Almost the entire state of Wyoming is 'rural and remote' with a land area of 97,814 square miles and a 2008 estimated population of 532,668. Wyoming is the ninth largest state in area, but the least populated state of the nation; the entire state has an average of 5.3 people per square mile. Cities, towns, and small communities are predominantly distributed across the state with two to three hour drives between population centers of 25,000 to 50,000 people. Wyoming businesses and citizens have by necessity begun to strongly embrace broadband technology to overcome the distance and density factors. Today, there is an approximate 33 mile gap over the precipitous Teton Pass of Wyoming effectively isolating much of the area from other communications carriers, business entrepreneurs, health care providers, educational facilities and community services. This project would complete an opening in the current fiber network that would connect the project areas into Idaho. The resulting fiber optic ring topology would consist of this project, and existing fiber segments owned by applicant. When completed, this project will enable robust and diverse (redundant) broadband network opportunities for 11 counties and 26 communities in Wyoming. Some of the cities, towns, and small communities along the entire proposed fiber ring topology include Evanston, Cokeville, Afton, Alpine, Freedom, Jackson, and Wilson. Direct and indirect beneficiaries of a robust and diverse fiber optic broadband network topology include: Approximately 366,000 Wyoming residents or almost 70% of the US Census 2008 estimated state population (www.census.gov/popest/cities/files/SUB-EST2008-56.csv) The University of Wyoming and five 2-year institutions (community colleges) BYU Idaho and Idaho State University 222 Wyoming Public Schools (https://wdesecure.k12.us/public_ed/schools.html) 42 Participating Facilities (hospitals, community mental health centers, and substance abuse clinics) in the Wyoming Telehealth Network (WYOMING TELEHEALTH NETWORK, Proposal to FCC Rural Health Care Pilot Program www.fcc.gov/cgb/rural/rhcp.html, Wyoming [Part 1]) Other providers, telecommunications carriers and adjoining state networks seeking alternate or protected broadband transport and carrier class service routes in and out of Jackson, and the state of Wyoming in general Start-up businesses looking for network reliability, existing businesses seeking to expand to other communities or connect offices using less costly, shorter transport and circuit routes. The project will consist of a robust DWDM and SONET architecture to provide up to 40 lambdas of 2.5 Gb/s capacity in a working/protect configuration and OC-48 down to DS1 services. Silver Star currently maintains an open network policy and through its Internet provider company does not differentiate among applications that traverse our Internet network. Silver Star commits to adhere to the NOFA’s non-discrimination and network interconnection obligations if awarded BTOP funds. Silver Star Telephone Company, Inc., doing business as Silver Star Communications, has over fifty years experience building and operating a widespread, state of the art...
broadband network. Silver Star has designed, constructed and operated an extensive network consisting of over 396 miles of transport fiber optic cable supporting diverse and redundant DWDM and SONET circuits. Silver Star has personnel with extensive experience in all departments from management, engineering, operations, customer service and finance prepared to implement and operate this proposed project as an integral part of its existing network. The proposed project to Deliver Opportunities by Investing in Rural Wyoming Broadband is estimated to result in 69 created or saved jobs. Industry estimates place the cost of the Jackson, WY to Victor, Idaho Middle Mile Fiber Optic Project at almost 6.3 million dollars. For more than a decade, telecommunications carriers have tried to justify the costs required to 'close the gap.' The costs as estimated are reasonable given the distance, and the fact that the project will traverse the Bridger-Teton National Forest and riparian areas near Grand Teton National Park. ARRA broadband stimulus funding represents an opportunity to construct a critical and long-needed project for the states of Wyoming and Idaho that would not otherwise be constructed due to costs and area remoteness.