

# Eugene Area Telecom Development Activities



## REGIONAL FIBER CONSORTIUM

Better Telecommunications Services for Rural Oregon

The Regional Fiber Consortium, and its one-time companion Fiber South Consortium, formed in 2000 to assist member local governments with the development of broadband capacities. The Consortia originally covered five counties: Coos, Douglas, Klamath, Lane and Lincoln, and had city members ranging from Merrill in the southeast to Bandon in the southwest, to Eugene in the center. The Consortia consolidated into a single entity – the Regional Fiber Consortium in 2006. Membership has declined as broadband development occurred slowly. Staffed by Lane Council of Governments (LCOG), the Consortium now enjoys the support of twelve local governments in three counties (Douglas, Klamath and Lane).

The Consortium has dark fiber assets that run from Merrill to Eugene to Portland, and from the Seven Devils cable grounding to Coos Bay to Roseburg to Eugene. Today approximately 80 percent of the Consortium fiber is leased, to 10 different entities. The Consortium has leased fiber to government agencies and to private service providers making broadband connections in over 15 communities in Coos, Douglas, Klamath and Lane Counties. These uses range from support for the ILECs to private and public operated CLECs offering competitive services, to public networks connecting schools. Speeds range from 10 mgs to one gigabit. The Consortium provided the major match for the LCOG Broadband Technology Opportunities Program (BTOP) project.

Eugene played a pivotal role in the establishment of the Consortium. The Consortium traded local expertise, provided local assistance in construction, and waived franchise fees to fiber construction companies during the dot.com bubble for dark fiber and connection points in rural and urban areas all along the construction routes in Oregon. Eugene has provided financial, legal and moral support to the Consortium throughout its life.

The Consortium has recently embarked on its own small grant program, seeking to expand broadband opportunities within its service area.

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