



A small but MIGHTY force for Rural Broadband.

In 2015, the Carpenter Road fire destroyed 63,972 acres in Stevens County and on the Spokane Indian Tribe of Indians Reservation. The fire camp serving that wild fire was without any access to the internet for two weeks and had to drive GIS maps on a zip drive from the county office.

To respond to these challenges, the Broadband Action Team (BAT) was formed in 2016. Members and partners meet monthly to address broadband needs in the area. Economic development, public safety preparedness and response, access to healthcare and education rely on a strong broadband internet connection for rural communities across the US. Increasing quality of, and access to, broadband is a widespread community goal for Stevens County and the Spokane Tribe of Indians.

Our BAT Goals

1. **Create a shared language** to describe broadband access, develop a website to help others understand the issues.
2. **Decide on metrics** for measuring increased broadband access.
3. **Respond to policy issues (state, federal and local)** that affect our ability to increase access and use.
4. **Pre-positioned Fire Camps.** Determine two potential sites, seek funding, develop “field guide” for replication.
5. **Boots on the Ground.** Encourage local champions to help us find solutions. Develop a “field guide” for replication.
6. **Map existing broadband infrastructure and levels of service with Stevens County and Spokane Tribe GIS.** This may involve use of publicly available data (FCC, etc.), interviews with service providers, data gathering from residents and businesses.
7. **Compile best practices in rural broadband solutions,** i.e., infrastructure types, investment models, business models and financing tools to record progress and share with broadband stakeholders, and other communities.

Contact Information

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extension.wsu.edu/stevens/broadband-action-team
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BAT Members and Partners

- WSU Extension:* Debra Hansen, Stevens County Director, Monica Babine, Digital Initiatives Senior Associate and Bert Klimas, *BAT Coordinator*
- City of Chewelah:* Dorothy Knauss, Mayor
- Colville School District:* Pete Lewis, Superintendent
- Department of Natural Resources:* Steve Harris, NE Wildfire & Forest Practices Assistant Manager
- Employment Security Department:* Bryan Raines, Customer First Manager and Barney Brockwell, WorkSource Specialist
- Libraries of Stevens County:* Amanda Six, Director, Jessica Varang, IT Manager, and Bryan Tidwell, Chewelah Manager
- NE WA Health Programs:* Desiree Sweeney, Chief Executive Officer and Clint Hagen, IT
- Rural Resources Community Action:* Kelly Charlton, Director of Employment and Training
- Providence Health Care:* Ron Rehn, Chief Administrative Officer
- Spokane Tribe of Indians:* Frank Metlow, Planning & Economic Development Director and Randy Bowen, IT Director
- Stevens County Emergency Management:* Jim Caruso, Director and Adenea Thompson, *WSU Extension*, Communications Coordinator
- Stevens County Information Services:* Mark Curtis, Director and Trevor Sellars, Communications Specialist
- Stevens County Fire District #9:* Jeff Pitts
- Stevens County Fire District #12:* Dave Klimas and Jason Edwards
- Tri County Economic Development District (TEDD):* Barry Lamont, Director and Silas Rappe, Interim Regional Planner

Over 14 Internet Service Providers!

- Stevens County Commissioners:**
 Wes McCart, Don Dashiell and Steve Parker
- US Congressional Staff:**
 Senator Cantwell: Alex Scott
 Senator Murray: John Culton & Ben Merkel
 Congresswoman McMorris Rodgers: Andrew Engell
- WA Legislators**
 Senator Shelly Short
 Representative Jacquelin Maycumber