



NEWS

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FCC AND USDA HOLD KICK-OFF MEETING OF THE “FEDERAL RURAL WIRELESS OUTREACH INITIATIVE”

Washington, D.C. – Today the Federal Communications Commission’s Wireless Telecommunications Bureau (FCC/WTB) and the U.S. Department of Agriculture Rural Utilities Service (USDA/RUS) held the kick-off meeting of the “Federal Rural Wireless Outreach Initiative.” The event brought together representatives from the federal government, the wireless industry, the rural community as well as other interested stakeholders. The Initiative is designed to exchange program and regulatory information about rural development and wireless telecommunications access in rural areas.

“This partnership is the first of its kind between the Commission and USDA,” said John Muleta, Chief of the FCC’s Wireless Telecommunications Bureau. “We hope the dialogue from this Initiative will lay the groundwork to expedite the deployment of wireless services throughout rural America.”

"The cooperation between USDA and the FCC is essential to make high speed telecommunications happen in rural America," stated RUS Administrator Hilda Legg. "Deploying this technology in a practical, effective manner is crucial to economic growth in rural areas."

Today’s meeting was the first in a series of events to (1) promote the exchange of information regarding rural development and telecommunications, and to (2) encourage greater deployment of wireless services. The four main goals of the Initiative include:

- To exchange information about products and services each agency offers to promote the expansion of wireless telecommunications services in rural America.
- Harmonize rules, regulations and processes whenever possible to maximize the benefits for rural America.
- Educate partners and other agencies about FCC/WTB and USDA/RUS offerings.
- Expand the FCC/WTB and USDA/RUS partnership, to the extent that it is mutually beneficial, to other agencies and partners.

Additional information concerning this Initiative may be obtained from Nancy Plon (FCC/WTB) at (202) 418-2899 or nplon@fcc.gov; or Roberta Purcell (USTA/RUS) at (202) 720-9554 or bpurcell@rus.usda.gov