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April 13, 2009

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**VIA ELECTRONIC DELIVERY**

Marlene H. Dortch, Secretary  
Federal Communications Commission  
445 12th Street, SW  
Room TWA325  
Washington, DC 20554

**Re: Notice of *Ex Parte* Presentation  
GN Docket No. 09-29  
ET Docket Nos. 04-186, 02-380**

Dear Ms. Dortch:

On April 10, 2009, Joseph M. Sandri, Jr., Senior Vice President of Government and Regulatory Affairs for FiberTower Corporation (“FiberTower”); Richard B. Engelman, Director, Spectrum Resources, Government Affairs for Sprint Nextel Corporation (“Sprint Nextel”); Karen Reidy, Vice President, Regulatory Affairs, COMPTEL; and Michele C. Farquhar of Hogan & Hartson, LLP, Special Counsel to FiberTower and the Rural Telecommunications Group, Inc., met with members of the Wireline Competition Bureau (Ian Dillner, William Kehoe, Matthew Warner) and Wireless Telecommunications Bureau (Christina Clearwater and Charles Mathias) working on rural broadband deployment issues raised in the first proceeding referenced above.

During the meeting, the parties discussed their petition for reconsideration and cover letter filed in the rural broadband proceeding on March 25, 2009, along with the attached slides and previously filed materials regarding the Canadian Remote Rural Broadband Systems model. The parties also urged the Commission to support Congress’s and the Administration’s broadband stimulus efforts and address the critical shortage of “middle mile” broadband – particularly in unserved and underserved areas, including rural areas – by expanding the amount of licensed spectrum that can be used for wireless backhaul services. Specifically, the parties noted the benefits of licensed use of the TV Bands White Spaces (“White Spaces”), including the exceptional propagation features of the band (which are ideal for lower-cost backhaul over much longer distances and offer significant cost savings compared to other spectrum bands), the

promotion of build-out in rural areas, and the enhanced protection of incumbents through greater certainty and accountability, as well as the off-the-shelf availability of fixed point-to-point backhaul equipment and the speed with which this equipment could be deployed.

Pursuant to Section 1.1206 of the Commission's rules, this letter is being filed via ECFS with your office.

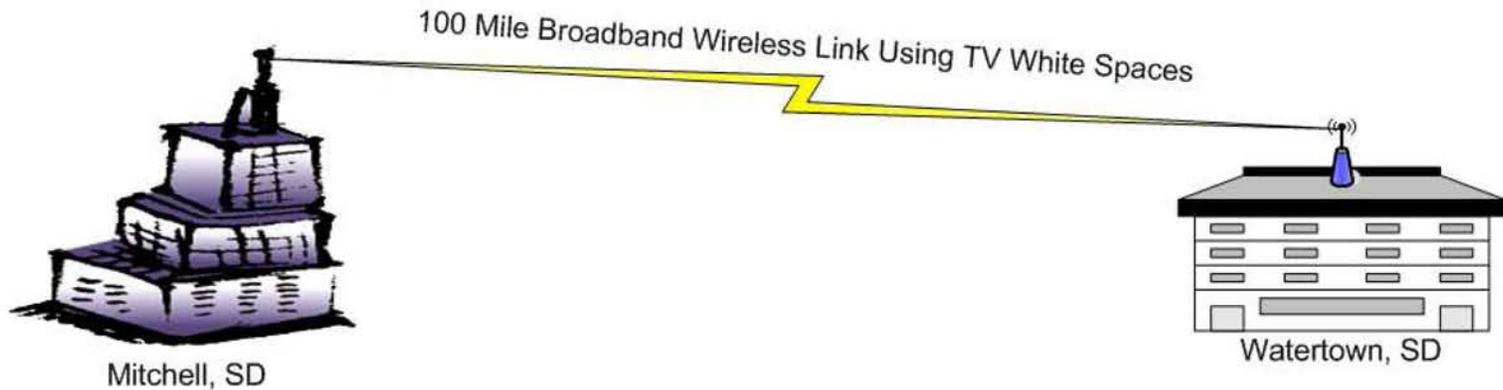
Respectfully submitted,

/s/ Michele C. Farquhar

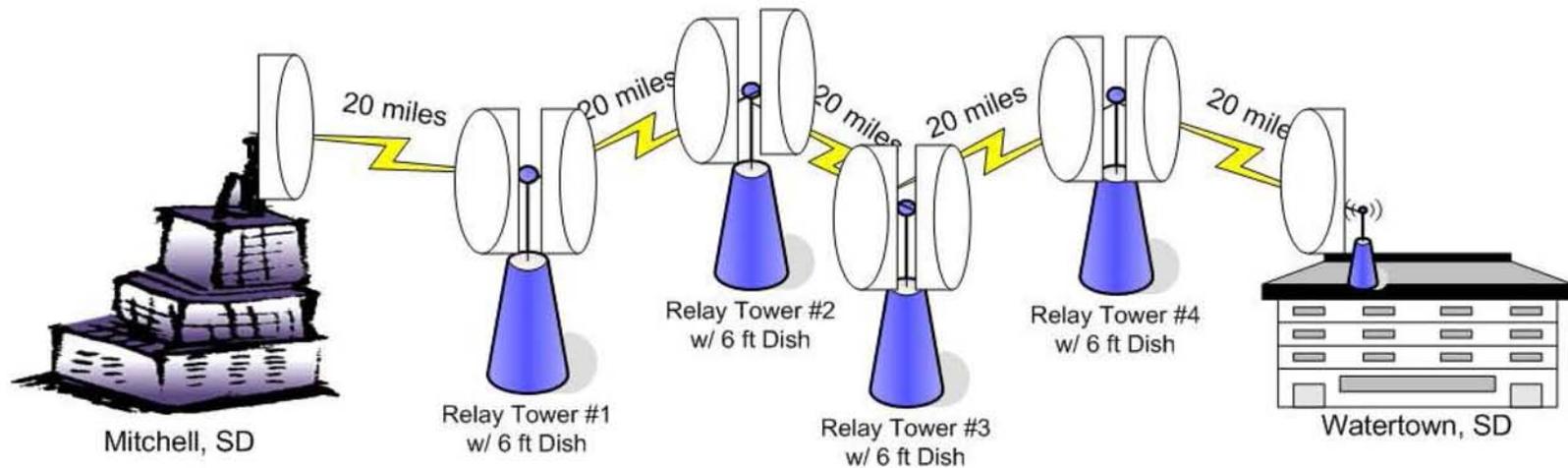
Michele C. Farquhar  
Counsel to Sprint Nextel Corporation  
Special Counsel to FiberTower Corporation  
and Rural Telecommunications Group, Inc.

cc: Ian Dillner  
William Kehoe  
Matthew Warner  
Christina Clearwater  
Charles Mathias

# 100 Mile broadband connection cost comparison



100 Miles using TV White Spaces (450-698 MHz): Small lightweight grill-style antenna fits on building/tower. Cost <\$100,000-200,000



6 GHz or 3.65 GHz . Total cost: >\$3million. Fiber Optic costs even more!

# Issues

- Recent FCC order allows low powered fixed systems
- FCC action needed for higher powered systems
  - 4 of 5 FCC Commissioners issued statements supporting higher powered systems for backhaul
- Technical Agreement already prepared that protects all incumbents
- Supporters: Rural Telecom Group, Sprint, Comptel, etc.
- Others who seek to use the TV White Spaces for mobile unlicensed worried that allowing licensed use opens the door for big auctions
  - Auctions not required
  - Abundant spectrum available in the rural areas
  - Solution: Limit high powered fixed service on a link-by-link basis to specific channels and to rural areas.
    - Canada already does this. It works!



# Need U.S. Map: Backhaul Capacity at Wireless Sites

> 220,000 mobile wireless sites in the U.S.  
> 50% located on towers; the rest buildings.  
Need to map backhaul capacity on those sites.  
Broadband only reaches the country when backhaul connects wireless sites to each other and the internet.

