**SC BAT Meeting Notes**

**July 13, 2017; 1-3 PM**

**NOTE: All future meetings will be held at TEDD, 986 S. Main St, Colville, WA 99114
(Remote access is described at the end of this document.)**

Participants:

Debra Hansen Mayor Dorothy Knauss

Bert Klimas Bryan Raines

Kinsey Larsen

**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

* BAT mail update. Let Debra know your preference.[See item a.]
* Time for a BAT webpage! [See item b.]
* TEDD Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy update. [See item c.]
* Fiber in Chewelah! [See item d.]
* Microsoft’s Rural Airband Initiative [See item e.]
* Big changes on the horizon for satellite broadband! Low earth orbit means faster, cheaper — and in our lifetime! [See item f.]
* Broadband Community Assessment Tool launched! [See item g.]
* BCAT Beta site in Maine has mapped speed and providers. [See item h.]
* BAT member Bryan Raines of Maria Cantwell’s office talks broadband around the state. [See item i.]
* One Touch, Make Ready and updated pole attachment guidelines in the news. [See item j.]
* Possible BCAT presentation at the IACC conference in October. [See item k.]
* Pre-positioned fire camps are still a viable topic. [See item l.]
* CERB loans and grants in the House capital budget. [See item m.]
* Partners for Rural America has identified broadband as a key area of focus. [See item n.]
* An Executive Order created an Interagency USDA-led Task Force on Agriculture and Rural Prosperity. Broadband has come up already as a key topic. [See item o.]
* A Texas healthcare bill was the link to getting broadband in schools. [See item p.]
* Debra and Monica to follow up with OTI/mapping. [See item q.]
* BAT Fun Fact

 **Next Meeting**: BAT meetings are the second Thursday of each month. Our next scheduled meeting is August 10th, 2017 [since rescheduled to August 24th]. Remote access is described at the end of this document.

**Meeting Notes:**

1. **Debra:** We are updating the BAT roster. We’ll be updating and splitting the mail list. Do you still want to get full info on all BAT activities, just highlights, or drop off altogether? Let Debra know.
2. Debra brought up the idea that it’s time to consider a BAT public presence like a webpage. It would serve to let our community know who we are, what we are doing, info in the news about broadband, etc. Debra will look into having Bert put a webpage together under the WSU webpage.
3. **Kinsey Larsen:** The Tri-County Economic District is updating the five year Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (TED’s CEDS). The survey generated 82 responses. Broadband and technology infrastructure are high on the short- and long-term list of priorities. They are still working on their CED goals, objectives, and action plan but Kinsey is confident that some form of infrastructure will be included.
4. **Mayor Knauss**: Fiber is still being installed. It’s coming into town, splitting with part headed north and part going to the golf course. The goal is to be in place “by fall.” Internet Express aka Desert Winds is also moving into the golf course area.
5. Microsoft has visited Senator Cantwell’s D.C. office to talk about Microsoft’s big new project. Monica also took time from her vacation to send information about it: The Microsoft Rural Airband Initiative. Efforts were announced this week to help meet rural broadband needs with TV White Space (TVWS). Big news for our state: Washington is one of the 12 selected to participate. Small infrastructure is slated to occur in Lincoln County. National 4H will work on digital skills training. In WA, Grant and Lincoln counties have been identified by National 4H to participate. Microsoft put up a blog post with even more info: <https://blogs.microsoft.com/on-the-issues/2017/07/10/rural-broadband-strategy-connecting-rural-america-new-opportunities/>

<https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2017-07-11/microsoft-pushes-fast-internet-for-u-s-heartland-to-bridge-broadband-gap>

It was noted that TVWS came into its own because broadcast TV has been pretty much pushed aside by digital broadcasts. Many frequencies in the spectrum are unused. Those who remember pre-cable/satellite TV can remember rabbit ears and outside antennas to pick up the signals. Those frequencies were primarily based upon line of sight; mountainous regions such as Stevens County will not easily receive such signals, but places like Lincoln and Grant counties can.

Bert remembered reading that TV whitespace has been getting recent press, but it has been around for quite some time in similar form; decades ago, the FCC granted thousands of spectrum licenses — free — to educational entities nationwide for a range of frequencies now known as the Educational Broadband Service. Teaching via TV never really took off, so to spur use of that part of the spectrum, the FCC let license holders lease “excess” (~95%) bandwidth to commercial broadcasters.
<https://www.wired.com/story/schools-secret-spectrum-free-internet-digital-divide/>

Bryan’s colleague, Narda Jones, in Washington D.C. used to work for the FCC, so he will ask her for a user-friendly briefing on TVWS and related technology topics. Watch this space!

1. Another broadband technology on the horizon that holds promise for geographically challenged areas is low earth orbit satellites. Two companies, OneWeb and Elon Musk’s SpaceX, are making strides in bringing this technology to the near future. Both plan an array of high-speed, low-latency, lower cost satellites to bring broadband to the masses at an affordable price. Both are optimistic about an aggressive schedule.

 <http://oneweb.world/>

https://arstechnica.com/information-technology/2016/11/spacex-plans-worldwide-satellite-internet-with-low-latency-gigabit-speed/

1. **Bert/Debra**: The NTIA/Broadband USA (Department of Commerce) Community Connectivity Initiative (CCI) has been renamed the Broadband Community Assessment Tool (BCAT).

On July 11th we had our first official Stevens County launch of the [BroadbandUSA Connectivity Assessment Tool](http://www2.ntia.doc.gov/bcat). This is a great planning tool/project for our Stevens County BAT as we move toward solving our broadband issues. We are beta-testing this, but more importantly, this tool will help us pull together and archive our collective knowledge about broadband needs, issues, and gaps in Stevens County.

**Here are a few takeaways from the launch:**

* Log in, change your password and log in again. Call Bert at 738-6876 if you have any trouble.
* All of us will first complete the “Community” Section on the far right tab. This will set the tone of why we are participating as a Stevens County group.
* Dive into and complete each of the other tabs, “Adoption” and “Access” because your unique role in the community will have important perspectives.
* Don’t worry if you don’t have all the information you need, because…

**Here are some things to know:**

* Don’t bother with the Mobile Access portion of the Access section. The Mobile Access portion is not ready in the Beta version.
* Read through each section before answering anything. There are frequently subsequent pages that may help prompt additional thoughts.
* Bert and Debra have editing “rights” and will be able to see your comments and notes – if you have something to say, include it so we can follow up.
* Both of us will be able to review and finalize our information before it goes live, so no worries on how and what you say. In fact, we encourage you to say things like “this doesn’t make sense” or “ why can’t I see more information about \_\_\_\_.”
* Remember, we are Beta-testing this online tool as community members, not broadband experts; our job is to give them feedback about what doesn’t make sense.

**Here are a few “rules” we decided to adopt for our SC BAT:**

* In general, all comments should be from a Stevens County perspective. If you want to say something more specific please add some context to your narrative. e.g., Amanda may have a unique view from a library perspective or Theron’s view from an anchor institution such as Providence may benefit from that context.
* If you don’t have the information, but can think of someone who might – note that in your comment. For example, here are some things we discussed at the launch:
* Deb didn’t want to type up all the BAT members so she typed in: “Bert will provide this information.”
* Maybe Rural Resources has information about low-income people in Stevens County that access the internet on their mobile devices?
* Here’s a study/website/resource that might help us: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_
* Let’s survey all school districts with “this question \_\_\_\_\_” and then we can do one survey, not several with the school districts.

**Here is a timeline we decided to adopt:**

Please complete these tasks above before August 2!

* We will have our next “BCAT/BAT” team meeting on that date so we can be ready to discuss and share with the larger BAT meeting on August 11. [Dates were since pushed out to be the August 24th meeting.]

**If you missed the work session, do not weep:**

* Bert and I have a plan! We think a phone call coaching session will put you in the right mood to engage in this project and not be overwhelmed. One of us will be calling you to talk you through it.
1. The island community of Vinalhaven, Maine is another BCAT Beta test site. They mentioned during the twice-monthly conference call that they have done their own speed testing and provider mapping. Bert is getting in touch with them for more details. They have a Facebook page at <https://www.facebook.com/fibtf/>
2. Fellow BAT member (and US Senator Maria Cantwell’s outreach director) Bryan Raines visited several areas of eastern Washington to speak directly with residents. The two issues he always hears about are broadband and jobs/economic development. He also spreads the word about how effective community involvement can be via groups like the BAT; few communities have a group like ours. Mayor Knauss is acquainted with Mayor Ing-Moody and will send her an email. <http://methowvalleynews.com/2017/07/05/cantwell-aide-hears-about-methow-valleys-concerns/>
3. Bert brought up the term One Touch, Make Ready. It’s a variation of Dig Once but for overhead utilities that applies to both wired and wireless. The article linked below even has attachments for San Antonio’s Pole Attachment Standards as well as Nashville’s and Louisville’s ordinances. <https://muninetworks.org/content/one-touch-make-ready-three-cities-and-counting>
4. A proposal has been submitted to the Infrastructure Assistance Coordinating Council (IACC) on behalf of the three Washington BCAT beta testers. If accepted, a joint panel will present information about BCAT at the IACC conference in Wenatchee in late October. We expect to hear if the proposal was accepted by August 4th.
5. Debra has found another possible avenue for a pre-positioned fire camp, looking at the Two Rivers and Fruitland Bible Camp areas. Perhaps we can leverage the Spokane Tribe’s grant along with a team including DNR, Commissioner McCart, Jim Caruso, Frank Metlow, Tiger Peone, Mark Curtis, Steve Harris, Mike Bucy, and Rick Anderson. The Tribe can use their Promise Zone designation to help and Bryan mentioned that his office has a new grants coordinator who will be happy to support projects and grant applications.
6. From Monica’s email: Although not a done deal, the House capital budget has $5M for broadband loans and grants through CERB. There appears to be some negotiations still going on with this House version and once completed, the Senate will have their say…so it will probably be a couple weeks before we know for sure.
7. More from Monica’s email: [Partners for Rural WA](http://www.partnersruralwa.org/) (PRWA) – A nonprofit focused on rural community and economic development has identified broadband as a key area of focus. The interim ED is Mario Villanueva, former USDA RD WA State Director; Monica is meeting with him on Monday about this. She is on the PRWA Board. Stay tuned… <http://www.partnersruralwa.org>
8. Still more from Monica’s email: Interagency USDA led Task Force on Agriculture and Rural Prosperity **–** An[Executive Order](https://www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/2017/04/25/presidential-executive-order-promoting-agriculture-and-rural-prosperity) created a task force and provides information about the members and the tasks. The [USDA press release](https://www.usda.gov/media/press-releases/2017/06/15/secretary-perdue-hosts-inaugural-rural-prosperity-task-force) following the task force kickoff meeting states: “The task force will examine and consider, among other issues, current barriers to economic prosperity in rural America and how innovation, infrastructure and technology may play a role in long-term, sustainable rural prosperity.” The press release also includes a link to that meeting. It was live streamed; Monica sat in on it and broadband came up several times. More as this moves forward.

<https://www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/2017/04/25/presidential-executive-order-promoting-agriculture-and-rural-prosperity>

<https://www.usda.gov/media/press-releases/2017/06/15/secretary-perdue-hosts-inaugural-rural-prosperity-task-force>

1. Kinsey related how a Texas healthcare bill helped get broadband to schools by considering school nurses as medical providers. It had the side benefit of drastically reducing the schools’ broadband bills. Kinsey will get back to her source for more information.
2. Monica and Debra will follow up with the mapping/OTI project.

**BAT Fun Fact for the Month**: [January 2015] U.S. regulators raised the standard for high-**speed** Internet, voting that only connections with download **speeds** of 25 megabits per second or faster will qualify as **broadband**. The Federal Communications Commission's previous **definition** of **broadband** was a download **speed** of at least 4 Mbps.

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You can join the meeting from your computer, tablet or smartphone. A link and access code will be sent out prior to the meeting; note that it will be a different link every month.

You can also dial in using your phone. United States: +1 (872) 240-3212

First GoToMeeting? Try a test session: <https://care.citrixonline.com/g2m/getready>