

June Lake Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC)
August 5, 2020 – Meeting Minutes

1. Call to Order by Chair John DeCoster at 6:02 p.m.; the Pledge of Allegiance was to a virtual flag. The meeting was held via ZOOM.

Other Members Present: Julie Brown, Jora Fogg, Sarah Holston, Janet Hunt, Bob Marks, David Rosky

2. Public Comment

- a. Jil Stark reported on this year's Chipper Weekend, organized by the June Lake Fire Safe Council and staffed by residents of the 27 cabins on Silver Lake. Jil said the event was very successful, with a total of 165 loads (122 on Saturday, and 43 on Sunday). She said these totals were in line with the previous 10 years, despite the unique challenges of this year. She thanked Julie Brown for the use of the June Mountain parking lot; Mammoth Disposal and D&S disposal for providing two dumpsters each; Kirstie Butler of the US Forest Service; Justin Nalder of the Mono County Public Works, and members of the Silver Lake Tract association and the Fire Safe Council, Bob Lavenberg, Al Heinrich, Kirstie Butler, and Jil Stark. [For more details, see the attached file.] Tentative dates for next year's Chipper Weekend are July 10-11, 2021.

3. Review/approve the minutes of the June 3, 2020 meeting. Julie moved adoption, and Dave seconded. The minutes were approved.

4. Reports

- a. Supervisor Gardner said he would comment more on covid-19 and SCE in those parts of the agenda.

He reported that (1) the situation around June Lake (the actual lake), with all the people and the questionable social distancing, was not good; (2) the dumpster in June Mountain parking lot (used earlier for Chipper Weekend) had been removed because of the SCE project (Bob Marks noted he saw it behind the Down Canyon fire station); (3) the speed bump on Bruce St. had elicited some concern from at least one neighbor, and suggested that those who had supported it talk with all their neighbors; (4) the county was working on the 2020-21 FY budget, and said it would be affected by the covid shut down; and (5) the Tioga Inn project would be taken up at a special meeting on Thursday, August 6.

He was asked about signage problem at the Post Office. He said there was a sign. Sarah observed that it was hidden behind tree branches and foliage, and that other cities in Southern California had painted the curb blue in front to signify the 15-minute parking limit; she asked Supervisor Gardner to look into the possibility of doing that here. He said he'd do that. In the meantime, hope was expressed that the foliage hiding the current sign might just disappear one night.

b. Chair DeCoster commented on the large influx of people to June Lake and the problems that caused, noting that the Chamber of Commerce was seeking to add some dumpsters and maybe porta-potties around town.

c. CAC Members

- Sarah Holston said that for the trails committee the year has been “weird.” They’re not allowed to work, despite having received a bunch of new tools, and noted the amount of human waste (human and other) on the trails—which they’re not allowed to pick up, or bury.

- Dave Rosky said he attended last month’s LTC (Local Transportation Commission) meeting. He said the county received a \$150,000 grant from CalTrans, and that major work on CA 120 in Yosemite Park would be going on over the next two summers, with likely effects on our area.

d. Mono County staff.

- i. Michael Draper reported that (a) the Planning Commission recommended to the BOS approval of June Lake Highlands project with a limit of 27 parcels (39%) in the Highlands being allowed to offer short-term vacation rentals; and (b) the June Lake Brewery had applied for a modification of its land use permit to make expanded outdoor seating permanent.

- ii. Wendy Sugimura reported that the amended Don Morton mixed-use project approval process was moving forward.

5. Discussion and updates of COVID-19 impact and response.

Supervisor Gardner said the number of positive cases has increased to 147; 3400 tests have been given, with about 100 pending. Most positive cases are in Mammoth Lakes, but 12-13 total have now been reported for north and south county combined. Those in June Lake were identified through contact tracing; HIPPA limits disclosure of personal medical information. The county health service has prioritized those who can be tested; those thinking they might have covid-19 symptoms should call 211. There remain compliance issues in the county with regard to the health directives. Local law enforcement agencies have been brought into the discussion about enforcement.

A big issue in all of the county is the large number of visitors. Highway traffic is back to previous years’ levels. Dispersed camping is problematic; approximately 20-30% of those seeking to camp are first-timers who are at best ignorant of the right way to do so. Grant Lake looks like a (poorly run) rv park with unauthorized fires, trash, and sanitation issues.

Supervisor Gardner asked Gordon Martin of the Inyo National Forest to comment. He said that their number one priority is June Lake beach. They are installing no parking signs, and with those in place will be able to issue citations. Outside of that, the FS is also going to increase the number of dumpsters elsewhere, probably doubling up at existing locations. He added that first-time campers are showing up without reservations, and all campgrounds are full every week. He said he'd be meeting with Dr. Boo to discuss occupancy limitations in campgrounds.

Julie Brown added that the June Mountain parking lot is not for camping, and asked that people not be sent there. The dumpsters there are also private. She and staff are trying to educate those who do show up—sometimes in caravans of up to six vehicles.

Dave Rosky observed that “No Camping” signs at Fern Lake trailhead have been torn down.

Janet asked why covid-19 testing is taking so long. New lab? Ralph Lockhart said that Mammoth Lakes uses USF (University of San Francisco?) testing with results in 2-3 days.

Sarah noted that *Sunset* magazine had an article encouraging camping at Grant Lake. She asked if June Lake citizens could respond with a letter; Supervisor Gardner encouraged them to do so.

Jora asked about the status of prohibiting dispersed camping in the Loop. Gordon Martin responded that enforcement will resume, with the exception of Grant Lake which is mostly LADWP and some FS land.

Janet concurred that the behavior of dispersed and other campers was problematic. She noted that Mammoth Lakes will have “ambassadors” to educate them, and asked if the county could hire some people to do that here. Supervisor Gardner said that hiring someone was difficult but that volunteers might be an easier route.

Business-owner Jamie Schechtman reported that an event being organized to remove trash and graffiti was disallowed by the county health department because it would have violated a county health directive. He said we are caught in a catch-22. Supervisor Gardner said he'd follow up to see if such actions in support of community needs could be allowed.

Bob Marks said he had a number of questions about the impact of the shutdown, reopening, and dialing back in light of rising covid-19 cases on employment and unemployment in the June Lake loop. He noted that having some handle on the numbers of people affected was important to know, especially as several important aspects of the original CARES Act have expired, and it's not clear if or when Congress will act to provide additional relief and support for the US economy and its people as long as the virus is circulating.

He said he analyzed the data made available by the SBA on the PPP (Payroll Protection Plan) loans up to \$150,000, and found that in June Lake there were 23 loans approved totaling \$752,022 that were said to have retained 142 jobs. That raises the question of how many businesses and employees there were in June Lake prior to the shutdown, how many employees were furloughed, how many have been reemployed, how many remain unemployed, and how many, if any, businesses have closed. In his view, those are important questions to have some perspective on, especially as we are likely to be hit with renewed economic slowdown if Congress does not approve further economic aid and relief (including to states, counties, municipalities, and school districts which may be forced to lay people off). What is the scope of the problem that June Lake (and Mono County) is likely to face, and how do we prepare for it? For example, are the funds available from June Lake Cares adequate? Or is additional fundraising needed?

Supervisor Gardner said that data was difficult to get. The county has done some surveys, but those are voluntary. He too wants to see data to see whether we in the county are doing better.

Ralph Lockhart said the Mono County Economic Development Department estimates 35% were unemployed before the reopening in June. He also noted that most businesses used up their PPP loans within 24 weeks. He's heard that a problem has been that with the additional \$600 in unemployment benefits, some unemployed people offered their job back didn't return to work because they wouldn't make as much money. He also said that it's likely that without foreign visitors and with Yosemite closed to camping, the shoulder season will likely become more difficult for employers and employees.

Janet said that June Lake Cares initially saw a lot of need and demand for their support and resources, but that that demand has slowed. She too anticipates that local need will increase. She noted that the Chamber of Commerce has the food bank, and that the June Lake Women's Club and IMACA have cooperated to provide support for those in need of food, shelter, and clothing.

6. SCE (Southern California Edison) projects in the June Lake Loop

Cal Rossi from SCE joined the ZOOM meeting via phone. He thanked Supervisor Gardner for arranging this meeting. He had several SCE projects to discuss.

a) Strengthening the SCE infrastructure and wildfire strategy. He reported that 3000 hazardous trees in the June Lake area and Inyo National Forest had been removed, and that helicopters and drones were used to inspect SCE equipment.

b) The Gem Lake project (see also attached press release). He brought in two SCE colleagues for this discussion. The Gem Lake dam is 75' high, was built in 1917, and is classified as "high hazard," and ultimately needs to be rebuilt. In 2012, because of seismic concerns the reservoir was lowered to 30'. SCE now needs to replace an old outlet valve. The project will take until the end of November, with copters being used to

lift heavy equipment to the site, flying intermittently from 7 am- 6 pm M-Sat. Crews will be brought in separately by pack train.

c) Concurrently, a smaller project will be conducted—removing the Agnew towers. In 2019 those towers and lines were damaged. The project will take 2-4 weeks to complete, with intermittent use of copters from 7 am- 6 pm M-S.

Mr. Rossi took questions, several addressing the impact of helicopters flying over residential areas. One questioned why the tram was not used, instead of helicopters. Sarah Loyola of SCE said the equipment was too heavy for the tram. Another question was about complaints regarding copters not adhering to regulations. The June Lake community is clearly concerned about the disruption to our lives that the helicopters cause. For complaints, SCE will distribute flyers with Mr. Rossi's name and contact information. A longer discussion concerned the licensing process for the dam. That process is under to auspices of the Division of Dam Safety of the FERC (Federal Energy Regulatory Commission). That process will take the next seven years. In the meantime, SCE is obligated to enhance and ensure safety. Other permitting entities include CDFW (California Department of Fish and Wildlife), USACE (US Army Corps of Engineers), and the California State Water Board. The FERC process includes SCE consultation with the Forest Service, and a key part of that will be engagement with the public for its feedback. One member of the public stressed the importance of finding out more about the details of the seismic strengthening. SCE said that would begin only after the seven-year relicensing is completed. Another topic concerned how the project (and the relicensing) will address the effects of water flow down canyon. Residents and businesses in Dream Mountain and around Silver Lake have been flooded or damaged by large water outflows in the past. SCE said the valve replacement would result in a slight increase in water flows, but that the new valve would allow SCE to better manage the water release; the old valve had on an "on-off" switch. A final comment concerned the "vegetation" management. This resident said SCE was removing too many trees, and that those removals have harmed our communities. There is little trust among these residents of SCE.

7. Update on Suddenlink internet access in June Lake Loop.

The two presenters of information included Nate Greenberg, Director of IT for Mono County, and Mike Horton, a regional vice president for Suddenlink. Mr. Greenberg gave a slide presentation that provided a historical background for broadband access in June Lake. The major turning point was the construction of Digital 395, a high-speed fiber optic line following US 395 from Carson City to Barstow, made possible by a 2009 grant made possible by the ARRA (American Recovery and Relief Act). This provided the "backbone;" the "last mile" connecting that cable to homes and businesses is where Suddenlink comes in. Mr. Greenberg concluded that the main issue with Suddenlink has been the quality of service to June Lake.

Mr. Horton gave an overview of the history, size, and organization of Suddenlink, and then began answering questions. Most questions dealt with concerns about the timeliness

and quality of Suddenlink service support to June Lake, the slowness of download streaming (less than what we pay for), and the underlying unreliability of the Suddenlink internet connection.

Regarding the latter, Mr. Horton acknowledged the problem, and said that Suddenlink faced “many challenges” in providing reliable connectivity, not just to June Lake, but to Mammoth Lakes too. There were many questions and considerable discussion of the technical details for why a customer’s connection dropped periodically, episodically, or regularly. Several people commented that they used their more reliable cell phones than worry that Suddenlink internet connection would drop. Mr. Horton said he would look into the setting of the “alarm thresholds,” and that the hardware forming the two “nodes” serving June Lake need to be better “optimized.” Those appeared to be assurances from Mr. Horton that Suddenlink would ensure that improvements to service and equipment would be forthcoming.

Regarding internet speeds, Mr. Horton said that speed tests need to be through the Suddenlink servers, and not others (that would be very long distances away).

Many expressed frustration bordering on anger at the quality (or lack thereof) of Suddenlink customer service, up to what one person called “a clear lack of professionalism” in addressing his business’s issues. Another business owner said his resort had two 500 MB accounts, but they were so unreliable he could not go to Suddenlink’s VOIP phone service. Others asked: Why can’t we get through on the phones? And what good is it call or try to report issues when techs cancel appointments or just don’t show up? Mr. Horton provided some answers, but also pleaded that he too faced “challenges” and “frustrations” in getting a handle on the issues we face, from outsourced call centers in Houston or New York, to covid-related work-from-home routines, and winter. Mr. Horton said he understood our issues, and that June Lake and Mammoth Lakes were at the top of his “hot list.”

With time running short, Mr. Greenberg thanked Mr. Horton, and said he will keep lines of communication with Suddenlink open, will work on the issues and support us, and will hold Suddenlink accountable.

8. Community updates (brief, as the time was already well past 8 p.m.)
 - a. Women’s Club. Janet Hunt said that June Lake Cares remains their top priority.
 - b. Chamber of Commerce. Janet Hunt reported that the Chamber is concerned about the large number of visitors and the amount of trash and human waste being left behind, and has decided to stop marketing the Loop for the time being.

- c. Water Subcommittee. Julie thanked Bob Marks for providing her with a copy of the 2007 PUD master plan, and said she was in touch with the PUD for a price on water for snow making.
- 9. Future agenda items: Status on trash in the loop; follow-up on Suddenlink; a presentation from the PUD.
- 10. The meeting adjourned at 8:29 p.m.

Next meeting: TBA

Respectfully submitted,

Bob Marks, Secretary

Fire Safe Council
June Lake Chipper Week End

Summary of activities and results – July 11 and 12, 2020
June Mountain Parking Lot

On June 1, 2020 I contacted Kirstie Butler (USFS) regarding the possibility of holding a Chipper event in the midst of a virus. A chipper and USFS staff could be provided and it was agreed to hold the Chipper event July 11, 12, 2020, pending any future lock-downs.

Many of the council were out of town but planning began for the event, and some emails were sent.

On June 19, Julie Brown was contacted and the procedure for requesting and obtaining the June Mountain Parking Lot was initiated. The request is made thru the corporation and must be made for the entire time the bins will occupy the lot (arrival and departure dates). We could not hold this event without this support and Julie's assistance.

At this time D & S disposal and Mammoth Disposal were contacted and arrangements were made for 4 bins; 2 each from each company. The bins arrived July 9 and all of them were retrieved by July 15. In the future maybe 5 bins would be better. The support of both D & S and Mammoth disposals is critical for our success.

Justin Nalder (of Mono County Public Works) was of considerable help as well, arranging for the permits to dispose of the materials at both the Pumice Landfill and the Benton Landfill.

June Simpkins (of The Sheet) assisted in getting a notice published twice in The Sheet for the event. Other notices were posted along Hiway 158 beginning on Monday July 6 as well as at the entrance to town.

The Silver Lake Tract community and the Fire Safe Council staffed the weekend event, which went on without a hitch. During the event masks were worn and special distancing was practice. A data sheet is provided with a breakdown of the areas of town that contributed to the event with the amounts.

The cooperation of the entire June Lake community made this a success.

June Lake Defensible Space Week-end 2020

[Chipper Week-end]

SATURDAY July 11, 2020

	Clark Tract	Down Canyon areas	Peterson Tract	Other Areas Williams Track	June Lake Village	June Lake Tract	Silver Lake Tract	Gull Lake Tract
Number of Contributors per area	Number of Loads	Number of Loads	Number of Loads	Number of Loads	Number of Loads	Number of Loads	Number of Loads	Number of Loads
1	1	10	1	1	2	3	4	1
2	3	1	1	2	3	1	7	2
3	1	4	1	0	2	0	8	0
4	2	7	1	0	1	0	3	0
5	2	1	4	0	1	0	2	0
6	0	6	2	0	4	0	9	0
7	0	1	2	0	0	0	1	0
8	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0
9	0	0	4	0	0	0	0	0
10	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0
11	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0
12	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0
13	0	0	4	0	0	0	0	0
14	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	0
Saturday Totals								
Total No. of Loads	9	30	26	3	13	4	34	3
Total No. of Contributors	5	7	14	2	6	2	7	2

SUNDAY July 12, 2020

	Clark Tract	Down Canyon areas	Peterson Tract	Other Areas Williams Track	June Lake Village	June Lake Tract	Silver Lake Tract	Gull Lake Tract
Number of Contributors per area	Number of Loads	Number of Loads	Number of Loads	Number of Loads	Number of Loads	Number of Loads	Number of Loads	Number of Loads
1	3	1	1	1	1	1	1	0
2	1	2	1	1	1	2	3	0
3	1	1	1	1	1	0	2	0
4	1	2	3	0	0	0	0	0
5	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0
6	3	0	1	0	0	0	0	0
7	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0
8	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
9	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Sunday Totals								
Total No. of Loads	13	6	9	3	3	3	6	0
Total No. of Contributors	9	4	7	3	3	2	3	0
Week-end Totals								
Total No. of Loads	22	36	35	6	16	7	40	3
Total No. of Contributors	14	11	21	5	9	4	10	2

In addition, the Silver Lake Tract home owners took 3 loads to the Pumice Landfill Site, which included organics (needles etc.) and CLN wood

122

45

43

31

165

76

JUNE LAKE BROADBAND

Background, Status, and Challenges

June Lake CAC
August 2020



COUNTY COMMITMENT



- Long-term commitment to broadband

- 2009 staff allocation to Digital 395
- Broadband Consortium
- Provider partnerships & support

- 2019-2024 County Strategic Plan

- 3B: Diversified Economic Base

- 2019-2021 IT Strategic Plan

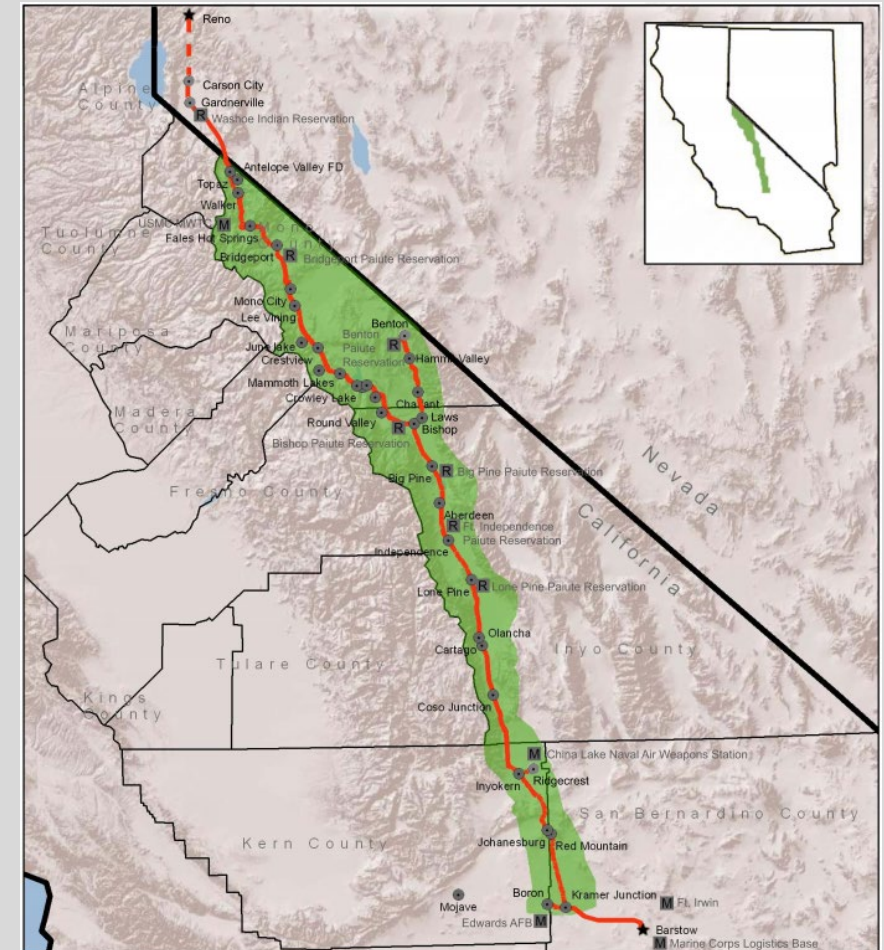
- 98% of Mono County households have access to Gigabit internet by end of 2021



DIGITAL 395



- Digital 395 is a 620 mile long, 432 strand, Middle Mile fiber optic network
- \$120m project funded by ARRA & CASF
- Two primary obligations:
 - To construct a fiber-optic backbone between Barstow, CA & Carson City, NV primarily following the Highway 395 corridor (Middle Mile)
 - To provide broadband capabilities to 250+ government, education, medical, and service provider anchors (Last Mile)



How do you access all this capacity?



1

Digital 395 provides broadband service in the form of 'backhaul' to providers

2

Providers utilize their 'Last Mile' network to connect customers at home & work

No. Mo. Co.



So. Mo. Co.



June Lake



3

Customers purchase service from local providers

A brief (recent) history of broadband in the Eastern Sierra

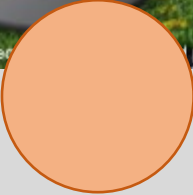
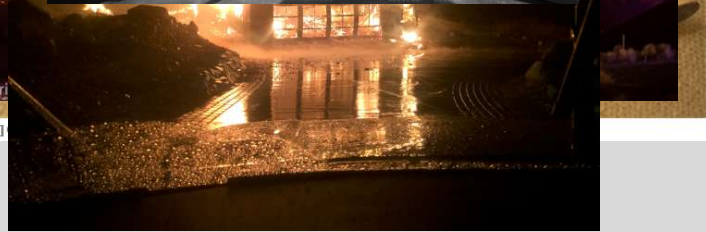
2006 ————— 2007 ————— 2009 ————— 2010 ————— 2012

2013

2014

2015

2016



8mbps
16mbps

suddenlink



National Average



Mono County Capacity

2013

\$37.01
per mbit

2016



\$1.83
per mbit

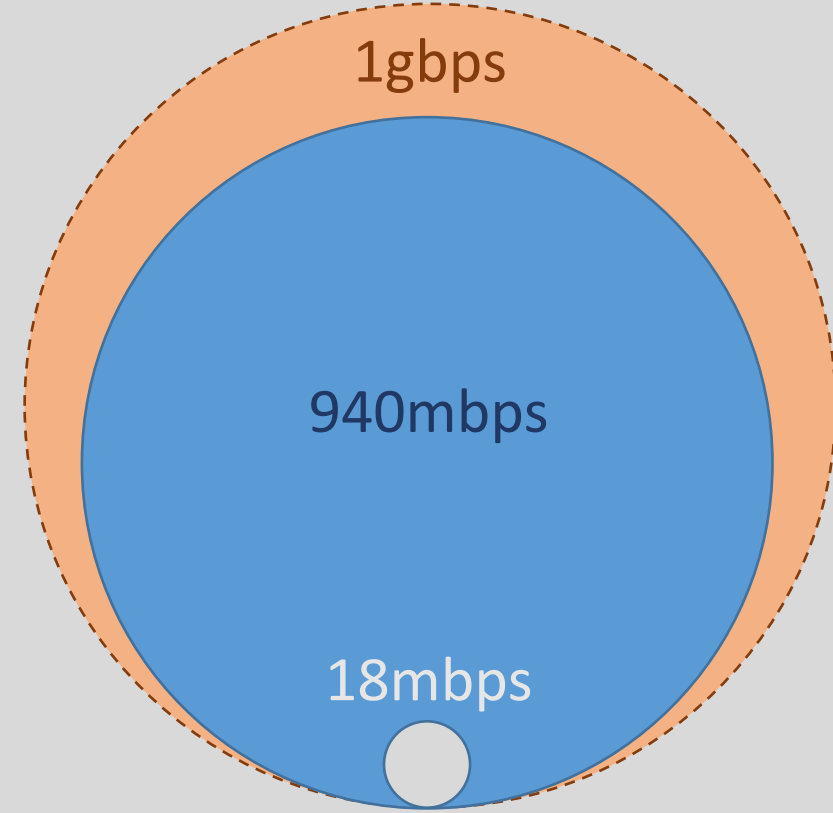
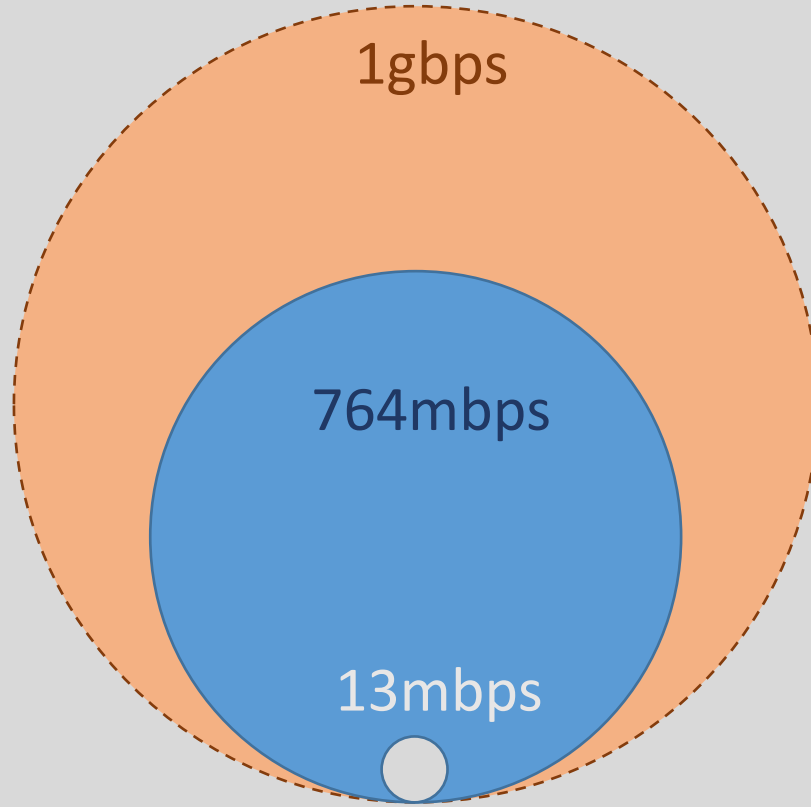
vs.



\$4 per
mbit
national avg.

2018

\$.62
per mbit



8mbps
1.4mbps
1.5mbps

○ National Average

● Mono County Average

○ Overall Capacity

WHERE WE ARE



- Ongoing work with broadband providers
 - Expand existing service areas
 - Resolve service issues
- Promote and leverage broadband as a strategic opportunity