



California Public Utilities Commission

505 Van Ness Avenue, San Francisco, CA 94102

News Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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PUC OFFERS TELECOMMUNICATIONS GRANTS FOR SERVING LOW-INCOME RURAL RESIDENTS OF CALIFORNIA

*Community Groups and Nonprofit Organizations Encouraged
to Apply by January 15, 2007*

SAN FRANCISCO, November 29, 2006 - The California Public Utilities Commission (PUC) is accepting applications for the Rural Telecommunications Infrastructure Grants Program for the 2006 – 2007 fiscal year. Under the program, rural and low-income communities are eligible to receive grants of up to \$2.5 million per project to help establish and provide telecommunication service to areas that are currently without telephone service.

Assembly Bill 140 enacted the program in March 2002 in an effort to extend telecommunication services to portions of the state where telecommunication service is unavailable or non-existent. The PUC oversees the program and has established the application process and eligibility criteria. Over the past five years, the PUC has authorized five grants totaling over \$10 million to qualified applicants in the Placer, Trinity, Tulare, Shasta, and Humboldt counties.

All interested community-based and nonprofit organizations are invited to learn more about this program and to apply for a grant by January 15, 2007.

For applications and information please contact Mary Jo Borak at 415-703-1879 or email bor@cpuc.ca.gov.

More information on the PUC is available www.cpuc.ca.gov.

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ANNOUNCEMENT
TELECOMMUNICATIONS GRANT AVAILABILITY
Up to \$2,500,000 available per project

To: Community groups seeking grants to provide telecommunications infrastructure in currently unserved low-income rural areas of California.

The Telecommunications Division of the California Public Utilities Commission is now accepting applications for the Rural Telecommunications Infrastructure Grants Program spanning the 2006-07 fiscal year. The application deadline is January 15, 2007 for Phase 1 Applications.

State Legislation created the Rural Telecommunications Infrastructure Grants Program, which seeks to extend telecommunication services to portions of the state where service is unavailable. Under this program, rural and low-income communities are eligible to receive grants of up to \$2,500,000 each to assist in providing telecommunications services to areas that are currently without telephone service. The program is funded up to \$10,000,000 annually through January 1, 2008.

The California Public Utilities Commission oversees the grants program and has established an application process and eligibility criteria for community-based groups to obtain grants to provide telephone infrastructure to connect their communities to the telecommunications network. Over the past three fiscal years, we have authorized five grants for \$10,194,900 to qualified community-based groups. More information on the program for this fiscal year is available on the CPUC website at www.cpuc.ca.gov.

We invite all interested community-based groups to learn more about this telecommunications program and apply for a grant to connect your community. In summary, the application process is divided into two stages involving first a qualifying stage and then a more detailed feasibility and costing review stage. Applicants who incur costs providing a stage 2 feasibility study may still be eligible for reimbursement even if their application is ultimately denied.

If you receive this notice and know of a community that may qualify for a grant, please share this notice with them. For those communities currently without telephone services, it could change their world. Questions regarding the Rural Telecommunications Infrastructure Grants Program (also known as the AB 140 Implementation Project) should be addressed to Mary Jo Borak at (415) 703-1879 or via email at bor@cpuc.ca.gov.