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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Updated maps, datasets available to assist Round 2 applicants for federal broadband funding

Kansas Internet service providers, organizations encouraged to apply for Recovery Act funds

Updated county-level broadband coverage maps and Census block-level datasets are now available at www.ConnectKansas.org to assist Kansas service providers and organizations applying for Round 2 federal broadband infrastructure funds.

The updated maps and datasets include new information from additional Kansas service providers and better represent nearly every region of Kansas. The maps are printer-friendly and include broadband coverage, cities and towns, county boundaries and detailed road information. The original maps and datasets were posted Feb. 16, the same day that the Round 2 application window opened. The second round closes March 15.

A complete statewide interactive map for public consumption and utilization will be unveiled later this month.

Background:

Internet service providers and other organizations in Kansas are encouraged to apply for the second round of federal Recovery Act funding for rural broadband Internet projects. Funding is available through two federal programs:

- **Broadband Initiatives Program (BIP)**
BIP makes loans and grants to Internet service providers for broadband infrastructure projects in rural areas. The program is sponsored by the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Rural Utilities Service. There is \$2.2 billion in BIP funding available.
- **Broadband Technology Opportunities Program (BTOP)**
BTOP provides grants to organizations such as non-profits, government entities, schools, libraries, hospitals and providers to fund broadband infrastructure, public computer centers and sustainable broadband adoption projects. The program is sponsored by the U.S. Department of Commerce's National Telecommunications Information Administration. There is \$2.6 billion in BTOP funding available.

The first round of federal funding ran from July through August 2009, and awards are currently being announced on a rolling basis. From that first round, Kansas provider Rural Telephone Service Co. in January was awarded more than \$101 million in grants and loans through BIP for Internet infrastructure projects in rural Kansas. The Kansas Department of Commerce expects additional first-round Kansas applicants to receive awards in the coming months.

In addition to providing grants and loans to service providers and organizations, the U.S. Department of Commerce's National Telecommunications Information Administration has issued awards to states for broadband mapping and planning. In November 2009, Kansas was awarded \$2 million to support Connect Kansas, the state's mapping and planning initiative.

For more information, visit www.ConnectKansas.org or contact Joe Monaco, Public Information Officer with the Kansas Department of Commerce, at (785) 296-3760 or jmonaco@kansascommerce.com.

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