



Press Release: 04/15/2022 10:00am AKST

CTC Awarded USDA Community Connect Grant

Chenega to Receive Expansive Broadband Services

Cordova Telecom Cooperative (CTC) is pleased to announce it has been awarded \$3,000,000.00 in grant funding from the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) Rural Development's Community Connect program to deliver high-speed broadband internet to the Village of Chenega located within Alaska's Prince William Sound.

The Chenega High-Speed Internet Project (CHIP) will deliver broadband internet service to all year-round residents and businesses in Chenega via Fiber-to-the-Premises. The connection from Cordova will be done through upgrades to CTC's existing microwave network located within the Sound.

"CTC is very excited to receive the USDA's Community Connect grant and for the opportunities it will bring to Chenega," stated Jeremiah Beckett, CEO of CTC. "Rural communities deserve access to the same broadband services as those in more urban areas. It is with programs such as this that we can help close that digital divide in rural Alaska."

CTC will work with the Village of Chenega to deliver new internet services within the community and upgrading the existing towers. The project will invest three million dollars to extend the Cooperative's network to Chenega and offer internet services with a minimum broadband speed of 25/3 Mbps. This unique opportunity was supported by Chenega's regional partner, The Denali Commission, which provided financial support of the preliminary feasibility studies that made the USDA application possible.

"When we invest in rural infrastructure, we invest in the livelihoods and health of people in rural Alaska," said Alaska State Director for Rural Development, Julia Hnilicka. "Broadband is an essential tool for businesses, residents and public institutions to be competitive and prosperous. The connections these people can now make will allow for distance learning, telemedicine and entrepreneurship and we are really excited about these opportunities and more to come for more Alaskans."

The Community Connect Program is annual funding opportunity from the USDA that has been utilized by CTC and the community of Cordova in the past in the form of grants to facilitate technology-related improvements in rural areas of America. In 2019, CTC was successfully awarded funding through the USDA's ReConnect program to provide Fiber-to-the-Premises in Yakutat, Alaska and five remote towers to connect Yakutat to Cordova's network. Community Connect is CTC's next step in assisting underserved communities in Southcentral Alaska gain internet connectivity.

To learn more about Community Connect please visit: www.rd.usda.gov/community-connect.

Cordova Telecom Cooperative is a member-owned local co-op serving the telephone, high speed internet, television, and technology needs of the community in Cordova, Alaska and surrounding areas since 1978. Founded in 1997, Cordova Wireless provides cellular voice, text, and data services to Cordova, as well as Prince William Sound fishing grounds and Yakutat, Alaska. More information about Cordova Telecom and Cordova Wireless can be found at www.ctcak.net, and on Facebook at www.facebook.com/cordovatelecomcoop.

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PO Box 459 | Cordova, AK 99574
907-424-2345
ctcak.net