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For Immediate Release

CHAIRMAN PAI NAMES WORKING GROUP CHAIRS AND VICE CHAIRS OF PRECISION AGRICULTURE TASK FORCE

First Task Force Meeting Scheduled for Monday, December 9 at the FCC

WASHINGTON, December 6, 2019—Federal Communications Commission Chairman Ajit Pai today announced the leadership of the four working groups that will support the work of the FCC’s new Task Force for Reviewing the Connectivity and Technology Needs of Precision Agriculture. The Task Force will hold its first meeting at 9:30 a.m. on Monday, December 9 in the Commission Meeting Room at FCC Headquarters.

“I’m grateful to these eight individuals for stepping up to lead the Task Force’s important working groups,” said FCC Chairman Ajit Pai. “The timing couldn’t be better. This week, I announced my plan for a new 5G Fund, which would set aside at least \$1 billion specifically for deployments facilitating precision agriculture needs. The Task Force will play a critical role in assessing connectivity needs and demand, accelerating deployment on unserved agricultural lands, and promoting adoption of these broadband-based technologies. We’re at a revolutionary moment for American farmers and ranchers who feed the world, and the important work of the Task Force will help shape that connected future.”

The Task Force is a federal advisory committee created to explore ways to enhance the productivity and efficiency of the nation’s farms and ranches through broadband-based technologies. Below are the chairs and vice-chair of the four working groups:

The working group for **Mapping and Analyzing Connectivity on Agricultural Lands** will help identify connectivity gaps on agricultural lands.

Chair:

Michael Adelaine, Ph.D., Vice President for Technology and Security
South Dakota State University

Vice Chair:

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

The working group for **Examining Current and Future Connectivity Demand for Precision Agriculture** will help identify the current and future connectivity needs for precision agriculture applications and identify how those needs may vary for different agricultural producers.

Chair:

Daniel T. Leibfried, Director Advanced Technology, Intelligent Solutions Group
John Deere

Vice Chair:

Blake Hurst, President
Missouri Farm Bureau

The **Encouraging Adoption of Precision Agriculture and Availability of High-Quality Jobs on Connected Farms** working group will explore how to promote adoption of precision agriculture technologies and how such technologies will affect demand for skilled labor in the farming and ranching sectors.

Chair:

Mike McCormick, President
Mississippi Farm Bureau Federation

Vice Chair:

Julie Bushell, President, Paige Wireless
Irrigation Association

The **Accelerating Broadband Deployment on Unserved Agricultural Lands** working group will help identify barriers to infrastructure deployment on agricultural lands and how to promote continued investment in networks serving those areas.

Chair:

Jeff Pettit, President and CEO, Noash Construction, Inc.
National Association of Tower Erectors

Vice Chair:

Heather Hampton Knodle, Vice President, Knodle Ltd. Farms
American Agri-Women

Previously, Chairman Pai announced that the Task Force Chair will be Teddy Bekele, Senior Vice President and Chief Technology Officer, Land O'Lakes. The Vice Chair will be Catherine Moyer, Chief Executive Officer and General Manager, Pioneer Communications.

The Task Force was created by the Agricultural Improvement Act of 2018, which directs the FCC to work with the U.S. Department of Agriculture to establish the Task Force, which will develop policy recommendations to promote the rapid, expanded deployment of broadband Internet access service on agricultural lands. Federal advisory committees were established by Congress to provide federal agencies with outside, expert advice on policy matters.

For more information about the meeting, and to watch the live webcast, visit <https://www.fcc.gov/news-events/events/2019/12/precision-ag-connectivity-task-force-meeting>.

For more information about the Task Force, visit <https://www.fcc.gov/task-force-reviewing-connectivity-and-technology-needs-precision-agriculture-united-states>

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