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Tri-County
Electric
Membership Corporation
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DATE: March 6, 2014

FROM: Paul Thompson 
Executive V.P. & General Manager
P.O. Box 40
Lafayette, Tennessee 37083
615-688-2100
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TO: Federal Communications Commission (FCC) Staff

SUBJECT: Expression of Interest – Rural Experiment
Docket No. 10-90

Background and Nature of Submitting Entity

In 1935 the Rural Electric Administration (REA) was created by President Franklin D. Roosevelt to bring electricity to rural America. Wasting little time, the founders of Tri-County Electric organized in 1936 to serve rural areas in three counties – and Tri-County Electric has experienced consistent growth over the past 78 years. Our wholesale power is supplied by the Tennessee Valley Authority (TVA).

We have 8 offices (4 in Tennessee: Celina, Hartsville, Lafayette (HQ) and Westmoreland; and 4 in Kentucky: Burkesville, Edmonton, Scottsville and Tompkinsville), 17 substations, and over 5,450 miles of distribution line, covering a service area of roughly 1,800 square miles.

We are among the largest cooperatives in both Kentucky and Tennessee and provide a wide range of services to our approximately 50,500 members-owners. Tri-County Electric serves all or part of the following counties: Allen, Cumberland, Metcalfe, Monroe, Adair, Barren, Clinton & Warren in Kentucky; Macon, Clay, Trousdale, Sumner, Jackson, Overton & Smith in Tennessee. (See Figure 1, below.)

In an effort to reduce its operating expenses, Tri-County Electric began running fiber between all of the cooperative's substations and offices. While installing fiber in Hartsville, Tri-County Electric responded to and won the bid for an RFP sent out by the Four Lake RIDA for a fiber project at PowerCom Industrial Park (formerly the Tennessee Valley Authority's Hartsville Nuclear Plant site).

Proposed Technology and Scalability

We propose to construct a fiber-to-the-premises (FTTP) network to serve residents, small businesses, and community anchor institutions. This technology is scalable through reprogramming, upgrading equipment, and adding service drops to new homes along the fiber routes.

State and Local Government Support for Project

Tri-County Electric's proposed broadband experiment has the strong support of the local government in Trousdale County. By a vote of 16 - 0, the Trousdale County Commission passed a resolution (attached) at their January 2014 meeting requesting that the Tennessee General Assembly pass a Private Act allowing "a rural electric cooperative that owns a fiber network and provides electric service to Trousdale County, a county with a population of more than 7,000 but less than 8,000 according to the 2010 US Census, may contract with any electric account to provide broadband service to any resident not served by a rural telephone cooperative as of January 1, 2014."

Senator Ferrell Haile and Representative Terri Lynn Weaver, the legislators representing Trousdale County, filed legislation supporting the county's request.

Existing Providers

North Central Telephone Cooperative (northern Trousdale County) and Comcast (city limits) each cover a portion of the county, and AT&T provides landline phone service throughout the county; however many residents do not have access to broadband. AT&T has stated that they offer fiber in other areas, but the President of AT&T Tennessee has stated at multiple recent meetings related to the Trousdale County Commission resolution that Trousdale County residents only need wireless internet – not fiber. Many of those who do have broadband service through AT&T and/or Comcast are not satisfied and would like to have other options.

Project Timeline

Because of our efforts to run fiber between our offices and substations, the backbone of this project has been completed with the installation of fiber on Highway 25. Preliminary engineering has begun on the new project. Tri-County Electric could begin serving the first residential customers within a few months of funding being approved.

Total Investment

We estimate that the total fiber build-out (including transmission, distribution, service drops and electronics) will require a \$23 million capital investment. We do not anticipate requiring any ongoing funding for operations.

Attachment 1: Census Blocks to Be Covered

High-Cost	Extremely High Cost
471690901001099	471690901001099
471690901003049	471690901003049
471690901001088	471690901001088
471690901001113	471690901001113
471690901003051	471690901001008
471690901001008	471690901002039
471690901002039	471690901003019
471690901003019	471690901003018
471690901003018	471690901001109
471690901001072	471690901001015
471690901002028	471690901003017
471690901001109	471690901001044
471690901001015	471690901002048
471690901003017	471690901001116
471690901001044	471690901001007
471690901002048	471690901001017
471690901001116	471690901002001
471690901001007	471690901001084
471690901001017	471690901001058
471690901002001	471690901001080
471690901001084	471690901001056
471690901001058	471690901001005
471690901001080	471690901001102
471690901001056	471690901002043
471690901001005	471690901001069
471690901001068	471690901001112
471690901001102	471690901001114
471690901002043	471690901003055
471690901001069	471690902001017
471690901001112	471690901001103
471690901001114	471690901002053
471690901003055	471690901001090
471690902001017	471690901001067

High-Cost	Extremely High Cost
471690901001103	471690901001079
471690901002053	471690901001101
471690901001090	471690901001076
471690901001067	471690901001081
471690901001079	471690901003038
471690901001101	471690901001064
471690901001076	471690901003056
471690901001012	471690901001110
471690901001081	471690901001065
471690901003038	471690901003090
471690901001064	471690901001087
471690901003056	471690901002013
471690901001110	471690901002051
471690901001057	471690901001047
471690901001065	471690901001100
471690901003090	471690901001091
471690901001087	471690901001086
471690901002013	471690901001059
471650206032036	471690901001021
471690901002051	471690901003091
471690901001047	471690901001061
471690901001100	471690901002055
471690901001091	471690901001121
471690901001086	471690901001073
471690901001059	471690901001098
471690901001021	
471690901003091	
471690901001061	
471690901002055	
471690901001121	
471690901001073	
471690901001098	



Hartsville/Trousdale County Metropolitan Government

Mark L. Beeler, Commission Chairman
210 Broadway
Hartsville, TN 37074

January 27, 2014

Senator Ferrell Haile
301 6th Ave North
Suite 10A Legislative Plaza
Nashville, TN 37243

Representative Terri Lynn Weaver
301 6th Ave North
Suite 105 War Memorial Bldg
Nashville, TN 37243

Dear Sen. Haile and Rep. Weaver,

Our County Commission approved the resolution requesting the Private Act to allow Tri County Electric to provide broadband service to electric customers in Trousdale County during the meeting held on 1/27/14. It was approved by a vote of 16 YES and 0 NO.

I have scanned our Resolution and the draft for the Private Act and they are attached. The draft for the Private Act has been developed and approved by CTAS legal staff, our County Attorney, Betty Lou Taylor, and Ken Witcher, Attorney for Tri County Electric. I hope it meets with your approval.

We will send a hard copy via US mail also. Again, thanks for your willingness to support this effort.

Sincerely,

Mark L. Beeler
Commission Chairman

RESOLUTION # 2014-02-331

**RESOLUTION REQUESTING THE PASSAGE OF A PRIVATE ACT TO
ALLOW A RURAL ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE TO CONTRACT TO
PROVIDE BROADBAND SERVICE TO ANY ELECTRIC ACCOUNT THAT
IS NOT SERVED BY A RURAL TELEPHONE COOPERATIVE.**

WHEREAS: Hartsville/Trousdale County Metropolitan Government has sought ways to provide broadband service for its residents.

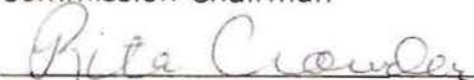
AND, WHEREAS, A rural electric cooperative now owns a dark fiber network and provides electric service to the residents of Trousdale County.

AND WHEREAS: It is in the best interest of Trousdale County's residents to have access to a dependable and affordable alternative for broadband service. Enhanced broadband service is a tool for improved economic development in the County.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED: The Hartsville/Trousdale County Commission requests that a Private Act be passed by the Tennessee General Assembly whereby a rural electric cooperative that owns a fiber network and provides electric service to Trousdale County, a county with a population of more than 7,000 but less than 8,000 according to the 2010 US Census, may contract with any electric account to provide broadband service to any resident not served by a rural telephone cooperative as of January 1, 2014.

1-27-2014 16 YES 0 NO
Date


Commission Chairman


County Clerk

AN ACT to authorize certain rural electric cooperatives in Trousdale County to provide broadband internet service to electric customers not served by a rural telephone cooperative.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE:

Notwithstanding any other law to the contrary,

SECTION 1. A rural electric cooperative that owns a fiber network and provides electric service to Trousdale County, a county with a population of more than 7,000 but less than 8,000 according to the 2010 US Census, shall have the power to provide broadband internet service to any electric customer not served by a rural telephone cooperative as of January 1, 2014.

SECTION 2. This Act shall have no effect unless it is approved by a two-thirds (2/3) vote of the Hartsville/Trousdale County Commission. Its approval or nonapproval shall be proclaimed by the presiding officer of the Hartsville/Trousdale County Commission and certified by such officer to the Secretary of State.

SECTION 3. For the purpose of approving or rejecting the provisions of this Act, it shall be effective upon becoming a law, the public welfare requiring it. For all other purposes, it shall become effective upon being approved as provided in Section 2.