

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

Performance Progress Report

2. Award Or Grant Number

01-50-M09013

4. Report Date (MM/DD/YYYY)

06-27-2012

1. Recipient Name

Alabama Department of Economic and Community Affairs (ADECA)

6. Designated Entity On Behalf Of:

n/a

3. Street Address

P.O. Box 5690, 401 Adams Avenue,

8. Final Report?

Yes

No

9. Report Frequency

Quarterly

Semi Annual

Annual

Final

5. City, State, Zip Code

Montgomery, AL 36104-5690

7. Project / Grant Period
Start Date: (MM/DD/YYYY)

11-01-2009

7a. End Date: (MM/DD/YYYY)

10-30-2014

7b. Reporting Period End Date:

06-30-2012

9a. If Other, please describe:

n/a

10. Broadband Mapping

10a. Provider Table

Number of Providers Identified	Number of Providers Contacted	Number of Agreements Reached for Data Sharing	Number of Partial Data Sets Received	Number of Complete Data Sets	Number of Data Sets Verified
0	0	0	0	0	0

10b. Are you submitting the required PROVIDER DATA by using the Excel spreadsheet provided by the SBDD grants office? Yes No

10c. Have you encountered challenges with any providers that indicate they may refuse to participate in this project? Yes No

10d. If so, describe the discussions to date with each of these providers and the current status

The provider information below is current as of the Round 5 Data Collection which was submitted to NTIA on March 31, 2012.

The following providers have formally declined to participate in the program:

**Castleberry Communications Inc.: Declined to Participate - this provider has declined to participate in the program. We continue to contact them with each new round of data collection, but they have not changed their position.

**Broadview Network Holdings, Inc.: Declined to Participate - this provider has declined to participate in the program. We continue to contact them with each new round of data collection, but they have not changed their position.

The following providers did not provide data in Round 5, but also have not formally decline to participate. We will continue to reach out to these providers to encourage their participation in future Rounds.

- Aerowire, Inc.
- Boondocks Wireless
- CTSWireless.NET
- Dixie Land Internet Services
- DSL by Air
- Gosuto Wireless
- Harbor Communications, LLC
- HorizonWisp.net
- Interglobe Comm
- JMF Solutions, Inc
- Smith Lake Broadband
- Media3
- Mobile Internet Services
- Network Solutions
- pcAirLink Wireless
- NetSpeedNow.com
- Ragland Telephone Company
- Cable Star
- RDASOL
- S and V Wireless
- Scottsboro Electric Power Board

Shelby Telecom
Beyond Communications
Conexus Communications
Cavalier Telephone
Cellular South
Traveler Information Services
Utopian Wireless Corporation
VeriQik
WP Media

The following companies are no longer in business:

Cobridge Communication
IBEC
Open Range
Rapid Cable
James Cable - purchased by Charter

10e. If you are collecting data through other means (e.g. data extraction, extrapolation, etc), please describe your progress to date and the relevant activities to be undertaken in the future

The LinkAMERICA team verifies and augments provider submitted data with coverage and speed information from third party sources when necessary. We do not substitute third party information for provider-supplied information unless we can independently verify that the provider information is incorrect. More often we use discrepancies to identify areas where further investigation is required.

If providers do not submit data, but we are able to verify infrastructure information through other sources, we use common engineering principles to estimate coverage and speed. We also collect user feedback via location-specific feedback mechanisms on the state interactive map.

10f. Please describe the verification activities you plan to implement

These verification methods are currently under review and have not been implemented to date. The verification processes being employed are recounted in section 10h.

**** Mobile Wireless Broadband Drive Testing:** Our intent for this process is to test the signal strength and bandwidth/throughput on mobile wireless signals. We will concentrate our efforts in areas where we have determined that coverage data may be suspect and/or where there is a discrepancy between provider-reported coverage/speed and consumer-reported coverage/speed to determine the actual coverage and speed characteristics. We are currently reviewing vendor options for this work.

**** Mobile Wireless Crowd Sourced Testing:** This process uses a proprietary smart phone application, provided by an outside vendor, to constantly check signal strength and bandwidth/throughput on users' mobile phones. The application will be downloadable by consumers and will run in the background on the consumer's phone. Data collected will be used for validating provider coverage and speed reports - We are currently reviewing vendor options for this work.

10g. Have you initiated verification activities? Yes No

10h. If yes, please describe the status of your activities

The LinkAMERICA team uses consistent data verification procedures in each data collection round - adding new procedures after they have been developed and tested. These procedures are common to all four LinkAMERICA states.

**** Third Party Data Comparison:** As data arrives from providers we compare submissions against several commercial data sources to identify obvious anomalies or areas for further investigation. An example would be the comparison of an ILECs reported coverage area boundaries with the legal exchange areas shown in the commercial ExchangeInfo data product. Coverage footprints of wireless providers are compared against AmericanRoamer database. This process occurs with each data collection round

**** Provider Validation:** Check maps and other tools are produced at the beginning of each data collection round based upon prior round coverage reports. We provide the information in both Google Earth and PDF format which gives providers the flexibility of updating their coverage boundaries directly within the check map file itself.

**** Data Format Verification:** Proprietary and NTIA-supplied scripts are run against the dataset prior to submission to ensure the data is properly formatted and will be fully received upon submittal - this process occurs with each data collection round. In Round 5 we included the NTIA technology/speed trips into our test code to check for Provider data that fell outside of the normal range as determined by NTIA. Identified providers are contacted for clarification of their submission and supporting documentation is collected when necessary.

**** Consumer Feedback/Verification:** The ConnectingALABAMA interactive map includes a consumer feedback layer that provides an opportunity for the public to supply information regarding their access to broadband. The information collected can be compared against provider supplied data to identify areas where consumer feedback conflicts with provider information.

10i. If verification activities have not been initiated please provide a projected time line for beginning and completing such activities

Verification activities have been initiated and are on-going. New process are being reviewed for possible implementation in yrs 3 & 4.

Staffing

10j. How many jobs have been created or retained as a result of this project?

An analysis of actual hours worked in Q2 2012 shows that the project resulted in 0.68 FTE jobs created/retained at the Sub Recipient level for the quarter. An additional 2.17 FTEs were created/retained at the Prime Recipient level for a grand total of 2.85 FTEs. It should be noted that this figure does not include positions staffed by vendors involved in the project.

10k. Is the project currently fully staffed? Yes No

10l. If no, please explain how any lack of staffing may impact the project's time line and when the project will be fully staffed

The program is fully staffed.

10m. When fully staffed, how many full-time equivalent (FTE) jobs do you expect to create or retain as a result of this project?

A total of 3.5-4.5 FTEs (depending upon number of hours worked by Prime and Sub-Recipient staff members each quarter).

10n. Staffing Table

Job Title	FTE %	Date of Hire
Prime Recipient Regional Coordinator	72	09/07/2010
Prime Recipient Regional Coordinator	72	09/07/2010
Prime Recipient Regional Coordinator	73	08/30/2010
Sub-recipient CEO Supervisory Role	1	11/01/2009
GIS Director	1	11/01/2009
Internal Systems Support	1	11/01/2009
Project Director	23	11/01/2009
Project Manager	35	09/05/2011
Provider Relations Manager	7	11/01/2009

Add Row

Remove Row

Sub Contracts

10o. Subcontracts Table

Name of Subcontractor	Purpose of Subcontract	RFP Issued (Y/N)	Contract Executed (Y/N)	Start Date	End Date	Federal Funds	In-Kind Funds
CostQuest Associates Inc./ LinkAMERICA Alliance	Project Management/GIS Programming & Planning	Y	Y	11/01/2009	11/08/2012	2,249,424	550,174
University Partner	Measurement and Evaluation	Y	Y	05/01/2012	09/30/2014	1,010,324	420,724

Add Row

Remove Row

Funding

10p. How much Federal funding has been expended as of the end of the last quarter? \$1,984,402 10q. How much Remains? \$2,889,740

10r. How much matching funds have been expended as of the end of last quarter? \$636,559 10s. How much Remains? \$582,924

10t. Budget Worksheet

Mapping Budget Element	Federal Funds Granted	Proposed In-Kind	Total Budget	Federal Funds Expended	Matching Funds Expended	Total Funds Expended
Personal Salaries	\$884,896	\$228,405	\$1,113,301	\$170,761	\$30,014	\$200,775
Personnel Fringe Benefits	\$427,454	\$85,318	\$512,772	\$85,137	\$11,492	\$96,629

Mapping Budget Element	Federal Funds Granted	Proposed In-Kind	Total Budget	Federal Funds Expended	Matching Funds Expended	Total Funds Expended
Travel	\$98,715	\$0	\$98,715	\$18,112	\$0	\$18,112
Equipment	\$64,700	\$0	\$64,700	\$790	\$0	\$790
Materials / Supplies	\$19,044	\$0	\$19,044	\$8,758	\$0	\$8,758
Subcontracts Total	\$3,259,748	\$895,752	\$4,155,500	\$1,636,058	\$595,054	\$2,231,112
Subcontract #1	\$2,249,424	\$475,028	\$2,724,452	\$1,636,058	\$550,174	\$2,186,232
Subcontract #2	\$1,010,324	\$420,724	\$1,431,048	\$0	\$44,879	\$44,879
Subcontract #3	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Subcontract #4	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Subcontract #5	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Construction	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Other	\$15,000	\$0	\$15,000	\$6,687	\$0	\$6,687
Total Direct Costs	\$4,769,557	\$1,209,475	\$5,979,032	\$1,926,303	\$636,559	\$2,562,863
Total Indirect Costs	\$104,585	\$10,008	\$114,593	\$58,099	\$0	\$58,099
Total Costs	\$4,874,142	\$1,219,483	\$6,093,625	\$1,984,402	\$636,559	\$2,620,961
% Of Total	80	20	100	76	24	100

Hardware / Software

10u. Has the project team purchased the software / hardware described in the application? Yes No

10v. If yes, please list

No software/hardware was purchased this Quarter. The purchases from prior quarters are listed below:

Laptop computer and software for Sub Recipient Project Manager (AL allocated portion): \$352.78

Laptop computer and software for Sub Recipient Vendor Relations Manager (AL allocated portion): \$339.48

2 Desktop PCs: \$2464.00

1 Presentation Projector: \$374.00

1 Uninterrupted Power Supply: \$121.00

1 Printer: \$375.10

1 Dell Precision T5500 Workstation w/ArcInfo C (AL allocated portion): \$3,458.59*

*The ArcInfo software was a necessary purchase to enable CostQuest to run the validation script, on provider data, that NTIA & FCC require for the SBDD program. Purchasing the hardware/software bundle was the most cost effective way to acquire the needed software. Without the hardware the cost for the software alone would have been \$1000 higher. This expense was allocated evenly to each of the four LinkAMERICA states.

10w. Please note any software / hardware that has yet to be purchased and explain why it has not been purchased

As previously noted, all software/hardware listed in the budget for Years 1-2 has been purchased. Software and Hardware for transition of the interactive maps to state hosting, in the amount of \$44,700 will be purchased in 2012. This purchase will include a Database Server, Web/GIS Server, and external storage device, and the necessary MS SQL Server and ESRI software licenses.

We anticipate having to purchase hardware and software for Drive Test validation work. Estimated cost per test unit: \$2475 (including hardware, lic. fee and data plan). Expect to purchase 4 units (one for each primary Mobile Wireless carrier in state) for a total estimate of \$ 9,900.

10x. Has the project team purchased or used any data sets? Yes No

10y. If yes, please list

**American Roamer: Market area boundary and speed data on mobile cellular providers was purchased in Yr 2 and again in Q1 2012 - \$625 (Q2 2012)

**Media Prints: Cable franchise boundary database was previously purchased in Yr 2 and a new set was ordered with expected delivery in July 2012 - est cost \$500

**ExchangeInfo: Legal exchange area boundary database for Incumbent Local Exchange Carriers was purchased in Yr 2. We are reviewing options for this data in Yr 3.

10z. Are there any additional project milestones or information that has not been included? Yes No

10aa. If yes, please list

**The Round 5 Data Collection was submitted to NTIA on schedule.

**The final transition of the process for CAI data collection and reporting from CostQuest to ADECA was completed in March 2012.

**The state website and state map are in the process of being transitioned to the State (ADECA). Target date for the website is October 2012. Target date for the state map is May 2013.

**A Provider Survey was sent to all providers in the state in Q2 to determine time invested in the program to date and to get feedback regarding the mapping and planning efforts.

**Cost Models (Wire-line and Wireless) were developed and delivered to Alabama in Q2. These forward looking economic Cost Models, developed by CostQuest, use a code base and modeling platform that develops the estimated costs of deploying and maintaining broadband services in currently unserved areas across the state. These tools will provide vital information to policy makers, providers and other stakeholders as they consider expansion of broadband to high cost areas. The models were presented to providers in the state at a Provider Workshop in May 2012. Additional training regarding use of the Models will be scheduled as needed.

10bb. Please describe any challenge or obstacle that you have encountered and detail the mitigation strategies the project team is employing

We continue to encounter difficulty in reconciling reported provider speeds for some providers with the NTIA speed range parameters. In Round 5, Providers whose reported data fell outside of the speed norms identified by NTIA were contacted for clarification of their submission. In most instances we found that Providers were using enhanced technologies to achieve the speed reported. We anticipate that this problem will persist in subsequent rounds and will continue to request clarification from providers when appropriate. We will document our findings in the methodology document we submit to NTIA each Round.

10cc. Please provide any other information that you think would be useful to NTIA as it assesses your Broadband Mapping Project

We look forward to continued refinement of the messaging regarding evaluation of submitted data against 3rd party data sets. We understand and appreciate the need to develop a process that can be used across states to determine the effectiveness of the SBI effort, however, we are concerned that the complexity of the information being evaluated often makes the validation results difficult to interpret and can lead to misinterpretation by stakeholders.

11. Broadband Planning

11a. Please describe progress made against all goals, objectives, and milestones detailed in the approved Project Plan. Be sure to include a description of each major activity / milestone that you plan to complete and your current status

Additional details regarding Capacity Building work is provided in AL 2012 Q2 Supplemental Answers Document

Pending from Q4, 2011

**Selection of University Partner Status: Complete

Pending from Q1 2012:

**Completion of the development of a database/list of technical leaders across the state. Status: Complete

**Planning of Broadband Summit. Status: On-going. Progress towards planning the broadband summit is on target and will continue into Q3.

** Refine Regional Broadband Investment Priority M&E and Training Needs for all 12 regions. Status: Pending. Substantial progress achieved towards completion of this milestone.

**Finalize Joint Partner Plan. Status: Complete

Q2 2012:

**Create and test initial M&E data collection tools. Status: On-going

**Regional Teams next phase orientation meetings. Status: Delayed as a result of delays in appointing the in-State university partner.

**Inform the group of technical leaders in Alabama on the latest broadband technologies and broadband policy changes. Status: Ongoing. This information is included in the ConnectingALABAMA newsletter, sent out on a regular basis.

**Draft the State Broadband Investment plan. Status: On track. Four Focus Group Meetings are scheduled for the end of July, with 2 larger follow-up meetings August 21st.

**Prototype designs for additional trainings. Status: On track Additional Trainings are under development, Project team members are discussing topics with the State Outreach Manager.

11b. Please describe any challenge or obstacle that you have encountered and detail the mitigation strategies the project team is employing
 Several Milestones pertaining to implementation of the M&E data collection and engagement with region teams in that M&E data collection process are still pending. The selection of the University of Alabama Team as the in-state M&E and capacity building partner during Q2 has enabled substantial progress. We expect many of the M&E tasks to catch up to the planned schedule during Q3. However, the implementation of field training and data collection by regional teams could be delayed as late as Q4 depending on the availability of partner resources.

11c. Does the Project Team anticipate any changes to the project plan for Broadband Planning? Yes No

11d. If yes, please describe these anticipated changes. Please note that NTIA will need to approve changes to the Project Plan before they can be implemented

There are no changes to report at this time.

Funding

11e. How much Federal funding has been expended as of the end of the last quarter? \$0

11f. How much Remains? \$0

11g. How much matching funds have been expended as of the end of last quarter? \$0

11h. How much Remains? \$0

11i. Planning Worksheet

Personal Salaries	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Personnel Fringe Benefits	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Travel	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Equipment	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Materials / Supplies	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Subcontracts Total	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Subcontract #1	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Subcontract #2	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Subcontract #3	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Subcontract #4	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Subcontract #5	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Construction	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Other	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Total Direct Costs	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Total Indirect Costs	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Total Costs	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
% Of Total	0	0	0	0	0	0

Additional Planning Information

11j. Are there any additional project milestones or information that has not been included?

No

11k. Please describe any challenge or obstacle that you have encountered and detail the mitigation strategies the Project Team is employing

No Challenges at this time

11l. Please provide any other information that you think would be useful to NTIA as it assesses your Broadband Mapping Project

N/A

12. Certification: I certify to the best of my knowledge and belief that this report is correct and complete for performance of activities for the purpose set forth in the award documents.

12a. Typed or Printed Name and Title of Authorized Certifying Official

Jessica Dent

12c. Telephone
(area code, number, and extension)

12d. Email Address

jessica.dent@adeca.alabama.gov

12b. Signature of Authorized Certifying Official

Submitted Electronically

12e. Date Report Submitted
(Month, Day, Year)

08-29-2012