



Atlantic Tele-Network, Inc. Subsidiary Sovernet Communications Receives Federal Stimulus Funds to Bring Broadband Connectivity to Vermont Communities

BEVERLY, Mass., Jul 12, 2010 (BUSINESS WIRE) -- Atlantic Tele-Network, Inc. (NASDAQ:ATNI) reported today that its Vermont based-subsubsidiary, Sovernet Communications, will receive a \$33.4 million grant from the National Telecommunications and Information Administration's ("NTIA") Broadband Technology Opportunities Program in partnership with the Vermont Telecommunications Authority ("VTA").

The grant will allow the company to develop, own, maintain, and operate a 773 mile fiber-optic middle mile network in southern, central, and northeastern Vermont. The project, known as Vermont FiberConnect, will connect over 340 community institutions including State owned buildings and all public K-12 schools and libraries that have elected to participate in the project. It will also be capable of connecting healthcare institutions, state and community colleges, and cellular towers.

Sovernet Communications, a leading communications provider in Vermont, is the sole sub-recipient of the grant, through its Sovernet Fiber Corporation subsidiary, and will coordinate with the NTIA through the VTA. Governor Jim Douglas and the Vermont legislature established the VTA to explore ways to expand broadband and mobile wireless services across the state.

"Our company is committed to providing connectivity in parts of the country that are often overlooked or underserved," said ATN CEO, Michael Prior, "Bringing high speed internet to rural areas such as Vermont not only helps to strengthen communities, but contributes to the overall economic strength and competitiveness of our country."

"By providing reliable high speed Internet throughout Vermont, the VFL project will lead to greater job opportunity, stronger schools, better healthcare and increased public safety," Prior continued. "We're proud to help achieve these goals, and believe this grant recognizes the excellence and unique skills of our Sovernet team. With years of experience serving Vermont, they are simply unmatched in their dedication to delivering high quality communications services."

With this grant, Sovernet will build a fiber-optic Middle Mile network, providing data transport services up to 1 Gbps to community anchor institutions, government agencies, and last mile providers across southern, central, and northeastern Vermont. And it will do so at lower prices and with greater bandwidth than is commonly available in these communities. The expansion of broadband infrastructure from Southern Vermont to the "Northeast Kingdom" will serve 9 out of 14 of Vermont's counties and over 85 communities.

Because they are located in one of the most rural states in the nation, many of Vermont's businesses and institutions have struggled without reliable, high-speed connectivity. This project will eliminate that "digital divide" and ensure that Vermont's technological capabilities are on par with the rest of the country.

Additionally, the State of Vermont has pledged another \$2 million grant toward the project through the VTA and The Gates Foundation also made a grant award of \$400,000. Sovernet will invest over \$11 million in the project.

About Atlantic Tele-Network

Atlantic Tele-Network, Inc. (NASDAQ:ATNI), headquartered in Beverly, Massachusetts, is a telecommunications company operating advanced wireless, wireline and both terrestrial and submarine fiber optic networks in North America and the Caribbean. Its principal subsidiaries include: Allied Wireless Communications Corporation, which, operating as Alltel, provides retail wireless voice and data services for U.S. customers; Commnet Wireless, LLC, which provides voice and data wireless roaming services for U.S. and international carriers in rural areas throughout the United States; Guyana Telephone and Telegraph Company, Limited, which is the national telephone service provider for all local, long-distance and international services, as well as a wireless service provider in Guyana; Bermuda Digital Communications Ltd., which is the leading provider of wireless voice and data services in Bermuda operating as Cellular One, and an early-stage wireless provider in Turks & Caicos through its IslandCom subsidiary; Sovernet, Inc., which provides wireline voice and data services to businesses and homes in New England and high capacity communications network transport services in New York State through its ION subsidiary; and Choice Communications, LLC, which provides wireless broadband services in the U.S. Virgin Islands.

About Sovernet

Founded in 1995, Sovernet Communications is Vermont's first and largest locally operated statewide competitive provider of residential and business telephone and Internet services. Sovernet is headquartered in Bellows Falls, with facilities in Burlington and Winooski. Sovernet Communications was the first Vermont carrier to offer residential customers an alternative to the incumbent carrier, and the first to allow customers to create their own phone/Internet bundle discounts.

About NTIA's Broadband Technology Opportunities Program

The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 appropriated \$7.2 billion and directed the NTIA and the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Rural Utilities Service (RUS) to expand broadband access to unserved and underserved communities across the U.S., increase jobs, spur investments in technology and infrastructure and provide long-term economic benefits. The result is the NTIA Broadband Technology Opportunities Program (BTOP) and the RUS Broadband Initiatives Program (BIP). BTOP will provide grants to fund broadband infrastructure, public computer centers and sustainable broadband adoption projects. BIP will make loans and grants for broadband infrastructure projects in rural areas. More information on these programs is available at www.broadbandusa.gov.

SOURCE: Atlantic Tele-Network, Inc.

Atlantic Tele-Network, Inc.

Michael T. Prior, 978-619-1300

Chief Executive Officer

or

Justin D. Benincasa, 978-619-1300

Chief Financial Officer

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