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PRESS RELEASE

For Immediate Release

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Eureka, Montana- InterBel Telephone Cooperative in Eureka, Montana has been awarded a \$486,000 grant from the US Department of Commerce Economic Development Administration to bring high-speed fiber to the Business Community of Eureka. The project will entail the upgrade from copper cables to high speed fiber optic cables utilizing existing and new conduits along Highway 37 and US Highway 93. The project will lay approximately eight miles of fiber optic cables with the capacity to provide broad-band services to all business customers within Eureka. There is also 2,956 feet of new conduit installation that will allow for additional customers on the south end of the community.

The success of this project will result in providing high speed broad band capacity to all of the Eureka area inside and outside of the Town limits. By providing a fiber optic backbone, InterBel Telephone is addressing and improving the economic conditions of the community. "This is a game changer for our community" said Lincoln County Commissioner Mike Cole. "The ability to retain, grow, and attract technology-based companies to Eureka is a huge opportunity to make positive economic changes to our area".

InterBel Telephone General Manger Randy Wilson shared his excitement of this project and the benefits it will bring to the Eureka community. "The build-out of fiber to the businesses in Eureka is not only an attraction to new business startups" Wilson said, "it also will better support and retain existing businesses in need of better broadband connections". Wilson said that InterBel is hopeful to procure a contractor in the Fall of 2018 with full construction being completed late in 2019.

"The potential of fiber not only increases the broadband speed in uploading and downloading large files; but just as important, it will better support multiple devices or uses in a business environment" Wilson said. The primary goal of InterBel Telephone's is to better serve the customers of Eureka while providing an important infrastructure for the future of the community.

InterBel shares their appreciation of Senator Tester, Senator Daines and Congressman Gianforte for the continued support in broadband initiatives and their support of the Economic Development Administration. The funding provided by Economic Development Administration has made the \$810,000 project a reality in this rural community.

Randy Wilson credits the partnership between InterBel Telephone Cooperative's staff and those at Rural Economic Designs, LLC for the successful application.