



PCCA Government Relations Roundtable

PCCA Convention
Friday, July 12, 2019
Deer Valley, Utah

Overview

- ▶ RUS Re-Connect Pilot
 - ▶ Increase in 773 Loan Limit
- ▶ BDAC II - Job Skills Working Group
- ▶ FCC/RUS Precision Ag Task Force
- ▶ Damage Prevention Initiatives
 - ▶ Recent Incidents and Attention to Fiber Deployment
 - ▶ Increasing Neglect of Locating/Marking Responsibilities
- ▶ Ken Kuchno, RUS
- ▶ Mike Riley, ACE
- ▶ Lisa Youngers, FBA

RUS ReConnect Pilot Program

- ▶ \$600 million in Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2018
- ▶ Grants, loan/grant combinations, straight loans
- ▶ Program to “facilitate broadband deployment in areas of rural America that don’t currently have sufficient access to broadband.”
- ▶ “Insufficient Service”- 90% households without fixed broadband service of 10/1 Mbps (no overlap w/areas that have received RUS loans)

- ▶ **IMPORTANT**
- ▶ All pilot projects estimated to cost **\$1 million or less:**
 - ▶ Form 515, a non-RUS contract, **the 773 contract**, or other work orders allowed under Small-Scale Construction
- ▶ Projects estimated to cost over \$1 million:
 - ▶ Form 515 or non-RUS contract

BDAC II - Job Skills Working Group

- ▶ Identify gaps in broadband infrastructure deployment skills that could inhibit pace of deployment of fixed/mobile broadband connectivity
- ▶ Formulate possible solutions that stakeholders can implement
- ▶ Recommend steps to attract more skilled professionals to join the broadband infrastructure deployment workforce.
- ▶ Identify existing job skills / training programs that could serve as a model for developing measures to bridge skills gaps
- ▶ Recommend performance metrics to gauge effectiveness of existing and future job skills/training programs and develop steps taken to continually improve the effectiveness of such programs.

BDAC II - Job Skills Working Group

- ▶ PCCA Nominates Steve Sellenriek
- ▶ President of Sellenriek Construction (2013);
- ▶ Active member of the PCCA (President in 2014-15); BOD, Ed Comm, Chair of Education & Research Foundation
- ▶ Partnership with State Tech: Development of Utility Systems Technician program
- ▶ Directional boring class in Heavy Equipment Operations (HEO) program.
- ▶ Mo. Gov asked Sellenriek to serve on the Board of Regents at State Tech; now serves on State Tech governing board.
- ▶ PCCA represents approximately 85 percent of the industry that builds broadband infrastructure.
- ▶ PCCA's aims to establish utility construction programs into more technical schools and community colleges
- ▶ Developing utility construction programs with State Tech, Wisconsin Indianhead Technical College, and Terra State Community College in Ohio.

Agriculture Broadband Coalition

- ▶ A coalition of 15-20 stakeholders focused on Rural Development
- ▶ Key Issues:
 - ▶ Coverage in Ranch lands and Rangelands
 - ▶ “Technology Neutral”
 - ▶ Access to fastest speeds available
- ▶ Major Player in Passage of Precision Ag Connectivity Act
 - ▶ FCC to work with RUS to establish a Task Force of public and private sector members for meeting the tech needs of precision agriculture
 - ▶ Identify / measure gaps in BB coverage of croplands / rangelands
 - ▶ Create guide of Fed programs/resources working to address unserved croplands and rangelands
 - ▶ Develop policy recommendation to achieve 95 percent coverage of croplands and rangelands by 2025

Precision Ag Task Force

- ▶ Announced June 15th 2019 by Commissioner Pai
- ▶ 15 voting slots / Task Force modeled on BDAC
- ▶ Application Process: Self-nominated; Open until July 15th

Qualifications

- ▶ Ag producers from diverse geographic regions & farm sizes
- ▶ ISPs: regional, rural fixed or mobile broadband;
- ▶ Telco infra providers, Electric Coops, Satellite industry reps
- ▶ Precision Ag Equipment manufacturers
- ▶ State / Local government
- ▶ Expertise in data collection, geospatial analysis, coverage mapping

Precision Ag Task Force

- ▶ PCCA Nominates Todd Myers
 - ▶ Ag producer
 - ▶ Expertise in telecommunications infrastructure
 - ▶ Expertise in coverage mapping
- ▶ Owner of Kenneth Myers Construction Co. Inc., but also ag producer on his family farm where he uses precision ag equipment to increase crop yields
- ▶ Telco industry since 1981 while managing his 2400-acre family farm
- ▶ Took over operations of Myers Construction, brought company to fiber deployment
- ▶ Unique position as both farmer and telco infrastructure provider (both sides of digital divide)

Damage Prevention Incidents and Failure to Locate

July 10th
2018

Sun Prairie, WI

- 1 Firefighter Killed, 1 critically injured
- 6 businesses damaged

December 14th
2018

PG&E Accused of Falsifying Locating Records

- 811 confirmed late locates

February 6th
2019

Geary Street, SF

- No Injuries
- 1 building damaged

April 1st
2019

Century Link Terminates Relationship with USIC

- From April to May more than 68,000 late locates

April 10th
2019

Durham, NC

- 2 dead, 25 injured (9 firefighters)
- 15 buildings damaged

July 1st
2019

Century Link accused of failing to locate in a timely manner

- More than 20,000 late locates in Michigan
- Up to \$5,000 fine per incident

Industry Response

Industry Letters re: CenturyLink

- ▶ PHMSA - “want to make you aware of this matter...”
- ▶ Minnesota OPS - “encourage you to take appropriate enforcement action...”
 - ▶ \$1,000 per day, per violation
- ▶ Ohio Public Utilities Commission
- ▶ Arizona Corporation Commission
- ▶ North Carolina Utilities Commission
- ▶ Indiana Utility Regulatory Commission
- ▶ Wisconsin Public Service Commission
- ▶ ALSO: letters to State AG offices

Industry Letters re: Consumers Energy

- ▶ PHMSA - “is in a position to penalize Consumers Energy, and we encourage you to do so “
- ▶ Michigan Public Service Commission



Questions?