

COMMONWEALTH OF KENTUCKY
BEFORE THE PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION

In the Matter of:

ELECTRONIC APPLICATION OF GIBSON)	CASE NO.
CONNECT, LLC FOR DESIGNATION AS AN)	2021-00006
ELIGIBLE TELECOMMUNICATIONS CARRIER)	

ORDER

Gibson Connect, LLC (Gibson Connect) is a facilities-based competitive local exchange carrier (CLEC) and a wholly owned subsidiary of Gibson Electric Membership Corporation. On September 27, 2018, Gibson Connect petitioned the Commission for designation as an eligible telecommunications carrier (ETC) pursuant to 47 U.S.C. § 214(e) and 47 C.F.R. § 54.201–207 in numerous census blocks.¹ The Commission granted the request on February 25, 2019.² Gibson Connect requests its ETC designation to be amended to include those areas where Gibson Connect has been allocated Rural Digital Opportunity Fund (RDOF) Phase I support as a winner in the Federal Communications Commission’s (FCC) RDOF Phase I auction (Auction 904).³ Gibson Connect additionally requests the Commission grant it the authority to offer Lifeline throughout the service territory of its parent company Gibson Electric Membership Corporation.⁴

¹ Case No. 2018-00333, *Petition of Gibson Connect, LLC for Designation as an Eligible Telecommunications Carrier*.

² *Id.*

³ Application at 1.

⁴ *Id.* at 2 and Exhibit A2.

Gibson Connect, through its participation in the Co-op Connections Consortium, seeks ETC status to serve 190 census blocks in Kentucky in the FCC's Auction 904.⁵ Gibson Connect is requesting that the census blocks outside its existing ETC designation also be awarded ETC status.⁶ Gibson Connect has been operating as a competitive local exchange carrier via its own facilities and continues to meet the obligations required by its original ETC Designation. FCC rules require winning bidders to receive ETC-designation in the RDOF areas no later than 180 days after the public notice identifying the winning bidders.⁷

Gibson Connect has demonstrated through its petition that it understands and will comply with all requirements of 47 C.F.R. § 54.201–207.⁸ Gibson Connect has provided an affidavit certifying it will use federal universal support “only for the provision, maintenance and upgrading of facilities and service for which the support is necessary” consistent with Section 254(e) of the Telecommunications Act of 1996.⁹

Gibson Connect has provided sufficient evidence for this Commission to grant ETC status in the requested areas of the state of Kentucky. This designation will benefit consumers in Kentucky by expanding the range of competitive choices and by providing an incentive for incumbent telephone companies to improve their existing networks.

⁵ Rural Digital Opportunity Fund Phase 1 Auction (Auction 904) Closes, Winning Bidders Announced, FCC Form 683 Due January 29, 2021, Public Notice, 35 FCC Rcd 13888, Att. A (2020) (Closing Public Notice) and Exhibit A1.

⁶ See Attachment A to the Application.

⁷ 47 C.F.R. § 54.804(b)(5).

⁸ Application at 4–7.

⁹ See Attachment B to the Application.

Therefore, the Commission finds it is in the public interest to designate Gibson Connect as an ETC in additional areas of the state.

Having reviewed the evidence of record and being otherwise sufficiently advised, the Commission HEREBY ORDERS that:

1. Gibson Connect is designated as an ETC in the census blocks in Attachment A1 to the application and authorized to receive High-Cost and Low-Income Support in those areas.

2. Gibson Connect is designated as an ETC for the purpose of offering Lifeline service and receiving support from both Federal and State USF in the service area of its parent company, Gibson Electric Membership Corporation, as depicted in Attachment A2 of the application .

3. Gibson Connect has certified to the Commission that it will comply with the FCC's criteria, in accordance with 47 U.S.C. § 254(e), and is therefore eligible to receive Universal Service Fund support for the current certification period.

4. The Executive Director shall serve a copy of this Order upon the FCC and the Universal Service Administrative Company.

By the Commission



ATTEST:


Executive Director

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