

# NEWS RELEASE

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## **DIRECT COMMUNICATIONS AND THE TOWNS OF BROOKS AND WALDO PARTNER TO EXPANDS HIGH SPEED BROADBAND**

UNITY – Direct Communications, formerly known as UniTel, and their partners the towns of Brooks and Waldo have been awarded a Connect the Ready grant by the Maine Connectivity Authority (MCA) to facilitate the construction of high-speed broadband service in the towns of Brooks and Waldo. This award was part of \$34 million awarded and is the single largest investment in Maine’s broadband infrastructure, to date, which will expand high-speed broadband to 31 communities across the state.

Connect the Ready is a competitive grant program that encourages public/private partnerships and collaboration to build unserved areas. The partnership between MCA, Direct Communications and the towns of Brooks and Waldo, will bring Fiber-to-the-Premise (“FTTP”) broadband to 837 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.

“Direct Communications is eager to bring reliable High-Speed fiber service to the residents and businesses in the towns of Brooks and Waldo. Partnering with rural communities to help bridge the digital divide has been and will continue to be our focus,” said Direct Communications’ General Manager Tim May.

Business and residential customers will have access to world-class broadband speeds and data connections for ongoing operations and future growth. Local residents will have access to instantaneous HD downloads and broadband support for unlimited household devices.

“The Town of Brooks is elated to have received a Broadband connectivity grant. We realize in order to be competitive for our citizens and new businesses broadband is a service we must offer. Remote learning, telemedicine and connection to the outside world all depend on reliable, affordable broadband service. Without this we would be a black hole in a sea of excellent connectivity,” said Brooks Selectboard Member Linda Lord.

“We are so excited about the next phase and can’t wait to have internet for all who need and want it! We have been working a long time on this endeavor. Looking forward to working with you Direct Communications,” said the Town of Waldo Selectmen.

Direct Communications recognizes the importance of supporting the local schools in rural communities and will offer its “Upgrade your school program” to residents in Brooks and Waldo. This program gives subscribers to Direct Communications fiber service the opportunity to donate their first month’s payment to the local school of their choice. More than \$273,000 has been given to rural schools since its inception.

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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.