



To: Wyoming BEAD Permitting Partners

From: Wyoming Broadband Office (WBO)

Re: Minutes: Wyoming BEAD Permitting Roundtable, Introduction to Permitting for BEAD (October 1, 2026)

Date: October 2026

Meeting information

Meeting: Wyoming BEAD Permitting Roundtable, Introduction to Permitting for BEAD (October 2026)

Date and time: October 1, 2026, from 11 a.m. to noon Mountain Time

Platform: Microsoft Teams

Host: Chad Bolling, Broadband Manager, Wyoming Broadband Office (WBO)

Consulting support: Mitch Hergett, Morgan Barnes, and Caroline Mueller, CTC Technology & Energy

Status: Closed to the public; not recorded

Attendance

The following organizations attended:

- Black Hills Energy
- BNSF Railway (represented by JLL)
- Bureau of Indian Affairs
- Bureau of Land Management (BLM)
- PacifiCorp (Rocky Mountain Power)
- Pelican Corp – One Call of Wyoming

- Wyoming Business Council
- Wyoming Game and Fish Department
- Wyoming Public Service Commission
- Wyoming State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO)

Welcome and Wyoming's role in BEAD and permitting

Chad Bolling opened the meeting, the first in a recurring series of permitting roundtables. He framed it as a working session rather than a briefing.

Mitch Hergett stated the shared goal: Rigorous, efficient permitting that is effective for all parties and aligns with the requirements of the National Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA). He then reviewed the four expanded permitting obligations in Wyoming's Notice of Award and in Section 13D of NTIA's Broadband Equity, Access, and Deployment (BEAD) General Terms and Conditions:

- Ensure broadband permit application expediency, with requests approved or denied within 90 days.
- Seek to minimize permitting costs for broadband deployments.
- Establish permitting roundtables.
- Track and report permitting compliance issues.

He emphasized that these are commitments the State of Wyoming made in accepting the award, not new mandates on participating organizations.

Information distribution

Mitch Hergett described the information distribution process. Subgrantee project routes are analyzed against partners' official geographic information system (GIS) data layers to identify potential permitting impacts (PPIs). A PPI is a GIS intersection between a project route and a partner data layer. It is a flag, not a confirmed permit requirement. PPIs are then included in each subgrantee's kickoff meeting, in ongoing issue tracking, and in the semi-annual public report.

WBO requested four things from partners: (1) designated points of contact, including any permitting authorities WBO has not yet identified; (2) GIS files of official data layers for the

PPI analysis; (3) proactive communication about concerns with any BEAD subgrantee project; and (4) resource documentation that can be shared with subgrantees.

WBO will work with partners to establish workflows, checklists, and points of contact to support the 90-day approve-or-deny window. WBO will also monitor and encourage fair and reasonable permitting costs. WBO committed to three tracking and reporting activities: A kickoff meeting for each subgrantee, tracking of permitting issues and compliance, and a semi-annual public report on the WBO website. Partner feedback on the 90-day window and on fair and reasonable permitting costs is summarized under “Participant discussion” below.

Permitting roundtable structure

Quarterly permitting roundtables for agency directors or their designated representatives are scheduled for November, February, April, and July. These sessions are closed to the public, and minutes will be published after each call. Staff-level permitting working sessions will be held as needed, beginning in December 2026.

Two optional deep-dive topics were offered for future working sessions: (1) federal land and right-of-way permitting and (2) railroads and pole attachments.

The roadmap is as follows:

- October 2026: Introduction to permitting for BEAD
- November 2026: Q4 roundtable and progress update
- December 2026: First working session (topic open)
- February 2027: Q1 roundtable
- April 2027: Q2 roundtable
- Quarterly roundtables continue through 2030.

Wyoming BEAD projects

Mitch Hergett reviewed program status. Sixty-one projects have been selected across 10 awardees, with 48 contracts executed and 13 under contract extension. Total awards are \$182.2 million, with \$61.6 million in matching funds, for roughly \$244 million in combined investment serving 32,361 broadband serviceable locations.

PPI counts and route miles were presented by permitting authority. Other potential impacts shown included historic places, floodplains and wetlands, critical habitat, sage-grouse habitat, and big game migration corridors, based on data from the federal ArcGIS Pro Permitting and Environmental Information Tool (APPEIT).

Participant discussion

Mitch Hergett invited participants to share roadblocks and challenges. The following questions and comments were raised during the presentation and the open discussion.

The 90-day window and pole attachments

A utility noted that it had handled pole attachments for many years. It asked why the new requirements were being introduced and whether some utilities had not been meeting guidelines and timelines. The utility said that meeting a 90-day timeline depends on the number and size of requests and is not feasible for requests involving 300 to 400 poles. Its practice is to keep applicants updated and meet regularly on status, and applicants have generally been satisfied with that approach.

Mitch Hergett responded that the 90-day window and the fair and reasonable cost obligations are federal requirements on the State. He said WBO has limited control over private industry and that the obligations are directed primarily at government permitting. He described the utility's practice as fair and said WBO does not want to disrupt existing processes.

A permitting manager asked whether the 90 days to approve or deny includes make-ready and pole replacement. Mitch Hergett said NTIA has not specified this. Pole attachments involve permitting, engineering review, and walkouts. For these, he does not expect the full make-ready process to be included, only an affirmative approve-or-deny action. The permitting manager added that a subgrantee may assume approval on day 90, but that a curing process may extend the timeline. Mitch Hergett said the intent is not to change partner processes. Instead, the goal is to monitor status and understand why requests exceed 90 days, which is NTIA's focus.

Defining permitting costs

A utility asked what "fair and reasonable permitting costs" means for utilities. It explained that it has never charged a separate permit fee. Its costs consist of labor and make-ready work, which are passed through to the applicant and cannot be reduced. The utility provides cost estimates in advance for approval. When applicants negotiate by removing poles, the utility must prepare a second estimate, which duplicates effort. It asked

whether other utilities charge submission fees and whether annual lease agreement costs or make-ready costs count as permitting costs. CTC added this question to the list of questions for NTIA.

Federal and state authority

A utility explained that joint use attachments require a contract with the utility that sets out all terms on costs and timelines. It noted that joint use in Wyoming is governed by the Federal Communications Commission (FCC). It asked which agency, the FCC or NTIA, has ultimate authority. Mitch Hergett responded that WBO has limited authority and that its role is to meet NTIA requirements as fully as possible.

Wyoming SHPO noted that NTIA has an interagency memorandum of understanding (MOU) with the State and that good communication between NTIA and BLM is needed. SHPO suggested that future roundtables include updates on those discussions so WBO can help facilitate communication with NTIA. SHPO also asked whether a state-level memorandum of agreement (MOA) exists. WBO will follow up.

Section 106 and SHPO review

Wyoming SHPO thanked WBO for the SHPO-related videos prepared by Tim Moyer, who provides environmental and historic preservation (EHP) support to CTC and WBO. SHPO reiterated that research must be done by Secretary of the Interior (SOI)-qualified staff and that SHPO data is accessible only to SOI-qualified individuals. SHPO explained that its program requirements build on FCC requirements from about 2020. It noted that some proponents have used the NTIA Section 106 documentation form as a checklist and that the form must be completed by SOI-qualified staff.

Mitch Hergett said subgrantees must meet both federal and state requirements. He explained that NTIA has made WBO responsible for submitting National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and EHP documentation to NTIA. Subgrantees must therefore prepare documentation that satisfies both state reviewers and NTIA. He also noted that a key concern is ensuring subgrantees work well with state agencies. Permitting requirements may differ from state to state, but they all roll up to NTIA.

SHPO noted that subdividing projects into smaller submissions would significantly increase review time, including for routes crossing national forest lands. SHPO said that receiving a project's entire area of potential effects (APE) at once would be more efficient. Mitch Hergett said WBO is being cautious about subdividing projects but that some subdivision may be necessary. He added that WBO will keep SHPO's concern in mind.

GIS data sharing

A utility asked what WBO expects regarding GIS data and how the data will be used, noting that it considers its data proprietary. Mitch Hergett explained that if a partner shares layers showing property or right-of-way boundaries, WBO can identify where projects may encroach. He gave the example of a railroad whose right-of-way extends 200 feet on either side of the track but varies near Cheyenne. He emphasized that data sharing is fully voluntary.

Other questions

Participants asked about a map of aerial miles and about call-before-you-dig compliance.

- **Aerial miles map:** No map is currently available. WBO will share more information as it receives detailed design files from subgrantees.
- **Call-before-you-dig compliance:** Subgrantee contracts require compliance with all local and state laws and permitting requirements. If partners report that subgrantees are not complying, WBO can direct those subgrantees to comply.

Open discussion prompts not reached

Time did not allow discussion of the remaining prompts. WBO will share these questions with permitting partners by email.

Close and next steps

Chad Bolling thanked participants and closed the meeting, saying he looked forward to seeing them at the next roundtable. Six next steps were identified:

- WBO and CTC will distribute the presentation deck and publish meeting minutes.
- Partners will provide designated points of contact by October 15, 2026, through the Wyoming BEAD Permitting Partners form or by email to WYBEAD@ctcnet.us. If no response is received, WBO will treat the current contact as the contact of record.
- Partners will provide GIS files or download links of official data layers for the PPI analysis by October 15, 2026. Sharing is voluntary.
- CTC will send NTIA the questions captured during the meeting ahead of NTIA's October 8, 2026, session at 1 p.m. Mountain Time.

- WBO will confirm the December 2026 working session topic in a follow-up email.
- WBO will send calendar invitations for the November 2026 Q4 roundtable.