



For more information contact:  
Joe Buttweiler, Director of Business Development  
218-454-1275, joe@goctc.com

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**CTC Receives DEED Award to Expand Broadband Internet**

Brainerd, MN – Last week the Minnesota Department of Employment and Economic Development (DEED) announced that they have awarded over \$20 million through their Border-to-Border Broadband Development Grant program. The 39 projects that were awarded throughout the state will be matched by nearly \$34 million in local funds, for a total investment of \$54.3 million.

The funding, which was approved during the 2019 legislative sessions, goes to broadband providers to build out wireline broadband infrastructure to unserved and underserved locations across the state. This round of funding will provide internet access to over 6,900 businesses, homes, and community institutions.

Consolidated Telecommunications Company (CTC) was one of the grant recipients, receiving \$350,805 in funding. This will be combined with \$350,805 in matching funds from CTC. When successfully completed, 180 unserved homes and businesses in Ross Lake Township in Crow Wing County will have access to internet with speeds of up to 1Gig.

“It’s an honor to receive this award as it helps to further our mission of connecting more communities,” said Kristi Westbrook, CEO and General Manager at CTC. “We’re confident that better internet services will enhance the lives of everyone that lives, works, and vacations in this area.”

Once complete, the project will allow rural residents to work from home, safely stay in their homes longer, and increase communication options for area businesses and residents... all while boosting economic development to the area. Broadband will bring enhanced employment opportunities and educational experiences to the thousands of rural residents that call this area home.

Created in 2014, the Border-to-Border Broadband Development Grant Program provides state resources that help make the financial case for new and existing providers to invest in building broadband infrastructure into unserved and underserved areas of the state. Grants were awarded through a competitive application process. More information about the program is available at <https://mn.gov/deed/programs-services/broadband/grant-program/>.

*CTC is a technology advisor and full-service telecommunications cooperative based in Brainerd, MN. Formed in 1952, CTC has grown into a complete communications provider offering telephone, high-speed internet, digital television, and IT services to businesses and individuals throughout central and northern Minnesota. More information about CTC can be found at [www.goctc.com](http://www.goctc.com).*

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