

Expanding Telecommunication Infrastructure

THE CITIZENS OF NORTHWEST WISCONSIN REQUEST

That the State of Wisconsin support the proposed Indian Gaming Budget Request submitted to WI Department of Administration for development and advancement of our consolidated agenda aimed at bringing the benefits of a modern communications infrastructure to our regional community.

BACKGROUND

Bayfield County is located in the northeastern corner of Wisconsin immediately along the shores of Lake Superior and adjacent to the Apostle Island National Lake Shore. Three years ago, the Red Cliff Band of Lake Superior Chippewa hosted an initial meeting of tribal, townships, cities, Bayfield County, state, and the National Park Service officials and representatives to discuss common concerns, issues and needs associated with remoteness of the area and the inability to communicate within that area.

They include:

- Town of Russell
- Town of Bayfield
- City of Bayfield
- Town of LaPointe
- Bayfield County
- National Park Service
- Wisconsin Department of Transportation
- State Law Enforcement
- Red Cliff Band of Lake Superior Chippewa

It is the belief and conviction of the group that we need to form an intergovernmental agreement to address this issue with a Public Safety Strategy in a collective and consolidated approach, instead of individually, and by combining our resources we will be able to achieve the desired results.

Briefly, the focus of this effort is directed at:

1. The lack of wireless phone service:
 - a. For the local and regional resident population
 - b. For tourist and recreational users
2. The lack of radio communications to:
 - a. Serve law enforcement at all levels including tribal, township, county and state
 - b. For road maintenance (tribal, township and county)
 - c. For emergency services at all levels including (tribal, county, state, National Park and potentially Border Patrol)
 - d. For transportation and transit services including tribal transit and school transportation for Red Cliff Early Childhood Center and Bayfield Public Schools.

In general terms, all areas north of the line running from west to east to north of HWY 13 have either no coverage, in the case of cell phone, to limited coverage in the case of radio communications. The joint/cooperative effort is seeking resources in defining and supporting a solution to the issue described. Beyond this initial group there is a local communication provider involvement and support in light of their benefit from gaining improved communication capability with both cellular and radio communications.

A proposal by Norvado calls for a cost-sharing arrangement. Under the agreement, Norvado would purchase and install the necessary hardware, wiring and antennas, electronics and other connections, at an anticipated cost of \$125,000 per tower site. In return the firm is proposing that tribal government/municipalities invest an additional \$125,000 to cover the cost of the actual tower(s) per site, including land, tower materials and construction.

The general concept is that Norvado will construct a cellular tower(s), which will be owned by the proposed Intergovernmental Cellular Tower Cooperative. Norvado would be responsible for obtaining the necessary governmental approvals, and would be responsible for constructing and maintaining the tower(s) on behalf of the consolidating members of the cooperative. The cooperative would pay for the cost of the tower, but would have the use of a portion of the tower, would receive rent revenue from Norvado for its use of the tower, and would have the ability to rent tower space to third parties, such as cellular providers.

As previously stated, the Red Cliff Band of Lake Superior Chippewa, Bayfield County and other governmental sectors including private stakeholders have for years said that better cell phone coverage within the area is critical for our resident's public safety as well as sustaining existing businesses and for creating future businesses via teleworking.

Pipeline analysis: total obligated amount to date \$375,000.00; costs incurred/expenditures to date \$1500.00, outstanding commitments (none), total projected expenditures \$864,872.00; the unexpended balance \$0, and the additional funding required: \$489, 872.00.

As stated by Mark Able-Allison, Bayfield County Administrator; "This kind of public-private partnership is credible, because it is focused on infrastructure, which like roads serves the common good of the regional community as a whole."

Thank you for your serious consideration for the betterment of our consolidated efforts empowering the citizens we collectively serve.

CONTACT INFORMATION

Brian Goodwin, Contract Grant Administrator
Red Cliff Band of Lake Superior Chippewa
88385 Pike Road HWY 13
Bayfield, WI 54814
715-779-3700 Ext. 4233
brian.goodwin@redcliff-nsn.gov