



August 4, 2014

EXTENSION REQUEST AAR

To: Department of Commerce
National Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA)

From: Ronan Telephone Company

Subject: Broadband Technology Opportunities Program (BTOP) 3-month Extension Request, Montana West (Award ID: NT10BIX5570148) for Award Period from 09/01/2010 to 08/31/2014 (one year extension already granted)

Date: Month 48, 2014

To Whom It May Concern:

Ronan Telephone Company requests a period of performance extension until December 31, 2014 to continue the successful implementation of our Broadband Technology Opportunities Program (BTOP) award. This request includes this project's extension rationale and provides supporting documentation as attachments to the Award Action Request (AAR).

Because of many delays obtaining consents and easements, Montana West has not yet completed providing high speed Internet to the communities of Heart Butte and St. Mary/Babb. These communities are located on the Blackfeet reservation; Heart Butte on the southern edge and St. Mary/Babb on the western edge. Our construction window is diminished by the cold weather, snow and wind and sometimes does not start until May or June, as is the case this year, with what has been a long winter. In order to build new infrastructure on the Blackfeet reservation it is necessary to gain tribal member consents and easements for access to the right of way on roads under the control of the Bureau of Indian Affairs. There are a number of steps that must be taken in order to acquire these consents and BIA approval, which take a great deal of time.

Heart Butte:

Heart Butte will be served by a microwave system with a direct connection to the fiber backbone in East Glacier the Westernmost point of the network on the Blackfeet Reservation. The best site to place a distribution radio for wireless broadcast of Internet signal to Heart Butte is Horn Ridge, approximately 2.29 miles NW from the center of town. This location is also high enough to enable a point to point microwave link to East Glacier for traffic backhaul.

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Broadband Technology
Opportunities Program (BTOP)

National Telecommunications &
Information Administration (NTIA)



Because of these desirable features it was decided to focus our efforts on gaining access to this site for service to Heart Butte.

It has taken several months to hire a tribal "consent" specialist, identify the individual landowners, obtain their consents, contract for and secure a cultural assessment, gain Tribal Historical Preservation approval, obtain surveys and appraisals from BIA approved surveyors and appraisers, and finally finish the application to the BIA for easements from these landowners. An additional two months has passed while waiting for BIA approval. We still are waiting on final approval of the easement application for access to and the site itself on Horn Ridge, although we now hear it may be this week or next. Our schedule for Horn Ridge now impacts the fiber build between Browning and St. Mary/Babb.

St. Mary/Babb

This will be an aerial fiber build from Browning along Duck Lake Road (Hwy464) for 33.7 miles, to the intersection of Hwy464 and Hwy89. There will be a buried fiber build from St. Mary to Babb on Hwy89 for a distance of 9.5 miles. We originally planned on burying fiber in the right of way on Hwy464, and employed a tribal member who does consent work to help us gain the necessary consents and ultimately the easements from the landowners. He was well into the process when he discovered that there were a couple of landowners who controlled a significant portion of the right of way on this path, and who would not consent to an easement under any circumstances. This cost us much valuable time, and we have since requested to change to an aerial route using the existing utility poles to get from Browning to Hwy89. Because of the above, our schedule has slipped four months, and we now need September, October, November and December in order to finish the project.

- 1) **Supporting Documentation:** Ronan Telephone Company submits the following documentation to assist NTIA with the review of this extension request. The attached materials have been updated according to revised project plans for an extended award period and reflect the narrative provided above.
- 2)
 - **Revised SF-424C Budget and associated narrative** (documentation of how remaining Federal and match funds in each SF-424C category will be used)
We do not anticipate reallocation of funding categories for the remainder of the grant period, including the extension requested to December 31, 2014.
 - **Project Plan** (updated timeline/milestones needed to achieve benefits within the extension period)
Please see the attached revised Project plan, with tasks extended throughout the calendar year.
 - **Revised Performance Projections** (table below)





Revised Performance Projections
(We just need more time to finish the original plan)

Performance Indicator	Revised Project Goals																								
New Network Miles Deployed	310 Miles of new network miles deployed in western Montana.. fiber available to 33 Community Anchor Institutions.																								
New Network Miles Leased	797 existing network miles leased.																								
Existing Network Miles Upgraded	106 miles of existing network miles upgraded																								
Existing Network Miles Leased	No existing Network Miles Leased																								
CAI's Receiving New Access	<p>24 CAI's will receive new access</p> <table border="1"> <tr><td>Mission Valley Power</td></tr> <tr><td>St. Patricks Medical Center- Missoula</td></tr> <tr><td>Jocko Valley Library</td></tr> <tr><td>Arlee Fire Department</td></tr> <tr><td>Arlee Tribal Health</td></tr> <tr><td>Kicking Horse Job Corps</td></tr> <tr><td>Salish Kootenai Housing</td></tr> <tr><td>Polson Fire Department</td></tr> <tr><td>Valley View School</td></tr> <tr><td>Elmo-Tribal headquarters</td></tr> <tr><td>Charlo Fire Department</td></tr> <tr><td>Preston Town County Library</td></tr> <tr><td>Hot Springs Fire Department</td></tr> <tr><td>Kalispell Regional Medical Center- Upgrade</td></tr> <tr><td>Flathead Community College- Upgrade</td></tr> <tr><td>Family Health Care</td></tr> <tr><td>Kalispell Fire Department</td></tr> <tr><td>University of Montana-Missoula</td></tr> <tr><td>Blackfeet Tribal Headquarters</td></tr> <tr><td>Blackfeet Community College</td></tr> <tr><td>Blackfeet Community Hospital</td></tr> <tr><td>Blackfeet Housing Authority</td></tr> <tr><td>Browning School District</td></tr> <tr><td>Heart Butte Medical Clinic</td></tr> </table>	Mission Valley Power	St. Patricks Medical Center- Missoula	Jocko Valley Library	Arlee Fire Department	Arlee Tribal Health	Kicking Horse Job Corps	Salish Kootenai Housing	Polson Fire Department	Valley View School	Elmo-Tribal headquarters	Charlo Fire Department	Preston Town County Library	Hot Springs Fire Department	Kalispell Regional Medical Center- Upgrade	Flathead Community College- Upgrade	Family Health Care	Kalispell Fire Department	University of Montana-Missoula	Blackfeet Tribal Headquarters	Blackfeet Community College	Blackfeet Community Hospital	Blackfeet Housing Authority	Browning School District	Heart Butte Medical Clinic
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	Ronan School District- Upgrade	
	Salish Kootenai Headquarters- Upgrade	
	Ronan City Hall- Upgrade	
	Ronan Fire Department- Upgrade	
	Lake County Housing- Upgrade	

**Planned Expended award funding
(No new funding is being requested)**

Funding Period	Planned Federal Amount	Planned Match Amount
Actual Funding Spent to Date and Planned Expended Funding to August 31, 2014	\$ 13,651,640	\$ 7,578,122
Planned Funding Needed Beyond August 31, 2014	\$ 145,000	\$0

Ronan Telephone Company understands that it must continue to comply with all statutory and programmatic requirements and that this is a no-cost period of performance extension request only (i.e. no additional funding will be provided under this extension request).

Sincerely,

Gerald Beeks
Authorized Organization Representative (AOR)
Ronan Telephone Company

