

**Before the  
FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION  
Washington, D.C. 20554**

|   |   |                      |
|---|---|----------------------|
| In the Matter of  | ) |                      |
|   | ) |                      |
| Amendment of Parts 73 and 74 of the Commission's Rules to Establish Rules for Digital Low Power Television and Television Translator Stations | ) | MB Docket No. 03-185 |
|   | ) |                      |
|   | ) |                      |
| Expanding the Economic and Innovation Opportunities of Spectrum Through Incentive Auctions  | ) | GN Docket No. 12-268 |
|   | ) |                      |
|   | ) |                      |
| Amendment of Part 15 of the Commission's Rules to Eliminate the Analog Tuner Requirement  | ) | ET Docket No. 14-175 |
|   | ) |                      |

**REPLY COMMENTS OF THE  
SOUTHWEST COLORADO TELEVISION TRANSLATOR ASSOCIATION**

Since 1979, the Southwest Colorado Television Translator Association ("SWCOTV") has been a Special Tax District formed under Title 32 in the State of Colorado, for the purpose of TV Translator, and FM Translator service. The Tax District receives 0.777 of a mill for support from all real property taxes within the District, and has an annual budget of approximately \$500,000 per year. There are currently about 4000 homes within the Tax District which receive antenna only, which includes: Montezuma County, CO (Albuquerque, NM-TV DMA); Dolores County, CO (Denver, CO-TV DMA). SWCOTV maintains and operates the translators for San Juan County, UT (Salt Lake City, UT-TV DMA). There are 14,000 residents of San Juan County, UT and over half are Native American, (Navajo Tribe). Many of these residents depend on TV translators for their television.

SWCOTV manages fifty (50) LPTV LD and TV Translator stations, with as many as forty-five (45) distinct digital sub-channels in total from eight DTV transmit locations. Each of these varies depending which of the counties viewers live in. San Juan County, UT has forty-three (43) TV Translator stations from five DTV locations. The Abajo Peak location utilizes nine of the ten frequencies at the main hub site of San Juan County, and is located on channels 36 through 47.

All SWCOTV FCC-licensed facilities have been converted to DTV operations. SWCOTV also manages microwave links to transmit signals between the facilities. The estimated total capital investment into these facilities is over \$2,500,000. During the DTV transition, SWCOTV received three (3) grants totaling \$619,715 from the NTIA Low Power and Translator Upgrade Program. This was essential to the timely conversion of the SWCOTV facilities. San Juan County, UT, received a grant of \$321, 020 from the NTIA Low Power and Translator Upgrade program to convert the translators to digital broadcast.

The programming of the SWCOTV digital sub-channels varies from educational, hunting and fishing, music, public domain movies, classic TV, weather, NASA TV, pentagon channel, along with all the major network affiliates and their sub-channels; and now also is including local content from local government agencies, civic, and social affairs groups. SWCOTV pays monthly fees to some of the satellite providers of programming available to translators. San Juan County, UT translators relay the majority of major networks from Salt Lake City, UT to the residents of San Juan County, UT.

The distribution of the 50 SWCOTV transmit facilities is:

| CALL SIGN               | CHANNEL | TYPE | CITY OF LICENSE              | ST | FAC #                  |
|-------------------------|---------|------|------------------------------|----|------------------------|
| <a href="#">K02OS-D</a> | 2       | LD   | <a href="#">WEBER CANYON</a> | CO | <a href="#">61474</a>  |
| <a href="#">K02OU-D</a> | 2       | LD   | <a href="#">ISMAY CANYON</a> | CO | <a href="#">61476</a>  |
| <a href="#">K02OG-D</a> | 2       | LD   | <a href="#">DOLORES</a>      | CO | <a href="#">61479</a>  |
| <a href="#">K02QI-D</a> | 2       | LD   | <a href="#">HESPERUS</a>     | CO | <a href="#">130898</a> |
| <a href="#">K04NK-D</a> | 4       | LD   | <a href="#">DOLORES</a>      | CO | <a href="#">61438</a>  |
| <a href="#">K04ON-D</a> | 4       | LD   | <a href="#">WEBER CANYON</a> | CO | <a href="#">61463</a>  |
| <a href="#">K04OO-D</a> | 4       | LD   | <a href="#">ISMAY CANYON</a> | CO | <a href="#">61478</a>  |
| <a href="#">K04PJ-D</a> | 4       | LD   | <a href="#">HESPERUS</a>     | CO | <a href="#">130884</a> |
| <a href="#">K05JW-D</a> | 5       | LD   | <a href="#">ISMAY CANYON</a> | CO | <a href="#">61449</a>  |
| <a href="#">K05GA-D</a> | 5       | LD   | <a href="#">DOLORES</a>      | CO | <a href="#">61470</a>  |
| <a href="#">K05LI-D</a> | 5       | LD   | <a href="#">WEBER CANYON</a> | CO | <a href="#">130882</a> |
| <a href="#">K06NT-D</a> | 6       | LD   | <a href="#">DOLORES</a>      | CO | <a href="#">130881</a> |
| <a href="#">K07UY-D</a> | 7       | LD   | <a href="#">CORTEZ</a>       | CO | <a href="#">61485</a>  |
| <a href="#">K08MB-D</a> | 8       | LD   | <a href="#">WEBER CANYON</a> | CO | <a href="#">61462</a>  |
| <a href="#">K08LL-D</a> | 8       | LD   | <a href="#">DOLORES</a>      | CO | <a href="#">61483</a>  |
| <a href="#">K09DM-D</a> | 9       | LD   | <a href="#">CORTEZ</a>       | CO | <a href="#">61443</a>  |
| <a href="#">K10MZ-D</a> | 10      | LD   | <a href="#">DOLORES</a>      | CO | <a href="#">61455</a>  |
| <a href="#">K10NY-D</a> | 10      | LD   | <a href="#">ISMAY CANYON</a> | CO | <a href="#">61459</a>  |
| <a href="#">K10OD-D</a> | 10      | LD   | <a href="#">WEBER CANYON</a> | CO | <a href="#">61490</a>  |

|                         |    |    |   |    |                        |
|-------------------------|----|----|---|----|------------------------|
| <a href="#">K11LP-D</a> | 11 | LD | <a href="#">CORTEZ</a>                                      | CO | <a href="#">61461</a>  |
| <a href="#">K12QH-D</a> | 12 | LD | <a href="#">DOLORES</a>                                     | CO | <a href="#">130883</a> |
| <a href="#">K13AT-D</a> | 13 | LD | <a href="#">DOLORES</a>                                     | CO | <a href="#">61439</a>  |
| <a href="#">K13XG-D</a> | 13 | LD | <a href="#">ISMAY CANYON</a>                                | CO | <a href="#">61492</a>  |
| <a href="#">K13XH-D</a> | 13 | LD | <a href="#">WEBER CANYON</a>                                | CO | <a href="#">61493</a>  |
| <a href="#">K13XX-D</a> | 13 | LD | <a href="#">HESPERUS</a>                                    | CO | <a href="#">130894</a> |
| <a href="#">K14JS-D</a> | 14 | LD | <a href="#">CORTEZ, ETC</a>                                 | CO | <a href="#">61489</a>  |
| <a href="#">K18DR-D</a> | 15 | LD | <a href="#">CORTEZ, ETC</a>                                 | CO | <a href="#">61472</a>  |
| <a href="#">K15GU-D</a> | 15 | LD | <a href="#">DOVE CREEK, ETC</a>                             | CO | <a href="#">130892</a> |
| <a href="#">K16CT-D</a> | 16 | LD | <a href="#">CORTEZ, ETC</a>                                 | CO | <a href="#">61469</a>  |
| <a href="#">K17JJ-D</a> | 17 | LD | <a href="#">CORTEZ</a>                                      | CO | <a href="#">61473</a>  |
| <a href="#">K17GE-D</a> | 17 | LD | <a href="#">DOVE CREEK, ETC</a>                             | CO | <a href="#">130897</a> |
| <a href="#">K19GB-D</a> | 19 | LD | <a href="#">DOVE CREEK, ETC</a>                             | CO | <a href="#">129634</a> |
| <a href="#">K21GT-D</a> | 21 | LD | <a href="#">DOVE CREEK, ETC</a>                             | CO | <a href="#">130899</a> |
| <a href="#">K22CU-D</a> | 22 | LD | <a href="#">CORTEZ, ETC</a>                                 | CO | <a href="#">61440</a>  |
| <a href="#">K23GF-D</a> | 23 | LD | <a href="#">DOVE CREEK, ETC</a>                             | CO | <a href="#">129636</a> |
| <a href="#">K24CH-D</a> | 24 | LD | <a href="#">CORTEZ, ETC</a>                                 | CO | <a href="#">61444</a>  |
| <a href="#">K26CI-D</a> | 26 | LD | <a href="#">CORTEZ, ETC</a>                                 | CO | <a href="#">61448</a>  |
| <a href="#">K27IG-D</a> | 27 | LD | <a href="#">CORTEZ, ETC</a>                                 | CO | <a href="#">131268</a> |
| <a href="#">K28EB-D</a> | 28 | LD | <a href="#">CORTEZ, ETC</a>                                 | CO | <a href="#">58850</a>  |
| <a href="#">K29GO-D</a> | 29 | LD | <a href="#">CORTEZ, ETC</a>                                 | CO | <a href="#">61487</a>  |
| <a href="#">K30HJ-D</a> | 30 | LD | <a href="#">CORTEZ, ETC</a>                                 | CO | <a href="#">61451</a>  |
| <a href="#">K30DC-D</a> | 30 | LD | <a href="#">DOVE CREEK, ETC</a>                             | CO | <a href="#">73091</a>  |
| <a href="#">K31CT</a>   | 31 | TX | <a href="#">CORTEZ</a>                                      | CO | <a href="#">61482</a>  |
| <a href="#">K32EY-D</a> | 32 | LD | <a href="#">DOVE CREEK, ETC</a>                             | CO | <a href="#">61466</a>  |
| <a href="#">K34IA-D</a> | 34 | LD | <a href="#">DOVE CREEK, ETC<br/>CORTEZ, MANCOS,<br/>ETC</a> | CO | <a href="#">130886</a> |
| <a href="#">K35CH-D</a> | 35 | LD | <a href="#">CORTEZ</a>                                      | CO | <a href="#">61488</a>  |
| <a href="#">K39EY-D</a> | 39 | LD | <a href="#">CORTEZ</a>                                      | CO | <a href="#">61491</a>  |
| <a href="#">K48BK-D</a> | 48 | LD | <a href="#">DOVE CREEK</a>                                  | CO | <a href="#">61456</a>  |
| <a href="#">K49EQ-D</a> | 49 | LD | <a href="#">CORTEZ, ETC</a>                                 | CO | <a href="#">61471</a>  |
| <a href="#">K51DB-D</a> | 51 | LD | <a href="#">CORTEZ, ETC</a>                                 | CO | <a href="#">61437</a>  |

| <b>CALL SIGN</b> | <b>CHANNEL</b> | <b>TYPE</b> | <b>CITY OF LICENSE</b> | <b>ST</b> | <b>FAC #</b> |
|------------------|----------------|-------------|------------------------|-----------|--------------|
| K14QC-D          | 14             | LD          | MEXICAN HAT            | UT        | 191143       |
| K15HM-D          | 15             | LD          | MONTEZUMA CRK,         | UT        | 167965       |
| K15HN-D          | 15             | LD          | BLUFF                  | UT        | 167963       |
| K15JV-D          | 15             | LD          | MEXICAN HAT            | UT        | 191144       |
| K16HI-D          | 16             | LD          | NAVAJO MT              | UT        | 167984       |
| K16HJ-D          | 16             | LD          | OLJETO                 | UT        | 167977       |
| K16HK-D          | 16             | LD          | MEXICAN HAT            | UT        | 167974       |
| K17IE-D          | 17             | LD          | NAVAJO MT              | UT        | 167985       |
| K17IF-D          | 17             | LD          | OLJETO                 | UT        | 167980       |
| K17IH-D          | 17             | LD          | MONTEZUMA CRK          | UT        | 167969       |
| K17JF-D          | 17             | LD          | BLUFF                  | UT        | 182712       |
| K17JH-D          | 17             | LD          | MEXICAN HAT            | UT        | 182822       |
| K18HZ-D          | 18             | LD          | NAVAJO MT              | UT        | 167983       |
| K18IA-D          | 18             | LD          | OLJETO                 | UT        | 167976       |
| K18IB-D          | 18             | LD          | MEXICAN HAT            | UT        | 167975       |
| K19HA-D          | 19             | LD          | NAVAJO MT              | UT        | 167986       |
| K19HB-D          | 19             | LD          | OLJETO                 | UT        | 167978       |
| K19HE-D          | 19             | LD          | BLUFF                  | UT        | 167962       |
| K19HU-D          | 19             | LD          | MONTEZUMA CRK          | UT        | 167968       |
| K19IG-D          | 19             | LD          | MEXICAN HAT            | UT        | 182823       |
| K20JE-D          | 20             | LD          | NAVAJO MT              | UT        | 167988       |
| K20JF-D          | 20             | LD          | OLJETO                 | UT        | 167981       |
| K20KC-D          | 20             | LD          | MEXICAN HAT            | UT        | 182817       |
| K21IU-D          | 21             | LD          | NAVAJO MT              | UT        | 167987       |
| K21IV-D          | 21             | LD          | OLJETO                 | UT        | 167979       |
| K21IW-D          | 21             | LD          | MEXICAN HAT            | UT        | 167973       |
| K21IX-D          | 21             | LD          | MONTEZUMA CRK          | UT        | 167967       |
| K21KC-D          | 21             | LD          | BLUFF                  | UT        | 182816       |
| K22IE-D          | 22             | LD          | NAVAJO MT              | UT        | 167989       |
| K22IF-D          | 22             | LD          | OLJETO                 | UT        | 167982       |
| K22IG-D          | 22             | LD          | MEXICAN HAT            | UT        | 167972       |
| K23JC-D          | 23             | LD          | MONTEZUMA CRK          | UT        | 167970       |
| K23KC-D          | 23             | LD          | BLUFF                  | UT        | 182809       |
| K23MT-D          | 23             | LD          | MEXICAN HAT            | UT        | 191142       |

|         |    |    |               |    |        |
|---------|----|----|---------------|----|--------|
| K25JT-D | 25 | LD | ABAJO PEAK    | UT | 167960 |
| K33JN-D | 33 | LD | MONTEZUMA CRK | UT | 167966 |
| K33JO-D | 33 | LD | BLUFF         | UT | 167961 |
| K34JN-D | 34 | LD | MONTEZUMA CRK | UT | 167971 |
| K34JO-D | 34 | LD | BLUFF         | UT | 167964 |
| K36AK-D | 36 | LD | ABAJO         | UT | 58870  |
| K38AJ-D | 38 | LD | ABAJO         | UT | 58860  |
| K42AD-D | 42 | LD | ABAJO         | UT | 58862  |
| K43MD-D | 43 | LD | ABAJO         | UT | 182722 |
| K44AG-D | 44 | LD | ABAJO         | UT | 58877  |
| K45GM-D | 45 | LD | ABAJO         | UT | 58880  |
| K46AF-D | 46 | LD | ABAJO         | UT | 58861  |

The next two are owned by the University of Utah and the Utah State Board of Regents, but serve San Juan County, UT. Through an arrangement they are housed with San Juan County, UT facilities and serve the county through the hub from Abajo Peak.

|         |    |    |       |    |        |
|---------|----|----|-------|----|--------|
| K47JI-D | 47 | LD | ABAJO | UT | 125453 |
| K40AF-D | 40 | LD | ABAJO | UT | 69109  |

Depending on the amount of spectrum sold in the Incentive Auction, and using just a simple channel-analysis, SWCOTV could lose access to as many as seven (7) transmit channels. San Juan County would lose nine (9) transmit channels. However, two of the three Counties that SWOCTV serves could experience significant loss of needed transmit channels. Also, considering how integrated the SWCOTV microwave system is, and how distant networks signals are passed from facility to another in this manner, SWCOTV operations could be dramatically affected. San Juan County, UT would lose nine of the ten channel frequencies, which relay signals to the lower sites. There are no available channels for San Juan County, UT to migrate to from the hub site. Effectively, any loss of these channels would shut down television for San Juan County, UT.

Since the 112th Congress, in passing the Incentive Auction legislation, did not provide for any channel relocation funding for either LPTV or TV Translators, the cost of any changes to the existing SWCOTV transmission facilities; and San Juan County, UT facilities, will need to be paid for directly by the residents of the three counties, which SWCOTV serves.

Some analysts predict that there will be little bidding for rural spectrum because of low population densities, while others predict a robust bidding based on the need by some carriers to reduce their roaming fees, which can be done by licensing rural spectrum. Others will point out that the FCC is giving winning bidders up to seven (7) years to build out their facilities, and that incumbent licensees like SWCOTV will have plenty of time to pay for and make their channel moves. While others will predict that the winning bidders could build out their facilities quickly to again reduce cellular roaming fees. At this time SWCOTV does not know which of these predictions will actually happen, but it does know that under current law and FCC regulations, it will have to move when displaced, it will have to totally re-engineer many if not most of its just built-out digital facilities, and it may have to pay for it with local resident funding via an increase in the special Tax District rate.

The FCC, in this rule making process, is doing it before the GAO has completed an impact study about the effects of the Incentive Auction, on LPTV and TV Translators. Members of the House Energy and Communications Subcommittee requested the study, the GAO has agreed to do it, but the date, which it will start, has not yet been determined.

#### **WHO WE AGREE WITH**

1. **SWCOTV agrees with NTA that,** *"Even if the broadband services or cable television operators were able—or willing—to technically replace lost rural free TV service, the replacements would come at a cost far higher than the rural residents are accustomed or able to afford."*<sup>1</sup>
  
2. **We further agree with NTA that,** *"On its way to viewers these signals travel over three mountain ranges and the earth's curvature. Here, translator systems normally require a network of translators over several intermediary hops, and the loss of a single channel important to the operation of the system can cause loss of service to a number these of rural communities, denominated "flyover country" by many, called "home" by all who live here."*<sup>2</sup>
  
- 3) **We additional agree with NTA that,** *"There is no policy, engineering or other reason to treat a household served directly by a full power station as entitled to full replication, while*

---

<sup>1</sup> National Translator Association 3rd LPTV NPRM Comments, pg. 2

<sup>2</sup> National Translator Association 3rd LPTV NPRM Comments, pg. 3

*a household served by translators may be ignored in the same plan.*"<sup>3</sup>

- 4) **SWCOTV has finished its DTV transition already, and does not currently have any outstanding analog-to-digital construction permits, or new digital construction permits, it agrees with the National Translator Association (NTA), the National Association of Broadcasters (NAB), the LPTV Spectrum Rights Coalition (LSRC), and others which commented on delaying harmonizing and delaying new construction dates until after the Incentive Auction has been completed. We specifically agree with NTA that, "...the setting of any new transition date cannot safely be done until at least twelve months after the auction is completed."**<sup>4</sup>
  
- 5) **SWCOTV acknowledges that in dense urban operating environments the channel-sharing concept may be feasible, and a valuable tool in providing channels to stations and networks that may otherwise be left with no carriage. But we agree with NTA that, "Rural translators...typically have multiple channels under one manager, sometimes in multi-hop networks. In such places there is no partner with whom share."**<sup>5</sup>
  
- 6) **SWCOTV agrees with NTA that the [FCC's], "...potential offer of assistance in finding replacement channels for displaced TV translator and LPTV stations is welcome if, as stated in Para 46, it remain voluntary. The difficulty in finding channels to replace those lost in a repacking process will, in many instances, be extreme. In case of translator systems, several interconnected communities could suffer greatly from the loss of one or more intermediary or networked channels, causing possible interruption of signal between translator sites and shutting down more than one community."**<sup>6</sup>
  
- 7) **SWCOTV agrees with LSRC that, the "FCC should study the new ownership and operations patterns of the TV Translator industry." We further agree with LSRC that, the "FCC should conduct a study of the future of LPTV."**<sup>7</sup>

---

<sup>3</sup> National Translator Association 3rd LPTV NPRM Comments, pg. 4

<sup>4</sup> National Translator Association 3rd LPTV NPRM Comments, pg. 4

<sup>5</sup> National Translator Association 3rd LPTV NPRM Comments, pg. 5

<sup>6</sup> National Translator Association 3rd LPTV NPRM Comments, pg. 5

<sup>7</sup> LPTV Spectrum Rights Coalition 3rd LPTV NPRM Comments, pg. 10

- 8) **And we agree that the FCC needs to answer the question that LSRC asks, "Why are translators not studied in the Broadcast Ownership Report, especially now after the DTV transition?"**<sup>8</sup>
- 9) **We further agree with LSRC that, the "FCC should conduct a mock LPTV and TV Translator repacking optimization before the auction."**<sup>9</sup> For SWCOTV this would of great benefit to analyze the potential scenarios, especially since SWCOTV's coverage area interacts with three separate TV DMA.
- 10) **SWCOTV agrees with NAB in that, "...the FCC's adoption of a variable band plan, under which it will recover more spectrum in less populated areas than in the most congested, highest-demand markets, will result in the displacement of far more LPTV and translator stations than necessary as the Commission will conduct extensive repacking to recover more spectrum in these less populated areas."**<sup>10</sup>

#### **WHO WE DISAGREE WITH**

- 11) **SWCOTV disagrees with the Open Technology Institute at New America Foundation and Public Knowledge ("OTI/PK") when it asserts, "It is critical that the Commission not only finds workable channels for LPTV and translator stations that are actively broadcasting a service to their community, but also makes these channel reassignments in a way that maximizes the number of useable white space channels available for unlicensed use, with as many consecutive white space channels as possible to facilitate rural broadband (since fixed wireless services can operate only on the middle of three consecutive white space channels)."**<sup>11</sup>

**We believe that if the FCC attempts to reshuffle all of the rural channel assignments for TV translators, huge cascading problems could potentially occur. It took in many cases decades for the original analog translator engineering solutions to be made through trial and error, and then just recently a lengthy period to complete the DTV transition.**

---

<sup>8</sup> LPTV Spectrum Rights Coalition, 3rd LPTV NPRM Comments, pg. 16

<sup>9</sup> LPTV Spectrum Rights Coalition, 3rd LPTV NPRM Comments, pg. 8

<sup>10</sup> National Association of Broadcasters, 3rd LPTV NPRM Comments, pg. 4

<sup>11</sup> Open Technology Institute, New America Foundation, Public Knowledge, 3rd LPTV NPRM Comments, pg. 2

If the FCC accepts the OTI/PK logic, and tries to repack rural spectrum equally for licensed LPTV and TV translators, as well as TV White and unlicensed uses, then much of rural America will be left without valuable and vital community television services for extended period of time, and at great further unfunded costs. SWCOTV recommends that the FCC reject the OTI/PK proposals for equal repacking for licensed and unlicensed services, and the reserving of spectrum for unlicensed use ahead of licensed users like TV translators.

Respectfully submitted,

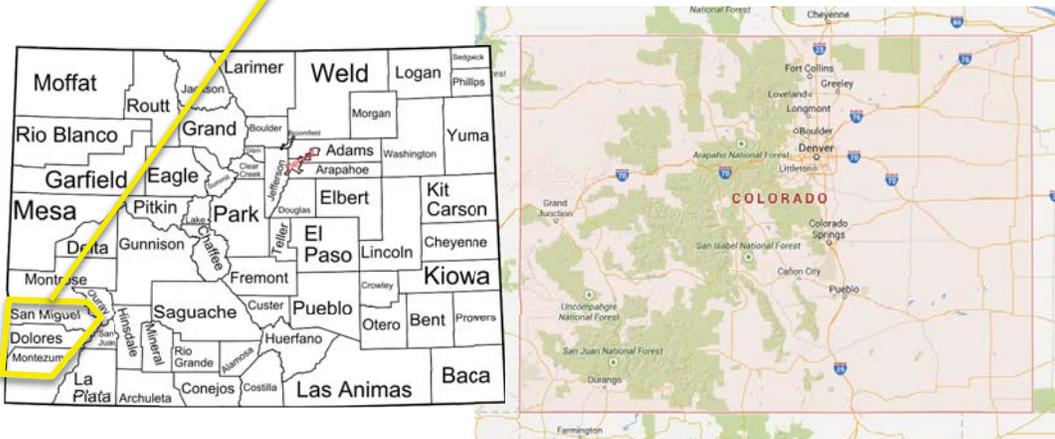
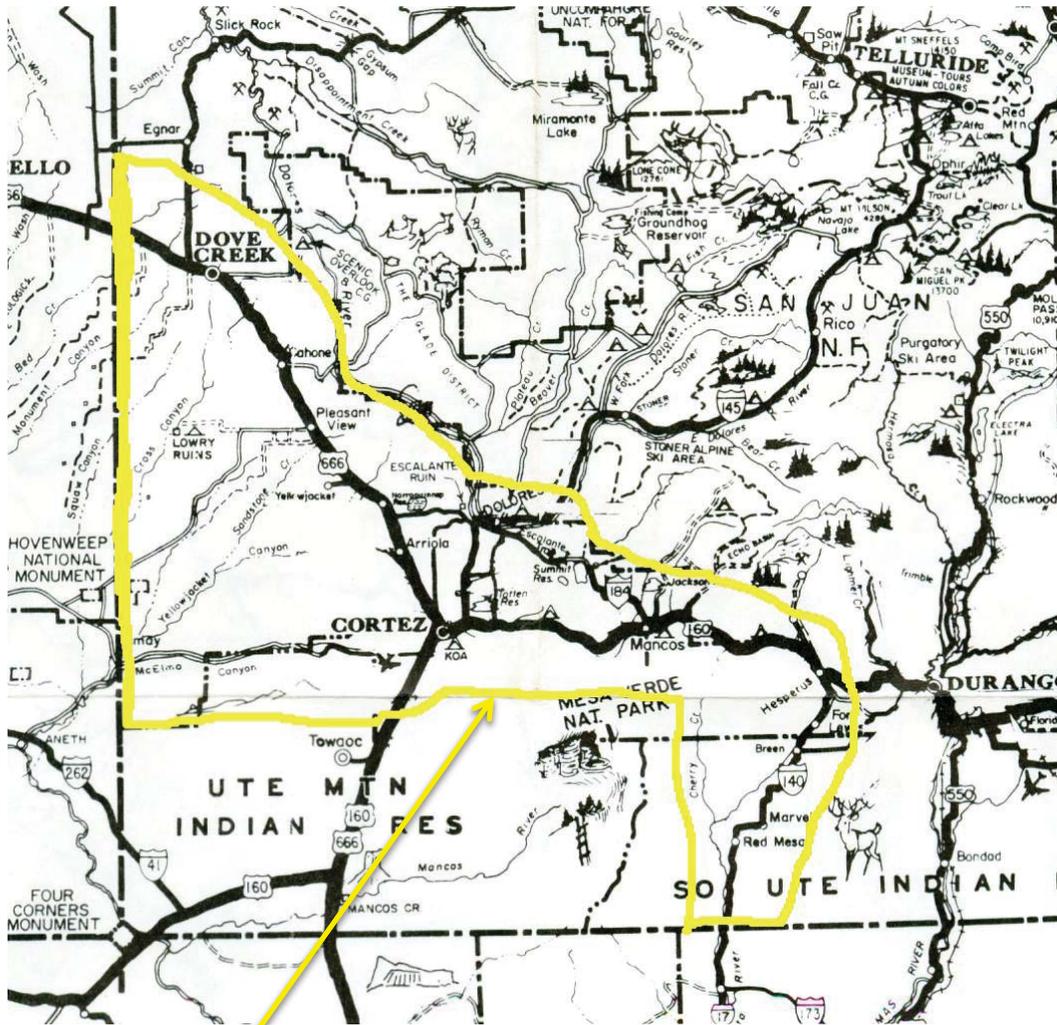
\_\_\_\_\_/S/\_\_\_\_\_

Wayne Johnson, Administrator  
Southwest Colorado Television Translator Association  
Administrator  
SWCOTV  
PO 1570 Cortez CO 81321  
(970) 565-2129  
swcotv@frontier.net

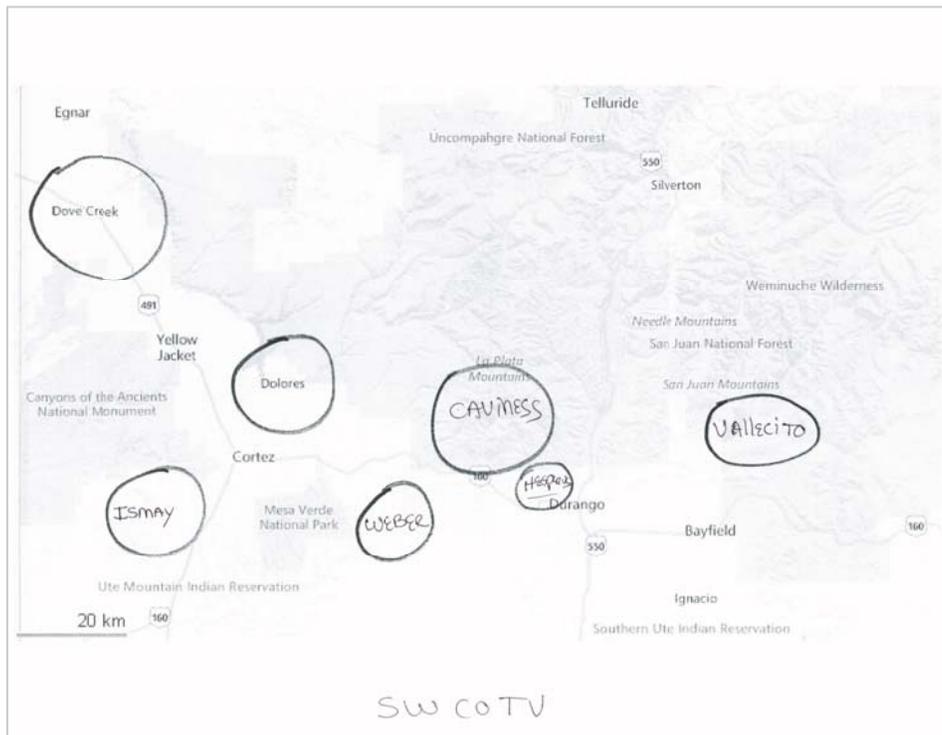
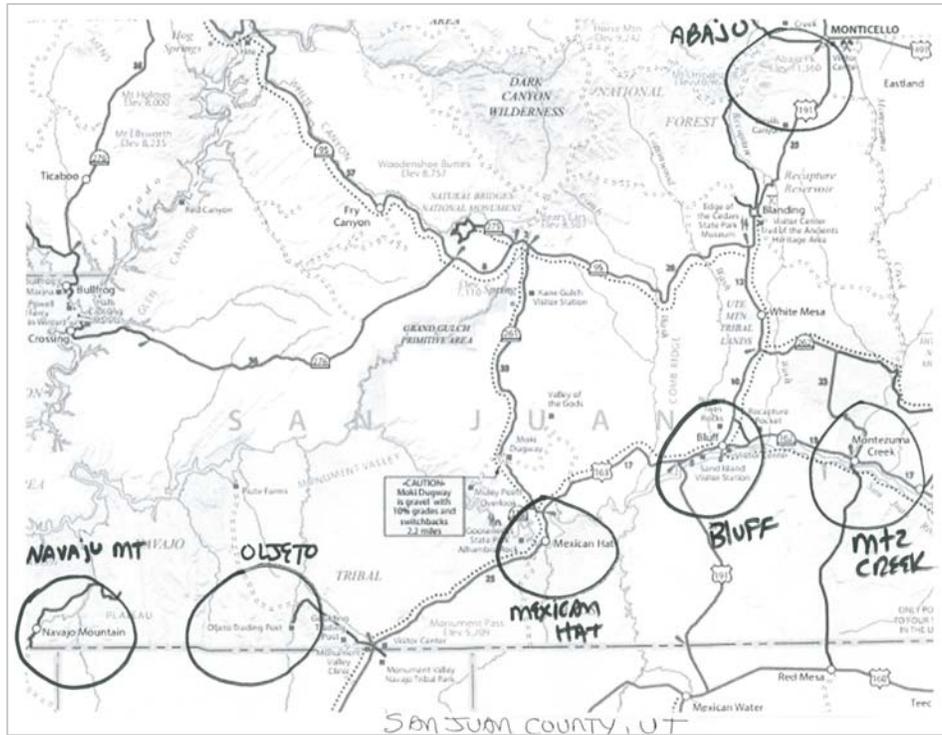
Attachments:

SWCOTV Coverage Maps  
SWCOTV Transmission Towers

# Southwest Colorado Television Translator Association Coverage Area



# Southwest Colorado Television Translator Association Coverage Area



SW CO TV

**Southwest Colorado Television Translator Association  
Transmission Towers, Microwave Relays, Wireless Internet**

