

Millions in internet funds to benefit local counties

(KAIR)--\$44.5 million will be awarded to nine service providers “to extend high-speed internet to 18,468 locations in 15 underserved counties across the state.”

According to a release from the office of Kansas Governor Laura Kelly, announcing the funding, two of the 15 counties are in the local area.

The release explains that the funds come through the Kansas Capital Project Funds Broadband Infrastructure Program, with the latest round of funding being the third and final award phase of the program.

According to the release, “the CPF program provides funding to make broadband connections in critical areas of the state that lack access to high-speed internet,” with the \$83.5 million total CPF investment, combined with almost \$42 million in matching funds, to “result in more than 24,500 homes, businesses, schools, health care facilities, and other public institutions being connected to fast, reliable internet for the first time.”

Doniphan County is included among the underserved locations receiving funding, with the release explaining that the near \$1.5 million is earmarked for the Iowa Tribe, with the release calling the location a “very rural, remote, and economically disadvantaged area in the northeast corner of Kansas” which is 91-percent underserved.

The project “will be based on a partnership between the Iowa Tribe, Doniphan County, Rainbow Communications, and the City of White Cloud.”

Jackson County, as well as the counties of Shawnee and Wabaunsee, will benefit from nearly \$6.4 million awarded to Cox Communications, with the release calling the multi-county project “100-percent underserved.”

The release explains that “Cox will use an affordable, scalable solution already deployed in the KC metro region” to connect the rural counties, located northwest of Topeka, as “the CPF Grant Program provides the funding needed to implement high-speed broadband in these areas of the state.”

According to the release, all of the “targeted counties have as few as five locations per square mile, which until now has prevented providers from investing the resources needed to deliver a quality broadband option.”

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