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Skolkovo Told to Support Moscow River Cable Project

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Expansion of Moscow's telecommunications network could move underwater as President Dmitry Medvedev's modernization commission has recommended that the Skolkovo Foundation consider financing a technology that would place fiber optic cable on the bed of the Moscow River.

The commission told Skolkovo to look at a new technology being promoted by a company from the Moscow suburb of Lyubertsy. The RDV company presented their idea to the commission earlier this week, Internet portal Marker reported Thursday.

The new project is called GidroSvyaz, has a budget of 120 million rubles ($4.3 million) and uses a specially equipped ship called the Vladimir to carry out the work.

Its current investors are the firm's owner Denis Radzyukevich and a number of private individuals, Marker reported.

According to Radzyukevich, RDV's cost of laying the cable is no more than 10,000 rubles ($350) per kilometer — up to 10 times less than the cost of laying the same cable in the ground, which experts say is becoming an increasingly more expensive way to lay cable because of the multiple permits necessary and issues with physical access.

Radzyukevich hopes that the technology will be good for places with rivers, and added that Rostelecom and Transtelecom have monopolized the cable market.

"There are more questions to this technology than answers," said Rostelecom spokesman Oleg Rumyantsev. "Until its effectiveness and economic use are understood, no telecommunications company will want to use it."

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