



Federal Communications Commission
Washington, D.C. 20554
Office of Native Affairs and Policy

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Title: FCC Native News Digest – December 2024

Greetings from the Federal Communications Commission.

To make it easy for Tribal Communities to engage with the FCC, the Office of Native Affairs and Policy (ONAP) publishes a monthly digest with updates and reminders that may be of interest to Tribal leaders, governments, businesses and other organizations. This list is not comprehensive of all FCC deadlines, programs, and initiatives, but includes certain items that might be important to the communities that you serve. Please reach out to Native@fcc.gov with any questions.

NEWS AND REMINDERS

Native Nations Communications Task Force

- On December 2, 2024, FCC Chairwoman Jessica Rosenworcel appointed twenty-one Tribal members and five Federal Communications Commission members to the FCC's Native Nations Communications Task Force. The Task Force is comprised of elected and appointed leaders, or their designees, from a broad cross section of Native Nations, as well as senior staff and decision-makers from across the FCC. The Task Force will help the FCC fulfill its commitment to increase access to broadband and other communications infrastructure deployment and services on Tribal lands.

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Broadband Data Task Force Announces Opening of Sixth Broadband Data Collection Filing Window

- In a [Public Notice](#) (DA-24-1257), the Broadband Data Task Force made two announcements:
 - (1) The sixth Broadband Data Collection (BDC) filing window for submitting broadband availability and other data as of December 31, 2024, will open on January 2, 2025.
 - All availability and subscription data must be submitted into the [BDC system](#) **no later than March 3, 2025**. Filers are encouraged to submit their availability data as of December 31, 2024, as early as possible in the filing window.
 - (2) The December 2024 update of the Broadband Serviceable Location Fabric (Fabric) is being made available to existing Fabric licensees in advance of the opening of the window.
 - The new version of the Fabric incorporates data from updated data sources and other improvement efforts conducted by the FCC and CostQuest, as well as the results of Fabric challenges submitted by state, Tribal, and local governments, broadband service providers, and the public through the National Broadband Map. Changes from previous versions of the Fabric include additional Broadband Serviceable Locations and

corrections to addresses, unit counts, building types, land use, and geographic coordinates.

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Rural Digital Opportunity Fund Milestone Notification

- The FCC recently released a [Public Notice](#) (DA-24-1207) to remind the carriers receiving Rural Digital Opportunity Fund (RDOF) support that they must contact the Wireline Competition Bureau (WCB) if they believe the third-year service milestone cannot be met. For context, the third-year service milestone requires RDOF recipients to build out at least 40% of each support recipient's RDOF locations. Any support recipient that will not meet its 40% buildout requirement by the end of its third year of support must notify WCB within 10 business days of the third-year service milestone deadline and provide information explaining this expected deficiency by filing a notification through the [Commission's Electronic Comment Filing System \(ECFS\)](#) in the RDOF docket, WC Docket 19-126.

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Note: In November 2023, the FCC released a [Public Notice](#) (DA-23-1115) providing guidance to carriers that receive Universal Service Fund (USF) High Cost support on engagement and coordination with state broadband offices and Tribal governments to determine eligibility of locations for broadband network funding under the Broadband Equity, Access and Deployment (BEAD) program and to remind High-Cost Support Recipients that if their service area includes Tribal lands, the service provider must demonstrate on an annual basis that it has engaged Tribal governments that have Tribal lands in the service provider's high-cost supported service area.

OPEN COMMENT PERIODS

The FCC's seeks comment from the public in its rulemakings, typically through a Notice of Proposed Rulemaking. Visit the FCC's website at <https://www.fcc.gov/>, or go to "Proposed FCC Rulemakings" at <https://www.fcc.gov/proposed-rulemakings> for more information on open proceedings.

Alaska Connect Fund - FCC Seeks Comment on Tribal Consent and Other Issues (WC Docket No. 23-328)

- In the Further Notice of Proposed Rulemaking (FNPRM) in the Alaska Connect Fund (ACF) proceeding, the FCC seeks comment on Tribal Consent issues for the ACF. Separately, the FNPRM seeks comment on how best to award support in areas where more than one mobile provider is receiving support (duplicate support areas) for ACF Mobile Phase II, which could occur from January 1, 2030, through December 31, 2034. The FNPRM also seeks comment on a reverse auction that would award additional support to unserved areas, as well as other issues that would impact the ACF.

Comments on WC Docket No. 23-328 are due on or before February 3, 2025, and reply comments are due on or before March 4, 2025.

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- **Regarding the Tribal consent requirements for the ACF**, the FCC seeks comment on whether ACF providers of mobile or fixed service must obtain the consent of the relevant Tribal government(s) for new deployments prior to being authorized to receive support for those areas. To promote and support Tribal sovereignty and self-determination, we tentatively conclude that adopting a Tribal consent requirement in Alaska Connect Fund rules is consistent with our long-standing recognition of that engagement between Tribal governments and communications providers, and we recognize particularly that early engagement is an important element to promote the successful deployment and provision of service on Tribal lands.

Interested parties may file comments and reply comments on FCC proceedings through the FCC's Electronic Comment Filing System (ECFS) at <https://www.fcc.gov/ecfs/filings>. Please check the docket number for the proceeding and select it as part of your submission.

RECENT EVENTS

Recent Broadband Data Webinars

- The FCC recently hosted two Office Hours sessions on submitting bulk mobile challenges to providers' BDC coverage. Each session included Q&A and was designed as a follow up to the FCC's [recent webinar](#) on how to challenge the mobile broadband coverage data reflected on the National Broadband Map. The two sessions were on collecting and submitting bulk challenge data and mobile challenge thresholds and other things to keep in mind when conducting a test.

Please see the main [Broadband Data Collection](#) website for more information.

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