

“Internet for All Benzie County” – Activities during Feb 2023. Reported **April 2023 Invoice status report:** March, April, May status reports will focus on preparing for construction season. Once construction starts May, June, July the status reports will start to include township and road level construction activities.

### **ROBIN application submitted:**

Cherry Capital Connection working with County administrator, Grow Benzie, and Mitch Shapiro submitted a ROBIN application the address the unserved and underserved households of Benzie County. The application was modeled and expanded on the Internet for All Benzie County agreement.

The project is valued at \$10.55M. The state request was \$5.1M. The project would be completed by the end of 2026. Houses unserved and underserved to be connected 2,553. Houses passed 4,290. To maximize adoption rates CCC working with Mitch and Grow Benzie analyzed the data and determined that we could offer the following:

- 1) Reduced 100 x 100 subscription service to \$64. All other subscriptions rates were reduced accordingly.
- 2) Offering a net zero program for ACP eligible households. ACP households can subscribe to 100 x 100 serve for \$30 per month. After applying the \$30 ACP payment service is net zero.

To succeed and create a sustainable model:

Adoption rate and getting the word out is critical. Adoption rate includes residential, business, and governmental.

The project includes a) 204 to 214 miles of main line fiber across Almira, Benzonia, Colfax, Crystal Lake, Homestead, Joyfield, and Weldon townships and b) 181 to 200 miles of fiber from the roadway to the home. Benzie Grow contribution to the application is worth noting:

1. Communicated with 50+ local community agencies to discuss the broadband initiative and request letters of support: This included: non-profits, schools, businesses, local government, health care agencies, libraries, churches, etc.
2. Collected and organized 40+ letters of interest total for the final grant. Directly impacted grant by communicating clear community support, need, and articulating benefits.
3. Acted as local consultants to provide insight and guidance unique to Benzie.

### **ROBIN Process**

There is a 45-day challenge process that will begin once the applications submitted are reviewed. It is assumed there will be a response to the challenges and then awards. Details of this process are being developed and we will be prepared to respond. Benzie.cccfiber.com will be updated to reflect ROBIN status.

### **Inventory**

Two shipments received 80K conduit and 180 Handholes (HH). Fiber has been ordered and is waiting for delivery. This will continue through September. Have started the process of securing 3 inventory and equipment yards. CCC is looking for 4 fields (yards) to store our inventory and equipment.

### **Human Resources**

CCC has placed ads for new hires. Heavy Equipment operators, Drop crew members, General Laborers, Inside wire installers. Experience and CDL A preferred, however, CCC has a mentoring program and will train people with a strong desire to learn a trade.

### **Other actionable items**

Current “Ciena” inventory levels capable of support 1,000 installs.

Finalizing contract for Wholesale model. Will require 2-3 months to install.

Future dates April 21 EDC meeting and May 9 County Commissioners meeting.

In April we anticipate submitting multiple Benzie County Road Commission ROW access applications.

Responded to a serious of question presented by ART based on calls from taxpayers.

**Kind Regards** - Tim Maylone - CEO and Managing Member, Cherry Capital Connection, LLC