



CHAIRMAN DANE MAXWELL
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PSC Chairman Maxwell Approves \$7.8 million to CoastConnect, LLC for Broadband Deployment
CoastConnect, a subsidiary of Coast Electric, was awarded these federal funds through the Rural Digital Opportunity Fund Phase 1 Auction

(KILN, MS) – Today, Chairman Dane Maxwell of the Mississippi Public Service Commission joined leadership and staff from CoastConnect, LLC, a subsidiary of Coast Electric Power Association, to formally sign an order releasing \$7.8 million to bring high-speed internet to its service area of Hancock, Harrison and Pearl River counties.

“I am honored for the opportunity to sign off on projects like this that bring such a huge benefit to the people of Mississippi,” Chairman Dane Maxwell said. “With the help of this federal funding, CoastConnect will be able to provide high-speed internet to its customers who may have never had access to it before.”

Last year, Coast Electric participated in the Rural Digital Opportunity Fund (RDOF) Phase I Auction process and was awarded the \$7,800,000. After today’s signing, CoastConnect, LLC is now approved as a designated Eligible Telecommunications Carrier (ETC) which allows CoastConnect to accept these federal funds.

In the coming months, CoastConnect will use these funds to deploy high-speed internet service to roughly 6,068 rural homes and small businesses who are currently unserved or underserved. CoastConnect is working to bring access to more than 85,000 homes and businesses in Coast Electric’s service territory.

“More than 80 years ago, Coast Electric was formed to bring electricity to underserved residents of our community,” said Coast Electric and CoastConnect CEO Ron Barnes. “It’s exciting to know that, today, CoastConnect will be providing potentially life-changing services to underrepresented residents. Our customers are now able to access things like digital learning, telemedicine and can more easily connect with the world. These funds are helping us continue the construction process, which will, in turn, improve economic development and quality of life for south Mississippians.”

Mississippi was the second highest recipient of these funds with a total of 21 winning bidders of RDOF funds who will potentially receive a collective total of \$495,725,799.60. More information on the RDOF Phase I auction is available at <https://www.fcc.gov/auction/904> including complete auction results and a map of winning bids.

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