

BEFORE THE NEBRASKA PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION

In the Matter of the Application) Application No. C-2113
of Great Plains Communications,)
Inc., Blair, seeking authority to)
remove the "free line" between) ORDER OPENING DOCKET
the communities of Huntley-Ragan)
and Wilcox, Nebraska.) Entered: September 8, 1999

BY THE COMMISSION:

On August 27, 1999, the Commission received a letter from Great Plains Communications, Inc. (Great Plains), Blair, Nebraska, which, for purposes made clear here, is being treated as an application for removal of a "free line" that now exists between the communities of Huntley-Ragan and Wilcox, Nebraska. That line, which allowed for toll-free calling between the two communities, was in place when Great Plains purchased the Continental of Nebraska (Continental) telephone exchanges in 1985. That "free line" was never included in a tariff filed by Continental.

In February 1999, the subscribers of Wilcox filed a petition for extended area service (EAS) between Wilcox and Huntley-Ragan. That petition was dismissed for lack of support. At or near that same time, subscribers of the Huntley-Ragan exchange filed a petition for EAS to Wilcox, which this Commission docketed under C-1994. A usage study determined that, pursuant to Commission rules, traffic was sufficient to warrant subscriber balloting. In July 1999, Huntley-Ragan subscribers were asked to vote on whether they were willing to pay \$3.85 per month for unlimited calling to Wilcox. Of 88 ballots returned, there were 28 "yes" votes and 60 "no" votes resulting in a failure of the EAS petition.

It should be noted for the record that Great Plains indicated to its customers, in a letter explaining the EAS balloting, that the failure of the EAS vote would result in Great Plains working with the Public Service Commission to remove the "free line" that existed between the two communities. A letter sent by Great Plains to its subscribers following the failed EAS vote also indicated that the company would make application to have the "free line" removed. The latter letter included the Commission's address and phone number to allow its subscribers to file comment with the Commission. A copy of that letter is made part of the file in this docket.

O R D E R

IT IS THEREFORE ORDERED by the Nebraska Public Service Commission that this docket be opened to determine whether Great Plains Communications, Inc. should be allowed to remove the "free line" that exists between the communities of Huntley-Ragan, Nebraska and Wilcox, Nebraska.

MADE AND ENTERED in Lincoln, Nebraska, on this 8th day of

September, 1999.

NEBRASKA PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION

COMMISSIONERS CONCURRING:

Chairman

ATTEST:

Executive Director

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