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## Washington completes installation of 1,600-mile, \$140M broadband network for rural areas

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Fast Internet speeds are coming to those living in the not-so-populated areas of Washington.

A three-year, \$140 million project to bring broadband Internet to rural Washington is finally completed, as businesses, hospitals, libraries, residents, and government agencies like police and fire departments in remote areas now have access to lightning quick Internet.

The project was made possible thanks to federal grants and the efforts of Olympia-based non-profit [Northwest Open Access Network](#). For the past three years, 1,600 miles of fiber optic cables were installed underground in places like Yakima, Ilwaco and Asotin.



“This is a hidden jewel for economic development in the state of Washington. It is underground, but its results are above ground,” Washington Gov. Jay Inslee said in a statement. “We are one of

the most wired states in the nation, and that’s just not because of the coffee.”



While in Congress, Inslee lobbied federal officials for the funding and has [long been supportive](#) of better broadband throughout the state, once saying that “a day without broadband is a day without sunshine for the state’s economy.”

The governor was also on hand at our [Startup Day event](#) this past Friday, touting the state’s ability state’s ability to innovate and create with startups and entrepreneurship. Of course, access to Internet is a must-have for nearly every successful startup.

“This is the center of innovation,” Inslee told the crowd at the Showbox SoDo. “It is this group here this morning that really epitomizes what Washington is: The most innovative culture and place on the planet.”

Fiber-optic Internet is already available in Seattle, with companies like Spectrum Networks providing access. In addition, Gigabit Squared is [set to bring lightning-fast fiber Internet speeds](#) to Seattle residents in early 2014.

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