

## Public Notice Submission

**Provider Name:** Rice Belt Telephone Company, Inc.

**Summary:** Rice Belt Telephone Company, incorporated in 1953, serving customers in Poinsett county in the northeast corner of Arkansas. The commercial and plant offices are located in Weiner, Arkansas. Rice Belt Telephone Company serves a predominantly rural economic base centered on agriculture. Backed by over a 60 years of local service, Rice Belt Telephone Company is a powerhouse of telecommunications technology. Rice Belt Telephone Company strives to bring its customers the latest and most advanced telecommunications products and services. Rice Belt Telephone Company has invested considerably in fiber infrastructure over the past decade to connect each exchange central office to the company's main access points enabling the company to deploy broadband services to these remote rural areas. Rice Belt Telephone Company historically has taken advantage of the Rural Utilities Services financing programs as a means to invest in this infrastructure build out. Rice Belt Telephone Company 's current construction activities involves deploying more fiber facilities to all node locations in order to meet their goal of being the premier broadband provider. As a part of Rice Belt Telephone Company 's commitment to provide bandwidth services to its customers, the company has obtained first mile commitments in order to support these services. Rice Belt Telephone Company demonstrates that it provides broadband service throughout its entire service area located in Arkansas, which is included in the proposed funded Service Area in some BTOP applications and that Rice Belt Telephone Company's service area is not unserved or underserved. 100% of the households in Rice Belt Telephone Company's service area are able to readily subscribe upon request to facilities-based, terrestrial broadband services at a minimum transmission speed of greater than 768 kbps downstream and 200 kbps upstream from Rice Belt Telephone Company; 100% of the households in Rice Belt Telephone Company's service area have access to facilities-based, terrestrial broadband service at greater than the minimum broadband transmission speed as set forth in the definition of broadband; in Rice Belt Telephone Company's serving area broadband providers advertise broadband service at broadband transmission speeds of at least 3 megabits per second downstream throughout its service area; and the rate of broadband subscribership in Rice Belt Telephone Company's service area is greater than 40 percent of households. Based on the foregoing, Rice Belt Telephone Company has demonstrated that all claims that the proposed funded service area which overlaps Rice Belt Telephone Company's service area is [unserved/underserved] is not correct. Further, because 100% of households in Rice Belt Telephone Company's service area are able to readily subscribe upon request to facilities-based, terrestrial broadband services at a minimum transmission speed of greater than 768 kbps downstream and 200 kbps upstream from Rice Belt Telephone Company, the proposed funded service area that overlaps Rice Belt Telephone Company's service area is not underserved.