

September 3, 2010

ConnectME Authority
Philip Lindley, Executive Directory
138 Statehouse Station
Augusta, ME 04333

Re Round Five - Complete Build out of Fields Pond Road Town of Orrington

Dear Members of the Connect Maine Authority,

The Fields Pond Road area of Orrington and Holden Maine is formally requesting a ConnectME grant to help fund a proposed project that will bring broadband internet service to this area. This area of the Bangor Brewer suburb is underserved and would greatly benefit from an upgrade in communications that this grant would ultimately assist in providing.

The following pages provide brief responses to the information requested in the *ConnectME 5th Grant Round Pre-Application Letter* dated MMM, DD, YYYY. Sean Trahan, a resident of Orrington, is working closely with Time Warner Cable (TWC) to improve the infrastructure in the area, and we look forward to ConnectME's help in moving this project forward. Should any member of the Authority have any questions to the information provided here, please contact Sean Trahan at 207-825-3683.

Description of proposed area

Broadband services are currently unavailable on a stretch of road 2.32 miles long passing 38 homes along the Field's Pond Road, Pond View Lane, Green Lane, Loons Hollow and Eagle Lane. This section of Fields Pond Road and other lanes run adjacent to the town line between Holden and Orrington. Within this area, there are approximately 38 households anchored by two non-profit organizations, the Curran Homestead Living History Farm and Museum and the Fields Pond Audubon Center. Both of these non-profits work closely with the University of Maine System, and the Audubon Center is frequently visited by area schools, nature enthusiasts, and researchers.

Infrastructure for this area is limited at best. Although services are available via satellite and one wireless provider, services are cost prohibitive, with costs ranging from \$70-\$400 a month. Also, these services require costly hardware to get started and place caps on bandwidth usage. In addition, customers in the area are given a discount for basic services because of inadequate services that are currently in place, this is a mandated credit for service issues relating to cutover, and some lines were not in ideal condition.

Description of Incumbent and Existing service providers

In 2007 members of the community were contacted about their willingness to receive better communication services including broadband, and the overwhelming response was positive to increased services. TWC was contacted regarding the service expansion and indicated the area did not meet density requirements outlined in the franchise agreement with the town of Orrington. In addition to communications with TWC, we contacted local wireless and DSL providers and learned that there was no intention of service improvements or infrastructure upgrades were planned that would create broadband service comparable with TWC. Discussions with the Town Manager of Orrington has brought to light that the approximate area within Orrington that is not covered by broadband access is ~15 to 20%; the proposed expansion of services in this area would bring this figure to ~10 to 15 %.

This section of the Fields Pond road is easily overlooked as it sits in the middle of two termination points of broadband service, and with a majority of property owned by non-profits; the possibility for expansion meeting density requirements outlined in the franchise agreement would be difficult if not impossible to achieve. Local town ordinances also limit the feasibility of wireless and satellite services due to the proximity to watershed areas. Ordinances dictate that residences close to bodies of water are not permitted to trim or otherwise clear vegetation for clear signal reception, which leads customers to depend on-line based services.

Description of the proposed project

The technology will consist of a hybrid fiber coax infrastructure; consistent with TWC’s cable plant throughout the State. The build includes fiber connection from existing fiber termination to a distribution node location. Distribution includes coax hard-line along pole lines to distribution tap locations. Distribution tap location is the take off point to the home from the roadway. Rg-6, Rg-7, Rg-11 coax drop cable will be used to connect the home to the distribution tap.

TWC will apply for all applicable pole permits and applications no later than thirty (30) days from the day notice is received regarding grant award and will complete the project within six (6) months of receipt of required approvals and completion of make-ready. It is anticipated that make-ready by pole owners will take approximately six (6) months. Broadband services and speeds that will be available are listed below:

Road Runner Lite - Download 765 kbps/ Upload 128KBPS

Road Runner Basic - 1.5Mb Download, 256kbps Upload

Road Runner Standard - 8Mb Download/ 512k Upload (speeds will be increasing to 10Mb X 1MB later this year)

Road Runner Turbo - 15Mb Download/ 1Mb Upload

Total amount of funding requested from the Authority

Total amount of the project is \$56,353.74 – TWC will contribute \$250 per passing for a total of \$9,500 – leaving a balance of \$46,853.74.

Applicants Financial Capability and commitment to the project

This project is being proposed by Sean Trahan in conjunction with Time Warner Cable. Sean Trahan has been working on the expansion of broadband services in the local area for more than five years and is dedicated to improving the overall infrastructure needs of the area. During Sean’s research, Adelphia cable, a service provider in the area, stated that needed funding would not be available. Since the merger, resources have been allocated to other areas with more dense populations and any type of build out in this often overlooked area has yet to be realized. Several requests to providers for service expansion have been meet with hesitation due to expense and the population density that would be serviced. In partnering with TWC, Sean Trahan will be willing to work with the local community and other stakeholders to foster support for expansion of services in the area.

Percentage of households in the unserved area that will have access to new service

With the expansion of service to the 38 households along the 2.32 miles of road, 100% of all persons within these homes will have the ability to purchase services including broadband from TWC. These services would include but not be limited to television, broadband, and telephone service for the underserved area. With additional services provided, the community will be granted more choices at reasonable costs to adequately meet their communication needs now and in the future.

Public-private partnerships that have been established and community support

Over the past few years the community has been highly supportive of the effort to improve and establish a reliable broadband infrastructure in the area. Extensive effort has been undertaken to gauge support of this endeavor. Through various types of input from the community, including surveys and town hall meetings, it has been found that the community favors infrastructure development and would look forward to more services. Even with community support, limited resources have severely constrained improvements sponsored by the municipality. However, town leaders fully support the Authorities' efforts and are aware of the underserved residents including dilapidated infrastructure in this area and would want to see nothing more than an improvement to services of their constituents. In addition to residents and town leaders, two non-profits in the area are behind this effort. Their members, including University of Maine researchers, would benefit directly from more readily available access and the enablement of more options for enhanced research capabilities in the area of environmental protection, ecosystem research and agricultural exploration. Infrastructure improvements will enhance involvement across the community and region leading to more development of the area through grants and potential research opportunities that are currently not possible

Description of applicant's experience

Sean Trahan has been working over five years to expand internet services to the Fields Pond Road community. Through petitions, phone calls with the Public Utilities Commission (PUC) and state representatives, there has been no funding or support since the area is a small part in a much larger picture and currently in place franchise agreements limits the expansion to this area. The franchise agreements do not adequately take into account the fact that the area in question is at the terminating points of two broadband lines and with large chunks of land owned by non profits and the power company this fact presents the reality that density requirements may never be met per this agreement. Sean has worked closely with stakeholders in the community ranging from residents, non-profit governing bodies, town leaders, regional leaders and state regulators concerning the needs of this area. He has in depth familiarity of the policies, procedures and guidelines that are required to reach out to the stakeholders of the surrounding community and is dedicated to bringing this service to those in the area. Sean will work in collaboration with TWC to evaluate the community needs and together with TWC determine the best plan going forward to meet the needs of the community. Along with this partnership TWC brings to the table extensive experience in the design, installation, and maintenance of broadband infrastructure. As a nationwide company, as a nationwide company, TWC has the depth and experience to build out a solid infrastructure at a reasonable cost, and its team of 1,000 local employees in Maine can be put to work throughout the area to ensure that the needed infrastructure meets the needs of all stakeholders involved. Time Warner Cable currently provides cutting edge digital technology, a vast array of home entertainment and broadband services to over 270 communities in Maine and is supported by its local customer service team based in Portland.

Obtaining funding from the *ConnectME* program will allow our community to take advantage of capabilities that an improved infrastructure including broadband would provide. Our community is unique in that those served not only include households but two active non-profits that provide

ConnectME Fifth Grant Round Pre-Application Letter – Fields Pond Road

research opportunities for the region at large. This project's goal is to improve the outreach of these organizations and provide unmet services to the residents of this community through improved broadband and communication services.

Thank you for your consideration

Sincerely,



09/03/2010

Sean Trahan