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Wyo., residents around state asked to help gauge gaps in regional broadband service

Northwest, southeast residents have already completed a survey

CASPER, Wyo. – Residents around the state except the northwest and southeast regions are asked to participate in an online survey to help identify and address broadband gaps in Wyoming.

LinkWYOMING, a statewide initiative funded through a 2009 federal grant to map broadband access in the state, has created a survey to assess Wyoming's broadband Internet usage and the needs of Wyoming's health care organizations, businesses, and the general public.

Data from the survey will be used to map locations where unmet demand exists for broadband. The survey takes about 10 minutes to complete and the deadline for submitting the survey is Feb. 28.

Participants have the option to include their broadband information on a geocoded map or to remain anonymous. Data will only be shared with the LinkWYOMING regional planning teams and the statewide broadband coordinator to identify and address broadband gaps.

To take one of surveys, visit <http://www.wyomingdashboard.org/node/434>. For questions or for assistance in completing the survey, please contact Melinda Johnson at 307.674.1696.

LinkWYOMING regional planning teams have been meeting since January 2010 to identify and address broadband needs in their region. Those interested in joining a regional broadband team will have the opportunity to express their interest through the survey.

The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) of 2009 made funding possible for broadband projects, including mapping and planning, infrastructure, public computer centers and sustainable adoption programs. States' broadband mapping and planning projects are made possible through the National Telecommunications and Information Administration's (NTIA) State Broadband Data and Development (SBDD) grant program.

In November 2009, Wyoming received a grant of nearly \$1.8 million to fund the state's SBDD project for years one and two. An additional \$2.36 million grant was awarded in September 2010 to fund project years three through five. This project will serve as a catalyst for increased access to and use of broadband to better serve Wyoming citizens. For more information, visit www.linkwyoming.org

The mission of the Business Council is to facilitate the economic growth of Wyoming. The Business Council, a state government agency, concentrates its efforts on providing assistance for existing Wyoming companies and start-ups, helping communities meet their development and diversification needs, and recruiting new firms and industries targeted to complement the state's assets. For more information, please visit www.wyomingbusiness.org.

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