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JUST ANNOUNCED: Trump Administration Invests \$91.5 Million in High-Speed Broadband in Rural Missouri

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Trump Administration Invests \$91.5 Million in High-Speed Broadband in Rural Missouri

ReConnect Funding to Connect 14,205 Rural Households to High-Speed Internet e-Connectivity

COLUMBIA, MO, Oct. 22, 2020 – The Trump Administration today announced that the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) is investing \$91.5 million to provide broadband service in unserved and underserved rural areas in Missouri. This investment is part of the \$550 million Congress allocated to the [second round of the ReConnect Program](#).

“In Missouri and across the country, technology and innovation are vital to agricultural production,” USDA Farm Service Agency Administrator Richard Fordyce said. “Our commitment to invest in rural America cannot be achieved without addressing the digital divide our rural communities face because of a lack of high-speed broadband internet.”

The Stoutland Telephone Company, doing business as (DBA) MissouriCom, will use a \$4.6 million ReConnect grant to deploy a fiber-to-the-premises network, which connect 2,390 people, 78 farms and 12 businesses to high-speed broadband internet in Dallas, Camden and Laclede counties in Missouri.

Marshall Municipal Utilities will use a \$7.5 million ReConnect grant to deploy a fiber-to-the-premises network, which will connect 3,890 people, 433 farms, 63 businesses, two public schools, a fire station and a post office to high-speed broadband internet in Saline County, Missouri.

Steelville Telephone Exchange, DBA STE Communications, will use a \$14.8 million ReConnect grant and a \$14.8 million ReConnect loan. As a result, STE Communications will deploy a fiber-to-the-premises network to connect 4,756 people, 314 farms, 55 businesses, two fire stations and a post office to high-speed broadband internet in Iron, Dent, Crawford and Washington counties in Missouri.

Total Highspeed LLC was awarded a \$24.9 million ReConnect grant and a \$24.9 million ReConnect loan. These funds will provide a fiber-to-the-premises network to connect 26,077 people, 720 farms, 417 businesses, nine fire stations and five public schools to high-speed broadband internet in Christian, Greene, Lawrence, Stone and Webster counties in Missouri.

Background:

In March 2018, Congress provided \$600 million to USDA to expand broadband infrastructure and services in rural America. On Dec. 13, 2018, Secretary Perdue announced the rules of the program, called "ReConnect," including how the loans and grants will be awarded to help build broadband infrastructure in rural America.

On April 20, 2020, USDA announced the Department has received 172 applications for \$1.57 billion in Round Two of the ReConnect Program. The second round will enable USDA to implement innovative new solutions to rural connectivity by leveraging financial options with our partners and continuing the success of the first round of funding. The application window for Round Two closed on April 15.

In Round One of the ReConnect Program, USDA invested \$698 million to bring high-speed broadband e-Connectivity to approximately:

- 167,000 households,
- 17,000 rural small businesses and farms, and
- more than 500 health care centers, educational facilities and critical community facilities located in 33 states.

To learn more about individual investments, read [USDA's Broadband ReConnect Program report](#) (PDF, 4 MB).

USDA received 11 Round Two ReConnect Program applications that are eligible for the \$100 million Congress allocated to the program through the [CARES Act](#).

To learn more about ReConnect Program eligibility, technical assistance and recent announcements, visit www.usda.gov/reconnect.

USDA Rural Development provides loans and grants to help expand economic opportunities and create jobs in rural areas. This assistance supports infrastructure improvements; business development; housing; community facilities such as schools, public safety and health care; and high-speed internet access in rural areas. For more information, visit www.rd.usda.gov.

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For your convenience, you can also [view the news release in its entirety on our website.](#)

If you don't already, please follow the [@RD_Missouri](#) Twitter account and interact with our tweets to learn more the programs offered to assist rural Missourians.



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