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?