

August 1, 2008

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

PRE-APPLICATION PERIOD OPENS AUGUST 1
FOR NEBRASKA INTERNET ENHANCEMENT FUND GRANTS

LINCOLN – A pre-application period for communities wishing to obtain grants from the Nebraska Internet Enhancement Fund (NIEF) opens August 1.

The Nebraska Public Service Commission announced that the grant process starts with a pre-application period to determine whether potential projects meet the requirements for a grant to install or deliver broadband or other advanced telecommunications products throughout the state.

NIEF was established by the 2001 Nebraska Legislature and gives priority to high cost factors such as population scarcity and remote geographical locations. A share of the proceeds from public entities that lease unused, dark fiber optics principally funds NIEF. The maximum amount available to successful grant applicants is \$50,000.

Forms for the pre-application period may be obtained online from the Commission's website at www.psc.ne.state.us or by contacting the Commission by telephone toll-free at 1-800-524-0017. Commission Attorney Nichole Underhill said pre-applications would be accepted through September 2 with the formal application period beginning September 15. Pre-applications are required before an invitation to submit a formal application is issued.

A timeline recommended by an advisory board and approved by the Commission calls for final awards for the new grant period to be made in January 2009.

Previous grants have been awarded to the City of Chappell, Box Butte County, Cheyenne County, Dawes County, Nemaha County, the Village of Dix, and the Harlan and Furnas County Partnership.

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