

DRAFT
PROCEEDINGS OF THE MURRAY COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
MURRAY COUNTY GOVERNMENT CENTER - SLAYTON, MINNESOTA
January 27, 2026, 8:30 AM

Pursuant to notice, the Murray County Board of Commissioners convened with the following members present in person: Commissioners; Loy Woelber, Jackie Meier, Mark Carlson, Dennis Welgraven and Roger Zins. Also Present in person were HR Director/Deputy Administrator, General Assistant Renee Gleason, and County Attorney Travis Smith.

1. - Opening

1.1. - Pledge of Allegiance

2. - Approve Agenda

2.1. - Agenda Additions

The Board Chair asked if there were any additions to the agenda, none were added

2.2. - Identify Any Conflict of Interest

The Board Chair asked if there were any conflicts of interest, none were identified.

It was moved by Commissioner Meier, seconded by Commissioner Zins, to approve the agenda for 01/27/2026. Motion Passed.

3. - Consent Agenda

3.1. - Approve Minutes from 01/20/2026

It was moved by Commissioner Zins, seconded by Commissioner Meier, to approve consent agenda, Board Meeting Minutes of 01/20/2026. Motion Passed.

4. - Regular Agenda

4.1. - U.S. Fish and Wildlife Services - Grant Easement for Wildlife Habitat Protection

Presenters: Jacob Gross, U.S. Fish & Wildlife Services and John Beyer, District Manager Windom Wetland Mgmt. Don Kramer, landowner via phone.

It was questioned if this easement changes the assessed value of property. This is determined by the County Assessor. Heidi Winter will check with Chad Benda for a response. The landowner will still be able to harvest hay from the land. In addition, the landowner receives a one-time payment from U.S. Fish & Wildlife Services. Any changes to county tile would be coordinated with Murray County. Once work plan is in place a public hearing will be scheduled.

It is moved by Commissioner Woelber, seconded by Commissioner Zins to sign U.S. Fish and Wildlife Services Certification of Acknowledgment of Habitat Easement being submitted to DNR Land Exchange Board for review and approval of Donald Kramer et

al. on the following described lands: T. 108 N. R. 39 W. 5th P.M. Section 29: Parts of W2NE4 and E2SE4, to be determined by a survey. Motion passed.

4.2. - Woodstock Communications - Project Updates

Terry Nelson, Woodstock Communications provided an update on their fiber network projects.

- Skandia FTTH - Border to Border Grant with Murray County
 - 95 miles of fiber with 190 homes passed.
 - Anticipated start date: Spring 2026
 - Awaiting Environmental/Archeological study
 - Service will be activated by end of 2026.
 -
- Lake Shetek Islands Line Extension
 - 120 homes - Edgewater Bay, Valhalla, Keeley Island, Lake Shetek Drive
 - Project required to be completed in 2026.
 - Utilizing the Lake Shetek Sewer Project Study to help speed the Archeological/Environmental study process

Future Grants/Projects:

- BEAD Program - If approved, this would only include 7 homes on south side of Shetek, but Woodstock would build out the entire south side.
- Line Extension - This program will remain very small due to funding.
- ReConnect - future of the grant is uncertain, co-ops are generally chosen over private companies, lobbying to change this going forward

Woodstock's goal to provide 100% fiber to home but will depend on grants and project feasibility. Most generally, fiber vs. wireless pricing, fiber is less cost to customer. Woodstock will keep the Board updated as these projects become feasible.

4.3. - Heidi Winter

4.3.1. - 2025 Audit Engagement Letter

This letter is signed annually to engage audit services with the MN Office of the State Auditor. This request is for audit services for the year 2025.

It is moved by Commissioner Woelber, seconded by Commissioner Zins to approve the 2025 Audit Engagement Letter with the Minnesota Office of the State Auditor, further moving to authorize the Board Chair and Auditor-Treasurer to sign the letter on behalf of the County. Motion passed.

4.3.2. - Ditch Bills

It is moved by Commissioner Zins, seconded by Commissioner Woelber to approve the report of bills for payment of the Murray County Drainage Authority as follows:

Murray County Auditor-Treasurer (reimburse ditch mailing costs)
 21-861-6289 (L-M) JD 27 13.98 Mailing costs for hearing 2/17/26
Subtotal 13.98

Rinke Noonan
 21-861-6260 JD 27 74.00 (M-L) Partial Abandonment-Legal
 21-868-6260 Admin 200.00 12/2025 Monthly Retainer
 21-868-6260 Admin 157.50 FEMA Request
Subtotal 431.50

Total Ditch Bills 445.48

Copies of invoices were available at the meeting. Motion passed.

4.4. - Heath Landsman

4.4.1. - 2026 Squad Up-Fitting

There are (2) new squads that need to be upfitted with internal and external equipment. We will be re-using as much equipment as possible.

It is moved by Commissioner Meier and seconded by Commissioner Woelber to approve the upfitting proposal from MacQueen for \$15,477.00 per squad. There will be (2) squads to be upfitted.

4.5. - Nathan Wurpts

4.5.1. - Conference Room – Training Tables and Nesting Chairs

Conference Room B is used regularly for meetings, training, and multi-purpose functions. The proposed purchase of flip-top training tables and rolling nesting chairs will improve room flexibility, storage efficiency, and consistency with furniture previously installed at other facilities. We propose purchasing ten (10) flip-top training tables (24" × 60) and twenty (20) rolling nesting chairs with arms.

Cost Comparison

Vendor	Tables (10)	Chairs (20)	Subtotal	Freight	Total
Innovative OS	\$7,095.10	\$5,408.00	\$12,503.10	Included	\$12,503.10
ULINE	\$4,300.00	\$3,900.00	\$8,200.00	~\$300	\$8,500.00
Budget Summary for:				01-110-114-6640	
Budgeted in 2026:					15,000.00
2026 YTD Expenditures:					0.00
Balance Available:					15,000.00
Quoted Price					8,500.00
2026 Budget Balance (if Approved)					\$6,500

This purchase was included in the budget. We would move \$8,500 budget 01-110-114-6640 Building Improvements to 01-110-114-6480 Equipment & Furniture. It was suggested that Nathan verify the tables quality by ordering a couple first, then move forward with a complete order.

It is moved by Commissioner Woelber and seconded by Commissioner Zins to approve the purchase of ten (10) flip-top training tables and twenty (20) rolling nesting chairs with arms for Conference Room B from ULINE.

4.6. - Carl Nyquist

4.6.1. - Emergency Management Light Tower Purchase

Commissioner Welgraven arrived at 9:03 a.m. for meeting.

Murray County Emergency Management is requesting to purchase a 2022 Allmand GR Series light tower with generator for a purchase price of \$10,499. The unit has approximately 300 operating hours and is equipped with 30-amp breakers for use with inflatable equipment. The current light tower has seen constant use, and each year the department borrows approximately four light towers from neighboring jurisdictions to meet operational demands. A new tower would cost approximately, \$23,000, so purchasing a used unit provides a cost savings while fulfilling the ongoing need for essential equipment. This tower will be in addition to the existing one.

It was moved by Commissioner Zins, seconded by Commissioner Welgraven to approve the purchase of the 2022 Allmand GR Series Light tower for \$10,499.00 as per quote. Motion passed.

4.6.2. - Hazard Mitigation Plan Adoption

Murray County Emergency Management, in cooperation with the University of Minnesota U-Spatial, has completed the update of the Murray County Hazard Mitigation Plan. Completion and update of this plan allows cities and county officials to pursue hazard mitigation projects moving forward and maintains eligibility for applicable mitigation funding programs.

It was moved by Commissioner Meier, seconded by Commissioner Zins to approve the resolution reflecting completion of the Murray County Hazard Mitigation Plan update as outlined. Motion passed. Resolution 2026-01-27-01

4.6.3. - Declare portable generators surplus property.

The (4) portable generators in inventory at end of life: (2) of the (4) we can't get parts for any more but they still work. Carl would like to replace all (4) but wasn't sure if the Board preferred to get quotes for replacements first and then declare the (2) operational ones as surplus OR go ahead and classify these as surplus now? The Board would like to see quotes on the replacement portable generators before we declare anything as surplus.

4.7. - Sharon Giese

4.7.1. - Discussion: Summer Internship Program - Funding Options

This is a carry-over discussion from 01/20/2026 Board Meeting. Unfortunately, it was discovered the Summer Internship Program was not budgeted for 2026. However, Heidi Winter has some alternative considerations for funding. We could make an appropriation to Murray County EDA funds and then grant an appropriation from there.

An alternative is we have monies within the general funds earmarked for EDA purposes. We do have some funds that could be used towards this program yet. The program in the past was an appropriation of \$115,000 over a (3) year period. For 2026 Murray County could do something very similar with different terms if desired.

Commissioner Carlson's response to Carrie Bendix, Southwest MN Private Industry Council indicated that further discussion would be scheduled at this meeting and the Board would like to see the local business community also support this program in some manner. We have not yet received a response but understand that Carrie probably needs to solicit the interest of the local business community first. Again, the board feels this program is beneficial for the county and the interns. But feedback from the interns in the past was the hope to increase the program to 40 hours vs the existing 29 hours.

This topic will be tabled until Carrie Bendix's feedback on support of the business community. The Board is open to hearing any options Carrie Bendix or the business community has to continue to support the Summer Internship Program. We would want to have a decision on direction shortly, as recruiting for these internships needs to occur soon.

4.7.2. - DNR Statewide Shotgun Repeal

Information and comments from the public hearing held previous has not changed. However, there is a citizen, Brandon Lolkus requesting to speak in this meeting and will present a petition that has been circulated.

Commissioner Carlson and Welgraven both gathered feedback in unrelated meetings, regarding the surrounding county's intended decision for the shotgun vs. rifle repeal. There are (3) counties on the bottom in District 8 likely to stay shotgun only, the other (5) counties are likely moving to allowing rifle.

Brandon Lolkus provided additional statistics, information, and comments received in support of moving to allow rifle. He also shared a petition in favor of rifle that currently has 87 signatures. Jason Wenzel also provided comments in favor of rifle. Per Heath Landsman, in addition to his comments in previous meetings, the DNR indicated if Murray County chooses rifle, the DNR will support enforcement. However, if Murray County places any other restrictions surrounding the rifle, it may not be reinforced through the DNR. Each Board member spoke about the varying feedback they have received from citizens.

Regardless of the motion presented here, we will need to have a roll call vote. Each county does have the option to change this decision each hunting season. If no motion is made, rifle will be allowed for deer hunting. If a motion is made to stay shotgun, Murray County would need to issue a formal ordinance.

Commissioner Carlson provided a motion to remain shotgun only based on the citizen comments he received, seconded by Commissioner Woelber. A decision needs to be submitted before publication of the deer hunting regulations, which is around March 1.

Roll Call Vote:

Woelber = Yes

Meier = No

Carlson = Yes

Welgraven = No

Zins = No

**Vote in favor = 2 Vote against = 3 Motion failed to remain shotgun only.
Murray County will move to rifles for deer hunting.**

The Board appreciates receiving all the respectful comments and feedback on this issue.

5. - Adjournment

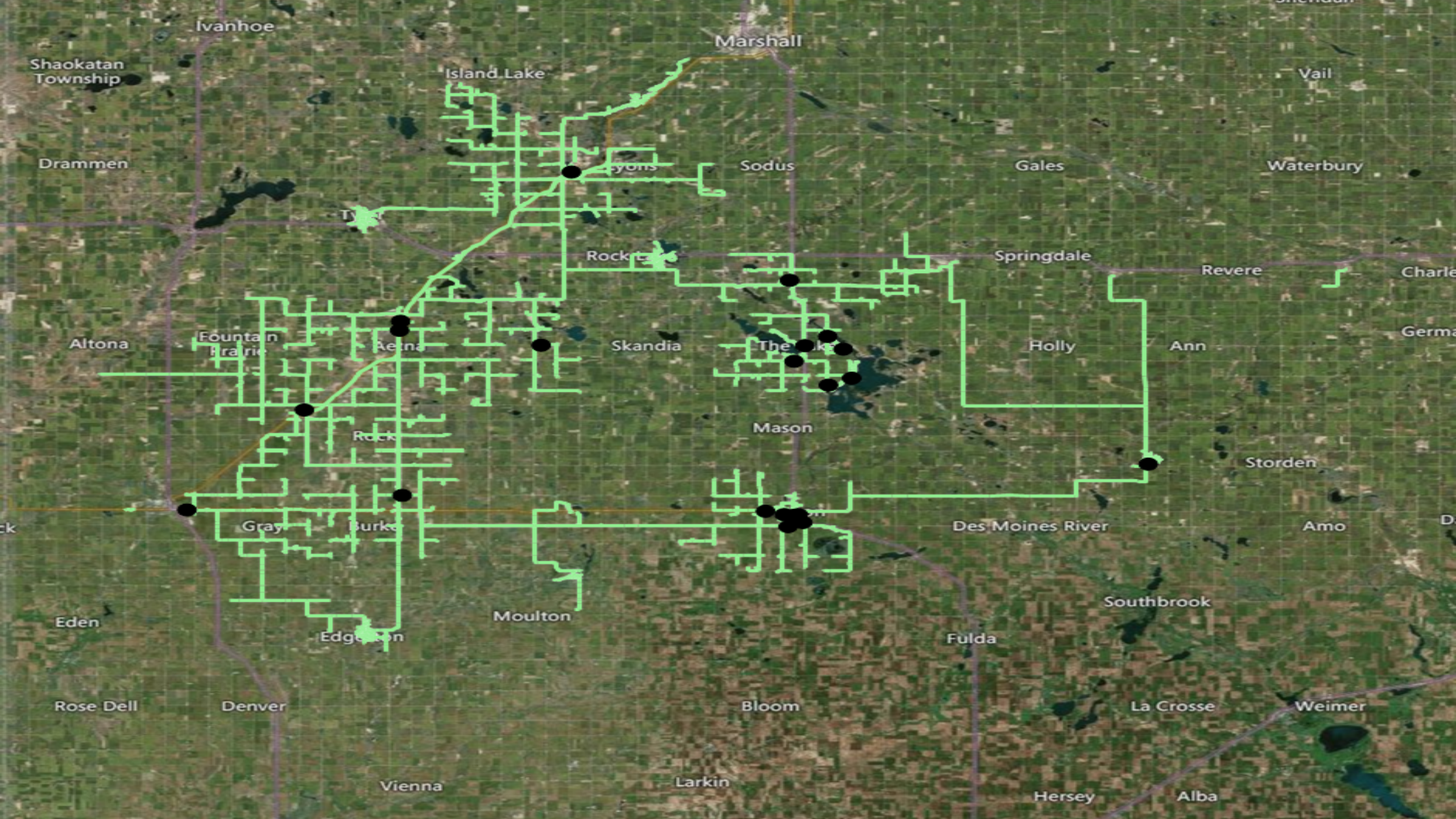
Meeting was adjourned at approximately 9:53.

ATTEST:

Sharon Giese, HR Director/Deputy Administrator Dennis Welgraven, Board Chair

Murray County Broadband

By: Terry Nelson
General Manager



Ivanhoe

Marshall

Shaokatan
Township

Island Lake

Vail

Drammen

Lyons

Sodus

Gales

Waterbury

Tyng

Rock Lake

Springdale

Revere

Charles

Altona

Fountain
Prairie

Keota

Skandia

The Oaks

Holly

Ann

German

Rock

Mason

Storden

Rock

Gray

Burke

Des Moines River

Amo

D

Eden

Edgerton

Moulton

Southbrook

Fulda

Rose Dell

Denver

Bloom

La Crosse

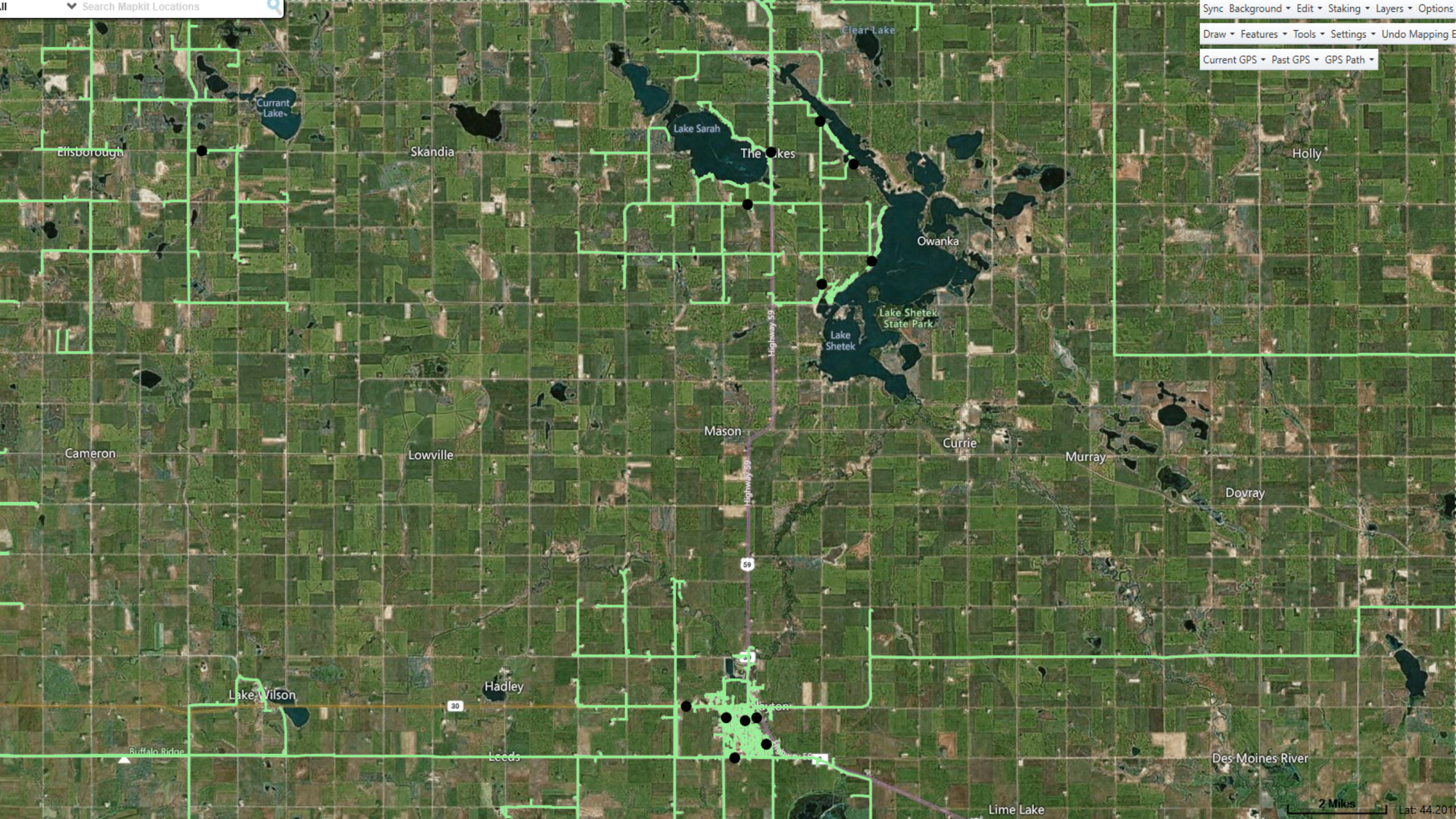
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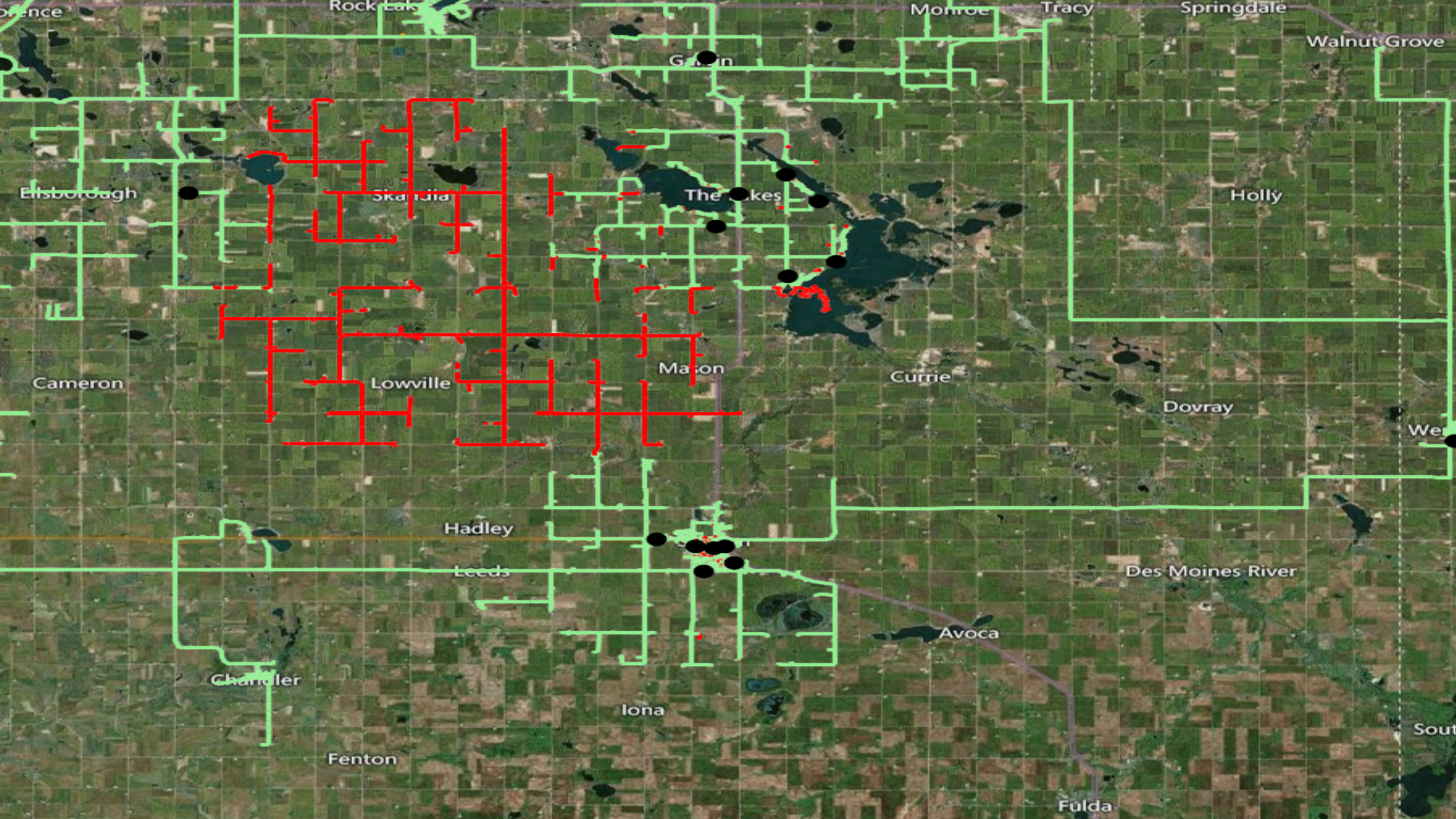
Hersey

Alba



2026 Projects

- ◆ Skandia FTTH- Border to Border Grant with Murray County
 - ◆ Awarded in 2025
 - ◆ 95 miles of fiber with 190 homes passed
 - ◆ \$3.88 million project
 - ◆ State grant of \$2.91
 - ◆ Remaining \$971,578 50/50 with Murray County
 - ◆ Still Waiting on Environmental/Archeological study
 - ◆ Service will be activated by the end of 2026



2026 Projects

- ◆ Lake Shetek Islands
 - ◆ Boring is complete under the three bridges
 - ◆ Received a Line Extension Grant on December 24th, 2025.
 - ◆ \$576,288 project cost. 50/50 grant with the State
 - ◆ 120 homes-Edgewater Bay, Valhalla, Keeley Island, Lake Shetek Drive
 - ◆ This project must be completed in 2026.
 - ◆ Issues with Archeological/Environmental/Tribal- Using the Lake Shetek Sewer Project Study to help speed along the project



Future Grants

- ◆ BEAD Program- Still waiting on the NTIA's final approval
 - ◆ Woodstock's plans was approved
 - ◆ Very few locations are eligible in Murray County- only 7 on the south side of Shetek
 - ◆ If this is received, We will build out the entire south side
- ◆ Line Extension- Only MN Grants available in the short term
 - ◆ Unless more money is funded, this program will remain small
- ◆ ReConnect- Uncertain if this will be continued-
 - ◆ Woodstock has been at a disadvantage for this because Co-ops received extra points over private companies- We have been lobbying at RUS at DC to change this- We are hopeful.

Murray

Write a description for your map.

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Feature 1

Feature 1

Image © 2024 Airbus
Image Landsat / Copernicus

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Long Term Goals

- ◆ 100% Fiber to the Home
 - ◆ Without Grants, these areas are extremely expensive
 - ◆ \$25 Million-\$30 Million to complete the remaining portions of the County
- ◆ Could upgrade some wireless locations to fill in gaps
 - ◆ New wireless services up to 300-400 Mbps
- ◆ Depending on the area, fiber costs run \$30,00-\$40,000 per mile in the rural and \$15,000-\$20,000 per customer.
- ◆ Our goal is to keep the per customer cost less than \$5,000.