



NEWS

Federal Communications Commission
445 12th Street, S.W.
Washington, D. C. 20554

News media information 202 / 418-0500
TTY 202 / 418-2555
Fax-On-Demand 202 / 418-2830
Internet: <http://www.fcc.gov>
<ftp.fcc.gov>

This is an unofficial announcement of Commission action. Release of the full text of a Commission order constitutes official action. See MCI v. FCC, 515 F.2d 385 (D.C. Circ 1974).

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:
April 29, 2004

NEWS MEDIA CONTACT:
Lauren Patrich at (202) 418-7944
Email: lauren.patrich@fcc.gov

FCC RETAINS BIOLOGICAL CONSULTANT TO WORK ON ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES

Washington, D.C. – Today, FCC Chairman Michael K. Powell announced that the Commission has retained Avatar Environmental Services of West Chester, Pennsylvania, as a biological consultant to assist the Commission in fulfilling its role under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and other federal environmental statutes. Avatar will give the Commission access to the services of experts with training and experience in evaluating the impact of construction projects on animal and plant species, and who have performed similar services for other agencies.

Avatar's primary task will be to review the studies referenced in comments to the Commission's *Notice of Inquiry*, released August 20, 2003, on the impact that communications towers may have on migratory birds. Avatar will also assist in the review of license applications that raise issues involving biological impacts under NEPA and the Endangered Species Act, including potential impacts on migratory birds.

The Commission's retention of Avatar as a consultant on biological issues furthers Chairman Michael K. Powell's Environmental and Historic Preservation Action Plan, announced May 1, 2003, to improve the Commission's ability to protect valuable historic and environmental resources, while at the same time accelerating the process of deploying necessary communications infrastructure. In particular, access to Avatar's biological expertise will enable the Commission more effectively to assess the impact of communications towers on migratory birds and more efficiently to process applications that implicate biological issues.

-FCC-

News about the Federal Communications Commission can also be found
on the Commission's web site www.fcc.gov.