



## *COUNTY OF MONO – County Administrative Office*

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Jim Leddy  
*County Administrative Officer*

August 21, 2013

Ryan Dulin, Director  
Communications Division  
California Public Utilities Commission  
505 Van Ness Avenue  
San Francisco, CA 94102-3298  
*Sent via email to T-17408 Service List*

RE : Comments in response to Resolution T-17408

Dear Mr. Dulin:

As the Mono County Administrative Officer, I would like to submit comments in support of Resolution T-17408 which would conditionally approve up to \$10,016,202 of additional funding for the completion of the Digital 395 project.

The significance and value of Digital 395 to our county and this region as a whole is unsurpassed and will provide opportunities and benefits to our local agencies, constituents, and visitors alike. Mono County has been a strong supporter of Digital 395 since the project was conceptualized, with one of our elected officials participating in many of the early discussions. Since the project has been underway, Mono County has contributed nearly \$300,000 to the cause, in the form of in-kind staff time, waived permit fees, and physical infrastructure. Additionally the Board of Supervisors created a Digital 395 Project Manager position who has been coordinating all aspects of the project within Mono County for the past year.

The challenges that Digital 395 has been faced with are fully realized by the County, and we stand behind their request for additional funding to help complete the project. The anchors and communities in Mono and Inyo Counties that risk being bypassed if this resolution is not adopted are of significant value to us, and as a result we encourage the Commission to approve the funding in full.

The County's specific concerns and interests are as follows:

**1. Completion of Segment M122**

The value of Digital 395 to the area is contingent upon end-to-end connectivity. Without an intact network, not only will there be a lack of redundancy or Quality of Service guarantee, but the County anchors and communities will be divided in half and served from separate locations.

**2. Service into June Lake**

June Lake is the highest priority community for Mono County with respect to Digital 395 as it is the principal community attracting visitors in the unincorporated portion of the County. The tax dollars generated by visitors to this area support our General Fund, and delivering high speed broadband to this area will further attract, and retain those visitors.

**3. Connectivity to other County anchors and critical facilities**

With the large rural nature of Mono County, connectivity between all of our facilities is of vital importance. Our workforce is spread out across more than a dozen different sites, some more than 100 miles apart. Having a network and communication infrastructure in place between these facilities improves efficiency and accessibility of public employees, while reducing costs. Overall, the County anticipates a 50% cost savings when adopting Digital 395, while simultaneously increasing our service by 10x.

**4. Value of an entirely underground network**

The County recognizes the value of an entirely underground network, for the purposes of protecting critical infrastructure, and maintaining visual resources. While the loss of ability to complete the network using existing overhead poles is partially responsible for the additional funding request, the resulting undergrounding is a positive outcome.

**5. Connectivity to the Benton Reservation and other tribal lands**

Providing broadband services to native populations in the County with the intent of improving Digital Literacy, bridging the Digital Divide, and affording them the same opportunities as all other residents in the County is of significant importance to the County.

**6. Service to the Mountain Warfare Training Center**

The Mountain Warfare Training Center (MWTC) is a unique Department of Defense facility in Mono County. In addition to the regular operations carried out there, MWTC provides emergency support to northern Mono County in the form of mutual aid is a valuable addition to the north county.

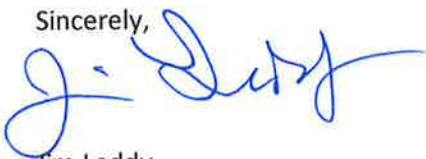
**7. Service to Round Valley School (Inyo County)**

In addition to the importance of providing broadband to Round Valley School in Inyo County, the proximity of this location to the underserved Mono County communities of Paradise Estates and Swall Meadows opens up opportunities for future projects to reach these areas.

In addition to the items addressed above, the County believes that Digital 395 stands to change the economic state of the region in the years to come, by providing us with opportunities to attract businesses and industry, and reduce our reliance on a primarily tourism based economy.

Mono County appreciates the opportunity to provide comments on this matter, and look forward to the completion of Digital 395.

Sincerely,



Jim Leddy

*County Administrative Officer*