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State awards \$500,000 in broadband planning and engineering grants

Funding will go toward deploying high-speed internet in five counties

ALBUQUERQUE—Today, the Office of Broadband Access and Expansion (OBAE) announced that it has awarded \$500,000 in state funds to five entities for planning, engineering and grant writing to help them construct and deploy broadband in their areas.

The Pueblo of San Felipe, Pueblo of Jemez, San Ildefonso Services, LLC, Sandoval County and ENMR Telephone Cooperative each received grants of \$100,000 through the state’s Grant Writing, Engineering and Planning Program (GWEP). The state allocated \$5 million to the program to help tribes, local governments and cooperatives attain grants to help them provide broadband to unserved locations.

The five awardees will target infrastructure projects in Bernalillo, Los Alamos, Santa Fe, Sandoval and San Miguel counties.

“We are very excited that more entities are stepping forward to get these grants as they plan broadband deployment,” said **Eric Rodgers, OBAE Project Manager**. “This funding will lead to accelerated projects in remote parts of the state where internet connection is badly needed. We aim to bridge the digital divide in New Mexico as quickly as possible.”

The grant recipients will use the funding for middle mile and last mile construction.

Awardees are seeking access for essential services such as education, healthcare and economic opportunities. All grant recipients can use the funds for broadband infrastructure, planning services and broadband engineering/design projects.

OBAE has now issued 26 GWEP awards, totaling \$2.6 million. The recipients include 12 local governments, 11 tribal communities and three cooperatives.

There is still \$2.4 million available, and OBAE encourages tribal governments, local governments, rural telephone cooperatives and rural electric cooperatives to submit applications. Matching funds are not required.

These grants are not competitive, but assistance grants, aimed at kick-starting broadband infrastructure projects. Entities that have already received awards are entitled to receive a second. The maximum amount allowed for each award under this state program is \$100,000.

Internet service providers are not eligible for the funds.

To apply for a GWEP grant, visit: <https://obae.submittable.com/submit>

For more information about the state grant program, visit:
<https://connect.nm.gov/gwep.html>

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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.