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WTA Congratulates FCC on Release of National Broadband Plan

Washington, D.C. (March 16, 2010) – The Western Telecommunications Alliance (WTA) today congratulated the Federal Communications Commission for its work in developing and submitting *Connecting American: The National Broadband Plan*.

“On behalf of the members of WTA, I want to congratulate Chairman Genachowski, his fellow Commissioners, and the countless number of Commission staff for their work on producing this report,” said Kelly Worthington, WTA Executive Vice President. WTA submitted comments with respect to a number of the public notices during the development of the Plan. WTA focused therein on the success of existing Universal Service programs in providing incentives for the development of broadband facilities in rural America and upon the importance of preserving those incentives in enabling future network expansions in hard to reach and costly to serve rural areas.

“Now that the Plan has been released, the hard work of reforming USF and intercarrier compensation for the future begins. We look forward to carefully analyzing the Plan and working with the Commission, Congress and others within the industry to ensure that sufficient and proper incentives remain so that the rural networks that our members have spent decades building and maintaining can be extended to unserved customers and evolve such that rural and urban high-speed broadband comparability is achieved” said Worthington.

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Western Telecommunications Alliance represents over 250 rural telecommunications companies providing quality voice, data and video services in rural areas in the 24 states west of the Mississippi River. On average, WTA member companies serve fewer than 3,000 access lines with fewer than 500 customers in each exchange. WTA's members serve some of the most rural and hard-to-serve communities in the country and are on the forefront of bringing 21st Century telecommunications services to rural America. For more information about WTA visit www.w-t-a.org.