A CDFI, the CRA, and the RS Fiber Cooperative

Jake Rieke, Linda Salmonson, Tim Moyer, and Tim Herwig: 9/28/17

Rural Fiber and Community Development Finance

Very few rural communities in southwestern Minnesota have access to affordable fiber optic broadband. This presents insurmountable obstacles to expanding economic, education, and health care opportunities.

Then came a citizen effort in Renville and Sibley counties to deliver fiber optic broadband access to homes and farms, businesses and government agencies, and schools and hospitals. Thus the RS Fiber Cooperative. It is the first operational fiber optic cooperative in the country.

Rural Electric Economic Development, Inc., a CDFI serving the area, was instrumental in financing this effort.

This panel will illustrate how a CDFI can finance rural broadband infrastructure, how the CRA can facilitate bank financing, how a federal government agency can provide technical assistance, and how a group of dedicated citizens can organize to bring rural communities into the 21st century web of global communications.

Speakers

- Tim Moyer, BroadbandUSA Manager, NTIA
- Jake Rieke, Farmer and RS Fiber Board Member
- Linda Salmonson, Economic Development Manager, Rural Electric Economic Development, Inc.
- Tim Herwig, District Community Affairs Officer, Office of the Comptroller of the Currency

Rural Fiber Optic Infrastructure

How can CDFIs finance innovative economic development efforts that revolutionize opportunity in rural communities?

OFN CONFERENCE

#OFNCONF #CDFIsINVEST

RS Fiber Cooperative

OFN Conference, Washington, DC

September 28th 2017

RSFIBER COOPERATIVE

Enriching the Lives of our Rural Communities

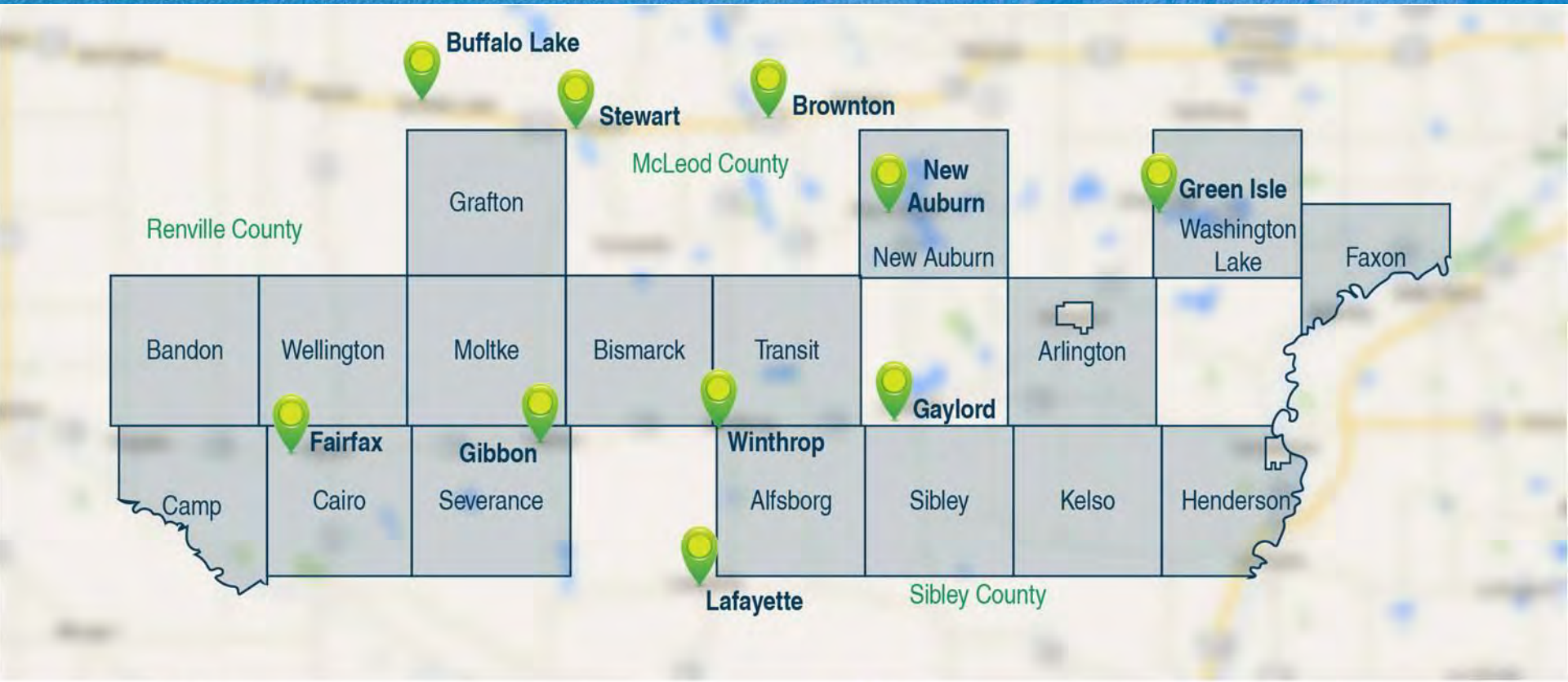
What Is RS Fiber Cooperative?

- A community driven effort that created a 308B telecommunications cooperative covering parts of Sibley & Renville Counties in Minnesota
- Public/Private Partnership model includes 10 small cities (population ranging from 400 to 2,300) and 17 rural townships
- Two phased approach: Build FTTH in cities first with high speed wireless to the rural area. Then construct fiber to the farm network after co-op is cash positive

RS Fiber Project History

- 2010 – Conducted feasibility study, formed Joint Powers Board (JPB) & developed business plan
- 2011 – Built public support with 150+ local educational meetings & obtained 56% pledge card rate inside footprint, drafted legal documents
- 2012/2013 – Attempted revenue bond financing. Sibley County withdrew from JPB & the cooperative was formed to take their place in representing the rural area
- 2014 – Developed & executed alternative financing structure
- 2015 – Began construction of fiber network & connected first customers

RS Fiber Footprint



RSFIBER COOPERATIVE

Enriching the Lives of our Rural Communities

Project Financing

- 10 cities & 17 townships created a Joint Powers Agreement to issue GO tax abatement bonds & provide economic development loans to the cooperative
- The public loans provide the foundation to the financing model by making them subordinate to all others – Tax payers have skin in the game
- The co-op can then leverage these subordinate loans for additional financing to build & operate network
- Phase 1
  - Cities provide loans first
  - FTTH network is built in the 10 cities providing up to a 1 gbps connection
  - Wireless network built on top of fiber network to provide 25 mbps service to rural areas
- Phase 2 (after positive cash flow)
  - Townships provide loans
  - Fiber network is extended to rural areas

City Contribution to Financing (Phase 1)

Cities:	2010 Households:	% of Total:	Debt Allocation:
Fairfax	577	7.95%	$ 1,191,984.58
Gibbon	394	5.43%	813,937.47
Winthrop	640	8.81%	1,322,131.94
Gaylord	996	13.72%	2,057,567.83
New Auburn	206	2.84%	425,561.22
Green Isle	240	3.31%	495,799.48
Lafayette	244	3.36%	504,062.80
Buffalo Lake	327	4.50%	675,526.79
Stewart	261	3.59%	539,181.93
Brownton	349	4.81%	720,975.07
10 Cities	**4,234**		**$ 8,746,729.10**

RSFIBER COOPERATIVE

Enriching the Lives of our Rural Communities

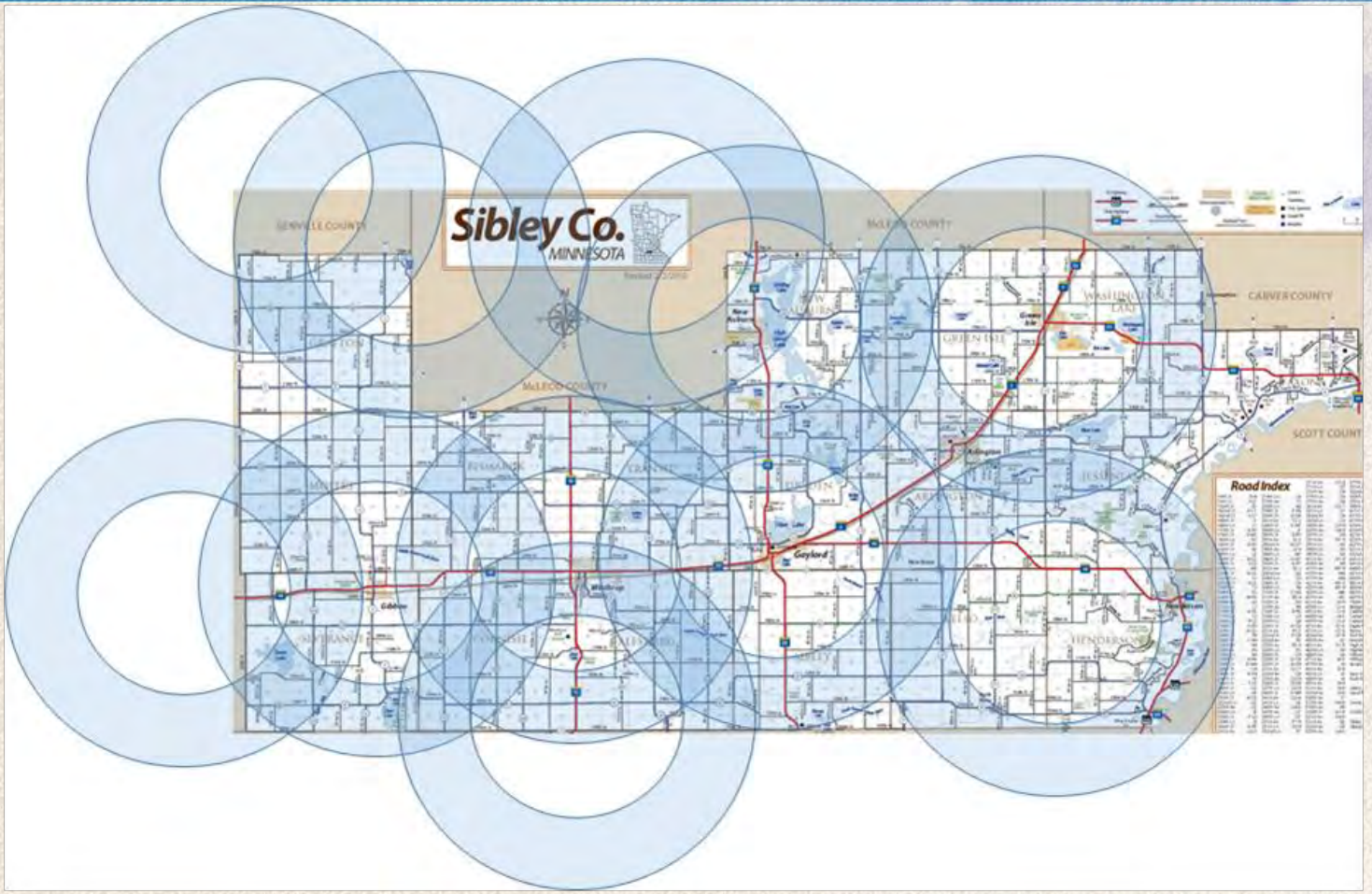
Where is RS Fiber Today

- First two years of construction
  - 100 mile fiber backbone connecting 10 cities
  - 6 cities fully built out & offering fiber services
  - 13 wireless towers active & attached to fiber backbone
  - 1,500 customers & counting, including 500+ ag producers
  - Adding approximately 100 customers per month
- Four remaining towns operational by end of 2017

Why Fiber not Wireless?

- Fiber is the only technology guaranteed to stay ahead of demand curve
- Since 1980, household demand for bandwidth has doubled every 3 years
- The wireless spectrum is highly competitive and wireless signals are subject to interference
- All wireless signals rely on a fiber backbone
- Fiber supports the most bandwidth, nearly unlimited distance and lowest latency

Preliminary PHASE 1 Air Broadband Coverage



RSFIBER COOPERATIVE

Enriching the Lives of our Rural Communities

Public Private Partnership

- Network is operated by Hiawatha Broadband Communications (HBC)
- HBC is based out of Winona, MN and was formed in 1997
  - They are a for-profit company that evolved out of a non-profit education initiative which connected Winona educational institutions to a fiber-optic network
- HBC's business model focuses on service to the community and putting people before profit
- They've grown to operate 21 Fiber to the Home networks in rural communities in Southeast Minnesota
  - HBC provides Air Broadband Service to adjacent areas around those communities

Rieke Farms

RSFIBER COOPERATIVE

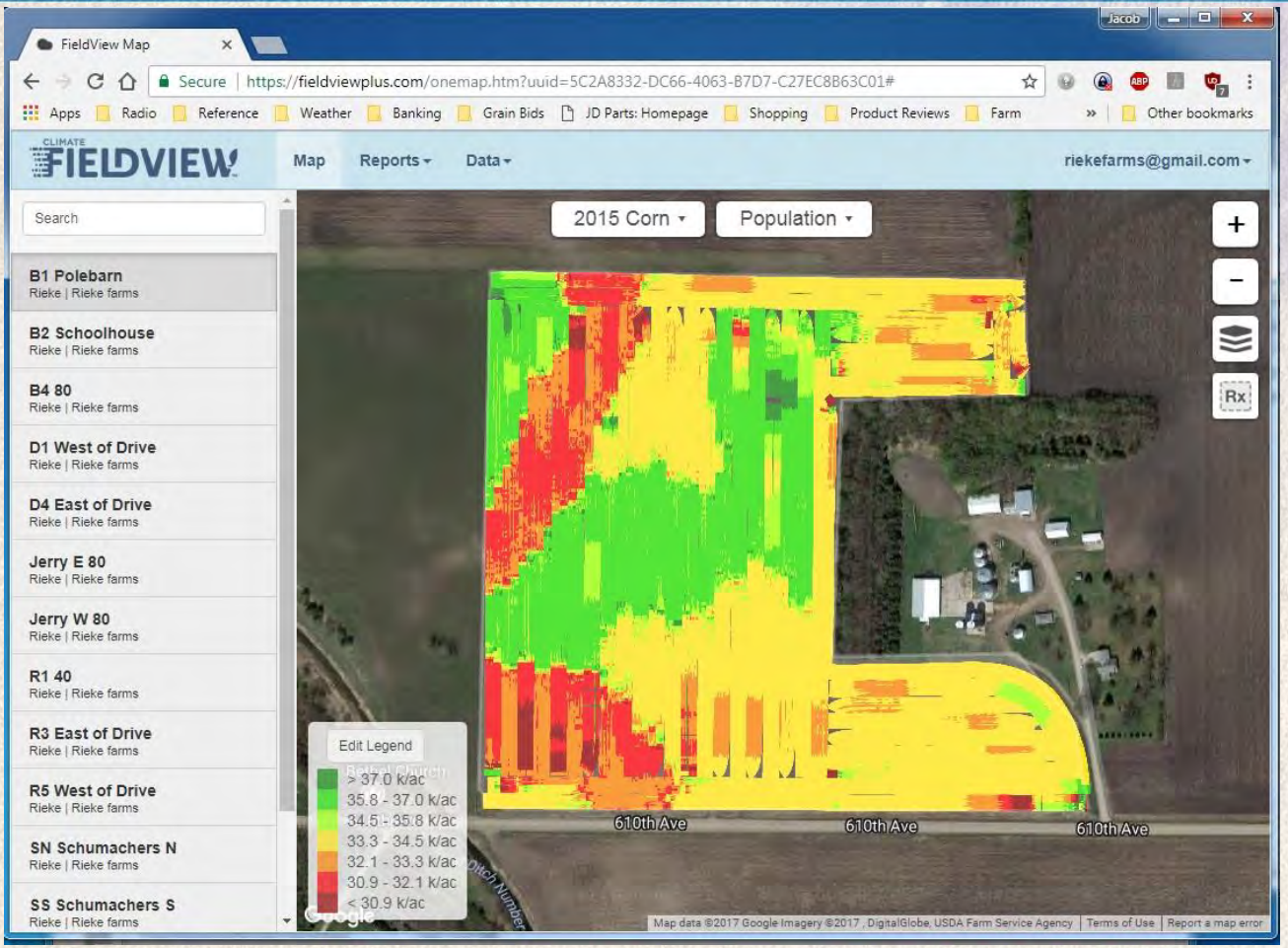
Enriching the Lives of our Rural Communities

Rieke Farms

RSFIBER COOPERATIVE

Enriching the Lives of our Rural Communities

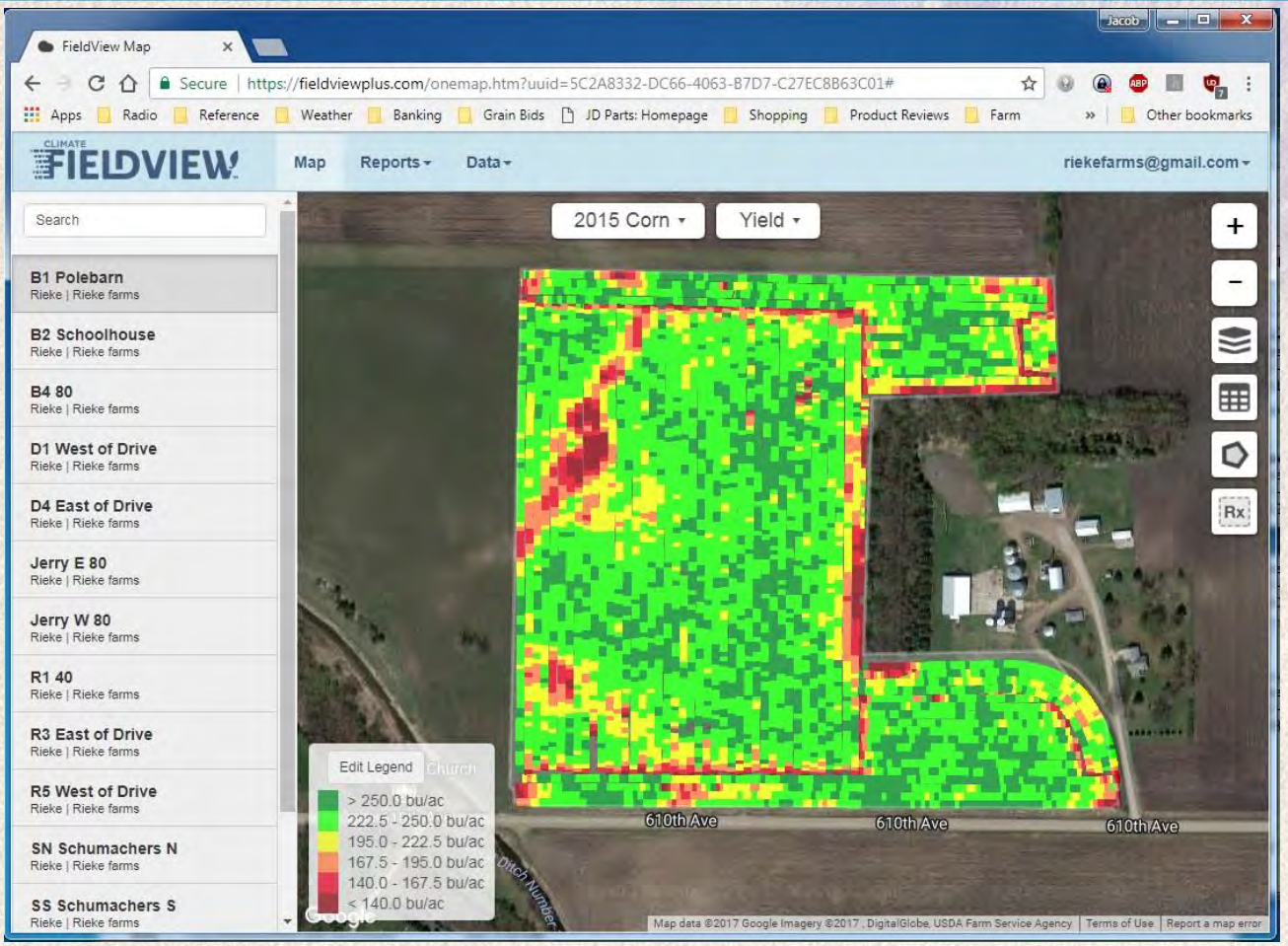
Rieke Farms



RSFIBER COOPERATIVE

Enriching the Lives of our Rural Communities

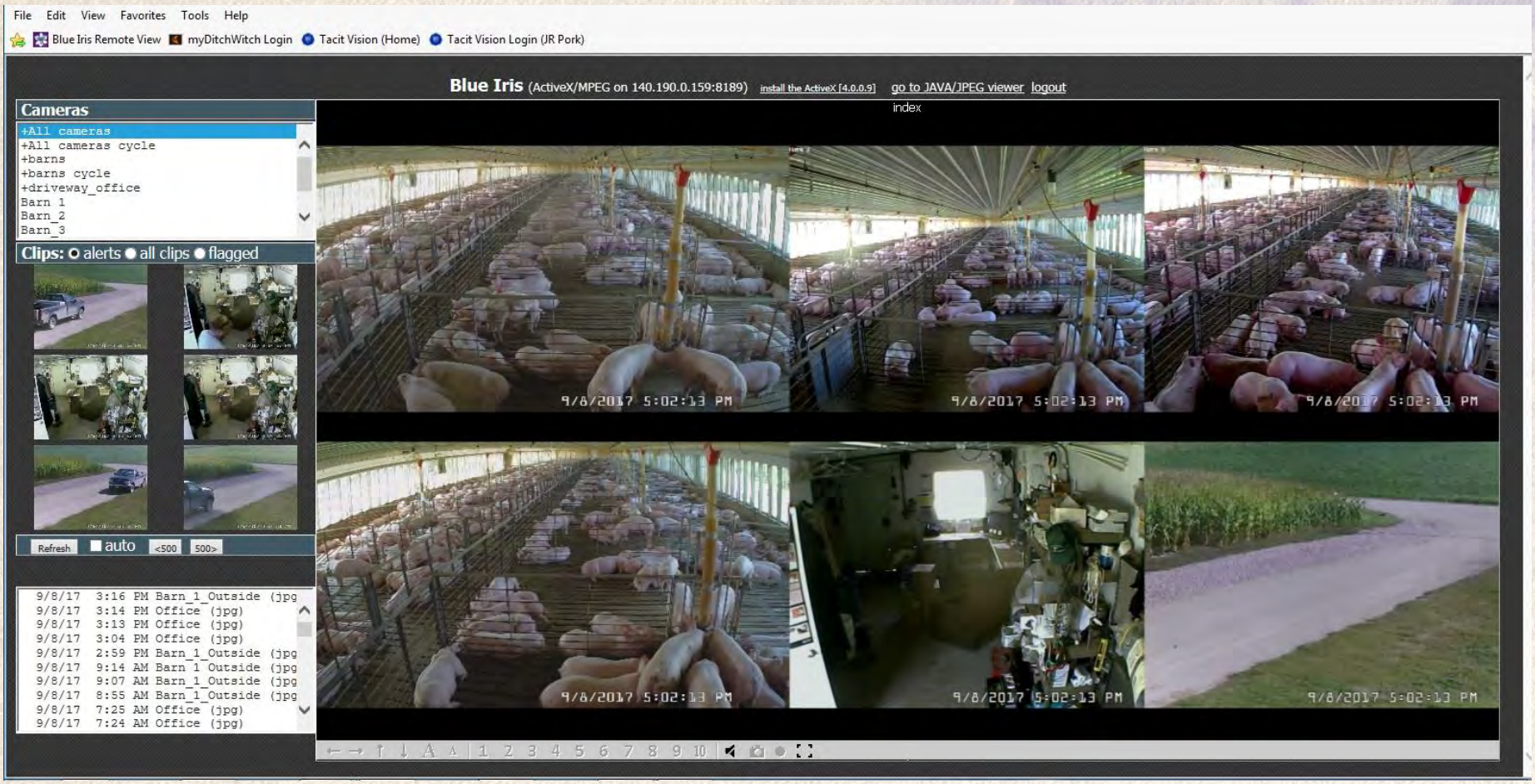
Rieke Farms



RSFIBER COOPERATIVE

Enriching the Lives of our Rural Communities

Rieke Farms



RSFIBER COOPERATIVE

Enriching the Lives of our Rural Communities

Rieke Farms

RSFIBER COOPERATIVE

Enriching the Lives of our Rural Communities

What have we learned from RS Fiber

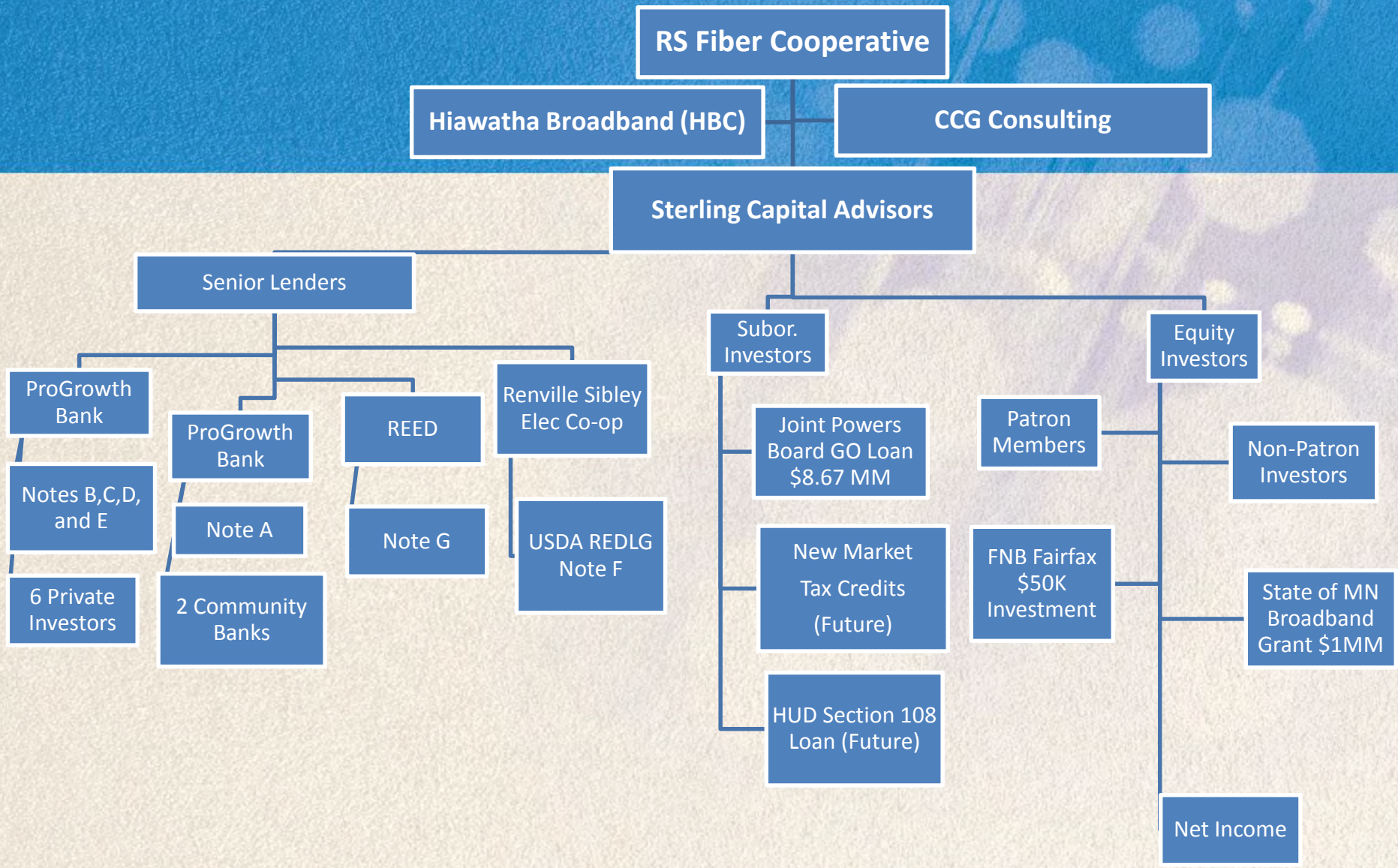
- Local community involvement is important
- A local champion is essential
- It will take more time and effort than you expect
- It takes a team (consulting, legal, banking, operational, engineering, construction) working together

What have we learned from RS Fiber

- A committed telecom partner is critical (HBC)
- Not necessary to bring fiber everywhere on day one, as long as there is a long-term plan
  - It's important to build the network incrementally and intentionally with manageable phases
- Community banks inside project footprint most receptive to lending
  - Traditional lenders struggle to understand risk, cash flows & appraisal value of a fiber network

Project Partners

- Blandin Foundation Grant
  - RS Fiber Cooperative has been named a Blandin Community
  - Provide an opportunity to improve digital inclusion/literacy and highlight the benefits of the fiber network
- MN Department of Employment and Economic Development
  - Awarded $1 million to RS Fiber Cooperative to help with construction costs
- University of Minnesota Extension
  - Develop an Innovation Center for area youth to focus on STEM curricula
- Renville-Sibley Cooperative Power Association
  - Special thanks to Renville-Sibley Coop Power for their tremendous support and collaboration



RSFIBER COOPERATIVE

Enriching the Lives of our Rural Communities

Jacob Rieke

Vice-Chair

RS Fiber Cooperative

507-766-2974

jacobrieke@gmail.com

RSFIBER COOPERATIVE

Enriching the Lives of our Rural Communities

Before You Go

Please complete your session evaluation!

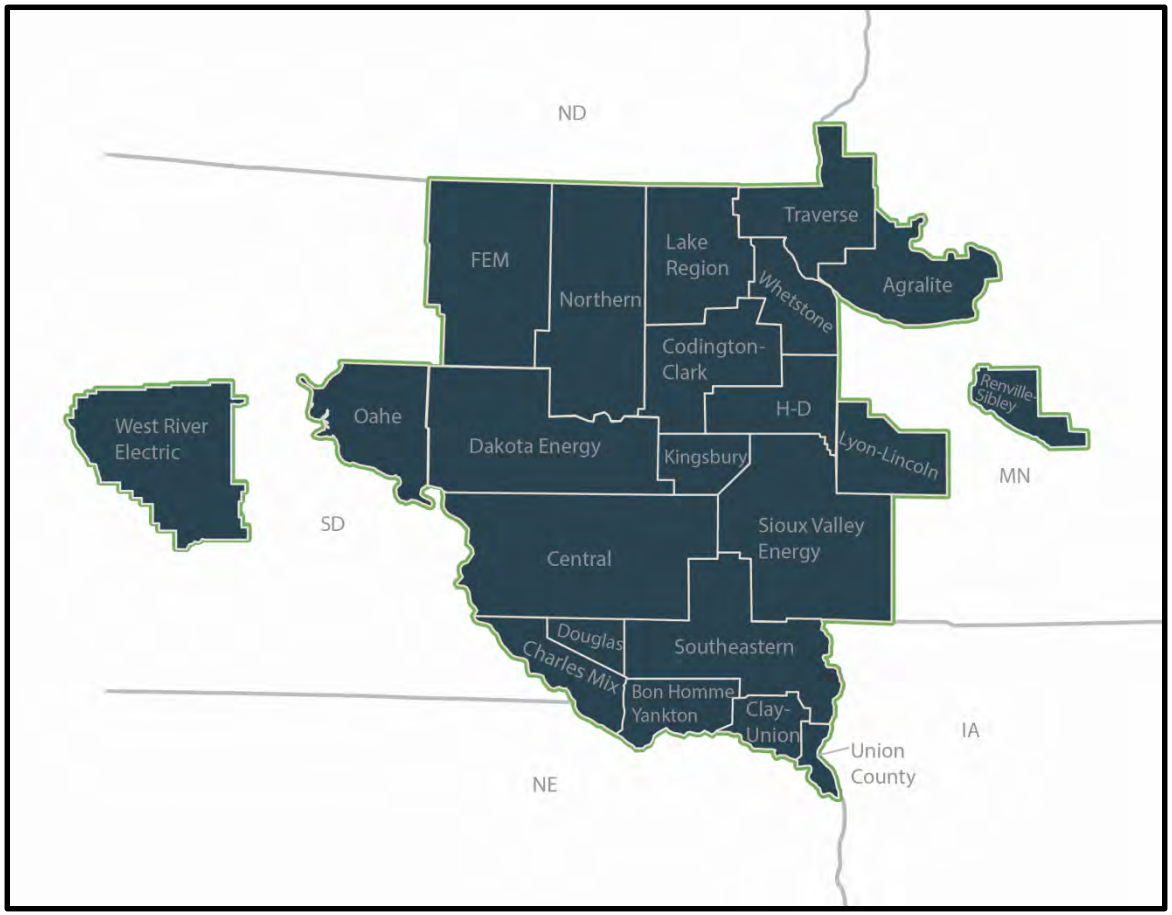
You can find it in the Conference app.

RURAL ELECTRIC ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, INC.
REED FUND

The REED Fund provides financing and leverages investment to help sustain and grow the rural economy and make a difference in the region.

301 loans over two decades - $76.5 million invested
Over $600,000 million leveraged – over 8,200 jobs

REED FUND MEMBERS



23 Electric Cooperatives, 45,000 square miles

Renville-Sibley Cooperative Power Association

- Retail electric service provider to 1,900 member-consumers in Renville and parts of Sibley Counties in Minnesota
- Not connected to RS Fiber Cooperative
- Member of REED Fund
- Sponsored application for 0% financing to RS Fiber

RS Fiber Cooperative

Financial Issues

- Large scale project – multiple partners
- Joint commitment among towns and townships
- Fiscal leadership and local ag cooperative support
- Strategic partner, Hiawatha Broadband
- Limited experience with Federal programs

RS Fiber Cooperative

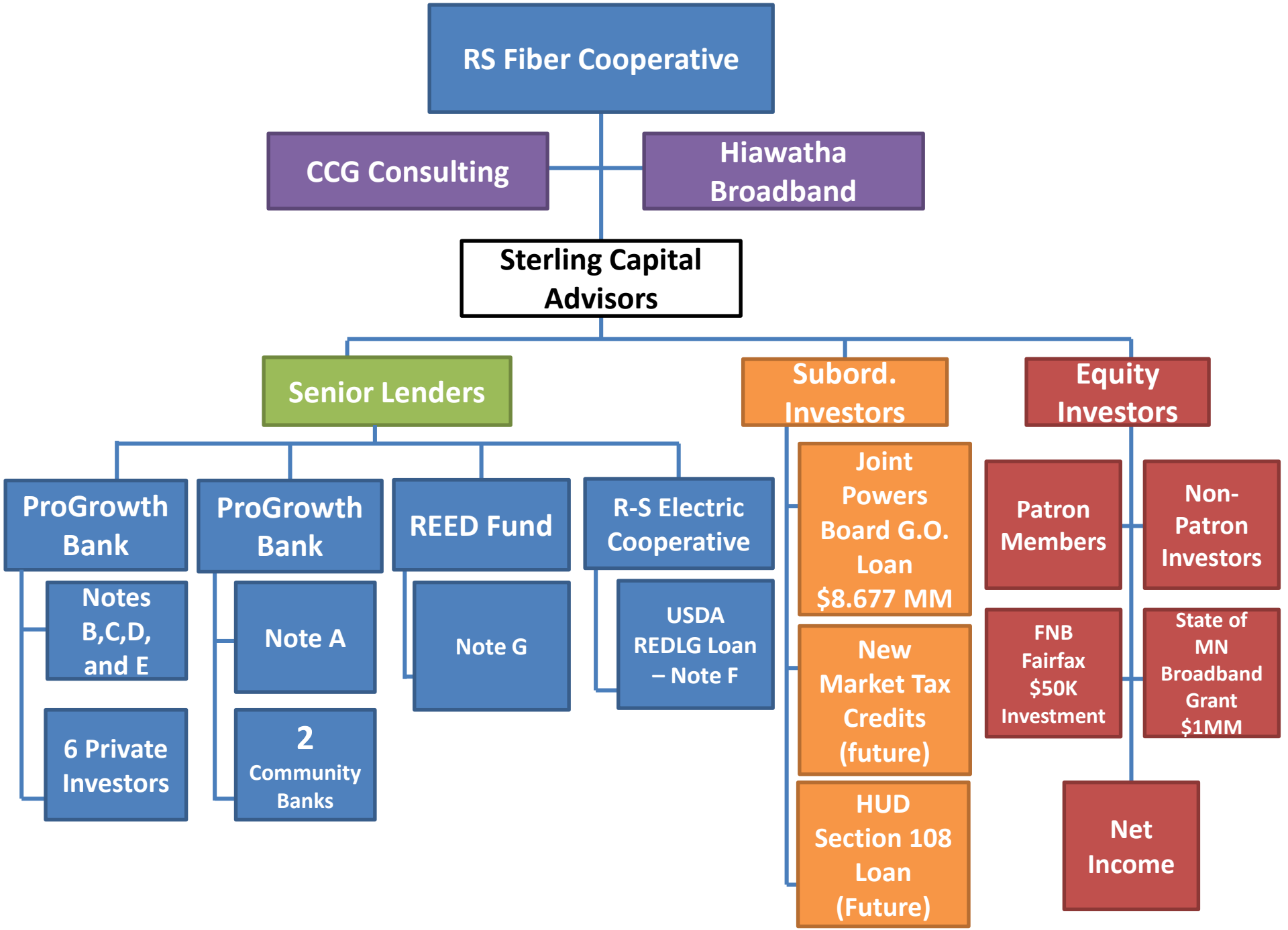
Technical Assistance

- Introduced to project at community meeting
- Discussion with cooperative partners
- Application to USDA for 0% loan
- Introduction to New Markets Tax Credit consultant
- REED Loan structure
- Ongoing dialog with primary lenders

RS Fiber Cooperative

Underwriting Considerations

- Start-up organization
- Community and strategic partners
- Strong business plan
- Detailed projections
- Cash flow dependent on subscribers
- Part of Primary Lender group


RS Fiber Cooperative
CCG Consulting
Hiawatha Broadband
Sterling Capital Advisors
Senior Lenders
Subord. Investors
Equity Investors
ProGrowth Bank
ProGrowth Bank
REED Fund
R-S Electric Cooperative
Notes B,C,D, and E
6 Private Investors
Note A
2 Community Banks
Note G
USDA REDLG Loan – Note F
Joint Powers Board G.O. Loan $8.677 MM
New Market Tax Credits (future)
HUD Section 108 Loan (Future)
Patron Members
Non-Patron Investors
FNB Fairfax $50K Investment
State of MN Broadband Grant $1MM
Net Income

Lessons Learned

- Broadband is essential community infrastructure
- Without the backbone system, high speed broadband is not possible
- Community investment is essential to success
- Local telephone providers aren't taking the risk
- Federal programs geared toward last mile service such as education and telemedicine
- There can be financing dead ends
- Complicated start-up

RURAL ELECTRIC
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, INC.
REED FUND

Linda Salmonson

lsalmonson@eastriver.coop

605-256-8015

www.reedfund.coop

Before You Go

Please complete your session evaluation!

You can find it in the Conference app.

Office of the Comptroller of the Currency

A CDFI, the CRA, and the RS Fiber Cooperative

OFN Conference

Thursday, September 28, 2017

RS Fiber Cooperative

- RS Fiber Cooperative is a community driven effort to bring high-speed fiber optic connectivity to the people, businesses, schools, hospitals/clinics, and government agencies of 10 communities and 17 townships in Renville, Sibley, and portions of Nicollet and McLeod counties in southwestern Minnesota.
- The RS Fiber telecommunications network will serve more than 6,000 households, farms, and other businesses in a 700+ square-mile area with both wireless and universal fiber-optic service.
- Construction will cost an estimated $45 million
- RS Fiber provides direct fiber optic connectivity at up to 1 gigabit of bandwidth at prices significantly reduced from current commercial providers. This fiber to the home service (FTTH) has become the leading technology for next-generation communications worldwide.

Rural Electric Economic Development

- Rural Electric Economic Development (REED) provides business and community project financing in partnership with commercial and other economic development lenders to leverage private investment in the region it serves.
- Governed by 22 electric cooperatives in 50 counties in eastern South Dakota and western Minnesota, REED assists projects that promote growth and contribute to job, business and wealth creation, as well as improve the infrastructure, community facilities/services and economic base of rural areas.

Office of the Comptroller of the Currency

- The OCC charters, regulates, and supervises national banks, federal savings associations, and federal branches and agencies of foreign banks. The OCC is an independent bureau of the U.S. Department of the Treasury.
- The OCC's mission is to ensure that national banks and federal savings associations operate in a safe and sound manner, provide fair access to financial services, treat customers fairly, and comply with applicable laws and regulations.
- Community Affairs supports the mission by helping national banks and federal savings associations provide safe and sound community development financing and making financial services accessible to underserved communities and consumers. Community Affairs does so by serving bank examiners, banks/thrifts, and communities through consultations, outreach, and publications

The Community Reinvestment Act

- The Community Reinvestment Act encourages depository institutions to meet the credit needs of low- and moderate-income (LMI) individuals and communities
- Passed to address discrimination in access to loans and credit
- Requires agencies to evaluate the performance of banks in meeting the credit needs in the communities in which they are chartered.
- Passed in 1977–has been revised since then

What Gave Rise to the CRA?

- A result of community struggle and activism
- Part of the neighborhood movement of 1970s-80s
- A campaign against deteriorating conditions in urban, lower-income neighborhoods, related to:
  - Redlining
  - Disinvestment
  - Housing discrimination

Purpose of the CRA

- Encourages federally insured banks and thrifts to help meet the credit needs of their entire communities, in particular, historically underserved people and places (this may include working together with community organizations to promote the availability of credit and other banking services)
  - Low- and moderate-income people
  - Low- and moderate-income geographies
  - Underserved or distressed non-metropolitan middle-income geographies, or certain designated disaster areas
  - Must be consistent with prudent, safe, and sound business operations

Purpose of the CRA (cont.)

- The CRA requires regulators of federal depository institutions to assess the record of each bank and thrift in helping to fulfill their obligations to the community and to consider that record in evaluating applications for charters or for the approval of bank mergers, acquisitions, and branch openings.
  - An affirmative obligation
  - Rating of Outstanding, Satisfactory, Needs to Improve, or Substantial Noncompliance
  - Interpreted through implementing regulations and guidance
  - Enforcement primarily through corporate application process and reputation risk
  - CRA contains no civil or criminal liability provisions

Q&A §__.12(g)(4)(iii) New Example - Activity in Underserved Nonmetro Middle-Income Geo

- Provides guidance on how examiners consider activities related to the expansion of broadband infrastructure in CRA defined underserved non-metropolitan middle-income geographies
  - Important to global competitiveness, job creation, innovation, and expansion of markets for American businesses
- Availability of broadband is essential to:
  - Access digital banking services, particularly in light of shift away from branch-based delivery systems
  - Promote economic development as small businesses become more reliant on related technologies for payment processing systems, remote deposit capture, access to credit facilities and markets, and to deliver products

Public Welfare Investment Authority (PWI)

- OCC's public welfare investment (PWI) authority is one tool for a national bank to help meet the credit needs of its communities
- National banks may make investments, directly or indirectly, that are primarily designed to promote the public welfare such as by providing housing, services, or jobs, under the investment authority in 12 USC 24 (Eleventh) and the implementing regulation, 12 CFR 24.
- By "investments," we mean both equity investments and debt investments, such as equity equivalent investments or other debt.
- By "public welfare investment," we mean investments that primarily benefit low- and moderate-income individuals, low- and moderate-income areas, or other areas targeted by a government entity for redevelopment, or if the investments would receive consideration under 12 CFR 25.23 (the Community Reinvestment Act regulation) as a "qualified investment."

PWI (cont.)

- National bank PWI examples:
  - Support for affordable housing and other real estate development
  - Equity for start-up and expansion of small businesses
  - Investments in CDFIs
  - Activities that help to revitalize or stabilizing a government-designated area.
- Other financial institutions follow different PWI rules:
  - Federal savings associations are supervised by OCC. However, they follow statutory and regulatory authorities that are different than for national banks.
  - Non-member state banks are supervised by the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation.
  - Member state banks and holding companies are supervised by the Federal Reserve System .
- Financial institutions should consult with their respective regulators about whether a PWI would be considered consistent with their respective investment authorities.

PWI Requirements: Primary Purpose

- A national bank's PWI must primarily benefit at least one of the following (12 CFR 24.3)
  - **Low- and moderate-income individuals**
  - **Low- and moderate-income areas**
  - **Areas targeted by a government entity for redevelopment**
  - **The investment would receive consideration under 12 CFR 25.23 (the Community Reinvestment Act regulation) as a "qualified investment."**

PWI Requirements: Investment Limits

- **Limits on Aggregate Outstanding Investments - 12 CFR 24.4(a)**
  - Aggregate investments may reach 5 percent of a bank's capital and surplus
  - With prior approval, aggregate investments may go up to 15 percent of a bank's capital and surplus
- **Limited Liability – 12 CFR 24.4(b)**
  - Investments must be structured to not expose the bank to unlimited liability

PWI Requirements: Record-keeping

- A national bank making a public welfare investment under 12 CFR 24 shall maintain in its files information adequate to demonstrate that its investments meet the public welfare beneficiary standards and investment limit requirements. (12 CFR 24.7(b))

PWI & R/S Fiber Optic

- **A national bank operating in the R/S Fiber Optic Cooperative's proposed service area recently requested and was granted permission by the OCC to purchase stock shares in the cooperative under the public welfare investment authority.**
- The cooperative was organized to bring high-speed fiber optic connectivity to communities in west central Minnesota and provide broadband service to homes, farms, businesses, health care facilities, schools, and local government offices at prices significantly reduced from current commercial providers.
- Project would result in enhanced economic development opportunities for businesses and job creation for local residents.

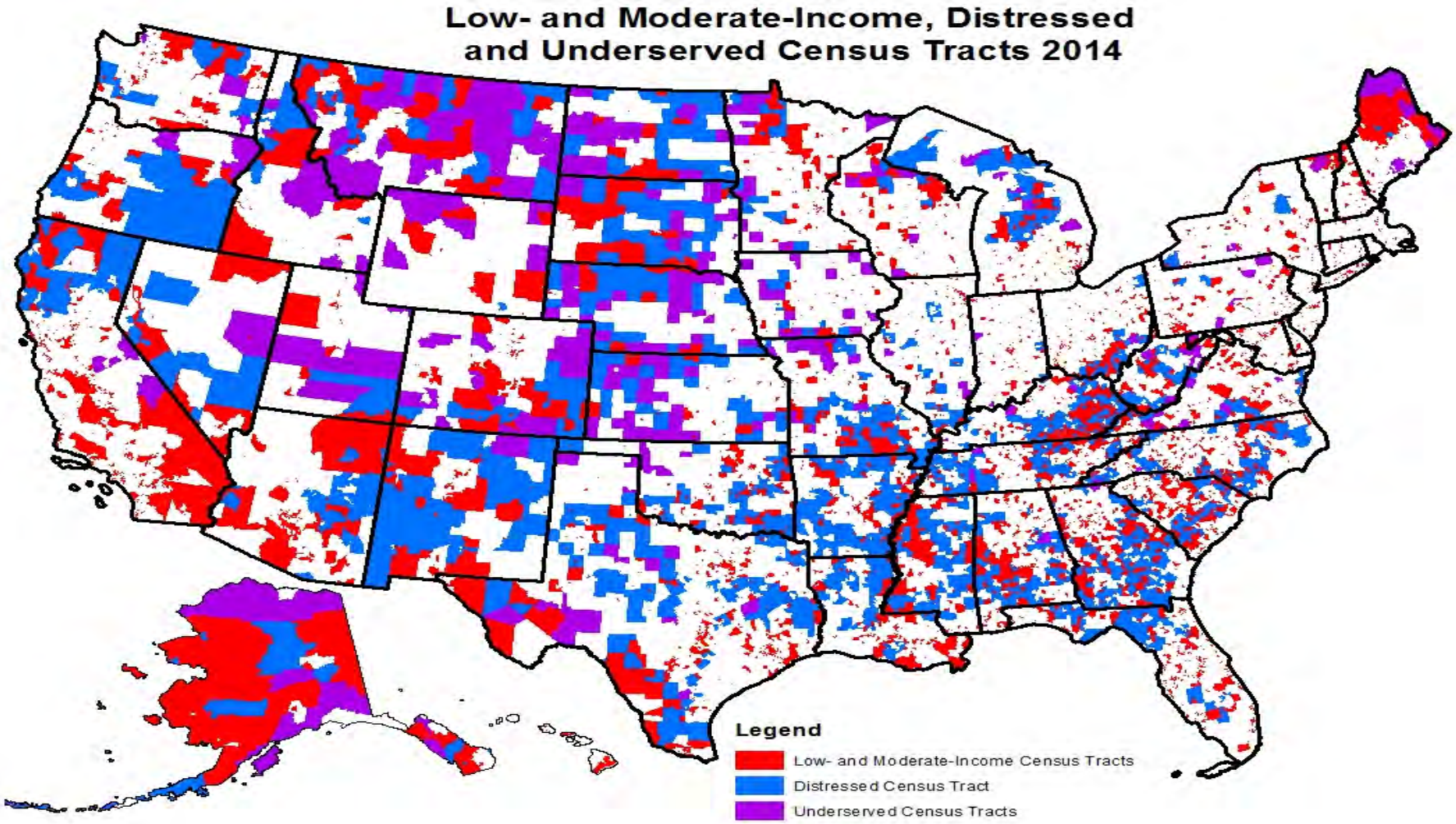
How R/S Fiber Optic Met PWI Requirements

- Primary Purpose: Bank demonstrated that the investment will primarily benefit low- and moderate-income individuals, low- and moderate-income areas, and other areas targeted by a government entity for redevelopment
  - **Project services census tracts that are moderate-income or in distressed non-metropolitan middle-income census tracts**
  - Project creates permanent jobs that will be pay salaries that fall within the range of 80 percent of area median income of the targeted counties
  - **Project receives financial support from government entities, including a grant from the state, loans from economic development authorities, and local tax abatement bonds**
- Investment limits:
  - Bank's investment was less than 1 percent of its capital and surplus
  - Bank's purpose of preferred stock would not expose it to unlimited liability
  - No safety or soundness concerns regarding bank's investment

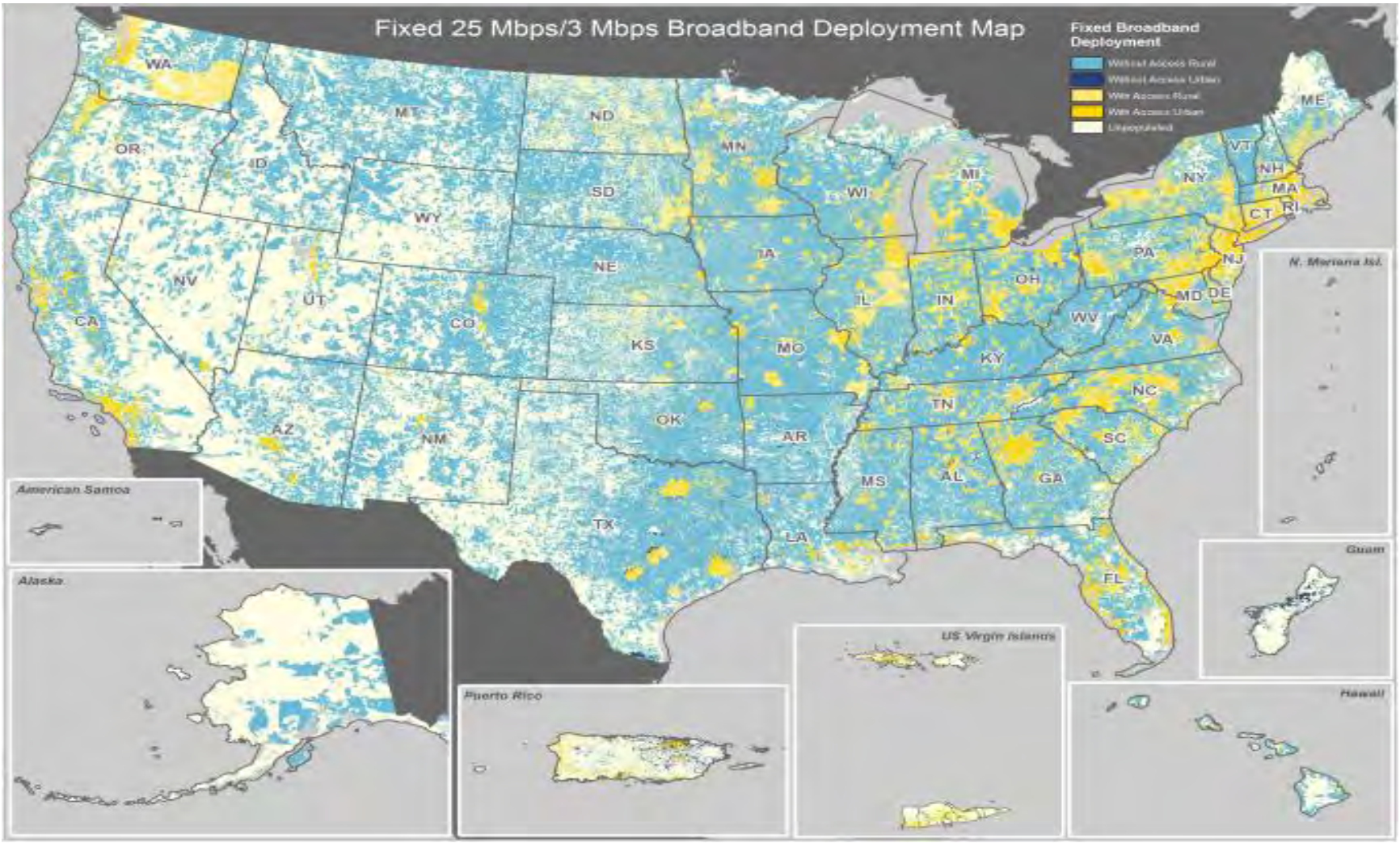
PWI Requirements: Fiber Optic Investment Activities

- Part 24 contains examples of Qualifying PWI Activities (12 CFR 24.6)
- Fiber optic projects generally consistent with economic development examples 12 CFR 24.6(b)
  - Investment that provides financing for a small business or farm located in a LMI area
  - Investment that provides financing for a small business or farm that produces or retains permanent jobs, the majority of which are held by LMI persons
  - Investment that develops and operates a commercial or industrial property located in a LMI area or that is occupied by a small business that produces jobs for LMI persons
  - Investment that develops and operates a business incubator located in a LMI area or that is occupied by a small business that produces jobs for LMI persons
  - Investment that forms and operates an agricultural cooperative located in a LMI area or that produces jobs for LMI persons
- Fiber optic investments are novel PWIs. Recommend that banks should seek prior approval before proceeding

Non-MSA Low- and Moderate-Income and Distressed and Underserved Census Tracts



FCC 25 Mbps Broadband Deployment



Locating LMI, Distressed and Underserved Non-Metropolitan Middle Income Census Tracts

- **Federal Financial Institutions Examination Council:** http://www.ffiec.gov/
  - FFIEC Online Census Data System: http://www.ffiec.gov/census/default.aspx
    - Census Demographic Data by County
  - Geocoding/Mapping System: https://geomap.ffiec.gov/FFIECGeocMap/GeocodeMap1.aspx
    - Census Demographic and other Data by Census Tract
  - CRA Evaluations: http://www.ffiec.gov/craratings/default.aspx
  - Distressed and Underserved Tracts: http://www.ffiec.gov/cra/distressed.htm

Locating Regulated Financial Institutions by County and MSA

- **FDIC Summary of Deposits Website:** https://www5.fdic.gov/sod/
  - Deposit Market Share: https://www5.fdic.gov/sod/sodMarketBank.asp?barItem=2
    - Individual Counties/MSAs
    - Aggregated Counties (up to 10)
    - Financial Institutions
      - Deposits within and without county or MSA
      - Branches: Deposits
      - CRA Evaluations
      - FFIEC Uniform Bank Performance Report (UBPR)
        - » Bank's Balance Sheet

Contact Information

- **Timothy Herwig**

  District Community Affairs Officer

  Office of the Comptroller of the Currency

  440 South LaSalle Street, Suite 2700

  Chicago, IL 60605

  312-660-8713

  Timothy.herwig@occ.treas.gov

Before You Go

Please complete your session evaluation!

You can find it in the Conference app.

Opportunity Finance Network Conference

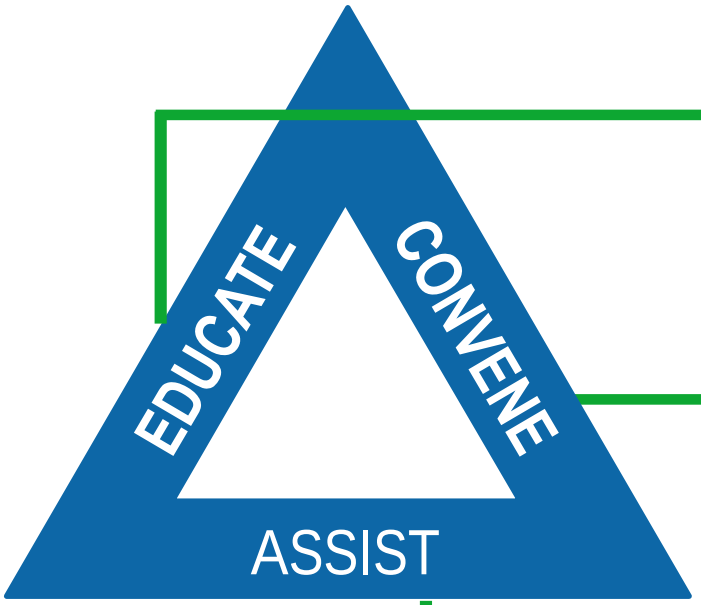
Rural Broadband Panel

September 2017

The National Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA) advises on telecom policy issues

- Expanding broadband access and adoption
- Expanding the use of federal spectrum
- Ensuring that the Internet remains an engine for continued innovation and economic growth

NTIA's BroadbandUSA program educates communities, facilitates relationships, and provides helpful resources



- Arm stakeholders & community leaders with key information
- Convene & facilitate the right conversations
- Develop guidance for communities

BroadbandUSA Focuses on Community Outcomes

Products & Events

- Publish Guidance & Tools
- Share Best Practices
- Convene Stakeholders
- Establish Open Dialogue

Partnerships

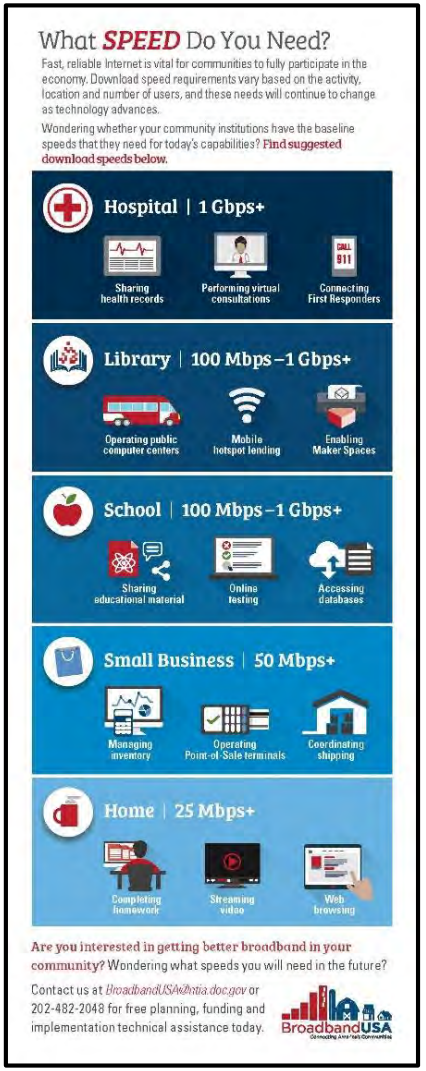
- Clarify Policy
- Advise States & Feds
- Recommend Best Practices
- Improve Coordination

Technical Assistance

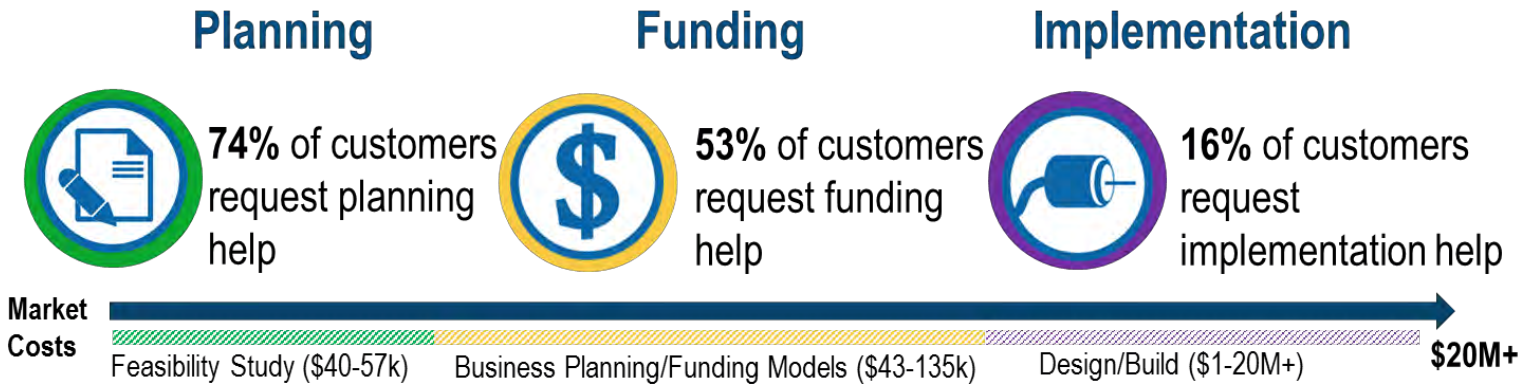
- Advise Communities
- Support Regional Teams
- Infrastructure
- Digital Inclusion

The urban-rural divide

- Research by the FCC, which defines home broadband as 25 Mbps download and 3 Mbps upstream, indicates:
  - 10% of all do not have access to broadband
    - 39% of rural Americans, compared to 4% of urban Americans lack access
  - 34% of non-metro healthcare facilities lack adequate speeds
    - Cannot upload electronic medical records and exchange health information.
  - 42% of public libraries have speeds less than 10Mbps.
    - 75% of rural libraries have lower download speeds than their urban counterparts.



Broadband Investment Collaboration Program

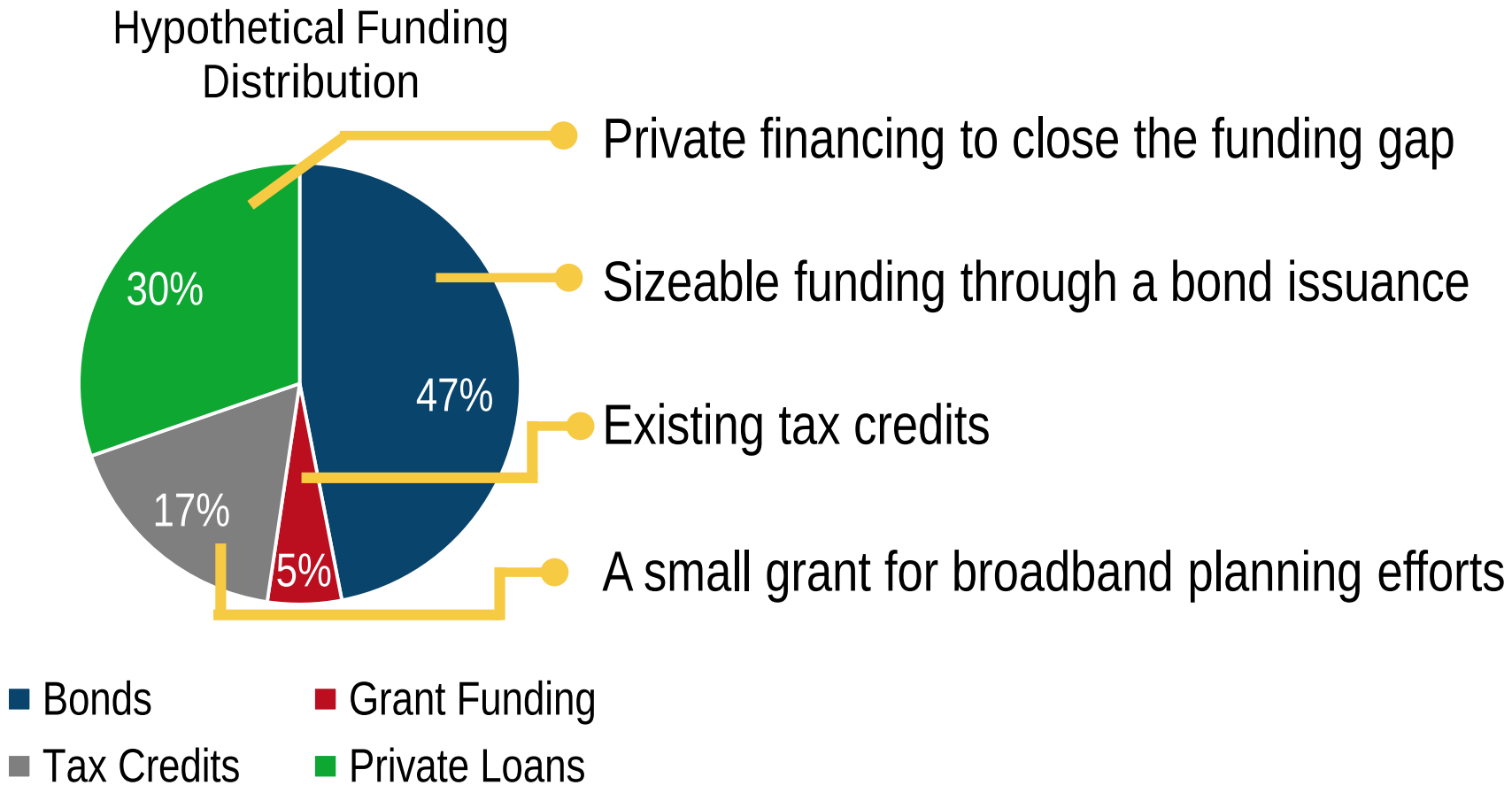


- Seek to bridge the gap between communities that need broadband investment and private sector investors seeking opportunities to invest in broadband.
  - Connect investors with communities that need broadband funding.
  - Develop standardized financial package and common guidance for use by communities to make them best prepared to work with investors.

Planners can consider a number of financing options depending on resources and requirements

- Bonds
- Government-Backed Loans
- Private Financing
- Tax Credits
- Grants
- Private Equity
- Public-Private Partnerships

Infrastructure deployment often includes a variety of funding sources



Case Study: Rock Falls, Illinois will issue GO bonds to fund a citywide gigabit network

Network Issue	Local officials in Rock Falls, IL, recognized the need for broadband in order to thrive in the digital economy.

The plan divides the city of Rock Falls into 14 “fiberhoods” with each area’s build out cost estimated to approximately be $250,000.

Funding Approach

- The city approved a $13 million bond issuance in April
- The plan requires the funds to be issued in four installments with the first installment taking place in May
- Residential fiberhoods will require 45 percent participation prior to beginning construction

Case Study: Vermont Telephone (VTel) contributed independent capital to secure government loans

Network Issue	Approximately 114,000 Vermont residents lacked broadband access.

VTel proposed creating a network that would cover the state, connecting nearly all community institutions and passing numerous new households.

Funding Approach	• Rural Utilities Service provided $81.7 million in grant funding and $35.1 million in guaranteed loans • BTOP provided $12.25 million in grant funding • VTel committed $60 million to the project • The loans stipulate that VTel brings customers to the network for the life of the loan

Case Study: Bozeman Fiber secured private financing from a consortia of local banks

Network Issue	Local officials in Bozeman, MT, viewed broadband access as a crucial component for driving economic development.

Local officials established a nonprofit entity, Bozeman Fiber, with the goal of passing 95% of local businesses and offering up to 1 Gbps.

Funding Approach

- Bozeman Fiber created a strategic plan for the network and form a partnership between eight local banks
- Banks agreed to provide $3.85 million in loans
- Bozeman Fiber has embarked on Phase One of its project, deploying 23 miles of Gigabit fiber throughout the city

Case Study: RS Fiber Cooperative's funding approach utilized tax credits

Network Issue	Small cities and rural towns in southern Minnesota needed high-speed Internet to bridge the digital divide and allow local residents, students and businesses to thrive.

RS Fiber set out to build a $45 million network that reaches the area's more than 6,000 households and covers more than 700 square miles.

Funding Approach	• Created a 10 city, 17 township broadband cooperative • Used various funding mechanisms including bonds, loans and tax credits • Negotiating $3.2 million in New Market Tax Credits to help finance their $16.1 million Phase 1 budget

Case Study: Nelson County, VA received grants that enabled new infrastructure deployment

Network Issue	To address unserved and underserved areas of Nelson County, VA, local officials developed a plan to build a new, state-of-the-art fiber network.

Once completed, the network connected 13 community anchor institutions and passed 1,500 households and 250 local businesses.

Funding Approach	• Received $122,500 in Community Development Block Grants (CDBG) to plan for their new network • Received a $1.8 million BTOP award • Secured an additional $200,000 in CDBG grants to support an eight-mile network expansion

Case Study: FirstLight Fiber utilized private equity investment to expand its existing network

Network Issue	FirstLight Fiber operated a network in upstate New York and throughout New England, and sought to expand operations in Maine.

FirstLight acquired Oxford Networks which allowed it to increase its network footprint in Maine and increased FirstLight's total resources by 2,000 route miles.

Funding Approach	Secured investment funding from Oak Hill Capital, allowing FirstLight to fund the acquisition of a majority ownership position in Oxford Networks

Case Study: Holly Springs, NC sought a partner to deploy a network in accordance with state laws

Network Issue	Holly Springs was interested in bringing a faster connection to their community, which required a partner given state laws and regulations.

Ting Internet is currently deploying a fiber-to-the-premise (FTTP) network throughout Holly Springs and is offering gigabit access to homes and businesses.

Funding Approach	• Holly Springs offered access to existing backbone fiber to attract investment from Ting • Ting Internet provides gigabit service to the community and offsets costs by leasing backbone fiber from Holly Springs

Case Study: Maine's legislature created Maine Fiber Company (MFC) to serve the state

Network Issue	To address the lack of service in rural regions across Maine, state and local officials established Maine Fiber Company (MFC) as a private network operator.

MFC deployed a 1,200 mile network that cut through approximately 100 communities and passed more than 110,000 households.

Funding Approach	• Received $24.6 million from NTIA's BTOP program • Secured $6.2 million in further funding to support network deployment • MFC owns and operates the network, leasing service back to the State and the University System of Maine

Contact BroadbandUSA

Request Technical Assistance:

- Email: broadbandusa@ntia.doc.gov
- Phone: 202-482-2048

Resources

- Website: www.ntia.doc.gov/broadbandusa

My Contact Information – Tim Moyer

Email: tmoyer@ntia.doc.gov

Phone: 202-

Before You Go

Please complete your session evaluation!

You can find it in the Conference app.

Contact Information

Jake Rieke

jacobrieke@gmail.com

Linda Salmonson

LSalmonson@eastriver.coop

Tim Moyer

tmoyer@ntia.doc.gov

Tim Herwig

timothy.Herwig@occ.treas.gov