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Ben Esang looks for mice on Pordora on the first which is set up at a window in order to reach his neighbor Jim Pordora's permission to piggyback the web network Pordora set up with a few hundred wireless antennas.

(Christopher Cheng/The Press Democrat)

BY AMY CALLAHAN
THE PRESS DEMOCRAT
March 2, 2014 9:26PM

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A \$138 million initiative to extend high-speed Internet capacity to about 150,000 rural California households — including 1,520 in Sonoma and Mendocino counties — has collapsed, forcing advocates to start from scratch after nearly three years of planning.

The failure of the Golden Bear Broadband proposal to get funding endorsement from the state Public Utilities Commission presents a substantial setback for local organizers and frustrated consumers who stood to benefit from a new fiber optic-based network designed to connect 16 northern counties and provide the anchor for expansion of fast, affordable service across more than a quarter of the state.

"It was a devastating blow," Sonoma County Supervisor Ellen Carrillo said of Golden Bear's withdrawal from the plan, "and we'll just have to figure out what next steps to take."

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Broadband Alliance *of Mendocino County*

October 15th, 2014

Ms. Marlene H. Dortch, Secretary
Federal Communications Commission
445 12th Street, S.W.
Washington, D.C. 20554

**RE: Ex Parte Notice, In the Matter of Policies to Respond to the Ongoing
Technological Transition of Voice Networks, GN Docket No. 12-353**

Dear Ms. Dortch,

As the Commission is well aware, the nation's public communications systems are undergoing profound transformation in terms of the evolution of networks used to provide communications services, hence the importance of this docket. As residents of California's rural Mendocino County we support the concerns expressed by the Commission and Chairman Wheeler that as these networks evolve, it is vital to ensure that communication remains reliable, ubiquitous and affordable. For rural areas, it is imperative that as increasingly all essential communication services are carried over the same middle mile facilities, federal and state policy makers ensure that those facilities are robust and available to every corner of the nation. We believe that as the Commission deliberates on these issues, it is useful to consider "real world" experiences. A recent event in Mendocino County highlights the importance of doing so; and points to the public safety threat posed by "gaps" in the availability of facilities generally viewed as being primarily associated with broadband service.

On August 3rd, 2014 an accident on the rural Comptche-Ukiah Road in our county took out 400' of AT&T fiber optic cable. The consequences were dire and long-lasting (45 hours). Telephone, Internet, cellular, and 911 services went down for thousands of residents of Mendocino County. The outage was lengthy because the AT&T backbone fiber network was not configured to be redundant nor diverse with protection routing. This was not due to the lack of fiber in the surrounding routes. AT&T owns the Manchester cable landing station - critical US infrastructure - just a short distance away from the fiber break. AT&T did provide diverse fiber and protection for their cable station but elected not to provide the same for the surrounding community and emergency services.

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