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Oregon—Rural Utilities Service

# Broadband & Continuous Job Creation

## Confederated Tribes of Warm Springs Expands Economic Opportunity with Broadband

### Outline Of Need:

Among Native Nations, only about 63 percent of tribal members have access to basic wire line telephone service, as compared to 95 percent throughout non-tribal lands in America. Broadband is similarly limited on tribal lands. To improve service and enhance economic opportunity for the residents of their remote, Central Oregon reservation, the Confederated Tribes of Warm Springs began in 2002 to plan a reservation-wide telecommunications build-out.

### How Rural Development Helped:

During the planning phase, USDA Rural Development provided the Confederated Tribes of Warm Springs with a Rural Business Enterprise Grant to assist with pre-planning and feasibility studies for telecommunications improvements. With this necessary planning in place, they were then able to apply for, and were awarded, funding under the Broadband Initiatives Program (BIP) under the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009.

## Fast Facts

### Programs:

2008 Rural Business Enterprise Grant	\$ 199,000
2010 Broadband Initiatives Program (ARRA)	\$ 2,722,960 Loan \$ 2,722,960

### Grant

### Reservation demographics:

Wasco, Warm Springs and Paiute Tribes  
60% unemployment

**Partners:** Warm Springs Ventures  
Congressional District: OR-02

### Impact:

Jobs Created or Saved:	33
Households Passed:	755
Businesses Passed:	22
Anchor Institutions:	233



**Photo:** USDA Rural Development State Director Vicki Walker joins the Tribal Council and stakeholders to break ground on the Warm Springs broadband installation.

### The Results:

On April 12, 2011, the Confederated Tribes of Warm Springs Telecommunications Company broke ground on a hybrid fiber/wireless network that will reach the entire 1,000-square-mile reservation. Critical facilities, including tribal administrative buildings, schools, health care facilities, all police/fire and public safety radio towers, as well as Kah Nee Ta (the tribal resort) will all gain broadband access. In addition, service will be soon be available to all residents, government agencies and businesses, many of whom had no broadband access prior to the project.

Once complete in the fall of 2011, residents will be able to access the most up-to-date opportunities and assistance – whether from health care or education or emergency services. They will also be able to access tools and resources needed to create jobs and stimulate economic activities.

Businesses ventures will be able to improve operations, strengthen distribution channels, increase efficiencies and gain access to the global marketplace. High-speed Internet will help encourage private enterprise and diversify the economic base. In short, this project will improve long-term economic opportunities and create jobs for the businesses and residents living and working here.

Through the process, the Confederated Tribes formed the Warm Springs Telecommunications Company, one of only nine tribally owned and operated telecom companies in the United States.