

**UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF INTERIOR
BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT
STATE OF OREGON
PRINEVILLE DISTRICT
CENTRAL OREGON RESOURCE AREA
3050 N.E. 3rd Street
Prineville, Oregon 97754**

Categorical Exclusion Documentation

A. Background

BLM Office: Prineville District Office

NEPA Log #: DOI - BLM - OR – P040 - 2011 - 0058 - CX

Project/Lease/Serial/Case File #: OR 66592

Proposed Action Title: Trans-Cascade Telephone, Antelope Exchange Fiber Optic Line

Location: The complete 53 mile fiber optic line project would occur within various state and county road rights of ways in an approximately 17 square mile area within the counties of Wasco, Jefferson and Wheeler, Oregon. The northern boundary of the area commences approximately four miles west of Antelope, Oregon and extends easterly to a point approximately three miles east of Clarno, Oregon.

Approximately 5.30 miles of the fiber optic line project would cross Prineville District Bureau of Land Management (BLM) lands in portions of T. 7S, R. 18E and R. 19E, T. 8S, R. 19E and T. 10S, R. 17E.

Description of the Proposed Action: Trans-Cascade Telephone Company has been awarded federal funds under the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act Broadband Initiatives Program of the United States Department of Agriculture, Rural Utilities Service. The project would place both buried and aerial fiber optic cable. The buried fiber optic cable would be placed primarily in state and county rights of way; however some segments would require private easements. All of the proposed routes for buried cable are existing routes where Trans-Cascade Telephone Co. currently has buried copper cable. The aerial segments of the fiber line would be placed on existing Wasco Electric Co. power poles. The new fiber optic cable would provide connectivity to six existing remote Digital Subscriber Line Access Multiplexer (DSLAM) sites (A DSLAM, often pronounced *dee-slam*, is a network device, located in the telephone exchange's networks of telecommunications operations. It connects multiple customer Digital Subscriber Line (DSL) interfaces to a high-speed digital communications channel using

multiplexing techniques. DSLAMS at locations remote to the telephone company's telephone exchange centers provide DSL service to locations previously beyond effective range.). Trans-Cascade Telephone Co. would be upgrading all of the DSLAM equipment at the six locations. The existing sites do not require any major construction modification.

The project would cross BLM managed public land for an aggregate of approximately five miles in eight locations: 1) An approximately three mile stretch going eastward alongside Oregon Shaniko-Fossil Hwy 218 commencing about three miles west of Clarno, Oregon, 2) A 0.60 mile stretch going southward alongside Clarno Road commencing about one-quarter mile south of the junction of Hwy 218 and Clarno Road, 3) An additional five short stretches going southward alongside Clarno Road about 0.20, 0.20, 0.20, 0.33 and 0.50 miles long, respectively, and commencing about 1.25, 1.75, 2.33, 2.80 and 3.60 miles, respectively, south of the junction of Hwy 218 and Clarno Road, and 4) A 0.25 mile stretch going southeastward alongside N.E. Trout Creek Road commencing about three and one-quarter miles south of Ashwood, Oregon. The foregoing stretches of line are shown on the attached map and all such stretches would be buried in existing road right of way boundaries.

B. Land Use Plan Conformance

Land Use Plan Name: Two Rivers Resource Management Plan, Record of Decision.

Date approved (ROD): June 1986. The proposed action is in conformance with the above plan, even though it is not specifically provided for, because it is clearly consistent with the following land use plan decisions, objectives, terms, or conditions: *page 32, Utility and Transportation Corridors – Applicants will be encouraged to locate new facilities (including communication sites) adjacent to existing facilities to the extent possible. . . . All rights of way applications will be reviewed using the criteria of following existing corridors wherever practical and avoiding proliferation of separate rights of way Public lands will continue to be available for local rights of way, including multiple use and single use utility/transportation corridors following existing routes, communication sites, and roads.*

C. Compliance with NEPA

The Proposed Action is categorically excluded from further documentation under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) in accordance with:

516 DM 11.9, E. Realty, (12) Grants of right-of-way wholly within the boundaries of other compatibly developed rights-of-way. [From 516 DM, Chapter 11 dated 5/8/08].

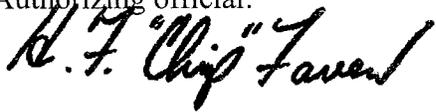
[The remainder of this page is intentionally blank]

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

D. Signature

I considered the proposal and have determined that based on project design, including adhering to BMPs from the RMPs for road maintenance actions; there is no potential for significant impacts.

Authorizing official:



Date

10-12-11

H. F. "Chip" Faver, Field Manager, Central Oregon Resource Area

Contact Person

For additional information concerning this review, contact: *Michael Kroll, Realty Specialist*, Prineville Field Office, 3050 NE 3rd Street, Prineville, OR 97754, telephone (541) 416-6752.

CX EXTRAORDINARY CIRCUMSTANCES DOCUMENTATION		YES	NO
The proposed categorical exclusion action will:			
2.1	Have significant impacts on public health or safety.		X
Rationale: This proposed action is not predicted to have significant impacts on public health or safety. It would have a beneficial impact on improving the speed and availability of communications services within the area of the project, but the effects on public health or safety are not expected to be significant.			
2.2	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.		X
Rationale: The proposed action would not have an effect 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. The proposed action does not include any actions for Wilderness Study Areas or for lands being managed for wilderness character.			
2.3	Have highly controversial environmental effects or involve unresolved conflicts concerning alternative uses of available resources [NEPA Section 102(2) (E)].		X
Rationale: There would be no highly controversial environmental effects or unresolved conflicts concerning alternative uses of available resources.			
2.4	Have highly uncertain and potentially significant environmental effects or involve unique or unknown environmental risks.		X
Rationale: There are no predicted effects on the human environment that are considered to be highly uncertain or involve unique or unknown risks. The BLM has successfully implemented similar actions within the Prineville District.			
2.5	Establish a precedent for future action or represent a decision in principle about future actions with potentially significant environmental effects.		X
Rationale: The proposed action would not establish a precedent for future actions with significant effects or represent a decision in principle about a future consideration.			
2.6	Have a direct relationship to other actions with individually insignificant but cumulatively significant environmental effects.		X
Rationale: Significant cumulative effects are not predicted to occur.			
2.7	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.		X
Rationale: The proposed action would not adversely affect districts, sites, highways, structures, or other objects listed in or eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places, nor will it cause loss or destruction of significant scientific, cultural, or historical resources.			

2.8 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.		X
Rationale: The proposed action would not affect endangered or threatened species or their habitat.		
2.9 Violate a Federal law, or a State, local, or tribal law or requirement imposed for the protection of the environment.		X
Rationale: The proposed action would not violate any Federal law, or a State, local, or tribal law or requirement imposed for the protection of the environment		
2.10 Have a disproportionately high and adverse effect on low income or minority populations (Executive Order 12898).		X
Rationale: The proposed action would not have a disproportionately high and adverse effect on low income or minority populations.		
2.11 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).		X
Rationale: The proposed action would not 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.		
2.12 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).		X
Rationale: The proposed action is designed so that it would not 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. While not specifically related to the proposed right-of-way project, it is noted that some portions of land within the proposed project area were burned in the recent "Hancock" fire; these areas will need to be monitored for invasive species and treated as such species appear.		