(text box: 1)BEFORE THE IDAHO PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION

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| IN THE MATTER OF THE PETITIONS FOR EXTENDED AREA SERVICE (EAS) BETWEEN RICHFIELD AND THE MAGIC VALLEY EAS REGION. | )))))) | CASE NO. GNR-T-97-4NOTICE OF PETITION |

In April 1997, the Commission received petitions containing more than 700 signatures requesting toll-free calling between the Richfield exchange and the Magic Valley region.  In Case No. USW-S-96-4 the Commission approved three calling areas or extended area service (EAS) regions in southern Idaho.  Included in these three calling regions is a Magic Valley region which includes the following U S WEST exchanges: Bliss, Buhl, Castleford, Dietrich, Eden, Gooding, Hagerman, Hazelton, Jerome, Kimberly, Murtaugh, Shoshone, Twin Falls, and Wendell. The petitions in this case seek to have Richfield included in the Magic Valley EAS region.  Local exchange service in the Magic Valley region is provided by U S WEST Communications and in the Richfield exchange by PTI Communications.

YOU ARE HEREBY NOTIFIED that the petitions generally assert that residents of Richfield want toll-free calling between Richfield and Magic Valley because they are part of the Magic Valley and already use U S WEST service lines.(footnote: 1)  The petitions maintain that residents of Richfield do not have toll-free access to the Magic Valley area where police, medical assistance, schools and county offices are located. The petitions state that students in Richfield attend the Shoshone School District which is a toll call from Richfield, however, if Richfield became part of the Magic Valley EAS region would be toll-free. They further assert that there is no geographic barrier between the Richfield exchange and the Magic Valley EAS region to prevent service.  The petitions also claim that EAS calling will make it easier to gain access to computer and information service companies, e.g., obtaining Internet access. Finally, the petitions indicate that many of the citizens are willing to pay a monthly fee for extended area service.

YOU ARE FURTHER NOTIFIED that this proceeding has been initiated on the Commission’s own motion to consider the reasonableness of providing EAS between the Richfield exchange and the Magic Valley region.  Further scheduling will be accomplished at a later time.

YOU ARE FURTHER NOTIFIED that all proceedings in this case will be held pursuant to the Commission's jurisdiction under Title 61 of the Idaho Code and that the Commission may enter any final Order consistent with its authority under Title 61.

YOU ARE FURTHER NOTIFIED that all proceedings in this matter will be conducted pursuant to the Commission's Rules of Procedure, IDAPA 31.01.01.000 et seq.

YOU ARE FURTHER NOTIFIED that the petition in Case No. GNR-T-97-4 can be reviewed at the Commission’s office during regular business hours.

YOU ARE FURTHER NOTIFIED that U S WEST and PTI Communications are designated as parties to this case.

 DATED at Boise, Idaho this                  day of April 1997.

Myrna J. Walters

Commission Secretary

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**FOOTNOTES**

1:

 “Toll-free” EAS is something of a misnomer because the costs associated with converting a former long-distance toll route to a toll-free EAS route are basically recovered from the affected customers by increasing their rates for local service.

**COMMENTS AND ANNOTATIONS**

Text Box 1:

**TEXT BOXES**

Office of the Secretary

Service Date

April 21, 1997