

PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION505 VAN NESS AVENUE
SAN FRANCISCO, CA 94102-3298**MITIGATED NEGATIVE DECLARATION****Crown Castle NG West Inc. (Crown Castle)
Permit to Construct
A.13-02-007
SAN MATEO COUNTY PROJECT****INTRODUCTION**

Crown Castle NG West Inc., ~~formerly NextG Networks of California Inc.~~ (Crown Castle or the Applicant) filed an application (13-02-007) which included a Proponent's Environmental Assessment (PEA) and required fee pursuant to Rules 2.4 and 2.5 of the California Public Utilities Commissions (CPUC) Rule of Practice and Procedure with the CPUC for an Authority to Construct and for Deviation from Public Utilities Code Section 320 for the San Mateo County Project (proposed project). On September 6, 2013, the Applicant filed an amended application and an updated PEA to reflect proposed changes for the original filing. Accordingly, the amended application and PEA describes the proposed project.

Under the CPUC's Rules, approval of the proposed project must comply with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), including assessment of the potential environmental impacts of the proposed project. This ~~Mitigated~~ Negative Declaration has been prepared based upon the assessment of the potential environmental impacts outline in the attached Initial Study.

Pursuant to CEQA (California Public Resources Code, Section 21000 et seq.), the CPUC must prepare an Initial Study (IS) for ~~discretionally~~ discretionary projects such as the proposed project to determine whether the proposed project may have a significant adverse effect on the environment. The IS uses the significance criteria outlined in Appendix G of the CEQA Guidelines (14 CCR 15000 et seq.).

Article 6, Section 15070, Decision to Prepare a Negative Declaration or Mitigated Negative Declaration, of the CEQA Guidelines states the following (14 CCR 15070):

A public agency shall prepare or have prepared a proposed negative declaration or mitigated negative declaration for a project subject to CEQA when:

- a) The initial study shows that there is no substantial evidence, in light of the whole record before the agency, that the project may have a significant effect on the environment, or
- b) The initial study identifies potentially significant effects, but:
 - 1) Revisions in the project plans or proposals made by, or agreed to by, the applicant before a proposed mitigated negative declaration and initial study are released for public review would avoid the effects or mitigate the effects to a point where clearly no significant effects would occur, and
 - 2) There is no substantial evidence, in light of the whole record before the agency, that the project as revised may have a significant effect on the environment.

Based on the analysis in the IS, it has been determined that all project-related environmental impacts would be ~~reduced to a less-than-significant level with the incorporation of feasible applicant proposed measures (i.e., measures adopted by the applicant as project features) as well as one mitigation measure.~~ Therefore, adoption of a ~~Mitigated-Negative Declaration (MND)~~ will satisfy the requirements of CEQA.

The information contained in the proposed project's PEA and additional information requested by the CPUC during the PEA review were fully considered during the preparation of this ~~Draft~~ Final IS/MND.

Copies of the project application, PEA, and supporting technical studies are available on the project website at:

<http://www.cpuc.ca.gov/environment/info//dudek/crowncastle/CrownCastleMain.htm>

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Following is a summary of the proposed project; the attached IS presents more details in Section Chapter 4, Project Description.

The proposed project would consist of installation of distributed antennae systems (DAS) network facilities, including fiber-optic cable, antennas, nodes, and related facilities along approximately 14.22 miles of existing highway rights-of-way (ROWs), primarily along Highway 1 (Hwy 1) in San Mateo County. Approximately ~~4.8~~ 10.76 miles of the fiber-optic cable would be placed aerially on existing utility poles, and approximately ~~4.4~~ 3.46 miles of new conduit would be installed underground within existing ROWs.

Project construction is expected to require approximately ~~2 months~~ 10 weeks to complete.

PROJECT OBJECTIVE

The Applicant provides point-to-point radiofrequency (RF) transport and backhaul services that augment wireless broadband services in dense urban and isolated suburban/rural areas for its wireless carrier customers. The Applicant provides these services over non-switched, digital fiber-optic communications networks referred to as DAS networks.

The proposed project would expand wireless broadband services in rural, coastal areas of San Mateo County, California. According to the Applicant, the primary objectives of the proposed project are to expand the wireless voice and broadband services provided by Crown Castle's customer, Verizon Wireless, to an unserved/underserved rural area along a heavily traveled section of Hwy 1 in San Mateo County, thereby generally improving the area's communications and data system; to enhance public safety by providing expanded and more reliable communications access to emergency services; to provide a means to more efficiently expand wireless service by other carriers in this area through co-location or joint use of certain facilities (this could also increase competition among existing telecommunications carriers—an outcome that would be consistent with well-established California and federal telecommunications policy); to expand and enhance California's national and international telecommunications access; and to enable existing telecommunications networks to better exchange traffic across California and improve reliability using high-quality, state-of-the-art technology.

APPLICANT PROPOSED MEASURES

The PEA details project protocols that would be followed during project-related activities (ICF 2013). Project protocols are specific to environmental issue areas and are herein termed Applicant Proposed Measures (APMs). Table 1 lists APMs proposed as project design features. These APMs are analyzed as part of the proposed project.

Table 1
Applicant Proposed Measures

APM Number	Description
<i>Aesthetics</i>	
APM-AES-1	Keep construction and staging areas orderly, free of trash and debris, and restore areas disturbed by project construction along the proposed route to their pre-project condition.
APM-AES-2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify and comply with local regulations and requirements concerning architectural design; • Design project facilities to be unobtrusive and to not conflict with the character of the surrounding setting; restore conduit installation sites to pre-construction conditions; and • Prior to construction, consult with the local agencies associated with each project area regarding the appropriate architectural design practices that will be implemented before, during, and after construction.
APM-AES-3	As part of its standard construction operating procedure, ensure that construction lights will be directed away from the visual field of motorists and pedestrians along any streets or right-of-ways.
<i>Air Quality</i>	
APM-AQ-1	<p><i>Implement BAAQMD basic construction measures to reduce dust emissions</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Crown Castle will require all construction contractors to implement the following BAAQMD emission reduction measures to reduce dust emissions. • All vehicle speeds on unpaved roads shall be limited to 15 mph. • Post a publicly visible sign with the telephone number and person to contact at the Lead Agency regarding dust complaints. This person shall respond and take corrective action within 48 hours. The air district's phone number shall also be visible to ensure compliance with applicable regulations.
APM-AQ-2	<p><i>Implement BAAQMD basic construction measures to reduce exhaust emissions</i></p> <p>Crown Castle will require all construction contractors to implement the following BAAQMD emission reduction measures to reduce exhaust emissions.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Idling times shall be minimized either by shutting equipment off when not in use or reducing the maximum idling time to 5 minutes (as required by the California airborne toxics control measure Title 13, Section 2485 of California Code of Regulations [CCR]). Clear signage shall be provided for construction workers at all access points. • All construction equipment shall be maintained and properly tuned in accordance with manufacturer's specifications. All equipment shall be checked by a certified mechanic and determined to be running in proper condition prior to operation.
<i>Biological Resources</i>	
APM-BIO-1	<p><i>Conduct spring surveys for special-status plants within the project area</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prior to construction, a qualified botanist will complete spring surveys for special-status plants within the project area to determine the presence or absence of special-status plants. The survey will be completed by qualified botanists and will be conducted during the appropriate period(s) necessary to observe special-status plants known to occur in the region. • If a population of a special-status plant species occurs within the project area, the population will be clearly staked and flagged in the field by a qualified botanist prior to construction so the population can be avoided. If the population cannot be avoided during construction, Crown Castle will minimize impacts by reducing the work area to the smallest area necessary to complete the work. Crown

**Table 1
Applicant Proposed Measures**

APM Number	Description
	<p>Castle will conduct project activities and necessary ground disturbance in a manner that is consistent with the successful reestablishment of the species to the extent feasible. The specific actions necessary will depend on the biology of the species, and will be determined through consultation with the USFWS and CDFW. Generally actions include waiting for the plant species to go to seed and collecting the seed for future planting and saving the top 6 inches of top soil (which contains the seed bank) separate from other excavated soil.</p>
APM-BIO-2	<p><i>Conduct a preconstruction nesting survey to minimize impacts to nesting birds and raptors (February through August)</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If the proposed project is completed outside of the nesting season of birds, no additional measures will be necessary. • If construction will take place during the nesting season (generally February through August) Crown Castle will conduct preconstruction nesting bird surveys. If an active nest is identified during the surveys, Crown Castle, in consultation with CDFW and USFWS, will establish a no-construction zone until the breeding season is completed or subsequent bird/raptor surveys confirm that all offspring have fledged and no new nests have been established. Generally, these no construction zones are 50 feet for passerine birds and 250 feet for raptors.
APM-BIO-3	<p><i>Conduct preconstruction survey to minimize impacts to wintering monarch butterflies for construction in late fall and winter months</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If the proposed project is scheduled to occur during the late fall and winter months and trimming of eucalyptus trees is required, a biologist will conduct a preconstruction survey to determine if the trees that require trimming and the surrounding trees support overwintering clusters of monarch butterflies. If clusters of monarch butterflies are present, Crown Castle, in consultation with CDFW, will establish a no construction zone until after the monarch butterflies have migrated. Generally, this no construction zone is 30 feet from wintering monarch butterflies.
APM-BIO-4	<p><i>Measures to minimize impacts to California red-legged frogs, San Francisco garter snakes, and western pond turtles</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work should be avoided from October 16 (or the first measurable rainfall of 1 inch or greater) to May 14. If work cannot be avoided during this period then it is recommended that a qualified biological monitor be present for all ground-disturbing activities. • It is recommended that a qualified biologist familiar with California red-legged frogs, San Francisco garter snake, and western pond turtle conduct a preconstruction survey immediately prior to construction in areas where ground disturbance will occur. During the preconstruction survey, the biologist will also look for and identify burrows that could be used by California red-legged frogs. These areas will be flagged (as practical) for avoidance. The biologist will remain onsite for the duration of any construction activities involving excavation or the use of heavy machinery or equipment. • Prior to work the construction crew will receive worker environmental awareness training. Training will include review of environmental laws and protective measures that must be followed by all personnel to reduce or avoid effects on protected species during construction activities. • Any holes, trenches, pits, and/or tanks that are left open overnight will either be covered to prevent entry or one side will be sloped to allow wildlife to escape. Open holes, trenches, pits, and/or tanks left overnight will be checked by a qualified biologist at the start of construction each day to determine whether trapped wildlife are present. If wildlife are present, they will be removed by the biologist before the hole, trench, or pit is filled. • Plastic monofilament netting (erosion control matting) or similar material containing netting will not be used at the project. Acceptable substitutes include coconut coir matting or tackified hydroseeding compounds. Handling of California red-legged frogs is prohibited without a valid federal take permit and handling of San Francisco garter snakes is prohibited without a valid federal take permit and a CESA Section 2081 Incidental Take Permit. Any California red-legged frogs or San Francisco garter

**Table 1
Applicant Proposed Measures**

APM Number	Description
	snakes observed on the work site will be allowed to move offsite on their own. If California red-legged frogs, San Francisco garter snakes, and western pond turtles are observed on or adjacent to the work site, and are in danger of injury, construction in the vicinity will cease until no danger exists for California red-legged frogs or San Francisco garter snakes.
<i>Cultural Resources</i>	
APM-CUL-1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If buried cultural resources, such as chipped or ground stone, historic debris, building foundation, or human bone, are inadvertently discovered during ground-disturbing activities, work will stop in that area and within 100 feet of the find until a qualified archaeologist can assess the significance of the find and, if necessary, develop appropriate measures in consultation with the CPUC, State Historic Preservation Officer, and other appropriate agencies • In the event that fossil remains are encountered, either by the cultural resources monitor or by construction personnel, qualified paleontological specialists will be contacted. Construction within 100 feet of the find in non-urban areas and 50 feet in urban areas will be temporarily halted or diverted until a qualified vertebrate paleontologist examines the discovery.
<i>Greenhouse Gas Emissions</i>	
APM-GHG-1	<p><i>Implement BAAQMD Best Management Practices to reduce GHG emissions</i></p> <p>To ensure that short-term GHG emissions are reduced as much as feasible and the proposed project does not result in a considerable contribution to GHG levels, Crown Castle will require all construction contractors to implement the following GHG emission reduction measures to the extent they are feasible.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Using alternative fueled (e.g., biodiesel, electric) construction vehicles/equipment of at least 15% of the fleet. • Recycling or reusing at least 50% of construction waste or demolition materials.
<i>Hazards and Hazardous Materials/Fire Safety</i>	
APM-HAZ-1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure proper labeling, storage, handling, and use of hazardous materials in accordance with best management practices and the Occupational Safety and Health Administration's HAZWOPER requirements. • Ensure that employees are properly trained in the use and handling of hazardous materials and that each material is accompanied by a material safety data sheet. • Any small quantities of hazardous materials stored temporarily in staging areas will be stored on pallets within fenced and secured areas and protected from exposure to weather. Incompatible materials will be stored separately, as appropriate. • All hazardous waste materials removed during construction will be handled and disposed of by a licensed waste disposal contractor and transported by a licensed hauler to an appropriately licensed and permitted disposal or recycling facility, to the extent necessary to ensure the area can be safely traversed. • Significant releases or threatened releases of hazardous materials will be reported to the appropriate agencies.
<i>Hydrology and Water Quality</i>	
APM-HYD-1	<p><i>Prior to non-storm discharges into surface waters, provide documentation of obtaining all necessary and applicable approvals, including the following:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implementation of appropriate Best Management Practice (BMP's) to minimize the potential for storm-water pollutants. These BMPs may include, but not necessarily be limited to, the utilization of settling ponds or screens to reduce suspended sediment loads
APM-HYD-2	<p>Erosion Controls:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Excavated or disturbed soil will be kept within a controlled area surrounded by a perimeter barrier that may entail silt fence, hay bales, straw wattles, or a similarly effective erosion control technique that prevents the transport of sediment from a given stockpile. • All stockpiled material will be covered or contained in such a way that eliminates offsite runoff from occurring. • Upon completion of construction activities, excavated soil will be replaced and the area restored to pre-construction conditions.

**Table 1
Applicant Proposed Measures**

APM Number	Description
<i>Land Use</i>	
APM-LU-1	<p><i>Submit written documentation, including evidence of review by the appropriate public works, planning, and/or community development agency for the applicable jurisdictions. This documentation will include the following:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Site plan showing the dimensions and location of the finalized alignment; • Evidence that the project meets all necessary requirements; • Evidence of compliance with design standards; • Copies of any necessary permits or conditions of approval; and • Records of any discretionary decisions made by of the applicable jurisdictions.
<i>Noise</i>	
APM-NOI-1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Require construction contractors to comply with the construction-hour limitations and construction equipment standards set forth by each local jurisdiction. • All equipment will have sound-control devices no less effective than those provided on original equipment; • No equipment will have an unmuffled exhaust; • Construction equipment will be located as far from sensitive receptors (e.g., residences, schools, places of worship, and hospitals) as possible; and • If traffic control devices requiring electrical power are employed within 500 feet of sensitive receptors, the devices will be battery/solar powered instead of powered by electrical generators. <p>In addition, implement a variety of measures to reduce noise levels from directional boring where noise levels of 60 dBA or greater will be experienced at sensitive receptor locations. For example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Special mufflers can be applied to the boring rig exhaust; • Shielding can be erected between the noise source and the receptor; or • As an extreme measure, a temporary enclosure can be erected to house the boring operation. <p>Implement all reasonable and customary noise reduction measures and post the name and telephone number of a person for the public to contact to resolve noise-related problems.</p>
<i>Recreation</i>	
APM-REC-1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Schedule construction to avoid peak use periods (e.g., weekends and holidays) for recreational facilities. • All ground surfaces will be restored as close to pre-project conditions as soon as possible or practicable.
<i>Traffic</i>	
APM-TRA-1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • As deemed necessary by the applicable jurisdiction, the road encroachment permits may require the contractor to prepare a traffic control plan in accordance with professional engineering standards prior to construction. • Identify all roadway locations where special construction techniques (e.g., directional drilling or night construction) will be used to minimize impacts to traffic flow. • Develop circulation and detour plans to minimize impacts to local street circulation. This will include the use of signage and flagging to guide vehicles through and/or around the construction zone. • Schedule truck trips outside of peak morning and evening commute hours. • Limit lane closures during peak hours to the extent possible. • Use haul routes minimizing truck traffic on local roadways to the extent possible. • Include detours for bicycles and pedestrians in all areas potentially affected by project construction. • Install traffic control devices as specified in the California Department of Transportation Manual of Traffic Controls for Construction and Maintenance Work Zones. • Store construction materials only in designated areas. • Coordinate with local transit agencies for temporary relocation of routes or bus stops in work zones, as necessary.
APM-TRA-2	<p>To avoid impeding emergency vehicle traffic around the construction activities, develop an Emergency Vehicle Access Plan that includes the following:</p>

Table 1
Applicant Proposed Measures

APM Number	Description
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evidence of advanced coordination with emergency service providers, including but not necessarily limited to police departments, fire departments, ambulance services, and paramedic services; • Emergency service providers will be notified of the proposed project locations, nature, timing, and duration of any construction activities, and will be asked for advice about any road access restrictions that could impact their response effectiveness; and • Project construction schedules and routes designed to avoid restricting movement of emergency vehicles to the best extent possible. Provisions to be ready at all times to accommodate emergency vehicles at locations where access to nearby properties may be blocked. Provisions could include the use of platings over excavations, short detours, and/or alternate routes.
APM-TRA-3	Prepare and implement a traffic safety plan and coordinate with local transportation and emergency response agencies to avoid potential roadway safety hazards.
APM-TRA-4	Limit all parking to right-of-way and pre-approved staging areas to address the increased parking demand created by construction activities.
<i>Utilities and Service Systems</i>	
APM-USS-1	Recycle and dispose of construction materials to minimize generation of solid waste resulting from construction activities.

Source: ICF 2013.

MITIGATION MEASURE

The following mitigation measure (Table 2), agreed to by the Applicant, would reduce project-related impacts to a less than significant level.

Table 2
Mitigation Measure

	Description
<i>Biological Resources</i>	
MM-BIO-1	<p>The Applicant and/or its contractors shall implement the following measures during all Monterey pine (i.e., natural and planted stands), live oak and black oak tree pruning activities associated with construction and maintenance:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tools and machinery that are used to prune, cut, or chip trees infected with pine pitch canker or sudden oak death shall be cleaned and sterilized before and after use. When cutting or pruning a diseased tree, clean tools with a disinfectant before using them on uninfected trees. Lysol™ or a 10% solution of bleach (1 part household bleach in 9 parts water) are effective sterilants. A two minute soak time is recommended when using bleach. • All tree material infected with pine pitch canker or sudden oak death shall be deposited on site, or may be taken to a designated disposal facility for prompt burial, chipping and composting, or burning. • Any infected material removed from the site shall be tightly covered with a tarp during transit and shall not leave the zone of infestation. • All individuals responsible for pruning, cutting, or chipping trees infected with pine pitch canker or sudden oak death shall be made aware of these measures.

ENVIRONMENTAL DETERMINATION

The IS has been prepared to identify the potential effects on the environment from implementation of the proposed project and to evaluate the significance of these effects. The IS is based on the Applicant's PEA filed on September 6, 2013 (ICF 2013), proposed project site inspections by the CPUC environmental team, and other environmental analysis for the proposed project. APMs proposed by the Applicant as project design features are incorporated into ~~Section~~ Chapter 4, Project Description, of this IS.

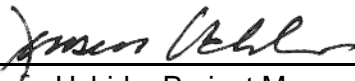
Based on the IS, the proposed project, with integration of APMs where applicable, would result in less-than-significant effects or have no impacts in the areas of aesthetics, agricultural and forestry resources, air quality/greenhouse gases, cultural resources, geology and soils, hazards and hazardous materials, hydrology and water quality, land use and planning, mineral resources, noise, population and housing, recreation, transportation and traffic, and utilities and service systems. ~~Impacts to biological resources, specifically Monterey pine (*Pinus radiata*), would be less than significant with incorporation of mitigation.~~

Review Period

~~All comments regarding the correctness, completeness, or adequacy of this IS/MND must be received by the CPUC by no later than 5:00 p.m. on April 18, 2014.~~

The IS/MND, as well as Crown Castle's application and PEA for the San Mateo County Project (September 2013), are available at the project's website: <http://www.cpuc.ca.gov/environment/info//dudek/crowncastle/CrownCastleMain.htm>.

Contact Person



Jensen Uchida, Project Manager
Energy Division
California Public Utilities Commission
505 Van Ness Avenue
San Francisco, California 94102
415.703.3175

May 11, 2015

Date