

From: drhill@chebeague.net
To: [BOCrfc2015](#)
Cc: maine-broadband-coalition@googlegroups.com
Date: Friday, May 29, 2015 1:59:40 PM
Attachments: [Broadband Opportunity Council.docx](#)

Specifically, the RFC seeks comment on such questions as:

- How can the federal government best promote coordination and use of federally-funded broadband assets?

The technology is there. What is missing is funding for areas that are not "economically viable." Past programs (BTOP/BTIP) have excluded smaller projects and areas that are close to served areas but physically separated, such as the island where we live, which is a mile or so from a served area but separated by water. "As the crow flies" doesn't work when the crow has to swim. Consideration must be made for all areas of the country with particular attention paid to the local characteristics of each.

The parallels to the rural electrification programs of the 1930s are striking and lessons should be learned from what was done then. Can we imagine an America without universal electrical service?

- What regulatory barriers exist within the agencies of the Executive Branch to the deployment of broadband infrastructure?

I don't feel qualified to answer this question other than to say that the large telecoms appear to have a stranglehold on major infrastructure that is needed to reach unserved/underserved areas. That infrastructure should be public, not private.

- Are there specific regulations within the agencies of the Executive Branch that impede or restrict competition for broadband service?

I don't feel qualified to answer this question.

- How can communities and regions incentivize service providers to offer broadband services, either wired or wireless, in rural and remote areas?

I would re-word this question to ask how the government can incentivize service providers to work with communities and regions to offer broadband services. Our experience as a very small ISP in a very small community is that there is no motivation on the part of large telecoms to establish partnerships with local companies/towns/regions to establish the critical mass necessary to make something happen. The sense is that the big companies want to shut out any competition until they're ready to come in and take control, even if it means the area has to make do with no or insufficient broadband for however long it takes to make the area financially viable for the big guy.

- What can the federal government do to make it easier for state, local, and tribal governments or organizations to access funding for broadband?

Having applied for BTOP/BTIP funding and being denied as being (a) too small a project and (b) too close to a served area (despite our island isolation), and having been through the FCC pilot program that found some portions of our five-mile-long island eligible and other portions ineligible, I have to say that evaluations on the LOCAL level have to be

made to determine the true state of current offerings and what needs to be done to bring them up to acceptable broadband levels.

Another concern is the ownership of the major infrastructure and/or access to same. Again, the parallels between rural electrification and broadband deployment are apt. Our "digital superhighways" cannot be limited access highways.

- Added comment/rant:

I have visited many locations around the world and have been absolutely astounded at the high level of Internet services in areas that I would least expect to find them. And where I do expect to find good broadband, I not only find it, I find it with speeds hundreds of times faster than what we have at home. And not just on our isolated little island. How can the most highly developed, highly advanced country in the world be so pitifully behind the rest of the world? It's an embarrassment and one that will cost our nation in the long run in many ways, many predictable, but some unpredictable. I applaud your efforts to change this situation and wish you the best of luck in doing so. Please know that there is a lot of energy at the local level to achieve this goal if we can just be empowered to do so. </rant>

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The deadline for submitting comments is June 10, 2015. Written comments can be submitted by email to BOCrfc2015@ntia.doc.gov or by mail to the National Telecommunications and Information Administration, U.S. Department of Commerce, 1401 Constitution Avenue NW, Room 4626, Attn: Broadband Opportunity Council, Washington, DC 20230.

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