

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

CRESTON / COLUMBUS EXTENDED AREA SERVICE BEGINS DECEMBER 16

Beginning December 16th the residents of Creston and Columbus will be able to call each other without incurring a per call toll charge as a result of a consumer-initiated petition to the Nebraska Public Service Commission last year.

The Nebraska PSC, the state agency that regulates telecommunications in Nebraska, received a petition from the citizens of Creston on November 27, 2002 requesting initiation of the process that establishes extended area service (EAS.) A study of the telephone traffic between Creston and Columbus by Qwest Communications, the local telecommunications provider in Creston, determined that extended area service was warranted and Qwest filed proposed rates for the service. A ballot, which included the proposed monthly rates, was mailed to the residents of Creston and returned directly to the PSC for tabulation. The initiative was approved by 71 percent of the 139 customers that received a ballot.

The extended area service from Creston to Columbus will cost residential customers of Creston an additional \$1.80 per month and business customers of Creston an additional \$2.00 per month. For service to Humphrey, Creston customers currently pay 50 cents and one dollar per month for residential and business EAS respectively. Frontier, local service provider for Columbus, will charge residential and business customers an additional \$0.05 per month for the extended area service from Columbus to Creston.

Fourth District Commissioner Rod Johnson stated, “We are extremely pleased for the community to see that all of the hard work they put into this effort paid off for the benefit of the people of Creston.”