
NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release
2010CITZ0007-000383
April 8, 2010

Ministry of Citizens' Services

MORE OF B.C. BENEFITS FROM CONNECTIVITY INVESTMENT

VICTORIA – British Columbians in up to 50 rural and remote locales will soon have the world at their fingertips with over \$1 million in provincial funding to expand broadband connectivity announced Citizens' Services Minister Ben Stewart.

“In the past two years, we’ve partnered with communities on almost 100 broadband projects through Network BC’s Connecting Citizens Grant Program,” said Stewart. “Each new project improves the quality of life for citizens living in rural and remote locales by increasing access to online learning and skills training, health and government services.”

Applications from all areas of the province have been reviewed and evaluated, completing the second year of the multi-year funding program. Grants totalling \$1.3 million will support 30 projects to be completed over the next year. Under Network BC, infrastructure grants were made available to eligible applicants where the ability to expand Internet high-speed service to unconnected areas was demonstrated.

The Connecting Citizens Grant Program was announced by Premier Gordon Campbell at the annual Union of B.C. Municipalities Convention in September 2008. The program is a \$5.2 million, multi-year grant program that provides up to \$50,000 per project.

“We are delighted with today's funding announcement,” said Bob Allen of ABC Communications, Northern B.C.'s largest provider of integrated telecommunications products and services. “The work we did last year to expand broadband network infrastructure into areas such as Beaverdell, Nukko Lake, Kettle Valley, McLeese Lake and Nazko could not have been achieved without the support of Network BC.”

As part of the Ministry of Citizens' Services, Network BC’s collaborative leadership model has gained international recognition. Network BC was named laureate of the international Computerworld honours program for innovation and has been recognized by the Premier’s Innovation and Excellence Awards annually since 2006 for its collaborative partnerships to support connectivity in rural and remote areas.

A list of successful projects of the 2009-2010 Connecting Citizens Grant Program is in the attached backgrounder.

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BACKGROUND

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CONNECTING CITIZENS GRANT PROGRAM ROUND 2 GRANTS 2009/2010

In 2009, nearly 100 applications for funding assistance under the Connecting Citizens Grant Program were received from all over British Columbia. Applications were adjudicated based on the published program criteria and 30 projects will be funded in this round of the multi-year program.

Extending last-mile broadband connectivity is making a significant contribution to bridging the digital divide in British Columbia.

Projects funded in this round must be completed by March 31, 2011.

Locale	Applicant	Amount
Bamfield, Anacla	Community Wireless Networks	\$20,000
Burton	Burton Internet Society	\$50,000
Canim Lake	BC Wireless Ltd. / 100 Mile Netshop Ltd.	\$50,000
Creston Valley	Wynndel Internet Society	\$50,000
Faulder	ABC Allen Business Communications Ltd.	\$46,954
Francois Lake	508533 British Columbia Ltd. (dba Hwy16 Internet)	\$5,000
Gantahaz Subdivision	ABC Allen Business Communications Ltd.	\$49,606
Gateway, Buffalo Creek, Houseman Road area	BC Wireless Ltd. / 100 Mile Netshop Ltd.	\$50,000
Gold Bridge	Minto Communications Society	\$50,000
Gordon River Reserve	San Juan Enterprises Ltd.	\$50,000
Gun Lake	Minto Communications Society	\$50,000
Horsefly Lake, Horsefly Mountain, area south of Horsefly town site	BC Wireless Ltd. /100 Mile Netshop Ltd.	\$50,000
Hudson's Hope	Peace Region Internet Society	\$50,000
Masset area	GwaiiTel Society	\$50,000
Old Massett Village area	GwaiiTel Society	\$50,000
Palling	ABC Allen Business Communications Ltd.	\$30,514
Roe Lake, L. Fish Lake, Grosset Rd, Wilson Lake, Lac Des Roches	BC Wireless Ltd. /100 Mile Netshop Ltd.	\$50,000
Rosebery	Red Mountain Internet Society	\$50,000
Saturna Island	Saturna Net Co-operative	\$50,000
Shalalth, Seton Portage	Seton Lake Indian Band	\$50,000

Shelley	ABC Allen Business Communications Ltd.	\$50,000
Shelley-Glen	ABC Allen Business Communications Ltd.	\$47,042
Skawahlook First Nation	Skawahlook First Nation	\$34,259
Timothy Lake, Greeney Lake, NE end of Lac La Hache	BC Wireless Ltd. / 100 Mile Netshop Ltd.	\$50,000
Tobacco Plains, Grasmere, Roosville, Kookanusa and Newgate rural areas	FlexiNET Broadband Inc.	\$50,000
Tsaxana	Conuma Cable Systems Ltd.	\$50,000
Tyughton Lake	Minto Communications Society	\$48,480
Wasa, Tata Creek and Wolf Creek rural areas	FlexiNET Broadband Inc.	\$50,000
Whitecroft	AirSpeed Wireless Inc.	\$50,000
Wilson Landing	ABC Allen Business Communications Ltd.	\$48,580

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