

IDAHO PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION

Case No. GNR-T-04-2

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Commission to hear oral arguments in Qwest-Soldiers Meadow case

Boise – The Idaho Public Utilities Commission will take up oral arguments on Sept. 13 on a motion by Qwest Corporation to dismiss a complaint from some Nez Perce County residents.

Residents of the Soldiers Meadow Reservoir area want Qwest to extend landline service to their properties. Qwest maintains that because Soldiers Meadows is not in the telephone company's assigned service area, it is not obligated to serve the customers unless they are willing to pay the approximate \$7,800 per customer to extend the service.

Commission staff surveyed residents of Soldiers Meadow, an unincorporated area of primarily vacation homes, to measure interest in landline service into the area. Nineteen of 22 surveyed were interested in service. Seven said they were not willing to pay for the extension, six said they would pay up to \$200 and another six said they would pay up to \$1,000. Qwest estimates construction costs would be at least \$180,000. Qwest states it is willing to provide service only if the potential customers agree to pay for installation.

Soldiers Meadow residents believe they should be allowed service without installation charges, since residents of Forest, about four miles away, receive service. Qwest alleges that Forest is in its certificated service territory, while Soldiers Meadow is not.

The oral arguments, scheduled for Sept. 13 at 3 p.m. (2 p.m. Pacific Standard Time), will address only Qwest's motion to dismiss the Soldiers Meadow complaint. Oral argument will take place at the commission hearing room, 472 W. Washington St. in Boise. To accommodate Soldiers Meadow residents, a conference call location will be set up in the back conference room of the Lewiston City Hall, 1134 F St. The commission will place a call to the Lewiston location. At that time, Qwest will present its argument and then residents of Soldiers Meadow will be given an opportunity to respond.

Documents related to this case, including those from Qwest as well from Soldiers Meadow residents, can be accessed on the commission's Web site at www.puc.state.id.us. Click on "File Room," then on "Telecommunications Cases," and scroll down to Case No. GNR-T-04-2.

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