

COPPER VALLEY WIRELESS

- Serving more than 15,000 square miles
- Population of 9,000
- Density of less than .6 people per square mile
- Less than 500 road miles in serving area
- More than 3,000 square miles of water (Prince William Sound)
- 30 cell sites

Copper Valley Wireless



Bus with ski teams collides with truck

DEVIN KELLY
dkelly@adn.com

Staff

A charter bus carrying Kenai-area students to a cross-country ski meet collided with a state Department of Transportation truck on the Richardson Highway on Friday morning, seriously injuring the bus driver, officials said. Vernon Brown, 72, of Kenai was eventually flown to Providence Alaska Medical Center in Anchorage to be treated for his injuries, said Beth Ipsen, Alaska State Troopers spokeswoman.

The crash was reported to authorities at 11:44 a.m. on a straight stretch of highway about two miles from the start of Thompson Pass. Snow was blowing, creating visibility problems, Ipsen said.

The bus, chartered by the Kenai Peninsula Borough School District from the Kenai-based Unique Bus Charters company, was following the large DOT truck, Ipsen said. The truck, similar to a snowplow truck, was towing a trailer with a bulldozer on it, said Jeremy Woodrow, a DOT communications officer. The DOT driver, identified by troopers as 60-year-old James Woodhouse of Valdez, was taking the bulldozer from one maintenance station to another, Woodrow said.

Ipsen said the DOT truck had slowed to make a left turn onto a pullout on the other side of the highway.

"Due to the blowing snow, the driver of the school bus didn't see the turn signal and didn't see the (truck) slowing down, and rear-ended it," Ipsen said.

The charter bus went into a ditch, pinning and seriously injuring Brown, Ipsen said. Brown has worked for the charter company for more than 15 years, said Margaret Baxter, a spokeswoman for Unique Bus Charters. He also works as a bus driver for the Kenai Peninsula Borough School District and has a good driving record, she said. An ambulance brought Brown to a Valdez hospital, from which he was later transported to Anchorage. He is being treated for serious but non-life-threatening injuries, Ipsen said.

Baxter said this is the first major driving accident in the charter company's history. The bus was carrying 49 people -- 43 students and 6 adults -- from the Kenai Peninsula to Valdez for the ski meet, said Pegge Erkeneff, a spokeswoman for the Kenai school district. That count included 28 members of the Kenai Central High School cross-country ski team and 15 from the Skyview High School team, as well as coaches from both teams, Erkeneff said.

One student was thrown against the seat in front of him and was transported by ambulance to the hospital with minor injuries, along with the DOT driver, who said he had back pain, Ipsen said.

The rest of the students were picked up by Valdez City School District buses and taken to be evaluated by a triage team at Hermon Hutchens Elementary School in Valdez, Erkeneff said. After that, several students were taken to Providence Valdez Medical Center for further evaluation, she said.

Mitch Michaud, chair of the Kenai Nordic Ski Club booster club, said two of his children are members of the Kenai Central High School ski team and were on board the bus when the crash happened.

Despite spotty reception, he reached his 16-year-old daughter Madeleine on her cellphone after the crash. She said that when the bus came to a sudden stop, "that was really scary, like slowing down really fast," Michaud said.

"A lot of kids got bounced," he said.

Madeleine told him she hurt her shoulder but was otherwise OK.

"I think she's just glad that nothing really worse happened," Michaud said.

Michaud said he was comforted that the students were aboard a charter bus rather than a standard school bus and that Unique Charters typically transports teams to compete in Fairbanks.

It's uncommon for Kenai schools to travel the roughly 450 miles to Valdez. The teams usually plan to make the trip every four years, Michaud said.

The bus left Thursday, and the students stayed in Palmer on Thursday night before heading out for Valdez the next day. The students' first race of the Valdez Invitational was supposed to start at 3:30 p.m. on Friday, with races continuing Saturday, Michaud said.

But in a statement Friday evening, the school district said that the teams will not compete in the Valdez Invitational at all this weekend.

"Unique Charters is sending a replacement bus for the teams, which plans to leave Valdez and drive back to the central peninsula midday," the statement said.

By about 6:50 p.m. Friday, most of the students who had gone to the hospital had been treated and released, and were eating a spaghetti dinner, Erkenoff said in an email. She said a few were still waiting at the hospital to be evaluated.

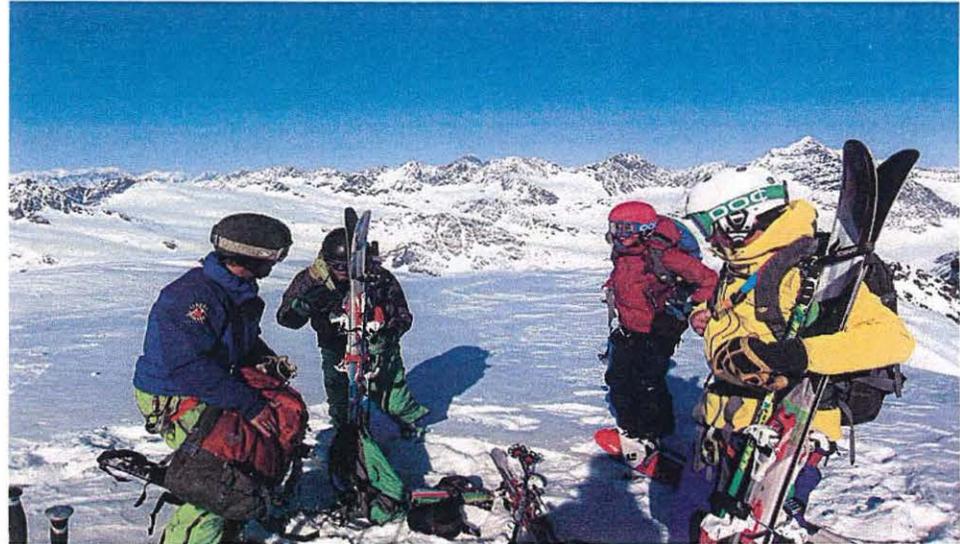
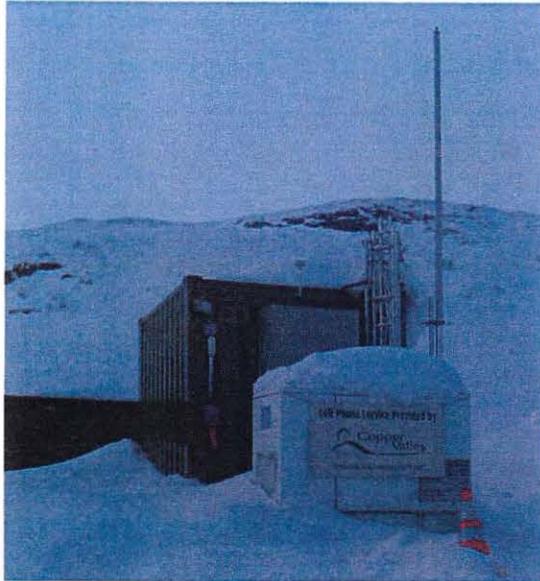
"I thank all of the staff from Valdez City Schools, the Valdez Emergency Services, Valdez Police, personnel at the Valdez Hospital, and the Alaska State Troopers for their immediate and professional response to today's accident," Steve Atwater, superintendent of the Kenai school district, said in a statement. "The location of the accident made the response difficult, we are thankful that these agencies are so well trained."

He also thanked local families who volunteered to bring food to the students and opened their homes to parents who came on the trip.

Reach Devin Kelly at dkelly@adn.com or 257-4314.



Deploy the C.O.W. at Thompson Pass DOT for the Spring ski season.



In 2010, three back country skiers were caught in an avalanche near Thompson Pass. Two of the skiers searched for and found the third. She was completely buried and in grave condition. After extracting her from the snow, one skier used her Copper Valley cell phone to call a ski tour operator located miles away who was able to dispatch a rescue helicopter. The victim was flown to the Valdez hospital. It was relayed to us that without the quick rescue, made possible by the use of Copper Valley's cell service, this incident would likely have resulted in death.

Responding to the community

- **In January 2014**, major avalanches occurred in Keystone Canyon and further north along the Richardson Highway. As a result, highway access was blocked to Valdez and to rural areas between the avalanches. Copper Valley Telecom communications network in the affected areas remained in good condition. Buried fiber optic cable, which is the backbone of voice and data communications in the area was undamaged, even though the area was flooded. Our Internet, landline, and wireless services in the Heiden View and Thompson Pass area were out for short periods of time during the weekend immediately following the incident, but were restored and operational for the remaining days that it took the Department of Transportation to clear the highway. Our services in Alpine Woods subdivision, which was under flash flood alerts for periods of time, operated normally during the event. Copper Valley worked with the City of Valdez to establish a cellular based remote camera at the western end of Keystone Canyon to provide real time monitoring of the Lower River for flood hazard.

The Washington Post PostTV Politics Opinions Local Sports National World Busin

NATIONAL

In the News Ukraine Flu Pussy Riot Hot Pockets Eliot Ness Scott Walker

ADVERTISEMENT



Ukraine ablaze in deadly crackdown

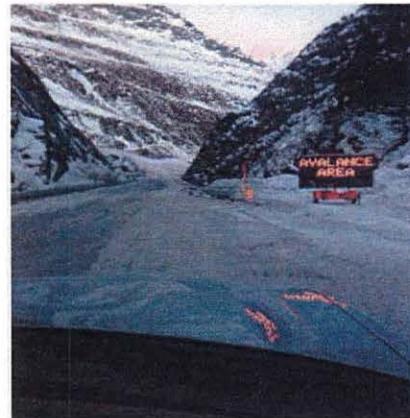


E-mails may spell trouble for Scott Walker



P1
di

Weeks after avalanches, lone road to Valdez opens



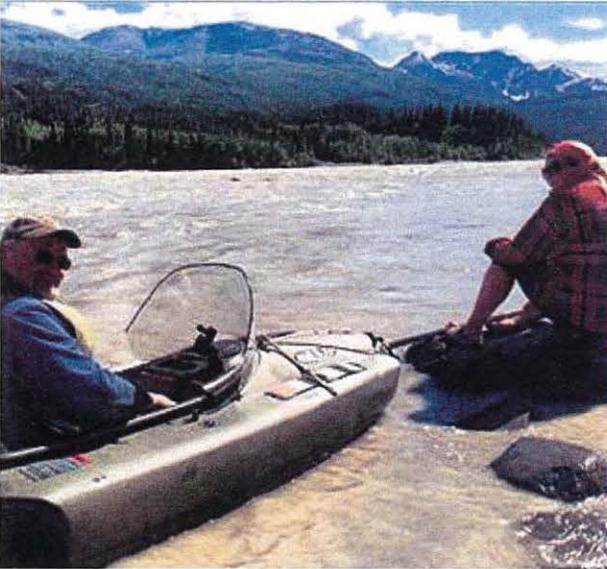
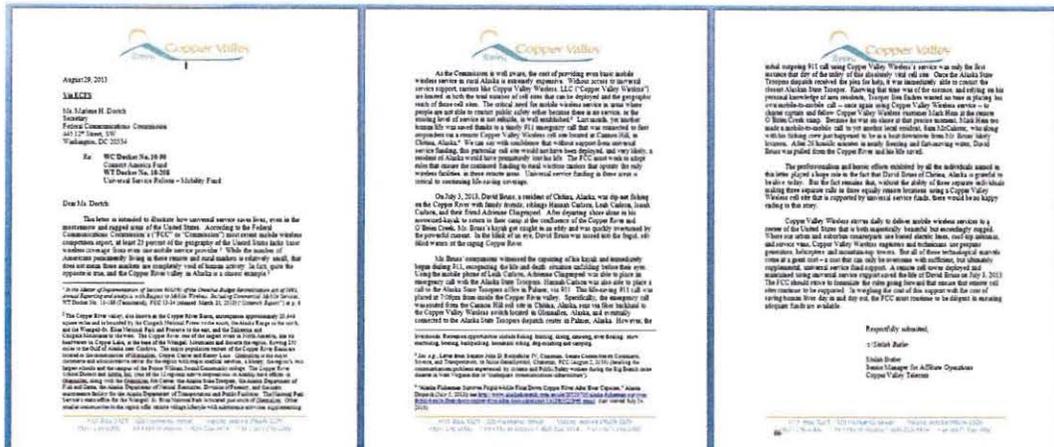
Alaska Department of Transportation & Public Facilities/Associated Press - This Feb. 5, 2014 photo released by the Alaska Department of Transportation & Public Facilities shows Richardson Highway at Keystone Canyon, Valdez, Alaska. On Wednesday Feb. 5, 2014 two weeks after cascades of snow prevented vehicles from getting into the only road to Valdez has reopened. Crews finished clearing away the remaining avalanche debris, and

By Associated Press, Published: February 5

VALDEZ, Alaska — Two weeks after cascades of snow prevented vehicles from getting into this city at the end of the trans-Alaska pipeline, the only road to Valdez has reopened.

Crews finished clearing away the remaining avalanche debris, and there was no damage to Richardson Highway, the Anchorage Daily News reported (<http://is.gd/nvV4Mr>).

Dave Bruss's life is saved due to a 911 call placed from the Cannon Hill site in Chitina on 7/5/2013.



Copper Valley Wireless Says USF Support Helps Save Lives

Copper Valley Wireless filed a [letter](#) on August 29, 2013, to detail how its USF-supported cell site in remote Alaska assisted in a recent emergency situation. CVW said without support from universal service funding, this particular cell site would not have been deployed, and very likely, human life would have been lost. CVW said the FCC must work to adopt rules that ensure the continued funding to rural wireless carriers that operate the only wireless facilities in these remote areas.

CVW filed with the FCC and hopes to nominate this story for various 911 awards in 2014.



For further information regarding Copper Valley Wireless contact

Dave Dengel

Chief Executive Officer

Copper Valley Telecom

907-835-7701

ddengel@cvtc.org





August 29, 2013

Via ECFS

Ms. Marlene H. Dortch
Secretary
Federal Communications Commission
445 12th Street, SW
Washington, DC 20554

Re: **WC Docket No. 10-90**
Connect America Fund
WT Docket No. 10-208
Universal Service Reform – Mobility Fund

Dear Ms. Dortch:

This letter is intended to illustrate how universal service saves lives, even in the most remote and rugged areas of the United States. According to the Federal Communications Commission's ("FCC" or "Commission") most recent mobile wireless competition report, at least 25 percent of the geography of the United States lacks basic wireless coverage from even one mobile service provider.¹ While the number of Americans permanently living in these remote and rural markets is relatively small, that does not mean these markets are completely void of human activity. In fact, quite the opposite is true, and the Copper River valley in Alaska is a classic example.²

¹ *In the Matter of Implementation of Section 6002(b) of the Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act of 1993, Annual Reporting and Analysis with Respect to Mobile Wireless, Including Commercial Mobile Services*, WT Docket No. 11-186 (Terminated), FCC 13-34 (released March 21, 2013) ("*Sixteenth Report*") at p. 6.

² The Copper River valley, also known as the Copper River Basin, encompasses approximately 20,649 square miles and is bounded by the Chugach National Forest to the south, the Alaska Range to the north, and the Wrangell-St. Elias National Park and Preserve to the east, and the Talkeetna and Chugach Mountains to the west. The Copper River, one of the largest rivers in North America, has its headwaters in Copper Lake, at the base of the Wrangell Mountains and dissects the region, flowing 250 miles to the Gulf of Alaska near Cordova. The major population centers of the Copper River Basin are located in the communities of Glennallen, Copper Center and Kenny Lake. Glennallen is the major commerce and administrative center for the region with major medical services, a library, the region's two largest schools and the campus of the Prince William Sound Community college. The Copper River School District and Ahtna, Inc. (one of the 12 regional native corporations in Alaska) have offices in Glennallen, along with the Glennallen Job Center, the Alaska State Troopers, the Alaska Department of Fish and Game, the Alaska Department of Natural Resources, Division of Forestry, and the main maintenance facility for the Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities. The National Park Service's main office for the Wrangell St. Elias National Park is located just south of Glennallen. Other smaller communities in the region offer remote village lifestyle with subsistence activities supplementing



As the Commission is well aware, the cost of providing even basic mobile wireless service in rural Alaska is extremely expensive. Without access to universal service support, carriers like Copper Valley Wireless, LLC (“Copper Valley Wireless”) are limited in both the total number of cell sites that can be deployed and the geographic reach of those cell sites. The critical need for mobile wireless service in areas where people are not able to contact public safety either because there is no service, or the existing level of service is not reliable, is well established.³ Last month, yet another human life was saved thanks to a timely 911 emergency call that was connected to first responders via a remote Copper Valley Wireless cell site located at Cannon Hill, in Chitina, Alaska.⁴ We can say with confidence that without support from universal service funding, this particular cell site would not have been deployed, and very likely, a resident of Alaska would have prematurely lost his life. The FCC must work to adopt rules that ensure the continued funding to rural wireless carriers that operate the only wireless facilities in these remote areas. Universal service funding in these areas is critical to continuing life-saving coverage.

On July 3, 2013, David Bruss, a resident of Chitina, Alaska, was dip-net fishing on the Copper River with family friends; siblings Hannah Carlson, Leah Carlson, Isaiah Carlson, and their friend Adrienne Clingenpeel. After departing shore alone in his motorized-kayak to return to their camp at the confluence of the Copper River and O’Brien Creek, Mr. Bruss’s kayak got caught in an eddy and was quickly overturned by the powerful current. In the blink of an eye, David Bruss was tossed into the frigid, silt-filled waters of the raging Copper River.

Mr. Bruss’ companions witnessed the capsizing of his kayak and immediately began dialing 911, recognizing the life-and-death situation unfolding before their eyes. Using the mobile phone of Leah Carlson, Adrienne Clingenpeel was able to place an emergency call with the Alaska State Troopers. Hannah Carlson was also able to place a call to the Alaska State Troopers office in Palmer, via 911. This life-saving 911 call was placed at 7:06pm from inside the Copper River valley. Specifically, the emergency call was routed from the Cannon Hill cell site in Chitina, Alaska, sent via fiber backhaul to the Copper Valley Wireless switch located in Glennallen, Alaska, and eventually connected to the Alaska State Troopers dispatch center in Palmer, Alaska. However, the

livelihoods. Recreation opportunities include fishing, hunting, skiing, canoeing, river-floating, snow machining, boating, backpacking, horseback riding, dog-mushing and camping.

³ See, e.g., Letter from Senator John D. Rockefeller IV, Chairman, Senate Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation, to Julius Genachowski, Chairman, FCC (August 2, 2010) (detailing the communications problems experienced by citizens and Public Safety workers during the Big Branch mine disaster in West Virginia due to “inadequate communications infrastructure”).

⁴ “Alaska Fisherman Survives Frigid 4-Mile Float Down Copper River After Boat Capsizes,” Alaska Dispatch (July 5, 2013); see <http://www.alaskadispatch.com/article/20130705/alaska-fisherman-survives-frigid-4-mile-float-down-copper-river-after-boat-capsizes#.Ue2DhNQ5P60.email> (last viewed July 24, 2013).



initial outgoing 911 call using Copper Valley Wireless's service was only the first instance that day of the utility of this absolutely vital cell site. Once the Alaska State Troopers dispatch received the plea for help, it was immediately able to contact the closest Alaskan State Trooper. Knowing that time was of the essence, and relying on his personal knowledge of area residents, Trooper Ben Endres wasted no time in placing his own mobile-to-mobile call -- once again using Copper Valley Wireless service -- to charter captain and fellow Copper Valley Wireless customer Mark Hem at the remote O'Brien Creek camp. Because he was on-shore at that precise moment, Mark Hem too made a mobile-to-mobile call to yet another local resident, Sam McCalister, who along with his fishing crew just happened to be in a boat downriver from Mr. Bruss' likely location. After 26 horrific minutes in nearly freezing and fast-moving water, David Bruss was pulled from the Copper River and his life saved.

The professionalism and heroic efforts exhibited by all the individuals named in this letter played a huge role in the fact that David Bruss of Chitina, Alaska is grateful to be alive today. But the fact remains that, without the ability of three separate individuals making three separate calls in three equally remote locations using a Copper Valley Wireless cell site that is supported by universal service funds, there would be no happy ending to this story.

Copper Valley Wireless strives daily to deliver mobile wireless services to a corner of the United States that is both majestically beautiful but exceedingly rugged. Where our urban and suburban counterparts use buried electric lines, roof-top antennas, and service vans, Copper Valley Wireless engineers and technicians use propane generators, helicopters and mountain-top towers. But all of these technological marvels come at a great cost -- a cost that can only be overcome with sufficient, but ultimately supplemental, universal service fund support. A remote cell tower deployed and maintained using universal service support saved the life of David Bruss on July 3, 2013. The FCC should strive to formulate the rules going forward that ensure that remote cell sites continue to be supported. In weighing the cost of this support with the cost of saving human lives day in and day out, the FCC must continue to be diligent in ensuring adequate funds are available.

Respectfully submitted,

/s/ Shilah Butler

Shilah Butler
Senior Manager for Affiliate Operations
Copper Valley Telecom

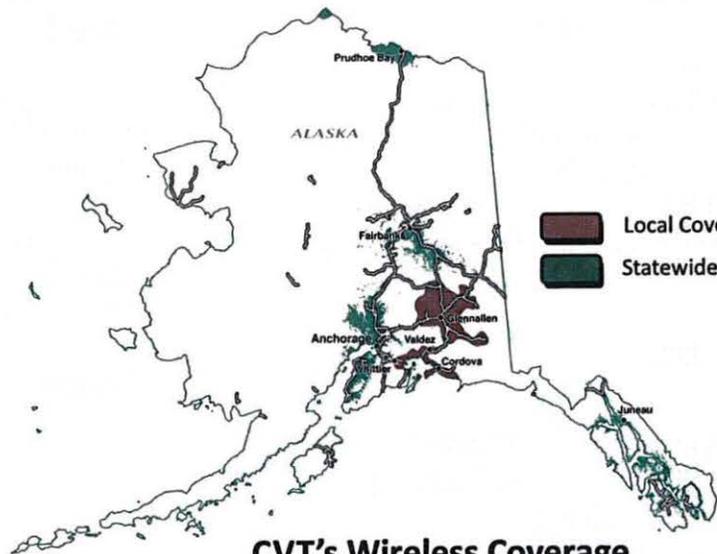
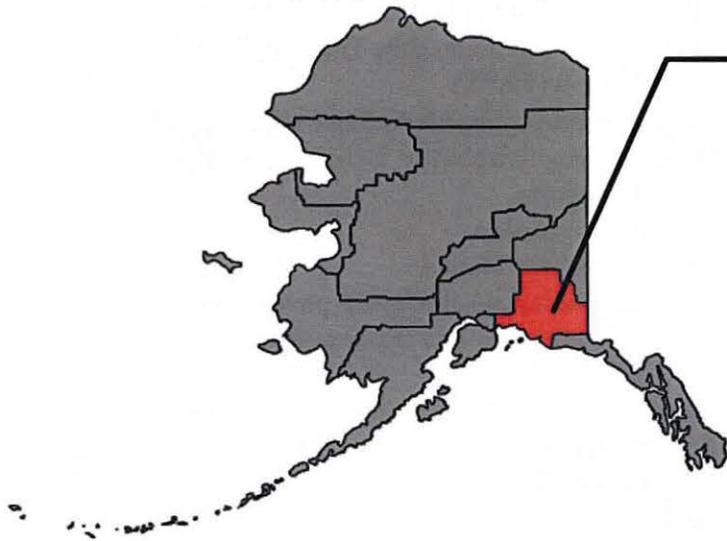
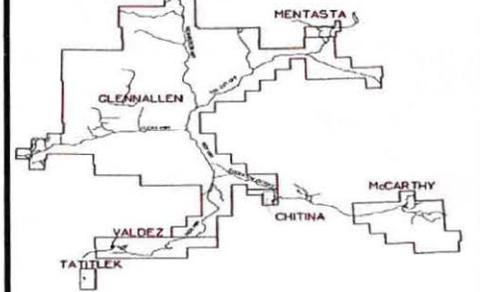


Copper Valley Telecom

Telephone | Long Distance | Internet | Wireless

CVT's Wireline Service Area

9600 Square Miles; 6 Wireline Exchanges



CVT's Wireless Coverage



Copper Valley Telecom: A Snapshot of a Rural Carrier

Cooperative since 1961

- o Copper Valley Telephone Cooperative
- o Copper Valley Wireless
- o Copper Valley Long Distance
- o Copper Valley Solutions

9,600 square miles within Wireline Service Area

- o 6 exchanges
- o 20 communities
- o Over 4,000 access lines
- o Rural: 0.7 people/square mile

15,000 square miles within wireless network

- o 30 cell sites
- o 3G CDMA network
- o 4G LTE
- o Rural: 0.6 people /square mile

Over 360 miles of fiber cable

2 major microwave paths

- o Valdez to Cordova (approx. 100 miles)
- o Chitina to McCarthy (approx. 60 miles)

Broadband serves over 1,800 customers

Land of Extremes

- o Temperatures from +80F to -50F
- o Average annual snowfall in Valdez: 325 inches
- o 2 to 4 hours drive time between exchanges
- o Remote sites accessible only by helicopter and fixed wing aircraft

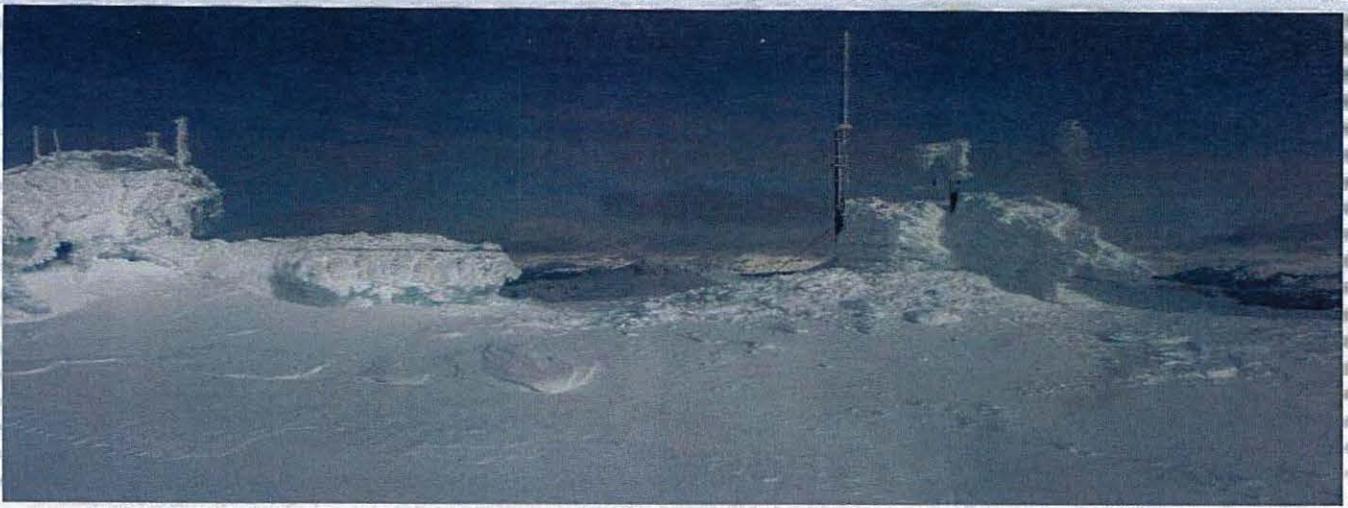
CVT Serves Key Rural Stakeholders

- o City of Valdez– terminus of the Trans Alaska Oil Pipeline System (TAPS)
- o Oil tankers transporting North Slope oil to market
- o 8 federally recognized Native tribal organizations
- o Copper River Basin
- o 7,400 Total Population
 - o 30% Alaska Native
 - o 6.3% of households below poverty level
 - o 63% of households in one exchange below poverty level
- o Wrangell-St. Elias National Park(largest park in U.S.)
- o Prince William Sound & its robust fishing industry
- o Alaska Marine Highway
- o Tourism businesses

Full Service Communications

- o Broadband up to 18MB/1MB
- o Landline
- o Long Distance
- o Wireless Data
- o Wireless Voice & Text Messaging
- o Ethernet, T1, DS3, OC3
Dedicated Circuits

4G LTE IS HERE!



Copper Valley Telecom Deploys State of the Art Telecommunications Technology to Best Serve Our Customers

Wireline

Network Components

- Fiber and microwave infrastructure
- Soft switches
- Fiber to major institutions including hospitals, schools, and government
- Shorter loops
 - Fiber to the node
 - Field trial fiber to the home
- Broadband reach:
 - 95% 3 mbps
 - 85% 10 mbps
 - 55% 15-18 mbps
- Video caching to maximize efficiency
- Redundant pathways

E911 Provider



Prince William Sound Microwave

- Terrestrial connectivity to Tatitlek, a remote Alaska Native village in Prince William Sound
- Provides high speed Broadband to community
- Supports 4G LTE

Wireless

Network Components

- Fiber and microwave foundation
- 30 cell sites
- 3G CDMA
- 4G LTE
- Fixed Wireless for hard to reach locations
- Nationwide roaming partners for voice & data
- Verizon LTE in Rural America (LRA) program participant

Cellular on Wheels (COW)

These mobile towers are available for fast emergency deployment for disasters such as oil spills and earthquakes.

The units are routinely deployed during winter on Thompson Pass, a busy ski and snowmobiling area, for increased public safety.

The units are routinely deployed during summer to Denali Highway, a busy fishing and boating area, for increased public safety.

Alternative Energy

Solar

CVT utilizes solar energy at 6 cell sites and 3 ancillary sites. As much as 50% of annual energy required to operate some sites is solar power.

Wind Trials

CVT is testing the viability of wind power at 2 sites.

Customer Care

Copper Valley provides affordable rates and excellent, accessible customer service and technical support.

- Three stores
- Service visits to remote communities
- Website
- Toll Free Number
- 24/7 Technical Support
- Educational Sessions
- Tiered pricing for all lifestyles and budgets
- Lifeline and LinkUp discounts
- Accessible to people with disabilities



CVT wireless network improves safety, saves lives

In 2010, three back country skiers were caught in an avalanche near Thompson Pass. Two of the skiers searched for and found the third. She was completely buried and in grave condition. After extracting her from the snow, one skier used her Copper Valley cell phone to call a ski tour operator located miles away who was able to dispatch a rescue helicopter. The victim was flown to the Valdez hospital. It was relayed to us that without the quick rescue, made possible by the use of Copper Valley's cell service, this incident would likely have resulted in death.

In 2013, a fisherman capsized on the frigid (40 degree) Copper River. The strong current swept him down river four miles for approximately 20 minutes. During his odyssey, he fought to remain above water, losing strength with each passing minute. Finally, a charter boat captain who had been called by authorities via cell phone to assist with the search saw the fisherman's arm reaching out of the water. The captain was able to rescue the man and save his life. Later, the fisherman stated to news reporters that he was "grateful to his family friends who carried cell phones and got the search launched."

"The technician that came out [to install service] was great. He explained everything to us."
Copper Center, AK

"CVT is my favorite telephone company. They are great!" Valdez, AK

"They aren't only nice people, they are competitive. I am very happy." Glennallen, AK

"The customer service representative that assisted us was very helpful. She just made it all so easy." McCarthy, AK

Contact Information

Dave Dengel
Chief Executive Officer
907.835.7701
ddengel@cvtc.org
www.cvtc.org

