



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

## **Barrett Xplore Inc. to provide high-speed Internet to Northumberland County**

**Woodstock, NB, February 11, 2009** -- Northumberland County has awarded a broadband project contract to Barrett Xplore Inc. (BXI), through its XplorNet brand, to provide high-speed Internet coverage to rural areas where it was previously unavailable.

Beginning in the spring of 2009, area residents and businesses will begin to see significant expansion of high-speed Internet services in the region. Expected to be completed in early 2010, the project will develop critical infrastructure for enhanced access to the Internet.

"Barrett Xplore Inc. is proud to be a part of this significant project for the residents of Northumberland County," said BXI Ontario Vice President Bob Davie. "We are committed to offering fast, reliable and affordable high-speed Internet solutions to meet the various needs of local customers."

Of the broadband project's estimated \$3 million cost, the financial impact for the County is anticipated to be less than \$200,000 to cover related customer outreach and project management costs. Funding of \$976,833 was obtained through the Government of Ontario's \$30 million Rural Connections Broadband Program, which was established to improve rural access to online government services and educational and economic development opportunities not viable through slower dial-up connections. In November 2008, Northumberland-Quinte West MPP Lou Rinaldi announced that Northumberland County received the full amount it requested in an application on behalf of its municipalities months earlier. The remainder of the budget is being contributed by the project's private sector partner, Barrett Xplore Inc..

"We look forward to working with both our provincial and private sector partners to ensure that high-speed Internet is a reality for all," said newly elected Northumberland County Warden Linda Thompson. "This is an important day for the County; efficient, reasonably priced Internet is a key service to our residents and an essential element of our economic growth."

Northumberland County has some unique challenges for the delivery of high-speed Internet service. The County's rolling terrain and significant tree cover in combination with relatively low population density have until now discouraged capital investment by a major Internet service provider. Many residents and businesses either have no Internet access, or are limited to very slow dial-up connections.

Barrett Xplore Inc. was awarded the contract based on the recommendation of the County's Broadband Working Committee following a competitive bidding process.

**About Barrett Xplore Inc.**

Headquartered in Woodstock, New Brunswick, Barrett Xplore Inc. operates Xplornet Internet Services, Canada's largest rural broadband provider, with customers and dealers in every province and territory. Barrett Xplore Inc. aims to bridge the urban/rural digital divide by ensuring that every Canadian, regardless of where they live, has access to broadband, thereby enabling them to compete effectively in the global economy and gain access essential government and educational services.  
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