



# **BRIDGING THE DIGITAL DIVIDE WITH DIVERSIFIED FUNDING & PARTNERSHIPS**

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# SACRED WIND'S MISSION

**Sacred Wind Communications (Sacred Wind) was established in 2006 and is the only privately-owned rural telco focused solely on bridging the digital divide for rural tribal communities in New Mexico.**



# FUNDING SOURCES

Sacred Wind was originally funded with a USDA RUS loan in 2006. Since then, we have also received the following funds:

- + State USF funds
- + Lifeline (Federal, State & Tribal)
- + High-Cost Loop Support
- + CAF II Funding from the FCC (2019)
- + Microsoft – Airband Partnership (2019) –  
we are the only rural telco in New Mexico selected to partner in fixed wireless & TV White Space deployment to unserved rural tribal communities.

# FUNDING REQUIRES MAPPING

- +Funding sources require accurate maps of areas to be served (e.g., Form 477).
- +Mapping requirements for service providers are based on U.S. Census data, which is not always accurate.
- +Service providers are currently required to report an entire census block as having access to broadband, even if only one household in that entire census block has broadband coverage.



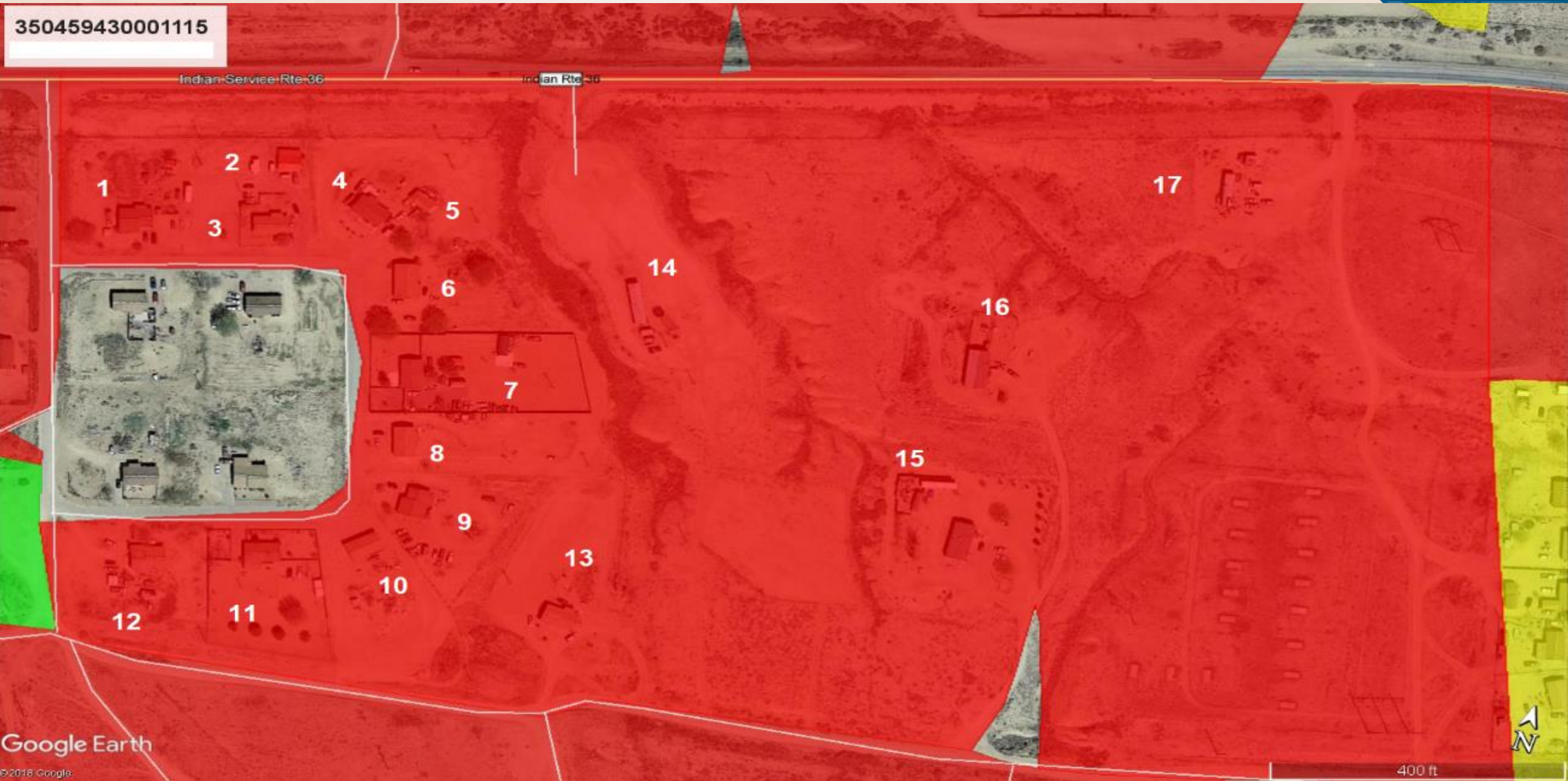
# DISCREPANCY WITH COUNTS



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Indian Service Rte 36

Indian Rte 36





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1997

Imagery Date: 4/6/2019 36°43'12.16" N 108°17'10.56" W elev 0 ft eye alt 2042 ft



# FUNDING REQUIRES MAPPING

Many rural tribal communities consist of isolated homes in desert or mountainous terrain.

- + Many rural tribal homes are not even considered “domiciles” and are often left out of Census data, which creates an inaccurate foundation for mapping.
- + Many rural tribal homes consist of multiple households under one roof. If even one home is missed in the Census count, multiple families will be affected by the services they can access.

# EXAMPLES OF “HOMES” THAT ARE OVERLOOKED



A Hogan that may be mistaken for a ceremonial structure and therefore, not considered a home.

Sheds that have been converted to family residences and are overlooked in Census counts.





## ACAM II M

- Green** = A-CAM II locations with SWC location counts
- Yellow** = A-CAM II locations with SWC location counts
- Red** = A-CAM II locations LESS than SWC location count

Total Census Block Locations = 1,412  
 Incorrect Census Block Location Counts = 1,185  
 Correct Census Block Location Counts = 227  
 # of A-CAM II Location Counts < than SWC Location Counts = 779  
 # of A-CAM II Location Counts > than SWC Location Counts = 406  
 A-CAM II Location Counts = 7,236  
 SWC Actual Location Counts = 11,968  
 Total Difference in Location Counts = 4,732

### NORTH

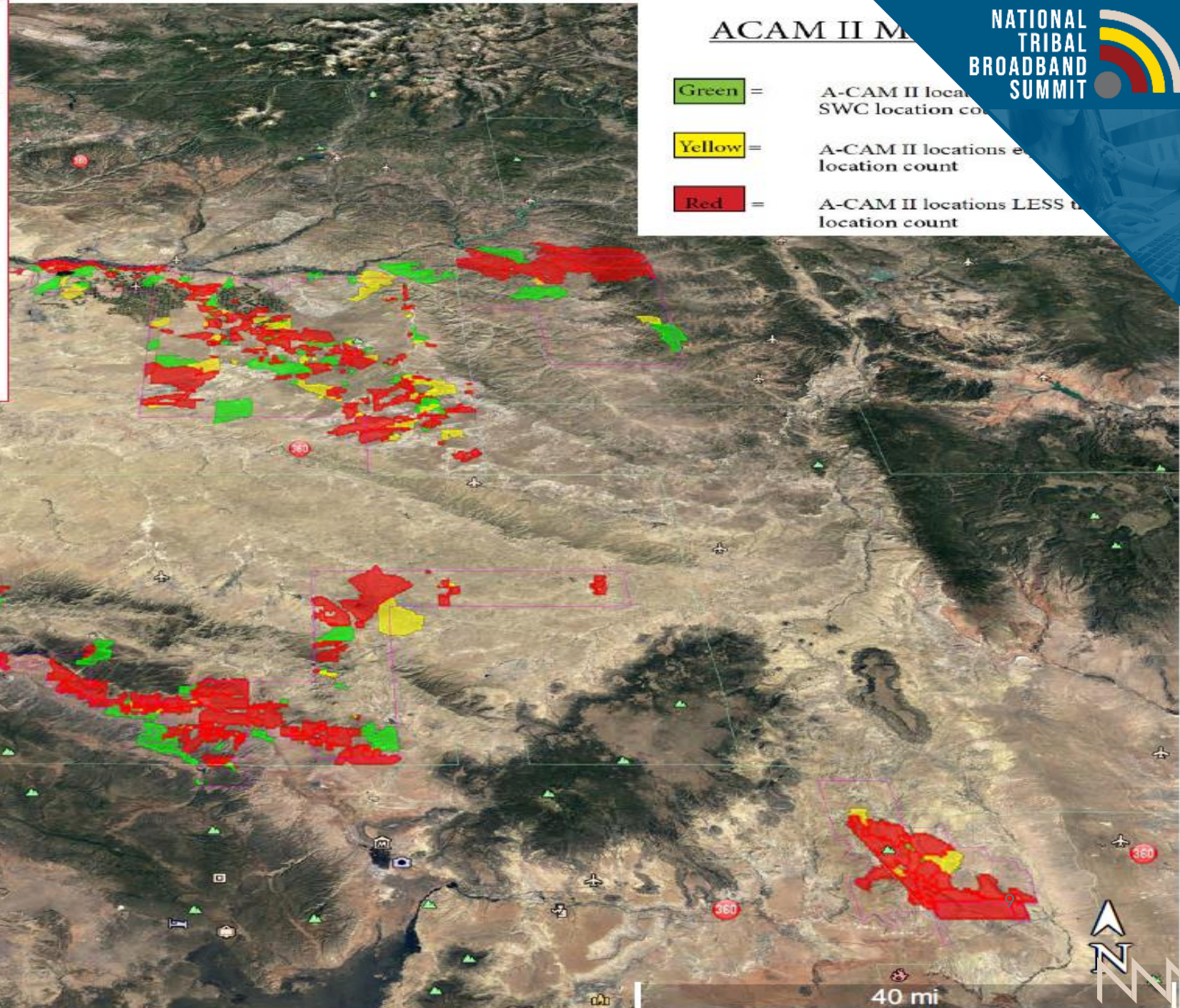
A-CAM II Counts = 2,671  
 SWC Counts = 3,741  
 Difference = 1,070

### SOUTH

A-CAM II Counts = 4,012  
 SWC Counts = 7,192  
 Difference = 3,180

### To'Hajiilee

A-CAM II Counts = 553  
 SWC Counts = 1,035  
 Difference = 482



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SEPTEMBER 23, 2019 WASHINGTON, DC

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# THE IMPLICATIONS OF UNDERCOUNTING

- The undercounted homes shown on the previous map represent a loss of funding of nearly \$4 million annually that is required to provide broadband to rural tribal locations.
- Reliance on Census data leads to many unserved tribal homes being missed. A carrier's "served" households is designated using this incomplete data.
- The new Digital Opportunity Data Collection process may be able to address the issue of undercounting tribal homes.





# OPEX/CAPEX ARE HIGHER ON RURAL TRIBAL LANDS

- The cost of construction on remote tribal lands is far higher than it is for urban and suburban areas.
- Crossing desert and mountainous terrain to reach isolated homes on sparsely populated tribal lands is very expensive.
- Infrastructure costs per rural household are extremely high, especially when you include Right-of-Way costs.

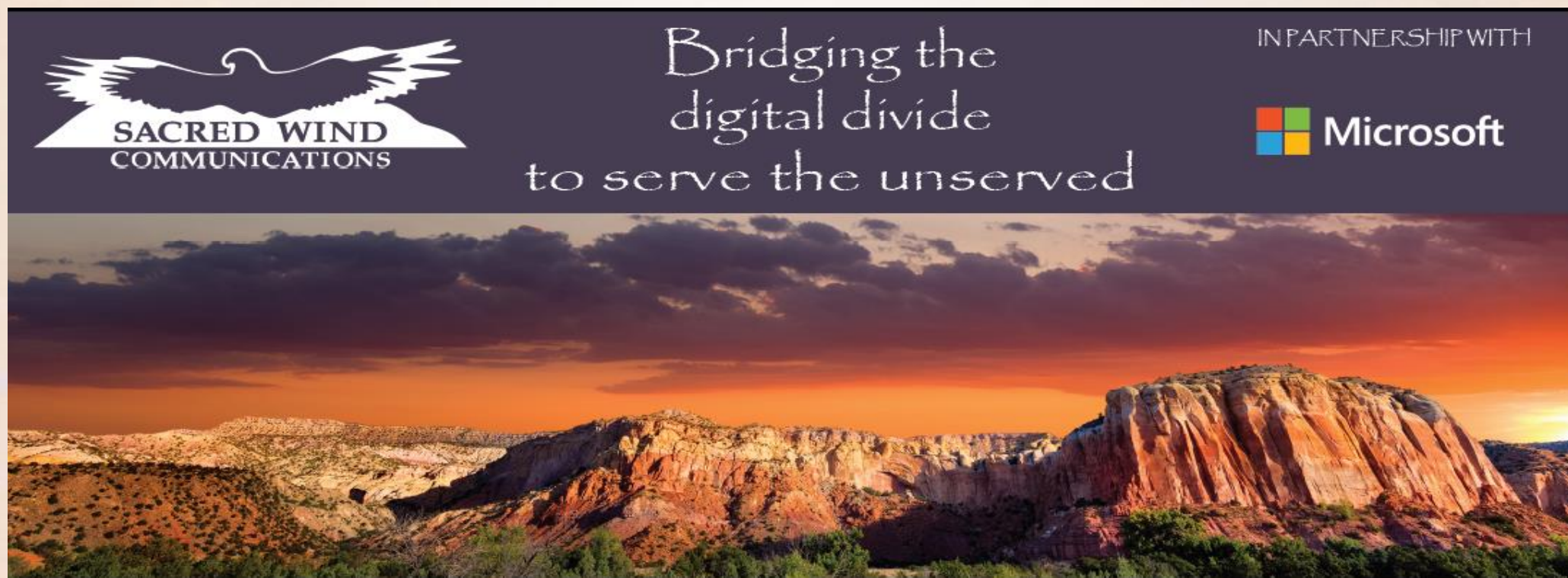
# DIVERSIFY YOUR FUNDING SOURCES

- Given the high cost to bridge the digital divide in rural tribal areas, and the reduced allocation of funds based on undercounting of homes in these locations, companies cannot rely on government funding alone.
- Consider Public-Private Partnerships (PPP) to diversify your funding sources (e.g., partnering with a local ISP, university, private foundations, municipalities).





# SACRED WIND'S PARTNERSHIP WITH MICROSOFT



Sacred Wind was the only rural telco in New Mexico to be selected by Microsoft to deploy fixed wireless and TV White Space technology to underserved and unserved rural tribal communities.

# MICROSOFT'S SUPPORT

Microsoft's support helps Sacred Wind defray the high cost of expanding broadband service to rural tribal lands.

Our partnership with **Microsoft Airband** enables us to include TV White Space in our cutting-edge mix of technologies to serve remote customers with Line-of-Sight obstructions.

As a Microsoft Commercial Partner, Sacred Wind can now offer Microsoft cloud-based solutions (Azure, Office365), consulting services and various Microsoft products and devices to our rural business and residential customers.



# PUBLIC-PRIVATE PARTNERSHIPS

Our ongoing investment in new technologies to serve the unserved can only be bolstered if we continue partnerships with external stakeholders like Microsoft. However, consider other potential partners such as:

- +Private foundations
- +Tribal Governments & Local Municipalities
- +Universities and Community Colleges

# PRIVATE FOUNDATIONS

- + Consider grant seeking tools such as [GrantStation](#) and the Foundation Center's [Foundation Directory Online](#).
- + There are some private foundations that will consider funding broadband infrastructure costs for marginalized communities.
- + Foundation funding can serve to supplement government grants/loans for connectivity projects, especially for workforce development and adult education.



# TRIBAL GOVERNMENTS & RURAL MUNICIPALITIES

- + To democratize digital access, partnerships should include tribal governments and rural municipalities.
- + Consider the following multiple funding sources to extend broadband services to a tribal community or rural municipality:
  - ❖ USDA ReConnect and Economic Development Grants
  - ❖ Foundation Grants
  - ❖ Municipal Funding (Town and/or County)
  - ❖ Tribal Administration Investment
  - ❖ Tribal Entity Partnership with ISP

# PARTNERSHIPS WITH UNIVERSITIES

Sacred Wind is currently working with the Pueblo of Acoma to think outside the box when it comes to funding sources to enable community-wide connectivity.

In addition to applying for the USDA ReConnect Grant, the Pueblo of Acoma is in talks with Sacred Wind and the University of New Mexico regarding potential funding via the National Science Foundation's *Smart & Connected Communities* grant.



# WHERE TO BEGIN

- + Consider signing up for a grant-writing course, or, engage a professional to assist you.
- + Register with Grants.gov and the USDA's Application Process (Level 2 eAuthentication, RDAApply)
- + Sign up for access to GrantStation and the Foundation Center's Foundation Directory Online.
- + Collaborate with your local bank and other private companies in your State (through corporate giving) for supplemental funding.



# SERVING THE UNSERVED & UNDERSERVED



Sacred Wind continues to remain true to its mission and vision and leads the way by providing a voice and equality of opportunity for our rural tribal communities in New Mexico.



**Voted “Most Inspiring Small Business in America”**

– American Express/NBC Universal Shine A Light Contest





## QUESTIONS?

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