



February 8, 2023 - FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Photo Provided

Surf Veteran Steve Carender Promoted to Director of Special Funding

The Former VP of Commercial Sales Selected to Lead Grant Application and Funding Efforts for Surf

ELKHART, Ind. (February 8, 2023) – Surf Internet, a leading fiber-optic internet company providing essential connectivity across the Great Lakes region, has promoted Steve Carender to Director of Special Funding. He will provide thought leadership and program management for Surf's ongoing efforts to close the digital divide by leveraging available grant funding. Directly preceding his newly announced position, Steve served as Vice President of Commercial Sales.

Surf has found numerous successes leveraging local, state, and federal funding for bridging the digital divide for broadband deployment. With the historic levels of funding available, Carender will lead a dedicated team to drive special funding projects including multiple BEAD (Broadband Equity, Access, and Deployment) applications in Indiana, Michigan, and Illinois.

Surf CEO Gene Crusie expressed his confidence in Carender taking up the new position, saying, "After working closely with Steve in the trenches for over 20 years, trying to close the digital divide first with fixed wireless and now with fiber, I am confident that there isn't a better person in the Midwest to help us lead our grant efforts going forward."

Carender has contributed to Surf's growth since May of 2002. During his tenure at Surf, Steve has established networks in 36 states and consulted on network projects in Chad, Dubai, Ireland, Bahamas, Afghanistan, and the U.S. Virgin Islands. Steve's projects have spanned a complete spectrum of connectivity — from fault tolerant industrial automation to intelligent traffic monitoring to public safety microwave backhaul rings.

"Rural America is at a real inflection point given the comprehensive commitments to broadband at the state and federal levels," Carender remarked. "Now is the time for rural stakeholders to take a leadership role in delivering broadband to their communities, and Surf is uniquely positioned for successful public-private partnerships."

Prior to Surf, Steve was directly involved in internet connectivity initiatives since 1995, when he and other community volunteers founded Huntington County Community Network, a grant-funded, not-for-profit organization that brought the first local internet to his hometown of Huntington, IN. Steve points out that, at that time, "local internet" meant a local dial-up number that didn't incur long distance charges. His experiences over the years have shown him that the "digital divide" has existed, in various forms, for rural Americans since the beginning of the internet.

- more -



About Surf Internet

Surf Internet is an innovative fiber-optic internet company that serves as the essential gateway to connectivity across the Great Lakes Region of Illinois, Indiana, and Michigan. The company is building a bridge to the wide open future by delivering high-speed, reliable internet to homes and businesses in underserved, rural communities. Surf's 200-plus-person team is local, giving them an edge when it comes to customer care and advocacy for the region. Headquartered in Elkhart, Ind., Surf also has offices in La Porte, Ind., Byron Center and Fowlerville, Mich., and Coal City and Rock Falls, Ill. Learn more at <https://surfinternet.com>.

###



Photo Caption: Steve Carender is promoted at Surf Internet to Director of Special Funding.