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VIA ECFS

3-7-2014

Marlene H. Dortch, Secretary  
Federal Communications Commission  
445 Twelfth Street, S.W.  
Washington, D.C. 20554  
Attn: Wireline Competition Bureau

**Re: WC Docket No. 10-90  
Rural Broadband Experiment Expression of Interest – Rate-of-Return Areas  
Big Bend Telephone Company, Inc.**

Dear Ms. Dortch:

Big Bend Telephone Company, Inc. (Big Bend Telephone) hereby expresses interest in participating in the Commission's rural broadband experiments to provide robust, scalable high-speed broadband to unserved and underserved high-cost areas with additional Connect America funding.<sup>1</sup> Big Bend Telephone is a rate-of-return incumbent local exchange carrier serving rural areas of Texas.

Currently Big Bend Telephone has Fiber to the Home, Satellite, Copper, Fixed Wireless and DSL facilities providing broadband to its customers. All locations within its regulated service area are at speeds of at least 3 Mbps/786 kbps. However, some of the DSL and copper facilities are aging and the current Satellite Facilities will not support higher speeds without large increased costs. Funds are needed to replace the older DSL and copper and Satellite so that Big Bend Telephone can provide higher speeds, meet customer demands, and transition to an all-IP network for 176 locations. The details of the proposed deployment are as follows.

#### Proposed Service Area

Big Bend Telephone proposes to upgrade broadband to 176 underserved premises within the regulated service territory in Presidio, Brewster, Pecos and Val Verde Counties in Texas. Big Bend Telephone has analyzed the Commission's data on the high cost areas that are eligible for funding and believes that there are errors in the estimation of underserved locations in Presidio and Brewster Counties, and that the Commission has inadvertently included too many locations.

#### Proposed Broadband Service

Voice and Broadband services with broadband transmission speeds of 12 Mbps/ 1Mbps upstream provided over Fixed Wireless Point to Point and Point to Multipoint utilizing unlicensed and licensed AWS spectrum.

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<sup>1</sup> See *Technology Transitions et al.*, GN Docket No. 13-5 et al., Order, Report and Order and Further Notice of Proposed Rulemaking, Report and Order, Order and Further Notice of Proposed Rulemaking, Proposal for Ongoing Data Initiative, FCC 14-5 (rel. Jan. 31, 2014).



Funding

Big Bend Telephone requests \$2 M in funding from Connect America Funds in one-time funding.

Big Bend Telephone expects service to be offered to all underserved customers within one year after construction starts.

Big Bend Telephone appreciates the opportunity to provide this non-binding expression of interest. Please contact the undersigned with any questions.

Sincerely,

Russell A. Moore  
General Manager