



# New Chapters in the Universal Service Fund's Story of Success

How additional resources from the FCC's December 2018 USF Order are being put to work by America's rural broadband companies.



## Moundridge Telephone Co.

Moundridge Telephone Co. is a family-owned and operated telecommunications company located in central Kansas. The sufficiency and predictability of Universal Service Fund (USF) support resulting from the FCC's December 2018 USF Order has made it possible for Moundridge to extend fiber to a new wastewater facility desperately needed by the community. Additionally, the city office is relocating to another part of the community where USF support will enable Moundridge to install fiber. Along with this new connection for the governmental office, Moundridge will be installing fiber to 40

neighboring locations that would not have received upgraded services without the resources provided by the FCC's December 2018 USF Order. These new locations include residences, businesses and a school. Moundridge Vice President Sommer Smith noted that prior to the FCC's Order, "Funding was going down at a drastic rate, and there was no way we would have been able to build anything without the Order."



**"Moundridge will be installing fiber to 40 neighboring locations that would not have received upgraded services without the resources provided by the FCC's December 2018 USF Order."**



## Golden West Telecommunications

The service area of Golden West Telecommunications—a 2018 Smart Rural Community (SRC) Showcase Award winner—spans nearly 25,000 square miles across rural South Dakota, including five tribal communities. Cuts in USF support forced Golden West to limit plans in past years for deployment of increased network capacity to a number of rural communities; however, in the wake of the FCC’s December 2018 USF Order, Golden West revised its plans to extend fiber connections to at least 2,400 additional locations in 2020—nearly 1,000 more locations than in 2019. These locations include farms, which benefit from broadband connections for “connected-ag” applications such as crop and soil sensors or livestock monitoring, and a number of homes

where connections may also be used for home-based businesses or teleworking. Golden West Chief Executive Officer Denny Law said rarely a week goes by that he doesn’t hear a customer describe a unique way they are using broadband technology. “That’s what we are enabling, and that’s what keeps us going,” Law said.



**“In the wake of the FCC’s December 2018 USF Order, Golden West revised its plans to extend fiber connections to at least 2,400 additional locations in 2020—nearly 1,000 more locations than in 2019.”**



## GTC Broadband

GTC Broadband, which serves an area of approximately 120 square miles in rural southwest Missouri, began installing fiber 10 years ago to serve residents and businesses located in Granby and Diamond, Mo. The sufficient and predictable support restored by the FCC’s December 2018 USF Order enabled GTC to secure the loan financing necessary to complete this decade-long fiber project. Following three years of delay due to uncertainty surrounding universal service funding, GTC President Jon Stouffer now anticipates that the company will install fiber to 100% of locations in Granby and Diamond by 2022. GTC’s installation of fiber in Diamond has resulted in a number of new homes being

built in what some residents are finding to be a great place to work remotely or live in while commuting 30 miles to Joplin, Mo. The local school has also been able to connect to GTC’s fiber network for even higher speeds and capabilities.



**“Following three years of delay due to uncertainty surrounding universal service funding, GTC President Jon Stouffer now anticipates that the company will install fiber to 100% of locations in Granby and Diamond by 2022.”**



## Farmers Mutual Cooperative Telephone Co.

Farmers Mutual Cooperative Telephone Co. (FMCTC) has been serving communities in west central Iowa since 1904, and currently provides broadband service to 14 communities. The FCC's December 2018 USF Order provided resources that will enable FMCTC to deliver 25/3 Mbps broadband service to 100 locations that were previously lacking even 10/1 Mbps service. FMCTC's ability to reach more locations and customers has also enabled the company to engineer a more efficient and effective transport network, and FMCTC has passed on those savings to K–12 schools, allowing the schools to purchase the bandwidth needed for a “one to one” ratio of devices to students. In addition, FMCTC has partnered with area K–12 schools to provide

students who qualify for free and reduced lunch with extended 25/3 broadband service in their homes, accessible only through the school device. This partnership provides all students in FMCTC's service area the ability to use technology to advance their education and improve learning. FMCTC hopes that providing broadband service throughout its communities will not only keep residents from moving out of the area, but also will create opportunities for students and adults to return to the area.



**“The FCC's December 2018 USF Order provided resources that will enable FMCTC to deliver 25/3 Mbps broadband service to 100 locations that were previously lacking even 10/1 Mbps service.”**



## Totelcom Communications, LLC

Totelcom Communications, LLC—a 2017 SRC Showcase Award Winner—provides broadband service to approximately 4,500 locations across 1,182 square miles in central Texas. Given the distance between locations, finding ways to provide reliable high-speed internet service to many of the residents and businesses located throughout the community is challenging both technically and financially; however, the predictability and sufficiency of universal service support established by the FCC's December 2018 USF Order enabled Totelcom to increase its 2019–20 capital budget by 20%. This budget increase allowed Totelcom to replace aging and deteriorating copper network

facilities with fiber in three additional communities, resulting in a very rapid increase in broadband adoption and a much higher nightly peak usage rate on the company's network—an indication that consumer demand has been unleashed as a result of Totelcom's network upgrades.



**“The predictability and sufficiency of universal service support established by the FCC's December 2018 USF Order enabled Totelcom to increase its 2019–20 capital budget by 20%.”**



4121 Wilson Boulevard • Suite 1000 • Arlington, VA 22203-1801  
P (703) 351-2000

[www.NTCA.org](http://www.NTCA.org)