



Connect South Carolina Releases New Broadband Coverage Maps for the Statewide Broadband Initiative

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Launches New Interactive Mapping App on Connect South Carolina Website

Columbia, SC – Connect South Carolina has launched a powerful new broadband app in the effort to bring affordable, high-speed Internet to the entire state. Available on Connect South Carolina’s website, www.connectsc.org, BroadbandStat is the interactive state mapping resource that puts all the latest information on the broadband landscape directly at your fingertips. Connect South Carolina is a subsidiary of [Connected Nation](http://www.connectednation.org) and operates as a nonprofit in the state of South Carolina.

Connect South Carolina has been able to gather and verify state-specific data on the availability, speed, location, and type of broadband services as well as the adoption and availability of broadband at community anchor institutions across the state. The meeting of this milestone is a result of a several-month long process of aggressive outreach to providers and community anchor institutions across the state, and extensive verification and validation of the data collected from these entities. These initial maps include data from 34 state providers, key findings include:

- 95.32% of South Carolina households have access to terrestrial fixed broadband service of at least 768 Kbps downstream and 200 Kbps upstream (excluding mobile and satellite services).
- 4.68% of South Carolina households are unserved by a terrestrial fixed broadband provider, representing approximately 72,000 unserved households that do not have access to a fixed wireless or wired broadband service offering (excluding mobile and satellite service).
- With mobile broadband service included, 99.70% or 1,529,333 South Carolina households have access to broadband service of at least 768 Kbps downstream and 200 Kbps upstream.

A public demonstration of the program's new interactive mapping feature, BroadbandStat, was held via webinar on Friday to encourage citizen verification and to demonstrate the broadband expansion scenario building that can be achieved using the tool.

Connected Nation's GIS team will continuously refine the maps as more data is gathered - relying upon citizen feedback as part of the validation process. Residents, businesses, and any interested party with knowledge of the state broadband landscape are asked to go to Connect South Carolina's website to provide input that will be used to verify and ensure the highest level of accuracy for the broadband maps.

On Connectsc.org, those who do not currently have broadband access can add their name and address to a secure database of households that would like to subscribe if given the opportunity. The collected information supports the creation of the broadband inventory map that will assist in expanding broadband delivery to residents across the state.

"We are excited to offer this interactive app to the citizens of South Carolina. With this new website, citizens can play an active role in the validation of the data and more importantly, use it as a resource to search provider options and draw attention to the areas that remain unserved," explains Brian Mefford, CEO of Connect South Carolina's parent organization, Connected Nation. "The goal of our nonprofit organization is to expand broadband access to areas where it doesn't exist and improve the quality of service in areas that are already served. South Carolina's newly completed map is the first major step in this process."

As the designated entity for broadband mapping and planning in the state of South Carolina, Connect South Carolina is a public-private partnership uniting local governments, businesses, and citizens in the goal of increasing broadband service in the state's unserved and underserved areas.

In December 2009, Connect South Carolina was awarded \$1.7 million in Recovery Act funding in an effort to increase the availability and use of high-speed Internet service in the state. The funding enables the state to collect data to develop and maintain a detailed map of existing broadband service over two years and conduct planning efforts for a period of five years.

These efforts are in compliance with the U.S. Department of Commerce's National Telecommunications and Information Administration's Notice of Funding Availability (NOFA) for the State Broadband Data and Development grant program (SBDD). Ultimately, these data will populate the comprehensive, interactive, and searchable national broadband map that NTIA is required by the Recovery Act to create and make publicly available by February 17, 2011.

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About Connect South Carolina: Connect South Carolina is a subsidiary of Connected Nation and operates as a nonprofit in the state of South Carolina. The state of South Carolina is leading the initiative to increase broadband Internet access throughout South Carolina. Connect South Carolina was commissioned by the Governor's Office to work with all broadband providers in the state of South Carolina to create detailed maps of broadband coverage in order to accurately pinpoint remaining gaps in broadband availability in South Carolina.
www.connectsc.org.