

April 26, 2021

State of South Carolina
Office of Regulatory Staff
1401 Main Street, Suite 900
Columbia, South Carolina 29201

Via email: Broadband@ors.sc.gov

To Whom It May Concern:

Home Telephone Company, Inc dba Home Telecom¹ [Home Telecom] submits two applications for a Broadband buildout grant as contemplated in the Office of Regulatory Staff's South Carolina 2021 Rural Broadband Grant Program.

We have focused on building a scalable transport network that can be extended over time as additional funding is available. We believe this approach is in the best public interest and provides a stable, expandable network that can continue to grow as funding is available. It offers future-proof technology at the lowest cost over time while immediately giving service to the broadest geographical area possible.

Home Telecom's application to expand its advanced fiber-to-the-home network will expand broadband availability to unserved and underserved areas in Berkeley County. We specifically chose areas of need identified in the South Carolina Broadband Grant Program's "Areas of Need" polygon map for this application.

This buildout will deliver highspeed fiber-to-the-home internet capable of symmetrical 1 Gbps internet service to 1995 addresses, including several businesses and Community Anchor points. With improved Broadband, customers may participate in Telehealth, distance learning, work from home opportunities, and many more online activities.

Should you have any questions or would like to discuss any aspect of our application, please feel free to contact me at 843.761.9173 or via email, Denny.Thompson@hometelco.com.

Sincerely,



Denny Thompson
Director of External Affairs
Home Telecom

¹ Home Telephone Company, Inc. and its subsidiaries Home Telephone ILEC, LLC, and Berkeley Cable Television Company, Inc dba Home Telecom are applying as one - Home Telecom



APPLICATION

South Carolina 2021 Rural Broadband Grant Program

Applicant Information

Applicant Name/Organization Home Telephone ILEC, LLC / Berkeley Cable Television Company, Inc.

Applicant FCC Registration Number (FRN) 0020980116 / 0005792700

Primary Contact Name Denny Thompson Title Director of External Affairs

Mailing Address 579 Stoney Landing Rd Phone Number 843-761-9173

City, State, Zip Moncks Corner, SC 29461 Email denny.thompson@hometelco.com

Broadband Service Provider Experience

Date of Applicant's Initial FCC Form 477 Submission 9/1/2000

Date of Applicant's Most Recent FCC Form 477 Submission 2/10/2021

Applicant and/or Project Partner has Experience:

- Delivering broadband service via fiber and/or hybrid fiber-coax infrastructure
- Delivering broadband service via fixed wireless infrastructure
- Building and operating broadband networks in rural areas
- Operating broadband networks in low-moderate income areas

Project Area Information

Eligible County Impact

Counties
(list)

Cities/Towns/Municipalities
(list)

Households

Businesses

Health Care Facilities

Community Anchor Institutions

Educational Institutions

Contiguous County Impact

Counties
(list) Berkeley County

Cities/Towns/Municipalities
(list) Pineville

Households 771

Community Anchor Institutions 5

Businesses 3

Educational Institutions 0

Health Care Facilities 0

Broadband Infrastructure Information

Indicate the type(s) of broadband infrastructure technology to be deployed in the project area.

- Fiber to the Premises* Minimum Sustainable Download/Upload Speeds all speeds offered up to 1G
- Hybrid fiber-coax* Minimum Sustainable Download/Upload Speeds
(symmetrical upload/download speeds)
- Hybrid fiber-coax* Minimum Sustainable Download/Upload Speeds
(non-symmetrical upload/download speeds)
- Fixed wireless* Minimum Sustainable Download/Upload Speeds

Broadband Pricing Schedules or Tiers

Indicate all rate tiers for wireline projects of at least 100/20 Mbps or fixed wireless at 50/5 Mbps or faster that will be offered to customers in the project area:

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Rates less than \$10/month | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Rates between \$20 - \$24.99/month |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Rates between \$10 - \$14.99/month | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Rates between \$25 - \$34.99/month |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Rates between \$15 - \$19.99/month | |

Project Timeline

Project Start Date 7/15/2021	Customer Premises
Project Construction Activity Begins 7/26/2021	Installations Begin 9/13/2021
Project Construction Activity Complete 10/31/2022	Installations End 10/31/2022
	Overall Project Completion Date 10/31/2022

Project Cost Information

Total Project Cost 2,008,552	Average Cost per Location Served (all locations or structures) 2,605
Upfront Cost Requirements n/a	
Cost of Building and/or Extending Infrastructure to Customer Premises 1,195,392	Average Cost per Housing Unit 2,605
	Average Cost per Business 2,605

Project Funding Information

South Carolina Rural Broadband Grant Program Funds requested (\$) 1,004,276

Applicant-Provided Funding (\$) 1,004,276

Non-Public Funding

Amount (\$) 1,004,276

Source(s) Equity from Home Telephone Company, Inc.
(Holding Company for Home Telephone ILEC, LLC
and Berkeley Cable Television Company, Inc.)

Additional Information

- 1) Describe Applicant's and/or project Partner's experience building and/or operating broadband networks.

Please see attachment A

- 2) Describe how your proposal meets the needs of the community to be served as described in the "Guidelines."

Please see attachment A

- 3) Describe any plans or programs you have developed to improve adoption in the community described in this proposal. Please include letters of support from key community partners that indicate their awareness of your project.

Please see attachment A

- 4) Provide documents that demonstrate your organization currently has the necessary funds (50% of total project cost) to complete this project/proposal. List documents here and attach documents to this proposal.

Please see attachment A

- 5) List any lease, franchise agreement, interconnection agreement, authorization, permit, or other items needed to complete this project.

Please see attachment A

Attachments and Exhibits

Please attach the following items to application:

- Map of project area (*PDF and Shapefile formats*)
- Letters of support evidencing community need and strategic partnerships
- Any additional information evidencing community need for project
- Most recent FCC Form 477 filing

Certification and Signature

CERTIFICATION: The Applicant certifies that information included in this application is factual to their knowledge.

Signature: 

Print Name of Signatory: Denny Thompson

Title of Signatory: Director of External Affairs

Date: 4 - 26 - 2021

All questions and completed applications should be submitted to Broadband@ORS.SC.GOV

Facsimile signatures and email signatures shall be as effective as original signatures to bind any party.



Attachment A
South Carolina 2021 Rural Broadband Grant Program

1. Describe Applicant's and/or project Partner's experience building and/or operating broadband networks.

Home Telephone Company Inc owns 100 percent of Home Telephone ILEC LLC dba Home Telecom and Berkeley Cable Television Company, Inc. dba Home Telecom. Together we are an independent telecommunications company, a competitive local exchange carrier, a traditional cable television company, an Internet Service Provider located in Moncks Corner, South Carolina, and serves Berkeley, Charleston, and Dorchester Counties.

Home Telecom has been working for years to provide high-speed, future-proof fiber connections to rural areas within our ability to serve. We have sought or received funding through traditional federal USF programs, various RUS, and other federal programs. We also know the COVID-19 pandemic has heightened the awareness of the rural digital divide, and both federal and state legislators are working on other funding programs. Home believes that it is critical to the long-term goal of providing quality Broadband at reasonable rates that we develop a long-term unified plan for reaching unserved or under-served areas. This process makes it difficult because each program or funding mechanism tends to be myopic to a specific cause or agenda. The results often lead to failed or inferior service, which wastes public funding and works to slow down deployment to many rural areas.

Home Telecom is submitting this proposal as part of a broader approach to rationally extend our network in a logical and financially reasonable way. Thus, we have focused on building a scalable transport network that develops over time as additional funding is available. This method provides for a stable, expandable network that can continue to grow as funding is available. We believe this approach is in the best public interest. It offers the best coverage at the lowest cost over time while immediately providing service for the broadest geographical area possible.

Home Telecom is an integrated communications provider utilizing various technologies driven by an all-digital network to deliver High-Speed Internet, Local and Long-Distance Telephone, Cable TV, and Security services to approximately 34,000 customers. Home Telecom has historically utilized several broadband service platforms such as Hybrid Fiber Coax (HFC), xDSL, and PON-based (G-PON) Fiber-To-The-Home (FTTH). Our Fiber-To-The-Home platform provides the most advanced broadband services to over 21,000 customers (over 60% of our current customer base). In addition to Broadband, Home Telecom offers phone, video, and security

Home Telephone ILEC, LLC dba Home Telecom
579 Stoney Landing Road
Moncks Corner, South Carolina 29461

Attachment A
South Carolina 2021 Rural Broadband Grant Program

services. A well-trained staff of over 216 South Carolinians supports these services with various accounting, provisioning, maintenance, and operations systems.

Home Telecom's advanced fiber-optic network allows customers to receive broadband data access at a minimum data rate of 1 Mbps to a maximum of 1000 Mbps symmetrical.

ISP backbone connectivity is provided by multiple, fully redundant 100 Gbps links connect to diverse backbone providers.

Home Telecom has a Video Head-End located at its Moncks Corner central office and transports both RF and IP video via dedicated fibers to each remote office.

The local video enters the head end via direct fiber connections to the television studios (5 local TV stations). All other video channels come from the commercial satellite and terminate on our local satellite dish.

Home Telecom provides voice service using 2 Metaswitch Class 5 Softswitches. For voice intralata and interlata services, Home Telecom has direct trunks to AT&T, Sprint, Verizon, and Segra. The company has Feature Group C trunks to the AT&T Access Tandem in Charleston, SC. Home Telecom's core network comprises 20 Cisco ASR routers and six fully redundant rings, each consisting of multiple 10G CWDM wavelengths.

The transport fiber will facilitate our video streaming technology as it is the same optical fiber that transports the GPON signals will also carry video (television) signals.

Home's Remote Offices, designed and equipped, will support the operation of communications networks. They include HVAC equipment, standby generators with fuel for 24 hours of run time, and battery strings with at least 8 hours of reserve capacity. Accordingly, the shared network equipment proposed in this undertaking will be powered to remain in service even when there is a complete commercial power failure.

2. Describe how your proposal meets the needs of the community served as described in the "Guidelines."

The purpose of this project is to extend Home Telecom's broadband services to several unserved and underserved areas of Berkeley County, South Carolina. These rural communities do not have access to sufficient broadband services today. Home Telecom's project is a Fiber to the Home Project capable of delivering high-

Attachment A
South Carolina 2021 Rural Broadband Grant Program

speed internet at 1000 Mbps synchronous speeds. With broadband speeds up to 1000 Mbps, these unserved end-users will now be able to improve their ability to work from home, enhance distance learning, and participate in telehealth services. Additionally, with the blended educational environment, school-age children will be able to participate in online classes and class assignments that will continue long after the pandemic of 2020.

Specifically, Home Telecom offers two programs that will assist families in both areas. The first project is a partnership with Berkeley County School District and Google where the Cross Schools School System students receive Free Internet with Free WIFI. Home Telecom's Pineville project splits the High School district in half, with half of the area is in the Cross School district. The remaining area in our Pineville project and our Jamestown project are eligible for our Community Connect program that offers Families of Student age children Reduced internet with Free WIFI

3. Describe any plans or programs you have developed to improve adoption in the community described in this proposal. Please include letters of support from key community partners that indicate their awareness of your project.

Home Telecom has established a formal partnership with Tri-County Cradle to Career (TCCC) to implement a pilot in the tri-county region as part of our commitment to digital equity and inclusion. This partnership will address the need for equitable and affordable digital access and adoption in vulnerable populations. Digital equity will ensure that the individuals and communities in the selected neighborhoods have access to internet service and to internet-enabled technology (devices). In addition, this partnership will help communities with two critical components of digital equity that will lead to adoption: digital literacy and skills training. Community adoption is critical to ensure an understanding and readiness to take advantage of the internet service technology that will allow for full participation in employment, life-long learning, and civic participation, as well as access to basic needs and services.

TCCC is the only organization in the region that utilizes the five important elements of the Collective Impact approach to solve tough challenges. The approach, driven by authentic and ongoing community engagement, includes building common agendas, shared measurement plans, mutually reinforcing activities, continuous communication, and backbone support. By aligning community resources, removing barriers, and promoting collaborative efforts, TCCC is committed to building a

Attachment A
South Carolina 2021 Rural Broadband Grant Program

regional culture where all residents have access to the support and resources they need.

Short-term goals of this project include:

- Increased access to affordable, robust broadband internet connections.
- Increased access to internet-enabled devices that meet the needs of the user.
- Improved digital literacy capacity to become confident, safe, secure, and self-directed learners.
- Improved access to quality technical support.
- Increased access and use of applications and online content designed to encourage self-sufficiency.
- Increased number of students receiving high school diploma, GED, and/or secondary education.
- Increased number of adults enrolled in job training programs as a result of this support.
- Increased number of new training programs offered to neighborhood residents.

Further, Home Telecom is working with the Chamber of Commerce and the School District to identify hotspots (WIFI) locations in areas both in the project area and outside the project area to help local communities with broadband access.

4. Provide documents that demonstrate your organization currently has the necessary funds (50% of total project cost) to complete this project/proposal. List documents here and attach documents to this proposal.

Please see the attached bank statement from Wells Fargo for our non-regulated operations (Berkeley Cable Television, Inc.), showing funds available of \$2.1 million. We kindly ask that you treat this information as confidential.

5. List any lease, franchise agreement, interconnection agreement, authorization, permit, or other items needed to complete this project.

Home Telephone ILEC, LLC dba Home Telecom
579 Stoney Landing Road
Moncks Corner, South Carolina 29461

Attachment A
South Carolina 2021 Rural Broadband Grant Program

Home Telecom does not need any additional franchise agreements, interconnection agreements, or authorizations to complete this proposed project. However, we will file the standard Department of Transportation (DOT) rights of way permits as construction starts.



April 16, 2021

To Whom It May Concern:

The Berkeley Chamber supports Home Telecom's application for grant funding through the South Carolina Broadband Infrastructure Program to build a fiber optic network capable of bringing Broadband Internet to underserved areas of Berkeley County, SC.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, residents of rural Berkeley County have been held back because of the lack of reliable Internet access. Our children have been especially disadvantaged because they were unable to properly conduct e-learning during the last school term. With this current and upcoming school year, the need for Broadband Internet is critical to give our children access to a quality education. Additionally, our community's high-risk residents have been unable to work remotely or access essential services such as Telehealth from the safety of their homes.

What we have learn this last year is Broadband Internet opens the door for families in our community to enhance their children's educational experience, keep our at-risk residents safe by allowing them to work from home, allow our elderly residents access to essential services, and, just as importantly, stay connected with friends and loved ones in the era of social distancing. Broadband Internet would also it is more imperative that small businesses who are suffering have a chance to thrive by offering them the option to provide their services online.

The pandemic has made apparent the need for reliable Broadband Internet in Berkeley County. Our residents were left behind because they needed to conduct school and work from home but did not have the resources to do so. Rural Berkeley County residents have been at a great disadvantage for far too long. We deserve to have the same high speed Internet options as those in neighboring counties, across the state and around the country.

Home Telecom's reputation and efforts to bring faster Internet to residents in rural areas of Berkeley County speaks volumes, and I feel Berkeley County residents would benefit from having access to Home Telecom's fiber optic services. Receiving this grant would help Home Telecom bring Broadband Internet service to our community and give our residents and businesses a chance to thrive.

Thank you for your consideration of Home Telecom's application for grant funding for Berkeley County.

Sincerely,

Elaine Morgan,
CEO



Board of Directors

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Anita Zucker
The InterTech Group

Vice Chair
Paul Kohlheim
Community Volunteer

Vice Chair- Advocacy
Gray Somerville
LaunchPath Innovation

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College of Charleston

Carolyn Hunter
CSA Unlimited

Larry Lautenschlager
Community Volunteer

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Dr. Gerrita Postlewait, Ed.D.
Charleston County School District

Rev. Nelson B. Rivers, III
Clarity Missionary Baptist Church

Joan Robinson-Berry
Community Volunteer

Dr. Sally Selden
The Citadel

Laura Varn
Parkland Fuel Corp.

Jessica Williford
The Boeing Company

Ex-Officio Directors
Bryan Derreberry
Charleston Metro Chamber of Commerce

David Ginn
Charleston Regional Development Alliance

Darrin Goss
Coastal Community Foundation

Chloe Knight Tonney
Trident United Way

Phyllis Martin
Tri-County Cradle to Career Collaborative

April 22, 2021

To Whom It May Concern:

Tri-County Cradle to Career Collaborative (TCCC) is pleased to submit this letter of support on behalf of Home Telecom's application for a matching grant from the SC Office of Regulatory Staff to build out a Fiber network to support additional, unserved areas in Berkeley County. Home Telecom has established a formal partnership with TCCC to implement a pilot in the tri-county region as part of our commitment to digital equity and inclusion. This partnership will address the need for equitable and affordable digital access and adoption in vulnerable populations.

TCCC is the only organization in the region that utilizes the five important elements of the Collective Impact approach to solve tough challenges. The approach, driven by authentic and ongoing community engagement, includes building common agendas, shared measurement plans, mutually reinforcing activities, continuous communication, and backbone support. By aligning community resources, removing barriers, and promoting collaborative efforts, TCCC is committed to building a regional culture where all residents have access to the support and resources they need.

Over the past 9 months, TCCC has built, with the region, a Digital Equity Coalition focused on four critical areas: access to internet services, access and adoption of modes of technology, digital literacy, and community advocacy to support this critical work. Home Telecom's willingness and ability to build a Fiber network in unserved areas in Berkeley County, while recognizing the need for an on-the-ground partner committed to increasing community engagement and adoption rates, is directly tied to our region's economic mobility rates and our ability to attract and retain talent – both now and in the future.

With thanks for your consideration,

Phyllis Martin
CEO



RICH HISTORY.
BRIGHT FUTURE.
One Berkeley

BERKELEY COUNTY COUNCIL
Caldwell Pinckney, Jr. (District No. 7)

April 22, 2021

To Whom It May Concern:

I, Caldwell Pinckney, Jr., Berkeley County Councilman for District 7, support Home Telecom's application for grant funding from the South Carolina Broadband Infrastructure Program.

Throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, there has been a growing reliance on technology to learn, live, and stay connected. At the same time, this reliance has further illuminated that under-resourced communities are disproportionately affected due to the lack of access to internet coverage and high-speed internet.

Over 50% of my constituents reside in rural Berkeley County. When the government ordered us to stay inside throughout the beginning stages of the pandemic in March 2020, employment, education, and healthcare were severely impacted. While some adults were able to work remotely, all of the students within my District had to participate in remote learning, and the senior citizens had to use telemedicine to seek medical assistance. My constituents were at a grave disadvantage due to the lack of access to internet coverage and high-speed internet.

I support Home Telecom's application because I know that they will stay true to their mission of providing excellent customer service while maintaining its reputation for local involvement, leadership, and service. Their experience and reputation put them at the forefront of bringing this much-needed technology to citizens of rural Berkeley County. Having this access would significantly enhance the quality of life of my constituents and others within rural parts of Berkeley County.

Best,

Caldwell Pinckney, Jr.
Berkeley County Council
District No. 7

Joe H. Jefferson, Jr.
District No. 102 - Berkeley County
1375 Colonel Mahem Drive
Pineville, SC 29468



304-D Blatt Building
Columbia, SC 29211
Tel. (803) 734-2936

Committees:
Labor, Commerce and Industry
Legislative Oversight

House of Representatives
State of South Carolina

Subcommittee:
Education & Cultural,
Chairman
Business & Commerce
Public Utilities
Administration &
Regulations

April 22, 2021

To Whom It May Concern:

I support Home Telecom's application for matching grant funding through the 2021 South Carolina Rural Broadband Grant Program to build a fiber optic network capable of bringing Broadband Internet to unserved areas in the Pineville and Jamestown communities of Berkeley County, South Carolina.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, citizens of these communities have been held back because of the lack of reliable Internet access. Children have been especially disadvantaged because they have been unable to properly conduct e-learning. The need for Broadband Internet is critical to give children access to a quality education. Additionally, high-risk residents have been unable to work remotely or access essential services such as Telehealth from the safety of their homes. However, the COVID-19 pandemic has only served to highlight the longstanding "digital divide" that exists in these rural communities.

Broadband Internet would open the door for families within these communities to enhance their children's educational experience, keep at-risk residents safe by allowing them to work from home, allow elderly residents access to essential services, and, just as importantly, stay connected with friends and loved ones in the era of social distancing. Broadband Internet would also give small businesses who are suffering a chance to thrive by offering them the option to provide their services online.

The pandemic has made apparent the need for reliable Broadband Internet in rural Berkeley County. Unserved citizens of Berkeley County were left behind because they needed to conduct school and work from home, but did not have the resources to do so. These citizens have been at a great disadvantage for far too long. They deserve to have the same high speed Internet options as those in neighboring counties, across the state, and around the country.

Home Telecom's reputation and efforts to bring faster Internet to citizens in rural areas of Berkeley County speaks volumes, and I feel Berkeley County citizens would benefit from having access to Home Telecom's fiber optic services. Receiving this matching grant would help Home Telecom bring Broadband Internet service to the Pineville and Jamestown communities, and give residents and businesses a chance to thrive.

Thank you for your consideration of Home Telecom's application for matching grant funding for Berkeley County.

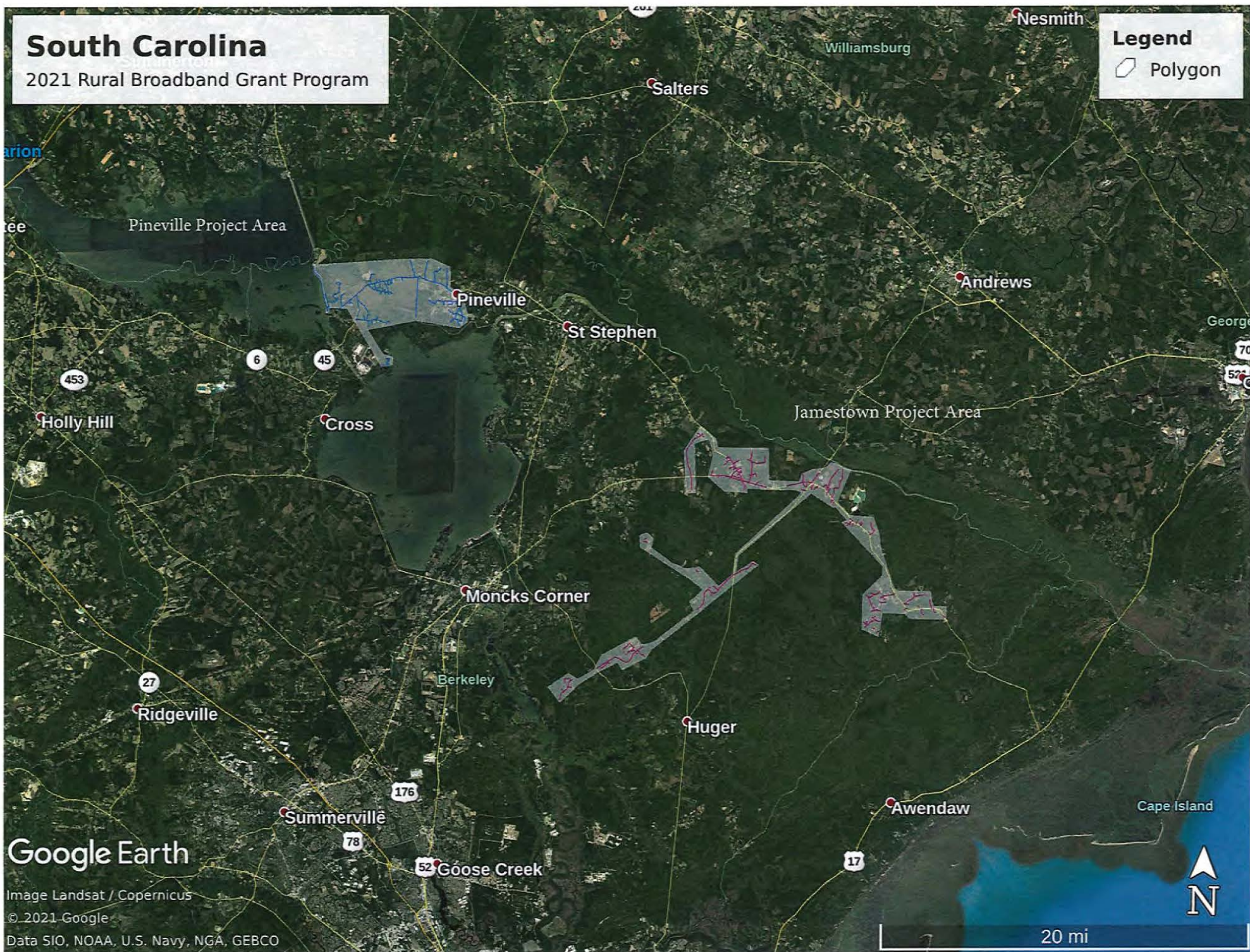
Sincerely,

Joe Jefferson
District 102 - Berkeley & Dorchester Counties

South Carolina

2021 Rural Broadband Grant Program

Legend
Polygon



Google Earth

Image Landsat / Copernicus

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Data SIO, NOAA, U.S. Navy, NGA, GEBCO