



broadband association of north dakota

BAND Together Newsletter

Executive Director Report: Fiber is Fueling North Dakota's Future

This month, I want to highlight the importance of fiber internet in rural areas. BAND members are proud to provide 100% fiber internet to homes and businesses across rural North Dakota. Here's why fiber matters so much:

Supports Local Economies

- Small businesses and farms increasingly rely on online tools for sales, supply chains, precision agriculture, and customer outreach.
- Reliable fiber helps attract and retain businesses, supporting job growth and economic vitality in rural towns.

Education Access

- Students need high-speed internet for homework, virtual classes, research, and college prep.
- Without fiber, many rural students are disadvantaged compared to their urban peers.

Healthcare Access

- Telehealth has become essential, especially in areas far from hospitals or clinics.
- Fiber makes video consultations, remote monitoring, and digital health records possible without delays.

Reliable, High-Speed Connectivity

- Fiber delivers faster speeds (up to gigabit and beyond) with much lower latency than copper or wireless technologies.
- With the average U.S. household now supporting 17–18 connected devices, fiber ensures rural residents can stream, work remotely, and stay connected without slowdowns—something older technologies simply can't handle.

Modern Quality of Life

- Everyday conveniences—smart home devices, video calls with family, online shopping, and entertainment—depend on strong connections.
- Fiber helps rural communities enjoy the same standard of living as urban ones.

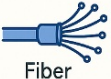
Future-Proof Infrastructure

- Fiber is scalable: once the cables are in place, they can support ever-higher speeds for decades.
- Rural communities with fiber are better positioned to adapt to future technological needs.

In short, fiber internet in rural areas isn't just about faster streaming—it's about economic survival, education, healthcare access, and community growth. You'll see a great example of this in our Member Spotlight, where BAND member RTC has upgraded its network to provide even more bandwidth to its customers.

As always, please **reach out with any questions** regarding broadband in North Dakota.

Quick Comparison Table

Technology	Speeds	Reliability	Latency	Upload/Download Balance	Future-Proof?
 Fiber	Up to multi-gigabit	Very high	Very low	Symmetrical	✓ Yes
 Satellite	Moderate (varies)	Weather sensitive	High	Limited uploads	✗ No
 Coax	100 Mbps – 1 Gbps	Moderate to high	Moderate	Asymmetrical	✗ No

BAND Member Spotlight: RTC Networks

Keeping Rural North Dakota Connected!

BAND member Reservation Telephone Cooperative ([RTC Networks](#)), headquartered in Parshall, provides service to more than **14,500 customers** across **9,000 square miles in western North Dakota and Montana**. With 100% fiber-to-the-home (FTTH), RTC Networks delivers lightning-fast speeds ranging from 500 Mbps up to 5 Gigs.

Why so fast?

The number of connected devices in homes and businesses has exploded in recent years. Computers, mobile phones, tablets, cameras, televisions, gaming systems, smart appliances, and wearables all demand reliable connections. Add in how consumers use these devices—streaming, video calls, online gaming—and the need for greater capacity only grows.

“Just in the last three years, RTC Networks has gone from a monthly average of 15 Gig peaking at 40 Gig, to averaging 30 Gig peaking at 66 Gig,” said Shane Hart, CEO and General Manager of RTC Networks. “The need for more speed, and subsequently network capacity, is only going to increase year over year because of how our customers are using the internet.”

Investing in the Future

RTC Networks has consistently invested in its network to stay ahead of demand. Most recently, RTC Networks upgraded its ring infrastructure to boost bandwidth availability from 100 Gig to 400 Gig! This \$7.2M upgrade was made possible in part by a **\$2.6M grant** from the **National Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA)**, with the remainder covered by the cooperative, which relies on the federal **Universal Service Fund (USF)** for network investment and maintenance.

These strategic investments ensure that RTC Networks’ customers—whether in rural North Dakota or Montana—stay connected today and well into the future.



BAND Around the State

Earlier this month, BAND and [NDAREC](#) hosted a PAC fundraiser in [WRT](#) territory at Painted Woods Golf Course in Washburn. In spite of the 50 mph winds and brief rain storm, we had a great turnout! The funds raised for PAC-T will help support those policymakers who make a positive impact on the rural broadband industry in North Dakota.

Pictured here are employees from [United Communications](#): Eric Williams, Steve Swanson, Tara Mikkelsen and AJ Hensel. Thanks to all those who support the PAC!



Upcoming Events

October 16
DRN Annual Meeting (Ellendale, ND)

December 1-3
BAND Annual Meeting (Bismarck, ND)

**Get in Touch &
Stay Connected!**

**Carissa Swenson,
Executive Director**



I am happy to provide information or speak at an event.
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