

## **MEDIA RELEASE**

**December 14, 2005 – For Immediate Release**

### **Northeastern Ontario Highway Cellular Expansion Project Complete**

Timmins, Ontario – On November 3, 2005, the last of eighteen cellular towers was activated marking the completion of the \$8.5 million highway cellular expansion project. The Northern Ontario Heritage Fund, FedNor and NorthernTel Mobility funded the project managed by NEOnet.

“NorthernTel Mobility is proud to have been the private sector partner on this initiative to improve coverage along 540 kilometers of King’s Highways in our area, from Constance Lake to the Quebec Border, and from Driftwood down to the Watershed,” remarked NorthernTel’s Dave McGirr. This public-private collaboration has made it possible to provide approximately 90% cellular coverage on our northern highways.

“The social and economic benefits of continuous cellular coverage range from increased security for travelers to enhanced tourism and economic growth potential,” said NEOnet Chair Christy Marinig.

The cellular tower on Highway 655 South – the last tower to be activated – has already garnered appreciation from residents, business travelers and tourists. Denis Bérubé – Executive Director North Claybelt CFDC – is very pleased with the improved cellular coverage. “The expanded coverage allows me to remain in contact with the office, clients and community partners while traveling throughout the region,” Bérubé said.

NEOnet is presently working with its public sector partners on a project which could see further cellular expansion in Northern Ontario.

NEOnet is the region’s non-for-profit technology development organization. It facilitates private and public sector partnerships in order to enhance telecommunications services and infrastructure in Northeastern Ontario. NEOnet’s vision is to develop and improve the information and communication technology (ICT) sector in the Cochrane and Timiskaming Districts.

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