

# Report highlights problems with broadband mapping in rural areas



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NORTHERN CALIFORNIA – Two regional groups say action needs to be taken to address problems with broadband mapping that's being used to develop plans for increasing broadband deployment in rural areas.

On Wednesday, July 17, 2013, the California Emerging Technologies Fund released a report titled, "Overview of Problems with CPUC Report on California Advanced Services Fund."

The report confirms what rural Californians have known for years – that broadband service actually provided on the ground is not the same as the service advertised by providers, and as claimed in the national and California broadband maps.

"The CPUC maps on broadband deployment and availability are inaccurate," the CETF report states. "There are inherent problems with the CPUC broadband access availability mapping because of aberrations embedded in the industry data and the mapping methodology. Ground truthing by Regional Consortia and rural community leaders revealed that those maps were about 50 percent in error."

The report also notes that there is no rural county or city in California that agrees with either the CPUC report on the California Advanced Services Fund or the California Cable and Telecommunications Association interpretation of the situation.

The Broadband Alliance of Mendocino County and Access Sonoma Broadband called the report a "watershed finding" that substantiates work done over the past two years by the two county organizations.

Working collaboratively, Mendocino and Sonoma counties have developed credible information showing that the broadband maps don't depict actual conditions in many areas of both counties.

Schools, libraries, public safety, health care all must cope with substandard broadband throughout much of Northern California, and rural areas throughout the state, the groups said.

Jim Moorehead, chair of the Alliance Executive Committee, and Mike Nicholls, co-chair of Access Sonoma Broadband, agree that "substandard broadband is damaging the economic viability of Northern California, and the inaccurate broadband maps are a serious problem. Having a state agency formally recognize it as a problem is a huge step in the right direction."

The Broadband Alliance of Mendocino County and Access Sonoma Broadband sent a letter to the California Public Utilities Commission asking the commission to address the problems the report identifies; support legislation – such as this year's fully funded version of SB 7403 – which would provide essential ongoing funding for the CASF broadband infrastructure grant program for rural broadband deployment projects; and support projects to build robust affordable accessible regional broadband networks throughout Northern California, such as the Northern California Regional Middle-Mile Infrastructure, proposed by Golden Bear Broadband LLC.

For more information, visit [www.MendocinoBroadband.org](http://www.MendocinoBroadband.org) .