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NEWS RELEASE

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Rural Wisconsin Continues to be Wired for the Future

Cochrane Cooperative Telephone Company Announces Fiber Optics Project

MADISON – The Cochrane Cooperative Telephone Company (Cochrane, WI) will soon begin construction on a project to deploy state-of-the-art fiber optic communications infrastructure throughout the company's serving area. The new Fiber-to-the-Home (FTTH) infrastructure will use thin glass fibers, rather than copper, as the medium through which communication signals are transmitted as pulses of light. This will provide Cochrane Cooperative Telephone Company customers – residential and business – with much more bandwidth than the existing infrastructure allowed.

“Fiber-to-the-Home creates an exciting opportunity to bring advanced communication services to our customers,” said John Rosenow, Cochrane Cooperative Telephone Company Board President. “The copper wire network was designed to carry a narrowband voice network and it has done a great job. But the network of the future is built to carry broadband data, video and voice services at speeds up to 100 Mb and beyond. Fiber optics is the infrastructure of the 21st century.” Because of the fast connections and tremendous download and upload speeds, FTTH supports multiple high-band applications at the customer's premise. This makes it an ideal choice for the convergence of voice, Internet, television and other high-speed data communications. Cochrane Cooperative Telephone Company currently provides voice, digital TV and Internet services and plans to provide Internet Protocol (IP) television services in the near future.

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“WSTA salutes the hard work, dedication and commitment Cochrane Cooperative Telephone Company, its employees, and Board of Directors have made in serving western Wisconsin for more than 104 years, providing the most advanced communications technology at the best possible prices,” said Bill Esbeck, WSTA Executive Director. “We especially applaud this unique and innovative project, which will provide state-of-the-art technology and offer the highest quality telecommunication services to the citizens of the Cochrane, Buffalo City, and Waumandee-areas. WSTA member companies continue to provide the infrastructure needed to keep the Wisconsin economy and job market competitive in a global economy.”

“It is great to see the Cochrane Cooperative Telephone Company expand opportunities for area customers and develop infrastructure essential to economic growth,” said State Sen. Kathleen Vinehout (Alma). “I wish them well as they continue to prosper in western Wisconsin.” “Congratulations to everyone at the Cochrane Cooperative Telephone Company who is helping to make this state-of-the-art project a reality,” said State Rep. Chris Danou (Trempealeau). “This exciting new technology will bring future opportunity for economic growth in western Wisconsin.”

An increasing number of communication services will be facilitated through the fiber optic system. These include:

- An unlimited number of High Definition (HD) televisions;
- Ultra High-Speed Internet (with speeds up to 100 Mb or possibly higher);
- Support for multi-player on-line gaming and graphics;
- Off-site residential and business data back-up services; and
- “Smart Home” technologies with remote capabilities and home security.

WSTA is a Madison-based trade organization representing more than 70 Wisconsin local telephone companies, Internet Service Providers (ISPs) and wireless carriers.