

Wiegand, Ryan

From: Linnea Jackson <hvpud.gm@gmail.com>
Sent: Friday, February 12, 2021 5:18 PM
To: BroadbandUSA
Subject: Hoopa Valley Public Utilities District comments

Thank you for your time today.

My name is Linnea Jackson and I am the General Manager for the Hoopa Valley Public Utilities District (HVPUD), which is a chartered entity of the Hoopa Valley Tribe in Northern California.

HVPUD meets the federal definition of 25 USC 5304 (1) as a tribal organization.

With the support of the Hoopa Valley Tribal Council, HVPUD has created a wireless internet service provider to help address the internet connectivity issues, which includes middle mile infrastructure and last mile wireless services.

The Hoopa Valley Indian Reservation is rural in nature and we do not have a high speed internet provider in the valley and we rely on wireless or satellite internet services, but in no way is the Hoopa Valley Indian Reservation considered served.

HVPUD was allocated some CARES funding by our Tribal Council to help address distance learning, but we quickly realized as we took a deep dive into the project, that the funding would not address all needs. For instance, we need to upgrade a communications tower, construct another tower at the other end of the valley, make each site resilient, such as generators, fuel tanks, solar panels, battery back-ups. Hoopa is in a Tier 2 and Tier 3 Fire Threat District and due to our location, we experience multiple power outages on an annual basis due to PSPS events and weather related issues.

Although Hoopa has started to address the digital divide, we are not near the speeds and resiliency that we need. In addition to strengthening our microwave backhaul, we need other routes of redundancy, which come with additional bandwidth, interconnection agreements, frequency propagation, equipment purchases, wireless engineering, tower climbers, etc.

I think it is imperative to NOT exclude tribes that have some infrastructure and investment, we still need financial assistance to meet the build-out requirements of the 2.5 GHz Rural Tribal Priority Window, our area has high levels of unemployment and low income levels, so financial assistance for internet costs are greatly needed, devices for students, tele-medicine, tele-work, etc.

I just wanted to provide a little insight into our current perspective as all tribes will be different.

I had a few questions for NTIA as follows:

1. If a particular tribal area has received some funding is that going to disqualify us as an area to receive funding because of funding duplication?
2. Some of the funding received, RDOF (not to the tribe, but a telecom) has a 10-year term and CASF funds (CPUC; again funded to a telecom) do not provide the needs to meet the definition of being served and does not address the financial issues of preventing service disconnection, etc.

3. The Hoopa Valley Tribe has many tribal members who live off reservation. Can the cost for internet services be provided to these tribal members who do not live on the reservation? Tribal members who do not live here are oftentimes left out of essential and critical services, but are just in need of relief from COVID related issues.

4. Funds from this allocation should provide technical services, wireless engineering, training, construction, equipment, etc.

I look forward to reviewing all of the grant application requirements so that I can help assist my community.

Thanks for your time.

Linnea

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