



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE - Sept. 23, 2011**

## **Regional fiber optic project progresses in region**

The Illinois Fiber Resources Group (iFiber) has announced construction crews from PirTano Construction Company are working at a good pace in Dixon, Rock Falls and surrounding outlying areas. Construction in the zone is expected to continue through the end of the year.

PirTano's immediate work plan includes finishing up the run between Dixon and Rock Falls. Crews also are working in the town of Dixon. After that, construction will continue between Rock Falls and Tampico and move to Warren to Stockton.

Since July, PirTano crews have installed 35 miles of iFiber conduit, beginning along Route 52, between Sublette and Amboy, working north. They have finished work in Amboy, and also from Mendota to Dixon.

Fiber optic construction will occur within the dedicated roadway right-of-way. During the construction of the fiber optic network, residents will see cable boring equipment in their neighborhood, as well as hand-hole construction crews. Crews also may have staked or painted to identify infrastructure in the area. Disturbed areas will be restored as part of the project.

In September 2010, Northern Illinois University as the fiscal agent, received a \$68.5 million NTIA Broadband Technology Opportunity Program grant to deploy an almost 900-mile network across the northwest Illinois region. The project will bring up to 10 Gbps speeds, significantly improving the ability to leverage broadband technology for improvements in rural education, economic opportunities and public safety.

iFiber was established as a not-for-profit entity in January 2011, to address current and future high-speed Internet needs of communities across northwest Illinois. Counties included are Boone, Carroll, JoDaviess, LaSalle, Lee, Ogle, Stephenson, Whiteside, and Winnebago.

iFiber is a public-private partnership that will provide access to the new fiber optic network to community anchor institutions such as schools, government, libraries, community colleges and health care providers. Through its service provider partners, iFiber also will promote similar high speed network transport services to businesses and residential subscribers in the private sector.

The grant is administered by NIU and is an Illinois Broadband Opportunity Partner (IBOP). Design engineering and permitting are being coordinated by Baxter & Woodman.

Construction is being completed by PirTano Construction Company (Addison, IL) in Carroll, JoDaviess, Lee and Whiteside counties; and Aldridge Electric (Libertyville, IL), which partnered with Kelso-Burnett (Rockford, IL), in Boone, LaSalle, Ogle, Stephenson and Winnebago counties.

The iFiber Board includes representatives from NIU, LaSalle County, North Central Illinois Council of Governments, the City of Rockford, Boone County, and Blackhawk Hills RC&D.

For more information about the iFiber project, visit [www.ifiber.org](http://www.ifiber.org). In addition, questions about the iFiber project may be directed to [info@ifiber.org](mailto:info@ifiber.org).

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