



BROADBANDUSA

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Organization:	County of Oconee
Project Name:	Oconee FOCUS (Fiber Optics Creating Unified Solutions)
Project Type:	Comprehensive Community Infrastructure
State:	South Carolina
Federal Award:	\$9,604,840

ABOUT THE PROJECT

The need for broadband services among community anchor institutions in rural, economically distressed Oconee County, South Carolina, has escalated significantly beyond current resources, hampering economic growth in the region. Oconee FOCUS, a public-private partnership between the county, several local small businesses, and the Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians, proposes to build a fiber-optic middle-mile network to serve community anchor institutions in the rural parts of the county and connect with high-speed networks across the state. The project aims to improve the Oconee region's attractiveness to employers, promote public safety and health, and enhance educational opportunities by enabling distance learning, video conferencing, and remote research.

Oconee FOCUS also proposes to:

- Construct a 245-mile fiber network that will provide speeds between 10 Mbps and 10 Gbps to potential local Internet service partners.
- Facilitate more affordable and accessible broadband service for up to approximately 27,800 households and 2,400 businesses by enabling local Internet service providers to utilize the project's open network.
- Connect as many as 150 anchor institutions, including as many as 26 public safety entities, 24 K-12 schools, Tri-County Technical College, Oconee Medical Center, and four libraries.

ORGANIZATION'S HISTORY

Although Oconee County does not currently own or operate a telecommunications network, it has established a public-private partnership for this project that brings together community leaders from all sectors with the skills necessary to manage a broadband network project. The County is partnering with small businesses Innovative Communications, GeoVision, and Southern Pipeline and Utility to provide the full range of network expertise, route engineering and planning, and installation support.

PROJECT PARTNERS

- Appalachian Council of Governments
- City of Walhalla
- City of Seneca
- City of Westminster
- Clemson University
- Oconee Medical Center
- Beaverdam Baptist Association
- American Red Cross

Data provided in the project description is based on information supplied by the applicant. An executive summary of this application can be found on www.ntia.doc.gov/broadbandusa.

For press-related inquiries, contact 202-482-7002 or press@ntia.doc.gov. For the general public, contact BTOP@ntia.doc.gov.

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