Spectrum Airwaves:
A Natural Resource
Tribes Must Leverage

Brian Howard
Research & Policy Analyst
Overview

- Tribal Opportunity: 2.5 GHz Spectrum
- Funding Opportunities
- Challenges with Funding Timelines
2.5 GHz Opportunity for Tribes to Obtain Spectrum

- Tribes can construct their own wireless networks or sublease their licenses to a tribal or non-tribal telecommunications provider.

- The FCC Tribal Priority Window to spectrum licenses in the 2.5 GHz band is unprecedented.

- Tribes should fully take advantage of this opportunity.

- Spectrum is a bankable asset that can be leveraged to access capital resources.
How Valuable are Spectrum Licenses?

January 2019 - Auction 101
2,965 licenses bid upon by 40 entities
generated $702.5 million in gross revenue

May 2019 – Auction 102
2,904 licenses bid upon by 29 entities
generated $2.02 billion in net revenue
Funding Opportunities for Tribes to Deploy Wireless Networks

- FCC Rural Development Opportunity Fund
  - Will offer $16 billion over 10 years to providers willing to serve unserved high-cost census blocks
  - Auction Bidding will begin on October 29, 2020
  - Application to participate in Auction will be open from July 1-15, 2020

- National Telecommunications & Information Administration – BroadbandUSA Funding Website
  - [https://broadbandusa.ntia.doc.gov/new-fund-search](https://broadbandusa.ntia.doc.gov/new-fund-search)
Issues with Funding Timelines due to COVID-19

- In any possible future stimulus package – will be critical for tribes to voice their concerns regarding the shortfalls and limitations of the previous COVID-19 stimulus packages

- Could provide an opportunity to request extended timelines for the use of previous and new stimulus funds

- National tribal and non-tribal organizations have requested an extension for the Tribal Priority Window

- Tribes can also submit a Special Temporary Authorization to the FCC to use 2.5 GHz spectrum
For more information contact:

Traci Morris  
Director  
t.morris@asu.edu

Brian Howard  
Research and Policy Analyst  
b.howard@asu.edu

American Indian Policy Institute  
Watts College of Public Service and Community Solutions  
Arizona State University

https://aipi.asu.edu/  
Phone: 480-965-1055  
Fax: 480-965-6404