

Before the
FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
Washington, DC 20554

AUG 14 1996

FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
OFFICE OF SECRETARY

In the Matter of)	
)	
Amendment of the Commission's Rules to)	ET Docket No. 96-102
Provide for Unlicensed NII/SUPERNet)	RM-8648
Operations in the 5 GHz Frequency Range)	RM-8653

U S WEST, INC. REPLY COMMENTS

U S WEST, Inc. ("U S WEST") submits this reply in support of several comments filed in the above-referenced proceeding.¹ In the NPRM, the Federal Communications Commission ("Commission") proposes to allocate 350 MHz of spectrum in the 5.15-5.35 GHz and 5.725-5.875 GHz bands for so-called NII/SUPERNet devices, which will provide short-range, high-speed wireless digital communications on an unlicensed basis. The Commission anticipates that this equipment will support creation of new wireless local area networks ("LAN") and facilitate wireless access to the National Information Infrastructure ("NII"). A high-power, long-range proposal in support of community networks is also under consideration. The Commission, however, has tentatively concluded it will not

¹ In the Matter of Amendment of the Commission's Rules to Provide for Unlicensed NII/SUPERNet Operations in the 5 GHz Frequency Range, Notice of Proposed Rule Making, 11 FCC Rcd. 7205 (1996) ("NPRM"). The following parties' Comments are referenced herein: Apple Computer, Inc. ("Apple"); Bell Atlantic Telephone Companies ("Bell Atlantic"); Cylink Corporation ("Cylink"); and 3Com Corporation ("3Com").

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adopt it at this time because it threatens “unacceptable interference risks” to other services.² U S WEST supports the Commission’s views.

We applaud the potential contribution which NII/SUPERNet devices could make to education, libraries and health care facilities, especially in rural locations, and to fostering greater availability to all Americans of advanced communications services, consistent with the Telecommunications Act of 1996.³ However, as U S WEST’s affiliates are frequent users of unlicensed point-to-point spread spectrum devices for various network links in the 5.8 GHz band, pursuant to Part 15 of the Commission’s rules, U S WEST has concerns regarding the potential interference to these operations from the NII/SUPERNet devices. Several of the comments filed in this proceeding echo this concern. As such, U S WEST urges the Commission to require the submission of conclusive studies demonstrating that SUPERNet devices will in no way interfere with spread spectrum operations in the 5800 MHz band before adopting final rules in this proceeding.

The public interest benefits of unlicensed Part 15 spread spectrum devices in the 5800 MHz band are a matter of public record.⁴ U S WEST, due to the large distances in its serving areas, specifically relies on Part 15 spread spectrum devices

² NPRM, 11 FCC Rcd. at 7222 ¶ 47.

³ Telecommunications Act of 1996, Pub. L. No. 104-104, 110 Stat. 56, 153 § 706.

⁴ See, e.g., U S WEST Reply Comments, filed July 19, 1996 at 4-5 and Notice of Proposed Rule Making, 11 FCC Rcd. 3068, 3069-70 ¶¶ 9-13 (1996), ET Docket No. 96-8, In the Matter of Amendment of Parts 2 and 15 of the Commission’s Rules Regarding Spread Spectrum Transmitters. See also Comments of 3Com at 3-4; Comments of Cylink at 6.

to provide some of its network services to customers, especially in rural environments. Our chief concern in this proceeding is that the quality of these radio transmissions will be negatively affected by the presence of competing non-spread spectrum NII/SUPERNet signals if the community networks proposal were approved. In its comments, Apple proposes that the Commission authorize in the 5800 MHz band a fixed frequency, wide-band signal with unlimited antenna gain and 316 milliwatts of transmitter power for point-to-point outdoor links.⁵ U S WEST has no assurance that such operations will not pose unacceptable interference to our operations.⁶

U S WEST utilizes spread spectrum systems because of their tolerance of relatively narrow band interference (500 kHz or less). The bandwidth signals of SUPERNet devices, however, are proposed to reach up to 25 MHz. One or more of these wide-band data channels, transmitted by a high-gain antenna, could significantly overwhelm the processing gain of a normally robust spread spectrum system, causing excessive data error rates and severely compromised quality.

A framework must be in place which prevents any reduction in quality of currently authorized operations in the 5800 MHz band. As such, U S WEST respectfully requests that the Commission refrain from allowing NII/SUPERNet

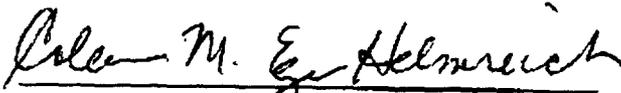
⁵ Comments of Apple at 8.

⁶ NPRM at ¶ 47; Comments of Bell Atlantic at 1-2; Comments of 3Com at 10-11; Comments of Cylink at 7-9.

system operations in this band until our (and other commenters') interference concerns have been definitively and satisfactorily extinguished.

Respectfully submitted,

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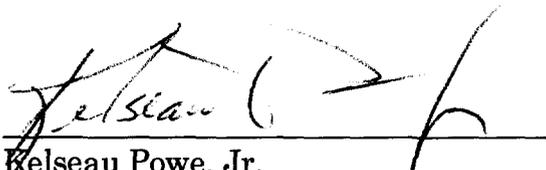
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August 14, 1996

CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE

I, Kelseau Powe, Jr., do hereby certify that on this 14th day of August, 1996, I have caused a copy of the foregoing **U S WEST INC., REPLY COMMENTS** to be served via first-class United States Mail, postage prepaid, upon the persons listed on the attached service list.


Kelseau Powe, Jr.

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