

## **NEWS RELEASE**

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For Information Contact:

Sabine County Judge's Office  
(409) 787-3543

### **Sabine County Secures \$17 Million Broadband Project**

(Hemphill, TX) Sabine County has been awarded a \$12.7 million grant from the National Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA) to fund construction of a new fiber optic network to provide high quality broadband service to more than 5,000 households in the county.

The county partnered with Kinetic by Windstream on the grant application. Kinetic will provide approximately \$4.7 million in matching funds for a total project of more than \$17 million.

Sabine County Judge Daryl Melton thanked Kinetic for its commitment and said the project is a result of several years of planning by the county in cooperation with economic planners and other regional stakeholders. Melton is Past President of the Deep East Texas Council of Governments (DETCOG) which has targeted the lack of broadband as one of this region's biggest issues and has been working to address it.

"This is a major step forward for Sabine County," Melton said. "In today's world broadband is no longer a luxury – it's a necessity. The citizens of Sabine County have suffered too long without it, and I am thrilled for this opportunity to remedy that. From education to healthcare to economic development and public safety, we will see great benefits from this in the future."

"This is great news for the residents of Sabine County," said Danny Ferguson, president of state operations for Kinetic. "We're excited to work with county officials to bring the benefits of gigabit speeds through fiber to homes and businesses in the area. These partnerships make it possible to reach areas that are otherwise cost prohibitive to serve."

Lonnie Hunt, Executive Director of DETCOG, said the project is a huge step forward for the entire region. "Our goal is to get reliable and affordable high-speed internet to every house, business, and farm across Deep East Texas," he stated. "This grant represents an important piece of the overall puzzle." He added, "The partnership between Sabine County and Kinetic is a great example of how we can make things better when we work together cooperatively."

A majority of homes in Sabine County will have opportunity to connect to this new service. Under NTIA rules those homes currently served with 100 Mbps (megabits per second) or higher download and 20 Mbps upload speeds will not receive new connections through the project. In addition, homes or businesses already funded for broadband by other federal programs will not receive this connection. In total, the project is expected to reach more than 5,000 Sabine County homes, at least two community facilities, and nearly 160 businesses.

Located within the US Department of Commerce, NTIA is the Executive Branch agency that is principally responsible by law for advising the President on telecommunications and information policy. The funding for Sabine County is one of 13 grants recently awarded under the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act. The grant was highly competitive with 230 applications from around the nation. Sabine County's project was the only one awarded in the State of Texas.

Details of the award will be finalized over the next 30 to 60 days. Once a contract is in place, engineering and required environmental assessments must be completed before any construction can take place.

### **About Kinetic**

Kinetic by Windstream is a business unit of Windstream Holdings, a privately held *Fortune*<sup>®</sup> 1000 communications and software company. Kinetic provides premium broadband, entertainment, and security services through an enhanced fiber network to consumers and businesses primarily in rural areas in 18 states. The company also offers managed communications services, including SD-WAN and UCaaS, and high-capacity bandwidth and transport services to businesses across the U.S. Additional information is available at [GoKinetic.com](https://www.gokinetic.com). Follow us on Twitter at @GoKineticHome.

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