



Published: March 07, 2011

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CommScope gets larger role, contract in buildout of NC fiber network

By Hickory Record Staff

CommScope will once again provide its product to help connect folks in rural North Carolina to high-speed Internet.

MCNC, which stands for Microelectronics Center of North Carolina and is a nonprofit organization, awarded a \$14 million contract to CommScope to provide materials to lay around 1,500 miles of new fiber throughout the northeastern, northwest and central part of the state.

The network is through the Golden LEAF Rural Broadband Initiative, which awarded an estimated \$2.5 million contract to CommScope in August for materials to cover 407 miles of high-speed fiber to 37 counties in the state.

“We are honored to be chosen again by MCNC to assist with this important project,” said Ric Johnsen, senior vice president of broadband solutions for CommScope. “Our selection is a validation of CommScope’s capabilities and willingness to support MCNC’s efforts to bring an advanced network to the State of North Carolina.”

The project is part of a total \$146 million broadband infrastructure expansion that’s expected to run through 69 counties has the potential to reach 1,500 institutions like schools, libraries and hospitals, more than 300,000 underserved families and serve more than 180,000 businesses when it’s complete. The \$146 million is from federal and private sources.

The \$14 contract, with the North Carolina Research and Education Network, means CommScope will provide an estimated 2,000 miles of fiber and 1,500 miles of conduit, among other materials, for the project.

“We have been pleased with CommScope’s performance on the (Broadband Technology Opportunities Program) Round 1 implementation as well as their continued commitment to our project,” said Tommy Jacobson, MCNC’s vice president for network infrastructure initiatives and NCREN’s chief architect.

“Today, there are still major areas of the state, particularly rural areas, where citizens do not have access to basic broadband. This second contract with CommScope allows us to strengthen our partnership for delivering broadband to those parts of North Carolina who really need it,” said Jacobson.

Joseph Depa, manager of corporate communications for CommScope, said Monday that the new contract won’t mean new jobs at the company.