

U.S. Department of the Interior
Bureau of Land Management
White River Field Office
220 E Market St
Meeker, CO 81641

ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

NUMBER: CO-110-2008-183-EA

CASEFILE/PROJECT NUMBER: COC73108

PROJECT NAME: UBET Wireless Site with Tower

LEGAL DESCRIPTION: Sixth Principal Meridian, Colorado
T. 2 S., R. 96 W.,
sec. 18, lot 15.

APPLICANT: Uintah Basin Electronic Telecommunication

ISSUES AND CONCERNS: 160' self supported tower

DESCRIPTION OF PROPOSED ACTION AND ALTERNATIVES:

Background/Introduction: Oldland Brothers currently has an existing 25' x 25' communication site serialized as COC55322. Uintah Basin Electronic Telecommunication (UBET) has a verbal agreement with Jerry Oldland to remove the existing 6' x 6' shelter and tower, owned by Jerry Oldland, and construct a new shelter and tower to accommodate both parties.

Proposed Action: UBET proposes to construct a 75' x 75' telecommunication site with a 160' self-supported tower for increased voice and data services to the oil and gas field and also to homes and highways in the area. The area is an existing radio site with access to the site from a BLM road.

UBET plans to construct a 13' x 21' concrete pad with a 12' x 20' shelter to accommodate both parties, an ice bridge from the tower to the building to protect coaxial cables, and a 160' self supported tower. The three legs on the tower are 18' apart and a soil sample will be taken to determine depth of holes needed to support the tower. No guide wires are necessary. Due to the height of the tower, UBET is aware of and will adhere to the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) and Federal Communications commission (FCC) requirements for aircraft safety.

No Action Alternative: The telecommunication site would not be authorized or constructed.

ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED BUT NOT CARRIED FORWARD: None

NEED FOR THE ACTION: The purpose of the proposed action is to manage multiple uses on Public Lands in a manner that avoids, minimizes, reduces, or mitigates potential impacts to other resource values.

PLAN CONFORMANCE REVIEW: The Proposed Action is subject to and has been reviewed for conformance with the following plan (43 CFR 1610.5, BLM 1617.3):

Name of Plan: White River Record of Decision and Approved Resource Management Plan (ROD/RMP).

Date Approved: July 1, 1997

Decision Number/Page: 2-49 thru 2-52

Decision Language: “To make public lands available for the siting of public and private facilities through the issuance of applicable land use authorizations, in a manner that provides for reasonable protection of other resource values.”

AFFECTED ENVIRONMENT / ENVIRONMENTAL CONSEQUENCES / MITIGATION MEASURES:

STANDARDS FOR PUBLIC LAND HEALTH: In January 1997, Colorado Bureau of Land Management (BLM) approved the Standards for Public Land Health. These standards cover upland soils, riparian systems, plant and animal communities, threatened and endangered species, and water quality. Standards describe conditions needed to sustain public land health and relate to all uses of the public lands. Because a standard exists for these five categories, a finding must be made for each of them in an environmental analysis. These findings are located in specific elements listed below:

INTERDISCIPLINARY TEAM ANALYSIS RECORD CHECKLIST

DETERMINATION OF STAFF:		
Determination	Resource	Rationale for Determination*
CRITICAL ELEMENTS		
PI	Air Quality	Construction activities will minor and temporary. Operational emissions will result from maintenance activities and travel to and from the site; this travel could be considered casual use.
NP	Areas of Critical Environmental Concern	There are no ACEC within proximity of the proposed action.
NP	Cultural Resources	The proposed tower facility has been inventoried at the Class III (100 % pedestrian) level (Creggor 2008, Compliance Dated 8.8.2008) with no new cultural resources identified in the inventoried area. However, there is a potential for undetected resources within 308 meters of the facility location. No access route upgrading is covered by this inventory therefore access upgrades are prohibited without additional inventory.

DETERMINATION OF STAFF:		
Determination	Resource	Rationale for Determination*
PI	Invasive, Non-native Species	There are known infestations of several noxious and invasive weed species already present in the area of the proposed action. New soil disturbance creates a potential site for establishment of weeds. With proper reclamation and re-vegetation of the site additional weed establishment is not likely to occur though the site should be monitored and any weeds that may occur should be eradicated.
PI	Migratory Birds	Birds are known to be killed due to collisions with communication towers.
NI	Threatened, Endangered, and Sensitive Animal Species	There is the potential for Northern goshawks (<i>Accipiter gentilis</i>), Townsend's big-eared bats (<i>Corynorhinus townsendii</i>), yuma myotis (<i>Myotis yumanensis</i>), and fringed myotis (<i>Myotis thysanodes</i>) to occur in pinyon-juniper woodlands in the project area. Construction of the proposed tower and associated facilities would represent an incremental increase in habitat loss in an increasingly industrialized area within a developing natural gas field.
NP	Threatened, Endangered, and Sensitive Plant Species	The proposed action would have no conceivable influence on special status species or associated habitats.
NI	Wastes (hazardous or solid)	No hazardous or solid wastes are likely to result from this project, either from the construction or operation of the facility.
PI	Water Quality (Surface/Ground)	Although, some new disturbance would occur as a result of this project (enlarging the site to 75'x75' from 25'x25'), there will not be new disturbance from the road construction, however the current road should be maintained to BLM Manual Section 9113 Standards to achieve year-round access.
NP	Wetlands/Riparian Zones	There are no wetlands or riparian areas present within proximity of the proposed action.
NP	Wilderness	There are no Wildernesses or Wilderness Study Areas within proximity of the proposed action.

NP = not present in the area impacted by the proposed or alternative actions

NI = present, but not affected to a degree that detailed analysis is required

PI = present with potential for impact analyzed in detail in the EA

AIR QUALITY

Affected Environment: The entire White River Resource area has been classified as either attainment or unclassified for all air pollutants, and most of the area has been designated for the prevention of significant deterioration (PSD) class II. The proposed action is more than ten miles from any special designation air sheds or non attainment areas. Unfortunately, no air quality monitoring data is available for this area. However, air quality conditions near the proposed location (Grand Junction, CO) indicate generally good air quality for this region.

Environmental Consequences of the Proposed Action: The proposed action would involve transportation of workers and equipment to the site and installation. Visible dust is likely to increase during the transportation to the site during installation and also during operation and there will be some soil disturbance but construction activities. Installation of this monitoring station would not lead to an increase in dust above background conditions and the

amount of transportation to the site is similar to casual uses. Therefore air quality impacts are not expected from installation or operational uses.

Environmental Consequences of the No Action Alternative: Minor impacts would continue from travel and maintenance of the current site.

Mitigation: None identified.

INVASIVE, NON-NATIVE SPECIES

Affected Environment: There are known noxious weeds infestations in the general area of the proposed action. The invasive alien annual cheatgrass occurs in the project area primarily in association with unvegetated earthen disturbance along roads, wells, and pipelines.

Environmental Consequences of the Proposed Action: The proposed action will create a minimal amount of new earthen disturbance, which if it is not revegetated with desirable species and /or treated with herbicides to eradicate noxious weeds, will likely be invaded by noxious weeds/cheatgrass, increasing the potential for fire and the consequent further proliferation of cheatgrass. Noxious weeds could establish onsite, the seed or propagules having been transported by equipment hauled to the site for construction and drilling operations. Noxious weeds, if they establish on site could also spread from the project site to surrounding native rangelands resulting in a long term negative impact. The resulting proliferation of noxious weeds/cheatgrass would perpetuate a downward cycle of environmental degradation that would be largely irreversible. There will be a low likelihood of long term negative impact *if* the proposed mitigation is properly implemented

Environmental Consequences of the No Action Alternative: There will be no change from the present situation.

Mitigation: The operator will be required to monitor the project area for the life of the project and eradicate all noxious and invasive species which occur on site using materials and methods approved in advance by the Authorized Officer.

MIGRATORY BIRDS

Affected Environment: The proposed tower location occurs on the margins of pinyon-juniper woodlands. Species such as gray flycatcher (*Empidonax wrightii*), pinyon jay (*Gymnorhinus cyanocephalus*), juniper titmouse (*Baeolophus ridgwayi*), and black-throated gray warbler (*Dendroica nigrescens*) breed and nest in pinyon-juniper woodlands. Species such as Brewer's sparrows (*Spizella breweri*), vesper sparrows (*Pooecetes gramineus*), and green-tailed towhees (*Pipilo chlorurus*) may breed in patches of sagebrush adjacent to (~75 meters) the tower location.

There are no specialized or narrowly endemic species known to inhabit the project area. However, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) recognizes pinyon jays and black-throated gray warblers as “birds of conservation concern” (BCC). The BCC list identifies birds that, without conservation actions, may become candidates for listing under the Endangered Species Act (FWS 2002).

Environmental Consequences of the Proposed Action: Expansion of the communications site would result in minimal increases in direct habitat loss for species nesting within pinyon-juniper woodlands. Construction is planned for fall and so there would be no direct disturbance of nesting attempts. However, it has been well-documented that collisions with communication towers kill birds. Most of the birds that seem to be impacted are Neotropical migrants and most mortality is associated with fall migration (Crawford and Engstrom 2001). It is anticipated that the number of birds that would be killed at this site would be reduced since the tower would be located in an increasingly industrialized area (i.e. developing natural gas field). Additionally the location is not near a wetland or other area that is known to attract large numbers of birds. Co-locating the tower with other communication towers, eliminating guy lines, and having a tower height of less than 200ft (which reduces lighting requirements) also should reduce collisions.

Environmental Consequences of the No Action Alternative: There is already a tower at the proposed location. Expansion of the site to accommodate other uses is not expected to substantially increase impacts to migratory birds.

Mitigation: None.

WATER QUALITY, SURFACE AND GROUND (includes a finding on Standard 5)

Affected Environment: This site is located in a small tributary to Piceance Creek which is tributary to the White River (Segment 16) and protected for Aquatic Life Warm 2, Recreation 2, and Agriculture.

Environmental Consequences of the Proposed Action: The installation of the communication site will have limited initial disturbance and some sustained surface disturbance during operation along an existing road.

Environmental Consequences of the No Action Alternative: Minor impacts would continue from travel and maintenance of the current site.

Mitigation: The access road will be maintained according to BLM Manual Section 9113 standards for road shape and drainage features at all times during construction and operation.

Surface roads if they will be subject to traffic during wet weather. The depth and gradation of surfacing will be determined by traffic type, frequency, weight, maintenance objectives, and the stability and strength of the road foundation and surface materials.

Provide for erosion-resistant surface drainage prior to fall rain or snow and Leave the disturbed area in a condition that provides drainage with no additional maintenance.

All disturbed areas not needed for operation shall be promptly reclaimed to the satisfaction of the Area Manger and will use seed that is certified and free of noxious weeds.

Finding on the Public Land Health Standard for water quality: It is extremely unlikely that the access road, tower construction and operation would result in an exceedence of state water quality standards.

CRITICAL ELEMENTS NOT PRESENT OR NOT AFFECTED: No flood plains, prime and unique farmlands, or Wild and Scenic Rivers exist within the area affected by the proposed action. There are also no Native American religious or environmental justice concerns associated with the proposed action.

Determination	Resource	Rationale for Determination*
NON CRITICAL ELEMENTS:		
NI	Soils	No fragile soils, steep slopes or other concerns are present at the site or along the access road. With proper stabilization and reclamation impacts are not likely to occur to the productivity of soils.
PI	Vegetation	There will be a small amount of vegetation removed and soils disturbed in association with construction of the proposed facilities. With proper reclamation, negative impacts to the vegetation community and its function are not likely to occur. Seed all soils disturbed in association with this project using Native Seed Mix #3
NI	Livestock Grazing	McKee/Collins allotment: Construction of the proposed tower and associated facilities would result in an insignificant loss of forage available but overall would have no affect on livestock that graze in the area.
NP	Wildlife, Aquatic	There are no aquatic habitats available within the project area and therefore no aquatic wildlife species would be impacted by the proposed action.
NI	Wildlife, Terrestrial	Construction of the proposed tower and associated facilities would represent an incremental increase in habitat loss in an increasingly industrialized area within a developing natural gas field.

NP = not present in the area impacted by the proposed or alternative actions

NI = present, but not affected to a degree that detailed analysis is required

PI = present with potential for impact analyzed in detail in the EA

VEGETATION:

Affected Environment: The plant community that will be affected by the proposed action is a pinyon/juniper range site. Vegetation represented in this plant community includes Pinyon pine, Utah juniper, mountain mahogany, bitterbrush, serviceberry, Wyoming big sagebrush, beardless bluebunch wheatgrass, western wheatgrass, June grass, Indian rice grass, mutton grass.

Environmental Consequences of the Proposed Action: There will be minimal disturbance associated with this action. With proper reclamation, negative impacts to the vegetation community and its function are not likely to occur.

Environmental Consequences of the No Action Alternative: None

Mitigation: Seed all soils disturbed in association with this project using Native Seed Mix #3 as listed below. Reclamation/re-seeding must result in establishment and persistence of seeded vegetation representative of at least 80% of species in the seed mix before it is considered successful. If this level of success is not achieved within three growing seasons after implementation of the proposed action seeding must be repeated until desirable vegetation is established.

Native Seed Mix	Species (Variety)	Lbs. PLS per Acre
3	Western wheatgrass (Rosanna)	2
	Bluebunch wheatgrass (Secar)	2
	Thickspike wheatgrass (Critana)	2
	Indian ricegrass (Nezpar)	1

OTHER NON-CRITICAL ELEMENTS: For the following elements, only those brought forward for analysis will be addressed further.

Non-Critical Element	NA or Not Present	Applicable or Present, No Impact	Applicable & Present and Brought Forward for Analysis
Access and Transportation		X	
Cadastral Survey	X		
Fire Management			X
Forest Management			X
Geology and Minerals		X	
Hydrology/Water Rights	X		
Law Enforcement		X	
Noise		X	
Paleontology			X
Rangeland Management		X	
Realty Authorizations			X
Recreation		X	
Socio-Economics		X	
Visual Resources			X
Wild Horses		X	

FIRE MANAGEMENT

Affected Environment: The proposed tower site is located within the D4 Little Hills Fire Management Polygon which has few restrictions on the ability to utilize naturally ignited fires for resource benefit. This area is located within a productive mature stand of pinion and juniper and do to the nature of the project there will be a need to clear vegetation in addition to the current site. The accumulation of these removed trees and brush are very receptive to fire brands and spotting from wind driven fires and can greatly accelerate the rate of spread of the fire front. The road(s) associated with this project may be used by the general public for a variety of uses, including access for fire wood gathering, hunting and other dispersed recreational activities. Increased public use of an area will nearly always result in an increased potential for man-caused wildland fires.

The National Fire Plan calls for “firefighter and public safety” to be the highest priority for all fire management activities. In the pinion, juniper, and brush types common on the WRFO, roads and other man-made openings are commonly used as fuel breaks or barriers to control the spread of both wildland and prescribed fires. By reducing the activity fuels created from this proposal, future fire management efforts in this area should be safer for those involved and more effective

Environmental Consequences of the Proposed Action: If not treated the slash and woody debris created from the removal of vegetation will create an elevated hazardous dead fuel loading which could pose significant control problems in the event of a wildfire. Vegetation removal and soil disturbance could also provide an opportunity for cheatgrass to establish or expand in the area, which would increase fuel loads. There would be a potential for construction-related activities such as welding, vehicle backfires, engine/exhaust heat, fuel spills, etc. to inadvertently start wildland fires on areas affected by the proposed project.

Environmental Consequences of the No Action Alternative: None

Mitigation: Several options may be considered for treatment of slash from this project. A hydro-ax or other mulching type machine could be used to remove the trees. The machines are capable of shredding trees up to 12" in diameter and 15' tall as well as mowing brush like a conventional brush beater. It generally leaves small branches and pieces of wood from pencil size up to bowling ball size. The mulch is evenly scattered across the surface and the tires or tracks distribute the weight of the equipment. This effectively breakdown the woody fuel and scatters the debris thereby eliminating any hazardous fuel load adjacent to the road and pipeline corridors and areas adjacent to the well pad clearing.

The other option would be to cut trees and have them removed for firewood, posts, or other products. The branches and tops should be lopped and scattered to a depth of 24 inches or less. If the products are left for collection by the general public, they should be piled along the road side or pad to facilitate removal.

During construction, there shall be one 10 lb A/B/C rated fire extinguisher, one shovel and/or Pulaski or axe for each piece of equipment on site and ready for use in the event of an accidental fire ignition as a result of construction. No fire suppression actions shall be taken on any fire in

the area unless directed by the incident commander. In the event of an accidental ignition or natural ignition resulting in a fire in the area, the contractor or a representative will contact Craig Fire Dispatch at 970-878-5037 so that a qualified fire crew can evaluate the situation for the safety of all crews in the area and determine the appropriate management action.

FOREST MANAGEMENT

Affected Environment: The project is on the southern edge of the Magnolia Bench and the eastern edge of the Dudley Bluff area. This area is populated with pinion and juniper trees that have an under story of brush. The specific area of construction is located in a productive mature stand of pinion and juniper and do to the nature of the project there will be a need to clear vegetation in addition to the current site.

Environmental Consequences of the Proposed Action: It is estimated that the proposed action will impact .1 acres of additional disturbance an impact a total volume of 1.8 cords of material. It is expected that pinion and juniper will again occupy the site in approximately 25 to 35 years post reclamation and will exhibit mature stand characteristics in 250+ years.

Environmental Consequences of the No Action Alternative: None

Mitigation: All of the trees with a diameter greater than 4 inches that are impacted shall be removed of limbs and cut into 4 foot sections all the way down to 4 inches in diameter. These materials may then be placed along the road where they may be removed by the public. Materials that are less than 4 inches in diameter may be scattered away from the road surface or chipped then chips shall be scattered away from the roadway to a depth less than 2 inches. If limbs are scattered it will be done in a manner not exceed a depth of 12 inches. Scattering of any of the material shall be done in a manner to avoid piling of the material. Do to the minimal volume of material that is expected to be created; the BLM will not charge for the materials.

PALEONTOLOGICAL RESOURCES:

Affected Environment: The proposed action is located in an area generally mapped as the Uintah formation (Tweto 1979) which the BLM, WRFO has classified as a PFYC 5 formation, meaning it is known to produce scientifically important fossil resources.

Environmental Consequences of the Proposed Action: If it becomes necessary to excavate into the underlying rock formation there is a potential to impact scientifically important fossil resources.

Environmental Consequences of the No Action Alternative: There would be no new impacts to fossil resources under the No Action Alternative.

Mitigation: The operator is responsible for informing all persons who are associated with the project operations that they will be subject to prosecution for knowingly disturbing

paleontological sites, or for collecting fossils. If fossil materials are uncovered during any project or construction activities, the operator is to immediately stop activities in the immediate area of the find that might further disturb such materials, and immediately contact the authorized officer (AO). Within five working days the AO will inform the operator as to:

- whether the materials appear to be of noteworthy scientific interest
- the mitigation measures the operator will likely have to undertake before the site can be used (assuming in situ preservation is not feasible)

If the operator wishes, at any time, to relocate activities to avoid the expense of mitigation and/or the delays associated with this process, the AO will assume responsibility for whatever recordation and stabilization of the exposed materials may be required. Otherwise, the operator will be responsible for mitigation cost. The AO will provide technical and procedural guidelines for the conduct of mitigation. Upon verification from the AO that the required mitigation has been completed, the operator will then be allowed to resume construction.

If it becomes necessary to excavate into the underlying rock formation, except for bore holes of less than 20 inches in diameter, a paleontological monitor shall be required for all such excavations.

REALTY AUTHORIZATIONS:

Affected Environment: Oldland Brothers have an existing 25 foot by 25 foot site serialized as COC55322. UBET's proposal will increase the size of the site to 75 feet by 75 feet with a building to house Oldland Brothers' equipment as well as their equipment and a 160 foot tower. Access to the site will be from RBC Road 76 and existing BLM roads. No improvements will be necessary along the roads. The closest existing and proposed linear rights-of-way are approximately 400 feet from the site.

Environmental Consequences of the Proposed Action: The tower facility would require authorization as a communication site and has been serialized as COC73108. Rental would be charged using the communication site schedule. The site will encompass approximately 0.129 acres for the building and tower. There should be no impacts to existing facilities.

Environmental Consequences of the No Action Alternative: None

Mitigation: The applicant for the tower project must provide documentation that appropriate FCC permitting has been approved. The applicant is responsible for obtaining appropriate state and local permits. Construction and use of the facilities must not negatively impact existing facilities. Improvements to the access roads are not authorized.

VISUAL RESOURCES

Affected Environment: The proposed action is located within a VRM class III area. The objective of this class is to partially retain the existing character of the landscape. The level of change to the characteristic landscape should be moderate. Management activities may attract

attention but should not dominate the view of the casual observer. Changes should repeat the basic elements found in the predominant natural features of the characteristic landscape.

Environmental Consequences of the Proposed Action: The proposed action would be located on top of a ridge approximately two miles from RBC 5 the Key Observation point (KOP) (Piceance Creek Road), which is the route that would most likely be traveled by a casual observer. Although the communication structure is 160 feet tall and would be located with a backdrop of pinyon/juniper trees, the antennae should not attract the attention of a casual observer, and certainly should not dominate the view due to its distance from the KOP. By painting the structure Juniper Green to blend with the background, the level of change to the characteristic landscape would be low, and the objectives of the VRM III classification would be retained.

Environmental Consequences of the No Action Alternative: There would be no additional environmental consequences.

Mitigation: All permanent (onsite for six [6] months or longer) structures, facilities and equipment placed above ground shall be painted Munsell Soil Color Chart Juniper Green or equivalent within six months of installation.

WILD HORSES:

Affected Environment: The proposed project is on the southern edge of the Magnolia Bench and the eastern edge of the Dudley Bluff area. The wild horses that are known to be located in this portion of the Piceance region are far outside the boundary of the Piceance-East Douglas Herd Management Area (HMA). BLM's management strategy for wild horses located outside the HMA is for gather and removal. The last gather attempt on the wild horses located in this area was 2002 with many gathered and removed but a few remained. Due to litigation and time of year another attempt was not made in 2006. It is currently estimated that 12 wild horses are located between Dry Fork of Piceance and Collins Gulch (Magnolia Bench/Dudley Bluffs) plus a few head of domestic horses are permitted by a local ranch. Horse sign (dropping, trails, etc.) was noted in areas near or adjacent to the proposed project. This area probably sees year round wild horse use with some winter use taking place near the Dudley Bluffs area. This project location provides quality foraging and mature stands of pinyon/juniper for cover for the wild horses.

Environmental Consequences of the Proposed Action: Because this project is not located within the Piceance-East Douglas Herd Management Area (P-ED HMA) this project is not expected to have any significant impact on wild horses.

Environmental Consequences of the No Action Alternative: None

Mitigation: None

CUMULATIVE IMPACTS SUMMARY: Cumulative impacts from oil and gas development were analyzed in the White River Resource Area Proposed Resource Management Plan/Final Environmental Impact Statement (PRMP/FEIS) completed in June 1996. Current development, including the proposed action, has not exceeded the cumulative impacts from the foreseeable development analyzed in the PRMP/FEIS.

REFERENCES CITED:

Crawford, R.L. and R.T. Engstrom. 2001. Characteristics of avian mortality at a north Florida television tower: a 29-year study. *Journal of Field Ornithology* 72(3):380-388.

Creggor, Michael. 2008. Class III Cultural Resource Inventory of the Piceance Telecommunication Tower Expansion, Rio Blanco County. SWCA Environmental Consultants, Broomfield, Colorado.

Tweto, Ogden. 1979. Geologic Map of Colorado. United States Geologic Survey, Department of the Interior, Reston, Virginia.

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS). 2002. Birds of conservation concern 2002. Division of Migratory Bird Management, Arlington, Virginia. Available at <http://migratorybirds.fws.gov/reports/bcc2002.pdf>.

PERSONS / AGENCIES CONSULTED: None

INTERDISCIPLINARY REVIEW:

Name	Title	Area of Responsibility
Bob Lange	Hydrologist	Air Quality, Wastes (Hazardous or Solids), Water Quality (Surface and Ground), Hydrology and Water Rights, and Soils.
Ken Holsinger	Botanist	Areas of Critical Environmental Concern, Threatened and Endangered Plant Species
Michael Selle	Archeologist	Cultural Resources, Paleontological Resources
Mary Taylor	Rangeland Management Specialist	Invasive, Non-Native Species, Vegetation , Rangeland Management
Heather Sauls	Wildlife Biologist	Migratory Birds, Threatened, Endangered and Sensitive Animal Species, Terrestrial and Aquatic Wildlife, Wetlands and Riparian Zones
Chris Ham	Outdoor Recreation Planner	Wilderness, Access and Transportation, Recreation & Visual Resources
Jim Michels	Fire / Fuels Technician	Fire Management
Jim Michels	Fire / Fuels Technician	Forest Management
Paul Daggett	Mining Engineer	Geology and Minerals
Stacey Burke	Realty Specialist	Realty Authorizations
Melissa J. Kindall	Range Technician	Wild Horses

Finding of No Significant Impact/Decision Record (FONSI/DR)

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FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT (FONSI)/RATIONALE: The environmental assessment and analysis of the environmental effects of the proposed action have been reviewed. The approved mitigation measures (listed below) result in a Finding of No Significant Impact on the human environment. Therefore, an environmental impact statement is not necessary to further analyze the environmental effects of the proposed action.

DECISION/RATIONALE: It is my decision to approve the proposed action with the addition of the mitigation listed below.

MITIGATION MEASURES:

1. The operator will be required to monitor the project area for the life of the project and eradicate all noxious and invasive species which occur on site using materials and methods approved in advance by the Authorized Officer.
2. The access road will be maintained according to BLM Manual Section 9113 standards for road shape and drainage features at all times during construction and operation.
3. Surface roads if they will be subject to traffic during wet weather. The depth and gradation of surfacing will be determined by traffic type, frequency, weight, maintenance objectives, and the stability and strength of the road foundation and surface materials.
4. Provide for erosion-resistant surface drainage prior to fall rain or snow and leave the disturbed area in a condition that provides drainage with no additional maintenance.
5. All disturbed areas not needed for operation shall be promptly reclaimed to the satisfaction of the Area Manger and will use seed that is certified and free of noxious weeds.
6. Seed all soils disturbed in association with this project using Native Seed Mix #3 as listed below. Reclamation/re-seeding must result in establishment and persistence of seeded vegetation representative of at least 80% of species in the seed mix before it is considered successful. If this level of success is not achieved within three growing seasons after implementation of the proposed action seeding must be repeated until desirable vegetation is established.

Native Seed Mix	Species (Variety)	Lbs. PLS per Acre
3	Western wheatgrass (Rosanna)	2
	Bluebunch wheatgrass (Secar)	2
	Thickspike wheatgrass (Critana)	2
	Indian ricegrass (Nezpar)	1

7. Several options may be considered for treatment of slash from this project. A hydro-ax or other mulching type machine could be used to remove the trees. The machines are capable of shredding trees up to 12" in diameter and 15' tall as well as mowing brush like a conventional brush beater. It generally leaves small branches and pieces of wood from pencil size up to bowling ball size. The mulch is evenly scattered across the surface and the tires or tracks distribute the weight of the equipment. This effectively breakdowns the woody fuel and scatters the debris thereby eliminating any hazardous fuel load adjacent to the road and pipeline corridors and areas adjacent to the well pad clearing. The other option would be to cut trees and have them removed for firewood, posts, or other products. The branches and tops should be lopped and scattered to a depth of 24 inches or less. If the products are left for collection by the general public, they should be piled along the road side or pad to facilitate removal.

8. During construction, there shall be one 10 lb A/B/C rated fire extinguisher, one shovel and/or Pulaski or axe for each piece of equipment on site and ready for use in the event of an accidental fire ignition as a result of construction. No fire suppression actions shall be taken on any fire in the area unless directed by the incident commander. In the event of an accidental ignition or natural ignition resulting in a fire in the area, the contractor or a representative will contact Craig Fire Dispatch at 970-878-5037 so that a qualified fire crew can evaluate the situation for the safety of all crews in the area and determine the appropriate management action.

9. All of the trees with a diameter greater than 4 inches that are impacted shall be removed of limbs and cut into 4 foot sections all the way down to 4 inches in diameter. These materials may then be placed along the road where they may be removed by the public. Materials that are less than 4 inches in diameter may be scattered away from the road surface or chipped then chips shall be scattered away from the roadway to a depth less than 2 inches. If limbs are scattered it will be done in a manner not exceed a depth of 12 inches. Scattering of any of the material shall be done in a manner to avoid piling of the material. Do to the minimal volume of material that is expected to be created; the BLM will not charge for the materials.

10. The operator is responsible for informing all persons who are associated with the project operations that they will be subject to prosecution for knowingly disturbing paleontological sites, or for collecting fossils. If fossil materials are uncovered during any project or construction activities, the operator is to immediately stop activities in the immediate area of the find that might further disturb such materials, and immediately contact the authorized officer (AO). Within five working days the AO will inform the operator as to:
 - whether the materials appear to be of noteworthy scientific interest
 - the mitigation measures the operator will likely have to undertake before the site can be used (assuming in situ preservation is not feasible)

If the operator wishes, at any time, to relocate activities to avoid the expense of mitigation and/or the delays associated with this process, the AO will assume responsibility for whatever recordation and stabilization of the exposed materials may be required. Otherwise, the operator will be responsible for mitigation cost. The AO will provide technical and procedural guidelines for the conduct of mitigation. Upon verification from the AO that the required mitigation has been completed, the operator will then be allowed to resume construction.

11. If it becomes necessary to excavate into the underlying rock formation, except for bore holes of less than 20 inches in diameter, a paleontological monitor shall be required for all such excavations.
12. The applicant for the tower project must provide documentation that appropriate FCC permitting has been approved. The applicant is responsible for obtaining appropriate state and local permits. Construction and use of the facilities must not negatively impact existing facilities. Improvements to the access roads are not authorized.
13. All permanent (onsite for six [6] months or longer) structures, facilities and equipment placed above ground shall be painted Munsell Soil Color Chart Juniper Green or equivalent within six months of installation.

COMPLIANCE/MONITORING: Compliance monitoring should be performed at five year intervals by White River Field Office staff.

NAME OF PREPARER: Stacey Burke

NAME OF ENVIRONMENTAL COORDINATOR: Caroline Hollowed

SIGNATURE OF AUTHORIZED OFFICIAL:

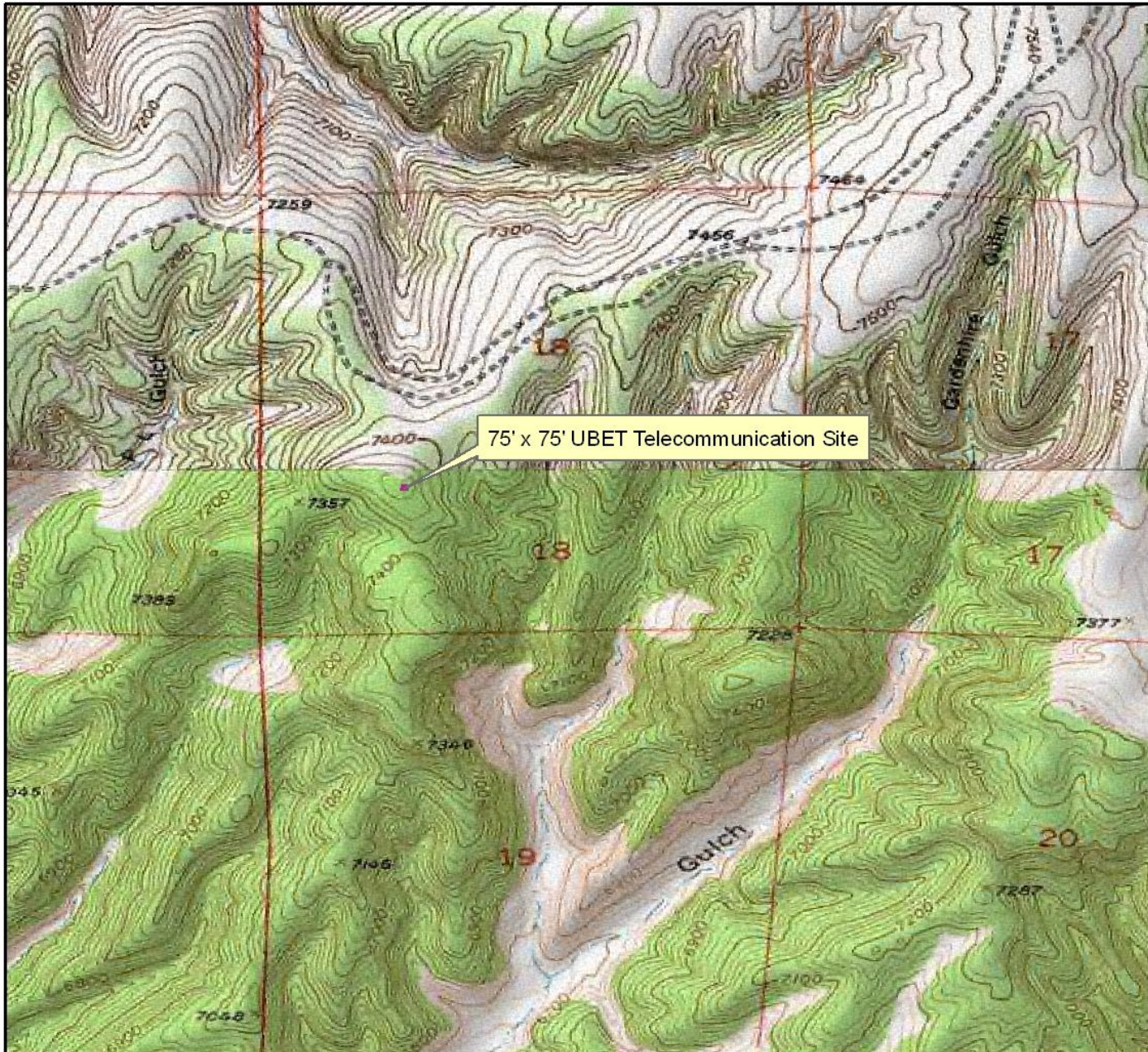

Field Manager

DATE SIGNED: 10/02/08

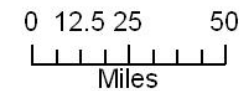

ATTACHMENTS:

Uintah Basin Electronic Telecommunications Wireless Site with Tower

T. 2 S., R. 96 W., sec. 18



- Projects: polygon selection
- Field office boundary
- Townships



09/2008

