

NUSF 99.16

Steve Meradith  
Regional Vice President, State Government Affairs  
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October 4<sup>th</sup>, 2018

Mr. Michael Hybl  
Executive Director  
Nebraska Public Service Commission  
300 The Atrium, 1200 "N" Street  
Lincoln, NE 68508C

**RE: In the Matter of the Nebraska Public Service Commission, on its own Motion to administer the Universal Service Fund High-Cost Program: Windstream Nebraska, Inc. Broadband Grant Requests**

Dear Mr. Hybl:

Windstream Nebraska, Inc. is filing six applications for projects that are all going to be deployed in the Ashland exchange. Those projects are Ashland-North, Ashland-Memphis Community, Ashland-Wann Community, Ashland-North CSA 1P, Ashland South CSA 6G and finally Ashland-South CSA 6K. Attached is the application for Ashland-Wann Community. We are seeking approval of all of these applications at the same time so we can effectively move into the construction phase. An electronic version of this filing has also been submitted to the NUSF Staff.

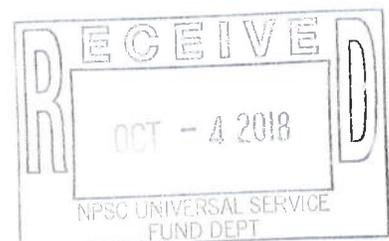
If you have any questions or require any additional information, please let me know.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Steve Meradith".

Steve Meradith  
Regional Vice President – State Government Affairs  
Windstream Communications  
1440 "M" Street  
Lincoln, NE 68508

Enclosures



WINSTREAM NEBRASKA, INC.

NUSF-99 PRICE CAP APPLICATION – Ashland EXCHANGE -Wann Community

**Checklist Item No. 1:**

A description of the proposed broadband project including download/upload speed capabilities which can be provided and a description of the proposed network infrastructure to be deployed. Minimum speed standards should be 4 mbps download and 1 mbps upload.

Windstream's Response:

Windstream is filing six applications for projects that are all going to be deployed in the Ashland exchange, those projects are Ashland – North, Ashland – Memphis Community, Ashland – Wann Community, Ashland – North CSA 1P, Ashland – South CSA 6G, Ashland – South CSA 6K. We are seeking approval of all of these applications at the same time, so we can effectively move into the construction phase.

Windstream submits the following project for the Commission's consideration of NUSF-99 broadband funding, to be constructed upon funding approval, using funding available from the 2016 funding allocation.

- Fiber fed DSLAM to serve a portion of the Northern area of the Ashland, NE ILEC Exchange (Partial funding requested)

The Wann community in the Ashland Exchange is not currently offered broadband service. This project intends to address these customers by placing a fiber fed DSLAM within an appropriate distance to provide a minimum of 10Mbps up to 100Mbps download speeds.

- The project will place one DSLAM site at a remote location approximately 7.5 miles north of the Central Office, along with fiber cable placed to the nearest available connection on an existing fiber route.
- The remote DSLAM will provide the broadband connection to the customers, and have fiber backhaul to the Central Office location.

Windstream projects the total deployment costs for this project is \$129,500 and Windstream is requesting Nebraska Universal Service Funding of \$73,383, not including ROW, IDC, and Tax. The difference between the total project costs and the requested funding is because Windstream is not seeking funding for the areas funded by the FCC's Connect America Fund Phase 2 program. Windstream is requesting that the funding for this project be applied against the remaining 2016 funds allotted to Windstream.

**Checklist Item No. 2:**

A list in Excel Format of all the census blocks where broadband facilities would be deployed for the proposed project, which shall include 2010 Census Block identification number of service area, by project.

Windstream's Response:

See Attached Checklist Item #2.

**Checklist Item No. 3:**

An estimate of the number of potential new broadband subscribers for each project.

Windstream's Response:

See Attached Checklist Item #3

**Checklist Item No. 4:**

An estimated schedule for broadband deployment.

Windstream Response:

Windstream stands ready to begin project work immediately upon approval of the application, the deployment schedule will be as indicated in the Attached Checklist Item #4.

**Checklist Item No. 5:**

A proposed budget, showing total project costs, in electronic format, with a detailed breakdown of the cost elements and a depreciation schedule showing the life of the investment.

Windstream Response:

Please see Attached Checklist Item #5 which also includes the depreciation schedule showing the life of investment for the major plant categories associated with these projects.

**Checklist Item No. 6:**

Proposed retail pricing, including both monthly recurring costs and nonrecurring costs for the new broadband service(s) to be offered. At a minimum the pricing should reflect the stand alone price for the speeds to be offered to the customer.

Windstream Response:

Attached Checklist Item #6 provides a listing of the retail pricing for the broadband services Windstream will be offering in the proposed service areas. This price list is consistent with Windstream pricing for similar services in other Nebraska exchanges.

**Checklist Item No. 7:**

The company's commitment to offer broadband services to all households within the service area of the project for a minimum of five (5) years.

Windstream Response:

If approved for funding, Windstream commits to offer broadband service to all households within the service area of the project for a minimum of five (5) years.

**Checklist Item No. 8:**

An affidavit from the company attesting 1) (a) that the area of the proposed project is a CAF II eligible area and have not refused CAF II funding, or (b) that the area of the proposed project is ineligible for CAF II funding. 2) That the company has done its due diligence to verify that comparable broadband does not already exist in the area of the proposed project. 3) The truth and accuracy of all information included in the project filing.

Windstream Response:

The Affidavit of Brad Brannon is provided in Attached Checklist Item #8.

**CHECK LIST #2 CENSUS BLOCKS - Ashland Exchange - Wann Community**

**Criteria for Determining NUSF Eligibility for Census Blocks in Priority Order for Projects Using Fixed Wireless Technology:**

- 1) If Census Block is CAF 2 - Not Eligible
- 2) If Census Block has Wireline Competitor with at least 10/1 broadband - Not Eligible
- 3) If Census Block Wireline Competitor is a Neighboring ILEC Sharing Service in the Census Block - Eligible
- 4) If Census Block has a Fixed Wireless Competitor with at least 10/1 Broadband but Does Not Provide Voice - Eligible
- 5) If proposal is for a wireline solution, then Fixed Wireless census blocks are counted - Eligible

| Census Blocks   | CAF 2 and Form 477 Status | Is Wireline Competitor a Neighboring ILEC? | Is Project Technology Wireline Based | NUSF Eligibility |
|-----------------|---------------------------|--|--------------------------------------|------------------|
| 311559684002099 | CAF2                      |  |                                      | CAF2             |
| 311559684002100 | CAF2                      |  |                                      | CAF2             |
| 311559684002102 | CAF2                      |  |                                      | CAF2             |
| 311559684002103 | CAF2                      |  |                                      | CAF2             |
| 311559684002109 | CAF2                      |  |                                      | CAF2             |
| 311559684002110 | CAF2                      |  |                                      | CAF2             |
| 311559684002112 | CAF2                      |  |                                      | CAF2             |
| 311559684002116 | CAF2                      |  |                                      | CAF2             |
| 311559684002122 | CAF2                      |  |                                      | CAF2             |
| 311559684002131 | CAF2                      |  |                                      | CAF2             |
| 311559684002132 | CAF2                      |  |                                      | CAF2             |
| 311559684002137 | CAF2                      |  |                                      | CAF2             |
| 311559684002158 | CAF2                      |  |                                      | CAF2             |
| 311559684002097 | Competition - FW          | No Wireline Competitor                     | Y                                    | NE BB Eligible   |
| 311559684002108 | Competition - FW          | No Wireline Competitor                     | Y                                    | NE BB Eligible   |
| 311559684002113 | Competition - FW          | No Wireline Competitor                     | Y                                    | NE BB Eligible   |
| 311559684002114 | Competition - FW          | No Wireline Competitor                     | Y                                    | NE BB Eligible   |
| 311559684002115 | Competition - FW          | No Wireline Competitor                     | Y                                    | NE BB Eligible   |
| 311559684002117 | Competition - FW          | No Wireline Competitor                     | Y                                    | NE BB Eligible   |
| 311559684002118 | Competition - FW          | No Wireline Competitor                     | Y                                    | NE BB Eligible   |
| 311559684002119 | Competition - FW          | No Wireline Competitor                     | Y                                    | NE BB Eligible   |
| 311559684002126 | Competition - FW          | No Wireline Competitor                     | Y                                    | NE BB Eligible   |
| 311559684002127 | Competition - FW          | No Wireline Competitor                     | Y                                    | NE BB Eligible   |
| 311559684002130 | Competition - FW          | No Wireline Competitor                     | Y                                    | NE BB Eligible   |
| 311559684002133 | Competition - FW          | No Wireline Competitor                     | Y                                    | NE BB Eligible   |
| 311559684002134 | Competition - FW          | No Wireline Competitor                     | Y                                    | NE BB Eligible   |
| 311559684002135 | Competition - FW          | No Wireline Competitor                     | Y                                    | NE BB Eligible   |
| 311559684002136 | Competition - FW          | No Wireline Competitor                     | Y                                    | NE BB Eligible   |
| 311559684002140 | Competition - FW          | No Wireline Competitor                     | Y                                    | NE BB Eligible   |
| 311559684002262 | Competition - FW          | No Wireline Competitor                     | Y                                    | NE BB Eligible   |

| Summary                     | # Census Blocks | %      |
|-----------------------------|-----------------|--------|
| CAF2                        | 13              | 43.3%  |
| <b>NE BB Eligible</b>       | 17              | 56.7%  |
| Competition - FW            | 0               | 0.0%   |
| Competition - Other         | 0               | 0.0%   |
| <b>Total</b>                | 30              | 100.0% |
| <br>                        |                 |        |
| <b>Eligible for Funding</b> | 17              | 56.7%  |

Check List #3 Subscribers - Ashland Exchange - Wann Community

| Exchange | # Locations in Deployment Area |
|----------|--------------------------------|
| Ashland  | 36                             |

Estimated Broadband Take Rate                      50%  
New Broadband Subscribers                              18

50% Take Rate assumption is likely low since broadband is generally not available due to long loop lengths

**Checklist Item #4 Estimated Schedule – Ashland Exchange – Wann Community**

Proposed Schedule: Total time for project is 120 to 150 days:

|  | <u>DSLAM Site</u>      |
|--|------------------------|
| Engineering design & approval              | 30 Calendar Days       |
| Permitting & material acquisition          | 30 Calendar Days       |
| Equipment deployment, testing, and turn-up | 60 to 90 Calendar Days |

Schedule is subject to seasonal limitations regarding when construction can commence or be completed.



**Check List #6 Pricing - Ashland Exchange - Wann Community**

| <b>Price for Internet Only (HSI Simple or Solo Internet)</b> |  |                       |                        |                  |
|--|--|-----------------------|------------------------|------------------|
| <b>Speed</b>   |  | <b>Standard Price</b> | <b>Current Promo</b>   | <b>Net Price</b> |
| Up to 25Mb   |  | \$45                  | \$10 off for 12 months | \$35             |
| 50Mb   |  | \$45                  | \$10 off for 12 months | \$35             |
| 100Mb  |  | \$45                  | \$10 off for 12 months | \$35             |
| 1 Gbps   |  | \$75                  | \$20 off for 12 months | \$55             |

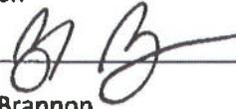
| <b>Price for Internet + Bundle Phone Adder</b> |  |                       |                        |                  |
|--|--|-----------------------|------------------------|------------------|
| <b>Speed</b>                                   |  | <b>Standard Price</b> | <b>Current Promo</b>   | <b>Net Price</b> |
| Up to 25Mb                                     |  | \$65                  | \$10 off for 12 months | \$55             |
| 50Mb   |  | \$65                  | \$10 off for 12 months | \$55             |
| 100Mb  |  | \$65                  | \$10 off for 12 months | \$55             |
| 1 Gbps   |  | \$95                  | \$20 off for 12 months | \$75             |

**\$50 Activation Fee and Free Professional Installation**

**AFFIDAVIT OF BRAD BRANNON**

I, Brad Brannon, being first duly sworn upon oath, state as follows:

1. I am currently employed by Windstream as the Vice President Consumer & Small Business - Business Intelligence. In that capacity, I am personally familiar with the company's network structure in Nebraska.
2. I have reviewed the foregoing project filing and certify that (a) the areas of the proposed project are CAF II eligible areas and have not refused CAF II funding, or the areas of the proposed project are ineligible for CAF II funding; (b) Windstream has done its due diligence to verify that comparable broadband does not already exist in the areas of the proposed project that we are requesting funding; and (c) all information included in the project filing is true and accurate to the best of my knowledge and belief.

  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 Brad Brannon

**ACKNOWLEDGMENT**

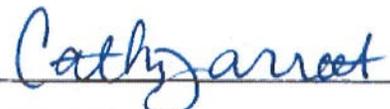
STATE OF ARKANSAS )

:SS



COUNTY OF ~~PULASKI~~ Lonoke

Subscribed, sworn to and acknowledged before me on this 1<sup>st</sup> day of October, 2018  
by Brad Brannon

  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 Notary Public

My Commission Expires:  
09-15-2024