

January 2, 2023

Idaho Broadband Advisory Board
c/o Ramón S. Hobdey-Sánchez, J.D., State Broadband Program Manager
Idaho Department of Commerce
700 W. State Street
Boise, Idaho 83702

Re: Creating Idaho's North-South Middle Mile Network

Dear Idaho Broadband Advisory Board,

Idaho Regional Optical Network (IRON) and Intermountain Infrastructure Group (IIG) are pleased to submit our written proposal to construct, own, and manage a broadband network connecting northern Idaho from Grangeville to southern Idaho at Star. Our attached proposal narrative and the route map (Appendix A) has not changed since it was first submitted as a response to the State of Idaho's RFI on December 1, 2022. We have included additional support letters totaling 44 respondents (Appendix B) and have added Appendix C providing fundamental assumptions. This cover letter specifically responds to the three broadband priorities in your December 22, 2022 call for proposals:

- 1. Middle-Mile Broadband Infrastructure: This is a middle mile infrastructure project.** We propose the construction of a 198-mile, 288-strand fiber connection "linking our core network to last mile service providers." Using the latest technology, Idaho Transportation Department's "Dig Once" policy, and with approximately 99% of the network underground, this infrastructure will provide scaled capacity and reliability for at least three decades. As open access infrastructure, it will create a free-market environment providing opportunity for existing Idaho "last mile" service providers and encouraging new Idaho "last mile" service providers to enter communities. This project is dependent on the Port of Lewiston being able to complete their Moscow to Lewiston to Grangeville middle mile network—collectively creating a new 314-mile north to south middle mile network.
- 2. Shovel Ready: This project is shovel ready.** This project is mapped, fielded, and priced using current vendor input. This project has been aligned with two middle mile plans completed in 2022 by independent consultants. Should this project be funded and a contract with the State of Idaho fully executed, it will be ready to enter the permit process. It is estimated to take 36 months to complete and bring online after grant execution.
- 3. Financial Match: 75% of this project will be funded by IIG/IRON.** IRON and IIG commit to providing \$60 million of the \$80 million cost.

This project directly supports five counties and nine communities that are underserved today. It builds open access middle mile infrastructure that does not currently exist and positions Idaho for competitive BEAD funding opportunities. To ensure the maximum amount of access can be provided, we plan to contact last mile Idaho providers and local communities for them to provide input into the final implementation.

Thank you for giving us this opportunity to help you meet Idaho's broadband vision for 2027! Should you have questions, please direct them to Brent Stacey at (208) 520-4617.

In appreciation,



Brent Stacey, President/CEO
Idaho Regional Optical Network



Jeff Yount, President/CEO
Intermountain Infrastructure Group

Creating Idaho's North-South Middle Mile Network

A Fiber Connection between Grangeville and Star

"Shovel-ready" 198-mile, 288-strand fiber network filling Idaho's middle mile gap between Grangeville and Star.

- Supporting Idaho's 2027 Vision; directly serving 5 counties/9 communities currently bypassed
- Providing 21st century capacity and reliability through a 99% underground network
- Improving affordability through non-discriminatory multiple provider access for last mile service
- Positions Idaho for BEAD funding opportunities
- Connecting with the Port of Lewiston Moscow-Grangeville Network in Grangeville to create a 314-mile open access, middle mile backbone from Moscow to Boise that does not currently exist
- Providing a redundant access point in Grangeville for a fiber link between Orofino, Nezperce, and Grangeville that is essential for DIGB2's public safety needs
- Private/public owners committed to maintain the network; scaled capacity for at least three decades

To attain Idaho's 2027 vision of reliable, affordable, accessible high-speed internet, a strategic priority buildout of middle mile is required before Idaho addresses the last mile infrastructure needs that plague the state. A robust north-south fiber segment with multiple east-west fiber connections or loops ensures each Idaho community can be physically networked through backbone infrastructure.

Did you know that Idaho lacks an in-state fiber connection between northern and southern Idaho with all broadband Idaho services traveling through Oregon and Washington? Yes, our state's primary middle mile connectivity for education, healthcare, public safety, government, and commerce bypasses the rural communities of Central Idaho. Is there no greater example of Idaho's digital divide?

The Project: With the State of Idaho's financial support and commitment to ensure access to broadband for all citizens, Idaho Regional Optical Network (IRON) and Intermountain Infrastructure Group (IIG) are ready to take on Idaho's most deficient and challenging middle mile network gap by constructing, owning, and managing a fiber segment linking Grangeville to Star. Complying with Idaho's "Dig Once" policy, the infrastructure will be constructed through Idaho, Adams, Valley, Gem, and Ada counties providing middle mile access to Grangeville, White Bird, Riggins, New Meadows, McCall, Donnelly, Cascade, Emmett, and Star. The 198 mile, open-access network will consist of one conduit with 288-strand fiber cable. By being buried underground or bored into rock, it will be highly secure and reliable. This middle mile network of 288-strand fiber markedly increases Idaho's broadband service capacity and reliability up and down the state for at least the next three decades. *For the project route, see Appendix A.*

IIG will provide services to commercial providers for commerce; IRON will continue its mission of serving education, healthcare, public safety, and governmental needs. 144 strands of the fiber will be owned and managed by IRON with IIG owning and managing the remaining 144 strands. IIG will maintain the entire fiber system.

The upcoming Port of Lewiston’s Moscow to Grangeville open-access, middle mile project that physically connects Latah, Nez Perce, Lewis, and Idaho counties is critical to this Grangeville to Star project and benefits the state through these collective efforts. Combined, the extended north-south network allows for high-speed instate transference with interstate connectivity. The two north-south segments will ensure middle mile capacity of open access infrastructure supporting Idaho’s telecommunication needs for at least the next 30 years and shall *finally* culminate two decades of studies and failed attempts.

The construction team anticipates that this \$80 million project will take 36 months to permit, construct, test, and bring the network online. If permitting can begin by September 2023, construction should commence by April 2024. With the State of Idaho support of \$20 million and \$60 million in private investment, Idaho gains a Grangeville-Star open access solution closing the middle mile gap between northern and southern Idaho. *For project assumptions and schedule, see Appendix C.*

The Planning:

- In 2003, this middle mile gap was identified as north-central Idaho’s single largest infrastructure deficiency at an economic summit hosted in Lewiston and has remained central to the region’s *Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS)* for two decades. Regional economic development, internet service providers, and public safety partners have pushed for a solution.
- Between 2005 and 2010, a middle mile assessment was conducted, a feasibility study was developed, and a Request for Proposal was issued seeking a commercial provider solution.
- In 2009, the Idaho State Legislature passed House Concurrent Resolution No. 21 supporting the planning and construction of new fiber communication facilities between the cities of Riggins and Grangeville.
- In 2010, Frontier Communication was unsuccessful in securing federal stimulus funding for the middle mile gap.
- In 2011, the project was highlighted in the state’s LinkIdaho strategic plan.
- In 2015, the District 2 Interoperability Governance Board (DIGB2) representing Latah, Lewis, Idaho, Nez Perce, and Clearwater county governments began working on public safety middle mile telecommunication issues.
- In 2019, the project was highlighted in the recommendations made by Governor Little’s State Broadband Task Force.
- In 2022, Idaho County and DIGB2 completed a feasibility study for a buried, middle mile network. The study results were considered in the development of this project’s route and estimate of costs.

IRON, IIG, and regional partners prepared to apply for National Telecommunication Information Administration (NTIA) 2022 Middle Mile funding. After exhausting options, the partnership abandoned the application. Federal grant requirements were expensive and did not allow for the partnership to

create the appropriate ownership and management structure to ensure success. Public support from the State of Idaho without federal strings is now essential.

The Partners: In 2007, the non-profit Idaho Regional Optical Network (IRON) was formed to offer high-speed and low-cost broadband network access for higher education, research, healthcare, local government, and public safety. Principal members are Idaho universities/colleges, the Idaho Hospital Association, and the Idaho National Laboratory. Its private partner, Intermountain Infrastructure Group, LLC (IIG), owns and operates a backbone and local networks in California, Washington, Illinois, and Nevada. IIG has 350 network miles with 1,100 miles currently under construction.

The Port of Lewiston, Clearwater Economic Development Association, and DIGB2 have had direct input into this project's planning and design to ensure local community needs are addressed. Regular communication with Valley County partners is ongoing so that this project complements and augments the West Central Mountain Network's fiber project. This project could eventually connect to the proposed Great Treasure Valley open access network.

With a need that is great and support that is high, letters of support accompany this proposal. *For support letters, see Appendix B.*

The Need: AirBridge Broadband Owner David McKnight documents the needs and solutions in his support letter.

The primary challenges we face in delivering quality internet to our customers in rural Northern Idaho are two-fold: 1.) Cost: Each 10 GB fiber connection costs us around \$5,000. 2.) Reliability: There is only one fiber feed for Idaho and Lewis counties, and whenever there is a fiber cut, all providers go down. Not only do our residents suffer due to consequences of these unconscionably excessive fiber costs, but more importantly, our economic opportunities in our communities are severely hindered as businesses are unable to secure reliable bandwidth in a cost-effective manner. That is a big deal.

The project will have two benefits: 1.) Competition will have the net effect of driving down the cost of a fiber connection. 2.) Redundancy will attenuate the effect of fiber cuts on our single fiber connection into the area.

Nez Perce County 911 Coordinator/DIGB2 Representative Dave Taylor provides a public safety perspective.

The proposed middle mile fiber link will be a foundation to support Public Safety Emergency Communications and will provide a primary network path for Next Generation 9-1-1 (NG911) systems through a large part of rural Idaho. This path along with the current existing paths will provide the redundant loops necessary to ensure National Emergency Number Association (NENA) standard 99.999% up time that is needed to properly provide 9-1-1 services to the Citizens of Idaho. Currently if systems are interrupted, Emergency Communications Centers (ECC) cannot receive emergency calls and must transfer 9-1-1 calls to another county. When this occurs all wired and wireless services are affected, disabling the timeliness in which First Responders are able to receive a radio dispatch and respond to the call costing life-saving time when seconds count. Idaho County and Lewis County both experienced this crisis during the pandemic for a 24-hour period.

Idaho's north-south middle mile network does not exist because we have been waiting for a commercial provider to develop it for 20 years. Unfortunately, the Return on Investment (ROI) is expected to be low

and the risk is too great to attract a commercial provider. Because Central Idaho is sparsely populated with miles of narrow canyons, rock, and elevation changes, construction costs are high. Public financial support is needed and will result in public benefit. Thus, public funding should be dedicated to the most flexible and beneficial option for its constituents.

The Benefits:

- **Resiliency** -- This project will protect Central Idaho bandwidth resiliency by providing all providers duplicate access to exchange points. Simply, it allows for more than one telecommunication pathway: one in-state and one out-of-state. If a fiber cable is cut between Grangeville and Lewiston or between Riggins and New Meadows, there will be an architecture to help ensure no more days of lost service. Retail businesses can still run credit cards. Manufacturers can still transfer digital files and schedule deliveries. High schools can still offer digital learning. Online mental health appointments can still be provided. A surgeon can still request online support during a critical procedure.
- **Open Access** -- As open access infrastructure, the North-South Middle Mile Network will create what Idaho loves—a free market environment. The fibers along the entire network funded by this strategic partnership will allow a heretofore unavailable choice for existing “last mile” service providers and promote new entrants into communities. The open access fibers are not intended for incumbents and carriers attempting to just pass through the area. Current and future last mile service providers who want to offer services in Central Idaho will be able to purchase connections from the middle mile network path to extend their last mile networks to reliable and cost-effective internet exchange locations at standard rates, not what the market will bear. This will minimize service monopolies that tend to keep prices high and services low. It will create a fair playing field for all (small, midsize, and large companies) broadband providers.
- **BEAD** -- This middle mile network positions Central Idaho communities for National Telecommunications and Information Administration’s BEAD funding for last mile infrastructure. By Federal Communication Commission data standards, the project will directly benefit three under-served Central Idaho communities and 3,763 people. It will also directly benefit four communities (population of 23,972) currently with only one provider providing 100/20 Mbps. In total, the network will benefit at least 30 anchor institutions. In addition, the middle mile network will serve Idaho statewide by providing a north to south fiber network within Idaho for the first time!

With this kind of strategy where middle mile is the priority, Idaho can achieve our goal of 100% high speed internet availability to Idaho businesses and residents by 2027.

Project Readiness: This proposal is a presentation of the possible. This project is not just an idea. It is “shovel-ready”, except for permitting, with the concept thoroughly considered and engineered. It is ready to execute.

Meeting Idaho’s Broadband Future: The Idaho North-South Middle Mile Network connecting Grangeville to Star is built by a partnership of people who are committed to a statewide middle mile

strategy. It offers a true public-private partnership to connect northern Idaho to southern Idaho with open access. Idaho’s \$20 million financial support will be a fraction of the actual costs to create this missing link in Idaho’s broadband strategy. The 198-mile network will provide Idaho with a competitive advantage for the BEAD last mile federal funding for rural Idaho. It will ensure accessible, affordable, and reliable broadband for Idaho businesses, schools, public institutions, hospitals, and residents. It will stimulate rural economic growth. With a full broadband network in place, every Idaho community can prosper. Rural Idaho communities will not just survive—they will thrive!

**Idaho Regional Optical Network
(IRON)**

Brent Stacey, President/CEO
950 W Bannock Street, Ste 1100
Boise, ID 83702-6140
Company Phone: 888-611-4766
Company Website: www.ironforidaho.net
Brent.Stacey@ironforidaho.net
Brent’s Phone: 208-520-4617

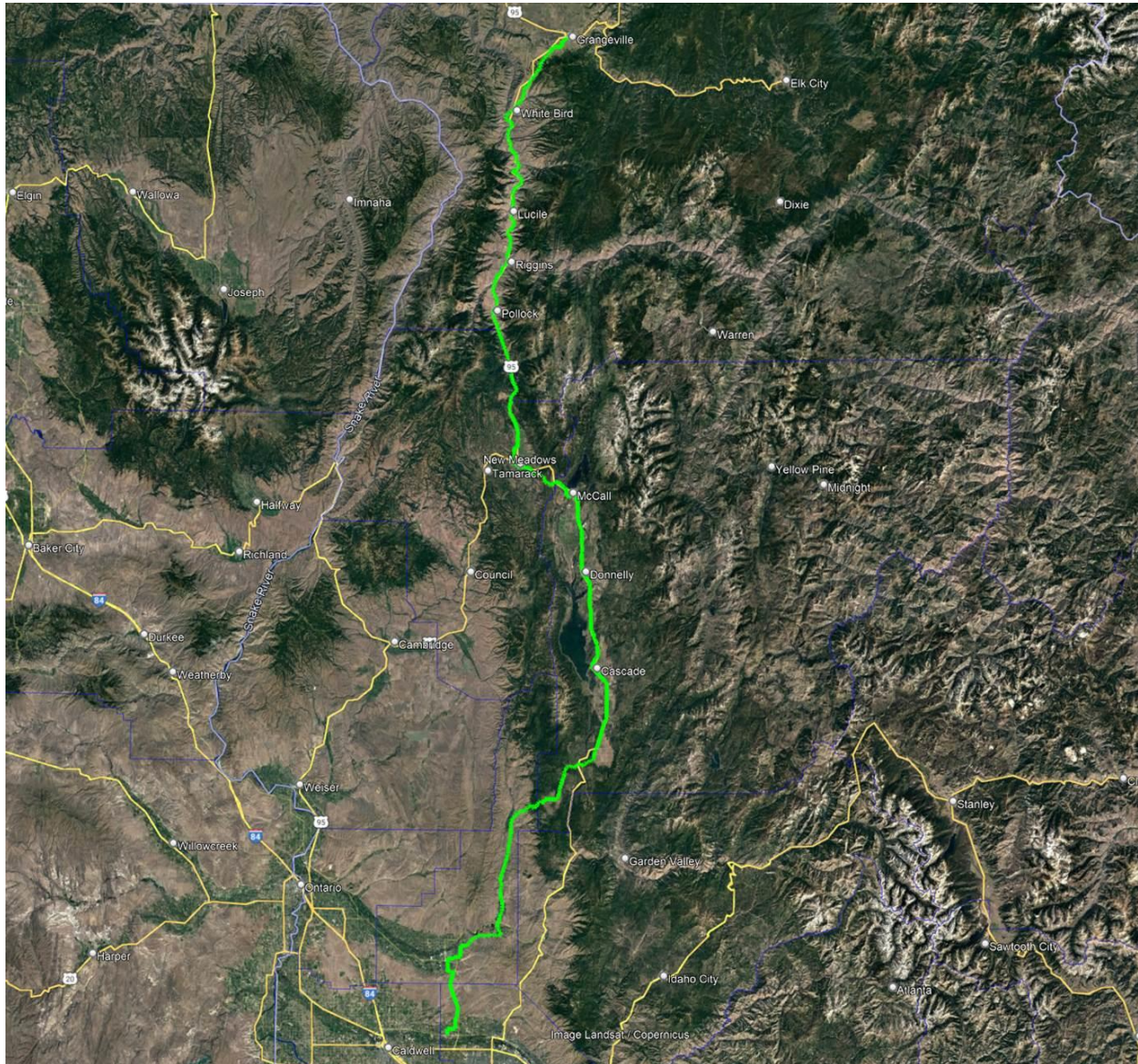
**Intermountain Infrastructure Group
(IIG)**

Jeff Yount, President/CEO
533 Airport Blvd, Suite 400
Burlingame, CA 94010-2013
Company Phone: 970-443-9943
Company Website: www.intermountainig.com
jeff.yount@intermountainig.com
Jeff’s Phone: 303-810-4006

Creating Idaho's North-South Middle Mile Network

A Fiber Connection between Grangeville and Star

Appendix A – Project Route



Creating Idaho's North-South Middle Mile Network

A Fiber Connection between Grangeville and Star

Appendix B – Support Letters

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|---|--|
| 1. Airbridge Broadband | 24. Ida-Lew Economic Development |
| 2. Avista Utilities | 25. Imagine Idaho |
| 3. Cascade Chamber | 26. Latah County Board of County Commissioners |
| 4. Cascade Fire District | 27. Lewis County Board of County Commissioners |
| 5. Cascade Medical Center | 28. McCall Donnelly School District |
| 6. Cascade Public Library | 29. McCall Fire |
| 7. Cascade School District | 30. McCall Greater Chamber |
| 8. City of Boise | 31. McCall Public Library |
| 9. City of Cascade | 32. Mountain View School District 244 |
| 10. City of Grangeville | 33. Nez Perce -Clearwater National Forests Supervisor's Office |
| 11. City of Lewiston | 34. Nez Perce County Board of County Commissioners |
| 12. City of New Meadows | 35. Paulsen, Dave and Doris (veteran, retired) |
| 13. City of Riggins | 36. St. Luke's McCall |
| 14. City of White Bird | 37. Syringa General Hospital |
| 15. Clearwater County Board of County Commissioners | 38. University of Idaho (Information Technology) |
| 16. Clearwater Economic Development Association | 39. University of Idaho (President's Office) |
| 17. District 2 Interoperability Governance Board | 40. University of Idaho (Extension) |
| 18. Donnelly Public Library | 41. Valley County Board of County Commissioners |
| 19. Greater Donnelly Area Chamber | 42. Valley Vision Economic Development Lewis-Clark Valley |
| 20. Idaho Commission of Libraries | |
| 21. Idaho County Board of County Commissioners | |
| 22. Idaho Hospital Association | |
| 23. Idaho State Board of Education | |

These additional support letters were sent directly to the Idaho Department of Commerce. We did not directly receive copies:

1. McCall Store
2. Serfdom Industries



231 W Main
Street
Grangeville ID
83530
208-494-4343

December 16, 2022

Idaho Broadband Advisory Board
c/o Ramón S. Hobdey-Sánchez, J.D.
State Broadband Program Manager
Idaho Department of Commerce
700 W. State Street
Boise, Idaho 83702

Re: Creating Idaho's North-South Middle Mile Network
Letter of Support

Dear Idaho Broadband Advisory Board:

This letter is to affirm support for the Idaho Regional Optical Network and Intermountain Infrastructure Group's public/private partnership for an open access middle mile broadband proposal from Grangeville to Star. It supports Idaho's 2027 broadband strategic goal of providing 100% of Idaho with accessible, reliable, and affordable high-speed internet. This middle mile network will prepare Central Idaho communities for last mile infrastructure and set Idaho up to successfully compete for BEAD funding. The network will link into the Port of Lewiston's open-access middle mile in Grangeville and help to finally provide infrastructure to connect north and south Idaho

My name is David McKnight and I am one of the co-owners of AirBridge Broadband –a wireless internet service provider located in Grangeville, Idaho. We provide internet to 5,000+ homes and businesses in Idaho, Lewis, Clearwater, Nez Perce, and Latah counties. We currently employ 18 individuals in our rural communities, and we are focused on providing the fastest internet at the most affordable price. Our plans range from \$40 to \$100 a month, and we charge the same price for both homes and businesses. We also donate free internet to local governments, first responders, teen centers, charities, churches, and other deserving community organizations. At present, we donate over \$20,000 per month in internet services to organizations that benefit our local communities.

AirBridge Broadband currently utilized three 10GB fiber feeds originating from Seattle (two) and Salt Lake City (one) to feed our network of 5,000+ customers- who then utilize this bandwidth for anything from surfing the internet, watching TV/video, VOIP, telehealth, uploading or downloading huge files for business purposes, etc.

The primary challenges we face in delivering quality internet to our customers in rural Northern Idaho are two fold:

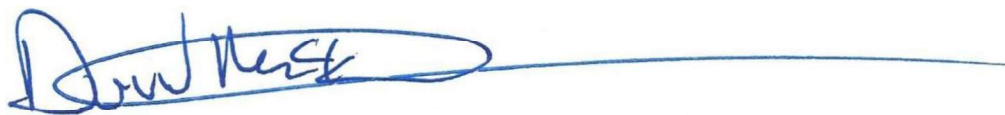
- Cost- each 10GB fiber connection costs us around \$5,000.
- Reliability- there is only one fiber feed into Idaho and Lewis County, and whenever there is a fiber cut coming in from Lewiston, all providers go down, including 911 emergency services. Not only do our residents suffer due to consequences of these unconscionably excessive fiber costs, but more importantly, our economic opportunities in our communities are severely hindered as businesses are unable to secure reliable bandwidth in a cost-effective manner. That is a big deal. Without internet that is both reliable and cost effective, our local communities will soon find themselves no better off than the city of Radiator Springs from the animated movie Cars.

AirBridge Broadband is eager and excited to support the North Central Idaho Middle Mile Project. It will have the following two benefits:

Competition will have the net effect of driving down the cost of a fiber connection
Redundancy will attenuate the effect of fiber cuts on our single fiber connection into the area.
Going forward, if there were a fiber cut on either fiber line, our communities would still be connected to the internet.

It is our opinion that (1) a greater percentage of our rural communities will enjoy the benefits of being connected to the rest of the world via fiber as a direct result of this project, (2) significant economic growth in our local communities will become tangible, and (3) we will no longer be cut off from the rest of the world anytime there is a fiber cut leading into our area.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "David McKnight", followed by a long horizontal line extending to the right.

David McKnight
AirBridge Broadband Co-Owner



803 Main Street
Lewiston, ID 83501

November 21, 2022

Idaho Broadband Advisory Board
c/o Ramon S. Hobdey-Sanchez, J.D.
State Broadband Program Manager
Idaho Department of Commerce
700 W. State Street
Boise, ID 83702

Re: Creating Idaho's North-South Middle Mile Network
Letter of Support

Dear Idaho Broadband Advisory Board:

This letter is to affirm support for the Idaho Regional Optical Network and Intermountain Infrastructure Group's public/private partnership for an open access middle mile broadband proposal from Grangeville to Star. It supports Idaho's 2027 broadband strategic goal of providing 100 percent of Idaho with accessible, reliable, and affordable high-speed internet. This middle mile network will prepare Central Idaho communities for last mile infrastructure and set Idaho up to successfully compete for BEAD funding. The network will link into the Port of Lewiston's open-access middle mile in Grangeville and help to finally provide infrastructure to connect north and south Idaho.

As an Avista Regional Business Manager for the Lewis-Clark Region where part of this project is located, I feel it is important for me to weigh in on behalf of my company.

After the past two years of Covid-related challenges, there is little doubt that broadband is now considered critical infrastructure in America. Access to, and use of, high-speed Internet is vital for today's communities – large and small.

Broadband has revolutionized business, government, education, health care, work and lifestyles. Without robust broadband access and fully technologically literate populations, many communities will be unable to take advantage of the extraordinary benefits that ultra-high-speed, next-generation Internet can provide. This includes many rural communities currently served by Avista. To help support the strengthening and revitalization of rural economies, Avista is taking a multi-pronged approach in the communities we serve. This includes maintaining and improving relationships with public entities to provide fair and non-discriminatory access to utility infrastructure for the buildout of broadband networks that focus on helping rural communities stay connected to the ever-changing, technology-dependent economy.

In today's information-driven global economy, broadband connectivity is not simply an amenity - it

has become essential. However, this connectivity is more than just connecting households, schools and universities, and healthcare centers to each other as well as the rest of the world through high-speed internet. It is also a tool that enables increased productivity for Idaho's farms, factories, forests, mining, and small businesses. Connectivity is fundamental for economic development, innovation, advancements in technology, workforce readiness, and an improved quality of life.

Avista believes the IRON Middle Mile Broadband proposal will serve as a catalyst in transforming much of Idaho.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Mike Tatko". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style. The "M" is large and loops around the "i". The "T" is tall and has a long horizontal stroke that extends to the right. The "k" is written with a loop, and the "o" is a simple circle. The signature is centered within a light gray rectangular box.

Mike Tatko
Regional Business Manager, Lewis-Clark Region
Avista Utilities



December 5, 2022

Idaho Broadband Advisory Board
c/o Ramón S. Hobdey-Sánchez, J.D.
State Broadband Program Manager
Idaho Department of Commerce
700 W. State Street
Boise, Idaho 83702

RE: Creating Idaho's North-South Middle Mile Network - Cascade Chamber Letter of Support

Dear Idaho Broadband Advisory Board:

This letter is to affirm support for the Idaho Regional Optical Network and Intermountain Infrastructure Group's public/private partnership for an open access middle mile broadband proposal from Grangeville to Star. It supports Idaho's 2027 broadband strategic goal of providing 100% of Idaho with accessible, reliable, and affordable high-speed internet. This middle mile network will prepare Central Idaho communities for last mile infrastructure and set Idaho up to successfully compete for BEAD funding. The network will link into the Port of Lewiston's open-access middle mile in Grangeville and help to finally provide infrastructure to connect north and south Idaho.

The mission of the Cascade Chamber of Commerce is to promote a vibrant business climate in the Cascade area; to serve our members, the community and visitors; and to foster a cohesive working relationship among political, educational and civic organizations locally and regionally. We partner with the city, the county, and other community based organizations to create and maintain a healthy business climate and a quality lifestyle for those who live in and visit our community. The Cascade Chamber membership is composed of local business owners, various community based organizations, and folks who support overall Chamber efforts. The Cascade Chamber continues to develop and sustain programs promoting scenic attractions and tourism assets located in and around the Cascade, Idaho area. Visitor interests to the Cascade area spills over the entire Southwestern region of Idaho. The primary tourism product for our area is outdoor recreation because of the natural access to Lake Cascade State Park, the South Fork of the Payette River, mountain trails, adventure biking, and various hot springs. Overall area activities include, but are not limited to; adventure biking, hiking, fishing, swimming, water skiing and jet skiing, kayaking, rafting, snowmobiling, Nordic skiing, snowshoeing, or simply relaxing. Our businesses that support those activities rely on reliable and affordable internet connectivity, for business transactions, marketing, and phone service. Bandwidth demands and prices are ever rising and the proposed middle mile network supports those needs.

We are dedicated to partner with local organizations, state Broadband agencies, and others to ensure our local residents and visitors have access to reliable, affordable broadband connectivity throughout our region (Smith's Ferry, Cascade, Donnelly, Lake Fork, McCall, and New Meadows). Our advertising/marketing strategy includes a "call to action" of "Play Here. Stay Here." Currently, up to 80% of potential visitors today get information and news via the internet and other social media platforms; therefore, we will continue to promote our destination through those sites and on platforms where outdoor adventure seekers exchange information about where to go and what to do. Our primary marketing goal is to ensure that potential visitors to the area can find and "view" recreation choices wherever they look for travel information. Given the world we live in it is paramount to be connected.

Respectfully,

Tom Reinhardt
President



Cascade Rural Fire Protection District
P. O. Box 825
109 East Pine Street
Cascade, Idaho 83611-0825

208.382.3200 – Phone
208.382.4222 – Fax

November 22, 2022

Idaho Broadband Advisory Board
c/o Ramón S. Hobdey-Sánchez, J.D.
State Broadband Program Manager
Idaho Department of Commerce
700 W. State Street
Boise, Idaho 83702

Re: Creating Idaho's North-South Middle Mile Network
Letter of Support

Dear Idaho Broadband Advisory Board:

This letter is to affirm support for the Idaho Regional Optical Network and Intermountain Infrastructure Group's public/private partnership for an open access middle mile broadband proposal from Grangeville to Star. It supports Idaho's 2027 broadband strategic goal of providing 100% of Idaho with accessible, reliable, and affordable high-speed internet. This middle mile network will prepare Central Idaho communities for last mile infrastructure and set Idaho up to successfully compete for BEAD funding. The network will link into the Port of Lewiston's open-access middle mile in Grangeville and help to finally provide infrastructure to connect north and south Idaho

I would like to take this opportunity to introduce myself. I'm Steven Hull and I'm the Fire Chief at Cascade Rural Fire Protection District. We are located in the West Central Mountains in Cascade, Idaho.

We support this project since we rely heavily on broadband. We receive our Computer Aided Dispatch (CAD) alerts through our Mobile Data Terminals (MDT's). The MDTs are mounted in our apparatus so when we are responding to emergencies, we can get updates from our dispatch center without having to ask for it. We can see it in real time as the dispatchers enter it. As a rural area, a lot of our response area has limited coverage. Increased fiber connection would greatly benefit Cascade Rural Fire Protection District during emergency response. With limited broadband coverage, we rely on our radios for communication, which are not reliable 100% of the time. Communication is always a concern for me and I'm always looking for ways to improve it. The North-South Middle Network would be an enormous benefit for our organization.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Steven Hull".

Steven Hull
Fire Chief
Cascade Rural Fire Protection District



November 28, 2022

Idaho Broadband Advisory Board
c/o Ramón S. Hobdey-Sánchez, J.D.
State Broadband Program Manager
Idaho Department of Commerce
700 W. State Street
Boise, Idaho 83702

Re: Creating Idaho's North-South Middle Mile Network, letter of support

Dear Idaho Broadband Advisory Board:

The purpose of this letter is to affirm support for the Idaho Regional Optical Network and Intermountain Infrastructure Group's public/private partnership for an open access middle mile broadband proposal from Grangeville to Star. It supports Idaho's 2027 broadband strategic goal of providing 100% of Idaho with accessible, reliable, and affordable high-speed internet. This middle mile network will prepare Central Idaho communities for last mile infrastructure and set Idaho up to successfully compete for BEAD funding. The network will link into the Port of Lewiston's open-access middle mile in Grangeville and help provide infrastructure to connect north and south Idaho.

As the only health care organization within 30 miles, Cascade Medical Center Hospital District (CMC) is a political subdivision of Valley County and is essentially the public health organization for the area. We are located about half way between Grangeville and Star. Our mission extends beyond caring for our patients to being the watchful stewards of the health and wellness of everyone who lives in or travels to or through our county. Although our hospital has good broadband service, many of our patients do not. And of those who do, it is often expensive and unreliable. The middle mile project will set up our region for success in providing the infrastructure necessary for providers to deliver stable and competitively priced options at the last mile to people's homes and businesses. In health care, this connectivity is vital for telehealth patient care visits and remote patient monitoring (vital sign monitoring from home for hypertension, COPD, heart failure, and diabetes).

Cascade Medical Center is dedicated to partnering with local organizations, state Broadband agencies, and others to see our local residents have access to stable, affordable broadband connectivity. It is vital for our community's commerce, economic options, and the health and well-being of local citizens. Please reach out to us if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

Tom Reinhardt

Tom Reinhardt, CEO
treinhardt@cmchd.org
208-382-4285 x1300
Cascade Medical Center
PO Box 1330
Cascade, ID 83611



12/19/2022

Idaho Broadband Advisory Board

c/o Ramón S. Hobdey-Sánchez, J.D.

State Broadband Program Manager

Idaho Department of Commerce

700 W. State Street

Boise, Idaho 83702

Re: Creating Idaho's North-South Middle Mile
Network Letter of Support

Dear Idaho Broadband Advisory Board:

This letter is to affirm support for the Idaho Regional Optical Network and Intermountain Infrastructure Group's public/private partnership for an open access middle mile broadband proposal from Grangeville to Star. It supports Idaho's 2027 broadband strategic goal of providing 100% of Idaho with accessible, reliable, and affordable high-speed internet. This middle mile network will prepare Central Idaho communities for last mile infrastructure and set Idaho up to successfully compete for BEAD funding. The network will link into the Port of Lewiston's open-access middle mile in Grangeville and help to finally provide infrastructure to connect north and south Idaho.

I am writing on behalf of Cascade Public Library, located in the middle, between Riggins and Star. We service 1000 people in Cascade in addition to nearby towns like Lake Fork, Smiths Ferry and Yellow Pine. Cascade is a growing community with numerous new housing developments both single family homes and apartment dwellings. With all this growth and people to serve, it would be beneficial to have a better internet connection.

I would like to voice out my support for the 198-mile, 288-strand middle mile broadband segment between Grangeville and Star, Idaho to improve our high-speed broadband infrastructure. This improvement will benefit all small towns that are located between Grangeville and Star; towns that mostly keep to themselves. Having better internet service will give them and the City of Cascade easier access to browse the world wide web which will help students and adults on their studies and projects. This improvement will bring the small towns to 21st century technology and enjoy the fast internet, a service that is already available to the other big towns of Idaho.

Sincerely,

Maria Guest

Library Director

Cascade Public Library

librarydirector@cascadeid.us



December 15, 2022

Idaho Broadband Advisory Board
c/o Ramón S. Hobdey-Sánchez, J.D.
State Broadband Program Manager
Idaho Department of Commerce
700 W. State Street
Boise, Idaho 83702

Re: Creating Idaho's North-South Middle Mile Network
Letter of Support

Dear Idaho Broadband Advisory Board:

This letter is to affirm support for the Idaho Regional Optical Network and Intermountain Infrastructure Group's public/private partnership for an open access middle mile broadband proposal from Grangeville to Star. It supports Idaho's 2027 broadband strategic goal of providing 100% of Idaho with accessible, reliable, and affordable high-speed internet. This middle mile network will prepare Central Idaho communities for last mile infrastructure and set Idaho up to successfully compete for BEAD funding. The network will link into the Port of Lewiston's open-access middle mile in Grangeville and help to finally provide infrastructure to connect north and south Idaho

I am the current Superintendent of Cascade School District in Cascade, ID. We are a PreK-12 School in a rural community, a community which fiercely supports the school. As a rural community we have to work very hard to provide an education that will afford our students the ability to be competitive in a quickly advancing world.

The Cascade School District supports this project wholeheartedly. Increased broadband capacity will allow us to stay on mission in our education endeavor for all ages of kids in Cascade by giving them the most advanced learning experiences possible. There are times in the school year and day when the access to the internet is very limited because of the influx of people coming into the community for weekend vacationing and second home stays. We are very fortunate to live in a place where people come to spend their recreational time and love that visitors support our economy, but this does come at a cost to the locals with more limited internet and cell services. The ability for our school aged youth and community to be connected to the surrounding communities and larger world, thus allowing them to become more likely to contribute positively.



Personally, I would love the ability to better connect my two young sons to family around the country via video chat and message sending. The ability to do this currently is very hit and miss, sometimes not available because of our geographic location. I want our family to be connected to other family members and feel that it is important for my boys to know their family & get to grow up in a safe, wholesome, and recreationally active community.

Sincerely,

Joni Stevenson
Superintendent, Cascade School District #422



OFFICE OF THE MAYOR

MAYOR: Lauren McLean

12/7/2022

Idaho Broadband Advisory Board
c/o Ramón S. Hobdey-Sánchez, J.D.
State Broadband Program Manager
Idaho Department of Commerce
700 W. State Street
Boise, Idaho 83702

Re: North-South Middle Mile Network Letter of Support

Dear Idaho Broadband Advisory Board:

This letter is to affirm support for the Idaho Regional Optical Network and Intermountain Infrastructure Group's public/private partnership for an open access middle mile broadband proposal from Grangeville to Star. It supports Idaho's 2027 broadband strategic goal of providing 100% of Idaho with accessible, reliable, and affordable high-speed internet. This middle mile network will prepare Central Idaho communities for last mile infrastructure and set Idaho up to successfully compete for BEAD funding. The network will link into the Port of Lewiston's open-access middle mile in Grangeville and help to finally provide infrastructure to connect north and south Idaho.

The City of Boise and Ada County also developed an open access middle mile broadband proposal called the Greater Treasure Valley Network (GTVN). This network is designed to loop around Ada County and connect to outlying rural communities and to the un/under areas of Ada County, including Star. We believe these two prospective networks should be designed to connect to each other, to provide needed resiliency and access to the colocation centers in Ada County. In fact, we believe *all* federally and state funded open access networks be required to connect to each other, to create a more connected and resilient, but not overbuilt, statewide open access network.

Sincerely,

Lauren McLean
Mayor
City of Boise



December 7, 2022

Idaho Broadband Advisory Board
c/o Ramón S. Hobdey-Sánchez, J.D.
State Broadband Program Manager
Idaho Department of Commerce
700 W. State Street
Boise, Idaho 83702

Re: Creating Idaho's North-South Middle Mile Network

Letter of Support

Dear Idaho, Broadband Advisory Board:

This letter is to affirm support for the Idaho Regional Optical Network and Intermountain Infrastructure Group's public/private partnership for an open access middle mile broadband proposal from Grangeville to Star. It supports Idaho's 2027 broadband strategic goal of providing 100% of Idaho with accessible, reliable, and affordable high-speed internet. This middle mile network will prepare Central Idaho communities for last mile infrastructure and set Idaho up to successfully compete for BEAD funding. The network will link into the Port of Lewiston's open-access middle mile in Grangeville and help to finally provide infrastructure to connect north and south Idaho

The City of Cascade is a resort destination community located at the southern end of Valley County and is a gateway to back country access. Residents of rural counties and their visitors expect digital equity with those living in larger communities.

For many years, the area surrounding Cascade, Donnelly, and McCall have been challenged with access to adequate internet service. The recent pandemic has only increased awareness of the unserved and underserved situation with students trying to learn virtually, businesses working from home and those working while travelling. Grant funding through the BEAD program is an opportunity to improve services throughout Idaho for these and other communities and for future residents. Residents of rural counties expect digital equity with those living in larger communities.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Judith Nissula".

Judith Nissula, Mayor
City of Cascade

Mayor:

Wes Lester

City Administrator:

Tonya Kennedy
tkennedy@grangeville.us

Public Works Director:

Bob Mager
rmager@grangeville.us

**Council Members:**

Dylan Canaday
Amy Farris
Beryl Grant
Pete Lane
Michael Peterson
Scott Winkler

December 14, 2022

County Seat Of Idaho County

Idaho Broadband Advisory Board
c/o Ramón S. Hobdey-Sánchez, J.D.
State Broadband Program Manager
Idaho Department of Commerce
700 W. State Street
Boise, Idaho 83702

Re: Creating Idaho's North-South Middle Mile Network
Letter of Support

Dear Idaho Broadband Advisory Board:

This letter is to affirm support for the Idaho Regional Optical Network and Intermountain Infrastructure Group's public/private partnership for an open access middle mile broadband proposal from Grangeville to Star. It supports Idaho's 2027 broadband strategic goal of providing 100% of Idaho with accessible, reliable, and affordable high-speed internet. This middle mile network will prepare Central Idaho communities for last mile infrastructure and set Idaho up to successfully compete for BEAD funding. The network will link into the Port of Lewiston's open-access middle mile in Grangeville and help to finally provide infrastructure to connect north and south Idaho.

The City of Grangeville is located in north central Idaho approximately 70 miles south of Lewiston on the Camas Prairie. We are the largest Idaho County city we are the county seat of Idaho County. The City has been discussing broadband for decades and we are very interested in the proposed north-South Middle Mile project.

The City of Grangeville supports this middle mile project and is excited over the possibility of the project being approved and moving forward. The proposed North-South Middle Mile project provides much needed redundancy for the City of Grangeville, our citizens and also our businesses. Currently if a line is damaged, Grangeville is cut off until the repairs are corrected. In order to maintain a vibrant and prosperous community, we need to have redundancy for all who reside here.

Please approve funding for the North-South Middle Mile project. It is vital to all, from Grangeville to Star.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Tonya Kennedy", is written over a light blue horizontal line.

Tonya Kennedy
City Administrator



November 29, 2022

Idaho Broadband Advisory Board
C/o Ramon S. Hobdey-Sanchez, J.D.
State Broadband Program Manager
Idaho Department of Commerce
700 W. State Street
Boise, Idaho 83702

RE: Creating Idaho's North-South Middle Mile Network – Letter of Support

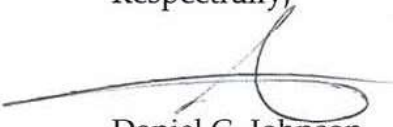
Dear Idaho Broadband Advisory Board:

This letter is to affirm support for the Idaho Regional Optical Network and Intermountain Infrastructure Group's public/private partnership for an open access middle mile broadband proposal from Grangeville to Star. It supports Idaho's 2027 broadband strategic goal of providing 100% of Idaho with accessible, reliable, and affordable high-speed internet. This middle mile network will prepare Central Idaho communities for last mile infrastructure and set Idaho up to successfully compete for BEAD funding. The network will link into the Port of Lewiston's open-access middle mile in Grangeville and help to finally provide infrastructure to connect North and South Idaho.

As a former Idaho legislator and Port of Lewiston Commissioner, I have worked on statewide economic development legislation and projects that have helped communities throughout Idaho. Lewiston and the Port of Lewiston are in a position to contribute to the viability of Central Idaho communities through the North-South Middle Mile project, and I am pleased to be a part of this effort.

I support this project for a few good reasons. First, I believe it is essential that Central Idaho communities have the telecommunication resources needed for industry, education, health care, public safety, and local government. Secondly, I believe it puts these communities on a more equal footing to pursue economic opportunities with other communities like the City of Lewiston and the State of Idaho. Lastly, I believe it provides an incentive for all broadband providers to be involved.

Respectfully,


Daniel G. Johnson
Mayor

November 22, 2022

Idaho Broadband Advisory Board
c/o Ramón S. Hobdey-Sánchez, J.D.
State Broadband Program Manager
Idaho Department of Commerce
700 W. State Street
Boise, Idaho 83702

Re: Creating Idaho's North-South Middle Mile Network
Letter of Support

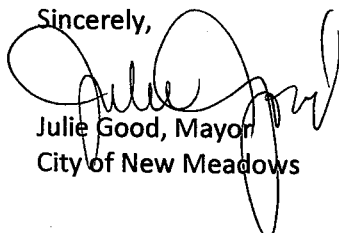
Dear Idaho Broadband Advisory Board:

This letter is to affirm support for the Idaho Regional Optical Network and Intermountain Infrastructure Group's public/private partnership for an open access middle mile broadband proposal from Grangeville to Star. It supports Idaho's 2027 broadband strategic goal of providing 100% of Idaho with accessible, reliable, and affordable high-speed internet. This middle mile network will prepare Central Idaho communities for last mile infrastructure and set Idaho up to successfully compete for BEAD funding. The network will link into the Port of Lewiston's open-access middle mile in Grangeville and help to finally provide infrastructure to connect north and south Idaho.

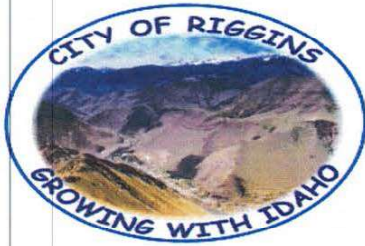
New Meadows is a small town in the west central mountains of Idaho, and we are grateful for the attention you give to the rural challenges we face. We are seeing an overwhelming demand for high quality, affordable, reliable internet in our area. The lack of service, and the instability of existing service, has an enormous impact on our community in so many ways including healthcare access, educational access and impacts on the local economy.

We support this effort because we need to be given the option to build infrastructure that accounts not just for our base population, but also the visitor/weekend/seasonal population. When a large group of Meadows Valley homeowners return to Boise after each weekend because they do not have adequate internet service to work from home throughout the week, it results in a huge impact on our community. Our current lack of a local grocery store is just one of the economic disadvantages the broadband crisis has sustained. Additionally, when an influx of visitors arrive over the weekend, broadband access plummets to accommodate those visiting, which leaves locals without critical access. Thank you for considering the needs and challenges our community faces when making long-term decisions for broadband access to our region.

Sincerely,



Julie Good, Mayor
City of New Meadows



CITY OF RIGGINS

P.O. Box 249
Riggins, Idaho 83549
(208) 628-3394
Fax (208) 628-3792
rigginscity@gmail.com

December 14, 2022

Idaho Department of Commerce
Idaho Broadband Advisory Board
Attention: Ramón S. Hobdey-Sánchez, J.D., State Broadband Program Manager
700 W. State Street
Boise, Idaho 83702

RE: CREATING IDAHO'S NORTH-SOUTH MIDDLE MILE NETWORK LETTER OF SUPPORT

Dear Idaho Broadband Advisory Board:

This letter is to affirm support for the Idaho Regional Optical Network and Intermountain Infrastructure Group's public/private partnership for an open access middle mile broadband proposal from Grangeville to Star. It supports Idaho's 2027 broadband strategic goal of providing 100% of Idaho with accessible, reliable, and affordable high-speed internet. This middle mile network will prepare Central Idaho communities for last mile infrastructure and set Idaho up to successfully compete for BEAD funding. The network will link into the Port of Lewiston's open-access middle mile in Grangeville and help to finally provide infrastructure to connect north and south Idaho.

Riggins is a small city located at the confluence of the Little Salmon River and Main Salmon River, and is between Grangeville and New Meadows. Highway 95 (main route connecting north and south Idaho) runs through the center of town, and brings a variety of recreationalists to the area.

The Salmon River Canyon is one of the most rugged and wild landscapes in Idaho, making it difficult to provide needed services to the growing rural population. At this time, fiber is non-existent between Riggins and Grangeville, and only limited fiber south of Riggins; current speeds are well below acceptable standards... this project is very much needed. The negative impact to our business community, school, and residents when service is disrupted is challenging to say the least. This is a high priority need in the Riggins area.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,


Glenna McClure
Mayor

City of White Bird
PO Box 74 | 212 River Street
White Bird, Idaho 83554
208.839.2294
WhiteBirdCity@outlook.com

December 14, 2022

Idaho Broadband Advisory Board
c/o Ramón S. Hobdey-Sánchez, J.D.
State Broadband Program Manager
Idaho Department of Commerce
700 W. State Street
Boise, Idaho 83702

Re: Creating Idaho's North-South Middle Mile Network
Letter of Support

Dear Idaho Broadband Advisory Board:

This letter is to affirm support for the Idaho Regional Optical Network and Intermountain Infrastructure Group's public/private partnership for an open access middle mile broadband proposal from Grangeville to Star. It supports Idaho's 2027 broadband strategic goal of providing 100% of Idaho with accessible, reliable, and affordable high-speed internet. This middle mile network will prepare Central Idaho communities for last mile infrastructure and set Idaho up to successfully compete for BEAD funding. The network will link into the Port of Lewiston's open-access middle mile in Grangeville and help to finally provide infrastructure to connect north and south Idaho.

The City of White Bird is a very small rural community located in North Central Idaho. With the Salmon and Snake Rivers out our back door it is sometimes easy to forget how dependent we have all become on the internet, but it has become a necessity. Finding a fast and reliable internet service has been a challenge and believe me we have tried – them all.

An internet service that is reliable and affordable would be a huge advantage to our small community and the surrounding areas. Many of our small businesses along with future businesses would greatly benefit opening up doors to unseen opportunities.

Sincerely,



Sandra L. Murphy City Clerk/Treasurer
On behalf of the City Council

P.O. Box 586
Orofino, ID 83544
Phone: (208) 476-3615
Fax: (208) 476-8902



Commissioners
Rick Winkel, Chair
Mike Ryan
Vince Frazier

December 12, 2022

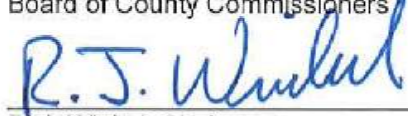
Idaho Broadband Advisory Board
c/o Ramón S. Hobdey-Sánchez, J.D.
State Broadband Program Manager
Idaho Department of Commerce
700 W. State Street
Boise, Idaho 83702


Re: Creating Idaho's North-South Middle Mile Network
Letter of Support

Dear Idaho Broadband Advisory Board:

This letter is to affirm support for the Idaho Regional Optical Network and Intermountain Infrastructure Group's public/private partnership for an open access middle mile broadband proposal from Grangeville to Star. It supports Idaho's 2027 broadband strategic goal of providing 100% of Idaho with accessible, reliable, and affordable high-speed internet. This middle mile network will prepare Central Idaho communities for last mile infrastructure and set Idaho up to successfully compete for BEAD funding. The network will link into the Port of Lewiston's open-access middle mile in Grangeville and help to finally provide infrastructure to connect North and South Idaho

Clearwater County
Board of County Commissioners


Rick Winkel, Chairman


Mike Ryan


Vince Frazier

November 28, 2022



Idaho Broadband Advisory Board
c/o Ramón S. Hobdey-Sánchez, J.D.
State Broadband Program Manager
Idaho Department of Commerce
700 W. State Street
Boise, Idaho 83702

Re: Creating Idaho's North-South Middle Mile Network
Letter of Support

Dear Idaho Broadband Advisory Board:

This letter is to affirm support from the Clearwater Economic Development Association (CEDA) for the Idaho Regional Optical Network and Intermountain Infrastructure Group's public/private partnership for an open access middle mile broadband proposal from Grangeville to Star. The project partners are seeking \$20 million in state commitment. This project supports Idaho's 2027 broadband strategic goal of providing 100% of Idaho with accessible, reliable, and affordable high-speed internet. This middle mile network will prepare Central Idaho communities for last mile infrastructure and set Idaho up to successfully compete for BEAD funding. The network will link into the Port of Lewiston's open-access middle mile in Grangeville and help to finally provide infrastructure to connect north and south Idaho

CEDA is a non-profit community and economic development organization that has served north central Idaho since 1968. Our membership and board is anchored by elected representatives from Nez Perce, Latah, Lewis, and Idaho counties, as well as education, the Nez Perce Tribe, partner organizations, and the private sector. CEDA has been a champion for establishing and improving broadband service for our region's communities and businesses for 20 years. It is addressed in our official regional planning document, the Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy, we have engaged with providers, and we have directly secured funding to improve incremental access in our region.

Our priority these past few years is to establish a redundant, open access fiber system for our region and to create a north-south connection. With the leadership of the Port of Lewiston, District 2 Interoperability Governance Board, and Idaho Regional Optical Network, this effort is converging to create a robust, truly open-access, dark-fiber network to benefit residents, governments, communities, and businesses across the state.

Sincerely,

Dodd Snodgrass
Executive Director



North-Central Idaho- District 2 Interoperability Governance Board

Idaho Broadband Advisory Board
c/o Ramón S. Hobdey-Sánchez, J.D.
State Broadband Program Manager
Idaho Department of Commerce
700 W. State Street
Boise, Idaho 83702

December 2, 2022

re: Letter of Support- Creating Idaho's North-South Middle Mile Network

Dear Idaho Broadband Advisory Board:

This letter supports the Idaho Regional Optical Network (IRON) and Intermountain Infrastructure Group's (IIG) public/private partnership proposal to establish an open access, middle mile broadband architecture that will connect Grangeville to Star, Idaho. The initiative underscores Idaho's 2027 broadband strategic goal of providing 100% of Idaho with accessible, reliable, and affordable high-speed internet. This middle mile network will prepare Central Idaho communities for last mile infrastructure and set Idaho up to successfully compete for BEAD funding. The proposed network will link into the Port of Lewiston's open-access middle mile in Grangeville and help to finally provide infrastructure that will connect north and south Idaho, within the state of Idaho.

Further, an engineering study has also been completed to construct a redundant broadband path that will connect Grangeville and Orofino, Idaho. This assessment has recommended the construction path and identified the required capital necessary to establish this complimentary fiber path and link it into the Port of Lewiston and IRON/IIG projects.

The District 2 Interoperability Governance Board's membership of public safety officials, tribal and elected public officials from the five north-central Idaho Counties and Nez Perce Tribe have long sought to establish these vital links. The IRON/IIG open access proposal will achieve this goal.

In addition to providing direct economic, education, governmental and healthcare benefits, the IRON/IIG project proposal will also provide the bandwidth, speeds and available middle mile network redundancy that will finally enable PSAP 9-1-1 call taking and public safety emergency response functions to be transferred from one dispatch center to another across the five counties from Moscow to Grangeville in the event of a local service loss or disaster emergency. The IRON/IIG proposal is the most robust, the strongest resourced, best-defined effort to build this middle mile segment to support last mile public and private connectivity DIGB2 has encountered. We unequivocally endorse this proposal and commend it to the Idaho Broadband Advisory Board for funding.

Sincerely,
Jerry Zumalt
District 2 DIGB Chair



Clearwater, Idaho, Latah, Lewis, Nez Perce Counties; Nezperce Tribe; Cities of Lewiston and Moscow; District II Local, State, and Federal Planning Participants



Idaho Broadband Advisory Board
% Ramon S. Hobdey-Sanchez, J.D.
State Broadband Program Manager
700 W. State St.
Boise, ID 83702

Re: Creating Idaho's North-South
Middle Mile Network
Letter of Support

Dear Idaho Broadband Advisory Board:

This letter is to affirm support for the Idaho Regional Optical Network and Intermountain Infrastructure Group's public/private partnership for an open access middle mile broadband proposal from Grangeville to Star. This proposal supports Idaho's 2027 broadband strategic goal of providing 100% of Idaho with accessible, reliable, and affordable high-speed internet. This middle mile network will prepare Central Idaho communities for last mile infrastructure and set Idaho up to compete successfully for BEAD funding. The network will link into the Port of Lewiston's open-access middle mile in Grangeville and help to provide infrastructure to connect north and south Idaho.

Donnelly is a community of fewer than 3,000 Idaho residents, and we at the Donnelly Public Library view this proposal as an investment in broadband infrastructure and equipment that will greatly benefit the citizens of our community through increased public safety and WiFi access. Currently many residents are unable to access the internet either for business, pleasure, or education because of their location or cost, and rely on the library for those needs.

Expanded WiFi access will address community needs that are currently going unmet should the library be forced to close for a public health emergency, holiday closures, or other community emergencies. Residents currently cannot access the unemployment claims website, access the library's and/or schools' e-books and e-audio collections, or access the school districts' K-12 online learning portals when those situations occur. Having access to WiFi in our society today, wherever one might live, is no longer a luxury, it is a necessity. Livelihoods and education are so dependent on the internet that to be without it jeopardizes an individual's and a community's progress. Employees cannot work from home, and students lag behind because they can't access the information they need to be successful. The ramifications of being denied WiFi access in today's world are enormous.

Thank you for your time and consideration of this grant. It would be a wise and necessary decision to support it.

Sincerely On Behalf of The Donnelly Public Library Board of Trustees and The Library Director,

Sherry L. Scheline, Director
Donnelly Public Library District
Donnelly, Idaho 83615

Greater Donnelly Area Chamber of Commerce
PO Box 83 • Donnelly, ID 83615

November 29, 2022

Idaho Broadband Advisory Board
c/o Ramón S. Hobdey-Sánchez, J.D.
State Broadband Program Manager
Idaho Department of Commerce
700 W. State Street
Boise, Idaho 83702

Re: Creating Idaho's North-South Middle Mile Network
Letter of Support

Dear Idaho Broadband Advisory Board:

This letter is to affirm support for the Idaho Regional Optical Network and Intermountain Infrastructure Group's public/private partnership for an open access middle mile broadband proposal from Grangeville to Star. It supports Idaho's 2027 broadband strategic goal of providing 100% of Idaho with accessible, reliable, and affordable high-speed internet. This middle mile network will prepare Central Idaho communities for last mile infrastructure and set Idaho up to successfully compete for BEAD funding. The network will link into the Port of Lewiston's open-access middle mile in Grangeville and help to finally provide infrastructure to connect north and south Idaho

We are the Donnelly Area Chamber of Commerce and we represent approximately 50 local businesses, nonprofits, and individuals in the Donnelly area.

We support this project because it addresses a need in our community and would be beneficial to all of the businesses we represent. Having affordable high-speed internet is something that we have been lacking in Valley County and a project like this would benefit our members as well as the community around us. The lack of reliable internet has limited businesses and individuals in our area so with improved speeds and costs it opens up opportunities for our current residents and allows for growth as well.

Please consider this project for Idaho.

Sincerely,

Allison Hatzenbuhler

President

Greater Donnelly Area Chamber of Commerce

December 6, 2022

Idaho Broadband Advisory Board
c/o Ramón S. Hobdey-Sánchez, J.D.
State Broadband Program Manager
Idaho Department of Commerce
700 W. State Street
Boise, Idaho 83702

Re: Creating Idaho's North-South Middle Mile Network
Letter of Support

Dear Idaho Broadband Advisory Board,

I am writing to affirm support for the Idaho Regional Optical Network (IRON) and Intermountain Infrastructure Group's public/private partnership for an open access middle mile broadband proposal from Grangeville to Star. This project supports the state's 2027 broadband strategic goal of providing accessible, reliable, and affordable high-speed internet to all of Idaho. The middle mile network will prepare central Idaho communities for last mile infrastructure and set Idaho up to successfully compete for BEAD funding. The network will link into the Port of Lewiston's open-access middle mile in Grangeville and help to finally provide infrastructure to connect north and south Idaho.

Increasing access to broadband, and the resulting services and resources it provides, is a key strategy in the work of the Idaho Commission for Libraries and the communities we serve across the state. The Idaho libraries we work with witness firsthand how gaps in the state's broadband infrastructure impact a great proportion of Idaho residents, especially our most vulnerable populations.

The State Librarian serves with IRON representatives on the Western State Pact Broadband Group and we continue to meet regularly to discuss ways to expand digital access. We have appreciated IRON's strong partnership and support of community anchor institutions, including libraries. The nonprofit's commitment to creating a middle mile backbone for our state will help ensure that residents in central Idaho have the reliable, affordable broadband they need to access critical services, including education, workforce development, and health care.

Sincerely,



Stephanie Bailey-White
State Librarian





Phone (208)983-2751 FAX (208)983-1428

320 West Main Street, Grangeville, ID 83530

BOARD OF IDAHO COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

November 22, 2022

Idaho Broadband Advisory Board
c/o Ramon S. Hobdey-Sanchez, J. D.
State Broadband Program Manager
Idaho Department of Commerce
700 W State Street
Boise, ID 83702

RE: Creating Idaho's North-South Middle Mile Network
Letter of Support

Dear Idaho Broadband Advisory Board:

This letter is to affirm support for the Idaho Regional Optical Network and Intermountain Infrastructure Group's public/private partnership for an open access middle mile broadband proposal from Grangeville to Star. It supports Idaho's 2027 broadband strategic goal of providing 100% of Idaho with accessible, reliable, and affordable high-speed internet. This middle mile network will prepare Central Idaho communities for last mile infrastructure and set Idaho up to successfully compete for BEAD funding. The network will link into the Port of Lewiston's open-access middle mile in Grangeville and help to finally provide infrastructure to connect north and south Idaho.

The Idaho County Board of Commissioners have been working in conjunction with the Commissioners of the other four Counties that make up District 2 in North Idaho to make this vital link between Northern and Southern Idaho a reality. We feel that the proposal put forward by IRON is the best chance for this to become a reality.

This project is vital to providing redundancy to the entire northern portion of the State which it does not have currently. In addition, it will be capable of providing the bandwidth and speeds that are so essential in today's business, healthcare and governmental arenas that are currently lacking. On the County level, it will provide a redundant link between the 5 County PTACs that will allow any one County to assume dispatch, enhanced 911 or phone over IP for a County whose dispatch may go down during a disaster such as fire or flooding. It will also allow citizens to take advantage of telehealth or work-from-home opportunities.

Sincerely,

R. Skipper Brandt, Chairman

Ted Lindsley

Denis B. Duman

December 12, 2022

Idaho Broadband Advisory Board
c/o Ramón S. Hobdey-Sánchez, J.D.
State Broadband Program Manager
Idaho Department of Commerce
700 W. State Street
Boise, Idaho 83702

Re: Creating Idaho's North-South Middle Mile Network
Letter of Support

Dear Idaho Broadband Advisory Board:

This letter is to affirm support for the Idaho Regional Optical Network and Intermountain Infrastructure Group's public/private partnership for an open access middle mile broadband proposal from Grangeville to Star. It supports Idaho's 2027 broadband strategic goal of providing 100% of Idaho with accessible, reliable, and affordable high-speed internet. This middle mile network will prepare Central Idaho communities for last mile infrastructure and set Idaho up to successfully compete for BEAD funding. The network will link into the Port of Lewiston's open-access middle mile in Grangeville and help to finally provide infrastructure to connect north and south Idaho.

The Idaho Hospital Association (IHA) is a statewide, not-for-profit trade association that brings hospital/health care leaders together to identify issues of mutual concern and to address these issues in a responsible manner that ensures quality health care for the patients and communities our hospital members serve throughout Idaho.

Idaho has many areas with limited access to specialty care due to its rural and frontier nature. Additionally, there is an alarming healthcare provider shortage throughout Idaho. Telemedicine can be a useful tool by helping to deliver health care services to areas where there are physician shortages and/or hospital capacity constraints and to provide care to patients unable to travel far from their communities due to distance or environment. The use of telehealth and telemedicine in Idaho can be instrumental in improving patient care management and helps to alleviate barriers to accessing needed healthcare. The effective use of telemedicine, particularly within hospitals sharing high-resolution imaging, is dependent on highly reliable, redundant, and high-speed broadband.

Sincerely,



Brian Whitlock, President/CEO
Idaho Hospital Association



650 W. State Street • Suite 307 • Boise, ID • 83702
P.O. Box 83720 • Boise, ID • 83720-0037

December 12, 2022

Idaho Broadband Advisory Board
c/o Ramón S. Hobdey-Sánchez, J.D.
State Broadband Program Manager
Idaho Department of Commerce
700 W. State Street
Boise, Idaho 83702

Dear Idaho Broadband Advisory Board:

This letter is to affirm the Office of the State Board of Education's support for the Idaho Regional Optical Network (IRON) and Intermountain Infrastructure Group's public/private partnership for an open access middle mile broadband proposal from Grangeville to Star. This partnership would support Idaho's 2027 broadband strategic goal of providing 100% of Idaho with accessible, reliable, and affordable high-speed internet. The middle mile network will prepare central Idaho communities for last mile infrastructure and set Idaho up to successfully compete for Broadband Equity, Access, and Deployment (BEAD) Program funding. The network will link into the Port of Lewiston's open-access middle mile in Grangeville and help to finally provide infrastructure to connect north and south Idaho

As you know, the State Board of Education provides general governance and supervision of all public education (kindergarten – Ph.D.) in the state. Access to uniform and thorough education is a constitutional mandate the framers of our state envisioned over 130 years ago. However, the rapid increase of technology-based instruction puts students in our rural and remote schools at a distinct disadvantage when it comes to access to instructional content enjoyed by students at urban and suburban schools in our state. Indeed, no fiber exists between Grangeville and Riggins, and only limited fiber present from Riggins to Star. Increasing middle-mile fiber connectivity will enhance delivery of online instruction by the Idaho Digital Learning Academy (www.idahodigitallearning.org/) and Online Idaho (www.online.idaho.edu).

For these reasons, I respectfully request your support for the IRON/IIG partnership proposal.

Sincerely,

Matt Freeman
Executive Director

November 15th 2022

Idaho Broadband Advisory Board
c/o Ramón S. Hobdey-Sánchez, J.D.
State Broadband Program Manager
Idaho Department of Commerce
700 W. State Street
Boise, Idaho 83702



Re: Creating Idaho's North-South Middle Mile Network
Letter of Support

Dear Idaho Broadband Advisory Board:

This letter is to affirm support for the Idaho Regional Optical Network and Intermountain Infrastructure Group's public/private partnership for an open access middle mile broadband proposal from Grangeville to Star. It supports Idaho's 2027 broadband strategic goal of providing 100% of Idaho with accessible, reliable, and affordable high-speed internet. This middle mile network will prepare Central Idaho communities for last mile infrastructure and set Idaho up to successfully compete for BEAD funding. The network will link into the Port of Lewiston's open-access middle mile in Grangeville and help to finally provide infrastructure to connect north and south Idaho

I am the Director of the Idaho County / Lewis County Economic Development Council (Ida-Lew EDC). We are a Non-Profit LLC sponsored by Federal, State, County and City programs as well as our Local Business Communities. Our office is located in Grangeville, Idaho, the current southern terminus of the existing Middle Mile program.

As an Economic Development Council we represent, support and advocate for our local Central Idaho businesses and industries. Though we are 'Rural' in every sense of the word, we continue to be a vibrant and necessary part of our State Economy. The future health of our local economy, our agriculture, timber, tourism, manufacturing and retail sectors, all require access to reliable, affordable, high-speed, internet service.

If our Central Idaho Industries are to compete in the 21st Century, completion of the Middle Mile from Grangeville to Star is absolutely necessary.

Sincerely,

Tim McDonald
Director
Idaho County / Lewis County Economic Development Council
208-983-8302
tim@Ida-Lew.org



Dec. 7, 2022

Idaho Broadband Advisory Board
c/o Ramón S. Hobdey-Sánchez, J.D.
State Broadband Program Manager
Idaho Department of Commerce
700 W. State Street
Boise, Idaho 83702

Re: Creating Idaho's North-South Middle Mile Network - Letter of Support

Dear Idaho Broadband Advisory Board:

This letter is to affirm support for the Idaho Regional Optical Network (IRON) and Intermountain Infrastructure Group's public/private partnership for an open access middle mile broadband proposal from Grangeville to Star. It supports Idaho's 2027 broadband strategic goal of providing 100% of Idaho with accessible, reliable, and affordable high-speed internet. This middle mile network will prepare Central Idaho communities for last mile infrastructure and set Idaho up to successfully compete for BEAD funding. The network will link into the Port of Lewiston's open-access middle mile in Grangeville and help to finally provide infrastructure to connect north and south Idaho.

Imagine Idaho Foundation is a 501(c)(3) non-profit created to connect rural Idaho with broadband infrastructure leading to Idahoans securing accessible, reliable, and affordable internet access, that is future-proof and high-speed to further economic prosperity. Incorporated in Idaho Falls, Idaho, we are a non-biased, grant funded, private entity that serves as an educational and capacity building resource for Idaho and its unserved and underserved communities. We have over 60 coalition members supporting our work, which can be found at www.imagineidaho.org. We are currently supporting 14 grantee projects statewide and track the broadband planning in all 44 counties.

I urge the Idaho Broadband Advisory Board to approve the IRON and Intermountain Infrastructure Group's middle mile project because it is a critical part of ensuring last mile connectivity for Central Idaho. The proposed project will link to the Port of Lewiston's middle mile project in Grangeville extending the north-south reach to Moscow. Imagine Idaho also supports the Port of Lewiston's middle mile project so that they can connect Latah, Nez Perce, Lewis, Idaho, and Clearwater counties. Thus, this project is a well-planned, important strategic extension to connect the region. Having vital middle mile service in the region will allow communities to bring last mile broadband fiber to residents, that otherwise simply would not be possible. Supporting this project will impact thousands of Idahoans and allow greater access to education, telehealth, and business opportunities in Idaho's unserved and underserved communities changing the economic trajectory and securing Idaho's future.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Christina Culver
Director



**Latah County
COMMISSIONERS**
PO Box 8068 / 522 S Adams
Moscow, Idaho 83843

Phone: (208) 883-7208
Fax: (208) 883-2280
Email: bocc@latahcountyid.gov

Kathie LaFortune ♦ Thomas C. Lamar ♦ David McGraw

December 5, 2022

Idaho Broadband Advisory Board
c/o Ramón S. Hobdey-Sánchez, J.D.
State Broadband Program Manager
Idaho Department of Commerce
700 W. State Street
Boise, Idaho 83702

Re: Creating Idaho's North-South Middle Mile Network
Letter of Support

Dear Idaho Broadband Advisory Board:

This letter is to affirm support for the Idaho Regional Optical Network and Intermountain Infrastructure Group's public/private partnership for an open access middle mile broadband proposal from Grangeville to Star. It supports Idaho's 2027 broadband strategic goal of providing 100% of Idaho with accessible, reliable, and affordable high-speed internet. This middle mile network will prepare Central Idaho communities for last mile infrastructure and set Idaho up to successfully compete for BEAD funding. The network will link into the Port of Lewiston's open-access middle mile in Grangeville and help to finally provide infrastructure to connect north and south Idaho.

Latah County is located in North Central Idaho. We are a rich agricultural and timber region as well as home to many thriving businesses and the University of Idaho. We are also one of the most underserved areas of the state in regards to broadband infrastructure due to our diverse geography and the distances between our communities. Latah County has formed a broadband coalition to assess and address middle mile needs unique to Latah County, but we need a regional effort to address the backbone of fiber that will then serve the ribs that can stretch into all areas of our diverse county.

Broadband has become a critical infrastructure need throughout the state of Idaho and the country. It is needed for emergency communications, education, telehealth, and business attraction and expansion. The Grangeville to Star project will finally connect northern Idaho to Southern Idaho without having to pass out of our state and then return. This will create redundancy and resilience. Open access fiber will entice our local Internet Service Providers to

provide last mile service to the farmers, timber professionals, and aspiring businesses that are located within Latah County. If we can have equivalent access to education, telehealth and communication technologies for all of Latah County then our county and our region will remain strong and competitive with other parts of the state and country.
Thanks for your consideration of this request.

Sincerely,

Kathie LaFortune
Chair



Lewis County ^{em} 12/4/22

ALESIA WINNER
Clerk of the District
Court
Ex-Officio Auditor &
Recorder

K Vicki Gifford
Chief Deputy

510 Oak Street, RM #1
Nezperce, ID 83543

AUDITOR

Phone: (208) 937-2661
Fax: (208) 937-9234

COURT

Phone: (208) 937-2251
Fax: (208) 937-9233

November 21, 2022

Idaho Broadband Advisory Board
c/o Ramón S. Hobdey-Sánchez, J.D.
State Broadband Program Manager
Idaho Department of Commerce
700 W. State Street
Boise, Idaho 83702

Re: Creating Idaho's North-South Middle Mile
Network
Letter of Support

Dear Idaho Broadband Advisory Board:

This letter is to affirm support for the Idaho Regional Optical Network and Intermountain Infrastructure Group's public/private partnership for an open access middle mile broadband proposal from Grangeville to Star. It supports Idaho's 2027 broadband strategic goal of providing 100% of Idaho with accessible, reliable, and affordable high-speed internet. This middle mile network will prepare Central Idaho communities for last mile infrastructure and set Idaho up to successfully compete for BEAD funding. The network will link into the Port of Lewiston's open-access middle mile in Grangeville and help to finally provide infrastructure to connect north and south Idaho

Lewis County is situated in the North Central part of Idaho and is a rural County with limited access to broadband services.

Being a small county with a population of approximately 3800 residents and trying to improve broadband for our local business and school districts. During the pandemic we realized what challenges our residents faced. With the addition of fiber to our area we would be able to attract and retain business and young people in our county.

Sincerely,

Greg
Johnson
Lewis
County



December 11, 2022

Idaho Broadband Advisory Board
c/o Ramón S. Hobdey-Sánchez, J.D.
State Broadband Program Manager
Idaho Department of Commerce
700 W. State Street
Boise, Idaho 83702

Re: Creating Idaho's North-South Middle Mile Network

Dear Idaho Broadband Advisory Board,

This letter is on behalf of the McCall Area Chamber of Commerce and Visitors Bureau (MACCVB) Board of Directors in support for the Idaho Regional Optical Network and Intermountain Infrastructure Group's public/private partnership for an open access middle mile broadband proposal from Grangeville to Star. It supports Idaho's 2027 broadband strategic goal of providing 100% of Idaho with accessible, reliable, and affordable high-speed internet. This middle mile network will prepare Central Idaho communities for last mile infrastructure and set Idaho up to successfully compete for BEAD funding. The network will link into the Port of Lewiston's open-access middle mile in Grangeville and help to finally provide infrastructure to connect north and south Idaho

The MACCVB is the concerted voice of local businesses and organizations, supporting their sustainability as well as the sustainability of the community at large. We are committed to striving for a healthy community with a sought-after quality of life.

As a local organization that works closely with business owners and the community, we have seen the disadvantages our region has to face to find reliable broadband resources and the impacts it has also had on our small businesses, governments, and residents. We are committed to assisting the West Central Mountains Economic Development Council and its partners with this work and enthusiastically endorse this application.

We thank you in advance for your consideration.

Sincerely,
The McCall Area Chamber of Commerce & Visitors Bureau Board of Directors

P.O. Box 350 | 605 N. 3rd Street | McCall, ID 83638

P: 208.634.7631

info@mccallchamber.org

www.mccallchamber.org

December 12, 2022

Idaho Broadband Advisory Board
c/o Ramón S. Hobdey-Sánchez, J.D.
State Broadband Program Manager
Idaho Department of Commerce
700 W. State Street
Boise, Idaho 83702

Re: Letter of Support for Creating Idaho's North-South Middle Mile Network

Dear Idaho Broadband Advisory Board:

This letter affirms support for the Idaho Regional Optical Network and Intermountain Infrastructure Group's public/private partnership for an open-access middle-mile broadband proposal from Grangeville to Star. It supports Idaho's 2027 broadband strategic goal of providing 100% of Idaho with accessible, reliable, and affordable high-speed internet. This middle-mile network will prepare Central Idaho communities for last-mile infrastructure and set Idaho up to compete successfully for BEAD funding.

The network will link into the Port of Lewiston's open-access middle mile in Grangeville and help to provide infrastructure to connect north and south Idaho.

McCall Fire and EMS provides fire and rescue services, including paramedic-level ambulance service within Valley County and mutual aid assistance to portions of Adams County and Idaho County. The fire district encompasses one hundred square miles, and the ambulance response area, nearly two thousand square miles of mountainous terrain in central Idaho. In the past year, the district has responded to over 800 calls for service, including 500 emergency medical calls.

As with everything in this day in age, our operations rely heavily on communications, including data, voice, and the internet. Our cardiac monitors communicate through the WIFI on our apparatus to share critical information with St. Luke's McCall and hospitals in the treasure valley. As our ability to share data can slow at different times of the year, it causes these processes to slow and become unreliable. Anything we can do to increase connectivity throughout central Idaho clearly benefits our customers and anyone in central Idaho who is experiencing a medical, fire, or rescue emergency.

Sincerely,



Garrett de Jong, Fire Chief, McCall Fire & EMS



15 December, 2022

Idaho Broadband Advisory Board
c/o Ramón S. Hobdey-Sánchez, J.D.
State Broadband Program Manager
Idaho Department of Commerce
700 W. State Street
Boise, Idaho 83702

Re: Creating Idaho's North-South Middle Mile Network
Letter of Support

Dear Idaho Broadband Advisory Board:

This letter is to support the Idaho Regional Optical Network and Intermountain Infrastructure Group's public/private partnership for an open access middle mile broadband proposal from Grangeville to Star.

As the Library Director at the McCall Public Library, I have seen vast changes in Idaho infrastructure needs since I started working here nearly 20 years ago. Located in the middle of this project's geographical spread, we have, over the years, lacked any funding to fill in our "dead zone" where people don't have broadband coverage. As a result, this very rural and remote part of Idaho has been at a disadvantage. The "dead zone" creates even more of a gap between the "haves" and the "have-nots" of our great state of Idaho.

This project will support Idaho's 2027 broadband strategic goal of providing 100% of Idaho with accessible, reliable, and affordable high-speed internet. This middle mile network will prepare Central Idaho communities for last mile infrastructure and set Idaho up to successfully compete for BEAD funding. The network will link into the Port of Lewiston's open-access middle mile in Grangeville and help to finally provide infrastructure to connect north and south Idaho.

As a librarian, I am committed to helping provide access to information, education, and other critical services for everyone. With this project providing more reliable, affordable capacity, locals won't be at the mercy of our notoriously low-serviced, high-priced monopolies. This will increase productivity and provide a basic service to all. Internet connectivity was, when I started working here, a dizzying new idea. It has since become essential. I hope you can support this application.

Sincerely,

Meg Lojek/ McCall Public Library



"Developing Lifelong Learners Today"

McCall-Donnelly Joint School District No. 421
120 Idaho Street, McCall, ID 83638
Phone: (208) 634-2161 Fax: (208) 634-4075

December 5, 2022

Idaho Broadband Advisory Board
c/o Ramón S. Hobdey-Sánchez, J.D.
State Broadband Program Manager
Idaho Department of Commerce
700 W. State Street
Boise, Idaho 83702

Re: Creating Idaho's North-South Middle Mile Network
Letter of Support

Dear Idaho Broadband Advisory Board:

This letter is to affirm support for the Idaho Regional Optical Network and Intermountain Infrastructure Group's public/private partnership for an open access middle mile broadband proposal from Grangeville to Star. It supports Idaho's 2027 broadband strategic goal of providing 100% of Idaho with accessible, reliable, and affordable high-speed internet. This middle mile network will prepare Central Idaho communities for last mile infrastructure and set Idaho up to successfully compete for BEAD funding. The network will link into the Port of Lewiston's open-access middle mile in Grangeville and help to finally provide infrastructure to connect north and south Idaho.

I am the Superintendent of Schools for the McCall-Donnelly Joint School District in Valley and Adams County. Bringing reliable and affordable high-speed internet to the region would immensely help the school district. Not only would it make our day-to-day operations more seamless, but it would also assist students and families with having the resources they need be successful in school, while at home. An opportunity like this would mean students would have a better chance of having affordable, dependable internet at home where they can complete their homework in the comfort of their own home, rather than some students needing to go elsewhere that has this same option with perhaps more distractions. Bringing high-speed broadband to the Valley would have many more benefits to these families, not just education oriented. I am completely in support of this project.

Sincerely,

Eric Pingrey
Superintendent of Schools
McCall-Donnelly Joint School District #421

Barbara R Morgan Elementary School Donnelly Elementary School
Payette Lakes Middle School Heartland High School McCall-Donnelly High School



714 Jefferson Street
Grangeville, ID 83530
Telephone 208-983-0990
Facsimile 208-983-1245
www.sd244.org

Date: November 21, 2022

Idaho Broadband Advisory Board
c/o Ramón S. Hobdey-Sánchez, J.D.
State Broadband Program Manager
Idaho Department of Commerce
700 W. State Street
Boise, Idaho 83702

Re: Creating Idaho's North-South Middle Mile Network
Letter of Support

Dear Idaho Broadband Advisory Board:

This letter is to affirm support for the Idaho Regional Optical Network and Intermountain Infrastructure group's public/private partnership for an open access middle mile broadband proposal from Grangeville to Star. It supports Idaho's 2027 broadband strategic goal of providing 100% of Idaho with accessible, reliable, and affordable high-speed internet. This middle mile network will prepare Central Idaho communities for last mile infrastructure and set Idaho up to successfully compete for BEAD funding. The network will link into the Port of Lewiston's open-access middle mile in Grangeville and help to finally provide infrastructure to connect north and south Idaho

My Name is Steve Higgins and I represent the Mt. View School District as Superintendent of schools. Mt. View S.D encompasses the communities of Whitebird, Grangeville, Kooskia and Elk City, educating approx. 1200 students K-12. Broadband access and even more important, affordable, reliable access would be a tremendous upgrade in our current ability to provide educational and business use internet.

If the Middle Mile Project is approved it could expand the market for network providers enhancing speed, bandwidth and price competitiveness. In all, a benefit to the district and those we serve.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Steven D. Higgins". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Steven" and last name "Higgins" clearly legible.

Steven D. Higgins, Superintendent
Mt. View School District #244



File Code: 1580
Date: December 8, 2022

Ramón S. Hobdey-Sánchez, J.D.
State Broadband Program Manager
Idaho Broadband Advisory Board
Idaho Department of Commerce
700 W. State Street
Boise, ID 83702

Dear Idaho Broadband Advisory Board:

This letter is to affirm support for the Idaho Regional Optical Network and Intermountain Infrastructure Group's public/private partnership for an open access middle mile broadband proposal from Grangeville to Star. It supports Idaho's 2027 broadband strategic goal of providing 100% of Idaho with accessible, reliable, and affordable high-speed internet. This middle mile network will prepare Central Idaho communities for last mile infrastructure and set Idaho up to successfully compete for BEAD funding. The network will link into the Port of Lewiston's open-access middle mile in Grangeville and help to finally provide infrastructure to connect north and south Idaho.

The Nez Perce-Clearwater National Forest and our district offices are located across North Central Idaho and also serve many of these rural communities. We are fully supportive of this proposal to provide high-speed internet to our underserved communities.

A prime example of how we would benefit from a fiber optic connection would be the Slate Creek Ranger Station, located just south of White Bird, ID. Employees are currently operating on an old T1 line that is entirely inadequate to support the needs of the office. Many programs that are necessary for completing our agency's mission cannot be used on the existing system. The limited bandwidth provided by the T1 line does not allow our employees to run GIS or to even complete mandatory, web-based training, forcing them to travel to other offices or work from home when performing these functions.

The Nez Perce-Clearwater National Forest fully supports the Idaho Regional Optical Network and Intermountain Infrastructure Group's proposal and believe it will be beneficial for the forest and the communities we serve.

Sincerely,

CHERYL F. PROBERT
Forest Supervisor





NEZ PERCE COUNTY

BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

November 21, 2022

Idaho Broadband Advisory Board
c/o Ramón S. Hobdey-Sánchez, J.D.
State Broadband Program Manager
Idaho Department of Commerce
700 W. State Street
Boise, Idaho 83702

1225 Idaho Street
P.O. Box 896
Lewiston, Idaho 83501-0896
(208) 799-3090
FAX (208) 799-3149

Re: Creating Idaho's North-South Middle Mile Network
Letter of Support

Dear Idaho Broadband Advisory Board:

This letter expresses Nez Perce County's support for the Idaho Regional Optical Network and Intermountain Infrastructure Group's public/private partnership for an open access middle mile broadband proposal from Grangeville to Star. In addition, it supports Idaho's 2027 broadband strategic goal of providing 100% of Idaho with accessible, reliable, and affordable high-speed internet. This middle mile network will prepare Central Idaho communities for last mile infrastructure and set Idaho up to successfully compete for BEAD funding. The network will link into the Port of Lewiston's open-access middle mile in Grangeville and help to finally provide infrastructure to connect north and south Idaho.

It is critical for Nez Perce County to have reliable and low-cost broadband services, which contribute to Economic Development, Emergency Communications, Education, and Public Health. The development of this middle mile network has been a need for many years and will fill the gap for future additions and connectivity.

Sincerely,

BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

A blue ink signature of Douglas A. Zenner, written in a cursive style.

DOUGLAS A. ZENNER, Chairman

A blue ink signature of Don H. Beck Jr., written in a cursive style.

DON H. BECK JR., Member

A blue ink signature of Douglas W. Havens, written in a cursive style.

DOUGLAS W. HAVENS, Member

Dave and Doris Paulsen

November 26, 2022

1638 Timber Circle P.O. Box 638

McCall, Idaho 83638

Idaho Broadband Advisory Board

C/O Ramon Hobdey-Sanchez, J.D.

State Broadband Program Manager

Idaho Department of Commerce

Boise, Idaho 83702

Regarding: Letter of Support to:

Create Idaho's North-South Middle Mile Network

Dear Sir:

We are sending this letter to affirm support for the Idaho Regional Optical Network and Intermountain Infrastructure Group's public/private partnership for an open access middle mile broadband network from Grangeville, Idaho to Star, Idaho. This supports the state of Idaho's 2027 Broadband Strategic Goal of providing 100% of Idaho with reliable, affordable and accessible HIGH SPEED INTERNET. With all the changes in how people, communities, schools, hospitals, community services, small and far reaching businesses interact today, the entire state of Idaho needs this infrastructure to stay competitive as well as protect the people of this great state. With this Network in place, Central Idaho cities, towns and villages will be able to successfully compete for BEAD funding to bring high speed internet to their local communities linking the entire state from north to south and keep Idaho competitive in the everchanging healthcare, education and business world.

My husband, a disabled Veteran and I, personally depend on safe, fast, reliable services for our health care and banking needs in the small, growing community of McCall, Idaho in Valley County.

Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,

Dave and Doris Paulsen



Dec. 9, 2022

Idaho Broadband Advisory Board
c/o Ramón S. Hobdey-Sánchez, J.D.
Idaho Department of Commerce
700 W. State Street
Boise, Idaho 83702

Re: Creating Idaho's North-South Middle Mile Network Letter of Support

Dear Idaho Broadband Advisory Board,

This letter is to affirm support for the Idaho Regional Optical Network and Intermountain Infrastructure Group's public/private partnership for an open access middle mile broadband proposal from Grangeville to Star. It supports Idaho's 2027 broadband strategic goal of providing 100 percent of Idaho with accessible, reliable, and affordable high-speed internet. This middle mile network will prepare Central Idaho communities for last mile infrastructure and set Idaho up to successfully compete for BEAD funding. The network will link into the Port of Lewiston's open-access middle mile in Grangeville and help to finally provide infrastructure to connect north and south Idaho

St. Luke's McCall is a 15-bed Critical Access Hospital that is part of the St. Luke's Health System that serves Valley County, Adams County and a portion of Idaho County. We're a modern rural hospital offering a wide range of services. These include our 24-hour emergency department, orthopedics, surgical care, maternal and childbirth services, sleep medicine, hospice care, and more. We also have several affiliated outpatient clinics that serve our patients in the West Central Mountains.

Having reliable high-speed internet available throughout our service area supports our objective to increase access to high quality and affordable health care. Technology allows us to connect with our patients through improved communication with providers, access to patient's electronic medical records, telehealth and remote patient monitoring.

St. Luke's McCall supports the Idaho Regional Optical Network and Intermountain Infrastructure group's efforts to improve access to reliable and affordable high-speed internet to Central Idaho communities.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Amber Green".

St. Luke's McCall Chief Operating and Nursing Officer



December 7, 2022

Idaho Broadband Advisory Board
c/o Ramon S. Hobdey-Sanchez, J.D.
State Broadband Program Manager
Idaho Department of Commerce
700 W. State Street
Boise, Idaho 83702

Re: My support for creating Idaho's North-South Middle Mile Network

Dear Idaho Broadband Advisory Board:

I am writing today to affirm my support for the Idaho Regional Optical Network and Intermountain Infrastructure Group's public/private partnership to develop an open access middle mile high-speed broadband network extension which would run from Grangeville to Star, Idaho. Installing this proposed network extension will create access to reliable, and affordable high-speed internet, it will also help set Idaho up to effectively compete for GEAD funding, and help Idaho achieve its 2027 broadband strategic goal of providing reliable high-speed internet to all of Idaho.

My name is Abner King and I am the Chief Executive Officer for Syringa Hospital & Clinics. I direct the operation of one Critical Access Hospital in Grangeville, and medical clinics in Grangeville, Kooskia, and Elk City, Idaho. Syringa Hospital & Clinics is the largest employer in our area and we provide health care services for patients living across Idaho County.

I strongly support the creation of Idaho's North-South Middle Mile Network because I know how essential it is for non-profit and for-profit businesses, organizations, and residents in our area to have access to reliable and affordable internet. Our healthcare services directly impact the wellbeing of patients, and nearly all of the services we provide have one or more connections or dependencies to reliable high-speed internet services. Creating Idaho's North-South Middle Mile Network will help create healthier communities, support improvements in businesses and schools, and improve the quality of life for North Central/Central Idaho residents. I encourage your advisory board to support the development of Idaho's North-South Middle Mile Network.

Sincerely,

Abner King, FACHE
Chief Executive Officer
Syringa Hospital & Clinics



OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT
875 Perimeter Drive MS 3151
Moscow ID 83844-3151

208-885-6365
president@uidaho.edu
uidaho.edu/president

December 15, 2022

Idaho Broadband Advisory Board
c/o Ramón S. Hobdey-Sánchez, J.D.
State Broadband Program Manager
Idaho Department of Commerce
700 W. State Street
Boise, Idaho 83702

Re: Creating Idaho's North-South Middle Mile Network
Letter of Support

Dear Idaho Broadband Advisory Board:

This letter is to endorse the Idaho Regional Optical Network and Intermountain Infrastructure Group's public/private partnership for an open access middle mile broadband proposal from Grangeville to Star. Their proposal supports Idaho's 2027 broadband strategic goal of providing 100% of Idaho with accessible, reliable, and affordable high-speed internet. This middle mile network will prepare Central Idaho communities for last mile infrastructure and lay the foundation for Idaho to successfully compete for Broadband Equity, Access, and Deployment (BEAD) funding. The network will link into the Port of Lewiston's open-access middle mile in Grangeville and when complete provide infrastructure to connect north and south Idaho.

Currently, all instate telecommunication for the central/north central region is routed through Oregon, Washington, and/or Montana before returning to Idaho. Unfortunately, this current system bypasses north-central and central Idaho communities. The University of Idaho as Idaho's land grant institution supports extension and research operations in forty-two of forty-four Idaho counties. Because of our statewide mission, reliable and accessible broadband access is paramount to our service and research in remote areas of the state include north-central and central Idaho communities.

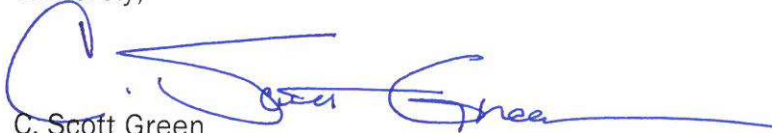
Recently hosting an event at the University of Idaho McCall Outdoor Science School for STEM Education, we were immediately briefed by our local team that the internet routinely drops Zoom calls. This is unacceptable in a modern era and a detriment to the commerce and educational goals of our state.

Industries vital to Idaho's economy located in the central/north central region need reliable broadband to continue to lead in agricultural production, healthcare, manufacturing, mining, forestry, and education. However, installing high-speed broadband in Idaho's rugged and vast terrain is expensive. Therefore, we support the Idaho Regional Optical Network and

Intermountain Infrastructure Group's public/private partnership for an open access middle mile broadband proposal from Grangeville to Star.

Thank you for your consideration of this important request.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "C. Scott Green", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

C. Scott Green
President

12-22-2022



Valley County

PO Box 510
110 W Pine St
Cascade, ID 83611

Phone: 208-382-7190
valley@uidaho.edu

Idaho Broadband Advisory Board
c/o Ramón S. Hobdey-Sánchez, J.D.
State Broadband Program Manager
Idaho Department of Commerce
700 W. State Street
Boise, Idaho 83702

Re: North-South Middle Mile Network Letter of Support

Dear Idaho Broadband Advisory Board:

This letter is to affirm support for the Idaho Regional Optical Network and Intermountain Infrastructure Group's public/private partnership for an open access middle mile broadband proposal from Grangeville to Star. It supports Idaho's 2027 broadband strategic goal of providing 100% of Idaho with accessible, reliable, and affordable high-speed internet. This middle mile network will prepare Central Idaho communities for last mile infrastructure and set Idaho up to successfully compete for BEAD funding. The network will link into the Port of Lewiston's open-access middle mile in Grangeville and help to finally provide infrastructure to connect north and south Idaho.

I am the Extension educator in Valley County, and I work in an internet limited rural community. Having reliable and fast internet is a challenge. To work in an area with this limited resource a lot of patience is required, and some tasks are out of the scope of my abilities due to internet speed. For example, I know that upload speeds are close to impossible at some locations in the county and connectivity is patchy throughout. Even when a service provider is selling you a product such as "high speed broadband connection", when a speed test is conducted or the service provided, it is less than adequate. In my last office in the county, we had an updated Ziplan plan and we were getting 20 download and 5 upload mbps (July 2021). Our new office (now located in town) is getting 40 download and 10 upload mbps.

This region would tremendously benefit from quicker internet speeds. This would create more opportunities to run efficient businesses for current organizations in the region and support new opportunities remote workers moving to rural communities. In 2023, UI Extension will be launching a statewide effort to help improve people's digital literacy and grow a remote work taskforce throughout the state. We will be utilizing Utah's curriculum and leadership with effort. You can learn more about the [Rural Online Initiative](#) on the website.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'MBH'.

Melissa B. Hamilton

November 15, 2022

Idaho Broadband Advisory Board
c/o Ramón S. Hobdey-Sánchez, J.D.
State Broadband Program Manager
Idaho Department of Commerce
700 W. State Street
Boise, Idaho 83702

Re: Creating Idaho's North-South Middle Mile Network Letter of Support

Dear Idaho Broadband Advisory Board:

This letter is to affirm support for the Idaho Regional Optical Network and Intermountain Infrastructure Group's public/private partnership for an open access middle mile broadband proposal from Grangeville to Star. It supports Idaho's 2027 broadband strategic goal of providing 100% of Idaho with accessible, reliable, and affordable high-speed internet. This middle mile network will prepare Central Idaho communities for last mile infrastructure and set Idaho up to successfully compete for BEAD funding. The network will link into the Port of Lewiston's open-access middle mile in Grangeville and help to finally provide infrastructure to connect north and south Idaho

The University of Idaho is Idaho's land-grant, research, extension and outreach university with 2,223 full time employees and locations in 42 of Idaho's 44 counties. We serve 11,507 students in Idaho and across the world through 165 undergraduate and graduate programs while conducting broad-ranging research with expenditures over \$106,000,000. Improved middle mile connectivity will result in improved internet access for all Idahoans, especially those in rural areas, and is critical to accomplishing our mission and setting all of Idaho up for success.

The proposed project will open endless opportunities for the university to better serve its mission. Open access, middle mile connectivity enables improved educational access to our students, allows our research data to be shared, and supports the ever-increasing need for our people to learn, work and live anywhere in the state. The value of this project, however, extends far beyond just the University of Idaho. Improving the availability and redundancy of open access connectivity between north and south Idaho will enable economic growth for all. It will make education, healthcare and government services more accessible in rural Idaho. Most importantly it will help Idahoans compete in a global society while having all the advantages of living and working in our beautiful state.

Thank you for your consideration of this critical request. If I can provide any additional information, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,



Daniel R. Ewart
Vice President for Information Technology and Chief Information Officer
University of Idaho

Valley County Board of Commissioners

P.O. Box 1350 • 219 N. Main Street
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December 12, 2022

Idaho Broadband Advisory Board
c/o Ramón S. Hobdey-Sánchez, J.D.
State Broadband Program Manager
Idaho Department of Commerce
700 W. State Street
Boise, Idaho 83702

Re: Creating Idaho's North-South Middle Mile Network
Letter of Support

Dear, Idaho Broadband Advisory Board:

This letter is to affirm support for the Idaho Regional Optical Network and Intermountain Infrastructure Group's public/private partnership for an open access middle mile broadband proposal from Grangeville to Star. It supports Idaho's 2027 broadband strategic goal of providing 100% of Idaho with accessible, reliable, and affordable high-speed internet. This middle mile network will prepare Central Idaho communities for last mile infrastructure and set Idaho up to successfully compete for BEAD funding. The network will link into the Port of Lewiston's open-access middle mile in Grangeville and help to finally provide infrastructure to connect north and south Idaho

Valley County is located in the West Central Mountains of Idaho. We are a community that is in the center of the state in a mountainous area that is difficult for infrastructure to build too.

The Commissioners of Valley County are very supportive of the proposed project to allow broadband infrastructure improvements to our region. Creating the middle mile pathways allows current providers to assess this infrastructure and provide affordable broadband to all. Our regional community has spotting service at best. During peak demand, our businesses are unable to process payments and service clients. This has a large impact to our economic stability for the region. Our education systems also struggle during peak demand. We do not have a college or university in our area, so many classes occur online. As a resort community during peak times, our population can swell from 12,000 in population to over 50,000 on any given weekend or holiday. This creates severe capacity issues on the current infrastructure.

Sincerely,

Valley County Commissioners

Elt Hasbrouck Chairman Elting A. Hasbrouck

Sherry Maupin Commissioner Sherry Maupin

Ed Allen Commissioner Edgar T. Allen



December 12, 2022

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Valley Vision is the leading economic development agency serving the Lewis – Clark Valley. This organization began in 1997. Our Board of Directors are comprised of private business owners, community leaders, the local jurisdictions, banking institutions, education, and healthcare.

The proposed project would be linking the port of Lewiston's middle mile project in Grangeville extending the north-south corridor to Moscow. The Grangeville to Star segment will be constructed over 198 miles and be physically located in Idaho, Adams, Valley, Gem, and Ada Counties. It will provide direct middle mile access to Grangeville, White Bird, Riggins, New Meadows, McCall, Donnelly, Cascade, Emmett, and Star. We understand that will be an open-access network where IIG provides services to multiple commercial providers and IRON similarly serves non-profit needs and government.

Respectfully,

Jerry Chavez, President/CEO
Valley Vision, Inc.

VALLEY VISION, INC.

313 D street – Ste. 201 Lewiston, ID 83501 (208) 799-9083 FAX: (208) 799-9082

e-mail: vvision@lewiston.com web-site: <http://www.lewis-clarkvalley.org>

A Fiber Connection between Grangeville and Star

Fundamental Assumptions:

- The project will strive to use Idaho labor where possible
- Most supplies are already purchased; however, supply chain delays for any additional supplies and equipment may impact the proposed timeline
- The project will coordinate with communities along the route to optimize middle-mile access given project funding
- Last mile segments are not included in the schedule or cost
- The Port of Lewiston's middle-mile project will complete the Grangeville to Moscow open-access middle-mile section
- Permitting processes and approvals will support the proposed timeline

[illegible]

Creating Idaho's North-South Middle Mile Network

A Fiber Connection between Grangeville and Star

Appendix D – Responses BBAB Questions from 01-11-23 Board Meeting

Please add this Exhibit D to our original proposal. This Appendix addresses the questions of the Idaho Broadband Advisory Board (IBAB) that were discussed at the IBAB Meeting on January 11, 2023 and distributed in the January 13, 2023 email from Idaho Broadband Manager Ramon Hobdey-Sanchez.

1. How much of the project's match is cash?

Idaho Regional Optical Network (IRON) and Intermountain Infrastructure Group (IIG) are committing \$60 million cash match to the construction of a middle mile network between Grangeville and Star, Idaho. This cash includes costs for permitting, contracting, community engagement/design, equipment purchases, construction, and network testing for the 198-mile, 288-strand fiber network.

IRON/IIG match does not include cash that was spent on prior built, related projects or in-kind services consisting of estimated values by 3rd party support or the value of prior built IRON/IIG assets.

With total project costs estimated at \$80 million, IRON and IIG are committing 75% of the cash needed to complete the middle mile network.

2. Please provide a timeline for the project described in the proposal, including the start date and completion date.

As per our project schedule previously submitted (Appendix C, proposal), IRON and IIG are prepared to start the project as soon as a contract with the State of Idaho is fully executed. From the date of award to the full construction and turn-up of the network (the ability to sell services), we expect the project will take thirty-six months to complete. *For more schedule detail, see Appendix C.*

3. Does the project described in the proposal qualify as middle-mile?

YES, according to the definition distributed in the January 13, 2023 email from Idaho Broadband Manager Ramon Hobdey-Sanchez, the proposed network is exclusively "middle mile infrastructure."

4. Does the project described in the proposal qualify for funding under either ARPA ([Capital Projects Fund](#)) or IIJA ([BEAD Program](#))?

As proposed, the Idaho North-South Middle Mile Project does not qualify for ARPA (Capital Projects Fund) or IIJA (BEAD Program) funding because it is exclusively a middle mile project.

This project will strategically position the State of Idaho to more successfully compete for last-mile, federally funded projects.

For More Information:

Should there be additional questions, please contact IRON President/CEO Brent Stacey at brent.stacey@ironforidaho.com or 208-520-4617.