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Office of Broadband Access & Expansion

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State awards broadband grants to two Tribal communities *Funds to go toward high-speed internet deployment*

ALBUQUERQUE — Two Tribal communities will receive state grants totaling \$200,000 for broadband planning, engineering and grant writing.

Santa Clara Pueblo in Rio Arriba County and the Fort Sill Chiricahua Warm Springs Apache Tribe in Luna County each received a maximum \$100,000 planning grant through the state's Grant Writing, Engineering and Planning Program (GWEP). The New Mexico Office of Broadband Access and Expansion (OBAE) administers the program, which has allocated \$5 million to the program to help Tribes, local governments and cooperatives obtain grants to provide broadband to unserved areas.

"These awards signify another milestone that helps expand broadband in Tribal communities in New Mexico," said **Andrew Wilder**, OBAE's policy & programs bureau chief. "This funding will kick-start important broadband projects to Tribal regions where high-speed internet is needed."

Santa Clara Pueblo will use its grant to develop a three-phase broadband project to build a fiber line from the intersection of state Routes 84 and 285 and state Route 399 to the end of state Route 399. The project includes connecting homes and providing Wi-Fi service for safety and security along trails around the Pueblo-owned Black Mesa Golf Club.

The Fort Sill Chiricahua Warm Springs Apache Tribe will use its grant to begin the design and engineering for a high-speed broadband network to bring reliable internet to its unserved homeland located in southern New Mexico. The funding will provide for detailed engineering plans needed to overcome the physical barriers that have prevented connectivity. The Tribe has already secured \$500,000 in infrastructure funding for fiber, equipment, and trenching.

OBAE has issued 36 GWEP awards totaling \$3.5 million, including 17 Tribal communities, 15 local governments and four rural electric and telephone cooperatives. Just under \$1.5 million in planning grants remain available.

Awards are assistance-based, not merit-based, meaning entities do not compete for the funding. No matching funds are required.

To apply, visit: connect.nm.gov.

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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.