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To	Bill Erdly	From	Nancy Jordan		
Co./Dept.	Tulalip Tribes	Co.	NW Economic Council		
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August 6, 2009

To: Bill Erdly, Director of Tulalip Data Services
 From: Northwest Economic Council – Whatcom County
 (formerly Bellingham Whatcom Economic Development Council)
 RE: Letter of Support for Washington State – Rural Broadband Co-op

The Northwest Economic Council – Whatcom County (NWEcon) is pleased to offer its support for the Washington Rural Broadband Cooperative (WA-RBC).

NWEcon recognizes that economic opportunity is essential for our all of communities to maintain resilience as economic, environmental and social needs change. Communication is a primary need to retain this resilience.

There exists a significant discrepancy between the availability of broadband (greater than 5Mbps inbound and greater than 3Mbps outbound) in metropolitan areas and our tribal and more rural areas of Washington State. This proposal, a unique private/public partnership, identifies three phases of connectivity, which will address unserved and underserved communities.


The scope of this project will launch a far-reaching and broadly impacting investment into infrastructure that will leverage resources, expertise and communities and will establish connectivity for current and future resilience and opportunity. From the recent assessments completed in the rural Foothills of Whatcom County:

([www.nwecon.org/images/pdf/Reports and Resources/mount baker foothills communications report-dec_2007.pdf](http://www.nwecon.org/images/pdf/Reports_and_Resources/mount_baker_foothills_communications_report-dec_2007.pdf)), this proposed unified effort will capture the local needs of each community while allowing an economy of scale not available if broadband were installed through individual efforts.

The Northwest Economic Council – Whatcom County is the designated Associate Development Organization (ADO) for Whatcom County. Formed in 1984, the newly renamed Northwest Economic Council is a private non-profit that provides economic development services for the region, supports local business retention and expansion, and serves as the point of contact for relocating businesses and develops long-term economic strategy. Please see www.nwecon.org for more information about the organization.

Please accept this letter as confirmation of the NWEcon's enthusiastic support for and commitment to work cooperatively with the Washington Rural Broadband Cooperative and expanding list of partners in the implementation of all phases of this proposal.

Sincerely,


 Nancy Jordan
 Executive Director