

OFFICE OF THE COUNTY
COMMISSIONERS

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MOBIUS 23_NBBP_BBC_M1

PO Box 678
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308-762-6565
clerk@boxbuttecountyne.gov

Box Butte County

Alliance, Nebraska

June 6, 2023

Nebraska Public Service Commission
1200 N St #300
Lincoln, NE 68508

Re: Nebraska Broadband Bridge Program Application

Dear Nebraska Broadband Bridge Grant Committee:

As a resident of rural Box Butte County, I am sending this letter of support for Mobius Communications Company and the potential Grant Funding through the Broadband Bridge Grant.

Box Butte County has a successful working partnership with Mobius Communications and supports their efforts to make broadband services available to all the residents of Box Butte County. While broadband coverage maps may show significant coverage of the county, this is not the case. Many of the rural residents still find themselves without adequate service, including myself. As a resident and as the Chairman of the Box Butte County Commissioners, I know firsthand the importance of not only having access to high-speed internet, but also the luxury it is to have a local provider that is working diligently to bridge the gap in coverage.

As an elected official, it is essential that we make these connections when we are given the opportunity. Through partnerships such as this, Mobius Communications continues to show their dedication to the residents of Box Butte County. The Box Butte County Commissioners have the upmost confidence that Mobius Communications can help us achieve our ultimate goal of total broadband coverage for all residents. As a sign of our commitment to this project, we are collaborating with Mobius and providing matching funds in the amount of \$90,000.00. Broadband expansion is critical in order to ensure that Box Butte County continues to progress with technology.

Mobius Communication Company has our full support in the submittal of this Nebraska Broadband Bridge Program Application. Please do not hesitate to contact me at 308.762.6565 if you have any further questions.

Sincerely,

Steve Burke
Box Butte County Chairman of the Board



BOX BUTTE DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION
502 BOX BUTTE AVE., ALLIANCE, NE 69301
www.BoxButteDevelopment.com

June 5, 2023

Nebraska Public Service Commission
1200 N St. #300
Lincoln, NE 68508

RE: Box Butte County 2023 Nebraska Broadband Bridge Program Grant

Dear Nebraska Broadband Bridge Grant Committee,

The COVID-19 pandemic hit the world and changed our lives immensely, everything we knew as normal is now in a process of learning to pivot from the pandemic and to live our lives with a new normal. This funding can be the catapult to help rural western Nebraska do just that! The opportunity to provide Mobius Communications, our local broadband company, with financial support to build essential, reliable internet service is imperative.

Box Butte Development Corporation (BBDC) is writing in support of an application connecting Box Butte County Residents with broadband and fiber to the home, thanks to financial support of this grant. Rural communities such as ours need to be better connected with the rest of the world via broadband in order to sustain and eventually grow opportunities for both business and population growth.

If you have any further questions of BBDC and moving forward in this process, please let me know.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Chelsie Herian". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Chelsie Herian
BBDC Executive Director
308.762.1800
Chelsie.Herian@bbc.net



To: Grant Committee

RE: Mobius Communications
P O Box 246
Hemingford, NE 69348

We are writing this letter to express our enthusiasm for the possibility of Mobius Communications of Hemingford, Nebraska to provide fiber optic internet service to our home address.

We currently are customers who utilize Wild Blue internet services. While this is better than dial-up, it is slow and unreliable. Our children were unable to use the internet because of it's speed. The majority of the time, their school work had to be completed in town, which is a 15 minute commute, one way. It is a challenge to be living in a rural environment, where internet speeds are quite slow.

My husband and I are both required internet access if we are called at home for our jobs. Many times, the internet speed is too slow to complete the work that we need to do.

We would, most certainly, be ready and eager to sign up to utilize the fiber optic internet service that would be provided by Mobius Communications. We hope that this will become a reality in the near future. If you should have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact either of us.

Sincerely,

Roger and Barbie Applegarth
3091 County Road 59
Alliance, NE 69301
(308)760-0709

PING DOWNLOAD

627 ms 8.7 Mbps

JITTER UPLOAD

30 ms 1.7 Mbps

Viasat 184.63.172.140



Clevis Ranch, LLC
Wayne and Mary Crawford
7767 Madison Road #3
Alliance, NE 69301
(308) 631-5134 cell
(308) 762-4414 home

Nebraska Public Service Commission
Nebraska Broadband Bridge Program
Lincoln, Nebraska
Re: Mobius Communications grant application

NBBP Grantees:

I write in support of the Nebraska Broadband Bridge application submitted by Mobius Communications. For us, expanded broadband in Box Butte County would be significant to reliable internet service as well as economic viability to our fourth-generation family agribusiness.

We reside 20 miles west of Alliance, primarily operating a commercial cow-calf operation. Crops include contracted acres for potatoes and sugar beets, and also corn, forage sorghum, alfalfa, dryland and irrigated wheat, dry edible beans and occasionally sunflowers and millet. Precision agriculture and irrigation requires reliable technology.

However, limited resources exist for high-speed internet. Cellular service is primarily from Viaero Wireless or Verizon. Currently, we purchase internet service from a family-owned business based in Alliance. The signal comes to a small dish located at the highest point on our farm/ranch – atop an old windmill tower west of our home.

Unfortunately, we have not had opportunity to be Mobius customers for internet service. The initial fiber line serving 487 prefix phone customers was placed about 2 miles north of us, near our wheat ground. It serves our closest neighbor with excellent 50 Mbps broadband. What a difference fiber could make for our family and business!

Low speed and unreliable service, examples:

- In a speed test done at 9:15 p.m. on June 14, the result was: Download 14.61Mbps / Upload 12.24Mbps. I had no success that evening for online banking or printing records from a recent medical appointment.
- Several times, while working from my home with the University of Nebraska system in external relations with the Nebraska College of Technical Agriculture, I needed to drive to the neighbor's machine shop "up north" to use his Mobius service to complete a Zoom call or transmit large data files.
- In 2021-22, I sometimes scheduled a meeting room at the Alliance Public Library or the University Extension Office (requiring a 40-mile roundtrip) to be assured I could complete my news project or conference call.

- In the past 2 years, my sister-in-law (now a retired college professor from Kentucky) has traveled to the ranch to assist with cattle operations, farming, and family business. While here for a several weeks at a time, her client consulting, Zoom classes, and business meetings can be a challenge. It's frustrating to reschedule sessions or drop off a video call to participate only by audio.
- Due to the distances to Scottsbluff, Sidney, Bridgeport and Alliance, I appreciate medical providers who allow face-to-face consults or appointments by Zoom calls. Who knew a physical therapy session could be successful online! That saves time and travel expense if the internet works for 45 minutes.
- We try to participate from our home office in multi-county ag webinars or meetings from Nebraska Extension.
- Ag organizations across the state sometimes offer Zoom calls or links to conferences for members. These are invaluable as it is prohibitive for us to travel to Lincoln, Omaha, or even Kearney for a half-day session. Again, internet video isn't assured.
- Internet reliability has been important in capacities where service as an elected board director or volunteer board member requires participation in business and personnel decisions. Each of us holds such a position.
- Telephone service – with cell phones that can be operated with Wi-Fi connection, reliability is valuable. If internet is insufficient here, we either need to move to a window, doorway, or out to the patio for connectivity. That's a bit challenging in winter conditions, to say the least, and limiting to step away from a laptop or PC.
- As many have, we moved away from a landline, and switched to VOIP (Voice over Internet Protocol) with our home number. While we prefer this less expensive method, VOIP only works if the internet works.

We look forward to expanded technology in our cattle business (chute-side internet records, for example), and opportunities in farming practices with GPS guidance systems. Additionally, conversations for home-based business ventures do exist for the next generation of agriculturalists and their families at Clevis Ranch.

I understand that the Box Butte County Commissioners have pledged \$90,000 to the Mobius application. *Residents in rural areas need and deserve broadband services that are more equitable with those available within the city limits.*

We certainly appreciate the Nebraska Public Service Commission's consideration of the Mobius application to the Nebraska Broadband Bridge Program.




I'd be pleased to answer any questions. Contact me at wamcrawford@gmail.com or 308-631-5134.

Thank you, Mary Bargman Crawford
Clevis Ranch, LLC, co-owner



SPEEDTEST

Apps Analysis Network




SHARE   

Result ID 14858952155

RESULTS SETTINGS

DOWNLOAD Mbps
14.61

UPLOAD Mbps
12.24

Ping ms  50  69  73

GO

Connections
Multi

ALLO - Scottsbluff
Scottsbluff, NE
[Change Server](#)

OPTK Networks
162.212.19.18

HOW DOES YOUR NETWORK AVAILABILITY COMPARE WITH YOUR EXPECTATIONS?

1	2	3	4	5
Much worse		As expected		Much better

Having Internet Problems?

Dear Grant Committee,

I've lived in rural areas all my life, I have ran my rural electrical buisness for 25 years. We have had a land line and good internet service until a year and a half ago, at that time they discontinued the contract on the land line so we went with DISH and have found out its extremely unreliable. Even with just mild weather the internet is down. We would be very interested in having a more stable and reliable internet service.

Sincerly,

Robert E. Hill CEO HillTop Electric Inc.

HillTop Electric Inc.

2362 CR. 59

Alliance Ne. 69301