

# **TASK FORCE FOR REVIEWING THE CONNECTIVITY AND TECHNOLOGY NEEDS OF PRECISION AGRICULTURE IN THE UNITED STATES**

## **CHARTER**

### **1. The Task Force's Official Designation**

The official designation of the federal advisory committee is the "Task Force for Reviewing the Connectivity and Technology Needs of Precision Agriculture in the United States" (hereinafter the "Task Force").

### **2. Authority**

The Task Force is hereby established at the direction of the Chairman of the Federal Communications Commission (hereinafter "Commission") and in accordance with the provisions of the Federal Advisory Committee Act (FACA) as amended, 5 U.S.C. App 2. The Chairman is acting pursuant to section 12511(b)(2) of the Agriculture Improvement Act of 2018, Pub.L. 115-334, 132 Stat 4490 (hereinafter the "Act").

### **3. The Task Force's Objective and Scope of its Activities**

The objective of the Task Force will be to consult with the Secretary of Agriculture (hereinafter "Secretary"), or a designee of the Secretary, and collaborate with public and private stakeholders in the agriculture and technology fields to:

- a. identify and measure current gaps in the availability of broadband Internet access service on agricultural land;
- b. develop policy recommendations to promote the rapid, expanded deployment of broadband Internet access service on unserved agricultural land, with a goal of achieving reliable capabilities on 95 percent of agricultural land in the United States by 2025;
- c. promote effective policy and regulatory solutions that encourage the adoption of broadband Internet access service on farms and ranches and promote precision agriculture;
- d. recommend specific new rules or amendments to existing rules of the Commission that the Commission should issue to achieve the goals and purposes of the policy recommendations described in paragraph (b);
- e. recommend specific steps that the Commission should take to obtain reliable and standardized data measurements of the availability of broadband Internet access service as may be necessary to target funding support, from future programs of the Commission dedicated to the deployment of broadband Internet access service, to unserved agricultural land in need of broadband Internet access service; and
- f. recommend specific steps that the Commission should consider to ensure that the expertise of the Secretary and available farm data are reflected in future programs of the Commission dedicated to the infrastructure deployment of broadband Internet access service and to direct available funding to unserved agricultural land where needed.

#### **4. Description of Duties**

The Task Force will carry out the activities described in Section 3. In addition, not later than one (1) year after the date on which the Commission establishes the Task Force, and annually thereafter, the Task Force shall submit to the Chairman of the Commission a report, which shall be made public not later than 30 days after the date on which the Chairman receives the report, that details: the status of fixed and mobile broadband Internet access service coverage of agricultural land; the projected future connectivity needs of agricultural operations, farmers, and ranchers; and the steps being taken to accurately measure the availability of broadband Internet access service on agricultural land and the limitations of current, as of the date of the report, measurement processes.

#### **5. Official to Whom the Committee Reports**

Chairman, Federal Communications Commission

#### **6. Support**

The Commission will provide the facilities and support staff necessary to conduct meetings of the Task Force. Private sector members of the Task Force will serve without any government compensation and will not be entitled to travel expenses or per diem subsistence allowances.

#### **7. Estimated Annual Operating Costs in Dollars and Staff Years**

Annual operating costs associated with supporting the Task Force's functions are estimated to be \$245,000, which includes Commission staff time equivalent to 2 full-time employees (FTEs).

#### **8. Designated Federal Officer**

A full-time or permanent part-time employee, appointed by the Chairman of the Commission, will serve as the Designated Federal Officer (DFO). The DFO will approve or call all of the Task Force's and subcommittee meetings, prepare and approve all meeting agendas, attend all Task Force and subcommittee meetings, adjourn any meeting when the DFO determines adjournment to be in the public interest, and chair meetings when directed to do so by the Chairman.

#### **9. Task Force Meetings**

The Task Force shall meet approximately three (3) times a year. Meetings of the Task Force shall be open to the public and timely notice of each meeting shall be published in the Federal Register and shall be further publicized through other appropriate vehicles.

#### **10. Subcommittees**

The Task Force may, with agency approval, work through informal subcommittees, or other subgroups of the Task Force, which shall report their activities and recommendations to the Task Force as a whole. Recommendations of subcommittees must be reported to the Task Force as a whole, and only as modified or ratified by the Task Force as a whole may such recommendations be reported to the Chairman of the Commission.

## **11. Duration**

The term of the Task Force shall be two (2) years.

## **12. Termination**

The charter of the Task Force shall terminate two (2) years from the Filing Date of this charter. However, the Commission will seek to renew the charter for successive terms until the Task Force terminates on January 1, 2025.

## **13. Membership**

Members of the Task Force shall be selected by the Chairman of the Commission, in consultation with the Secretary and appropriate Commission staff. The Task Force shall be composed of not more than 15 voting members who will be appointed either as Representatives or as Special Government Employees (SGEs) as necessary. Voting members shall include:

- a. agricultural producers representing diverse geographic regions and farm sizes, including owners and operators of farms of less than 100 acres;
- b. an agricultural producer representing tribal agriculture;
- c. Internet service providers, including regional or rural fixed and mobile broadband Internet access service providers and telecommunications infrastructure providers;
- d. representatives from the electric cooperative industry;
- e. representatives from the satellite industry;
- f. representatives from precision agriculture equipment manufacturers, including drone manufacturers, manufacturers of autonomous agricultural machinery, and manufacturers of farming robotics technologies;
- g. representatives from State and local governments; and
- h. representatives with relevant expertise in broadband network data collection, geospatial analysis, and coverage mapping.

Voting members will be fairly balanced in terms of their technological experience, points of view, and fields of knowledge relevant to the Task Force. A voting member of the Task Force shall serve for a term of two (2) years. As appropriate, members may also be appointed for their individual expertise as SGEs.

The Secretary, or a designee of the Secretary, shall serve as an ex-officio, nonvoting member of the Task Force.

Any vacancy in the Task Force shall not affect the powers of the Task Force; and shall be filled in the same manner as the original appointment.

#### **14. Recordkeeping**

Records of the proceedings will be kept, as required by applicable laws and regulations. All records of the Task Force, its subcommittees, and any other subgroups of the Task Force, shall be handled in accordance with General Records Item 6.2, or other approved agency records disposition schedule. These records shall be available for public inspection and copying, subject to the Freedom of Information Act, 5 U.S.C. § 552.

#### **15. Filing Date**

December 4, 2019