Illinois Broadband Opportunities Partnership - Southern Delta Communications, LLC, dba Clearwave Communications, is a facilities based Competitive Local Exchange Carrier located in rural southern Illinois. We have been providing telecommunication service as well as internet service to southern Illinois since 2002. In February 2010, Clearwave joined the newly-formed Illinois Broadband Opportunities Partnership (IBOP). Illinois Broadband Opportunity Partnership (IBOP) - Southern is part of a statewide coalition poised to bring sustainable and high-speed communication services to all communities across the State of Illinois. These higher-speed services are required to meet a wide range of critical needs, including needs pertaining to education, economic development, healthcare, and public safety. The IBOP series of partnerships are creating inter-organizational and community partnerships, providing broadband technology assessment and guidance, creating rigorous financial plans, and communicating with core constituencies. The IBOP partnerships will be a catalyst profoundly improving communications for underserved communities throughout Illinois. One key objective of this initiative will be to implement a statewide core broadband infrastructure, based on optical fiber, that will connect multiple communities in the State in the near term. It will also serve as the foundation for additional development and expansion in the future. Similarly, each of the key regions participating in the IBOP series of partnerships will implement the same core broadband foundation of resources to meet near-term, intermediate-term and long-term needs. Four other regional proposals have been submitted by a separate lead entity: IBOP - Northwest, IBOP - Western, and IBOP - East Central, and IBOP - Northeast. A sixth collaborator is the City of Chicago's SmartChicago broadband proposal. The State of Illinois has committed $11,351,250 of matching funds to the Clearwave application, and is in full support of this partnership as well as Clearwave's BTOP application. Clearwave's proposed project is a comprehensive community infrastructure fiber optic network covering 23 counties; interconnecting 3 Local Access Transport Areas (LATA); and 33 interconnection points. This portion of Southern Illinois is generally bounded on the north by Interstate 64, on the east by the state of Indiana, on the southeast by the state of Kentucky, and on the southwest by the state of Missouri. The area is predominately rural and the interconnection points are located in 33 communities, ranging in population from less than 1000 to approximately 20,000 (with the exception of one community), of which 20 of the 23 counties in the service area are classified as economically distressed. The communities that our middle mile network will pass through contain approximately 307,136 households and 55,479 businesses. Because Clearwave is a last-mile service provider, this project will be able to serve multiple purposes and benefit many stakeholders. Critical community organizations, including health care, education, libraries, and public safety will be some of the first to benefit from this network. Our network will be able to address the
broadband needs by directly connecting 232 community anchor institutions, including 111 K-12 schools, 9 community colleges, Southern Illinois University, 60 hospitals and public healthcare facilities, 28 PSAPs, and 23 libraries. We will have an immediate impact on public safety in our service area through a collaborative partnership with the CSI NG 9-1-1 (Counties of Southern Illinois Next Generation 9-1-1). As an example of our commitment to offer broadband access to public safety agencies, we have included in this application funds for an 18-county regional Next Generation 9-1-1 project. These funds will enable broadband connectivity for each of the Public Safety Answering Points (PSAPs) in the 18 counties in their project. The grant will also enhance the public safety by providing the broadband access that will facilitate the implementation of the nation's first standards-based Next Generation 9-1-1 (NG 9-1-1) system. In addition to improving access to 9-1-1 for residents in the IBOP - Southern region, the NG 9-1-1 system will enable improved emergency information sharing, and enhanced training, among numerous anchor institutions involved in emergency response (e.g. hospitals; police, fire, and EMS agencies, universities). The Counties of Southern Illinois consortium has committed $261,261 of matching funds for this portion of the project. Our service offerings will include high-capacity, symmetrical, point-to-point data as well as Internet services starting at 10 Mbps. Currently, there is limited availability for this type of connectivity in the area, especially inter-LATA connectivity. Where it is available, there is insufficient competition. This lack of competition raises both the wholesale and retail cost for this type of service. Frequently, it is unaffordable for most carriers and end-users. Clearwave commits to follow all of the nondiscrimination obligations of this program. Public entity pricing (for schools, libraries, public safety, and public healthcare) will be deeply discounted, and available at extremely affordable rates. This pricing takes into consideration that the proposed network is being funded primarily with taxpayer dollars and it is our obligation to give back to our community. The discount that we will offer public entities will be in excess of the 25% that NTIA and RUS recommends from carriers. For roughly the same price that a public entity is currently paying for a 1.5 Mbps connection, they will be able to get a 50 Mbps connection from Clearwave. And for approximately the same price they are paying for a bonded 3.0 Mbps T1 connection, they will be able to get a 100 Mbps connection from Clearwave. Wholesale point to point and Internet pricing will be available for other carriers, such as Local Exchange Carriers (LECs), Internet Service Providers (ISPs), Wireless Internet Service Providers (WISPs) and Mobile Wireless Carriers in order to connect and provide service to their end users. Wholesale pricing will be substantially lower than current market prices in this 23-county area. As an example, current providers are charging $5,400 per month for 45 Mbps of point-to-point connectivity today, and our pricing for 50 Mbps will be $1,500 per month. Pricing will not be distance-sensitive, nor based on which NODE or Connection Point is utilized to provide the connectivity. This will promote the interconnection obligations of this program through agreements with other providers to utilize this carrier class network. This project will place 740.4 miles of 96-count fiber cable throughout the project area. The network will conform to SONET and Ethernet standards, with the core network initially operating at both multiple OC48 and multiple 10 Gbps capacity. The primary Internet data source will originate from a carrier hotel in St. Louis, Missouri, and a redundant connection in a carrier hotel in Chicago will be provided through a fiber swap with IBOP - East Central. Both connections will be trunked to Clearwave's proposed office in Marion, Illinois. The proposed design uses a combination of Ethernet (Gigabit-capable), GPON (Gigabit-capable passive optical network) and SONET (DS-3, OC-3, OC-12) services to provide a variety of interconnect options. Clearwave has demonstrated its ability to
implement and operate a broadband infrastructure by its own network build out in southern Illinois as well as our management team's experience with multi-million dollar network build outs at other companies. Clearwave began building its current network in 2002, and has grown to a network that has points of presence in over 20 communities. The overall infrastructure cost of our project is $45,395,020. We expect to have enough of the network completed to begin adding subscribers by 2011. Overall expected cumulative subscriber projections are below: 2011 ' 26 2012 ' 218 2013 ' 657 2014 ' 989 2015 ' 1319 2016 ' 1647 2017 ' 1972 2018 ' 2296 There have been numerous studies and methodologies for determining the impact of broadband development on employment. We have chosen to use the Council of Economic Advisors' Guide to Job Creation Estimates, per the recommendations of NTIA. Using this, we come up with the following job years created from this project: 158 ' Direct Job-years 157 ' Indirect Job-years 177 ' Induced Job-years In summary, Clearwave's Illinois Broadband Opportunities Partnership Southern Region proposal will address the lack of affordable broadband in our area that limits economic development, quality of health care, education, and public safety by constructing a 740.4-mile high-capacity fiber network connecting 33 communities in 23 counties.