



BROADBAND IN WYOMING MOVES QUICKLY

Wyoming Leading US in Broadband Line Growth

CHEYENNE, WY - A recent broadband report commissioned by the Wyoming Telecommunications Council demonstrated that broadband providers are moving to deploy land based broadband access statewide. Also, Federal Communications Commission (FCC) filed data shows that between June 2002 and June 2005 Wyoming led the nation in growth in broadband access lines. During that time total high-speed lines grew by over 400%.

As a part of Governor Freudenthal's ongoing efforts to remove barriers to economic growth, the Wyoming Telecommunications Council is working to fulfill the deployment of universal broadband internet access to Wyoming's citizens. Under the Council's policy directive that broadband services are essential to operating businesses, furthering education, and supporting healthcare systems, the Council commissioned CostQuest Associates to develop a Broadband Gap Report to identify gaps in access to broadband services and estimate costs for universal broadband deployment.

Terrestrial broadband is defined as telecommunications, cable, and fixed wireless services deployed at data speeds of at least 1 million bits/second sent to the customer and downstream and 256,000 bits per second transmitted back to the receiver. There are currently satellite broadband providers that offer services in Wyoming as well.

The report developed by CostQuest Associates shows that over 80% of Wyoming housing units have access to terrestrial broadband services and that communications providers are moving quickly to deploy advanced services to their customers in Wyoming. As expected, the Broadband Gap areas typically represent the more rural portions of the state. The Telecommunications Council looks to focus on narrowing these Broadband Gap areas by providing the information to encourage private enterprise to deploy advanced services in these areas.

Nina Cornell, Chair of the Telecommunications Council stressed the importance of broadband communications to Wyoming. "Telecommunications is a critically important part of Wyoming's economic future. Wyoming's ability to participate in the global economy depends on providing all citizens access to a broadband infrastructure that delivers such services as high-speed Internet access and video conferencing. Broadband networks have joined highways and railroads as necessary elements of a modern infrastructure and are an essential component of economic prosperity."

Communications companies considering building-out their networks to serve these Broadband Gap areas have a unique opportunity to look at the cost of deployment well in advance. The Broadband Gap Report calls out the estimated investment needed to build out the needed infrastructure. "Unlike other state efforts, the Wyoming study not only looked at the broadband coverage but also looked at the costs of various technologies to provide coverage in the gap areas." said Jim Stegeman, President of CostQuest Associates. "This data can then be used to encourage private enterprise to deploy."

The Wyoming Telecommunications Council and CostQuest Associates are now working on the next phase of the project by working to update this information and deploying it online so that interested parties can identify communities where terrestrial broadband could be deployed for a relatively modest investment. CostQuest Associates will also update its cost studies to identify specific technologies that might provide effective solutions to narrow the broadband gap areas of Wyoming.

CostQuest Associates (www.costquest.com) is a global leader in communications network modeling. Based out of Cincinnati, Ohio, CostQuest has been involved in the design and development of some of the world's leading network costing and business analysis tools.



Contact: Mike Wilson, CostQuest Associates
Office: 425-772-2261

