

A Broadband Project: Two Rivers Resort Pre-positioned Fire Camp



Project Description:

WSU Stevens County Extension and Program for Digital Initiatives staff is working in partnership with the Spokane Tribe, Washington State Department of Natural Resources (DNR) and various SC ST BAT members on a study to determine the feasibility of the communications components of a Pre-positioned Fire Camp (PPFC) in the Two Rivers Resort area on the Spokane Indian Reservation. This will enable emergency responders and residents in the area to have permanent access to broadband communications to stay abreast of public safety threats and disaster response activity in the region. Once the broadband infrastructure is deployed, it will also be available to provide Tribal members, business enterprises, residents and visitors of Two Rivers Resort with high speed internet access to fill the homework gap, increase business efficiency and opportunities, access to government and social services, as well as other critical broadband uses.

Several meetings have been held with Tribal staff and DNR to identify key components of the project work plan. Through DNR's [Rural Communities Partnership Initiative](#), PPFCs have been identified as a targeted focus for their interests in helping expand broadband into rural Washington.

Work to date:

The Spokane Tribe hosted the first meeting on October 3, 2018 at the Two Rivers Resort. Participants included eight tribal staff representing the Tribe's broadband company, Spokane Tribe Telecom Exchange (STTX), planning and economic development, IT, GIS, public safety and administration, as well as one DNR staff and three from WSUE. This served as a kickoff meeting and the initial site visit to the proposed location of the PPFC. This was an opportunity for the team members to ask questions, begin to finalize the work plan, start gathering relevant data for the asset inventory and gap analysis as well as determine roles and responsibilities. The Tribe will also determine what formal agreements are needed among the partners such as data sharing agreements, a memorandum of agreement, Tribal review of the survey and cultural review requirements.



The Washington State Department of Natural Resources (DNR) supports the Two Rivers Resort location on the Spokane Tribe Reservation because it is a prime location that will benefit our access to fires on the reservation and in the three county region. We have had a fire camp there before and experienced communications challenges because of no internet access.

When we do not have broadband service it is more challenging to provide quality intelligence and logistical support for firefighters. Examples of such needs include spot weather forecasts, resource ordering, infrared mapping access, situation reporting and incident documentation. These tasks must be completed via radio or telephone through an already overburdened dispatch center if there is no connectivity.

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