DATE: 2-28-2014
FROM: Ralls County Electric Cooperative
TO: Federal Communications Commission (FCC) Staff
SUBJECT: Expression of Interest – Rural Trials
Docket No. 10-90

Background

Ralls County Electric Cooperative (RCEC) established in 1937, based in New London, Missouri, is a member owned electric cooperative serving 6,000 meters is Ralls, Marion, Monroe, Adrian and Pike counties in Northeast Missouri. RCEC is nearing the completion of building a 1,200-mile fiber-to-the-home network. The system will deliver internet speeds of up to 1 gigabit per second, as well as High Definition Television (HD) and Voice over Internet Protocol Phone services (VoIP). The project will serve the remote areas in parts of five counties and provide the infrastructure to launch smart grid technologies in the near future. RCEC averages around 4 meters per mile and is considered an unserved area.

Ralls County Electric Cooperative was a first round RUS/USDA, American Recovery and Reinvestment Act grant/loan winner and one of the first projects to start construction and deliver these services to its members. The cooperative has teamed with Missouri Governor Jay Nixon in an effort to deliver high-speed services to rural Missourians to foster rural economic development and improve the standard of living through the governor’s MOBroadbandNow initiative. The purpose of the initiative was to increase access to high-speed Internet in Missouri from 79.7 percent to 91.5 percent of the population.

Ralls County Electric Cooperative’s first-of-its-kind cooperative project is helping to develop the long-range strategic plan for rural Missouri, and is serving as a demonstration project for both private and cooperative businesses in Missouri and other states.

Our goal is to improve the quality of life in northeast Missouri by providing a next generation fiber network and offer rural businesses, home owners and students the same access to technology as those in the city.

Geographic Territory –

RCEC currently serves just over 6,000 meters in Northeast Missouri in the counties of Ralls, Marion, Monroe, Adrian and Pike. The purposed services will include the communities of New London (981), Saverton (100), Center (512), Perry (702), Frankford (322), Curryville (225), Bowling Green (5481), and Vandalia (4017) Missouri. The total population of the communities served under the build-out will exceed 12,340. RCEC will also be partnering with member owned Missouri Rural Electric Cooperative (5650 members) to build out its 1114 miles of plant to provide services to 5,100 meters in the counties of Lewis, Marion, Monroe, Ralls and Shelby in Missouri.
List of Anchor Institutions

Hannibal Regional Airport
Hannibal Regional Hospital
Moberly Community College
Ralls County Library, Center MO
Center City Hall
Center Police
US postal Service, New London MO
New London City Hall
New London Fire
Ralls County Court House
Ralls County Sherriff
US Postal Service, Center MO
US Postal Service, Perry MO
US Postal Service, Curryville MO
US Postal Service, Bowling Green MO
US Postal Service, Vandalia MO
US Postal Service, Saverton MO

Proposed technology

RCEC will be constructing a Gigabit fiber to the home network. RCEC will offer triple play services with internet packages starting at $40.00 a month for 10mbps symmetrical with packages going all the way to 1 GB.

State and/or Local or Tribal Government Participation in and/or Support for Project

We are currently receiving broadband funding of 50/50 grant loan of $19,000,000.00 from the RUS/BIP stimulus program and $950,000 grant from our partnership with the state of Missouri. The project leverages the utility’s rights of way and existing infrastructure, which reduces costs and accelerates deployment.

Existing Providers

One provider overlaps 3% of our territory in the NE corner of our current service territory and the purposed communities. Communities listed currently have last generation DSL offering of 4 Mbps down and 1 Mbps up. This may be sufficient for today’s needs, but is built on last generation
technology and will not meet future applications. In addition, they are not providing anchor institutions with the needed bandwidth requirements at prices that are competitive, let alone affordable.

**Project Timeline**

RCEC does have a small amount of the projected service areas designed, but will be able to have construction crews available when the current RUS/BIP project done in approximately 90 working days. Design of the entire project will need to be completed before the full project can be started.

**Scalability**

As with the current RUS/BIP project, RCEC will break the project into service areas for construction. This will be a natural extension of current $20,000,000.00 RCEC operational fiber network and allow RCEC to utilize current Phone, Internet and Television Head-End assets to provide services to new customers. We have experienced engineering and construction contractors on site working on our project and would expect them to build the purposed new network.

**Total Utility Investment**

RCEC will utilize existing investments from our current ($20,000,000.00) fiber project build-out and partnerships with Missouri Rural Electric Cooperative, as well as the community utilities to utilize their infrastructures and right of ways.

**One Time Capital Infrastructure Investment Needed**

$50,000,000.00

**Total Project Cost**

$50,000,000.00