



United States Department of the Interior



BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT
Grand Staircase-Escalante National Monument
669 South Highway 89 A
Kanab, UT 84741
<http://www.ut.blm.gov/monument>

IN REPLY REFER TO:
2801-1 (UT030)

October 30, 2015

Your reference: DOI-BLM-UT-0300-2015-0030-EA

To All Interested Parties:

The Bureau of Land Management (BLM), Grand Staircase-Escalante National Monument (GSENM) is soliciting input on the proposed Buckskin to Page Project for South Central Utah Telephone Association, Inc., doing business as South Central Communications (SCC), within GSENM and on lands administered by the BLM Kanab Field Office (KFO). SCC is proposing to construct, operate, and maintain a buried 35.45-mile (187,196-foot) telecommunications system within the Utah Department of Transportation (UDOT) U.S. Highway 89 road right-of-way (ROW) which follows the congressionally-designated utility corridor through GSENM and the KFO. The proposed project route originates at Five Mile Mountain Road turnoff, approximately 30 miles east of Kanab, Utah and continues east-southeast to Page, Arizona (see Figure 1 in enclosure).

SCC will require a 15-foot-wide temporary easement for construction of the telecommunications system. A new conduit and fiber optic line will be installed by a tractor-mounted cable plow (plowed) and, where needed, trenching and boring. A rock-cutting trencher or micro-trencher will be used if solid rock is encountered, and horizontal boring equipment will be used to cross any washes and access roads. Most of the conduit will be plowed in with a typical disturbance width of one foot and little disturbance to vegetation. No new access roads will be created as part of the project.

The entire project would cross federal, state, and private lands in southern Utah and northern Arizona (see Figure 2 in enclosure). The GSENM, KFO, and National Park Service (NPS) Glen Canyon National Recreation Area administer the federal lands affected by the project; the State Institutional Trust Lands Administration (SITLA) and UDOT administer the state lands affected by the project. SCC needs a 10-foot-wide grant of ROW from the GSENM, BLM, and NPS and an easement from SITLA to complete the project. This scoping letter and Environmental Assessment (EA) only address the lands administered by the BLM.

SCC is pursuing the project to address the need for more reliable, expansive telecommunication bandwidth service in and around the community of Page, Arizona and the Glen Canyon National Recreation Area. The BLM is preparing an EA to analyze potential impacts of the proposed project on the natural and human environments.

If you are interested in bringing forward information, potential issues, or alternatives associated with the project route, please send a letter to Amber Hughes on or before November 30, 2015 at the following address:

Grand Staircase-Escalante National Monument
P.O. Box 225
Escalante, Utah 84726

A summary of the Buckskin to Page Project and supporting project documents are available from the BLM's national register for the National Environmental Policy Act at the following web address:

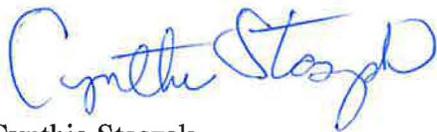
https://eplanning.blm.gov/epl-front-office/eplanning/nepa/nepa_register.do

Comments may also be submitted by e-mail to blm_ut_gs_comments@blm.gov (please include "SCC Buckskin to Page EA" in the subject line). You may also fax your comments to (435)-826-5650. Any parties who submit comments will be added to the project mailing list.

Before including your address, phone number, e-mail address, or other personal identification information in your comment, you should be aware that your entire comment, including your personal identification information, may be made publicly available at any time. While you can ask us in your comment to withhold your personal identification information from public review, we cannot guarantee that we will be able to do so. All submissions from organizations or businesses, and from individuals identifying themselves as representatives or officials of organizations or businesses, will be made available for public inspection in their entirety.

Thank you in advance for your participation.

Sincerely,



Cynthia Staszak
Monument Manager

Enclosure

Figure 1: Overview Map

Figure 2: Project Map