



PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION
STATE OF CALIFORNIA
505 VAN NESS AVENUE | SAN FRANCISCO, CALIFORNIA 94102

June 7, 2024

Jeff Blagg
Right-of-Way Engineer
Plumas-Sierra Telecommunications (PST)
Jeff.Blagg@psrec.com

Re: PST Portola-Delleker-Whitehawk, PST Plumas Pines-Graeagle, PST Quincy Coax Conversion

Dear Jeff Blagg,

The California Public Utilities Commission (Commission) is pleased to inform you that Plumas-Sierra Telecommunications' applications to the Last Mile Federal Funding Account program for the following projects and grant request amounts have been approved:

- PST Portola-Delleker-Whitehawk for \$6,018,607
- PST Plumas Pines-Graeagle for \$5,134,398
- PST Quincy Coax Conversion for \$5,595,647.

Pursuant to Decision (D.) 22-04-055, Appendix A, section 13, the Commission delegates to Staff the authority to approve applications that meet all the criteria for Ministerial Review. Your applications were received on September 28, 2023, and posted on the Commission's Federal Funding Account Last Mile webpage. Staff reviewed the applications referenced for compliance with Commission and federal rules, conducted fiscal and technical analysis, and determined that your applications meet the eligibility requirements for Ministerial Review and are eligible for a grant under the program.

The award is predicated on Plumas-Sierra Telecommunications' agreement to construct its project as detailed in its application. In its application, Plumas-Sierra Telecommunications agreed to comply with the Ministerial Review criteria as well as to fulfill all requirements, guidelines, and conditions associated with Federal Funding Account Last Mile grant funds as specified in D. 22-04-055.


All awards are contingent on available state budget appropriations funding and may be subject to Budget Letter 24-07.¹ The effective date of each award and encumbrance of funds is to be set, in consultation with Plumas-Sierra Telecommunications, by letter from the Communications Division Director or the director's delegate or designee. Grants in this letter will not be enforceable commitments unless and until an effective

¹ Department of Finance Budget Letter 24-07, "Onetime Appropriation(s) Expenditure Freeze Pursuant to Section 21 of the Budget Act of 2023 (As Amended by Section 74 of AB 106 (Chapter 9, Statutes of 2024))," available at: <https://dof.ca.gov/wp-content/uploads/sites/352/2024/04/BL-24-07.pdf>

date of award is set and a grant agreement is executed (forthcoming in a separate letter). The attached appendices include project summaries and tables.

Thank you for your application and please direct any questions to FederalFundingAccount@Cpuc.Ca.Gov. We appreciate your efforts to provide service to our fellow Californians.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Maria Ellis".

Maria Isabel Ellis
Deputy Director of Broadband
California Public Utilities Commission

Appendix A

Plumas County Awards

The allocation for projects in Plumas County in D. 22-04-005 is \$42,282,567. This letter awards three grants to Plumas-Sierra Telecommunications for projects in Plumas County. The awarded grant amount for projects in Plumas County is \$16,748,652, which leaves a remainder of \$32,470,739 of the allocation for Plumas County.

1. Plumas-Sierra Telecommunications, PST Portola-Delleker-Whitehawk Project

Plumas-Sierra Telecommunications' PST Portola Delleker-Whitehawk project complies with program rules as stated in D. 22-04-055. The Commission approves Plumas-Sierra Telecommunications' application for a grant of up to \$6,018,607 for the PST Portola-Delleker-Whitehawk project.

a. Summary

Plumas-Sierra Telecommunications proposes serving 1,218 unserved locations and an unserved population of 2,264. A population of 2,839 will benefit from these investments in and around the communities of Portola, Delleker, and Whitehawk. The last-mile fiber project will provide up to one gigabit per second symmetrical service to consumers.

The PST Portola-Delleker-Whitehawk project will benefit disadvantaged or Environmental and Social Justice communities;² 86 percent of the unserved locations are low-income. Plumas-Sierra Telecommunications has committed to maintaining its prices for at least 10 years, and will provide a low-cost plan that meets the requirements in D. 22-04-055, Section 3.

The proposed project will cost an estimated \$6 million, of which the Federal Funding Account will fund 100 percent of costs.

Staff determined that the applicant and the project are financially viable, and the applicant's engineering meets the program standards. The applicant has demonstrated that it has the administrative, technical, and operational capacity to provide broadband service at the scale of this project.

No Federal Funding Account Public Map comments were submitted in Plumas County.³ The PST Portola-Delleker-Whitehawk project area's unserved locations were evaluated in light of the latest Federal Communications Commission and Federal Funding Account unserved data (as of June 30, 2023). This application did not receive any objections, and in response to zero objections and this data, the number of unserved locations is unchanged at 1,218, the project area is unchanged, and the total grant amount is unchanged.

² The CPUC Environmental and Social Justice Action plan includes definitions and data indicators for disadvantaged or Environmental and Social Justice communities including Disadvantaged Communities defined by the California Environmental Protection Agency and low-income households defined as household incomes below 80 percent of the area median income.

The CPUC's Environmental and Social Justice Action Plan 2.0 is available at: <https://www.cpuc.ca.gov/-/media/cpuc-website/divisions/news-and-outreach/documents/news-office/key-issues/esj/esj-action-plan-v2jw.pdf>

³ See Federal Funding Account Public Map, <https://federalfundingaccountmap.vetro.io/> (visited April 28, 2024).

State Senator Brian Dahle and the Lost Sierra Chamber of Commerce each submitted a letter of support for this application.

The proposed project provides the public safety benefits of reliable broadband infrastructure and will benefit households located in Tier 2 High Fire Threat Districts. This project will connect to Plumas-Sierra Telecommunications' open-access middle-mile infrastructure, which utilized funds from the federal American Recovery and Reinvestment Act and the California Advanced Services Fund.⁴

b. California Environmental Quality Act

Before authorizing funding for the construction of Federal Funding Account projects, the Commission must either:

- determine that the project meets the criteria for a statutorily or categorical exempt pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act, or
- prepare and certify the appropriate environmental study.

For the proposed PST Portola-Delleker-Whitehawk project, the Commission has determined that the PST Portola-Delleker-Whitehawk project is categorically exempt from California Environmental Quality Act review.

Plumas-Sierra Telecommunications provided the Commission with its project plans to install fiber and supporting facilities within existing public rights-of-way and primarily on existing poles as well as Best Management Practices to be implemented during construction. The project would construct approximately 34.1 miles of aerial and approximately 24.6 miles of underground fiber-optic infrastructure off Highways 70 and 89 in the Portola, Delleker and Whitehawk communities of Plumas County. Plumas-Sierra Telecommunications would utilize existing rights-of-way that it and its parent company (Plumas-Sierra Rural Electric Cooperative) have in place, as well as positions on poles and underground facilities it currently has rights to from the purchase of assets from a defunct cable TV company. The aerial portion would follow existing rights-of-way and easements. When placing fiber on existing poles or replacing poles, Plumas-Sierra Telecommunications would ensure the poles comply with General Order 95. New underground construction, when necessary, would occur in existing public utility easements. Following the installation of conduit and cable, Plumas-Sierra Telecommunications would return the site to its original condition.

Based on the information that PST provided, the Commission's Energy Division has confirmed that the project meets the criteria for the California Environmental Quality Act categorical exemptions under 14 C.C.R. § 15301 (Existing Facilities), 14 C.C.R. § 15302 (Replacement or Reconstruction), and 14 C.C.R. § 15303 (New Construction or Conversion of Small Structures). Thus, the PST Portola-Delleker-Whitehawk Project is categorically exempt from California Environmental Quality Act review and the Commission may authorize funds for construction activities.

c. Conclusion

Plumas-Sierra Telecommunications and the PST Portola-Delleker-Whitehawk project comply with all requirements for approval in D. 22-04-055. The Commission approves Plumas-Sierra Telecommunications' application for a grant of up to \$6,018,607 for the PST Portola-Delleker-Whitehawk project.

⁴ See D.21-03-006, Decision Modifying Data Submission Requirements and Requiring Open Access For California Advanced Services Fund Projects.

2. Plumas-Sierra Telecommunications, PST Plumas Pines-Graeagle Project

Plumas-Sierra Telecommunications' PST Plumas Pines-Graeagle project complies with program rules as stated in D. 22-04-055. The Commission approves Plumas-Sierra Telecommunications' application for a grant of up to \$5,134,398 for the PST Plumas Pines-Graeagle project.

a. Summary

Plumas-Sierra Telecommunications proposes serving 1,445 unserved locations and an unserved population of 975. A population of 1,024 will benefit from these investments in and around the communities of Plumas Pines and Graeagle. The last-mile fiber project will provide up to one gigabit per second symmetrical service to consumers.

The PST Plumas Pines-Graeagle project will benefit disadvantaged or Environmental and Social Justice communities; 34 percent of the unserved locations are low-income. Plumas-Sierra Telecommunications has committed to maintaining its prices for at least 10 years, and will provide a low-cost plan that meets the requirements in D. 22-04-055, Section 3.

The proposed project will cost an estimated \$5 million, of which the Federal Funding Account will fund 100 percent of costs.

Staff determined that the applicant and the project are financially viable, and the applicant's engineering meets the program standards. The applicant has demonstrated that it has the administrative, technical, and operational capacity to provide broadband service at the scale of this project. In accordance with D. 22-04-055, the proposed project area is unserved.

No Federal Funding Account Public Map comments were submitted in Plumas County.⁵ The PST Plumas Pines-Graeagle project area's unserved locations were evaluated in light of the latest Federal Communications Commission and Federal Funding Account unserved data (as of June 30, 2023). This application did not receive any objections, and in response to zero objections and this data, the unserved locations is revised from 1,434 to 1,445, the project area is unchanged, and the total grant amount is unchanged.

State Senator Brian Dahle and the Lost Sierra Chamber of Commerce each submitted a letter of support for this application.

The proposed project provides the public safety benefits of reliable broadband infrastructure and will benefit households located in Tier 2 High Fire Threat Districts. This project will connect to Plumas-Sierra Telecommunications' open-access middle-mile infrastructure, which, utilized funds from the federal American Recovery and Reinvestment Act and the California Advanced Services Fund.⁶

b. California Environmental Quality Act

Before authorizing funding for the construction of Federal Funding Account projects, the Commission must either:

- determine that the project meets the criteria for a statutorily or categorical exempt pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act, or

⁵ See Federal Funding Account Public Map, <https://federalfundingaccountmap.vetro.io/> (visited April 28, 2024).

⁶ See D.21-03-006, Decision Modifying Data Submission Requirements and Requiring Open Access For California Advanced Services Fund Projects.

- prepare and certify the appropriate environmental study.

For the proposed PST Plumas Pines-Graeagle project, the Commission has determined that the PST Plumas Pines-Graeagle project is categorically exempt from California Environmental Quality Act review.

Plumas-Sierra Telecommunications provided the Commission with its project plans to install fiber and supporting facilities within existing public rights-of-way and primarily on existing poles as well as Best Management Practices to be implemented during construction. The project would construct approximately 37.1 miles of aerial and approximately 35.8 miles of underground fiber-optic infrastructure off Highway 89 and Graeagle-Johnsville Road in the Plumas Pines and Graeagle communities of Plumas County. Plumas-Sierra Telecommunications would utilize existing rights-of-way that it and its parent company (Plumas-Sierra Rural Electric Cooperative) have in place. The aerial portion would follow existing rights-of-way and easements. When placing fiber on existing poles or replacing poles, Plumas-Sierra Telecommunications would ensure the poles comply with General Order 95. New underground construction, when necessary, would occur in existing public utility easements. Following the installation of conduit and cable, Plumas-Sierra Telecommunications would return the site to its original condition.

c. Conclusion

Plumas-Sierra Telecommunications and the PST Plumas Pines-Graeagle project comply with all requirements for approval in D. 22-04-055. The Communications Division recommends that the Commission approve Plumas-Sierra Telecommunications' application for a grant of up to \$5,134,398 for the PST Plumas Pines-Graeagle project.

3. Plumas-Sierra Telecommunications, PST Quincy Coax Conversion

Plumas-Sierra Telecommunications' PST Quincy Coax Conversion project complies with program rules as stated in D. 22-04-055. Staff recommends the Commission approve Plumas-Sierra Telecommunications' application for a grant of up to \$5,595,647 for the PST Quincy Coax Conversion project.

a. Summary

Plumas-Sierra Telecommunications proposes serving 1,029 unserved locations and an unserved population of 2,079. A population of 2,594 will benefit from these investments in and around the Quincy community. The last-mile fiber project will provide up to one gigabit per second symmetrical service to consumers.

The PST Quincy Coax Conversion project will benefit disadvantaged or Environmental and Social Justice communities; 49 percent of the unserved locations are low-income. Plumas-Sierra Telecommunications has committed to maintaining its prices for at least 10 years, and will provide a low-cost plan that meets the requirements in D. 22-04-055, Section 3.

The proposed project will cost an estimated \$6 million, of which the Federal Funding Account will fund 100 percent of costs.

Staff determined that the applicant and the project are financially viable, and the applicant's engineering meets the program standards. The applicant has demonstrated that it has the administrative, technical, and operational capacity to provide broadband service at the scale of this project.

No Federal Funding Account Public Map comments were submitted in Plumas County.⁷ The PST Quincy Coax Conversion project area project area's unserved locations were evaluated in light of the latest Federal

⁷ See Federal Funding Account Public Map, <https://federalfundingaccountmap.vetro.io/> (visited April 28, 2024).

Communications Commission and Federal Funding Account unserved data (as of June 30, 2023). This application did not receive any objections, and in response to zero objections and this data, the number of unserved locations is unchanged at 1,029, the project area is unchanged, and the total grant amount is unchanged.

State Senator Brian Dahle and the Lost Sierra Chamber of Commerce each submitted a letter of support for this application.

The proposed project provides the public safety benefits of reliable broadband infrastructure and will benefit households located in Tier 2 High Fire Threat Districts. This project will connect to Plumas-Sierra Telecommunications' open-access middle-mile infrastructure, which utilized funds from the federal American Recovery and Reinvestment Act and the California Advanced Services Fund.⁸

b. California Environmental Quality Act

Before authorizing funding for the construction of Federal Funding Account projects, the Commission must either:

- determine that the project meets the criteria for a statutorily or categorical exempt pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act, or
- prepare and certify the appropriate environmental study.

For the proposed Quincy Coax Conversion project, the Commission has determined that the Quincy Coax Conversion project is categorically exempt from California Environmental Quality Act review.

Plumas-Sierra Telecommunications provided the Commission with its project plans to install fiber and supporting facilities within existing public rights-of-way and primarily on existing poles as well as Best Management Practices to be implemented during construction. The project would construct 30.1 miles of aerial and 8 miles of underground fiber optic infrastructure off State Route 70 in the Quincy community of Plumas County. Plumas-Sierra Telecommunications would utilize existing rights-of-way that it and its parent company (Plumas-Sierra Rural Electric Cooperative) have in place, as well as positions on poles and underground facilities it currently has rights to from the purchase of assets from a defunct cable TV company. The aerial portion would follow existing rights-of-way and easements. When placing fiber on existing poles or replacing poles, Plumas-Sierra Telecommunications would ensure the poles comply with General Order 95. New underground construction, when necessary, would occur in existing public utility easements. Following the installation of conduit and cable, Plumas-Sierra Telecommunications would return the site to its original condition.

Based on the information that Plumas-Sierra Telecommunications provided, the Commission's Energy Division has confirmed that the project meets the criteria for the California Environmental Quality Act categorical exemptions under 14 C.C.R. § 15301 (Existing Facilities), 14 C.C.R. § 15302 (Replacement or Reconstruction), and 14 C.C.R. § 15303 (New Construction or Conversion of Small Structures). Thus, the Quincy Coax Conversion Project is categorically exempt from California Environmental Quality Act review and the Commission may authorize funds for construction activities.

⁸ See D.21-03-006, Decision Modifying Data Submission Requirements and Requiring Open Access For California Advanced Services Fund Projects.

c. Conclusion

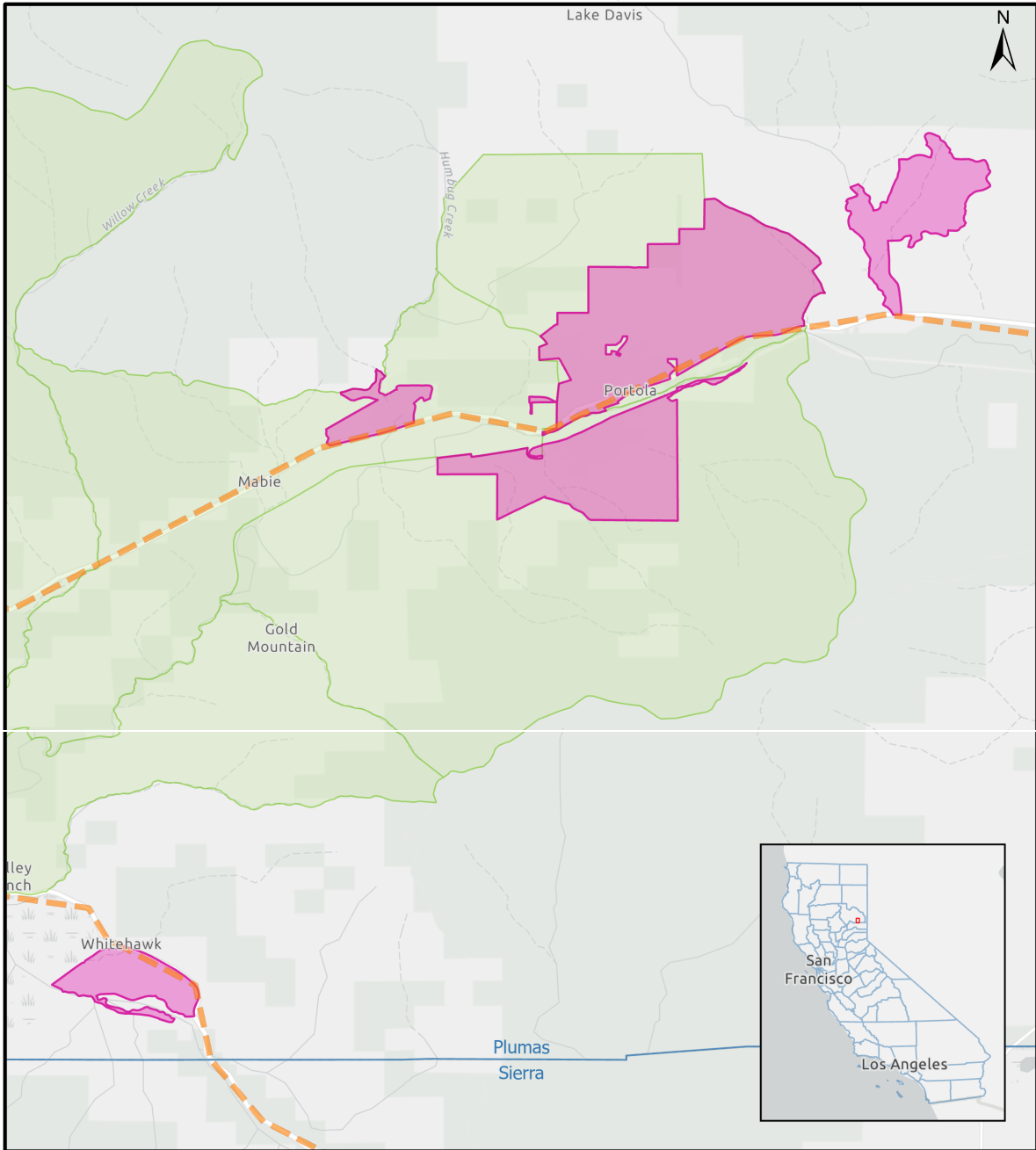
Plumas-Sierra Telecommunications and the PST Quincy Coax Conversion project comply with all requirements for approval in D. 22-04-055. The Commission awards Plumas-Sierra Telecommunications' application for a grant of up to \$5,595,647 for the PST Quincy Coax Conversion project.

Appendix B
PST Portola-Delleker-Whitehawk
Key Information

Project Name	PST Portola-Delleker-Whitehawk
Applicant Name	Plumas-Sierra Telecommunications
Community Names	Portola, Delleker and Whitehawk
County	Plumas County
County Allocation	\$42,282,567
Project Size (in square miles)	11
Maximum Download/Upload speed	Up to 1 Gbps / 1 Gbps
Percent Disadvantaged Communities	0 percent
Percent Low-Income Areas	86 percent
Median Household Income (weighted)	\$56,159
Area Population	2,839
Households	1,175
Estimated unserved population in the project area	2,264
Estimated unserved locations in the project area	1,218
Does the project connect to public open access middle mile?	Yes
Deployment Schedule	18 months
Total Project Cost	\$6,018,607
Amount of FFA grant funds requested	\$6,018,607
Applicant funded	\$0
Grant per unserved location passed	\$4,941

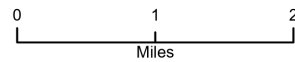
Map of PST Portola-Delleker-Whitehawk

Plumas-Sierra Telecommunications- PST Portola-Delleker-Whitehawk Plumas County



PST Portola-Delleker-Whitehawk

- Middle Mile Broadband Initiative
- FFA Project Areas
- Low-Income Areas



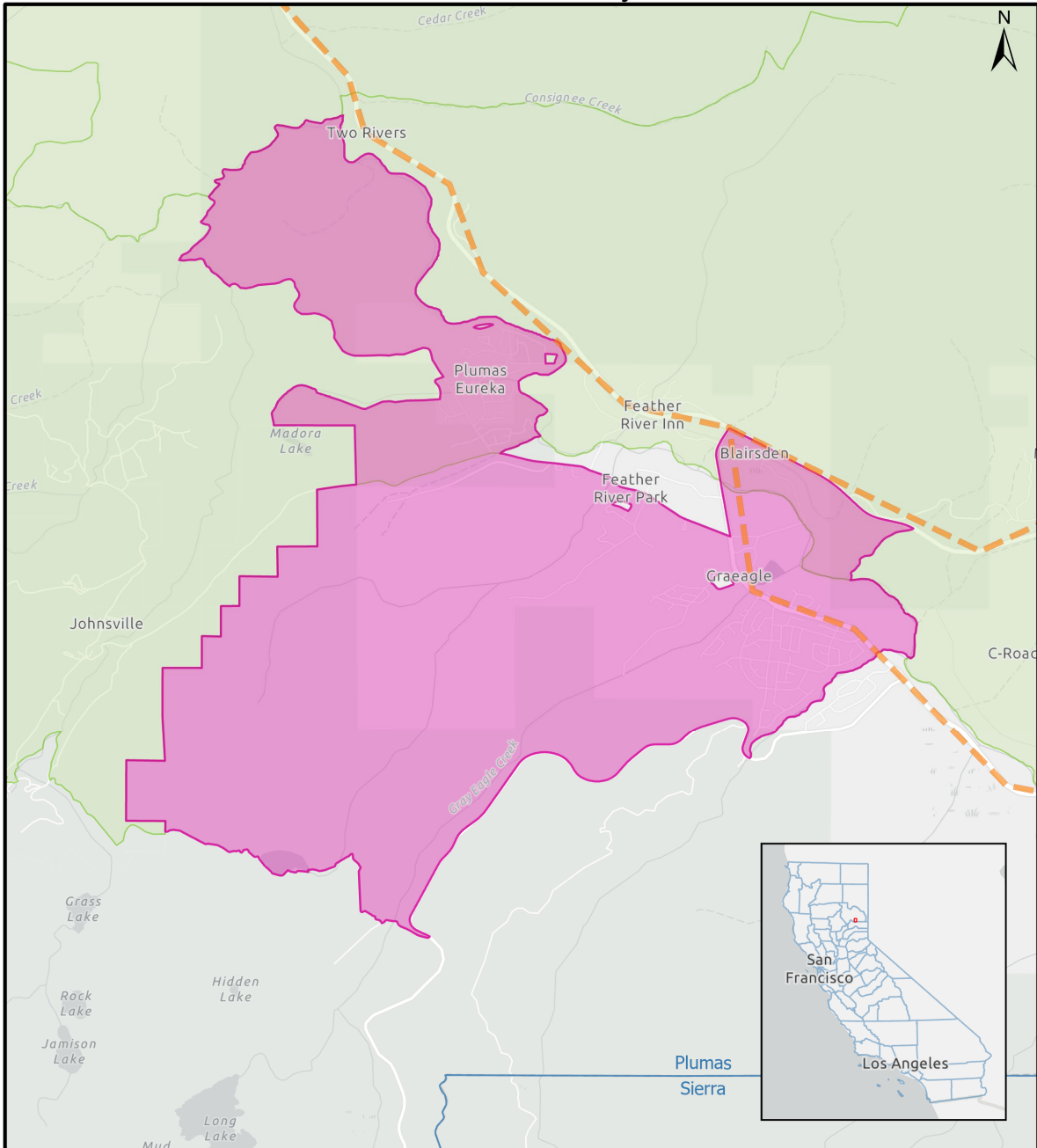
Map created by Chico State for Last Mile Federal Funding Account Program on April 24, 2024.

Appendix C
PST Plumas Pines-Graeagle
Key Information




Project Name	PST Plumas Pines-Graeagle
Applicant Name	Plumas-Sierra Telecommunications
Community Names	Plumas Pines and Graeagle
County	Plumas County
County Allocation	\$42,282,567
Project Size (in square miles)	24
Maximum Download/Upload speed	Up to 1000 Mbps / 1000 Mbps
Percent Disadvantaged Communities	0 percent
Percent Low-Income Areas	34 percent
Median Household Income (weighted)	\$66,146
Area Population	1,024
Households	546
Estimated unserved population in the project area	975
Estimated unserved locations in the project area	1,445
Does the project connect to public open access middle mile?	Yes
Deployment Schedule	18 months
Total Project Cost	\$5,134,398
Amount of FFA grant funds requested	\$5,134,398
Applicant funded	\$0
Grant per unserved location passed	\$3,553

Map of PST Plumas Pines-Graeagle

Plumas-Sierra Telecommunications- PST Plumas Pines-Graeagle Plumas County



PST Plumas Pines-Graeagle

-  Middle Mile Broadband Initiative
-  FFA Project Areas
-  Low-Income Areas



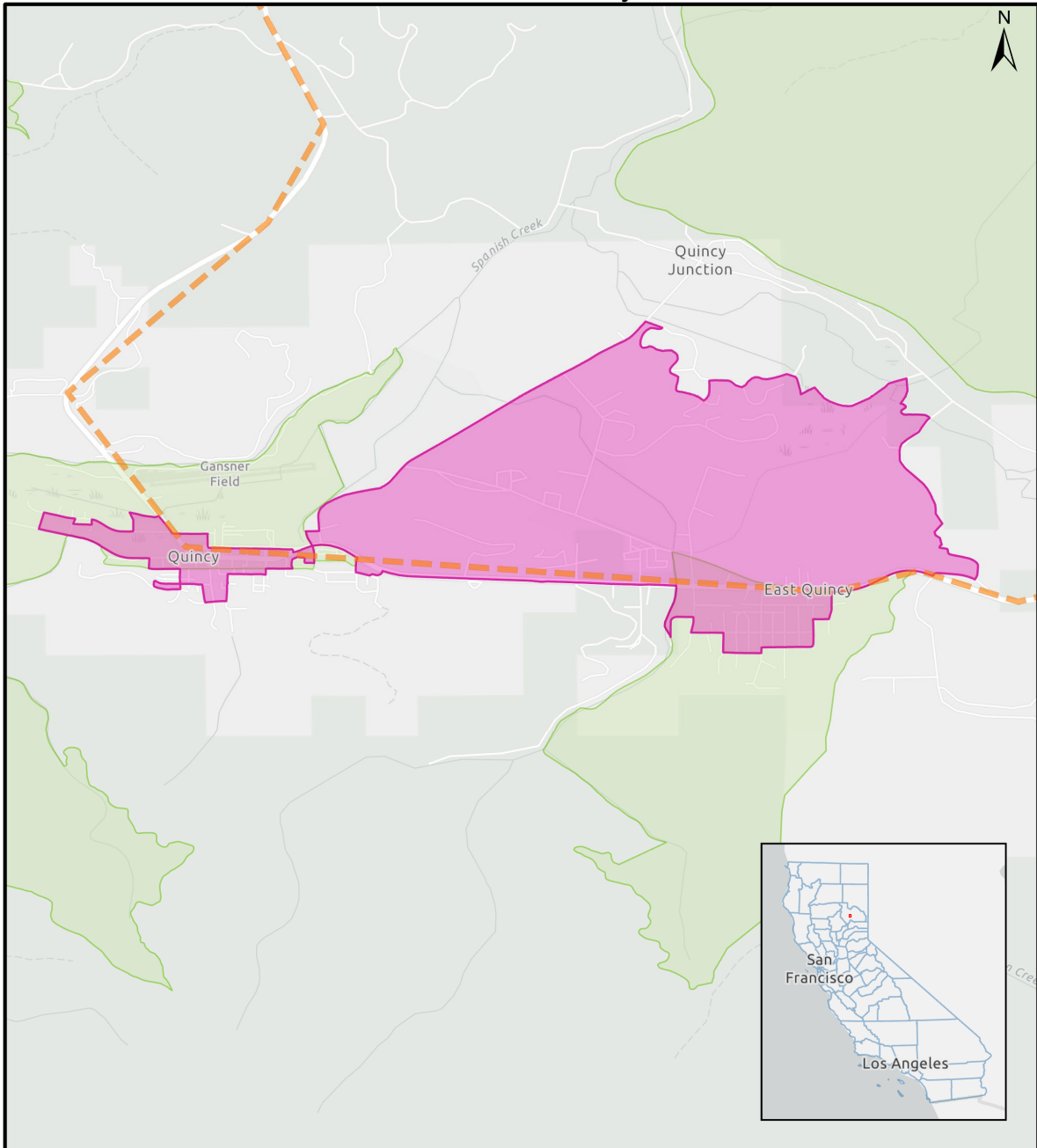
Map created by Chico State for Last Mile Federal Funding Account Program on April 24, 2024.

Appendix D
PST Quincy Coax Conversion
Key Information




Project Name	Quincy Coax Conversion
Applicant Name	Plumas-Sierra Telecommunications
Community Names	Quincy
County	Plumas County
County Allocation	\$42,282,567
Project Size (in square miles)	6
Maximum Download/Upload speed	Up to 1000 Mbps / 1000 Mbps
Percent Disadvantaged Communities	0 percent
Percent Low-Income Areas	48 percent
Median Household Income (weighted)	\$59,205
Area Population	2,594
Households	1,159
Estimated unserved population in the project area	2,079
Estimated unserved locations in the project area	1,029
Does the project connect to public open access middle mile?	Yes
Deployment Schedule	18 months
Total Project Cost	\$5,595,647
Amount of FFA grant funds requested	\$5,595,647
Applicant funded	\$0
Grant per unserved location passed	\$5,438

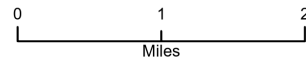
Map of PST Quincy Coax Conversion

Plumas-Sierra Telecommunications- PST Quincy Coax Conversion Plumas County



PST Quincy Coax Conversion

-  Middle Mile Broadband Initiative
-  FFA Project Areas
-  Low-Income Areas



Map created by Chico State for Last Mile Federal Funding Account Program on April 24, 2024.