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**Surf Internet Secures \$2.6 Million to Expand High-Speed Broadband Access in Indiana**

*Largest Award in the History of the Indiana Connectivity Program*

ELKHART, Ind. (July 30, 2024) - Surf Internet® proudly announces it has secured \$2.6 million in funding from the Indiana Connectivity Program (ICP), marking the largest award in the program's history. This significant investment will enable Surf to extend high-speed broadband to 548 underserved addresses across 13 counties in Indiana, including Allen, DeKalb, Elkhart, Grant, Lake, La Porte, Marshall, Newton, Noble, Porter, St. Joseph, Starke, and Whitley.

“This funding is a testament to our commitment to communities and our mission to deliver transformational internet services to rural areas,” said Gene Crusie, CEO of Surf Internet. “I’m incredibly proud of our dedicated team and the strong partnerships they have formed at a local level. We aren't done yet – with over \$55 million in grant awards to date, we remain focused on combining our private investments with additional state and federal grants to bring even more opportunities and high-speed connectivity to the Great Lakes region.”

Internet service providers participating in the ICP's \$3.3 million 10th round initiative are collectively matching \$13.7 million, with Surf contributing \$12.9 million to the effort. That brings the total investment in Indiana's broadband infrastructure to \$17 million.

Elaborating on the broader impact of Surf's investment, Steve Carender, Director of Special Funding, said, “Beyond the 548 grant-funded addresses, our initiative includes plans to connect over 7,500 adjacent homes and agribusinesses. This comprehensive approach not only maximizes the impact of the grant but also strengthens the digital infrastructure of entire communities.”

The ICP, administered by the Indiana Office of Community and Rural Affairs (OCRA), is dedicated to helping Hoosier residents and business owners, particularly in rural areas, obtain reliable broadband access by supporting internet providers with the costs of expanding their services to underserved locations. Since April 28, 2022, the ICP has allocated over \$9.5 million to assist internet service providers in connecting 2,369 remote addresses across Indiana.

A key factor in Surf's success in securing this funding was its proactive community outreach and education. Understanding that the ICP requires residents to apply individually, Surf organized informational events in DeKalb, La Porte, Starke, and Whitley counties, attracting 300 attendees. Surf team members were on hand to meet residents, inform them about the opportunities available through the ICP, and guide them through the application process using on-site computers or providing handouts for those who preferred to apply later. They also leveraged

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social media, digital ads, newspaper ads, radio, direct mail, and their website to raise awareness. These combined efforts resulted in over 600 residents applying for the program, many of whom might not have otherwise known about it.

“We recognized early on that community engagement and education were crucial to the success of the ICP,” said Amber Rodriguez, Senior Director, Growth Marketing at Surf Internet. “By collaborating with local partners and organizing informative events, we were able to ensure that residents knew the importance of participating and how to apply. Our team’s dedication to this cause has paid off, and we are thrilled to bring Surf’s high-speed fiber-optic internet to more communities.”

According to ICP guidelines, Surf has nine months from the contract date to deliver service to the 548 grant-funded addresses. Residents at these homes will receive a letter with FAQs and next steps, including a state-required “Consent for Access to Property” form. As projects progress, construction updates will be available at <https://construction.surfinternet.com/>.

For more information about the Indiana Connectivity Program and to see a list of providers granted funding, visit [in.gov/ocra/broadband/icp](http://in.gov/ocra/broadband/icp). Hoosiers and business owners lacking internet connectivity can submit their addresses and information through the Next Level Connections portal at [in.gov/ocra/broadband](http://in.gov/ocra/broadband).

### 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 Michigan, Indiana, and Illinois. 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 250-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, Naperville, and Rock Falls, Ill. Learn more at <https://surfinternet.com>.

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**PHOTO CAPTION:** Starke County residents gathered at the Henry F. Schricker Public Library in Knox, Ind., on January 18 for a Surf Internet information session to learn more about the Indiana Connectivity Program and application process.

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