



February 26, 2004

Marlene H. Dortch, Secretary  
Federal Communications Commission  
Office of the Secretary  
445 12th Street, SW  
Washington, DC 20554

Re: Ex Parte Presentation, MB Docket No. 03-185.

Dear Ms. Dortch:

The Association of Public Television Stations (“APTS”) hereby notifies the Commission of the following *ex parte* meeting in the above captioned proceeding. On February 23, 2004, Lonna Thompson, Vice President and General Counsel for APTS, Andrew Cotlar, Assistant General Counsel for APTS, Peter Morrill, General Manager of Idaho Public Television (via telephone), Ted Garcia, General Manager and CEO of KNME in Albuquerque, New Mexico (representing stations KNME, KENW and KRWG, collectively New Mexico Public Television), and Mark Stanislawski, General Manager of KSYS in Medford Oregon, met with the following individuals:

W. Kenneth Ferree, Media Bureau Chief  
Barbara Kreisman, Media Bureau, Video Division Chief  
Keith Larson, Media Bureau Chief Engineer; and  
Shaun Maher, Media Bureau.

The participants discussed the need for digital translators in rural areas and described the noncommercial educational services such translators can provide. APTS discussed the substance of its comments and replies in the above captioned proceeding, including the need to limit applications by geography, the need to limit multiple inter-state applications and the need to encourage engineering solutions to resolve apparently mutually exclusive applications. The participants emphasized the impracticality of a “hot-switch” in lieu of authorizing additional channels for digital translators. The participants also discussed the recent announcement by the Department of Agriculture’s Rural Utilities Service of grant awards to financially support the build-out of digital facilities in rural areas, including the build-out of digital translators, contingent on the completion of the Commission’s proceeding. In all other respects, the participants made statements consistent with the policy positions taken by APTS comments and replies. Mr. Stanislawski separately discussed his interest in using low power on-channel repeater technology to reach mountainous and isolated communities in southern Oregon.

The attached materials were provided during the meeting.

Sincerely,

/s/ Andrew D. Cotlar

Assistant General Counsel



# NEWS RELEASE

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**Release No. 0079.04**

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## USDA ANNOUNCES \$15 MILLION IN PUBLIC TELEVISION STATION DIGITAL TRANSITION GRANTS

WASHINGTON, Feb. 20, 2004—Agriculture Secretary Ann M. Veneman today announced the selection of 16 recipients in 13 states to receive \$15 million in grant funds to finance the conversion of television services to digital broadcasting for small rural public television stations.

“These grants will help bring digital-age broadcasting to rural America,” Veneman said. “Many rural communities depend on public television stations for services ranging from educational course content in their schools to local news, weather and agricultural reports. The recipients selected for the competitive grant program have significant need in their communities.”

As part of the nation's transition to digital television, the Federal Communications Commission required all television broadcasters to initiate the broadcast of a digital television signal by May 1, 2003, and to cease analog television broadcasts on December 31, 2006. About half of the nation's 357 public television stations did not meet the deadline to initiate digital broadcasting, and have received extensions to May 1, 2004. To assist stations with the transition, Congress recommended in the USDA Rural Development 2003 appropriation bill that \$15 million of the \$51.9 million in distance learning and telemedicine funds be utilized in support of the transition effort. Since 2001, the Bush Administration has invested over \$88 million to enhance access to rural education, and health care technology through the distance learning and telemedicine program.

To meet the requirements of transition to digital broadcasting, a station must install a new antenna, transmitter or translator, and new digital program management facilities. If a station is to perform a program origination, which many do, digital cameras, editing and mastering systems are also required. In Kansas, Smoky Hills Public TV will receive \$1.4 million to assist in providing a new tower, building, digital transmission equipment and the associated processing, monitoring, and test equipment. This will enable Smokey Hills to continue to provide children's programs, educational programs, state legislative news and regular PBS programs to the 52 counties in Northwestern Kansas.

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The following stations have been selected to receive grant funds:

<b>I. Applicant Name</b>	<b>Station or Network ID</b>	<b>State</b>	<b>Grant</b>
University of Alaska - Fairbanks	KUAC	AK	\$703,000
Redwood Empire PTV	KEET	CA	\$350,548
Florida State University	WFSU	FL	\$575,000
Smoky Hills Public TV	KOOD, KSWK, KDCK	KS	\$1,470,094
Kentucky Auth. for Educational TV	KET	KY	\$619,008
Western Kentucky University	WKYU	KY	\$760,000
West Central Illinois	WQEC	IL	\$554,400
Central Michigan University	WCMW	MI	\$791,016
St. Lawrence Valley Educational TV	WNPI	NY	\$1,999,659
Prairie Public Broadcasting	KSRE, KWSE, KDSE	ND	\$2,000,000
Penn State University	WPSX	PA	\$940,814
South Dakota Educational TV	KPSD	SD	\$391,118
South Dakota Educational TV	KZSD	SD	\$391,118
Upper Cumberland Broadcast Council	WCTE	TN	\$851,069
West TN Public TV Council	WLJT	TN	\$943,156
WV Educational Broadcast Authority	WVEBA	WV	\$1,660,000

**Funds will be provided through the USDA Rural Development Telecommunications Program. Funding of selected applicants will be contingent upon meeting the conditions of the grant agreement. USDA Rural Development's mission is to deliver programs in a way that will support increasing economic opportunity and improve the quality of life of rural residents. As a venture capital entity, Rural Development provides equity and technical assistance to finance and foster growth in homeownership, business development, and critical community and technology infrastructure. Further information on rural programs is available at a local USDA Rural Development office or by visiting USDA's web site at <http://www.rurdev.usda.gov>.**

## **Southern Oregon Public Television and Digital Television**

SOPTv operates analog and digital television services in a very challenging environment. The region's rurality and mountainous terrain make over-the-air television reception difficult - no amount of power will get a signal into all the valleys where the people live. For analog television service, SOPTv relies heavily on translators; presently the FCC has not established rules for digital translators.

Both present and contemplated DTV rules are problematic because of southern Oregon's terrain features.

### **SOPTv's present situation and plan:**

- When we built our first DTV transmitter, we did not co-locate with our analog transmitter because of distance and coverage issues in Medford (the most populated metro area and our city of license). Using a FCC Special Temporary Authority, we located on a hill close to town with excellent local coverage and good signal strength because of proximity. This location allows us to cover only a small portion our present analog coverage area, however, it is the most populated region.
- Our plan is to utilize a cellular DTV distribution method in all of the population centers within our coverage area. To minimize PSIP problems and conserve spectrum, we plan to use the same UHF channel (42) for each of these locations. Terrain shielding will protect us from mutual interference.
- We plan to use our present analog channel 8 as our DTV distribution channel and translate to channel 42 at the end of the DTV transition. We would achieve excellent replication of coverage using only two channels leaving some 5 or 6 analog channels presently occupied with translators open. This would result in good service where the people live. This method has been adopted in Australia where it's called the "One Plus One" plan.

### **To allow us to best serve our viewers in southern Oregon we need:**

- Rules to allow us to license our assigned DTV channel as translators in any location within our analog grade B coverage area.
- Continued interference protection to both our eventual channel 8 DTV service and our present channel 42 service channel within our present analog grade B coverage area.

# Southern Oregon Public Television

*The other side of Oregon*



## Households Served:

Jackson County	.... 66,690
Douglas	..... 37,700
Josephine	..... 29,530
Klamath	..... 23,980
Siskiyou	..... 17,260
Curry	..... 9,490
Modoc	..... 3,720
TOTAL	..... 185,000

Source: Nov. 1996  
Nielsen  
\*Compensated total  
for reception



Southern Oregon Public Television

Southern Oregon Public Television was established in 1977 by William B. Smullin and Ray Johnson, pioneers in broadcasting in Southern Oregon.

From a small beginning it has grown to serve 18,000 square miles covering Klamath, Jackson, Josephine, Douglas, Curry and Modoc Counties, with two stations — KSYS in Medford and KFTS in Klamath Falls.

Every year the stations broadcast more than 8,760 hours of educational, informational and entertainment programming. In addition to the two transmitters, Southern Oregon Public Television has a network of translators and is carried on 35 cable systems.

Today, Southern Oregon Public Television is an independent, community-owned nonprofit broadcasting service. In addition to the broadcast of PBS programs, the station mission is the production and broadcast of local/regional programs and community projects which are unavailable through other regional media. It receives no state funding for operations and is governed by an 18-member volunteer board of directors.

**Public Broadcasting is a library... a museum... a concert hall... a theater... a school.** It is a cultural resource without walls. It charges no admission to its concerts and plays. It requires no tuition for its classes. It makes no travel demands on those who attend exhibits and lectures. It is available to *everyone*, regardless of income, education, ethnicity or occupation. *Enriched living through...*

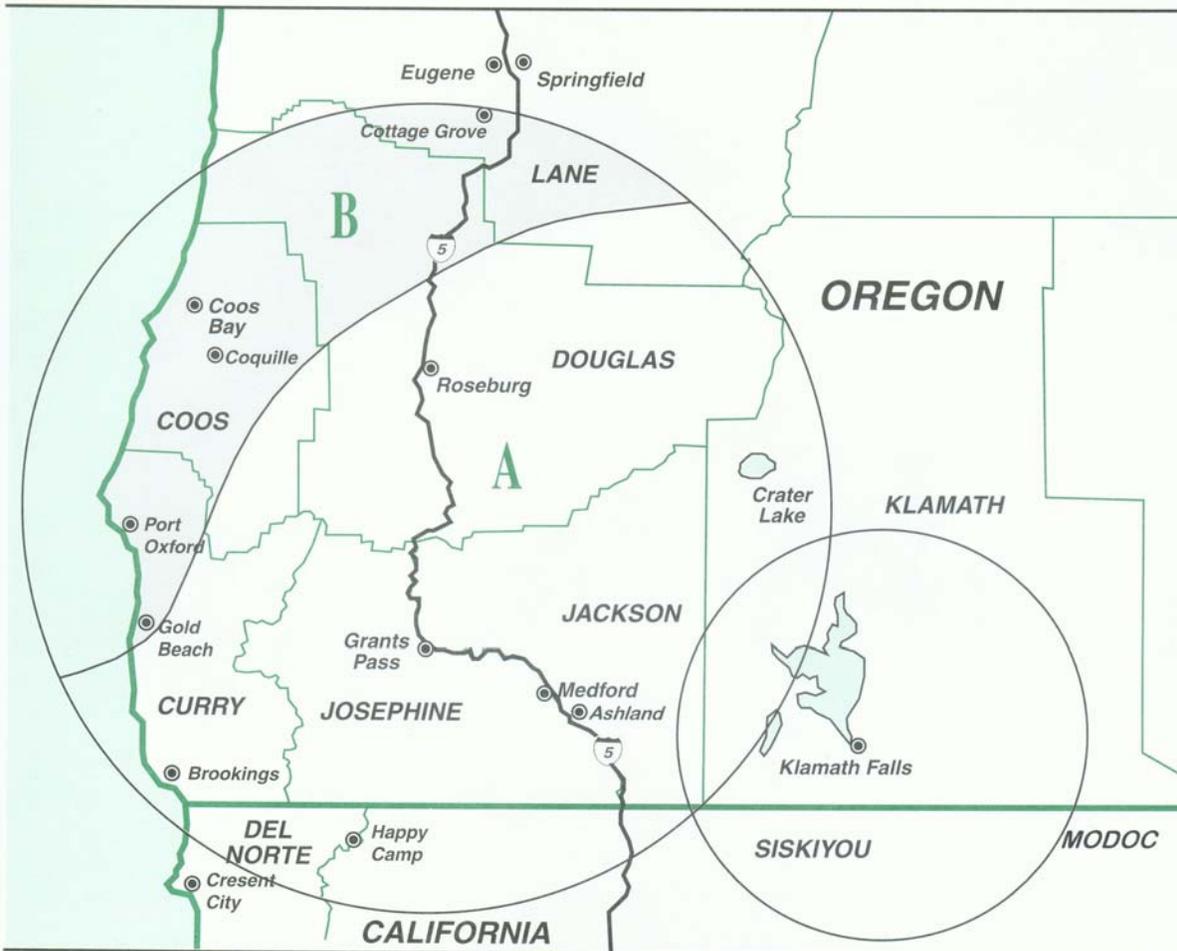
- Public Affairs
- News
- Children's Programming
- Drama
- Comedy
- Music
- Education
- Nature
- Science
- Documentaries
- Performances

*...lifelong learning.*

*Right here in Southern Oregon.*



# SOPTv Coverage Map



Southern Oregon Public Television transmits to 185,000 households covering 18,000 square miles including Klamath, Jackson, Josephine, Douglas, Curry, and Modoc Counties, with two stations — KSYS in Medford and KFTS in Klamath Falls.

- A** = 185,000 prime grade A reception
- B** = 33,000 grade B reception



Southern Oregon Public Television

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