



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**Cellular One Awarded Over \$13 Million
For Rural Broadband Development**

DANVILLE – August 20, 2010. Cellular Properties, Inc., doing business as Cellular One of East Central Illinois, has been notified of approval of \$12,264,520 in federal funding and \$1,000,000 in state funding to assist with the build out of broadband services in its rural areas.

The federal award was made by the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Rural Utilities Service (RUS) as a \$6,132,260 grant and \$6,132,260 loan in broadband stimulus funding. The Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity, through the “Illinois Jobs Now!” public works program, also pledged a \$1,000,000 match to the project. Cellular Properties will provide at least \$11,264,520 of private funding.

“This funding award will allow us to provide our area with one of the best, if not the best, 3G wireless broadband networks in the country,” said Cassy Carter, CEO/GM of Cellular Properties. “We will be able to provide wireless broadband services to many in our area who live in more remote areas and have had limited or no internet service. Without this assistance, we could not cost justify the expense of building out to those areas.”

“Building information infrastructure brings jobs and high-speed Internet access to underserved areas,” said Illinois Governor Pat Quinn. “This is critical for economic development, and for our future - so we are grateful for this federal support.”

“With 776 applications submitted to RUS for second round broadband stimulus funding, we are excited to receive this award,” Carter stated. “Very few cellular companies have been approved for funding of wireless broadband networks, so we feel this is a vote of confidence in our company and the way we have been operating our business over the last 20 years.”

Cellular Properties, privately-owned and locally-operated, submitted an application for funding to deploy 3G fixed and mobile wireless broadband services in the underserved areas of Clay, Clark, Coles, Crawford, Cumberland, Douglas, Edgar, Jasper, Lawrence, Richland and Vermilion counties in East Central Illinois.

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Serving the area since 1991, the company will leverage its existing wireless spectrum, assets and experience building and maintaining wireless networks to complete the project.

According to the award documentation, approximately 66,513 people stand to benefit from the broadband project, as do roughly 7,123 businesses and 704 community institutions. Estimates are that 267 jobs will be created or maintained in the 11-county area, as well as the foundation set for economic growth and job creation for decades.

While non-rural communities and areas which have received previous funding commitments from other RUS programs had to be left out of the application, Cellular Properties intends to use its own capital to ensure these services are available in its entire 11-county service area, Carter said.

Currently, the company has 54 cellular sites, with seven more expected to be operational in the next two months and nine more already planned in the next two years. With the broadband stimulus funding, the tower count will reach 100 at the end of the three-year build out.

Broadband stimulus funding was made available by the American Reinvestment and Recovery Act of 2009 to increase jobs, spur investments in technology and infrastructure, and provide long-term economic benefits. The USDA Rural Utilities Service Broadband Initiatives Program is distributing \$2.5 billion. An additional \$4.7 million was designated for distribution by the National Telecommunications and Information Administration.

The award process has just started, Carter said. Since this is a relatively new program, the company will learn more details on the process and timetables.

Cellular Properties, Inc. is the only wireless carrier based in and dedicated exclusively to serving East Central Illinois. It is one of few independent rural cellular companies still operating under its initial ownership.

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