

HUDSPETH COUNTY COMMISSIONERS COURT

COMMISSIONER
Andrew Virdell
Precinct No. 1

COMMISSIONER
Sergio Quijas
Precinct No. 2



COMMISSIONER
Johny Sheets
Precinct No. 3

COMMISSIONER
Canuto Mariscal
Precinct No. 4

Joanna E. MacKenzie
Hudspeth County Judge
STATE OF TEXAS

FAR WEST TEXAS REGIONAL BROADBAND RESOLUTION

WHEREAS, the counties of Brewster, Culberson, Hudspeth, Jeff Davis, and Presidio; the cities of Alpine, Marfa and Presidio; and the towns of Valentine and Van Horn (collectively for the purposes hereof, "the Upper Rio Grande Region") recognize Broadband internet is an essential service that promotes equity and improved quality of life for residents, regional economic development, and enables participation in today's digital society; and

WHEREAS, the Upper Rio Grande Region agrees that COVID-19 has only heightened the need to be digitally connected and literate with the increase in telehealth, distance learning, e-commerce, and remote work; and the value of the additional layer of communication that Broadband provides for emergency purposes; and

WHEREAS, the Upper Rio Grande Region recognizes that Digital Inclusion remains a critical concern for thousands of rural residents who are either underserved or unserved of Broadband internet; and

WHEREAS, the unique geographic and socio-economic factors in the Upper Rio Grande Region create significant challenges in constructing and delivering essential Broadband services to its residents; and

WHEREAS, the Upper Rio Grande Region agrees that with Broadband assets and solutions identified, regional coordination for Broadband infrastructure can address gaps in service, reduce operating costs, and galvanize a once-in-a-generation allocation of federal, state, and private funds to Broadband infrastructure; and

WHEREAS, the current identification of Broadband deployment and service levels in the Upper Rio Grande Region is severely flawed due to the inaccuracy of information collected, which if relied upon will erroneously classify many areas in

the Upper Rio Grande Region as ineligible for Broadband funding under the first round of the Bringing Online Opportunities to Texas Program; and

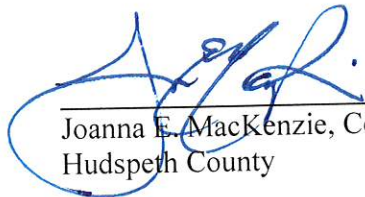
WHEREAS, in addition to Broadband expansion, the Upper Rio Grande Region recognizes the unique opportunity legislation will provide for Broadband expansion into high-cost low-density remote rural communities, assist local governments to maximize federal, state, and local funding streams and support telecommunications connectivity for the public safety, healthcare, and education sectors; and

WHEREAS, the Upper Rio Grande Region sees the value of public-private, intra-county, and intra-city/town partnerships to enable Broadband infrastructure to meet the region's future-generation connectivity needs; and

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Upper Rio Grande Region approves the creation of the Upper Rio Grande Broadband Task Force which shall endeavor to work collaboratively with the State of Texas Broadband Development Office and regional internet service providers to enable regional coordination and engagement to help ensure visibility of local and regional needs and create a broadband network infrastructure that connects all residents no matter their zip code and socio-economic status; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the to be created Upper Rio Grande Broadband Task Force take action to urge the State of Texas Broadband Development Office and related federal and state agencies to acknowledge that connecting our most vulnerable populations over great distances will require high construction costs through rocky and mountainous terrain, and take into account such costs as factors in the competitive grant process.

Passed and Approved this 25th day of April, 2023



Joanna E. MacKenzie, County Judge
Hudspeth County



ATTEST:



Brenda Sanchez, County and District Clerk
Hudspeth County