



For Immediate Release
December 4, 2009

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MBC Announces Grant Awards for Last-Mile Broadband Projects

The Mid-Atlantic Broadband Cooperative (MBC), a successful open-access fiber optic backbone provider in rural markets, is pleased to announce that \$1,514,143 was awarded to MBC Members as part of a last-mile matching grant program, funded by the Virginia Tobacco Commission. These awards will enable deployment of broadband services for residential and business customers in unserved communities in Southern Virginia.

The 50/50 matching grants were awarded to:

- **CenturyLink**, for an ADSL deployment in 14 digital loop carrier serving areas currently served by dial-up Internet access, located in Campbell, Prince Edward, Halifax, Pittsylvania, Henry and Patrick Counties;
- **DigitalBridge Communications**, for expansion of its existing WiMAX deployment in Appomattox County;
- **Jet Broadband**, for high-speed wireless deployment in two targeted areas in Charlotte County and Mecklenburg County; and
- **Telpage**, for a broadband wireless deployment in Greensville County.

“This first round of matching grant awards is a critical part of enabling the private sector to provide broadband services in unserved areas” said Tad Deriso, MBC’s President & CEO. “We’re glad to see our members investing their capital dollars into the region, and look forward to more projects that expand the reach of affordable last-mile broadband services.”

The matching grant awards have leveraged an additional \$1.6 million in private sector capital. This will enable over 15,660 residential and business customers in the Southern Virginia areas mentioned to have access to high-speed Internet services. Previously, the only option was dial-up Internet access.

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About MBC

The Mid-Atlantic Broadband Cooperative (MBC) owns and operates an advanced open-access fiber optic backbone network that provides wholesale optical transport services, collocation, dark fiber, and tower construction/leasing. Over 55 private sector telecom providers are members of MBC. They use the network to expand their reach, reduce their transport costs, enable new services and applications and drive advanced broadband services in Southern Virginia. MBC is a not-for-profit 501(c)12 Cooperative whose mission

is economic development, job creation and private sector investment in Southern Virginia. For more information about MBC, visit www.mbc-va.com.

About the Virginia Tobacco Commission

The Tobacco Indemnification and Community Revitalization Commission (Virginia Tobacco Commission) is a 31-member body created by the 1999 Virginia General Assembly. Its mission is the promotion of economic growth and development in tobacco-dependent communities, using proceeds of the national tobacco settlement. For more information on the Commission, visit their website at www.tic.virginia.gov.