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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

## *Wisper ISP to Expand Broadband Internet with Microsoft Airband for Rural Communities in Arkansas, Illinois, Indiana, Kansas, Missouri, and Oklahoma*

**Mascoutah, IL. - March 2020** - [Wisper ISP, Inc.](http://www.wisperisp.com) has signed an agreement with [Microsoft Corp.](http://www.microsoft.com) aimed at bridging the gap between broadband internet and rural communities in Arkansas, Illinois, Indiana, Kansas, Missouri, and Oklahoma. The agreement is part of the [Microsoft Airband Initiative](http://www.microsoft.com/airband), which is focused on extending broadband access to rural America.

Wisper ISP and Microsoft Corp. expect to serve two million residents across the six states over a span of six years. 980,000 of whom are considered underserved by the Federal Communications Commission (FCC).

Wisper's expected coverage per state is as follows:

1. Arkansas: Total Coverage Population = 36,512 (17,337 considered underserved)
2. Illinois: Total Coverage Population = 621,666 (283,415 considered underserved)
3. Indiana: Total Coverage Population = 1,437 (1,437 considered underserved)
4. Kansas: Total Coverage Population = 131,144 (34,423 considered underserved)
5. Missouri: Total Coverage Population = 1,211,903 (626,916 considered underserved)
6. Oklahoma: Total Coverage Population = 91,034 (17,753 considered underserved)

Bridging the digital divide continues to be a struggle across the United States. According to the FCC, 21 million Americans lack broadband access.

"Everyone deserves the same opportunity to succeed. Unfortunately, the broadband gap is holding back rural families, children, farmers, businesses, and whole communities, preventing them from fully taking advantage of the social and economic benefits that come with access to the internet," said Shelley McKinley, Microsoft Vice President of Technology and Corporate Responsibility. "We're glad to work with Wisper to connect rural communities across the American heartland and help them thrive in the 21<sup>st</sup> century and beyond."



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Wisper was founded by Nathan Stooke in 2003 when a neighboring business could not receive a high-speed internet connection, even though Stooke was able to at his home. After 6 months of dedicated research, Stooke was able to provide that connection. He was inspired and realized he could help others with the same issue; thus, Wisper was born.

“Wisper is excited to work with Microsoft and continue our efforts,” said Wisper CEO, Nathan Stooke. “We understand bridging the gap between broadband internet and rural communities cannot be done efficiently on our own and will require strategic partnerships. The Microsoft Airband Initiative’s vision is closely aligned with ours and we look forward to working with them to make our similar visions a reality.”

Wisper ISP, Inc. is an Internet Service Provider with 16,000 current subscribers across Illinois, Indiana, Kansas, Missouri and Oklahoma. Their headquarters are based in Mascoutah, IL with remote offices in Kansas City, Joplin, and Washington, MO.

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