

THE

PowerLines

REPORT



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August 2023

What does Colorado's BEAD Funding Mean for DMEA?



Jack Johnston, CEO

Recently, the news has been dominated by the topic of BEAD funding. There's a good reason for it too! So, this month, I'd like to provide a bit of history on the program and explain what it means for DMEA.

In November 2021, the Information Infrastructure and Jobs Act (IIJA) was signed into law and later became known as the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL). Hailed as a modern "New Deal" program, this law focuses on rebuilding or expanding our country's basic infrastructure, from transportation to drinking water to energy development.

One of the most essential components, though, is the *Internet for All* initiative that dedicates \$65 billion to the goal of bringing high-speed internet to every American home. Of this, \$42.5 billion is earmarked specifically to build and expand telecom networks, and is called Broadband Equity, Access, and Deployment funding, or BEAD for short. Recently, Colorado received its \$826,522,650 BEAD allocation. In July, our state officials announced that Colorado will distribute its allocation via the Colorado Broadband Office's Advance Colorado Broadband grant program. So, what does this mean for DMEA? It means we're one step closer to officially closing the digital divide!

State and federal grants have been crucial to our ability to build Elevate's fiber network in many rural areas. Over the years, we have secured almost \$56 million in grant funds, which has allowed us to bring high-speed internet to thousands of rural homes and ranches.

Once we complete all of our current grant projects, 95% of DMEA members will have access to Elevate's multigigabit internet. This new funding will help us continue closing the gap and move us that much closer to connecting **every** member.

The digital divide is two-fold, though. We recognize that having access to our high-speed internet doesn't automatically mean you have the financial ability to take advantage of it. Another critical aspect of the *Internet for All* initiative is the Affordable Connectivity Program (ACP). Congress dedicated \$14.2 billion (of the \$65 billion) to ACP alone. Established by the Federal Communications Commission in 2022, the ACP provides a significant discount on internet services for low-income households. This renewed investment in the ACP addresses the affordability gap by providing a \$30 monthly discount for eligible households.

Eligibility is very inclusive as the income level qualifier is double the traditional poverty level. It's estimated that roughly 40% of American households qualify for the ACP discount, yet rates are much lower. I'm proud to share that in 2022, Elevate took steps to add ACP to our offerings and better serve our consumers. We aren't immune to the national trend, and participation in Montrose and Delta counties has also been slow to take off. I encourage you to check your eligibility online at getinternet.gov.

High-speed internet is an essential utility in our modern life. Colorado's BEAD funding is critical in helping providers like us ensure that neither lack of infrastructure nor income prevents any Coloradan from having it.

**BIPARTISAN
INFRASTRUCTURE LAW**
\$65B

**COLORADO
BEAD FUNDING**
\$826M

**AFFORDABLE
CONNECTIVITY PROGRAM**
\$14.2B

GET C RRENT

Keeping you plugged in to everything electric.

ELECTRIC LEAF BLOWERS

Turn your tedious yard work into a breeze. Say goodbye to bending, raking, and sore muscles with an electric leaf blower. These noise-conscious heroes of yard maintenance quietly whisk away autumn's festive fallout or spring's green debris.

One of their standout features is their adjustable speed setting. Coupled with their lightweight and cordless design, they give you the freedom to wander your garden without any hassle.

Electric leaf blowers provide an eco-friendly solution to yard maintenance. No gas or oil, just mess-free electric power.

Where to buy: Home improvement and hardware stores

Who it's for: Homeowners, businesses, and landscapers

Extras: Collection bags, batteries, extension tubes, and more



- ✓ Quiet Operation
- ✓ Adjustable Speeds
- ✓ Low Maintenance
- ✓ Lightweight

CLEARING THE WAY

MANAGING VEGETATION FOR SAFETY, RELIABILITY, AND AFFORDABILITY

Trees keep us cool with shade, provide habitat for wildlife, and make our landscape beautiful. Unfortunately, trees that grow too close to or into DMEA's power lines can result in power outages and safety risks.

DMEA's vegetation management crews are responsible for trimming and removing trees along all our distribution and transmission lines. This is important for three reasons:

- ▶ **Safety** — Electricity can travel through trees and injure or kill anyone working or playing on the tree. In addition, trees growing too close to power lines increase the risk of deadly wildfires.
- ▶ **Reliability** — Maintaining proper clearance around lines significantly reduces the chance that adverse weather will send trees or limbs into our lines and equipment.
- ▶ **Affordability** — Preventing the need to repair and replace our power lines, poles, and equipment because of tree damage helps deliver affordable electricity.

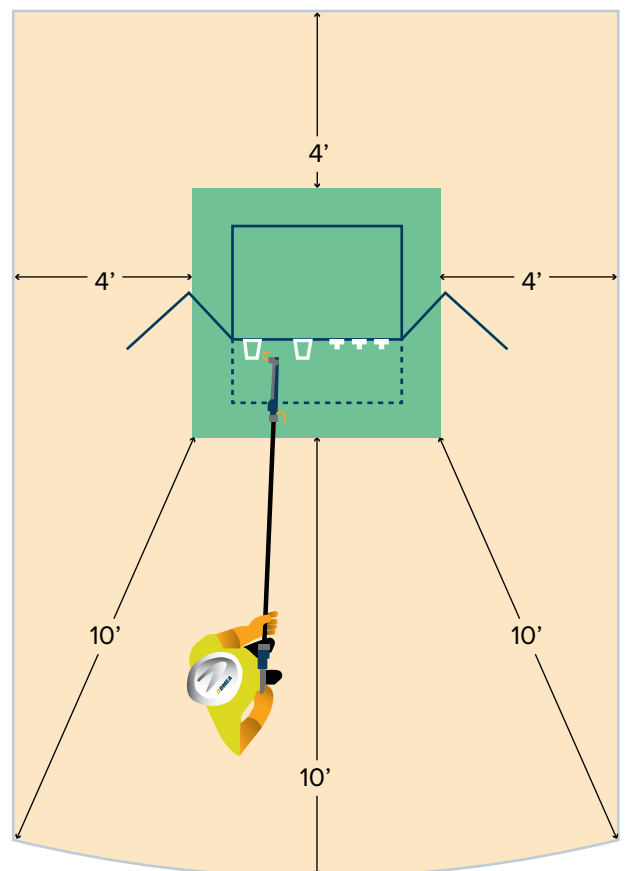
Learn more at dmea.com/trees-your-power

GIVE US SPACE

WE NEED ACCESS TO OUR PAD-MOUNTED TRANSFORMERS

Pad-mounted transformers are part of the underground electrical system in your neighborhood. They are placed on easements in yards and serve the same purposes as transformers on utility poles. Because they connect several homes, underground lines may radiate out from them in many directions.

- ▶ **Maintain a 4-foot clearance around the back and sides of the transformer.** Equipment inside the box generates heat and needs air circulation to keep cool and run efficiently. Overheating can cause an outage.
- ▶ **Maintain a 10-foot clearance in front of the transformer.** The equipment inside is energized at high voltage. Line crews need to access energized transformers to avoid interrupting your service. The linemen use long fiberglass insulated sticks and need 10 feet of clear space to work safely.
- ▶ **Landscape with caution.** While low ground cover won't restrict access, any plantings are at risk of getting trampled by crew members during maintenance and repair work.



PLEASE DON'T BLOCK OUR
SAFE OPERATING ZONE

CONCERN FOR Community

COOPERATIVE PRINCIPLE #7



Top photo, front row (left-to-right): Emily Sanchez, DMEA; Dave Vergamini, MVMC, US Navy; Amy Eifling, MVMC, USMC; Stan Hoover, US Army; Les Williams, MVMC, USMC; J. Bob Brueske, MVMC; Mark Garcia, supporter/son of veteran; Damon Lockhart, DMEA; back row: Steve Class, VFW Auxilliary; Fred Schaefer, US Army; Joe Kusar, USMC.

Bottom: Artist rendition of the Veterans Memorial Plaza by Kirk Shiflett.

HONORING HEROES

The Montrose Veterans Memorial Coalition

The Montrose Veterans Memorial Coalition (MVMC) is a devoted group of eight members, brought together by a shared commitment: to honor the valiant veterans from all wars and eras. Their primary mission is to create a Veterans Memorial Plaza at Cerise Park. This peaceful place will be a comforting space for veterans, their families, and friends to reflect and heal.

The Coalition, formed in November 2022, envisions the Veterans Memorial Plaza as more than just a monument. It will serve as an educational resource, helping the public to understand the sacrifices our military personnel have made throughout history. The memorial will bring to life various conflicts from World War I to the War on Terror, fostering a deeper appreciation of our veterans' sacrifices.

How We are helping

Aligned with the mission of the MVMC, DMEA provided support through a \$20,000 matching donation. This contribution has helped MVMC exceed their initial fundraising goal of \$100,000, pushing them closer to a groundbreaking ceremony for the plaza in Spring 2024. DMEA's involvement is a testament to the community's shared values and commitment to honor those who have served.

How you can help

Purchase granite benches and bricks in honor of veterans or donate directly via the Coalition's website at montrosevmc.us. Keep up-to-date with MVMC's progress on social media or by contacting them at 970-765-2210.



Montrose Office
11925 6300 Road
Montrose, CO 81401
M, W, F; 8:00am-5:00pm
T & Th; 8:00am-6:00pm

Read Office
21191 H 75 Road
Delta, CO 81416
W; 8:00am-5:00pm

Contact Us:
877-687-3632 | dmea.com | [f](https://www.facebook.com/dmea) [y](https://www.youtube.com/dmea) [i](https://www.instagram.com/dmea) [l](https://www.linkedin.com/dmea)

Your Board of Directors:

Bill Patterson, District 1	Kyle Martinez, District 2
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Enno Heuscher, District 7	Stacia Cannon, North
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DMEA Board Meetings are open to all members and are generally held on the 4th Tuesday monthly beginning at 3PM with the public comment period at 5PM. Call 970-240-1212 to confirm date, time, and location.

DMEA is an equal opportunity provider and employer. If you wish to file a Civil Rights program complaint of discrimination, complete the USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form, found online at ascr.usda.gov/complaint_filing_cust.html or at any USDA office, or call (866) 632-9992 to request the form. You may also write a letter containing all of the information requested in the form. Send your completed complaint form or letter to USDA by mail at U.S. Department of Agriculture, Office of Adjudication, 1400 Independence Avenue, S.W. Washington, DC. 20250-9410, by fax (202) 690-7442 or email at program.instate@usda.gov.

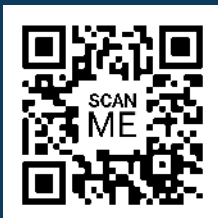
SAVE \$5. CHANGE LIVES.



Get a **\$5 DMEA bill credit** when you sign up today for **Operation Round Up**.

Make a difference in the community by rounding up your monthly electric bill to the nearest dollar. Those extra cents are donated to worthwhile organizations and families in need.

dmea.com/ORU.save5news



AFFORDABLE INTERNET FOR EVERY HOME

GET HIGH-SPEED FIBER
INTERNET FOR JUST \$15.70/MO.

Elevate participates in two financial aid programs that provide discounted internet service for eligible low-income households:

Program	Discount
Affordable Connectivity Program (ACP)	\$30/month
Lifeline	\$9.25/month

Your low price: 150 Mbps for \$15.70/month!

Sign up at nv.fcc.gov/lifeline

ELEVATE[®]

FAST INTERNET ▶ (for real)

elevateinternet.com • 844-386-8744

ACP and Lifeline discounts can be combined and are only available for eligible household internet service. Consumers must self-verify. Discounted price of \$15.70/month applies to residential 150 Mbps internet service.