

March 27, 2000

Via Fax and US Mail

Carole Washburn
WUTC
1300 S. Evergreen Pk. Dr. S.W.
PO Box 47250
Olympia, WA 98504-7250

RE: ***In re US West – Qwest Merger***
Docket No. UT-991358

Dear Ms. Washburn:

Public Counsel is unable to agree to a shortening of the timeline. We are heavily committed in other matters, including the Avista electric and gas rate case hearing this week, and Avista rate case testimony in early May. The already-adopted dates are the most workable for us. Given the schedule of remaining proceedings in other states and at the FCC, shortening the schedule by a few days will not make any significant difference in any event, except by putting all parties under unnecessary additional time pressures.

Very truly yours,

Simon J. ffitch
Assistant Attorney General
Public Counsel Section

Cc: Parties