

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA
DEPARTMENT OF INTERIEOR
BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT
MEDFORD DISTRICT OFFICE

CATEGORICAL EXCLUSION/DECISION RECORD
ODOT Lease Amendment Application, ORE 06247
CE# OR117-08-01

A. Proposed Action: Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT) has applied for a Communications Site Lease amendment for their existing communications facility at Sexton Mountain. The communications site is located on public land in Section 24, T. 34 S., R. 6 W., Willamette Meridian. The proposed action calls for the replacement of ODOT's existing guyed tower with a more substantial free-standing tower and the construction of a 12 x 20 foot equipment shelter. The new tower would occupy the same area as the existing tower. The new structure would be located just to the south of the new tower on previously disturbed ground. ODOT's lease authorization allows them to sub-lease to other users. The new shelter would allow them to permit other users to place equipment in the shelter and to broadcast from the site.

B. Location/Land Use Allocation: Sexton Mountain is an important communications site located north of Grants Pass, Oregon along the I-5 corridor. The mountain has been used as a communications site since the 1950's. The mountain has an approved communications site plan and the proposed amendment is consistent with that plan.

C. Need / Rationale for the Proposed Action: Sexton Mountain has been identified as a prime site for meeting the goals of two public safety initiatives, Oregon Wireless Interoperability Network (OWIN) and the federal government's Integrated Wireless Network (IWN). OWIN has grown out of the Department of Homeland Security's "Safecom" program, which is working toward a wireless system that is compatible for all city, county, state, and federal public safety agencies across the country. The IWN project consolidates federal government law enforcement communications and enhances safety communications between federal, state and local government agencies. This will benefit the public through increased safety communications capabilities.

D. Description of the Proposed Action:

The lease amendment would add an additional 30 x 30 foot parcel to the south of ODOT's current 30 x 50 foot lease. ODOT will replace their existing communication tower with a self-supporting tower and construct a second building on the new parcel to shelter radio equipment for the federal government's *Integrated Wireless Network*.

The new tower will be 60 feet tall – the current tower is 66 feet – and will measure 9 feet on each of three sides; this is a larger cross section than the old tower.

The new building will measure 12 x 20 feet and a retaining wall will be constructed on the southeast corner of this building.

New underground electrical and telephone service would be provided to the new building from existing service on the Sexton Mountain communications site. Utility installation and all building construction would comply with local and state codes as applicable.

Project Design Features

The Permit will be issued with the following stipulations:

- Oregon Department of Transportation will obtain all necessary state and local permits before doing any work on the new tower or the new building.

- Soils/Hydrology – Between October 15th and May 15th, moving of heavy equipment will be restricted on all road surfaces to periods of dry weather conditions and only when permission to work is specifically granted by an Authorized Officer. This restriction may be waived through consultation with the authorized BLM engineer.

- Botany – All ground disturbing/yarding equipment used on BLM lands must be washed prior to entering BLM lands to remove any dirt or vegetation that may harbor noxious weed seeds.

- Archaeology – If any cultural sites are located, a BLM archaeologist will be contacted and the site protected as per BLM stipulations.

E. Plan Conformance

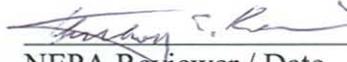
The proposed action is in conformance with the following plans:

- (1) *Final EIS and Record of Decision for the Medford District Resource Management Plan (RMP)* (June 1995).
- (2) *Final Supplemental EIS on Management of Habitat for Late-Successional and Old-Growth Forest Related Species within the Range of the Northern Spotted Owl* (February 1994).
- (3) *Record of Decision for Amendments to Forest Service and Bureau of Land Management Planning Documents Within the Range of the Northern Spotted Owl and its attachment A entitled the Standards and Guidelines for Management of Habitat for Late-Successional and Old-Growth Forest Related Species Within the Range of the Northern Spotted Owl (NFP)*(April 1994).
- (4) *Final Supplemental EIS for Amendments to the Survey & Manage, Protection Buffer, and other Mitigation Measures Standards and Guidelines* (March 2000), and the *Record of Decision and Standards and Guidelines for Amendment to the Survey & Manage, Protection Buffer, and other Mitigation Measures Standards and Guidelines* (January 2001)
- (6) *Medford District Noxious Weed Environmental Assessment* (April 1998).
- (7) *Final Supplemental EIS for Management of Port-Orford Cedar in Southwest Oregon* (December 2003)

F. Compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act

The Proposed Action qualifies as a categorical exclusion under Department Manual 516 DM 11, Appendix 11.5, Section E (16)--Acquisition of easements for an existing road or issuance of leases, permits, or rights-of-way for the use of existing facilities, improvements, or sites for the same or similar purposes.

The proposed action has been reviewed to determine if extraordinary circumstances exist that would require further environmental analysis and documentation (516 DM 2, Appendix 2). None have been identified (see attached).

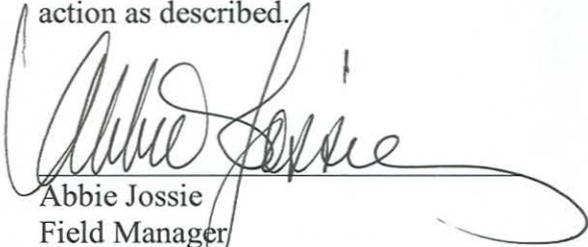
 10/15/07

NEPA Reviewer / Date

Preparer / Date

G. Decision

I have reviewed this CE, plan conformance, and NEPA compliance review and have determined the proposed action is in conformance with the approved land use plan and that no further environmental analysis is required. It is my decision to implement the action as described.



Abbie Jossie
Field Manager
Grants Pass Resource Area

10-15-07

Date

**NEPA COMPLIANCE
CATEGORICAL EXCLUSION REVIEW
ODOT Lease Amendment Application, ORE 06247
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The Department of the Interior Manual 516 2.3A (3) requires the review of the following “extraordinary circumstances” (516 DM 2 Appendix 2) to determine if an otherwise categorically excluded action would require additional analysis and environmental documentation.

1) *Have significant impacts on public health or safety.*

Yes No Remarks: This project will improve public safety through increased communications capabilities.

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

Yes No Remarks: None are identified in the project area.

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

Yes No Remarks: This project will occur in a previously disturbed area. Effects are not controversial and no other use will be affected by project activities.

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

Yes No Remarks: There are no uncertain or potentially significant environmental effects expected from this project.

5) *Establish a precedent for future action or represent a decision in principle about future actions with potentially significant environmental effects.*

Yes No Remarks: This is a stand alone decision in compliance with the Sexton Mountain Communication Site Plan.

6) *Have a direct relationship to other actions with individually insignificant but cumulatively significant environmental effects.*

Yes No Remarks: None are identified.

7) *Have significant impacts on properties listed, or eligible for listing, on the National Register of Historic Places as determined by either the bureau or office.*

Yes No Remarks: There are not listed or eligible properties that will be affected by this project.

8) Have significant impacts on species listed, or proposed to be listed, on the List of Endangered or Threatened Species, or have significant impacts on designated Critical Habitat for these species.

Yes No Remarks: The area is previously disturbed and no listed or proposed species are in the project area.

9) Violate a Federal law, or a State, local, or tribal law or requirement imposed for the protection of the environment.

Yes No

10) Have a disproportionately high and adverse effect on low income or minority populations (Executive Order 12898).

Yes No

11) Limit access to and ceremonial use of Indian sacred sites on Federal lands by Indian religious practitioners or significantly adversely affect the physical integrity of such sacred sites (Executive Order 13007).

Yes No

12) Contribute to the introduction, continued existence, or spread of noxious weeds or non-native invasive species known to occur in the area or actions that may promote the introduction, growth, or expansion of the range of such species (Federal Noxious Weed Control Act and Executive Order 13112).

Yes No Remarks: Project design features should negate this risk.

Reviewers:

Coreen Francis 10/3/07
Silviculture, Vegetation Dynamics
& Port-Orford Cedar Date

Robin M. S. L. 10/15/2007
Botany Date

Alisa Brennan 10/1/07
Cultural Resources Date

Jon R. Roper 10/4/07
Fisheries Date

Jessie R. Roper 10/1/07
Wildlife Date

Michael DeBlasi 10/3/07
Soils/Hydrology Date

J. Miller 10/1/07
Visual Resources / Recreation Date

James R. Roper 10/10/07
Engineering Date