



Public Scoping and Notice of Proposed Action & Opportunity to Comment

**United States
Department of
Agriculture**

Forest Service

**Humboldt-
Toiyabe
National Forest**

Verizon Cellular Site Development Pennsylvania Hill

**Mountain City Ranger District
Elko County
Nevada**

August, 2012

Comments Welcome

The Mountain City Ranger District of the Humboldt-Toiyabe National Forest welcomes your comments on the proposed Verizon Wireless Cellular Site Project (Project) which is located on National Forest System land within the Humboldt-Toiyabe National Forest. Verizon Wireless is seeking a special use authorization to construct a cellular facility at the existing Pennsylvania Hill Communication Site located in T44N, R53E, SW ¼ Section 6 MDM. The improvements would include the placement of a prefabricated 12 x 16 ft. communications shelter, a 6 x 13 ft. concrete pad for a propane generator and a 1,000 gallon propane tank at the site. The existing tower on the site would be extended 100 ft. to accommodate Verizon Wireless antennas. This facility is needed to improve the cellular communication coverage for the residents of Mountain City and surrounding areas.

The District has determined that this proposed activity may be categorically excluded from further analysis and documentation in an environmental assessment (EA) or environmental impact statement (EIS) [36 CFR 220] per FSH 1909.15 32.2 (3) (vi) approving an additional telecommunication use at a site already used for such purpose. The Forest Service is applying notice, comment, and appeal regulations found at 36 CFR 215 (specific to EAs) to this project.

This document initiates both the scoping process (40 CFR 1501.7) and provides notice of the 30-day comment period pursuant to Forest Service regulations at 36 CFR 215. The purpose of this comment period is to provide an opportunity for the public to provide meaningful input on the proposed action prior to a decision by the Responsible Official.

Environmental Protection Measures

Environmental protection measures are proposed to avoid or minimize potential negative effects to resources surrounding and within the Project area. Specific measures currently include, but are not necessarily limited to the following list.

Wildlife and Vegetation: The Proposed Action construction schedule would avoid potential conflicts with migratory and breeding birds. The flagged rebar stakes are located on the south side of the complex of pre-existing structures. The majority of the area of disturbance would be on ground that is currently highly disturbed, consisting of road bed materials and very little fines. Any areas that have soil sufficient to support plants that may potentially be disturbed is confined to an area less than 10 X 30 ft. The area of disturbance is no closer than 10 yards to the nearest Lewis' buckwheat plant, a Forest Service Region 4 sensitive species.

Cultural Resources: Project area was cleared when the existing site was established. There are no resources of concern at this site.

Comment Process

The Forest Service encourages your comments on this Project. Written, facsimile, hand-delivered, oral, and electronic comments concerning this action will be accepted for 30 calendar days following the publication of the legal notice for this project in the Elko Daily Free Press on August 24, 2012. It is the responsibility of persons providing comments to submit them by the close of the comment period. Interest expressed or comments provided after the close of the 30-day comment period will be considered, but will not confer eligibility to appeal a decision to proceed with the Project.

Mailed comments must be submitted to: District Ranger, Mountain City Ranger District, 2035 Last Chance Road, Elko, Nevada 89801. The fax number is (775) 778-6167. Office business hours for those submitting comments in person are: 7:30 am to 4:30 pm Monday through Friday, excluding federal holidays.

Electronic comments must be submitted in a format such as an email message, plain text (.txt), rich text format (.rtf), and Word (.doc/.docx) to: comments-intermtn-humboldt-toiyabe-mtn-city@fs.fed.us.

Appeal Eligibility

Individuals and organizations wishing to be eligible to appeal must provide the information identified in 36 CFR 215.6, including : [i] name and address; [ii] title of the proposed action; [iii] specific comments (36 CFR 215.2) on the proposed action, along with supporting reasons that the Responsible Official should consider in reaching a decision; [iv] signature or other verification of identity upon request; identification of the individual or organization who authored the comment(s) is necessary for appeal eligibility; [iv.A] for appeals listing multiple organizations or multiple individuals, a signature or other means of verification must be provided for the individual authorized to represent each organization and for each individual in the case of multiple names, to meet appeal eligibility requirements; [iv. B] those using electronic means may submit a scanned signature. Otherwise another means of verifying the identity of the individual or organizational representative may be necessary for electronically submitted comments or comments received by telephone; [v] individual members of an organization must submit their own comments to meet the requirements of appeal eligibility; comments received on behalf of an organization are considered as those of the organization only.

Comments received in response to this notice, including names and addresses of those who comment, will be considered part of the public record for this project and will be available for public inspection and will be released if requested under the Freedom of Information Act.

For additional information please contact Tina Gast, Mountain City Ranger District at (775) 623-5025 ext. 111 or email at mgast@fs.fed.us. We thank you for your interest in our National Forests.

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