



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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FOCUS Broadband Awarded \$26 Million in GREAT Grant Funds

Shallotte, NC – FOCUS Broadband announced today that the company will receive more than \$26.8 million in grant funding through the latest round of 2022 Growing Rural Economies with Access to Technology (GREAT) Grant program. These funds will be used to expand high-speed internet service to nearly 10,000 homes in Columbus, Robeson, Duplin, Pender, Hoke, Bladen, and Perquimans counties. The total cost for all of the grant projects amounts to \$33.7 million with contributions being made from each of the counties as well as a \$3.9 million investment from FOCUS Broadband.

“The announcement of these GREAT grant awards is a huge win for these rural communities that have gone too long without adequate internet service,” said Keith Holden, FOCUS Broadband CEO. “We would like to thank each county for partnering with us to help secure this funding and the residents, business owners and community leaders who helped us tell the stories of how important these projects are for their communities. We are also grateful to Governor Cooper and NCDIT for continuing to put their trust in FOCUS Broadband as we work to provide reliable, high-speed internet in each of these counties.”

The N.C. Department of Information Technology’s (NCDIT) Broadband Infrastructure Office received 305 applications, totaling \$350 million for this round of GREAT grants. “High-speed internet access is critical for people to work, learn, access telehealth and connect with one another,” said Governor Cooper at an event in Greensboro today. “Thanks to this significant GREAT grant award funding, many more North Carolina families and small business owners will have the tools they need to succeed in today’s digital world.”

The GREAT Grant program was created in 2019 as a way for internet service providers and cooperatives to seek and compete for funding to aid in lowering financial barriers that prevent high-speed internet service

expansion. The recently announced grants are part of Governor Cooper's plan to invest nearly \$2 billion in federal and state funds to close the digital divide in North Carolina.

In July, FOCUS Broadband also received a \$4 million dollar grant to serve 1,600 homes in Chowan County. With this latest announcement, the cooperative has now won more than \$42 million in GREAT grants since the program's inception in 2019. Additional GREAT Grant applications for Chowan and Perquimans counties are still under review. The company also plans to apply for additional resources through the Completing Access to Broadband (CAB) funds in hopes to further broadband expansion in these counties.

FOCUS Broadband is awaiting details as to when the 2022 grant funds will be made available to begin work on expanding high-speed internet to all of these communities. To stay up to date on the progress of the grant project, please visit www.getfocusbroadband.com, or call 888-367-2862.

About FOCUS Broadband

FOCUS Broadband is a member-owned cooperative providing a multitude of communications services, including telephone, business services, wireless, broadband internet, cable television, and home security, in Brunswick County, North Carolina. FOCUS Broadband provides services in additional areas through its wholly owned subsidiary, ATMC, LLC. FOCUS Broadband is the largest communications cooperative in North Carolina and one of the largest in the country. For more information on products and services from FOCUS Broadband, visit www.focusbroadband.com.

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