Southeastern Indiana Rural Telephone Cooperative has been serving its customers since 1953, and SEI Data, Inc., its Internet Service Provider subsidiary, has been providing high speed Fiber-to-the-Home Internet service to customers since 2013 with completed deployments in three exchanges. SEI is a registered Incumbent Local Exchange Carrier serving customers in Dearborn, Jefferson, Jennings, Ohio, Ripley, and Switzerland Counties and a registered Competitive Local Exchange Carrier in other portions of southeastern Indiana. SEI offers phone service, high-speed internet, and advanced data services at competitive rates while providing excellent customer service.

In a continuation of SEI’s mission to provide the best possible service to customers, SEI is proposing a project in partnership with the Indiana Office of Community and Rural Affairs’ Next Level Connections Broadband Grant Program which would provide service of speeds up to 1Gbps down/1Gbps up to 421 currently unserved households and businesses in three exchanges in southeastern Ripley County. These areas will be noncontiguous and bounded by N. Milan/Versailles Pike at its northernmost boundary; by SR 101 at its easternmost boundary; by W CR 700 S at its southernmost boundary, and by W CR 300 S at its westernmost boundary.

In this deployment, existing SEI fiber would feed a new buried fiber optic network arranged in an Active Ethernet network topology which has the capacity to serve each customer passed with symmetrical 1Gbps service. Due to the immense bandwidth capacity of the fiber optic cable itself and its lifespan of up to 30 years, this network would last for decades and easily accommodate upgraded electronic equipment that may further improve speeds in the decades to come.

According to a survey completed by these potential customers, high speed Internet would afford countless opportunities that they currently lack. Economic opportunity for small business owners, farmers, and large businesses alike would arise, allowing them to take advantage of new Internet-dependent methods and technologies that would attract new employers and optimize operations. High speed internet would also afford new opportunities to utilize educational and telemedicine opportunities currently unavailable to many rural residents which would drastically improve their quality of life. Records-keeping and communication services by law enforcement and public safety officials would also be more accessible to residents, along with entertainment and communication opportunities that many who already have high speed Internet take for granted.

SEI’s professional staff have the skills and experience to manage the construction and operation of this network as demonstrated by their history of successful network buildouts. Nearly 60% of the company’s staff have been employed with SEI for over 15 years, and 15% have been with SEI for 30 years. SEI’s dedicated 24/7 Internet Tech Support, free to SEI customers, ensures that customers will receive lightning-fast, reliable service for decades to come. An investment in broadband is a crucial investment not only for SEI but also for the community that SEI strives to serve.