

# CONNECTED NATION AND THE NTIA NATIONAL BROADBAND MAP

Collectively, Connected Nation has supported the NTIA efforts in states and territories that account for –

**5.5** million unique records that support the map, or approximately

**24% of the 23** million records that NTIA estimates comprise the National Broadband Map

**39.4** million households

**31.82%** of U.S. Gross Domestic Product

**42.4%** of U.S. landmass

**1,200** broadband service providers, and mapped that infrastructure

**95,000** Community Anchor Institutions, and is in the process of collecting broadband technology and speed information from these institutions.



# CONNECTED NATION AND THE NTIA NATIONAL BROADBAND MAP



On February 17, 2011, the Department of Commerce's National Telecommunications & Information Administration (NTIA) will release a National Broadband Map.

This National Broadband Map is the product of an intensive and joint effort of the NTIA, FCC, state governments, industry, and specialized mapping entities like Connected Nation. The map will be a key tool for the American public and policymakers.

Until now, the American public has not had a comprehensive and granular inventory of broadband availability. This lack of knowledge has hampered policy debates for years – for example, communities and anchor institutions frequently did not know the extent of their broadband infrastructure challenges, let alone how to bridge those gaps. At the federal level, essential policy questions, such as the effect of federal “universal service” subsidy programs on broadband availability, have often been debated in the absence of this basic data.

Beginning in 2001 with its work in Kentucky and later in Ohio and Tennessee, Connected Nation pioneered the collaborative, state-driven approach to broadband mapping that became the foundation of the current NTIA program. In 2008, Congress unanimously passed and President George W. Bush signed the Broadband Data Improvement Act. The Broadband Data Improvement Act established a framework for states and public-private partnerships to gather broadband availability information, verify it, and release it to the public. This program was funded by the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009, and is administered by the NTIA as the State Broadband Data Development Program (SBDD).

The National Broadband Map will be a key tool for policymakers. On February 8, 2011, the FCC proposed changes to its federal universal service fund program that will shift and target those subsidies toward building broadband networks in areas that are listed as “unserved” on the National Broadband Map.

## **Connected Nation's Role in Building the National Map**

Connected Nation, a non-profit, public-private partnership, has played an instrumental role in developing, gathering data, and verifying data for the National Broadband Map:

- With regard to the National Broadband Map, Connected Nation is helping twelve states and the Territory of Puerto Rico in collecting and verifying broadband availability.
- Collectively, Connected Nation has supported the NTIA efforts in states and territories that account for –
  - ◆ 39.4 million households
  - ◆ 31.82% of U.S. Gross Domestic Product, and
  - ◆ 42.4% of U.S. landmass
- In these 13 jurisdictions, with the assistance of the state and federal government, Connected Nation has identified and collected information from over 1,200 broadband service providers and mapped that infrastructure.
- This information is collected at the Census Block level and is broken down into nine speed tiers and several technology platforms (fiber, DSL, cable, fixed wireless, mobile wireless). Examples of analysis by platform and speed tier that Connected Nation has performed in several states are attached.

- Additionally, Connected Nation has identified and geocoded approximately 95,000 Community Anchor Institutions and is in the process of collecting broadband technology and speed information from these institutions.
- Connected Nation has provided NTIA 5.5 million unique records that support the map, or approximately 24% of the 23 million records that NTIA estimates comprise the National Broadband Map.

### **The National Broadband Mapping Data is Helping Drive Connectivity Solutions and Focusing the Policy Debate**

- The FCC has proposed that subsidies from its existing \$8.7 billion universal service fund be re-directed to support broadband deployment in areas listed as “unserved” on the National Broadband Map.
- The mapping data is also being used by states to inform and shape state broadband planning efforts.
  - ◆ Connected Nation is helping several states in these efforts and has prepared comprehensive, county-specific analyses for Iowa, Nevada, and Minnesota, with more states to come.
  - ◆ These assessments provide a detailed review of the state’s broadband market with the goal of sparking discussion across multiple stakeholders. They are available for review through the following links:  
Iowa- <http://www.connectiowa.org/research/>  
Nevada- <http://www.connectnv.org/research/>  
Minnesota- <http://www.connectmn.org/research/>
  - ◆ States are using the data to undertake their own initiatives. For example, last month Nevada Governor Brian Sandoval proposed to target \$3 million of state expenditures to fund broadband infrastructure projects in areas that are identified by the Nevada Broadband Task Force.
- Through state-specific and regional surveys, Connected Nation also has been tracking and studying how consumers and businesses use broadband for over 10 years.

### **The Data that Supports the National Broadband Map has been Vigorously Investigated and Verified**

- Connected Nation pioneered this approach to broadband infrastructure mapping, beginning with state-led efforts in Kentucky, and later Ohio and Tennessee.
- We do not simply take service providers at their word – NTIA grant rules require that the availability data on the map be independently verified by multiple sources, including consumer feedback.
- Connected Nation employs a field team of 11 experienced telecommunications network engineers whose job is to visit locations, investigate *actual* service availability, measure strength of wireless signals, and engage in spot checks. In CY2010, this field team drove 72,000 miles to verify the location and capabilities of broadband infrastructure.
- Connected Nation also checks service provider submissions against FCC broadband subscribership data (Form 477), antennae registration databases, various commercially-available data sources, its own consumer and business survey research, and several speed tests, performed both by visitors to our websites and also by speed test data obtained from the FCC.