



**USDA Rural Development**

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# News Release

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## USDA Invests \$16 Million in Broadband in Alaska

*ReConnect funding to give 944 rural households access to high-speed internet*

**ANCHORAGE, Alaska, Aug. 11, 2021** – Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack today announced that the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) is investing \$16 million to install broadband infrastructure in Dillingham, Alaska.

“Generations ago, the federal government recognized that without affordable access to electricity, Americans couldn’t fully participate in modern society and the modern economy. Broadband internet is the new electricity. It is necessary for Americans to do their jobs, to participate equally in school learning and health care, and to stay connected,” Secretary Vilsack said. “This is why President Biden’s [American Jobs Plan](#) prioritizes building ‘future-proof’ broadband infrastructure – like the investments we’re announcing today – in areas without sufficient access to broadband, so that we finally reach 100 percent high-speed broadband coverage.”

Nushagak Electric & Telephone Cooperative Inc. will use the \$16 million grant to deploy a fiber-optic network near Bristol Bay for 944 households, 2,604 people, nine educational facilities, eight essential community facilities, three healthcare facilities, and 223 businesses spread over 48 square miles.

The investment in Alaska infrastructure is part of a [\\$167-million deployed](#) during the second round of the [ReConnect Program](#) for broadband in rural areas without sufficient access to high-speed internet.

### **Background:**

USDA’s [ReConnect Program](#) provides loans and grants to construct, improve or acquire facilities and equipment needed to provide broadband service in eligible rural areas. To learn more about ReConnect Program eligibility, technical assistance and recent announcements, visit [www.usda.gov/reconnect](http://www.usda.gov/reconnect).

Under the Biden-Harris Administration, USDA Rural Development provides loans and grants to help expand economic opportunities, create jobs and improve the quality of life for millions of Americans in rural areas. This assistance supports infrastructure improvements; business development; housing; community facilities such as schools, public safety and health care; and high-speed internet access in rural, tribal and high-poverty areas. For more information, visit [www.rd.usda.gov/ak](http://www.rd.usda.gov/ak).

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