

For Immediate Release

Local Access Contract Will Connect 20,000 Households and Businesses to Eastern Ontario's Broadband Network

Northumberland County, Ontario, December 19, 2011 – The Eastern Ontario Wardens' Caucus (EOWC) has awarded its third Local Access Contract that will allow more than 20,000 homes and businesses to connect wirelessly to high-speed Internet across an area that includes most of Northumberland County. The service will be available by fall 2012.

As part of the contract, Xplornet Communications Inc. will build a wireless network which will give a substantial portion of the region access to speeds of up to 10 Mbps. The coverage area spans over 1,300 square kilometres, encompassing communities such as Castleton, Cobourg, Colborne, Cold Springs, Garden Hill, Grafton, Roseneath and Welcome.

"We continue to make steady progress on our goal of expanding high-speed broadband Internet access across Eastern Ontario," said J. Murray Jones, Chair of the EOWC. "Connecting to the Internet with higher speeds will open new doors for our communities in terms of quality of life and economic growth."

This is the third of several contracts that will be awarded to deliver high-speed Internet through wired and fixed wireless services as part of the Eastern Ontario regional broadband project. Work to build a massive, 5,500-kilometre fibre optic network is already underway and contracts have also been signed to deliver high-speed via satellite at improved pricing. The \$170 million project is funded by federal, provincial and municipal governments and private sector investment.

"It is gratifying to see this regional broadband network grow. This is another important step towards providing the improved access that will help our residents and businesses to prosper," added Dave Burton, Chair of Eastern Ontario Regional Network Inc. (EORN).

Xplornet will provide wireless access from 20 towers, including nine to be newly built. Six of these new structures will be in the 401 corridor.

"We welcome this new infrastructure, which will improve Internet access and offer greater choice to our local residents and businesses," said Northumberland County Warden Gil Brocanier. "This is essential to the success of our community and an important investment in our future."

"Xplornet is pleased to be able to expand access to fast, affordable broadband Internet across Eastern Ontario through this investment in wireless infrastructure," said John Maduri, CEO of Xplornet Communications Inc. "The network expansion will feature state-of-the-art technology to ensure customers get the best quality service possible with minimal interference."

EORN is a not-for-profit organization established by the EOWC to manage all contracts awarded as part of the project.

Once up and running in fall 2012, a variety of service packages will be offered, ranging from 1.5 Mbps to up to 10 Mbps. These speeds will enable users to stream video and use other innovative applications that will support various sectors, including business, health and education.

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Backgrounder: Eastern Ontario Regional Network

The Eastern Ontario Wardens Caucus is spearheading a \$170 million broadband project that will provide improved access to high-speed Internet across the region by 2014. Given that high-speed is essential for a host of services and information available through the Internet, expanding this access is critical to improving the quality of life and economic growth of the community.

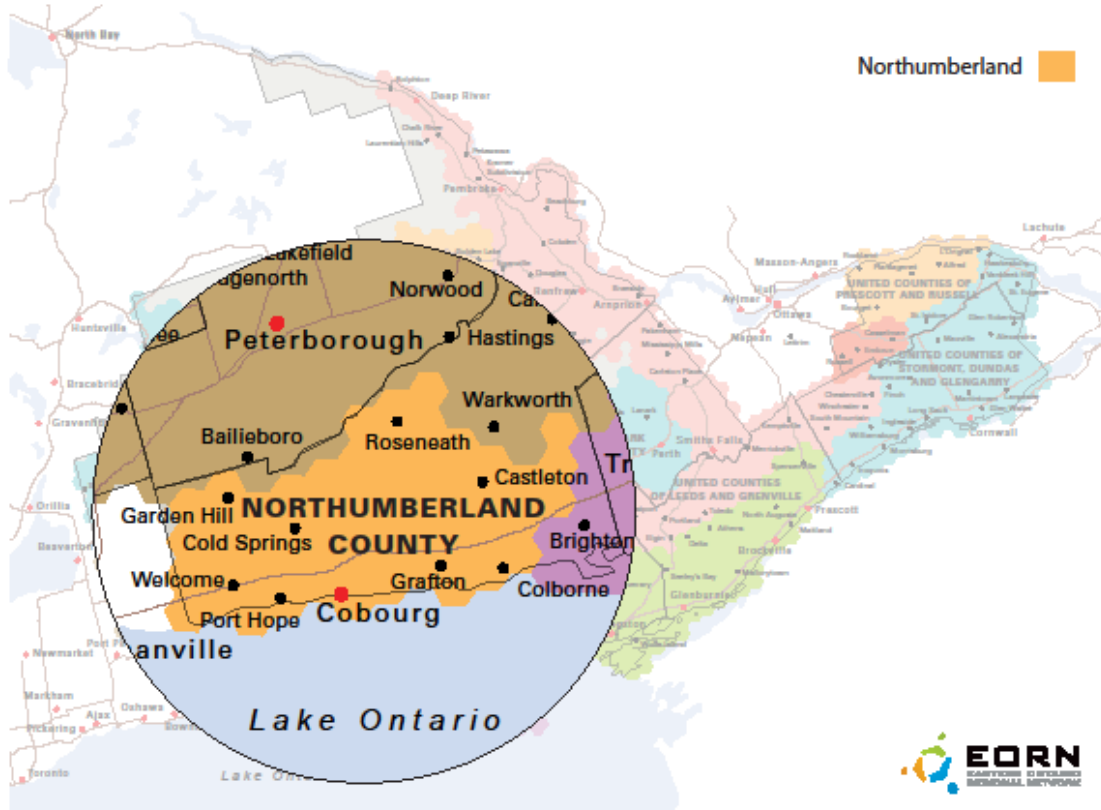
The project is supported through substantial investments from federal, provincial and local governments, along with private sector contributions. To manage this important initiative, the EOWC created the Eastern Ontario Regional Network (EORN).

- The project is made up of three main components:
 - **Backbone:** A scalable network of 5,500 kilometres of new and existing fibre connected by new generation high-speed switches in 160 Points of Presence throughout Eastern Ontario. Construction began last year on this wired portion of the network.
 - **Access:** Links the end-user, such as businesses and residents, to the network through either wired or fixed wireless technology. EORN will promote high-speed bandwidth access that bridges the urban/rural price gap. Internet service providers (ISPs) can bid and receive funding to assist in improving and adding new infrastructure.
 - **Satellite:** Ensures no one is left behind by providing satellite access for those that the wireless and wired network cannot reach. Improved and more affordable satellite services are now available through Xplornet Communications Inc. by contacting any of the company's dealers across the EORN region.
- The project aims to improve access to the Internet with higher speeds and bandwidth to at least 95 per cent of homes and businesses in Eastern Ontario, a majority of which will see speeds up to 10 Mbps.
- The entire project encompasses a region of more than one million people spread out over 50,000 square kilometres.
- A mix of wired, wireless and satellite technologies will be required to deliver high-speed access across the varied terrain and remote communities of the region.

Quick Facts – Northumberland

- The Northumberland zone covers 1,300 square kilometres and about 20,000 homes, encompassing most of Northumberland County.
- The contract with Xplornet Communications Inc. (XCI) to cover the Northumberland zone is the third local access contract. XCI will create a wireless network from 20 towers, nine of which will be newly built. Six of these new towers will be in the 401 corridor.

- The contract will use four EORN Points of Presence in Welcome, Cold Springs, Roseneath and Colborne, also expanding access in the communities of Castleton, Cobourg, Garden Hill and Grafton.
- The contract features state-of-the-art technology to extend access of up to 10 Mbps to rural and small urban areas.



Map: The Northumberland Zone, shaded above in orange, encompasses most of Northumberland County.