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November 2, 2015

## **PSC actions extend life of single area code for Montana**

**HELENA, Mont. –November 2, 2015–** The Federal Communications Commission announced on Tuesday, October 27<sup>th</sup>, that actions taken by the Montana Public Service Commission has extended the life of 406 as the exclusive area code for the entire state of Montana.

With population increases and correlating phone number growth in the state, the exhaustion of the 406 area code will eventually force the state of Montana to adopt an additional three digit area code. The original projection released by the FCC in 2013 predicted exhaustion of the 406 area code by 2019. The Montana PSC took immediate action in an effort to delay that exhaustion forecast by requiring mandatory number pooling by phone service providers in the state.

The FCC's updated forecast for exhaustion of the 406 area code as a result of the PSC's actions is now projected in the year 2022. The FCC requires planning for a new area code to begin three years in advance of the forecasted area code exhaustion date.

In response to the FCC's updated forecast, PSC Commissioner Roger Koopman, R-Bozeman, said,

"We are very pleased to find out that our actions have kept the whole state of Montana 'the 406' for a while longer, and we are looking for any way possible to extend the exhaustion deadline out even further. It's likely that the state will eventually have to adopt an additional three digit area code to accommodate growth, but we hope to push that off for as long as possible, as we know our single area code is a matter of pride for many Montanans."

A key part of the extension of the forecasted exhaustion deadline is cooperation from Montana telecommunications providers with access to numbering resources, which have been very helpful in the number pooling process

Montana is one of twelve remaining states with a single area code.

To view the PSC's 2013 order requiring mandatory number pooling, visit: <http://1.usa.gov/1NDJXQs>

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