



PUBLIC NOTICE

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WIRELESS TELECOMMUNICATIONS BUREAU SEEKS COMMENT ON ELIGIBLE-AREAS MAP VERSION 1.2

WC Docket No. 23-328

Comment Date: May 22, 2026

The Wireless Telecommunications Bureau (WTB), in coordination with the Office of Economics and Analytics (OEA), seeks comment on the next version of the Eligible-Areas Map (EA Map) for the Alaska Connect Fund, EA Map version 1.2, which was published today and can be found at the following link: <https://www.fcc.gov/wireline-competition/alaska-connect-fund#mobile-eligible-areas-map>.¹ The *Alaska Connect Fund Order* requires WTB, in coordination with OEA, to publish a map or maps of areas eligible and ineligible for Alaska Connect Fund mobile support, and for the subset of eligible areas, to identify which are in duplicate-support areas, single-support areas, or other eligible areas.²

WTB, in coordination with OEA, has sought comment on previous versions of the EA Map.³ Version 1.2 of the EA Map is the first to integrate providers' feedback regarding their own support areas. This version of the map also includes recent updates to the December 31, 2024 Broadband Data Collection data sets that affect eligible areas in Alaska. In addition, this map removes the incorrect "newly ineligible" designation from some areas that were already ineligible under the Alaska Plan, updates census boundaries consistent with the most recent version of the 2020 census, and shifts some

¹ See generally FCC, Alaska Connect Fund, <https://www.fcc.gov/wireline-competition/alaska-connect-fund>; see also *Connect America Fund; Alaska Connect Fund et al.*, WC Docket Nos. 10-90, 23-328, 16-271, 14-58, 09-197, WT Docket No. 10-208, Report and Order and Further Notice of Proposed Rulemaking, 39 FCC Rcd 12099 (2024) (*Alaska Connect Fund Order*); *Connect American Fund; Alaska Connect Fund et al.*, WC Docket Nos. 23-328 et al, Alaska Connect Fund Order on Reconsideration and Clarification, Alaska Plan Waiver Order, and Order, 40 FCC Rcd 7716 (2025) (*ACF Reconsideration Order*).

² 47 CFR § 54.318(c)(2).

³ *Wireless Telecommunications Bureau Seeks Comment on the Initial Eligible-Areas Map and Performance Plan Template for the Alaska Connect Fund*, WC Docket No. 23-328, Public Notice DA 25-916 (WTB rel. Sept. 30, 2025) (*EA Map Notice*), <https://docs.fcc.gov/public/attachments/DA-25-916A1.pdf>; *Wireless Telecommunications Bureau Extends Comment Deadlines for Alaska Connect Fund Eligible-Areas Map And Performance Plan Template*, WC Docket No. 23-328, Public Notice, DA 25-959 (WTB rel. Nov. 19, 2025) (*EA Map Comment Extension Notice*); *Wireless Telecommunications Bureau Extends Reply Comment Deadline for Alaska Connect Fund Eligible-Areas Map and Performance Plan Template And Provides Additional Information Regarding Updated Eligible Areas Map*, WC Docket No. 23-328, DA 25-1061, Public Notice (WTB Dec. 16, 2025) (extending reply comment period until Jan. 7, 2026). The map is based on mobile providers' Broadband Data Collection (BDC) mobile availability data as of December 31, 2024. See *Alaska Connect Fund Order*, 39 FCC Rcd at 12102, para. 6. Previous versions of the EA Map can be found on the Alaska Connect Fund webpage. See FCC, Alaska Connect Fund, Mobile Eligible Areas Map—Version History, <https://www.fcc.gov/wireline-competition/mobile-eligible-areas-map-version-history>.

single-support eligible blocks from the areas in and around Newtok to Mertarvik.⁴ We rejected submissions that conflict with BDC data⁵ or where one provider claimed another provider's coverage was inaccurate.⁶

We now seek comment on EA Map version 1.2. Providers must ensure that this version of the map accurately reflects their support areas or file further corrections within the comment period.

We provide some reminders on the Alaska Connect Fund requirements to assist providers in their determination of whether the EA Map accurately reflects their support areas. When defining their Alaska Connect Fund support areas, providers should recognize that the Alaska Connect Fund is a mobile broadband plan.⁷ Voice-only coverage areas should not be a part of the EA Map or the provider's commitments unless the provider intends to upgrade to broadband service in those areas.⁸ In short, providers should only include in their coverage areas for this version of the EA Map those hex-9s where they receive Alaska Plan support and offer or intend to offer broadband service, consistent with the requirements of the Alaska Connect Fund. We also remind providers that they must commit to cover any eligible hex-9 in their support area,⁹ and there is a strong presumption against accepting less than a 4G LTE at 5/1 Mbps commitment at any milestone.¹⁰

Additional Information. For further information about this proceeding, email ACF@fcc.gov.

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⁴ See *Connect America Fund—Alaska Plan*, WC Docket No. 16-271, Order, DA 26-249 (WTB 2026) (*Newtok Waiver Order*).

⁵ We remind providers that to be “deemed covered” under the Alaska Connect Fund, the provider needs to cover 70% of the hex-11s within the hex-9. 47 CFR § 54.318(g). Some providers submitted hex-9 coverage based on an incorrect understanding of “deemed covered.”

⁶ See 47 CFR § 1.7006(e) (setting forth the mobile challenge process for challenging providers' coverage data). Where a provider claimed an area was inaccessible for testing in another provider's support area, those too were rejected. See 47 CFR 54.318(h)(6) (“Where two providers cover the same hex-9 and one provider claims that the area is inaccessible for testing, but the other provider does not, the area would become a part of the latter provider's single-support area”).

⁷ See, e.g., 47 CFR § 54.318(f)(6), (f)(8); *Alaska Connect Fund Order*, 39 FCC Rcd at 12102-03, para. 6; *ACF Reconsideration Order*, 40 FCC Rcd at 7730, para. 29.

⁸ While providers are obligated to provide voice service in all of their Alaska Connect Fund commitment areas and maintain at least the same amount of voice service coverage provided in the Alaska Plan, that is a separate public interest obligation. See *ACF Reconsideration Order*, 40 FCC Rcd at 7723-24, para. 17 nn.61 (“In other words, the 2G commitment areas of the Alaska Plan will receive different treatment than the voice areas that are the result of signal bleed beyond the mobile broadband data cell edge: the former needs to be improved pursuant to the mobile provider's ACF commitments; the latter, maintained pursuant to public interest obligations.”); see also 47 CFR § 54.318(f)(6) (“for voice-only areas that exist beyond the cell edge of the mobile commitment areas—based on Alaska Plan service areas—mobile providers do not need to upgrade those areas to 5G-NR or commit to a minimum data speed and may maintain the facilities and voice service already in place, unless otherwise committed to in the Alaska Connect Fund”).

⁹ 47 CFR § 54.318(f)(2).

¹⁰ *ACF Reconsideration Order*, 40 FCC Rcd at 7725, para. 15 (“WTB will have a strong presumption against approving a technology commitment lower than 4G LTE at 5/1 Mbps for any milestone.”).