
Broadband Matters

**Mid-Atlantic Conf. of Regulatory Utils. Comms.
The Hotel Hershey
June 23, 2009**

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Broadband: Essential in Many Aspects of Daily Life



Education



Health Care



Public Safety

Problems of Broadband Access



- All communities need broadband
- Without access to broadband, rural communities like Weirwood, Virginia, that are not connected to the Internet backbone (though they may be close to it), can be left behind



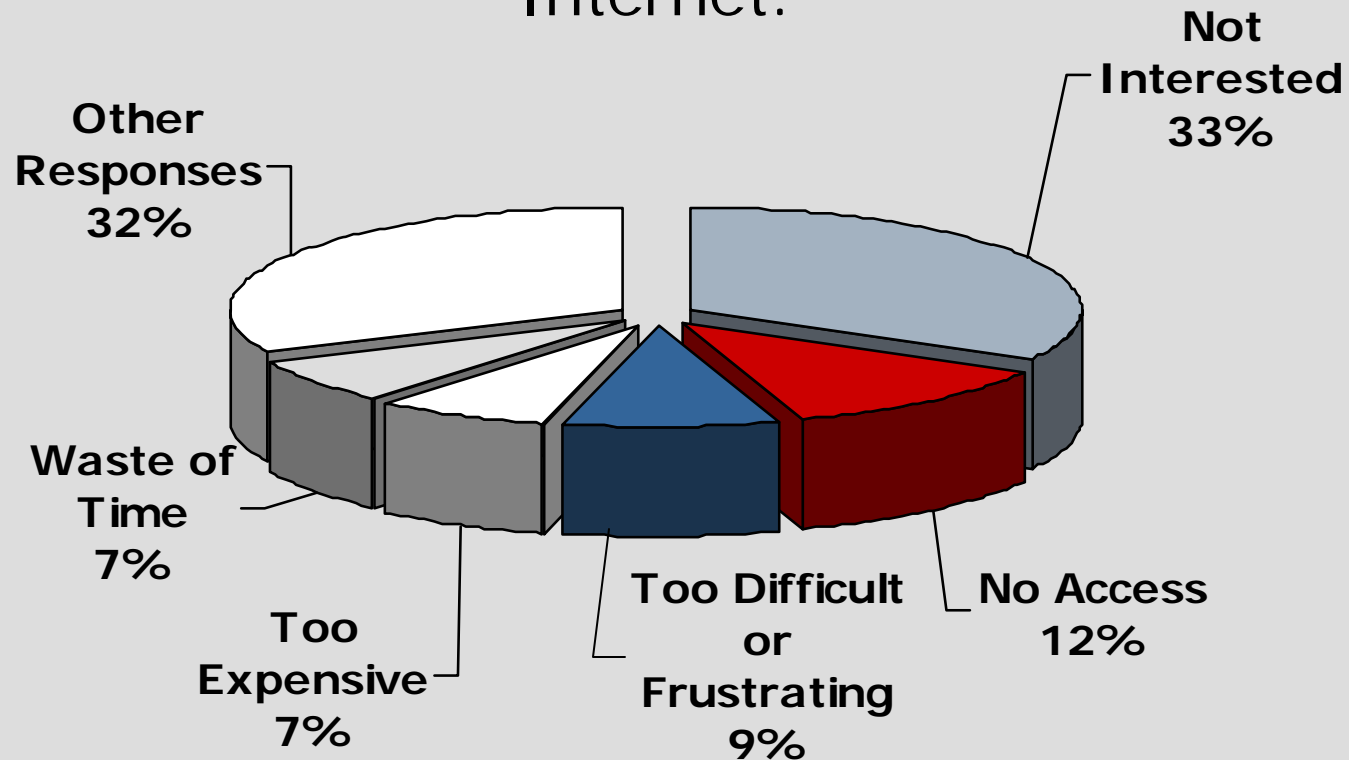
Problems of Broadband Access



- All communities need broadband
- Not all urban communities are served adequately, either.
- And not everyone who could subscribe chooses to do so.

Roughly one quarter of adult Americans do not use the Internet (Pew 2008)

Reasons given for not using the Internet:



Source: Pew Internet & American Life Project, Home Broadband Adoption 2008

Historic Infrastructure Challenges and Government Response



Rural
Electrification

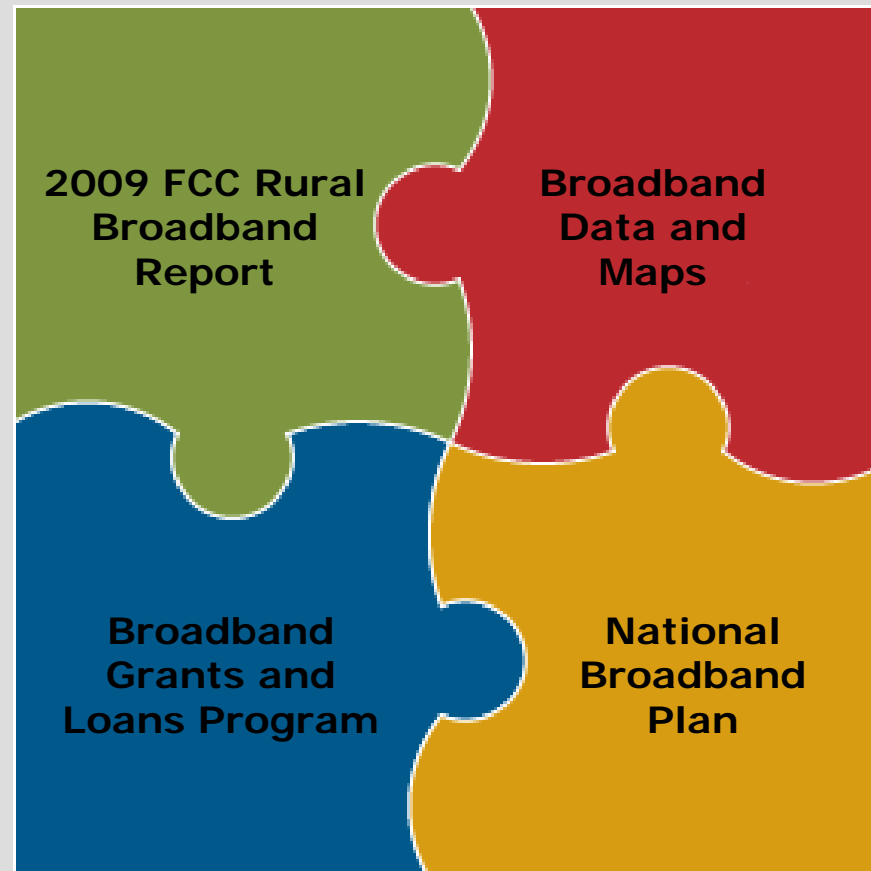
Trans-Continental
Railroads



Interstate
Highways

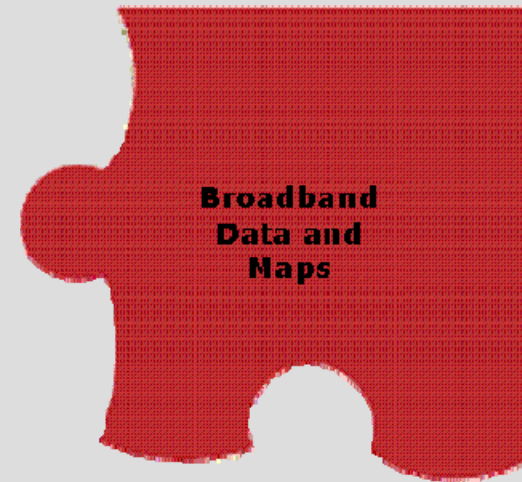
Response to Broadband Challenges

Recent
Legislative and
FCC Actions:



Broadband Data and Maps

- **2008 Broadband Data Improvement Act (BDIA)**
 - Changes FCC's Section 706 Report:
 - must identify "unserved" areas
 - must include international comparison of speeds, prices
 - Annual consumer survey
 - Census Bureau, GAO, SBA have new obligations
- **2009 American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA)**
 - NTIA must create a map



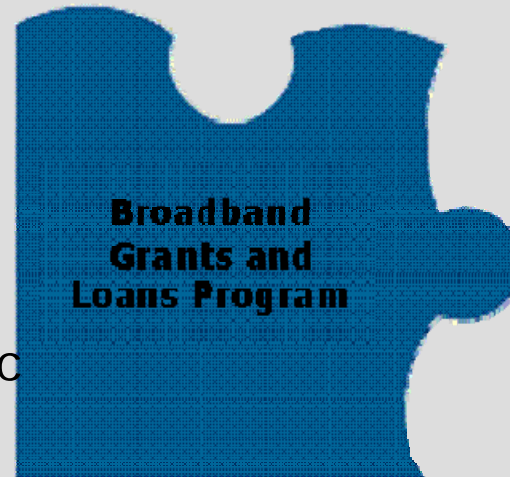
2009 FCC Rural Broadband Report

- 2008 Farm Bill required FCC Chairman to produce a rural broadband strategy report
- Chairman Copps delivered the Report to Congress in May 2009
- Identifies challenges for rural broadband
- Recommends coordination of rural broadband efforts with all stakeholders



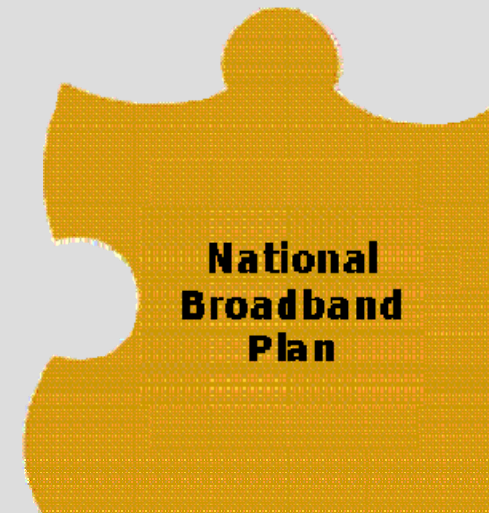
Broadband Grants and Loans Under the Recovery Act

- **NTIA (BTOP)**
 - \$4.7 B total
 - access in unserved and underserved areas
 - public safety, training, outreach, public computer centers, sustainable adoption programs
- **USDA – Rural Utilities Service (RUS)**
 - \$2.5 B loans / grants for broadband
 - facilitate rural economic development



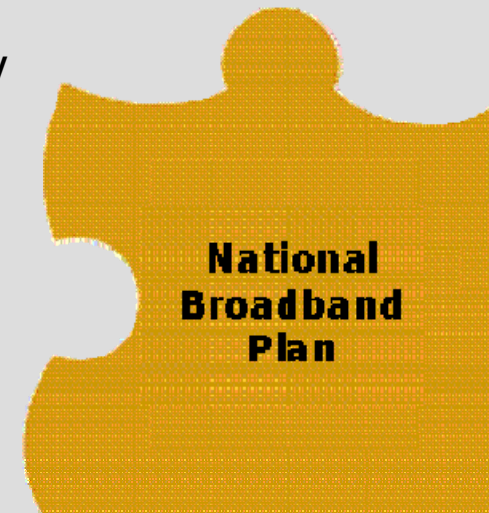
A Broadband Plan for the Future

- FCC must create a **National Broadband Plan** by February 2010 that:
 - Ensures that all people of the United States have access to broadband capability
 - Establishes benchmarks for meeting that goal
 - Addresses affordability, utilization, and an array of national purposes
- Notice of Inquiry released in April 2009:
 - Seeks comment on a wide range of issues
 - FCC received over 8000 pages of comments in early June; replies due July 7

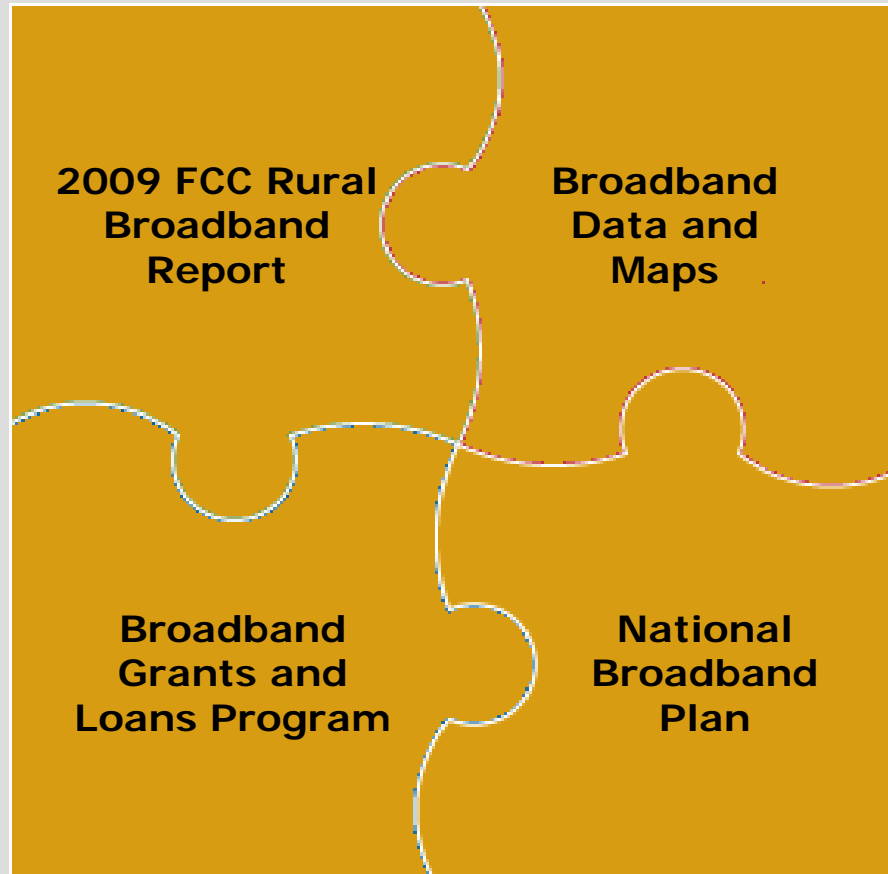


A Broadband Plan for the Future

- Consumer welfare
- Civic participation
- Public safety and homeland security
- Community development
- Health care delivery
- Energy independence and efficiency
- Education
- Worker training
- Private sector investment
- Entrepreneurial activity
- Job creation and economic growth
- Other national purposes



Response to Broadband Infrastructure Challenges:



Relevant issues:

- Many issues intertwined with broadband (find one that isn't?)
- But if we try to solve all the old telecom battles, we will not succeed in creating a National Broadband Plan.

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