

# Categorical Exclusion

## Nevada Broadband Networks Fiber Co-location Right-of-way

Sierra Front Field Office

Carson City

Nevada

89701

775-885-6000

## *Categorical Exclusion Review*

### **Background**

Nevada Broadband Networks (“NBN”) has submitted a right-of-way (“ROW”) application to the Bureau of Land Management (“BLM”) to co-locate overhead fiber optic cable to existing power poles within a BLM ROW held by Sierra Pacific Power Company (“SPPC”), NVN 089487. NBN plans to use this ROW to extend an existing statewide fiber network that services medical providers in Nevada.

#### **BLM Office:**

LLNVC02000

#### **Lease/Serial/Case File No.:**

NVN 094303

#### **Location of Proposed Action:**

Mount Diablo Meridian, Nevada

T. 18 N., R. 24 E.,

sec. 14, N1/2SW1/4 and N1/2SE1/4;

sec. 16, N1/2SW1/4 and N1/2SE1/4;

sec. 17, N1/2SW1/4 and N1/2SE1/4.

#### **Description of Proposed Action:**

On August 3, 2015, the BLM received a ROW application from NBN to co-locate overhead fiber optic cable to existing poles within a 40-foot transmission line ROW granted to SPPC (NVN 089487). NBN requested ROW would total 10 feet in width, 15,308 feet in length, and cover approximately 3.6 acres of public land managed by the BLM.

The fiber optic cable would be attached to existing wooden power poles granted in within SPPC's ROW (NVN 089487). Pole heights, distances between poles, and pole types vary, per the practice of the particular owner of the existing infrastructure. Pole heights are between 45 and 65 feet. Average spacing ranges from 300 to 600 feet, with occasional spans of roughly 1,000 feet. Existing roads would be used to access the project area.

The fiber optic cable would be installed on six-foot by four-foot reels, splice cases and appurtenances, aerial strand and pole line hardware. Items not in use would be transported and stored off-site. All packaging material would be removed and disposed of each day in the proper manner. No temporary use areas would be needed during construction. Two methods would be used for the installation of the fiber optic cable on the existing poles: 1) the drive-out method and 2) the stationary reel method. NBN would use a method based on the conditions of the existing access road. The drive-out method would be used in areas where there is adequate vehicular access to and along the existing ROW (NVN 089487). In the drive-out method, one vehicle carrying the reel of fiber optic cable proceeds from pole to pole, paying out fiber optic cable as it moves forward. A second vehicle, a bucket truck, follows at a distance of approximately 50 feet so that a lineman may secure the fiber optic cable to the pole attachments. The stationary reel method would be used in areas where vehicular access to the construction corridor along a pole line is restricted by rough terrain. Using this method, the poles are accessed by ATV or on foot and the poles are climbed or a ladder is used. A pull rope is placed through a pulley system attached to the pole. This pull rope is attached to the fiber optic cable on a stationary reel located at the nearest access point to the pole line. The fiber optic cable is pulled, preferably downhill, through the pulley system and attached to the pole. The installation would consist of a workforce of eight (8) individuals. All equipment would be generally within a moving within the existing roads during the drive-in method. There would be no ground disturbance to install the overhead line other than vehicles driving on existing roads along the existing transmission line (NVN 089487).

The BLM would grant NBN a 30-year ROW pursuant to Title V of the Federal Land Policy and Management Act (FLPMA) and the regulations at 43 CFR Part 2800. The ROW would be subject to terms and conditions, including standard stipulations. The maintenance and monitoring would be specified in a pole attachment agreement between NBN and SPPC. Monitoring would be conducted through alarm circuits in the electronics attached to the cable at various points along the route. Maintenance would include the replacement or repair if the appurtenances on a case-by-case basis. The life of the fiber optic cable system is approximately 30 years. Hardware (fiber optic cable) would be replaced as they reach the end of their productivity. Replacement would be done in accordance with the terms and conditions in the ROW grant. Upon termination, the holder would be required to remove the fiber cable from the poles.

## **Land Use Plan Conformance**

**Land Use Plan Name:** Nevada, Carson City Consolidated Resource Management Plan

**Date Approved/Amended:** May 2001

**The proposed action is in conformance with the LUP, even though it is not specifically provided for, because it is clearly consistent with the following LUP decision(s) (objectives, terms, and conditions):**

LND -7, "Administrative Actions" #6: "exchanges and minor non-Bureau initiated realty proposals will be considered where analysis indicates they are beneficial to the public."

**Compliance with NEPA:**

The Proposed Action is categorically excluded from further documentation under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) in accordance with 516 DM 2, Appendix 1, or 516 DM 11.9,

This categorical exclusion is appropriate in this situation because there are no extraordinary circumstances potentially having effects that may significantly affect the environment. The proposed action has been reviewed, and none of the extraordinary circumstances described in 516 DM 2 apply.

The applicable section is: 516 DM 11.9 Appendix 4, (E) (12): "Grants of right-of-way wholly within the boundaries of other compatibly developed rights-of-way."

I considered the following:

**Impacts on Public Health and Safety**

1. Does the proposed action have significant impacts on public health and safety?		
		REVIEWER/TITLE
	NO	Shaina Shippen, Realty Specialist
	NO	Brian Buttazoni, Planning & Environmental Coordinator

## Impacts on Natural Resources or Unique Geographic Characteristics

2. Have significant impacts on such natural resources and unique geographic characteristics as historic or cultural resources; park, recreation or refuge lands; wilderness or wilderness study areas; wild or scenic rivers; national natural landmarks; sole or principal drinking water aquifers; prime farmlands; wetlands (Executive Order 11990); floodplains (Executive Order 11988); national monuments; migratory birds (Executive Order 13186); and other ecologically significant or critical areas?

		REVIEWER/TITLE
	NO	Shaina Shippen, Realty Specialist

## Level of Controversy

3. Have highly controversial environmental effects or involve unresolved conflicts concerning alternative uses of available resources [NEPA Section 102(2)(E)]?

		REVIEWER/TITLE
	NO	Shaina Shippen, Realty Specialist
	NO	Brian Buttazoni, Planning & Environmental Coordinator

## Highly Uncertain or Unique or Unknown Environmental Risks

4. Have highly uncertain and potentially significant environmental effects or involve unique or unknown environmental risks?

		REVIEWER/TITLE
	NO	Shaina Shippen, Realty Specialist
	NO	Brian Buttazoni, Planning & Environmental Coordinator

## Precedent Setting

5. Establish a precedent for future action, or represent a decision in principle about future actions, with potentially significant environmental effects?		
		REVIEWER/TITLE
	NO	Shaina Shippen, Realty Specialist
	NO	Brian Buttazoni, Planning & Environmental Coordinator

## Cumulatively Significant Effects

6. Have a direct relationship to other actions with individually insignificant, but cumulatively significant, environmental effects?		
		REVIEWER/TITLE
	NO	Shaina Shippen, Realty Specialist
	NO	Brian Buttazoni, Planning & Environmental Coordinator

## Impacts on Cultural Properties

7. Have significant impacts on properties listed or eligible for listing, on the National Register of Historic Places as determined by either the Bureau or office?		
		REVIEWER/TITLE
	NO	Rachel Crews, Archeologist

## Impacts on Federally Listed Species or Critical Habitat

8. Have significant impacts on species listed, or proposed to be listed, on the List of Endangered or Threatened Species, or have significant impacts on designated Critical Habitat for these species?		
		<b>REVIEWER/TITLE</b>
	<b>NO</b>	Brian Buttazoni, Planning & Environmental Coordinator

## Compliance with Laws

9. Violate a Federal law, or a State, local, or tribal law or requirement imposed for the protection of the environment?		
		<b>REVIEWER/TITLE</b>
	<b>NO</b>	Brian Buttazoni, Planning & Environmental Coordinator

## Environmental Justice

10. Have a disproportionately high and adverse effect on low income or minority populations (Executive Order 12898)?		
		<b>REVIEWER/TITLE</b>
	<b>NO</b>	Brian Buttazoni, Planning & Environmental Coordinator

## Sacred Sites

11. Limit access to and ceremonial use of Indian sacred sites on Federal lands by Indian religious practitioners, or significantly adversely affect the physical integrity of such sacred sites (Executive Order 13007)?		
		<b>REVIEWER/TITLE</b>
	<b>NO</b>	Rachel Crews, Archeologist

## Noxious and Non-Native Invasive Species

12. Contribute to the introduction, continued existence, or spread of noxious weeds or non-native invasive species known to occur in the area, or actions that may promote the introduction, growth, or expansion of the range of such species (Federal Noxious Weed Control Act and Executive Order 13112)?		
		<b>REVIEWER/TITLE</b>
	<b>NO</b>	Brian Buttazoni, Planning & Environmental Coordinator

## Approval Information

Leon Thomas Field Manager ACTING		Date 10/16/2015
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This categorical exclusion worksheet does not constitute the decision to approve this project. See accompanying right-of-way grant for appeal information.