



NATIVE AMERICANS IN RURAL NORTHERN CALIFORNIA  
PHONE SURVEY

Compiled by

SUSCOL INTERTRIBAL COUNCIL

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# NATIVE AMERICANS IN RURAL NORTHERN CALIFORNIA PHONE SURVEY

## Executive Summary

This survey is a project of the California Public Utilities Commission's (CPUC) Telecommunications Education and Assistance in Multiple-languages (TEAM) program<sup>1</sup>. Self-Help for the Elderly, based in San Francisco, has administered the program for the CPUC. TEAM member, the Suscol Intertribal Council with the assistance of Dr. Tamsen Stevenson, collected and compiled the data contained herein.

TEAM representatives assisting Native Americans discovered in the early stages of their contribution to the program that there were significant discrepancies in cost, quality, reliability, and availability of telephone service in remote rural areas. TEAM was authorized by the CPUC to develop and implement a survey to document these difficulties. This report is a summary of the findings and recommendations from this survey.

Access to communications technologies, including telephone service utilizing landlines and cell phones, and the Internet, is essential to health, safety, and education especially in remote rural communities. However, access is limited in Native American communities in Northern California for a number of reasons, including costs, lack of essential infrastructure, service challenges, cultural misunderstandings, and others. This project surveyed a representative sample of Native Americans in four counties in Northern California, including Humboldt, Mendocino, Lake, and Sonoma counties to assess the status of telecommunications services.

This report includes an aggregated synopsis of the survey results for all four counties and a report of the results of the survey for each of them. Comments from respondents for each of the counties can be found in the Appendix. Comments offered in the following reports refer to comments in the appendix where "H" refers to Humboldt County, "M" to Mendocino County, "L" to Lake County, and "S" to Sonoma County. Raw data are available on request.

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<sup>1</sup>The Consumer Protection Initiative (CPI), which was developed to empower consumers and prevent fraud in the rapidly changing telecommunications industry, also directed the Commission to explore, through another proceeding, ways to assist Limited English Proficient (LEP) consumers. From the LEP proceeding, the TEAM program was created. It provides education, outreach and complaint resolution services to LEP consumers through Community Based Organizations (CBOs) statewide.

A total of 1025 surveys were completed. These included 210 from respondents in Humboldt County, 271 in Mendocino County, 234 in Lake County, and 310 in Sonoma County. Of these 629 (61%) respondents reported having phone service, and 395 (39%) did not (one respondent did not answer this question).

A summary of the problems indicated follows:

- Overwhelmingly, the primary barrier to having a phone was the high cost of phone services. This was exacerbated by difficulties in establishing credit or repairing bad credit, and/or coming up with deposits that often amount to hundreds of dollars.
- Other significant issues include lack of basic infrastructure. This includes problems getting phone lines installed in rural locations, and at locations where the primary mailing address is a post office box.
- There are also significant problems with service reliability, including no, or intermittent, connectivity. Services are being sold that are not and/or cannot be delivered.
- Respondents are being charged for services even when devices have been returned and contracts canceled within the initially agreed upon time frame.
- Residents of Federal lands are being charged taxes they are legally exempt from.
- Communications challenges with service agents are a constant theme in response to this survey.

## TELEPHONE SERVICE COSTS

Of those who have phones, most respondents pay between \$50 - \$100 a month for toll calls or long distance services. Community services, like hospitals, schools, and community centers are local calls for 84% of respondents. However, there are differences among the counties. Only 67% of Sonoma County respondents report that essential community services are local calls; for 33% of respondents these are toll calls.

The average cost of maintaining a landline is \$50 - \$100 monthly; however a significant number of respondents, especially in Humboldt (15%) and Sonoma Counties (16%) report paying \$100 -- \$200 for their landline, monthly.

Installation fees ranged from \$0 -- \$250. The average cost of installation ranged from \$37.78 in Sonoma County to \$104.60 in Lake County. None of the respondents in Sonoma County reported having to work to bring the landline to their homes, while 10% in Lake and Mendocino Counties, and 22% in Humboldt County did.

A total of 177 respondents in the four-county area reported that their phones had been out of order or didn't work at some time in the past 5 years.

## SERVICE OUTAGES

The number of days outages lasted ranged from 1 day to more than a year with significant differences among counties. The number of respondents reporting the duration of outages in Sonoma County was 8; the average time the outages lasted was 3 days; the mode, or most common value, was 2 days. The number of respondents reporting outages in Lake County was 60; the average duration was 27 days; the mode was 30 days. The number of respondents reporting outages in Humboldt County was 60; the average duration was 42 days; the mode was 14 days. And, in Mendocino County the number of respondents reporting outages was 49; the average duration was 55 days; and the mode was 7 days.

Eighty-one respondents out of a total of 189 (43%) answered “Yes” to the question, “Did you have problems reporting it (i.e., the phone outage) to the phone company’s repair department?” The number of those reporting problems ranged from 2 out of 14 (14%) in Sonoma County, to 34 out of 66 (52%) in Humboldt County.

Respondents who reported that they didn’t have phone service reported that while they need access, it could take more than an hour to reach the nearest phone. Responses differ from community to community, Comments include:

- “I have to use pay phones but they aren’t around anymore” (H- 15)
- “There are no pay phones in my community” (L- 92)
- “They took the pay phone out of the area where everyone without a phone went” (M - 215)

## ENHANCED LIFELINE

Enhanced LifeLine is a Federal program which the CPUC supports and provides some assistance in communicating its existence to Native Americans in California. It is available to Native Americans living on tribal lands for a little more than a one dollar a month.

Forty-one percent of the respondents to this survey had heard of Enhanced LifeLine. This percentage differed by county with 31% in Mendocino County, 38% in Lake County, 41% in Humboldt County, and 50% of respondents in Sonoma reporting that they had heard of Enhanced LifeLine. These figures indicate that outreach efforts have had a positive impact, but suggest that there is still a need for enhanced outreach and education about the program. Comments include:

- “Enhanced LifeLine is a great program! This seems unreal!” (H-95)
- “Everything has been great since I’ve been on Lifeline. Before that every call was long distance.” (H-107)
- “(I) Attempted to sign up for Enhanced LifeLine but was unable to understand the operator.”(M-166)
- “They should have more outreach for lifeline service.” (H-138)

## HOW CONSUMERS WOULD LIKE TO RECEIVE INFORMATION

In response to the question about how they would like to receive information regarding phone services, multiple choices were offered. The two favored media were fliers/posters/brochures (27%) and personal communication (25%).

<b>Information and Outreach</b>		
<b>Source</b>	<b>Number N=1617</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Community outreach events	223	14%
In person	400	25%
Fliers/Posters/Brochures	431	27%
Television	211	13%
Radio	173	10%
Other	179	11%

Note: There were multiple responses to this question.  
The "other" category includes mail and e-mail.

### **Recommendations:**

- Assure that the menu of services and their costs (including installation costs) is transparent from the initiation of the agreement or contract
- Provide assistance to consumers who have challenges accessing credit
- Educate consumers about how to manage their accounts, read bills, retain records, and respond to billing disputes
- Educate carriers about Enhanced LifeLine, and assist qualified consumers to apply for Enhanced LifeLine
- Support culturally competent advocacy for consumers in Native American communities
- Hire Native Americans in positions of outreach, marketing, and technical assistance
- Assure that consumers are not charged for services that are not provided (i.e., when they are unavailable or out of order)
- Educate service providers about tax exemptions for residents of Federal lands
- Expedite restoration of services when outages occur.
- Install and maintain public phones that are accessible 24 hours a day in communities that have otherwise limited service
- Support the development and maintenance of an environmentally and culturally appropriate infrastructure that provides state of the art communication technologies in Native American communities.

These issues could be resolved by culturally competent ombudsmen and culturally competent service providers.



# Survey Results by County

## Humboldt County

There were 210 respondents to the Humboldt County survey.

- Of the 210 respondents, 157, or 75% have phones.

### Toll and Long Distance Costs

Of those who have phones 96 responded to the question, “How much do you spend on toll or long distance calls a month,” as illustrated in the following table. Additionally, 13 reported that they didn’t know or weren’t sure.

Cost of toll or long distance calls a month		
Amount	Number N = 96	Percent
\$20 - \$50	51	53%
\$50 - \$100	26	27%
\$100 - \$200	13	14%
\$200 or more	6	6%

Community services, like hospitals, schools, and the community center are local calls (not toll) for 85% of respondents.

### Type of Service:

- 109 or 69% of respondents have a landline.
- 101, or 64% have cell phones; 36% have both.
- 20 have DSL access to the Internet.
- 20 use dial up service to access the Internet.

The average monthly cost of a landline is shown in the following table. Most respondents pay \$25 to \$50 a month, but many pay more. 12 respondents reported that they didn’t know or were not sure about the amount of their average monthly bill.

Average monthly bill for landline		
Amount in dollars	Number N = 116	Percent
Under \$25	22	19%
\$25 - \$50	48	41%
\$50 - \$100	28	24%
\$100 - \$200	17	15%
\$200 or more	1	1%

## Installation Fees

Respondents reported that phone installation fees ranged from \$20 – to \$200. The average cost was \$61.70. The mode or most common value was \$50. 28, or 22% of the 130 respondents to this question, reported having to do some of the work to bring the line into their home or workplace.

Comments include:

- “We had to spend \$5,000 for underground utilities.” (H-155)
- “We had to pay \$200 to have the phone installed.” (H-210)
- “We paid \$300 each -- 100 people – to get the phone line out to our houses.” (H-164)

## Cell Phone Usage

The location of cell phone usage is illustrated in the following table. Respondents offered more than one answer to this question.

<b>Cell phone usage by location</b>	
Location	Number N=404
At home	87
At work	81
Within the community	87
On the streets in the community	77
On the main roads to the community	72

## Reasons for no Phone

Respondents report the following reasons for not having a phone. The most common reason is cost; however, infrastructure issues are a significant challenge in Humboldt County.

- “I never had phone services. I live in a remote area and the telephone company told me it would cost too much” (H-179)
- “It’s very hard to get connected” (H-180)
- “The telephone company would not come out to replace phone lines where I live. They told me that if they did it for me they would have to do it for everyone” (H-119)
- “Cell phone hardly works or gets reception” (H-74)
- “There are not only problems with the phone companies but also problems with the power companies, gas companies, and problems with the water” (H-41)
- “Phone companies will not give them a phone when mail is delivered to a P.O.Box and not a street address” (H-71, H-108, H-116)

Reasons for not having a phone	
Reason	Number N=84
No reception	7
No electricity	8
No landline infrastructure	8
Cost	33
Other	28

## Time it Takes to Reach a Phone

Respondents report it can take more than an hour to reach the nearest phone, although most report that they can reach a phone within 10 minutes. Typical comments include:

- “I have to use pay phones but they aren’t around anymore” (H-15)
- “It’s almost impossible to use a public phone. You get a recording and lose all your money” (H-118)

Time it takes to reach the nearest phone	
Time in minutes	Number N=73
0 -5 minutes	29
5 – 10 minutes	25
10 – 20 minutes	9
30 – 60 minutes	7
> 1 hour	3

### Dial Tone Without Service

- 47 % of respondents who do not subscribe to a phone service and have a phone jack report that they get a dial tone if they plug a phone into it; 44% do not.
- 18% report that they can dial 911.
- 25% report that they can't dial 911.
- 57% of respondents report that they have never tried to dial 911.

### Phone Service Outages

In Humboldt County, winter weather can mean weeks of outages for phone services and electricity. Fire can also be an issue. Respondents comment:

- Phones go out when it rains (H-1)
- Phones go out many times a year and the problems do not get fixed (H-115)
- “The only time there is good reception in the area is when there is a fire; the fire department puts up poles so they get good reception. When the fire is out, they take down the poles” (H-113)

It is important to note that the placement of poles and towers has been controversial because they have been “slapped up on sacred sites and in sensitive habitats.” Respondents have commented that there needs to be better control over where phone towers are installed. (H-148, H-157).

35% of respondents who replied to this question reported that their phone had been out of order or didn't work at some time in the last 5 years. The number of times that their phones were out of order is illustrated in the following table.

Number of times phones have been out of order		
Times	Number N= 53	Percent
1 - 2 times a year	29	55%
2 – 7 times a year	16	30%
More than 7 times a year	8	15%

The number of days of outages reported by 60 respondents range from 1 day to 368 days. (One entry reported 5 years but was not counted.) The average was 42 days. The mode was 14 days.

52% of respondents who answered the question reported having problems with the phone repair department.

## Enhanced LifeLine

In the Humboldt County survey, with 200 out of the 207 surveyed responding, 41% of those report having heard of Enhanced LifeLine; 59% have not. Those with Lifeline in Humboldt County report:

- “Everything has been great since I’ve been on Lifeline. Before that every call was long distance” (H-107)
- “They should have more outreach for Lifeline services” (H-136)

## Keeping Informed

Respondents reported that they would like to receive information regarding phone services from the following sources. In some cases there was more than one response.

Information and outreach		
Source	Number N= 283	Percent
Community outreach events	36	13%
In person	55	19%
Fliers/Posters/Brochures	48	17%
Television	52	18%
Radio	51	18%
Other	41	15%

Among the “others” mentioned were mail and e-mail.

## Mendocino County

There were 271 responses to the Mendocino County survey.

- Of the 271 respondents, 174, or 64% have phones; 97, or 36% don't.

### Toll and Long Distance

Of those who have phones, 116 responded to the question, "How much do you spend on toll or long distance calls a month," as illustrated in the following table. Additionally 32 respondents answered, "don't know/not sure" to the question.

Cost of toll or long distance calls a month		
Amount	Number N = 116	Percent
\$20 - \$50	41	35%
\$50 - \$100	59	51%
\$100 - \$200	12	10%
\$200 or more	4	3%

Note: Percent less than 100 due to rounding

Community services, like hospitals, schools, and the community center are local calls for 81% of respondents.

### Type of Service

- 102 respondents have a landline
- 135 have cell phones
- 37 have DSL to access the Internet
- 14 report using dial up service to access the Internet

The average monthly cost of a landline is shown in the following table. Most respondents pay between \$50 and \$100 a month; however 9% report an average monthly bill of more than \$100. Additionally, 20 respondents answered, "Don't know/not sure" to this question.

Average monthly bill for landline		
Amount in dollars	Number N = 102	Percent
Under \$25	16	16%
\$25 - \$50	28	27%
\$50 - \$100	49	48%
\$100 - \$200	7	7%
\$200 or more	2	2%

## Installation Fees

In Mendocino County, installation fees ranged from \$1.00 to \$200. The average fee was \$73.70. The mode or most common value was \$100.

Of 126 respondents, 13, or 10%, reported having to work to bring the line into their home or workplace themselves.

## Cell Phone Usage

The location of cell phone usage in Mendocino County is illustrated in the following table. There were multiple responses to this question.

Cell phone usage by location	
Location	Number N = 589
At home	128
At work	113
Within the community	127
On the streets in the community	114
On the main roads to the community	107

## Reasons for no Phone

Respondents report the following reasons for not having a phone. Overwhelmingly, in Mendocino County the most common reason for not having a phone is cost. There were multiple responses to this question.

Reasons for not having a phone	
Reason	Number N = 95
No reception	4
No electricity	3
No landline infrastructure	5
Cost	83

### Time it Takes to Reach a Phone

Respondents who do not have phones report it can take an hour to reach the nearest phone. The modal value in this survey was 10 – 20 minutes.

Time it takes to reach the nearest phone	
Time in minutes	Number N= 105
0 -5 minutes	28
5 – 10 minutes	44
10 – 20 minutes	24
30 – 60 minutes	9

### Dial Tone Without Service

- 29 respondents who do not subscribe to a phone service and have a phone jack report that they get a dial tone if they plug a phone into it, 53 report that they don't.
- 11 report that they can dial 911.

### Phone Service Outages

49, or 19%, of 260 respondents reported that their phone was out of order or didn't work at some time in the last 5 years. The number of times that phones were reported out of order is illustrated in the following table:

Number of times phones have been out of order	
Times	Number N= 38
1 - 2 times a year	19
2 – 7 times a year	13
More than 7 times a year	6

- The number of days of outages reported by respondents ranged from 1 day to 730 days. The average was 55 days. The mode was 7 days.
- Of 54 respondents, 18 (33%) reported having problems with the phone repair department.

Many respondents from Mendocino County commented on poor communications with phone company representatives and suggested that more Native Americans be employed in media outreach, technical assistance, and marketing.



## Enhanced LifeLine

In the Mendocino County survey, with 267 out of 271 responding, 84 or 31% report having heard of Enhanced LifeLine; 183, or 69% have not.

## Keeping Informed

Respondents reported that they would like to receive information regarding phone services from the following sources. Respondents chose multiple answers to this question.

Information and outreach	
Source	Number N=441
Community outreach events	60
In person	91
Fliers/Posters/Brochures	118
Television	52
Radio	44
Other	76

The "other" category included mail and e-mail.

## Lake County

There were 234 responses to the Lake County survey.

- Of the 234 respondents 134 or 57% have phones; 100, or 43% don't.

### Toll and Long Distance Calls

Of those who have phones, 96 responded to the question, "How much do you spend on toll or long distance calls a month," as illustrated in the following table. 20 responded that they "don't know or were not sure."

Cost of toll or long distance calls a month		
Amount	Number N = 96	Percent
\$20 - \$50	40	42%
\$50 - \$100	45	47%
\$100 - \$200	9	9%
\$200 or more	2	2%

Community services, like hospitals, schools, and the community center are local calls for 82% of respondents.

### Type of Service

- 85 respondents have a landline
- 99 have cell phones
- 25 have DSL to access the internet
- 6 report using dial up service to access the internet

The average monthly cost of a landline is shown in the following table. Most respondents pay between \$50 and \$100 a month; however 9% report an average monthly bill of \$100 or more. Additionally, 9 respondents reported that they didn't know or were not sure of the average monthly bill for their landline.

Average monthly bill for landline		
Amount in dollars	Number N = 92	Percent
Under \$25	12	13%
\$25 - \$50	34	37%
\$50 - \$100	38	41%
\$100 - \$200	7	8%
\$200 or more	1	1%

## Installation Fees

Respondents reported that installation fees ranged from \$0 to \$250. The average cost was \$104.60. The modal or most common value was \$100. Of 98 respondents, 10% reported having to work to bring the line into their home or workplace themselves.

## Cell Phone Usage

The location of cell phone usage in Lake County is illustrated in the following table. Respondents chose multiple answers to this question.

Cell phone usage by location	
Location	Number N = 390
At home	80
At work	80
Within the community	82
On the streets in the community	78
On the main roads to the community	70

## Reasons for no Phone

Respondents report the following reasons for not having a phone. Overwhelmingly, in Lake County the most common reason for not having a phone is cost; however, infrastructure is also a significant issue. Respondents chose multiple answers to this question.

Reasons for not having a phone	
Reason	Number N= 123
No reception	3
No electricity	8
No landline infrastructure	10
Cost	90
Other	12

### Time it Takes to Reach a Phone

Respondents who do not have phones report it can take an hour to reach the nearest phone. The modal value in this survey was 10 – 20 minutes.

Time it takes to reach the nearest phone	
Time in minutes	Number N=107
0 -5 minutes	36
5 – 10 minutes	32
10 – 20 minutes	37
30 – 60 minutes	1
> 1 hour	1

### Dial Tone Without Service

- 22 respondents who do not subscribe to a phone service and have a phone jack report that they get a dial tone if they plug a phone into it, 80 report that they don't.
- 5 report that they can dial 911.
- 20 report that they have never tried to dial 911.

### Phone Service Outages

60 respondents reported that their phone was out of order or didn't work at some time in the last 5 years. The number of times that phones were reported out of order is illustrated in the following table:

Number of times phones have been out of order	
Times	Number N= 60
1 - 2 times a year	24
2 – 7 times a year	12
More than 7 times a year	10
Don't know/ not sure	14

- The number of days of outages reported by 46 respondents ranged from 1 day to 365 days. The average was 27 days. The mode, or most common duration of an outage was 30 days.
- Of 55 respondents, 27 (49%) reported having problems with phone repair.

## Enhanced LifeLine

In the Lake County survey, with 224 out of the 234 surveyed responding, 84 or 37.5% report having heard of Enhanced LifeLine; 140, or 62.5% have not.

## Keeping Informed

Respondents reported that they would like to receive information regarding phone services from the following sources. There were multiple responses to this question. The preferred outreach method in Lake County was in person communication.

Information and outreach	
Source	Number N= 362
Community outreach events	45
In person	114
Fliers/Posters/Brochures	99
Television	33
Radio	25
Other	46

The "other" category included e-mail.

## Sonoma County

There were 310 responses to the Sonoma County survey.

- Of the 310 respondents 164 or 53% have phones.

### Toll and Long Distance Calls

Of those who have phones 91 responded to the question, “How much do you spend on toll or long distance calls a month,” as illustrated in the following table.

Cost of toll or long distance calls a month		
Amount	Number = 91	Percent
\$20 - \$50	26	29%
\$50 - \$100	51	56%
\$100 - \$200	13	14%
\$200 or more	1	1%

Community services, like hospitals, schools, and the community center are local calls for 67% of respondents, and are not local calls for 33% of respondents.

### Type of Service:

- 71 respondents have a landline
- 94 have cell phones
- 30 have DSL to access the internet
- None report using dial up service to access the internet

The average cost of the landline monthly bill is shown in the following table. Most respondents pay between \$50 and \$100 a month. Only 38 respondents were able to answer this question; 33 respondents reported that they did not know or were not sure about the amount of their monthly bill for their landline, suggesting that education should include a component on how to manage the phone bill.

Average monthly bill for landline		
Amount in dollars	Number = 38	Percent
Under \$25	3	8%
\$25 - \$50	9	24%
\$50 - \$100	20	53%
\$100 - \$200	6	16%
\$200 or more	0	0

Note: Percentage greater than 100 due to rounding.

## Installation Fees

Respondents reported that installation fees ranged from \$19.99 - \$150. The average cost was \$37.78.

None of the respondents in Sonoma County reported having to work to bring the line into their home or workplace.

## Cell Phone Usage

Cell phones are used in multiple locations. The location of cell phone usage in Sonoma County is illustrated in the following table.

Cell phone usage by location	
Location	Number = 116
At home	94
At work	87
Within the community	93
On the streets in the community	89
On the main roads to the community	89

## Reasons for no Phone

Respondents report the following reasons for not having a phone. Overwhelmingly, in Sonoma County the most common reason for not having a phone is cost.

- 51 respondents reported having problems with no credit or bad credit.
- 13 respondents reported that the deposit was too high.

Reasons for not having a phone	
Reason	Number N = 177
No reception	1
No electricity	1
No landline infrastructure	6
Cost	158
Other	11

### Time it Takes to Reach a Phone

Respondents who do not have phones report it can take up to an hour to reach the nearest phone. The modal value in this survey was 10 – 20 minutes.

Time it takes to reach the nearest phone	
Time in minutes	Number N=163
0 -5 minutes	39
5 – 10 minutes	49
10 – 20 minutes	63
30 – 60 minutes	12
> 1 hour	0

### Dial Tone Without Service

- 26 or 22 % of respondents who do not subscribe to a phone service and have a phone jack report that they get a dial tone if they plug a phone into it.
- 26 report that they can dial 911.
- 22 report that they can't dial 911.
- 114 report that they have never tried to dial 911.

### Phone Service Outages

14 respondents reported outages during the last 5 years; only 8 reported the number of times that their phone was out of order or didn't work. However, this figure is not consistent with the data on the length of outages. The number of times that phones were reported as out of order is illustrated in the following table:

Number of times phones have been out of order	
Times	Number = 8
1 - 2 times a year	7
2 – 7 times a year	1
More than 7 times a year	0

The number of days of outages reported by the 12 respondents who answered this question ranged from 1 day to 6 days. The average was 3 days. The most common value (mode) was 2 days.

Of the 14 respondents answering the question, 2 reported having problems with the phone repair department.

Many respondents from Sonoma County commented on poor communications with phone company representatives and suggested that more Native Americans be employed in media outreach, technical assistance, and marketing.



## Enhanced LifeLine

In the Sonoma County survey, with 305 out of the 310 surveyed responding, 154 (50%) report having heard of Enhanced LifeLine and 151 (50%) have not.

## Keeping Informed

Respondents reported that they would like to receive information regarding phone services from the following sources. 31 Respondents reported that they would like to receive information from all of these sources. The “other” category was noted but not specified.

Information and outreach	
Source	Number = 531
Community outreach events	82
In person	140
Fliers/Posters/Brochures	166
Television	74
Radio	53
Other	16



## Appendix - Respondent Comments by County

### Humboldt County Survey Comments

- H-1 Phone goes out when winter rains. I am a quadriplegic [and] sometimes cannot phone out [I am] too weak to put enough pressure on keys. Through TEAM [I] ordered a handicap sensitive phone.
- H-4 I would like the phone company to provide DSL to our area (HOOPA).
- H-10 Why do I have to pay to call 530 call numbers? I think it should be included w/my long distance package.
- H-14 No jack or pole to house.
- H-15 No jack to house. I have to use pay phones but they are not around anymore.
- H-16 Need better reception in this area (Hoopa).
- H-17 Cell phones are bad cut out; I can hear other people talking on the line.
- H-18 No problems
- H-20 They are not bad but they could be better.
- H-21 People keep calling and asking for someone else. All hours of the day and night, I get unwanted calls.
- H-22 It would be nice if cell phones were more affordable.
- H-24 Bad reception.
- H-25 I wish the transmitter was more accessible then the phone company would be able to repair problems quicker! Have trouble reporting with bad weather.
- H-29 I have good service.
- H-31 Cell phone service could be better. There needs to be more landlines in the area (Hoopa).
- H-32 It would be nice if the phone company could get better reception in the area. Too many roaming charges. My cell phone company signed me up for plan but still get charged roams.
- H-34 I use a cell phone because there are too many problems using landlines.
- H-36 As long as I was paying the bill it worked.
- H-39 I am glad they are putting info out.
- H-41 There are not only problems w/the phone companies but problems w/the power companies, gas companies and problems with the water.
- H-42 Limb fell online it took forever to get someone to come out.

- H-45 My phone service was shut off but I was paying my bill. I had only basic phone service but they said I owed \$153. I ended up having to pay the bill to keep my phone on. My service was turned off but I was making my monthly payments.
- H-47 Lifeline charges too much on your bill. I think they are taking advantage of people.
- H-48 Sounds like someone tied into my line I can hear clicking on my line. I ended up getting a package because they are pushy. All I wanted was lifeline but ended up getting signed up for something I did not want.
- H-50 Get better phone service in case of emergency.
- H-51 There needs to be better communication services and reception.
- H-52 Services are not reliable.
- H-54 I think they should protect you more. I kept getting billed \$7.95 for ten months.
- H-56 I think it is bogus that they keep messing up my bill ever since I switched over to LifeLine.
- H-55 No phone infrastructure. No electricity.
- H-57 My company is not very good; too high.
- H-59 My company is really too expensive.
- H-60 Live off the grid. I think the phone company should give people advance notice to reapply for LifeLine.
- H-62 No phone, costs way too much.
- H-66 One of my companies isn't really bad. But the other always adds charges to my bill. I always have to contest that bill. Have to wait around two to seven times a year for them to fix it.
- H-67 Phone service for me not too bad but there are a lot of people who have problems with bills being too expensive or [service] not accessible.
- H-69 That company jacks your bill up. They tell you it's going to be one thing but ends up being more.
- H-70 We are extremely limited to services in this area (Hoopa). One company was better than the other. It has outrageous prices for phone plans. I am currently paying for a line I don't use.
- H-71 I would like them to understand we do not have physically numbered address because we live on the rez (reservation). They will not come down here to install the phone.
- H-72 It is all good.
- H-73 Bad service in our trailer.
- H-74 Cell phone hardly works or gets reception.
- H-75 Never had a phone can I get some.
- H-76 I need cheaper service!
- H-87 There needs to be more information about services. When my phone is down, I need to keep going to someone else's house.

- H-88 No reception. There is an antenna and you only get TV from New York. If there were an emergency, no one would know about it.
- H-89 I would not hook my phone up with that company again because they kept overcharging. they made me back pay 4 months otherwise they were going to send my bill to collections.
- H-90 Phone services are too high.
- H-92 I am happy with my service.
- H-93 We need a plan for collect calls.
- H-94 When people call me I don't hear the phone ring. People calling in hear a ring tone
- H-95 Enhanced LifeLine is a great program! This seems unreal!
- H-96 Services could be better. When the lines are down it takes the phone company forever to fix it.
- H-97 Should have more cell phone towers.
- H-99 Average service.
- H-100 Too expensive.
- H-102 Services are a little expensive.
- H-103 I feel like they are ripping everyone off because we live way out and do not have any choices. I had to pay extra to have my phone line brought in. It cost more than they said it would.
- H-105 Not a lot to choose from.
- H-106 It's been good for us.
- H-107 Everything has been great since I've been on lifeline. Before that every call was long distance.
- H-108 Phone company needs to be open-minded. They will not give us a phone because we only have a P.O. box. Will not give us a phone number because we do not have a physical address.
- H-110 Signed up for lifeline and in meantime the phone bill got really high. I was told that I would be reimbursed or credited but was not. I had to pay the bill to keep my phone.
- H-111 Happy with my company.
- H-104 I need a phone because I have cancer and go into seizures.
- H-113 The only time there is good reception in the area is when there is a fire. The fire dept. puts up poles so they get good reception. When the fire is out, they take down the poles. Automated phone operators are terrible.
- H-116 Unable to get phone turned on because they do not have address. They do have an address. They live on a trailer park with a trailer space but phone company will not come out.
- H-115 Phone goes out many times a year and problems do not get fixed. Had to bring an underground conduit to house before they would bring the line to my home. My daughter's phone goes out ten or more times /year.

- H-117 Phones are too expensive to have because when you are on the rez (reservation) a lot of calls you have to make are toll calls.
- H-118 Just recently got a phone. It's almost impossible to use a public telephone get a recording and lose all your money.
- H-124 I think I would clear the brush away from the lines so they don't knock lines out.
- H-119 The telephone company would not come out to replace phone lines where I live. They told me that if they did it for me they would have to do it for everyone. That is why I don't have a landline.
- H-122 Phone services are too high so no phone.
- H-129 On my sister's phone someone was tapped into the line reported that we could hear someone on the line. Phone company never came out. I am excited now to be getting a phone.
- H-130 The company made me re-wire and only hooked up one line. The phone company does not advertise Enhanced LifeLine. I had to find out about it myself; wire-care went up to \$6 from \$1.50.
- H-136 Comes in pretty good.
- H-138 They should have more outreach for lifeline service.
- H-139 I wish the cell phones would come in better.
- H-142 Options are limited a little competitive pricing would be nice.
- H-144 It has been a long time since I had a landline.
- H-146 No phone people on tribe who cut off phones because cost too high. Long distance is too high.
- H-147 Landline too expensive. Could not afford bill so shut down. Use cell phone to control who uses it. Husband currently not working. Requested info about lifeline.
- H-148 Better control where cell phone towers go. They are slapped up where sacred sites and sensitive habitats need to be considered.
- H-149 Cousin can't have phone too expensive to get up a landline.
- H-150 During summer fires temporary towers installed. Works better. Community wants tower! Daughter can't use cell phone in town. When the power is out can't use phone can't report sometimes a couple of weeks. My lifeline was cut off though I was warned I did not get paperwork in on time.
- H-151 No long distance service. I had a phone bill over \$200/month. Cancelled because could not afford it. Use phone at work.
- H-152 Too expensive. All calls toll calls so too expensive cannot afford it.
- H-153 Big Bills little service. No phone.
- H-155 Had to spend \$5,000 under ground utilities. Over \$200 for landline. Cell is \$450. In winter phones are down weeks at a time. When the power is down the phones are down cell phones too.
- H-156 Got into plans for \$40 but suddenly \$150 bill. So tight no long distance can't afford long distance bill over \$200.

- H-157 Not wanting towers must consider sacred sites with digging. Satellites rather than towers or poles.
- H-158 Hoopa is last community to get phone and power back on. It happens every winter 1-2 weeks.
- H-160 I am satisfied with my service. Don't like getting calls from telemarketers.
- H-161 That company is expensive.
- H-162 Hard to get reception if you have a cell phone.
- H-164 Use internet more than phone. Use cell phone when traveling too iffy in town. In Sinkyone (North Mendocino). Paid \$300 each 100 people to get phone line out to house area.
- H-166 Why are services higher here than everywhere else?
- H-167 I would like more and varied services.
- H-168 We need a phone service "local" here on the reservation.
- H-169 I think that is a great idea local "reservation phone"
- H-170 That company is only provider around this area, so whatever points the company wants they change so the consumer really has no choice. We have a cell phone pay as you go but the signal is low once you leave the valley floor and at my house there is no regular signal.
- H-172 The tribe should make sure everyone has a cell phone.
- H-173 A taller or higher tower maybe.
- H-174 That it would be easier to make the payments to keep the phone service with the lifeline in place. The lifeline would be welcome to all who need the service.
- H-175 Cell phones are way too costly.
- H-176 Cell phone service is lost during winter weather.
- H-177 I think star 60 and call forwarding should be able to work here in Hoopa.
- H-179 Never had a telephone services to be in a remote area telephone company told me it would cost too much.
- H-180 Very hard to get connected.
- H-183 On the road too much for landline. This cell phone company does everything we need. \$60/mo for 500 minutes only call 30 minutes a day evenings!
- H-184 Can't get lifeline because the company not paid won't give me lifeline.
- H-188 Right now the phone is a veteran's service office at my home
- H-189 Had lifeline but somehow was off it for six months. They kept saying it was on but I told them to call me and they got an out of service message. So they got it back on but now my bills are larger.
- H-190 Paying too much for my low income home. My plan was for long distance and my bill was \$187 Why? Too much. Almost \$200/month.
- H-192 Phone service static and party lines.
- H-194 Would like a lower bill.

- H-197 Too expensive have good service but pricey!
- H-201 I would like to see more services available. More phones in hard to reach areas.
- H-203 We only have local on our landline. Long distance it too expensive.
- H-204 My Phone bill has just gone up and up. Just got my bill today and it is \$20 higher. Thinking about cutting out my landline and just keeping cell phone.
- H-205 It would be great if you could come to Health Fair July 22<sup>nd</sup> at neighborhood facility.
- H-209 I believe there should be free tribal telephone service for our community.
- H-210 Had to pay \$200 to have the phone installed. Anna Lee put line in.

### **Mendocino County Survey Comments**

- M-4 There is only one phone (landline) company in our area and we have had a lot of problems with them. There is no other company for service unless it is a cell
- M-6 Bills are over \$100 a month but only allowed to make local calls
- M-11 Needing installation (wiring)
- M-13 Should you start sign me up
- M-14 The reason no landline phone was because of overcharge years ago, never went back
- M-15 I wish I had a phone that I could afford
- M-16 The company needs more tech services
- M-25 Bills are too high
- M-32 Why is there so much static
- M-34 My company is an exceptional phone service-would not change companies for anything
- M-35 I don't get service at the ocean. My TV reception is not always clear. My phone is always roaming, even though I have the western states plan
- M-36 Phone service is too expensive PUC allowed the company to raise rates by 20%. Raised all rates and fees assisted calls. Info line doesn't give you the option to speak to someone in person. Menu doesn't give you all the choices that you can encounter.
- M-37 Not happy with my company, but that is all that is available in Laytonville
- M-38 Nothing to do with them anymore
- M-39 Phones cost too much- phone bills are too high
- M-40 Phone service has been fine-no complaints
- M-41; Bill too high
- M-47 I don't have a landline due to cost. I would like a home phone, but cost is too high
- M-50 Being in rural community makes it difficult for calls to be local, most calls are long distance
- M-52; M-58 Phone services are too high



- M-61 Everything works when I want it to
- M-53 Has a cell phone because it allows her to call all over the U.S. at a standard rate
- M-54 The phone company had to be contacted a couple of times before they would connect me out in Coyote Valley. My cell phone doesn't get good service at C.V. and I believe they charge too much.
- M-56 I'm being ripped off by my company
- M-56 I'm being ripped off by my company, because they charge for every single thing that is added to the phone
- M-59 Poor phone services
- M-60 Phone service is great my company
- M-62 Wish there was a variety of phone providers
- M-63 Cell phone service is too expensive there should be more
- M-66 Niece broke into house ran phone up to one thousand dollars. Never paid so lost landline
- M-67 Charges are too much for extra fees that shouldn't be on the bill
- M-68 Bills are a little too high
- M-70 Problem with the switch from one company wireless to another. Had to buy a whole new plan. Had to buy two new phones keep getting unwanted calls from someone trying to sell something
- M-75 Phone turned off for non-payment. There are lots of hidden charges that you are not informed on. Pretty good other than hidden fees
- M-76 Paying state taxes on phone bill and live on federal land
- M-77 Services could be better and cheaper
- M-80 They are all rip offs
- M-81 I get very good service at my company
- M-82 Have no problems with service at my company
- M-91 Sometimes they add on extra cost
- M-98 I like the services my two companies provide.
- M-108 They are not thinking about the community by taking out public phones because not everyone has a cell phone.
- M-104 If you call you don't get to speak to anyone in person. Hassle
- M-106 They are prompt in fixing things and prompt in sending you the bill. Not too hostile when requesting service
- M-107 Customer is being charged for services he doesn't want. Phone bill is \$70+ a month without even paying a bill
- M-108 Over rated government is trying to introduce phone for the elderly
- M-109 I don't think I should be paying taxes on my electricity and phone bills because I live on a reservation

M-110 Service has been excellent

M-111 Line need to be upgraded in the rural communities

M-112 Bills are kind of high had to drop stuff off plan

M-113 They need to have better service area phone doesn't work when I travel north

M-115 Too high cut the price down. Phone service keeps cutting in and out

M-117 Too expensive sometimes if you travel out of the city limits it's hard to get good reception

M-120 At times it appears to me that they are charging me too much and I don't know why

M-121 Answer the phone when I call the help line takes forever to speak with someone

M-122 Services are to expensive you lose all rollover minutes

M-129 No. There isn't an option to get a LifeLine beeper that hangs around the neck

M129 Too expensive. Uses another company because phone services are too high

M-135 Had problems with cell service. Signed up for a cell phone and there was no service in the area. Now the company wants to send his bill to collection

M-136 Too expensive and not enough access to service. Not enough towers in area

M-137 That company is bad.

M-138 Mother's phone lines are so old the phone lines are always having problems

M-139 Keep billing late charges after phone has been shut off

M-145 Just have reception problems when driving on road to Ukiah or Santa Rosa have to go over mountains

M-159 I don't have a phone because of cost

M-165 I have a lot of problems with my dial-up, DSL Internet is not accessible where I live

M-166 Attempted to sign up for Enhanced LifeLine but was unable to understand the operator. The company cost too much to change service to Enhanced LifeLine

M-169 No. Old Company was not able to hook up phone as a modem

M-171 They are all rip offs

M-173 The phone company charges to many taxes etc.

M-175 Charged for calls that she didn't make. Calls were charged to her number. The local call zone isn't large should be the whole county

M-176 Phone service goes out a lot unable to call or receive calls

M-177 That company charges a lot extra to my bill. Plan is \$40.00 a month I end up paying \$50.00 a month

M-178 The company is too expensive

M-182 Phone kept messing up when I had service

M-186 They charge too much

M-187 Need wider reception area

M-188 Good

M-189 I'm not happy with the company. I was forced to take their service

M-190 I don't like the increase in rates

M-193 M-204; M-270; M-271 More Indians

M-197 Would like better English speaking reps

M-208; M-209; Too expensive

M-215 Took pay phone out of the area where everyone without a phone went to use

M-218 Can't pass credit check need \$300 deposit

M-223 Deposits are too high no credit report

Again in Mendocino County there was the request to have more Native Americans employed in media out reach, technical assistance and marketing.

## **Lake County Survey Comments**

L-4 Phone works great but phone bills are high.

L-9 Problems with phone lines is reason for phones being out of service for one week. She knows she is getting charged a lot.

L-10 Why don't phone companies know about no Federal taxes on Federal lands?

L-13 Believes this survey is a good thing for the native people.

L-16 Was told to repair phone herself by the phone company.

L-17 The bills are expensive and there is a lot of problems with the phone media-com. Man is on the "do not call list" but he still receives calls. Cable is very expensive for what you get.

L-19 Have problems with phone service from my company.

L-20 I have a lot of dropped calls form my home-dead zone.

L-21 I would like to have a job with this department.

L-24 They are like any big corporation They do what they want.

L-25 No, I don't like to have to use the area code to make a local call.

L-30 Every time my phone went out of service I had to keep calling the phone company over and over before they would do anything about it.

L-32 I need a home phone.

L-33 Too expensive-I don't like telecommunication spying. I keep getting unwanted phone calls- spam calls.

L-34 That company is unreasonably expensive for pre-paid.

L-40 Phone service too expensive.

- L-42 The company would not come out to repair phone because they said the phone lines belonged to AT&T. Had to change over to another company then phone operators couldn't understand me-foreigners.
- L-43 Phone service is not very good.
- L-50 I have internet.
- L-52 The telephone kept adding things to my plan without my permission.
- L-53 Not affordable
- L-56 I would like cheaper service.
- L-58 Sometimes it takes a few days for the phone people to come out for repairs.
- L-60 I have no problems with my phone service so far.
- L-61 It usually takes two times to fix the problem and they charge a lot.
- L-66 They are all right.
- L-68 Don't like that company. I think they take advantage of people in rural areas.
- L-73 My cell phone bill is too high \$75/mo.
- L-80 Good program.
- L-81 Poor customer service. It took 3 months to have services transferred to new residence. I pay for caller ID but don't get the service.
- L-82 Too many choices and not enough info on the choices.
- L-83 That company costs too much-most phone calls are not local. Didn't know about Enhanced lifeline for Native Lands.
- L-85 Lost service on the rez. Some have service the last cell phone did not get service in all places.
- L-87 Took phone company 3 ½ months to hook up landline- had a couple of emergencies in the time of waiting.
- L-89 They keep adding to your plan without my knowledge/permission.
- L-92 Yes, there are no pay phones in my community (outside). There should be for the ones who cannot go on casino property or use tribal phones during the work hours.
- L-97 Bad cell service.
- L-98 Should be a little cheaper.
- L-101 The phone company charges too much.
- L-105 That company is bad.
- L-106; L113 Too expensive.
- L-115 I would like to have a phone but phones are too expensive.
- L-117 Need better reception for cell phone.
- L-118 I don't like the way the phone company charges for every little thing – should be one flat rate for everything

- L-120 I have concerns over that company taking over small cell phone companies-takes away competitive pricing.
- L-121 That company is shocking. This one wireless is better.
- L-124 I would like a landline that is enough.
- L-125 Cell phone drops too many calls computer takes awhile 2 minutes or so.
- L-142 I just have to accept what they tell me. I feel like I have no say.
- L-147 Most of the phone calls made by Native people who live on the reservation are toll or long distance because they live so far out.
- L-148; L-229; L-230 Cost is too high
- L-165 Does not have a phone because someone switched her phone carrier. Phone bill ended up being \$300.
- L-176 40 years in my home make mostly local calls.
- L-178 Cell phone reception is poor; drop calls lots of dropped calls.
- L-180; L-208; L-212; L-219 Bad credit, deposit too high.
- L-184; L-185; L-193; L-198; L-209; L-225 Deposit too high.
- L-187 No money for deposit.
- L-188; L-189; L-192; L-194; L-195; L-197; L-199; L-201; L-207; L-213; L-215; L-216; L-218; L-221; L-226; L-228; L-231; L-234 Bad credit
- L-224 I had too much trouble reporting phone problems and I don't want a phone cost is too high.
- L-233 Bad credit and no electricity at home.

## **Sonoma County Survey Comments**

- S-184 I see no native workers
- S-185; S-216; S-248; S-260; S-276; S-287; S-294 Hire more Indian workers
- S-186 I only use cell I like it better
- S-194 Happier people, more natives
- S-195 I don't like phones
- S-200 The workers are bad
- S-201 Better workers
- S-211 Rude people I don't like it
- S-242 People are rude
- S-243 Hire happier people, more friendly
- S-244 Nicer workers

- S-249 Hire more Mexican workers
- S-251 Nicer people
- S-256 Nicer people
- S-264 Hire happier people more natives
- S-267 Nicer reps would be nice they are rude
- S-269 Better English speaking reps
- S-270 I see no native workers at the cell phone shops
- S-273 Better speaking reps that show respect
- S-275 Friendly customer service

Again in Sonoma County there was a prevailing theme requesting more Native American representation in media outreach, technical assistance and marketing.