

Keynote Address

Assistant Secretary Gregory Rohde

This is a time of great excitement for the wireless industry. Currently experiencing explosive growth, the industry is at the center of attention at both the technical and policy levels. Assistant Secretary Rohde will discuss NTIA's policies and goals as they affect broadband wireless issues.

One of NTIA's greatest concerns is the lack of access to information technology by low-income families, racial minorities, and those living in rural areas. Previous NTIA reports have shown that this "Digital Divide" affects access to computers and the Internet. A new report, based on a joint study by NTIA and the Rural Utility Service, warns that a new Divide is emerging in the deployment of broadband technologies such as DSL and cable modem services. NTIA's goal is to help America – and the rest of the world – move from Digital Divide to Digital Inclusion, in the words of our new Commerce Secretary, Norman Mineta.

The wireless industry holds the key to a widespread expansion of the Internet as the challenges of implementing the third generation of wireless services (3G) are worked out by industry and by government. As the manager of the Federal spectrum, NTIA will be a key player in coordinating the plans to vacate existing users into new bands, so that the 3G principles adopted by the World Radiocommunications Conference (WRC 2000), in which NTIA played a leading role, can be achieved.