

Washington Rural Broadband Service Expansion Plan Status Report

In response to Docket UT-061625, Order No. 6, paragraph 122, Qwest filed a Rural Broadband Service Expansion Plan. That plan confirmed that Qwest would invest \$4 million to make economical high-speed access to the internet available in the following targeted wire centers/communities: Roy, Northport, Pateros, Springdale, Elk, Easton, Waitsburg, Steamboat Island, Joyce, Hoodspport, Napavine, Omak, Shelton, Rochester, Deerpark, Winlock and Belfair. Also per paragraph 29 of Order 6, ensuring that wire-line high-speed Internet service became available to at least 83% of consumers in Qwest’s Washington serving area was noted as an important goal to reach during the four-year period of the Alternative Form of Regulation.

The Broadband Availability Report indicates an 88% broadband availability to Qwest’s customers which compares favorably with the broadband availability in other Qwest states.

The Broadband Expansion Expenditures Report filed in August of 2010 reflected that \$3,854,645, or 96% of the four million dollar target investment, had been spent halfway through 2010. As of 9/13/10, a total of \$3,957,389 had been invested. Qwest is confident that more than the balance of the four million dollar investment will have been spent by November of 2010.

Qwest has deployed considerably more equipment in the targeted wire centers than originally planned. This has resulted in wider availability of service than was originally forecast. This result is displayed in the table below.

Wire Center/ Community	Central Office DSLAM (Plan/Actual)	Remote Terminal DSLAM (Plan/Actual)	Availability Before (%)	Availability After (%Plan/% Actual)
Roy				
NorthPort				
Pateros				
Springdale				
Elk				
Easton				
Waitsburg				
Joyce				
Hoodspport				
Napavine				
Omak				
Shelton				
Rochester				

Deer Park				
Winlock				
Belfair				
Steamboat^[1]				

¹ Steamboat Island is part of the Olympia Evergreen Wire Center

Qwest deployed 80 remote terminal sites as opposed to the 43 expected at the initiation of the Plan.¹ Two of the 80 sites remain under construction; one in Rochester and one in Deer Park. Negotiation of easement with the Bureau of Indian Affairs created a delay in Rochester. The Deer Park site required boring under a waterway. As such, it required an Environmental Protection Agency permit and a Joint Aquatic Resource Permit Application and approval that delayed project completion. These projects will produce the dual benefit of supporting high-speed, fiber-optic-cable-based internet access as well as higher grade basic telephone service in the area. Qwest's remaining work will drive Qwest's investment well beyond the \$4M target. As a result of deployment under this Plan, parts of the Rochester and Deer Park Wire Centers already have high-speed service availability. When construction is complete, Rochester will have 14 Remote Terminal sites and Deer Park will have three as reflected in the table above. The table above also reflects that Qwest deployed 9 central office terminals as opposed to the 8 expected at the initiation of the Plan. Not reflected in the table is the fact that this Plan has also had the effect of reinforcing interoffice backbone between the targeted Wire Centers and more centrally located Wire Centers. This reinforcement was a critical prerequisite to introducing high-speed Internet access to customers in the targeted wire centers.

High-speed Internet access was available to customers from all sites on the original list well in advance of the deadlines of Docket UT-061625, Order No. 6. The facilities deployed by Qwest through its investment commitment has made service available in a footprint far beyond what was originally proposed, yet within the same set of rural communities determined to be most in need. Qwest commits that more than the remaining 1% of the \$4M investment will have been expended by November 30, 2010.

Finally, statewide availability of service at 88% is considerably above the 83% target set by the AFOR despite persistent wireline customer loss, competition and a very challenging economy.²

¹ WUTC Docket UT-061625, Order 16, Order Accepting Washington Rural Broadband Service Expansion Plan, On Condition, and Denying Request for Alternative Reporting, January 10, 2008.

² Footnote 125 of Order 6 states, "In evaluating Qwest's performance towards the goal of ensuring 83% high speed internet service availability in its Washington service area during the review process, consideration shall be given to Qwest's access line loss and the loss of high speed internet service customers to other broadband service providers operating in its territory."