



Timberland
Regional
Library

News Release

(360)943-5001 - Fax (360)586-6838 - www.trlib.org - 415 Tumwater Blvd SW - Tumwater, WA 98501

Timberland Regional Library; Website: www.TRL.org; Information: 704-4636 in Olympia area, or 1-800-562-6022.

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Media Contact: Jeff Kleingartner, Communications Manager, (360) 704-4507.
Outside Olympia calling area: 877-284-6237, ext. 2507.

Rural libraries to receive broadband internet upgrades

Timberland Regional Library is a participant in two high-speed broadband projects recently funded under the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA). These projects will help bring faster Internet service to more than 100 community institutions in underserved areas across Washington State. Thirteen of Timberland's library buildings are expected to benefit from the projects.

The projects are funded by the U.S. Dept. of Commerce's National Telecommunications and Information Administration's (NTIA) Broadband Technology Opportunities Program (BTOP). The ARRA provided a total of \$7.2 billion to NTIA and the Department of Agriculture's Rural Utilities Service (RUS) to fund projects that will expand access to and adoption of broadband services. Chehalis, McCleary, Naselle, Mountain View (Randle) and Salkum will be upgraded to high-speed broadband connections in the first project. Four additional Timberland libraries, Centralia, Ilwaco, Raymond and South Bend, already have high-speed connections, but will receive infrastructure upgrades.

The second project will positively impact four Timberland libraries: Amanda Park, Hoodport, Packwood and Westport. These sites have slower network connections that will be upgraded to high-speed broadband connections. Over the last five years, TRL has upgraded network connections to 14 of its 27 libraries to meet the needs of patrons using public PCs and free Wi-Fi access. The BTOP projects will fund broadband connections into most of the remaining library communities.

These two federal grants are expected to create jobs, attract economic investment to rural areas, and provide reliable, high-speed Internet access to schools, libraries, emergency responders, hospitals, government agencies, businesses and individuals. Both projects are expected to be substantially complete by the fall 2012 and fully complete by the fall 2013.

Timberland Regional Library provides for the information, reading and lifelong learning needs of the Grays Harbor, Lewis, Mason, Pacific, and Thurston county public at 27 community public libraries and 7 library service partner locations. The library system is funded mainly by local property taxes. Anyone needing special accommodations to participate in a library's program may contact the library one week in advance.