

Fiber Community Support

Help with COVID-19 impacts

April 13, 2020



Why we're here

Discuss PUD broadband network support options for:

- Residential and Small Business support
- Education and Community support

Following study session discussion, action will be requested at Commission business session this afternoon

Residential & Small Business Support

- By state law PUD fiber network offers wholesale service only
 - No direct connection to county's fiber users
 - Chelan PUD serves Internet Service Providers (ISPs)
 - Any financial relief from PUD would have to be broad based
- Rate relief must be delivered through ISPs
 - Customer support and relief is at ISP's discretion
 - State and federal programs in place to offer ISPs financial assistance

Education & Community Support

Option #1

- Connect customers with students and existing fiber device on house
- Challenges
 - Crew availability for troubleshooting
 - ISP support
 - Only available to customers in existing service territory creating equity issues
 - Time consuming

Education & Community Support

Option #2

- Community “hot spots” at strategic county locations to provide internet access
- Benefits
 - Free to users
 - High impact with ability to serve many customers in short period of time
 - Low impact on crew resources for implementation
- Challenges
 - Need willing locations for access points
 - ISP support

What would it cost

- Upfront costs for up to 54 hot spots
 - Labor and equipment
 - \$40k
- Foregone revenue for 54 VLANs
 - Monthly VLAN cost
 - \$24K monthly
- How cost was developed
 - Why 54 locations
 - 9 community areas in county with up to 6 hot spots

Recommendation

- We offer VLAN circuits at no cost to service providers who agree to use them for free community and educational access hotspots
 - Separate Service Agreement would be required
 - Terms and conditions to be included in the Service Agreement
 - Duration is initially through December 31 with the ability to end sooner if conditions permit
- Request Board approval this afternoon on resolution to enable Option 2

Questions?

Appendix

- Federal and State programs for financial assistance during Covid-19 crisis:
 - CARES act: payroll protection, economic injury disaster loans
 - Delayed tax filing dates
 - Small Business Administration economic injury disaster loans
 - State Broadband Office – Financial grants for hot spots through the Public Works Board