



April 26, 2010

Ian Martinez
Senior Advisor and Director of Outreach, BTOP Program
National Telecommunications and Information Administration
Department of Commerce
imartinez@ntia.doc.gov

Re: Recommendation for *BIP Easygrants ID # 4557*

Dear Mr. Martinez:

This letter is written in recommendation for the project Rio Networks Rural WiMAX Expansion Program, as we feel that this project will meet specific economic and geographical need in providing Broadband service to our Tribe and the surrounding communities.

The Cow Creek Band of Umpqua Tribe of Indians wholly owns Rio Networks, a Competitive Local Exchange Carrier that has the facilities and experience to rapidly deploy a broadband WiMAX service. Since 1994 Rio Networks continued to expand its facilities based voice and data solutions to deliver the most innovative technology available to Portland, Bend, Salem, Eugene, Roseburg, and Grants Pass Oregon. Current products include T1, Ethernet over Copper solutions, VOIP, Broadband, Analog Telephone lines, SIP and WiMAX solutions. With the help of the Broadband Technology Opportunities Program, Rio Networks and the Tribe recognized the opportunity we would have to improve rural Oregon's access to high speed broadband and submitted an application detailing a program that shows Rio Networks not only has the experience to provide broadband to a significant number of underserved communities but is also ready to deploy in a rapid timeframe.

With a below national average unemployment rate and a struggling economy Oregon desperately needs help; increasing the Broadband offerings will take great strides in helping our economy improve. Oregon has been hit harder than most other states with company closures, the collapse in the residential mortgage market and changes in export and import levels. These issues and more have all contributed to a September 2009 unemployment rate of 11.5 percent. This situation has the potential to become much worse; the need for stimulus dollars in Douglas County has never been so great. Much needed jobs will be created, industry will be encouraged; this grant could influence the beginning of an upward trend. The Broadband Technology Opportunities Program is a fantastic opportunity for Oregon to improve our access

to education and to continue the focus we have placed on technology in an effort to replace our historical dependency on the timber industry.

Of the applications reviewed, our tribe feels the Rio Networks Rural WiMAX Program is the superior rural service proposal and the vehicle needed to jump start our local economy. This project is anticipated to bring new life to businesses, residences and tribal entities in seven rural communities by providing increased access to education and e-commerce for our tribe and over 30,000 people in rural Oregon. The Cow Creek band supports this project fully, and looks forward to the impact this funded project could bring to Douglas County Oregon.

Regards,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Michael Rondeau".

Michael Rondeau
Tribal Administrator
Cow Creek Band of Umpqua Tribe of Indians