Dish Network Looks Like a Lock to Win H Block Spectrum Auction

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Dish Network stands out among a list the FCC released yesterday of applicants participating in the H Block auction [1] scheduled for Jan. 22.

As Reuters notes [2], Dish applied under the name American H Block Wireless LLC, and appears to be the best bet. In all, the FCC disclosed the names of 14 participants that have completed applications and 20 without.

Earlier this year, Dish agreed with the FCC to bid the aggregate reserve price of $1.56 billion in exchange for more time in determining if its 2000-2020 MHz AWS licenses will be designated for downlink or uplink. Dish had previously indicated it would not participate in the auction.

True to its word, Sprint, which had recently indicated it had no interest in participating in the auction, does not appear among the applicants. AT&T, T-Mobile and Verizon also do not appear among the list applicants.

Interestingly, among the participants with completed applications is regional carrier nTelos. Dish and nTelos earlier this year announced a partnership for a trial of fixed-mobile broadband servic [3]e. In October, the two announced an expansion of the service trial and estimated it could reach up to 500,000 homes in 2014.

Up for grabs in the H Block auction is 10 MHz of paired spectrum (1915-1920 MHz and 1995-2000 MHz bands.) The auction was originally scheduled for Jan. 14 but was pushed back to Jan. 22. It will be the FCC’s first major spectrum auction since 2008.

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