

ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT  
for  
TROY CABLEVISION, INC.



BROADBAND TECHNOLOGY OPPORTUNITIES PROGRAM  
(BTOP)  
&  
NATIONAL TELECOMMUNICATIONS & INFORMATION  
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Prepared for:

Frank Monteferrante, PhD  
Environmental Compliance Specialist  
National Telecommunication and Information Administration  
Broadband Technology Opportunities Program  
1401 Constitution Avenue, N.W.  
Washington, DC 20230

Prepared by:  
Ladd Engineering Associates, Inc.  
P.O. Box 680747  
Fort Payne, AL 35968

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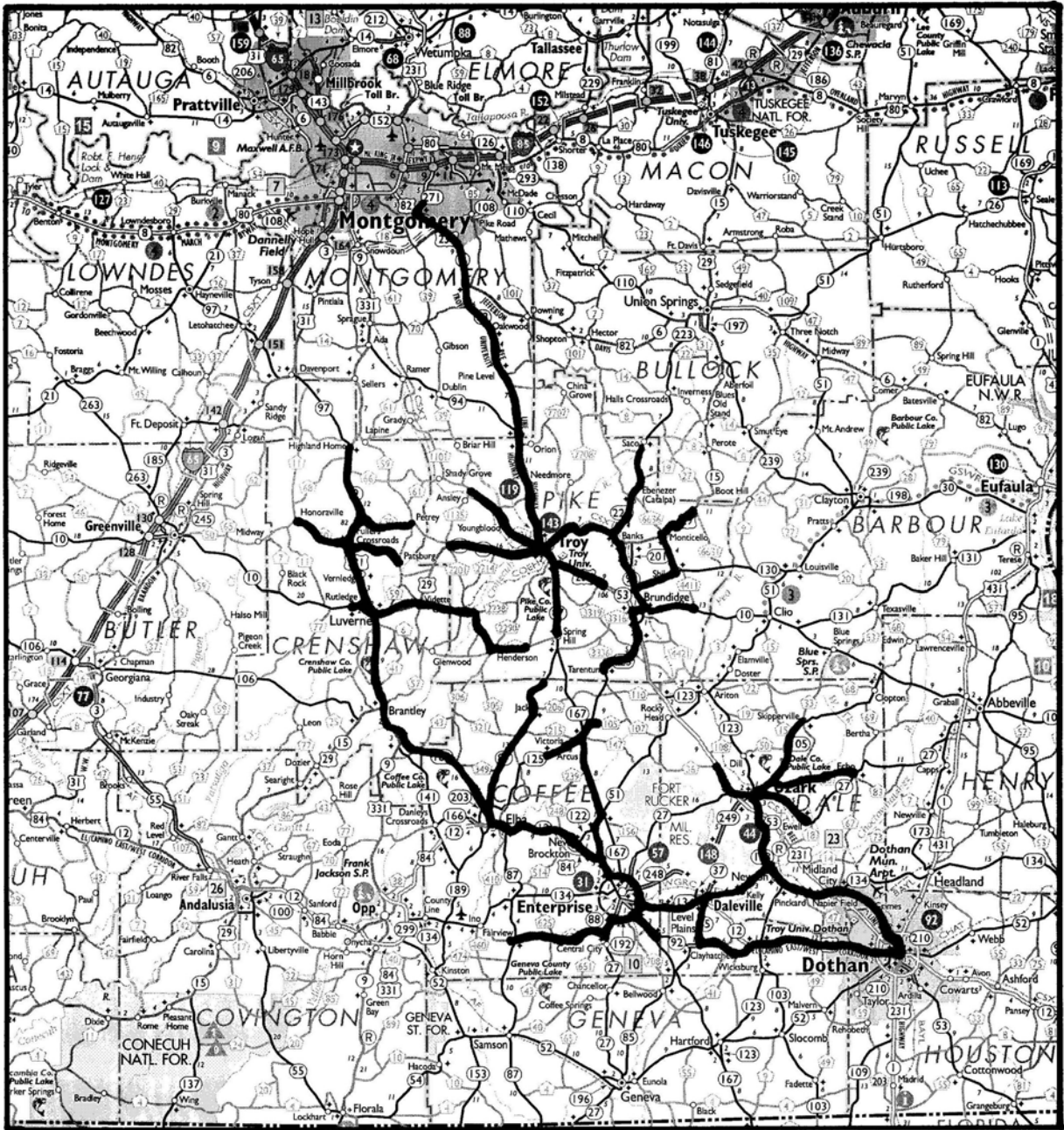
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**TROY CABLEVISION, INC.**  
**Southeast Alabama SmartBand Project**  
**PROJECT AREA MAP**



## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The National Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA) through the Broadband Technology Opportunities Program (BTOP) has awarded Troy Cablevision, Inc. (TCV), in Troy, Alabama, grant funding so that they may install approximately 595 miles of fiber optic cable to connect approximately 53,809 households, 3,681 businesses, and 673 critical community institutions and public safety entities in a four county area totaling over 2,521 square miles. The Project will also provide key internet connection points to the global internet in the Cities of Montgomery and Dothan, Alabama. The network will also support economic growth by providing redundant rings, including two backhaul routes to Atlanta, Georgia, that will enable the high-capacity, reliable broadband capability that will attract major businesses to the area.

TCV has partnered with South Alabama Electric Cooperative (SAEC), which is a non-profit electric cooperative, and they have coordinated their efforts simultaneously to maximize public investment in Coffee, Crenshaw, Dale and Pike Counties in Southeast Alabama.

TCV has also partnered with the Cities of Enterprise, Ozark and Troy, along with Troy University and the area's community colleges. This 595 mile fiber optic Middle Mile network will offer speeds between 1 Mbps and 1 Gbps and will facilitate more affordable and accessible broadband service to the unserved and underserved areas in the four counties and will enable local internet providers the use of the Project's open network. The overall goal of this Project is to make higher speed broadband equal to that available in other major metropolitan areas and more populated states so that all of the rural communities in this four county area can participate in the global economy.

This Project consists of approximately 595 miles of fiber optic cable that will be constructed on existing utility poles along various existing, federal, state, city or county right-of-ways and utility easements throughout the Project area. There will be approximately 524 miles of fiber optic cable lashed to existing utility facilities within highway rights-of-way. There will be approximately 71 miles of buried fiber optic cable utilized in areas where electrical distribution and/or telecommunication cable routes are non-existent or conditions would be favorable for plowing.

The alternatives considered for the SmartBand Project are based on TCV's and SAEC's existing network throughout the Project area. Determining the routes of the proposed fiber cable routes first involved determining the connection points in the unserved and underserved areas along with connections to SAEC's substations and connections to all businesses and critical community institutions and public safety entities. Once these locations were determined routes were established along the existing network to minimize the temporary environmental impacts associated with the Project, while maximizing connectivity between the unserved and underserved areas.

This Environmental Assessment (EA) analyzes several alternatives to determine the least impact to the environment during construction activities. The first alternative is the No Action alternative. This alternative basically does nothing and would not support the purpose and need of the Project. The second alternative is the Preferred alternative. This alternative is a

combination of the aerial and buried alternatives. The third alternative is the all Aerial Cable alternative. This alternative considers constructing all the fiber optic cable in the air. The fourth alternative is the all Buried Cable alternative. This alternative considers constructing all the fiber optic cable underground. The fifth alternative is an all Wireless alternative. This alternative considers constructing a network of radio towers and microwave radio towers to provide a wireless broadband network. The all buried cable alternative, the wireless alternative and the all aerial alternative were excluded from further consideration because they will require significantly more ground disturbance and/or would not be as cost effective as the Preferred alternative.

This EA analyzes the existing conditions and the environmental consequences of the Preferred alternative and the No Action alternative. The areas reviewed include: Noise, Air Quality, Geology and Soils, Water Resources, Biological Resources, Historic and Cultural Resources, Aesthetic and Visual Resources, Land Use, Infrastructure, Socioeconomic Resources and Health and Human Safety. Cumulative impacts of each alternative were also evaluated.

The analysis of this Project as constructed utilizing the methods described herein, show that no significant adverse impacts would take place during construction or operation along the Preferred alternative to any of the areas reviewed as stated above. The Preferred alternative was chosen as the most suitable route due to the fact that it is the most economical route by which to serve the population. Also there are established rights-of-ways that are maintained on a regular basis and environmental issues will be minimally affected.