

Public Notice Submission

Provider Name: Northeast Missouri Rural Telephone Company

Summary: The census tracts listed in this Service Provider Response are currently served by Northeast Missouri Rural Telephone Company (NEMR) in accordance with the broadband definition in the NOFA. NEMR responds by providing documentation to prove that these proposed overlapping areas currently served by NEMR are in fact adequately served. All households located in the designated overlapping census tract areas that are served by NEMR have access to adequate and affordable middle mile transport facilities as well as last mile broadband service. NEMR offers broadband internet service with download speeds greater than 768K to 100% of the households and businesses located within its service territory. NEMR's service territory covers 1,380 square miles of a sparsely populated rural area in the northeast part of Missouri. Within our NEMR service area, 46.5% of these households currently subscribe to 768K or greater broadband services from NEMR with an additional estimate of 71% of the businesses in our area subscribe to NEMR's broadband internet. In addition to its broadband customers, NEMR still has some households that have determined 56K dialup internet service is sufficient for their needs. The proposed service areas contained in the BTOP applications that are currently served by NEMR should not be eligible for funding. The passion of NEMR's personnel and board of director's is to provide the high quality communications services our customers want at reasonable rates. NEMR introduced internet service to its rural customers in 1995, this new technology and NEMR's focus on customer service proved quite popular. Soon the neighboring cities that were served by much larger, but uninterested communications companies, presented petitions of willing customers and pleaded with NEMR to extend internet service to their towns which NEMR did. NEMR's first internet connections used 14.4K modems, then 28.8, 33.6 and 56K. It was apparent in the very early stages of providing internet, there would be a steady demand for more bandwidth. In the fall of 1996 NEMR requested and was approved for a multi-million dollar RUS/RTB loan to completely upgrade its telephone system by connecting all 14 of its central offices in a fiber ring and extending fiber deep into the rural areas so every customer would be within 18,000 feet of fiber (completed in 2006). At the end of 2008 NEMR's owned cable network included more than 800 route miles of buried fiber optics. Also in the 1990's NEMR worked with local high schools to form the Education Plus Network that leveraged NEMR's fiber network to become Missouri's first ITV public school network to offer high school classes over fiber optics. In October, 2008 NEMR introduced a successful IPTV cable television service throughout its territory. In 2009 NEMR installed home-run buried fiber optic cable to each of the homes and businesses in the City of Memphis, MO. NEMR is currently working on upgrading the City of Unionville with a Round 1 RUS/BIP grant.