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TC97-069

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SOUTH DAKOTA PUBLIC  
UTILITIES COMMISSION

BEFORE THE PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION  
OF THE STATE OF SOUTH DAKOTA

IN THE MATTER OF THE REQUEST OF	)	
GOLDEN WEST TELECOMMUNICATIONS	)	REQUEST FOR ETC
COOPERATIVE, INC. FOR DESIGNATION	)	DESIGNATION
AS AN ELIGIBLE TELECOMMUNICATIONS	)	DOCKET TC97-
CARRIER	)	

Golden West Telecommunications Cooperative, Inc. ("Golden West Cooperative") pursuant to 47 United States Code Section 214(e) and 47 Code of Federal Regulations Section 54.201 hereby seeks from the Public Utilities Commission ("Commission") designation as an "eligible telecommunications carrier" within the local exchange areas that constitute its service area. In support of this request, Golden West Cooperative offers the following:

1. Pursuant to 47 U.S.C. § 214(e) it is the Commission's responsibility to designate local exchange carriers ("LECs") as "eligible telecommunications carriers" ("ETCs"), or in other words, to determine which LECs have assumed universal service obligations consistent with the federal law and should be deemed eligible to receive federal universal service support. At least one eligible telecommunications carrier is to be designated by the Commission for each service area in the State. However, in the case of areas served by "rural telephone companies", the Commission may not designate more than one LEC as an ETC without first finding that such additional designation would be in the public interest. Under 47 CFR § 54.201, beginning January 1, 1998, only telecommunications carriers that have received designation from the Commission to serve as an eligible telecommunications carrier within their service area will be eligible to receive federal universal service support.

2. Golden West Cooperative is the facilities-based local exchange carrier presently providing local exchange telecommunications services in the following exchanges:



Ardmore, SD	(459)	Interior, SD	(433)	Oral, SD	(424)
South Ardmore, NE	(453)	Kyle, SD	(455)	Philip, SD	(859)
Belvidere, SD	(344)	Long Valley, SD	(462)	Pine Ridge, SD	(867)
Buffalo Gap, SD	(833)	Martin, SD	(685)	Quinn, SD	(386)
Creighton, SD	(457)	Maurine, SD	(748)	Wall, SD	(279)
Edgemont, SD	(662)	Midland, SD	(843)	Wasta, SD	(993)
West Edgemont, WY	(663)	Milesville, SD	(544)	White Clay, NE	(862)
Enning, SD	(985)	New Underwood, SD	(754)	White River, SD	(259)
Faith (Rural), SD	(739)	Oelrichs, SD	(535)	Wicksville, SD	(798)
Hayes, SD	(567)	South Oelrichs, NE	(525)	Wood, SD	(452)
Hot Springs, SD	(745)				

Golden West Cooperative to its knowledge is the only carrier today providing local exchange telecommunications services in the above identified exchange areas.

3. Golden West Cooperative in accord with 47 CFR § 54.101 offers the following local exchange telecommunications services to all consumers throughout its service area:

- Voice grade access to the public switched network;
- Local exchange service including an amount of local usage free of per minute charges under a flat rated local service package and as part of a measured local service offering;
- Dual tone multi-frequency signaling;
- Access to emergency services such as 911 or enhanced 911 public services;
- Access to operator services;
- Access to interexchange service;
- Access to directory assistance; and
- Toll blocking service to qualified low-income consumers.

As noted above, Golden West Cooperative does provide toll limitation service in the form of toll blocking to qualifying consumers, however, the additional toll limitation service of "toll control" as defined in the new FCC universal service rules (47 CFR § 54.400(3)) is not provided. Golden West Cooperative is not aware that any local exchange carrier in South Dakota has a current capability to provide such service. The FCC gave no indication prior to the release of its universal service order (FCC 97-157) that toll control would be imposed as an ETC service requirement and, to our information and belief, as a result, LECs nationwide are not positioned to make the service immediately available. In order for Golden West Cooperative to provide the service, additional usage tracking and storage capabilities will have to be installed in its local switching equipment. At minimum, the service requires a switching software upgrade and at this time Golden West Cooperative is investigating and attempting to determine whether the necessary software has been developed and when it might become available.

Accordingly, Golden West is faced with exceptional circumstances concerning its ability to make the toll control service available as set forth in the FCC's universal service rules and must request a waiver from the requirement to provide such service. At this time, a waiver for a period of one year is requested. Prior to the end of the one year period, Golden West Cooperative will report back to the Commission with specific information indicating when the necessary network upgrades can be made and the service can be made available to assist low income customers. The Commission may properly grant a waiver from the "toll control" requirement pursuant to 47 CFR 54.101(c).

3. Golden West Cooperative has previously and will continue to advertise the availability of its local exchange services in media of general distribution throughout the exchange areas served. Prior to this filing, Golden West Coop has not generally advertised the prices charged for all of the above-identified services. It will do so going forward in accord with any specific advertising standards that the Commission may develop.

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5. Based on the foregoing, Golden West Coop respectfully request that the Commission.

(a) grant a temporary waiver of the requirement to provide "toll control" service; and

(b) grant an ETC designation to Golden West Coop covering all of the local exchange areas that constitute its present service area in the State.

Dated this \_\_\_\_ day of June, 1997.

Golden West Telecommunications  
Cooperative, Inc.

  
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Jack Brown, Manager