



Michelle Lujan Grisham
Governor

Drew Lovelace
Broadband Acting Director

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

September 13, 2024

Contact: Mike Curtis
Public Relations Coordinator
Office of Broadband Access and Expansion
Michael.curtis@connect.nm.gov
(505) 231-4477

Hundreds of rural New Mexicans to receive high-speed internet
Grants will make service available in Hidalgo and Grant County communities

ALBUQUERQUE—The Office of Broadband Access and Expansion (OBAE) has announced that three rural Southwestern New Mexico communities will soon have high-speed internet, thanks to a state-issued grant totaling more than \$5.6 million.

The funding was awarded through the state’s Connect New Mexico Fund to Valley Telephone Cooperative, which will provide fiber broadband connections to hundreds of residents in Animas, Cotton City and Hachita.

“This project will have a generational impact for residents in this rural corner of the state. No one should lack access to broadband, and this important connectivity is a sign of real progress,” said **Drew Lovelace, Acting Director of OBAE**.

The Valley Telephone Cooperative project will build fiber to 324 homes and 101 local businesses. The broadband will be constructed to 170 unserved and 255 underserved locations. An underserved location is one that does not have access to broadband speeds of at least 100Mbps download and 20 Mbps uploads.

“We are grateful to the state for recognizing the critical need to expand connectivity in our rural areas,” said **Troy Judd, CEO of Valley Telephone Cooperative**. “High-speed internet is not just a convenience—it is essential for empowering local businesses, residents, and schools, enabling efficiencies, reducing travel needs, and improving educational opportunities.”

Valley Telephone Cooperative will build nearly 135 miles of fiber for this project. Construction will begin as soon as Valley Telephone Cooperative completes preliminary work such as permitting, right of way and labor contracts.

The project could be completed as early as spring 2025.

Last night residents in Animas celebrated the prospect of high-speed internet during a ribbon cutting ceremony at the Animas High School football game.

###

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.