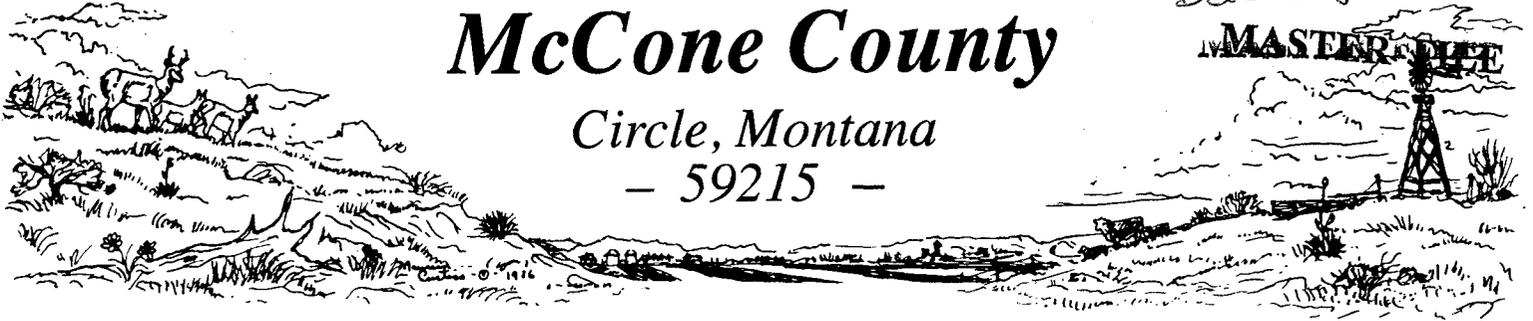


McCone County

Circle, Montana
- 59215 -

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MASTER FILE



October 12, 2004

The Public Service Commission
1701 Prospect Ave.
Vista Building
P.O. Box 202601
Helena, Montana 59620-2601

Dear Commissioners:

McCone County's Local Emergency Planning Committee (LEPC) has been working diligently to satisfy the demands for training and disaster preparation placed on them by Homeland Security. We are writing in support of the petition of Mid-Rivers Cellular for designation as an Eligible Telecommunications Carrier throughout its service area and thereby entitled to use Universal Service Funds.

Mid-Rivers Cellular has served the public interest in providing cellular coverage in the remoteness of Eastern Montana, not only for the people who live here, but also for those visiting or traveling through the 10,000 square mile area. This sparsely populated area was abandoned by the original cellular licenses, most probably because it wasn't feasible economically for them to provide service here.

Since 9/11/01, a heightened awareness of the need for cellular coverage, as well as for wireless location accuracy, has led to the state promoting Phase II E-911 implementation by counties and deployment sometime in 2005. Phase II E-911 implementation and deployment would financially jeopardize continued wireless service to the customers served by Mid-Rivers Cellular. This means that the inhabitants of Mid-Rivers service area would no longer have cell service. The visitors to the area, expecting the same Phase II E-911 implementation here, as they enjoy at home, should they experience trouble, would receive a rude awakening!

Without wireless service, all the hours spent in planning, training, and preparing for the mitigation of potential disasters by McCone County, as well as Carter, Custer, Fallon, Dawson, Richland, Garfield, Prairie, and Powder River Counties in Mid-River's service area, have been for naught. Mitigation of disasters will be greatly jeopardized within this vast and remote area.

An Eligible Telecommunications Carrier designation would allow Mid-Rivers to upgrade and improve its service through the use of Universal Service Funds. The McCone

PUBLIC SERVICE
COMMISSION

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County LEPC urgently requests that the Public Service Commission grant Mid-Rivers Cellular this vital designation.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Alan K. Stempel". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned above a horizontal line.

Alan Stempel, LEPC Chair
Disaster and Emergency Services Coordinator