

## **USDA Announces Recovery Act Broadband Award to Bring Jobs, Economic Opportunity to Northern New Mexico Communities**

MORIARTY, N.M. – Aug. 16, 2010 – USDA Rural Utilities Service Administrator Jonathan Adelstein today announced the funding of a Recovery Act broadband infrastructure project in northern New Mexico that will create jobs and provide thousands of rural residents access to improved service. Today's announcement is part of the second round of USDA broadband funding through the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (Recovery Act). Adelstein made the announcement at the New Mexico Broadband and Smart Grid Summit in Moriarty on behalf of Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack.

"This project will give rural New Mexico residents access to the broadband they need to attract new businesses, jobs, health care and educational opportunities," Adelstein said. "It will enable Kit Carson to deploy cutting edge smart grid technology that will help cut electric bills and permit sustainable energy development. The Obama Administration understands that bringing broadband to rural New Mexico will give families, businesses and key anchor institutions -- such as schools, libraries and first responders -- service that is second to none. This project will create immediate jobs building out the network, and the completed system will provide a platform for economic growth Northern New Mexico for years to come."

The Kit Carson Electric Cooperative Fiber-to-the-Home project will deliver affordable broadband service to 29 communities comprised of approximately 20,500 households, 3,600 businesses and 183 critical community institutions, two Native American Pueblos within a 2,951 square mile, rural underserved area in Taos, Colfax and Rio Arriba counties. The network spans 2400 miles.

In all, \$63.8 million in Recovery Act funds will be invested in the project. An additional \$600,000 will come from private investment sources. By leveraging Recovery Act funding authorized by Congress, USDA has been able to provide loans and grants of \$3 billion to construct 260 broadband projects in 45 states and one territory. The remaining authorized funds will allow for an additional investment of \$1 billion in loans and grants by September 30, 2010. The Recovery Act provided USDA with a total of \$2.5 billion to invest in expanding broadband access to rural America.

According to analysis released by the National Economic Council last year, overall Recovery Act investments in broadband are expected to create tens of thousands of jobs in the near term and expand economic development and job opportunities in communities that would otherwise be left behind in the new knowledge-based economy. Recovery Act broadband projects help bring down the cost of private

investment, attract Internet service providers to new areas, improve digital literacy among students and workers, and help create new opportunities in employment, education, and entrepreneurship by wiring homes and businesses. With new or increased broadband access, communities can compete on a level playing field to attract new businesses, schools can create distance learning opportunities, medical professionals can provide cost-efficient remote diagnoses and care, and business owners can expand the market for their products beyond their neighborhoods to better compete in the global economy.

President Obama signed The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 into law on Feb. 17, 2009. It is designed to jumpstart the nation's economy, create or save millions of jobs, and put a down payment on addressing long-neglected challenges so our country can thrive in the 21st century. The Act includes measures to modernize our nation's infrastructure, enhance energy independence, expand educational opportunities, preserve and improve affordable health care, provide tax relief, and protect those in greatest need.