

STATE OF NORTH DAKOTA
BEFORE THE PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION

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**INTER-COMMUNITY TELEPHONE COMPANY, LLC AND ABSARAKA
COOPERATIVE TELEPHONE CO., INC. JOINT APPLICATION FOR ELIGIBLE
TELECOMMUNICATIONS CARRIER DESIGNATION**

Inter-Community Telephone Company, LLC (“ICTC”), a wholly-owned subsidiary of BEK Communications Cooperative (“BEK”), has been designated by the Commission as an Eligible Telecommunications Carrier (“ETC”) to receive universal service support under Section 214 and 254 of the Federal Telecommunications Act of 1996 and receives such support in the following North Dakota exchanges:

Alice	Buffalo-Wheatland	Dazey
Hannaford	Hope	Nome-Fingal
Page	Sanborn-Rogers	Tower City

Absaraka Cooperative Telephone Co., Inc. (“Absaraka”) is an ETC serving 47 members over 47 access lines in the Absaraka, North Dakota exchange. The Absaraka exchange is located in the Eastern portion of the ICTC designated service area and is surrounded on three sides by ICTC serving territory. Absaraka proposes to transfer its ETC designation in the Absaraka exchange to ICTC.

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Due to the location of Absaraka facilities and the few members it serves, Absaraka cannot justify further investment in its telecommunications infrastructure that is isolated in this exchange. As Absaraka and ICTC have entered into a Purchase Agreement whereby ICTC will acquire all of Absaraka's members and hard assets. The Absaraka facilities and members will be merged with ICTC's operations.

It is in the public interest to transfer the Absaraka ETC designated service area to ICTC. The Absaraka members are stranded without access to gigabit broadband and other communications services. In addition, Absaraka members would gain the benefit of ICTC's Extended Area Service calling which is offered throughout the ICTC study area. Absaraka has surveyed its Absaraka members and confirmed that virtually all those members would like to connect to ICTC in order to have access to a larger calling area, gigabit broadband, and access to other ICTC services (see Attachment 4). The Absaraka exchange members' willingness to migrate to ICTC for telecommunications services clearly demonstrates the public interest is served through the increased choices and expanded services which will be available.

The Commission has authority under N.D.C.C. §49-21-01.7(13) to designate geographic service areas for ETCs to receive universal service support under sections 214 and 254 of the Communications Act of 1934, as amended by the Federal Telecommunications Act of 1996 ("the Act"). ICTC satisfies the requirements of Section 214(e) for designation as an ETC in the Absaraka exchange:

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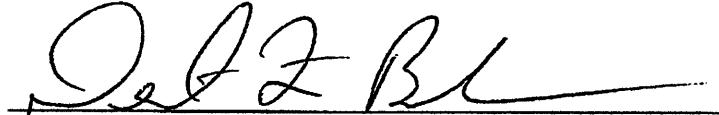
ICTC is a common carrier that will offer voice telephony services supported by universal service over its own facilities and will advertise the availability and rates for such services in the Absaraka exchange, including:

- Voice grade access to the public switched network;
- Minutes of use for local service provided at no additional charge;
- Access to emergency services provided by local government or other public
 - safety organizations such as 911 and enhanced 911, to the extent the local government in the Absaraka exchange has implemented 911 or enhanced 911 systems:
- Lifeline support and toll limitation services to qualifying low-income consumers
- Broadband internet access service

Applicants request that the Commission grant this application without a hearing if no interested party has requested a hearing on this application after receiving at least twenty (20) days' notice of opportunity to request such a hearing.

Dated this 24 day of June, 2019.

INTER-COMMUNITY TELEPHONE COMPANY LLC



By: Derrick Bulawa, President

ABSARAKA COOPERATIVE TELEPHONE COMPANY, INC.



By: Steve Monilaws, President

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