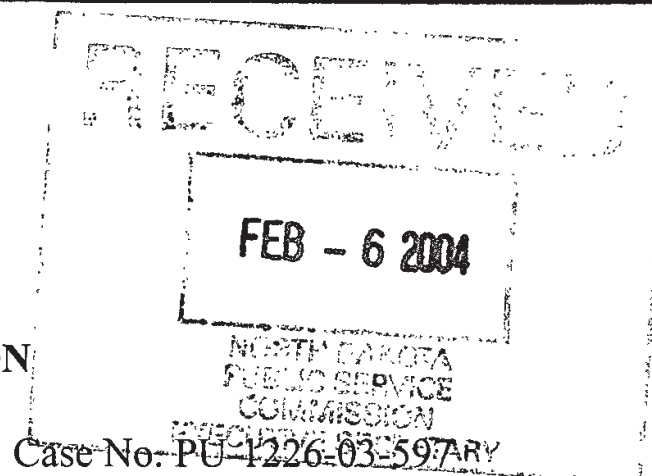


STATE OF NORTH DAKOTA  
PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION



Northwest Dakota Cellular of North  
Dakota Limited Partnership  
Designation Eligible Carrier Application

Case No. PU-1226-03-597

North Central RSA 2 of North Dakota  
Limited Partnership  
Designation Eligible Carrier Application

Case No. PU-386-03-598

North Dakota RSA 3 of North Dakota  
Limited Partnership  
Designation Eligible Carrier Application

Case No. PU-897-03-599

Badlands Cellular of North Dakota  
Limited Partnership  
Designation Eligible Carrier Application

Case No. PU-1255-03-600

North Dakota 5 – Kidder Limited Partnership  
Designation Eligible Carrier Application

Case No. PU-338-03-601

Bismarck MSA Limited Partnership  
Designation Eligible Carrier Application

Case No. PU-494-03-602

**JOINT STIPULATION**

This Joint Stipulation is entered into between and among Northwest Dakota Cellular of North Dakota Limited Partnership, North Central RSA 2 of North Dakota Limited Partnership, North Dakota RSA No. 3 of North Dakota Limited Partnership, Badlands Cellular of North Dakota Limited Partnership, North Dakota 5 – Kidder Limited Partnership and Bismarck MSA Limited Partnership (individually and collectively “Verizon Wireless”) and BEK Communications Cooperative, Consolidated Telecom, Dakota Central Telecom 1, Dakota Central Telecommunications Cooperative, Dickey Rural Access, Inc., Dickey Rural Communications, Inc., Dickey Rural Telephone Cooperative, Missouri Valley Communications, Inc., Nemont Telephone Cooperative, Inc., North Dakota Telephone Company, Northwest Communications Cooperative, Polar Communications Mutual Aid Corporation, Polar

Telecommunications, Inc., Reservation Telephone Cooperative, Turtle Mountain Communications and United Telephone Mutual Aid Corporation (individually and collectively "Rural Telephone Companies"), acting by and through their respective undersigned counsel.

Based on information provided by Verizon Wireless, and after consideration of the applicable law, Verizon Wireless and the Rural Telephone Companies agree that the North Dakota Public Service Commission ("Commission") should accept the following stipulations for purposes of the above-captioned proceedings.

As set forth more fully below, and in the separate Joint Stipulation Regarding Redefinition of Service Area Requirement ("Service Area Stipulations") of the parties, Verizon Wireless and the Rural Telephone Companies agree the Rural Telephone Companies withdraw their objections in the above-captioned proceedings and agree the Verizon Wireless entities may be designated as a federal eligible telecommunications carrier ("ETC") as follows:

1. On December 5, 2003, the Rural Telephone Companies filed a Notice of Appearance in response to the Commission's Notice of Opportunity for Hearing and Notice of Informal Hearing dated October 22, 2003. Based on the Commission's decision granting ETC status to Western Wireless in Case No. PU-1564-98-428, the Rural Telephone Companies did not contest the designation of Verizon Wireless as a federal ETC in those areas where Verizon Wireless served the entire study area. The Rural Telephone Companies' interest in the proceedings was limited to Verizon Wireless' request to redefine the service area requirement for purposes of its ETC designation.

2. On December 17, 2003, an informal hearing was held before the Commission. At the informal hearing, Verizon Wireless presented an overview of the Applications and various Affidavits demonstrating its compliance with the requirements to be designated a federal ETC. The Rural Telephone Companies were also given an opportunity to be heard.

3. Verizon Wireless' network includes cell sites, antennas and other network facilities and infrastructure which were installed and constructed throughout the areas served by the Rural Telephone Companies prior to the enactment of the 1996 Act and not solely for the purposes of obtaining ETC status.

4. Verizon Wireless and the Rural Telephone Companies stipulate and agree that the Rural Telephone Companies withdraw their opposition to the Applications and agree that the Commission may issue Orders consistent with this Stipulation and the Service Area Stipulations in each of the above-captioned dockets to grant ETC designation for those areas that Verizon

Wireless wholly serves, as identified on each Exhibit A to each Application. Verizon Wireless and the Rural Telephone Companies further stipulate, agree and request that the Commission may issue Orders in each of the above-captioned dockets to grant conditional ETC designation in all other Rural Telephone Company service areas identified on Exhibit A to each Application, subject to the FCC's approval of the redefined service area requirement under 47 C.F.R. § 54.207(c) as more fully set forth in the Service Area Stipulations.

5. Nothing in this Stipulation shall be construed to constitute a redefinition of any Rural Telephone Company study area for the receipt of universal service support by the Rural Telephone Company or a waiver of the Rural Telephone Companies' rights to object to or contest any future ETC applications which may be filed with the Commission in other dockets and this Stipulation shall be limited only to the purposes of the above-captioned proceedings.

Dated: February 4, 2004

BRIGGS AND MORGAN, P.A.

By   
Mark J. Ayotte

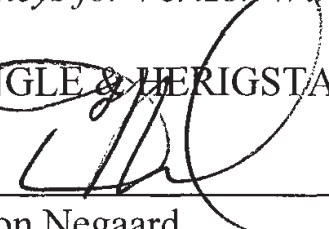
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