



## Champion Report Template

Theme Area: Connectivity

Champions: Pam Mahling, Janelle Riley, Kevin Larson, Merritt Bussiere, Stacey Stockdill, Tad Erickson

Date: October 22, 2013

**Complete and submit to Champion Facilitator (Dan Frank) to be compiled, cover highlights in two-minute report at Champion Meeting.**

### 1. Update on progress on your Theme Priorities since our July meeting;

Goal #	Description of priority, activity and progress
All 5 Areas	1. Cheryal Hills, Bob McLean, and Stacey Stockdill met with Commissioner Tingerthal, Commersion Zelle and Commissoenr Siben. They requested a budget for the Rural Broadband Impact Assessment. We have submitted one and are waiting for a response from them regarding next steps.
All 5 Areas	2. Yuri Hupka (resident of Little Falls, Finishing his MA in Applied Economics at SCSU) was hired by UMN CURA/CAP to assist with the Rural Broadband Impact Assessment. He is focusing on the ROI questions and trying to locate successful rural projects. So far he has only been able to find one in England and in China (none in Rural USA).
All 5 Areas	3. Michelle Adkins continues to volunteered her time to begin to help us: a) update the telehealth impact literature and b) to start to drill down on what is and is not reimbursable by VA, Private Insurance, Medicare and Medicaid.
All 5 Areas	4. Great News! WTCA was identified as one of 7 Smart Rural Communities!! Their celebration will be held October 24 from 5-7 at Blueberry Pines in Menahga.
All 5 Areas	5. <b>PCs for People</b> – Region Five is working with The Shop in Brainerd to transition the PC’s for People program over to Brainerd, where The Shop will administer the program going forward. The Shop moved into their new location Oct. 1st and the PC’s will be moved in the first week of November.

### 1. New opportunities for action/alignment and collaboration:

Goal #	Description of opportunity
All 5 Areas	1. Dr. Chad Couette (ED, NJPA) has agreed to serve as Resilient Region Theme Champion for Education and Workforce Development and on the Resilient Region Broadband Taskforce. He and Cheryal Hills (ED, R5DC) have agreed to distribute a broadband/PC inventory for K-12 and LUGs respectively. The DRAFT survey was submitted for review and is being finalized.
All 5 Areas	2. Stacey met with Bill Coleman and Roxy Traxler, Project Director for the East Broadband Taskforce. They agreed to send out a similar needs assessment for the counties they serve. We also talked about working with them to host a spring Broadband Summit in the region.
All 5 Areas	3. Stacey has set up a meeting to meet with Kim Nagle, Director, Leech Lake Band of Ojibwe Economic Development, on the Leech Lake Broadband Taskforce work – on November 1.

## Connectivity

### Connectivity Issue

**Connectivity:** Extending high-speed internet access to the entire region increases telecommuting opportunities, provides greater access to customers and markets for businesses, and allows all residents access to civic resources and commerce.

### Connectivity Issue Goal

**Connectivity:** The number of households in the region served by high-speed internet-services rises from the current level of 40% to 95% served. The (region/rural areas) community is willing to invest to increase coverage. This will include both public and private investment in service.

### Recommendation 1

***Access across the region:*** Ensure all households in the region have high-speed internet access which meets common state standards.

#### Action Step 1A

**Access:** Promote, support and develop high-speed internet access throughout region for telecommuting, educational benefits, and supporting business activity.

### Recommendation 2

***Efficiency:*** Local units of governments will work across political boundaries to share equipment costs/facilities for more efficient delivery of high-speed internet.

#### Action Step 2A

**Efficiency in installation:** Lay conduit for fiber optics when upgrading sewer and water or digging trench.

### Recommendation 3

***Access for entrepreneurs:*** Provide access to technology needs and support to retain businesses and encourage potential entrepreneurs

#### Action Step 3A

**Economic development:** Determine the compatibility and interface between communications, smart grid technologies, and internet systems. Develop a recruiting initiative encouraging technology-oriented companies to explore opportunities offered in non-urban spaces.

#### Action Step 3B

**Telecommuting:** Create a business plan that facilitates legitimate telecommuting jobs and promotes high-speed internet connection in the region. Upgrade and expand high-speed internet infrastructure in housing so residents may work from home.

### Action Step 3C

**Map of access sites:** Develop map or list of accessible sites within region to conduct web-type meetings, free Wi-Fi etc.

### Recommendation 4

**Access for children:** All school aged children will have access to a computer with high-speed internet capabilities.

### Action Step 4A

**Support sites:** Make available sites providing educational, internet, support, financial resources, etc.

### Recommendation 5

**Funding:** Identify and pursue state, federal, and philanthropic grants to fund connectivity recommendations.