March 5, 2014

AgUpLink, LLC
185 Fish Hatchery Road
Cordele, GA 31015

Federal Communications Commission
Attn: Rural Broadband Experiments Program
445 12th Street SW
Washington, DC

Background: Agribusiness is the number one industry for the state of Georgia. It's also the number one industry for many states. As is the case for most businesses in rural America, agribusiness needs technology to succeed and compete in the 21st century.

AgUpLink, LLC and its subsidiary, Ag Technologies, LLC were started to meet the growing need for technology solutions in the agricultural industries.

History of Effort: Ten years ago Ag Technologies identified a developing need for High Accuracy Applications within the Ag Industry and decided to help farmers to be able to embrace this technology by building a network that would enable them to utilize these technologies with limited cost. The Company constructed a RTK network of 280 plus towers across Georgia, Florida and Alabama and placed the needed technology on these sites.

These technologies give a high degree of accuracy for the farmers to track and manage their activities. Some of the critical items tracked are water usage, pesticide and fertilizer management, along with the ability to turn on and off pivots (pivots are what water the fields) as well as open and close gates, and monitor activates with live video feeds.

An example some of the benefits: Farmers have been able to more efficiently plant and dig crops with less operator fatigue and higher crop yield. Higher quality management though machine to machine technologies are available in modern farming equipment and is enabled because the technology is controlling the machine.

In essence, Ag technologies and AgUpLink are creating a "smart network" for modern farming.

Smart Networks for Agricultural Use:

Smart Metering is a term we all are familiar with. However, the same principals apply to a "smart network" for farming.

Many machine to machine (M2M) applications are necessary in modern farming. Today's farm uses heavy equipment, metering of assets, water and chemical use and a host of other uses that are necessary for effective and profitable crop yields.

Smart networks can only work if there is connectivity. Two years ago, Ag Technologies saw the need to upgrade their network for more capacity and started their sister company AgUpLink.

The mission of AgUpLink is to enable agribusiness and rural customers by providing the connectivity they need to perform personal and business related tasks.

AgUpLink provides customers with an agnostic network, capable of handling the data being produced by big ag applications and equipment such as tractors, pickers and combines that are now the standard.

More robust applications are coming to market, and the RTK network cannot handle the "big data" that is being pushed through.

Because they own their tower assets, they have been deploying a high capacity wireless infrastructure in their existing market areas. They offer services to farms, residents, schools, municipalities, medical facilities and others that need to get to the Internet at a reasonable cost, but cannot because there is no carrier available.

To date, AgUpLink has built a network that is serving residents, businesses and famers across six counties in Georgia.

The technologies used include licensed and unlicensed wireless, including gigabyte backhaul and white spaces for many of their M2M applications. In fact, AgUpLink is an early adopter in the white spaces arena, and works directly with manufacturers of white spaces technology to design better gear for white spaces applications.

Partnerships: AgUpLink also works with fiber partners in their areas to provide service to both large business and municipal customers in addition to their agricultural customers. They have robust tier one and tier two support teams and high capacity back office and data centers that gather, analyze and produce mission critical data for their customers from this effort.

The Proposed Network and Accompanying Needs: AgUpLink is seeking pilot funding for $5 Million dollars to expand their network into an additional five counties in Southwest Georgia over the next year.

After the pilot, they are requesting another $25 Million dollars to extend the network into twenty five (25) additional counties throughout Georgia, Alabama and Florida.

Smart Technologies are mission critical in rural areas for many reasons. As bandwidth needs explode and more applications are made available for agribusiness the need is going to become greater.

Just because there is not a “home”, a municipality or a school in a geographic area does not mean that business is not being conducted and that technology is not needed.

AgUpLink fulfills that need and encourages your consideration of this proposal.

Respectfully submitted,

Brian Kelley
President
AgUpLink, LLC