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The FCC – Who We Are and What We Do

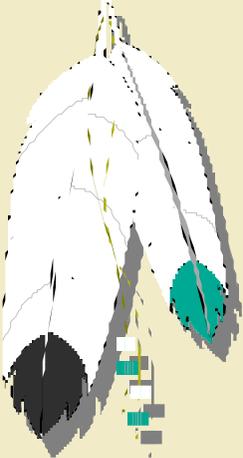
- The Federal Communications Commission
 - An independent federal agency
 - Created by Congress in 1934
 - Regulates telecommunications (telephone), radio-based communications (wireless), and mass media services (broadcast, cable, satellite).
 - Regulatory mission: “to make available to all the people of the United States, without discrimination on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, or sex, a rapid, efficient, Nation-wide, and world-wide wire and radio communication service with adequate facilities at reasonable charges.” [Communications Act of 1934, Section 1.]

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The FCC – Why We're Here

- Tribal communities have historically had less access to telecommunications services than any other segment of the population.
 - Nationwide, 94 percent of households have telephone service.
 - Only 47 percent of Indian households on reservations have telephone service.
- Telecommunications Act of 1996
 - Directs the FCC to ensure that all Americans have access to affordable telecommunications services.



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FCC Tribal Initiatives – An Overview

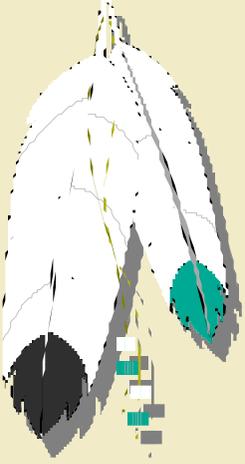
- January, March 1999 -- FCC holds public hearings in Arizona, New Mexico on "Overcoming Obstacles to Telephone Service for Indians on Reservations."
- August 1999 -- FCC initiates two rulemaking proceedings aimed at promoting telecommunications services on tribal lands.
- June 2000 – FCC adopts three Indian-related orders:
 - Tribal Policy Statement
 - Universal Service Order
 - Wireless Tribal Lands Order

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FCC Tribal Policy Statement

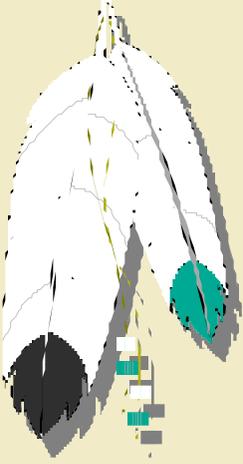
- Recognizes the sovereignty of tribal nations and the FCC's trust responsibility to Indian tribes.
- FCC commits to promote government-to-government relationship with tribes.
- FCC will consult with tribal governments prior to implementing regulatory actions that significantly or uniquely affect tribes.



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Order on Universal Service Funding for Tribal Communities

- FCC amends federal universal service rules to reduce cost of telecommunications services to low-income persons on tribal lands.
- Increased “Link Up” assistance – Government pays to help tribal customers hook up new telephone service.
- Increased “Lifeline” funding – Reduces cost of monthly telephone service for low-income consumers on tribal lands.



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Order on Extending Wireless Services to Tribal Lands

- FCC adopts rules to provide incentives for wireless telecommunications carriers to serve individuals living on tribal lands.
- Auction bidding credit program – wireless carriers receive credit in FCC spectrum auctions if they deploy wireless services in qualifying tribal areas.
- Easing of wireless rules to lower technical barriers to deployment of wireless services on tribal lands.

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