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AZ Broadband Office funds the Graham County project to bring fiber to Bryce, Eden, and Ft. Thomas

GRAHAM COUNTY, AZ – The long-awaited news that the Graham County Regional Fiber Project will be funded came from the Arizona Commerce Authority’s - Broadband Office. The project was originally submitted by Valley TeleCom Group (Valley) and Graham County for consideration in January of 2022. When the awards were announced in June of that year the Graham County project was left out of the funding.

Shortly after the initial grants were awarded, the Arizona Broadband Office contacted Valley, acknowledging the project’s merit but explaining that there were insufficient funds to grant the award. Since then, changes in a few previously funded projects have freed up additional resources, making further funding available.

“We are very excited to have been awarded the Graham County Project,” said Troy Judd, CEO of Valley. “Expanding our services to meet the needs of Graham County residents has been a long-standing goal for us. This project builds on the investment and expansion we made in Thatcher back in 2021. With the additional funding from the Arizona Broadband Office, we can now extend high-speed connectivity even further west, bringing critical connections to some of our most rural communities.”

Graham County Regional Fiber Project - This grant award of \$4,810,148 will fund the extension of Valley’s backbone network by 8.3 miles from Thatcher to Ft. Thomas and the construction of 65.5 miles of last-mile infrastructure serving the communities of Bryce, Eden, and Ft. Thomas. To support this effort, the Graham County Board of Supervisors has allocated \$250,000 in matching funds, with Valley contributing an additional \$463,722. Together, these contributions represent 13% of the total project cost of \$5,523,870—a valuable investment in enhancing connectivity for Graham County residents.

In the initial round of funding of the Arizona Broadband Development Grant, Valley was awarded 2 grants. Those projects were the Fiber Investment for West Willcox Rural Community and the Santa Cruz County Patagonia Regional Broadband Project - Patagonia. Both projects are currently under construction with anticipation of services being available in the spring of 2025.

Valley TeleCom Group is deeply committed to the communities it serves. They are thrilled to bring high-speed connectivity to Bryce, Eden, and Ft. Thomas, enhancing the quality of life and opening up new opportunities for residents. Valley’s ongoing efforts, including the new Graham County Regional Fiber Project, reflect their dedication to expanding access to essential services in rural areas. Valley is proud to contribute to the development and prosperity of Graham County, ensuring that rural communities stay connected and thrive in the digital age.

About Valley TeleCom Group

Valley TeleCom Group is a local telecommunications company that provides high-speed Internet, phone, and business solutions to southeast Arizona and southwest New Mexico. Valley has offices in Clifton, AZ; Safford, AZ; and Willcox, AZ, and has been providing services since 1962. www.vtc.net

About the Arizona Commerce Authority

The Arizona Commerce Authority (ACA) is the state's leading economic development organization with a streamlined mission to grow and strengthen Arizona's economy. The ACA uses a three-pronged approach to advance the overall economy: attract, expand, create - attract out-of-state companies to establish operations in Arizona; work with existing companies to expand their business in Arizona and beyond; and help entrepreneurs create new Arizona businesses in targeted industries. For more information, please visit azcommerce.com and follow the ACA on Twitter @azcommerce.