BEFORE THE NEBRASKA PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION

In the Matter of the)	Application No. NUSF-99.35
Nebraska Public Service	.)	
Commission, on its own)	
Motion, to administer the)	
Universal Service Fund High-)	GRANTED
Cost Program: Windstream)	
Nebraska Inc., Broadband)	
Grant Request.)	Entered: January 15, 2019

BY THE COMMISSION:

OPINION AND FINDINGS

By Application filed December 6, 2018, Windstream Nebraska Inc., (Windstream) seeks high-cost support from the Nebraska Universal Service Fund (NUSF). Notice of the application appeared in The Daily Record, Omaha, Nebraska and in the Hastings Tribune on December 12, 2018. No protests or interventions were filed; therefore, the Commission processed this application pursuant to its Rule of Modified Procedure.

Windstream seeks support in the amount of four hundred five thousand five hundred fifty-nine dollars (\$405,559) for the construction of facilities to the southwestern area of the Hastings, Nebraska ILEC exchange. According Windstream, this area of the Hastings Exchange currently served with broadband. This project intends to address these customers and others along the route by placing fiber fed DSLAMs within an appropriate distance to provide a minimum of 10 Mbps up to 100 Mbps download speeds. Windstream will place a DSLAM site at a remote location approximately 10 miles southwest of the Central Office along with fiber cable placed from the nearest available existing fiber splice.

Windstream projects the total deployment cost for the project is \$405,559 and is seeking NUSF support for that amount. Windstream is requesting that the funding for this project be applied against the remaining 2017 funds allotted to Windstream.

Windstream estimates the project will be completed within 180 days of application approval. If the project is approved, Windstream will commit to providing broadband service to all households in the project area for a minimum of five years.

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The Commission staff conducted an analysis of the census blocks submitted and compared the information against the Connect America Fund Phase II eligible areas. The Commission staff also reviewed the census block information and compared it to its wireline Broadband Mapping data, which uses FCC Form 477 deployment data collected by the FCC biannually. The Commission finds support should be granted in the amount of \$405,559 as requested by Windstream.

Requests for Reimbursement:

Windstream must first make the investment and then may file a request for reimbursement with the NUSF Department. Windstream does not need to complete the construction process prior to seeking reimbursement; rather, it may work with the NUSF Department to develop intervals at which reimbursement can be sought. The NUSF Department will reimburse Windstream for capital improvement costs made relative to and as included in the application filed by the company for the projects approved in this Order. Once the investment is made, Windstream shall file a request for support, provide the NUSF Department with documentation consistent with Department policy and shall certify to the Department that it had made the described investment for the provision, maintenance and upgrading of facilities and services in the described rural areas.

Reporting Requirements:

Windstream shall file, on an annual basis, consistent federally designated eligible telecommunications carriers (ETCs), the information required by the Commission's Telecommunications Rules pertaining to ETCs investment information required by the Commission's Order in NUSF-66. The report should make clear Commission that Windstream will not request reimbursement for equipment where grant money was also received from another source. Windstream shall file its annual report on or before June 1 of each year.

In addition, the Applicant shall be required to complete the approved projects within two (2) years from the date of this Order unless good cause is shown for a later completion date. Application No. NUSF-99.35

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Broadband Commitments:

The Commission maintains broadband availability data and updates that information on at least an annual basis. As a condition of this support, Windstream must report broadband availability to the Commission upon request. Windstream must also confirm that it will not seek duplicative support through the FCC's funding mechanisms.

ORDER

IT IS THEREFORE ORDERED by the Nebraska Public Service Commission that the above-captioned application submitted by Windstream be and it is hereby granted as described herein.

IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that Windstream shall be subject to all terms and conditions adopted in this Order.

ENTERED AND MADE EFFECTIVE at Lincoln, Nebraska, this 15th day of January, 2019.

NEBRASKA PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION

COMMISSONERS CONCURRING:

Chair

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Executive Director

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