

Wireless system will serve tribal members

February 23, 2011

Spilyay Tymoo

by **Marsha Spellman**
*Marketing & Regulatory
Director, WSTC*

In the last Telecom Corner, I discussed the use of fiber optic cable to transmit large amounts of data. This fiber forms the backbone of our new telecom network.

The fiber network will be connected to the Warm Springs Telephone Company's anchor business and governmental customers like Kah-Nee-Ta, tribal administration and the Health and Wellness Center.

If we had all the money in the world, we would build out the entire network with fiber optic cable, including fiber to the home. Alas, we don't have all the money, so we had to design this new network to offer the same capability at a more affordable cost.

I want to tell you how we will deliver the service via the network, to your home.

Qwest, as most telephone companies, is currently using narrow-band copper wire, called "twisted pair," to transmit your phone calls from the backbone to your home.

As I explained previously, copper wire is only able to transmit a fraction of the data at much slower speeds than fiber optic cables.

Cable TV companies use a different type of cable, called co-axial cable, which is much better than copper, but still not as good as fiber.

Tribal businesses, administrative and agency offices need to receive and send large amounts of data, so these customers will be connected by fiber. However, we have chosen another option for tribal members.

We will use "point to multi point fixed wireless" to reach all the residential areas on the reservation.

While our ultimate goal is to provide fiber optic cable to ev-

ery home on the reservation, this technology uses what some people call a wireless fiber.

What is point to multi point fixed wireless?

This technology uses a fixed wireless link from the network to your home. This is not like your mobile phone—which is also wireless, but your cell phone moves around with you.

This system uses a fixed wireless connection that goes from a communications tower to your home, from point A to point B.

You will not even know it is wireless, your phone will operate just like a regular house phone. This means that you will only use this phone in your home, with extensions in various rooms if you want.

This connection will also be used to deliver your Internet service. For Warm Springs, since homes are often far apart from each other, and since the cost of running fiber to each home is very expensive, this will allow us to deliver a really good signal to your home, without digging up roads and putting up more wires.

Therefore, "point to multi point fixed wireless" is the best option for providing access to all residents.

The new wireless system will enable us to provide both telephone service as well as high-speed, broadband Internet access.

It will also greatly advance the potential of emergency response on the reservation. By providing this new service, all members of the tribe will now be able to contact help in times of emergency, call to the children's school, or just chat with your friends.

Next article I will tell you more about the new Central Office that we are going to build on the Reservation.

Service will begin to be available in Fall of 2011.