

# NORTH BAY-NORTH COAST BROADBAND CONSORTIUM

A member of the California Public Utilities Commission's Rural and Urban Regional Consortia Program

## Oversight Committee

Supervisor Steve Kinsey (Marin)  
Supervisor Dan Hamburg  
(Mendocino)  
Supervisor Diane Dillon (Napa)  
Supervisor Efren Carrillo  
(Sonoma)  
Liza Crosse- Oversight  
Committee Manager

## Consortium Manager

Tom West

## County Management Teams

### Marin:

Peter Pratt - County Liaison/Manager  
and private consultant  
Barbara Thornton – County Co-  
Deputy/Liaison Manager and EO  
Marin Telecommunications Agency  
Barbara Layton – County Co-Deputy  
Liaison/Manager and Manager,  
County Enterprise Systems Manager

### Mendocino:

Steve Dunncliff –County Liaison/  
Manager and Director of County  
Planning and Building Services  
Trish Steel - County Deputy Liaison/  
Manager and Chair of The  
Broadband Alliance  
Diann Simmons-administrative  
coordinator for Broadband Alliance

### Napa

Anthony Halstead – County Liaison/  
Manager

### Sonoma:

Mike Nicholls – County Liaison/  
Manager  
Steve Sharpe- County Deputy  
Liaison/Manager



*Randy MacDonald (5th from left) with his co-presenters in Washington DC for the Rural Telecom Policy Briefing in May 2015; photo credit to Martyn Griffen of Public Knowledge*

## Policy Briefing on Rural Telecom Issues in Washington DC

The traditional phone network is a great success story in the history of communications service in the United States. Its ubiquity, affordability, and reliability stimulate economic growth and allows millions of people to keep in touch with loved ones regardless of their physical distance. And most importantly, it helps those in need reach emergency first responders. When a person calls 9-1-1, they are connected to a specially trained professional working at a Public Safety Answering Point (PSAP), who determines the type of emergency the caller is reporting, and routes the call to the appropriate emergency agency (such as law enforcement, fire or ambulance). The 9-1-1 call taker can even provide direct assistance to the caller, such as coaching the person through administering CPR.

Americans have come to trust and depend on the telephone network, but the network and technologies are now changing and our traditional 911 telephone system is being eroded. Consumers may not be aware of this change, nor how it impacts them. This process of "Technology Transition" involves providers moving customers off the legacy copper lines and onto technologies of fiber, wireless and Voice over Internet Protocol (VoIP).

This transition often has significant implications for rural communities and their residents.

The National Rural Assembly's Rural Broadband Policy Group, the Center for Rural Strategies, and Public Knowledge wanted to make sure that those who make rural telecom decisions are fully aware of the impact of the Technology Transitions on rural communities, and for that reason they hosted a Rural Telecom Policy Briefing in Washington DC for Congressional staff, which was sponsored by Congressman Jared Huffman. Randy MacDonald, Public Safety Liaison for the Broadband Alliance of Mendocino County and 2nd Assistant Fire Chief for the Comptche Volunteer Fire Department in Mendocino County, was invited to participate in this hearing.

Randy traveled to Washington DC and made a presentation on "Network Resiliency" and the impact on communities when networks fail. Randy knows this impact well, as he was first on the scene of a fiber break in August of 2014 that caused telecommunications service to go down across a 40 mile section of the northern Mendocino County coast. It also took out some cell phone service in the north central part of our county where a major wild land fire was growing rapidly. Many residents were not able to access the 9-1-1 system because their telephone lines were down for 45 hours. The Sheriff could not use the reverse 9-1-1 system to notify people threatened by the wildfire of planned evacuations. In addition to these impacts on the emergency system, the phone outage impacted the local economy, medical system and the local communities in many negative ways. The NBNBCB Volume 1 newsletter included an article about impacts on public safety from this outage.

Randy began his presentation with the bad news: the excellent 9-1-1 system is now being eroded by private sector business decisions, public sector policy failures and the rise of new technologies that the telecommunications system is rapidly adopting. He touched on four major factors for this erosion: 1) loss of E-911 location information, 2) unraveling of network redundancy, 3) neglect of the legacy physical plant, and 4) the introduction of new technologies. He presented three principles which policymakers **must** keep forefront in their minds about this growing crisis as they consider telecommunications policy issues at the federal, state, and local levels. These three principles are: 1) Make public safety a top priority, 2) Address Network Vulnerability, and 3) Keep our citizens informed.

The Mendocino outage is the tip of an iceberg: a quick Google search of FCC statistics turned up 487 fiber optic line outages in 2014 alone, up from 221 in 2010. The lack of redundancy in many rural areas means that often the 9-1-1 "Emergency Lifeline" system goes down as well.

As technologies inevitably evolve, we have the opportunity to make sure any transition in technology is a step forward for **all** Americans. We ask policymakers and stakeholders to reaffirm the fundamental values of our communications network – universal service, reliability, consumer protections, public safety, and competition.

You can read Randy's policy brief posted on our website at <http://www.mendocinobroadband.org/data-and-reports/>, or watch the You-Tube video of the policy hearings themselves at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cgBYrZcezUY>

***Copper wires are able to carry electricity, which allows telephones to continue to work during a power outage. This characteristic makes the traditional phone network resilient, particularly during emergencies and natural disasters when Americans need it most. Today, new technologies (fiber, wireless, VoIP) do not carry their own electricity, and some cannot guarantee a connection to 911 or additional devices such as medical alarms, home alarms, and ATMs. In addition, the new technologies might require consumers to be responsible for securing backup power.***

## Tom West - NBNCBC Project Manager

The North Bay-North Coast Broadband Consortium has been under the leadership of a man with extensive broadband network experience - Tom West. Involved in networking since 1973, Tom has 42 years experience in developing and managing communications networks for the research and education community including: 18 years as the Chief Information Technology Officer for the California State University system; five (5) as the CEO of the Corporation for Education Initiatives in California (CENIC) and five years as the CEO of National LambdaRail LLC (NLR).

Today CENIC's charter associates include the California State University system, the University of California system, Stanford University, Caltech, the University of Southern California, the California Community Colleges and the California K-12 system. 10 million students, faculty and staff across the state are reached by CENIC's advanced network, CalREN.

Since retirement from NLR in 2009 Tom has been involved in working on three major plans for the deployment of broadband



infrastructure to serve residents, businesses, libraries, schools, public safety and health care facilities. Working with CENIC and the Central Valley Independent Network a successful grant proposal for NTIA and CASF funds has resulted in the deployment of broadband infrastructure across 18 central valley counties.

In 2011 when the CPUC announced the call for grant proposal for the Consortia

Program, acting on behalf of CENIC, West engaged the Chico State Center for Economic Development as a partner to submit two successful grant proposals setting up two regional consortia covering 11 Northern California counties. West served as the co-manager of both consortia from January 2012 through May 2013.

Since early 2014 Tom has participated in the work of NBNCBC as Project Manager, offering his services pro bono. The NBNCBC management teams appreciate the leadership and experience that Tom brings in our effort to fulfill the mission of our consortium, and thank him for his many hours of service during his retirement years.

***Tom West brings a lifetime of knowledge and experience to his work as manager of the NBNCBC. His determination to bring up-to-date broadband to rural Northern California inspires us all.***

***-Mendocino County Supervisor Dan Hamburg***

## Access Changes Lives!

By Diann Simmons

If we stop to think about the many ways internet access impacts our own lives, we realize it is typically integrated into many aspects. We have some stories from people in a coastal community that recently had the good fortune to become a fully served area.

As is common in many coastal areas, this community has a high population of retired residents. As they shift out of their work and office life, many turn to volunteer opportunities to enrich their lives and communities. Instead of less need for Internet, many are surprised to find their need greater as they participate in these volunteer activities from their homes. They write grants (almost all applications are on-line only these days) to support community non-profits, participate in video conferencing and video meetings, communicate as Board members, and work on projects and programs for groups such as the Juvenile Justice Commission, non-profit medical centers, Community Foundations, school districts, local Granges, Friends of the Library, Family Resource Centers, and Senior and Community Centers.

One retired rural resident (with poor cell phone and radio reception) describes how their new Internet service has impacted their social life: "We stream movies, and use Google Hangout/dialer to video chat/make cell phone calls with our family, and listen to our local radio stations over the net. We and our neighbors use the Internet for following the news, on-line banking, checking on investments and taking training courses."

Real Estate in this area appears to have been at least partially impacted by new Internet service, showing an increase in sales and upswing in prices. New residents, who work from home, previously couldn't have considered living in a remote area. In this community, people working from home include: a local web designer, stock market traders, owners of an on-line musical instrument business and a marketing consultant. Several residents telecommute to work - part-time for the Sheriff's office and full-time for a health care provider. One part-time resident is an executive in charge of IT for a major movie company. He is able to spend more and more time at his coastal home now that he has "access to great Internet". Another resident handles web security for a national bank.

An additional way that real estate is affected by the Internet was described by a local resident as follows: "My wife and I bought our coast house in 2002, with plans to retire to it 10 years later. In the meantime, we needed to help pay the expenses by turning it into a vacation rental. It was amazing how the demands of the vacation home renters changed over the ten years. At the beginning no one asked about our Internet access. Today, virtually every vacation rental in our community is connected to the new service provider and having Internet is almost an absolute must if you are to rent out a house as a vacation rental".

Living remotely with good Internet access allows many people to bring the outside world into their lives.



*Estimated time left: 39 years. We can do better than this!*

## CASF Learning Summit

by Trish Steel

In February Mike Nicholls and Trish Steel of the NBNCBC management teams for Sonoma and Mendocino, attended the CPUC/CETF 3rd annual Rural and Urban Regional Broadband Consortia Learning Summit in San Francisco (NBNCBC Manager Tom West was out of the country). The NBNCBC and Pacific Coast Consortia were the two newest consortiums, joining the existing consortia network of 16 groups.

This summit was a day-long opportunity for all consortia to gather and exchange their accomplishments and best practices in implementing their action plans. Fourteen of the sixteen consortia are at the end of their 3-year funding cycle, while the NBNCBC and Pacific Coast Consortia are new and only six months into their grants.

CPUC Communications Director Ryan Dulin's opening remarks set the stage for the day: "I want projects". He wants good solid broadband projects submitted to the CASF grant program that will result in "broadband on the ground" and success stories.

Each of the 16 Consortia had five minutes to present about their specific activities. Trish made the presentation on behalf of the NBNCBC, sharing our Action Plan Goals, Accomplishments, Best Practices, Challenges and Outstanding Needs/Gaps, and Future Sustainability Action Plans. A synopsis of her presentation is on page 23 of the Roundtable PDF posted on our website <http://www.mendocinobroadband.org/reports-and-newsletters/>.

Sean McLaughlin from Humboldt County presented next, and he spoke about Community Networks and Broadband Localism. He also shared two highly recommended resources to orient us to the larger broadband issues: 1) NATOA.org - a nationally recognized local government association, and 2) shlb.org - Schools, Health, & Libraries Broadband Coalition.



*The CPUC Learning Summit is an opportunity for various state consortia to share best practices*

C P U C  
Commissioner Sandoval was the keynote speaker, and her passion for broadband was clearly evident as she touched upon an array of topics, including telemedicine, education, open-Internet, smart-grid and energy usage, and adoption challenges. She called changes to the California Lifeline program a "game-changer" in that it now allows providers to include broadband in the Lifeline

package. Commissioner Sandoval also said that she will suggest that the CPUC parallel the FCC, which recently updated their speed definition of broadband to 25/3. She affirmed that the CASF consortia has a leadership role in California for broadband issues, and supports continued funding for their work.

Many attendees, Mike and Trish included, felt that it was a productive forum and were appreciative of the opportunity for open and honest discussion with CASF staff, and a chance to meet other consortia leaders and exchange ideas.

## West Marin Broadband Progress Highlighted

By Peter Pratt

The work of NBNCBC's affiliate in Marin County, the Marin Broadband task Force (MBTF) was highlighted in the June 25 issue of *The Point Reyes Light*, the Pulitzer Prize winning weekly that covers rural West Marin.

The story titled "West Marin's Internet Woes and Hopes", by reporter Beau Evans, was triggered by the complaints about the lack of broadband from several residents of the coastal community of Bolinas. Residents had contacted *The Light* to say that a move within Bolinas of sometimes just a few blocks, from one home location to another, can lead the major carrier in the area to report that broadband grade DSL service is not available for that new residence.

"We see this across the Marin County areas, and in our cities and towns", observed Barbara Thornton, Executive Officer of the Marin Telecommunications Agency (MTA). "When we see a home or business much beyond the core area around a carrier's central office or remote hub, DSL service is often not at broadband levels, as defined by CPUC. Even parts of communities that can be technically upgraded, aren't seeing the needed investment. This is particularly true in our West Marin areas." Barbara Thornton serves as Co-Chair of MBTF. MTA is one of the few multi-jurisdictional cable regulatory local authorities in California. It also addresses telecommunications issues in the Marin community.

Reporter Evan's story highlighted the solution being worked on by MBTF, as it cataloged the broadband challenges faced by West Marin's residents. The story focused on MBTF's efforts to leverage the private investment in "middle mile" optical fiber made by the Marin-based Lucasfilm Ltd to support the deployment of this critical "backhaul" infrastructure out to the broadband unserved communities of West Marin.

"What we're trying to do is take the planning to actual infrastructure improvements and to provide backbone to West Marin to help local providers serve local communities," said Liza Crosse. Liza, an aide to Marin Supervisor Steve Kinsey (District 4) serves as NBNCBC's Coordinator of the Consortium's Oversight Committee, and has been instrumental in establishing MBTF and the Consortium itself.

Supervisor Kinsey is Marin's representative on the Oversight Committee, and has coordinated County personnel and resources to address the broadband underserved challenges of West Marin, the area in which he is the County Supervisor. He was recently reappointed to the California Coastal Commission, which he serves as Chair of, by Governor Jerry Brown.

Currently, the competitive optical fiber infrastructure, owned and operated by Zayo Group,



*Pt Reyes National Seashore, Photo Courtesy:  
Marin Convention & Visitors Bureau*

brought into Marin by Lucasfilm terminates at Skywalker Ranch in West Marin's Nicasio community. Two "metro rings" of Zayo in Marin tie the county redundantly to data centers and Internet exchanges in both Emeryville / Oakland and San Francisco. This wealth of competitive fiber, including ample inventories of "dark fiber" sought by broadband providers, makes Marin the only county along California's North Coast to be directly supported with diverse dark fiber routes to some of the largest Internet exchanges in the nation.

The strategy of MBTF is to work to both extend middle mile fiber and to generate public-private investment in "last mile" broadband networks in West Marin. Grant applications being framed by providers for funding from the CPUC's California Advanced Services Fund (CASF) will be critical to achieving the success of this coordinated strategy.

## Mendocino County Update

by Trish Steel

Mendocino County has had a busy last 6 months. In February, the Broadband Alliance, the grassroots broadband group which actively works with the NBNCBC, hired Diann Simmons as the new Administrative Coordinator to replace Trish Steel, who moved up to replace Jim Moorehead on his retirement. Diann brings a lot of grant-writing experience and organizational ability to the group, and the Alliance is excited to have her on the team. She jumped right in with work on our broadband adoption



*Deputy-Manager Trish Steel with Supervisor Dan Hamburg; not pictured is Manager Steve Dunicliff*

report, which found that for many county residents without access to reliable broadband, public access computers play a large role in how they connect to the Internet. Working with the county Library Director, Alliance staff created a survey in both Spanish and English to capture data on who uses public computers, and why, to better understand how to improve services. Diann is now researching grant opportunities to develop adoption programs that will include creating or expanding public access computer hubs located at county non-profits, along with developing digital literacy programs through the public libraries and selected non-profits. .

Several long-term processes have started to come to fruition. Back in 2012 the Alliance began working with the county to revise permitting regulations to create a stream-lined, easier permitting process for small, low-power broadband projects for the inland areas of the county. In May the Planning Commission recommended approval of these revisions to the Board of Supervisors. The Alliance and providers look forward to the ordinance amendment going into effect very soon. There is still work ahead for coastal zone revisions, but progress is being made one step at a time. A long-awaited permit

application by North Coast Internet was successfully concluded when they were finally given approval to install equipment on a local Cal-Fire tower. The company is now providing last-mile fixed wireless services to some residents in Rancho Navarro and some coastal areas, with plans to build out a network. Fixed wireless services have also been expanded on the south coast to Point Arena, Irish Beach, Manchester, and Elk, with a CASF application in the works for the Albion area. Cellular upgrades in five areas of the county are scheduled to be completed in the 3rd and 4th quarter of 2015. The Alliance is continuing to work with interested providers to support potential CASF grant applications to the California Public Utilities Commission for deployment projects in our identified "priority areas." The Alliance also hosted what we hope is the first of an on-going dialog with AT&T regarding improved communication with County Emergency Services, Public Safety Answering Points, and residents during times of outages.

Recognizing the importance that fixed wireless will play in bringing last mile connectivity to residents in low-density areas of our county, the Alliance hosted a "Fixed Wireless Tutorial", taught by Technical Chair Brian Churm. This was an opportunity to learn about bandwidths, wireless spectrum allocations, and throughputs.

The Alliance continues monthly public outreach meetings and participation in various public forums, and has submitted written comments to the FCC and local government on broadband topics. In March the local public radio station hosted a 2-part program called "The Digital Divide" (part 1, part 2) that included Supervisor Hamburg of the NBNCBC Oversight Committee. Alliance Chair Trish Steel is also working to increase the Alliance's presence on social media to share information on broadband topics.

## Napa County Libraries Internet speeds soon 10 Times Faster

By Anthony Halstead



*Five-year old Ryan Halstead loves reading books...pictured here with his dad Anthony, who also happens to be the Assistant Director of the Napa County Library*

Napa County Libraries will install 1Gbps (gigabit per second) speeds at all its locations in the summer and fall of 2015. This includes Napa, American Canyon, Calistoga and Yountville libraries.

Thanks to additional state funding, the statewide program CENIC that previously brought high speed access to numerous educational institutions, is being expanded this calendar year to help public libraries increase access for the community. Napa was selected as part of a round one funding.

Speeds will be 1Gbps with the potential to increase to 2 Gbps. The initial 1Gbps is roughly 10 times faster than any of our current offerings and allows us virtually unlimited use by the public. All locations have offered Wi-Fi and public accessible computers for years but have only recently offered speeds of more than 10 Mbps, moving to 50 and 100 Mbps last year thanks to build out projects by various carriers.

The Library has thousands of Wi-Fi and public PC users each year. We anticipate that this increase in speed will increase use of Wi-Fi and stand-alone PCs but will allow us to expand to offer additional hardware, such as tablets or laptops, for public use.

*Because of huge infrastructure investments, Seoul, South Korea offers the world's fastest Internet speeds. The city is blanketed with free Wi-Fi - even subway riders can stream movies on their phones, deep underground. By 2020, the government predicts their mobile infrastructure will be 1,000 times faster — so fast you could download a feature-length movie in approximately one second. Read about how they have accomplished this here*

*[http://www.nytimes.com/2015/06/07/magazine/what-silicon-valley-can-learn-from-seoul.html?\\_r=1](http://www.nytimes.com/2015/06/07/magazine/what-silicon-valley-can-learn-from-seoul.html?_r=1)*



## Sonoma County Update

by Mike Nicholls

Access Sonoma Broadband (ASB) is progressing financially, operationally, and politically.

In order to fulfill the requirements of our consortium grant, Sonoma County has been working diligently on the development, distribution and tabulation of an Adoption Study questionnaire for needs assessment purposes. Data will provide for the development of an action plan, which can be implemented during the second year of our Consortium Grant.

The broadband adoption questionnaire was developed and submitted to over 150 organizations in Sonoma County by the Economic Development Board. Information is in the process of being tabulated as it is received. ASB looks forward to the analysis completion and inclusion in our 4th Quarter Report to CASF.

Access Sonoma Broadband was privileged to have Ryan Dulin, Director of the Communications Division for CPUC attend our May meeting. His input is invaluable as in some instances our consortium representatives were unaware of State and Federal resources available for local use. Our monthly meetings this quarter have included speakers on Telehealth, Local Network Design, Local Network Operations and County Library Broadband Needs.

Committee members met with a local ISP to review a potential project, inclusive of organizational and operational parameters, which would have to be established in order to move forward.



*Sonoma County Liaison/Manager  
Mike Nicholls*

ASB staff met with Senator Mike McGuire and Staff in Sacramento regarding non-redundant 911 services within Sonoma and Mendocino Counties. We have offered to assist the Senator and his staff on drafting a re-write of SB486 (McGuire) for presentation during the next legislative session.

Our Committee has been engaging and communicating positively with Assemblymen Levine and Wood and their respective staff members on reoccurring basis regarding broadband issues within their districts. We support AB1262 (Wood) with minor recommended changes.

Co-chair Nicholls coordinated with three County Supervisors on May 13, 2015 to meet with EB-5 Regional Center officials from San Francisco and Concord. In addition to Sonoma County broadband financing, non-broadband economic development investment opportunities were discussed.

## Broadband Needed Along the Route 101 Corridor

by Tom West

The counties along the Pacific coast in northwestern California (Marin, Napa, Sonoma, Mendocino, Humboldt, Del Norte and Trinity) contain one of the largest groupings of broadband underserved and unserved businesses and households in California according to data published by the California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC).

The comparative lack of broadband infrastructure serving homes and businesses in this northwest region of California is tied directly to a surprising lack of competitive “middle mile” optical fiber infrastructure to connect local access networks slated to serve unserved and underserved areas. Economists, economic developers, and regulators agree that without competitive availability and pricing of middle mile fiber providing cost effective “back haul” connectivity for local community access network providers to the outside world, these rural underserved counties will remain lacking in broadband facilities.

While major optical fiber networks, including several competitive carriers offering “dark fiber” infrastructure, run from the top of the Bay Area northerly to Oregon via the Route 5 corridor, no such competitive optical fiber routes exist along the Route 101 corridor between the Bay Area and the Oregon border.

While no competitive optical fiber routes have been developed along the Route 101 corridor there exist valuable assets owned by counties, its agencies or municipalities in the form of broadband ROWs, recently installed fiber conduits, and existing unused fiber conduits, installed over a decade ago, that could provide the keystone for the deployment of an open and competitive middle-mile optical fiber infrastructure along the Route 101 corridor. For instance, SMART rail authority has ROW between Larkspur and Healdsburg and has already installed four conduits in some segments of this route. Sonoma County and several of its municipalities hold ownership of one conduit that was installed by WilTel at the turn of the century in segments within the county. WilTel also installed conduits in parts of Mendocino County. Finally, the North Coast Rail Authority (NCRA) also owns public ROW that could be developed for telecommunications network installations from Healdsburg northward.

Together, these existing assets provide the foundation for developing and installing a comprehensive competitive middle-mile fiber optic broadband infrastructure from the Bay Area to the Oregon border in proximity to Route 101.

NBNCBC has initiated contact with each of these entities to start conversations about how these assets together might form the foundation to develop a middle-mile optical fiber infrastructure along Route 101. NBNCBC is prepared to work with these potential partners to explore potential funding sources - federal, state and private investment – for the development of this tremendous digital opportunity for Northern California.

## CASF Infrastructure Grant Applications and Awards

Currently, the California Public Utilities Commission's (CPUC) California Advanced Services fund (CASF) has approximately \$170 million available in its Infrastructure Program for grants. As of June 15, 2015, CPUC has received 15 grant applications, requesting \$43.3 million. Two awards have been made totaling \$3.3 million.

Only one grant application has been submitted for a project in the four counties that comprise the NBNCBC. The Sea Ranch Homeowners Association has submitted a grant application requesting \$3.1 Million for its \$5.2 million project.

There are between four and six projects in NBNCBC territory developing or considering developing grant proposals for submission in the next six months. In addition, NBNCBC is aware of projects being developed for implementation that will not seek a CASF grant.

The CASF Infrastructure Program requires matching funding. If the area is "unserved" the CASF grant can be a maximum of 70 percent and the local match 30 percent. If the area is "underserved" the CASF grant can be a maximum of 60 percent and the local match 40 percent.

Finding the matching funds has been a challenge for local providers.



## Upcoming Events

### NBNCBC Oversight Committee Meeting

October 16th, 2015 9 am

• Meeting locations vary with each county, contact the person below for specific information:

**Marin:** Supervisor Steve Kinsey,  
skinsey@marincounty.org  
(415) 473-7331

**Mendocino:** Supervisor Dan Hamburg,  
hamburgd@co.mendocino.ca.us,  
(707) 463-4221

**Napa:** Supervisor Diane Dillon,  
Diane.DILLON@countyofnapa.org  
(707) 944-8280,

**Sonoma:** Supervisor Efen Carillo,  
ecarrillo@sonoma-county.org, (707)  
565-2241

### Broadband Alliance of Mendocino County Public Outreach Meetings

Please check the website for details

[www.mendocinobroadband.org](http://www.mendocinobroadband.org)

Friday, July 10th, 10am

Friday, August 7th, 10 am

Friday, September 11th, 10 am

### Access Sonoma Broadband Meetings

Please check the website for details

<http://sonomacounty.ca.gov/EDB/Access-Sonoma-Broadband/>

Wednesday, July 15th, 10 am

Wednesday, August 19th, 10 am

Wednesday, September 16th, 10 am

## CPUC Approves 2nd Year Funding for NBNCBC

The California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC) approved second year grant funding of \$125,000 to enable North Bay North Coast Broadband Consortium (NBNCBC) to continue its work in facilitating the deployment of broadband into the unserved and underserved communities in the four counties—Marin, Mendocino, Napa and Sonoma. NBNCBC is one of 16 regional planning consortia working to bring broadband to all citizens throughout California.

During the first year NBNCBC's work focused on: 1) engaging various communities and providers in each county and 2) identifying the major unserved and underserved communities in each county. Over 30 communities were put on a priority list. Each county management team and county advisory committees or task forces worked with a subset of these priority communities and with potential providers to encourage the development of community-based broadband plans and to pursue seeking grant funding from CASF to help offset the capital costs.

As we end Year 1 only one community, Sea Ranch in Sonoma has developed a plan and has submitted a grant application for CASF infrastructure funding. Their application is under review. The Sea Ranch Home Owners Association took this initiative independently of NBNCBC.

During Year Two each county team will focus on facilitating the development of specific projects for priority communities where the citizens are in support and there are willing providers to take the lead, similar to what has happened in Sea Ranch. There are communities and providers in three of the four counties well along the way to having a plan and a CASF grant application. We expect some applications to be submitted in the next six months.

We have a different challenge in Napa County. The CPUC Broadband Availability Map shows that 99 percent of Napa is already served, thus not eligible for CASF grants. The Napa team believes there are unserved and underserved communities and plans to conduct extensive ground truth testing in Year 2 to confirm or refute the Broadband Map.

The overall consortium will focus on developing a design for a regional middle mile infrastructure that will interconnect the communities in all four counties. NBNCBC believes that such a robust and redundant middle mile infrastructure is essential to the future economic growth and development of each county and the region.