



Northeast Service Cooperative

Collaborating to meet your changing needs

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An Equal Opportunity Employer

March 23, 2010

NESC Members, Colleagues and Friends:

Thanks to a rock-solid proposal and active support from our members, the Northeast Service Cooperative will receive \$43.5 million in federal funding (<http://www.nesc.k12.mn.us/files/award.pdf>) for the Northeast Middle Mile Fiber Project through the Rural Utilities Service at the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA).

The Northeast Middle Mile Fiber Project will bring world-class, vendor neutral broadband services to more than 220 key sites across the Arrowhead region over 915 miles of in-the-ground fiber backbone. This initiative will impact regional infrastructure and economic development for years to come providing services to education, health care, public safety, emergency responders, cities, counties, governmental agencies, community development and public-private business partnerships.

For now, we begin the process of completing the necessary agreements with USDA's Rural Utilities Service. This detailed process may take several months. The remainder of 2010 has been set aside for planning, leveraging, re-engineering, community meetings, additional due diligence and the project request for proposal (RFP). Once project bids are awarded, construction will begin in 2011 and likely continue into 2012. Although some components of service may begin sooner, the full potential for the Northeast Middle Mile Project will be realized in 2012 and beyond.

For more information on our project and related updates going forward, please visit our website at www.nesc.k12.mn.us/broadband. We appreciate your calls and letters of support – they clearly made a difference! And stay in touch with us for the latest news on the Northeast Middle Mile Fiber Project, a national priority investment in Broadband USA.

Best regards,

Paul Brinkman, Executive Director
Northeast Service Cooperative