



Lake Region Electric Cooperative

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DATE: March 7, 2014

FROM: **Tim Thompson**, Lake Region Electric Cooperative, Pelican Rapids, MN
CEO

TO: The Honorable Ms. Marlene H. Dortch
Secretary
Federal Communications Commission
Wireline Competition Bureau

RE: Expression of Interest of BARC Electric Cooperative
WC Docket No. 10-90/Connect America Fund (CAF)

Lake Region Electric is a *customer-owned* electric utility serving over 26,000 members in Ottertail Count, Pelican Rapids, MN. Lake Region Electric Cooperative owns and operates 5,705 miles of electric transmission and distribution line along its rights-of-way. Our service territory is un- and under-served by existing broadband providers, with few members enjoying minimum broadband speeds of at least 4 Mbps download/1 Mbps upload.

Although we have not yet developed a broadband business plan, we may deploy a fiber-to-the-premises (FTTx) project at some point in the future that leverages our existing rights-of-ways and electric infrastructure. We see tremendous value in connecting fiber to each of our substations, enabling us to utilize smart grid applications such as demand response and grid-level energy efficiency.

By choosing FTTx, our network would be scalable and capable of providing gigabit service to every home or business. When we pursue FTTx, we view our need for project funds as a one-time capital expenditure subsidy. Our financial model would not factor in any ongoing subsidies from the FCC.

We envision that our core substation ring would be financed through an electric work plan loan, with the remainder of the capital expense through a combination of Connect America Fund dollars and other financing.

For More Information:

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