



News Release

Contact:

Cassie Cunningham, CCC – Manager of Communications & Member Engagement

O: (417) 335-9231, C: (417) 849-1148

ccunningham@whiteriver.org

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White River Valley Electric Cooperative Completes Broadband Feasibility Study

Branson, Missouri – White River Valley Electric Cooperative (WRVEC) has taken the initiative to evaluate the lack of broadband availability and study the cost and benefits of providing broadband service to its members.

WRVEC engaged the National Rural Telecommunications Cooperative, NRTC, to conduct a feasibility study analyzing a broadband communications project.

“We recognize that internet connectivity isn’t just a luxury anymore, and that there are parts of the service area that may never receive the reliable and robust broadband internet services needed to enable economic prosperity without help from co-ops like White River,” said White River CEO Chris Hamon.

The Branson headquartered electric cooperative is reviewing three scenarios for the potential broadband project - from providing the fiber backbone to extending full fiber-to-the-home services to 100% of their membership. The comprehensive study includes but is not limited to:

- Diverse terrain
- Sustainable technology
- Financial models
- Competitive analysis
- Physical plant
- Operating models



- Barriers to buildout
- Funding opportunities
- Public/private partnerships

The Co-op recently reported on the study results at their annual meeting. The report said it would not be financially feasible for White River to fund 100% of the project for 100% of their members at this time and doing so would result in losing the ability to return capital credits and an eventual rate increase. However, the WRVEC team is working on avenues to bring in supplemental funding through grants and area public/private partnerships.

“This type of assistance could aid in our deployment of pilot projects in each of our five counties without having such a negative financial impact on the Co-op and its members,” said Cassie Cunningham Manager of Communications & Member Engagement. “There is a lot of data still to be analyzed and models considered. Input from White River members such as speed test results and overall accessibility will be vital to the project’s funding as we move forward.”

It’s an exciting time for WRVEC members, but it is imperative to the livelihood of the electric utility provider and its members that due diligence be done in pursuit of what could be the largest investment since the Cooperative brought electricity to the members in 1939.

Find the full summary of the study at www.whiteriver.org.

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[White River Valley Electric Cooperative](#) is a [Touchstone Energy Cooperative](#) dedicated to ensuring our members receive safe and reliable service in their homes and businesses across five southwest Missouri counties including Ozark, Taney, Stone, Christian and Douglas.