

**SIERRA COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS'  
AGENDA TRANSMITTAL & RECORD OF PROCEEDINGS**

<b>MEETING DATE:</b>  <b>DEPARTMENT:</b>  <b>PHONE NUMBER:</b>  <b>REQUESTED BY:</b>	<b>TYPE OF AGENDA ITEM:</b> REGULAR          CONSENT          TIMED  <b>SUPPORTIVE DOCUMENT ATTACHED:</b> RESOLUTION          MEMO AGREEMENT          OTHER _____
<b>AGENDA ITEM:</b>	
<b>BACKGROUND INFORMATION:</b>	
<b>FUNDING SOURCE:</b> <b>GENERAL FUND IMPACT:</b>	<b>OTHER FUND:</b> <b>AMOUNT: \$</b>
<b>ARE ADDITIONAL PERSONNEL REQUIRED?</b>  YES          NO  TYPE OF EMPLOYEE	<b>IS THIS ITEM ALLOCATED IN THE BUDGET?</b>  YES          NO  <b>IS A BUDGET TRANSFER REQUIRED?</b>  YES          NO
<b>SPACE BELOW FOR CLERK'S USE</b>	
<b>BOARD ACTION:</b>  APPROVED                  APPROVED AS AMENDED  ADOPTED                  ADOPTED AS AMENDED  DENIED                  OTHER  NO ACTION TAKEN	<b>SET PUBLIC HEARING FOR:</b> _____ <b>DIRECTION TO:</b> _____ <b>REFERRED TO:</b> _____ <b>CONTINUED TO:</b> _____ <b>AUTHORIZATION GIVEN TO:</b> _____
<b>BOARD VOTE:</b> BY CONSENSUS AYES: ABSTAIN: NOES: ABSENT:	RESOLUTION 2024- _____ AGREEMENT 2024- _____ ORDINANCE _____
<b>COMMENTS:</b>	

\_\_\_\_\_  
CLERK OF THE BOARD

\_\_\_\_\_  
DATE

**MEMO:**

**Subject:** Approval of letter of opposition to AT&T's California Applications 22-03-002 and 22-03-003 before the California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC) with respect to its eligible telecommunications carrier designation and carrier of last resort designation.

**Department:** Lee Adams, District 1 & Lila Heuer, District 2

**Background:** For decades, AT&T has been obligated to provide telecommunications to a large part of rural California. It is now asking for relief of this obligation as well as discontinuing to provide copper line service. It is arguing that there is one other company that could provide service, an unknown company headquartered in Wyoming. If approved by the CPUC, there are strong concerns on the impact to the telecommunication system in western Sierra County. The loss of copper line service would severely impact telephone service during times of power outages, including severe impact to local Emergency services dispatch. RCRC has provided a letter of opposition on behalf of the 40 rural counties it represents.

# SIERRA COUNTY

Board of Supervisors  
P.O. Drawer D  
Downieville, California 95936  
Telephone (530) 289-3295  
Fax (530) 289-2830



February 6, 2024

California Public Utilities Commission  
Public Advisor's Office  
505 Van Ness Avenue  
San Francisco, CA. 94102

Subject: Application 22-03-002 and Application 22-03-003

Madam/Sir:

Please consider this letter a protest to the above applications, and a request from the County of Sierra that you deny both of these applications by AT&T California.

No doubt you have heard many concerns from rural California, and the AT&T service area of western Sierra County is some of the most rural in the state. Over the past few decades, AT&T's business model has been extremely detrimental to the safety of all in Sierra County, whether it be to residents or visitors to the county.

AT&T deployed U-verse platform telephone service by offering it as a reduced rate option for copper-based lines. In doing so, they neglected to explain its inability to work during times of power outages, something that happens frequently due to our weather and geographic demographics. Many customers changed, and they had to fight hard to get their copper service restored once they experienced telephone service loss during power outages.

Due to our geographic and rural demographic setting, cellular service is quite limited even within our townsites, and when available, it too is supported mostly by extenders within residential U-verse systems. And it too is fraught with reliability issues due to weather and other emergency situations.

Sierra County elevations range from 2,200 to 8,900 feet, with heavy snow and winter conditions a common occurrence here. That winter weather brings with it power outages that kill non-copper-based phone systems. In the peak of our summer fire season, public safety power shutoffs (PSPS) occur when our local communities are at their biggest risk of wildfire, and then too, non-copper-based phone systems fail. As well, a number of western Sierra County fire agency dispatch services rely on copper-based phones in order to have consistent communication dispatch abilities.

In addition, AT&T has made public telephones an endangered species and we can only identify two in western Sierra County. In the past they were a presence in every western Sierra County community, with at least four in our county seat of Downieville (and today there are none). Anyone traveling needs to try and find a U-verse based hot spot or try and find an open business during an emergency. During times of power outages, they are without any option of communication.

**Lee Adams**  
District No. 1  
P.O. Box 1  
Downieville, CA 95936

**Lila Heuer**  
District No. 2  
P.O. Box 485  
Sierra City, CA 96125

**Paul Roen**  
District No. 3  
P.O. Box 43  
Calpine, CA 96124

**Terry LeBlanc**  
District No. 4  
P.O. Box 387  
Loyalton, CA 96118

**Sharon Dryden**  
District No. 5  
P.O. Box 246  
Loyalton, CA 96118

In its applications, AT&T notes there are nine wire centers with only one '*alternative*' to AT&T services (and three of those wire centers are in Sierra County). They also note these nine wire centers *only* support 110 lifeline customers, and .02% of their customers are system wide. Their statement infers that the customers in these nine wire centers are not worth worrying about due to their limited numbers. We find those statements demeaning.

The one '*alternative*' they offer is a company located in the state of Wyoming and for which this board has no institutional history. Should a company like AT&T as a regulated utility wish to do business in California, they should not be allowed to operate in areas with a larger profit margin while trying to escape their mandated operations in less lucrative areas.

While Sierra County is home to 3,000 residents, its landmass is comprised of 70% national forest system lands with visitors year around that far exceeds our permanent population. Additionally, state route 49 and its Yuba Pass is often an alternative winter travel route to a closed or snow impacted Donner Summit.

In 1936, the Rural Electrification Act was passed by congress in order to close the gap and bring reliable electrical power to farms and other rural areas. When adopted, 3% of farms had commercial electrical power, and by 1956 some 90% of those farms were so served.

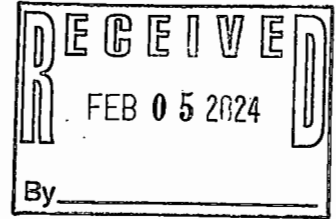
Sadly, the gap between urban and rural areas on the subject of both cellular and broadband service remains huge. Instead of allowing AT&T to make the situation worse in their rural California service area, please deny these applications and instead encourage, or better yet, mandate them to enhance the services in these areas to what they once were and to what urban areas have today.

Sincerely,

SIERRA COUNTY  
BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

PAUL ROEN  
Chairman

Cc: Hon. Megan Dahle, California State Assembly, 1<sup>st</sup> District  
Hon. Brian Dahle, California State Senate, 1<sup>st</sup> District  
Leigh Kammerich, Policy Advocate, Rural County Representatives of California  
Jacqueline Wong-Hernandez, Legislative Affairs Chief, California State Association of Counties



PO Box 216  
Sierra City, CA 96125  
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January 30, 2024

Sierra County Board of Supervisors  
Post Office Box Drawer D  
Downieville, CA 95936

AT&T Notice of Pending Regulatory Application to the CPUC re Landline Services

Dear Chairman Roen and Board Members,

Following is a copy of our recent comments to the CPUC regarding their File No. A2303003:

***Our place of business, Sardine Lake Resort, is located in an isolated, mountainous portion of the 96125 zip code within the Tahoe National Forest. We have no form of viable communication at this location other than our traditional analog phone service as there is no cell service and satellites cannot reach stable signal due to the mountains and forest interference. Our copper phone line is the only outside contact we have available for 911 emergency calls and critical business contacts (approximately 250 annual (weekly) cabin rental families and nearly 10,000 restaurant dinner guests seasonally). Without the copper lines, our business will shut down resulting in a significant loss of transient occupancy tax and sales tax revenue to Sierra County as well as a heartbreaking end to an 85-year old family business and laying off of our 20 plus local employees. Please deny AT&T their request to let them off the hook after we have paid dearly for antiquated service.***

We don't need to explain to your board how devastating this loss of essential service will be to our business and the County as a whole. We implore you to make every effort to derail AT&T's request.

Sincerely,

Thomas B. Hunt, President  
Sardine Lake Resort, Inc.  
Personal Phone (530)277-4081