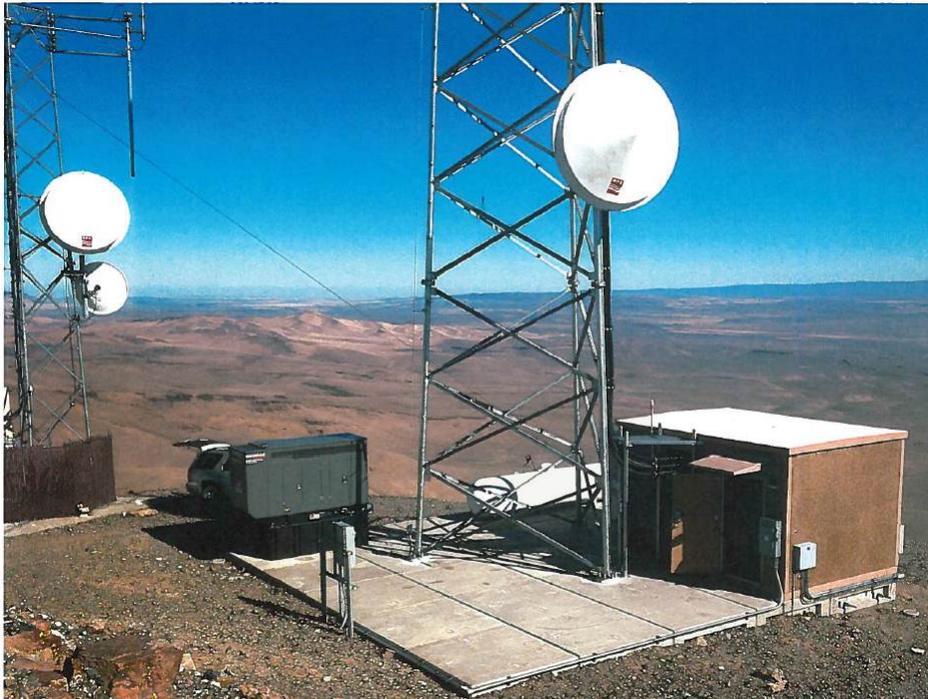


**U.S. Department of the Interior  
Bureau of Land Management**

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**Environmental Assessment  
Verizon Wireless Communication Site**



**PREPARING OFFICE**

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# **Environmental Assessment**

## **Verizon Wireless Communication Site**

**Prepared by**  
**U.S. Department of the Interior**  
**Bureau of Land Management**  
**Wells Field Office**  
**Elko, NV**

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# **Chapter 1. Introduction**

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## 1.1. Introduction

The Bureau of Land Management (BLM) Elko District (EDO), Wells Field Office (WFO), is evaluating an application from Southwestco Wireless LP d/b/a Verizon Wireless (Verizon) to renew an existing right-of-way (ROW) lease (NVN-91880) for a communication facility located at the top of Ellen D Mountain northwest of Contact, NV.

This Environmental Assessment (EA) documents the environmental analysis conducted to estimate the site-specific effects on the human environment that may result from the authorization of the ROW lease to Verizon on BLM administered lands. The analysis documented in this EA will provide the BLM's authorized officer with current information to aid in the decision-making process. This document complies with the Council on Environmental Quality's (CEQ) Regulations for Implementing the Procedural Provision of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA; 40 CFR Parts 1500–1508) and the Department of the Interior's manual guidance on the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (43 CFR part 46).

The ROW lease, granted by the BLM, would authorize Verizon's current short term temporary facility as a permanent, long term site. Verizon would also continue to use the existing access road for vehicle traffic throughout the life of the project (Figure 1.1, "Ellen D Mountain Communication Site Layout").

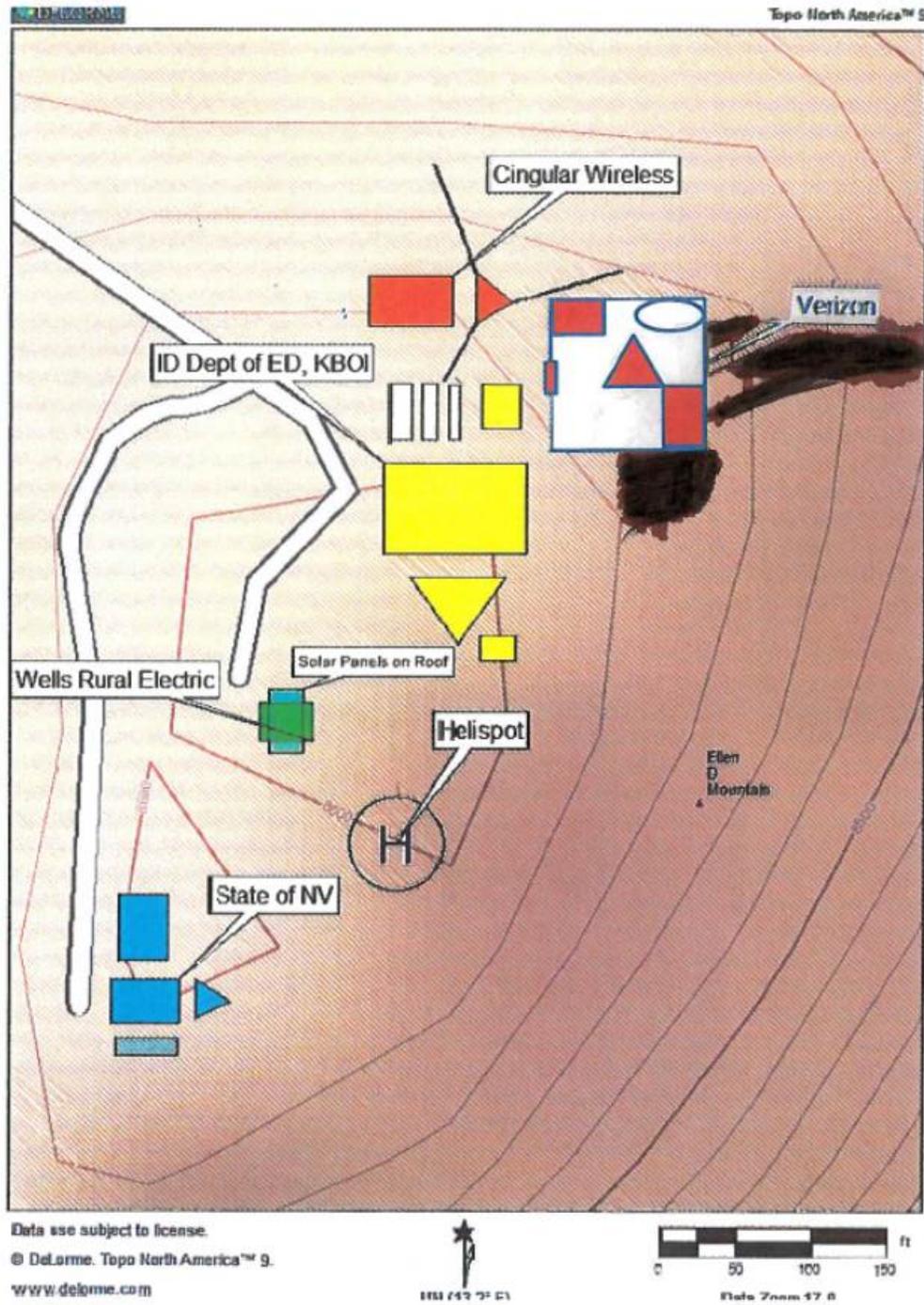


Figure 1.1. Ellen D Mountain Communication Site Layout

## 1.2. Background

The Ellen D Communications Site is located on public land administered by the WFO (see Map 1.2, “Project Area Land Status”). It is a long-standing, established site that serves a large and varied population over a broad geographic region encompassing northeast Nevada. Ellen D Mountain functions as a vital line in the communication industry. The various authorized holders who currently operate at the site provide an array of services, including commercial and public radio broadcasting; microwave internet data links; telephone transmission; and cellular services.

The Site overlooks Jackpot, Nevada and several other communities in the region. US Highway 93 runs generally in a north/south direction approximately six miles east of the communications site. Other secondary county and BLM roads also run through the surrounding area. This transportation network, and the many residents who live in and around the area (including those within the boundaries of Ellen D Mountain), are served by the authorized users who operate and provide reliable communication services from the top of Ellen D Mountain.

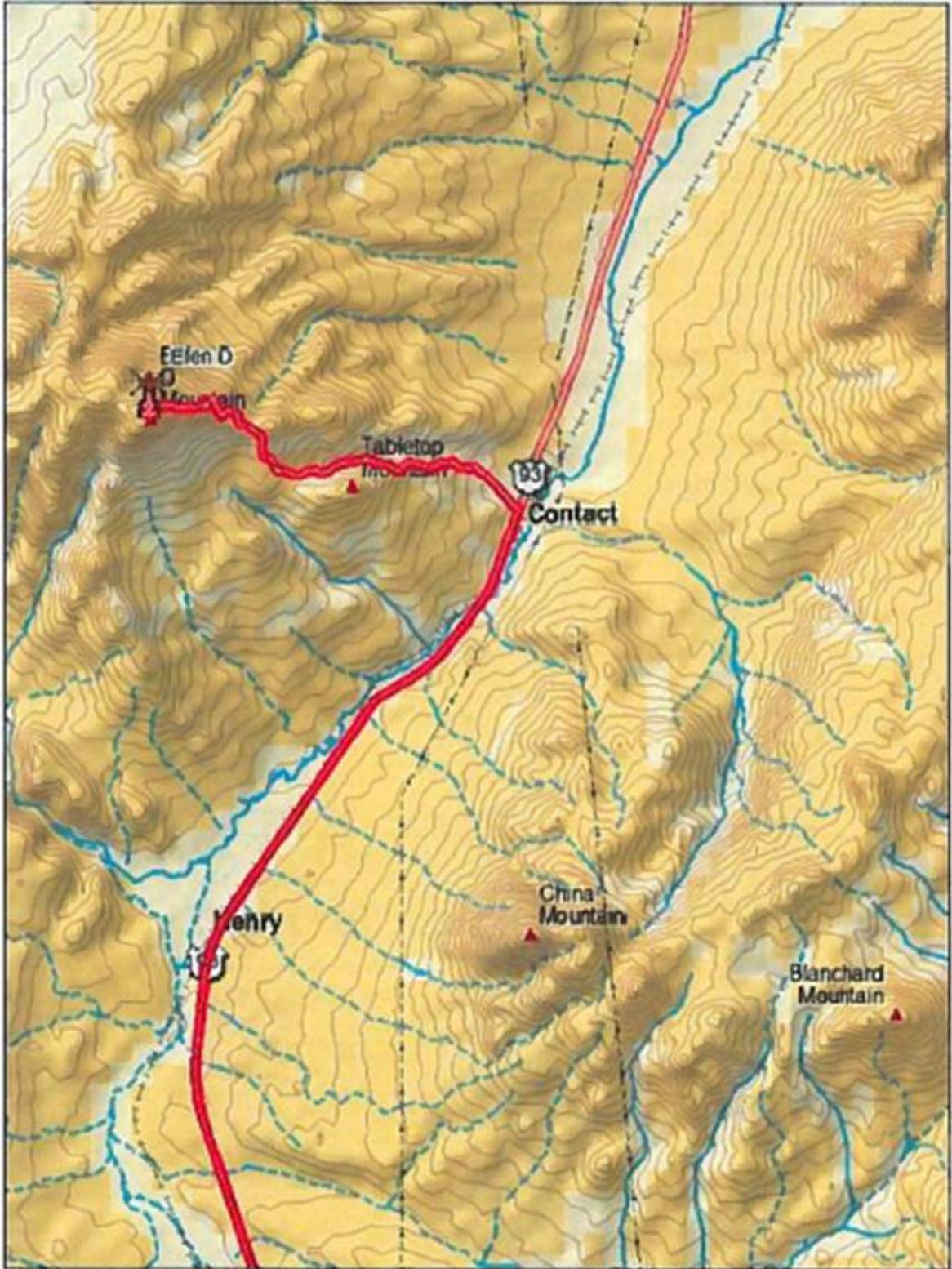
The site is located approximately forty-seven air miles north of Wells, Nevada. It is specifically located in the SE $\frac{1}{4}$ NE $\frac{1}{4}$ SE $\frac{1}{4}$  of Sec. 16, T. 45 N., R. 63 E., Mt. Diablo Base and Meridian, Elko County, Nevada at approximately 41° 47' 07" North Latitude and 114° 50' 22" West Longitude. The elevation at the Ellen D Communication Site is approximately 8,420 feet above mean sea level. Access is from Wells; take US Highway 93 north approximately 51.2 miles to Contact and the intersection with the Ellen D road. Turn west onto the gravel road to the Enexco gate and then take the left fork in the road. Follow the road to the top of the peak for approximately 5.4 miles to the site. See Map 1.1, “Ellen D Mountain Access”.

There are currently four communication facilities at Ellen D. In 1979, the first facility was authorized by the State of Nevada, NVN-25816. Wells Rural Electric, NVN-53994 was authorized for a two-way radio relay facility. The first commercial facility was authorized to Nevada 2 Cellular in 1994 for a cellular site. This facility was sold and the authorization assigned to Western Wireless in 1996, then AllTel in 2006, and finally Cingular Wireless, NVN-57870, in 2011. Idaho State Board of Education, NVN-66358, was granted an authorization in 2000, for an FM broadcast radio site, KBSJ 91.3 FM. This facility also provides building and tower space for two-way radio repeater uses, NOAA weather radio, and amateur radio uses. The existing Verizon Wireless communication site authorization at Ellen D Mountain was authorized in the Ellen D Mountain Communication Site Management Plan, approved on April 24, 2013.

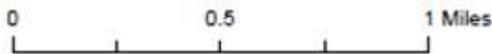
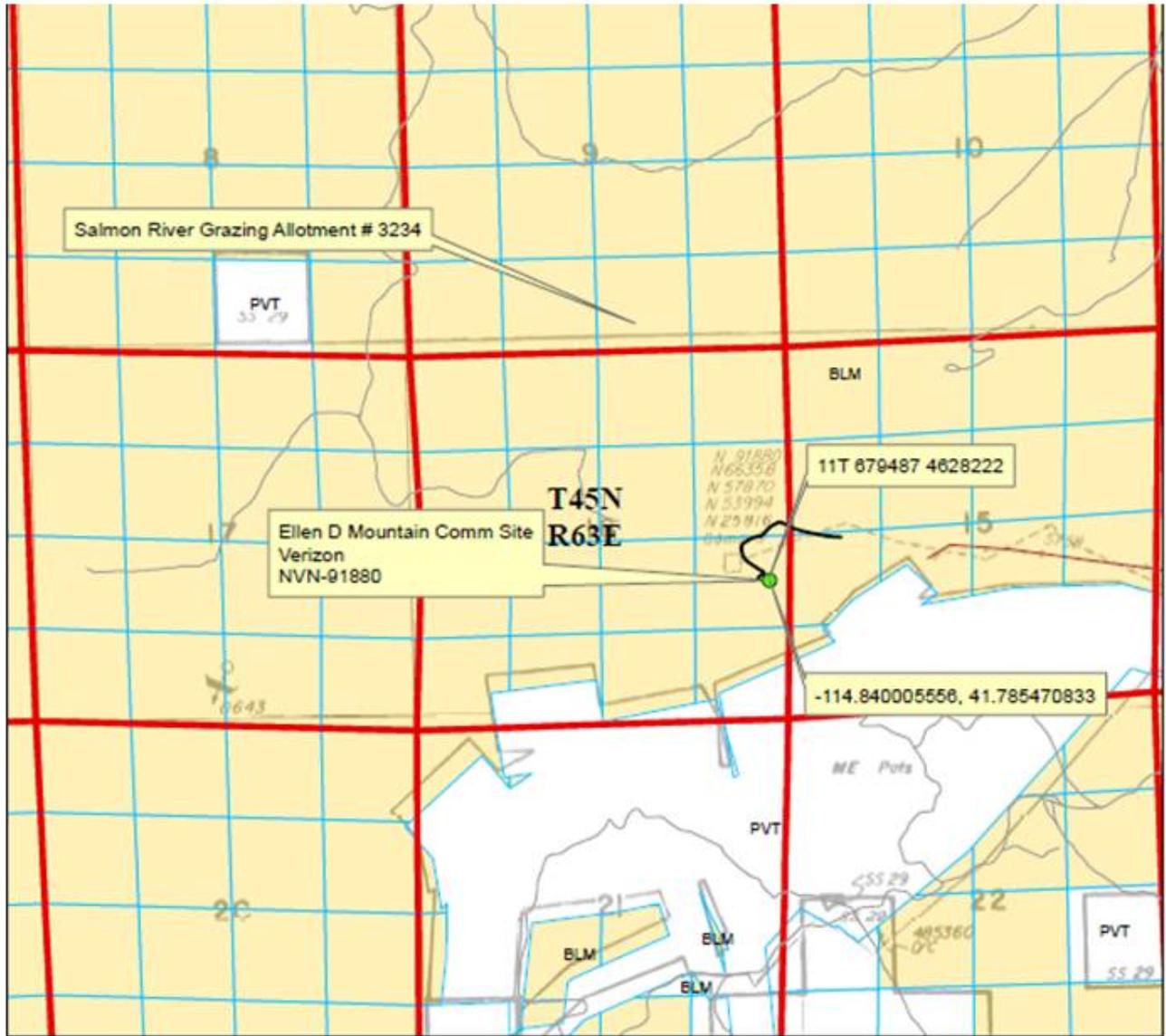
The temporary communication facility site has provided service along the Highway 93 corridor in Elko County between the cities of Wells, Contact, and Jackpot. Before the temporary site was authorized, Verizon Wireless had no presence at this location and had to rely on other carriers. This proposed communications tower would provide services that would enhance the public safety of the area’s residents and visitors, and increase the economic viability of the area.

On January 22, 2013, Verizon Wireless was notified that their previous Code Division Multiple Access (CDMA) roaming provider would no longer provide CDMA roaming service to Verizon Wireless customers past June 22, 2013. CDMA refers to any of several protocols used in second-generation (2G) and third-generation (3G) wireless communications. As the term implies, CDMA is a form of multiplexing, which allows numerous signals to occupy a single transmission channel, optimizing the use of available bandwidth.

In order to mitigate any coverage “holes” which may be created by no longer having CDMA coverage, Verizon submitted a ROW application (SF 299 Application for Transportations and Utility Systems and Facilities on Federal Lands) to the WFO requesting a temporary Communication On Wheels (COW) be granted while a permanent communication facilities be built. On February 26, 2013, a CX NEPA analysis was initiated for the temporary site. On March 7, 2013, the Categorical Exclusion (CX) NEPA analysis was approved. On April 26, 2013, a bond was filed in the amount of \$15,000. On May 9, 2013, the bond was accepted. On June 11, 2013, a temporary lease was issued for a period of three years for a completely constructed communications facility. The proposed permanent communication facility was never built. Verizon then proposed to keep the completed temporary site as their permanent long term site.



Map 1.1. Ellen D Mountain Access



# Verizon Wireless NVN-91880

Elko District  
Wells Field Office  
August 26, 2015



Data published to:  
North American Datum 1983 (NAD83)  
UTM coordinates, Zone 11, meters

\*NO WARRANTY IS MADE BY THE BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT  
AS TO THE ACCURACY, RELIABILITY, OR COMPLETENESS OF THESE  
DATA FOR INDIVIDUAL USE OR AGGREGATE USE WITH OTHER DATA.\*

### Legend

- Land Status**  
**Abbreviation**
- PVT
  - BLM
  - PLSS Township
  - PLSS Section
  - Core (PPH)
  - Comm Site



### 1.3. Purpose and Need for Action

On November 21, 2014, Southwestco Wireless LP d/b/a Verizon Wireless (Verizon) submitted a ROW application to the BLM, WFO requesting their existing temporary ROW lease for the communication facility located on Ellen D Mountain be renewed as a long-term ROW lease for a permanent communication site.

The BLM’s purpose is to determine whether or not to authorize a long-term ROW lease to Verizon and the necessary stipulations for the already constructed communication facility on public lands.

The need for the action is established by the BLM’s responsibility under Title V of the Federal Land Policy Management Act (FLPMA), as amended, to respond to an application request for a ROW Communications Use Lease on federal land.

### 1.4. External Scoping, Public Involvement and Issues

On September 3, 2015, scoping letters were sent to all users on Ellen D Mountain. Scoping letters were also sent out to all the adjacent ROW holders, range permittees, adjacent land owners, Tribal government, and local government agencies. Receipt of comments in response to this public outreach effort was requested by October 9, 2015. No comments were presented by the public. The comments from other agencies and BLM’s response to the issues raised can be found in Table 1.1, “Scoping Comments and Responses”.

**Table 1.1. Scoping Comments and Responses**

<b>Comment</b>	<b>Response</b>
Utilize consistent lighting mitigation measures that follow “Dark Sky” lighting practices. Effective lighting should have screens that do not allow the bulb to shine up or out. All proposed lighting shall be located to avoid light pollution onto any adjacent lands as viewed from a distance. All lighting fixtures shall be hooded and shielded, face downward, located within soffits and directed on to the pertinent site only, and away from adjacent parcels or areas. A lighting plan should be submitted indicating the types of lighting and fixtures, the locations of fixtures, lumens of lighting, and the areas illuminated by the lighting plan.	The lighting is minimal on the facility. There are only two lights, both of which are on the equipment building. There’s one light by the door of the equipment building and one light on the backside of the building. The lights are small and point downward. There are no lights on the tower nor on the generator. See Figure 1.2, “Light 1” and Figure 1.3, “Light 2”.
Any required FAA lighting should be consolidated and minimized wherever possible.	The tower does not have any lighting or FAA striping, as none was required.
We would heartedly recommend a monopole system for the Ellen D Mountain Development. Justification for this would be that sage grouse routinely are observed on top of the mountain in the vicinity of the communication site and we need to continue to minimize perching and nest building opportunities for those species that prey on sage grouse.	The Verizon facility currently has a self-standing three-tier lattice tower and it would be retrofit to a monopole when an upgrade is needed. See Figure 1.4, “Tower”.
Any water used on the described project should be provided by an established utility or under permit or waiver issued by the State Engineer’s Office.	No water of any kind would be used since no new construction would occur with the renewing of the lease.



**Figure 1.2. Light 1**



**Figure 1.3. Light 2**



**Figure 1.4. Tower**

## **1.5. Internal Scoping**

The proposed project was presented to the WFO Interdisciplinary Team (IDT) on September 16, 2015. Internal scoping consisted of discussing how the already built communication site and facilities impact resources and what terms and conditions would apply for the life of the long-term ROW lease. On October 22, 2015, a site visit was conducted to assess the impacts on resources.

## **1.6. Resource Issues Identified**

Based on the internal and external scoping, the following issues have been determined relevant to the analysis of this action. The following resource issues were identified as having the potential to be impacted by the Proposed Action and analyzed in detail in this EA.

- Wildlife, Sensitive/Special Status Species, and Migratory Bird Species (including Raptors)
- Hazardous Materials/Geology & Mineral Resources
- Cultural Resources
- Soils/Water/Air Resources
- Visual Resources

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# **Chapter 2. Proposed Action and Alternatives**

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## 2.1. Proposed Action

Under the Proposed Action, the BLM would authorize a long-term ROW lease to Verizon to convert the current status of a completely built short-term, temporary facility to a long-term, permanent facility on a site that has been established as part of the existing Ellen D Communication Site administered by BLM WFO under the Ellen D Communication Site Management Plan.

Verizon is the external proponent and owner of the communication facility and all equipment. No new surface disturbance or construction would occur. Routine maintenance and testing of the communications facilities and equipment would continue to occur on a monthly basis. An existing road would be used for access and maintenance to the site.

The proposed action would occur entirely on the previously authorized and disturbed ground (35' x 35' cell block foundation) and consists of .028 acres that was originally authorized on June 11, 2013.

### Facility Design Features (Appendix A, *Facility Design Feature Diagrams*)

1. One (1) 81 foot self-supporting lattice tower with nine (9) Verizon antennas in three sectors, two microwave dishes, and various cables;
2. One (1) 12 ft. x 16 ft. equipment shelter;
3. One (1) 60 kW standby propane generator;
4. One (1) 1,000 gallon propane tank;
5. One (1) 123 feet of underground power conduits;
6. One (1) 200A service meter mounted on a 3 feet utility H frame;
7. Operational access (Map 1.1, "Ellen D Mountain Access"); and
8. Reclamation.

## 2.2. No Action Alternative

Under the No Action Alternative, the BLM would not authorize a long-term ROW lease to Verizon to convert the short-term temporary use location of their communication facility. Verizon would have to remove all of their equipment; have no presence at this location; not be able to provide emergency, cell, and ISP coverage to its customers; and reclaim the area to pre-disturbance specifications. Their customers would have to rely on other carriers to provide coverage in this area.

Verizon would have to seek another location for their communication facility. At this time, there are no other designated communication sites in the area. This facility was originally authorized under a short-term 3-year lease that required the site to be recontoured and reclaimed back to the condition that existed prior to the authorization of the site. The selection of the No Action Alternative would result in additional surface disturbance to remove the existing facility, recontour the slope, and seed the area.

## 2.3. Land Use Plan Conformance

### Land Use Plan Name and Date Amended & Approved:

Wells RMP- July 16, 1985. The Wells Resource Management Plan as approved on July 16, 1985, is silent on the Proposed Action. However, it is consistent with the objectives for the management of lands, right-of-way corridors, access, recreation, livestock management, wildlife, and minerals as prescribed and identified in the Record of Decision of the RMP (BLM 1985, pgs. 3, 7, & 10)

Wells RMP Wild Horse Amendment- February 2, 1993

Wells RMP Elk Amendment- February 14, 1993

Wells RMP Fire Amendment-October 14, 2003

Nevada and Northeastern California Greater Sage-Grouse Approved Resource Management Plan Amendment (ARMPA)-September 21, 2015

## 2.4. Plans, Laws, and Regulations

The authority used by BLM to authorize communication uses on public land (administered by the BLM) is The Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976 (FLPMA), 90 Stat. 2776 (43 U.S.C. 1761–1771) and is reflected in title 43, Code of Federal Regulations (CFR), Sections 2801–2808 and various BLM Washington Office Information Bulletins and Instruction Memorandums.

Authority for the issuance of theorizations and/or licenses for the transmission and reception of electronic radiation for communications purposes is granted by Congress and administered by the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) add/or the National Telecommunication and Information Administration — Interagency Radio Advisory Committee (NTIA/IRAC).

## 2.5. Consistency with other Land Use Plans

The Proposed Action is further consistent with other Federal, State, and local laws, regulations, and plans to the maximum extent possible. This includes the Elko County Public Lands Policy Plan (2008) and Elko County Nevada General Open Space Plan (2003). The Elko County Public Lands Policy Plan (2008) outlines the expectations and general procedures for project development along county rights-of-way, and within county jurisdictional boundaries as they relate to public lands. The Elko County Nevada General Open Space Plan (2003) provides for the development of multiple uses on open space within Elko County.

# **Chapter 3. Affected Environment and Environmental Effects**

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### 3.1. Review of Statutory Authorities and Other Resources

Table 3.1, “Statutory Authorities and Other Resources” identifies elements of the human environment that are regulated by a statutory or regulatory authority that would be affected and are analyzed in this EA, as well as those that BLM determined would not be affected.

**Table 3.1. Statutory Authorities and Other Resources**

Element/Resource	Not Present	Present / Not Affected	Present / Potentially Affected	Remarks/Comments
Areas of Critical Environmental Concern (ACEC)	X			There are no ACEC concerns present within the project area.
Environmental Justice	X			The EPA (EPA, 2015) identified that less than 2 percent of the population within a five mile radius of the project area is considered minority. No disproportionate effects to these populations are anticipated to occur from the proposed action. There are no Environmental Justice concerns present within the project area.
Human Health and Safety	X			There are no Human Health and Safety concerns present within the project area.
Farm Land — Prime/Unique	X			There are no Farm Land — Prime/Unique concerns present within the project area.
Forests and Rangelands (HFRA)	X			There are no Healthy Forest Restoration Act concerns present within the project area.
Floodplains	X			There are no Floodplain concerns present within the project area.
Native American Concerns	X			A review of ethnographic records reveals no evidence of use of the site by Native American peoples. This conclusion is supported by the cultural inventory report, which revealed no archaeological sites in the vicinity of the proposed action. Additionally, the area has been highly disturbed from previous construction activities for the existing communication facilities on the mountain peak, minimizing the potential for intact sites in this locations. There are no known Native American concerns present within the project area. Scoping letters were sent with no response.
Wetlands, Riparian Zones	X			There are no Wetlands, Riparian Zones concerns present within the project area.

<b>Element/Resource</b>	<b>Not Present</b>	<b>Present / Not Affected</b>	<b>Present / Potentially Affected</b>	<b>Remarks/Comments</b>
Wild & Scenic Rivers	X			There are no Wild & Scenic concerns present within the project area.
Wilderness	X			There are no Wilderness concerns present within the project area.
Access	X			Physical access is available to the lands through use of the local road network in the area. The site has legal access from the highway and no gates or road closures are proposed. There are no Access concerns present within the project area.
Aquatic Species	X			There are no Aquatic Species concerns present within the project area.
Climate Change (Greenhouse Gas (GHG's) Wildfire, Disease, etc.)	X			There are no Climate Change (GHGs Wildfire, Disease, etc.) concerns present within the project area.
Energy (Gas, Oil, Wind)	X			There are no Energy (Gas, Oil, Wind) concerns present within the project area.
Engineering	X			There are no Engineering concerns present within project area.
Fire Management	X			There are no Fire Management concerns present within project area.
Fisheries	X			There are no bodies of water present within the project area that support fish species.
Livestock Grazing/Rangelands		X		Gates should be left closed and no harassing, injuring, or worrying livestock. There are no Livestock Grazing/Rangelands concerns present within project area.
Non-Native Invasive and Noxious Species	X			Wash vehicles prior to entering the project site to remove all dirt, debris, and plant material to minimize the introduction and spread of weeds. Continue to monitor access route and communication site for presence of noxious weeds and non-native invasive plants. If noxious weeds or non-native invasive plants are found on-site, consult with district weed specialist prior to herbicide application.
Social or Economic	X			There are no Social or Economic concerns present within the project area.

Element/Resource	Not Present	Present / Not Affected	Present / Potentially Affected	Remarks/Comments
Wild Horses & Burro	X			This is not a herd management area. There are no Wild Horses & Burro concerns present within project area.
<b>Address Further in the EA</b>				
Wildlife, Sensitive/Special Status Species, and Migratory Bird Species (including Raptors)			X	See Section 3.3, “Wildlife, Sensitive/Special Status Species, and Migratory Bird Species (including Raptors)”.
Hazardous Material/Geology & Minerals Resources			X	See Section 3.4, “Hazardous Material/Geology & Minerals Resources”.
Cultural Resources			X	See Section 3.5, “Cultural Resources”.
Soils/Water/Air Quality Resources			X	See Section 3.6, “Soil/Water/Air Resources”.
Visual Resources			X	See Section 3.7, “Visual Resources”.

## 3.2. Past, Present and Reasonably Foreseeable Future Actions

Past, Present and Reasonably Foreseeable Future Actions (PPRFFAs) include recreation use, livestock grazing, issuance and renewal of ROW leases and maintenance of associated facilities, and mineral exploration and mining.

## 3.3. Wildlife, Sensitive/Special Status Species, and Migratory Bird Species (including Raptors)

### 3.3.1. Affected Environment

The Proposed Action is located in a black sage/grassland habitat type with scattered surface gravel and rock outcrops. Taller sagebrush species occur below the project site, along drainages where deep snow accumulates. There are also scattered mountain mahogany patches in the upper elevations and drainages. See Figure 3.1, “View to North of Ellen D Mountain” and Figure 3.2, “View to West of Ellen D Mountain”.



**Figure 3.1. View to North of Ellen D Mountain**



**Figure 3.2. View to West of Ellen D Mountain**

## General Wildlife:

The Proposed Action project area is home to several different wildlife species. Big game species occupy the surrounding habitat during different seasons throughout the year. The area is crucial winter range for mule deer (*Odocoileus hemionus*), crucial summer range for Rocky Mountain bighorn sheep (*Ovis canadensis*), and elk (*Cervus canadensis*) use the area throughout the year. Predator species, such as coyotes (*Canis latrans*), bobcats (*Lynx rufus*), and mountain lions (*Puma concolor*), potentially use the area for food and/or shelter. Other wildlife species, such as ground squirrels, other rodents, and chukar partridge (*Alectoris chukar*), are also present year-round.

## Sensitive/Special Status Species:

Greater sage-grouse (grouse; *Centrocercus urophasianus*) have been observed within the Proposed Action project area. The Proposed Action is located within a Sagebrush Focal Area (SFA) and Priority Habitat Management Area (PHMA), as mapped within the Nevada and Northeastern California Greater Sage-Grouse Approved Resource Management Plan Amendment (ARMPA; Appendix A, Figure 2-1). One active lek and three pending status leks occur within the area, but are greater than four miles away from the Proposed Action project area (Appendix B, *Disturbance Cap Calculations*; NDOW, 2014). This area is categorized as late summer and winter habitat for grouse according to Geospatial Information System (GIS) layers from the Nevada Department of Wildlife (NDOW, 2010).

Other Sensitive/Special Status Species that may occur within the Proposed Action project area are several bat species (Appendix C, *2011 BLM Elko District Sensitive/Special Status Species List*), the black rosy-finch (*Leucosticte atrata*), and the American pika (*Ochotona princeps*). Due to a lack of riparian foraging areas, sensitive bat species, such as the big brown bat (*Eptesicus fuscus*), spotted bat (*Euderma maculatum*), California myotis (*Myotis californicus*), or fringed myotis (*Myotis thysanodes*), may occupy the project area temporarily during migration or movement between foraging sites, using some of the small crevices within the rock outcrops as a day roost. The black rosy-finch may nest near the Proposed Action project area and use it for foraging and nest building. Pika may inhabit some of the rock outcrops near the open grassy areas, foraging and living year-round.

## Migratory Bird Species (including Raptors):

The Migratory Bird Treaty Act (MBTA) provides Federal protection for migrant and resident native passerines (flycatchers and songbirds) as well as birds of prey, migratory waterbirds (waterfowl, wading birds, and shorebirds), and other species such as doves, hummingbirds, swifts, and woodpeckers. For most species, nesting habitat is of special importance because it is critical for supporting reproduction in terms of both nesting sites and food. In addition, because birds are generally territorial during the nesting season, their ability to access and utilize sufficient food is limited by the quality of the territory occupied. During non-breeding seasons, birds are generally non-territorial and able to feed across a larger area and wider range of habitats.

Numerous migratory bird species occupy, or have the potential to occupy, the project area associated with the Proposed Action. Species potentially present include, but are not limited to, the bald eagle (*Haliaeetus leucocephalus*)\*, ferruginous hawk (*Buteo regalis*)\*, golden eagle (*Aquila chrysaetos*), prairie falcon (*Falco mexicanus*)\*, short-eared owl (*Asio flammeus*), rough-legged hawk (*Buteo lagopus*), Swainson's hawk (*Buteo swainsoni*)\*, sage sparrow (*Artemisiospiza nevadensis*), loggerhead shrike (*Lanius ludovicianus*)\*, pinyon jay (*Gymnorhinus*

*cyanocephalus*)\*, sage thrasher (*Oreoscoptes montanus*)\*, Virginia's warbler (*Leiothlypis virginiae*), green-tailed towhee (*Pipilo chlorurus*), and Brewer's sparrow (*Spizella breweri*)<sup>1</sup>

Nest sites for several of the raptor species listed above are documented 500 ft. or more below the Proposed Action project area. No nest sites for the smaller migratory bird species have been documented. No sign of raptor nesting or perching on the lattice tower or facilities were observed during the site visit. No guy wires are constructed for the Proposed Action.

### 3.3.2. Environmental Effects

#### Proposed Action

The facility proposed for permanence in the Proposed Action was constructed and placed into full operation approximately three years ago. Wildlife, other sensitive/special status species, and migratory birds in the area have adapted to the presence of the structures, the noise from the air conditioning units and generators, and the human activity necessary for maintenance of the Proposed Action. Therefore, there would be no new environmental effects to wildlife, other sensitive/special status species, and migratory birds by authorizing a long-term ROW lease.

The Proposed Action is already built and cannot be located outside of the PHMA/SFA or in non-habitat in order to avoid effects on grouse (ARMPA, MD SSS-1: a, b; pg. 2-6). However, the Proposed Action is collocated with other communication towers and managed under the Ellen D Mountain Communication Site Management Plan (ARMPA, MD SSS-1: c; pg. 2-6). This collocation minimizes the effects of each communication tower across the landscape by consolidating the effects area into one area versus several different areas. The Proposed Action project analysis area (4 mile buffer) shows existing anthropogenic disturbance is 1.12% (ARMPA, MD SSS-2: A, pg. 2-6 to 2-2-8; Appendix B, *Disturbance Cap Calculations*). There would not be any new habitat loss or degradation because the Proposed Action is already built (ARMPA, MD SSS-2: B, pg. 2-8).

As with other wildlife, grouse have adapted to the presence of the structures and human activity and have been observed in the area around the Proposed Action. New or updated mitigation measures, stipulations, or required design features (RDFs) for the ROW lease would be applied to decrease the impact of the current structures and human presence (see Section 3.3.3, "Mitigation and Monitoring Measures"). There would be no new environmental effects that would have adverse impacts to grouse or that would disrupt grouse habitat by authorizing a long-term ROW lease.

#### No Action Alternative

Denying the request for a long-term ROW lease would require the proponent to remove all of their facilities and reclaim the area. This requires more human presence, heavy construction equipment for facility, concrete, and tower removal and re-contouring work, and seeding equipment. These surface disturbing and disruptive activities may be completed in a short time period, with reclamation potentially continuing over several years. Removal of the facilities and completion of reclamation would not change the amount of existing anthropogenic disturbance for the project analysis area (see Appendix B, *Disturbance Cap Calculations*).

<sup>1</sup>Species with an asterisk (\*) are also listed on the BLM Sensitive Species List for Nevada in the EDO, WFO (Appendix C, 2011 BLM Elko District Sensitive/Special Status Species List).

The amount of human presence and disruptive activities would decrease with the removal of this communications site after reclamation. The need for routine maintenance and equipment tests would no longer be required. This is a mildly beneficial effect since the other communications sites have routine maintenance they conduct and would still have human presence and disruptive activities occurring.

Removal of the air-conditioning units and the back-up generator would decrease the amount of noise for the area, but it would be a small benefit due to the other communication facilities located on the same site. Re-contouring the soils would increase the potential for wind and water erosion due to the poor quality of the soil/gravel mix, the exposed site, and steep slopes. Erosion potential would decrease as vegetation established, but this may not be for several years.

Wildlife, other sensitive/special status species, and migratory birds would avoid the area during times of heavy equipment use and increased human activities, but would resume their normal activities after the work has been completed. Effects of avoidance range from larger more mobile animals moving away from potentially important habitat to increased risk of predation on smaller animals to reproductive failure for migratory birds, depending on the season activities occur. These effects would be negligible due to the short duration of surface disturbing and disruptive activities. The environmental effect would be negative but mild to moderate in the short term, and mildly beneficial in the long term for the No Action Alternative.

Environmental effects of denying the long-term ROW lease and subsequent deconstruction and reclamation work would have a short-term negative impact and a mildly beneficial long-term impact to grouse similar to what has been described above for other wildlife species.

### **3.3.3. Mitigation and Monitoring Measures**

#### **Proposed Action**

The proponent remains subject to the MBTA, administered by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS), which precludes the “take” of any raptor or most other native species. Under the Act, the term “take” means to harass, harm, pursue, hunt, shoot, wound, kill, trap, capture, or collect, or to attempt to engage in any such conduct. The FWS interprets “harm” and “kill” to include loss of eggs or nestlings due to abandonment or reduced attentiveness by one or both adults as a result of disturbance by human activity, as well as physical destruction of an occupied nest.

Although no physical evidence was observed of raptor or migratory bird nesting on any of the facilities or equipment during the site visit, the proponent must be aware that nesting may occur. If the proponent does find any nest structures on any of the facilities, they are to contact the BLM wildlife biologist for identification of the species and further instruction on how to proceed.

Raptors are known to use the lattice-type structure of the tower for perching; however, no evidence of raptor perching was observed during the site visit. The proponent must be aware that perching may still occur. If raptor perching is observed, the proponent would contact the BLM wildlife biologist to determine how to proceed. If at any time the lattice tower needs to be replaced or updated, the replacement structure would be designed and constructed to discourage raptor nesting and perching.

If new surface disturbing or increased disruptive activities (i.e., increased maintenance timing from once per month to more than once per month) are required for updating or maintaining the

communications facilities, the proponent would be required to conduct migratory bird nesting surveys, including raptors and grouse, prior to any activities occurring. Dates for surveys to be conducted are December 1 to September 30 for raptors, March 1 to May 15 for grouse, and April 1 to July 31 for migratory birds. Surveys would be conducted according to the BLM Nevada *Statewide Wildlife Survey Protocols* (July 2014). Surveys would be conducted by a BLM wildlife biologist or a BLM-approved third party wildlife biologist. If nesting behavior or structures are observed, depending on the species observed, an avoidance buffer would be established, or the surface disturbing or disruptive activities would be postponed, until the young have fledged.

No surface disturbing activities would occur from November 1 to April 30 to protect mule deer in crucial winter range. No surface disturbing activities would occur from June 15 to September 15 and from November 1 to February 28 to protect grouse during late summer and winter habitat use periods. These no surface disturbance stipulations include reclamation activities.

Applicable grouse RDFs for the Proposed Action are the following (ARMPA, Appendix C):

- RDF Gen 7: Require dust abatement practices when authorizing use on roads.
- RDF Gen 11: Equip temporary and permanent aboveground facilities with structures or devices that discourage nesting and perching of raptors, corvids, and other predators.
- RDF Gen 12: Control the spread and effects of nonnative, invasive plant species (e.g., by washing vehicles and equipment, minimize unnecessary surface disturbance; Evangelista et al. 2011). All projects would be required to have a noxious weed management plan in place prior to construction and operations.
- RDF Gen 13: Implement project site-cleaning practices to preclude the accumulation of debris, solid waste, putrescible wastes, and other potential anthropogenic subsidies for predators of GRSG (grouse).
- RDF Gen 16: Utilize mulching techniques to expedite reclamation and to protect soils if the site requires it.
- RDF Gen 17: Restore disturbed areas at final reclamation to the pre-disturbance landforms and desired plant community.
- Modified RDF Gen 19: Instruct all employees to avoid harassment and disturbance of wildlife, especially during the GRSG breeding (e.g., courtship and nesting) season. In addition, pets shall not be permitted on site.
- RDF Gen 20: To reduce predator perching in GRSG (grouse) habitat, limit the construction of vertical facilities and fences to the minimum number and amount needed and install anti-perch devices where applicable.
- RDF Gen 22: Load and unload all equipment on existing roads to minimize disturbance to vegetation and soil.
- RDF LR-LUA 3: Where necessary, fit transmission towers with anti-perch devices (Lammers and Collopy 2007) in GRSG (grouse) habitat.

RDF Gen 1, 2, 3, and 4 do not apply to the Proposed Action because there would not be any new road construction. The access road is already constructed and shared with all proponents that use the communications site. RDF Gen 5 wouldn't provide additional protection for grouse because

the access road to the Proposed Action is extremely rocky and difficult to traverse. A regular 4x4 truck cannot travel at speeds greater than 30 mph along the access road without causing severe damage to the vehicle or causing an accident. The access road is very windy with steep slopes on both sides. RDF Gen 6 doesn't apply because this road is utilized by the public and the communications proponents to access the area for recreation and work purposes. RDF Gen 9 doesn't apply because the communications sites are not going to be removed and the road will continue to be used for access. RDF Gen 10 doesn't apply because there are no permanent structures that create movement associated with the Proposed Action. RDF Gen 14 doesn't apply because there would not be any project related temporary housing. RDF Gen 15 doesn't apply because there isn't any interim reclamation required. RDF Gen 18 doesn't apply because there are no ground-disturbing activities authorized with the Proposed Action. RDF Gen 19 is modified above to reflect all employees, not just construction employees. If RDF Gen 19 were left as is, it wouldn't apply because the Proposed Action is already constructed. All employees should avoid harassment of wildlife species and no pets should be allowed on site. RDF Gen 21 doesn't apply because there are no reservoirs, pits, tanks, troughs, etc. authorized with the Proposed Action. RDF LR-LUA 1 doesn't apply because the Proposed Action is not new, has already been constructed, and is collocated with other communication sites. RDF LR-LUA 2 doesn't apply because the Proposed Action is not a request to authorize a ROW lease to a county on newly constructed energy/mining development roads. All RDFs that follow the Lands and Realty section of RDFs don't apply because they are specific to other programs.

## **No Action Alternative**

The same stipulations as for the Proposed Action would apply to surface disturbing and disruptive activities associated with removing the communications facilities and reclamation work.

Applicable RDFs for the No Action Alternative are as follows (ARMPA, Appendix C):

- RDF Gen 7: Require dust abatement practices when authorizing use on roads.
- RDF Gen 12: Control the spread and effects of nonnative, invasive plant species (e.g., by washing vehicles and equipment, minimize unnecessary surface disturbance; Evangelista et al. 2011). All projects would be required to have a noxious weed management plan in place prior to construction and operations.
- RDF Gen 13: Implement project site-cleaning practices to preclude the accumulation of debris, solid waste, putrescible wastes, and other potential anthropogenic subsidies for predators of GRSG (grouse).
- RDF Gen 15: When interim reclamation is required, irrigate site to establish seedlings more quickly if the site requires it.
- RDF Gen 16: Utilize mulching techniques to expedite reclamation and to protect soils if the site requires it.
- RDF Gen 17: Restore disturbed areas at final reclamation to the pre-disturbance landforms and desired plant community.
- RDF Gen 18: When authorizing ground-disturbing activities, require the use of vegetation and soil reclamation standards suitable for the site type prior to construction.

- Modified RDF Gen 19: Instruct all construction and reclamation employees to avoid harassment and disturbance of wildlife, especially during the GRSG (grouse) breeding (e.g., courtship and nesting) season. In addition, pets shall not be permitted on site during construction or reclamation (BLM 2005b).
- RDF Gen 22: Load and unload all equipment on existing roads to minimize disturbance to vegetation and soil.

RDF Gen 1, 2, 3, and 4 do not apply to the No Action Alternative because there would not be any new road construction. The access road is already constructed and shared with all proponents that use the communications site. RDF Gen 5 wouldn't provide additional protection for grouse because the access road to the Proposed Action is extremely rocky and difficult to traverse. A regular 4x4 truck cannot travel at speeds greater than 30 mph along the access road without causing severe damage to the vehicle or causing an accident. The access road is very windy with steep slopes on both sides. RDF Gen 6 doesn't apply because this road is utilized by the public and the communications proponents to access the area for recreation and work purposes. RDF Gen 9 doesn't apply because the other communications sites are not going to be removed and the road would continue to be used for access. RDF Gen 10 and 11 don't apply because all facilities would be removed and the site would be reclaimed. RDF Gen 14 doesn't apply because there would not be any project related temporary housing. RDF Gen 19 is modified above to reflect all employees, not just construction employees. All employees should avoid harassment of wildlife species and no pets should be allowed on site. RDF Gen 21 doesn't apply because there are no reservoirs, pits, tanks, troughs, etc. authorized. RDF LR-LUA 1, 2, and 3 don't apply because the Verizon communication site would be removed and the site reclaimed. All RDFs that follow the Lands and Realty section of RDFs don't apply because they are specific to other programs.

### 3.3.4. Cumulative Effects

The Cumulative Effects Study Area for Wildlife, Sensitive/Special Status Species, and Migratory Bird Species (including Raptors) is the Ellen D Communication Site buffered out by 4 miles. The PPRFFAs of concern in this CESA are issuance and renewal of ROW leases and maintenance of associated facilities, and mineral exploration and mining.

#### Proposed Action

Cumulative effects for the Proposed Action are negligible because new surface disturbance or disruptive activities would not occur and the facilities are already constructed and operational. If the tower needs to be updated, there would be a mild increase in human/disruptive activities and some potential for surface disturbing activities, but effects would be short-term and minor. The long-term effects would be minor but beneficial for wildlife.

The project site is managed under a communications site plan and other communication proponents could request to place a communications tower on the same site. This would increase the cumulative effects for the area only mildly since the new facilities would be collocated with the Proposed Action and other already constructed facilities. The new facility would be subject to the mitigation requirements in the ARMPA and would have a negligible effect on grouse specifically, but would also have a negligible effect to other wildlife species.

The other communication facilities that are collocated with the Proposed Action may need to be updated. However, these updates would be short-term, minor effects. A new communications

proponent could request a ROW lease for communications facilities within the communications site in the near future. The new site construction would be a short-term impact to wildlife species due to the increased human presence, noise from construction, operation, and reclamation equipment, and adapting to the new tall structures for the new site. The new communication proponent would be subject to similar stipulations and mitigation measures from the ARMPA for grouse. These measures would decrease the cumulative impact to negligible to minor for all wildlife species.

The potential for other development in the area (i.e., mining) has been and is reasonably assumed to be low. There are mining claims held in the surrounding area, but no major exploration or mine development has occurred or is expected to occur in the near future. If mining exploration activity were to increase in the area, the cumulative effect would be minor to moderate for wildlife due to increased noise, disruptive activities (i.e., exploration drilling, cross-country travel, new road construction), and increased human presence. If mine development were to occur in the area, the cumulative effect would be moderate to major for wildlife due to increased construction activity, blasting associated with mining, increased human presence, and noise. All potential mining development activities would be subject to mitigation measures in the ARMPA and other best management practices to decrease impacts.

### **No Action Alternative**

Cumulative effects for the No Action Alternative would be short-term during the deconstruction and reclamation phases. The long-term effects would be beneficial for wildlife species; however, potentially negligible since the project area is a communications site and the Verizon site was only .28 acres in size.

The potential for another communications proponent to request a ROW lease for communications facilities in the same site is moderate. Cumulative effects would mildly increase during the construction phase and would become negligible for the operational phase. A new communications facility would be subject to stipulations and the mitigation requirements in the ARMPA and cumulative effects would be the same as for the Proposed Action.

The potential for other development in the area (i.e., mining) and cumulative effects is the same as for the Proposed Action.

## **3.4. Hazardous Material/Geology & Minerals Resources**

### **3.4.1. Affected Environment**

Sealed lead acid batteries would be present on the site for starting the standby 60 kW Propane Generator. The batteries contain sulfuric acid.

The Paleozoic rocks of Ellen D Mountain are composed primarily of quartzite and shales that dip north at angles near 20 degrees or lie nearly horizontal (Shrader, 1912).

Ellen D Mountain is roughly 3 miles east of the Contact Mining District which is centered around the town of Contact near Salmon Falls Creek in northeastern Elko County. The district is large and includes the old districts of Alabama, Salmon, Kit Carson, Salmon River, and Porter (Portis). Most of the mines and prospects lie within the contact aureole of a large granodiorite stock which intrudes Paleozoic sedimentary rocks. The Contact District was a copper producing

district from 1915 to 1930, containing mostly copper with lesser amounts of gold, silver, and lead. (LaPointe et al., 1991).

### **3.4.2. Environmental Effects**

The presence of sulfuric acid in the batteries for the standby 60 kW Propane Generator represents a spill hazard. The presence of the batteries could result in the release of sulfuric acid to the cellblock foundation and surrounding area.

The Proposed Action would not involve the removal of rocks or have any effect on mineral exploration in the Contact Mining District. There would be no significant impact to geology and mineral resources from the Proposed Action.

The No Action Alternative would have the potential risk of impacts due to the removal and transport of the sealed lead batteries from the site. Until reclamation is completed there would be the possible impact of erosion.

### **3.4.3. Mitigation and Monitoring Measures**

The standby propane generator would need to be designed to secure the lead acid battery to the generator to prevent the battery from tipping and creating a spill hazard. The generator should also be designed to contain the sulfuric acid should a spill occur.

### **3.4.4. Cumulative Effects**

The CESA for Hazardous Material/Geology & Minerals Resources is the Ellen D Communication Site buffered out by 4 miles. The PPRFFAs of concern in this CESA are issuance of ROW leases and maintenance of associated facilities, and mineral exploration and mining.

In the Contact Mining District, a mining or precious metal exploration company may propose to continue mineral exploration activities in response to commodity prices, which could potentially combine with the effects from the Proposed Action and No Action Alternative and contribute to the cumulative effects. The issuance of ROW leases and maintenance of associated facilities could potentially combine with the effects of the Proposed Action and No Action Alternative and contribute to the cumulative effects.

## **3.5. Cultural Resources**

### **3.5.1. Affected Environment**

Gold was first discovered in Contact in 1870; however production in the district did not really begin until the late 1870s. The area was originally divided into four adjacent mining districts which were later grouped into the same district. A preliminary record search and field reconnaissance suggests that at least three distinct towns developed throughout the district, each of which have been referred to as Contact.

A municipal transportation system was laid upon the previously rural setting with the establishment of Jackpot on the Nevada-Idaho line. This small community began with the

construction of the Horseshoe Club Casino in 1956 and still owes its livelihood to gambling. By 1959 the town had three casinos and was officially christened Jackpot. Roads have proliferated around Jackpot as support facilities have sprung up in and around town and as the populace has ventured into the surrounding desert seeking recreational opportunities.

### **3.5.2. Environmental Effects**

The Project location for the Verizon facility is located on top of Ellen D Mountain, Elko County, Nevada. The project area has had two previous cultural resources inventories (BLM 1-1231 and BLM 1-1293). The Class III inventories were conducted on Sept. 17, 1991 and July 9, 1992. Both of these inventories of the ridge top yielded negative findings of historic properties. In March 2013, a Categorical Exclusion (CX) document was signed permitting construction of the current facilities. BLM determined that the previous cultural resource surveys were adequate and that no historic properties would be affected from construction of the facility.

The project location has no historic properties or cultural resources that could be affected from the proposed project. Known cultural resources within the general area include prehistoric settlements and camps, the remains of the historic mining town of Contact, the Oregon Shortline Railroad, and the Toano Idaho Stage Road.

### **3.5.3. Mitigation and Monitoring Measures**

The project location has no direct effects on any historic properties. As required at the time of the construction of the tower and facilities, BLM instructed Verizon that the facilities would be painted two (2) shades darker than the surrounding landscape. This would make the tower and buildings virtually invisible from a distance. The mitigation measures ensure that there would not be any indirect effects (visual or auditory) from the project on nearby historic properties.

### **3.5.4. Cumulative Effects**

The CESA for Cultural Resources is the Ellen D Communication Site buffered out by 4.4 miles. The PPRFFAs of concern in this CESA are recreation, issuance and renewal of ROW leases, and mineral exploration and mining.

Often times, cultural resources may be affected by continued or increased human presence (i.e., illegal collection and vandalism). Construction of access roads and improving existing roads may increase access to previously inaccessible locations, increasing the likelihood that prehistoric and historic sites could be looted. As described above, the Project area has no historic properties; therefore, there would be no incremental increase in direct cumulative effects within the project location. Cumulative effects could arise from visual impacts associated with proposed infrastructure placement if the proposed mitigative measures/stipulations were not adhered to.

## **3.6. Soil/Water/Air Resources**

### **3.6.1. Affected Environment**

The Proposed Action area falls within Major Land Resource Area 025 (Owyhee High Plateau) and the Snake River Basin. Based on the Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS,

2014) soil survey, one soil association is present within the Proposed Action area, the Shalcleav-Gollaher-Keman association which is map unit symbol 237. The interpretations and descriptions are developed from the Web Soil Survey, National Cooperative Soil Survey of Elko County, Nevada, Northeast Part, Version 7, Aug. 15, 2014 (NRCS, 2014). Bedrock is typically located within four to twelve inches below ground surface and the soils are not considered prime farmland. The soils are well drained with no tendency for flooding and ponding. Slopes range from 15 to 50%. The soils are primarily gravelly loams, moderately deep, and well drained. Water holding capacity varies with soil texture and depth. Surface soils are typically 0 to 12 inches thick and are moderately susceptible to wind and/or water erosion. Soils have a very slow infiltration rate (high runoff potential) and a very slow rate of water transmission. Soils in the project area have been described extensively and in detail by the Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS – see references).

### **3.6.2. Environmental Effects**

The Proposed Action would occur entirely on the previously authorized and disturbed 0.028 acres. The Proposed Action would not result in any further disturbance or additional exposure of the soils to wind and water erosion. As the disturbed area is small and no further construction is to take place, it is unlikely that the Proposed Action would contribute significantly to background erosion levels.

The No Action Alternative would require the removal of existing infrastructure which would increase susceptibility to soil erosion; however this impact would be reduced with best management practices. Soil loss incurred in the interim would be permanent.

No impacts to surface or ground water quality are anticipated from the Proposed Action. In addition, water resources and/or water rights would not be affected. There is no surface water located in the Proposed Action area and the watershed would not be substantially affected. Direct, indirect, or cumulative impacts would not approach a level of significance.

There would be minor temporary increases in emissions from the intermittent operation of the standby propane generator with the Proposed Action. The affected area is not within an area of non-attainment or areas where total suspended particulates or other criteria pollutants exceed Nevada air quality standards. Direct, indirect, or cumulative impacts would not approach a level of significance.

### **3.6.3. Mitigation and Monitoring Measures**

No mitigation measures and monitoring would be necessary. Compliance and monitoring would continue to be performed by the appropriate BLM staff (Realty Specialist) to ensure that implementation of the project is consistent with the right-of-way grant, terms, conditions, and stipulations, and that no unnecessary or undue degradation occurs.

### **3.6.4. Cumulative Effects**

The CESA for Soil/Water/Air Resources the Ellen D Mountain Communication Site. The PPRFFAs of concern is the issuance and renewal of ROW leases and maintenance of the associated facilities.

The cumulative effects of the Proposed Action, and associated maintenance activities, when combined with past, present and foreseeable future actions would have minimal impact on soil resources. The project area is very small (0.028 acres) on a previously established communications site. Loss of soil during prior construction activities and during the time before revegetation occurred in the project area is permanent, but would not increase with the Proposed Action. In contrast, the No Action Alternative would contribute to further site disturbance and soil loss with the removal of infrastructure. Due to the project area's small size there would be a negligible contribution to the cumulative effects of soil resources in the vicinity of Ellen D Mountain.

## **3.7. Visual Resources**

### **3.7.1. Affected Environment**

The analysis area for impacts to visual resources is the view shed along U.S. Highway 93, 16.5 miles south of the Idaho/Nevada state line. The proposed project is located within a VRM Class III designation and would meet the objectives of that class. The primary observers of the project would be the 2,400 daily vehicles traveling the U. S. Highway 93 corridor near Contact, Nevada (NDOT, 2014).

The speed on that road is 65-70 mph. The nearest possible view point to the project from the highway is 4.4 miles away. It would be intermittently visible for several miles. However, the speed of travel, meanders in the road, unique rock formations, nearby large mountains and Salmon Falls Creek adjacent to the highway would make the project unlikely to attract the attention of a casual viewer. See Appendix A, *Facility Design Feature Diagrams*, Figure A.13, "NDOT Traffic Statistics"

### **3.7.2. Environmental Effects**

A contrast rating worksheet was not prepared for this location due to its distance from the project area. The extension of the lease and proposed modifications would not provide any significant impacts to visual resources. The No Action alternative would have short-term impacts on Visual Resources until reclamation is completed.

### **3.7.3. Mitigation and Monitoring Measures**

Buildings would be painted two shades darker than the surroundings as previously required. Compliance and monitoring would continue to be performed by the appropriate BLM staff (Realty Specialist), to ensure that implementation of the project is consistent with the right-of-way grant, terms, conditions, and stipulations, and that no unnecessary or undue degradation occurs.

### **3.7.4. Cumulative Effects**

The CESA for Visual Resources is the view shed along U.S. Highway 93, 16.5 miles south of the Idaho/Nevada line. The PPRFFAs of concern in this CESA are issuance of ROWs, and mineral exploration and mining.

Issuance of additional ROWS and mineral exploration and mining could have cumulative effects once combined with the Proposed Action., both long- and short-term depending on the type of

project, the amount of disturbance and the types of structures proposed. These impacts would be lessened by reclamation, collocation of similar facilities, and painting of structures to blend into its surroundings. The No Action Alternative would slightly reduce the cumulative effects to Visual Resources once reclamation is completed.

# **Chapter 4. Tribes, Individuals, Organizations, or Agencies Consulted**

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**Table 4.1. List of Persons, Agencies and Organizations Consulted**

<b>Name</b>	<b>Purpose &amp; Authorities for Consultation or Coordination</b>	<b>Findings &amp; Conclusions</b>
Wells Rural Electric Co-Op	Analyze the potential effects of having a permanent communication site on Ellen D Mountain. 40 CFR Parts 1500 to 1508.	Sent scoping letter on September 3, 2015. Thirty (30) days comment period ended on October 9, 2015.
New Cingular Wireless	Analyze the potential effects of having a permanent communication site on Ellen D Mountain. 40 CFR Parts 1500 to 1508.	Sent scoping letter on September 3, 2015. Thirty (30) days comment period ended on October 9, 2015.
Nevada Division of State Lands	Analyze the potential effects of having a permanent communication site on Ellen D Mountain. 40 CFR Parts 1500 to 1508.	Sent scoping letter on September 3, 2015. Thirty (30) days comment period ended on October 9, 2015. Returned comments were sent by e-mail.
Idaho State Board of Education BSU	Analyze the potential effects of having a permanent communication site on Ellen D Mountain. 40 CFR Parts 1500 to 1508.	Sent scoping letter on September 3, 2015. Thirty (30) days comment period ended on October 9, 2015.
Nevada State Clearinghouse SHPO	Analyze the potential effects of having a permanent communication site on Ellen D Mountain. 40 CFR Parts 1500 to 1508.	Sent scoping letter on September 3, 2015. Thirty (30) days comment period ended on October 9, 2015. Returned comments were sent by e-mail.
Nevada Department of Wildlife	Analyze the potential effects of having a permanent communication site on Ellen D Mountain. 40 CFR Parts 1500 to 1508.	Sent scoping letter on September 3, 2015. Thirty (30) days comment period ended on October 9, 2015.
Elko County	Analyze the potential effects of having a permanent communication site on Ellen D Mountain. 40 CFR Parts 1500 to 1508.	Sent scoping letter on September 3, 2015. Thirty (30) days comment period ended on October 9, 2015.
Town of Jackpot	Analyze the potential effects of having a permanent communication site on Ellen D Mountain. 40 CFR Parts 1500 to 1508.	Sent scoping letter on September 3, 2015. Thirty (30) days comment period ended on October 9, 2015.
Salmon River Cattlemen's Association	Analyze the potential effects of having a permanent communication site on Ellen D Mountain. 40 CFR Parts 1500 to 1508.	Sent scoping letter on September 3, 2015. Thirty (30) days comment period ended on October 9, 2015.
US Fish & Wildlife Service	Analyze the potential effects of having a permanent communication site on Ellen D Mountain. 40 CFR Parts 1500 to 1508.	Sent scoping letter on September 3, 2015. Thirty (30) days comment period ended on October 9, 2015.
Resource Concepts, Inc.	Analyze the potential effects of having a permanent communication site on Ellen D Mountain. 40 CFR Parts 1500 to 1508.	Sent scoping letter on September 3, 2015. Thirty (30) days comment period ended on October 9, 2015.
Western Watersheds Project	Analyze the potential effects of having a permanent communication site on Ellen D Mountain. 40 CFR Parts 1500 to 1508.	Sent scoping letter on September 3, 2015. Thirty (30) days comment period ended on October 9, 2015.
Nevada Cattlemen's Association	Analyze the potential effects of having a communication site on Ellen D Mountain. 40 CFR Parts 1500 to 1508.	Sent scoping letter on September 3, 2015. Thirty (30) days comment period ended on October 9, 2015.
Natural Resources Management Advisory Commission	Analyze the potential effects of having a communication site on Ellen D Mountain. 40 CFR Parts 1500 to 1508.	Sent scoping letter on September 3, 2015. Thirty (30) days comment period ended on October 9, 2015.
Sustainable Grazing Coalition	Analyze the potential effects of having a permanent communication site on Ellen D Mountain. 40 CFR Parts 1500 to 1508.	Sent scoping letter on September 3, 2015. Thirty (30) days comment period ended on October 9, 2015.
Cactus Pete's Inc.	Analyze the potential effects of having a permanent communication site on Ellen D Mountain. 40 CFR Parts 1500 to 1508.	Sent scoping letter on September 3, 2015. Thirty (30) days comment period ended on October 9, 2015. Returned comments were sent by e-mail.

Name	Purpose & Authorities for Consultation or Coordination	Findings & Conclusions
Natural Resources Conservation Service	Analyze the potential effects of having a permanent communication site on Ellen D Mountain. 40 CFR Parts 1500 to 1508.	Sent scoping letter on September 3, 2015. Thirty (30) days comment period ended on October 9, 2015.
Pleasant Valley Grazing Association	Analyze the potential effects of having a permanent communication site on Ellen D Mountain. 40 CFR Parts 1500 to 1508.	Sent scoping letter on September 3, 2015. Thirty (30) days comment period ended on October 9, 2015.
R&S Enterprise	Analyze the potential effects of having a permanent communication site on Ellen D Mountain. 40 CFR Parts 1500 to 1508.	Sent scoping letter on September 3, 2015. Thirty (30) days comment period ended on October 9, 2015.
Winecup, Inc.	Analyze the potential effects of having a permanent communication site on Ellen D Mountain. 40 CFR Parts 1500 to 1508.	Sent scoping letter on September 3, 2015. Thirty (30) days comment period ended on October 9, 2015.
US Senator Dean Heller	Analyze the potential effects of having a permanent communication site on Ellen D Mountain. 40 CFR Parts 1500 to 1508.	Sent scoping letter on September 3, 2015. Thirty (30) days comment period ended on October 9, 2015.
Congressman Mark Amodei	Analyze the potential effects of having a permanent communication site on Ellen D Mountain. 40 CFR Parts 1500 to 1508.	Sent scoping letter on September 3, 2015. Thirty (30) days comment period ended on October 9, 2015.
Kathy Gregg	Analyze the potential effects of having a permanent communication site on Ellen D Mountain. 40 CFR Parts 1500 to 1508.	Sent scoping letter on September 3, 2015. Thirty (30) days comment period ended on October 9, 2015.
U.S. Senator Harry Reid	Analyze the potential effects of having a permanent communication site on Ellen D Mountain. 40 CFR Parts 1500 to 1508.	Sent scoping letter on September 3, 2015. Thirty (30) days comment period ended on October 9, 2015.
Wildlands Defense	Analyze the potential effects of having a permanent communication site on Ellen D Mountain. 40 CFR Parts 1500 to 1508.	Sent scoping letter on September 3, 2015. Thirty (30) days comment period ended on October 9, 2015.
Nevada Department of Agriculture	Analyze the potential effects of having a permanent communication site on Ellen D Mountain. 40 CFR Parts 1500 to 1508.	Sent scoping letter on September 3, 2015. Thirty (30) days comment period ended on October 9, 2015.
Nevada Division Water Resources	Analyze the potential effects of having a permanent communication site on Ellen D Mountain. 40 CFR Parts 1500 to 1508.	Sent scoping letter on September 3, 2015. Thirty (30) days comment period ended on October 9, 2015. Returned comments were sent by e-mail.

## **Chapter 5. List of Preparers**

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**Table 5.1. List of Preparers**

<b>Name</b>	<b>Title</b>	<b>Responsible for the Following Section(s) of this Document</b>
Virginia Morales	Realty Specialist	Lands and Realty/Project Lead
Wes Allen	Archaeologist	Cultural Resources
Jeff Moore	Rangeland Management Specialist	Livestock Grazing/Rangeland Health
Harley Gordon	Geologist	Geology and Minerals/Hazardous & Solid Wastes
Kristine Dedolph	Outdoor Recreation Planner	Visual Resources
Rob Hegemann	Hydrologist	Soils/Water/Air Resources
Sam Cisney	Weed Management Specialist	Nonnative Invasive Plants and Noxious Weeds
Kelly Michelsen	Natural Resource Specialist	Wildlife, Sensitive/Special Status Species, and Migratory Bird Species (including Raptors)
Terri Dobis	Planning and Environmental Coordinator	NEPA Compliance

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# Chapter 6. References

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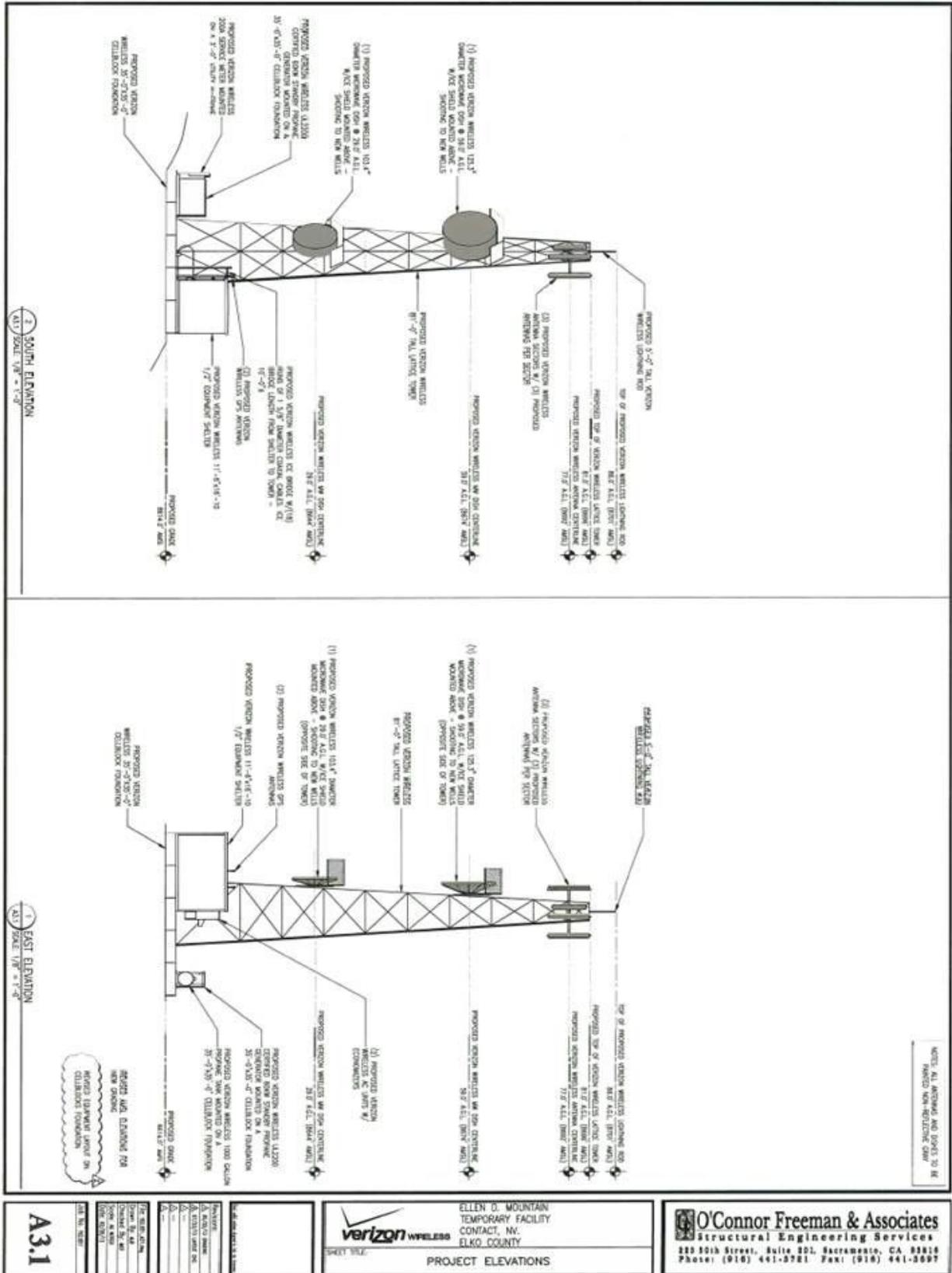


Figure A.3. Project Elevations

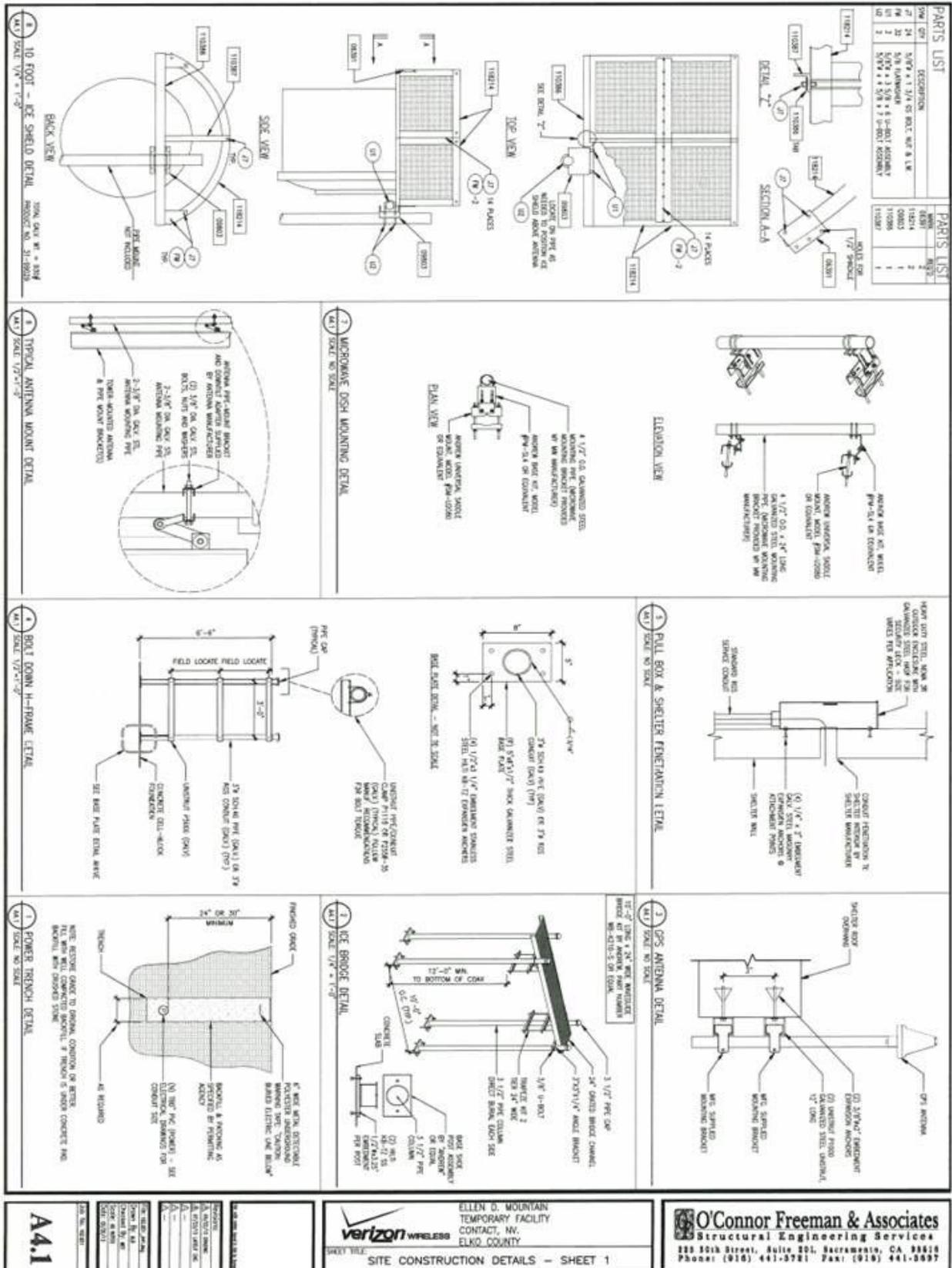


Figure A.4. Site Construction Details





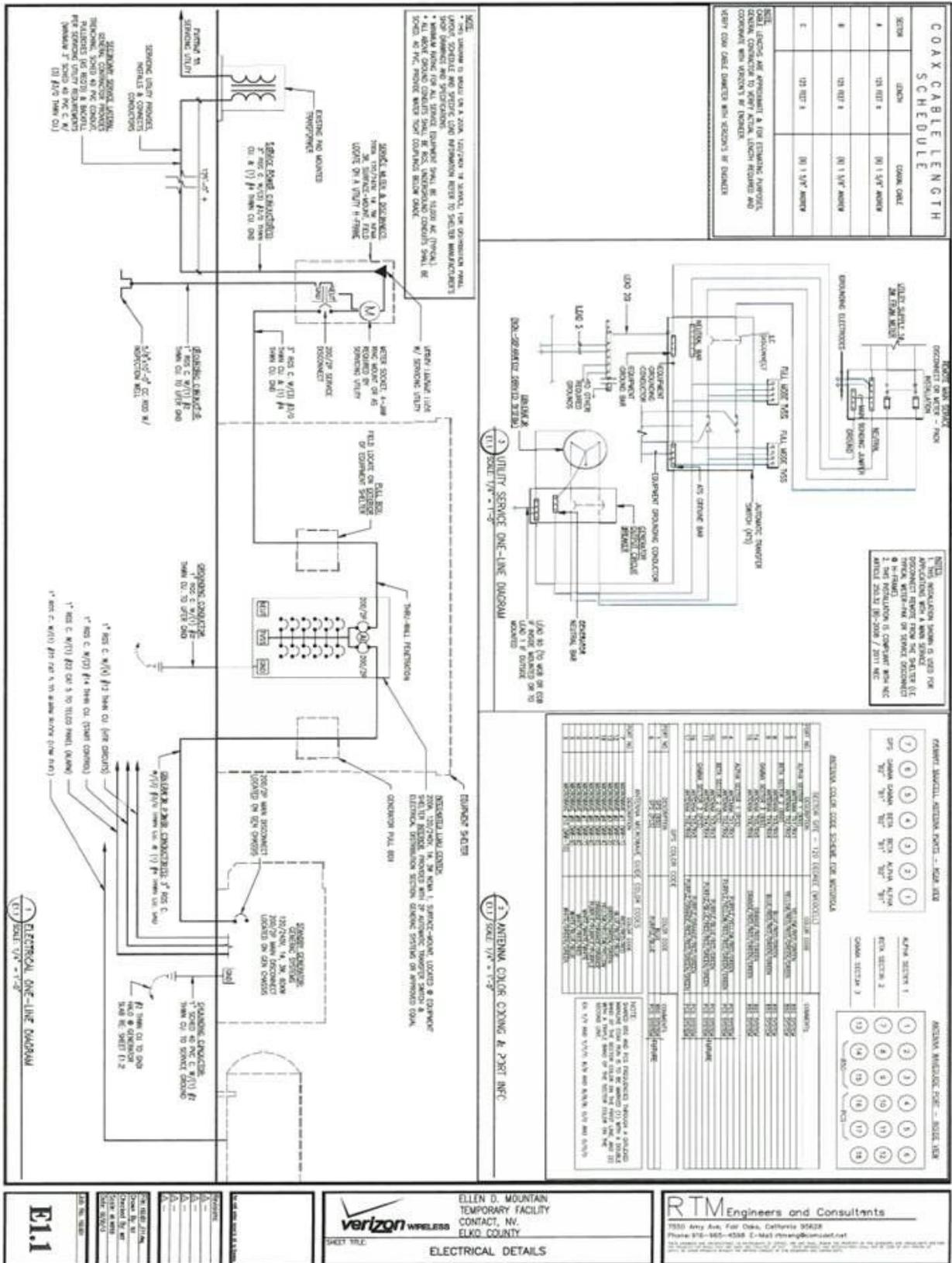


Figure A.7. Electrical Details













Station	Route / Location	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014
		AADT	AADT	AADT	AADT	AADT	AADT	AADT	AADT	AADT	AADT
0070158	SR232, Clover Valley Rd, .1 mi W of US-83 S of Wells	160	150	140	150	140	140*	120	150	150	200
0070161	IR80, .35 mi W of the East Elko Intch 'Exit 303'			11,000	12,000	11,000	12,000*	11,000	12,000	12,000	15,000
0070162	US93, 1.1 mi N of Jackpot Intch 'Exit 303'	3,500	3,750	3,700	3,400	3,500	3,600	3,800*	3,500*	3,400	3,500
0070163	IR80, 8.25 mi E of the East Elko Intch 'Exit 303'	8,250*	8,450*	8,200*	8,800	8,500	12,000*	8,600*	9,000	8,000	6,600
0070164	FREL54, .2 mi E of Nevada Youth Training Center driveway	1,750	2,000	1,900	1,800	1,900	1,800	1,900	2,100	2,000*	2,000
0070165	IR80, .3 mi W of Summit Intch 'Exit 373'	5,200*	5,050*	5,500*	5,400	5,200	5,200*	5,100*	5,000*	6,100*	4,600
0070166	IR80, E/B off-ramp of the Summit Intch 'Exit 373'	410	470	400	410	400	400*	200	200	200	200
0070167	IR80, E/B on-ramp of the Summit Intch 'Exit 373'	220	240	220	200	200	200*	240*	200	250	200*
0070168	IR80, W/B off-ramp of the Summit Intch 'Exit 373'	230	250	220*	210	200	200*	240	250*	250	200
0070169	IR80, W/B on-ramp of the Summit Intch 'Exit 373'	470	540	460*	470	460	300*	240	250*	250	250
0070171	IR80, .2 mi E of the Summit Intch 'Exit 373'	5,100*	4,850*	5,300	5,000	4,900	5,200	5,200	5,000*	5,100*	6,400*
0070172	IR80, E/B off-ramp of the Pequop Intch 'Exit 376'	10	20	20	10*	10	10*	10*	10*	10*	10*
0070174	IR80, E/B on-ramp of the Pequop Intch 'Exit 376'	10	20	10	10*	10	10*	10*	10*	10*	10*
0070175	IR80, W/B off-ramp of Pequop Intch 'Exit 376'	10	20	10*	10	10	10*	10*	10*	10*	10*
0070176	IR80, W/B on-ramp of the Pequop Intch 'Exit 376'	10	10	10*	10	10	10*	10*	10*	10*	10*
0070177	IR80, E/B off-ramp of the Oasis Intch 'Exit 378'	100	120	100	110	100	100*	100*	100*	100*	100*
0070179	IR80, E/B on-ramp of the Oasis Intch 'Exit 378'	70	90	60	70	70	70*	60*	60*	60*	60*
0070181	IR80, W/B on-ramp of the Oasis Intch 'Exit 378'	110	120	110*	120	110	110*	110*	100*	100*	100*
0070182	IR80, W/B off-ramp of the Oasis Intch 'Exit 378'	70	80	60*	70	70	70*	60*	60*	60*	60*

\*Data Adjusted or Estimated

Excerpt from NDOT, 2014.

Figure A.13. NDOT Traffic Statistics

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# **Appendix B. Disturbance Cap Calculations**

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## Appendix C. 2011 BLM Elko District Sensitive/Special Status Species List

<b>Amphibians</b>	
<i>Rana pipiens</i>	northern leopard frog
<i>Rana luteiventris</i>	Columbia spotted frog (including Toiyabe spotted frog subpopulation)
<b>Birds</b>	
<i>Accipiter gentilis</i>	northern goshawk
<i>Aquila chrysaetos</i>	golden eagle
<i>Athene cunicularia hypugaea</i>	Western burrowing owl
<i>Buteo regalis</i>	ferruginous hawk
<i>Buteo swainsoni</i>	Swainson's hawk
<i>Centrocercus urophasianus</i>	Greater Sage-grouse
<i>Charadrius alexandrinus nivosus</i>	Western snowy plover
<i>Falco peregrinus</i>	peregrine Falcon
<i>Gymnorhinus cyanocephalus</i>	pinyon jay
<i>Haliaeetus leucocephalus</i>	bald eagle
<i>Lanius ludovicianus</i>	loggerhead shrike
<i>Leucosticte atrata</i>	Black Rosy-finch
<i>Melanerpes lewis</i>	Lewis woodpecker
<i>Oreoscoptes montanus</i>	Sage Thrasher
<i>Spizella breweri</i>	Brewer's Sparrow
<b>Fish</b>	
<i>Gila bicolor isolata</i>	Independence Valley tui chub
<i>Gila bicolor newarkensis</i>	Newark Valley tui chub
<i>Lepidomeda copei</i>	Northern leatherside chub
<i>Oncorhynchus clarki henshawi</i>	Lahontan cutthroat trout
<i>Oncorhynchus mykiss gairdneri</i>	inland Columbia Basin redband trout
<i>Relictus solitarius</i>	relict dace
<i>Rhinichthys osculus lethoporus</i>	Independence Valley speckled dace
<i>Rhinichthys osculus oligoporus</i>	Clover Valley speckled dace
<i>Salvelinus confluentus</i>	Bull trout
<b>Mammals</b>	
<i>Corynorhinus townsendii</i>	Townsend's big-eared bat
<i>Eptesicus fuscus</i>	big brown bat
<i>Euderma maculatum</i>	spotted bat
<i>Lasionycteris noctivagans</i>	silver-haired bat
<i>Lasiurus cinereus</i>	hoary bat
<i>Myotis californicus</i>	California myotis
<i>Myotis ciliolabrum</i>	western small-footed myotis
<i>Myotis evotis</i>	long-eared myotis
<i>Myotis lucifugus</i>	little brown myotis
<i>Myotis thysanodes</i>	fringed myotis
<i>Myotis volans</i>	long-legged myotis
<i>Myotis yumanensis</i>	Yuma myotis
<i>Pipistrellus hesperus</i>	western pipistrelle
<i>Tadarida brasiliensis</i>	Brazilian free-tailed bat
<i>Antrozous pallidus</i>	pallid bat
<i>Brachylagus idahoensis</i>	pygmy rabbit
<i>Microdipodops megacephalus</i>	dark kangaroo mouse
<i>Sorex preblei</i>	Preble's shrew
<b>Scientific Name</b>	<b>Common Name</b>

<i>Ochotona princeps</i>	pika
<i>Ovis canadensis</i>	bighorn sheep
<b>Insects</b>	
<i>Euphilotes pallescens mattonii</i>	Mattoni's blue
<b>Molluscs</b>	
<i>Anodonta californiensis</i>	California floater
<i>Pygulopsis humboldtensis</i>	Humboldt pyrg
<i>Pygulopsis villacampae</i>	Duckwater Warm Springs pyrg
<i>Pygulopsis vinyardi</i>	Vinyards pyrg
<i>Tryonia clathrata</i>	Grated tryonia
<b>Plants</b>	
<i>Astragalus anserinus</i>	Goose Creek milkvetch
<i>Boechera falcifructa</i>	Elko rockcress
<i>Collomia renacta</i>	Barren Valley collomia
<i>Antennaria arcuata</i>	Meadow pussytoes
<i>Erigeron latus</i>	Broad fleabane
<i>Eriogonum beatleyae</i>	Beatley buckwheat
<i>Eriogonum lewisii</i>	Lewis buckwheat
<i>Eriogonum nutans</i> var. <i>glabratum</i>	Deeth buckwheat
<i>Ivesia rhypara</i> var. <i>rhypara</i>	Grimy mousetails
<i>Lathyrus grimesii</i>	Grimes vetchling
<i>Lepidium davisii</i>	Davis peppergrass
<i>Leptodactylon glabrum</i>	Owyhee prickly phlox
<i>Mentzelia tiehmii</i>	Tiehm blazingstar
<i>Penstemon idahoensis</i>	Idaho beardtongue
<i>Phacelia minutissima</i>	Least phacelia
<i>Potentilla cottamii</i>	Cottam cinquefoil
<i>Ranunculus triternatus</i>	Obscure buttercup
<i>Silene nachlingerae</i>	Nachlinger catchfly
<b>Scientific Name</b>	<b>Common Name</b>