

STATE OF ALASKA
DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE, COMMUNITY AND
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

REGULATORY COMMISSION OF ALASKA

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PRESS RELEASE

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REGULATORY COMMISSION OF ALASKA SEEKS COMMENTS
ON THE RURAL ALASKA BROADBAND INTERNET ACCESS
PROGRAM

As part of continuing state and federal efforts to extend affordable Internet services to rural areas within Alaska, the Regulatory Commission of Alaska ("RCA") seeks comment on the Rural Alaska Broadband Internet Access grant program. Grant funding is provided by the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) - Rural Development, and is intended to assist in the deployment of broadband Internet service in rural Alaska. The program was established through the efforts of Senator Ted Stevens, an ardent proponent for the development of modern communications infrastructure throughout Alaska.

The RCA will solicit proposals for service to communities that are eligible for grant funding under current grant program guidelines. Under current grant program guidelines, a community must not have local dial-up Internet access or broadband service in order to be eligible for grant funding. The RCA has researched Internet service levels throughout Alaska and developed a list of locations that may be eligible for grant funding under existing grant program guidelines. Those locations are:

Akhiok
Aleneva
Chuathbaluk
Dry Creek
Edna Bay
Game Creek
Hollis
Hughes
Hyder

Lutak
Manley Hot Springs
Old Harbor
Ouzinkie
Port Alexander
Port Protection
Red Dog Mine
Susitna
Tenakee Springs
Whitestone Logging Camp

The above list is based on agency research and excludes communities with less than 35 residents. The RCA invites comments on other communities that may be eligible under existing program guidelines. A spreadsheet showing Internet connectivity in Alaska can be found on the RCA website at <http://www.state.ak.us/rca/Broadband/Connectivity>. We also encourage corrections and comments regarding information in the spreadsheet.

The RCA also requests that eligible providers submit a statement of interest identifying the communities that they are interested in serving upon receipt of grant funding. Information regarding the grant program, including eligible provider guidelines, may be found on the RCA website at <http://www.state.ak.us/rca/Broadband/grantguide>.

Please send comments by September 12, 2005 to Rich Gazaway at rich_gazaway@rca.state.ak.us or Jess Manaois at john_manaois@rca.state.ak.us, or mail your comments to 701 West Eighth Avenue, Suite 300, Anchorage, Alaska 99501.

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