

## **West Texas Students Don't Need to Wait for New Stimulus Package to Access Subsidized Rural Broadband Services**

### ***Bridging the Digital Divide***

**Charlotte, NC February 24, 2009-** Conterra Telecom Services (Conterra) has announced the commencement of high-speed wireless wide area network service to 44 member school districts and colleges of the West Texas Telecommunications Consortium (WTTC) located in the Texas Region 14 Education Service Center (ESC). The 100 Mbps Ethernet based microwave radio network connects member districts and colleges to the main WTTC office located in Abilene. A five year contract was awarded to Conterra through the federal E-Rate program which covers a large portion of the consortium member's costs.

Conterra's intelligent broadband networks support the convergence of integrated data, video and voice services on a single circuit that minimizes the number of service providers and provides for a single source of accountability. The Conterra network is now providing Internet access to over 15,000 WTTC endpoints, Internet video conferencing and distance learning service to more than 200 locations and Voice over IP service to members. Conterra monitors, manages and supports the WTTC network on a 24X7X365 basis and guarantees network performance and reliability.

"Conterra has provided the educational community of west central Texas with the most reliable and cost effective voice, video, and data transport infrastructure we could possibly have acquired in this rural part of our state," said Mr. Simoneau the Wide Area Network Director for WTTC, in a statement given this week. "Their solution was the best solution that met the needs of all of the member districts of our consortium and has been a wonderful addition to the strategic plan of the West Texas Telecommunications Consortium. The network has been reliable from day one, the service and support has been prompt and efficient, and the people from Conterra I have worked with have been most helpful since the project began. The WTTC and its members are extremely pleased that the decision was made to partner with Conterra Ultra Broadband in this endeavor."

The Region 14 ESC wide area network is the first of three major E-Rate telecommunications projects for Conterra in Texas. Conterra is currently deploying Wide Area Networks for the Region 10 and Region 15 ESCs, which will bring high-quality; high-speed Ethernet based broadband and Internet services to 125 Texas school districts at performance levels comparable to those enjoyed by schools in the state's largest metropolitan areas. "It is extremely gratifying to be able to utilize our many years of technology and telecommunications experience to deliver services to students and teachers in parts of Texas that might otherwise be unable to access the growing number of 'distance learning' opportunities available through the Internet, noted Conterra's President , Dennis Francis. "This is a great example of the federal E-rate funding program achieving its intended result of making sure locations and economics do not stand in the way of equal education opportunities for all American school children," added Mr. Francis.

### **About Conterra Telecom Services**

Conterra Telecom Services, headquartered in Charlotte, NC, is a national provider of facilities-based broadband services for schools, wireless carriers and select enterprises that require bandwidth intensive, carrier-grade data, video and voice transport services primarily in outer suburban and rural markets. Conterra and its subsidiaries currently provide these services to over 1,000 K-12 schools and colleges throughout the United States, affording broadband services to hundreds of thousands of students, teachers and administrators.

Privately owned, Conterra was established by the founders and members of management of Vanguard Cellular Systems, Inc., which became one of the first and largest independent cellular companies in the United States. Started in 1982, Vanguard designed, built and operated its own point-to-point microwave transport systems to support wireless voice and data traffic within its mostly rural cellular networks throughout the country which are now part of AT&T Mobility. For more information about Conterra, visit [www.conterra.com](http://www.conterra.com) or call: **800-634-1374**.