

# NELPCO Board votes to move forward with broadband initiative

*Project will bring internet to NELPCO membership*

The Board of Directors of the Northeast Louisiana Power Cooperative (NELPCO) voted in a special meeting on June 29<sup>th</sup> to begin the process of bringing broadband internet to its membership.



“The NELPCO Board of Directors voted to bring high speed internet to its members through its wholly owned subsidiary, Volt Broadband, LLC,” said Weldon Fitch, President of the NELPCO Board. “This vote came after many months of due diligence, discussions and deliberations by our board.”

NELPCO General Manager Jeff Churchwell noted that broadband has become a near-essential aspect of today’s society, and that the new venture will offer broadband to customers in rural Louisiana who have gone without service.

“Broadband has become common in the densely populated areas, but the rural, hard-to-service areas have been left behind,” Churchwell said. “Now that the board has made this decision, we can begin our work to make this a reality for our membership as quickly as we can.”

“As our plans progress, we will keep our members informed as we work to make rural broadband a reality for the members we serve.”

“This is good news for the people and business owners served by Northeast Louisiana Power Co-op,” said Louisiana Public Service Commissioner Foster Campbell. “Reliable and affordable internet service is critical to health care, education, commerce and public safety. Businesses need it, students doing homework assignments need it, and rural communities need it to survive.

“North Louisiana has more unserved and underserved territory than any other part of the state, so that’s where the need is greatest,” Commissioner Campbell added. “We have to think about innovative ways of getting high-speed internet service for everyone in Louisiana who wants it, and Northeast Louisiana Power Co-op is in a unique position to provide this service using their existing infrastructure.”

Churchwell noted that details are still being worked out but that the NELPCO membership would be kept informed of the progress being made.

“This project is very large in scale and the most ambitious one since the co-op first brought electricity to the rural areas,” he said. “We know it’s important to keep our membership informed of our progress as we go forward.”