

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

Performance Progress Report

2. Award Or Grant Number
01-50-M09013

4. Report Date (MM/DD/YYYY)
09-21-2010

1. Recipient Name
Alabama Department of Economic and Community Affairs (ADECA)

6. Designated Entity On Behalf Of:
Alabama

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

8. Reporting Period End Date:
(MM/DD/YYYY)
06-30-2010

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
67	67	29	53	0	5

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 following providers refused to participate in the Round 1 data collection process:

- 1.) Castleberry Telephone Company Inc
- 2.) Beyond Communications

We will continue to reach out to them and hope they will participate after the new public maps are released and they can see the results of our efforts and the benefits other providers are receiving.

Data received from other providers varied greatly depending upon their ability to generate tabular data or coverage maps, and their general attitude toward the program. As with the other LinkAMERICA states, we did not receive high quality Middle Mile data in the first data collection round. Also, while many providers supplied general Maximum Advertised Speed data (typically system wide or by MSA?RSA as required), many did not provide Typical Speed at the census block level or Subscriber Weighted Nominal speed at any level. We are working hard to fill in the gaps regarding typical speeds, but this is unfortunately one piece of the data that must come from providers - and many are reluctant to divulge true network speeds.

At the writing of this report, we are beginning our Round 2 data collection process. We have identified missing data for each provider and are reaching out to those who did not respond in Round 1. IN Q2, immediately after the March 31 submission, we focused on data verification and online map development - so we did not actively reach out to providers again in that quarter. As a result, provider counts reported for Q2 are identical to those reported at the end of Q1.

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

LinkAMERICA is using common verification procedures in each of the four states they are working. These include the use of third party data to both verify coverage for existing providers and to fill in gaps where provider data submissions were incomplete. We are also launching drive testing efforts later this year with technology that measures connectivity and throughput for multiple mobile carriers. We continue to collect consumer speed test information via the ConnectingALABAMA web site.

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

The LinkAMERICA team used common procedures in each of their state. Data verification in Q2 consisted primarily of there separate processes:

- 1.) PDF check maps showing specific coverage footprints were prepared for each provider who submitted data in Q1. These maps were shared through a secure server and showed only the census blocks and street segments we derived from the data provided. Providers were asked to verify the accuracy of the presentation.
- 2.) Processes were run within the data to check for "islands" and "donut holes". These are anomalies where a block is listed as covered by a provider but no adjacent or nearby blocks are reported by the same provider. Or, conversely, all but a single block in a large area are covered. We flag these suspect blocks and then investigate with providers when possible. We are using the second data collection process to investigate and correct many of these possible errors.
- 3.) We use processes to compare third party data reported by providers and flag resulting anomalies. We then investigate those issues with providers whenever possible to determine if errors were mad of the reported coverage is accurate.

10g. Have you initiated verification activities? Yes No

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

See above - the first three activities have already been undertaken on the first dataset collected and we are using the second data collection process to resolve many of the anomalies we identified. The second data collection process will also offer a huge step forward in the accuracy of the data due to the fact that it represents current network conditions rather than June 30, 2009 information.

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

N/A

Staffing

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

SBDD funding has resulted in 1.2 total FTEs created.

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

Currently an amendment is pending with the Department of Commerce, once the amendment is received additional staff will be hired. Provided the amendment is received by mid August the project time line will not be affected.

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

Total of 4.2 FTEs; ADECA 3 FTESs and 1.2 LinkAMERICA FTEs.

10n. Staffing Table

Job Title	FTE %	Date of Hire
CEO-Supervisor Role	15	11/01/2009
Project Director	25	11/01/2009
Project Manager	25	11/01/2009
GIS Director	20	11/01/2009
Internal System Support/Architecture	15	11/01/2009
Provider Relations Manager	20	11/01/2009

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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 and Planning Services	N	Y	11/01/2009	10/31/2011	\$1,134,958	\$475,028

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Funding

10p. How much Federal funding has been expended as of the end of the last quarter? \$0 10q. How much Remains? \$1,134,958

10r. How much matching funds have been expended as of the end of last quarter? \$300,000 10s. How much Remains? \$175,028

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	\$194,037	\$0	\$194,037	\$0	\$0	\$0
Personnel Fringe Benefits	\$48,509	\$0	\$48,509	\$0	\$0	\$0
Travel	\$37,440	\$0	\$37,440	\$0	\$0	\$0
Equipment	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Materials / Supplies	\$8,734	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Subcontracts Total	\$1,134,958	\$100,028	\$1,234,986	\$0	\$0	\$0
Subcontract #1	\$1,134,958	\$0	\$1,134,958	\$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	\$375,000	\$375,000	\$0	\$0	\$0
Total Direct Costs	\$1,423,678	\$0	\$1,423,678	\$0	\$0	\$0
Total Indirect Costs	\$9,440	\$0	\$9,440	\$0	\$0	\$0
Total Costs	\$1,433,118	\$475,028	\$1,908,146	\$0	\$0	\$0
% Of Total	75	24	1	0	0	0

Hardware / Software

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

10v. If yes, please list

N/A

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

Three computers, not purchased because the amendment authorizing the purchase of equipment has been approved but has yet to be received by the state.

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

10y. If yes, please list

American Roamer, Media Prints, and ExchangeInfo

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

10aa. If yes, please list

N/A

10bb. Please describe any challenge or obstacle that you have encountered and detail the mitigation strategies the project team is employing
LinkAMERICA experienced delays in data normalization and initial verification steps. Additional GIS programming resources were applied by the contractor. Several issues were uncovered in the data as it was inspected and normalized for delivery to NTIA. This required more extensive database work and data re-processing that was originally expected. Again, the contractor applied additional programming resources to address this issue. As a result the sub-budget for GIS Programming services is diminishing more rapidly than expected. However, we are monitoring the budget closely and expect the extra work at the beginning of the project will result in time savings in the later/final months.

10cc. Please provide any other information that you think would be useful to NTIA as it assesses your Broadband Mapping Project
LinkAMERICA reports that data verification continues to be a challenging issue. We anticipate a high volume of consumer and provider challenges to the data's accuracy when the new NTIA dataset is released in map form later this year. The potential number of these types of anomalies is unknown at this point, but we expect a very high volume of reports regarding specific locations that are shown covered on the map, but that consumers consider uncovered. LinkAMERICA is developing a confidence scoring system to alert users to suspect data - but we do not intend to override a provider's coverage report based solely on consumer data. When we can use ground truthing or other on site techniques to verify coverage, we will consider overriding provider data, but the potential number of reports may be too large for every report to be individually pursued/verified. We will know about the scope of this issue as the maps are released to the public in Q3.

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

A great deal of Planning activity occurred in Alabama in Q2, including the following key milestones:

- 1) Hiring of Nichole D'Andre as the Statewide Coordinator and Outreach Manager for the ongoing mapping and planning activities. Ms. D'Andre has a contractual relationship with CostQuest Associates to provide these services.
- 2) Hiring of Horace Lamar as the first Regional Coordinator (including ASU intern management duties) for planning and mapping activities in Alabama. Mr. Lamar has a contractual relationship with CostQuest Associates to provide regional planning and intern coordination with ASU.
- 3) Engagement of three student interns from ASU to support the Montgomery project office in a variety of tasks.
- 4) Finalization and launch (on the project website and through the Alabama public library system) of several short educational videos describing the benefits of broadband availability for all Alabamians. The videos also include an ongoing survey to help better understand consumer broadband needs and perspectives.
- 5) Decision to develop broadband plans for twelve regions designed to mirror the regional structure used by the state planning councils.

Both Ms. D'Andre and Mr. Lamar will work closely with LinkAMERICA and ADECA/ALBI staff. Mr. Lamar will coordinate the activities of several interns as they assist in both planning and mapping activities as well-particularly with respect to anchor institutions. ADECA/ALBI will be hiring three additional regional coordinators to finalize the ConnectingALABAMA regional planning team. Once in place, the team will initiate local broadband planning activities, including the formation of regional planning councils, in regions throughout the state.

11b. Please describe any challenge or obstacle that you have encountered and detail the mitigation strategies the project team is employing
The Planning process ran into no significant obstacles in Q2. The hiring of the coordinator positions mentioned above was delayed to

same degree due to our re-budgeting process with NTIA, the three additional regional coordinators will be on board once a fully executed amendment has been received by the state. Activities with the regions are kicking off on schedule and we're very pleased with progress to date.

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

N/A

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

Planning Budget Element	Federal Funds Granted	Proposed In-Kind	Total Budget	Federal Funds Expended	Matching Funds Expended	Total Funds Expended
Personal Salaries	\$68,572	\$0	\$68,572	\$0	\$0	\$0
Personnel Fringe Benefits	\$17,143	\$0	\$17,143	\$0	\$0	\$0
Travel	\$7,800	\$0	\$7,800	\$0	\$0	\$0
Equipment	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Materials / Supplies	\$2,091	\$0	\$2,091	\$0	\$0	\$0
Subcontracts Total	\$364,466	\$0	\$364,466	\$0	\$0	\$0
Subcontract #1	\$364,466	\$0	\$364,466	\$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	\$460,072	\$0	\$460,072	\$0	\$0	\$0
Total Indirect Costs	\$3,132	\$0	\$3,132	\$0	\$0	\$0
Total Costs	\$463,205	\$0	\$463,205	\$0	\$0	\$0
% Of Total	100	0	100	0	0	0

Additional Planning Information

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

No further information

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

As described above, the planning process has experienced no significant obstacle in Alabama and is very pleased with the project

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

No further information

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)

09-28-2010

Performance Progress Report
OMB Approval Number: 0660-0034
Expiration Date: 08/31/2010