

USDA - RUS Telecommunications Program Update

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Telecom Grant Programs

FY 2010 Grant Programs – Application windows will open in next few weeks:

- Distance Learning and Telemedicine
- Public TV Digital Transition
- Community Connect Broadband

Telecom Loan Programs Retirements

Southern Division:

- Ken Chandler – Southern Division Director
- Charlie Harper – Deputy Director
- Current acting Director: Peter Aimable

Northern Division:

- Twanda Gay – Loan and Grant Technician

Broadband Stimulus

- American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA)
 - RUS Broadband Initiatives Program (BIP)

Round 1 BIP & NTIA:

- Over 2,200 applications received
- Requesting \$28 billion in funding

ARRA BIP – Round 1

Dec. 17th announcement:

- 8 Projects: Alaska, Hawaii, Colorado/Nebraska, Michigan, New Hampshire, New York, Ohio, Oklahoma

Jan. 25th announcement:

- 14 Projects: Alaska, Alabama, California, Iowa (3), Kansas, Tennessee, Louisiana, Missouri, North Dakota (2), Oregon, Virginia
- Remaining Round 1 awards expected to be announced within the next few days

ARRA BIP – Round 2

- Federal Register NOFA – Jan. 22nd:

http://www.broadbandusa.gov/files/FedRegNOFA_R2_RUS.pdf

- Application Window:

Feb. 16th – March 15, 5 pm

- **This** NOFA only applies to Last Mile and Middle Mile
– NOFA for Satellite/Library category still to be issued
(current NOFA does contains some preliminary information about the latter category)

ARRA BIP 2 – Online resources

<http://www.broadbandusa.gov/faq.htm>

- 2nd bullet – FAQ on Round 2 BIP applicants – 31 pg. doc.

<http://www.broadbandusa.gov/workshop.htm> –

slide presentations:

- Round 2 NOFA Requirements: eligibility, scoring, etc.
- Technical Details for Projects under BIP
- Mapping Tool
- BIP Financial Review
- Easygrants Process
- Accounting and Auditing Compliance Requirements

ARRA BIP 2 – Online Resources

Workshop videos:

- BIP Round 2 NOFA, Technical Details and Mapping Tool
- BIP Financial Review, Easygrants process, and ARRA Compliance
- ARRA Compliance Q&A

Broadband ARRA Partners Online Database Tool

- RUS & NTIA - new online database driven tool to facilitate partnerships among prospective applicants
- Combine expertise for stronger proposals
- Example: BB infrastructure company with community institution such as a hospital or library
- Website:
<http://match.broadbandusa.gov/BTOPpartners/BPMhome.aspx>

Additional Resources

<http://www.broadbandus.tv/>

Broadband Stimulus Town Hall Meeting –

February 12, 2010 – includes:

- Interview with Jessica Zufolo (RUS Deputy Administrator) & Angela Simpson (NTIA Senior Advisor)
- First Round Winners: Insights and Lessons
- Maximizing Chances in Second Round

ARRA BIP 2 - Highlights

- RUS and NTIA - separate NOFAs and separate application process
- Electronic applications **only** and **one-step** application process
- Application categories: last mile, middle mile, satellite, technical assistance & rural library broadband
 - Separate NOFA for last three categories
 - Remote category has been removed

ARRA BIP 2 - Highlights

- Eligible service area: At least 75% rural AND within the rural portion **at least 50% of the premises in the rural area must have no access to broadband service at the rate of 5 Mbps**
- Loan grant award allocation: **75/25 grant loan combination** (more points for larger loan %)

ARRA BIP 2 – Funding

- Last Mile Projects: \$1.7 Billion

Middle Mile Projects: \$300 Million

(both categories: 75% loan/25% grant)

- Satellite Projects: \$100 Million (100% grant)

- Rural Library Broadband & Technical Assistance Projects: \$5 Million (100% grant)

Broadband Economics

- Why Broadband? Quality of life factors
- Jobs
 - Direct construction
 - Communications network - integral part of economic and job transactions
- “Recovery Act Investment in Broadband: Leveraging Federal Dollars to Create Jobs and Connect America”:

<http://www.whitehouse.gov/sites/default/files/20091217-recovery-act-investments-broadband.pdf>

Broadband Economics

- Broadband Stimulus Program (NTIA & RUS): spur regional and local economic development
- USDA Rural Development: regional economic development and innovation in Rural America (jobs roundtables w. RD state directors and Farm Service Agency state executive directors)
- RUS specifically: **broadband** jobs effect in rural areas (ARRA BIP - applications are required to report jobs created or saved)

Broadband Economics

Round 2 BIP

How tackling economic issues factors into scoring:

- Socially and Disadvantaged Small Business Concern (**3 points**)
- Application **promotes rural economic development** (RUS Administrator may award up to **10 bonus points**)

Contact for ARRA BIP Questions

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Contact Information

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