

Swain Broadband Committee: Commissioners Report

2022 Update on Committee Activity,
Grant Awards, and Funding Needs

September 8, 2022



Committee Members

Service Length: 2017-2022 (5 years & ongoing)

1. John Tyndall
- 2.* Karen Cook
3. Mark Tyson
- 4.* Jason Gardner
5. Melanie McCullough
- 6.* Leonard Winchester
- 7.* Jeff Delfield
8. Juliet Jacobsen Kastorff
- 9.* Julie Thorner

***Committee Member since 2017**



Swain County Government Invitees

Kevin King - County Manager

Danny Burns - Commissioner

Our Broadband Committee Partners



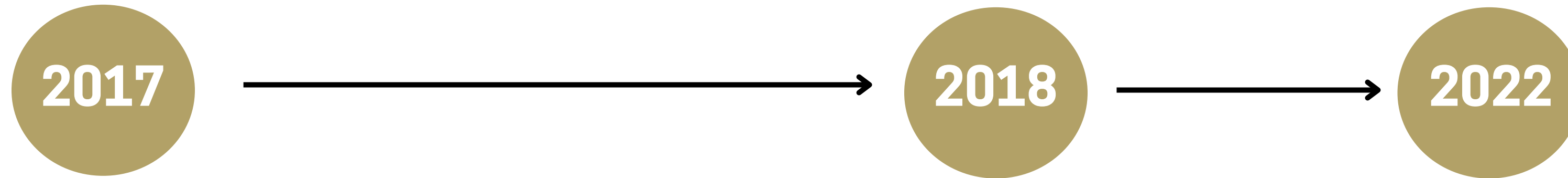
Appalachian
Regional
Commission



BAND-NC

BUILDING A NEW DIGITAL ECONOMY IN NC

Timeline of Activities



Committee Established

INVENTORY: Broadband internet services in Swain County

- Underserved (too slow/unaffordable)
- Unserved (no internet)
- Served

CONCLUSIONS (tinyurl.com/SwainSurveyResults2017)

ACTION: Forged strong working relationship with NCDIT (Keith Conover); identified new grant funding, learned of technology updates & provider capabilities, obtained successful grant application examples

Advancing Partnerships

- Monthly broadband meetings (including NCDIT)
- Identified new grant opportunities for area providers to apply
- Partnered with providers via committee support letter for submitted applications
- Led successful ARC application by Skywave with Swain Chamber as county applicant
- Supported NTIA application, helped secure valuable pole data for provider application
- SMTW \$5,000 grant for student connectivity

Past Grant Applications Supported

GREAT Grant: 2019-2021 Skywave Awards



2019-2020

\$179,153 State
\$96,467 Skywave
\$275,620 TOTAL

514 Households
2 Agricultural Operations
3 Businesses



2020-2021

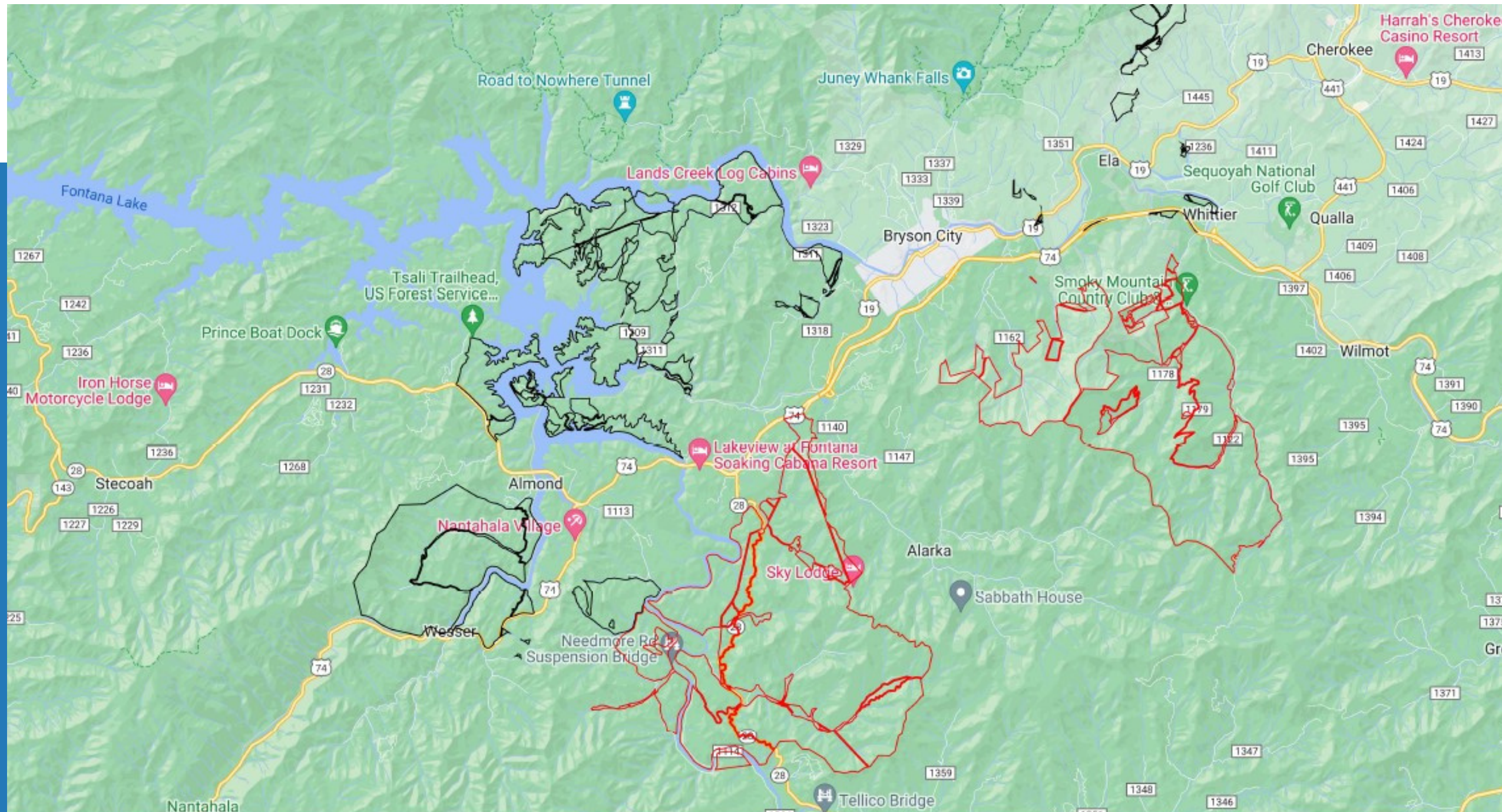
\$251,387 State
\$135,362 Skywave
\$386,749 TOTAL

595 Households
11 Businesses
3 Community Anchor points

GRAND TOTAL
\$662,369

ALL WINS ACTIVELY
SUPPORTED BY SWAIN
BROADBAND COMMITTEE

GREAT Grant: Skywave Awarded Areas



<https://nconemap.maps.arcgis.com/apps/webappviewer/index.html?id=72f01e944bde425ca07523d06a59c232>

2022 GREAT Grants Submitted

Submitted to the Federal Government by Providers,
with partnership support of Swain Broadband Committee
& Swain County Government

Overview

	Total Application Cost	# Locations	Cost per Location	# Residences	# Businesses	County Partner Match
Zito Media	\$4,686,778	1,624	\$2,886	1,573	51	\$15,000
Frontier	\$2,842,242	1,458	\$1,949	1,290	168	\$5,000
BalsamWest	\$1,403,642	377	\$3,723	346	31	\$15,000
Cherokee	\$3,544,574	932	\$3,803	896	36	\$15,000
Zitel (not partner)	\$5,120,363	2,627	\$1,949	NA	NA	\$0

2022 GREAT Grant for Swain County

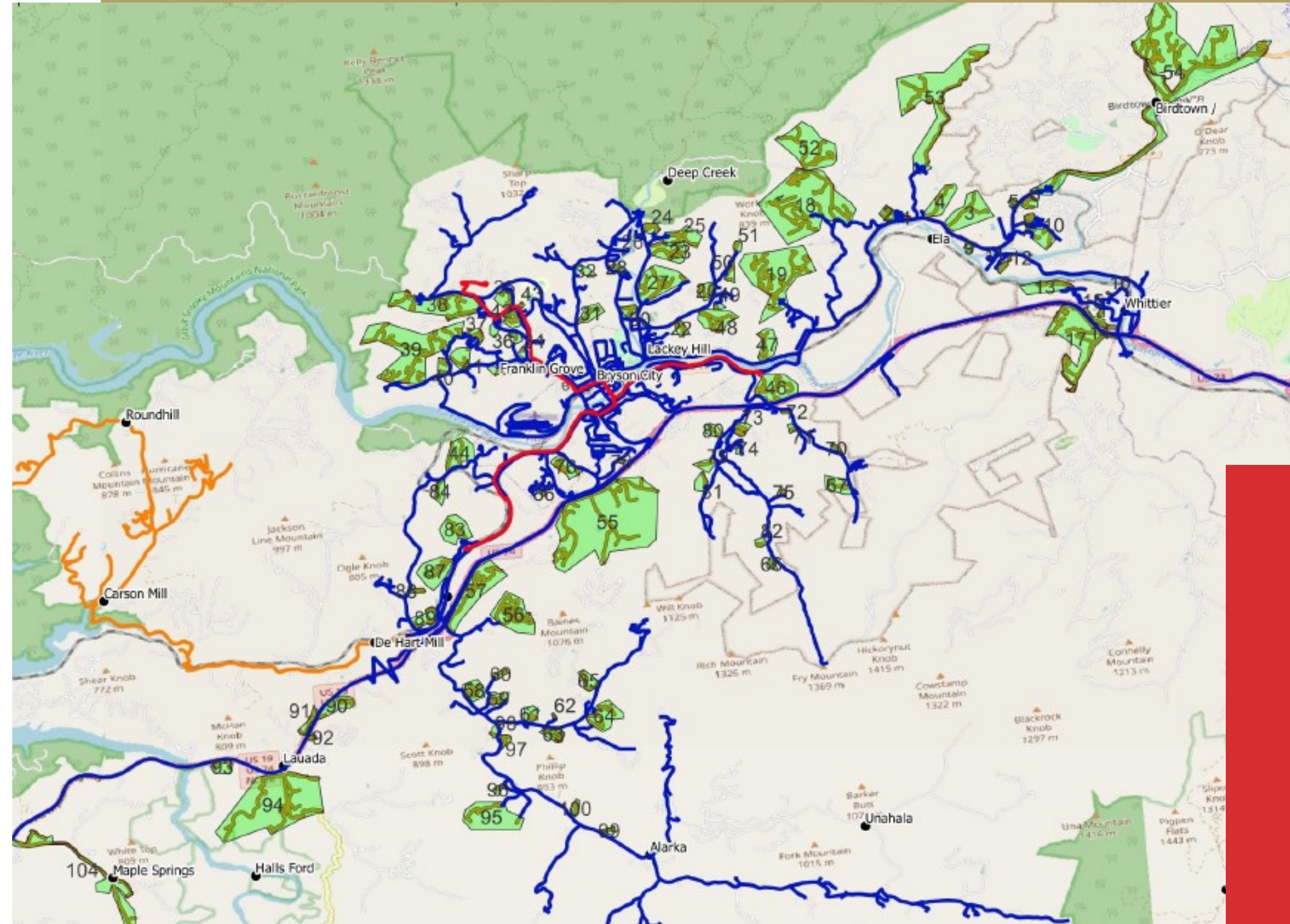
WINNER

Awarded: \$3,979,001

Zito Match: \$702,177

Swain Co. Match: \$15,000

Locations: 1619



Deployment Locations in Zito GREAT Grant Application



- Maple Springs
- Lauada
- Redo Alarka
- Fill in Jackson Line
- Jenkins Br
- Hughes Br
- Breedlove Rd
- Laurel Br
- Fill in Buckners Br
- Parcels Kirkland's Ck
- Shepherd Ck
- Franklin Grove to Lower Lands Ck
- Along 19 from Ela to Birdtown/Birdtown north
- Sections East Deep Ck
- Bett's Br
- Whittier
- Cooper's Ck
- Upper Galbraith Ck
- Cline Rd
- Johnson Br Rd

Frontier: Partner Provider



Application Costs: \$2,842,242

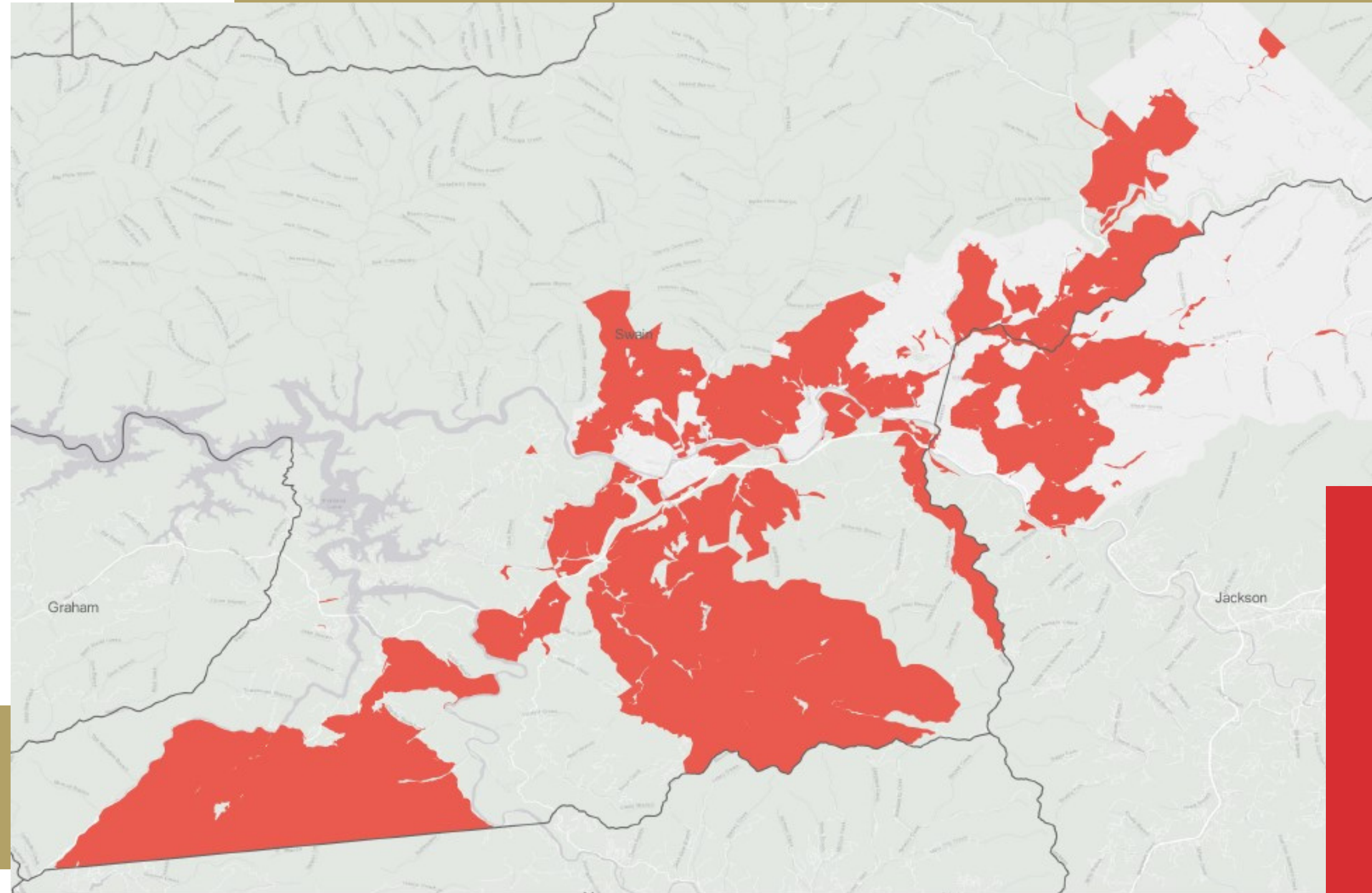
Locations: 1458

Cost/Location: \$1,949.41

County Partner Match: \$5,000

1290 Households

168 Businesses



BalsamWest: Partner Provider



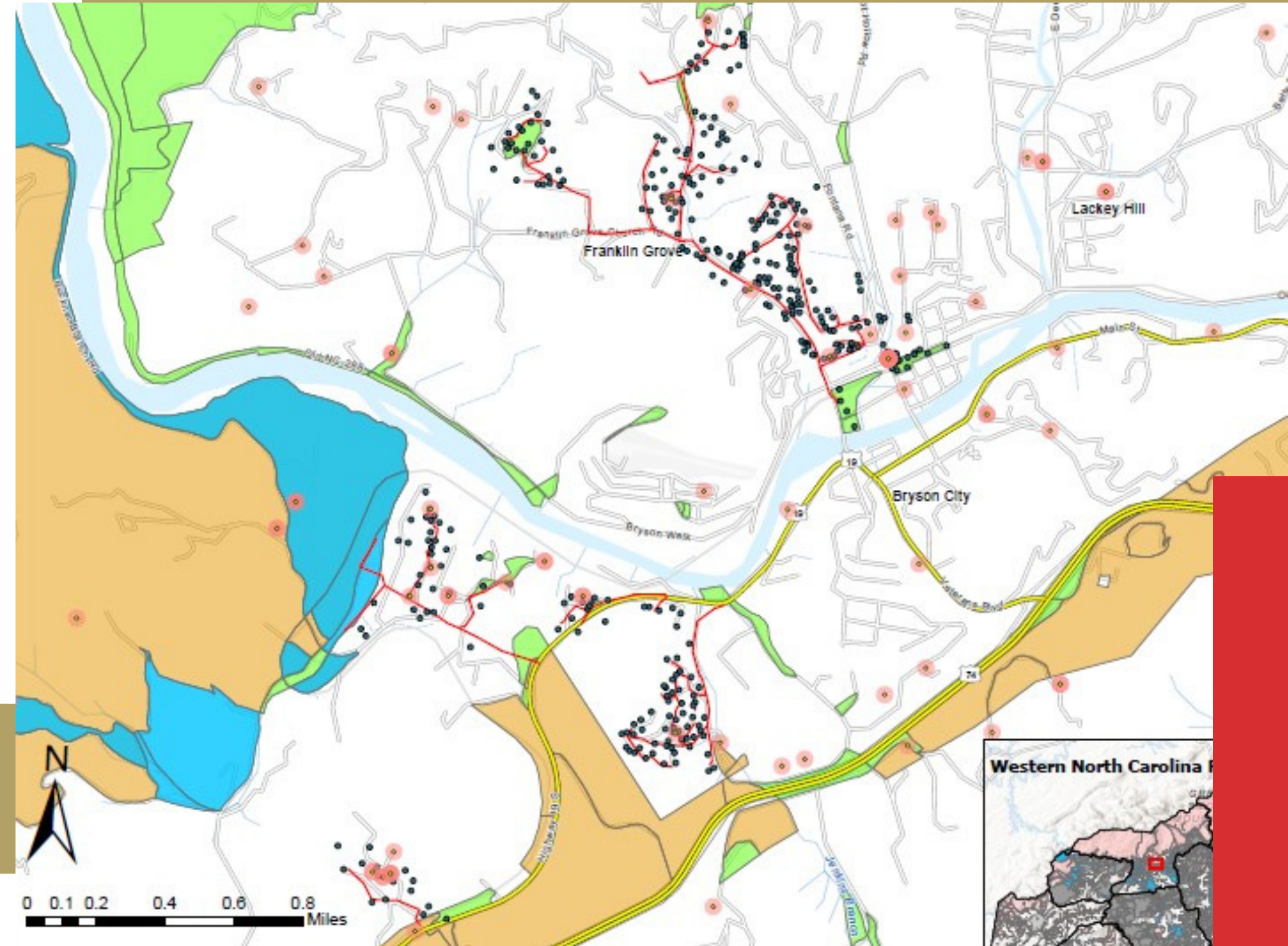
Application Costs: \$1,403,642

Locations: 377

Cost/Location: \$3,723.19

County Partner Match: \$15,000

346 Households
31 Businesses



Cherokee Cablevision: Partner Provider



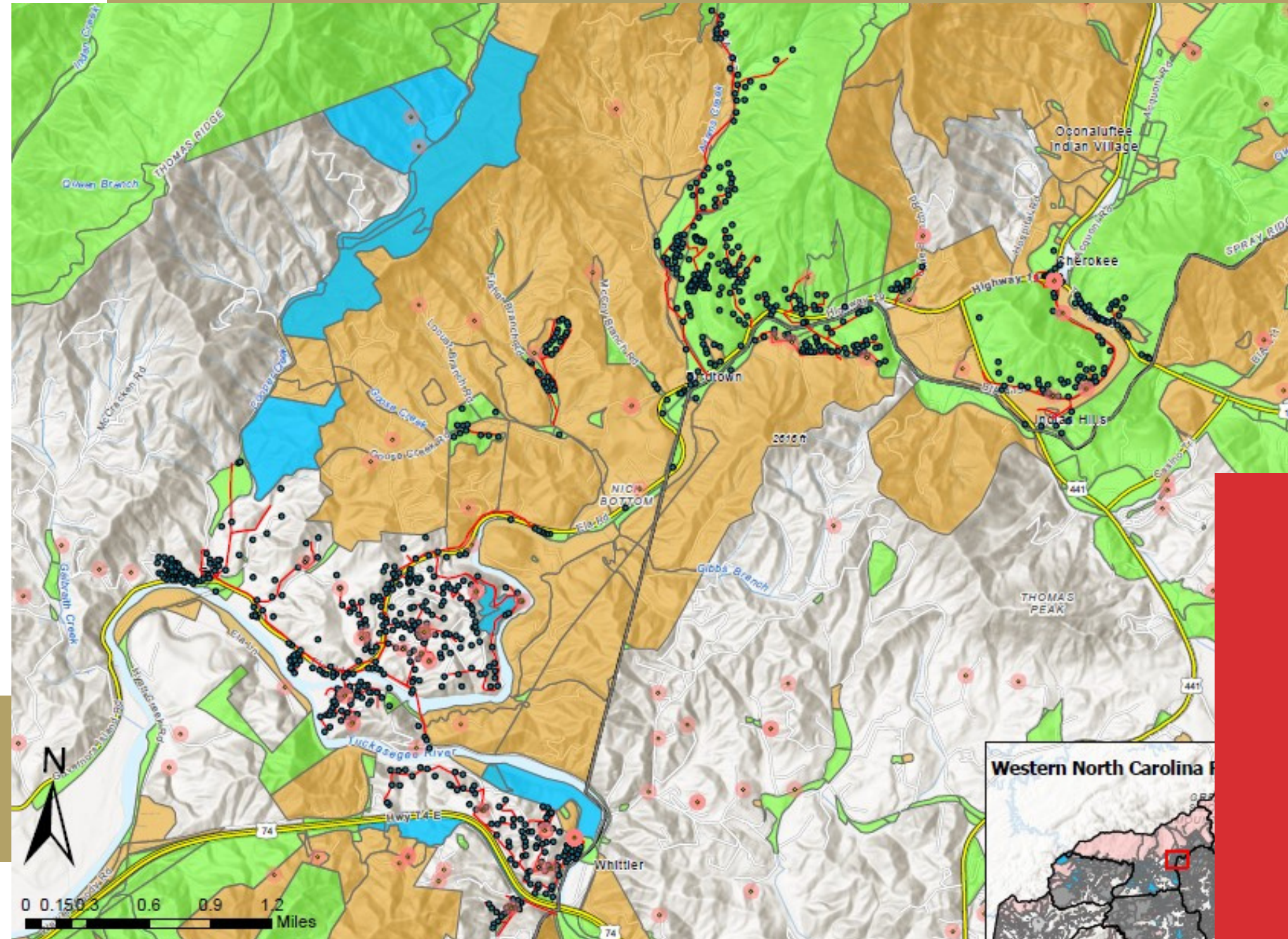
Application Costs: \$3,544,574

Locations: 932

Cost/Location: \$3,803.19

County Partner Match: \$15,000

896 Households
36 Businesses



Zitel Media: (Not a Partner)

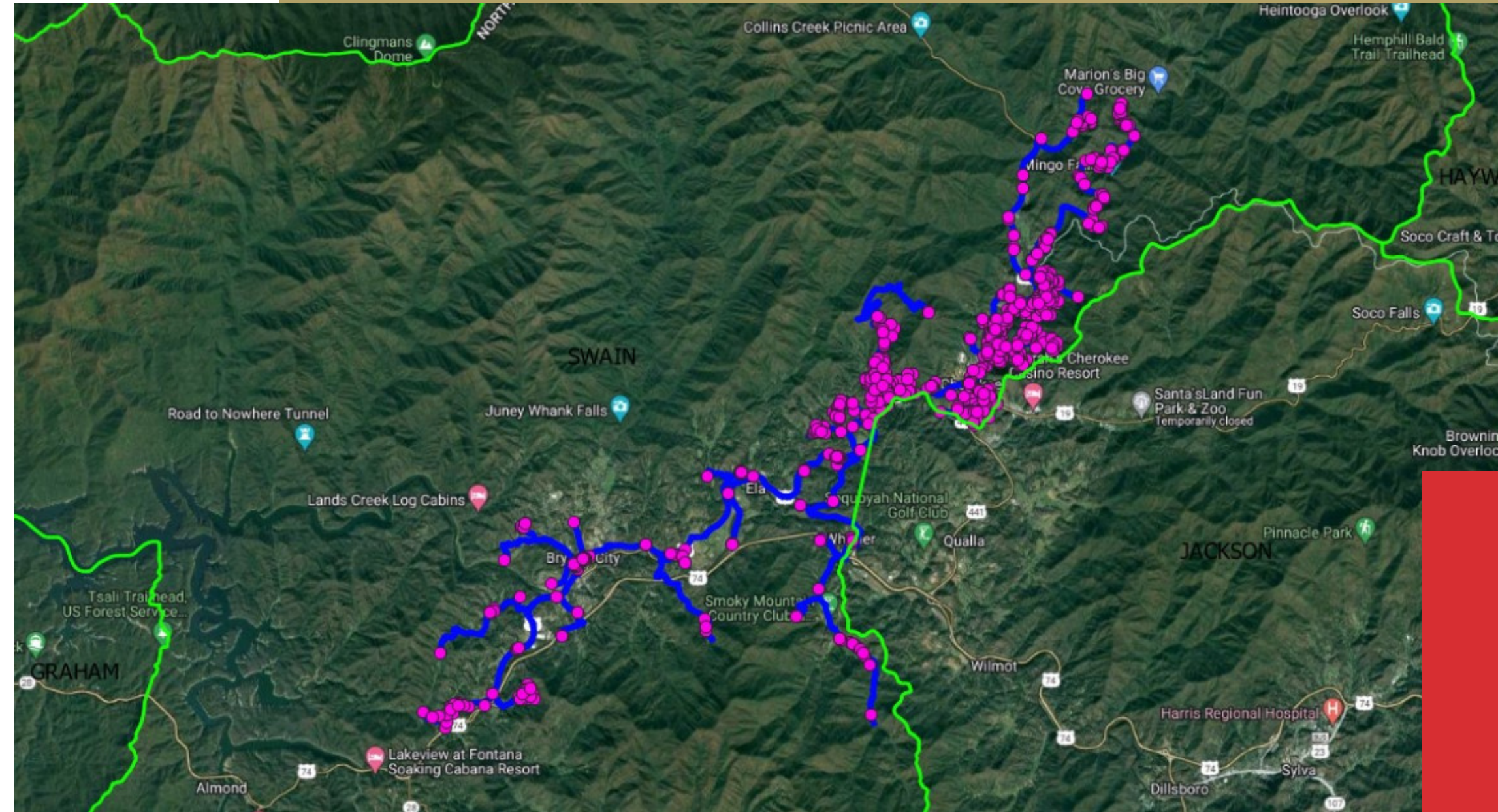


Application Costs: \$5,120,363

Locations: 2627

Cost/Location: \$1,949.13

County Partner Match: \$ 0



Proposed but probably not submitted

Received partner request April 28. (Apps due May 4); Partner request denied.

Other Grants Applied For - Not Won



NTIA Grant Application for fixed wireless

- \$18,313,229
- 3,000 homes & businesses (minimum)
- BalsamWest
- Lost
- Swain Broadband Committee supported

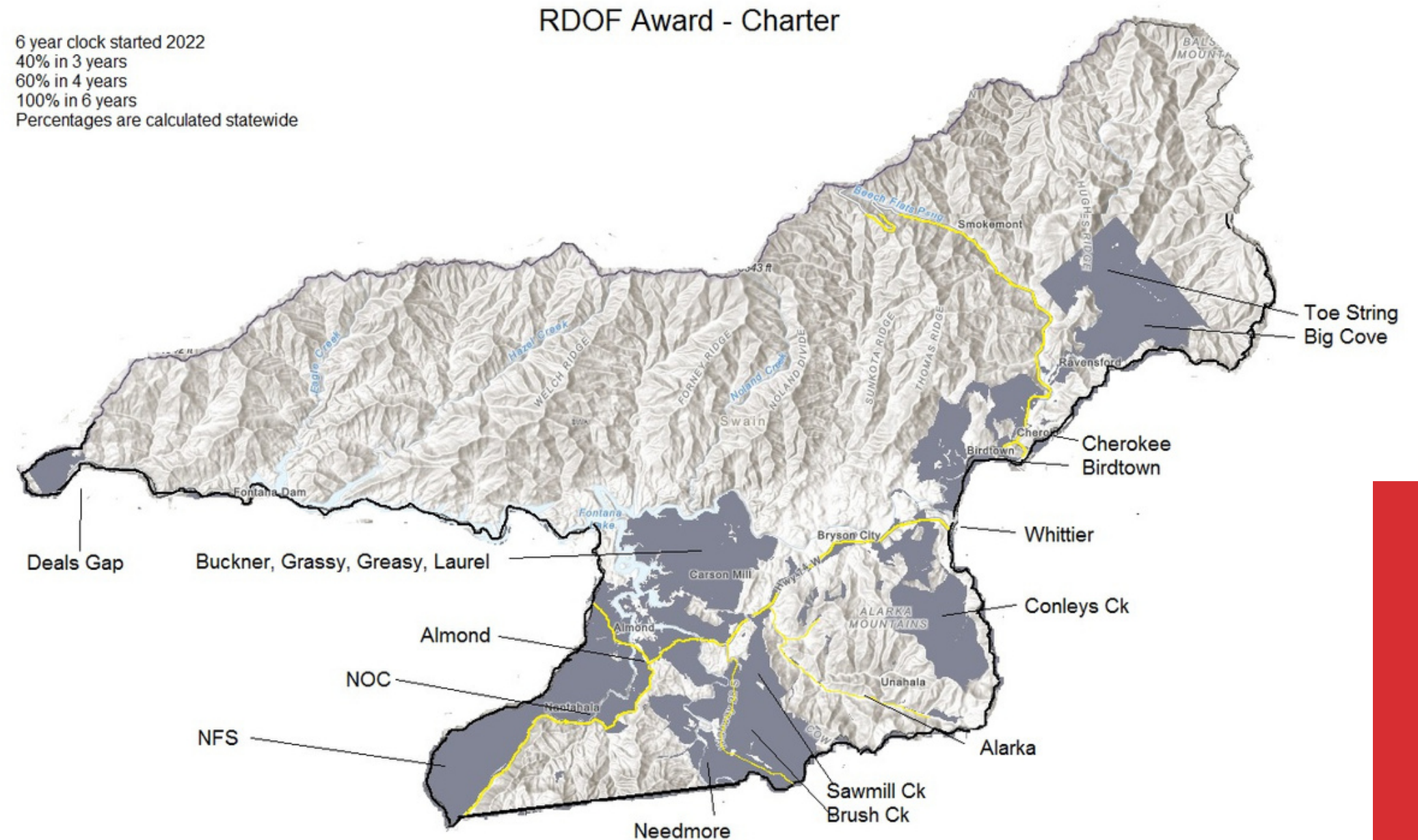
What's Happening Now

Broadband Funding Initiatives | Awards in Progress
GREAT Grants - NC State

RDOF: Charter/CCO Holdings



RDOF Auction: \$5,177,163
Date Awarded: December, 2020
Contract Signed: April 18, 2022
Locations: 3344
Cost/Location: \$12.90/month
County Partner Match: NA



RDOF Requirements:

Complete 40% of proposed deployments in first 3 years, 20% more in 4 years. Minimal penalties to walk away. No on-site work has started, no subsequent grants can cover RDOF areas.

CAB - Completing Access to Broadband

\$4M max per county with required matching: \$400k Provider & \$200k County

- Total award corresponds with match amounts
- County + NC-DIT develop RFP
- RDOF exclusions apply
- County forwards its match to DIT; DIT oversees application, award, implementation
- Unfunded GREAT applications are eligible
- CAB guidance posted on 6/24/2022*
- Reliable service is now a factor. Fixed Wireless only on licensed frequencies.
- Information Session to be announced.
- No movement on CAB until all GREAT Grants are finalized and awarded.

*<https://www.ncbroadband.gov/media/748/download?attachment>

Middle Mile Broadband Infrastructure

Funding to enable providers to build better backhaul middle mile capability

- \$980M total - each grant \$5M - \$100M; Matching minimum 30%
- Applications due to NTIA: **September 30, 2022**
- Awards: February 16, 2023
- Start Date: March 1, 2023
- 5-year performance: Buildout 40% Y2, 60% Y3, 80% Y4, 100% Y5
- Applicants: State, Subdivision, Tech Co, Telco, Nonprofit
- Application requirements are complicated and difficult; will limit the applicant pool
- **NO TAKERS SO FAR**

Other News

BEAD

Broadband Equity, Access, & Deployment Program

- \$42.5 billion
- State applies, takes applications
- Likely 2024 (after CAB)

RDOF

Rural Digital Opportunity Fund

- Charter (Spectrum) contractors have been observed doing site assessments only, summer 2022. No physical work started.

ARC - FEDERAL

Appalachian Regional Commission

- 90-100% complete
- Goal reached (56 businesses)
- Missing required service & expenses documentation
- Deadline passed (9/30/2021)
- Skywave won in 2020 (\$387k)

Digital Inclusion Planning

Bryson City

Deals Gap

- DIP PURPOSE: CLOSE THE DIGITAL DIVIDE FOR NC COMMUNITIES
- DIP KICKED OFF JULY 27 WITH COMMUNITY MEETING AT LIBRARY
- LED BY SWC
- GOAL IS DRAFT PLAN BY LATE NOVEMBER 2022

- HIGH SPEED BROADBAND ASSETS MAPPING
- DIGITAL LITERACY TRAINING
- DIGITAL TECHNICAL SUPPORT
- IMPACTS: HEALTHCARE, EDUCATION, ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, TOURISM, SAFETY & COMMUNITY SERVICES

SEE DIP GUIDE & TEMPLATE
CREATED BY NC BROADBAND

Broadband Support Needed for Swain County

Funding Commitment from Swain County Commissioners



\$200,000 match

For next round of CAB applications.
5% match on \$4MM

- Provider matches \$600k
- ARP funds remainder
- SCBBC prepares RFP
- State oversees award, implementation
- Timeline begins after GREAT announcements (by year-end)

This is a \$4,000,000 Project

Swain County Broadband Committee

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Vice-Chair: Leonard Winchester

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Appendix: GREAT Grant Details - Unawarded Bids

Frontier

- Nantahala, Wesser and Silvermine to county line
- Euchella east
- Lower Needmore to Maple Springs
- Lauada
- Most of Alarka
- Jackson Line
- Davis Br
- Buckners Br circle
- Some of Jenkins Br & Kirklands Ck above 4-lane
- Strip up Conleys Ck, along county line
- Ela Galbreath Ck
- McCracken
- Adams Ck
- Goose Ck
- Birdtown
- Big Cove
- Tow String

BalsamWest

- Bryson Branch
- Franklin Grove
- Buckers Br to Laurel Br
- Jenkins Branch

Cherokee Cablevision

- Whittier
- Ela
- Birdstown
- Goose Ck
- Adams Ck
- Cherokee



Appendix: RDOF Auction Details

Charter/Spectrum

- Deals gap
- Buckner Branch
- Grassy Branch
- Greasy Branch
- Laurel Branch
- Sawmill Creek
- Brush Creek
- some needmore
- Conleys Creek
- Adams Creek
- Goose Creek
- Birdtown
- Big Cove
- Toe String

