



IBOP Upcoming Activities

February

ICE Conference - 2/23 & 2/24

IBOP-EC Meetings with Direct Connect Sites



In November, ICN staff met with representatives of sites targeted to be directly connected with fiber as part of the grant. These were initial face-to-face meetings providing the opportunity for ICN and constituent staff to discuss the specific details of fiber connectivity, site requirements, and level of interest.

IBOP EC Engineering Firm Selected



The Illinois Department of Central Management Services (CMS) has established a contract with Globetrotters Engineering Corporation for engineering services related to the IBOP EC project. Globetrotters will be working with CMS and Illinois State University (ISU), a sub-recipient, to complete an environmental assessment, perform route planning and design activity, and construction project management.

At this time, the environmental assessment is well underway with a due date of January 31, 2011 for submission to the Department of Commerce (DOC), National Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA). The environmental assessment and a "Finding of No Significant Impact" (FONSI) from NTIA are required prior to moving forward with the physical construction aspects of the project.

Cost Recovery

ICN staff is working on revisions to the ICN cost recovery policy which we anticipate rolling out in parallel with completing the fiber network and implementing new services and rates. The goal for the cost recovery revisions is to develop a "credit" formula tied more directly to the annual state funding appropriation. The "credit" would be adjusted annually as the funding level fluctuates. The model currently under consideration would simplify the cost recovery methodology, eliminate problematic areas in the current model, and be more equitable state-wide. Proposals are being developed under the direction of the ICN Advanced Engineering Taskforce and will be presented to the ICN Policy Committee for approval later this fiscal year. Any thoughts or comments on the methodology should be shared with the AET member representing your constituency group or an ICN staff member.



Community Networks

ICN staff are receiving inquiries from more and more communities looking to build local fiber and/or wireless networks to connect their community with a high speed broadband network. If your community has, is planning to, or would like to develop a community network, ICN would like to know. ICN staff will be compiling best practices on what communities can do to increase connectivity options locally. As the IBOP EC network develops, ICN will provide information on community network models and connection options.

The broadband stimulus projects are making incredible strides towards extending affordable, high-speed broadband into rural communities.

The stimulus projects are only the beginning and much work is still needed to extend high-speed connectivity to every school, library, hospital, business and household throughout Illinois.