

NEWS RELEASE- FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

UTE INDIAN TRIBE BUSINESS COMMITTEE SECURES FCC SPECTRUM LICENSE TO EXPAND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES ON THE UINTAH AND OURAY RESERVATION

Ft. Duchesne, UT — November 2, 2020. The Ute Indian Tribal Business Committee is pleased to announce that its application to the Federal Communications Commission (“FCC”) has been approved to award the Ute Indian Tribe (“Tribe”) a license for 2.5 GHz spectrum across the Uintah and Ouray Reservation (“Reservation”). The Tribe had applied for this license under the FCC’s Tribal Priority Window, which, subject to certain restrictions, provided Indian tribes the first opportunity to procure a license for spectrum within their tribal lands – and to do so at no cost to tribes. The Tribal Business Committee had long supported the inter-tribal initiative for FCC to extend these licenses to Tribes, which has now established a process by which Tribes can maintain ownership over spectrum within its sovereign territory.

Spectrum, in the context of the telecommunications industry, refers to invisible radio frequencies that wireless electromagnetic signals can travel over to convey information across a telecommunication network, such as a cellular phone network.

The Tribe’s new FCC spectrum license will open up a wide range of valuable opportunities on the Reservation. With radio spectrum of the 2.5 GHz band, Indian tribes and/or internet service providers can deploy 5G networks within tribal lands that can support many wireless technology services, such as telemedicine, cellular phones, precision agriculture, cloud storage, and the Internet of Things. The license could also be leased to a third party such as internet or cellular service providers to generate a new revenue source for the Tribe. This broadband is capable of providing service in high density population areas as well as rural areas and, aside from its commercial uses, the 2.5 GHz band could be used for educational, public health, and governmental purposes, as well as household use. The Tribe’s new license could be used to broadcast educational programs, utilize telemedicine applications, and improve emergency response services. The Business Committee is excited to bring these new opportunities to the Tribe’s membership.

The Business Committee is hard at work assessing the various options for use of the Tribe’s FCC spectrum license in order to move forward with development in the best interest of Tribal members.

Moving forward, the Business Committee will be further considering the best options for rollout of the broadband network; identifying the locations where service would be provided and the number of users at those locations; identifying existing cellular towers and potential locations for new towers; and determining how the network will be owned and managed in order to maximize the value of this asset for the benefit of the Tribal membership.

About the Ute Indian Tribe-The Ute Indian Tribe resides on the Uintah and Ouray Reservation in northeastern Utah. Three bands of Utes comprise the Ute Indian Tribe: the Whiteriver Band, the Uncompahgre Band, and the Uintah Band. The Tribe has a membership of more than three thousand individuals, with over half living on the Uintah and Ouray Reservation. The Ute Indian Tribe operates its own tribal government and oversees approximately 1.3 million acres of trust land which contains significant oil and gas deposits. The Tribal Business Committee is the governing council of the Tribe.