



Windstream Installs Fiber for First Broadband Stimulus Project

LITTLE ROCK, Ark., June 1, 2011 (GLOBE NEWSWIRE) -- Windstream began laying fiber optic cable today near Prentiss, Miss., as part of its first broadband stimulus project. The work is being funded in part by a federal grant under the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009.

The stimulus grants were designed to bring broadband to areas with so few residents that it would not be cost-effective to extend high-speed Internet service to them without a public-private partnership.

"This is an exciting day for Windstream and our customers in the Prentiss area," said Terry Mathis, local manager for Windstream. "Windstream had already built out our broadband network to every area that we could serve in a cost-effective way, and now for the first time we will be able to reach customers in some of the most rural parts of our community."

Broadband access to the Internet gives users a powerful tool for education, commerce and entertainment.

Nationally, Windstream was the largest single recipient of broadband stimulus grants awarded on a competitive basis by the U.S. Agriculture Department's Rural Utilities Service.

Windstream won grants totaling \$181.3 million for projects in 13 states, including Mississippi. The grants cover 75 percent of the cost of installing broadband. Windstream will invest the remaining 25 percent, a total of \$60.4 million.

In Prentiss, the grant totals \$416,322, and Windstream's investment is \$138,733. The project involves upgrading Windstream's existing network with a little more than 7 miles of fiber optic cable as well as electronic equipment. It will reach approximately 170 potential customers southeast of Prentiss along Highway 42, giving them access to the Internet at speeds of at least 6 Mbps.

Construction is expected to be completed in July, and the new broadband service should be available to Windstream customers in August.

About Windstream

Windstream Corp. (Nasdaq:WIN), headquartered in Little Rock, Ark., is an S&P 500 communications and technology solutions provider with operations in 29 states and the District of Columbia and about \$4 billion in annual revenues. Windstream provides IP-based voice and data services, MPLS networking, data center and managed hosting services and communication systems to businesses and government agencies. The company also delivers broadband, digital phone and high-definition TV services to residential customers primarily located in rural areas and operates a local and long-haul fiber network spanning approximately 60,000 route miles. For more information about Windstream, visit www.windstream.com.

The Windstream Corporation logo is available at <http://www.globenewswire.com/newsroom/prs/?pkgid=7044>

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