

## PROJECT MEMORANDUM

### SISKIYOU TELEPHONE CO. HAPPY CAMP TO SOMES BAR FIBER CONNECTIVITY PROJECT

**To:** Connie Chen, Project Manager, CPUC  
**From:** Vida Strong, Aspen Project Manager  
**Date:** April 15, 2019  
**Subject:** Monitoring Report #1 – March 11, 2019 to April 7, 2019

This report provides a summary of the construction and compliance activities associated with the Siskiyou Telephone Co. Happy Camp to Somes Bar Fiber Connectivity Project for the installation of a fiber optics line along Highway 96 in the Klamath National Forest (see Exhibit A).

A summary of the Notices to Proceed (NTP) for construction is provided in Table 1 below.

**CPUC Environmental Monitor (EM):** Jody Fessler was on site March 19 and April 3.

## Phase I

NTP #1 was issued on February 20, 2019 for Phase 1 of the Happy Camp to Somes Bar Fiber Connectivity Project (Project). Under this NTP, Siskiyou Telephone received CPUC authorization to proceed with the construction and installation of a new fiber optic broadband facility cable within or adjacent to State Highway 96 (Caltrans right-of-way) in the Klamath National Forest from mile post (MP) 32.41 south to MP 24.0. NTP #1 included conditions that had to be satisfied prior to the start of construction. Additional NTP(s) will be required for the remainder of the Project.

### Summary of Activity:

#### ***Week of March 11-17, 2019***

Between March 12 and 15, 2019, Siskiyou Telephone's biologists (CH2M Hill/Jacobs) conducted pre-construction surveys for an eight-mile portion of the Project from MP 32.2 to MP 24.0 (Phase I). The objective of the surveys was to perform nesting bird surveys and identify environmentally sensitive areas within the Project area. Potential wetland features were identified using vegetation and hydrology, and were staked/flagged with orange/green lath. Three-foot flagged stakes were used at the beginning and end points of a wetland area, as well as intermittent staking/flagging at intervals between 25 and 50 feet. Two mapped potential wetlands along Highway 96 at MP 32.12 and MP 29.25-29.0 contained Pacific tree frog (*Pseudoacris regilla*) tadpoles, a non-sensitive species. Habitat for sensitive species, including Del Norte salamander (*Plethodon elongatus*) and foothill yellow-legged frog (*Rana boylei*), also occurs adjacent to the Project area. Nests were inspected and bird behavior observed. Three large nests were observed within the survey area and monitored each day of the surveys. No birds were observed at any of the nests. Bird species observed during the surveys included red-tailed hawk (*Buteo jamaicensis*), double-crested cormorant (*Phalacrocorax auritus*), mountain bluebird (*Sialia currucoides*), American robin (*Turdus migratorius*), common raven (*Corvus corax*), California quail (*Callipepla californica*), California scrub jay (*Aphelocoma californica*), Steller's jay (*Cyanocitta stelleri*), Canada goose (*Branta canadensis*), and turkey vulture (*Cathartes aura*). Six previously mapped and permitted California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) jurisdictional features occur along the Project area, including Wyman Gulch, and were staked/flagged in the field. Approximately 20 additional ephemeral, intermittent, and perennial waterways that were previously unmapped were located, mapped, and staked/flagged as environmentally sensitive areas. Other animal species observed included California mule deer (*Odocoileus hemionus californicus*), western

gray squirrel (*Sciurus griseus*), and elk (*Cervus canadensis*) sign. The biological survey report was submitted to the CPUC for review and approval on March 17, 2019.

### **Week of March 18-24, 2019**

Construction activities began on March 18, 2019. The Project Worker Environmental Awareness Training (WEAT) was conducted by the Siskiyou Telephone Environmental Inspector (EI) in the morning prior to the start of construction.

Construction during the week occurred between MP 32.5 (south of Clear Creek) and MP 31.2. No work occurred on Friday, March 22nd, due to rain. All traffic controls were in place prior to the start of construction. All sensitive habitat and potential wetland areas were well marked and pointed out/discussed with the construction foreman prior to equipment placement. All equipment, with exception of the horizontal directional drilling (HDD) units, were staged within the road during work hours. HDD equipment were placed within the shoulder of the road, outside of all sensitive habitat and wetland areas. No drilling occurred under culverts or drainages.

Biological surveys were conducted daily, and historic nests monitored for activity. No active nests were observed.

The CPUC Environmental Monitor (EM) conducted a site visit on March 19th and reviewed all of the wetland and environmentally sensitive area staking/flagging along Phase I of the Project (see Figure 1). The CPUC EM monitored a crew that was drilling from MP 32.24 south to MP 32.21, and another crew that was pulling conduit south from MP 32.21 to MP 32.18 (see Figures 2 and 3). Each drill crew had the required spill containment materials and a vac-truck (see Figure 3). Traffic controls and a pilot vehicle were set up at each drill site along Highway 96. Historic nests were observed at MP 31.7, MP 29.9, MP 29.16, and MP 28.1. No birds were observed on the nests; however, an osprey (*Pandion haliaetus*) was near the nest at MP 28.1. Other special-status birds observed included two bald eagles (*Haliaeetus leucocephalus*) and a golden eagle (*Aquila chrysaetos*).

### **Week of March 25-31, 2019**

Construction during the week occurred between MP 32.12 and MP 31.45. No work took place on Monday, March 25th, and Wednesday, March 27th, due to heavy rains. All traffic controls were in place prior to the start of construction. All sensitive habitat and potential wetland areas were well marked and pointed out/discussed with the construction foreman prior to equipment placement. All equipment, with exception of the horizontal directional drilling (HDD) units, were staged within the road during work hours. HDD equipment were placed within the shoulder of the road, outside of all sensitive habitat and wetland areas.

On March 26th, the CPUC EM was informed that there was a frac-out at MP 31.79 that spilled some drilling slurry into a portion of a wetland (see Figure 4). The drill was going under and along the roadway approximately 15 feet from the wetland where the frac-out occurred. The wetland feature had some flowing water from the recent rain and the drill slurry extended approximately 40 feet downstream before it was contained using sandbags and a vac-truck. The frac-out occurred at approximately 11:15 am and was cleaned up by 1:00 pm. The Siskiyou Telephone EI stayed on site to ensure the clean-up started as quickly as possible and monitored the progress.

On March 28th, the CPUC EM was informed that there was a frac-out at MP 31.51 and bentonite slurry was observed coming out of a culvert outfall into some blackberry bushes. Drilling stopped, a pit was excavated, and the slurry vacuumed up (see Figure 5). Slurry dissipated at the outfall and clear water was observed. No wetlands or sensitive habitat was impacted. The Siskiyou Telephone EI monitored the clean-up and various points downstream to the river and saw slurry only within 30 feet of the outfall. From there to the river was approximately 100 feet and was clear. HDD operators were instructed to drill deeper than 15 feet from now on to prevent any more frac-outs.

Biological surveys were conducted daily, and historic nests monitored for activity. No active nests were observed. Special-status species observed during the week included bald eagle, golden eagle, osprey, red-tailed hawk, and yellow warbler (*Setophaga petechia*).

**Week of April 1-7, 2019**

Construction during the week occurred between MP 28.6 and MP 27.8. All traffic controls were in place prior to the start of construction. All sensitive habitat and potential wetland areas were well marked and pointed out/discussed with the construction foreman prior to equipment placement. All equipment, with exception of the horizontal directional drilling (HDD) units, were staged within the road during work hours. HDD equipment were placed within the shoulder of the road, outside of all sensitive habitat and wetland areas. No drilling occurred under permitted jurisdictional features. No frac-outs occurred during the week or any other HDD issues. The Siskiyou Telephone EI noted that all necessary BMPs were in place.

Biological surveys were conducted daily, and historic nests monitored for activity. No nesting birds were observed within the current work area. Special-status species observed during the week included bald eagle and osprey.

The CPUC Environmental Monitor (EM) conducted a site visit on April 3rd and met with Siskiyou Telephone’s EI in the field. The CPUC EM monitored a crew that was drilling from MP 28.5 south (see Figure 6), and another crew that was drilling at MP 27.93 north. Each drill crew had the required spill containment materials and a vac-truck. The CPUC EM inspected the area where a frac-out occurred the previous week at MP 31.51 and noted that the area had been cleaned-up and recontoured (see Figure 7). Traffic controls and a pilot vehicle were set up at each drill site along Highway 96. The historic nest was observed at MP 29.9 and was not active. No special-status species were observed during the site visit, except possibly an osprey.

**Environmental Compliance:**

1. Siskiyou Telephone’s EI conducted monitoring and inspections each day of construction activities. Sensitive habitat and wetland areas were checked while inspecting the sites. Ongoing surveys for special-status species and nesting birds were also performed. No nesting birds were observed.
2. On March 26th and 28th, frac-outs occurred during HDD operations and were contained and cleaned-up according to the Siskiyou Frac-out Plan and Spill Prevention and Response Program. The CPUC EM inspected the frac-out area that occurred on March 28th and noted that the area had been cleaned-up and recontoured. Siskiyou Telephone informed CDFW of the frac-out on March 29th.
3. The CPUC EM noted that the sites were neat and clean, and that SWPPP measures were in place. The sensitive habitat and wetland areas were staked/flagged. Traffic control signs were setup along Highway 96 with flaggers in place, and pilot cars escorted vehicles through the work areas. The site was in compliance with mitigation measures, Applicant Proposed Measures, and other permit requirements.

**Notices to Proceed**

Table 1 summarizes the Notices to Proceed (NTP) for the Siskiyou Telephone Project.

**Table 1**  
**Notice to Proceeds (NTPs)**  
(Updated 4/15/19)

NTP #	Date Requested	Date Issued	Phase	Description
NTP #1	2/08/19	2/20/19	Phase I	Construction and installation of a new fiber optic broadband facility cable within or adjacent to State Highway 96 (Caltrans right-of-way) in the Klamath National Forest from MP 32.41 south to MP 24.0

## **Minor Project Changes (MPCs)**

None at this time.

## PROJECT PHOTOS



Figure 1 – Wetland staking/flagging installed along Hwy 96 – view north, March 19, 2019.



Figure 2 – HDD operations set-up on Hwy 96 – view north, March 19, 2019.



Figure 3 – HDD pulling cable – view south, March 19, 2019.



Figure 4 – Frac-out at MP 31.79 – view northwest, March 26, 2019. Photo courtesy of Siskiyou Telephone.



Figure 5 – Frac-out at MP 31.51 – view south, March 28, 2019.  
Photo courtesy of Siskiyou Telephone.



Figure 6 – Drilling south at MP 28.5 – view north, April 3, 2019.



Figure 7 – Area where frac-out occurred at MP 31.51 on March 28th – view south, April 3, 2019.