



Calista Corporation and Alaska Communications Will Bring Affordable, High-Speed Broadband to Seven Tribal Communities in Alaska

October 6, 2022

BETHEL, Alaska--(BUSINESS WIRE)--Oct. 6, 2022-- More than 2,300 rural Alaskans in seven communities along the Kuskokwim River will receive affordable, high-speed internet for the first time thanks to a tribal broadband grant funded by the National Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA).

This press release features multimedia. View the full release here: <https://www.businesswire.com/news/home/20221006005977/en/>



The collaboration between Calista Corporation and Alaska Communications will connect one of the most underserved regions in the United States with a fiber-optic cable that will be the foundation for expanding broadband to communities in the region. This transformative project will give rural residents access to virtual meetings, online classes, telehealth, and online jobs without having to leave their village or way of life.

The communities served include Lower Kalskag, Upper Kalskag, Tuluksak, Akiak, Akiachak, Kwethluk and Napakiak.

Alaska Communications will deploy a fiber-to-the-home network in each community, offering up to Gigabit speed service at affordable rates.

The project is part of the Alaska FiberOptic Project, a larger collaboration between Calista Corporation, Doyon, Limited, Gana-A 'Yoo Limited, Tanana Chiefs Conference and Alaska Communications to connect up to 20 communities along the Yukon and Kuskokwim Rivers with fiber-optic cable. This segment is the second of three segments to get funding.

The community of Akiachak will be served by the Alaska FiberOptic Project. Photo: Calista Corporation

The five companies recognize that reliable, affordable, high-speed internet is the foundation for education, healthcare, economic growth, and quality of life. The COVID-19 pandemic highlighted the importance of broadband and illuminated the growing digital divide across Alaska. The Alaska FiberOptic Project will bridge that divide for many rural communities.

"Reliable, affordable, high-speed internet is a key to connecting our people to the world, preserving and advancing our culture, and offering opportunities for young people in our communities," said Andrew Guy, President and CEO of Calista Corporation. "In combination with other broadband projects in our region, the Alaska FiberOptic Project will create the foundation for many socio-economic improvements and opportunities in the region now and for decades to come."

"This is an exciting milestone for Alaska," said Bill Bishop, president and CEO of Alaska Communications. "We're honored to work with our partners on a project that will be life-changing for many Alaskans, providing the technical expertise and experience building, operating and maintaining critical broadband infrastructure. We thank the NTIA along with President Biden, Senator Murkowski, Senator Sullivan, Representative Peltola, and Governor Dunleavy for their support bringing this important infrastructure to our country and state."

"Alaska's geography, terrain, climate, and vast size have created significant obstacles to developing broadband infrastructure. But rural Alaska is no less deserving of connectivity. For the first time, some of Alaska's most underserved communities will receive high-speed internet access made possible by the Tribal Broadband Connectivity Grant program. The *Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2021* created this program and made \$980 million available for grants to eligible Native entities for broadband deployment. Leading up to its passage, I made sure the program would meet the

unique needs of Alaska, with broad eligibility for Native entities. I commend the partnership and coordination of the successful applicants in securing this grant, which will be transformational," said Senator Lisa Murkowski (R-Alaska).

"Access to high-speed, reliable internet can be life-changing for a community, enhancing the delivery of health care and education, and opening doors for small businesses and entrepreneurs," said Senator Dan Sullivan (R-Alaska). "Many of our rural, Alaska Native communities for too long have found themselves without the broadband connectivity that most Americans take for granted. I'm glad to see the significant federal infrastructure dollars we secured being deployed to break down the digital divide and improve the lives and well-being of thousands of Alaskans across the Lower Kuskokwim region."

"While Alaska villagers work hard at preserving their culture and traditions, they also need reliable, high-speed internet service to manage in today's world. It's essential to conduct business, keep in touch with family, receive medical care and communicate with public agencies. High-speed internet to these underserved communities is the perfect mix of new and old," said Representative Mary Peltola (D-Alaska).

"Now more than ever do we see the critical role that the internet plays in nearly every part of life and the importance of good connectivity for every Alaskan," said Governor Mike Dunleavy. "Ensuring all Alaskans have access to equal economic and educational opportunities has been a priority for me as governor. This new grant from NTIA to Calista and ACS is a great opportunity to build connectivity in Alaska for the next 10, 20, and 50 years."

Alaska Communications will begin the permit and construction process as quickly as possible. It will also offer a \$75/month discount for households on qualifying Tribal lands through the Affordable Connectivity Program. Customers can learn more and enroll at acpbenefit.org.

Calista Corporation

Calista Corporation has over 35,000 Shareholders and is the parent company of more than 30 subsidiaries in the following industries: defense contracting, construction, real estate, environmental services, natural resource development, marine transportation, oilfield services, and heavy equipment sales, service and rentals. Since 1994, Calista has provided more than \$5.9 million in scholarships to its Shareholders and Descendants. Since inception, Calista has declared more than \$108.3 million in distributions to Shareholders, including \$9.2 million in Elders' Benefit Program distributions to Shareholders. Calista can be found on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#) and [Instagram](#).

Alaska Communications

Alaska Communications, a subsidiary of ATN International, Inc. (NASDAQ: ATNI), is the leading provider of advanced broadband and managed IT services for businesses and consumers in Alaska. The company operates a highly reliable, advanced statewide data network with the latest technology and the most diverse undersea fiber optic system connecting Alaska to the contiguous U.S. For more information, visit www.AlaskaCommunications.com.

View source version on businesswire.com: <https://www.businesswire.com/news/home/20221006005977/en/>

Calista Corporation
Thom Leonard
907-275-2863
media@calistacorp.com

Alaska Communications
Heather Marron
907-564-1326
heather.marron@acsalaska.com

Source: Alaska Communications