

March 18, 2010

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

Dear Assistant Secretary Strickling:

On behalf of UNH Cooperative Extension, Sullivan 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. Sullivan 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, i.e. to provide New Hampshire 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 colleagues, volunteers, and clientele throughout the state. We use web-based video clips to train master gardeners and wildlife volunteers. With the increased cost of gasoline, we expect to use video based conferencing for training more and more.

We are currently unable to offer online services to as many clients as we would like due to inaccurate broadband infrastructure as Sullivan County is primarily rural and the vast majority of our county is still on dial-up.

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, Sullivan 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 black ink, appearing to read "Chuck Hersey", with a long, sweeping horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Chuck Hersey  
Extension Educator  
Forest Resources