CONNECT new mexico
Office of Broadband Access & Expansion

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First *Connect NM Pilot Program* broadband project completed

Dozens of rural Chaves County homeowners gain internet service

ALBUQUERQUE – The Office of Broadband Access and Expansion (OBAE) announced today that a landmark broadband infrastructure project in a remote subdivision in Chaves County is complete, providing high-speed internet to 52 rural homes in the Cherry Decker subdivision near the community of Hagerman.

With the project completed, these residents can now sign up for high-speed internet service.

The Chaves County project is OBAE's first grant project to reach 100 percent completion and the first Connect New Mexico Pilot Program project funded through the federal American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) Capital Projects Fund to reach the final stage.

"This project's completion delivers on the state's promise to connect New Mexico families in the most remote areas of the state," said **Andy Exell**, OBAE's ARPA program coordinator. "For these dozens of homeowners to finally get high-speed internet is a life changer."

In 2023, OBAE awarded Artesia, NM-based Penasco Valley Telephone Cooperative Inc. (PVT) an ARPA grant of $487,000. Construction includes nearly 11 miles of pole-attached aerial fiber to the rural residences. With matching PVT funds, the broadband project's total budget was $649,000.

"As PVT completes the project in rural Chaves County, we are excited to see residents gaining access to reliable fiber connectivity," said Penasco Valley Telephone CEO **Jim Meyers.** "This milestone represents more than infrastructure; it's about opportunity. PVT is grateful for the support and partnership with OBAE in helping us close the digital divide and improve the quality of life for all New Mexicans."

The U.S. Treasury awarded New Mexico with $117 million in grants through ARPA to expand and deploy broadband to unserved and underserved areas. OBAE has awarded 21 grants to internet service providers, cooperatives, and Tribal communities.

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The Office of Broadband Access and Expansion is dedicated to serving New Mexico with a commitment to make high-speed broadband accessible to all New Mexicans. OBAE's mission is to expand and improve high-speed internet service with passionate leadership that drives bold, equitable, affordable and inclusive broadband solutions. OBAE seeks results that honor the state's rich heritage and elevate quality of life for all.

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