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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

January 27, 2025

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State broadband office allocates \$1.25 million for disaster relief
Grants support broadband growth in communities hit by disasters

ALBUQUERQUE—Today, the Office of Broadband Access and Expansion (OBAE) announced that it will dedicate \$1.25 million from its American Rescue Plan Act funding to assist New Mexico communities hurt by environmental disasters.

“After the Mescalero and Ruidoso disasters in 2024, we felt it was important to use the rest of the money to assist hard-hit communities devastated by fires and floods,” said **Drew Lovelace**, OBAE’s Acting Director. “When disasters strike communities, it affects broadband service and other vital needs, and OBAE wants to directly support communities that were harmed. Broadband communication is crucial and can be lifesaving.”

Applications for the **Connectivity to Declared Disaster Areas Grant** funding opens today. The grants will fund terrestrial-based broadband last-mile networks in communities damaged by wildfires, floods or other disasters declared by the Governor between 2022 and 2024.

Eligible applicants include:

- Tribal governments.
- Local governments (municipalities, counties, etc.)
- Local and state agencies.
- For-profits, non-profits, cooperatives, and utilities.

Applicants must provide a 25% funding match, though waivers for reduced matching requirements may be available. Grant requests must be at least \$250,000 and projects must deliver broadband to unserved (less than 25 Mbps download/3 Mbps upload) or underserved locations (up to 100 Mbps download/20 Mbps upload).

Key Dates:

- **Application deadline:** March 21, 2025.
- **Project completion:** December 31, 2026.

For more information and to apply, visit: <https://connect.nm.gov/disaster-relief.html>

The state program funded by American Rescue Plan Act has provided New Mexico with \$117 million in grants to expand and deploy broadband to unserved and underserved areas. OBAE has invested \$115.7 million from that financial pool toward more than 22,000 locations and will now use the remaining funds for disaster relief.

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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.