



American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 Broadband Initiatives, NRTC and DigitalBridge Communications to NTIA and RUS on April 13, 2009

Using their experience “with the challenges inherent in bringing communications services to rural America” as a foundation, the National Rural Telecommunications Cooperative (NRTC) and DigitalBridge Communications Corp. (DBC) filed a response to a Joint Request for Information (RFI) issued by the National Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA) and the Rural Utilities Service (RUS) on April 13, 2009.

The response provides sensible definitions for many of the critical terms of the broadband stimulus sections of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA). In addition, the response suggested the following:

- Establishing grant criteria that considers speed to deploy, cost, broadband quality, job creation, broadband service to multiple constituencies, plans for sustainable broadband adoption, experience, local ties, local support and state support
- Requiring states to elect how they will participate in the NTIA program in order to eliminate conflicts of interest.
- Progress in deploying broadband does not await national mapping
- That RUS awards grants for rural projects—not loans
- That NTIA/RUS make grant determinations within 90 days of filing