

California Public Utilities Commission
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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PRESS RELEASE

Docket #: Res T-

CPUC ACTION ALLOWS DIGITAL 395 PROJECT TO MOVE FORWARD

SAN FRANCISCO, November 10, 2011 - The California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC) today adopted an environmental report that sets the stage for the California Broadband Cooperative (CBC) to move forward and obtain other required state and federal permits in order to build a new 593-mile fiber network.

The CPUC approved a Final Mitigated Negative Declaration pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act for the CBC's Digital 395 broadband fiber optic infrastructure project, which has received grant funding from both the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act stimulus fund (\$81.15 million) and the California Advanced Services Fund (\$19.3 million).

The Digital 395 Middle Mile Project would build a new 593-mile fiber network providing a 10 gigabit high capacity fiber optic middle mile/backhaul route along U.S. Highway 395 between Barstow, Calif., and Carson City, Nev. The network would establish a future-proof broadband "middle mile" link to more than three dozen communities, stimulate broadband edge-out in the local communities, and fill-in wireless voice and data transmission gaps along the well-traversed U.S. Highway 395 corridor. The area that the CBC Digital 395 wholesale middle mile network proposes to serve contains 28,127 households, 2,571 businesses, and 168 community anchor institutions, including 74 educational, 12 health care, 11 libraries, and 26 public safety entities. Download and upload speeds will be 100 mbps up to Gigabit Ethernet.

The major components of the proposed project include the following:

- Construction of a new, approximately 479-mile backbone fiber route;
- Construction of approximately 62 miles of new distribution lines;

- Placement of approximately 52 miles of fiber in existing utility conduit; and,
- Construction of 16 nodes or pre-fabricated buildings to support wireless systems.

The Digital 395 Middle Mile Project would make middle-mile fiber available for broadband service providers to bring cost effective, high-speed broadband services to areas that do not have access to it today. This middle-mile infrastructure would provide access to 1) unserved communities; 2) underserved communities; 3) schools, libraries, community colleges, and other institutions of higher education; 4) public safety agencies and healthcare providers; and would 5) stimulate demand for broadband, economic growth, and job creation. The goal of the proposed project is to make broadband capacity in the Eastern Sierra equal to that available in major metropolitan areas and more populated areas of California and Nevada.

“I fully support high-speed communications infrastructure development in California. Today’s decision will advance California’s ability to compete in the global marketplace,” said Commissioner Timothy Alan Simon. “The Digital 395 network will strengthen California’s economy overall and will further the development of job creation in our state.”

Said Commissioner Catherine J.K. Sandoval, “Today’s decision is an important milestone in the Digital 395 project. This project promised to expand Internet access in a key area of our state. It will help residents and businesses alike, and will increase California’s competitiveness.”

The proposal voted on today is available at

http://docs.cpuc.ca.gov/word_pdf/AGENDA_RESOLUTION/145785.pdf.

For more information on the CPUC, please visit www.cpuc.ca.gov.

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