

## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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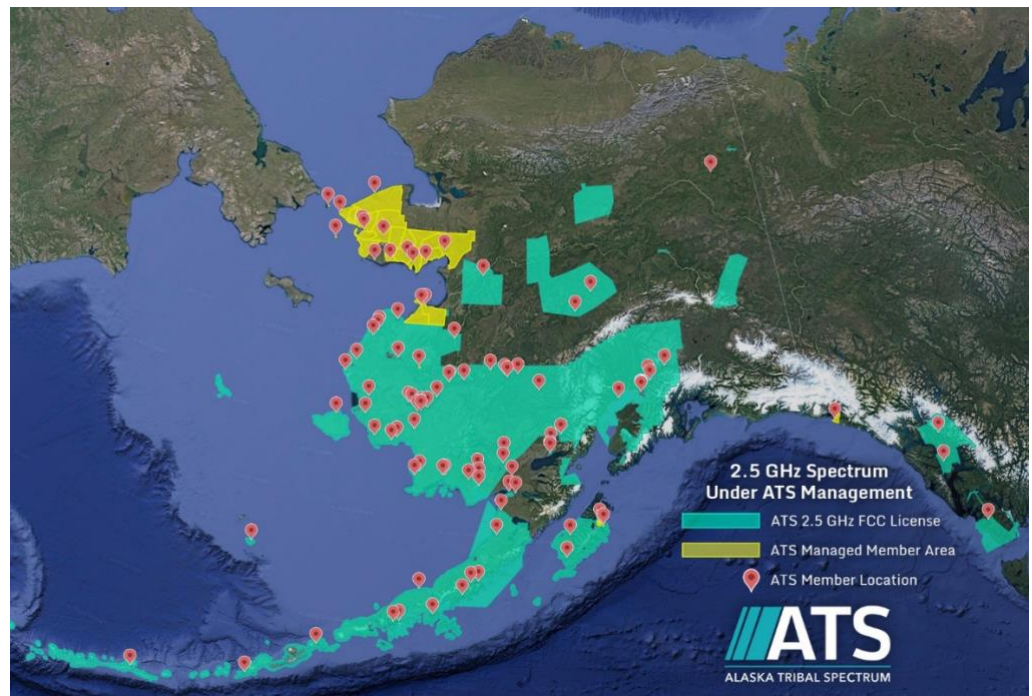


## FCC Awards Alaska Tribal Spectrum (ATS) with essential building block to establish the Alaska Tribal Network in 103 Alaska Native communities

Anchorage, AK – On March 15th, 2022, the FCC granted 2.5 GHz license number WRPT585 to the tribally managed [Alaska Tribal Spectrum \(ATS\)](https://www.alaskatribalspectrum.org) nonprofit. This represents the FCC's largest single 2.5GHz spectrum award in America. The ATS management footprint represents an area 85% the size of Texas, or a little bigger total area than New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Virginia, New Hampshire, Delaware, Massachusetts, and Indiana combined.

ATS played an instrumental role in making sure that this 2.5 GHz spectrum local wireless network building block was captured for the benefit of all its members. The ATS mission now is to leverage this powerful collective tribal voice, *representing almost half of the tribes in Alaska and a quarter of all tribes in the US*, to apply for government funding to create a statewide Alaska Tribal Network (ATN). The ATN will include tribally owned last mile village infrastructure that can immediately connect to existing high-speed satellite service to distribute broadband and cell service to tens of thousands of presently unserved Alaskans in 103 ATS member communities.

The ATS member communities represent many of the most remote tribal villages in Alaska where access to fiber is not coming anytime soon, if ever. ATS recently applied for an NTIA grant to use this 2.5GHz spectrum to establish ATN wireless delivery in 96 member villages. These last mile wireless networks can connect to existing Low Earth Orbit (LEO) OneWeb satellites now to provide sustainable affordable broadband service. Over the next decade, these networks can also be connected to whatever else becomes available, like fiber or additional new satellite capacity to provide gigabit speeds.



*"This is really huge news for our Tribes. Access to high-speed internet at unprecedented affordable prices will revolutionize our lives in our rural communities such as our remote village of Atka! This will make possible everything from creating more and better educational opportunities for our students and adults too, and improving communications and opportunities for our local governments, businesses and individuals, as well as increased capabilities to remote work and more. It will improve the general overall quality of life in our villages and perhaps help us to make our communities even more desirable places to live. The possibilities are limitless!"* said **Crystal Dushkin**, President, Native Village of Atka.

The wireless ATN design is a collaboration with [OptimERA](#), an Alaska owned company out of Dutch Harbor, AK who have successfully proven the ATN design in hardened Alaska environments. The ATN offers many [tribal advantages](#). It allows the tribes to own the networks and be paid by providers for the use of the 2.5 GHz spectrum in their villages. These local tribal networks also offer true mobility with village-wide broadband and cell phone service using a 4G/5G LTE architecture with the ability to roam everywhere in the United States. ATS is not a service provider, but ATS members will manage the network standards and policies to ensure a high quality of service is delivered by the many providers offered over the ATN. The Alaska Tribal Network is open to all willing and technically capable service providers in Alaska, to greatly reduce their operational costs in rural markets. The goal is to create inclusiveness and competition for affordable service to maximize tribal options in every village.

*"This FCC award was a truly tribal effort and represents a key ingredient to enable affordable satellite broadband now across all of Alaska's rural communities with tribal network ownership. It also empowers these tribes to maintain their Tribal Digital Sovereignty to control their own digital destiny"* said **Hallie Bisset** Executive Director of the Alaska Native Village Corporation Association (AVNCA) and Chair of the Governor's Task Force on Broadband.

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### **About Alaska Tribal Spectrum (ATS)**

Alaska Tribal Spectrum is a tribal managed nonprofit with a mission to bring affordable broadband to every member community. Our mission is to leverage the FCC awarded Tribal 2.5GHz spectrum to obtain last mile wireless infrastructure funding to create and expand a statewide Alaska Tribal Network (ATN) that will deliver sustainable, affordable "Broadband For All" everywhere in the State of Alaska. ATS manages member spectrum via the member-elected Policy Board to ensure the collective benefit of all of its Tribal members. ATS membership currently includes over 100 Tribes and we are inviting all Tribes with 2.5 GHz spectrum to join us in our mission.

### **About the Alaska Tribal Network (ATN)**

The ATN concept was made possible when Alaska Tribal entities took advantage of an offer by the FCC to reserve 2.5 GHz radio spectrum in Alaska. ATS played a significant role in that success. Nearly the entire state is covered by ATS members and other Tribes that applied for the spectrum. This means that if we all work together, we can create a statewide Alaska Tribal Network that is Tribally governed. Working together we can create last mile wireless networks in every community in Alaska and provide sustainable, affordable broadband. The ATN opens up possibilities and connection for rural Tribal communities to participate in opportunities the rest of the US takes for granted. In these times, affordable broadband access is as essential as water, power, and electricity. The ATN makes it possible.