

## IBEC hires heavy-hitters to market BPL to southern US utilities

### Firm finally lands USDA loans totaling \$49 million

IBEC teamed up with McCullough Greer to market its MV BPL services to utilities throughout southeastern US.

McCullough Greer was founded and is run by former Tennessee Valley Authority (TVA) Chairman Glenn McCullough -- from 2001-2005 -- and utility-oriented attorney Michael Greer. The firm will concentrate its efforts on electric cooperatives and other electric utilities in the TVA region including Alabama, Georgia, Mississippi, North Carolina, Tennessee and Virginia.

McCullough Greer is based in Tupelo, MS.

IBEC is the BPL integrator/operator that dominates the co-op market, pioneered with the USDA's RUS office the application process for affordable co-op loans for BPL and invented -- as far as we know -- the brilliant idea of using lightning arrestors as BPL couplers, helping make BPL installation a snap for utility line workers.

"IBEC's focus since its inception has been to provide BPL services to the underserved residents of rural America -- those citizens who are often neglected but who have the same need for broadband services as those living in urban and suburban America," IBEC CEO Scott Lee told the press recently.

McCullough Greer "will help IBEC continue building the broadband networks necessary to serve rural America and close the 'digital divide,' especially here in the southeast US," he added.

McCullough Greer specializes in

building relationships between utilities, especially electric utilities and service providers that offer key revenue- and reliability-enhancing services.

McCullough was appointed to the TVA board in 1999 and was made chairman in 2001 by President George W Bush.

Before that, he served on the board and executive committee of the Electric Power Research Institute (EPRI), the Institute of Nuclear Power Operations, the Nuclear Energy Institute and the Advisory Council to US Department of Energy Secretary Spencer Abraham.

McCullough currently serves as the Chairman of the Board of NuVision Engineering in Pittsburgh, Penn -- an engineering and waste removal contractor and as far as we can tell, not in any way related to BPL firm called NuVisions in New York.

McCullough was Mayor of Tupelo from 1997-1999 and director of the Appalachian Regional Commission from 1993 to 1997.

Greer is a practicing attorney in Tupelo and the founding member of the law firm of Greer, Russell, Dent and Leathers. He's a "seasoned business executive in the utility and financial industries as well as being actively involved in the development of commercial real estate," said IBEC.

He's invested years as an advocate for improvement in the daily lives of Mississippians and his outstanding efforts to protect and encourage the average citizen have led to his desire to make fast, economical internet service available to each individual. "IBEC has the people, proven technology and commitment to provide exceptional value in broadband

service to electric utilities, which is why we're proud to be associated with IBEC," said McCullough.

### USDA loans come through

The USDA reported a list of firms that landed Rural Utility Service loans for broadband including IBEC's \$49.2 million loan application covering co-ops in seven US states (BT, [2006-Jul-25](#)).

The loans are being made through the Rural Development Broadband Loan and Loan Guarantee Program that provides low-interest loans to deploy broadband and telecommunications services to rural communities of 20,000 residents or less, with first priority going to areas without broadband, noted the announcement.

The department made special mention of IBEC's group of loans and a couple others in an announcement about 18 firms that won approval.

Most of those firms applied to deploy individual projects -- not a long list of projects as did the Alabama BPL firm.

IBEC will partner with 13 electric utilities to provide BPL service in seven states to connect 62,143 subscribers, noted the USDA, in Alabama, Indiana, Maryland, Pennsylvania, Texas, Virginia and Wisconsin.

#### Links:

- IBEC [[www.ibec.net](http://www.ibec.net), [www.bpl.coop](http://www.bpl.coop)];

- McCullough Greer [[www.McCulloughGreer.com](http://www.McCulloughGreer.com)];

- The USDA announcement [[http://www.usda.gov/wps/portal/!ut/p/\\_s.70\\_A/7\\_0\\_1OB?contentidonly=true&contentid=2008/09/0238.xml](http://www.usda.gov/wps/portal/!ut/p/_s.70_A/7_0_1OB?contentidonly=true&contentid=2008/09/0238.xml)].

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