

RUS Project Designation:

Idaho 515-G11 Rural

LOAN AGREEMENT

dated as of March 9, 2005

between

RURAL TELEPHONE COMPANY

and

THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA.

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
RURAL UTILITIES SERVICE

LOAN AGREEMENT

THIS LOAN AGREEMENT (the "Agreement,") dated as of March 9, 2005, is between RURAL TELEPHONE COMPANY (hereinafter the "Borrower,") a corporation organized and existing under the laws of Idaho, and the UNITED STATES OF AMERICA, (hereinafter the "Government") acting through the Administrator of the Rural Utilities Service ("RUS.")

The Borrower has applied to RUS, requesting financial assistance (hereinafter the "Application") to provide telecommunications and/or broadband services in rural areas.

RUS is willing to extend financial assistance, in the form of loans or loan guarantees to the Borrower, pursuant to the Rural Electrification Act of 1936 (7 U.S.C. 901 *et seq.*)(the "Act,") and all applicable federal regulations, on the terms and conditions stated herein.

THEREFORE, in consideration of the promises and mutual covenants herein contained, the parties agree and bind themselves as follows:

ARTICLE I - DEFINITIONS

The terms defined herein include both the plural and the singular. Unless otherwise specifically provided, all accounting terms not otherwise defined herein shall have the meanings assigned to them, and all determinations and computations herein provided for shall be made in accordance with Accounting Requirements.

"Accounting Requirements" shall mean the system of accounting prescribed by RUS in RUS Regulations.

"Advance" or "Advances" shall mean an advance or advances made or approved by RUS under its respective Note(s).

"Affiliate" or "Affiliated Company" of any specified person or entity means any other person or entity directly or indirectly controlling of, controlled by, under direct or indirect common control with, or related to, such specified person or entity. For the purpose of this definition, "control" of any specified person or entity means the power to direct the management and policies of such specified person or entity, directly or indirectly, whether through the ownership of stock, by contract, or otherwise.

"Application" shall have the meaning as defined above in the second paragraph hereof.

"Broadband Loan" shall mean the broadband loan described in Section 3.1.

"Broadband Loan Expiration Date" shall have the meaning as defined in Paragraph (a)(ii) of Section 3.1.

"Business Day" shall mean any day that RUS and the Department of Treasury are both open for business.

"Construction Fund Account" shall have the meaning as defined in Paragraph (d) of Section 5.4.

"Distributions" shall have the meaning as defined in Section 6.9.

"Event of Default" shall have the meaning as defined in Article VIII.

"Interest Expense" shall have the meaning as defined in Attachment 3.

"Laws" shall have the meaning as defined in paragraph (e) of Article II.

"Loan(s)" shall mean, collectively, the loans described in Section 3.1.

"Loan Documents" shall mean, collectively, this Agreement, Security Documents, and the Note(s).

"Material Adverse Effect" shall mean a material adverse effect on, or change in, the condition, financial or otherwise, operations, properties, business or prospects of the Borrower or on the ability of the Borrower to perform its obligations under the Loan Documents as determined by RUS.

"Net Income" or "Net Margins" shall have the meaning as defined in Attachment 3.

"Net Worth" shall have the meaning as defined in Attachment 3.

"Note(s)" shall have the meaning as defined in Paragraph (a) of Section 3.2.

"Permitted Encumbrances" shall have the meaning as defined in the Security Documents.

"Pledged Deposit Account" shall have the meaning as defined in Section 5.4.

"Prior Telephone Loan Contracts" shall mean all telephone loan agreements previously entered into by RUS and the Borrower.

"Project" shall have the meaning as defined in Paragraph (a) of Section 3.4.

"RUS Regulations" shall mean the rules, regulations and bulletins of general applicability published by RUS from time to time, as such rules, regulations and bulletins exist at the date of applicability thereof, and shall also include any rule and regulations of other Federal entities which RUS is required by law to implement. Any reference to specific RUS Regulations shall mean the version of and cite to such regulation effective at the date of applicability thereof.

"Security Documents" shall mean, collectively, any mortgage, security agreement, financing statement, deposit account control agreement or other document providing collateral for the Loan(s).

"Subsidiaries" shall mean the subsidiaries listed in Schedule 1.

"Telecommunications Loan" shall mean the telecommunications loan described in Section 3.1.

"Telecommunications Loan Expiration Date" shall have the meaning as defined in Paragraph (b)(ii) of Section 3.1.

"Telecommunications Loan Guarantee" shall mean the telecommunications loan guarantee described in Section 3.1.

"TIER" shall mean the Borrower's total Net Income or Net Margins plus Interest Expense payable for such year divided by Interest Expense payable for such year, as determined in Schedule 1 hereto.

"TIER Commencement Date" shall have the meaning as defined in Section 5.12.

"Total Assets" shall have the meaning as defined in Attachment 3.

ARTICLE II - REPRESENTATIONS AND WARRANTIES

Recognizing that RUS is relying hereon, the Borrower represents and warrants, as of the date of this Agreement, the following:

- (a) *Organization; Power, Etc* The Borrower: (i) is the type of organization specified in the first paragraph hereof, duly organized, validly existing, and in good standing under the laws of the State identified in the first paragraph hereof; (ii) is duly qualified to do business and is in good standing in each jurisdiction in which the transaction of its business make such qualification necessary; (iii) has legal power to own and operate its assets and to carry on its business and to enter into and perform its obligations under the Loan Documents; (iv) has duly and lawfully obtained and maintained all material licenses, certificates, permits, authorizations, and approvals necessary to conduct its business or required by applicable Laws; and (v) is eligible to obtain the financial assistance from RUS contemplated by this Agreement.
- (b) *Authority.* The execution, delivery and performance by the Borrower of this Agreement and the other Loan Documents and the performance of the transactions contemplated hereby and thereby have been duly authorized by all necessary actions and do not violate any provision of law or any charter, articles of incorporation, organization documents or bylaws of the Borrower or result in a breach of, or constitute a default under, any agreement, security agreement, note or other instrument to which the Borrower is a party or by which it may be bound. The Borrower has not received any notice from any other party to any of the foregoing that a default has occurred or that any event or condition exists that with the giving of notice or lapse of time or both would constitute such a default.
- (c) *Consents.* No consent, approval, authorization, order, filing, qualification, license, or permit of any governmental authority is necessary in connection with the execution, delivery, performance, or enforcement of the Loan Documents, except such as have been obtained and are in full force and effect.
- (d) *Binding Agreement.* Each of the Loan Documents is, or when executed and delivered will be, the legal, valid, and binding obligation of the Borrower, enforceable in accordance with its terms, subject only to limitations on enforceability imposed in equity or by applicable bankruptcy, insolvency, reorganization, moratorium or similar laws affecting creditors' rights generally.
- (e) *Compliance with Laws.* The Borrower is in compliance in all material respects with all federal, state and local laws, rules, regulations, ordinances, codes and orders (collectively, "Laws.")
- (f) *Litigation.* There are no pending or threatened legal, arbitration or governmental actions or proceedings to which the Borrower is a party or to which any of its property is subject which, if adversely determined, could have a Material Adverse Effect.
- (g) *Information Submitted with Application.* All information, reports, and other documents and data submitted to RUS in connection with the Application were, at the time the same were furnished, complete, and correct in all material respects. Any financial statements or data submitted to RUS in connection with the Application present fairly, in all material respects, the financial position of the Borrower and the results of its operations in conformity with Accounting Requirements. Since the date thereof, there has been no material adverse change in the financial condition or operations of the Borrower.

- (h) *Location of Properties.* All real property and interests therein of the Borrower are located in the states, counties, or parishes identified in the Security Documents.
- (i) *Principal Place of Business.* The principal place of business and chief executive office of the Borrower is at the address of the Borrower specified in Schedule 1 hereto.
- (j) *Organization Number.* The Borrower's organization number is correctly identified in Schedule 1 hereto.
- (k) *Subsidiaries and Parent.* Any subsidiaries or parent of the Borrower are disclosed on the attached Schedule 1.
- (l) *Defaults Under Other Agreements.* No default by the Borrower has occurred under any agreement or instrument to which the Borrower is a party, or to which any of its property is subject, that could have a Material Adverse Effect.
- (m) *Title to Property.* Except as disclosed in writing in the opinion of counsel, the Borrower holds good and marketable title to all of the collateral securing the Loan(s), free and clear of any liens, security interests, or other encumbrances except for Permitted Encumbrances.

ARTICLE III – THE LOANS

Section 3.1 Loans

- (a) *Broadband Loan.* RUS agrees to make and the Borrower agrees to accept, on the terms and conditions stated in this Agreement, a Broadband Loan, in the amount specified in Schedule 1 hereto.
 - (i) *Interest Rate.* The portion of the Broadband Loan specified in Schedule 1 hereto will bear interest at the comparable Treasury rate for comparable maturities, as determined by RUS, and the portion of the Loan specified in Schedule 1 hereto will bear interest at the rate of four percent (4%) per annum.
 - (ii) *Broadband Loan Expiration Date.* The obligation of RUS to advance the Broadband Loan or any portion thereof shall expire on a date ("Broadband Loan Expiration Date") five years from the date of the Note(s). No portion of the Broadband Loan will be advanced by RUS to the Borrower after the Broadband Loan Expiration Date. RUS, in its sole discretion, may approve an extension of the Broadband Loan Expiration Date, provided that the Borrower notifies RUS, in writing at least ten days prior to the Broadband Loan Expiration Date, of the reasons and need for an extension, together with a suggested revised Broadband Loan Expiration Date.
- (b) *Telecommunications Loan.* RUS agrees to make and the Borrower agrees to accept, on the terms and conditions stated in this Agreement, a Telecommunications Loan, in the amount specified in Schedule 1 hereto.
 - (i) *Interest Rate.* The portion of the Telecommunications Loan specified in Schedule 1 hereto will bear interest at the Cost-of-Money Interest Rate determined by the Government pursuant to 7 U.S.C. 935(d)(2)(A) of the Act and its implementing regulations, as amended from time to time (7 C.F.R. 1735.31(c)) and the portion of the Telecommunications Loan

specified in Schedule 1 hereto will bear interest at the rate of five percent (5%) per annum.

- (ii) *Telecommunications Loan Expiration Date.* The obligation of RUS to advance the Telecommunications Loan or any portion thereof shall expire on a date ("Telecommunications Loan Expiration Date") five (5) years from the date of the Note(s). No portion of the Telecommunications Loan will be advanced by RUS to the Borrower after the Telecommunications Loan Expiration Date. RUS, in its sole discretion, may approve an extension of the Telecommunications Loan Expiration Date, provided that the Borrower notifies RUS, in writing at least ten (10) days prior to the Telecommunications Loan Expiration Date, of the reasons and need for an extension, together with a suggested revised Telecommunications Loan Expiration Date.
- (c) *Telecommunications Loan Guarantee.* RUS agrees to guarantee the loan identified in Schedule 1 hereto and the Borrower agrees to accept such guarantee, on the terms and conditions stated in this Agreement.
 - (i) *Interest Rate.* Each Advance of funds subject to the Telecommunications Loan Guarantee shall bear interest at the rate established by FFB at the time such Advance is made on the basis of the determination made by the Secretary of the Treasury pursuant to 12 U.S.C. 2285(b) of the Federal Financing Bank Act of 1973, as amended.
 - (ii) *Telecommunications Loan Guarantee Expiration Date.* The obligation of RUS to approve requests for Advances made under the Telecommunications Loan Guarantee or any portion thereof shall expire on the Last Advance Date as specified in the applicable guaranteed Note.

Section 3.2 Loan Documents

- (a) The debt created by the Loan(s) will be evidenced by a note(s) ("Note(s)") executed by the Borrower and payable, as applicable, to the United States of America or, in the case of a loan guarantee, to the guaranteed lender. The Borrower shall repay the Loan(s) in accordance with the Note(s) which shall be payable and bear interest in accordance with its (their) terms.
- (b) The Borrower shall execute the Security Documents covering all of the Borrower's property, in form and substance satisfactory to RUS and such other security instruments as required by RUS.

Section 3.3 Payment

Except as otherwise prescribed by RUS, if any, the Borrower shall make all payments on the Note(s) utilizing electronic funds transfer procedures as specified by RUS.

Section 3.4 Project

- (a) *Loan Purpose.* The Loan has been made solely to finance the project specifically described in the Application to furnish or improve telecommunications and/or broadband services in rural areas (the "Project.")
- (b) *Changes to Project.* The Borrower shall obtain the prior written approval of RUS regarding any material change to the scope, loan design, construction, delivery of services, or objectives of the Project.

ARTICLE IV – CONDITIONS OF LENDING

Section 4.1 General Conditions

In connection with the execution and delivery of this Agreement, each of the following conditions shall be satisfied (all documents, certificates, and other evidence of such conditions are to be satisfactory to RUS in its discretion):

- (a) *Legal Matters.* All legal matters incident to the consummation of the transactions hereby contemplated shall be satisfactory to counsel for RUS;
- (b) *Loan Documents.* RUS shall receive duly executed originals of the Loan Documents;
- (c) *Filed and Recorded Security Documents.* RUS shall have received the following documents securing the Loan(s): (i) executed, filed, and indexed financing statements covering all of the personal property and fixtures of the Borrower and (ii) executed, filed, and recorded counterparts of a mortgage covering all of the Borrower's real property;
- (d) *Articles of Incorporation, Charter, Bylaws, and Organizational Documents.* With respect to corporate and cooperative Borrowers, RUS shall have received copies of the Borrower's articles of incorporation, charter, and bylaws. With respect to limited liability companies or similar organizations, RUS shall have received copies of the Borrower's organizational documents containing provisions reflecting the obligations of the Borrower in paragraphs (c) and (d) of Section 6.3.
- (e) *Authorizations.* RUS shall have received satisfactory evidence that all Loan Documents and proceedings of the Borrower necessary for duly authorizing the execution, delivery, and performance of the Loan Documents have been obtained and are in full force and effect;
- (f) *Approvals.* RUS shall have received satisfactory evidence that the Borrower has duly registered as required by law with all state, federal, and other public authorities and regulatory bodies and has obtained all authorizations, certificates, permits, licenses, franchises and approvals necessary for, or required as a condition of, the validity and enforceability of each of the Loan Documents and for the construction and operation of the Project;
- (g) *Title Evidence.* RUS shall have received satisfactory evidence that the Borrower has good and marketable title to its property, including the Project, and holds such franchises, permits, leases, easements, rights, privileges, licenses, or right-of-way instruments, reasonably adequate in form and substance, as may be required by law for the continued maintenance and operation of its existing facilities and the Project;
- (h) *Tariff Evidence.* RUS shall receive evidence from each Borrower with rates imposed by tariff, that it has duly adopted a tariff, which (1) will provide for such grades of telephone service as RUS may approve, (2) does not include mileage or zone charges on any telephone service provided by the Project, and (3) is designed with a view to (i) paying and discharging all taxes, maintenance expenses, and operating expenses of the Borrower's system, (ii) making all payments in respect of principal and interest on the Note(s) when and as the same shall become due, (iii) providing and maintaining reasonable working capital of the Borrower, and (iv) producing and maintaining the TIER, specified in Schedule 1 hereto;

- (i) *Broadband Rate Evidence.* For Broadband loans, RUS shall receive evidence that the Borrower has duly adopted rates which are designed with a view to (i) paying and discharging all taxes, maintenance expenses, and operating expenses of the Borrower's system, (ii) making all payments in respect of principal and interest on the Note(s) when and as the same shall become due, (iii) providing and maintaining reasonable working capital of the Borrower, and (iv) producing and maintaining the TIER, specified in Schedule 1 hereto.
- (j) *Opinion of Counsel.* RUS shall receive an opinion of counsel for the Borrower (who shall be acceptable to RUS) in form and content acceptable to RUS;

Section 4.2 Conditions to Advances

The obligations of RUS to make any Advances under its Loan(s) or approve any requests for Advances under its Loan Guarantee(s) are subject to the satisfaction of each of the following conditions precedent on or before the date of such Advance (all documents, certificates and other evidence of such conditions precedent are to be satisfactory to RUS in its discretion):

- (a) *Continuing Representations and Warranties.* That the representations and warranties of the Borrower contained in this Agreement be true and correct on and as of the date of such Advance as though made on and as of such date;
- (b) *Material Adverse Effect.* That no event has occurred which has had or could have a Material Adverse Effect;
- (c) *Event of Default.* That no Event of Default and no event which with the passage of time or giving of notice, or both, would constitute an Event of Default shall have occurred and be continuing, or shall have occurred after giving effect to such Advance on the books of the Borrower;
- (d) *Requisitions and Supporting Documentation*
 - (1) *Broadband Loans.* That RUS shall have received a requisition for Broadband loan funds, not more frequently than once a month, and supporting documentation from the Borrower in accordance with Rural Utilities Service RUS Bulletin 1738-2, *Rural Broadband Access Loan and Loan Guarantee Advance and Construction Procedures Guide*, as amended and supplemented from time to time (hereinafter "RUS Bulletin 1738-2,") attached hereto as Attachment 1 or available at <http://www.usda.gov/rus/telecom/broadband/rus-bulletin-1738-web2-6-03.doc>;
 - (2) *Telecommunications Loan and Loan Guarantee.* That RUS shall have received a requisition for Telecommunications Loan funds and Loan Guarantee funds not more frequently than once a month, and supporting documentation from the Borrower in accordance with RUS Regulations;
- (e) *Flood Insurance.* That for any Advance used in whole or in part to finance the construction or acquisition of any building in any area identified by the Secretary of Housing and Urban Development pursuant to the Flood Disaster Protection Act of 1973 (the "Flood Insurance Act") or any rules, regulations or orders issued to implement the Flood Insurance Act as any area having special flood hazards, or to finance any facilities or materials to be located in any such building, or in any building owned or occupied by the Borrower and located in such a flood hazard area, the Borrower shall have submitted evidence, in form and substance satisfactory to RUS or RUS has otherwise determined, that (i) the community in which such area is located is then participating in the national flood insurance program, as required by

the Flood Insurance Act and any related regulations, and (ii) the Borrower has obtained flood insurance coverage with respect to such building and contents as may then be required pursuant to the Flood Insurance Act and any related regulations;

- (f) *Current Financial Information and Certification of Authority.* That RUS has received from the Borrower (i) its current, updated balance sheet, statement of cash flow, and income statement and (ii) a duly authorized and executed certification, Form 675, "Certification of Authority," designating an officer, employee, or agent of the Borrower as the person or persons authorized to execute and submit, on behalf of the Borrower, REA Form 481, "Financial Requirement Statement;"
- (g) *Fidelity Bond or Theft Insurance Coverage.* That RUS has received from the Borrower, except Borrowers which are units of government, evidence, that the Borrower has obtained fidelity bond or theft insurance coverage in accordance with RUS Regulations;
- (h) *Pledged Deposit Account.* That, in connection with Broadband Loans (or with respect to Telecommunications Loans and Loan Guarantees when required on Schedule 1, or otherwise directed in writing by RUS), the Borrower has opened a Pledged Deposit Account under terms satisfactory to RUS;
- (i) *Compliance with Deposit Requirements for Broadband Loans.* That, in connection with Broadband Loans, RUS has received from the Borrower, evidence that the Borrower has maintained on deposit in account, funds in the amount specified in Schedule 1 to cover operating expenses, in accordance with 7 C.F.R. Section 1738.20(b), and has provided RUS with an advance schedule for such funds;
- (j) *Compliance with Loan Documents.* That the Borrower is in material compliance with the Loan Documents;
- (k) *RUS Loan Guarantee Requirements.* In connection with the Telecommunications Loan Guarantee:
 - (1) That RUS and the FFB have entered into a contract and that the FFB has agreed to make the loan to the Borrower, which will be guaranteed by RUS;
 - (2) That RUS has received evidence that any conditions in the contract referred to above in subparagraph (1) have been satisfied; and
 - (3) That RUS has received a promissory note payable to FFB in the amount to be guaranteed by RUS and a reimbursement note payable to the order of the Government, both duly authorized, executed and delivered by the Borrower, within the time period prescribed by RUS;
- (l) *Additional Documents.* The Borrower agrees to provide RUS with such additional documents as RUS may request; and
- (m) *Additional Conditions.* The Borrower has met all additional conditions specified in Schedule 1 hereto.

Section 4.3 First Advance to Pay Off Interim Construction Financing; Restrictions on Subsequent Advances

Loan funds to pay off RUS approved interim construction financing, if any, will be included in the first loan advance. Thereafter no further advances will be made unless and until the Borrower has

furnished evidence, in form and content satisfactory to RUS, that such interim construction financing has been paid in full and any associated liens have been duly discharged from record.

ARTICLE V – AFFIRMATIVE COVENANTS

Section 5.1 Generally

Unless otherwise agreed to in writing by RUS, while this Agreement is in effect, the Borrower shall duly observe each of the affirmative covenants contained in this Article V.

Section 5.2 Use of Advances

The Borrower shall apply the proceeds of Advances in accordance with its Application with such modifications as may be mutually agreed to in writing by RUS and the Borrower.

Section 5.3 Unused and Disallowed Advances

- (a) The Borrower shall return forthwith to RUS any and all advanced portions of the Loan(s) or Loan Guarantee(s) not disbursed by the Borrower for the Project or not needed to complete the Project with any interest earned thereon when deposited in the Pledged Deposit Account or other account approved by RUS.
- (b) The Borrower shall reimburse RUS for any advanced funds whose original expenditure has been disallowed by a RUS loan audit. Disallowances shall be satisfied, as directed by RUS, by either administrative offset against requests for Advances or repaying the disallowed amount directly to the United States Treasury. Such disallowed amounts shall accrue interest payable to RUS from the date RUS delivers to the Borrower a written demand for payment. Interest shall accrue at the lesser of the following: the interest rate of the disallowed Advance or the then current United States Treasury rate as prescribed by the Secretary of the Treasury in the Federal Register and the Treasury Fiscal Requirements Manual Bulletin. Closeout of the Loan will not affect such right to disallow expenditures and recover, in full, any amount on the basis of a subsequent audit, or other review or the Borrower's obligation to return any disallowed expenditures.

Section 5.4 Deposit of Advances into Pledged Deposit Account and Construction Fund Account

- (a) *Broadband Loans.* The Borrower of Broadband Loans shall open and maintain a deposit account pledged to RUS ("Pledged Deposit Account,") in a bank or depository whose deposits are insured by the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation or other federal agency acceptable to RUS and shall be designated by the RUS name of the Borrower followed by the words "Pledged Deposit Account." The Borrower shall promptly deposit proceeds from all Advances of the Broadband Loan, including previously advanced funds whose original expenditure has been disallowed by a RUS loan audit, and other funds described on Schedule 1 hereto (hereinafter "Additional Funds") into the Pledged Deposit Account. Moneys in the Pledged Deposit Account shall be used solely for the purposes for which the Advance was made, for the purposes as set forth in Schedule 1 hereto (hereinafter "Additional Purposes,") or for such other purposes as may be approved by RUS. Deposits and disbursements from the Pledged Deposit Account shall be made and recorded in accordance with Attachment 1 hereto, RUS Bulletin 1738-2, as amended and supplemented from time to time.
- (b) *Telecommunications Loans and Loan Guarantees and Bank Loans.* The Borrower of Telecommunications Loans and/or Loan Guarantees, when required on Schedule 1 or

otherwise directed in writing by RUS, shall open and maintain a deposit account pledged to RUS for Telecommunications Loans and Loan Guarantees. Such account shall be in a bank or depository whose deposits are insured by the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation or other federal agency acceptable to RUS, and shall be designated by the corporate name of the Borrower followed by the words "Pledged Deposit Account." The Borrower shall promptly deposit proceeds from Loan Advances, including previously advanced funds whose original expenditure has been disallowed by a RUS loan fund audit, and any Additional Funds into the Pledged Deposit Account. Moneys in the Pledged Deposit Account shall be used solely for the purposes approved by RUS or other Additional Purposes and shall be withdrawn from time to time only as permitted by RUS.

- (c) *First Lien on Pledged Deposit Account.* The Borrower shall establish and maintain the Pledged Deposit Account as a deposit account and perfect a first and prior lien in such account for RUS, (pursuant to a deposit account agreement or similar agreement or mechanism for perfecting as provided by applicable law) in form acceptable to RUS.
- (d) *Construction Fund Account.* The Borrower shall promptly deposit Loan Advances not required to be deposited in a Pledged Deposit Account, including previously advanced Loan funds whose original expenditure has been disallowed by a RUS loan fund audit, in a bank or depository whose deposits are insured by the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation or other federal agency acceptable to RUS. Such account (hereinafter called the Construction Fund Account) shall be designated by the corporate name of the Borrower followed by the words "Construction Fund Account." Moneys in the Construction Fund Account shall be used solely for the purposes approved by RUS and shall be withdrawn from time to time only as permitted by RUS.

Section 5.5 Use of Operating Funds Required in Connection with Broadband Loans

The Borrower shall expend the operating funds required by 7 C.F.R. Section 1738.20(b), as approved by RUS.

Section 5.6 Financial Books

The Borrower shall maintain, at its premises, such books, documents, papers, or other records and supporting documents, including, but not limited to, invoices, receipts, and bills of sale, adequate to identify the purposes for which and the manner in which Loan and other funds were expended on the Project. The Borrower shall at all times keep and safely preserve proper books, records, and accounts in which full and true entries shall be made of all dealings, business, and affairs of the Borrower and its Subsidiaries (as listed in Schedule 1 hereto,) in accordance with any applicable Accounting Requirements. The Borrower shall maintain copies of all documents submitted to RUS in connection with the Loan until the Loan has been paid in full and all audits have been completed.

Section 5.7 Rights of Inspection

The Borrower shall afford RUS, the Office of Inspector General of USDA and the General Accounting Office, through their representatives, reasonable opportunity, at all times during business hours and upon prior notice, to access and inspect the Project, any other property encumbered by the Security Documents, and any and all books, records, accounts, including electronic books, records, accounts, and electronic mail messages, regardless of the physical form or characteristics, invoices, contracts, leases, payrolls, canceled checks, statements, other documents, and papers of every kind belonging to or in any way pertaining to its property or business, including its Subsidiaries, if any, and to make copies or extracts therefrom.

Section 5.8 Annual and Special Financial Reports

- (a) One hundred twenty (120) days from the end of the Borrower's fiscal year in which the first Advance is made and, thereafter, one hundred twenty (120) days from the close of each fiscal year of the Borrower, the Borrower shall cause to be prepared and furnished to RUS a full and complete annual report of its financial condition and of its operations in form and substance satisfactory to RUS, and as provided in 7 C.F.R. 1773, which is audited and certified by an independent certified public accountant satisfactory to RUS, and accompanied by a report of such audit in form and substance satisfactory to RUS.
- (b) The Borrower shall also furnish to RUS fifteen (15) Business Days after March 31st of each year, and on such additional date(s) as specified in Schedule 1 (hereinafter "Additional Reporting Dates,") or as otherwise requested in writing by RUS, balance sheets, income statements, statements of cash flow, or such other reports concerning the financial condition or operations of the Borrower, including its Subsidiaries, as RUS may request or RUS Regulations require.

Section 5.9 Annual Compliance Certificate

Commencing forty-five (45) days from the date hereof, and thereafter within forty-five (45) days after the close of each calendar year, or sooner if required in writing by RUS, the Borrower shall deliver to RUS, a written statement signed by its general manager, managing member, or equivalent corporate official satisfactory to RUS, stating that, during such year the Borrower has fulfilled its obligations under the Loan Documents in all material respects or, if there has been a material default in the fulfillment of such obligations, specifying each such default known to such official and the nature and status thereof.

Section 5.10 Miscellaneous Reports and Notices

The Borrower shall furnish to RUS:

- (a) *Notice of Default.* Promptly after becoming aware thereof, notice of the occurrence of any default under the Loan Documents or the receipt of any notice with respect to the occurrence of any event which with the giving of notice or the passage of time, or both, could become an Event of Default hereunder or under the other Loan Documents.
- (b) *Notice of Litigation.* Promptly after the commencement thereof, notice of the commencement of all actions, suits or proceedings before any court, arbitrator, or governmental department, commission, board, bureau, agency, or instrumentality affecting the Borrower or any Affiliate which, if adversely determined, could have a Material Adverse Effect on the Borrower.
- (c) *Regulatory and Other Notices.* Promptly after receipt thereof, copies of any notices or other communications received from any governmental authority with respect to any matter or proceeding which could have a Material Adverse Effect on the Borrower.
- (d) *Material Adverse Effect.* Promptly after becoming aware thereof, notice of any matter which has resulted or may result in a Material Adverse Effect on the Borrower.
- (e) *Corporate Document Changes.* Thirty (30) days prior to their effectiveness, any amendments, supplements or modifications to the Borrower's Articles of

Incorporation, Charter, Bylaws, Operating Agreement, Members Agreements or other Organizational Documents.

- (f) *Other Information.* Such other information regarding the condition, financial or otherwise, or operations of the Borrower as RUS may, from time to time, reasonably request.

Section 5.11 Tariff and Rate Design

- (a) Tariff Requirements for Telecommunications Loan and Telecommunications Loan Guarantee Borrowers are as follows:
- (1) *Regulatory Approval Necessary.* If regulatory approval is required to effectuate its telephone service tariff, the Borrower shall seek and use its diligent best efforts to obtain all regulatory body approvals necessary to place in effect and thereafter to maintain in effect a tariff for telephone service which (A) provides for such grades of service as RUS shall approve, (B) does not include mileage or zone charges for any telephone service provided by the Project, and (C) is designed with a view to (1) paying and discharging all taxes, maintenance expenses, and operating expenses of the Borrower's system, (2) making all payments in respect of principal of and interest on the Note(s) when and as the same shall become due, (3) providing and maintaining reasonable working capital for the Borrower, and (4) producing and maintaining the TIER specified on Schedule 1 hereto. The Borrower shall place such tariff into effect as soon as permitted by applicable laws and regulations and shall use its diligent best efforts to obtain all necessary regulatory body approvals of such revisions of its tariff as may be necessary from time to time to satisfy the requirements of this provision.
- (2) *Regulatory Approval Not Required.* If regulatory approval is not required to effectuate its telephone service tariff, the Borrower shall design, charge and maintain in effect a tariff for telephone service which (A) provides for such grades of service as RUS shall approve, (B) does not include mileage or zone charges for any telephone service provided by the Project, and (1) pays and discharges all taxes, maintenance expenses, and operating expenses of the Borrower's system, (2) makes all payments in respect of principal of and interest on the Note(s) when and as the same shall become due, (3) provides and maintains reasonable working capital for the Borrower, and (4) produces and maintains the TIER specified on Schedule 1 hereto.
- (b) *Rate Requirement for Broadband Service.* The Borrower shall design, charge, and maintain in effect rates for Broadband service which (i) pay and discharge all taxes, maintenance expenses and operating expenses of its system, (ii) make all payments in respect of principal of and interest on the Note(s) when and as the same shall become due, (iii) provide and maintain reasonable working capital for the Borrower, and (iv) produce and maintain the TIER specified on Schedule 1 hereto.

Section 5.12 TIER Requirement

From the date of this Agreement until the date specified in Schedule 1, the Borrower will maintain a TIER of at least 1.0. Thereafter, starting on the date specified in Schedule 1 (hereinafter called the "TIER Commencement Date") the Borrower shall maintain the TIER level(s) as specified in Schedule 1.

Section 5.13 Corrective Action

Within thirty (30) days of (i) sending the financial reports required by Section 5.8 hereof that shows the TIER specified by Section 5.12 was not achieved for the reported fiscal year or (ii) being notified by RUS that the TIER specified in Section 5.12 was not achieved for the reported fiscal year, whichever is earlier, the Borrower, in consultation with RUS, shall provide a written plan satisfactory to RUS setting forth the actions that shall be taken to achieve the specified TIER on a timely basis and shall promptly implement said plan.

Section 5.14 Obligations with Respect to the Construction, Operation and Maintenance of the Project Funded by the Broadband Loan

- (a) *Project Management and Operation.* The Borrower shall be responsible for managing the day to day operations of the Project and will operate the Project in an efficient and economic manner as well as maintaining the Project in good repair.
- (b) *Design Standards, Construction Standards, and Lists of Materials.* The Borrower shall use design standards, construction standards, and lists of acceptable materials in accordance with Attachment 1 hereto, RUS Bulletin 1738-2, as amended and supplemented from time to time.
- (c) *Plans and Specifications.* The Borrower shall submit plans and specifications for construction to RUS for review and approval in accordance with Attachment 1 hereto, RUS Bulletin 1738-2, as amended and supplemented from time to time.
- (d) *Standard Forms of Purchase Contracts, Installation Contracts, Construction Contracts, and Engineering and Architectural Service Contracts.* The Borrower shall use the standard forms of contracts promulgated by RUS for construction, procurement, engineering services, and architectural services in accordance with Attachment 1 hereto, RUS Bulletin 1738-2, as amended and supplemented from time to time, and shall submit to RUS such contracts for review and approval in accordance with such Attachment 1.
- (e) *Contract Bidding Requirements.* The Borrower shall follow RUS bidding procedures when contracting for construction or procurement in accordance with Attachment 1 hereto, RUS Bulletin 1738-2, as amended and supplemented from time to time.
- (f) *Construction in Accordance with Loan Design.* The Borrower shall cause the Project to be constructed and completed in accordance with the loan design submitted with the Application.
- (g) *General Insurance Requirements.* The Borrower shall take out and maintain insurance on the Project and any other property acquired with the Loan in accordance with 7 CFR Section 1788 as well as maintaining the fidelity bond or theft insurance coverage required in Section 4.2 paragraph (g) hereof.

Section 5.15 Obligations with Respect to the Construction, Operation and Maintenance of the Project Funded by the Telecommunications Loan and Telecommunications Loan Guarantee

- (a) *Project Management and Operation.* The Borrower shall be responsible for managing the day to day operations of the Project and will operate the Project in an efficient and economic manner as well as maintaining the Project in good repair.

- (b) *Design Standards, Construction Standards and List of Material.* The Borrower shall use design standards, construction standards, and lists of acceptable materials in accordance with RUS Regulations.
- (c) *Plans and Specifications.* The Borrower shall submit plans and specifications for construction to RUS for review and approval in accordance with RUS Regulations.
- (d) *Standard Forms of Purchase Contracts, Installation Contracts, Construction Contracts, and Engineering and Architectural Service Contracts.* The Borrower shall use the standard forms of contracts promulgated by RUS for construction, procurement, engineering services, and architectural services in accordance with RUS Regulations and shall submit to RUS such contracts for review and approval in accordance with RUS Regulations.
- (e) *Contracts for Toll Traffic, Operator Assistance Services, and Extended Area Service.* The Borrower shall submit contracts for toll traffic, operator assistance services and contracts for extended area service to RUS for review and approval in accordance with RUS Regulations.
- (f) *Contract Bidding Requirements.* The Borrower shall follow RUS bidding procedures when contracting for construction or procurement in accordance with RUS Regulations.
- (g) *Construction in Accordance with Loan Design.* The Borrower shall cause the Project to be constructed and completed in accordance with the loan design submitted with the Application.
- (h) *General Insurance Requirements.* The Borrower shall take out and maintain insurance on the Project and any other property acquired with the Loan as well as maintaining fidelity bond or theft insurance coverage in accordance with RUS Regulations.

Section 5.16 Obligations Applicable to Telecommunications Loan and Telecommunications Loan Guarantee Borrowers with Respect to Area Coverage of Telephone Service

The Borrower shall furnish adequate telephone service to the widest practicable number of rural users in the Borrower's telephone service area, as such area is shown on the map which is a part of the Borrower's application for the Telecommunications Loan or Telecommunications Loan Guarantee and which map, as revised by agreement between the Borrower and RUS, is incorporated herein by reference thereto. In the performance of this obligation, the Borrower shall:

- (a) furnish service to all applicants for telephone service included in the Project funded by the Telecommunications Loan, or Telecommunications Loan Guarantee, without payment by such applicants of any extra charge as a contribution to the cost of construction of facilities to provide such service; and
- (b) take all action that may be required to enable it to extend service, without payment to the Borrower of any extra charge as a contribution to construction of facilities to provide such service, to every unserved rural applicant for service in its telephone service area if the cost of constructing the required line extension for such applicant will not exceed seven times the estimated annual local service revenues from such applicant. Such service shall be furnished with the use of such funds as may from time to time be available to the Borrower, either from surplus earnings, increased equity capital, additional loans made by lenders other than the Government, or otherwise as the Borrower may elect, pursuant to terms and conditions set forth in

the Borrower's tariff, as duly filed with or approved by regulatory bodies having jurisdiction in the premises, or in the absence of any such regulatory body, as adopted by the Borrower; provided that the Borrower shall not file with or submit for approval of appropriate regulatory bodies or adopt any proposed tariff, or continue in effect any existing tariff not required to be continued by any regulatory body, unless under such tariff the Borrower will be obligated to serve unserved rural applicants as provided herein.

Section 5.17 Preservation of Existence and Rights

The Borrower shall, until the Loan is repaid in full, take or cause to be taken all such actions as from time to time may be necessary to preserve its existence and to preserve and renew all franchises, contracts, rights of way, easements, permits, and licenses now or hereafter to be granted or conferred upon it, with respect to the Project, the loss of which would have a Material Adverse Effect on the Borrower.

Section 5.18 Compliance with Laws

The Borrower shall operate and maintain the Project and its properties in compliance in all material respects with all applicable Laws.

Section 5.19 Nondiscrimination

- (a) *Equal Opportunity Provisions in Construction Contracts.* The Borrower shall incorporate or cause to be incorporated into any construction contract, as defined in Executive Order 11246 of September 24, 1965 and implementing regulations, which is paid for in whole or in part with funds obtained from RUS, or borrowed on the credit of the United States pursuant to a grant, contract, loan, insurance or guarantee, or undertaken pursuant to any RUS program involving such grant, contract, loan, insurance or guarantee, the equal opportunity provisions set forth in Attachment 2 hereto, entitled Equal Opportunity Contract Provisions.
- (b) *Equal Opportunity Contract Provisions Also Bind the Borrower.* The Borrower further agrees that it shall be bound by such equal opportunity clause in any federally assisted construction work which it performs itself other than through the permanent work force directly employed by an agency of government.
- (c) *Sanctions and Penalties.* The Borrower agrees that it shall cooperate actively with RUS and the Secretary of Labor in obtaining the compliance of contractors and subcontractors with the equal opportunity clause and the rules, regulations and relevant orders of the Secretary of Labor, that it shall furnish RUS and the Secretary of Labor such information as they may require for the supervision of such compliance, and that it shall otherwise assist the administering agency in the discharge of RUS' primary responsibility for securing compliance. The Borrower further agrees that it shall refrain from entering into any contract or contract modification subject to Executive Order 11246 with a contractor debarred from, or who has not demonstrated eligibility for, Government contracts and federally assisted construction contracts pursuant to Part II, Subpart D of Executive Order 11246 and shall carry out such sanctions and penalties for violation of the equal opportunity clause as may be imposed upon contractors and subcontractors by RUS or the Secretary of Labor pursuant to Part II, Subpart D of Executive Order 11246. In addition, the Borrower agrees that if it fails or refuses to comply with these undertakings RUS may cancel, terminate or suspend in whole or in part this Agreement, may refrain from extending any further assistance under any of its programs subject to Executive Order 11246 until satisfactory assurance of future compliance has been received from the Borrower, or may refer the case to the Department of Justice for appropriate legal proceedings.

Section 5.20 Buy American

The Borrower shall use or cause to be used in connection with the expenditures of funds if such funds were obtained in whole or in part by a loan being made or guaranteed by RUS only such unmanufactured articles, materials, and supplies as have been mined or produced in the United States or any eligible country, and only such manufactured articles, material, and supplies as have been manufactured in the United States or any eligible country substantially all from articles, material, and supplies mined, produced or manufactured, as the case may be, in the United States or any eligible country, except to the extent RUS shall determine that such use shall be impracticable or that the cost thereof shall be unreasonable. For purposes of this section, an "eligible country" is any country that has with respect to the United States an agreement ensuring reciprocal access for United States products and services and United States suppliers to the markets of that Country, as determined by the United States Trade Representative.

Section 5.21 Additional Affirmative Covenants

The Borrower shall comply with the additional affirmative covenants set forth in Schedule 1 hereto.

ARTICLE VI – NEGATIVE COVENANTS

Section 6.1 General

Unless otherwise agreed to in writing by RUS, while this Agreement is in effect, the Borrower shall duly observe each of the negative covenants set forth in this Article VI.

Section 6.2 Merger, Consolidation and Transfer of Property

The Borrower shall not, without the prior written consent of RUS, take or suffer to be taken any steps to reorganize, consolidate with, or merge into any other corporation, or to sell, lease or transfer (or make any agreement therefor) all or any part of its property, including, without limitation, the Project.

Section 6.3 Covenants for Limited Liability Companies and Similar Borrowers

Borrowers which are limited liability companies or similar organizations agree that:

- (a) The death, retirement, resignation, expulsion, termination, bankruptcy, or dissolution of any member or the occurrence of any other event that terminates the continued membership of any member shall not cause the Borrower to be dissolved or its affairs to be wound up;
- (b) Prior to the date on which any and all obligations owed to RUS or the guaranteed lender with respect to Telecommunications Loan Guarantees, including the note evidencing the Loan, are discharged in full, the Borrower shall not be dissolved or terminated;
- (c) The organizational documents of the Borrower shall contain provisions reflecting the obligations of the Borrower in paragraphs (a) and (b) immediately above and such provisions shall not be amended without the prior written consent of RUS; and
- (d) No direct or indirect addition, issuance, or transfer of any membership units (or any other ownership interest) in the Borrower may be made by the Borrower or its members without the prior written consent of RUS.

Section 6.4 Additional Indebtedness

The Borrower shall not, without the prior written consent of RUS, incur additional indebtedness in the event:

- (a) The Borrower is not maintaining a TIER of 1.0 or if the additional indebtedness will cause the Borrower's TIER to fall below 1.0; or
- (b) An Event of Default as defined in Section 8.1(b) hereof has occurred and is continuing.

Section 6.5 Negative Pledge

The Borrower shall not create, incur, or suffer any lien, mortgage, pledge, assignment, or other encumbrance on, or security interest in its property, other than Permitted Encumbrances.

Section 6.6 Contracts

The Borrower shall not, without the prior written consent of RUS, enter into any contract or contracts for the operation or maintenance of all or any part of its property, including, without limitation, the Project, and shall not enter into any contract for the use by others of all or any part of its property, including, without limitation, the Project.

Section 6.7 Salaries

Salaries, wages and other compensation paid by the Borrower for services, and directors', members', managers' or trustees' fees, shall be reasonable and in conformity with the usual practice of entities of the size and nature of the Borrower.

Section 6.8 Extension of Credit

Except as specifically authorized in writing in advance by RUS, the Borrower will make no advance payments or loans, or in any manner otherwise extend its credit, either directly or indirectly, with or without interest, to any of its directors, trustees, officers, employees, stockholders, members, managers, Affiliates or Affiliated Companies; provided, however, the Borrower may make an investment for any purpose described in section 607(c)(2) of the Rural Development Act of 1972 (including any investment in, or extension of credit, guarantee or advance made to an Affiliated Company that is used by such Affiliate for such purpose) to the extent that, immediately after such investment, (1) the aggregate of such investments does not exceed one-third of the Net Worth and (2) the Borrower's Net Worth is at least twenty percent (20%) of its Total Assets.

Section 6.9 Distributions or Withdrawals

- (a) *Corporations and Cooperatives.* Corporate or cooperative Borrowers shall not, without the prior written approval of RUS, make any dividend, stock, capital, or other distribution in the nature of an investment, guarantee, extension of credit, advance, or loan, nor make a capital credit distribution (all such distributions being hereinafter collectively called "Distributions;") *provided, however,* Distributions may be made in each calendar year as follows:
 - (1) Aggregate, annual Distributions not to exceed twenty-five percent (25%) of prior calendar year's Net Income or Margins may be made if, after such aggregate annual Distributions, the Borrower's net worth is at least one percent (1%) of its Total Assets;

- (2) Aggregate annual Distributions not to exceed fifty percent (50%) of the prior calendar year's Net Income or Margins may be made if, after such aggregate annual Distributions, the Borrower's Net Worth is at least twenty percent (20%) of its Total Assets;
 - (3) Aggregate annual Distributions not to exceed seventy-five percent (75%) of the prior calendar year's Net Income or Margins may be made if, after such aggregate annual Distributions, the Borrower's Net Worth is at least thirty percent (30%) of its Total Assets; or
 - (4) There is no limit on aggregate, annual Distributions if, after making such aggregate, annual Distributions, the Borrower's Net Worth is at least forty percent (40%) of its Total Assets.
- (b) *Limited Liability Companies.* Borrowers which are limited liability companies shall not, without the prior written approval of RUS, make any membership withdrawals, unit redemptions, or other type of profit allocation to its members and shall not, without the prior written approval of RUS, make capital distributions in the nature of an investment, guarantee, extension of credit, advance, or loan (all such actions being hereinafter collectively called "Distributions;") *provided, however,* Distributions may be made in each calendar year as follows:
- (1) Aggregate, annual Distributions not to exceed twenty-five percent (25%) of the prior calendar year's Net Income or Margins may be made if, after such aggregate annual Distributions, the Borrower's Net Worth is at least one percent (1%) of its Total Assets;
 - (2) Aggregate annual Distributions not to exceed fifty percent (50%) of the prior calendar year's Net Income or margins may be made if, after such aggregate annual Distributions, the Borrower's Net Worth is at least twenty percent (20%) of its Total Assets;
 - (3) Aggregate annual Distributions not to exceed seventy-five percent (75%) of the prior calendar year's Net Income or Margins may be made if, after such aggregate annual Distributions, the Borrower's Net Worth is at least thirty percent (30%) of its Total Assets; or
 - (4) There is no limit on aggregate, annual Distributions if, after making such aggregate, annual Distributions, the Borrower's net worth is at least forty percent forty percent (40%) of its Total Assets.
- (c) In addition to the Distributions authorized under the immediately, preceding subsections, the Borrower may make any Distribution or investment as provided in 7 CFR 1744 Subpart D.

Section 6.10 Changing Principal Place of Business, Place of Conducting Business, or Type of Organization

The Borrower shall not change its principal place of business, place of conducting business, or type of organization without the prior consent of RUS.

Section 6.11 Changing Name or Place of Incorporation or Organization

The Borrower shall not change its legal name or place of incorporation or organization without giving RUS sixty (60) days prior written notice.

Section 6.12 Changing Rates or Tariffs

The Borrower shall not file for or change its rates or tariffs without prior written approval by RUS.

Section 6.13 Historic Preservation

The Borrower shall not, without the prior written consent of RUS, use any Advance(s) to construct any facility which shall involve any district, site, building, structure or object which is included in, or eligible for inclusion in, the National Register of Historic Places maintained by the Secretary of the Interior pursuant to the Historic Sites Act of 1935 and the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966.

Section 6.14 Limitations on Using non-FDIC Insured Depositories.

Without the prior written approval of RUS, the Borrower shall not place the proceeds of the Loans or any loan which has been made or guaranteed by RUS, in the custody of any bank or other depository that is not insured by the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation or other federal agency acceptable to RUS.

Section 6.15 Affiliated Transactions

The Borrower shall not enter into any transaction, contract, or dealing with an Affiliate of the Borrower or with the Borrower's or Affiliate's directors, trustees, officers, managers, members (if the Borrower is a limited liability company), or other corporate officials, without the prior written consent of RUS.

Section 6.16 Obligations with Respect to Nonduplication of Facilities for Telecommunications Loan and Telecommunications Loan Guarantee Loan Borrowers

If the Borrower has outstanding Telecommunications Loan(s) or Telecommunications Loan Guarantee(s) and provides telephone service in any state in which there is no state regulatory body with authority to regulate telephone service and to require certificates of convenience and necessity to the Borrower, the Borrower shall not use any portion of such Loan(s) for the construction of telephone facilities to furnish or improve service to persons located in such state receiving telephone service from any other telephone company at the time the Borrower proposes to furnish or improve service to such persons, except that the Borrower may provide or improve service to persons receiving service through facilities acquired or to be acquired by the Borrower, and except to the extent RUS, on the basis of evidence submitted to it by the Borrower, shall have determined that service by the Borrower to such persons will not result in duplication of lines, facilities or systems providing reasonably adequate service.

Section 6.17 Additional Negative Covenants

The Borrower shall comply with the additional negative covenants set forth in Schedule 1 hereto.

ARTICLE VII - LENDER'S RIGHTS

Section 7.1 Termination of Loan Offer

RUS, in its sole discretion, may terminate the offer to make the Loan(s) if Loan Documents, duly executed on behalf of the Borrower, are not received and all other conditions in Section 4.1 hereof are not satisfied within one hundred twenty (120) days from the date hereof.

Section 7.2 Audits and Compliance Reviews

After giving prior notification to the Borrower, RUS has the right to conduct compliance reviews and audits of the Borrower to assure compliance with the Loan Documents and RUS Regulations.

Section 7.3 Disallowed Expenditures

Upon a determination by RUS that the Borrower did not utilize the Loan in the manner and exclusively for the Project as approved by RUS, RUS may, in its sole discretion:

- (a) Disallow all or a part of the expenditures and disbursements of the Loan and require the Borrower to deposit such funds in the Construction Fund Account or in the Pledged Deposit Account, to be applied toward other approved Project purposes or to reimburse the Government, as provided in Section 5.3 hereof;
- (b) Suspend making Advances; and/or
- (c) Take any other action RUS determines to be necessary including, without limitation, exercising any right or remedy available under the Loan Documents or at law.

Section 7.4 Suspension of Advances

RUS may, in its absolute discretion, suspend making or approving Advances hereunder, if RUS determines that an event has occurred that is likely to have a Material Adverse Effect on the Borrower.

Section 7.5 Payment Extensions

RUS may, at any time or times in succession without notice to, or the consent of, the Borrower and upon such terms as RUS may prescribe, grant to any person, firm or entity who shall have become obligated to pay all or any part of the principal of or interest on any Note held by, or indebtedness owed to, RUS or who may be affected by the lien created by the Loan Documents, an extension of the time for the payment of such principal or interest. After any such extension the Borrower will remain liable for the payment of such Note or indebtedness to the same extent as though it had at the time of such extension consented thereto in writing.

ARTICLE VIII - EVENTS OF DEFAULT

Section 8.1. Events of Default

The following shall be Events of Default under this Agreement:

- (a) Representations and Warranties. Any representation or warranty made by the Borrower in the Loan Documents or in the Application, any certificate furnished to RUS thereunder, shall prove to have been incorrect in any material respect at the time made;
- (b) Non-Payment. The nonpayment of any required and due installment of interest on, or principal of, any Note, whether by acceleration or otherwise, which continues for five (5) Business Days, as such term is herein defined;
- (c) Corrective Actions. Default by the Borrower in the observance or performance of Section 5.13;

- (d) Limited Liability Companies. Default by the Borrower or its members in the observance or performance of Section 6.3;
- (e) Other Covenants. Default by the Borrower in the observance or performance of any other covenant or agreement contained in any of the Loan Documents, which shall remain unremedied for thirty (30) calendar days, after written notice thereof had been given to the Borrower by RUS;
- (f) Adverse Effects. The Borrower shall forfeit or otherwise be deprived of its charter, articles of organization, franchises, permits, easements, consents, or licenses required to carry on any material portion of its business, or the Borrower files for, or an event occurs, which can reasonably be expected to result in its dissolution or termination;
- (g) Other Obligations. Default by the Borrower in the payment of any obligation, whether direct or contingent, for borrowed money in excess of ten thousand dollars (\$10,000.00) or in the performance or observance of the terms of any instrument pursuant to which such obligation was created or securing such obligation which default shall have resulted in such obligation becoming or being declared due and payable prior to the date on which it would otherwise be due and payable;
- (h) Bankruptcy. A court having jurisdiction in the premises shall enter a decree or order for relief with respect to the Borrower in an involuntary case under any applicable bankruptcy, insolvency, or other similar law now or hereafter in effect: (1) appointing a receiver, liquidator, assignee, custodian, trustee, sequestrator, or similar official, or (2) ordering the winding up or liquidation of its affairs; or the Borrower shall commence a voluntary case under any applicable bankruptcy, insolvency or other similar law now or hereafter in effect, or under any such law, or consent to the appointment or taking possession by a receiver, liquidator, assignee, custodian or trustee, of a substantial part of its property, or make any general assignment for the benefit of creditors;
- (i) Dissolution or Liquidation. Other than as provided in the immediately preceding subsection, the dissolution or liquidation of the Borrower, or the filing of such by the Borrower;
- (j) Impaired Business. The failure by the Borrower to promptly forestall or remove any execution, garnishment or attachment of such consequence as shall impair its ability to continue its business or fulfill its obligations and such execution, garnishment or attachment shall not be vacated within thirty (30) days; or
- (k) Payment of Final Judgment. A final judgment in an amount of ten thousand dollars (\$10,000.00) or more shall be entered against the Borrower and shall remain unsatisfied or without a stay in respect thereof for a period of thirty (30) days.

ARTICLE IX - REMEDIES

Section 9.1 Generally

Upon the occurrence of an Event of Default, RUS may pursue all rights and remedies that are contemplated by the Loan Documents in the manner, upon the conditions, and with the effect provided in the Loan Documents, including, but not limited to, a suit for specific performance, injunctive relief, or damages. Nothing herein shall limit the rights of RUS to pursue, jointly or severally, all rights and remedies available to a creditor following the occurrence of an Event of Default listed in Article VIII hereof. Each right, power, and remedy of RUS shall be cumulative and concurrent, and recourse to one or more rights or remedies shall not constitute a waiver of any other right, power or remedy.

Section 9.2 Remedies

In addition to the remedies referred to in Section 9.1 hereof, upon the occurrence of an Event of Default RUS may:

- (a) Refuse to make any Advance or further Advance on account of the Loan(s), but any Advance thereafter made by RUS shall not constitute a waiver of such default; or
- (b) Declare all unpaid principal of and all interest accrued on the Note(s) to be immediately due and payable and upon such declaration all such principal and interest shall become immediately due and payable.

ARTICLE X - MISCELLANEOUS

Section 10.1 Notices

All notices, requests, and other communications provided for herein including, without limitation, any modifications, waivers, requests, or consents under, this Agreement shall be given or made in writing (including, without limitation, by telecopy) and delivered to the intended recipient at the "Address for Notices" specified below; or, as to any party, at such other address as shall be designated by such party in a notice to each other party. Except as otherwise provided in this Agreement, all such communications shall be deemed to have been duly given when transmitted by telecopier or personally delivered or, in the case of a mailed notice, upon receipt, in each case given or addressed as provided for herein. The Addresses for Notices of the respective parties are as follows:

RUS
Rural Utilities Service
United States Department of Agriculture
1400 Independence Avenue, S.W.
Washington, D.C.20250-1500
Attention: Administrator
Fax: (202) 720-1725

Borrower
See Schedule 1

With a copy to:
See Schedule 1

With a copy to:
See Schedule 1

Section 10.2 Expenses

To the extent allowed by law, the Borrower shall pay all costs and expenses of RUS, including reasonable fees of counsel, incurred in connection with the enforcement of the Loan Documents or with the preparation for such enforcement if RUS has reasonable grounds to believe that such enforcement may be necessary.

Section 10.3 Late Payments

If payment of any amount due hereunder is not received at the United States Treasury in Washington, DC or such other location as RUS may designate to the Borrower within five (5) Business Days after the due date thereof, or such other time period as RUS may prescribe from time to time in its policies of general application in connection with any late payment charge (such unpaid amount being herein called the "delinquent amount", and the period beginning after such due date until payment of the delinquent amount being herein called the "late-payment period,") the Borrower shall pay to RUS in addition to all other amounts due under the terms of the Notes, the Security Documents and this Agreement, any late payment charge as may be fixed by RUS Regulations from time to time on the delinquent amount for the late-payment period.

Section 10.4 Filing Fees

To the extent permitted by law, the Borrower agrees to pay all expenses of RUS (including the fees and expenses of its counsel) in connection with the filing or recordation of all financing statements and instruments as may be required by RUS in connection with this Agreement, including, without limitation, all documentary stamps, recordation, transfer taxes, and other costs and taxes incident to recordation of any document or instrument in connection herewith. Borrower agrees to save harmless and indemnify RUS from and against any liability resulting from the failure to pay any required documentary stamps, recordation and transfer taxes, recording costs, or any other expenses incurred by RUS in connection with this Agreement. The provisions of this section shall survive the execution and delivery of this Agreement and the payment of all other amounts due hereunder or due on the Notes.

Section 10.5 No Waiver

No failure on the part of RUS to exercise, nor any delay in exercising, any right hereunder shall operate as a waiver thereof, nor shall any single or partial exercise by RUS of any right hereunder preclude any other or further exercise thereof or the exercise of any other right.

Section 10.6 Governing Law

This Agreement shall be governed by and construed in accordance with applicable federal law and, in the absence of controlling federal law, by the laws of the State identified in the first paragraph herein, except those that would render such choice of law ineffective.

Section 10.7 Holiday Payments

If any payment to be made by the Borrower hereunder shall become due on a day which is not a Business Day, such payment shall be made on the next succeeding Business Day and such extension of time shall be included in computing any interest in respect of such payment.

Section 10.8 Rescission

The Borrower may elect not to borrow the Loan, in which event RUS shall release the Borrower from its obligations hereunder, provided the Borrower complies with such terms and conditions as RUS may impose for such release.

Section 10.9 Successors and Assigns

- (a) This Agreement shall be binding upon and inure to the benefit of the Borrower and RUS, and their respective successors and assigns, except that the Borrower may not assign or transfer its rights or obligations hereunder without the prior written consent of RUS.
- (b) Pursuant to federal claims collection laws, RUS' claims hereunder may be transferred to other agencies of the United States of America; in the event of such a transfer, all rights and remedies hereby granted or conferred on RUS shall pass to and inure to the benefit of any such successor agency.

Section 10.10 Complete Agreement; Waivers and Amendments

Subject to RUS Regulations, this Agreement and the other Loan Documents are intended by the parties to be a complete and final expression of their agreement. However, RUS reserve the right to waive its rights to compliance with any provision of this Agreement and the other Loan Documents. No amendment, modification, or waiver of any provision hereof or thereof, and no consent to any departure of the Borrower herefrom or therefrom, shall be effective unless approved in writing by RUS in the form of

either a RUS Regulation or other writing signed by or on behalf of RUS, and then such waiver or consent shall be effective only in the specific instance and for the specific purpose for which given.

Section 10.11 Prior Telephone Loan Contracts

With respect to all Prior Telephone Loan Contracts, the Borrower shall, commencing on the delivery date hereof, prospectively meet the affirmative and negative covenants as set forth in this Agreement rather than those set forth in the Prior Telephone Loan Contracts. In addition, any remaining obligation of RUS to make or approve additional advances on promissory notes of the Borrower that have been previously delivered to RUS under Prior Telephone Loan Contracts shall, after the date hereof, be subject to the conditions set forth in this Agreement. In the event of any conflict between any provision set forth in a Prior Telephone Loan Contract and any provision in this Agreement, the requirements as set forth in this Agreement shall apply. Nothing in this section shall, however, eliminate or modify (i) any special condition, special affirmative covenant or special negative covenant, if any, set forth in any Prior Telephone Loan Contract or (ii) alter the repayment terms of any promissory notes which the Borrower has delivered under any Prior Telephone Loan Contract, except, in either case, as RUS may have specifically agreed to in writing.

Section 10.12 Headings

The headings and sub-headings contained in the titling of this Agreement are intended to be used for convenience only and do not constitute part of this Agreement.

Section 10.13 Severability

If any term, provision, condition, or any part thereof, of this Agreement, Note(s) or the Security Documents shall for any reason be found or held invalid or unenforceable by any governmental agency or court of competent jurisdiction, such invalidity or unenforceability shall not affect the remainder of such term, provision, or condition nor any other term, provision, or condition, and this Agreement, the Note(s), and the Security Documents shall survive and be construed as if such invalid or unenforceable term, provision or condition had not been contained therein.

Section 10.14 Right of Setoff

Upon the occurrence and during the continuance of any Event of Default, RUS is hereby authorized at any time, without prior notice to the Borrower, to exercise rights of setoff or recoupment and apply any and all amounts held or hereafter held, by RUS, owed to the Borrower, or for the credit or account of the Borrower against any and all of the obligations of the Borrower now or hereafter existing hereunder or under the Note(s). RUS agrees to notify the Borrower promptly after any such setoff or recoupment and the application thereof, provided that the failure to give such notice shall not affect the validity of such setoff, recoupment or application. The rights of RUS under this section are in addition to any other rights and remedies (including other rights of setoff or recoupment) which RUS may have. Borrower waives all rights of setoff, deduction, recoupment, or counterclaim.

Section 10.15 Schedules and Attachments

Each Schedule and Attachment attached hereto and referred to herein is each an integral part of this Agreement.

Section 10.16 Authority of Representatives of RUS

In the case of any consent, approval, or waiver from RUS that is required under this Agreement or any other Loan Document, such consent, approval, or waiver must be in writing and signed by an authorized RUS representative to be effective. As used in this section, "authorized RUS representative" means the Administrator of RUS or any person to whom the Administrator has officially delegated specific or general authority to take the action in question.

Section 10.17 Amendment of Laws and RUS Regulations

Nothing contained herein shall restrict in any way RUS' right to amend, rescind, or supplement any of the RUS Regulations or to seek such changes to existing Laws.

Section 10.18 Term

This Agreement shall remain in effect until one of the following two events has occurred:

- (a) The Borrower and RUS replace this Agreement with another written agreement; or
- (b) All of the Borrower's obligations under this Agreement have been discharged and paid.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, the parties hereto have caused this Agreement to be duly executed as of the day and year first above written.

RURAL TELEPHONE COMPANY

by James R. Martell
Name: JAMES R. MARTELL
Title: PRESIDENT

(Seal)

Attested to by: Carmela M. Martell
Secretary

THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

by Jonathan Clapp
Acting Assistant Administrator
Telecommunications Program

SCHEDULE 1

Article II Representations and Warranties

1. Paragraph (i) Borrower's address: **892 West Madison Avenue
Glenns Ferry, Idaho 83623**
2. Paragraph (j) Borrower's Organization Number: **C61691**
3. Paragraph (k) Borrower's Subsidiaries: **Pend Oreille Telephone Company,
Nehalem Telecommunications, Inc.**
4. Paragraph (k) Borrower's Parent: **Martell Enterprises, Inc.**

Article III The Loans

1. Broadband Loan
Section 3.1(a) Broadband Loan amount: **\$0**
Section 3.1(a)(i) Broadband Loan portion at the cost-of-money interest rate: **\$0**
Section 3.1(a)(i) Broadband Loan portion at the four percent (4%) rate of interest: **\$0**
2. Telecommunications Loan
Section 3.1(b) Telecommunications Loan amount: **\$17,425,000**
Section 3.1(b)(i) Telecommunications Loan amount at the cost-of-money interest rate: **\$0**
Section 3.1(b)(i) Telecommunications Loan amount five percent (5%) rate of interest: **\$17,425,000**
3. Telecommunications Loan Guarantee
Section 3.1(c) Telecommunications Loan Guarantee amount: **\$0**
4. Bank Loan
Section 3.1(d) Bank Loan amount: **\$0**

Article IV Conditions of Lending

1. Section 4.2(i) funds required on deposit by Broadband borrower in accordance with 7 C.F.R. 1738.20(b): **N/A**
2. The additional conditions to advance referred to in Section 4.2(m) are as follows:

No advances for new toll facilities will be advanced until connecting company concurrences have been received from:

- (a) **Syringa Networks, Inc., for the new fiber toll connections with Tipanuk and Boise River;**
- (b) **Filer Mutual Telephone Company for the location of a fiber terminal in their Rogerson office for the Three Creek toll route; and**
- (c) **Citizens Communications for a new fiber connection with their Elko exchange to the new Tuscarora and North Fork toll route.**

No advances for outside plant construction will be advanced until the final route maps and approvals have been granted by the U. S. Army Corps of Engineers, Boise, Regulatory Office, the State Historical Societies of Idaho and Nevada, the Boise National Forest, the Humboldt-Toiyabe National Forest and the Salmon-Challis National Forest, the Bureau of Land Management and the U. S. Fish and Wildlife Services of Idaho and Nevada; as outlined in RUS' letter dated September 15, 2004.

Article V Affirmative Covenants

1. Section 5.4(a) Additional Funds: **None**
2. Section 5.4(a) Additional Purposes: **None**
3. Section 5.4(b) Pledged Deposit Account **IS NOT** required.
4. Section 5.8(b) Additional Reporting Date(s): **None**
5. Section 5.12 TIER: **1.50**
6. Section 5.12 TIER Commencement Date: **December 31, 2008**
7. The additional affirmative covenants referred to in Section 5.21 are as follows: **None**

Article VI Negative Covenants

1. The additional negative covenants referred to in Section 6.17 are as follows: **None**

Article X Miscellaneous

1. Section 10.1 Borrower's address for purposes of notification:

Mr. James R. Martell
President
892 West Madison Avenue
Glenns Ferry, Idaho 83623
Telephone: (208) 366-2614
Fax: (208) 366-2615

2. Section 10.1 Address for Borrower's notification copy:

Givens Pursley LLP
Attorney
601 W. Bannock Street
Boise, Idaho 83701
Telephone: (208) 388-1200
Fax: (208) 388-1300

3. Section 10.1 Address for RUS' notification copy:

Rural Utilities Service
United States Department of Agriculture
1400 Independence Avenue, S.W.
Washington, D.C. 20250-1500
Attention: Administrator
Fax: (202) 720-1725