

Gold Country Broadband Consortium Three Year Project Summary

Counties: Eastern Alpine, El Dorado, Nevada, Placer and Sierra

Point of Contact: Randy Wagner 530.635.2115 Randy@sedcorp.biz

Website: <http://goldcountryconsortium.wordpress.com>

Key outcomes of consortium achievements in 3 years:

- Action Plan Goals:
 - Promote and advance broadband deployments, access and adoptions

- Accomplishments:
 - Built strategic partnerships with Internet Service Providers (ISP's)
 - Collaborated with Fixed Wireless Internet Service Providers (WISP's)
 - Instituted a "community meetings" approach to determine local issues, needs and wants
 - Measured customer satisfaction with their broadband access and experience
 - Mapped customer broadband service experience (ARC/GIS Mapping)
 - Determined that CPUC California Broadband Maps were inaccurate and misleading
 - Compelled CPUC to develop a state-wide GIS Working Group and to "ground-proof" maps
 - Connected "unserved" customers and improved "underserved" 3-6 months after first contact
 - Supported development of CASF grant proposals and one ARA grant implementation
 - Cal.NET/El Dorado County
 - Spiral Internet/Nevada County
 - Smarter Broadband/Nevada County
 - Sebastien/Placer County
 - Exwire/Nevada & Placer
 - Plumas Rural Electric/Sierra County

Best Practices Achieved:

- Community Meetings: Listened to the voice of the unserved, underserved and served
- Focus: Concentrated on the most "needy of the needy", and providing an immediate response
- "Ground-Proofing": Qualitative mapping
- Collaborative Partnerships: Developed strategic deployment relations with ISPs
- Fixed Wireless Internet Service: Leveraged technology which best supports our topography
- Fiber Optic Service: Supported strategic gigabyte projects serving Nevada & Placer

Challenges Faced:

- Leadership: Multiple agency involvement, lack of cohesive Federal and State strategy
- Focus: Serving unserved, underserved and increasing adoption is significant effort
- Adoption: Should be a national or statewide campaign not local
- Mapping: Input controls are inadequate; “garbage-in, garbage-out”
- Nationwide Providers: Not motivated to partner nor be proactive
- Funding: CASF process is complex and expensive for WISPs who are generally small businesses
- Exit Strategy: No financial sustainability nor “hand-off” program plan

Outstanding Gaps/Needs:

- Each county should have a “State of County Broadband” assessment
- Each county should have an unserved, underserved, and adoption plan
- Each county plan should have a short, mid and long term vision
- Each county current ISP should be mandated to participate in the planning process

Future Sustainability Action Plan

- Consortium funding should be continued for another three years
- Consortium and CASF funding should be managed with a 30/70 split or more
- Consortium should be funded for regional coordination across counties
- County CTO’s should lead local unserved and underserved technology deployment planning
- Counties should be incented to apply for Federal and State “matching” grant funds
- CPUC should fund a statewide Adoption Program aimed at public awareness and benefit
- Enhanced access to public lands to deploy services
- Enhanced partnership with Department of Education
- Enhanced engagement with Federal Economic Development Districts
- Enhanced engagement with Go-Biz, CALED and county economic development resources
- Enhanced engagement with Chambers of Commerce, business and “homeowner” associations