

**Before the
Federal Communications Commission
Washington, D.C. 20554**

In the Matter of)	
)	
Telecommunications Carriers Eligible to Receive)	WC Docket 09-197
Universal Service Support)	
)	
Western Wireless Corporation)	
)	
Petition for Designation as an Eligible)	
Telecommunications Carrier in the)	
State of Wyoming)	
)	
Petition for Designation as an Eligible)	
Telecommunications Carrier for the)	
Pine Ridge Reservation in South Dakota)	

ORDER

Adopted: May 11, 2011

Released: May 11, 2011

By the Chief, Telecommunications Access Policy Division, Wireline Competition Bureau:

1. In this order, we approve the requests of Western Wireless, LLC, successor by merger of Western Wireless Corporation d/b/a Verizon Wireless (Western Wireless), to relinquish its eligible telecommunications carrier (ETC) designations in the state of Wyoming and on the Pine Ridge Reservation in South Dakota.¹

2. Section 214(e)(6) of the Communications Act of 1934, as amended (Act), authorizes the Commission to designate ETCs when a state commission lacks jurisdiction.² The Commission must permit such ETCs to relinquish their designation “in any area served by more than one” ETC so long as “the remaining [ETCs] ensure that all customers served by the relinquishing carrier will continue to be served.”³

3. On December 26, 2000, the Wireline Competition Bureau (Bureau) designated Western Wireless as an ETC in certain areas in the state of Wyoming.⁴ On October 5, 2001, the Commission designated Western Wireless as an ETC on the Pine Ridge Reservation in South Dakota.⁵

¹ See Notice of Relinquishment of Eligible Telecommunications Carrier Designation, WC Docket No. 09-197 (filed Aug. 11, 2010) (Western Wireless Wyoming Petition); Notice of Relinquishment of Eligible Telecommunications Carrier Designation, WC Docket No. 09-197, at 2 (filed Aug. 11, 2010) (Western Wireless Pine Ridge Petition). No comments were filed in this proceeding.

² 47 U.S.C. § 214(e)(6).

³ 47 U.S.C. § 214(e)(4).

⁴ *Western Wireless Corporation Petition for Designation as an Eligible Telecommunications Carrier in the State of Wyoming*, CC Docket No. 96-45, Memorandum Opinion and Order, 16 FCC Rcd 48 (Wireline Comp. Bur. 2000) (*Western Wireless Wyoming Order*). The assigned study area code for Western Wireless’ designated service area in Wyoming defined in the *Western Wireless Wyoming Order* is 519002.

⁵ *Federal-State Joint Board on Universal Service; Western Wireless Corporation Petition for Designation as an Eligible Telecommunications Carrier for the Pine Ridge Reservation in South Dakota*, CC Docket 96-45,

4. In 2005, Alltel Corporation (Alltel) acquired Western Wireless.⁶ On January 9, 2009, Cellco Partnership d/b/a Verizon Wireless (Verizon Wireless) acquired Alltel and its subsidiaries, including Western Wireless.⁷ As a condition of the Alltel acquisition, Verizon Wireless voluntarily agreed to divest all customers, the network serving those customers, and certain other assets in 100 markets, including Wyoming and the Pine Ridge Reservation.⁸

5. Pursuant to section 214(e)(4) of the Act, Western Wireless filed a petition to relinquish its ETC designations in Wyoming and on the Pine Ridge Reservation in South Dakota.⁹ In its petition, Western Wireless asserts that multiple carriers are designated as ETCs in Wyoming and one other carrier is designated as an ETC on the Pine Ridge Reservation.¹⁰ Based on these circumstances, we find that Western Wireless is permitted to relinquish its ETC designation in Wyoming and on the Pine Ridge Reservation in South Dakota.¹¹

6. IT IS ORDERED that, pursuant to the authority contained in section 214(e)(4) of the Communications Act as amended, 47 U.S.C. § 214(e)(4), and the authority delegated in sections 0.91 and 0.291 of the Commission's Rules, 47 C.F.R. §§ 0.91, 0.291, the ETC designation of Western Wireless Corporation d/b/a Verizon Wireless IS RELINQUISHED in the state in Wyoming and on the Pine Ridge Reservation in South Dakota.

7. IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that, on behalf of its former affiliate Western Wireless Corporation, Verizon Wireless SHALL TRANSMIT a copy of this order to the Wyoming Public Service Commission and the South Dakota Public Utilities Commission and the Universal Service Administrative Company.

(...continued from previous page)

Memorandum Opinion and Order, 16 FCC Rcd 18133 (2001) (*Western Wireless Pine Ridge Order*). The assigned study area code for Western Wireless' designated service area on the Pine Ridge Reservation defined in the *Western Wireless Pine Ridge Order* is 399001.

⁶ *Id.*

⁷ *Application of Cellco Partnership d/b/a Verizon Wireless and Atlantis Holdings, LLC for Consent to Transfer Control of Licenses, Authorizations, and Spectrum Manager and de Facto Transfer of Leasing Arrangements*, WT Docket No. 08-95, Memorandum Opinion and Order and Declaratory Ruling, 23 FCC Rcd 17444 (2008).

⁸ *Id.*

⁹ See generally Western Wireless Wyoming Petition; Western Wireless Pine Ridge Petition.

¹⁰ The Western Wireless designated service area in Wyoming is served by the following ETCs: Golden West Telecommunications Coop, Qwest Corporation, Chugwater Telephone Co., Range Telephone Coop. Inc., RT Communications, Inc., CenturyLink, and in some locations, Union Cellular, Silver Star Telephone Co. Inc., and Advanced Communications Technology, Inc. See Western Wireless Wyoming Petition at 3. The designated service area on the Pine Ridge Reservation is served by the Golden West Telecommunications Coop. See Western Wireless Pine Ridge Petition at 4.

¹¹ The Universal Service Administrative Company (USAC) should discontinue the eligibility of study area codes 519002 and 399001, which are assigned to Western Wireless.

8. IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that, pursuant to section 1.102(b)(1) of the Commission's rules, 47 C.F.R. § 1.102(b)(1), this order SHALL BE EFFECTIVE upon release.

FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSSION

Trent B. Harkrader
Chief
Telecommunications Access Policy Division
Wireline Competition Bureau