

MERRIMACK COUNTY
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UNIVERSITY *of* NEW HAMPSHIRE
COOPERATIVE EXTENSION

County Offices

March 18, 2010

Belknap County
527-5475

The Honorable Larry Strickling
Assistant Secretary of Commerce
National Telecommunications and Information Administration U.S.
Department of Commerce
1401 Constitution Avenue NW
Washington, D.C. 20230

Carroll County
447-3834

Cheshire County
352-4550

Dear Assistant Secretary Strickling:

Coos County
788-4961

On behalf of UNH Cooperative Extension, Merrimack County, I wish to express our support and commitment to the statewide broadband proposal titled Network New Hampshire Now (#4248) submitted by the University of New Hampshire to the National Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA) Broadband Technologies Opportunities Program (BTOP) Round 2 program.

Grafton County
787-6944

Merrimack County is impacted directly by a lack of available connectivity and by the high cost of connectivity due to insufficient supply and inadequate price competition in New Hampshire. Robust and reliable broadband connectivity is critical to UNH Cooperative Extension's mission, *Le.* to provide NH citizens with research-based education and information, enhancing their ability to make informed decisions which strengthen youth, families and communities, sustain natural resources, and improve the economy. We rely on Internet connectivity to communicate with, volunteers and clientele and our colleagues throughout the state.

Hillsborough County
641-6060

Merrimack County
796-2151

Rockingham County 679-
5616

Here in Merrimack County, we continue to expand usage of technology to reach our clientele "where they are". We would like to be able to provide webinars, or Skype with clientele, but due to the lack of high speed access by all, we are limited in the types of new technologies that we can use with some of our volunteers and clientele. Having several rural towns that still only have dial up, it limits us in being able to implement these new technologies. If everyone had high speed access it would minimize travel costs due to the rising gas prices and expand options for our educational program outreach. We also do a lot of videoconferencing and the cost of this would be reduced because we currently use telephone lines for this which can be somewhat costly to our county budgets.

Strafford County
749-4445

Sullivan County
863-9200

We hear from clientele that with dial up, it is very slow to upload pictures and to download materials that they would like to access off of our web site. We even have limited ability to share materials between county offices in some cases because of inconsistencies in internet access speed.

Family, Home & Garden
Education Center 629-9494
(Office) 877-398-4769 (Toll
Free)

UNH Cooperative
Extension State Office 862-
1520



Recycled

The **Network New Hampshire Now Project** will be extremely useful for us. It will enhance our ability to communicate with colleagues throughout the state, region and nation. It will also improve our ability to work with our local volunteers and provide us with the affordable broadband connectivity we need to communicate and deliver programs to clientele.

For these reasons, we at UNH Cooperative Extension, Merrimack County, are enthusiastically committed to New Hampshire's efforts at constructing the **Network New Hampshire Now Project**. We look forward to being a user of and provider on the finished network. We encourage the funding and construction of this project.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in purple ink that reads "Deborah Cheever". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, looping initial "D".

Deborah Cheever
County Office Administrator, Merrimack County