

# COUNTY OF EL DORADO

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December 15, 2015

Michael Picker, President  
California Public Utilities Commission  
505 Van Ness Avenue  
San Francisco, California 94101

**RE: SUPPORT FOR RENEWAL FUNDING OF THE GOLD COUNTRY BROADBAND CONSORTIUM FROM THE CALIFORNIA PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION CALIFORNIA ADVANCED SERVICES FUND**

President Pickler:

The Board of Supervisors for the County of El Dorado endorses a renewal of the Gold Country Broadband Consortium application for financial support from the California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC) California Advanced Services Fund (CASF) per funding provided by the recently signed AB 1262 which specifies that \$5 million in the California Advanced Services Fund broadband loan program be dedicated to spending on local Consortia to consolidate demand and support local and county government broadband deployment efforts.

The Sierra Economic Development Corporation (SEDCorp), a regional, non-profit economic development organization, will continue to lead the Gold Country Consortium by working with partners, stakeholders and experts to implement the regional Broadband Work Plan and meet the region's strategic priorities.

The challenge we face as a county is in the expansion of broadband infrastructure to deliver high-speed Internet service to a low-density population that is dispersed over very difficult terrain. We support a plan to bring together residents, business owners, experts in service areas, and the broadband service providers to make the economic case needed to attract investment in broadband infrastructure expansion. However, we know that consumer education will be needed, and, we are confident that current feasibility study efforts will inform consumers and stakeholders about the benefits of expanding services available via broadband Internet connections. We plan to make the case that broadband service is a necessary utility in each home and business, and, correspondingly, to attract higher broadband service adoption rates as broadband service availability expands in our rural area.

The County of El Dorado is committed to supporting the Gold Country Broadband Consortium project. We will assist in supporting ongoing County Broadband efforts to convey knowledge and views on the specific questions and concerns related to improving broadband service availability in our area. And, we will support the preparation of infrastructure expansion project applications intended to increase the availability of broadband service in El Dorado County.

Thank you for your thoughtful review of the Gold Country Broadband Consortium renewal application as the most efficient and effective way to provide greater broadband service availability and adoption in our rural area. If you have any questions, do not hesitate to contact Jeff McLaughlin, El Dorado County's Economic Development Manager at 530-621-5595 or via email at [jeff.mclaughlin@edcgov.us](mailto:jeff.mclaughlin@edcgov.us).

Sincerely,

BRIAN VEERKAMP, Chairperson  
Board of Supervisors  
El Dorado County

Cc: Supervisor Shiva Frentzen  
Jeff McLaughlin, CAO Economic Development  
Randy Wagner, SEDCorp