






JACKSON COUNTY BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

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PRESS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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February 14, 2025

JACKSON COUNTY MAKING STRIDES IN BROADBAND EXPANSION

Jackson County, FL – Jackson County is making significant progress in its ongoing efforts to expand broadband infrastructure and increase digital equity for residents. Recognizing the vital role of high-speed internet in economic development, education, and quality of life, Jackson County leaders have prioritized broadband expansion as a key initiative.

Bringing broadband access to a rural community presents unique challenges, requiring collaboration among multiple agencies and access to critical funding opportunities. One of the primary funding sources helping to bridge the digital divide has been the **Rural Digital Opportunity Fund (RDOF)**— a federal auction program held in 2020 that allocated \$20.4 billion to expand broadband access in underserved areas, such as Jackson County.

To maximize current and future opportunities, **West Florida Electric Cooperative (WFEC)** is in discussions with **Conexon**, an industry leader in rural fiber broadband design and construction. Working with Conexon and its Internet Service Provider arm, Connect, would allow for leveraging WFEC's existing infrastructure to extend reliable and affordable high-speed internet to unserved and underserved areas. By utilizing pole attachments and the cooperative's other existing assets, the collaboration could pave the way for an efficient yet world-class broadband network to potentially encompass **all of the counties WFEC serves**.

The work happening behind the scenes to bring broadband to Jackson County is a testament to the commitment of local government, industry partners, and the electric cooperative. Expanding broadband infrastructure will not only provide affordable and reliable internet access but will also open doors for educational advancements, telehealth services, and economic growth.

The County and its partners continue to work diligently to implement broadband solutions and ensure that residents and businesses have access to modern connectivity. As these efforts progress, West Florida Electric Cooperative, Conexon Connect, and Jackson County officials remain steadfast in their goal to eliminate the digital divide and create new opportunities for all citizens.

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