

NEWS RELEASE

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DIRECT COMMUNICATIONS PARTNERS WITH MCA TO EXPAND HIGH SPEED BROADBAND IN WALDO & PENOBSHOT COUNTIES

UNITY – Direct Communications, formerly known as UniTel, has been awarded a Reach Me Line Extension grant by the Maine Connectivity Authority (MCA) to utilize their existing broadband network to expand high speed fiber in the towns of Burnham, Dixmont, Newburgh, Thorndike, Troy and Unity. This award was part of \$20 million awarded to Internet Service Providers (ISPs) which will expand high-speed broadband to 73 communities across the state.

The Reach Me program was designed to leverage and optimize existing ISP infrastructure with a focus on deploying funding where it is needed most. The MCA worked directly with ISPs to identify portions of their existing networks that would benefit from line extensions. The partnership between MCA, Direct Communications, and the local communities, will bring Fiber-to-the-Premise (“FTTP”) broadband to 1,373 homes and businesses in these unserved areas. The Direct Communications fiber optic network will be capable of delivering symmetrical service of 1 gigabyte, scalable to multi-gig in the future.

“We are excited to partner with the MCA and our local towns to extend broadband services to the most rural parts of the communities we serve.” said Direct Communications’ General Manager Tim May.

Direct Communications recognizes the importance of supporting the local schools in rural communities and offers its “Upgrade Your School Program” to residents in all the communities they serve. The Upgrade Your School program allows new and upgrading customers of Direct Communications the opportunity to select the school district they wish to receive their first month's payment. Since the inception of the program in 2019, Direct Communications has donated more than \$297,000 to schools in their service areas.

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About Direct Communications: Direct Communications formerly, UniTel, was established in 1902; and since then, has been providing unparalleled customer service and technology to Albion, Dixmont, Knox, Newburgh, Thorndike, Troy, Unity and surrounding areas. Direct Communications offers high-speed broadband for both residential and business customers with speeds up to 1GB. In addition to their dedication to customer service, Direct Communications is committed to maintaining the highest level of technology. They have invested over \$10 million in the past 10 years to expand their digital fiber network in Maine. Direct Communications customer experience representatives and technicians in Maine are located in Unity and live and work in the communities they serve. Direct Communications is also a devoted community advocate supporting a host of local charities and organizations.