United States Department of the Interior
Bureau of Land Management

Environmental Assessment
DOI-BLM-UT-W010-2010-0026-EA

January 2013

Johnson Pass Communication Site

Location: **Johnson Pass**
Tooele County, Utah
T5S R6W, Section 31
Salt Lake Base and Meridian

Applicant/Address: **Verizon Wireless Communications**

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CHAPTER 1
INTRODUCTION AND NEED FOR THE PROPOSED ACTION

INTRODUCTION

The applicant – Verizon Wireless Communications (Verizon) has requested from the U.S. Bureau of Land Management (BLM) Salt Lake Field Office a Communication Use Lease (Serial Number UTU-87430) for a proposed cellular communications tower (Project) and a right-of-way (ROW) grant (Serial Number UTU-87430-01) for use and maintenance of the access road to the Project. In addition if the Project is approved by BLM, Rocky Mountain Power (RMP) would have to make application to amend their existing ROW (Serial Number UTU-02933) in order to install the necessary structures to provide power to the Project. Under the authority of the Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976, 43 U.S.C. 1737 (FLPMA), as amended, the Salt Lake Field Office is overseeing the preparation of this environmental assessment (EA) in accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). If the Project is approved, the BLM would issue a ROW grant under the authority of Section 501 of FLPMA.

The Project consists of the installation of a new communications facility on 3,600 square feet (0.083 acre) in Tooele County, Utah (Site). (Appendix A: Figures 1 and 2) (Appendix B: Photograph Log). The Site is located on Johnson Pass at the southern end of the Stansbury Mountains, on public land administered by the BLM, use and maintenance of a dirt access road approximately 5 miles west of Clover, Utah on UT-199 and installation of a drop line from the existing power line to the Site. The Site is approximately 0.75 miles north and uphill of UT-199 on the east side of the dirt access road. The Project would involve the installation of an equipment building, which would be approximately 12 feet by 26 feet, and a 100-foot tall steel lattice tower. The tower would not have guy wires.

PURPOSE AND NEED FOR THE PROPOSED ACTION

The purpose of the Proposed Action is to provide a ROW grant for Verizon to construct the Project as outlined in the SF-299 ROW Application. The need for the Proposed Action is established by the FLPMA which requires BLM to respond to a request for a ROW grant. FLPMA Section 302[43 U.S.C. 1732] (a) states that the Secretary shall manage the public lands under principles of multiple use and sustained yield, in accordance with the current Resource Management Plan RMP (BLM, 2001).

This EA has been prepared to disclose and analyze the potential environmental consequences of the Project. An EA is a site-specific analysis of potential impacts that could result from the implementation of the proposed action. This EA assists the BLM in project planning and ensuring compliance with NEPA and in making a determination as to whether any significant impacts could result from the analyzed actions.

Decision to be made: The BLM will decide whether or not the Project qualifies for a statement of Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) and whether or not to approve the ROW grant application. If the ROW is granted, the BLM would also decide what terms and conditions would apply.

CONFORMANCE WITH BLM LAND USE PLAN(S)

Land Use Plan Name: Pony Express RMP Date Approved/Amended: January 1, 1990

Although the proposed action is not specifically provided from in the RMP, it has been determined to be in conformance with the terms and conditions of the Pony Express RMP as required by 43 CFR 1610.5. This is shown in Transportation and Utility Corridors Decision 1 on page 56 of the plan and reads as follows:

"Future proposals for major rights-of-way such as pipelines, large power lines and permanent improved roads must utilize identified corridors as shown in Figure 10. Otherwise, a planning amendment and appropriate environmental analysis will be required. Proposals that are not considered major may be sited outside corridors after demonstrating that locating within a corridor is not viable. In all cases, the utilization of rights-of-way in common shall be considered whenever possible. Rights-of-way, whether within or outside a corridor, will avoid the following areas to the maximum extent possible:

(1) Lands within 0.5 mile of sage grouse strutting grounds if the disturbance would adversely impact the effectiveness of the lek.
(2) Lands within 1200 feet of riparian/aquatic habitats.
(3) Lands within VRM Class II and III areas.
(4) Lands within WSAs.
(5) Lands where an above-ground right-of-way would be an obvious visual or physical intrusion such as ridge tops or narrow drainages.
(6) Lands with slopes greater than 30 percent.
(7) Lands with known or suspected hazardous materials.

In addition, construction activities would not be allowed within the crucial seasons and habitats for mule deer, elk, pronghorn, bald eagles, and other raptors. Exceptions may be permitted based on consideration of the following criteria: type and need for facility proposed and economic impact of facility, conflicts with other resource values and uses, and availability of alternative routes and/or mitigation measures."

The Project would disturb approximately 0.1 acres on public land administered by the BLM. The BLM lands are administered by the Salt Lake Field Office, in accordance with the *1990 Pony Express Resource Management Plan and Record of Decision*, as Amended (RMP) (BLM, 1990). The public lands associated with the Stansbury Mountains are mandated by the RMP to provide for multiple uses, including a diverse choice of recreational and other opportunities.

The federal action for this Project would be consistent with current BLM Policy and the RMP.

RELATIONSHIPS TO STATUTES, REGULATIONS AND OTHER PLANS

The federal action would be consistent with all federal, state, and local statues, regulations, and enforceable plans. The BLM is responsible for consultation with Native American tribal governments.

The proposed communications site would be registered with the Federal Communication Commission and the tower location would be registered with the Federal Aviation Administration. Plan review, permitting, and building inspections would be performed by the reviewing jurisdiction.

CHAPTER 2
DESCRIPTION OF ALTERNATIVES

INTRODUCTION

This EA focuses on the Proposed Action and the No Action alternatives. The original Project consisted of the construction of a 200-foot tall communication tower. This alternative was eliminated from discussion because a 100-foot tall tower would meet the needs of the Project with less impact to visual resources. No other action alternatives were developed or eliminated from detailed analysis because additional action alternatives would have similar impacts as those described under the Proposed Action Alternative and can be analyzed under this alternative. If the location of the Project, or any of the access routes, change significantly, a new analysis would be required. The No Action Alternative is considered and analyzed to provide a baseline for comparison of the impacts of the Proposed Action.

PROPOSED ACTION

The Project is to construct a wireless communications facility on a small portion of public land located near Johnson Pass in Tooele County. The Site would be 3,600 square feet (0.083 acre) in size. The Project consists of the construction of a 100-foot tall lattice tower, with associated antennas and microwave dishes, and a 12-foot by 26-foot prefabricated equipment shelter to be placed in the 60-foot by 60-foot fenced lease area. A six foot tall lightning rod would be added to the tower for an overall height of 106-feet. A generator would be used to power the facility in times of power outages. The generator would be housed inside the shelter within secondary spill containment. A 210-gallon diesel belly tank would be required for fuel to operate the generator. The diesel tank would be a UL Listed, double-walled, steel tank and is also housed within the shelter. The facility would also house a battery system that would power radio equipment. The batteries required are valve regulated lead acid batteries. They would be housed within a spill containment system. Proper hazardous material signage would be posted on the exterior doors of the shelter. Termination and restoration commitments would be included in the lease. There would not be anything installed that could not be removed. The area would be enclosed within a six-foot tall chain-link fence with a barbed wire and two six-foot wide access gates. The facility would not be lighted.

Minor improvements to the existing access road would be needed. The existing 12-foot wide and 2,970-foot long access road would be used for access during construction of the communications compound and by technicians to visit the Site for maintenance. The area of the road would be 35,640 square feet (0.82 acres). There are some rocky areas totaling less than 1,000 feet in length that would be ground down, but not graded, during construction in order to allow access to maintenance personnel via four wheel drive vehicles. No tree removal along the existing access road would occur. Some tree trimming would be needed.

The 3,600-square foot communications compound Site would need to be graded. The vegetation within the Site would be removed. A 6-inch layer of crushed gravel would be placed in the Site.

A 50-foot wide perimeter around the proposed communications site would be needed. The area of disturbance during construction; including improvements to the electrical power line route, working perimeter around the outside of the proposed Site and the proposed site; would be 0.32 acres. The permanent area of disturbance would be approximately 0.1 acres.

Rocky Mountain Power would be installing three new wood poles. Electric power would extend 200 to 220-feet over head to the third new pole. Electric power would then be placed in an 80 to 100-foot long 3-inch conduit routed from the last wood pole to a meter pedestal that would be located within the fenced communications compound. The overhead and underground electrical power would be placed within an amended ROW that is described on the project plans.

A geotechnical survey would be conducted to assess soil stability and would be used in the tower foundation design process. The proposed tower and equipment shelter would be engineered and built according to the 2009 International Building Code specifications. All surveys and drawings would be reviewed and stamped by licensed engineers.

Existing conditions are such that a dozer would be used to grade the Site location. A dozer would be used to grind rock exposed boulders along the access route. Other excavation equipment would include a track hoe, dump truck, and trailer. Approximately six support vehicles, such as a pick-up truck would be on-site during construction. Excavated soils would be used to grade the lease area and access road. Concrete trucks would deliver concrete upon completion of excavation for the tower and building foundations, total cubic yards of concrete would be known after the tower foundation is designed. However, at this time it is estimated that 30 to 45 cubic yards of soil would be generated during foundation excavation.

An all-terrain crane would be used to set the pre-fabricated shelter and tower once the concrete has cured. It is unclear at this time if a helicopter would be needed to stack the top portion of the tower.

A snow cat would be used to access the Site in extreme winter conditions. Helicopter use is not anticipated at this time. Typically the Site would be visited once every four to six weeks for maintenance. The diesel tank would be refueled once per year or as needed.

Construction/equipment staging would be located approximately 700-feet south of the access to the site from Highway 199 within BLM lands. The staging area is a cleared gravel surfaced area immediately southwest of Highway 199 as shown on Figure 2. Number of vehicles on Site at any given time would be kept to a minimum.

APPLICANT COMMITTED ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION MEASURES

- Migratory/breeding bird surveys would be conducted during migratory bird nesting season (March 1 – September 15) if construction were to occur during this time period. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) Utah Field Office Guidelines for Raptor Protection from Human and Land Use Disturbances (Romin and Muck 2002) would be used for development of seasonal buffers for raptor nests. A 100-foot seasonal buffer would be used for neotropical, ground-nesting, or cavity-nesting birds.

- Construction would not occur from December 1 to April 15 to protect the crucial mule deer range.

- Areas of temporary disturbance, approximately 0.22 acres, would be reseeded with a BLM-approved seed mix. The seed mix would be specially selected to include low-fire/fuel plant species that are less likely to provide fuel in the case of a wildfire. Low-fire/fuel seed mixes generally consist of a high proportion of bunch grasses.
- Noxious weeds do not currently occur at the Site. The BLM Noxious Weed Standard Stipulations would be implemented throughout construction of the Project to prevent future invasion of weeds.
- All above-ground structures including fences not subject to safety requirements shall be painted by the holder to blend with the natural color of the landscape. The paint used shall be a color which simulates "Standard Environmental Colors". The color selected for this communication site is Covert Green.

NO ACTION

The No Action Alternative would be to deny Verizon the ROW grant and permission to construct the Project as proposed. With this alternative BLM would not approve the proposed Project and Verizon would not be permitted to construct the cellular communication facility. Cellular service within the current analysis area would remain as it is at present.

CHAPTER 3
AFFECTED ENVIRONMENT

INTRODUCTION

The Interdisciplinary Team Checklist (Appendix C) provides a brief description of the affected environment for several resources. The Checklist indicates which resources are not present in the project area, which are present, but would not be impacted by the project, and which resources are present and could be impacted by the project. Resources which could be impacted by the Project to a level requiring further analysis are described in Chapter 3 and the impacts on these resources are analyzed in Chapter 4.

GENERAL SETTING

URS, with the assistance of the BLM, conducted a baseline ecological survey of the project area on June 14, 2011 and February 3, 2012. They conducted a pedestrian observation of the access road, the project area, and an approximate one-half mile buffer of the project area.

The Site is located on Johnson Pass. Johnson Pass lies at the south end of the Stansbury Mountains on the west side of Rush Valley. The Site is located approximately 5 miles west of Clover, Utah and approximately 0.75 miles north of UT-199. There is a dirt access road on the north side of UT-199 that can be walked directly to the Site. The access road is steep and narrow with deep ruts and large boulders.

The Site is located in the Rocky Woodland- and Shrub-Covered Low Mountains ecoregion. This ecoregion is characterized by a distinct vegetation mosaic of mountain brush in the higher elevations and woodland in the lower elevations. Juniper is typically found at lower elevations and pinyon at higher elevations with the intermixing at middle elevations. Bitterbrush and western serviceberry are important browse for mule deer in the ecoregion (Woods et. al., 2001). Table 3-1 is a list of the plant species observed during the site visit in June 2011.

The site elevation is approximately 6,500 feet above mean sea level. It is in a low-mountain juniper forest with large shrubs, wildflowers, grasses, and limestone outcrops.

The Site is located in crucial spring/fall mule deer habitat (Figure 3). Crucial winter/spring mule deer habitat is located approximately 1 mile west and 1.25 miles northeast of the Site. Crucial winter mule deer habitat is located over 1 mile southwest of the Site (DWR, 2006).

The Site vegetation consists of small trees and tall shrubs including one-seed juniper (*Juniperus monosperma*), bitterbrush (*Purshia tridentata*), and Utah serviceberry (*Amelanchier utahensis*). Wildflowers, grasses, prickly pear, sage, and thistle are also present on the Site. The Site appears to be relatively undisturbed and dominated by native plant species.

Table 3-1. Plant Species Observed at Johnson Pass on June 2011

Common Name	Scientific Name	Common Name	Scientific Name
Arrowleaf balsam root	*Balsamorhiza sagittata*	Long-leaf phlox	*Phlox longifolia*
Big mountain sage	*Artemisia tridentata*	Narrowleaf paintbrush	*Castilleja chromosa*
Bitterbrush	*Purshia tridentata*	One-seed juniper	*Juniperus monosperma*
Bulbous bluegrass	*Poa bulbosa*	Prickly pear	*Opuntia* sp.
Common larkspur	*Delphinium nuttallianum*	Steppe sweetpea	*Lathyrus pauciflorus*
Crested wheatgrass	*Agropyron cristatum*	Utah serviceberry	*Amelanchier utahensis*
Desert evening primrose	*Oenothera caespitosa*	Wavyleaf thistle	*Cirsium undulatum*
False dandelion	*Agoseris glauca*	Western wheatgrass	*Pascoyrum smithii*
Grey desert parsley	*Lomatium grayi*	Woolly-pod locoweed	*Astragulus purshii*
Groundsel	*Senecio* sp.		

Resource A: Lands/Access

The public land associated with the Oquirrh Mountains is mandated by the RMP to provide for multiple uses, including a diverse choice of recreational activities. The Project area provides opportunities for recreational activities including; sight-seeing, wildlife viewing, hiking, and other activities. A dirt road from UT-199 provides limited access to the Project area. Because the Project area is located on BLM administered land, Verizon is required to file an SF-299 application to receive approval from the BLM to access and construct in the area.

Resource B: Migratory Birds

The project Site and the area to the east and below the Site were observed and evaluated for potential raptor habitat on February 3, 2012. The Site consists of an open area with rocky limestone outcrops. The east area surrounding the Site consists of moderately dense stands of one-seed juniper with some open areas and rocky limestone outcrops. The trees and rocky outcrops were observed using binoculars. The trees were searched for signs of nests. A concentration was placed on those trees surrounding open areas which would provide a vantage point which is favorable for nesting birds. The rocky outcrops were not large enough to favorably support most cliff dwelling raptors. No nests were observed. (Appendix D: Threatened, Endangered, and Sensitive Animal Species and Other Wildlife.)

The BLM's role under the Migratory Bird Treaty Act (MBTA) is to adequately manage migratory birds and their habitats, and to reduce the likelihood of a sensitive bird species from being listed under the Endangered Species Act. BLM provides project-level NEPA guidance for meeting compliance of the MBTA by identifying sensitive bird species and habitats identified from sources such as the USFWS, Birds of Conservation Concern (BCC), and the Utah Partners in Flight (PIF) (IM-2008-050).

Resource C: Soils

The Web Soil Survey (NRCS, 2010) indicates that the Site lies within an area of the Lodar-Lundy-Rock outcrop association. This soil association occurs between 6,000 and 8,500 feet above mean sea level (AML) and receives a mean annual precipitation of 12 to 35 inches. Much of this soil association is covered with cobbles, stones, or boulders and the occurring soils are well drained with 10 to 20 inches depth to bedrock. There is generally no flooding or ponding occurrence with this soil association. This is not a special status soil and it is not known to be highly erodible.

Resource D: Threatened, Endangered, Candidate or Special Status Animal Species and Other Wildlife

Threatened, Endangered, Candidate or Special Status Animal Species
The species listed as endangered, threatened, and candidate by the USFWS or as a special status species by the BLM are listed on Table 3-2.

Table 3-2. Species Listed by USFWS or BLM occurring in Tooele County

Common Name	Scientific Name	Status	Listing Agency
Dark kangaroo mouse	*Microdipodops megacephalus*	SPC	BLM
Ferruginous hawk	*Buteo regalis*	SPC	BLM
Greater sage-grouse	*Centrocercus urophasianus*	C	BLM and USFWS
Kit fox	*Vulpes macrotis*	SPC	BLM
Lewis's woodpecker	*Melanerpes lewis*	SPC	BLM
Long-billed curlew	*Numenius americanus*	SPC	BLM
Northern goshawk	*Accipiter gentilis*	SPC	BLM
Preble's shrew	*Sorex preblei*	SPC	BLM
Pygmy rabbit	*Brachylagus idahoensis*	SPC	BLM
Short-eared owl	*Asio flammeus*	SPC	BLM
Townsend's big-eared bat	*Corynorhinus townsendii*	SPC	BLM
Ute ladies'-tresses	*Spiranthes diluvialis*	T	USFWS
Western yellow-billed cuckoo	*Coccyzus americanus occidentalis*	C	USFWS

SPC = Utah Species of Concern, BLM Sensitive Species, C = Federal Candidate Species (Candidate species have no legal protection under the Endangered Species Act. However, these species are under active consideration by USFWS for addition to the Federal List of Endangered and Threatened Species and may be proposed or listed during the development of the Project.) T = Threatened (A classification provided to an animal or plant likely to become endangered within the foreseeable future throughout all or a significant portion of its range).
Note: aquatic species were not included in Table 1 because there are not any bodies of water on the Site that would support aquatic species.

<u>Dark kangaroo mouse</u>
Dark kangaroo mice occur primarily in the Great Basin ecoregion in shadscale- and sage-dominated saline basins. It would be unlikely to occur at the Site because it is not located within a shadscale- and sage- dominated saline basin (DWR 2011).

Ferruginous hawk

Ferruginous hawks winter primarily in grasslands and shrub steppes and they require flat and rolling terrain in grassland or shrub steppe for breeding. They avoid high elevations, but can be found at the periphery of pinyon-juniper forests. Because of their preference for elevated nest sites, they will nest on cliffs (DWR 2011). It is unlikely that they would occur at the Site because the Site is not adjacent to flat open hunting grounds.

Greater sage-grouse

Greater sage-grouse inhabit sagebrush plains, foothills, and mountain valleys. Sagebrush is the predominant plant of quality habitat (DWR 2011). Since sagebrush is not a dominant plant species at the Site, the project is not in occupied greater sage-grouse habitat.

Kit fox

Kit foxes primarily occur in open prairie, plains, and desert habitats (DWR 2011). They are unlikely to occur at the Site because it is not located within an open prairie, plain, or desert habitat.

Lewis's woodpecker

Lewis's woodpeckers are cavity nesters that prefer to nest in ponderosa pine, cottonwood, or sycamore. No ponderosa pines, cottonwoods, or sycamores were observed during the Site visits.

Long-billed curlew

Long-billed curlews are shorebirds (DWR 2011). They would not occur at the Site because it is not located near a shore.

Northern goshawk

Northern goshawks prefer mature mountain forest and riparian zone habitats. They construct their nests in mature trees. They typically build their nests at the tops of old growth forests where they feel protected against predators (DWR 2011). It is unlikely that northern goshawks would nest at the Site because the junipers are not a preferred nesting tree.

Preble's shrew

The known range of Preble's shrew is only the southern shore of the Great Salt Lake (DWR 2011). It is unlikely to occur at the Site because there is an absence of wetlands.

Pygmy rabbit

Pygmy rabbits prefer tall dense sagebrush with deep and loose soil (DWR 2011). They are unlikely to occur at the Site because there is not a dense stand of sagebrush and the soils are gravelly and shallow.

Short-eared owl

Short-eared owls are ground-nesters and they prefer open habitats (DWR 2011). They would be unlikely to occur at the Site because it is within dense stands of small trees and large shrubs.

Townsend's big-eared bat
Townsend's big-eared bats occur statewide in Utah. They can be found in mines, caves, and structures in forests below 9,000 feet in elevation (DWR 2011). Since the project area does not have mines or caves, roosting and hibernaculum sites would not be impacted for Townsend's big-eared bat

Ute ladies'-tresses
Ute ladies'-tresses occur within wetland areas (DWR 2011). It is unlikely to occur at the Site because there is an absence of wetlands.

Western yellow-billed cuckoo
Western yellow-billed cuckoos prefer lowland riparian habitats (DWR 2011). They are unlikely to occur at the Site because there are not any riparian areas on or adjacent to the Site.

Utah Division of Wildlife (DWR) reported that there were no records of occurrence for any threatened, endangered, or sensitive species within the project area. However, in the vicinity there are recent records of occurrence of bonytail chub (*Gila elegans*), kit fox (*Vulpes macrotis*), and Southern Bonneville springsnail (*Pyrgulopsis transversa*) and historical records of occurrence for Lyrate mountainsnail (*Oreohelix haydeni*) and Townsend's big-eared bat (*Corynorhinus townsendii*) (Appendix D). All of these species are included on the *Utah Sensitive Species List*.

The bonytail does not occur at the Site because there are no waterbodies that could support it. The kit fox prefers open prairie, plains, and desert (described above). The Southern Bonneville springsnail is endemic to the springs south of Footes Canyon, Simpson Mountains, Old River Bed, Tooele County, Utah, T 10S, R 8W, NW ¼ section of 33 (DWR 1998). The Lyrate mountainsnail prefers limestone talus protected from rapid evaporation by overhanging brush. Limestone talus slopes do not occur at the Site (DWR 2011).

Two URS environmental scientists conducted a foot survey of the Site on June 14, 2011. On February 3, 2012, one URS environmental scientist and one BLM biologist conducted another foot survey of the east area surrounding the Site specifically to evaluate potential raptor habitat. In order to survey the nearest water source for bats, bat capture surveys using mist nets were conducted on July 27 and September 27, 2011 at the BLM Clover Spring Campground. Acoustic bat surveys were also conducted to determine the presence and activity levels of bat species in the vicinity of the Project area. An Anabat bat detector survey station was installed near the Project area, and sampled for one week in both the summer and fall seasons (July 27-August 2, and September 20-26, 2011).

Coyote (*Canus latrans*) scat was observed on the dirt access road and several song birds were heard during the June 14, 2011 Site visit. The trees on the Site and to the north, south, and west of the site were observed for signs of raptor nests, but no nests were observed. The dominant tree species is the one-seed juniper. These trees are very similar in height. There are not taller trees that would allow for a nest location with a good vantage point of the surrounding area. Raptors generally prefer to nest in locations with good visibility of the

surrounding areas. No other signs of wildlife or bird nests were observed during the June 14, 2011 foot survey.

On February 3, 2012 the area to the east and below the Site were observed and evaluated for potential raptor habitat. The east area surrounding the Site consists of moderately dense stands of one-seed juniper with some open areas and rocky limestone outcrops. The trees and rocky outcrops were observed using binoculars. The trees were searched for signs of nests. A concentration was placed on those trees surrounding open areas which would provide a vantage point which is favorable for nesting birds. The rocky outcrops were not large enough to favorably support most cliff dwelling raptors. No nests were observed.

During the February 3, 2012 foot survey common ravens (*Corvus corax*) and a juniper titmouse (*Baeolophus griseus*) were observed. There were also wildlife tracks in the snow. The species creating these tracks were not positively identified, but it is likely that one set of tracks were from a coyote and another from a bobcat (*Felis rufus*)

Bats

One night of bat capture and one week of acoustic monitoring for bats was conducted near the Site in both the summer (July) and fall (September) of 2011. A total of 11 bat species were identified near the Project area. Four of these species were identified during capture surveys, and all 11 were recorded acoustically. Of the species recorded near the Project area, common bat species made up the majority of recorded activity. The species with the highest overall activity was the Western long-eared bat. This species was also captured in both the spring and the fall capture surveys. One Species of Concern, Townsend's big-eared bat, was recorded acoustically near the Project area, and made up approximately three percent of all recorded activity.

Mule Deer

The Project area is located within crucial mule deer spring/fall range. Crucial mule deer spring/fall range is an area where wildlife species rely on high productivity forage habitat for fat accretion that helps animals survive during the vulnerable winter months. The species will then use the area again for forage in the spring to recover after low calorie intake during the winter. Any disturbance to fall foraging wildlife can result in a loss of calories, and decrease its chances for survival during the following winter and recovery in the spring. The crucial mule deer spring/fall range that overlaps the Project area falls within the Stansbury Mountains (Appendix A: Figure 3).

Resource E: Visual Resources

A visual impact assessment of the proposed tower was conducted on May 18 and 19, 2011, this was further assisted by the creation of photo simulation pictures of the proposed project area from several Key Observation Points (KOPs). The tower would have a potential visual impact to the Lincoln Highway. SR 199 is the original course of this historic road. The Lincoln highway is an NRHP eligible site based primarily on the relative integrity of its setting. This segment of the road is particularly noteworthy as it follows the originally designed course of the historic highway. URS specialists assessed the potential impact of the

tower by rating the proposed tower's visual impacts based on the integrity of the existing viewshed and existing impacts in the area and several KOPs along the route of the highway.

The visual impact assessment found the proposed tower to have minor impact to the visual setting of the Lincoln Highway segment located south, west, and east of the project area. URS in consultation with the BLM SLFO, identified the area of the proposed tower as being within a Class IV Objective Visual Resource Management Area (VRM). This type of VRM area allows for development of major modifications of the existing landscape. The development activity may be dominate in the view and if necessary the focus of the viewer (BLM 1986).

CHAPTER 4
ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS

DIRECT AND INDIRECT IMPACTS

PROPOSED ACTION

This section analyzes the potential impacts of the proposed action to the resources described in the affected environment, Chapter 3, of this document.

Resource A: Public Lands and Access

Public access to federal lands within the project area would not be restricted, except as necessary during construction to provide for public safety.

During construction, noise, dust, traffic, equipment use, and associated human activities may change the character of the area and could result in a temporary loss of recreational opportunities. Once construction is complete, the ROW on [except for the 3,600 square foot (0.083 acre) communication facility] would be available for public use again. Construction is expected to last approximately 30 days. Verizon has submitted an SF-299 ROW Application in order to comply with BLM regulations and land use authorizations.

Land use and access to public lands would not be significantly impacted by the Project and the Project would only have a minor impact to public access during construction activities.

Resource B: Migratory Birds

Based on the surveys conducted June 2011 and February 2012, there are no migratory birds nesting in the project area. Migratory birds could be temporarily impacted by the Project during construction activities as they may avoid using the area for foraging. Once construction is complete, it is likely that any birds using the area for forage would continue to do so. There would not be any guy wires associated with the communication tower.

If construction is scheduled during migratory bird nesting season, approximately March 1 through September 15, a migratory bird nest survey would be conducted within 72-hours prior to the start of construction work. If a migratory bird nest is discovered in, or immediately adjacent to, the construction area, an appropriate buffer zone for the species would be established around that nest. Construction work within that buffer zone would be postponed until the end of the nesting season and/or it is verified that the young have fledged from the nest.

Based on the observations from the surveys conducted in June 2011 and February 2012 and the avoidance and mitigation measures developed for migratory birds, there would be no significant impact to migratory birds. There would be a minor, short-term impact to birds that may use the area for foraging during construction activities.

Resource C: Soils

The Lodar-Lundy-Rock outcrop soil association is present at the Site. It is not prone to flooding, ponding, or erosion. There would be a temporary impact to these soils during the surface work that is required for Site grading. Stormwater BMPs would be used during

construction in order to minimize soil erosion. Disturbed areas of the Site would be re-vegetated upon completion of construction work.

Soil would not be significantly impacted by the Project.

Resource D: Threatened, Endangered, Candidate or Special Status Animal Species and Other Wildlife

The USFWS concurs with the finding that the Project would have "***no effect***" on threatened and endangered species or Critical Habitat (Appendix D: Threatened, Endangered, and Sensitive Animal Species and Other Wildlife).

The Project area is located within crucial mule deer spring/fall range. The Project area is within a DWR Herd Unit.

The Project would impact less than approximately 0.32 acres of the crucial mule deer spring/fall range for this herd unit that is thought to cover several hundred acres. This is substantially less than one percent of the range, and would not be an adverse impact to the overall crucial mule deer spring/fall range in the Stansbury Mountains. The Project would have a minor impact on crucial mule deer spring/fall range (Douglas Sakaguchi personal communication). However, since the Project's existing access road goes through crucial spring/fall range, construction should be conducted between April 16 to November 30. Maintenance visits to the Project area from December to April 15 would be minimized, so that disturbances in crucial spring/fall range to foraging mule deer would be minimized. Dogs would not be allowed to accompany maintenance personnel during maintenance visits, this would reduce further disturbance to deer.

Resource E: Visual Resources

Based on the visual impact assessment (Appendix E: Visual Assessment) of the proposed tower conducted on May 18 and 19, 2011, the proposed tower would have a minor impact to the visual setting of the Lincoln Highway segment located south, west, and east of the project area. URS , in consultation with the BLM SLFO, identified the area of the proposed tower as being within a Class IV Objective Visual Resource Management Area (VRM). This type of VRM area allows for development of major modifications of the existing landscape. The development activity may be dominate in the view and if necessary the focus of the viewer (BLM 1986).

The proposed tower would be 100-feet tall, extending above the natural tree line on the proposed ridgeline. The current view of the project area from the east is already impacted by the presence of several large high tension power lines and vertical poles. The view is also impacted by horizontal lines caused by ongoing re-vegetation of burn areas directly below the project area.

When viewed from the west, from a vantage point along SR 199, the proposed tower extends only slightly above the existing tree line as shown in the attached View Shed Study. The proposed tower would not be visible from a vantage point at the Johnson Pass pull out or information sign, south of the proposed location, as it would be obscured by a high point in the ridgeline.

The proposed tower would have a weak visual contrast in relation to the existing visual environment. This level of modification to the landscape would be within an acceptable level of a Class IV Objective VRM area. The tower is to be painted with a dark, non-reflective paint to further minimize the level of impact. In light of existing landscape modifications the proposed tower would be effectively obscured.

NO ACTION

Resource A: Public Lands and Access

Under the No Action Alternative, BLM would deny Verizon the ROW application and permission to construct the Project. Public access would remain the same as current conditions, and there would be no impacts to other nearby land uses.

Resource B: Migratory Birds

Under the No Action Alternative, BLM would deny Verizon the ROW application and permission to construct the Project. There would be no impacts to migratory birds from the Project.

Resource C: Soils

Under the No Action Alternative, BLM would deny Verizon the ROW application and permission to construct the Project. There would be no impacts to soils from the Project.

Resource D: Threatened, Endangered, Candidate or Special Status Animal Species and Other Wildlife

Under the No Action Alternative, BLM would deny Verizon the ROW application and permission to construct the Project. There would be no impacts to wildlife from the Project.

Resource E: Visual Resources

Under the No Action Alternative, BLM would deny Verizon the ROW application and permission to construct the Project. There would be no impacts to visual resources from the Project.

CUMULATIVE IMPACTS

There are no other known projects currently being planned or constructed, or reasonable foreseeable projects, near or adjacent to the Project that would be considered under the cumulative impacts discussion. The only impacts from the Proposed Action are minor, and temporary in nature, and would not add cumulatively to any other reasonable foreseeable action within the appropriate analysis areas.

CHAPTER 5
PERSONS, GROUPS, AND AGENCIES CONSULTED

Table 5-1. List of Persons, Agencies and Organizations Consulted

Name	Purpose & Authorities for Consultation or Coordination	Findings & Conclusions
Utah State Historic Preservation Officer	Section 106 Consultation and Coordination	No historic or cultural sites were identified in the project area. The Project access road ingress and egress is on the historic Lincoln Highway. The impacts to Lincoln Highway would be temporary and minor.
Utah Natural Heritage Program Manager	Search for occurrences of threatened and endangered or state sensitive species	No records for occurrence of threatened or endangered or state sensitive species in the Project area, Records of occurrence in the vicinity of the Project of bonytail (*Gila elegans*), kit fox (*Vulpes macrotis*), and Southern Bonneville springsnail (*Oreohelix haydeni*).
Utah Division of Wildlife Resources Springfield Field Office Biologist	Crucial winter mule deer habitat analysis	Impacts to crucial winter mule deer habitat would be minor.
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Biologist	Threatened and endangered species coordination	Concurrence with "***no effect***" to threatened and endangered species determination.
Goshute Tribe Ute Indian Tribe Paiute Tribe	Tribal Consultation	Letters describing the proposed project were sent to the Tribes listed. The Paiute Tribe responded with indication of no concerns with the proposed project.

CHAPTER 6
LIST OF PREPARERS

Table 6-1. List of Preparers

BLM Preparers

Name	Title	Responsible for the Following Section(s) of this Document
Traci Allen	**Wildlife Biologist**	**Threatened, Endangered, Candidate or Special Status Animal Species and Other Wildlife, Migratory Birds**
Cindy Ledbetter	**NEPA Coordinator**	**NEPA Compliance, Document Review**
Julie Pallette	**Outdoor Recreation Planner**	**Visual Resources**
Ray Kelsey	**Outdoor Recreation Planner**	**General Recreation, Wilderness**
Dylan Tucker	**Range Management Specialist**	**Prime or Unique Farmlands, Floodplains, Invasive Plants-Weeds, Livestock Grazing, Vegetation, Soils and Water Resources**
Dave Watson	**Realty Specialist**	**Land Use, Access**
Dale Earl	**Archaeologist**	**Cultural Resources, Native American Consultation**

Non-BLM Preparers

Name	Title	Responsible for the Following Section(s) of this Document
Keith O'Connell	Consultant Project Manager	All Sections
Laura Springsteen	Environmental Planner, Ecologist	All Sections
Joshua McNutt	Archaeologist	Cultural Resources

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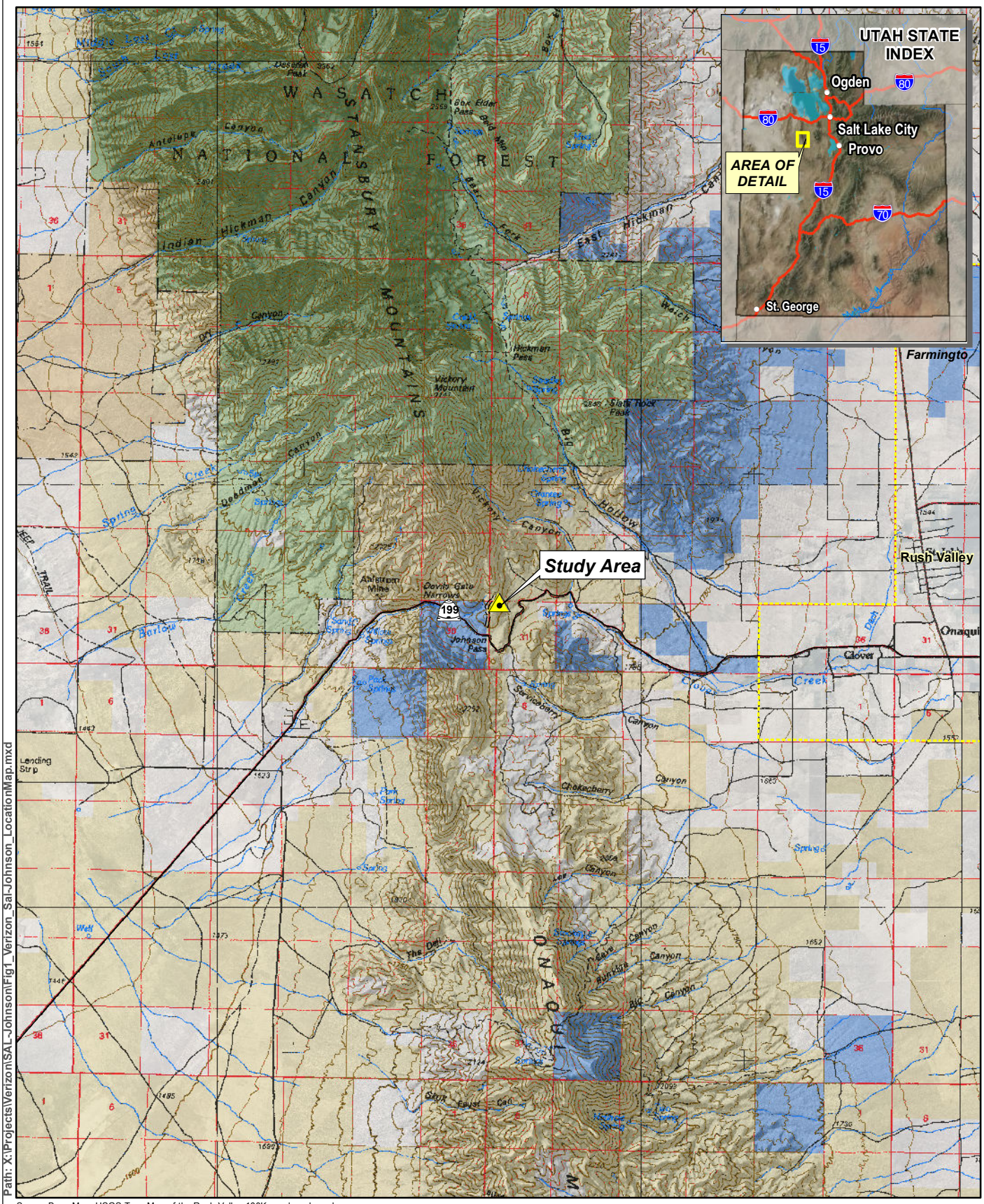
APPENDIX A

FIGURES



Source Base Map: USGS Topo Map of the Rush Valley 100K quadrangle and ImageService://IMAGE.AGRC.UTAH.GOV/AerialPhotography_Color/NAIP2009_Color1Meter

Site Location

Land Status

- Private
- State Trust Land
- Tribal Lands
- Bureau of Land Management (BLM)
- USFS National Forest
- Wilderness

0 1 2 3 Miles

FIGURE 1

Location Map

Verizon Wireless - JOHNSON PASS

Tooele County, Utah

verizon wireless

URS

Path: X:\Projects\Verizon\SAL-Johnson\Fig2_Site-Map_11X17.mxd

Proposed Site Location

199

Dirt Access Road

199

Staging Area

Aerial Source:ImageService://IMAGE.AGRC.UTAH.GOV/AerialPhotography_Color/HRO2006_Color1Foot

Half Mile Site Buffer

Proposed Site Location

N

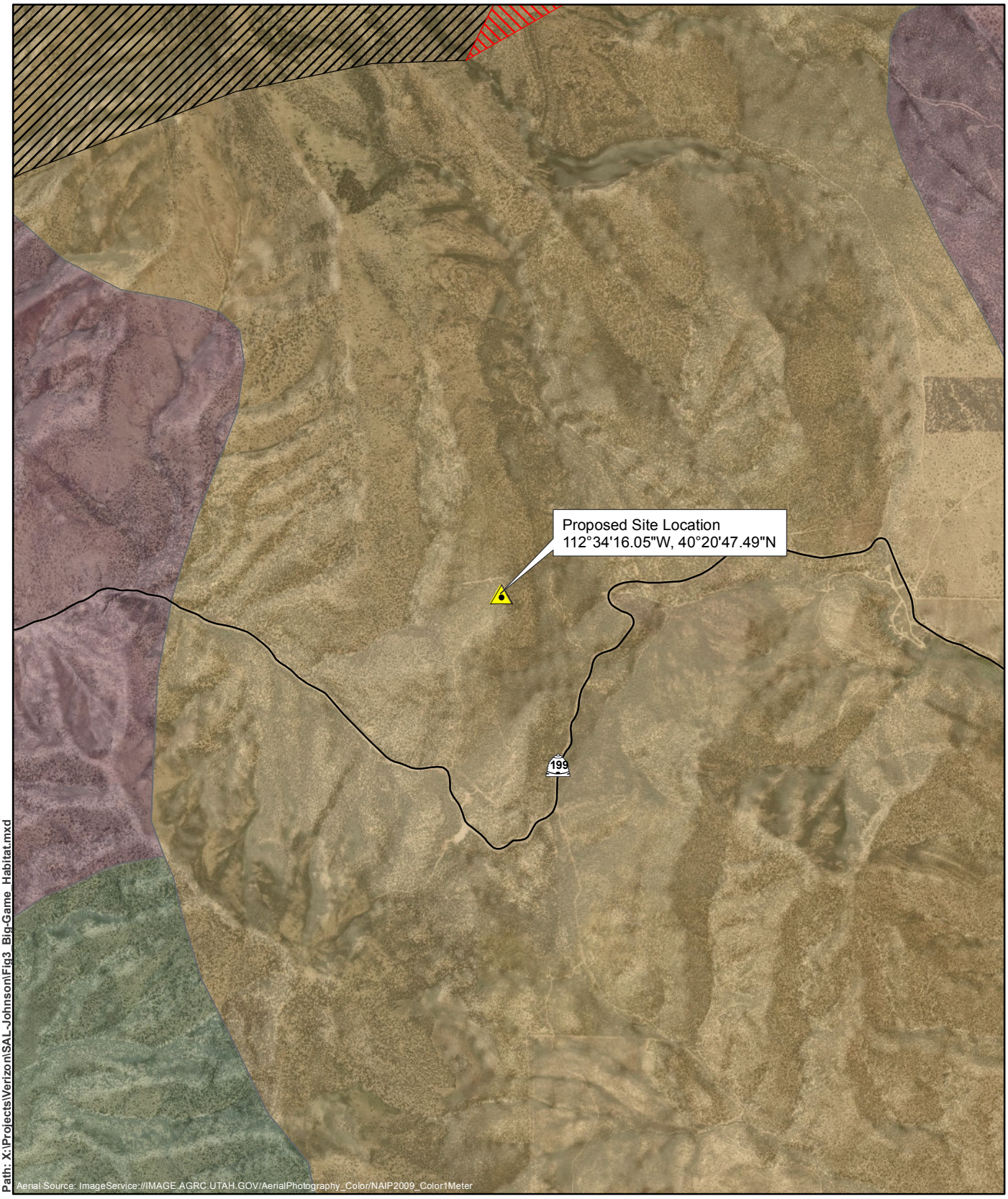
0 300 600 900 Feet

FIGURE 2

Site Map
Verizon Wireless - JOHNSON PASS
Tooele County, Utah

verizon wireless

URS



Path: X:\Projects\Verizon\SAL-Johnson\Fig3_Big-Game_Habitat.mxd

Proposed Site Location

Mule Deer Winter, Crucial

Mule Deer Spring / Fall, Crucial

Mule Deer Winter / Spring, Crucial

Data Source: Utah Division of Wildlife Resources, Salt Lake City, UT
Note: This dataset represents MULE DEER use areas in Utah as determined by wildlife biologists during 2001. In May 2006 the dataset was converted from a Critical, High, Substantial and Limited value system to a Crucial/Substantial value system.

0 1,000 2,000 3,000 Feet

FIGURE 3

Big Game Habitat
Verizon Wireless - JOHNSON PASS
Tooele County, Utah

verizon wireless

URS

APPENDIX B
PHOTOGRAPH LOG

Photograph Log

URS

General Information			
	Project Number: 36299361	**Project Name:** Johnson Pass Communication Tower	**Page: 1 of 4**
	Client: Verizon Wireless		**Date:** 6/14/2011
	Location: Tooele County, Utah		
	Field Investigators: Laura Springsteen and Colter Davis		

Photographs

Photograph: 1

Description:
Looking northwest from the southeast Site corner stake

Photograph: 2

Description:
Looking north from the southeast Site corner stake.

Recorded By: Laura Springsteen	Date 6/14/2011

Photograph Log

URS

General Information			
Project Number: 36299361	**Project Name:** Johnson Pass Communication Tower		**Page:** 2 of 4
Client: Verizon Wireless			**Date:** 8/10/2011
Location: Tooele County, Utah			
Field Investigators: Laura Springsteen and Colter Davis			

Photographs

Photograph: 3

Description:
Looking northeast of the Site from the northeast corner stake.

Photograph: 4

Description:
Looking east at the Site.

Recorded By: Laura Springsteen

Photograph Log

URS

General Information			
Project Number: 36299361	**Project Name:** Johnson Pass Communication Tower		**Page:** 3 of 4
Client: Verizon Wireless			**Date:** 6/14/2011
Location: Tooele County, Utah			
Field Investigator: Laura Springsteen and Colter Davis			

Photographs

Photograph: 5

Description:
Looking north at the power transmission line from the access road.

Photograph: 6

Description:
Looking east from the southwest Site corner stake.

Recorded By: Laura Springsteen

Photograph Log

URS

General Information			
Project Number: 36299361	**Project Name:** Johnson Pass Communication Tower		**Page:** 4 of 4
Client: Verizon Wireless			**Date:** 6/14/2011
Location: Tooele County, Utah			
Field Investigators: Laura Springsteen and Colter Davis			

Photographs

Photograph: 7

Description:
Looking east from the northwest Site corner stake.

Photograph: 8

Description:
Looking east at Rush Valley from the east boundary of the Site.

Recorded By: Laura Springsteen

APPENDIX C
INTERDISCIPLINARY TEAM CHECKLIST

INTERDISCIPLINARY TEAM CHECKLIST

Project Title: Johnson Pass Communication Site

NEPA Log Number: DOI-BLM-UT-W010-2010-0026-EA

File/Serial Number: UTU-87430

Project Leader: Dave Watson

DETERMINATION OF STAFF: ***(Choose one of the following abbreviated options for the left column)***

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 relevant impact that need to be analyzed in detail in the EA
NC = (DNAs only) actions and impacts not changed from those disclosed in the existing NEPA documents cited in Section D of the DNA form. The Rationale column may include NI and NP discussions.

Determi-nation	Resource	Rationale for Determination*	Signature	Date
RESOURCES AND ISSUES CONSIDERED (INCLUDES SUPPLEMENTAL AUTHORITIES APPENDIX 1 H-1790-1)				
NI	Air Quality	Project is in an attainment are. The project may create short term increases in PM10 but typical mitigation to reduce airborne particles may be used.	/s/ Brook Chadwick	9/28/10
NP	Areas of Critical Environmental Concern	Land use plan does not identify any ACEC's within the project area	/s/ Cindy Ledbetter	9/14/2010
NI	Cultural Resources	A cultural resource inventory of the project area found no sites eligible for the National Register of Historic Places would be affected by this project.	/s/ Dale Earl	11/29/12
NI	Greenhouse Gas Emissions	BLM does not have the ability to associate an action's contribution in a localized area to impact global climate change. Further, an IPCC assessment states that, "difficulties remain in attributing observed temperature changes at a smaller than continental scale"	/s/ Cindy Ledbetter	9/14/2010
NI	Environmental Justice	Low income or minority populations would not be disproportionately affected	/s/ Cindy Ledbetter	9/14/2010
NP	Farmlands (Prime or Unique)	No farmlands designated for this area in the soil survey	/s/ Alan Bass	10/13/10
NP	Fish Habitat	No fish habitat is in the project area	/s/ Traci Allen	9/28/2010
NP	Floodplains	Resource not within project area	/s/ Alan Bass	10/13/10
NI	Fuels/Fire Management	Fuels mitigation (defensible space) measures would apply to these new structures and fire prevention stipulations would apply to the general operation.	/s/ Teresa Rigby	11/24/10
NI	Geology / Mineral Resources/Energy Production	The proposed action would not affect any potential mineral resources.	/s/ Larry Garahana	9/17/2010
NI	Invasive Species/Noxious Weeds	No impact anticipated because of SOP for weed control	/s/ Alan Bass	10/13/10
PI	Lands/Access	Needs ROW for not only comm site, but access road as well	/s/Mike Nelson	10/5/2010
NI	Livestock Grazing	No impact to livestock grazing expected	/s/ Alan Bass	10/13/10

Determi-nation	Resource	Rationale for Determination*	Signature	Date
PI	Migratory Birds	May affect nesting raptors	/s/ Traci Allen	9/28/2010
NI	Native American Religious Concerns	Native American Consultation will take place for this project.	/s/ Dale Earl	9/15/10
NP	Paleontology	There are no known significant paleontological resources in the project area.	/s/ Larry Garahana	9/17/2010
NI	Rangeland Health Standards	Impacts would not change Rangeland Health Standards	/s/ Alan Bass	11/01/10
NI	Recreation	No impact to recreation resources or opportunities.	/s/Roxanne Tea	12/13/10
NI	Socio-Economics	LUP Allocations would not change	/s/ Cindy Ledbetter	9/14/2010
NI	Soils	No Impact to Soils would occur due to lack of road construction or grading	/s/ Dylan Tucker	11/01/10
NP	Threatened, Endangered, Candidate or Special Status Plant Species	Utah Special Status Plants are not located within this area	/s/Roddy Hardy	9/15/2010
PI	Threatened, Endangered, Candidate or Special Status Animal Species	Nesting golden eagles and other migratory birds and territories may be present. Site visit is warranted.	/s/ Traci Allen	9/28/2010
NP	Wastes (hazardous or solid)	Hazardous or solid wastes are will not be present to pose a hazardous risk to human health or the environment.	/s/ Tim Ingwell	9/18/2010
NP	Water Resources/Quality (drinking/surface/ground)	Resource not present in area	/s/ Alan Bass	10/13/10
NP	Wetlands/Riparian Zones	Resource not present in area	/s/ Alan Bass	10/13/10
NP	Wild and Scenic Rivers	Resource is not present in project area.	/s/ Ray Kelsey	10/5/10
NP	Wilderness/WSA	Resource is not present in project area.	/s/ Ray Kelsey	10/5/10
NI	Wildlife Excluding Special Status Species	No adverse affects anticipated at this time. Recommend a least a 6 foot fence to keep out big game from the area. Improved road could promote more big game hunting access.	/s/ Traci Allen	9/28/2010
NP	Woodland / Forestry	There are no tree species in this area which require protection.	/s/Verlyn Pindell	9/15/2010
NI	Vegetation Excluding Special Status Species	Removal of vegetation for tower constructions would be a short term minor impact given that what can be reseeded after is reseeded.	/s/ Alan Bass	11/01/10
PI	Visual Resources	Proposed project would be visible from and affect viewshed of Highway 199 and Clover Springs Campground, which is within VRM Class II area.	/s/ J. Pallette	12/13/10
NP	Wild Horses and Burros	Outside of HMA	/s/ Alan Bass	11/01/10
NP	Areas with Wilderness Characteristics**	Resource has not been identified or proposed in project area.	/s/ Ray Kelsey	10/5/10

Determi-nation	Resource	Rationale for Determination*	Signature	Date

FINAL REVIEW:

Reviewer Title	Signature	Date	Comments
Environmental Coordinator			
Authorized Officer			

APPENDIX D
THREATENED, ENDANGERED, AND SENSITIVE ANIMAL SPECIES AND OTHER WILDLIFE

1.0 Introduction

Verizon Wireless is proposing the installation of a new communications facility on a 3,600 square foot (0.083 acre) site in Tooele County, Utah (Site) (Attachment A – Figures 1 and 2). The Site is located on Johnson Pass which is located on land administered by the U.S. Bureau of Land Management (BLM). The dirt access road to the Site is located approximately 5 miles west of Clover, Utah on UT-199. The Site is located approximately 0.75 miles north and uphill of UT-199 on the east side of the dirt access road. The project would involve the installation of an equipment building, which would be approximately 12 feet by 26 feet, and a 300-foot steel lattice tower. The tower will not have guy wires.

2.0 Methods

Two URS environmental scientists conducted a foot survey of the Site on June 14, 2011. The weather was sunny and warm with a light northwest breeze. On February 3, 2012, one URS environmental scientist and one BLM biologist conducted another foot survey of the east area surrounding the Site specifically to evaluate potential raptor habitat. The weather was sunny and approximately 45 degrees Fahrenheit. The dirt access road is steep, narrow, deeply rutted, and rocky, so the scientists walked from UT-199 to the Site. The Site and a one-half mile buffer were walked and representative photographs were taken (Attachment B). Prior to the Site visit, the Utah Division of Wildlife Resources (DWR) was contacted and several existing resources were reviewed to identify the ecoregion, the soil types, the location of any potential wetlands and other waters, and wildlife that may inhabit the Site. These resources included:

- Ecoregions of Utah (Woods, et. al., 2001)
- Wildlife Gap Data (Attachment A - Figure 3) (DWR, 2001)
- The Natural Resources Conservation Services Web Soil Survey (USDA, 2010)
- National Wetlands Inventory (USFWS, 2011a)
- Federally Listed and Proposed Endangered, Threatened and Candidate Species and Critical Habitat in Utah (USFWS, 2011b)
- Special Status Species of the BLM SLFO Based on Occurrence and Habitats on BLM Land (BLM SLFO, 2011)

3.0 Resource Search Results

3.1 Ecoregion

The Site is located in the Rocky Woodland- and Shrub-Covered Low Mountains ecoregion. This ecoregion is characterized by a distinct vegetation mosaic of mountain brush in the higher elevations and woodland in the lower elevations. Juniper is typically found at lower elevations and pinyon at higher elevations with an intermixing at the middle elevations. Bitterbrush and western serviceberry are important browse for mule deer in this ecoregion (Woods et. al., 2001).

3.2 Wildlife

The Site is located in crucial spring/fall mule deer habitat (Figure 3). Crucial winter/spring mule deer habitat is located approximately 1 mile west and 1.25 miles northeast of the Site. Crucial winter mule deer habitat is located over 1 mile southwest of the Site (DWR, 2001).

3.3 Soil

The Web Soil Survey (NRCS, 2010) indicated that the Site lies within an area of the Lodar-Lundy-Rock outcrop association. This soil association occurs between 6,000 and 8,500 feet above mean sea level and receives a mean annual precipitation of 12 to 35 inches. Much of this soil association is covered with cobbles, stones, or boulders and the occurring soils are well drained with 10 to 20 inches depth to bedrock. There is generally no flooding or ponding occurrence with this soil association.

3.4 Wetlands and Waters of the U.S.

The Site is not mapped on the National Wetlands Inventory (NWI 2010).

3.5 Sensitive Plant and Wildlife Species

The DWR reported that there were no records of occurrence for any threatened, endangered, or sensitive species within the project area. However, in the vicinity there are recent records of occurrence of bonytail (*Gila elegans*) (aquatic species), kit fox (*Vulpes macrotis*) and Southern Bonneville springsnail (*Pyrgulopsis transversa*), and historical records of occurrence for Lyrate mountainsnail (*Oreohelix haydeni*) and Townsend's big-eared bat (*Corynorhinus townsendii*). All of these species are included on the *Utah Sensitive Species List*. The DWR correspondence is included in Attachment C.

The bonytail does not occur at the Site because there are no waterbodies that could support it. The kit fox prefers open prairie, plains, and desert (described below). The Southern Bonneville springsnail is endemic to the springs south of Footes Canyon, Simpson Mountains, Old River Bed, Tooele County, Utah, T 10S, R 8W, NW ¼ section of 33 (DWR 1998). The Lyrate mountainsnail prefers limestone talus protected from rapid evaporation by overhanging brush. Limestone talus slopes do not occur at the Site (DWR 2011).

The species listed as endangered, threatened, and candidate by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) or as a special status species by the BLM are listed on Table 1.

Table 1. Species Listed by USFWS or BLM occurring in Tooele County

Common Name	Scientific Name	Status	Listing Agency
Dark kangaroo mouse	*Microdipodops megacephalus*	SPC	BLM
Ferruginous hawk	*Buteo regalis*	SPC	BLM
Greater sage-grouse	*Centrocercus urophasianus*	C	BLM and USFWS
Kit fox	*Vulpes macrotis*	SPC	BLM
Lewis's woodpecker	*Melanerpes lewis*	SPC	BLM
Long-billed curlew	*Numenius americanus*	SPC	BLM
Northern goshawk	*Accipiter gentilis*	SPC	BLM
Preble's shrew	*Sorex preblei*	SPC	BLM
Pygmy rabbit	*Brachylagus idahoensis*	SPC	BLM
Short-eared owl	*Asio flammeus*	SPC	BLM
Townsend's big-eared bat	*Corynorhinus townsendii*	SPC	BLM
Ute ladies'-tresses	*Spiranthes diluvialis*	T	USFWS
Western yellow-billed cuckoo	*Coccyzus americanus occidentalis*	C	USFWS

SPC = Utah Species of Concern, BLM Sensitive Species, C = Federal Candidate Species (Candidate species have no legal protection under the Endangered Species Act. However, these species are under active consideration by USFWS for addition to the Federal List of Endangered and Threatened Species and may be proposed or listed during the development of the proposed project.) T = Threatened (A classification provided to an animal or plant likely to become endangered within the foreseeable future throughout all or a significant portion of its range). Note: aquatic species were not included in Table 1 because there are not any bodies of water on the Site that would support aquatic species.

Dark kangaroo mouse

Dark kangaroo mice occur primarily in the Great Basin ecoregion in shadscale- and sage-dominated saline basins. It would be unlikely to occur at the Site because it is not located within a shadscale- and sage- dominated saline basin (DWR 2011).

Ferruginous hawk

Ferruginous hawks winter primarily in grasslands and shrub steppes and they require flat and rolling terrain in grassland or shrub steppe for breeding. They avoid high elevations, but can be found at the periphery of pinyon-juniper forests. Because of their preference for elevated nest sites, they will nest on cliffs (DWR 2011). It is unlikely that they would occur at the Site because the Site is not adjacent to flat open hunting grounds.

Greater sage-grouse

Greater sage-grouse inhabit sagebrush plains, foothills, and mountain valleys. Sagebrush is the predominant plant of quality habitat (DWR 2011). Since sagebrush is not a dominant plant species at the Site, it is not quality greater sage-grouse habitat.

Kit fox

Kit foxes primarily occur in open prairie, plains, and desert habitats (DWR 2011). They are unlikely to occur at the Site because it is not located within an open prairie, plain, or desert habitat.

Lewis's woodpecker
Lewis's woodpeckers are cavity nesters that prefer to nest in ponderosa pine, cottonwood, or sycamore. No ponderosa pines, cottonwoods, or sycamores were observed during the Site visits.

Long-billed curlew
Long-billed curlews are shorebirds (DWR 2011). They would not occur at the Site because it is not located near a shore.

Northern goshawk
Northern goshawks prefer mature mountain forest and riparian zone habitats. They construct their nests in mature trees. They typically build their nests at the tops of old growth forests where they feel protected against predators (DWR 2011). It is unlikely that northern goshawks would nest at the Site because the junipers are not a preferred nesting tree.

Preble's shrew
The known range of Preble's shrew is only the southern shore of the Great Salt Lake (DWR 2011). It is unlikely to occur at the Site because there is an absence of wetlands.

Pygmy rabbit
Pygmy rabbits prefer tall dense sagebrush with deep and loose soil (DWR 2011). They are unlikely to occur at the Site because there is not a dense stand of sagebrush and the soils are gravelly and shallow.

Short-eared owl
Short-eared owls are ground-nesters and they prefer open habitats (DWR 2011). They would be unlikely to occur at the Site because it is within dense stands of small trees and large shrubs.

Townsend's big-eared bat
Townsend's big-eared bats occur statewide in Utah. They can be found in mines, caves, and structures in forests below 9,000 feet in elevation (DWR 2011).

Ute ladies'-tresses
Ute ladies'-tresses occur within wetland areas (DWR 2011). It is unlikely to occur at the Site because there is an absence of wetlands.

Western yellow-billed cuckoo
Western yellow-billed cuckoos prefer lowland riparian habitats (DWR 2011). They are unlikely to occur at the Site because there are not any riparian areas on or adjacent to the Site.

4.0 Field Survey Results

4.1 Site Description

The Site is located on Johnson Pass. Johnson Pass lies at the south end of the Stansbury mountains on the west side of Rush Valley. The Site is located approximately 5 miles west of Clover, Utah and approximately 0.75 miles north of UT-199. There is a dirt access road on the

north side of UT-199 that can be walked directly to the Site. The dirt access road is steep and narrow with deep ruts and large boulders.

The Site elevation is approximately 6,500 feet above mean sea level. It is in a low-mountain juniper forest with large shrubs, wildflowers, grasses, and limestone outcrops. It is at the top of a limestone cliff that falls away to the east.

4.2 Vegetation

The Site vegetation consists of small trees and tall shrubs including one-seed juniper (Juniperus monosperma), bitterbrush (Purshia tridentata), and Utah serviceberry (Amelanchier utahensis). Wildflowers, grasses, prickly pear, sage, and thistle are also present on the Site. The Site appears to be relatively undisturbed and dominated by native plant species. Vegetation species observed during the Site visit are listed on Table 2.

Table 2. Vegetation at Johnson Pass, June 2011

Common Name	Scientific Name	Common Name	Scientific Name
Arrowleaf balsam root	*Balsamorhiza sagittata*	Long-leaf phlox	*Phlox longifolia*
Big mountain sage	*Artemisia tridentata*	Narrowleaf paintbrush	*Castilleja chromosa*
Bitterbrush	*Purshia tridentata*	One-seed juniper	*Juniperus monosperma*
Bulbous bluegrass	*Poa bulbosa*	Prickly pear	*Opuntia* sp.
Common larkspur	*Delphinium nuttallianum*	Steppe sweetpea	*Lathyrus pauciflorus*
Crested wheatgrass	*Agropyron cristatum*	Utah serviceberry	*Amelanchier utahensis*
Desert evening primrose	*Oenothera caespitosa*	Wavyleaf thistle	*Cirsium undulatum*
False dandelion	*Agoseris glauca*	Western wheatgrass	*Pascoyrum smithii*
Grey desert parsley	*Lomatium grayi*	Woolly-pod locoweed	*Astragulus purshii*
Groundsel	*Senecio* sp.		

4.3 Wildlife

Coyote (*Canus latrans*) scat was observed on the dirt access road and several song birds were heard during the June 14, 2011 Site visit. The trees on the Site and to the north, south, and west of the site were observed for signs of raptor nests, but no nests were observed. The dominant tree species is the one-seed juniper. These trees are very similar in height. There are not taller trees that would allow for a nest location with a good vantage point of the surrounding area. Raptors generally prefer to nest in locations with good visibility of the surrounding areas. No nests were observed. No other signs of wildlife or bird nests were observed during the June 14, 2011 foot survey.

On February 3, 2012 the area to the east and below the Site were observed and evaluated for potential raptor habitat. The east area surrounding the Site consists of moderately dense stands of one-seed juniper with some open areas and rocky limestone outcrops. The trees and rocky outcrops were observed using binoculars. The trees were searched for signs of nests. A concentration was placed on those trees surrounding open areas which would provide a vantage point which is favorable for nesting birds. The rocky outcrops were not large enough to favorably support most cliff dwelling raptors. No nests were observed.

During the February 3, 2012 foot survey common ravens (*Corvus corax*) and a juniper titmouse (*Baeolophus griseus*) were observed. There were also wildlife tracks in the snow. The species creating these tracks were not positively identified, but it is likely that one set of tracks were from a coyote and another from a bobcat (*Felis rufus*)

One night of bat capture and one week of acoustic monitoring for bats was conducted near the Site in both the summer (July) and fall (September) of 2011. A total of 11 bat species were identified near the project area. Four of these species were identified during capture surveys, and all 11 were recorded acoustically. Of the species recorded near the project area, common bat species made up the majority of recorded activity. The species with the highest overall activity was the Western long-eared bat. This species was also captured in both the spring and the fall capture surveys. One Species of Concern, Townsend's big-eared bat, was recorded acoustically near the project area, and made up approximately three percent of all recorded activity (Attachment D – Verizon Johnson Pass Bat Inventory).

5.0 Conclusions/Recommendations

An ecological field survey was conducted on the proposed Verizon Johnson Pass Communication Tower Installation Site in Tooele County, Utah on June 14, 2011 and February 3, 2012. The Site is located on BLM land managed by the Salt Lake Field Office. Environmental scientists walked the dirt access road, the Site, and a 0.5-mile Site buffer. The Site resides in a low-mountain juniper forest. The overstory is dominated by one-seed juniper, bitterbrush, and Utah service berry. The understory consists of a variety of wildflowers and grasses with prickly pear. The only signs of wildlife observed during the field surveys were coyote scat on the dirt access road, the sound of various unidentified song birds, ravens, a juniper titmouse, and possible tracks of coyote and bobcat. Wetlands and Other Waters of the U.S. were not observed at the Site.

Bat surveys were conducted by SWCA in July and September of 2011. A total of 11 bat species were identified near the Site. A majority of the identified bats are common bat species with the highest overall activity being of the Western long-eared bat. One Species of Concern, Townsend's big-eared bat, was recorded acoustically near the Site, and made up approximately three percent of all recorded activity.

All necessary environmental clearances should be obtained including a BLM Environmental Assessment. If construction is to be conducted during the nesting season in central Utah (approximately mid-April through mid-July) it is recommended that an avian survey be conducted again within 72 hours prior to the beginning of construction activities. This would help to ensure compliance with the Migratory Bird Treaty Act (MBTA) which forbids the take of any migratory birds, their eggs, feathers or nests. Take is defined in the MBTA to include hunting, harassing, pursuing, wounding, killing, possessing or transporting any migratory bird, nest, egg, or part thereof. During this pre-construction survey the Site could also be observed for signs of small mammals that may inhabit crevices created by the limestone outcrops on the Site.

6.0 Literature Cited

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APPENDIX E
VISUAL ASSESSMENT

VERIZON SAL JOHNSON: RESULTS OF A VISUAL ASSESSMENT OF A PROPOSED CELL PHONE TOWER PAD AND ACCESS ROAD, TOOELE COUNTY, UTAH

Prepared for:
Verizon Wireless
9696 South Prosperity Road
West Jordan, Utah 84088

Written By:
Joshua H. McNutt, M.A
Senior Staff Archaeologist

URS Corporation
8181 E. Tufts Avenue
Denver, Colorado 80237

December, 2011

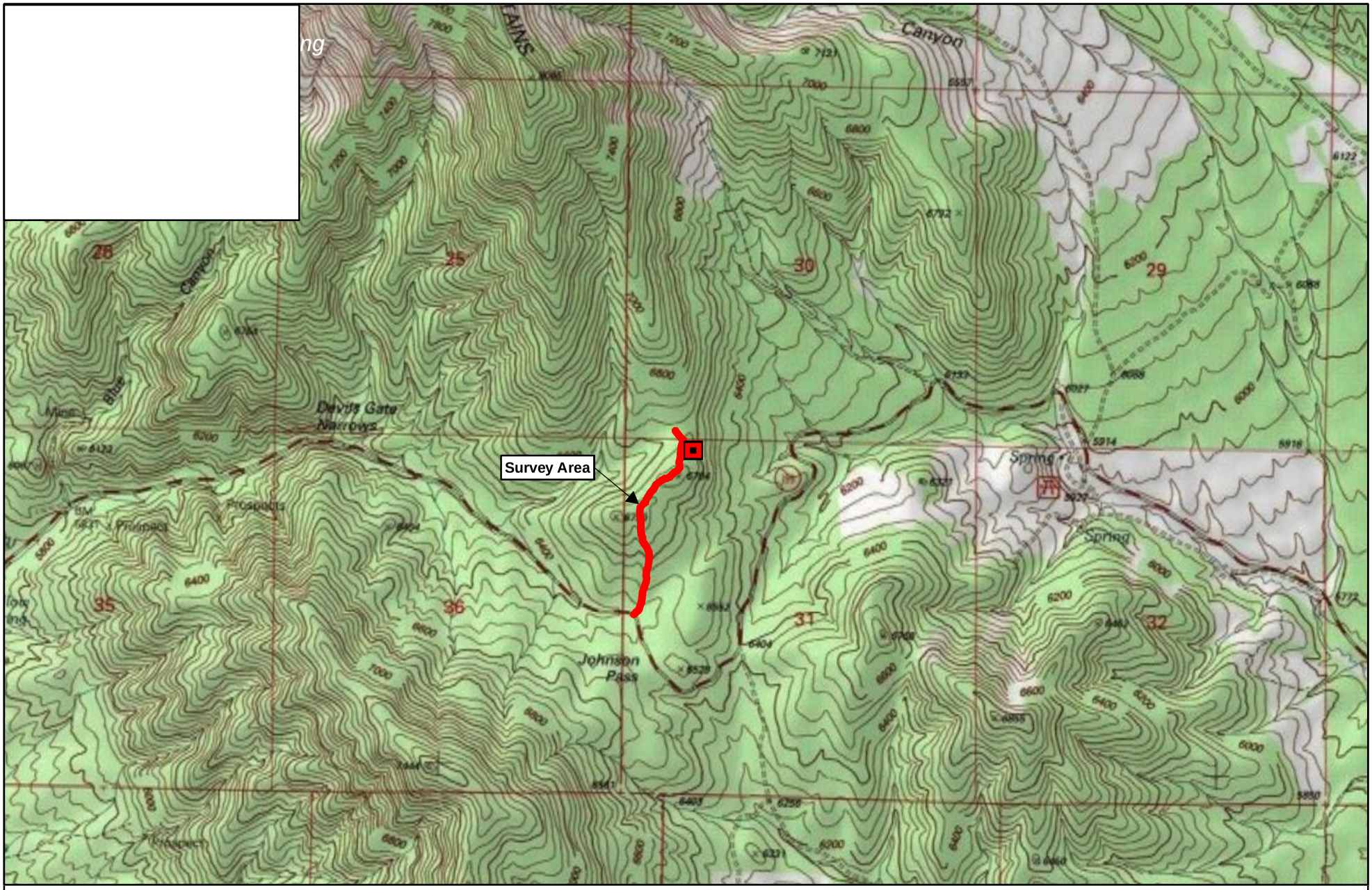
1.1 Introduction

In May 2011, the URS Corporation (URS) conducted a Class III cultural resources inventory of the Sal Johnson Cell Tower pad and access road for the project proponent Verizon Wireless (Verizon). The proposed tower location is situated on a prominent ridge line that extends south from the steep foothills of the Stansbury Range to the northern extent of the Onaqui Range. This ridge is crossed east-to-west by State Highway (SH) 199 at Johnson Pass, which is located 0.56 mile (mi) south of the proposed project location. The project area is located approximately seven miles west of the town of Clover. The proposed pad is located on public lands administered by the Bureau of Land Management (BLM), Salt Lake Field Office (SLFO) (Figure 1). The project area is located within Tooele County, Utah. The project Area of Potential Effects (APE) is entirely within Section 31 of Township 5 South, Range 6 West (Salt Lake P.M.) on the U.S.G.S. Johnson Pass (1985) 7.5' quadrangle topographic map.

The inventory was conducted under the conditions of Utah State BLM permit 11UT85059 Gordon C. Tucker Jr., Ph.D. is the Principal Investigators for the project. Joshua McNutt conducted the field inventory and wrote the report. Dr. Tucker reviewed the document for accuracy and completeness.

1.2 Project Description

The Project area consists of an approximate seven acre area containing a 0.08 acre (60-foot (ft) by 60-ft) pad and a 0.56 mi long access road. The pad that will encompass a prefabricated equipment shelter, an ice bridge, a utility rack, and a 100-ft high steel lattice tower supported by a 30-ft by 30-ft underground concrete foundation. The 0.56 mi (6.8 acres inventoried) long access road is designed to follow an existing two-track road that begins at Highway 199 approximately 600 ft east of the Johnson Pass turn-out. This two-track road appears to have been built as an access road for the Utah Power & Light Dugway Powerline that passes northeast-to-southwest approximately 200 ft north of the pad location. This two-track road will be widened and graded to 12-ft wide along its length between SH 199 and the pad location. The two portions of the project area combined resulted in an inventoried area of approximately 7 acres.



0 2,000 4,000 Feet

Scale: 1:24,000 (1" equals 2,000 ft)
Horizontal Projection: NAD83 UTM Zone 12N
Basemap: USGS 7.5' Topographic Quagrangles
Johnson Pass (1985)

URS Nov 22, 2011

N
W E
S

Project Location Map

Verizon Wireless
SAL Johnson
Township 5S Range 6W Section 31
Rush Valley, Utah

2.1 Natural Environment

The project area is located at the southern terminus of the Stansbury Range at its divide with the Onaqui Range at Johnson Pass. Johnson Pass marks the divide of the drainages leaving this range of mountains. Drainages flowing east enter the Skull Valley, while west-trending drainages enter the Rush Valley. The project area overlooks the headwaters of Clover Creek to the east and the upper tributaries of the Devils Gate Narrows to the west. The topography surrounding the project area consists mainly of steep mountain and ridge slopes with small more gently sloped drainage bottoms and canyon floors (Figure 2). The project APE ranges between 6,464 ft and 6,700 ft in elevation.

Figure 2. Overview of the project APE facing north towards Vickory Mountain and the Stansbury Range Mountains.

The project area falls within the Woodland and Shrub-Covered Low Mountains ecoregion (Woods et al. 2001). This region is described as unglaciated, low, rocky fault block mountains, ridges, slopes, foothills, and alluvial fans with some ephemeral streams. This ecoregion does not commonly have reliable water sources; however, the project is in the general area of several springs, the most prominent of which is Clover Spring, located one mi east of the project APE, which supports year round water flow. Geology of the project area is dominated by fine-grained Quaternary black basalt bedrock with veins of white quartz. This formation outcrops along the entire ridgeline and is exposed throughout the entire access road route and pad area. Soil deposition in the project area is very minimal and consists of a thin, primarily residual loam, composed of decomposed organic matter overlying freeze-fractured bedrock cobbles and outcrops. Vegetation is dominated by dense juniper-pinyon woodland with a relatively dense understory of mountain mahogany, cliffrose, western serviceberry, big sagebrush, black sagebrush, rabbitbrush, prickly pear cactus, wheatgrass, fescue, cheatgrass, Indian paintbrush, globe mallow, desert parsley, and balsamroot.

3.1 Visual Impact Assessment

A visual impact assessment of the proposed tower was conducted on May, 18 and 19 2011, This was further assisted by the creation of photo simulation pictures of the proposed project area from several Key Observation Points (KOPs). The tower is a potential visual impact to the Lincoln Highway. SH 199 is the original course of this historic road. The Lincoln highway is an NRHP eligible site based primarily on the relative integrity of its setting. This segment of the road is particularly significant as it follows it originally designed course of the historic highway. A URS archaeologist assessed the potential impact of the tower by rating the proposed tower's visual impacts based on the integrity of the exiting viewshed and any existing impacts in the area and several KOPs along the route of the highway.

4.1 Conclusions

The visual impact assessment found the proposed tower to have minor impact to the visual setting of the Lincoln Highway segment located south, west, and east of the project area. The URS archaeologist, in consultation with the BLM SLFO, identified the area of the proposed tower as being within a Class IV Objective Visual Resource Management Area (VRM) (Personal Communication 2011). This type of VRM area allows for development of major modifications of the existing landscape. The development activity may be dominate in the view and if necessary the focus of the viewer (BLM 1986).

The proposed tower will be 100' high, extending above the natural tree line on the proposed ridgeline. The current view of the project area from the east is already impacted by the presence of several large high tension power lines and vertical poles. The view is also impacted by horizontal lines caused by ongoing re-vegetation of burn areas directly below the project area (Figure 4.1-1 and Appendix A).

Figure 4.1-1
View from east of proposed tower location along SH 199. Note the power line on right end of the ridgeline and the cleared vegetation area behind the trees in the foreground.

When viewed from the west, from a vantage point along SH 199, the proposed tower extends only slightly above the existing tree line (Appendix A). The proposed tower would not be visible from a vantage point at the Johnson Pass pull out or information sign, south of the proposed location, as it would be obscured by a high point in the ridgeline (Figure 4.1-2).

Figure 4.1-2
View north from the Johnson Pass SH 199 pullout. The proposed tower would be obscured by the ridgeline in the center of the photo.

As shown in the above photos and photo simulations located in Appendix A, the proposed tower will have a weak visual contrast in relation to the existing visual environment. This level of modification to the landscape is within an acceptable level of a Class IV Objective VRM area. URS recommends Verizon further minimize the level of impact by painting the tower with a non-reflective paint that does not contrast with the surrounding landscape color.

5.1 References Cited

Bureau of Land Management (BLM)
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Franzwa, Gregory M. and Jesse G. Peterson
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2001 Ecoregions of Utah. U.S. Geological Survey, Reston, Virginia. Online document http://www.epa.gov/wed/pages/ecoregions/ut_eco.htm#Please%20note: . Accessed June 12, 2012.

APPENDIX A

PHOTO SIMULATIONS

EXISTING SITE

PHOTOSIM AERIAL MAP

PROPOSED VERIZON WIRELESS 100' LATTICE TOWER
Looking west toward site from Big Hollow Road (2.39 miles)

Technology Associates
9847 SOUTH 500 WEST
SANDY, UT 84070
(801) 463-1020

SAL JOHNSON
PHOTO SIMULATION

verizonwireless

EXISTING SITE

PHOTOSIM AERIAL MAP

PROPOSED VERIZON WIRELESS 100' LATTICE TOWER
Looking west toward site from Clover Springs Campground (0.87 miles)

Technology Associates
9847 SOUTH 500 WEST
SANDY, UT 84070
(801) 463-1020

SAL JOHNSON
PHOTO SIMULATION

verizonwireless

EXISTING SITE

PHOTOSIM AERIAL MAP

PROPOSED VERIZON WIRELESS 100' LATTICE TOWER
Looking west toward site from Johnson Pass (.68 miles)

Technology Associates
9847 SOUTH 500 WEST
SANDY, UT 84070
(801) 463-1020

SAL JOHNSON
PHOTO SIMULATION

verizonwireless

EXISTING SITE

PHOTOSIM AERIAL MAP

PROPOSED VERIZON WIRELESS 100' LATTICE TOWER
Looking east toward site from Johnson Pass (.61 miles)

Technology Associates
9847 SOUTH 500 WEST
SANDY, UT 84070
(801) 463-1020

SAL JOHNSON
PHOTO SIMULATION

APPENDIX B

KEY OBSERVATION POINTS

Form 8400-4
(September 1985)

UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT

VISUAL CONTRAST RATING WORKSHEET

Date: **4/20/11**

District: **Salt Lake Field Office**

Resource Area:

Activity (program):

SECTION A. PROJECT INFORMATION

1. Project Name: **Verizon SAL Johnson**

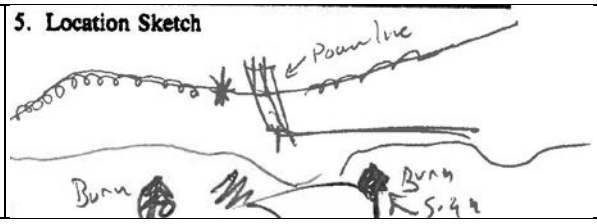
2. Key Observation Point **#1**

3. VRM Class: **IV**

4. Location

Township 5S
Range 6W
Section 30

5. Location Sketch



SECTION B. CHARACTERISTIC LANDSCAPE DESCRIPTION

	1. LAND/WATER	2. VEGETATION	3. STRUCTURES
FORM	Rolling	Conical	Vertical
LINE	Jagged angled	Irregular vertical, horizontal	Rolling smooth
COLOR	Green/Brown/Green	Brown/Green	Brown/Yellow
TEX-TURE	Smooth	Rough/Broken	Smooth

SECTION C. PROPOSED ACTIVITY DESCRIPTION

FORM	N/A	N/A	Straight
LINE	N/A	N/A	Vertical
COLOR	N/A	N/A	Neutral
TEX-TURE	N/A	N/A	Smoth

SECTION D. CONTRAST RATING ☐ SHORT TERM ☒ LONG TERM

1. DEGREE OF CONTRAST

		FEATURES											
		LAND/WATER BODY (1)				VEGETATION (2)				STRUCTURES (3)			
		Strong	Moderate	Weak	None	Strong	Moderate	Weak	None	Strong	Moderate	Weak	None
ELEMENTS	Form				X				X			X	
	Line				X				X			X	
	Color				X				X			X	
	Texture				X				X			X	

2. Does project design meet visual resource management objectives? ☒ Yes ☐ No (Explain on reverse side)

3. Additional mitigating measures recommended ☐ Yes ☒ No (Explain on reverse side)

Evaluator's Names: Josh McNutt
Date: 4/20/11

Form 8400-4
(September 1985)

UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT

VISUAL CONTRAST RATING WORKSHEET

Date **4/20/11**

District: **Salt Lake Field Office**

Resource Area

Activity (program)

SECTION A. PROJECT INFORMATION

1. Project Name: **Verizon SAL Johnson**

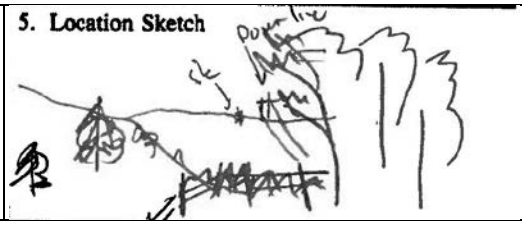
2. Key Observation Point **#2**

3. VRM Class: **IV**

4. Location

Township 5S
Range 6W
Section 32

5. Location Sketch



SECTION B. CHARACTERISTIC LANDSCAPE DESCRIPTION

	1. LAND/WATER	2. VEGETATION	3. STRUCTURES
FORM	Rough/Irregular	Irregular	Angular/Vertical
LINE	Rough	Rounded/rough	Straight/angular
COLOR	Green	Green/brown	White/Green
TEX-TURE	Rough	Rough/Irregular	Smooth

SECTION C. PROPOSED ACTIVITY DESCRIPTION

FORM	---	---	Line
LINE	---	---	Vertical
COLOR	---	---	---
TEX-TURE	---	---	Smooth

SECTION D. CONTRAST RATING ☐ SHORT TERM ☒ LONG TERM

1. DEGREE OF CONTRAST		FEATURES: LAND/WATER BODY (1)				VEGETATION (2)				STRUCTURES (3)			
		Strong	Moderate	Weak	None	Strong	Moderate	Weak	None	Strong	Moderate	Weak	None
ELEMENTS	Form				X				X			X	
	Line				X				X			X	
	Color				X				X			X	
	Texture				X				X			X	

2. Does project design meet visual resource management objectives? ☒ Yes ☐ No (Explain on reverse side)

3. Additional mitigating measures recommended ☐ Yes ☒ No (Explain on reverse side)

Evaluator's Names :Josh McNutt
Date: 4/20/11

Form 8400-4
(September 1985)

UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT

VISUAL CONTRAST RATING WORKSHEET

Date 4/20/11

District Salt Lake Field Office

Resource Area

Activity (program)

SECTION A. PROJECT INFORMATION

1. Project Name: Verizon Sal Johnson

2. Key Observation Point: #3

3. VRM Class: IV

4. Location

Township 5S
Range 6W
Section 31

5. Location Sketch:

Corresponds to photo facing north from Johnson Pass pullout.

SECTION B. CHARACTERISTIC LANDSCAPE DESCRIPTION

	1. LAND/WATER	2. VEGETATION	3. STRUCTURES
FORM	Irregular	Irregular/Rolling	Regular/ angular
LINE	Angled	Rolling	Vertical/Smooth
COLOR	Green/Brown/Gray	Gray/ Green	Black, Reflective
TEX-TURE	Rough	Rough	Smooth

SECTION C. PROPOSED ACTIVITY DESCRIPTION

FORM	N/A	N/A	Regular/obscured
LINE	N/A	N/A	Vertical/obscured
COLOR	N/A	N/A	Obscured
TEX-TURE	N/A	N/A	Obscured

SECTION D. CONTRAST RATING ☐ SHORT TERM ☒ LONG TERM

1. DEGREE OF CONTRAST

	FEATURES											
	LAND/WATER BODY (1)				VEGETATION (2)				STRUCTURES (3)			
	Strong	Moderate	Weak	None	Strong	Moderate	Weak	None	Strong	Moderate	Weak	None
ELEMENTS: Form				X				X				X
ELEMENTS: Line				X				X				X
ELEMENTS: Color				X				X				X
ELEMENTS: Texture				X				X				X

2. Does project design meet visual resource management objectives? ☒ Yes ☐ No (Explain on reverse side)

3. Additional mitigating measures recommended ☐ Yes ☒ No (Explain on reverse side)

Evaluator's Names: Josh McNutt
Date: 4/20/11