



Assisting North Central Idaho Communities Since 1968

August 11, 2009

Mr. Kevin Owen
First Step Internet
1420 S. Blaine, Ste. 10
Moscow, ID 83843

Re: North Central Idaho Multi-User Wide Area Network
Grant Application, RUS/NTIA Funding

Dear Kevin:

On behalf of the North Central Idaho Telecom Consortium, I offer our support to your company's grant application that will be submitted to the U.S. Department of Commerce and the U.S.D.A. Rural Utilities Service for ARRA Broadband funding. Your proposed project will address the strategy outlined in the North Central Idaho Telecommunication Plan and will implement most of the schematic design developed in the expanded study and deployment plan.

Since 2004, the Clearwater Economic Development Association has spearheaded a grassroots effort to plan for and promote the build out a telecommunication system that would adequately address rural community needs in the five-county region of north central Idaho. "Key" to this planning and promotional effort has been the establishment of our multi-user consortium and guiding work group. During the plan process, CEDA and the consortium hosted a series of community meetings to engage users as well as providers in the process.

The purpose of the NCITC is to promote the build out of a telecom system focused on backbone, reliability, enhanced capacity, financial viability, and redundancy that would satisfy the current and long-term needs of private industry, health care, education, and public safety. Your project is a clear reflection of your company's willingness to "listen" to the needs of our communities and to collaborate with the NCITC, CEDA, the Idaho Regional Optical Network, the Nez Perce Tribe, and Frontier Communications.

With great pleasure, the North Central Idaho Telecom Consortium offers their full support to your grant application.

Sincerely,

Christine Frei, CEDA Executive Director
Coordinator, North Central Idaho Telecommunication Consortium (NCITC)

cc: NCITC Work Group Members

DETAIL OF PROJECT COSTS

PLEASE COMPLETE THE TABLE BELOW FOR THE DIFFERENT CATEGORIES OF EQUIPMENT THAT WILL BE REQUIRED FOR COMPLETING THE PROJECT. EACH CATEGORY SHOULD BE BROKEN DOWN TO THE APPROPRIATE LEVEL FOR IDENTIFYING UNIT COST

SERVICE AREA or COMMON NETWORK FACILITIES:		Eligibility (Yes/No)	Unit Cost	No. of Units	Total Cost	Support of Reasonableness
NETWORK & ACCESS EQUIPMENT					\$613,970	
Switching	Dell 5424	yes	600	45	27000	Inconnection points and network
					0	
					0	
Routing	Juniper Router /cards	yes	80000	1	80000	primary pop connection to fiber
	Mikrotik RB1000	yes	700	28	19600	network routing
	Mikrotik 450g	yes	150	71	10650	network routing and handoff
Transport	Dragon Wave Horizon Comp	yes	21500	22	473000	core network backhaul
					0	
					0	
Access					0	
					0	
					0	
Other	DLI reboot switches	yes	120	31	3720	remote power control
					0	
					0	
OUTSIDE PLANT					\$348,230	
Cables	cat5e	yes	140	10	1400	network cable
					0	
					0	
Conduits					0	
					0	
					0	
Ducts					0	
					0	
					0	
Poles					0	
					0	
					0	
Towers	Rohn 100'	yes	40600	6	243600	core tower locations
	Rohn 50'	yes	14907.5	4	59630	secondary network tower locations
					0	
Repeaters					0	
					0	
					0	
Other	Power systems	yes	2400	14	33600	power for core distribution
	Hahn Rental	yes	10000	1	10000	rental of misc. construction equipment
					0	

SERVICE AREA or COMMON NETWORK FACILITIES:		Eligibility (Yes/No)	Unit Cost	No. of Units	Total Cost	Support of Reasonableness
BUILDINGS					\$82,000	
New Construction					0	
					0	
					0	
Pre-Fab Huts	shipping containers	yes	9000	6	54000	equipment housing
	exterior cabinets	yes	4000	4	16000	equipment housing
					0	
Improvements & Renovation					0	
					0	
					0	
Other	Bennett Lumber	yes	500	24	12000	temporary rental of storage facility
					0	
					0	
CUSTOMER PREMISE EQUIPMENT					\$376,000	
Modems	Redline An-80	yes	8000	47	376000	anchor tenant connections
					0	
					0	
Set Top Boxes					0	
					0	
					0	
Inside Wiring					0	
					0	
					0	
Other					0	
					0	
					0	
BILLING SUPPORT AND OPERATIONS SUPPORT SYSTEMS					\$268,390	
Billing Support Systems	Playtypus Billing package	yes	80000	1	80000	network enhance billing and support manag
					0	
					0	
Customer Care Systems					0	
					0	
					0	
Other Support	Equipment Manager	yes	36.56	3840	140390.4	shipping and receiving clerk
	A/R and A/P support	yes	25	1920	48000	A/R and A/P clerk
					0	

SERVICE AREA or COMMON NETWORK FACILITIES:		Eligibility (Yes/No)	Unit Cost	No. of Units	Total Cost	Support of Reasonableness
OPERATING EQUIPMENT					\$90,133	
Vehicles	Toyota Tundra	yes	35000	1	35000	construction vehicle
	Yamaha Rhino	yes	25000	1	25000	remote tower access vehicle
					0	
Office Equipment / Furniture					0	
					0	
					0	
Other	Fuel	yes	2.99	6700	20033	fuel for construction vehicles
	Repair and Maintenance	yes	6500	1	6500	repair and maint of construction vehicles
	insurance	yes	150	24	3600	insurance on vehicles
PROFESSIONAL SERVICES					\$206,150	
Engineering Design	Access Consulting	yes	1700	1	1700	professional engineer
	Wireless Mapping	yes	20000	1	20000	census data mapping
	Hayden / Ross	yes	10000	3	30000	annual audit requirement
Project Management	Project Manager	yes	70000	1	70000	responsible for project
	Palouse Hills Accounting	yes	49200	1	49200	project accounting compliance
					0	
Consulting					0	
					0	
					0	
Other	Irwin, Myklebust, Savage & Bro	yes	325	70	22750	legal review of contracts and land use
	Various lodging	yes	250	50	12500	temp housing and food for crew
					0	
TESTING					\$15,000	
Network Elements					0	
					0	
					0	
IT System Elements					0	
					0	
					0	
User Devices					0	
					0	
					0	
Test Generators	Fieldfox cable sweep test/gen	yes	7500	2	15000	infield cable, RF and antenna testing
					0	
					0	
Lab Furnishings					0	
					0	
					0	
Servers / Computers					0	
					0	
					0	

02/05/2010

SERVICE AREA or COMMON NETWORK FACILITIES:		Eligibility (Yes/No)	Unit Cost	No. of Units	Total Cost	Support of Reasonableness
OTHER UPFRONT COSTS					\$992,156	
Site Preparation	Rathbun Communications	yes	2000	10	20000	tower site preparation
					0	
	Miscellaneous	yes	76227	1	76227	misc. construction supplies
Other	fringe benefits	yes	8000	1	8000	fringe benefits
	labor	yes	798336	1	798336	construction labor
	other	yes	89593	1	89593	sales/use tax on equipment purchased
PROJECT TOTAL:					\$2,992,029	

First Step Internet, LLC

BUDGET INFORMATION - Construction Programs

NOTE: Certain Federal assistance programs require additional computations to arrive at the Federal share of project costs eligible for participation. If such is the case, you will be notified.

COST CLASSIFICATION	a. Total Cost	b. Matching Funds (Cash)	c. Matching Funds (In-Kind)	d. Federal Funding Request (Columns a-b-c)
1. Administrative and legal expenses	\$149,950	\$149,950	\$0	\$0
2. Land, structures, rights-of-way, appraisals, etc.	\$430,230	\$22,000	\$0	\$408,230
3. Relocation expenses and payments	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
4. Architectural and engineering fees	\$21,700	\$21,700	\$0	\$0
5. Other architectural and engineering fees	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
6. Project inspection fees	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
7. Site work	\$20,000	\$0	\$0	\$20,000
8. Demolition and removal	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
9. Construction	\$1,021,226	\$222,890	\$0	\$798,336
10. Equipment	\$1,251,330	\$173,866	\$0	\$1,077,464
11. Miscellaneous	\$97,593	\$8,000	\$0	\$89,593
12. SUBTOTAL (add #1 through #11)	\$2,992,029	\$598,406	\$0	\$2,393,623
13. Contingencies	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
14. SUBTOTAL (add #12 and #13)	\$2,992,029	\$598,406	\$0	\$2,393,623
15. Project (program) income	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
16. TOTAL PROJECT COSTS (subtract #15 from #14)	\$2,992,029	\$598,406	\$0	\$2,393,623
FEDERAL FUNDING				
17. Federal assistance requested, calculated as follows: (Consult Federal agency for Federal percentage share.) Enter the resulting Federal share.				
Enter eligible costs from line 16a Multiply X 20%				\$598,406

There are several partnerships involved in this project. It is a regional effort that has been developing for a number of years. Each of these groups have been integral to the planning of the project and the aggregation of support.

The Clearwater Economic Development Association (CEDA) has been instrumental in the referenced Telecom Assessment study and the Regional WAN implementation plan. We have worked with CEDA for the past 4 years and they will continue to be a key partner and adviser. In addition, they have been key with other related projects listed below and we expect to work closely with them to bring other opportunities to the region.

The Idaho Regional Optical Network is a key partner both in their support of the project as well as the service they will provide to IRON members including the hospitals, schools and others. First Step will provide a direct connection to IRON and will work closely with them to further connectivity throughout the region.

The Clearwater County Economic Development Council (CCEDC) is another group that has been key, particularly in our relationship with the Nez Perce Tribe.

The Nez Perce Tribe will be a key partner in utilizing our network and extending service out to some underserved and unserved areas throughout the reservation. In addition, they will be using our towers and adding additional distribution throughout the network on the reservation for the Tribal Police and other first responders.

Another key group led by CEDA is the NCITC which has been working on this project since 2005. The details on NCITC are below.

North-Central Idaho Telecommunication Consortium (NCITC)

MISSION STATEMENT: To support the development of reliable telecommunications and internet capacity throughout North Central Idaho.

AREA SERVED: Latah, Idaho, Lewis, Clearwater, and Nez Perce Counties

FOCUS:

1. Financial Viability
2. Connectivity
3. Reliability/Enhanced Capacity
4. Backbone
5. Redundancy

NCITC WORK GROUP:

Angela Vanderpas IT Specialist/911 Coordinator, Clearwater County

Chris St. Germaine Executive Director, Clearwater County Economic Development

Debbie Evans Kamiah Grants Coordinator

Danae Wilson IT Director, Nez Perce Tribe

Gil Bates Economic Development Specialist, Ida-Lew Ec Development

Joyce Dearstyne Executive Director, Framing Our Communities

Dan Dorman Vice President, Manager, Zions Bank, Lewiston

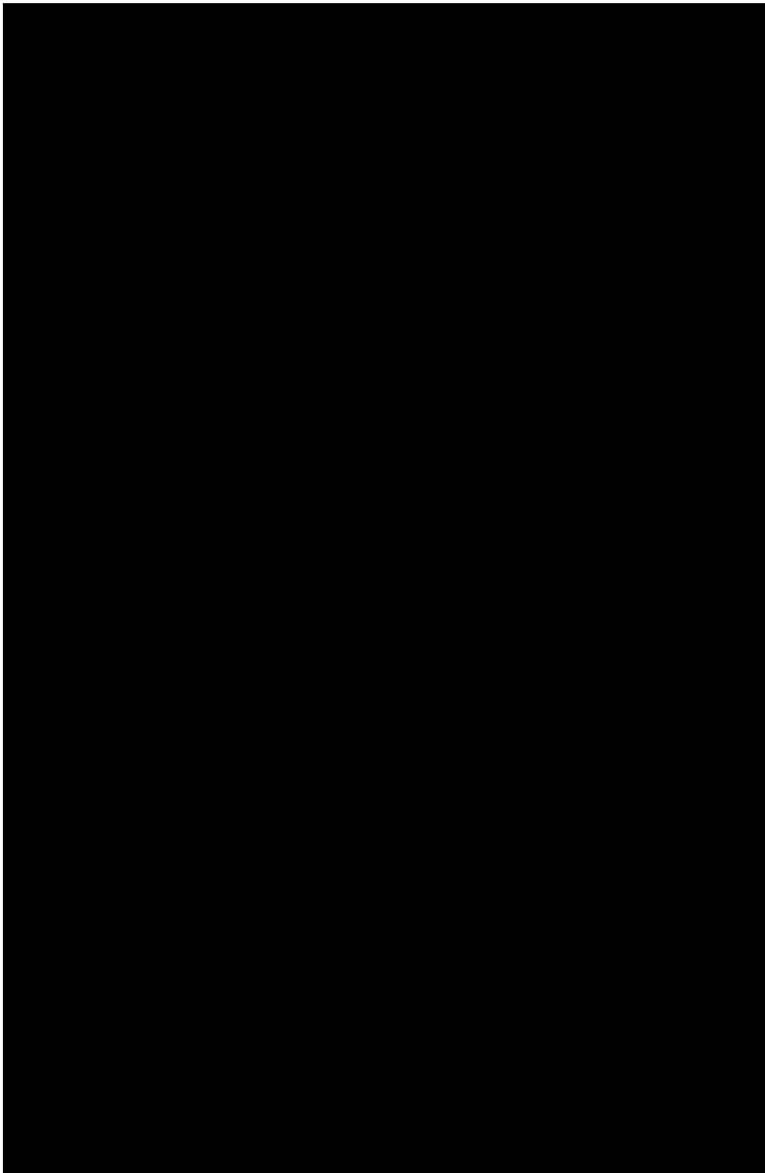
Carrie Warner IT Specialist, Idaho Transportation Department

Harvey Hughett Executive Director, CIO, Information Tech Services, U of I
Jerry Hindberg IT Manager, Lewis Clark State College
Mike Thomason Area Manager, Avista Corporation
Paul Kimmell Regional Business Manager, Avista Corporation
Jesse Flowers Information Systems Director, City of Moscow
Jay Baldwin IT, Potlatch School District
Doug Crockett Citizen, Clearwater County

OTHER Interested Stakeholders that Attend the Work Group Meetings

Bob Swandby Idaho Department of Commerce, Regional Representative
Hank Ebert Idaho Department of Commerce, Regional Representative
James Rockwell Idaho County, Commissioner
Todd Bradman Region II Telemental Health Initiative

And last, the following is our list of anchor tenants, many who receive service from us now and others who will be offered service under this project: In addition





Telemental Health Project. There are two grants:

- 2008 Idaho Community Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services – One-Time Development Grant (State of Idaho) - \$390,000 (Budget is attached)
Project is to serve mental health patients throughout north-central Idaho by using a teleconferencing system. The tele-mental health network links four (4) critical access hospitals and St. Joseph's Regional Medical Center. The four hospitals included: Gritman Medical Center, Moscow; Clearwater Valley Hospital, Orofino; Syringa General Hospital, Grangeville; and St. Mary's Hospital, Cottonwood. The project leadership included the District II Mental Health Board and the Idaho Health & Welfare. The network system will also be open and available for other important telehealth services and training opportunities for health care staff. The majority of the funding has been used for equipment, service agreement, planning, and network design. \$60,000 will be used for reimbursement to hospitals for care given when no insurance other funding can cover the costs (ie: indigent care).
- 2009 Idaho Community Mental Health and Substance Abuse Service Development Grant Program – One-Time Development Grant - \$52,575.43

These funds are being used to provide transitional organizational support to the Region II Telemental Health Network and funding support to encourage service use on the network. \$35,000 of the funds are being used for reimbursement to hospitals for care given when no insurance or other funding can cover the costs (ie: indigent care).

Telecom Study. There have been two grants:

- USDA Rural Business Opportunities Grant: \$48,874 with \$4,556 (in-kind for stakeholder time): Used to develop the North Central Idaho Telecom Assessment and Implementation Plan (completed in 2006). Eight step methodology was used to develop this plan, including: community assessment, existing infrastructure inventory, application analysis, identify broadband benefits, analyze demand, identify and evaluate potential technologies, cost analysis, and strategy analysis. The study focus on 16 unserved or underserved rural communities in Nez Perce, Lewis, Clearwater, and Idaho Counties.
- USDA Rural Business Enterprise Grant: \$13,500 grant with \$5,000 local cash (provided by Zions Bank) And \$1,760 in in-kind (stakeholder time): Used to develop Wide Area Network Schematic Design and three phase deployment plan.

This project identified existing wide area networks that are currently providing WAN connectivity in the region to the four user groups (health care, public safety, education, and private industry); identified critical unmet WAN needs; identified existing assets that may be used in the design of new WAN resources; identified potential funding sources; develop a WAN network schematic design, and completed a time-phased deployment plan.

In addition, CEDA has raised approximately \$28,000 in financial contributions from cities and counties to help with the telecom initiative. Approximate \$8,500 have been used to date for coordination of the telecom initiatives by CEDA. \$5,000 will be used to support your data needs. \$5,000 is being planned for membership to IRON as General Associate. The remainder of the funds will be used to for continued operations for the telecom initiative by CEDA.

Christine Frei
CEDA Executive Director

First Step first began offering broadband in partnership with Verizon in Moscow and Pullman via DSL and Frame Relay. In 2001, First Step began to build out a fixed wireless network in Moscow and quickly partnered with Gritman Medical, the Moscow School District, the City of Moscow and others.

At that time, we were requested by Corporate Pointe Developers in Pullman to bring service there and help them bring wireless to their apartment complexes under construction. Over the years, this expanded to seven developments with over a hundred buildings all pre-installed with high speed Internet service. With a proven track record for apartments, First Step partnered with several other developers, owners and management companies to deploy high speed Internet in over 4500 apartments in Moscow and Pullman to date. Other prominent clients include WSU Housing and Hill Enterprises. These projects involved the management of personnel, materials acquisition, support and ongoing service.

Partnerships with government as well as private companies have led to the expansion of broadband wireless service in the region. Through a partnership with Moscow Medical, First Step expanded broadband wireless to Troy, Idaho in 2001-02. Through a partnership with the City of Palouse, First Step brought service to Palouse in 2003. Through grants from the RUS, First Step brought broadband to Bovill, Potlatch and Deary in 2002-04. Through a partnership with the Whitman County Library District, First Step brought service to Colfax and then to Farmington in 2008. A partnership with Wilbur Ellis enabled First Step to expand broadband wireless to Uniontown, Colton, Tekoa, Oakesdale in 2005-06. A grant from a non-profit agency in Pomeroy expanded service throughout the rural countryside and into Pataha and all areas of town. A grant from the State of Idaho in 2006 enabled First Step to deploy service to previously unserved Weippe, Idaho.

Each of these partnerships is representative of First Step's ability to work with both private and public institutions to meet community needs for broadband Internet. Through partnerships, investment and acquisitions, First Step now provides broadband wireless throughout 40 communities, has installed over 600 miles of point to point microwave links and provides coverage to over 3000 square miles of rural area and cities.

In summary, here are activities FS regularly performs to make these projects successful:

1. Pre-project – partnerships with businesses or government entities
2. Engineering studies of topography and site selection for towers, access points, etc.
3. Specification of all equipment.
4. Negotiation of collocation facilities with government agencies, businesses and private individuals for access point locations.
5. Installation of backbone microwave connections.
6. Installation of microwave equipment, cabling, power systems, remote management systems, access points, etc. on towers, buildings, grain elevators and other collocation facilities.
7. Programming of equipment to provide routed Internet service to businesses and residents.
8. Monitoring of network using online tools such as What's UP Professional to maximize up time for all clients.
9. Delivery of Internet service in segmented bandwidth packages.
10. Marketing of service to residents, anchor institutions and businesses in the area via direct email, phone, newsletters, radio and print media.
11. Support of network and client connections via phone based technical support and on-site technicians and engineers.



Assisting North Central Idaho Communities Since 1968

August 6, 2009

Mr. Kevin Owen
President, CEO
First Step Internet
1420 S. Blaine St.
Moscow, ID 83843

Re: Cash Commitment/Support
North Central Idaho Multi-User Network
BTOP/BIP Application, First Step Internet

Dear Kevin:

This letter is to confirm Clearwater Economic Development Association's cash commitment of \$5,000 to be used toward the plan, design and/or construction of the Wide Area Network that is proposed in your grant/loan application for ARRA funding through the U.S. Department of Commerce and USDA Rural Utilities Services.

This financial contribution originated from a small pool of funds that CEDA members provided to promote telecommunication infrastructure improvements in North Central Idaho. Although small in cash amount, it does represent a sincere desire from our county and community members to address the telecom needs of our region.

As coordinator of the North Central Idaho Telecommunication Consortium, I want to thank you for taking our vision of a multi-user Wide Area Network that is delineated in *the North Central Idaho Telecom Assessment and Implementation Plan: Expanded Study - Schematic Wide Area Network Design* and taking the risk to make it a reality. In my eight years with Clearwater Economic Development Association, I have not seen a more important project. It is one of two regional initiatives that have the greatest ability to advance our capacity to improve the local economy over the long-term.

Respectfully submitted,

Christine Frei, Executive Director
Clearwater Economic Development Association



August 7, 2009

Kevin Owen
President and CEO
First Step Wireless
1420 South Blaine Street
Moscow, ID 83843

Dear Mr. Owen:

I am pleased to confirm that the Idaho Regional Optical Network (IRON), at its regularly scheduled Board of Directors meeting on July 30, 2009, voted unanimously to endorse First Step Wireless' grant application for Federal stimulus funds to fund development of a broadband wireless communications network that will link the rural communities of the Clearwater Valley in north central Idaho to the outside world and each other, and provide the first-ever opportunity for many of the communities in this region of the state for access to broadband communications. In the same meeting the Board also confirmed its intent to assist First Step by contributing \$81,000 towards the matching funds required for the project.

IRON and its Charter Associates, which include:

1. **Boise State University;**
2. **Brigham Young University-Idaho;**
3. **Idaho Hospital Association;**
4. **Idaho National Laboratory;**
5. **Idaho Department of Administration;**
6. **University of Idaho;**
7. **Washington State University;**

are convinced this project will make a material contribution to improving broadband access and connectivity for the rural, un-served and underserved areas of north central Idaho, and particularly will benefit IRON's Charter and General Associates in their attempts to improve the quality of education and health care in these rural communities.

Thank you for the opportunity to participate with First Step Wireless in this very essential and worthwhile project.

Victor E. Braud, III

Victor E. Braud, III
General Manager



August 11, 2009

Mike Hall
First Step Internet
1420 S. Blaine, Suite 10
Moscow, ID 83843

Re: WAN North Central Idaho, BIP/BTOP Funding – Financial Support Letter

Dear Mike:

On behalf of Avista Corporation, I want to again express our support for First Step Internet's proposed initiative to fully develop a multi-user Wide Area Network (WAN) in North Central Idaho. As proposed, the project will meet the needs identified in the recently completed *North Central Idaho Broadband Study and Deployment Plan* building upon the existing infrastructure in our rural areas. If funded, I understand First Step will provide backbone and redundancy into at least 18 communities and provide distribution to end users of under-served and un-served areas of Latah, Lewis, Idaho Nez Perce, and Clearwater counties. Consistent with Avista's Rural Prosperity Initiative, this project is critical to the region's economic future and warrants our full support.

Therefore, Avista is pleased to offer \$5000 of cash support toward this worthy effort. Avista and our community and business partners truly believe critical projects like this can only serve to strengthen our region's economic capacity.

I appreciate First Step Internet's continuing commitment of building the wireless infrastructure our region so desperately needs to succeed in the future. Thank you.

Sincerely,

Paul J. Kimmell
Business & Public Affairs
Avista Corporation

Cc: CEDA / North Central Idaho Telecommunications Consortium
The Honorable John Rusche, District 7
Mr. Donald A. Dietrich, Idaho Department of Commerce



ZIONS BANK®

August 14, 2009

Kevin Owen
First Step Internet
1420 South Blain Street
Moscow, ID 83843

Commitment for financing for \$150,000 Line of Credit

Zions First National Bank herein after referred to as "Lender" has completed a preliminary review of the information recently provided concerning the project to provide operating financing for the building purchase referenced above and is pleased to issue this proposal letter regarding the requested transaction.

Terms:

Facility A

Loan Amount:	\$150,000 "will be disbursed contingent upon securing the proposed Grant, and as based on the bench marks for completion as shown in the project plan.
Borrower:	First Step Internet
Guarantors:	Kevin and Shannon Owen
Loan Type:	Revolving Line of Credit
Term:	Three years or until project completion, which ever is less.
Interest Rate:	London Interbank Offer Rate (LIBOR), as quoted by Zions for 90-day maturity, plus 5.40%. Currently the 90-day Libor is 0.42%, resulting in an effective rate of 5.82%. The Libor index is subject to daily change and will be determined by the closing date.
Fees:	Annual fee of 1% - \$1,500
Security for the Loan:	Blanket jr. lien on all machinery and equipment
Covenants:	To be determined
Financial Reporting:	Tax returns and financial statements annually
Prepayment Premium:	There will be no prepayment penalty.
Loan Related Expenses:	Borrower will be responsible for all loan related expenses, including but not limited to UCC search fees and documentation fees.

This Letter is not a commitment to lend, either expressed or implied, and does not impose any obligation on Lender. This letter is merely a non-binding indication of

interest for the loan(s) and the delivery of it by Lender will not be a commitment or approval by Lender of any kind. Borrower acknowledges that Lender has not approved the loan(s) described in this letter, and knowingly assumes the risk that such approval may not be obtained, or, if obtained, may be conditioned on additional terms or conditions. Please be advised that a commitment to lend on the part of the Lender will arise only upon the issuance of a written commitment and the execution of written loan documents by the Lender. This letter hereby supersedes any prior negotiations or representations by any employee or representative of the Lender. Please be advised that no employee or representative of the Lender will have any authority to issue any commitment or loan approval except in writing signed by an officer of the Lender.

This letter is intended only for the use of the individual or entity to which it is addressed and/or potential borrower or applicant. This letter contains information that is privileged and confidential. You are hereby notified that any dissemination, distribution, or copying of this communication is prohibited.

Respectfully,

ZIONS FIRST NATIONAL BANK

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Lisa Uhlenkott", written in black ink.

Lisa Uhlenkott
Relationship Manager

Attachment B – Proposed Middle Mile Service Offerings

Please complete the table below describing the service offerings that will be available indicating the bandwidth packages, the distance band (length of the network section) or point-to-point (geographical end points) of the specific package, the minimum peak load bandwidth that is available on the route, and the monthly or yearly pricing for the services. The chart may be adapted to adequately describe the service offerings of the project as long as the information described is included. If different packages will be available based on the area that will be receiving the benefits, then separate charts should be developed indicating which are the services for each area.

Service Offering	Distance Band or Point to Point	Minimum Peak Load Network Bandwidth Capacity (Mbps)	Monthly/Yearly Pricing (\$)	Other
Metro-Ethernet	P-P Transport from any point on network	10mbps/10mbps	\$1000/mo	\$100/mb up to 10m
	P-P Transport from any point on network	45mbps/45mbps	\$2000/mo	
Dedicated Internet access	Internet access from any point on network	1mbps/1mbps up to 10mbps/10mbps	\$100./mbps/mo	5megs - \$500/mo
	Internet access from any point on network	Above 10mbps	Negotiable	

Schools, hospitals and others have a need to connect to the IRON network in Clarkston. Hospitals also have the need to connect to one another and to St. Joseph's hospital in Lewiston, the hub for their Telemental Health video conferencing system. In the case of Clearwater Valley Hospital, they have a need to connect directly to their hospital in Cottonwood. This service is priced at \$2000/month vs. Verizon/Qwest at \$10,000/month.

The point to point transport service listed in the table is from any point on the network to any other point. This will be particularly important to the hospitals for connecting to one another and for the Telemental Health video network. It can also include transport from the end user facility to the IRON network. The minimum peak load bandwidth that will be sold is 1mbps/1mbps, going up in increments of 1meg. In our discussions with IRON, they have been talking to the hospitals about 10-50+meg connections to IRON. They will be offering them \$25/meg Internet service in addition to connectivity to the other medical resources in southern Idaho, including the Idaho Hospital Association. The schools and other IRON members will have this service available to them as well.

First Step does not anticipate any restrictions on the use of the network. Schools will no doubt use it for a direct connection to State testing servers in southern Idaho. The Nez Perce Police and other first responders will establish VPNs across the network from field vehicles. We currently have the Latah County Sheriff's office doing this across Latah County at present. Counties will no doubt use it for video conference training sessions with State level institutions in southern Idaho as does Latah County at present. Hospitals will use the network for xray and other data transmissions to Gritman and St. Joseph's. Businesses, homes and anchor institutions will use it for VoIP service. First Step does not restrict the types of usage on our current network and do not intend to start doing so with this regional network.

ATTACHMENT H – Broadband Subscriber Estimates

Instructions: Using the table below, please estimate the number of subscribers for each distinct type of service offering on a quarterly basis over the five year forecast period. Combine all service pricing tiers of broadband data services into a single service offering. The subscriber projections must be described separately by the type of services offered, and by type of entity (households, businesses, "strategic institutions" i.e., critical community facilities, community anchor institutions, and public safety entities) to which services are offered. For last mile subscribers, please also provide, on a separate sheet, your estimated take rate (the percentage of total customers passed who will subscribe to your service), along with a brief description of the methodology used to forecast these subscribers/take rates. Middle mile applicants should indicate their subscriber forecasts in terms of the entities served via the last mile service providers, community anchor institutions, or public safety entities that are connected to their middle mile network. Middle mile applicants should also provide a reasoned basis for these subscriber forecasts (e.g., agreements in principle with existing or planned last mile service providers, market studies, etc).

Household Subscribers	YEAR 0	YEAR 1				YEAR 2				YEAR 3				YEAR 4				YEAR 5			
<i>Service Type #1</i> Broadband Internet		Qtr. 1	Qtr. 2	Qtr. 3	Qtr. 4	Qtr. 1	Qtr. 2	Qtr. 3	Qtr. 4	Qtr. 1	Qtr. 2	Qtr. 3	Qtr. 4	Qtr. 1	Qtr. 2	Qtr. 3	Qtr. 4	Qtr. 1	Qtr. 2	Qtr. 3	Qtr. 4
Net add-ons						21	15	15	15	15	15	15	15	30	30	30	30	45	45	45	45
Cumulative subscribers						21	36	51	66	81	96	111	126	156	186	216	246	291	336	381	426
<i>Service Type #2</i>																					
Net add-ons																					
Cumulative subscribers																					
<i>Service Type #3</i>																					
Net add-ons																					
Cumulative subscribers																					

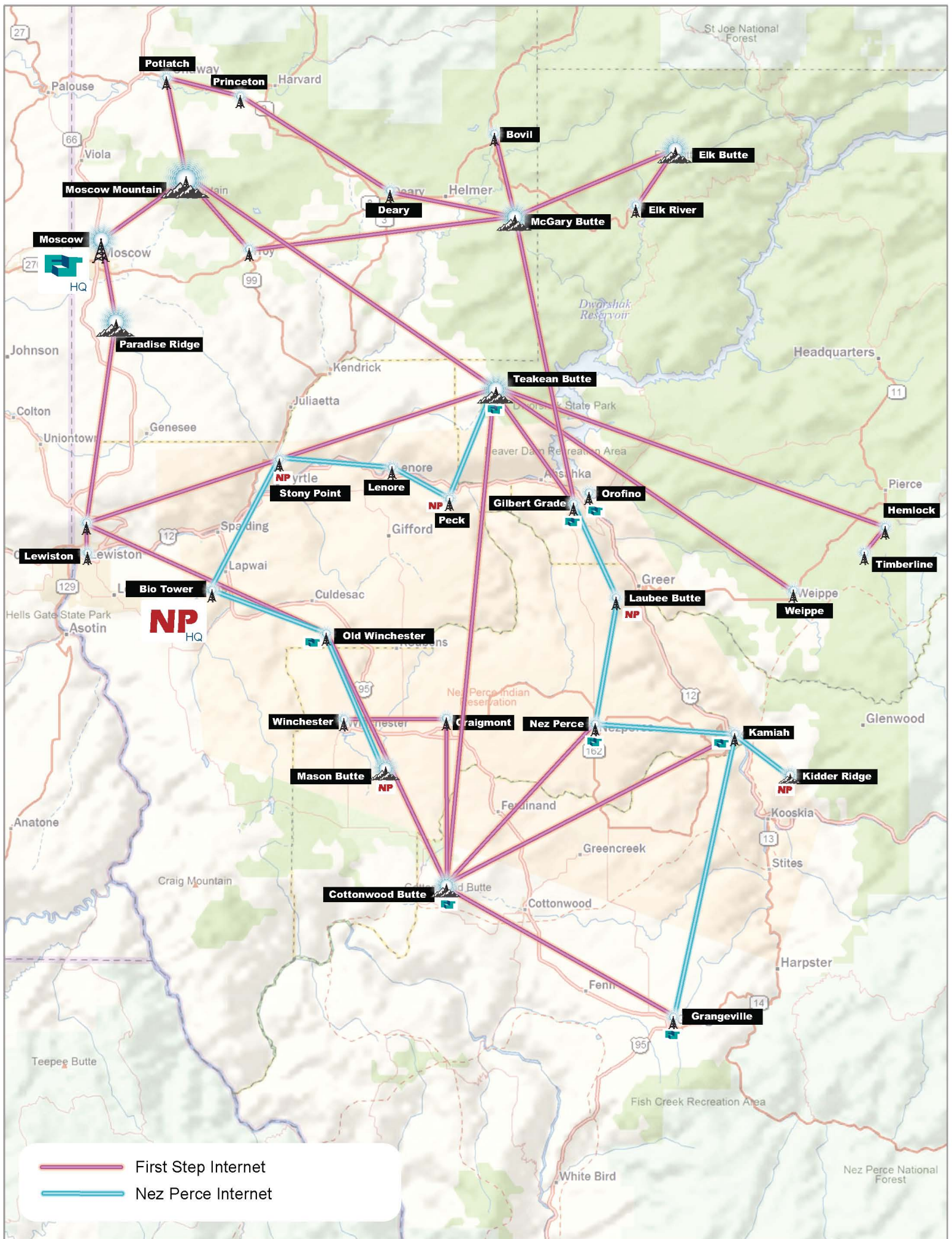
We have not included any potential subs for the first year while the new network is being built. In fact, the project is constructed to survive with service to anchor institutions even if no third party last mile providers connect. However, after the network is built, we expect two additional last mile providers to utilize the network. Candidates include: Cactus, Mt. IDA, Elk River Cable, TDS, and the Nez Perce Tribe. We would estimate similar subscriber numbers on a monthly basis from them. The service type is for home broadband service. Neither FS nor these others are wholesale VoIP providers, but that could change in the future. We know that there are several hundred homes still using dial up (from Mt. IDA) on the Camas Prairie and many folks are without any service at all. First Step is not seeking last mile funding in this application, however we have a substantial last mile network built in other areas of the region and we could easily add last mile coverage to any of our Interconnect points.

We also know once the network is up and running and news about the bandwidth available, the openness of the network and it's reliability and redundancy, others will choose to sign on. In fact, providers such as Clearwire, Verizon Wireless and Sprint have not moved into the area due to lack of backhaul. With this network build, the potential exists to attract such carriers. If either of develops, the numbers would revise upward. Nevertheless, our estimates for years four and five are more aggressive above.

Business Customers	YEAR 0	YEAR 1				YEAR 2				YEAR 3				YEAR 4				YEAR 5			
<i>Service Type #1</i> Broadband Internet		Qtr. 1	Qtr. 2	Qtr. 3	Qtr. 4	Qtr. 1	Qtr. 2	Qtr. 3	Qtr. 4	Qtr. 1	Qtr. 2	Qtr. 3	Qtr. 4	Qtr. 1	Qtr. 2	Qtr. 3	Qtr. 4	Qtr. 1	Qtr. 2	Qtr. 3	Qtr. 4
Net add-ons						6	15	15	15	15	15	15	15	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3
Cumulative subscribers						6	21	36	51	66	814	96	24	111	126	141	156	171	186	201	216
<i>Service Type #2</i>																					
Net add-ons																					
Cumulative subscribers																					
<i>Service Type #3</i>																					
Net add-ons																					
Cumulative subscribers																					

Strategic Institution	YEAR 0	YEAR 1				YEAR 2				YEAR 3				YEAR 4				YEAR 5			
<i>Service Type #1</i> Internet Transport		Qtr. 1	Qtr. 2	Qtr. 3	Qtr. 4	Qtr. 1	Qtr. 2	Qtr. 3	Qtr. 4	Qtr. 1	Qtr. 2	Qtr. 3	Qtr. 4	Qtr. 1	Qtr. 2	Qtr. 3	Qtr. 4	Qtr. 1	Qtr. 2	Qtr. 3	Qtr. 4
Net add-ons						16	16	16	4												
Cumulative subscribers						16	32	48	52	52	52	52	52	52	52	52	52	52	52	52	52
<i>Service Type #2</i>																					
Net add-ons																					
Cumulative subscribers																					
<i>Service Type #3</i>																					
Net add-ons																					
Cumulative subscribers																					

We anticipate that once the network is completed, we will attract more “anchor” type tenants. However, for this estimate we have left the “anchor” tenants growth flat with only those that we have already targeted in this application showing as subscribers in the Strategic Institution section. We have planned to begin tying them to the network in Q1 of Year 2. As indicated previously the Nez Perce Tribe is submitting an application for last mile service that will be built on the First Step last mile network. We have included their potential business subscribers in the Business Customer’s section.



ATTACHMENT C – COMPETITOR TABLE – LAST MILE

Existing Last Mile Broadband Service Providers and Services Offered: Please complete a table describing the competing last mile providers' broadband service offerings being advertised in each proposed funded service area (BIP applicants should complete this table for each census designated community within the proposed funded service area) . For each competitor, explain the following: a) technology; b) service tiers; c) advertised speeds for residential and business; d) pricing. Include any other comments to explain your findings, if necessary.

Service Area	Last Mile Services Provider	Technology Platform	Service Tier	Advertised Residential Offering		Advertised Business Offering		Other Comments
				Downstream Speed (Mbps)	Price	Downstream Speed (Mbps)	Price	
Moscow, Potlatch, Orofino	Verizon	DSL – dry loop	Entry Level Plan	1	19.99	1	19.99	Residential 12-mo cont. Dry loop. Business may require
			Highest Speed Plan	7.1	43.99	7.1	43.99	Dial tone phone service
			Other Plans (e.g., Mid-Tier Plan)	3	29.99	3	29.99	Pricing was listed as promotional
			Entry Level Plan					
			Highest Speed Plan					
			Other Plans (e.g., Mid-Tier Plan)					
Troy	TDS	DSL	Entry Level Plan	1.5	54.95	1.5	54.95	
			Highest Speed Plan	10	69.95	10	69.95	
			Other Plans (e.g., Mid-Tier Plan)	3	59.95	3	59.95	
			Entry Level Plan					
			Highest Speed Plan					
			Other Plans (e.g., Mid-Tier Plan)					

Service Area	Last Mile Services Provider	Technology Platform	Service Tier	Advertised Residential Offering		Advertised Business Offering		Other Comments
				Downstream Speed (Mbps)	Price	Downstream Speed (Mbps)	Price	
Grangeville, Kamiah, Cottonwood, Craigmont, Nez	Qwest	DSL – dry loop	Entry Level Plan	1.5	39.99	1.5	45.45	Residential 12 mo contract
			Highest Speed Plan	12	56.99	20	112.95	Business may require dial
			Other Plans (e.g.,	7	46.99	7/12	84.83	Tone service. Dry loop cost

Perce			Mid-Tier Plan)					
			Entry Level Plan					
			Highest Speed Plan					
			Other Plans (e.g., Mid-Tier Plan)					
Grangeville, Cottonwood	Mt. IDA	Fixed Wireless	Entry Level Plan	2	40	2	40	Up to 3 computers
			Highest Speed Plan	5	80	5	80	
			Other Plans (e.g., Mid-Tier Plan)					
	Mt. IDA	DSL – via Qwest	Entry Level Plan	256k	32			
			Highest Speed Plan	3	65			
			Other Plans (e.g., Mid-Tier Plan)	1.5	45			

Service Area	Last Mile Services Provider	Technology Platform	Service Tier	Advertised Residential Offering		Advertised Business Offering		Other Comments
				Downstream Speed (Mbps)	Price	Downstream Speed (Mbps)	Price	
Moscow	Cactus Internet	Fixed Wireless	Entry Level Plan	800k	29.95			
			Highest Speed Plan	3.2	44.95			
			Other Plans (e.g., Mid-Tier Plan)	1.6	34.95			
	Cactus Internet	Dry loop DSL via Verizon	Entry Level Plan	768k	21.99			
			Highest Speed Plan	7.1	59.99			
			Other Plans (e.g., Mid-Tier Plan)	3	37.99			

Service Area	Last Mile Services Provider	Technology Platform	Service Tier	Advertised Residential Offering		Advertised Business Offering		Other Comments
				Downstream Speed (Mbps)	Price	Downstream Speed (Mbps)	Price	
Moscow	Time Warner Cable	Cable Internet	Entry Level Plan	5mbps	34.95			Promotional price – 12 mo
			Highest Speed Plan	10mbps	44.95			Promo price for 12 mo
			Other Plans (e.g., Mid-Tier Plan)			100mbps	7800	\$78/meg – scalable to gigabit

Deary			Entry Level Plan					
			Highest Speed Plan					
			Other Plans (e.g., Mid-Tier Plan)					
	Elk River Cable	Cable Internet	Entry Level Plan					
			Highest Speed Plan	1mbps	\$39.95			
			Other Plans (e.g., Mid-Tier Plan)					
			Entry Level Plan					
			Highest Speed Plan					
			Other Plans (e.g., Mid-Tier Plan)					

Service Area	Last Mile Services Provider	Technology Platform	Service Tier	Advertised Residential Offering		Advertised Business Offering		Other Comments
				Downstream Speed (Mbps)	Price	Downstream Speed (Mbps)	Price	
Regional	Sprint	Cellular	Entry Level Plan	2mbps	60			3G network areas – 5gb usage
			Highest Speed Plan	2mbps	79.99			4G network areas – unlimited usage
			Other Plans (e.g., Mid-Tier Plan)					
			Entry Level Plan					
			Highest Speed Plan					
			Other Plans (e.g., Mid-Tier Plan)					
Regional	AT&T	Cellular	Entry Level Plan					
			Highest Speed Plan	1mbps	\$39.95			Up to 5gb of download
			Other Plans (e.g., Mid-Tier Plan)					
			Entry Level Plan					
			Highest Speed Plan					
			Other Plans (e.g., Mid-Tier Plan)					

Service Area	Last Mile Services Provider	Technology Platform	Service Tier	Advertised Residential Offering		Advertised Business Offering		Other Comments
				Downstream Speed (Mbps)	Price	Downstream Speed (Mbps)	Price	
Regional	Verizon Wireless	Cellular	Entry Level Plan	400-700kbps	15	400-700kbps	15	Day pass for 24 hours
			Highest Speed Plan	400-700kbps	59.99	1.4mbps	59.99	Up to 5GB monthly
			Other Plans (e.g., Mid-Tier Plan)	400-700kbps	39.99	400-700kbps	39.99	Up to 250mb monthly
			Entry Level Plan					
			Highest Speed Plan					
			Other Plans (e.g., Mid-Tier Plan)					
Moscow, Lewiston	Clearwire	Fixed Wireless, pre WiMAX	Entry Level Plan					
			Highest Speed Plan	2mbps	29.99			
			Other Plans (e.g., Mid-Tier Plan)					
			Entry Level Plan					
			Highest Speed Plan					
			Other Plans (e.g., Mid-Tier Plan)					

ATTACHMENT C – COMPETITOR TABLE – MIDDLE MILE

Existing Middle Mile Broadband Service Providers and Services Offered: Please complete a table describing the competing middle mile providers' broadband service offerings being advertised in the last mile service areas associated with the proposed middle mile project. **For BIP**, please provide this information for each census designated community within each last mile service area. For each competitor, explain the following: a) technology; b) service tiers; c) point-to-point of the competitor's service offering; d) speed; and e) pricing. Include any other comments to explain your findings if necessary.

<Applicant Service Area Name>							
Service Area	Middle Mile Services Provider	Technology Platform	Service Tier	Point-to-Point	Minimum Peak Load Network Bandwidth Capacity	Pricing	Other Comments
Grangeville, Kamiah, Craigmont, Cottonwood – Qwest territory	Qwest	DS & OC – no metro	Entry Level Plan	T-1	1.5mbps	\$400/mo	Plus distance
		Ethernet facility	Highest Speed Plan	OC-3	50mbps burstable	\$4500/mo – 100 yards from CO	Grangeville client
			Other Plans (e.g., Mid-Tier Plan)	Bonded T-1's Internet access	3mbps	N/A	
	Provider B		Entry Level Plan				
			Highest Speed Plan				
			Other Plans (e.g., Mid-Tier Plan)				
Orofino, Moscow, Potlatch, Deary, Bovill – Verizon territory	Verizon	DS & OC – no metro	Entry Level Plan	T-1	1.5mbps	\$400-\$1100	
		Ethernet facility	Highest Speed Plan	OC-12	155mbps	\$6500/mo	Local loop only – Internet extra
			Other Plans (e.g., Mid-Tier Plan)	DS3	45mbpas	n/a	
	AT&T	DS & OC	Entry Level Plan	T-1	1.5	\$800-1200	
			Highest Speed Plan	DS-3	45mbps	\$10,000 between Verizon & Qwest	
			Other Plans (e.g., Mid-Tier Plan)				

It's hard to track down the telco pricing unless you contact them as a client seeking a quote. Qwest's tariffs are listed at http://tariffs.qwest.com:8000/QWEST_RSS/index.htm. The numbers we have used above are from subscribers. We do know that a DS3 from Orofino (Verizon) to Cottonwood (Qwest), as quoted to the Clearwater Valley Hospital, was \$10,000/mo as of 2009. AT&T was the IXC.

ZIONS BANK®

August 12, 2009

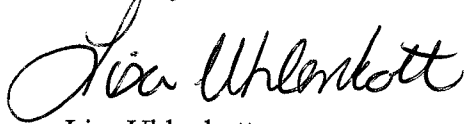
First Step Internet
Kevin Owen
1420 S Blain St
Moscow, ID 83843

Dear Mr. Owen:

Your request for Zions Bank to facilitate a \$3,000,000 loan for a fixed wireless network is not approved. Reason for denial is that the projected cash flow and existing cash flow will not be able to support the projected debt payments.

Thank you for your interest in Zions bank.

Sincerely,



Lisa Uhlenkott
Relationship Manager
Zions Bank

P.O. Box 586
Orofino, ID 83544
Phone: (208) 476-3615
Fax: (208) 476-3127



Commissioners
Don Ebert, Chairman
Stan Leach, Commissioner
John T. Allen, Commissioner

Clearwater County Commissioners

August 10, 2009

Thomas Vilsack
Secretary
U.S. Department of Agriculture
1400 Independence Ave., SW
Washington, DC 20250

Lawrence Strickling
Assistant Secretary for Communications and Information
National Telecommunications and Information Administration
U.S. Dept. of Commerce
1401 Constitution Ave. NW
Washington, DC 20230

Re: North Central Idaho Multi-User Network – First Step Internet,
BIP/BTOP Funding – Grant Application

Dear Secretary Vilsack and Assistant Secretary Strickling:

Clearwater County Board of Commissioners is pleased to express support of First Step Internet's proposed project to build up middle mile broadband infrastructure across North Central Idaho. This project will provide backbone and redundancy building upon the existing infrastructure in our rural areas, needs recently identified in the *North Central Idaho Broadband Study and Deployment Plan*.

This project will provide backbone, redundancy, connectivity, and reliability/enhanced capacity while being financially viable. First Step Internet's proposed project has taken into consideration several factors identified in several strategic planning efforts lead across the region and supported by the grassroots efforts of Clearwater Economic Development Association and the North Central Idaho Telecom Consortium

Through partnership and collaboration this proposed middle mile broadband project will benefit residents, businesses and public sector entities. We applaud First Step Internet's efforts and encourage you to strongly consider funding this application.

Sincerely,

Don Ebert, Chairman

City of Weippe

623 N Main St
Weippe, Id 83553

Phone (208)435-4216

Fax (208)435-4396

Email weippe@orofino-id.com

August 13, 2009

Thomas Vilsack
Secretary
U.S. Department of Agriculture
1400 Independence Ave., SW
Washington, DC 20250

Lawrence Strickling
Assistant Secretary for Communications and Information
National Telecommunications and Information Administration
U.S. Dept. of Commerce
1401 Constitution Ave. NW
Washington, DC 20230

Re: North Central Idaho Multi-User Network – First Step Internet,
BIP/BTOP Funding – Grant Application

Dear Secretary Vilsack and Assistant Secretary Strickling:


The city of Weippe fully supports First Step Internet proposed initiative to fully develop a multi-user Wide Area Network (WAN) in North Central Idaho that will meet the needs identified in the recently completed *North Central Idaho Broadband Study and Deployment Plan* building upon the existing infrastructure in our rural areas. If funded, First Step will provide backbone and redundancy into at least 18 communities and provide distribution to end users of under-served and un-served areas of Latah, Lewis, Idaho Nez Perce, and Clearwater counties.

The project addresses the five focus areas of the grassroots efforts of Clearwater Economic Development Association and the North Central Idaho Telecom Consortium who have worked conjunctively to promote improved telecommunication infrastructure in our region. This project will provide backbone, redundancy, connectivity, and reliability/enhanced capacity while being financially viable.

Our region believes that we are on the cusp of realizing the goals set forth at the 2003 Economic Summit conducted in North Central Idaho to develop our region's *Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS)*.

Please fund First Step Internet's application!

Sincerely,



Norman C. Steadman
Mayor

August 13, 2009

Thomas Vilsack
Secretary
U.S. Department of Agriculture
1400 Independence Ave., SW
Washington, DC 20250

Lawrence Strickling
Assistant Secretary for Communications and Information
National Telecommunications and Information Administration
U.S. Dept. of Commerce
1401 Constitution Ave. NW
Washington, DC 20230

Re: North Central Idaho Multi-User Network – First Step Internet,
BIP/BTOP Funding – Grant Application

Dear Secretary Vilsack and Assistant Secretary Strickling:

I appreciate your consideration of the First Step Internet proposal to create a multi-user Wide Area Network (WAN) in North Central Idaho. The project, which has support from private, nonprofit and local governmental groups, meets the needs identified in the *North Central Idaho Broadband Study and Deployment Plan*. If funded, First Step will provide backbone and redundancy to at least 18 communities and provide distribution to end users of under-served and un-served areas of Latah, Lewis, Idaho, Nez Perce, and Clearwater counties. This infrastructure is also an essential component to revitalizing and diversifying an economy that has been battered by the downturn in the timber industry.

The project addresses the five focus areas of the grassroots efforts of Clearwater Economic Development Association and the North Central Idaho Telecom Consortium, that have worked together to improve telecommunication infrastructure in this geographically isolated region. This project can provide backbone, redundancy, connectivity, and enhanced capacity while being financially viable.

Thank you for your consideration. Contact my office if you have questions.

Very Truly Yours,

Walt Minnick
U.S. Representative, ID-01 ~~Walt Minnick~~



Nez Perce

TRIBAL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

P.O. BOX 305 • LAPWAI, IDAHO 83540 • (208) 843-2253

August 12, 2009

Kevin Owen
First Step Internet
1420 S Blaine St
Moscow, ID 83843

Dear Mr. Owen:

The Nez Perce Tribe is pleased to support the First Step Internet application for middle mile telecommunications enhancement across north central Idaho. In addition, the recent collaboration that will enhance both the Nez Perce Tribe's Broadband Initiatives Program application and First Step Internet's Broadband technology Opportunities Program application.

Broad band connectivity is widely recognized as an increasingly important infrastructure for rural communities and regions like north central Idaho. Connectivity can be linked to success in education, healthcare delivery, public safety and economic opportunity. Currently, the coverage of broadband is intermittent; topographic challenges and costs of build out are limiting factors for the private sector. Through partnership and collaboration with First Step Internet this proposed broadband network will benefit residents, businesses and public sector entities.

The Nez Perce Tribe supports your efforts to build additional broadband infrastructure capacity within the region.

Sincerely,

Samuel N. Penney
Chairman

NP 09-429

RESOLUTION

WHEREAS, the Nez Perce Tribal Executive Committee has been empowered to act for and in behalf of the Nez Perce Tribe, pursuant to the Revised Constitution and By-Laws, adopted by the General Council of the Nez Perce Tribe, on May 6, 1961 and approved by the Acting Commissioner of Indian Affairs on June 27, 1961; and

WHEREAS, the Nez Perce Tribe is a federally recognized Indian Tribe that provides essential government services on and adjacent to the Nez Perce Reservation;

WHEREAS, the Tribe has developed a large wide area wire network for services necessary to operate for business, emergency response, law enforcement.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Nez Perce Tribal Executive Committee (NPTEC) does hereby authorize the Memorandum of Understanding with First Step Internet to expand the Nez Perce Tribes wide area wireless network; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the NPTEC Chairman and Secretary are authorized to sign the required correspondence and documents to execute MOU with first Step Internet; and

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED that the NPTEC Treasurer is hereby authorized to disburse funds accordingly.

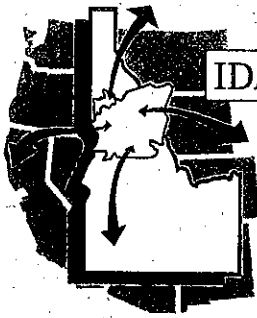
CERTIFICATION

The foregoing resolution was duly adopted by the Nez Perce Tribal Executive Committee meeting in Special Session, August 11, 2009, in the Richard A. Halfmoon Council Chambers Lapwai, Idaho, and a quorum of its members being present and voting.

BY: McCoy Oatman
McCoy Oatman, Secretary

ATTEST:

Samuel N. Penney
Samuel N. Penney, Chairman



IDA-LEW ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL, INC.

P.O. Box 393 • Grangeville, Idaho 83530 • Phone 208.983.1025
FAX 208.983.1962 www.ida-lew.org

August 5, 2009

Thomas Vilsack
Secretary
U.S. Department of Agriculture
1400 Independence Ave., SW
Washington, DC 20250

Lawrence Strickling
Assistant Secretary for Communications and Information
National Telecommunications and Information Administration
U.S. Dept. of Commerce
1401 Constitution Ave. NW
Washington, DC 20230

Dear Secretary Vilsack and Assistant Secretary Strickling:

Ida-Lew Economic Development Council fully supports the proposed initiative of First Step Internet to fully develop a multi-user Wide Area Network (WAN) in North Central Idaho that will meet the needs identified in the recently completed *North Central Idaho Broadband Study and Deployment Plan* building upon the existing infrastructure in our rural areas. If funded, First Step will provide backbone and redundancy into at least 18 communities and provide distribution to end users of under-served and un-served areas of Latah, Lewis, Idaho, Nez Perce, and Clearwater counties.

The project addresses the five focus areas of the grassroots efforts of Clearwater Economic Development Association and the North Central Idaho Telecom Consortium, who have worked conjunctively to promote improved telecommunication infrastructure in our region. This project will provide backbone, redundancy, connectivity, and reliability/enhanced capacity while being financially viable.

Our region believes that we are on the cusp of realizing the goals set forth at the 2003 Economic Summit conducted in North Central Idaho to develop our region's *Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS)*.

Please fund First Step Internet's application!

Sincerely,

Raina Frei

Chairman, Ida-Lew
208-983-1025
ida-lew@gwestoffice.net

JAMES E. RISCH
IDAHO

RUSSELL SENATE OFFICE BUILDING
SUITE 483

(202) 224-2752

FAX (202) 224-2573

United States Senate
WASHINGTON, DC 20510

COMMITTEES

ENERGY AND NATURAL RESOURCES

FOREIGN RELATIONS

SELECT COMMITTEE ON ETHICS

SELECT COMMITTEE ON INTELLIGENCE

JOINT ECONOMIC COMMITTEE

August 3, 2009

Thomas Vilsack
Secretary
U.S. Department of Agriculture
1400 Independence Ave., SW
Washington, DC 20250

Lawrence Strickling
Assistant Secretary for Communications and Information
National Telecommunications and Information Administration
U.S. Dept. of Commerce
1401 Constitutional Ave., NW
Washington, DC 20230

RE: North Central Idaho Multi-User Network-First Step Internet,
BIP/BTOP Funding-Grant Application

Dear Secretary Vilsack and Assistant Secretary Strickling:

The office of U.S. Senator James E. Risch fully supports First Step Internet's proposed initiative to fully develop a multi-user Wide Area Network (WAN) in North Central Idaho that will meet the needs identified in the recently completed North Central Idaho Broadband Study and Deployment Plan building upon the existing infrastructure in our rural area. If funded, First Step will provide the backbone and redundancy into at least 18 communities and provide to end users of under-served and un-served areas of Latah, Lewis, Idaho, Nez Perce, and Clearwater counties.

The project addresses the five focus areas of the grassroots efforts of Clearwater Economic Development Association and the North Central Idaho Telecom Consortium who have worked conjunctively to promote improved telecommunication infrastructure in our region. This project will provide backbone, redundancy, connectivity, and reliability/enhanced capacity while being financially viable.

Our region believes that we are on the cusp of realizing the goals set forth at the 2003 Economic Summit conducted in North Central Idaho to develop our region's Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS).

Please fund First Step Internet's application!

Very Truly Yours,



James E. Risch
United States Senator

SUITE 302
350 NORTH 9TH STREET
BOISE, ID 83702
(208) 342-7985

HARBOR PLAZA
610 HUBBARD, SUITE 121
COEUR D'ALENE, ID 83814
(208) 667-6130

SUITE 106
313 D STREET
LEWISTON, ID 83501
(208) 743-0792

SUITE 290
275 SOUTH 5TH STREET
POCATELLO, ID 83201
(208) 236-6817

SUITE A
560 FILER AVENUE
TWIN FALLS, ID 83301
(208) 734-6780

SUITE 101
490 MEMORIAL DRIVE
IDAHO FALLS, ID 83402
(208) 523-5541



House of Representatives
State of Idaho
MINORITY LEADER

July 31, 2009

Thomas Vilsack
Secretary
U.S. Department of Agriculture
1400 Independence Ave., SW
Washington, DC 20250

Lawrence Strickling
Assistant Secretary for Communications and Information
National Telecommunications and Information Administration
U.S. Dept. of Commerce
1401 Constitution Ave. NW
Washington, DC 20230

Re: Wide Area Network in North Central Idaho
BIP/BTOP Funding – Grant Application

Dear Secretary Vilsack and Assistant Secretary Strickling:

On behalf of the citizens in North Central Idaho, I would like to give my full support to First Step Internet's proposed initiative to fully develop a multi-user Wide Area Network (WAN) in North Central Idaho. This project will meet the needs identified in the recently completed *North Central Idaho Broadband Study and Deployment Plan* and builds upon the existing infrastructure in our rural areas. If funded, First Step will provide backbone and redundancy into at least 18 communities and provide distribution to end users of under-served and un-served areas of Latah, Lewis, Idaho, Nez Perce, and Clearwater counties.

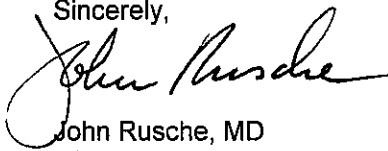
As a physician, I can state that broadband service development is essential to maintaining the healthcare system in rural Idaho. Electronic records do not help that much if information in those records cannot be shared due to lacking infrastructure. As a legislator and knowing the economic condition in rural Idaho, I am certain that this project will help the area climb out of the double digit unemployment by allowing small business to meet their customers needs.

The project addresses the five focus areas of the grassroots efforts of Clearwater Economic Development Association and the North Central Idaho Telecom Consortium who have worked conjunctively to promote improved telecommunication infrastructure in our region. This project will provide backbone, redundancy, connectivity, and reliability/enhanced capacity while being financially viable.

Our region believes that we are on the cusp of realizing the goals set forth at the 2003 Economic Summit conducted in North Central Idaho to develop our region's *Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS)*.

Please fund First Step Internet's application!

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "John Rusche". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "J" and "R".

John Rusche, MD
Minority Leader,
Idaho House of Representatives



NEZ PERCE COUNTY

BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

August 3, 2009

Thomas Vilsack
Secretary
U.S. Department of Agriculture
1400 Independence Ave., SW
Washington, DC 20250

1225 Idaho Street
P.O. Box 896
Lewiston, Idaho 83501-0896
(208) 799-3090
FAX (208) 799-3149

Lawrence Strickling
Assistant Secretary for Communications and Information
National Telecommunications and Information Administration
U.S. Dept. of Commerce
1401 Constitution Ave. NW
Washington, DC 20230

Re: North Central Idaho Multi-User Network – First Step Internet,
BIP/BTOP Funding – Grant Application

Dear Secretary Vilsack and Assistant Secretary Strickling:

Nez Perce County fully supports First Step Internet proposed initiative to fully develop a multi-user Wide Area Network (WAN) in North Central Idaho that will meet the needs identified in the recently completed *North Central Idaho Broadband Study and Deployment Plan* building upon the existing infrastructure in our rural areas. If funded, First Step will provide backbone and redundancy into at least 18 communities and provide distribution to end users of under-served and un-served areas of Latah, Lewis, Idaho, Nez Perce, and Clearwater counties.

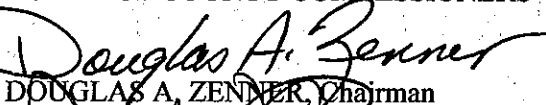
The project addresses the five focus areas of the grassroots efforts of Clearwater Economic Development Association and the North Central Idaho Telecom Consortium who have worked conjunctively to promote improved telecommunication infrastructure in our region. This project will provide backbone, redundancy, connectivity, and reliability/enhanced capacity while being financially viable.

Our region believes that we are on the cusp of realizing the goals set forth at the 2003 Economic Summit conducted in North Central Idaho to develop our region's *Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS)*.

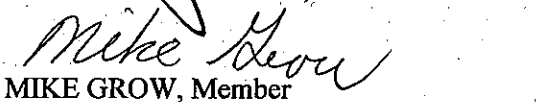
Please fund First Step Internet's application!

Sincerely,

BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS


DOUGLAS A. ZENNER, Chairman


RONALD J. WITTMAN, Member


MIKE GROW, Member

Mike Grow
First District

Ronald J. Wittman
Second District

Douglas A. Zenner
Third District

Patty O. Weeks
Clerk

217 First Street
P.O. Box 312
Orofino, ID 83544



Phone (208) 476-4725
Fax (208) 476-3634
email: citycouncil@orofino-id.com

City of Orofino

August 3, 2009

Thomas Vilsack
Secretary
U.S. Department of Agriculture
1400 Independence Ave., SW
Washington, DC 20250

Lawrence Strickling
Assistant Secretary for Communications and Information
National Telecommunications and Information Administration
U.S. Dept. of Commerce
1401 Constitution Ave. NW
Washington, DC 20230

Re: North Central Idaho Multi-User Network – First Step Internet,
BIP/BTOP Funding – Grant Application

Dear Secretary Vilsack and Assistant Secretary Strickling:

It is with pleasure that the Mayor and City Council for the City of Orofino submit a letter of support for First Step Internet's proposed initiative to fully develop a multi-user Wide Area Network (WAN) in North Central Idaho. The initiative will meet the needs identified in the recently completed *North Central Idaho Broadband Study and Deployment Plan*. All improvements will be constructed using existing infrastructure in rural areas of our region. If funded, First Step will provide backbone and redundancy into 18 communities and provide distribution to "end-users" of underserved and un-served areas of Latah, Lewis, Idaho Nez Perce, and Clearwater Counties.

The project addresses the five focus areas of the grassroots efforts of the Clearwater Economic Development Association and the North Central Idaho Telecom Consortium who have worked conjunctively to promote improved telecommunication infrastructure in our region. The proposed project will provide the backbone, redundancy, connectivity, and reliability/enhanced capacity while being financially cost effective and viable.

With the Department of Agriculture's assistance, North Central Idaho will be able to accomplish the goals set forth at the 2003 Economic Summit which developed our region's *Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS)*. On behalf of the citizens of our Great State, I respectfully request that First Step Internet's application be funded.

If I can be of any assistance or answer any questions whatsoever, please do not hesitate to contact me

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Ryan Smathers", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Ryan Smathers
Mayor



City of Elk River
P.O. Box "H"
112 S. Second Street
Elk River, Idaho 83827

Phone (208) 826-3209 or 826-3008
Fax (208) 826-3209

August 4, 2009

Thomas Vilsack
Secretary
U.S. Department of Agriculture
1400 Independence Ave., SW
Washington, DC 20250

Lawrence Strickling
Assistant Secretary for Communications and Information
National Telecommunications and Information Administration
U.S. Dept. of Commerce
1401 Constitution Ave. NW
Washington, DC 20230

Re: North Central Idaho Multi-User Network – First Step Internet,
BIP/BTOP Funding – Grant Application

Dear Secretary Vilsack and Assistant Secretary Strickling:


The City of Elk River fully supports First Step Internet proposed initiative to fully develop a multi-user Wide Area Network (WAN) in North Central Idaho that will meet the needs identified in the recently completed *North Central Idaho Broadband Study and Deployment Plan* building upon the existing infrastructure in our rural areas. If funded, First Step will provide backbone and redundancy into at least 18 communities and provide distribution to end users of under-served and un-served areas of Latah, Lewis, Idaho, Nez Perce, and Clearwater counties.

The project addresses the five focus areas of the grassroots efforts of Clearwater Economic Development Association and the North Central Idaho Telecom Consortium who have worked conjunctively to promote improved telecommunication infrastructure in our region. This project will provide backbone, redundancy, connectivity, and reliability/enhanced capacity while being financially viable.

Our region believes that we are on the cusp of realizing the goals set forth at the 2003 Economic Summit conducted in North Central Idaho to develop our region's *Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS)*.

Please fund First Step Internet's application!

Sincerely,


James Martin
Mayor



Latah County Library District

Moscow Library – District Headquarters
110 South Jefferson St.
Moscow, ID 83843
Phone: 208.882.3925
Fax: 208.882.5098
www.latahlibrary.org

August 5, 2009

Thomas Vilsack
Secretary
U.S. Department of Agriculture
1400 Independence Ave., SW
Washington, DC 20250

Lawrence Strickling
Assistant Secretary for Communications and Information
National Telecommunications and Information Administration
U.S. Dept. of Commerce
1401 Constitution Ave. NW
Washington, DC 20230

Re: North Central Idaho Multi-User Network – First Step Internet,
BIP/BTOP Funding – Grant Application

Dear Secretary Vilsack and Assistant Secretary Strickling:

The Latah County Library District operates seven libraries in rural Latah County and it is one of our strategic objectives to continue to improve Internet access for our patrons and communities. First Step has been an integral partner in the library's efforts, providing the expertise and resources that we cannot within our current funding.

The Library District fully supports the First Step Internet proposed initiative to fully develop a multi-user Wide Area Network (WAN) in North Central Idaho that will meet the needs identified in the recently completed *North Central Idaho Broadband Study and Deployment Plan* building upon the existing infrastructure in our rural areas. If funded, First Step will provide backbone and redundancy into at least 18 communities and provide distribution to end users of under-served and un-served areas of Latah, Lewis, Idaho Nez Perce, and Clearwater counties.

The project addresses the five focus areas of the grassroots efforts of Clearwater Economic Development Association and the North Central Idaho Telecom Consortium who have worked conjunctively to promote improved telecommunication infrastructure in our region. This project will provide backbone, redundancy, connectivity, and reliability/enhanced capacity while being financially viable.

Our region believes that we are on the cusp of realizing the goals set forth at the 2003 Economic Summit conducted in North Central Idaho to develop our region's *Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS)*. Please fund First Step Internet's application!

Sincerely,

Anne Cheadle
Director

Branch Libraries

Bovill Bovill, ID 83806 Phone/Fax: 208.826.3451	Deary Deary, ID 83823 Phone/Fax: 208.877.1664	Genesee Genesee, ID 83832 Phone/Fax: 208.285.1398	Juliaetta Juliaetta, ID 83535 Phone/Fax: 208.276.7071	Potlatch Potlatch, ID 83855 Phone/Fax: 208.875.1036	Troy Troy, ID 83871 Phone/Fax: 208.835.4311
---	---	---	---	---	---



August 3, 2009

Thomas Vilsack
Secretary
U.S. Department of Agriculture
1400 Independence Ave., SW
Washington, DC 20250

Lawrence Strickling
Assistant Secretary for Communications and Information
National Telecommunications and Information Administration
U.S. Dept. of Commerce
1401 Constitution Ave. NW
Washington, DC 20230

Re: WAN North Central Idaho, BIP/BTOP Funding – Grant Application

Dear Secretary Vilsack and Assistant Secretary Strickling:

On behalf of Avista Corporation, I want to express our support for First Step Internet's proposed initiative to fully develop a multi-user Wide Area Network (WAN) in North Central Idaho. As proposed, the project will meet the needs identified in the recently completed *North Central Idaho Broadband Study and Deployment Plan* building upon the existing infrastructure in our rural areas. If funded, First Step will provide backbone and redundancy into at least 18 communities and provide distribution to end users of under-served and un-served areas of Latah, Lewis, Idaho Nez Perce, and Clearwater counties. Consistent with Avista's Rural Prosperity Initiative, this project is critical to the region's economic future and warrants your full support.

The project addresses the five focus areas of the grassroots efforts of Clearwater Economic Development Association and the North Central Idaho Telecom Consortium who have worked conjunctively to promote improved telecommunication infrastructure in our region. This project will provide backbone, redundancy, connectivity, and reliability/enhanced capacity while being financially viable.

Avista and our community and business partners truly believe critical projects like this can only serve to strengthen our region's economic capacity. I would appreciate your full and careful consideration of First Step Internet's application. Please call me if you have any questions. Thank you.

Sincerely,

Paul J. Kimmell
Business & Public Affairs
Avista Corporation





171 HIGHWAY 95 NORTH

GRANGEVILLE, ID 83530

IDAHOFORESTGROUP.COM

208.983.0012

August 4, 2009

Thomas Vilsack
Secretary
U.S. Department of Agriculture
1400 Independence Ave., SW
Washington, DC 20250

Lawrence Strickling
Assistant Secretary for Communications and Information
National Telecommunications and Information Administration
U.S. Dept. of Commerce
1401 Constitution Ave. NW
Washington, DC 20230

Re: North Central Idaho Multi-User Network – First Step Internet,
BIP/BTOP Funding – Grant Application

Dear Secretary Vilsack and Assistant Secretary Strickling:

Idaho Forest Group Grangeville fully supports First Step Internet proposed initiative to fully develop a multi-user Wide Area Network (WAN) in North Central Idaho that will meet the needs identified in the recently completed *North Central Idaho Broadband Study and Deployment Plan* building upon the existing infrastructure in our rural areas. If funded, First Step will provide backbone and redundancy into at least 18 communities and provide distribution to end users of under-served and un-served areas of Latah, Lewis, Idaho, Nez Perce, and Clearwater counties.

The project addresses the five focus areas of the grassroots efforts of Clearwater Economic Development Association and the North Central Idaho Telecom Consortium who have worked conjunctively to promote improved telecommunication infrastructure in our region. This project will provide backbone, redundancy, connectivity, and reliability/enhanced capacity while being financially viable.

Our region believes that we are on the cusp of realizing the goals set forth at the 2003 Economic Summit conducted in North Central Idaho to develop our region's Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS).

Please fund First Step Internet's application!

Sincerely,

Shannon Fuchs
Plant Manager



August 7, 2009

Thomas Vilsack
Secretary
U.S. Department of Agriculture
1400 Independence Ave., SW
Washington, DC 20250

Lawrence Strickling
Assistant Secretary for Communications and Information
National Telecommunications and Information Administration
U.S. Dept. of Commerce
1401 Constitution Ave. NW
Washington, DC 20230

Re: North Central Idaho Multi-User Network – First Step Internet,
BIP/BTOP Funding – Grant Application

Dear Secretary Vilsack and Assistant Secretary Strickling:

Valley Vision, Inc, economic development for the Lewis-Clark Valley, fully supports First Step Internet proposed initiative to fully develop a multi-user Wide Area Network (WAN) in North Central Idaho that will meet the needs identified in the recently completed *North Central Idaho Broadband Study and Deployment Plan* building upon the existing infrastructure in our rural areas. If funded, First Step will provide backbone and redundancy into at least 18 communities and provide distribution to end users of under-served and un-served areas of Latah, Lewis, Idaho Nez Perce, and Clearwater counties.

The project addresses the five focus areas of the grassroots efforts of Clearwater Economic Development Association and the North Central Idaho Telecom Consortium who have worked conjunctively to promote improved telecommunication infrastructure in our region. This project will provide backbone, redundancy, connectivity, and reliability/enhanced capacity while being financially viable.

Our region believes that we are on the cusp of realizing the goals set forth at the 2003 Economic Summit conducted in North Central Idaho to develop our region's *Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS)*.

Please fund First Step Internet's application!

Sincerely,


R. H. Tippet
Executive Director
Valley Vision, Inc.

VALLEY VISION, INC.

111 Main Street - Ste. 130 Lewiston, ID 83501 (208) 799-9083 FAX: (208) 799-9082
e-mail: vvision@lewiston.com web-site: <http://www.lewis-clarkvalley.com>

BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

Phone (208) 983-2751

IDAHO COUNTY
320 W. Main • GRANGEVILLE, IDAHO 83530

FAX Number (208) 983-1428

August 3, 2009

Thomas Vilsack
Secretary
U.S. Department of Agriculture
1400 Independence Ave., SW
Washington, DC 20250

Lawrence Strickling
Assistant Secretary for Communications and Information
National Telecommunications and Information Administration
U.S. Dept. of Commerce
1401 Constitution Ave. NW
Washington, DC 20230

Re: North Central Idaho Multi-User Network – First Step Internet,
BIP/BTOP Funding – Grant Application

Dear Secretary Vilsack and Assistant Secretary Strickling:

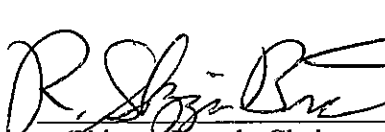
Idaho County Commissioners fully supports First Step Internet proposed initiative to fully develop a multi-user Wide Area Network (WAN) in North Central Idaho that will meet the needs identified in the recently completed *North Central Idaho Broadband Study and Deployment Plan* building upon the existing infrastructure in our rural areas. If funded, First Step will provide backbone and redundancy into at least 18 communities and provide distribution to end users of under-served and un-served areas of Latah, Lewis, Idaho Nez Perce, and Clearwater counties.

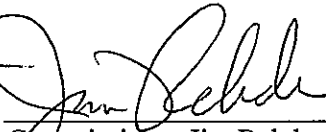
The project addresses the five focus areas of the grassroots efforts of Clearwater Economic Development Association and the North Central Idaho Telecom Consortium who have worked conjunctively to promote improved telecommunication infrastructure in our region. This project will provide backbone, redundancy, connectivity, and reliability/enhanced capacity while being financially viable.

Our region believes that we are on the cusp of realizing the goals set forth at the 2003 Economic Summit conducted in North Central Idaho to develop our region's *Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS)*.

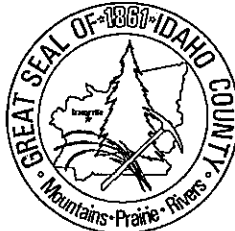
Please fund First Step Internet's application!

Sincerely,


R. Skipper Brandt, Chairman


Commissioner Jim Rehder


Commissioner James Rockwell



August 6, 2009

Thomas Vilsack
Secretary
U.S. Department of Agriculture
1400 Independence Ave., SW
Washington, DC 20250

Lawrence Strickling
Assistant Secretary for Communications and Information
National Telecommunications and Information Administration
U.S. Dept. of Commerce
1401 Constitution Ave. NW
Washington, DC 20230

Re: North Central Idaho Multi-User Network – First Step Internet,
BIP/BTOP Funding – Grant Application

Dear Secretary Vilsack and Assistant Secretary Strickling:


Highland SD #305 fully supports First Step Internet proposed initiative to fully develop a multi-user Wide Area Network (WAN) in North Central Idaho that will meet the needs identified in the recently completed *North Central Idaho Broadband Study and Deployment Plan* building upon the existing infrastructure in our rural areas. If funded, First Step will provide backbone and redundancy into at least 18 communities and provide distribution to end users of under-served and un-served areas of Latah, Lewis, Idaho Nez Perce, and Clearwater counties.

The project addresses the five focus areas of the grassroots efforts of Clearwater Economic Development Association and the North Central Idaho Telecom Consortium who have worked conjunctively to promote improved telecommunication infrastructure in our region. This project will provide backbone, redundancy, connectivity, and reliability/enhanced capacity while being financially viable.

Our region believes that we are on the cusp of realizing the goals set forth at the 2003 Economic Summit conducted in North Central Idaho to develop our region's *Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS)*.

Please fund First Step internet's application!

Sincerely,



Name: Clair R. Garrick
Organization: Highland PS District #305

MIKE CRAPO
U.S. SENATOR
IDAHO

CO-CHAIRMAN, SENATE RENEWABLES AND
ENERGY EFFICIENCY CAUCUS

CO-CHAIRMAN, WESTERN WATER CAUCUS

CO-CHAIRMAN, SPORTSMEN'S CAUCUS

CO-CHAIRMAN, COPD CAUCUS

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

August 3, 2009

COMMITTEES:
FINANCE

BANKING, HOUSING, AND
URBAN AFFAIRS

ENVIRONMENT AND PUBLIC WORKS

BUDGET

INDIAN AFFAIRS

The Honorable Thomas Vilsack, Secretary
U.S. Department of Agriculture
1400 Independence Ave., SW
Washington, DC 20250

The Honorable Lawrence Strickling
Assistant Secretary for Communications and Information
National Telecommunications and Information Administration
U.S. Dept. of Commerce
1401 Constitution Ave. NW
Washington, DC 20230

Re: North Central Idaho Multi-User Network-First Step Internet
BIP/BTOP Funding – Grant Application

Dear Secretary Vilsack and Assistant Secretary Strickling:

I am writing in support of First Step Internet's proposed initiative to fully develop a multi-user Wide Area Network (WAN) in North Central Idaho. It is my understanding that this project has significant support from the rural communities in the area and would work to meet the needs identified in the recently completed *North Central Idaho Broadband Study and Deployment Plan*.

If funded, First Step will provide backbone and redundancy into at least eighteen communities and provide distribution to end users of under-served and un-served areas of Latah, Lewis, Idaho, Nez Perce and Clearwater Counties. This project will provide affordable, high speed internet to rural manufacturers, hospitals, schools and libraries.

This project is vital for the region to realize the goals set forth at the 2003 Economic Summit conducted in North Central Idaho. I urge you to give this application all due consideration.

Sincerely,



Michael D. Crapo
United States Senator

MDC/rrf



City of Cottonwood

Idaho County, State of Idaho

P. O. Box 571
Cottonwood, Idaho 83522-0571
Phone 962-3231

August 6, 2009

Thomas Vilsack
Secretary
U.S. Department of Agriculture
1400 Independence Ave., SW
Washington, DC 20250

Lawrence Strickling
Assistant Secretary for Communications and Information
National Telecommunications and Information Administration
U.S. Dept. of Commerce
1401 Constitution Ave. NW
Washington, DC 20230

Re: North Central Idaho Multi-User Network – First Step Internet,
BIP/BTOP Funding – Grant Application

Dear Secretary Vilsack and Assistant Secretary Strickling:

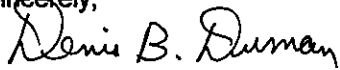
The City of Cottonwood, Idaho fully supports First Step Internet proposed initiative to fully develop a multi-user Wide Area Network (WAN) in North Central Idaho that will meet the needs identified in the recently completed *North Central Idaho Broadband Study and Deployment Plan* building upon the existing infrastructure in our rural areas. If funded, First Step will provide backbone and redundancy into at least 18 communities and provide distribution to end users of under-served and un-served areas of Latah, Lewis, Idaho Nez Perce, and Clearwater counties.

The project addresses the five focus areas of the grassroots efforts of Clearwater Economic Development Association and the North Central Idaho Telecom Consortium who have worked conjunctively to promote improved telecommunication infrastructure in our region. This project will provide backbone, redundancy, connectivity, and reliability/enhanced capacity while being financially viable.

Our region believes that we are on the cusp of realizing the goals set forth at the 2003 Economic Summit conducted in North Central Idaho to develop our region's *Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS)*.

Please fund First Step Internet's application!

Sincerely,


Denis B. Duman
Mayor, City of Cottonwood

Weippe Public Library
Clearwater County Free Library District
P.O. Box 435 204 Wood Street
Weippe, Idaho 83553



208-435-4058

weippelibrary@weippe.com

August 6, 2009

Thomas Vilsack
Secretary
U.S. Department of Agriculture
1400 Independence Ave., SW
Washington, DC 20250

Lawrence Strickling
Assistant Secretary for Communications and Information
National Telecommunications and Information Administration
U.S. Dept. of Commerce
1401 Constitution Ave. NW
Washington, DC 20230

Re: North Central Idaho Multi-User Network – First Step Internet,
BIP/BTOP Funding – Grant Application

Dear Secretary Vilsack and Assistant Secretary Strickling:

The Weippe Public Library fully supports First Step Internet proposed initiative to fully develop a multi-user Wide Area Network (WAN) in North Central Idaho that will meet the needs identified in the recently completed *North Central Idaho Broadband Study and Deployment Plan* building upon the existing infrastructure in our rural areas. If funded, First Step will provide backbone and redundancy into at least 18 communities and provide distribution to end users of under-served and un-served areas of Latah, Lewis, Idaho Nez Perce, and Clearwater counties.

The project addresses the five focus areas of the grassroots efforts of Clearwater Economic Development Association and the North Central Idaho Telecom Consortium who have worked conjunctively to promote improved telecommunication infrastructure in our region. This project will provide backbone, redundancy, connectivity, and reliability/enhanced capacity while being financially viable.

Our region believes that we are on the cusp of realizing the goals set forth at the 2003 Economic Summit conducted in North Central Idaho to develop our region's *Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS)*.

Please fund First Step Internet's application!

Sincerely,

Terri Summerfield,
Director

August 5, 2009

Thomas Vilsack
Secretary
U.S. Department of Agriculture
1400 Independence Ave., SW
Washington, DC 20250

Lawrence Strickling
Assistant Secretary for Communications and Information
National Telecommunications and Information Administration
U.S. Dept. of Commerce
1401 Constitution Ave. NW
Washington, DC 20230

Re: North Central Idaho Multi-User Network – First Step Internet,
BIP/BTOP Funding – Grant Application

Dear Secretary Vilsack and Assistant Secretary Strickling:

Gritman Medical Center in Moscow, Idaho, fully supports the First Step Internet proposed initiative to fully develop a multi-user Wide Area Network (WAN) in North Central Idaho that will meet the needs identified in the recently completed *North Central Idaho Broadband Study and Deployment Plan* building upon the existing infrastructure in our rural areas. If funded, First Step will provide backbone and redundancy into at least 18 communities and provide distribution to end users of under-served and un-served areas of Latah, Lewis, Idaho Nez Perce, and Clearwater counties.

This project will allow Gritman Medical Center to provide better care to the people in our community. The high speed network will allow us to provide consultations with care providers that our patients would not otherwise have access to using high-definition videoconferencing. Additionally, many of the resources available at Gritman Medical Center's primary location in Moscow could be made available to the clinics in rural areas such as Potlatch and Kendrick. Gritman also collaborates with other hospitals in the region to provide medical imaging diagnostic services which would be significantly enhanced with this project.

Please fund First Step Internet's application!

Sincerely,



Kane Francetich
Chief Information Officer



**Latah County
BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS**

P.O. Box 8068 ♦ 522 South Adams ♦ Moscow, Idaho 83843
(208) 883-7208 ♦ fax (208) 883-2280 ♦ e-mail bocc@latah.id.us
Tom S. Stroschein ♦ John A. "Jack" Nelson ♦ Jennifer Barrett

August 3, 2009

Thomas Vilsack
Secretary
U.S. Department of Agriculture
1400 Independence Ave., SW
Washington, DC 20250

Lawrence Strickling
Assistant Secretary for Communications and Information
National Telecommunications and Information Administration
U.S. Dept. of Commerce
1401 Constitution Ave. NW
Washington, DC 20230

Re: North Central Idaho Multi-User Network – First Step Internet,
BIP/BTOP Funding – Grant Application

Dear Secretary Vilsack and Assistant Secretary Strickling:

Latah County fully supports First Step Internet proposed initiative to fully develop a multi-user Wide Area Network (WAN) in North Central Idaho that will meet the needs identified in the recently completed *North Central Idaho Broadband Study and Deployment Plan* building upon the existing infrastructure in our rural areas. If funded, First Step will provide backbone and redundancy into at least 18 communities and provide distribution to end users of under-served and un-served areas of Latah, Lewis, Idaho Nez Perce, and Clearwater counties.

The project addresses the five focus areas of the grassroots efforts of Clearwater Economic Development Association and the North Central Idaho Telecom Consortium who have worked conjunctively to promote improved telecommunication infrastructure in our region. This project will provide backbone, redundancy, connectivity, and reliability/enhanced capacity while being financially viable.

Our region believes that we are on the cusp of realizing the goals set forth at the 2003 Economic Summit conducted in North Central Idaho to develop our region's *Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS)*.

Please fund First Step Internet's application!

Sincerely,

Tom S. Stroschein
Chair

John A. "Jack" Nelson
Commissioner

Jennifer Barrett
Commissioner

Lewis-Clark
S T A T E
C O L L E G E

Connecting Learning to Life

August 10, 2009

Thomas Vilsack
Secretary
U.S. Department of Agriculture
1400 Independence Ave., SW
Washington, DC 20250

Lawrence Strickling
Assistant Secretary for Communications and Information
National Telecommunications and Information Administration
U.S. Dept. of Commerce
1401 Constitution Ave. NW
Washington, DC 20230

Re: North Central Idaho Multi-User Network – First Step Internet, BIP/BTOP Funding – Grant Application

Dear Secretary Vilsack and Assistant Secretary Strickling:

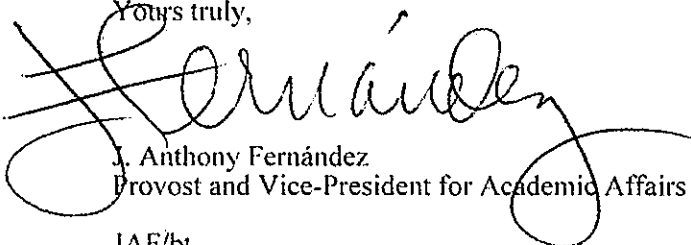
Lewis-Clark State College fully supports the First Step Internet proposal to develop a multi-user Wide Area Network (WAN) in North Central Idaho. Such a network will meet the needs identified in the recently completed *North Central Idaho Broadband Study and Deployment Plan* and will build upon the existing infrastructure in our rural areas. If funded, First Step Internet will provide backbone and redundancy to at least 18 communities and provide distribution to end users of the under-served or unserved areas of Clearwater, Idaho, Latah, Lewis, and Nez Perce counties.

Residents in the above mentioned areas currently do not have access to services that provide the necessary bandwidth for online educational programs. Implementation of this project will provide residents such access; for example, students in these areas will be able to earn college credit by taking online, dual credit courses while still in high school.

The project addresses five focus areas of the grassroots efforts of the Clearwater Economic Development Association and the North Central Idaho Telecom Consortium who have worked together to promote an improved telecommunication infrastructure in our region. This project will provide backbone, redundancy, connectivity, reliability, and enhanced capacity while being financially viable.

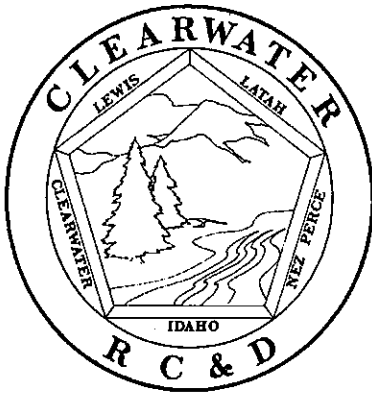
We are on the cusp of realizing the goals set forth at the 2003 Economic Summit conducted in North Central Idaho to develop our region's *Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS)*. Funding First Step Internet's proposal will be a significant step towards realizing those goals

Yours truly,



J. Anthony Fernández
Provost and Vice-President for Academic Affairs

JAF/bt



CLEARWATER RESOURCE CONSERVATION AND DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL, INC.

P.O. BOX 9576, MOSCOW, ID 83843-0176 (208) 882-4960

August 11, 2009

Thomas Vilsack
Secretary
U.S. Department of Agriculture
1400 Independence Ave., SW
Washington, DC 20250

Lawrence Strickling
Assistant Secretary for Communications and Information
National Telecommunications and Information Administration
U.S. Dept. of Commerce
1401 Constitution Ave. NW
Washington, DC 20230

Re: North Central Idaho Multi-User Network – First Step Internet,
BIP/BTOP Funding – Grant Application

Dear Secretary Vilsack and Assistant Secretary Strickling:

Clearwater Resource Conservation and Development Council, Inc. fully supports First Step Internet proposed initiative to fully develop a multi-user Wide Area Network (WAN) in North Central Idaho that will meet the needs identified in the recently completed *North Central Idaho Broadband Study and Deployment Plan* building upon the existing infrastructure in our rural areas. If funded, First Step will provide backbone and redundancy into at least 18 communities and provide distribution to end users of under-served and un-served areas of Latah, Lewis, Idaho Nez Perce, and Clearwater counties.

The project addresses the five focus areas of the grassroots efforts of Clearwater Economic Development Association and the North Central Idaho Telecom Consortium who have worked conjunctively to promote improved telecommunication infrastructure in our region. This project will provide backbone, redundancy, connectivity, and reliability/enhanced capacity while being financially viable.

Our region believes that we are on the cusp of realizing the goals set forth at the 2003 Economic Summit conducted in North Central Idaho to develop our region's *Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS)*.

Please fund First Step Internet's application!

Sincerely,

Ronald Wittman, President
Clearwater Resource Conservation and Development Council, Inc.

"Discover North Central Idaho"

August 4, 2009

Thomas Vilsack
Secretary
U.S. Department of Agriculture
1400 Independence Ave., SW
Washington, DC 20250

Lawrence Strickling
Assistant Secretary for Communications and Information
National Telecommunications and Information Administration
U.S. Dept. of Commerce
1401 Constitution Ave. NW
Washington, DC 20230

Dear Secretary Vilsack and Assistant Secretary Strickling:

The North Central Idaho Travel Association fully supports First Step Internet proposed initiative to fully develop a multi-user Wide Area Network (WAN) in North Central Idaho that will meet the needs identified in the recently completed *North Central Idaho Broadband Study and Deployment Plan* building upon the existing infrastructure in our rural areas. If funded, First Step will provide backbone and redundancy into at least 18 communities and provide distribution to end users of under-served and un-served areas of Latah, Lewis, Idaho, Nez Perce, and Clearwater counties.

The project addresses the five focus areas of the grassroots efforts of Clearwater Economic Development Association and the North Central Idaho Telecom Consortium who have worked conjunctively to promote improved telecommunication infrastructure in our region. This project will provide backbone, redundancy, connectivity, and reliability/enhanced capacity while being financially viable.

Our region believes that we are on the cusp of realizing the goals set forth at the 2003 Economic Summit conducted in North Central Idaho to develop our region's *Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS)*.

Please fund First Step Internet's application!

Sincerely,



Kelly Dahlquist
North Central Idaho Travel Association
PO Box 2018
Lewiston, ID 83501
northcentralidaho.info



Heart of the Arts

Nancy J. Chaney
Mayor

John Weber
Council President

Wayne Krauss
Council Vice-President

Dan Carscallen
Council Member

Tom Lamar
Council Member

Bill Lambert
Council Member

Walter M. Steed
Council Member

Gary J. Riedner
City Supervisor

City of Moscow, City Hall
206 East 3rd Street
P.O. Box 9203
Phone (208) 883-7000
Fax (208) 883-7018

Website: www.ci.moscow.id.us
Hearing Impaired (208) 883-7019



August 10, 2009

Thomas Vilsack
Secretary
U.S. Department of Agriculture
1400 Independence Ave., SW
Washington, DC 20250

Lawrence Strickling
Assistant Secretary for Communications and Information
National Telecommunications and Information Administration
U.S. Dept. of Commerce
1401 Constitution Ave. NW
Washington, DC 20230

Dear Secretary Vilsack and Assistant Secretary Strickling:

The City of Moscow fully supports First Step Internet proposed initiative to fully develop a multi-user Wide Area Network (WAN) in North Central Idaho that will meet the needs identified in the recently completed North Central Idaho Broadband Study and Deployment Plan building upon the existing infrastructure in our rural areas. If funded, First Step will provide backbone and redundancy into at least 18 communities and provide distribution to end users of under-served and un-served areas of Latah, Lewis, Idaho Nez Perce, and Clearwater counties.

The project addresses the five focus areas of the grassroots efforts of Clearwater Economic Development Association and the North Central Idaho Telecom Consortium who have worked conjunctively to promote improved telecommunication infrastructure in our region. This project will provide backbone, redundancy, connectivity, and reliability/enhanced capacity while being financially viable.

Our region believes that we are on the cusp of realizing the goals set forth at the 2003 Economic Summit conducted in North Central Idaho to develop our region's Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS).

Please fund First Step Internet's application!

Sincerely,


Nancy Chaney, Mayor
City of Moscow

Rayme Dir, MD
Jo Elsbury, MD
Sunday D Henry, MD
Richard K Howe, MD
Sara M Lawrence, MD
Randall G Lorenz, MD
Raymond M Paz, MD
Wayne L Ruby, MD
G David Rych, MD



Helen M Shearer, MD
Francis K Spain, MD
Robert M Ting, MD
Dustin K Worth, DO
Bruce Barnhart, PA-C
Don Bickford, PA-C
Steven Fischer, PA-C
Terri Grzebielski, PA-C
Gloria Workman, FNP

August 6, 2009

Thomas Vilsack
Secretary
U.S. Department of Agriculture
1400 Independence Ave., SW
Washington, DC 20250

Lawrence Strickling
Assistant Secretary for Communications and Information
National Telecommunications and Information Administration
U.S. Dept. of Commerce
1401 Constitution Ave. NW
Washington, DC 20230

Re: North Central Idaho Multi-User Network – First Step Internet,
BIP/BTOP Funding – Grant Application

Dear Secretary Vilsack and Assistant Secretary Strickling:

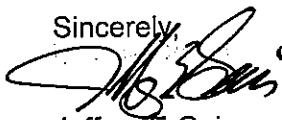
Moscow Family Medicine fully supports First Step Internet's proposed initiative to fully develop a multi-user Wide Area Network (WAN) in North Central Idaho that will meet the needs identified in the recently completed *North Central Idaho Broadband Study and Deployment Plan* building upon the existing infrastructure in our rural areas. If funded, First Step will provide backbone and redundancy into at least 18 communities and provide distribution to end users of under-served and un-served areas of Latah, Lewis, Idaho Nez Perce and Clearwater counties.

The project addresses the five focus areas of the grassroots efforts of Clearwater Economic Development Association and the North Central Idaho Telecom Consortium who have worked conjunctively to promote improved telecommunication infrastructure in our region. This project will provide backbone, redundancy, connectivity, and reliability/enhanced capacity while being financially viable.

Our region believes that we are on the cusp of realizing the goals set forth at the 2003 Economic Summit conducted in North Central Idaho to develop our region's *Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS)*.

Please fund First Step Internet's application!

Sincerely,



Jeffrey E Geier
Administrator



August 6, 2009

Thomas Vilsack
Secretary
U.S. Department of Agriculture
1400 Independence Ave., SW
Washington, DC 20250

Lawrence Strickling
Assistant Secretary for Communications and Information
National Telecommunications and Information Administration
U.S. Dept. of Commerce
1401 Constitution Ave. NW
Washington, DC 20230

Re: North Central Idaho Multi-User Network—First Step Internet,
BIP/BTOP Funding—Grant Application

Dear Secretary Vilsack and Assistant Secretary Strickling:

Syringa Hospital & Clinics fully supports First Step Internet proposed initiative to fully develop a multi-user Wide Area Network (WAN) in North Central Idaho that will meet the needs identified in the recently completed *North Central Idaho Broadband Study and Deployment Plan* building upon the existing infrastructure in our rural areas. If funded, First Step will provide backbone and redundancy into at least 18 communities and provide distribution to end users of under-served and un-served areas of Latah, Lewis, Idaho Nez Perce, and Clearwater counties.

The project addresses the five focus areas of the grassroots efforts of Clearwater Economic Development Association and the North Central Idaho Telecom Consortium who have worked conjunctively to promote improved telecommunication infrastructure in our region. This project will provide backbone, redundancy, connectivity, and reliability/enhanced capacity while being financially viable.

Our region believes that we are on the cusp of realizing the goals set forth at the 2003 Economic Summit conducted in North Central Idaho to develop our region's *Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS)*.

Please fund First Step Internet's application!

Sincerely,



Joe Cladouhos
Chief Executive Officer

BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

Phone (208) 983-2751

IDAHO COUNTY
320 W. Main • GRANGEVILLE, IDAHO 83530

FAX Number (208) 983-1428

August 3, 2009

Thomas Vilsack
Secretary
U.S. Department of Agriculture
1400 Independence Ave., SW
Washington, DC 20250

Lawrence Strickling
Assistant Secretary for Communications and Information
National Telecommunications and Information Administration
U.S. Dept. of Commerce
1401 Constitution Ave. NW
Washington, DC 20230

Re: North Central Idaho Multi-User Network – First Step Internet,
BIP/BTOP Funding – Grant Application

Dear Secretary Vilsack and Assistant Secretary Strickling:

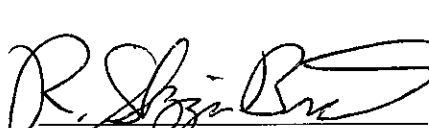
Idaho County Commissioners fully supports First Step Internet proposed initiative to fully develop a multi-user Wide Area Network (WAN) in North Central Idaho that will meet the needs identified in the recently completed *North Central Idaho Broadband Study and Deployment Plan* building upon the existing infrastructure in our rural areas. If funded, First Step will provide backbone and redundancy into at least 18 communities and provide distribution to end users of under-served and un-served areas of Latah, Lewis, Idaho Nez Perce, and Clearwater counties.

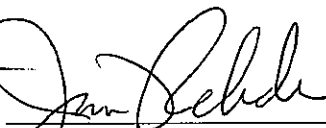
The project addresses the five focus areas of the grassroots efforts of Clearwater Economic Development Association and the North Central Idaho Telecom Consortium who have worked conjunctively to promote improved telecommunication infrastructure in our region. This project will provide backbone, redundancy, connectivity, and reliability/enhanced capacity while being financially viable.

Our region believes that we are on the cusp of realizing the goals set forth at the 2003 Economic Summit conducted in North Central Idaho to develop our region's *Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS)*.

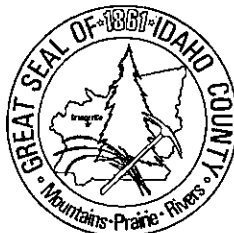
Please fund First Step Internet's application!

Sincerely,


R. Skipper Brandt, Chairman


Commissioner Jim Rehder


Commissioner James Rockwell



CITY OF NEZPERCE**STEVE A. BATEMAN, MAYOR**

Rhonda J. Schmidt, Clerk ♦ P. O. Box 367 ♦ Nezperce, ID. 83543

Phone (208) 937-1021 ♦ Fax (208) 937-0116

August 3, 2009

Thomas Vilsack
Secretary
U.S. Department of Agriculture
1400 Independence Ave., SW
Washington, DC 20250

Lawrence Strickling
Assistant Secretary for Communications and Information
National Telecommunications and Information Administration
U.S. Dept. of Commerce
1401 Constitution Ave. NW
Washington, DC 20230

Re: North Central Idaho Multi-User Network – First Step Internet,
BIP/BTOP Funding – Grant Application

Dear Secretary Vilsack and Assistant Secretary Strickling:

The City of Nezperce fully supports First Step Internet proposed initiative to fully develop a multi-user Wide Area Network (WAN) in North Central Idaho that will meet the needs identified in the recently completed *North Central Idaho Broadband Study and Deployment Plan* building upon the existing infrastructure in our rural areas. If funded, First Step will provide backbone and redundancy into at least 18 communities and provide distribution to end users of under-served and un-served areas of Latah, Lewis, Idaho Nez Perce, and Clearwater counties.

The project addresses the five focus areas of the grassroots efforts of Clearwater Economic Development Association and the North Central Idaho Telecom Consortium who have worked conjunctively to promote improved telecommunication infrastructure in our region. This project will provide backbone, redundancy, connectivity, and reliability/enhanced capacity while being financially viable.

Our region believes that we are on the cusp of realizing the goals set forth at the 2003 Economic Summit conducted in North Central Idaho to develop our region's *Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS)*.

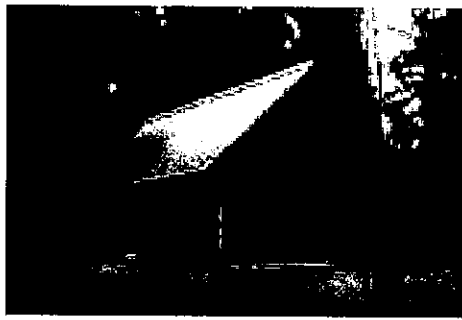
Please fund First Step Internet's application!

Sincerely,

Handwritten signature of Steve A. Bateman in cursive.

Steve A. Bateman
Mayor

SAB/rs



Framing Our Community, Inc.
P.O. Box 321, 1000 Hwy. 14, Elk City, Idaho 83525
Phone (208) 842-2939, Fax (208) 842-2322

August 4, 2009

Thomas Vilsack
Secretary
U.S. Department of Agriculture
1400 Independence Ave., SW
Washington, DC 20250

Lawrence Strickling
Assistant Secretary for Communications and Information
National Telecommunications and Information Administration
U.S. Dept. of Commerce
1401 Constitution Ave. NW
Washington, DC 20230

Re: North Central Idaho Multi-User Network – First Step Internet,
BIP/BTOP Funding – Grant Application

Dear Secretary Vilsack and Assistant Secretary Strickling:

Framing Our Community, Inc. fully supports First Step Internet proposed initiative to fully develop a multi-user Wide Area Network (WAN) in North Central Idaho that will meet the needs identified in the recently completed *North Central Idaho Broadband Study and Deployment Plan* building upon the existing infrastructure in our rural areas. If funded, First Step will provide backbone and redundancy into at least 18 communities and provide distribution to end users of under-served and un-served areas of Latah, Lewis, Idaho Nez Perce, and Clearwater counties.

The project addresses the five focus areas of the grassroots efforts of Clearwater Economic Development Association and the North Central Idaho Telecom Consortium who have worked conjunctively to promote improved telecommunication infrastructure in our region. This project will provide backbone, redundancy, connectivity, and reliability/enhanced capacity while being financially viable.

Framing Our Community believes that we are on the cusp of realizing the goals our region set forth at the 2003 Economic Summit conducted in North Central Idaho to develop our region's *Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS)*.

Please fund First Step Internet's application!

Sincerely,

Thank you,

Joyce Dearstyne

Joyce Dearstyne
Executive Director

University of Idaho

August 3, 2009

Thomas Vilsack
Secretary
U.S. Department of Agriculture
1400 Independence Ave., SW
Washington, DC 20250

University Research Office

Morrill Hall 103
PO Box 443010
Moscow ID 83844-3010
Phone: 208-885-4989
Fax: 208-885-5752
Email: vpresearch@uidaho.edu
Web: www.uro.uidaho.edu

Lawrence Strickling
Assistant Secretary for Communications and Information
National Telecommunications and Information Administration
U.S. Dept. of Commerce
1401 Constitution Ave. NW
Washington, DC 20230

Re: North Central Idaho Multi-User Network – First Step Internet,
BIP/BTOP Funding – Grant Application

Dear Secretary Vilsack and Assistant Secretary Strickling:

The University of Idaho fully supports First Step Internet proposed initiative to fully develop a multi-user Wide Area Network (WAN) in North Central Idaho that will meet the needs identified in the recently completed *North Central Idaho Broadband Study and Deployment Plan* building upon the existing infrastructure in our rural areas. If funded, First Step will provide backbone and redundancy into at least 18 communities and provide distribution to end users of under-served and un-served areas of Latah, Lewis, Idaho Nez Perce, and Clearwater counties.

The project addresses the five focus areas of the grassroots efforts of Clearwater Economic Development Association and the North Central Idaho Telecom Consortium who have worked conjunctively to promote improved telecommunication infrastructure in our region. This project will provide backbone, redundancy, connectivity, and reliability/enhanced capacity while being financially viable.

Our region believes that we are on the cusp of realizing the goals set forth at the 2003 Economic Summit conducted in North Central Idaho to develop our region's *Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS)*.

Please fund First Step Internet's application!

Sincerely,



Gene A. Merrell, Ph.D.
Associate Vice President for Research
Chief Technology Transfer Officer

GAM/maw



Hospital and Clinics

PO Box 137 * 701 Lewiston Street
Cottonwood, ID 83522-0137
tel 208-962-3251 * fax 208-962-3722



Hospital and Clinics

301 Cedar
Orofino, ID 83544
tel 208-476-4555 * fax 208-476-5385

August 5, 2009

Thomas Vilsack, Secretary
U.S. Department of Agriculture
1400 Independence Ave., SW
Washington, DC 20250

Lawrence Strickling
Assistant Secretary for Communications and Information
National Telecommunications and Information Administration
U.S. Dept. of Commerce
1401 Constitution Ave. NW
Washington, DC 20230

Re: North Central Idaho Multi-User Network – First Step Internet,
BIP/BTOP Funding – Grant Application

Dear Secretary Vilsack and Assistant Secretary Strickling:

On behalf of Clearwater Valley Hospital & Clinics and St. Mary's Hospital & Clinics, I would like to encourage you to fund the proposal being submitted by First Step Internet to develop a multi-user Wide Area Network (WAN) in North Central Idaho. Our two hospitals, seven satellite medical clinics and four PT clinics depend upon the transfer of electronic media between not only our facilities, but between other health care facilities throughout the state. If we are to provide the highest quality of medical care to the people in this region we must have the appropriate bandwidth.

The proposal meets the needs identified in the recently completed *North Central Idaho Broadband Study and Deployment Plan*. It is an outgrowth of the planning completed by the Clearwater Economic Development Association and the North Central Idaho Telecom Consortium. The project will provide backbone and redundancy into at least 18 communities most of which our two hospitals serve directly. It would mean the ability to also easily share electronic medical records, X-rays and other radiology images with other facilities in our region which is important when treating patients in a clinic, ER or hospital setting. The current proposal will build upon the existing infrastructure in our rural area. It is truly needed in this area if we are to preserve health care services in rural, underserved areas.

It would benefit not only our medical facilities, but also the educational facilities, businesses and residents of this area. The project would bring us closer to fulfilling the goals identified at the 2003 Economic Summit which produced a Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy.

Thank you for considering First Step Internet's proposal favorably.

Sincerely,

Casey Meza, CEO
Clearwater Valley Hospital & Clinics
St. Mary's Hospital & Clinics

Participating Organizations of the

Essentia Community
Hospitals and Clinics
As a member of the Essentia Health System



August 4, 2009

Kevin Owen
President & CEO
First Step Wireless
1420 S Blaine St # 10
Moscow, ID 83843-3973

Dear Kevin:

The Idaho Regional Optical Network (IRON) endorses First Step Wireless' application for a middle-mile infrastructure grant through the NTIA Broadband Technology Opportunities Program. The First Step project, based on the Clearwater Economic Development Association recommendations for broadband infrastructure in this area (which we also endorse), will allow IRON to extend connectivity to Internet 2, the National Lambda Rail to the schools and university branch operations in Orofino and Grangeville. As well, the First Step Wireless project will enable us to provide inter-connectivity between regional universities (University of Idaho, Lewis-Clark State College, BYU-Idaho, Washington State University, Boise State University), Idaho hospitals and the schools and hospitals in Orofino and Grangeville.

IRON is a cooperative effort between universities located in the Northwest region of the United States, the State of Idaho, the Idaho Hospital Association, and the Idaho National Laboratory. It was formed to establish a high-performance Regional Optical Network (RON) within the State of Idaho. IRON objectives include enabling research, education, healthcare, and other institutions to collaborate effectively with counterparts in Idaho, as well as nationally and internationally. IRON's network strengthens Idaho's economy, providing a backbone for a solid computing infrastructure; providing access to computing technologies throughout the state, as well as support for large scale research.

We are eager to work with First Step Wireless to extend the IRON network to anchor institutions including schools, libraries, hospitals, medical clinics, extension offices and branch campuses as well as the members of the Clearwater Economic Development Association. IRON is committed to the provision of high speed network connectivity in support of education, research, government, healthcare and economic development.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "David O'Neill", is written over a horizontal line.

David O'Neill
President & CEO

Northwest Intermountain Manufacturers Association

"Dedicated to the Success of Our Region's Manufacturers"

August 7, 2009

Thomas Vilsack
Secretary
U.S. Department of Agriculture
1400 Independence Ave., SW
Washington, DC 20250

Lawrence Strickling
Assistant Secretary for Communications and Information
National Telecommunications and Information Administration
U.S. Dept. of Commerce
1401 Constitution Ave. NW
Washington, DC 20230

Re: North Central Idaho Multi-User Network – First Step Internet,
BIP/BTOP Funding – Grant Application

Dear Secretary Vilsack and Assistant Secretary Strickling:

The Northwest Intermountain Manufacturers Association fully supports First Step Internet's proposed initiative to fully develop a multi-user Wide Area Network (WAN) in North Central Idaho that will meet the needs identified in the recently completed *North Central Idaho Broadband Study and Deployment Plan* building upon the existing infrastructure in our rural areas. If funded, First Step will provide backbone and redundancy into at least 18 communities and provide distribution to end users of under-served and un-served areas of Latah, Lewis, Idaho Nez Perce, and Clearwater counties.

As an advocate for our regions manufacturers, NIMA understands the importance of broadband Internet access to the success of our member's businesses. Modern manufacturing heavily relies on electronic communications and many of our current members are at a significant disadvantage to manufacturers in other regions because of the poor availability of quality Internet access. We see improvement of our region's broadband capabilities as keys to economic growth in our region and to the improved global competitiveness of our companies.

Please fund First Step Internet's application!

Sincerely,



Lenny Hill, President
Northwest Intermountain Manufacturers Association

KAMIAH

Kamiah, Idaho ... a great place to live, work and play!

CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

PO Box 1124 ~ KAMIAH, IDAHO 83536 ~ 208-935-2290
WWW.KAMIAHCHAMBER.COM

August 3, 2009

Thomas Vilsack
Secretary
U.S. Department of Agriculture
1400 Independence Ave., SW
Washington, DC 20250

Lawrence Strickling
Assistant Secretary for Communications and Information
National Telecommunications and Information Administration
U.S. Dept. of Commerce
1401 Constitution Ave. NW
Washington, DC 20230

Re: North Central Idaho Multi-User Network – First Step Internet,
BIP/BTOP Funding – Grant Application

Dear Secretary Vilsack and Assistant Secretary Strickling:

The Kamiah Chamber of Commerce fully supports First Step Internet proposed initiative to fully develop a multi-user Wide Area Network (WAN) in North Central Idaho that will meet the needs identified in the recently completed *North Central Idaho Broadband Study and Deployment Plan* building upon the existing infrastructure in our rural areas. If funded, First Step will provide backbone and redundancy into at least 18 communities and provide distribution to end users of under-served and un-served areas of Latah, Lewis, Idaho Nez Perce, and Clearwater counties.

The project addresses the five focus areas of the grassroots efforts of Clearwater Economic Development Association and the North Central Idaho Telecom Consortium who have worked conjunctively to promote improved telecommunication infrastructure in our region. This project will provide backbone, redundancy, connectivity, and reliability/enhanced capacity while being financially viable.

Our region believes that we are on the cusp of realizing the goals set forth at the 2003 Economic Summit conducted in North Central Idaho to develop our region's *Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS)*.

Please fund First Step Internet's application!

Sincerely,



Robert Simmons
Chamber President

August 10, 2009

Thomas Vilsack
Secretary
U.S. Department of Agriculture
1400 Independence Ave., SW
Washington, DC 20250

Lawrence Strickling
Assistant Secretary for Communications and Information
National Telecommunications and Information Administration
U.S. Dept. of Commerce
1401 Constitution Ave. NW
Washington, DC 20230

Re: North Central Idaho Multi-User Network – First Step Internet,
BIP/BTOP Funding – Grant Application

Dear Secretary Vilsack and Assistant Secretary Strickling:

ASE, Inc. fully supports First Step Internet proposed initiative to fully develop a multi-user Wide Area Network (WAN) in North Central Idaho that will meet the needs identified in the recently completed *North Central Idaho Broadband Study and Deployment Plan* building upon the existing infrastructure in our rural areas. If funded, First Step will provide backbone and redundancy into at least 18 communities and provide distribution to end users of under-served and un-served areas of Latah, Lewis, Idaho Nez Perce, and Clearwater counties.

The project addresses the five focus areas of the grassroots efforts of Clearwater Economic Development Association and the North Central Idaho Telecom Consortium who have worked conjunctively to promote improved telecommunication infrastructure in our region. This project will provide backbone, redundancy, connectivity, and reliability/enhanced capacity while being financially viable.

Our region believes that we are on the cusp of realizing the goals set forth at the 2003 Economic Summit conducted in North Central Idaho to develop our region's *Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS)*.

Please fund First Step Internet's application!

Sincerely,

Lowell Davis, VP
ASE, Inc. dba Architectural Signs and Engraving
10110 Highway 12
Orofino, ID 83544



Proud Manufacturers of
Duckworth, Weldcraft and
Columbia Boats

August 10, 2009

Thomas Vilsack
Secretary
U.S. Department of Agriculture
1400 Independence Ave., SW
Washington, DC 20250

Lawrence Strickling
Assistant Secretary for Communications and Information
National Telecommunications and Information Administration
U.S. Dept. of Commerce
1401 Constitution Ave. NW
Washington, DC 20230

Re: North Central Idaho Multi-User Network – First Step Internet,
BIP/BTOP Funding – Grant Application

Dear Secretary Vilsack and Assistant Secretary Strickling:

Renaissance Marine Group, Inc. fully supports First Step Internet proposed initiative to fully develop a multi-user Wide Area Network (WAN) in North Central Idaho that will meet the needs identified in the recently completed *North Central Idaho Broadband Study and Deployment Plan* building upon the existing infrastructure in our rural areas. If funded, First Step will provide backbone and redundancy into at least 18 communities and provide distribution to end users of under-served and un-served areas of Latah, Lewis, Idaho Nez Perce, and Clearwater counties.

The project addresses the five focus areas of the grassroots efforts of Clearwater Economic Development Association and the North Central Idaho Telecom Consortium who have worked conjunctively to promote improved telecommunication infrastructure in our region. This project will provide backbone, redundancy, connectivity, and reliability/enhanced capacity while being financially viable. As a Washington based business, we strongly support this initiative as a much needed enhancement to the technological infrastructure that serves our economic base that spans the Idaho / Washington state boundaries.

Our region believes that we are on the cusp of realizing the goals set forth at the 2003 Economic Summit conducted in North Central Idaho to develop our region's *Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS)*.

Please fund First Step Internet's application!

Sincerely,

Bruce N Larson

Bruce N Larson
Renaissance Marine Group, Inc.

Phone (509)758-9831 – FAX (509)758-8809
PO Box 580 – Clarkston, WA 99403
www.duckworthboats.com * www.weldcraftmarine.com
www.columbia-boats.com



P.O. Box 757
Clarkston, WA 99403
Phone: (509) 758-2605 Fax: (509) 758-4225

August 10, 2009

Thomas Vilsack
Secretary
U.S. Department of Agriculture
1400 Independence Ave., SW
Washington, DC 20250

Lawrence Strickling
Assistant Secretary for Communications and Information
National Telecommunications and Information Administration
U.S. Dept. of Commerce
1401 Constitution Ave. NW
Washington, DC 20230

Re: North Central Idaho Multi-User Network – First Step Internet,
BIP/BTOP Funding – Grant Application

Dear Secretary Vilsack and Assistant Secretary Strickling:

Seaport Machine Inc. fully supports First Step Internet proposed initiative to fully develop a multi-user Wide Area Network (WAN) in North Central Idaho that will meet the needs identified in the recently completed *North Central Idaho Broadband Study and Deployment Plan* building upon the existing infrastructure in our rural areas. If funded, First Step will provide backbone and redundancy into at least 18 communities and provide distribution to end users of under-served and un-served areas of Latah, Lewis, Idaho Nez Perce, and Clearwater counties.

The project addresses the five focus areas of the grassroots efforts of Clearwater Economic Development Association and the North Central Idaho Telecom Consortium who have worked conjunctively to promote improved telecommunication infrastructure in our region. This project will provide backbone, redundancy, connectivity, and reliability/enhanced capacity while being financially viable. As a Washington based business, we strongly support this initiative as a much needed enhancement to the technological infrastructure that serves our economic base that spans the Idaho / Washington state boundaries.

Our region believes that we are on the cusp of realizing the goals set forth at the 2003 Economic Summit conducted in North Central Idaho to develop our region's *Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS)*.

Please fund First Step Internet's application!

Sincerely,

Kim Geist Jr.
General Manager
Seaport Machine Inc.
1719 13th Street
Clarkston, WA 993403

P.O. Box 586
Orofino, ID 83544
Phone: (208) 476-3615
Fax: (208) 476-3127



Commissioners
Don Ebert, Chairman
Stan Leach, Commissioner
John T. Allen, Commissioner

Clearwater County Commissioners

August 10, 2009

Thomas Vilsack
Secretary
U.S. Department of Agriculture
1400 Independence Ave., SW
Washington, DC 20250

Lawrence Strickling
Assistant Secretary for Communications and Information
National Telecommunications and Information Administration
U.S. Dept. of Commerce
1401 Constitution Ave. NW
Washington, DC 20230

Re: North Central Idaho Multi-User Network – First Step Internet,
BIP/BTOP Funding – Grant Application

Dear Secretary Vilsack and Assistant Secretary Strickling:

Clearwater County Board of Commissioners is pleased to express support of First Step Internet's proposed project to build up middle mile broadband infrastructure across North Central Idaho. This project will provide backbone and redundancy building upon the existing infrastructure in our rural areas, needs recently identified in the *North Central Idaho Broadband Study and Deployment Plan*.

This project will provide backbone, redundancy, connectivity, and reliability/enhanced capacity while being financially viable. First Step Internet's proposed project has taken into consideration several factors identified in several strategic planning efforts lead across the region and supported by the grassroots efforts of Clearwater Economic Development Association and the North Central Idaho Telecom Consortium

Through partnership and collaboration this proposed middle mile broadband project will benefit residents, businesses and public sector entities. We applaud First Step Internet's efforts and encourage you to strongly consider funding this application.

Sincerely,

Don Ebert, Chairman



Assisting North Central Idaho Communities Since 1968

August 11, 2009

Mr. Kevin Owen
First Step Internet
1420 S. Blaine, Ste. 10
Moscow, ID 83843

Re: North Central Idaho Multi-User Wide Area Network
Grant Application, RUS/NTIA Funding

Dear Kevin:

On behalf of the North Central Idaho Telecom Consortium, I offer our support to your company's grant application that will be submitted to the U.S. Department of Commerce and the U.S.D.A. Rural Utilities Service for ARRA Broadband funding. Your proposed project will address the strategy outlined in the North Central Idaho Telecommunication Plan and will implement most of the schematic design developed in the expanded study and deployment plan.

Since 2004, the Clearwater Economic Development Association has spearheaded a grassroots effort to plan for and promote the build out a telecommunication system that would adequately address rural community needs in the five-county region of north central Idaho. "Key" to this planning and promotional effort has been the establishment of our multi-user consortium and guiding work group. During the plan process, CEDA and the consortium hosted a series of community meetings to engage users as well as providers in the process.

The purpose of the NCITC is to promote the build out of a telecom system focused on backbone, reliability, enhanced capacity, financial viability, and redundancy that would satisfy the current and long-term needs of private industry, health care, education, and public safety. Your project is a clear reflection of your company's willingness to "listen" to the needs of our communities and to collaborate with the NCITC, CEDA, the Idaho Regional Optical Network, the Nez Perce Tribe, and Frontier Communications.

With great pleasure, the North Central Idaho Telecom Consortium offers their full support to your grant application.

Sincerely,

Christine Frei, CEDA Executive Director
Coordinator, North Central Idaho Telecommunication Consortium (NCITC)

cc: NCITC Work Group Members

Clearwater Memorial Library

(208) 476-3411
Post Office Box 471
402 Michigan Avenue
Orofino, Idaho 83544-0471

August 10, 2009

Thomas Vilsack
Secretary
U.S. Department of Agriculture
1400 Independence Ave.
Washington, D.C. 20250

Lawrence Strickling
Assistant Secretary for Communications and Information
National Telecommunications and Information Administration
U.S. Dept of Commerce
1401 Constitution Ave. NW
Washington, D.C. 20230

Re: .
BIP/BTOP Funding-Grant Application

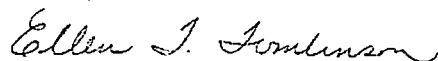
Dear Secretary Vilsack and Assistant Secretary Strickling,

In this period of depressed economic times a Library is often a source of not only social interaction but current information and job investigation. The internet has become an important resource for people looking for necessary information about health, jobs, updating skills, testing, and transportation.

Clearwater Memorial Public Library has noticed an increase of up to 15% in patron use within the last year. With this in mind, we feel that for future economic and informational growth in our area, our technology resources need, "to step up to the plate." There are so many areas of our economy we the public have no control over, but the upgrading of our technological sources is one that can, and will give us great gains.

Please fund First Step Internet's application.

Sincerely,



Ellen T. Tomlinson
Director
Clearwater Memorial Public Library

Clearwater Memorial Library

August 10, 2009

Thomas Vilsack
Secretary
U.S. Department of Agriculture
1400 Independence Ave., SW
Washington, DC 20250

(208) 476-3411
Post Office Box 471
402 Michigan Avenue
Orofino, Idaho 83544-0471

Lawrence Strickling
Assistant Secretary for Communications and Information
National Telecommunications and Information Administration
U.S. Dept. of Commerce
1401 Constitution Ave. NW
Washington, DC 20230

Re:
BIP/BTOP Funding – Grant Application

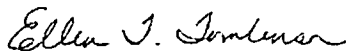
Dear Secretary Vilsack and Assistant Secretary Strickling:
Clearwater Memorial Public Library fully supports First Step Internet proposed initiative to fully develop a multi-user Wide Area Network (WAN) in North Central Idaho that will meet the needs identified in the recently completed *North Central Idaho Broadband Study and Deployment Plan* building upon the existing infrastructure in our rural areas. If funded, First Step will provide backbone and redundancy into at least 18 communities and provide distribution to end users of under-served and un-served areas of Latah, Lewis, Idaho Nez Perce, and Clearwater counties.

The project addresses the five focus areas of the grassroots efforts of Clearwater Economic Development Association and the North Central Idaho Telecom Consortium who have worked conjunctively to promote improved telecommunication infrastructure in our region. This project will provide backbone, redundancy, connectivity, and reliability/enhanced capacity while being financially viable.

Our region believes that we are on the cusp of realizing the goals set forth at the 2003 Economic Summit conducted in North Central Idaho to develop our region's *Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS)*.

Please fund First Step Internet's application!

Sincerely,



Ellen T. Tomlinson
Director
Clearwater Memorial Public Library

TROY SCHOOL DISTRICT No. 287

DISTRICT OFFICE
102 WEST FIFTH STREET PO BOX 280 TROY, ID 83871
TELEPHONE: (208) 835-3791
FAX: (208) 835-3790

August 7, 2009

Mr. Mike Hall, Area Sales Manager
First Step Internet
Moscow, ID 83843

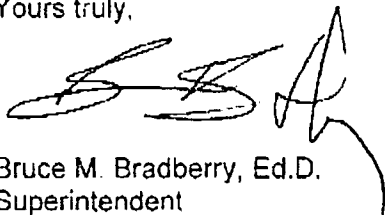
Dear Mr. Hall:

We are excited to learn about your efforts to improve bandwidth for Troy and for the Troy schools.

Our experience during the past twenty years tells us that no matter what our forecast of future data capacity might be, the actual need will surpass it. We must continually be planning ahead in order to avert obstacles to the education of our current and future students.

Please let us know how we can assist in your efforts to increase our connectivity and improve our educational opportunities.

Yours truly,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'B. Bradberry', with a long, sweeping horizontal stroke and a vertical line extending downwards from the end.

Bruce M. Bradberry, Ed.D.
Superintendent



P.O. Box 1200/ 103 North Main Street, Lapwai, Idaho 83540 (208) 843-7254

August 6, 2009

Thomas Vilsack
Secretary
U.S. Department of Agriculture
1400 Independence Ave., SW
Washington, DC 20250

Lawrence Strickling
Assistant Secretary for Communications and Information
National Telecommunications and Information Administration
U.S. Dept. of Commerce
1401 Constitution Ave., NW
Washington, DC 20230

Re: North Central Idaho Multi-User Network – First Step Internet,
BIP/BTOP Funding – Grant Application

Dear Secretary Vilsack and Assistant Secretary Strickling:

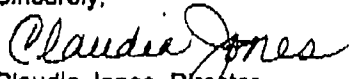
Prairie-River Library District strongly supports the First Step Internet proposed initiative to fully develop a multi-user Wide Area Network (WAN) in North Central Idaho that will meet the needs identified in the recently completed *North Central Idaho Broadband Study and Deployment Plan* building upon the existing infrastructure in our rural areas. If funded, First Step will provide backbone and redundancy into at least 18 communities and provide distribution to end users of under-served and un-served areas of Latah, Lewis, Idaho, Nez Perce, and Clearwater counties.

Four of Prairie-River Library District's branches (Craigmont, Kamiah, Nezperce and Winchester) are located in small communities that would greatly benefit from this project. Each branch library offers the only free internet access available within their community; service is provided to residents and non-residents alike. People of all ages and backgrounds increasingly depend upon the local library's public access computers and Internet access and support to search for jobs, take classes, obtain medial information, and receive government information and services. The public need for Internet access will inevitably grow and raise more challenges for library connectivity in the next few years. In addition to providing public access to the Internet, the branch libraries also depend on connectivity for basic operations including circulation, cataloging, and resource sharing. Unfortunately, the ability of our libraries to meet these community needs is in jeopardy because of the lack of adequate broadband capacity.

This project will greatly benefit our region by providing backbone, redundancy, connectivity, and reliability/enhanced capacity while being financially viable.

Please fund First Step Internet's application!

Sincerely,


Claudia Jones, Director
Prairie-River Library District

General Budget Overview

[illegible]