

**USDA ReConnect Project Update – Marian Walrath/Dan Long
Finance Committee 7/6/2021**

1. **Services Agreement with Empire Access**

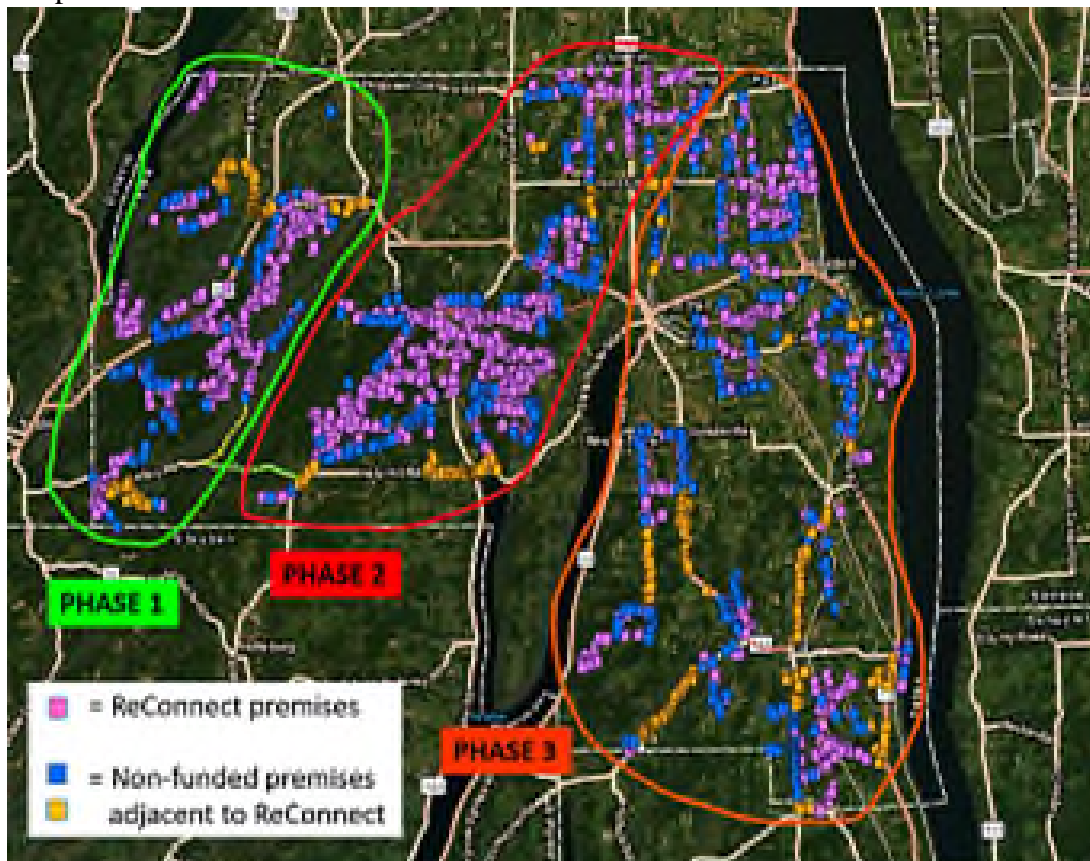
a. Agreement still out for review and approval by USDA/RUS → backlog.

2. **Engineering**

a. The executed RUS 217 contract submitted to RUS for review and approval.

b. Survey/fielding work is continuing.

c. The plan is to complete Plans and Specifications and construction bid process in phases.



3. **Construction**

a. Goal is to start Phase I construction in Fall 2021.

b. The ‘bottleneck’ for pole permits has been and will continue to be the NYSEG engineering survey review due to minimal staffing. This factor may lead to construction start delays, however we and the engineers are working on mitigating this as much as possible and if necessary, use our contacts at the legislative level to assist and expediting the review.

4. **Grant Applications**

- a. Intended use for first two would be to expand the ReConnect network to reach the NFSA premises that are adjacent to this network (non-funded service areas = areas which are not eligible to build to using our ReConnect grant monies).
- b. Northern Border Regional Commission grant (NBRC) -- Applied on 5/14/21 for \$1M grant with \$250K match. Notification Fall 2021.
- c. Congressionally Directed Spending (CDS) request – Submitted \$4.9M request thru Senator Schumer’s and Senator Gillibrand’s portals on 5/26/21. Notification Fall 2021.
- d. National Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA) Broadband Infrastructure Program Grant -- to be submitted by August 17, 2021 deadline
- e. USDA ReConnect Round 3 – FOA (Funding Opportunity Announcement) expected July/August 2021 with Application portal open Fall 2021.
- f. Resolution included to **AUTHORIZE CHAIRMAN TO SIGN CONTRACT WITH NEW YORK ENGINEERING SERVICES FOR A FEASIBILITY STUDY IN SUPPORT OF THE COUNTY BROADBAND ACCESS EFFORT**