

10/27/2004 P-1 (2)

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OCT 27

MONT. P. S. COMMISSION

**RESOLUTION 10/18/04 - 01
SUPPORT MID-RIVERS PETITION
BEFORE PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION
CARTER COUNTY, MONTANA**

WHEREAS, the Cable & Communications Corporation, dba Mid Rivers Cellular is currently the only wireless (cellular) provider throughout Eastern Montana, and

WHEREAS, the wireless (cellular) service provided by Mid-Rivers Cellular is essential for the maintenance of public safety and security in Eastern Montana and, therefore, in the public interest; and

WHEREAS, Designating Mid-Rivers Cellular as an Eligible Telecommunications Carrier (ETC) would allow them to be eligible for Universal Service funding which would give the company an opportunity to improve upon public safety and security through the construction of additional tower sites as well as allowing them to upgrade their current systems;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Carter County Commissioners to support Mid Rivers Cellular's petition to be designated as an Eligible Telecommunications Carrier (ETC) and to ensure eligibility for Universal Service Funding.

Dated this 18th day of October 2004.

**BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
CARTER COUNTY, MONTANA**

James Cooney 10-18-04
COMMISSION CHAIRMAN

Milton H. Markason
MEMBER

Steve Rosencranz
MEMBER

ATTEST: Pamela J. Castleberry
CLERK & RECORDER

RESOLUTION # 10-18-04

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OCT 27 2004

MONT. P. S. COMMISSION

WHEREAS, Mid-Rivers Cellular presently provides cellular service to this vast and remote 10,000 square mile area of Eastern Montana, which was abandoned by the original cellular carrier, presumably for economic reasons; and

WHEREAS, Mid-Rivers Cellular serves the public interest by providing wireless coverage in previously un-served rural areas of Eastern Montana, not only for the people living and working here, but also for those visiting and traveling through this area; and

WHEREAS, Emergencies validate the need for accessible and precise cellular coverage, which has led to the state of Montana promoting Phase II E-911 implementation and operations in 2005; and

WHEREAS, Eligible Telecommunications Carrier (ETC) status would allow Mid-Rivers Cellular to improve and expand its wireless service with the assistance of the Universal Service Funds.

WHEREAS, These improvements would allow Mid-Rivers Cellar to provide customers in Eastern Montana with better coverage, a choice of providers and technologies, and features that will enhance the 911 Emergency Communications Center's ability to respond instantaneously to the various emergency needs of the people residing in this area; and

WHEREAS, Without the Universal Service funds, upgrades to meet the requirements of Phase II E-911 will be nearly impossible financially, threatening Mid-Rivers Cellular continued ability to offer any wireless communications in Eastern Montana.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Fallon County Commissioners, the support of Mid-Rivers Cellular petition to be designated as an Eligible Telecommunications Carrier (ETC) and to ensure eligibility for Universal Service Funding.

ADOPTED this 18th day of October, 2004.

ATTEST:

Fallon County Commissioners

Roddy M. Rost
Roddy M. Rost, Chairman

Brenda J. Wood
Brenda J. Wood, Clerk & Recorder

Don Rieger
Don Rieger, Member

Deb Ranum
Deb Ranum, Member

P.O. Box 1061
Baker, MT. 59313
(406) 778-7139
Fax (406) 778-7176
clee@midriverrs.com

.....
Fallon County Dispatch Center

October 26, 2004

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OCT 27
MONT. P. S. COMMISSION

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

Dear Sir or Madam:

This letter is being sent to request that Mid-Rivers Telephone Cooperative be designated as a competitive ETC. This designation would be instrumental in helping Mid-Rivers meet the Federal requirement of the implementation of Phase II Wireless.

I run a PSAP for 4 counties (Fallon, Wibaux, Carter, & Prairie) with the responsibility of providing 911 coverage. A large part of this requirement has been shifted to the use of wireless phone appliances throughout the United States, and more importantly Southeastern Montana. As it sits now, I would just have to inform Mid-Rivers that my PSAP was Phase II ready, and Mid-Rivers would have 6 months to comply. I am led to believe that Mid-Rivers could not meet this schedule (Due to Logistic & Financial Reasons), and that my request would lead to Mid-Rivers having to discontinue cellular service. I am not sure if this is a fact, but my understanding is that a carrier must comply within 6 months of receiving a request for Phase II compliance.

I support Mid-Rivers in their effort, and have found them to be a reliable, helpful, and knowledgeable partner. Mid-Rivers provides cellular service to an area that others have abandoned, since the population base is small. The larger companies can not reap the financial rewards available to them in larger areas, so they do not exist for practical purposes in our rural area. We have many miles of dirt between the light posts, and Mid-Rivers provides excellent service to an area in need. The financial hardship of new towers, digital transmission, land acquisition, and other considerations would be great if no help is provided. If Phase II is to become a reality in ALL of the States, then designation for Mid-Rivers as an ETC is critical.

Sincerely,



Chuck Lee
PSAP Manager (Fallon, Carter, Wibaux, Prairie Counties)
911 Coordinator (Fallon, Carter, Wibaux, Prairie Counties)

PO Box 846
10 Fallon Ave West
Baker, MT 59313
406-778-3233

Fallon County DES

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MONT. P. S. COMMISSION

October 20, 2004

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

Dear Commissioners,

As the Fallon County Disaster and Emergency Services Coordinator, Fallon County Fire Warden, and Chairman of the Fallon County Local Emergency Planning Committee (LEPC) I know well the emergency situations that Fallon County citizens can encounter every day. With Agriculture and Gas/Oil production as our leading industries it is not uncommon to have work related emergencies on a very frequent basis. Agriculture is often regarded as one of the most dangerous occupations in the United States, and the Oil and Gas industry has its own widely varied hazards.

The very nature of most Agriculture/Oil and Gas Industry emergencies places the event in remote areas where wire line communications are not available. The cellular phone is the only way for these citizens working in remote areas to call for the help they need when an emergency or disaster occurs. Cellular phones are the critical lifeline for thousands of our citizens across this region serviced by Mid-Rivers, unfortunately there are numerous gaps in coverage where Cell Phones simply will not work due to lack of signal.

Mid-Rivers provides critical Cellular Phone service to Fallon County and much of the region. This service can man life or death to a citizen in an emergency. It has saved lives, but lack of cellular phone service across a more broad reaching area has also been very costly to the citizens of our region. There are numerous cases of stranded motorists and victims of auto accidents being unable to call for help by cellular phone due to dead spots in coverage. This has proven to be fatal on a number of occasions across Eastern Montana.

If Mid-Rivers is given the resources to expand its Cellular Phone Coverage and to fill in the gaps in service then it will be a great public safety improvement indeed for the Citizens all over the region. It will also greatly benefit the many travelers that cross this vast expanse every year. With Phase 2 E911 looming on the Horizon it is critical that Mid-Rivers be provided with the resources to improve and expand their wireless communications system.

Please grant Mid-Rivers Eligible Telecommunications Carrier status and assist them and our regions citizens with Universal Service Funds. This is the only way our public safety issues concerning Cellular Phone Communications can be addressed. Mid-Rivers has the full support of all Fallon County First Responder Agencies, the Fallon County LEPC, and my personal support in this matter.

Sincerely,
Sam Thielen

Sam Thielen
Fallon County DES Coordinator, Fire Warden, LEPC Chairman



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OCT 27

RESOLUTION 04-09-07C

MONT. P. S. COMMISSION

**RESOLUTION IN SUPPORT OF DESIGNATION OF MID-RIVERS
CELLULAR AS AN ELIGIBLE TELECOMMUNICATIONS CARRIER
THROUGHOUT ITS SERVICE AREA**

WHEREAS, Mid-Rivers Cellular has served the public interest in providing cellular coverage in the vastness of Eastern Montana, not only for the inhabitants, but also for visitors to the 10,000 square mile area; and,

WHEREAS, Mid-Rivers Cellular serves customers in sparsely populated areas abandoned by the original cellular licenses, presumably for economic reasons; and,

WHEREAS, an Eligible Telecommunications Carrier designation would allow Mid-Rivers to upgrade and improve its service through the use of Universal Service Funds; and,

WHEREAS, a heightened awareness of the need for cellular coverage, as well as for wireless location accuracy, since 9/11, has led to the state promoting Phase II E-911 implementation by counties and deployment sometime in 2005; and,

WHEREAS, Phase II E-911 implementation and deployment would financially jeopardize continued wireless service to the customers served by Mid-Rivers Cellular; and,

WHEREAS, McCone County's Local Emergency Planning Committee has been working diligently to satisfy the demands for training and disaster preparation placed on them by Homeland Security. 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, 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 10,000 square mile area.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that McCone County fully supports 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.

APPROVED AND ADOPTED this 7th day of September, 2004.

**THE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
McCONE COUNTY**



Robert Kluth, Chairman

ATTEST:


Connie Eissinger
Connie Eissinger, Member

(SEAL)

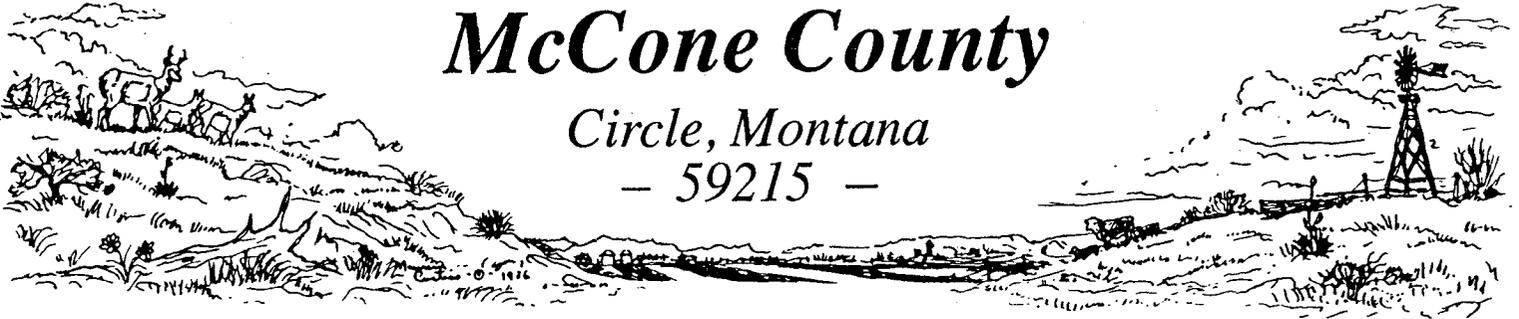
Kenton Larson
Kenton Larson, Member

Maridel L. Kassner
Maridel L. Kassner, Clerk and Recorder
Clerk to the Board of County Commissioners

McCone County

Circle, Montana

- 59215 -



October 12, 2004

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

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OCT 27
MONT. P. S. COMMISSION

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

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 dark ink and is positioned above a horizontal line.

Alan Stempel, LEPC Chair
Disaster and Emergency Services Coordinator

BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
POWDER RIVER COUNTY
PO Box 270
Broadus, Montana 59317

Fax: 406-436-2151
Phone: 406-436-2657

Ray Traub, Broadus
Betty Aye, Broadus
Nancy Espy, Broadus

October 25, 2004

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OCT 27 2004
MONT. P. S. COMMISSION

Montana Public Service Commission
1701 Prospect Avenue
PO Box 202601
Helena, MT 59620-2601

Dear Commission:

Please consider this our letter of support for the application of Cable & Communications Corporation, dba Mid-Rivers Cellular to be designated as a competitive eligible telecommunications carrier within the Mid-Rivers's service areas.

Mid-Rivers Cellular was willing to put cell towers in this area to provide badly needed cell service, even though the area is sparsely populated and other providers felt it wasn't economically feasible.

If Mid-Rivers Cellular is granted eligible telecommunications carrier status, it would allow them to improve and expand wireless service with the help of Universal Service funds. These improvements would allow them to provide customers in Eastern Montana with better coverage, a choice of providers and technologies, and features that will enhance local law enforcement communication abilities.

Without these funds, upgrades to meet the requirements of Phase II E-911 will be nearly impossible financially, threatening Mid-Rivers Cellular's continued ability to offer any wireless communications in eastern Montana.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment and support this application.

Sincerely,

BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
POWDER RIVER COUNTY

Ray Traub

Ray Traub, Chairman

Betty Aye

Betty Aye

Nancy Espy

Nancy Espy

RECEIVEDRESOLUTION # 04-19

OCT 27

MONT. P. S. COMMISSION

WHEREAS, Mid-Rivers Cellular serves the public interest by providing high quality wireless service to customers in Eastern Montana including Garfield County; and

WHEREAS Mid-Rivers Cellular has saved lives in Garfield County in many emergency situations including stranded motorists in winter blizzards and lost hunters and fishermen on Fort Peck Lake and in the Charles M. Russell Game Refuge; and

WHEREAS Mid-Rivers Cellular has continued to try to improve wireless service in Garfield County by the addition of a cell extender at Rock Springs in February of 2004; and

WHEREAS More cells in Garfield County are needed to provide coverage for all areas; and

WHEREAS The existence of high quality wireless service allows Garfield County to have the same services as those who live in more populated areas and improves the quality of life for residents and those who visit Garfield County which also enhances economic development efforts in the county; and

WHEREAS, Eligible Telecommunication Carrier (ETC) status would allow Mid-Rivers Cellular to improve and expand its wireless service with the assistance of the Universal Service Funds; and

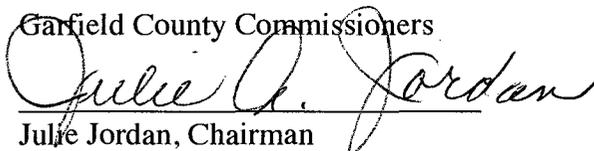
WHEREAS, These improvements would allow Mid-Rivers Cellular to upgrade to digital technology and add cells to enhance coverage in Eastern Montana and thereby give customers a choice of providers and enhance 911 Emergency Communication Center's ability to respond to various emergencies in the area; and

WHEREAS, Without the Universal Service Funds, upgrades to meet the requirements of Phase II E-911 would be nearly impossible which would threaten the ability to meet future 911 needs;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Garfield County Commissioners support the Mid-Rivers Cellular petition to be designated as an eligible Telecommunications Carrier (ETC) and to ensure eligibility for Universal Service Funding.

ADOPTED this 26 day of October, 2004.

Garfield County Commissioners



Julie Jordan, Chairman

ATTEST:



Janet Sherer, Clerk & Recorder

P-9

Testimony of Janet R. Kelly, Chairman Custer County Commission
before the Montana Public Service Commission
Public Hearing on Mid-Rivers Cellular's Application for ETC Status
Wednesday, October 27, 2004
Eagles Club, 24 8th Street, Miles City Montana

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MONT. P. S. COMMISSION

My name is Janet Kelly, chairman of the Custer County Commission. I am appearing here today in support of Mid-Rivers Cellular Corporation's petition for Eligible Telecommunications Carrier (ETC) designation.

One of the primary responsibilities of a County Commissioner is to provide for the public safety. Mid-Rivers' wireless service to the government of Custer County and its residents has helped me work toward achieving this goal.

However, too many areas of my county do not have much-needed cellular service. This lack of service leaves many of our residents without needed communications in times of emergency and danger.

Grassland fires are always a problem for us. Expanded cellular service will provide our firefighters with improved communications among themselves and greatly assist them in containing these fires before they get out of control and burn up our precious grasslands.

Expanded cell services will assist our emergency service providers in maintaining communications with people who have called our 911 center needing medical service, and making sure they arrive at the correct residence as quickly as possible.

Expanded cell service will improve our search and rescue teams' ability to maintain communications with those people in the field.

Providing ETC status to Mid-Rivers, and access to Universal Service Funds, will allow them to improve and expand wireless service. Without these funds, the needed upgrades to meet Phase II, E 911 requirements will jeopardize Mid-Rivers ability to continue offering wireless communications to the people living in Eastern Montana.

Mid-Rivers has already demonstrated that it serves the public interest in rural Eastern Montana by providing wireless coverage in an area that has been previously unserved. This sparsely populated part of Montana was abandoned by original licensees, apparently due to lack of profitability. Cellular services in rural areas is our lifeline in times of emergency and disasters.

I urge your favorable consideration and support of Mid-Rivers petition to be designated an Eligible Telecommunications Carrier (ETC) and insure its eligibility for Universal Services Funding.

RESOLUTION NO. 2005-07

**RESOLUTION TO SUPPORT MID-RIVERS PETITION BEFORE
PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION**

WHEREAS, Cable & Communications Corporation dba Mid-Rivers Cellular is the only wireless (cellular) provider throughout much of Eastern Montana; and

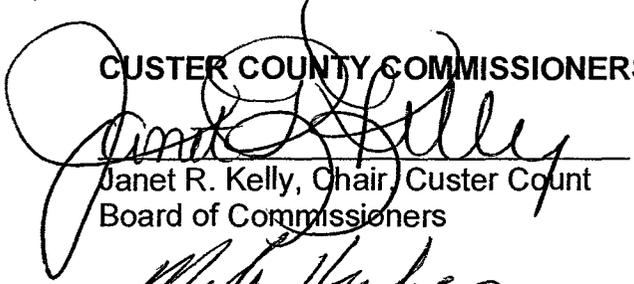
WHEREAS the wireless (cellular) service provided by Mid-Rivers Cellular is essential for the maintenance of public safety and security in Eastern Montana and, therefore, in the public interest; and

WHEREAS, designation as an Eligible Telecommunications Carrier (ETC) and eligibility for Universal Service funding would allow Mid-Rivers Cellular to further public safety and security through the construction of additional tower sites and by upgrading its current systems;

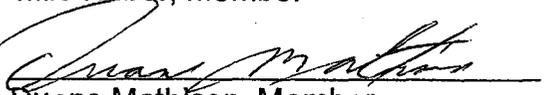
NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Custer County Commissioners, support of Mid-Rivers Cellular's petition to be designated as an Eligible Telecommunications Carrier (ETC) and to ensure eligibility for Universal Service Funding.

ADOPTED this 24th day of August, 2004.

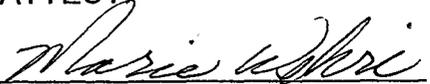
CUSTER COUNTY COMMISSIONERS


Janet R. Kelly, Chair, Custer County
Board of Commissioners


Milo Huber, Member


Duane Mathison, Member

ATTEST:


Marie Wehri, Clerk & Recorder

8-25-05: m w
Derry Anderson - MidRivers