



# PUBLIC NOTICE

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## FCC ANNOUNCES THE MEMBERSHIP AND FIRST MEETING OF THE RE-CHARTERED TASK FORCE FOR REVIEWING THE CONNECTIVITY AND TECHNOLOGY NEEDS OF PRECISION AGRICULTURE IN THE UNITED STATES

### GN Docket No. 19-329

This Public Notice serves as notice that, consistent with the Federal Advisory Committee Act<sup>1</sup> and the Agriculture Improvement Act of 2018,<sup>2</sup> Federal Communications Commission Chairwoman Jessica Rosenworcel, in consultation with Secretary of Agriculture Tom Vilsack, has appointed members to serve on the re-chartered Task Force for Reviewing the Connectivity and Technology Needs of Precision Agriculture in the United States (Precision Ag Connectivity Task Force or Task Force). The Task Force will hold its first meeting on **Thursday, January 13, 2022, beginning at 10:00 am EST**. Notice of this meeting will be published in the Federal Register. This Public Notice also provides below a limited exemption from our *ex parte* rules, under authority of section 1.1200(a) of the Commission's rules, 47 CFR § 1.1200(a), for certain communications between Task Force and working group members and FCC staff or Commissioners.<sup>3</sup>

In its second term, the Task Force will continue its work to provide advice and recommendations to the Commission on accelerating the deployment of broadband Internet access service on unserved agricultural land to promote precision agriculture. The Task Force will perform duties and will submit reports consistent with sections 12511(b)(3)(A) and (b)(5) of the 2018 Farm Bill.<sup>4</sup> Four working groups will assist the Task Force in carrying out its work: (1) Mapping and Analyzing Connectivity on Agricultural Lands; (2) Examining Current and Future Connectivity Demand for Precision Agriculture; (3) Encouraging Adoption of Precision Agriculture and Availability of High-Quality Jobs on Connected Farms; (4) Accelerating Broadband Deployment on Unserved Agricultural Lands.<sup>5</sup>

Chairwoman Rosenworcel has designated Teddy Bekele, Land O'Lakes Senior Vice President and Chief Technology Officer, to serve a second term as Chair of the Task Force, and Dr. Michael Adelaine, CIO & Special Advisor to the President, South Dakota State University, to serve as Vice Chair.

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<sup>1</sup> Federal Advisory Committee Act, 5 U.S.C. App. 2 (FACA).

<sup>2</sup> Pub. L. No. 115-334, 132 Stat. 4490 (2018 Farm Bill).

<sup>3</sup> See *FCC Announces the Membership of and First Meeting of the Task Force for Reviewing the Connectivity and Technology Needs of Precision Agriculture in the United States*, GN Docket No. 19-329, Public Notice, 34 FCC Rcd 10493, 10494 (WCB 2019) (providing a similar exemption from our *ex parte* rules for the first term of the Task Force).

<sup>4</sup> 2018 Farm Bill § 12511(b)(3)(A) & (b)(5).

<sup>5</sup> For more information on the working groups, see *FCC Announces and Solicits Nominations for Working Groups of the Task Force for Reviewing the Connectivity and Technology Needs of Precision Agriculture in the United States*, GN Docket No. 19-329, Public Notice, 34 FCC Rcd 10496 (WCB 2019).

A full list of Task Force Members appointed by the Chairwoman in consultation with the Secretary is attached to this Public Notice.

The primary agenda of the Task Force's first meeting will be to introduce members of the Task Force, describe the focus of each working group, review the policies relevant to the Task Force's duties, and begin discussing strategies to advance broadband deployment on agricultural land and promote precision agriculture. This agenda may be modified at the discretion of the Task Force Chair and the Designated Federal Officer.

The Precision Ag Task Force meeting will be wholly electronic and is open to the public on the Internet via live feed from the FCC's web page at [www.fcc.gov/live](http://www.fcc.gov/live).

Open captioning will be provided for this event. Other reasonable accommodations for people with disabilities are available upon request. Requests for such accommodations should be submitted via e-mail to [fcc504@fcc.gov](mailto:fcc504@fcc.gov) or by calling the Consumer and Governmental Affairs Bureau at (202) 418-0530 (voice). Such requests should include a detailed description of the accommodation needed. In addition, please include a way for the FCC to contact the requester if more information is needed to fill the request. Please allow at least five days' advance notice for accommodation requests; last minute requests will be accepted but may not be possible to accommodate.

Members of the public may submit comments to the Task Force in the FCC's Electronic Comment Filing System, ECFS, at [www.fcc.gov/ecfs](http://www.fcc.gov/ecfs). Comments to the Task Force should be filed in GN Docket No. 19-329.

Pursuant to the FACA, the Commission is responsible for oversight of the Task Force, including its subcommittees and working groups.<sup>6</sup> As a result, FCC staff or Commissioners may participate in or attend meetings or other activities held by both the Task Force and its subcommittees and working groups. In light of this, we are announcing that, pursuant to section 1.1200(a) of the Commission's rules, 47 CFR § 1.1200(a), presentations to the Task Force, including to its subcommittees and working groups, and at any roundtable discussions sponsored by the Task Force, as well as presentations between Task Force members (including members of any subcommittees or working groups) and FCC staff or Commissioners incidental to and in connection with such Task Force meetings or roundtable discussions, will be treated as exempt presentations for *ex parte* purposes. This exemption covers presentations from Task Force members to FCC staff and Commissioners in other settings only to the extent that the Task Force members are presenting the views of the Task Force or its working groups, as opposed to an individual member's own views or that of a member's organization. We find that this modification of the *ex parte* rules is in the public interest because it will allow the Task Force to develop and shape its advice and recommendations to the Commission more efficiently and effectively.

We recognize that some issues may be addressed by the Task Force that are the subject of pending FCC proceedings. The Commission will not rely in these proceedings on any information submitted to the Task Force, or to any of its subcommittees, working groups, or sponsored roundtables, or information conveyed by Task Force members (including members of any subcommittees or working groups) to FCC staff or Commissioners unless that information is first placed in the record of the relevant proceeding.

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<sup>6</sup> See 5 U.S.C. App. 2.

More information about the Precision Ag Connectivity Task Force is available at <https://www.fcc.gov/task-force-reviewing-connectivity-and-technology-needs-precision-agriculture-united-states>. You may also contact Jesse Jachman, Designated Federal Officer of the Task Force, at (202) 418-2668, or [Jesse.Jachman@fcc.gov](mailto:Jesse.Jachman@fcc.gov); Elizabeth Cuttner, Deputy Designated Federal Officer, at (202) 418-2145, or [Elizabeth.Cuttner@fcc.gov](mailto:Elizabeth.Cuttner@fcc.gov); or Stacy Ferraro, Deputy Designated Federal Officer, at (202) 418-0795 or [Stacy.Ferarro@fcc.gov](mailto:Stacy.Ferarro@fcc.gov).

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**MEMBERS OF THE TASK FORCE****Chair:**

Teddy Bekele, Senior Vice President and Chief Technology Officer; *Land O'Lakes*

**Vice Chair:**

Michael Adelaine, Ph.D., CIO & Special Advisor to the President; *South Dakota State University*

**Members:**

The Honorable Dale Artho, Commissioner; *Deaf Smith County, TX*

The Honorable Lorraine Ausley, Florida State Senator; *Florida State Senate District 3*

Sreekala Bajwa, Ph.D., Vice President, Dean & Director; *Montana State University College of Agriculture & Montana Agricultural Experiment Station*

Andy Bater, Farmer; *Fifth Estate Growers LLC*

Julie Bushell, President, Paige Wireless; *Irrigation Association*

Anthony Dillard, Tribal Councilman; *Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma*

Michael Gomes, Vice President, Strategic Business Development; *Topcon Agriculture*

Heather Hampton+Knodle, Vice President & Secretary; *Knodle Ltd. Farms*

Robert Hance, President & CEO; *Midwest Energy & Communications*

Ryan Krogh, Manager, Production System Program Management; *John Deere*

Jennifer Manner, Senior Vice President, Regulatory Affairs; *Hughes Network Systems, LLC*

Joy Sterling, Chief Executive Officer; *Iron Horse Vineyards*

Jimmy Todd, Chief Executive Officer & General Manager; *Nex-Tech*

Christopher McLean, Acting Administrator, Rural Utilities Service, United States Department of Agriculture, will serve as an ex-officio, nonvoting member of the Task Force.

Jesse Jachman, Designated Federal Officer  
Elizabeth Cuttner, Deputy Designated Federal Officer  
Stacy Ferraro, Deputy Designated Federal Officer