

Mt. Baker Foothills Broadband Communication Task Force

August 30th. 2011.

The following update to the vision and dedication of the Communication Task Force leader, Linda Dorsett, will confirm the Mt. Baker Foothills Chamber of Commerce's, the Communication Task Force members, and the Mt. Baker Foothills Broadband Project Working Group's pledge to continue Linda's exceptional efforts to bring broadband internet and cellular phone services to the citizens of Eastern Whatcom County.

Our project has received preliminary approval for broadband funding through the Northwest Open Access Network (NoaNet) for the next phase of Broadband projects (BTOP II) to be completed by the summer of 2013.

We are working to complete the task list including: technical issues, feasibility studies, tower site placement, system design and costing, and community support needed for us to have an approved and revised Wireless Broadband system project ready for completion within the time frame.

Many of you may have noticed that the first connecting leg of high speed broadband service to the Foothills was recently dedicated in a ceremony on August 1st. at the newly expanded Deming Library.

NoaNet's Chief Executive Officer, Greg Marney, gathered Community leaders including Whatcom County Executive, Pete Kremen; Mt. Baker School District Superintendent, Rick Gantman; state and local Library sponsors, local educators, and area residents who will be able to use the 17+ high speed stations for all of their communication needs. This fiber cable link was built by Black Rock Cable of Bellingham, and owner Bob Warshawer received appreciative thanks for providing assets needed to get this section of broadband to the "light-up" stage.

In addition, Greg Marney, announced that the next stage of fiber would be ready for construction for approximately 14 miles to Kendall and connect to the North Fork Library, the Kendall Elementary School, and then onto the East County Resource Center in the summer of 2012.

Our project would connect to the Kendall cable link, and then proceed to Glacier, Silver Lake, Kendall areas, Welcome/Mosquito Lake areas, and south to the South Fork Valley where possible. Our Wireless Broadband System would reach most of the unserved areas near SR 542 & SR 547.

The Foothills Chamber has asked the Whatcom County Public Utility District # 1(Whatcom PUD), and it's General Manager, Steve Jilks, to take

a lead role in meeting the funding and operational requirements for this phase of our Broadband Project. In addition, I have been asked, after having worked closely with Linda on this project to assume the coordinators role. I will assist the Task Force Working Group in completing all of the tasks needed for our grant application requirements, and any revised amendments to our grant process that may be required at the federal level or by NoaNet.

Time is of the essence, and we expect to have most or all of the tasks completed in early October. Please feel free to contact us either with your questions, your project support, or an interest in assisting in completing this important Mt. Baker Foothills Broadband Project.

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