

# EWEB redefines fiber-optic plans

■ The public utility will move more slowly in building a system for high-speed Internet and cable services

By Rebecca Newell  
Oregon Daily Emerald

Despite winning voter approval last November to provide fiber-optic Internet service, the Eugene Water and Electric Board won't be building the infrastructure needed for such a system any time in the near future.

EWEB officials decided last week that building the system within the next three years, as the original plan intended, wasn't financially feasible. Instead, EWEB officials are considering a 10-year timeline to provide high-speed Internet and cable services, EWEB spokeswoman Cathy Hamilton said.

"The [original plan] would have been a full build out within three years," Hamilton said. "We're redefining that plan."

EWEB is now refocusing on a network that would 'build out,' or expand, in phases, rather than at all at once.

The public utility board currently has a core system of 70 miles of fiber optics connecting several EWEB substations, Hamilton said. EWEB uses this core to run its electric utility service and for security, but the utility could expand the system to offer telecommunications services.

Nine months ago, voters approved giving EWEB charter authority to provide a publicly owned telecommunications system to the city of Eugene.

Since gaining voter approval, EWEB has looked into providing cable television, but utility officials decided that there wasn't enough revenue to pay for the system, Hamilton said. There is the possibility EWEB would provide television in the future, but further research is needed, she said.

"Right now we're just talking about the infrastructure, not the service," Hamilton said. "Regardless of who provides the service, a fiber-optic infrastructure provides

## EWEB timeline

**May 2000:** Eugene voters approve a charter amendment allowing EWEB to provide telecommunications service.

**May 2000 through January 2001:** EWEB researches the financial feasibility of providing citywide telecommunications service.

**Feb. 6, 2001:** The EWEB board votes to postpone building the telecommunications system. The original plan gave the project a three-year timeline, but EWEB officials now plan to build the system within 10 years.

speed that is unprecedented — unlike anything that is existing now."

Though some have suggested EWEB cut costs by investing in older technology, utility officials said they want to offer cutting-edge technology.

"They've committed to building a next-generation system, similar to Ethernet in the [University residence halls]," said Dale Smith, assistant director of Network Services for the University. "Called 'Metronet,' it will not compete with Qwest or AT&T because it is a new offering of services which you can't get from anyone else right now."

But this technology doesn't exist in a cost-effective form, Smith said.

The potential service that EWEB is considering is similar to those offered by Qwest and AT&T, but uses technology offering much higher speeds of access, Smith said.

"As far as EWEB goes, as long as they have to abide by the same rules, we don't have a problem with them entering the market," said Bill Prows, Qwest's area manager for Eugene.

EWEB has also discussed the possibility of allowing other service providers to access the EWEB fiber optic lines to provide service.

"We would be looking at if the cost would be appropriate, because we are doing it in other areas of the state," Prows said.

**Berg's Ski Bus to Willamette Pass, Mt. Bachelor & Hoodoo!**



**Sign up at Berg's!**  
Call For Details, Reservations & Information.

**Berg's Ski Shop**  
13th & Lawrence • Eugene • 683-1300  
www.bergsski.com

**Special**

**Haircuts \$8.50**

**Artistic Touch Hair, Nails, Tanning**

160 E. 18th St.  
431-1060

Is your voice getting heard?  
www.dailyemerald.com

**Rhythm & Blooms**

Voted Eugene's Favorite Florist  
**Best Flowers Best Prices**

Call Us or Drop By  
**485-0985**  
WE DELIVER

**U of O's Outdoor Flower Market**  
13th & Kincaid

**Storewide Winter Clearance**

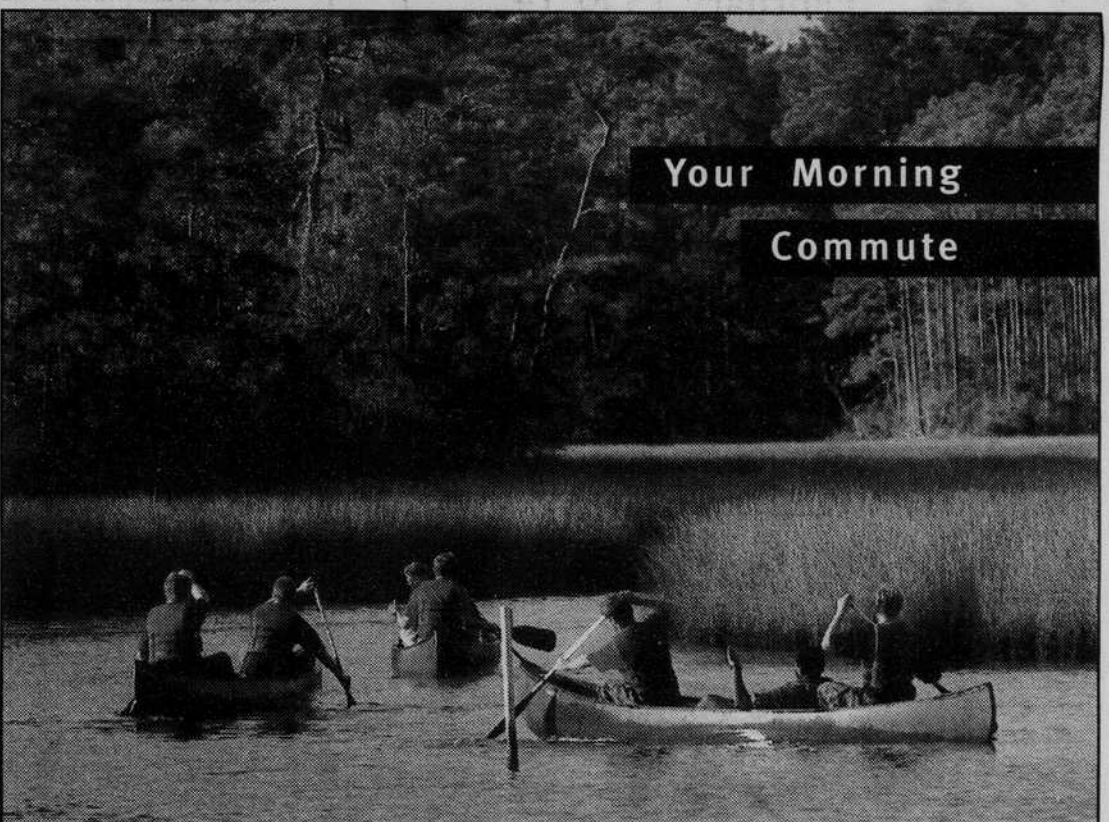
**50% off**  
Selected items

- Outerwear - Footwear
- Camping gear
- Huge selection of Famous Brand Names

**MCKENZIE OUTFITTERS**

Up the escalator • Valley River Center

**Your Morning Commute**



Why start your day stuck in traffic? There's no such thing as rush hour at an EYA wilderness camp. Our youth counselors live and work year-round in some of the most beautiful, natural settings in the eastern United States. Hike the Appalachian Trail. Canoe the Suwanee. Sleep under the stars. Develop personal relationships. And help at-risk kids get back on the right path. Doesn't that sound a lot better than breathing exhaust fumes twice a day?

For more information and to apply on-line, park your mouse at [www.eckerd.org](http://www.eckerd.org).

Or send resume to:  
Selection Specialist/CN  
P.O. Box 7450  
Clearwater, FL 33758-7450

E-mail to: [recruiting@eckerd.org](mailto:recruiting@eckerd.org)

**EYA offers you** — Full-time, live-in positions • Excellent salary/benefits • Free room and board  
• Clothing allowance • Free time-off quarters • Paid training (all majors encouraged to apply)

**ECKERD EYA YOUTH ALTERNATIVES**

EOE

**A romantic evening calls for a perfect bottle of wine.**  
Candlelight, soft music, that sick-to-your-stomach, first-real-date feeling. Ah, yes. Romance. You've planned the perfect night. Gone over every situation. You know what to say, how to act, even how to cook the chicken. And then, as you pour the last glass of wine it hits you! What do I do with the empty bottle? And just when you decide to give up dating forever, your date asks you,

**"Where's the recycling bin?"**  
You think to yourself, this could be love.

Sponsored by U of O Environmental Issues Committee

**Oregon Daily Emerald WORLDWIDE**  
your source for exclusive online polls  
[www.dailyemerald.com](http://www.dailyemerald.com)