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Press Release

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July 10, 2007

Annawan, IL –The rail gang from Colo Railroad Builders, headquartered in Geneseo, is now on site constructing what likely is the largest rail track project ever in Henry County. Gene Griffith, President & CEO of Patriot said, “Over 8 miles of new track will be built between now and November to service Patriot Renewable Fuels, LLC. Our facility is strategically positioned to reach East Coast ethanol terminals such as Albany, NY and Sewaren, NJ. Cities like New York and Boston and the Washington DC metropolitan area are key destination points for us and our partner, the Iowa Interstate Railroad (IAIS). Rail service is crucial in reaching these markets.”

Chad Lambi, P.E. Public Works/Real Estate for IAIS said "We're very pleased with the progress of the facility, and the professionalism with which Patriot Renewable Fuels has developed this project. We're also pleased that Patriot has hired Colo Railroad Builders to construct the industry trackage for the site. Colo Railroad Builders is one of our preferred contractors, and has a very good reputation throughout the rail industry." The Iowa Interstate Railroad crew delivered the new 1600-foot rail ribbon to the site, adjacent to US Highway 6, in March (see 3 attached photos below). They began near the east end of the property and tied down one ribbon on each side of the existing tracks. Then as the locomotives began in reverse towards Atkinson, the ribbon rolled off the top shelf and was laid down until all 10 sections of the rail stretched to the west end of the property. Consequently Patriot Renewable Fuels will have a 10,300-foot first class rail siding along the roadbed of Iowa Interstate Railroad. The rail siding will run to a point just east of the Annawan Coop fertilizer facility. In addition to the siding, there will be over 6 miles of storage track installed this summer and require over 23,000 steel ties. Patriot will have the ability to store up to 500 rail cars allowing them to assemble 95-car “unit trains” of ethanol and Distillers Dried Grain (DDGS).

Terry Benton, General Manager of Colo Railroad Builders said, “Initially we started with a crew of 8 men in mid-June and built the first switches. We’ve now increased our manpower to 13, expecting to complete the entire project by mid-November.”

Colo Railroad Builders, while based in Geneseo, has built railroad track all across the United States for over 30 years. Colo Railroad Builders is a production rail and tie maintenance-of-way company with the reputation of excelling at large projects that require experienced crews and specialized equipment. Benton, who has worked for the company for 7 years says, “Colo Railroad Builders gets the job done quickly, safely and within budget. We have built a hard-earned reputation for our honesty, flexibility, dependability and commitment. Colo is an active supporter of programs and organizations that make our community and industry a better place to live and work. Giving back is an integral part of our corporate culture, including supporting local health and social services, arts, youth programs, education and sports. Colo Railroad Builders is a proud member of the NRC, AREMA and the ASLRRA. Colo has won awards for its safety policies and practices for the past five consecutive years from the National Railroad Contractors Association.”

Below: Colo Railroad Builders crew constructing new siding track near Annawan.



Below: First switch built at west end of siding near Annawan Co-op.



Below photos: IAIS train begins to unload the first sections of rail ribbon.





Above: IAIS crews deliver and unload the rail ribbon in Annawan.

Once operational Patriot Renewable Fuels, LLC expects to be one of the largest locally owned and operated dry grind ethanol plants in Illinois. Midwestern and local citizens, farmers and businesses, primarily from Annawan, Kewanee, Geneseo and the surrounding communities in Henry, Bureau and Rock Island counties invested in the ethanol plant. Ethanol is a renewable fuel that can improve air quality and the environment, adds value to the local farming community and contributes to the reduction of our nation's dependence on foreign oil.