



Department of Community and Economic Development

Edgar Blatchford
Commissioner
PO Box 110800
Juneau, Alaska 99811-0800

NEWS RELEASE

Tina Dickinson
Communications Specialist
907-269-4568
Fax: 907-269-8125
tina_dickinson@dced.state.ak.us
www.dced.state.ak.us

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: May 05, 2004

No. 04-012

Department of Community and Economic Development Awards **Federal Grants For Internet Access in Rural Alaska**

(Anchorage) - The State of Alaska's Department of Community and Economic Development is in the process of awarding grant funds to assist in the establishment of broadband Internet service in rural Alaska.

Under a continuing state and federal effort to make Internet service more affordable to communities in rural Alaska, \$15 million has been allocated to assist service providers in the deployment of broadband. To date, the state has potentially awarded more than \$4 million dollars in grant requests. The program was established through the efforts of Senator Ted Stevens, who continues to advocate for the development of modern communications infrastructure throughout the state.

"This effort helps to provide rural Alaska residents with improved access to world markets and potential new economies," said Edgar Blatchford, Commissioner of the Department of Community and Economic Development. "This can clearly help to improve the quality of life in many of these communities through education and technical training. In the future, we hope to have more community centers equipped with Internet access," said Blatchford.

The grant awards were made through a program funded by the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) - Rural Development.

"Funding provided through this program was supported by Senator Ted Stevens," said Alaska Rural Development State Director Bill Allen. "These dollars will go a long way in the effort to ensure that residents of rural Alaska will not be left behind as we work to provide affordable broadband Internet service to all Americans. Broadband makes e-commerce possible," said Allen. "As more rural residents of our state are provided with this cutting edge technology, it will become easier for them to market goods and services over the world wide web. It is my hope that this will result in rural residents getting a greater share of the value of the goods they produce," said Allen.

-more-

DCED Awards Federal Grants for Internet Access in Rural Alaska
Page 2

The grants are being jointly administered by the Alaska Department of Community and Economic Development and the Regulatory Commission of Alaska.

Potential grant recipients of the \$4 million are: GCI Communications Corp.; United Utilities, Inc.; and Yukon Telephone Company/Supervisions Cable Television. Communities where service may be implemented are: Allakaket, Anaktuvuk Pass, Chefnak, Crooked Creek, Dot Lake, Eek, Grayling, Holy Cross, Kongiganak, Kwigillingok, Kipnuk, Lower Kalskag, Mentasta Lake, Newtok, Nightmute, Red Devil, Sleetmute, Stony River, Shageluk, Tanacross, Tetlin, Tununak, Tuntutuliak, Tyonek, Upper Kalskag, and Wainwright.

###

For more information about the program, visit the web page:
www.state.ak.us/rca/broadband.html.