

Siskiyou Telephone Nordheimer Project

Initial Study/Mitigated Negative Declaration

Draft

November 2008

Prepared for:

Public Utilities Commission
505 Van Ness Avenue
San Francisco, California 94102

Prepared by:

RMT Inc.
4 West Fourth Avenue, Suite 303
San Mateo, California 94402

Siskiyou Telephone Nordheimer Project

Initial Study/Mitigated Negative Declaration

Draft

November 2008

Prepared for:

Public Utilities Commission
505 Van Ness Avenue
San Francisco, California 94102

Prepared by:

RMT Inc.
4 West Fourth Avenue, Suite 303
San Mateo, California 94402

PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION
505 VAN NESS AVENUE
SAN FRANCISCO, CA 94102-3298

MITIGATED NEGATIVE DECLARATION

SISKIYOU TELEPHONE COMPANY (“Siskiyou Telephone”) APPLICATION

T-17138 Nordheimer Flat Line Extension Grant Project

INTRODUCTION

Siskiyou Telephone Company (“Siskiyou Telephone”) has filed an Application with the California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC) for the Nordheimer Flat Line Extension Grant Phase 2 Project (“Nordheimer Project”) for installation of telecommunications lines in two conduits. The objective of the project is to provide telephone service and Digital Subscriber Line (DSL) service to two private residences and a United States Department of Agriculture, Forest Service (USFS) campground in Siskiyou County, California.

The cable route would be located within the right-of-way along Salmon River Road, a Siskiyou County-maintained road located on the Klamath National Forest. The route would be located between the end of Siskiyou Telephone’s current cable facility 2 miles southwest of Forks of Salmon, California and the terminating telecommunications pedestal at Red Cap Ranch. A small portion of the project would be located along a private gravel driveway.

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

CEQA requires that the CPUC prepare an “Initial Study” for discretionary projects, such as the proposed project, to determine whether the project may have a significant adverse effect on the environment. The CPUC would be required to prepare an Environmental Impact Report (EIR) if the proposed project would result in significant effects that cannot be mitigated. A Mitigated Negative Declaration can be adopted (Section 21080, CEQA Public Resources Code) by the CPUC if the Initial Study does not reveal that there may be significant environmental impacts based on substantial evidence, or if the potential effects can be reduced to a level of insignificance through project revisions (Section 21080; CEQA Public Resources Code). This Mitigated Negative Declaration has been prepared based on the Initial Study prepared for the Siskiyou Telephone Nordheimer Project.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Siskiyou Telephone proposes to install an underground telecommunications line within the right-of-way of Salmon River Road. The project corridor is approximately 2.76 miles long, and roughly parallels the river channel of the Salmon River.

***Mitigated Negative Declaration
Siskiyou Telephone Nordheimer Project***

Siskiyou Telephone's proposed Nordheimer Project would consist of four phases. These phases include the construction and installation of underground telephone lines, restoration and paving of construction areas, service activation, and telephone line maintenance. Grant funds would be used for construction and installation of telephone lines and restoration and paving of construction areas. Grant funds would not be used for service activation or telephone line maintenance.

Phase 1: Construction and Installation of Telephone Lines

Siskiyou Telephone proposes to use conventional landline telecommunications construction to install the two proposed underground conduits. The telephone lines within the underground conduits would consist of copper and fiber wires. Construction would use Rural Utilities Service engineering and construction standards and practices, established by the United States Department of Agriculture. Specifications of the telecommunications line would be compatible with Siskiyou Telephone's existing telecommunications network.

The construction of the proposed telecommunications line would consist of a crew of 15 employees, three backhoes, three dump trucks, one rock saw, two one-ton trucks, and two pickup trucks. The construction crew would saw through the roadway asphalt where necessary, trench, and place the two conduits within the trench before backfilling the trench and resurfacing the roadway. Construction would occur during the dry season (generally May to October), with the construction crew working up to 10 hours per day, 5 days per week, for a total duration of 8 weeks. Construction crews would use a staging site approximately 11 miles from the construction area for commute vehicles and for most construction materials. Most of the equipment used for trenching would be left on-site in one of several turnouts on Salmon River Road for the duration of construction.

Siskiyou Telephone estimates that a minimum of 50 pairs of copper cable would be installed in the two underground conduits. Siskiyou Telephone's design practice for telecommunication lines is to install copper cable in 25-pair increments based on a 20- to 25-year life of the cable. Fifty pairs of copper cable would accommodate potential future growth in the area while considering the projected life of the cable. The proposed telecommunications route would be placed within the Salmon River Road right-of-way, and would begin at the end of Siskiyou Telephone's current cable facility 2 miles southwest of Forks of Salmon, and terminate at the telecommunications pedestal at Red Cap Ranch. The two conduits would be installed underground in trenches measuring approximately 1.5 feet wide by 3 feet deep, with the cables pulled into the conduits once the trenches have been backfilled and compacted, and the roadway repaired, as outlined in Phase 2. All trenching activities would take place within the existing roadway and unpaved shoulder. Cable would be installed beneath the roadway and above the culverts. No construction activity or equipment staging would occur in the streambed of the Salmon River.

Trenching would avoid hard-rock areas when possible, due to the higher cost of sawing rock. Rock sawing would be utilized for sawing asphalt when the road shoulder is not wide enough to place the trench, and when trenching through rock that cannot be avoided. Trenches would be backfilled with a few inches of Class II Base Rock before the installation of the cable conduits. Asphalt removed during the trenching process and more Class II Base rock would be used to further backfill the trenches to near surface after installation of the conduits, and then either paved over or backfilled with native soil depending on whether the trench is located in the paved roadway or the unpaved shoulder. Spent asphalt would also be placed along the edge of the roadway as shoulder backing, using approved standards of Siskiyou County.

Seven above-ground access pedestals would be placed at key locations along the route for cable access. Drop conduit would be placed from each access pedestal to each user's residence along

the route. One six-pair copper drop would be placed along each drop conduit along the route. One Telecommunications Network Interface would also be placed on the outside wall of each potential user's residence for the purpose of connecting to the buried copper drop.

Waste generated by the proposed project would primarily consist of ground soil and rock from trenching activities during construction. This waste would total approximately 3,500 cubic yards of ground soil and gravel. All of this solid waste would be disposed of at a gravel plant on Eddy Gulch Road to be used for the reclamation of an old mining site. The gravel pit site is being used under an existing permit with Siskiyou County.

Phase 2: Restoration and Paving of Construction Areas

The roadway and shoulder would be restored after construction activities are completed in the area. The conduit trench area would be repaved by an asphalt crew. The asphalt crew would consist of 12 employees. Equipment would include one paver, one backhoe, one trench grinder, four dump trucks, and two crew cab pickups. The paving operations would take approximately five days, and would be the last construction work to be completed on the project. The roadway shoulder would be restored by replacing the top of the trenched area with native soil.

Phase 3: Service Activation

Cable installation and splicing to prepare the two residences and the campground for telecommunication service activation would be completed within 30 days of the end of construction and roadway restoration. A Service Order would be generated by Siskiyou Telephone to connect residences to the new telecommunications line. The Service Order would include all customer data, including mailing address, house address, and other personal information. An installer would travel to the location to install the type of connection needed for the house to connect to the line. The drop¹ that would be used would be installed at the time of project construction. Service activation would also include some type of electronic site to serve customers as they come on-line. Siskiyou Telephone would work on its portion of the electronic sites in conjunction with the construction process. The electronic site would be a small cabinet the size of two access pedestals. It would house a Digital Loop Carrier, which would generate the dial tone for the telephone service.

Phase 4: Telephone Line Maintenance

Siskiyou Telephone would conduct routine maintenance for the new lines as needed. Maintenance would occur if there is damage to a pedestal or a report from a customer of a service problem. Siskiyou Telephone would notify all subscribers of any expected time outage due to maintenance. Subscribers would be called after restoration of service to verify that service has been restored. Maintenance of the telephone line is not analyzed in this document because maintenance of existing facilities of utilities used to provide a public utility service is exempt from CEQA requirements (CEQA Guidelines §15301(b)).

PROJECT OBJECTIVE

The project would provide telephone and dial-up service to two residences and the USFS Nordheimer Flat Campground, neither of which currently have any kind of telephone service. From the Nordheimer Flat area, the nearest public phone is located 5 miles east in the community of Forks of Salmon. Dial-up services would be used for various needs, such as shopping, telemedicine, and telecommuting.

¹ A *drop* is part of a device that is connected to a telephone exchange.

Mitigated Negative Declaration
Siskiyou Telephone Nordheimer Project

The heavily wooded nature of the Nordheimer Flat area poses a serious risk of fire danger during the hot, dry summer months. The lack of mobile phone coverage throughout the Sawyer's Bar exchange² contributes not only to delays in reporting forest fires, but also to inefficiency in battling fires. Firefighters must contend with extremely rugged terrain, much of it inaccessible by road, and having landline phone service in the area would provide temporary fire camps with not only voice service, but the dial-up service that the USFS finds indispensable in managing fire fighting operations.

Salmon River Road offers unique challenges for the traveling public. A good portion of this road is single lane (paved) with turnouts. Very few guard rails exist. This road is covered with ice and snow intermittently during the winter months. Some Bar and Forks of Salmon are the nearest communities where very limited emergency services are available. The nearest hospital is located in the City of Yreka, which is 2 hours driving distance away. The nearest grocery store of any size is located in the City of Etna, which is over one hour driving distance away. The proposed telephone service would allow for faster notification and response of emergency services to the subject area.

NEGATIVE DECLARATION MITIGATION MEASURES

The following mitigation measures are recommended to reduce project-related impacts to a less than significant level.

Biological Resources

Mitigation Measure BIO-1: A qualified biologist shall conduct focused surveys for Marble Mountain companion prior to project construction. Any plant(s) located during the survey would be flagged by the biologist and avoided during construction. If avoidance is not possible, the plant(s) shall be transplanted by the biologist according to a plan to be approved by the CDFG.

Cultural Resources

Mitigation Measure CR-1: Areas containing historic resources (e.g., NP3, NP4, NP5, NP6, and CA-SIS-391H) shall be marked on construction plans, and construction plans shall be modified to accommodate avoidance of these locations.

Mitigation Measure CR-2: A buffer zone around historic resources shall be established prior to construction in consultation with a qualified archaeologist, and this buffer area shall be flagged on the ground as an exclusion zone where no construction or surface disturbance shall take place.

Mitigation Measure CR-3: Construction personnel shall be briefed on the nature of the resource and instructed not to enter the flagged exclusion zones.

Mitigation Measure CR-4: Monitoring by a qualified archaeologist shall be required for ground-disturbing activities in areas where original ground surface would be exposed in flat areas. Archeological monitoring shall include inspection of exposed materials to determine if artifacts are present. The monitor shall have authority to temporarily halt or divert construction away from exposed resources in order to recover specimens.

Mitigation Measure CR-5: A qualified archaeologist shall monitor construction activities and collect any cultural materials encountered. The archaeologist shall have the authority to stop construction as needed to collect as assess cultural materials in consultation with Siskiyou County and the USFS (if on USFS property). The location of any cultural materials shall be recorded on a scaled map. If substantial deposits are encountered, these remains shall be

² In telecommunications, an exchange is an area served by a particular telephone switch that connects telephone calls.

drawn and photographed in plan and profile views and recorded on a scaled map. The results of monitoring shall be presented in a final report, to be submitted to the CPUC, summarizing the results of fiber optic trenching.

Mitigation Measure CR-6: A Native American monitor shall be required at site CA-SIS-363 for all ground disturbing activity at the site.

Mitigation Measure CR-7: All construction personnel shall be alerted to the possibility of buried cultural remains (prehistoric and historic resources). Personnel shall be instructed that upon discovery of buried cultural materials, work in the immediate vicinity of the find shall cease and a qualified archaeologist be contacted immediately.

Mitigation Measure CR-8: If a paleontological resource, such as a fossil, is discovered during construction, the recovered resource shall be examined by a qualified paleontologist. According to the paleontologist's findings, the resource shall be prepared to the point of curation, identified by qualified experts, listed in a database to allow analysis, and deposited in a designated repository.

Mitigation Measure CR-9: If human remains are encountered during the course of excavation, all construction activities in the vicinity of the find shall cease, and the Siskiyou County Coroner shall be notified immediately. If remains are determined to be Native American, then the NAHC shall be notified within 24 hours as required by Public Resources Code 5097.

Geology and Soils

Mitigation Measure GEO-1: Gravel backfilled telecommunication line trenches shall have direct connectivity with all down drains crossing the road and a natural down hill drainage system. This connectivity shall be shown on project construction drawings, and shall be submitted for the review and approval of Siskiyou County engineering division staff prior to project construction.

Hazards and Hazardous Materials

Mitigation Measure HM-1: Siskiyou Telephone shall prepare an SPCP for construction activities. At a minimum, the plan shall include the following standard operation procedures for spill prevention, hazard assessment, spill prevention and containment, emergency response procedure, and closing the spill incident:

- 1) Before construction begins, workers who would be on-site shall be trained to recognize and respond to spills in accordance with the SPCP plan and the proper protocols and procedures for contacting the appropriate authorities. Construction crews shall have an emergency spill kit containing absorbent brooms and pads, personal protective equipment, and emergency response guidance.
- 2) Construction equipment shall be maintained and kept in operating condition to reduce the likelihood of line breaks and leakage. Any vehicles with chronic or continuous leaks shall be removed from the construction area and repaired before being returned to operation.
- 3) Absorbent material or drip pans shall be placed beneath vehicles during equipment storage, maintenance, and refueling. Refueling shall take place only in designated areas. Any fluids drained from equipment shall be collected in leak proof containers and taken to an appropriate disposal or recycling facility.
- 4) If portable chemical toilets are used, the toilets shall not be placed near environmentally sensitive areas, such as adjacent to the creek. A commercial vendor shall maintain the self-contained chemical toilets in good working order to ensure that there are no leaks, and shall pump the toilets as necessary to prevent overflow. The vendor shall be responsible for proper off-site disposal of the wastes.

Mitigated Negative Declaration
Siskiyou Telephone Nordheimer Project

Mitigation Measure HM-2: Implementation of the following measures would minimize potential hazards to workers and the public:

- 1) The construction contractor shall develop and implement a Health and Safety Plan consistent with OSHA Regulations 29 CFR 1910 and 29 CFR 1926. The Health and Safety Plan shall identify physical and chemical hazards that could result from proposed operations.
- 2) The construction crew shall be trained in safety measures for the following activities: trenching and excavation safety, work zone safety, cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR), spill prevention and control, and safe vehicle handling along public rights-of-way.
- 3) Per Mitigation Measure TT-2, the contractor shall prepare and submit a Traffic Control Plan prepared in accordance with CalTrans and Siskiyou County Public Works Road Department guidelines for approval before beginning construction. Copies of the approved traffic control plans shall be on-site during construction.

Mitigation Measure HM-3: A certified geologist shall test serpentinite found in the project area for asbestos prior to the commencement of construction activities. If asbestos is found, the project plans shall be changed to avoid the serpentinite. If avoidance is not possible, all OSHA regulations shall be followed during work that could expose the construction crew to asbestos.

Mitigation Measures HM-4: The construction area shall be set up so that the entire road would not be blocked at any one time. If this is not feasible, then metal plates shall be kept nearby to cover trenches in case an emergency vehicle needs to pass through the construction area, or in case of evacuation.

Mitigation Measure HM-5: Contractors shall receive training regarding the proper handling and/or storage of potential fire hazards, potential ignition sources (such as smoking or sparking equipment), and appropriate types of fire protection equipment.

Mitigation Measure HM-6: Smoking shall be allowed only in designated areas.

Hydrology and Water Quality

Mitigation Measure HYD-1: The following BMPs shall be implemented to mitigate any potential water resources impacts during construction of the proposed project:

- 1) Temporary sediment barriers shall be placed near sensitive habitat areas adjacent to the proposed project alignment to prevent any construction materials from entering these areas. Such barriers shall include devices such as certified weed-free straw bales, straw wattles, and silt fences. These devices shall be left in place until restoration activities are deemed successful and complete.
- 2) Following installation of the telecommunications system, trenched and excavated areas shall be compacted and graded to the natural contours of the area prior to construction activities.
- 3) Construction personnel shall be trained on the sensitive types of water resources found in the local area, and the measures to avoid or minimize impacts to those resources.

Noise

Mitigation Measure NO-1: All equipment used shall have the appropriate mufflers and noise abatement equipment installed and maintained as necessary.

Mitigation Measure NO-2: Construction activities shall take not take place outside of the hours of 7:00 AM and 7:00 PM, Monday through Friday.

Transportation and Traffic

Mitigation Measure TT-1: Complete closure of Salmon River Road shall not extend beyond one hour if there are vehicles waiting to pass through the construction area. If trenching is not completed, metal plates or a similar apparatus shall be placed over the trench and any waiting motorists shall be allowed to pass.

Mitigation Measure TT-2: Siskiyou Telephone shall prepare a Traffic Control Plan for the review and approval of Caltrans and the Siskiyou County Public Works Road Department.

ENVIRONMENTAL DETERMINATION

The Initial Study was prepared to identify the potential effects on the environment from the installation and construction of an underground telecommunications line in the right-of-way of Salmon River Road in Siskiyou County, and to evaluate the significance of these effects. The Initial Study was based on site visits, analysis of the environmental setting, and studies of cultural resources, biological resources, and site geology.

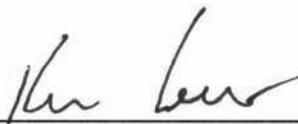
Based on the Initial Study, the project as proposed by Siskiyou Telephone, including the mitigation measures proposed herein, would have no significant impacts in the areas of aesthetics, agricultural resources, air quality, biological resources, cultural resources, geology and soils, hazards and hazardous materials, hydrology and water quality, land use planning, mineral resources, noise, population and housing, recreation, transportation and traffic, and utilities and service systems.

REVIEW PERIOD

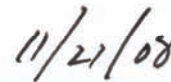
All comments regarding the correctness, completeness, or adequacy of this Mitigated Negative Declaration must be received by the CPUC by no later than 5:00 p.m. on December 29, 2008.

CONTACT PERSON

Jensen Uchida
California Public Utilities Commission
505 Van Ness Avenue, Room 4a
San Francisco, California 94102
(415) 703-5484



Ken Lewis, Acting Director
Energy Division
California Public Utilities Commission



Date

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Mitigated Negative Declaration

Initial Study Environmental Checklist Form.....	1
Environmental Factors Potentially Affected	5
Environmental Determination.....	5
1: Introduction.....	1-1
1.1 Proposed Project.....	1-1
1.2 CEQA Lead and Responsible Agency	1-1
2: Project Description.....	2-1
2.1 Project Objectives	2-1
2.2 Project Description.....	2-1
3: Evaluation of Environmental Impacts.....	3-1
3.1 Introduction	3-1
3.2 Aesthetics.....	3-2
3.3 Agricultural Resources	3-5
3.4 Air Quality.....	3-6
3.5 Biological Resources.....	3-13
3.6 Cultural Resources.....	3-19
3.7 Geology and Soils.....	3-24
3.8 Hazards and Hazardous Materials.....	3-29
3.9 Hydrology and Water Quality	3-34
3.10 Land Use and Planning.....	3-38
3.11 Mineral Resources	3-41
3.12 Noise	3-42
3.13 Population and Housing.....	3-45
3.14 Public Services.....	3-46
3.15 Recreation.....	3-48
3.16 Transportation and Traffic.....	3-49
3.17 Utilities and Service Systems.....	3-52
3.18 Mandatory Findings of Significance	3-54
4: References	4-1
5: List of Preparers and Agencies/Persons Contacted	5-1
5.1 Lead Agency	5-1
5.2 Preparers	5-1
5.3 Agencies and Persons Contacted.....	5-2

LIST OF TABLES

Table 3.4-1: National Clean Air Act Quality Designations in Siskiyou County (2008) 3-7
Table 3.4-2: CARB Air Quality Designations in Siskiyou County (2008)3-7
Table 3.4-3: GHG Emissions from Construction Activities3-10
Table 3.4-4: Comparison of GHG Emissions for Various Types of Projects3-11
Table 3.5-1: Special Status Wildlife Species with the Potential to Occur
along the Project Route 3-15
Table 3.7-1: Soil Type Characteristics..... 3-26
Table 3.12-1: Noise Levels from Construction Equipment3-43

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1.1-1: Proposed Project Location 1-2
Figure 2.2-1: Gravel Plant on Eddy Gulch Road and the Proposed Project Alignment.....2-4
Figure 3.2-1: Proposed Project Alignment with Aerial3-3
Figure 3.7-1: Proposed Project Alignment and Topography..... 3-25
Figure 3.10-1:Proposed Project Alignment and Land Ownership..... 3-40

ATTACHMENTS

- Attachment 1: USFS Categorical Exclusion**
- Attachment 2: Biological Evaluation**
- Attachment 3: Consultation Letters**

INITIAL STUDY ENVIRONMENTAL CHECKLIST FORM

1. PROJECT TITLE

Siskiyou Telephone Company, Nordheimer Flat Line Extension Grant Phase 2 Project
Resolution Number T-17138

2. LEAD AGENCY NAME AND ADDRESS

California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC)
Energy Division
505 Van Ness Avenue
San Francisco, California 94102

3. CONTACT PERSON AND PHONE NUMBER

Jensen Uchida, Project Manager
Energy Division – Analysis Branch
Phone: (415) 703-2185
E-mail: JMU@cpuc.ca.gov

4. PROJECT LOCATION

The proposed project is located within the right-of-way of Salmon River Road between the communities of Somes Bar and Forks of Salmon, on the Klamath National Forest, Siskiyou County, California.

5. PROJECT SPONSOR'S NAME AND ADDRESS

Siskiyou Telephone Company
30 Telco Way
PO Box 157
Etna, California 96027

6. GENERAL PLAN DESIGNATION

The project is located in a relatively unpopulated, previously disturbed rural setting in Siskiyou County, California. Land use designations in Siskiyou County are designated by the Siskiyou County General Plan. The proposed project is located within a roadway right-of-way on the Klamath National Forest; therefore, there is no General Plan land use designation for the project route.

7. ZONING

The project is located in a relatively unpopulated, previously disturbed rural setting in Siskiyou County, California. The proposed project is located within a roadway right-of-way on the Klamath National Forest; therefore, there is no Zoning Ordinance land use designation for the project alignment.

8. DESCRIPTION OF THE PROJECT

Siskiyou Telephone proposes to install an underground telecommunications line within the right-of-way of Salmon River Road. The project corridor is approximately 2.76 miles long, and roughly parallels the river channel of the Salmon River.

Siskiyou Telephone's proposed Nordheimer Project would consist of four phases. These phases include the construction and installation of underground telephone lines, restoration and paving of construction areas, service activation, and telephone line maintenance. Grant funds would be used for construction and installation of telephone lines and restoration and paving of construction areas. Grant funds would not be used for service activation or telephone line maintenance.

Phase 1: Construction and Installation of Telephone Lines

Siskiyou Telephone proposes to use conventional landline telecommunications construction to install the two proposed underground conduits. The telephone lines within the underground conduits would consist of copper and fiber wires. Construction would use Rural Utilities Service engineering and construction standards and practices, established by the United States Department of Agriculture. Specifications of the telecommunications line would be compatible with Siskiyou Telephone's existing telecommunications network.

The construction of the proposed telecommunications line would consist of a crew of 15 employees, three backhoes, three dump trucks, one rock saw, two one-ton trucks, and two pickup trucks. The construction crew would saw through the roadway asphalt where necessary, trench, and place the two conduits within the trench before backfilling the trench and resurfacing the roadway. Construction would occur during the dry season (generally May to October), with the construction crew working up to 10 hours per day, 5 days per week, for a total duration of 8 weeks. Construction crews would use a staging site approximately 11 miles from the construction area for commute vehicles and for most construction materials. Most of the equipment used for trenching would be left on-site in one of several turnouts on Salmon River Road for the duration of construction.

Siskiyou Telephone estimates that a minimum of 50 pairs of copper cable would be installed in the two underground conduits. Siskiyou Telephone's design practice for telecommunication lines is to install copper cable in 25-pair increments based on a 20- to 25-year life of the cable. Fifty pairs of copper cable would accommodate potential future growth in the area while considering the projected life of the cable. The proposed telecommunications route would be placed within the Salmon River Road right-of-way, and would begin at the end of Siskiyou Telephone's current cable facility 2 miles southwest of Forks of Salmon, and terminate at the telecommunications pedestal at Red Cap Ranch. The two conduits would be installed underground in trenches measuring approximately 1.5 feet wide by 3 feet deep, with the cables pulled into the conduits once the trenches have been backfilled and compacted, and the roadway repaired, as outlined in Phase 2. All trenching activities would take place within the existing roadway and unpaved shoulder. Cable would be installed beneath the roadway and above the culverts. No construction activity or equipment staging would occur in the streambed of the Salmon River.

Trenching would avoid hard-rock areas when possible, due to the higher cost of sawing rock. Rock sawing would be utilized for sawing asphalt when the road shoulder is not wide enough to place the trench, and when trenching through rock that cannot be avoided. Trenches would be backfilled with a few inches of Class II Base Rock before the installation of the cable conduits. Asphalt removed during the trenching process and more Class II Base rock would be used to further backfill the trenches to near surface after installation of the conduits, and then either paved over or backfilled with native soil depending on whether the trench is located in the paved roadway or the unpaved shoulder. Spent asphalt would also be placed along the edge of the roadway as shoulder backing, using approved standards of Siskiyou County.

Seven above-ground access pedestals would be placed at key locations along the route for cable access. Drop conduit would be placed from each access pedestal to each user's residence along

the route. One six-pair copper drop would be placed along each drop conduit along the route. One Telecommunications Network Interface would also be placed on the outside wall of each potential user's residence for the purpose of connecting to the buried copper drop.

Waste generated by the proposed project would primarily consist of ground soil and rock from trenching activities during construction. This waste would total approximately 3,500 cubic yards of ground soil and gravel. All of this solid waste would be disposed of at a gravel plant on Eddy Gulch Road to be used for the reclamation of an old mining site. The gravel pit site is being used under an existing permit with Siskiyou County.

Phase 2: Restoration and Paving of Construction Areas

The roadway and shoulder would be restored after construction activities are completed in the area. The conduit trench area would be repaved by an asphalt crew. The asphalt crew would consist of 12 employees. Equipment would include one paver, one backhoe, one trench grinder, four dump trucks, and two crew cab pickups. The paving operations would take approximately five days, and would be the last construction work to be completed on the project. The roadway shoulder would be restored by replacing the top of the trenched area with native soil.

Phase 3: Service Activation

Cable installation and splicing to prepare the two residences and the campground for telecommunication service activation would be completed within 30 days of the end of construction and roadway restoration. A Service Order would be generated by Siskiyou Telephone to connect residences to the new telecommunications line. The Service Order would include all customer data, including mailing address, house address, and other personal information. An installer would travel to the location to install the type of connection needed for the house to connect to the line. The drop that would be used would be installed at the time of project construction. Service activation would also include some type of electronic site to serve customers as they come on-line. Siskiyou Telephone would work on its portion of the electronic sites in conjunction with the construction process. The electronic site would be a small cabinet the size of two access pedestals. It would house a Digital Loop Carrier, which would generate the dial tone for the telephone service.

Phase 4: Telephone Line Maintenance

Siskiyou Telephone would conduct routine maintenance for the new lines as needed. Maintenance would occur if there is damage to a pedestal or a report from a customer of a service problem. Siskiyou Telephone would notify all subscribers of any expected time outage due to maintenance. Subscribers would be called after restoration of service to verify that service has been restored. Maintenance of the telephone line is not analyzed in this document because maintenance of existing facilities of utilities used to provide a public utility service is exempt from CEQA requirements (CEQA Guidelines §15301(b)).

9. SURROUNDING LAND USES AND SETTING

The proposed project route is located entirely within the Salmon River Road right-of-way, with the exception of a spur of the telecommunications line that would extend up a private gravel driveway. Salmon River Road is a County road under the jurisdiction of Siskiyou County. The Salmon River parallels the project route. The route passes over four waterways. A bridge crosses over the Salmon River; the other three crossings are culverts. Surrounding lands are within the Klamath National Forest and managed by the USFS. There are also several residences in the project

vicinity that exist as a result of long-standing mining claims. The Klamath National Forest Nordheimer Flat Campground is adjacent to a portion of the proposed project.

10. OTHER PUBLIC AGENCIES WHOSE APPROVAL IS REQUIRED

Siskiyou Telephone must obtain the following permits:

- Use Permit from the Siskiyou County Planning Department
- USFS Permit (for USFS lands only; already obtained Permit No. 07-90 D5f)

ENVIRONMENTAL FACTORS POTENTIALLY AFFECTED

The environmental factors checked below would be potentially affected by this project, involving at least one impact that is a “Potentially Significant Impact” as indicated by the checklist on the following pages.

- | | | |
|---|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Aesthetics | <input type="checkbox"/> Agricultural Resources | <input type="checkbox"/> Air Quality |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Biological Resources | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Cultural Resources | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Geology and Soils |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Hazards and Hazardous Materials | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Hydrology and Water Quality | <input type="checkbox"/> Land Use and Planning |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Mineral Resources | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Noise | <input type="checkbox"/> Population and Housing |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Public Services | <input type="checkbox"/> Recreation | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Transportation and Traffic |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Utilities and Service Systems | <input type="checkbox"/> Mandatory Findings of Significance | |

ENVIRONMENTAL DETERMINATION

On the basis of this initial evaluation:

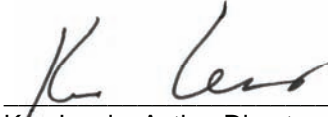
I find that the Proposed Project COULD NOT have a significant effect on the environment, and a NEGATIVE DECLARATION will be prepared.

I find that although the Proposed Project could have a significant effect on the environment, there will not be a significant effect in this case because revisions in the project have been made by or agreed to by the applicant. A MITIGATED NEGATIVE DECLARATION will be prepared.

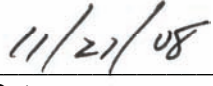
I find that the Proposed Project MAY have a significant effect on the environment, and an ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT (EIR) is required.

I find that the Proposed Project MAY have a “potentially significant impact” or “potentially significant impact unless mitigated” on the environment, but at least one effect (1) has been adequately analyzed in an earlier document pursuant to applicable legal standards, and (2) has been addressed by mitigation measures based on the earlier analysis as described on attached sheets, if the effect is a “potentially significant impact” or “potentially significant unless mitigated.” An EIR is required, but it must analyze only the effects that remain to be addressed.

I find that although the Proposed Project could have a significant effect on the environment, because all potentially significant effects (a) have been analyzed adequately in an earlier EIR pursuant to applicable standards, and (b) have been avoided or mitigated pursuant to that earlier EIR, including revisions or mitigation measures that are imposed upon the Proposed Project, nothing further is required.



 Ken Lewis, Acting Director
 Energy Division
 California Public Utilities Commission



 Date

1: INTRODUCTION

1.1 Proposed Project

Siskiyou Telephone Company (“Siskiyou Telephone”) has filed an Application with the California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC) for the Nordheimer Flat Line Extension Grant Phase 2 Project (“Nordheimer Project”) for installation of telecommunications lines in two conduits. The objective of the project is to provide telephone service and Digital Subscriber Line (DSL) service to two private residences and a United States Department of Agriculture, Forest Service (USFS) campground in Siskiyou County, California.

The cable route would be located within the right-of-way along Salmon River Road, a Siskiyou County-maintained road located on the Klamath National Forest (Figure 1.1-1). The route would be located between the end of Siskiyou Telephone’s current cable facility 2 miles southwest of Forks of Salmon and the terminating telecommunications pedestal at Red Cap Ranch. A small portion of the project would be located along a private gravel driveway.

1.2 CEQA Lead and Responsible Agencies

CEQA LEAD AGENCY AND REVIEW

The CPUC is the lead state agency for review of the project under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). This Initial Study/Mitigated Negative Declaration (IS/MND) includes an assessment of the potential environmental impacts of the proposed project. The Mitigated Negative Declaration has been prepared based upon the assessment of potential environmental impacts outlined in the attached Initial Study. This IS/MND has been prepared pursuant to CEQA, the amended State CEQA Guidelines (14 CCR 15000 et seq.), and the CPUC CEQA rules (Rules 17.1, 17.2, and 17.3).

CEQA requires that the CPUC must prepare an “Initial Study” for discretionary projects, such as the proposed project, to determine whether the project may have a significant adverse effect on the environment based on substantial evidence. The CPUC would be required to prepare an Environmental Impact Report (EIR) if substantial evidence indicates that the proposed project may result in significant effects that cannot be mitigated. A Mitigated Negative Declaration can be adopted (Section 21080, CEQA Public Resources Code) by the CPUC if the Initial Study does not reveal substantial evidence of significant impacts, or if the potential effects can be reduced to a level of insignificance through project revisions (Section 21080; CEQA Public Resources Code).

Figure 1.1-1: Proposed Project Location



SOURCE: ESRI 2006 and RMT 2008

LEGEND



-  Proposed Project Location
-  National Forest Area
- 
-  U.S. Highway
-  Interstate Highway
-  State Route



This Mitigated Negative Declaration has been prepared based on the assessment in the Initial Study prepared for the Siskiyou Telephone Nordheimer Project.

NEPA LEAD AGENCY AND REVIEW

The USFS has amended the Forest-wide Special Use Permit for Siskiyou Telephone's trenching and placement of conduit cable along Salmon River Road and within the Siskiyou County right-of-way. The proposed project is categorically excluded under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) because the amended permit is for a use which is in place and ongoing.

The environmental impact of the proposed action is minimal, and consistent with the past uses of National Forest land. No sensitive, threatened, or endangered species would be adversely impacted by the issuance of the permit or the continued use of National Forest land authorized by the permit. The activity would be of limited size, duration, and degree of disturbance based on the above information. Past actions and environmental analysis have revealed that no extraordinary circumstances exist that might cause the proposed action to have significant effects on the human environment. The authorization and amendment of permits and the use of National Forest land are consistent with the Klamath National Forest Land and Resource Management Plan (LRMP).

The action also qualifies under Forest Service Handbook provision 1909.15, 31.2 Category 3: Approval, modification or continuation of minor special uses of the NFL that require fewer than five contiguous acres of land. The Categorical Exclusion is included as Attachment 1.

2: PROJECT DESCRIPTION

2.1 Project Objectives

The proposed project is needed to provide Plain Old Telephone Service and dial-up internet service to two residences and the USFS Nordheimer Flat Campground. From Nordheimer Flat, the nearest public phone is located 5 miles east in the community of Forks of Salmon. Dial-up services would be used for various needs, such as shopping, telemedicine, and telecommuting.

The heavily wooded nature of the Nordheimer Flat area poses a serious risk of fire danger during the hot, dry summer months. The lack of mobile phone coverage throughout the Sawyer's Bar exchange contributes not only to delays in reporting forest fires, but inefficiency in battling the costly fires. Firefighters must contend with extremely rugged terrain, much of it inaccessible by road, and having landline phone service in the area would provide temporary fire camps with not only voice service, but the dial-up service that the USFS finds indispensable in managing fire fighting operations.

Salmon River Road offers unique challenges for the traveling public. A good portion of this road is single lane (paved) with turnouts. Very few guard rails exist. During the winter months, this road is covered with ice and snow intermittently. Somes Bar and Forks of Salmon are the nearest communities where very limited emergency services are available. The nearest hospital is located in the City of Yreka, which is 2 hours driving distance away. The nearest grocery store of any size is located in the City of Etna, which is over 1 hour driving distance. The proposed telephone service would allow for faster notification and response of emergency services to the subject area.

2.2 Project Description

OVERVIEW

Siskiyou Telephone proposes to install an underground telecommunications line within the right-of-way of Salmon River Road. The project corridor is approximately 2.76 miles long, and roughly parallels the river channel of the Salmon River.

Siskiyou Telephone's proposed Nordheimer Project would consist of four phases. These phases include the construction and installation of underground telephone lines, restoration and paving of

construction areas, service activation, and telephone line maintenance. Grant funds would be used for construction and installation of telephone lines and restoration and paving of construction areas. Grant funds would not be used for service activation or telephone line maintenance.

Phase 1: Construction and Installation of Telephone Lines

Siskiyou Telephone proposes to use conventional landline telecommunications construction to install the two proposed underground conduits. The telephone lines within the underground conduits would consist of copper and fiber wires. Construction would use Rural Utilities Service engineering and construction standards and practices, established by the United States Department of Agriculture. Specifications of the telecommunications line would be compatible with Siskiyou Telephone's existing telecommunications network.

The construction of the proposed telecommunications line would consist of a crew of 15 employees, three backhoes, three dump trucks, one rock saw, two one-ton trucks, and two pickup trucks. The construction crew would saw through the roadway asphalt where necessary, trench, and place the two conduits within the trench before backfilling the trench and resurfacing the roadway. Construction would occur during the dry season (generally May to October), with the construction crew working up to 10 hours per day, 5 days per week, for a total duration of 8 weeks. Construction crews would use a staging site approximately 11 miles from the construction area for commute vehicles and for most construction materials. Most of the equipment used for trenching would be left on-site in one of several turnouts on Salmon River Road for the duration of construction.

Siskiyou Telephone estimates that a minimum of 50 pairs of copper cable would be installed in the two underground conduits. Siskiyou Telephone's design practice for telecommunication lines is to install copper cable in 25-pair increments based on a 20- to 25-year life of the cable. Fifty pairs of copper cable would accommodate potential future growth in the area while considering the projected life of the cable. The proposed telecommunications route would be placed within the Salmon River Road right-of-way, and would begin at the end of Siskiyou Telephone's current cable facility 2 miles southwest of Forks of Salmon, and terminate at the telecommunications pedestal at Red Cap Ranch. The two conduits would be installed underground in trenches measuring approximately 1.5 feet wide by 3 feet deep, with the cables pulled into the conduits once the trenches have been backfilled and compacted, and the roadway repaired, as outlined in Phase 2. All trenching activities would take place within the existing roadway and unpaved shoulder. Cable would be installed beneath the roadway and above the culverts. No construction activity or equipment staging would occur in the streambed of the Salmon River.

Trenching would avoid hard-rock areas when possible, due to the higher cost of sawing rock. Rock sawing would be utilized for sawing asphalt when the road shoulder is not wide enough to place the trench, and when trenching through rock that cannot be avoided. Trenches would be backfilled with a few inches of Class II Base Rock before the installation of the cable conduits. Asphalt removed during the trenching process and more Class II Base rock would be used to further backfill the trenches to near surface after installation of the conduits, and then either paved over or backfilled with native soil depending on whether the trench is located in the paved roadway or the unpaved shoulder. Spent asphalt would also be placed along the edge of the roadway as shoulder backing, using approved standards of Siskiyou County.

Seven above-ground access pedestals would be placed at key locations along the route for cable access. Drop conduit would be placed from each access pedestal to each user's residence along the route. One six-pair copper drop would be placed along each drop conduit along the route. One

Telecommunications Network Interface would also be placed on the outside wall of each potential user's residence for the purpose of connecting to the buried copper drop.

Waste generated by the proposed project would primarily consist of ground soil and rock from trenching activities during construction. This waste would total approximately 3,500 cubic yards of ground soil and gravel. All of this solid waste would be disposed of at a gravel plant on Eddy Gulch Road to be used for the reclamation of an old mining site (Figure 2.2-1). The gravel pit site is being used under an existing permit with Siskiyou County.

Phase 2: Restoration and Paving of Construction Areas

The roadway and shoulder would be restored after construction activities are completed in the area. The conduit trench area would be repaved by an asphalt crew. The asphalt crew would consist of 12 employees. Equipment would include one paver, one backhoe, one trench grinder, four dump trucks, and two crew cab pickups. The paving operations would take approximately five days, and would be the last construction work to be completed on the project. The roadway shoulder would be restored by replacing the top of the trenched area with native soil.

Phase 3: Service Activation

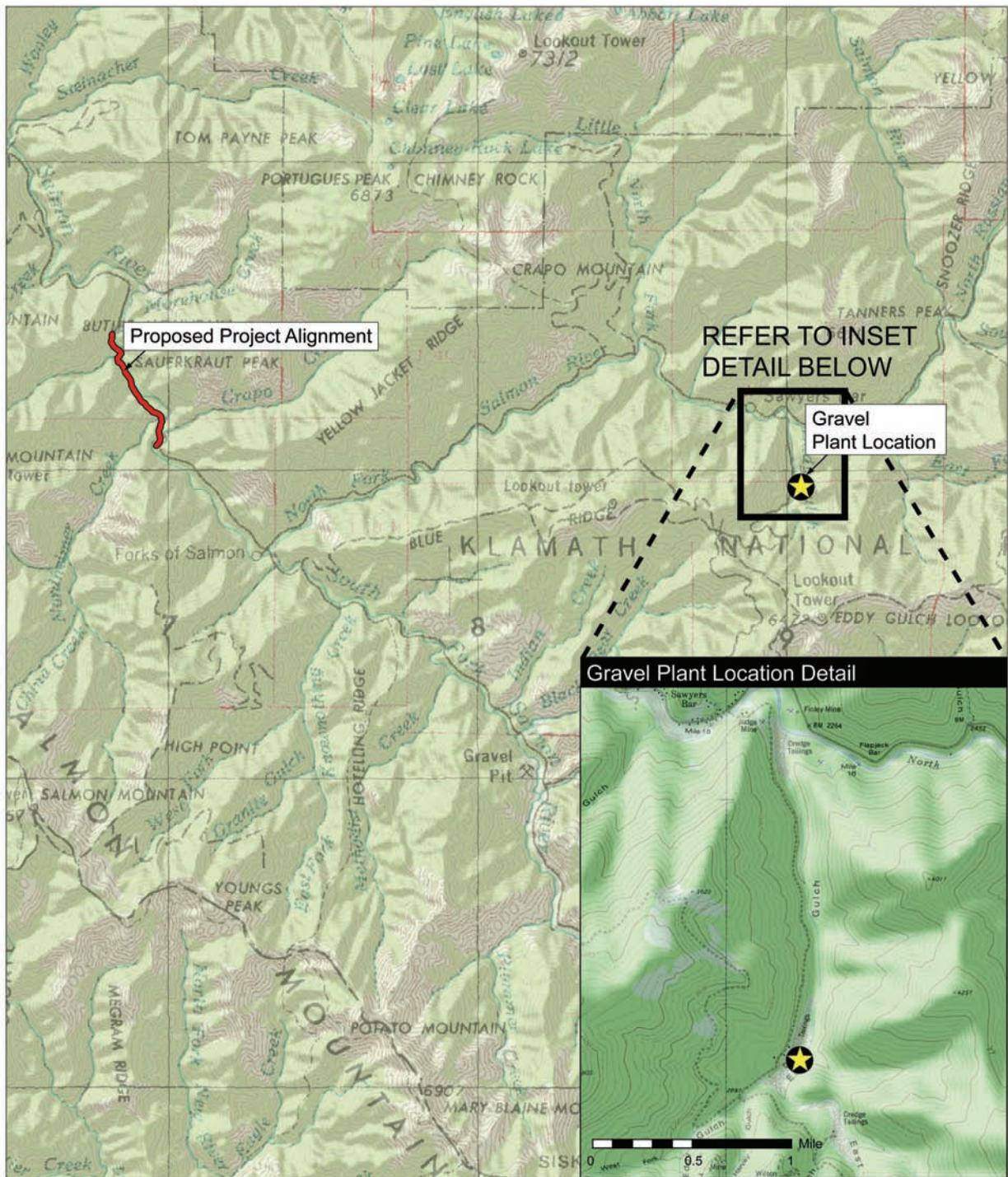
Cable installation and splicing to prepare the two residences and the campground for telecommunication service activation would be completed within 30 days of the end of construction and roadway restoration. A Service Order would be generated by Siskiyou Telephone to connect residences to the new telecommunications line. The Service Order would include all customer data, including mailing address, house address, and other personal information. An installer would travel to the location to install the type of connection needed for the house to connect to the line. The drop² that would be used would be installed at the time of project construction. Service activation would also include some type of electronic site to serve customers as they come on-line. Siskiyou Telephone would work on its portion of the electronic sites in conjunction with the construction process. The electronic site would be a small cabinet the size of two access pedestals. It would house a Digital Loop Carrier, which would generate the dial tone for the telephone service.

Phase 4: Telephone Line Maintenance

Siskiyou Telephone would conduct routine maintenance for the new lines as needed. Maintenance would occur if there is damage to a pedestal or a report from a customer of a service problem. Siskiyou Telephone would notify all subscribers of any expected time outage due to maintenance. Subscribers would be called after restoration of service to verify that service has been restored. Maintenance of the telephone line is not analyzed in this document because maintenance of existing facilities of utilities used to provide a public utility service is exempt from CEQA requirements (CEQA Guidelines §15301(b)).





² A *drop* is part of a device that is connected to a telephone exchange.

Figure 2.2-1: Gravel Plant on Eddy Gulch Road and the Proposed Project Alignment



SOURCE: ESRI 2006, US Geological Survey, EROS Data Center, Sioux Falls, SD, and RMT 2008

LEGEND


 Proposed Project Alignment
 Gravel Plant Location
 Miles



3: EVALUATION OF ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS

3.1 Introduction

This Initial Study includes analyses of the 16 environmental issue areas listed below. These issue areas incorporate the topics presented in CEQA's Environmental Checklist (identified in Appendix G to the CEQA Guidelines).

- | | |
|-------------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| 3.2 Aesthetics | 3.10 Land Use and Planning |
| 3.3 Agricultural Resources | 3.11 Mineral Resources |
| 3.4 Air Quality | 3.12 Noise |
| 3.5 Biological Resources | 3.13 Population and Housing |
| 3.6 Cultural Resources | 3.14 Public Services |
| 3.7 Geology and Soils | 3.15 Recreation |
| 3.8 Hazards and Hazardous Materials | 3.16 Transportation and Traffic |
| 3.9 Hydrology and Water Quality | 3.17 Utilities and Service Systems |

3.2 Aesthetics

<i>Would the project:</i>	Potentially Significant Impact	Potentially Significant Unless Mitigation Incorporated	Less than Significant Impact	No Impact
<i>a) Have a substantial adverse effect on a scenic vista?</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
<i>b) Substantially damage scenic resources, including, but not limited to, trees, rock outcroppings, and historic buildings within a state scenic highway?</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
<i>c) Substantially degrade the existing visual character or quality of the site and its surroundings</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<i>d) Create a new source of substantial light or glare, which would adversely affect day or nighttime views in the area?</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

EXISTING CONDITIONS

The proposed project alignment occurs entirely within the right-of-way of Salmon River Road between the communities of Somes Bar and Forks of Salmon. Salmon River Road is not an officially designated State Scenic Highway, nor is it eligible to be an officially designated State Scenic Highway. Salmon River Road traverses a portion of the Klamath National Forest, an area that is utilized for recreational activities such as bird watching, camping, and fishing. The Salmon River flows north and parallel to Salmon River Road and the proposed project route. The Salmon River is to the east of Salmon River Road for most of the project length. The Salmon River crosses under and to the west of Salmon River Road about 0.125 miles from the southern terminus of the proposed project.

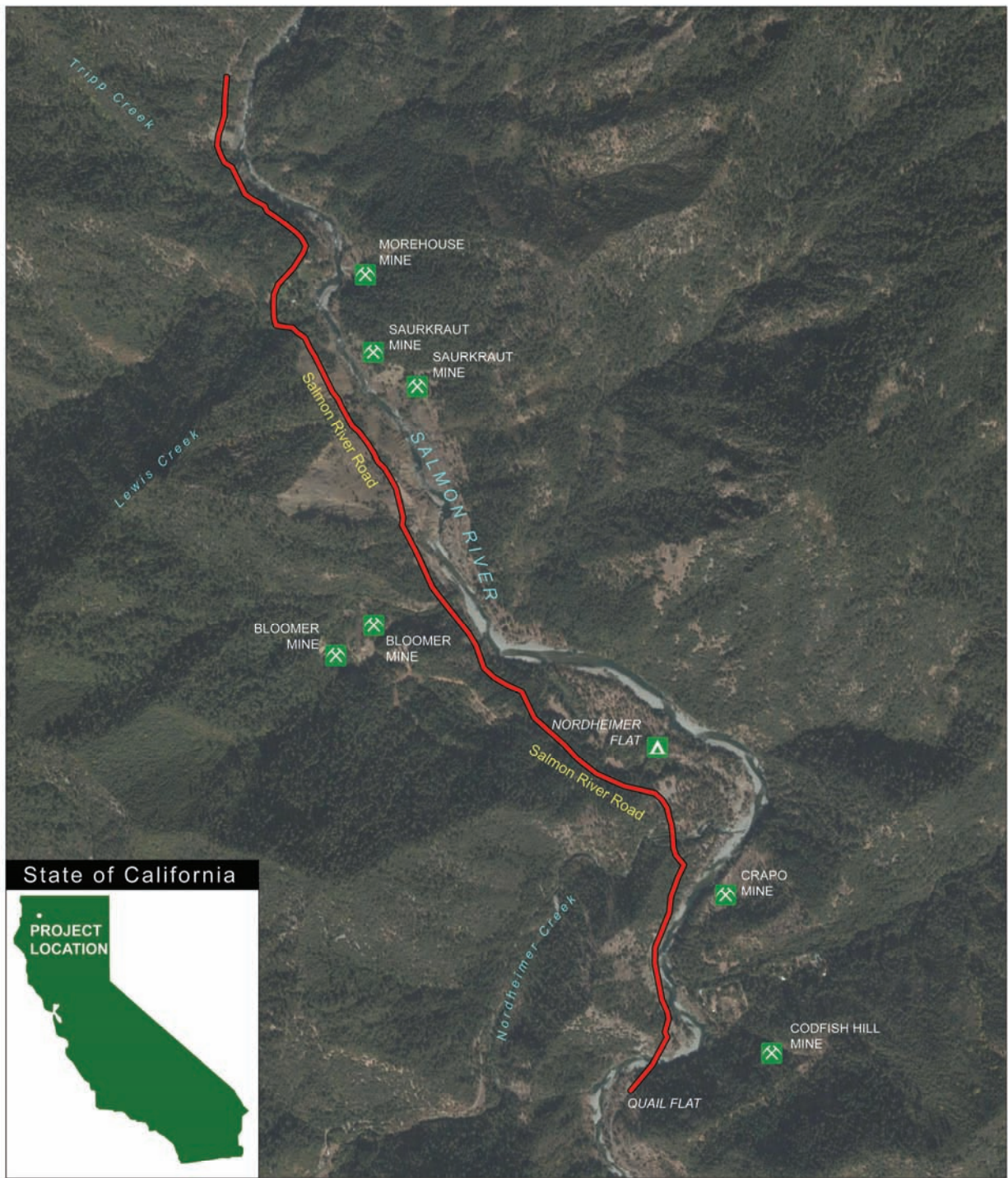
The Nordheimer Campground is adjacent to a portion of the telecommunication line route, as are several residences. Views are generally devoid of non-natural objects; however, there are a few signs related to the campground and residential areas.

The only source of illumination and glare is one residence near the northern terminus of the project route that is close enough to be visible from the roadway. Other residences along the project route are set back and not visible from the road. Nordheimer Flat Campground does not have permanent light sources; campers may introduce light sources, but they would be transient in nature. The glare and light from these locations is minimal.

Vegetation is limited within the right of way of Salmon River Road and the project alignment. The Klamath National Forest extends to the east and west of the proposed project alignment, and provides the visual backdrop for the telecommunication line route. Figure 3.2-1 is an aerial photo showing the project alignment and the forested area in the project vicinity.

The Salmon River is considered a Wild and Scenic River (WSR). In the Klamath National Forest LRMP, visual resources of WSRs are to meet the Partial Retention Visual Quality Objective in the foreground and middleground beyond the WSR corridor (USFS 2001). Partial Retention requires that management activities remain visually subordinate to natural characteristics of the landscape. The foreground is considered to be between the observer and 0.5 miles away from the observer (Bacon 1979). Salmon River Road falls within the foreground of the Salmon River WSR corridor.

Figure 3.2-1: Proposed Project Alignment with Aerial



SOURCE: ESRI 2006, Google Earth Pro 2008, and RMT 2008

LEGEND

— Proposed Project Alignment (2.76 miles)
 ▲ Campground

✕ Mine (inactive)

0 500 1000 2000 4000 Feet

IMPACTS

a) Have a substantial adverse effect on a scenic vista?

Impacts to aesthetics would take place only during the construction phase and would be temporary, lasting approximately 8 weeks. Restoration of the roadway and shoulder would be completed once work is completed, and no permanent, long-term change to the existing scenic vistas would occur. The installation of the primarily underground telecommunications system would be compatible with the aesthetic environment of the utility corridor, and would not create significant changes to the scenic vista or scenic resources. Nearly all new infrastructure would be buried below ground in conduits; however, some elements of the project would be installed above ground. Permanent, above-ground elements would include:

- A conduit: The conduit would carry the cables across the Salmon River bridge crossing.
- Seven access pedestals: The access pedestals would be placed adjacent to the road at the junction of each potential communications user's driveway.

The access pedestals would not obstruct any scenic vistas. The conduit for the bridge crossing would be attached to the side of the bridge, and would blend into the architecture of the bridge. The proposed project would be consistent with the Partial Retention Visual Quality Objective for WSRs. No impacts to scenic vistas or scenic resources would occur as a result of the project.

b) Substantially damage scenic resources, including, but not limited to, trees, rock outcroppings, and historic buildings within a state scenic highway?

Salmon River Road is not a State Scenic Highway, nor is it eligible to be designated as a State Scenic Highway. Trenching would avoid hard-rock areas. No tree removal would be required because trenching would take place along or in Salmon River Road in areas that do not contain trees. No substantial damage to scenic resources would occur as a result of the proposed project.

c) Substantially degrade the existing visual character or quality of the route and its surroundings?

The construction activities would be apparent but would result in a temporary, less than significant impact. Soil disturbance may be apparent immediately following construction; however, this impact would be temporary as the road surface and disturbed areas would be rehabilitated following construction. The access pedestals would be permanent, but would not substantially degrade the existing visual character or quality of the route and its surroundings. Impacts to the surrounding visual character would be less than significant.

d) Create a new source of substantial light or glare, which would adversely affect day or nighttime views in the area?

The project would not include any new sources of light and glare. No impacts related to light and glare would occur as a result of the proposed project.

3.3 Agricultural Resources

<p><i>In determining whether impacts to agricultural resources are significant environmental effects, lead agencies may refer to the California Agricultural Land Evaluation and Site Assessment Model (1997) prepared by the California Department of Conservation as an optional model to use in assessing impacts on agriculture farmland. Would the project:</i></p>	Potentially Significant Impact	Potentially Significant Unless Mitigation Incorporated	Less than Significant Impact	No Impact
<p>a) <i>Convert Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, or Farmland of Statewide Importance (Farmland), as shown on the maps prepared pursuant to the Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program of the California Resources Agency, to non-agricultural use?</i></p>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
<p>b) <i>Conflict with existing zoning for agricultural use, or a Williamson Act contract?</i></p>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
<p>c) <i>Involve other changes in the existing environment which, due to their location or nature, could individually or cumulatively result in loss of Farmland, to non-agricultural use?</i></p>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

EXISTING CONDITIONS

The project area does not include Prime or Unique Farmland. No agricultural activities occur within the proposed project alignment or in the vicinity of the proposed project alignment. There is no land in the project right-of-way that is subject to a Williamson Act contract because adjacent land is USFS land.

IMPACTS

a) Convert Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, or Farmland of Statewide Importance (Farmland), as shown on the maps prepared pursuant to the Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program of the California Resources Agency, to non-agricultural use?

There is no farmland in the right-of-way that would be affected by the proposed project.

b) Conflict with existing zoning for agricultural use, or a Williamson Act contract?

The proposed project would not conflict with existing agricultural activities or any area subject to the Williamson Act, as no farmland or agricultural activities occur in the project vicinity.

c) Involve other changes in the existing environment which, due to their location or nature, could individually or cumulatively result in loss of Farmland, to non-agricultural use?

The proposed project does not include new construction that might convert farmland to non-agricultural uses. There would be no impacts that would individually or cumulative result in the loss of Farmland to non-agricultural use.

3.4 Air Quality

<i>Where available, the significance criteria established by the applicable air quality management or pollution control district may be relied upon to make the following determinations. Would the project:</i>	<i>Potentially Significant Impact</i>	<i>Potentially Significant Unless Mitigation Incorporated</i>	<i>Less than Significant Impact</i>	<i>No Impact</i>
<i>a) Conflict with or obstruct implementation of the applicable air quality plan?</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
<i>b) Violate any air quality standard or contribute substantially to an existing or projected air quality violation?</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<i>c) Result in a cumulatively considerable net increase of any criteria pollutant for which the project region is in non-attainment under an applicable federal or state ambient air quality standard (including releasing emissions that exceed quantitative thresholds for ozone precursors)?</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<i>d) Expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations?</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
<i>e) Create objectionable odors affecting a substantial number of people?</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
<i>f) Increase the level of greenhouse gas emissions beyond that existing in the area before the project?</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

EXISTING CONDITIONS

Siskiyou County is located within the Northeast Plateau Air Basin. Air quality in Siskiyou County is regulated by various local, state, and federal government agencies. At the local level, the Siskiyou County Air Pollution Control District (SCAPCD) adopts and enforces regulations to control stationary source emissions.

Siskiyou County is currently designated as a non-attainment area with respect to the state 8-hour ozone standard, and is either in attainment or unclassified for the remaining state standards. The county is either in attainment, unclassified, or unclassified/attainment for the remaining national standards. Based on current attainment status, only ozone emissions could be of concern. National standards and air quality designations for Siskiyou County are listed in Table 3.4-1. State standards and air quality designations for Siskiyou County are listed in Table 3.4-2.

Table 3.4-1: National Clean Air Act Air Quality Designations in Siskiyou County (2008)

Pollutant	Standard (Primary ³ Annual Arithmetic Mean)	Classification (National)
Ozone	0.08 ppm (8-hour)	Unclassified/Attainment
Particulate Matter (PM ₁₀)	150 µg/m ³ (24-hour)	Unclassified
Particulate Matter (PM _{2.5})	15 µg/m ³	Unclassified/Attainment
Carbon Monoxide (CO)	9 ppm (8-hour)	Unclassified/Attainment
Nitrogen Dioxide (NO ₂)	0.053 ppm	Attainment
Sulfur Dioxide (SO ₂)	0.030 ppm	Attainment
Lead	1.5 µg/m ³ (Calendar Quarter)	Attainment

SOURCE: CARB 2008A, CARB 2006

Table 3.4-2: CARB Air Quality Designations in Siskiyou County (2008)

Pollutant	Standard (Concentration)	Classification
Ozone	0.070 ppm (8-hour)	Nonattainment/Transitional
Particulate Matter (PM ₁₀)	20 µg/m ³ (Annual Arithmetic Mean)	Attainment
Particulate Matter (PM _{2.5})	12 µg/m ³ (Annual Arithmetic Mean)	Unclassified
Carbon Monoxide (CO)	9.0 ppm (8-hour)	Unclassified
Nitrogen Dioxide (NO ₂)	0.030 ppm (Annual Arithmetic Mean)	Attainment
Sulfur Dioxide (SO ₂)	0.04 ppm (24-hour)	Attainment
Lead	1.5 µg/m ³ (30-Day Average)	Attainment

SOURCE: CARB 2008A, CARB 2006

IMPACTS

a) Conflict with or obstruct implementation of the applicable air quality plan?

Construction of the proposed project would result in emissions from the operation of construction equipment and support vehicles. Sources of emissions include dust (fugitive particulate matter) and combustion emissions from the use of diesel fuel. There are no air quality plans for Siskiyou County; therefore, this project would not conflict with or obstruct implementation of any air quality plan. There would be no impact to air quality plans, and no mitigation would be necessary.

b) Violate any air quality standard or contribute substantially to an existing or projected air quality violation?

The proposed project has the potential to emit dust from trenching for installation of the conduit, and from the use of construction vehicles. Dust emissions can vary substantially depending on levels of activity, specific operations, and prevailing meteorological conditions. Disturbance would be caused by trenching, rock and concrete sawing operations, and transportation of construction materials. Minimal dust emissions are expected from the trenching operation as the

³ Level of air quality necessary to protect public health with a sufficient margin of safety.

final trench width is expected to be only 1.5 feet, and the trenching and construction process would capture most trenching materials before they are emitted as dust. Dust emissions would not violate state or federal standards or make a substantial contribution to existing or projected violations because the area is not well-developed, and dust emissions caused by the proposed project are expected to be small in scale. Impacts would be less than significant.

c) Result in a cumulatively considerable net increase of any criteria pollutant for which the project region is in non-attainment under an applicable federal or state ambient air quality standard (including releasing emissions that exceed quantitative thresholds for ozone precursors)?

The project area has transitional/non-attainment status for 8-hour ozone under State standards. The combustion-related emissions, some of which are precursors to ozone, would be very low and have minimal impact on ambient air quality. The project construction and operation would not result in a cumulatively considerable net increase of ozone or ozone precursor emissions. The effect would be less than significant.

d) Expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations?

Combustion emissions associated with construction equipment include criteria pollutants. The SCAPCD does not have numerical emissions thresholds for evaluating projects under CEQA. The combustion-related emissions would be very low and have little, if any, impact on ambient air quality. Measures to avoid and/or minimize short-term construction impacts to air quality have been included as part of the project design either per regulation or per Siskiyou Telephone's standard construction and operation protocols. Sensitive receptors would not be exposed to substantial pollutant concentrations.

e) Create objectionable odors affecting a substantial number of people?

There would be an odor impact from the hot asphalt source during the one-week time period when the asphalt paving is repaired. The project is in an area with a very low population and odors would be temporary and would not affect a significant number of people. The impact would be less than significant.

f) Increase the level of greenhouse gas emissions beyond that existing in the area before the project?

Greenhouse Gas Regulations

The State of California adopted the Global Warming Solutions Act of 2006 (Assembly Bill [AB] 32) on September 27, 2006 to address the threat of global warming caused by the increase in greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions. Ambient global temperatures rise as atmospheric concentrations of greenhouse gases rise because less heat is able to escape the atmosphere. This rise in temperature is accompanied by climatic changes, some dramatic and some subtle, that affect how organisms live, adapt, and survive. Potential effects of an increase in temperature could include winter flooding, summer droughts, drier growing seasons resulting in agricultural losses, changes in fish stock and other wildlife, changes in sea level, more forest wildfires, and damage to coastlines due to severe weather events.

AB 32 requires sources within the state to reduce carbon emissions to 1990 levels by the year 2020. The 1990 carbon dioxide (CO₂) equivalent emissions are estimated to be 427 million metric tons. The California Air Resources Board (CARB) has estimated CO₂ equivalent emissions to be 596.4 million metric tons in 2020 if no actions are taken to reduce GHG emissions. Emission sources in the State would need to reduce emissions by approximately 28

percent (or 169 million tons) before 2020 to reach this goal. Based on the CARB inventory, primary sources of GHG emissions include on-road transportation, electric power generation, and industrial facilities (CARB 2008a). Projects similar to the Nordheimer Project have not been identified as large or significant sources of GHG emissions.

The CARB recently developed mandatory reporting rules for significant sources of GHGs as a result of AB 32 (Subchapter 10, Article 1, sections 95100 to 95133, Title 17, California Code of Regulations). The CARB released a Proposed Scoping Plan in October 2008 that indicates how GHG emission reductions would be achieved from significant GHG sources and adopting regulations to achieve maximum technologically feasible and cost-effective GHG emission reductions. The Proposed Scoping Plan has a new statewide goal of 33% renewable energy, rather than 20% as outlined in AB 32, in the State of California's energy portfolio by 2020. The CARB also outlined voluntary early actions and reductions. It is important to note that actions outlined in the Proposed Scoping Plan are recommendations, and not mandates. The recommendations to reduce GHG emissions that are relevant to the project include (CARB 2008b):

- **Low Carbon Fuel Standard:** The Low Carbon Fuel Standard would reduce the carbon intensity of transportation used in California by ten percent or more by 2020 (E.O. S-01-07). Recommended Measure 4 would require the use of biofuel, which could be low-carbon, depending on its source.
- **Medium/Heavy-Duty Vehicle Standards:** These standards could include requiring heavy-duty trucks to be retrofitted to contain devices that reduce aerodynamic drag and rolling resistance, or other measures to reduce GHG emissions. Hybrid trucks would also reduce GHG emissions. Recommended Measures 1 and 4 would reduce the emissions of the construction equipment and vehicles used for the proposed Project.
- **Recycling and Waste:** Recycling would reduce GHG emissions by reducing the energy that would be used to acquire raw material for manufacturing of building materials.
- **Sustainable Forests:** The target for the Proposed Scoping Plan is to maintain the current sequestration capacity of forests through sustainable management practices, including the avoidance or mitigation of land-use decisions that would reduce carbon storage capacity. The proposed Project would not require the removal of trees because trenching would take place in the roadway or along the side of the roadway where there are no trees.

The Proposed Scoping Plan also has information regarding voluntary actions and reductions in GHG emissions. The CARB is required to draft regulations that would encourage early action in reducing GHG emissions. The regulations would also reward reductions occurring before AB 32 is fully implemented. There are also voluntary offset markets, and the CARB will adopt methodologies for quantifying voluntary reductions (CARB 2008b).

The CARB has proposed draft regulations to limit GHG emissions from electric power plants and other specific source categories. The proposed regulations do not include sources such as construction related to installation of telephone lines or other rural utilities. This type of source is also not subject to mandatory GHG emission reporting. Thus, this project is not currently subject to any requirements under the California Climate Change Regulatory Program. Nevertheless, the GHG emissions from this project were estimated and several mitigation measures were reviewed for feasibility.

Greenhouse Gas Emissions Estimate

The sources of GHG emissions for this project would include the combustion of diesel fuel used in construction equipment and the daily commute of construction workers. Emissions of GHGs are predicted to occur only during construction and maintenance of the project. The cables would be placed in conduits, which would virtually eliminate the need for maintenance once the construction is complete; therefore, no GHG emissions would occur for operation of the telephone and internet cables, unless a crew needed to travel to the site to perform maintenance on the telecommunications line.

Construction GHG emissions were estimated based on the projected number of backhoes, rock saws, dump trucks, one-ton trucks, pick-up trucks, pavers, and trench grinders that would be used onsite. The construction period was assumed to be 10 hours per day, 5 days per week, for a total duration of 8 weeks. Combustion-related emissions are overestimated as it is unlikely that every piece of equipment would be operated 10 hours each day.

Emissions due to employee commutes were based on the number of employees, distance from the construction route, and duration of the construction project. Using these conservative assumptions, the GHG emissions from this project are estimated to be 494 tons (CO₂ equivalent) or 448 metric tons. The emissions summary Table 3.4-3 below describes the emissions associated with construction and paving activities and incorporates the employee commutes.

Table 3.4-3: GHG Emissions from Construction Activities									
	CO₂ Emissions			CH₄ Emissions			N₂O Emissions		
	<i>Off-Road</i>	<i>On-Road</i>	<i>Total</i>	<i>Off-Road</i>	<i>On-Road</i>	<i>Total</i>	<i>Off-Road</i>	<i>On-Road</i>	<i>Total</i>
Operating Schedule	(tons)	(tons)	(tons)	(tons)	(tons)	(tons)	(tons)	(tons)	(tons)
Construction	324.58	8.36	332.9	0.0376	0.00072	0.038	0.356	0.00081	0.357
Paving	37.49	0.44	37.93	0.00397	0.000038	0.00401	0.0376	0.00004	0.0377
TOTAL	362.07	8.80	370.9	0.042	0.00076	0.042	0.394	0.00085	0.394
CO₂-Equivalent (tons)			370.9			0.89			122.3
TOTAL CO₂-Equivalent (tons)									494.0
TOTAL (metric tonnes)									448.2

Table 3.4-4 compares the GHG emissions from this project to other sources of GHG emissions. The construction emissions are a fraction of the typical emissions for somewhat similar projects involving road or transmission line construction because of the limited scale and duration of the Nordheimer Project. It is also important to note that the generation of emissions would be short term (8 weeks) in nature and there would be no further emissions once the construction phase of this project is completed. Reduction or elimination of 448 metric tons of emissions associated with this project would have virtually no impact on the state's goal to reduce emissions by 169 million metric tons by the year 2020. The proposed project's cumulative impacts to global climate change due to the incremental contribution of GHGs would be less than significant. The applicant proposed measures for GHGs, listed below, would completely offset the carbon emissions of the proposed project.

Project Description	CO ₂ -Equivalent	
	Construction Emissions (tons)	Operating Emissions (tons per year)
Typical household emissions ¹	NA	27.7
Nordheimer Flat Construction (Proposed project)	494	0.0
1 lane-mile of road construction ²	2,600	NA
30 MW geothermal power plant	NA	24,700
Univ. NH, Durham Campus, 2003	NA	71,100
Sunrise Powerlink Project ³	147,000	NA
300 MW coal-fired power plant	NA	2,950,000

¹ Based on family of 4, two cars, natural gas heat, 550 mi/week total driving, 24 mpg.
² Estimated 1,400 - 2,300 tons of CO₂ per lane-mile for construction only. Does not include increased traffic or road maintenance. CO₂-equivalent estimate assumes same ratio of CH₄ and N₂O to CO₂ as the current project.
³ Assumes same ratio of CH₄ and N₂O to CO₂ as the current project to estimate total CO₂-equivalent.

SOURCES: EPA 2008, Williams-Derry 2007, Bloomfield et al. 2003, PSC of Wisconsin 2008, UNH 2004, CPUC and BLM 2008, CARB 2008c

Applicant Proposed Measures for Greenhouse Gas Mitigation

The applicant has proposed several measures to reduce GHG emissions, all of which have been incorporated into the project. These measures include:

- Most construction employees would likely be staying in the nearest town, Etna, which is approximately 40 miles from the construction route. Siskiyou Telephone Company would provide company-owned vehicles to allow employees to carpool to the construction route, which would reduce the number of commute miles.
- Several construction employees would be residing in camping trailers closer to the construction route in order to reduce the commute miles.
- Supplies would be delivered on larger trucks to avoid more frequent deliveries using smaller trucks.

- The Applicant would purchase carbon credits that would completely offset the project's GHG emissions.

The emission estimates above have incorporated these mitigation measures.

Recommended Measures

The GHG emissions from the proposed project would not be significant; however, other feasible measures to reduce GHG emissions include:

- 1) Limit idling of construction equipment.
- 2) Participate in the CARB Statewide Portable Equipment Registration Program or meet the Tier 2 California Emission Standards for Off-Road Compression-Ignition Engines as specified in California Code of Regulations, Title 13, Sec. 2423(b)(1).
- 3) Limit the hours of operation to daylight hours, so that diesel generators are not required for operation of lights.
- 4) Replace diesel fuel with a biodiesel blend of B20 or less, if this fuel type is readily available.

Biofuels and biofuel blends are being used in construction equipment across the country. Compatibility of construction equipment with the use of biodiesel is dependent primarily on the blend of biodiesel. Some engines have been designed or modified to utilize 100% biodiesel (B100). However, B100 is not necessarily compatible with standard engines found in construction equipment. For these engines, typical blends are from 2% to 20% (B2 to B20), depending on the engine manufacturer's recommendation. Several engine manufacturers have published warranty statements or recommendations for the use of biofuels with their engines. In general, post-2007 engines built for low emissions are compatible with biodiesel up to B5 or B20. Almost all recommendations suggest consulting the manufacturer directly if planning to use anything higher than B20.

The highest blend that could be feasible for this project would be B20, as the equipment to be used for the Nordheimer Project is not designed or modified to use B100. The owner of the equipment would need to check on the recommendation for the specific engines and how the use of biodiesel might affect any warranty. In terms of availability of biodiesel in the immediate area of the project, the closest biodiesel retailers would be in Ukiah (BioDiesel.org 2008). The use of biodiesel on this project is dependent on the availability of appropriate blends in the area (no greater than B20), and equipment that is compatible with the use of biodiesel.

Other mitigation measures include the use of electric or other zero emission vehicles for both employee commutes and construction; however these types of vehicles are not yet commercially available. Nor is it possible to install the telephone line without the use of construction equipment.

3.5 Biological Resources

<i>Would the project:</i>	<i>Potentially Significant Impact</i>	<i>Potentially Significant Unless Mitigation Incorporated</i>	<i>Less than Significant Impact</i>	<i>No Impact</i>
a) <i>Have a substantial adverse effect, either directly or through habitat modifications, on any species identified as a candidate, sensitive, or special status species in local or regional plans, policies, or regulations, or by the California Department of Fish and Game or U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service?</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b) <i>Have a substantial adverse effect on any riparian habitat or other sensitive natural community identified in local or regional plans, policies, or regulations, or by the California Department of Fish and Game or U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service?</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c) <i>Have a substantial adverse effect on federally protected wetlands as defined by Section 404 of the Clean Water Act (including, but not limited to, marsh, vernal pool, coastal, etc.) either individually or in combination with the known or probable impacts of other activities through direct removal, filling, hydrological interruption, or other means?</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
d) <i>Interfere substantially with the movement of any native resident or migratory fish or wildlife species or with established native resident or migratory wildlife corridors, or impede the use of wildlife nursery sites?</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
e) <i>Conflict with any local policies or ordinances protecting biological resources, such as a tree preservation policy or ordinance?</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
f) <i>Conflict with the provisions of an adopted Habitat Conservation Plan, Natural Communities Conservation Plan, or other approved local, regional, or state habitat conservation plan?</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

EXISTING CONDITIONS

Overview

A reconnaissance-level biological survey was conducted for the proposed project by Live Oak Associates, Inc. in September 2008 (Attachment 2). The survey report describes the biological resources and impacts associated with the project and presents recommendations to minimize effects. The survey report was developed using information from:

- California Natural Diversity Data Base (CNDDB)
- California Native Plant Society (CNPS) Inventory of Rare and Endangered Vascular Plants of California
- Manuals and references related to plants and animals in Siskiyou County

- Two reconnaissance-level field surveys of the study area (July 15, 2008 and September 20, 2008)

Habitat and Vegetation

Habitat

The habitat in the vicinity of the project route is classified as ruderal. A ruderal habitat is defined as a habitat where disturbance is sustained but where there is no intentional substitution of vegetation, such as alongside a roadway. Ruderal vegetation present in the roadside bar ditches along Salmon River Road included non-native grasses of European descent, forbs, and coniferous forest plants, including silver hairgrass (*Aira caryophyllea*), rattail fescue (*Vulpia myuros*), soft chess (*Bromus hordeaceus*), ripgut brome (*Bromus diandrus*), and dogtail grass (*Cynosurus echinatus*). Forbs observed include the non-native English plantain (*Plantago lanceolata*), yellow star thistle (*Centaurea solstitialis*), Himalayan blackberry (*Rubus discolor*), common sheep sorrel (*Rumex acetosella*), and the native Spanish clover (*Lotus purshianus*). Constituent plants of the surrounding coniferous forest included pine (*Pinus ponderosa*), Douglas-fir (*Pseudotsuga menziesii*), black oak (*Quercus kelloggii* sp.), poison oak (*Toxicodendron diversilobum*), and Pacific madrone (*Arbutus menziesii*).

A list of all vascular plant species observed on the project route is included in Appendix A of the Biological Report (Attachment 2).

The Salmon River is a Riparian Reserve, according to the Klamath National Forest LRMP. Riparian Reserves generally include an aquatic ecosystem and adjacent uplands that directly affect the aquatic ecosystem (USFS 2001).

Special Status Plant Species

Twenty-four special status plant species have the potential to occur in the region surrounding the project area (refer to Table 2 in Attachment 2). The majority of these plants would not have any potential to occur at the project route due to its elevation, which is lower than the ideal habitat for these species. Only one special status plant species was found to have the potential to occur along the project route: Marble Mountain companion (*Silene marmorensis*).

Marble Mountain companion. Only one special status plant species was found to have the potential to occur at the project route: Marble Mountain companion (*Silene marmorensis*). Marble Mountain companion is on the CNPS List 1B. The plants of List 1B are considered rare, threatened, or endangered in California and elsewhere. Most of the plants of List 1B have declined significantly over the last century.

The Marble Mountain companion occurs in broadleafed upland forests, chaparral, cismontane woodlands, and lower montane coniferous forests at elevations between approximately 560 feet and 4100 feet. The project route ranges from 1100 feet to 1200 feet in elevation, and would be suitable habitat for the Marble Mountain companion.

Wildlife

General Wildlife

The coniferous forest surrounding the project area supports a diverse assemblage of wildlife, which may cross or move along the road from time to time. Amphibians and reptiles such as the ensatina (*Ensatina eschscholtzii*), western fence lizard (*Sceloporus occidentalis*), western skink (*Eumeces skiltonianus*), and gopher snake (*Pituophis catenifer*), are expected to occur in the forest where sufficient cover (e.g., rock outcrops, logs, and dense leaf litter) exists.

Coniferous forests also provide habitat to a number of resident and migratory birds. Birds that could occur within the project area include the northern goshawk (*Accipiter gentiles*), chestnut-backed chickadee (*Poecile rufescens*), northern flicker (*Colaptes auratus*), pileated woodpecker (*Dryocopus pileatus*), and winter wren (*Troglodytes troglodytes*). These and other birds may nest, forage, or winter in habitats adjacent to the route.

The understory vegetation in coniferous forests provides foraging habitat and cover for several mammal species. Brush rabbits (*Sylvilagus bachmani*) primarily feed on forbs and grasses, while deer mice (*Peromyscus maniculatus*) prefer insects and seeds. A mixture of over- and understory vegetation provides abundant leaf litter and a variety of flowers, leaves, and berries for the dusky-footed woodrat (*Neotoma fuscipes*). The western gray squirrel (*Sciurus griseus*) forages on a broad variety of fruits and green foliage both in trees and on the ground. The abundance of small mammals also potentially attracts larger mammalian predators known to occur in the region, including coyotes (*Canis latrans*), gray foxes (*Urocyon cinereoargenteus*), and mountain lions (*Puma concolor*).

Special Status Wildlife Species

Twenty-two special status animal species occur, or once occurred, in the project region (refer to Table 2 in Attachment 2). Only six of these species would have the potential to occur on the project route. These species are presented in Table 3.5-1 and include:

- Bald eagle (*Haliaeetus leucocephalus*)
- Peregrine falcon (*Falco peregrinus anatum*)
- Northern goshawk (*Accipiter gentilis*)
- Black swift (*Cypseloides niger*)
- Vaux’s swift (*Chaetura vauxi*)
- Pallid bat (*Antrozous pallidus*)

Table 3.5-1: Special Status Wildlife Species with the Potential to Occur Along the Project Route			
Common Name	Scientific Name	Listing Status	Habitat
Birds			
Bald eagle	<i>Haliaeetus leucocephalus</i>	Federal Status: None State Status: CE	Nests in the upper canopy of large trees, especially conifers, near lakes, reservoirs, and rivers
Peregrine falcon	<i>Falco peregrinus anatum</i>	Federal Status: None State Status: CE	Individuals breed on cliffs in the Sierra or in coastal habitats; occurs in many habitats of the state during migration and winter
Northern goshawk	<i>Accipiter gentilis</i>	Federal Status: None State Status: CSC	Coniferous forests, usually nesting in large trees on north slopes near water
Black swift	<i>Cypseloides niger</i>	Federal Status: None State Status: CSC	Migrants and transients found throughout many habitats of the state. Breeds on steep cliffs or ocean bluffs, or in cracks and crevasses of inland deep canyons
Vaux’s swift	<i>Chaetura vauxi</i>	Federal Status: None State Status: CSC	Migrants and transients move through the foothills of the western Sierra in spring and late summer. Breeds in coniferous forests

Table 3.5-1 (Continued): Special Status Wildlife Species with the Potential to Occur Along the Project Route

Common Name	Scientific Name	Listing Status	Habitat
Mammals			
Pallid bat	<i>Antrozous pallidus</i>	Federal Status: None State Status: CSC	Grasslands, chapparal, woodlands, and forests of California; most common in dry rocky open areas that provide roosting opportunities
Notes: CE: California Endangered CSC: California Species of Special Concern			

SOURCE: Live Oak Associates, Inc. 2008

IMPACTS

a) Have a substantial adverse effect, either directly or through habitat modifications, on any species identified as a candidate, sensitive, or special status species in local or regional plans, policies, or regulations, or by the California Department of Fish and Game or U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service?

One special status plant species and six special status wildlife species have the potential to occur on the project route. Proposed trenching and conduit installation activities would have no effect on the six wildlife species described above as there is little or no likelihood that these species would be present during construction. These species would also experience little to no loss of habitat because the project is taking place within a roadway and its right-of-way.

The Marble Mountain companion may be directly at risk of being adversely affected by project activities. The extent to which this species occurs at the project route is not known. The proposed project could directly remove and destroy populations of Marble Mountain companion if the plant is present in areas that would be trenched or otherwise disturbed. Impacts to the Marble Mountain companion would be significant if the species occurs in roadside ditches where trenching would take place. Impacts would be reduced to less than significant levels with the implementation of mitigation described below.

The USFS maintains lists of sensitive plant and wildlife species. The USFS determined in its Categorical Exclusion that no sensitive, threatened, or endangered species would be adversely impacted by the issuance of the Special Use Permit or the continued use of National Forest land authorized by the permit.

Mitigation Measure BIO-1: A qualified biologist shall conduct focused surveys for Marble Mountain companion prior to project construction. Any plant(s) located during the survey would be flagged by the biologist and avoided during construction. If avoidance is not possible, the plant(s) shall be transplanted by the biologist according to a plan to be approved by the CDFG.

b) Have a substantial adverse effect on any riparian habitat or other sensitive natural community identified in local or regional plans, policies, or regulations, or by the California Department of Fish and Game or U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service?

Riparian habitat could be affected by project construction, particularly by the construction near the slope leading down to Salmon River, and at the Salmon River bridge crossing near the southern end of the project alignment. Management goals for Riparian Reserves, as outlined in the Klamath National Forest LRMP, include maintaining riparian-dependent structures and functions of intermittent streams, and being consistent with Aquatic Conservation Strategy Goals (USFS 2001). A hazardous materials spill could affect the water quality of Salmon River. Oil, fuel, asphalt, or other toxic materials could enter the waterway if spilled during construction. With the implementation of Mitigation Measures HM-1, which requires the development of a Spill Prevention and Contingency Plan (SPCP), the impacts to riparian habitat would be less than significant.

c) Have a substantial adverse effect on federally protected wetlands as defined by Section 404 of the Clean Water Act (including, but not limited to, marsh, vernal pool, coastal, etc.) through direct removal, filling, hydrological interruption, or other means?

There are no wetlands or jurisdictional waters within the project route. Cable would be installed beneath the roadway and above the culverts. The cable installed at the Salmon River crossing would be placed in a conduit and attached to the existing bridge. There would be no impacts to wetlands.

d) Interfere substantially with the movement of any native resident or migratory fish or wildlife species or with established native resident or migratory wildlife corridors, or impede the use of wildlife nursery sites?

The Salmon River runs along the route to the northeast at the bottom of a steep slope and facilitates the movement of wildlife through the region. The project route itself provides minimal dispersal habitat for native wildlife and does not function as a significant movement corridor for native wildlife. Proposed construction activities would not have a significant effect on home range and dispersal movements of native wildlife that may occur in the region. No barriers would be erected that would prevent migration or animal and fish movement. The proposed construction work could result in a temporary disruption of local wildlife movements and would be expected to do so only during daylight hours. These activities would not result in any permanent or substantial changes in use or movement patterns once construction is complete. Wildlife species presently utilizing this area as a corridor would continue moving through it after project build-out. Therefore, the proposed project would have a less than significant impact on corridor-type movements of native wildlife within the region.

e) Conflict with any local policies or ordinances protecting biological resources, such as a tree preservation policy or ordinance?

There are no local ordinances protecting biological resources known to be in effect for this area; The Klamath National Forest LRMP contains general management guidelines for biological resources in the Klamath National Forest, but does not contain ordinances. The proposed project would not conflict with any local policies or ordinances related to biological resources.

f) Conflict with the provisions of an adopted Habitat Conservation Plan, natural communities conservation plan, or other approved local, regional, or state habitat conservation plan?

Salmon River is a WSR. Management goals for WSRs, as outlined in the Klamath National Forest LRMP, include allowing ecological processes to shape the vegetation of the area. The proposed project would not conflict with this guideline. The Klamath National Forest LRMP also contains guidance for bald eagle management. The proposed project could deter birds from the project area during construction because of noise; however, there is abundant habitat in the surrounding area to accommodate this species. No trees would be removed as a result of the proposed project. The proposed project would not conflict with bald eagle guidelines. The Klamath National Forest LRMP contains guidelines for management of peregrine falcon nesting areas; however, there is foraging habitat, but no suitable nesting habitat for peregrine falcon within the project alignment, and no impacts would occur.

Management goals for Riparian Reserves, as outlined in the Klamath National Forest LRMP, include maintaining riparian-dependent structures and functions of intermittent streams, and being consistent with Aquatic Conservation Strategy Goals (USFS 2001). A hazardous materials spill could affect the water quality of Salmon River. Oil, fuel, asphalt, or other toxic materials could enter the waterway if spilled during construction. With the implementation of Mitigation Measures HM-1, which requires the development of a Spill Prevention and Contingency Plan (SPCP), impacts involving regional habitat conservation plans would be less than significant.

3.6 Cultural Resources

<i>Would the project:</i>	<i>Potentially Significant Impact</i>	<i>Potentially Significant Unless Mitigation Incorporated</i>	<i>Less than Significant Impact</i>	<i>No Impact</i>
a) <i>Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource as defined in §15064.5?</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b) <i>Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of an archaeological resource pursuant to §15064.5?</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c) <i>Directly or indirectly destroy a unique paleontological resource or site or unique geological feature?</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d) <i>Disturb any human remains, including those interred outside of formal cemeteries?</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

EXISTING CONDITIONS

Ethnography

The Karuk, Shasta, and Konomihu Tribes have inhabited the area around the Salmon River for thousands of years. The Salmon River is still culturally important for the Shasta and Karuk Tribes. A majority of the Salmon River watershed is in the Karuk Tribe's ancestral territory. The area at the interface between the Salmon and Klamath Rivers, about 7 miles east of the project alignment, is known to the Karuk people as Katamin, "the Center of the World". The Karuk Tribe continues to hold traditional ceremonies at this location (SRRC 2008).

Historic Resources

The history of the project area is closely associated with the discovery of gold and subsequent mining activity in California. Gold was first found in the area in 1850 near Yreka, California on the Shasta River, and prospectors may have traveled north from the Trinity River region into the Salmon River area at around the same time. A hotel was built at Forks of Salmon, California by 1851. The town of Forks of Salmon became a supply center for local miners and had a saw mill, bars, and a store.

The Salmon River area became a rich gold bearing region, and many mining claims were located along the river and tributary streams. The region was still producing in 1906. By approximately 1914, many mines on the North Fork of the Salmon River were inactive because there was not enough water to sustain placer and hydraulic mining. Only one mining company was reported as operating around Forks of Salmon by 1919.

Gold mining enjoyed a resurgence during the Great Depression. Small-scale placer mines fueled a dramatic increase in mining operations over a period of 15 years culminating in 1940 when California saw the greatest amount of gold mining activity since 1856. Placer and hydraulic mining claims in the vicinity of the project area were part of the Liberty Mining District and included the Morehouse Mine, Sauerkraut Mine, Crapo Mine, and Bloomer Mine.

Paleontological Resources

There are no known paleontological resources in the project area. Most of the project would be constructed by trenching into road-fill material or into the weathered portions of the Pre-Cretaceous Age metamorphic rocks. The rocks are not likely to contain identifiable fossils because they are

metamorphic; however, there is some sandstone and greywacke in the project area, which has the potential to contain fossils.

Records Search Results

A records and information search of the Nordheimer project area was conducted by the Northeast Information Center (NEIC) of the California Historical Resources Information System for Pacific Legacy and Synthesis Planning on August 15, 2008 (I.C. File No. D08-64). This records search included a review of:

- Historic Properties Directory (California Office of Historic Preservation 2007)
- California Inventory of Historic Resources (State of California 1976)
- The May 1992 listing for the California Points of Historical Interest (State of California 1992)
- National Register of Historic Places (*Directory of Determinations of Eligibility*, California Office of Historic Preservation, Volumes I and II, 2001)

A records search revealed that one previous archaeological survey had been conducted within the project area and had wholly encompassed the project area. One additional study was conducted adjacent to the project area, though the study did not overlap the project area. One previously recorded cultural resource was noted within the project area, and ten additional cultural resources sites were known to exist within a 0.5-mile radius of the project area. None of these resources have been evaluated or deemed eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP).

Nine of the previously recorded cultural resources noted within a 0.5-mile radius of the project area were historic, while one contained both prehistoric and historic elements. These historic resources were almost all related to mining and mining-related settlement of the area. The previously recorded resource (CA-SIS-391H) found within about 30 feet of either side of Salmon River Road is historic and consists of a placer mining area with one grave site, according to the records search. The site has been disturbed and presently contains two small ditch segments infilled with mine tailings.

The Native American Heritage Commission (NAHC) was contacted in order to solicit comments on the proposed project route and area. No sites of particular Native American traditional or religious importance have been identified as being within the proposed project route according to the NAHC. The NAHC provided a list of Native American stakeholders with local knowledge of the region. Letters were sent to the persons on this list, which included representatives of the Quartz Valley Indian Community, and representatives of the Karuk Tribe. One response was received from a member of the Karuk Tribe. The commenter informed Pacific Legacy of an ethnographic gathering site in close proximity to the project route, and the potential for buried prehistoric resources in the flatter areas of the roadway that could be obscured by roadway construction. See Attachment 3 for consultation letters.

Archaeological Study

A pedestrian survey of the project area was conducted on September 24, 2008. A corridor of approximately 30 feet to either side of Salmon River Road was proposed as the survey area. This survey area is considerably larger than the proposed project corridor. A survey of the larger corridor would allow for changes to be made in the construction corridor without the need to conduct a second, larger cultural resource survey. Certain survey areas in the proposed survey

corridor are characterized by areas of extreme slope, which made it necessary to contract the width of the survey corridor for most of the length of the proposed telecommunications route.

Four new cultural resources were identified during the survey, and one resource was noted but not designated. Resource NP3 is a ditch, which would have been primarily used for carrying water for mining operations or to camps. Resources NP4, NP5, and NP6 are mining sites with various features, such as prospecting pits and mine tailings. Another mine location was depicted on a map, but it was unclear whether or not this location represented a historic or active mine, so no resource designation was assigned.

A previously designated midden site with lithic scatter (CA-SIS-363) was also surveyed. No surface manifestations of the site, as listed in the records search, were noted during the pedestrian survey. However, there is a possibility for buried cultural resources at this site. A previously designated historic mining site (CA-SIS-391H) was surveyed. This site has been disturbed and the remaining portions were two small ditch segments.

IMPACTS

a) Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource as defined in §15064.5?

Construction has the potential to affect a designated historic resource (e.g., NP3, NP4, NP5, NP6, and CA-SIS-391H) that are within 30 feet of the roadway. To ensure that these historic resources would not be affected, Mitigation Measure CR-1 would require that these cultural resources are marked on construction plans, and that construction plans be monitored as necessary to accommodate avoidance of the resources. Mitigation Measure CR-2 would require that a buffer zone be designated and marked around these features prior to the start of construction. Mitigation Measure CR-3 would require that construction personnel be briefed on the nature of the resource and instructed not to enter the exclusion zones. With implementation of these three mitigation measures, impacts to historic resources would be less than significant.

Mitigation Measure CR-1: Areas containing historic resources (e.g., NP3, NP4, NP5, NP6, and CA-SIS-391H) shall be marked on construction plans, and construction plans shall be modified to accommodate avoidance of these locations.

Mitigation Measure CR-2: A buffer zone around historic resources shall be established prior to construction in consultation with a qualified archaeologist, and this buffer area shall be flagged on the ground as an exclusion zone where no construction or surface disturbance shall take place.

Mitigation Measure CR-3: Construction personnel shall be briefed on the nature of the resource and instructed not to enter the flagged exclusion zones.

b) Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of an archaeological resource pursuant to §15064.5?

Project activities that involve ground disturbance in the roadway could affect undiscovered cultural resources obscured by the roadway and buried under flatter areas of Salmon River Road. Trenching under the roadway could affect such resources. Mitigation Measure CR-4 would require monitoring by a qualified archaeologist in flat areas where the original ground surface would be exposed.

Construction activities within the midden site with lithic scatter (CA-SIS-363) could potentially encounter buried prehistoric cultural materials. Mitigation Measure CR-5 would require that a qualified archaeologist monitor all surface disturbances within this area. Mitigation Measure CR-

6 would require that a Native American monitor be present for all surface-disturbing activities at this site.

Construction personnel would be instructed that cultural remains could be encountered during construction per Mitigation Measure CR-7. Construction personnel would be informed that if buried cultural materials are found, work in the area and in the immediate vicinity must immediately stop and a qualified archaeologist must be contacted immediately. With implementation of these mitigation measures, impacts to archeological resources would be less than significant.

Mitigation Measure CR-4: Monitoring by a qualified archaeologist shall be required for ground-disturbing activities in areas where original ground surface would be exposed in flat areas. Archeological monitoring shall include inspection of exposed materials to determine if artifacts are present. The monitor shall have authority to temporarily halt or divert construction away from exposed resources in order to recover specimens.

Mitigation Measure CR-5: A qualified archaeologist shall monitor construction activities and collect any cultural materials encountered. The archaeologist shall have the authority to stop construction as needed to collect or assess cultural materials in consultation with Siskiyou County and the USFS (if on USFS property). The location of any cultural materials shall be recorded on a scaled map. If substantial deposits are encountered, these remains shall be drawn and photographed in plan and profile views and recorded on a scaled map. The results of monitoring shall be presented in a final report, to be submitted to the CPUC, summarizing the results of fiber optic trenching.

Mitigation Measure CR-6: A Native American monitor shall be required at site CA-SIS-363 for all ground disturbing activity at the site.

Mitigation Measure CR-7: All construction personnel shall be alerted to the possibility of buried cultural remains (prehistoric and historic resources). Personnel shall be instructed that upon discovery of buried cultural materials, work in the immediate vicinity of the find shall cease and a qualified archaeologist be contacted immediately.

c) Directly or indirectly destroy a unique paleontological resource or site or unique geologic feature?

No known paleontological resources exist in the project right-of-way. However, there is a possibility of locating undiscovered paleontological resources, such as fossils, during construction. Should a paleontological resource be located during project activities, Mitigation Measure CR-8 would require that a qualified paleontologist examine the specimen and ensure that it is prepared to the point of curation, identified by qualified experts, listed in a database to allow analysis, and deposited in a designated repository. There are no unique geologic features within the project alignment. With implementation of mitigation, impacts to paleontological resources would be less than significant.

Mitigation Measure CR-8: If a paleontological resource, such as a fossil, is discovered during construction, the recovered resource shall be examined by a qualified paleontologist. According to the paleontologist's findings, the resource shall be prepared to the point of curation, identified by qualified experts, listed in a database to allow analysis, and deposited in a designated repository.

d) Disturb any human remains, including those interred outside of formal cemeteries?

One grave site was recorded in resource CA-SIS-363; however, no surface evidence was found of this resource. The potential of encountering remains is very low. If human remains are

identified during project construction, Mitigation Measure CR-9 would require notification of the Siskiyou County Coroner and the NAHC. Impacts to human remains would be less than significant with implementation of this mitigation measure.

Mitigation Measure CR-9: If human remains are encountered during the course of excavation, all construction activities in the vicinity of the find shall cease, and the Siskiyou County Coroner shall be notified immediately. If remains are determined to be Native American, then the NAHC shall be notified within 24 hours as required by Public Resources Code 5097.

3.7 Geology and Soils

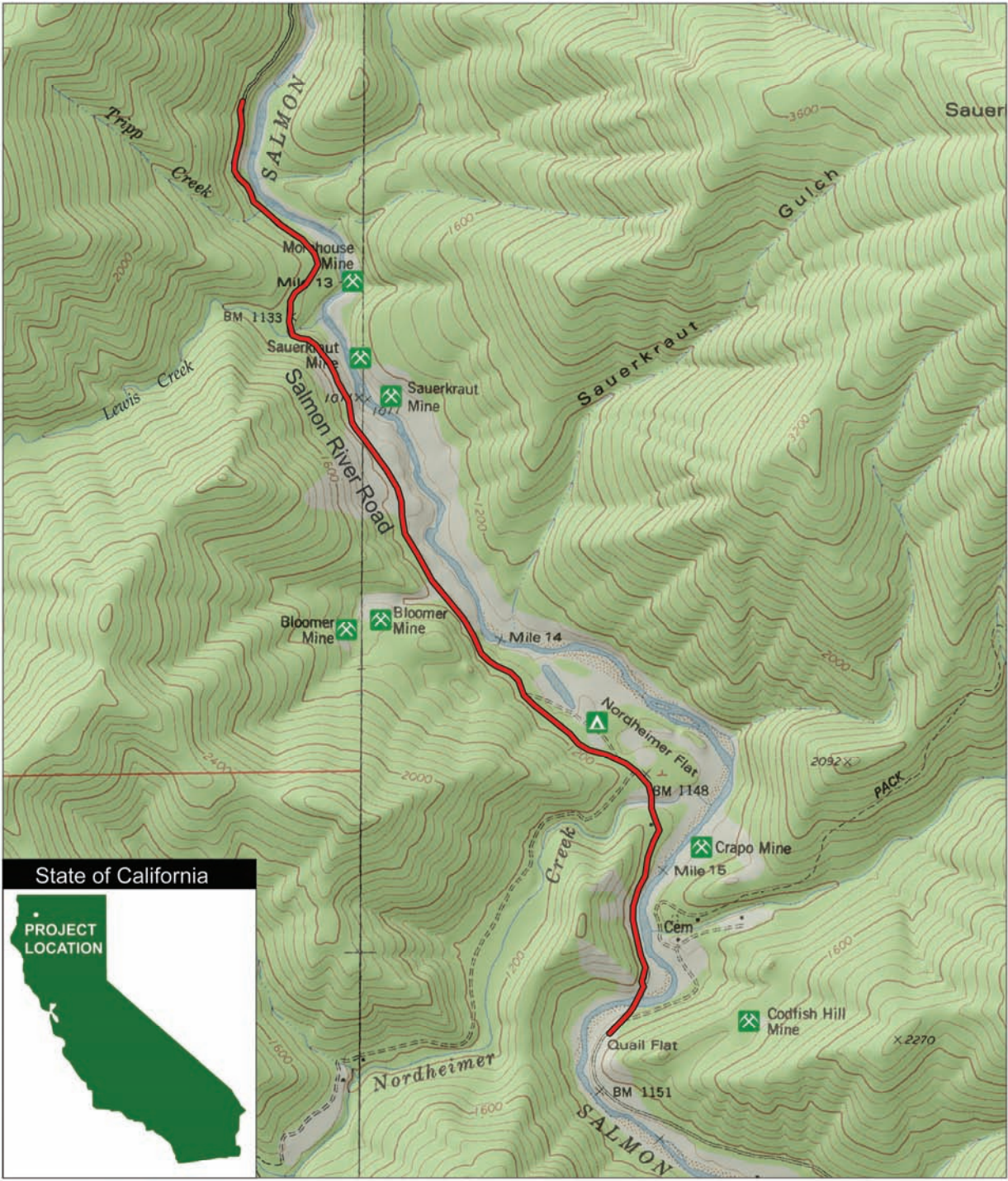
<i>Would the project:</i>	<i>Potentially Significant Impact</i>	<i>Potentially Significant Unless Mitigation Incorporated</i>	<i>Less than Significant Impact</i>	<i>No Impact</i>
a) <i>Expose people or structures to potential substantial adverse effects, including the risk of loss, injury, or death involving:</i>				
i) <i>Rupture of a known earthquake fault, as delineated on the most recent Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zoning Map issued by the State Geologist for the area or based on other substantial evidence of a known fault? Refer to Division of Mines and Geology Special Publication 42.</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
ii) <i>Strong seismic ground shaking?</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
iii) <i>Seismic-related ground failure, including liquefaction?</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
iv) <i>Landslides?</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b) <i>Result in substantial soil erosion or loss of topsoil?</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c) <i>Be located on a geological unit or soil that is unstable, or that would become unstable as a result of the project, and potentially result in on- or off-site landslide, lateral spreading, subsidence, liquefaction, or collapse?</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d) <i>Be located on expansive soil, as defined in Table 18-1-B of the Uniform Building Code (1994) creating substantial risks to life or property?</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
e) <i>Have soils incapable of adequately supporting the use of septic tanks or alternative wastewater disposal systems where sewers are not available for the disposal of wastewater?</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

EXISTING CONDITIONS

Geology



The proposed project route is located in the Coast Range system in the Klamath Mountains geomorphic province of California. Rugged topography with prominent peaks typifies the Klamath Mountain province (CGS 2002). Elevations in the project route vicinity range between 800 and 5,000 feet above sea level. Topography in the vicinity of the proposed project is shown in Figure 3.7-1. The project area geology consists of Pre-Cretaceous Age metamorphic rocks, chiefly greywacke, sandstone, and other related weathered products (Franks 2008). There is one small, almost vertical bed of serpentinite (Franks 2008). There is a minimal accumulation of sediment and weathered bedrock next to and below most of the existing roadway (Franks 2008). The Salmon




Figure 3.7-1: Proposed Project Alignment and Topography



SOURCE: ESRI 2006, USGS 1985, and RMT 2008

LEGEND

— Proposed Project Alignment (2.76 miles)
  Campground
 Mine (inactive)

Initial Study
Siskiyou Telephone Nordheimer Project

River and Nordheimer Creek crossings have an accumulation of stream transported sands, boulders, and gravel (Franks 2008).

Existing grade within the proposed alignment is generally flat to gentle-sloping, and the roadway is paved. Topography adjacent to Salmon River Road is generally steep-sloped. There are numerous small active land creeps that are moving slowly down slope, caused by near surface water (Franks 2008). These land creeps are evidenced by the growth of small trees on the hillsides, which show a curvature that indicates that the near surface soil and rock system is moving at a slow rate down slope, with the top two or three feet of the trees being almost vertical, and the lower 5 to 20 feet of trunk bent to a 5-30 degree downhill angle (Franks 2008). The trees indicate that there is near surface water in the system causing the near surface materials and rocks to slide down hill at a very slow rate (Franks 2008). This movement is typical in much of the Coast Range. Tree roots are penetrating the joint and crack systems in the greywacke in some of the road cuts and rock slide areas. (Franks 2008). Therefore, existing higher and steeper slopes are being destabilized, and in the future will be subject to landslides (Franks 2008).

Soils

There are six soil types present in the project area (Table 3.7-1).

Table 3.7-1: Soil Type Characteristics	
Soil Types	Characteristics
<i>Aiken family-Dumps, mine tailings association:</i>	Consists of mine tailings and residuum weathered from serpentinite. The Aiken family is well-drained and not prone to flooding. The mine tailings are extremely cobbly. Aiken family soils are gravelly loam, gravelly clay loam, gravelly clay, silt loam, and gravelly silt loam.
<i>Clallam, deep-Deadwood families association:</i>	Consists of residuum weathered from metamorphic rock. The Clallam and Deadwood families are well-drained and not prone to flooding. The Clallam family soils are very gravelly loam, very gravelly clay loam, and extremely gravelly loam on top of bedrock. The Deadwood family soil is extremely gravelly loam on top of bedrock.
<i>Deadwood-Clallam, deep families association:</i>	Consists of residuum weathered from metamorphic rock. The Deadwood and Clallam families are well-drained and not prone to flooding. The Deadwood family soil is extremely gravelly loam on top of bedrock. The Clallam family soils are very gravelly loam, very gravelly clay loam, and extremely gravelly loam on top of bedrock.
<i>Deadwood family-Rock outcrop association:</i>	Consists of residuum weathered from metamorphic rock. The Deadwood family is well-drained and not prone to flooding. The Deadwood family soil is extremely gravelly loam on top of bedrock. The rock outcrop consists of unweathered bedrock.
<i>Holland-Aiken families association:</i>	Consists of residuum weathered from igneous and metamorphic rock, including serpentinite. The Holland and Aiken families are well-drained and not prone to flooding. The Holland family soils are gravelly loam, gravelly clay loam, and gravelly sandy clay loam. The Aiken family soils are gravelly loam, gravelly clay loam, gravelly clay, gravelly silt loam, and silt loam.
<i>Riverwash:</i>	Consists of sandy and gravelly alluvium. The Riverwash is excessively drained and frequently prone to flooding.

SOURCE: USDA 2008

Faulting and Seismicity

The closest fault is the Grogan Fault, which is 32 miles to the west of the project area (Bryant 2005). The closest Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zone is the Mad River Fault Zone, which is 44.5 miles to the west of the project area (USGS 2004). Available data suggest that the recurrence interval for earthquakes in the Mad River fault zone is between 3,000 and 5,000 years. The maximum magnitude for the Little Salmon Fault, which is part of the Mad River Fault Zone, is

estimated between 7.0 and 7.3 (Humboldt County 2000). The potential source of a larger earthquake is the Cascadia Subduction Zone, which extends from Cape Mendocino in California to British Columbia in Canada. The Cascadia Subduction Zone could produce up to a magnitude 9.5 earthquake. The most recent event on the Cascadia Subduction Zone occurred approximately 300 years ago, and earthquakes are estimated to occur at intervals of approximately 600 years (Humboldt County 2000, Goldfinger et al. 2003). No active faults have been mapped within the proposed project route.

IMPACTS

a) Expose people or structures to potential substantial adverse effects, including the risk of loss, injury, or death involving:

i. Rupture of a known earthquake fault, as delineated on the most recent Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zoning Map issued by the State Geologist for the area or based on other substantial evidence of a known fault?

There is a potential for earthquakes to occur on the Mad River Fault Zone and the Cascadia Subduction Zone; however, there is no potential for ground rupture in the area because of its distance from the fault zone.

ii. Strong seismic ground shaking?

The potential for strong ground shaking is less-than significant because of its distance from the fault zone and the relatively long time between earthquakes.

iii. Seismic-related ground failure, including liquefaction?

The soils on which construction would occur are all well-drained; no construction would take place on the Riverwash. Soil must retain water for liquefaction to occur; therefore, liquefaction and ground failure would not be expected to occur as a result of the project.

iv. Landslides?

There are several small active land creeps in the project area. The proposed project would help stabilize these land creeps with proper mitigation as outlined in Mitigation Measure Geology-1. With the addition of this mitigation measure, impacts due to unstable geologic units or soil would be less than significant.

Mitigation Measure GEO-1: Gravel backfilled telecommunication line trenches shall have direct connectivity with all down drains crossing the road and a natural down hill drainage system. This connectivity shall be shown on project construction drawings, and shall be submitted for the review and approval of Siskiyou County engineering division staff prior to project construction.

b) Result in substantial erosion or loss of topsoil?

All construction would occur in the road right-of-way, where soils have been previously graded, compacted, and paved. Most of the project would be constructed by trenching into road fill material or into the weathered portions of the Pre-Cretaceous metamorphic rocks. Where possible, the hard rock areas would be avoided by working in the ditch or shoulder of the road and into and under the asphalt road bed materials. Avoiding trenching in hard-rock areas would reduce production of loose sediment and reduce erosion caused by the project. Some above-ground items, such as pedestals to access the buried cable conduit, would be constructed as part of the project, but these project elements would not affect the stability or the erosion

potential of the hillsides. No slope cutting is anticipated because slope gradients along the terrestrial route are flat. Surface restoration activities are included in the project design. The goal of the restoration is to return the project route to its pre-construction condition. Restoration would include pavement repair, and pavement re-striping where appropriate. In unpaved areas, restoration would include replacement of original topsoil with topsoil collected during trench excavation, and tamping down the topsoil. This restoration would help reduce erosion to disturbed areas. Erosion impacts would be less than significant.

c) Be located on a geologic unit or soil that is unstable, or that would become unstable as a result of the project, and potentially result in on- or off-site landslide, lateral spreading, subsidence, liquefaction or collapse?

Trenches for the telecommunication lines would not be dug to a depth that would trigger new land slides or activate existing land slides. Trenches would be backfilled with a few inches of Class II Base Rock before the installation of the cable conduits. After installation of the conduits, the trenches would be backfilled to near surface with more Class II Base Rock, and either paved over or backfilled with native soil depending on whether the trench is located in the paved roadway or the unpaved shoulder. This new length of clean-gravel filled ditch would provide a natural drainage system to collect near surface water that could have flowed down gradient. This intercepted water could provide a collection and disposal system of water that otherwise could cause landslides. The installation of this telecommunication line, if properly drained, would be beneficial to the stability of Salmon River Road. Mitigation Measure Geology -1 would require connectivity with all down drains crossing the road to prevent water accumulation in buried conduits, which could otherwise further stabilize the slope. With the identified mitigation, the potential of the project to cause landslides would be less-than significant.

d) Be located on expansive soil, as defined in Table 18-1-B of the Uniform Building Code (1994), creating substantial risks to life or property?

The project would not be located on expansive soils. No impacts due to expansive soils are expected to occur.

e) Have soils incapable of adequately supporting the use of septic tanks or alternative waste water disposal systems where sewers are not available for the disposal of waste water?

No septic tank would be needed for the proposed project. There would be no impact to geology or soils as a result of a septic tank.

3.8 Hazards and Hazardous Materials

<i>Would the project:</i>	<i>Potentially Significant Impact</i>	<i>Potentially Significant Unless Mitigation Incorporated</i>	<i>Less than Significant Impact</i>	<i>No Impact</i>
<i>a) Create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through the routine transport, use, or disposal of hazardous materials?</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<i>b) Create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through reasonably foreseeable upset and accident conditions involving the likely release of hazardous materials into the environment?</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<i>c) Emit hazardous emissions or handle hazardous or acutely hazardous materials, substances, or waste within one-quarter mile of an existing or proposed school?</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<i>d) Be located on a site which is included on a list of hazardous materials sites compiled pursuant to Government Code Section 65962.5 and, as a result, would it create a significant hazard to the public or the environment?</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
<i>e) The creation of or exposure to potential health hazards?</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<i>f) For a project located within an airport land use plan or, where such a plan has not been adopted, within two miles of a public airport or public use airport, would the project result in a safety hazard for people residing or working in the project area?</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
<i>g) For a project within the vicinity of a private airstrip, would the project result in safety hazard for people residing or working in the project area?</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
<i>h) Impair implementation of or physically interfere with an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan?</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<i>i) Expose people or structures to the risk of loss, injury, or death involving wildland fires, including where wildlands are adjacent to urbanized areas or where residences are intermixed with wildlands?</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

EXISTING CONDITIONS

The proposed project route is located within a public roadway right-of-way. The project route is a developed road and was forest prior to construction of Salmon River Road. It is highly unlikely that the route has been used as an illegal dumping ground or contaminated with any hazardous materials. The proposed project route is therefore likely free of any hazardous material or waste. There are no sites included in the Cortese List that are close to the project alignment. There are no

Superfund sites or leaking underground storage tanks within the project alignment (SWRCB 2008, CALEPA 2008).

Fires are naturally occurring phenomena in forested areas, and serve to shape and reshape the vegetative patterns and structures of these areas. The project is located in the Klamath National Forest. Most recorded wildfires in the Klamath National Forest in recent history have been started by lightning strikes, which is an uncontrollable and unpredictable source of ignition. About 75% of the fires in the Klamath National Forest have been started by lightning during the periods for which fire records are currently available (1950 through 1990). The remaining 25% of fires have been started by people (BLM 2002).

IMPACTS

a) Create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through the routine transport, use, or disposal of hazardous materials?

Hazardous materials, such as fuels and asphalt, would be transported on public roads to and from the project area. All transport activities would follow federal, state, and local regulations. In addition to spills, small quantities of hazardous wastes, such as waste oil, could be generated during maintenance activities. Hazardous wastes also must be handled according to applicable regulations. Waste oils and other wastes considered hazardous by the State of California would be transported to a Resource Conservation and Recovery Act (RCRA)-certified treatment, storage, and disposal facility and disposed of at a Class I hazardous waste landfill. Siskiyou Telephone would prepare and follow an SPCP and train workers under this plan as outlined in Mitigation Measure HM-1. With implementation of Mitigation Measure HM-1, impacts on the use, transport, and disposal of hazardous materials would be less than significant.

Mitigation Measure HM-1: Siskiyou Telephone shall prepare an SPCP for construction activities. At a minimum, the plan shall include the following standard operation procedures for spill prevention, hazard assessment, spill prevention and containment, emergency response procedure, and closing the spill incident:

- 1) Before construction begins, workers who would be on-site shall be trained to recognize and respond to spills in accordance with the SPCP plan and the proper protocols and procedures for contacting the appropriate authorities. Construction crews shall have an emergency spill kit containing absorbent brooms and pads, personal protective equipment, and emergency response guidance.
- 2) Construction equipment shall be maintained and kept in operating condition to reduce the likelihood of line breaks and leakage. Any vehicles with chronic or continuous leaks shall be removed from the construction area and repaired before being returned to operation.
- 5) Absorbent material or drip pans shall be placed beneath vehicles during equipment storage, maintenance, and refueling. Refueling shall take place only in designated areas. Any fluids drained from equipment shall be collected in leak proof containers and taken to an appropriate disposal or recycling facility.
- 6) If portable chemical toilets are used, the toilets shall not be placed near environmentally sensitive areas, such as adjacent to the creek. A commercial vendor shall maintain the self-contained chemical toilets in good working order to ensure that there are no leaks, and shall pump the toilets as necessary to prevent overflow. The vendor shall be responsible for proper off-site disposal of the wastes.

b) Create a significant hazards to the public or the environment through reasonably foreseeable upset and accident conditions involving the release of hazardous materials into the environment?

An oil or hazardous materials release from trenching, boring, or improper handling; vehicle collisions; fires; damage to existing utility lines and poles; or the general risks associated with the installation could occur as a result of the project. Accidents or improper handling or containment of hazardous materials stored on-site during construction could result in spills. Should a spill occur, all hazardous waste generated would be disposed of according to appropriate state and federal regulations, including Occupation Safety and Health Regulations (OSHA) regulations. The appropriate disposal method would depend on the type of waste generated. Siskiyou Telephone would also follow the SPCP as required by Mitigation Measure HM-1.

Spills of fuels or any other materials transported by the vehicles may occur during traffic collisions. The increased traffic due to the additional vehicles and the occasional, temporary obstruction of traffic would increase the risk of vehicle collisions. This risk increases during severe storm weather. The increased risk of traffic collisions would be less than significant because of the light use of the road and because construction would only occur in the dry season. A Health and Safety Plan and Traffic Control Plan would be prepared per Mitigation Measure HM-2, and crews would be trained to follow the safety measures outlined in this plan.

Workers could potentially be exposed to asbestos as there may be serpentinite in the areas where they would be trenching. Only one kind of serpentinite is asbestiform (chrysotile). To ensure that workers do not disturb asbestiform serpentinite, a certified geologist shall test serpentinite found in the project area for asbestos prior to the commencement of construction activities as outlined in Mitigation Measure HM-3. If asbestos is found, the project plans shall be changed to avoid the serpentinite. If avoidance is not possible, all OSHA regulations shall be followed during work that could expose the construction crew to asbestos. With implementation of these mitigation measures, impacts on the accidental release of hazardous materials would be less than significant.

Mitigation Measure HM-2: Implementation of the following measures would minimize potential hazards to workers and the public:

- 1) The construction contractor shall develop and implement a Health and Safety Plan consistent with OSHA Regulations 29 CFR 1910 and 29 CFR 1926. The Health and Safety Plan shall identify physical and chemical hazards that could result from proposed operations.
- 2) The construction crew shall be trained in safety measures for the following activities: trenching and excavation safety, work zone safety, cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR), spill prevention and control, and safe vehicle handling along public rights-of-way.
- 3) Per Mitigation Measure TT-2, the contractor shall prepare and submit a Traffic Control Plan prepared in accordance with CalTrans and Siskiyou County Public Works Road Department guidelines for approval before beginning construction. Copies of the approved traffic control plans shall be on-site during construction.

Mitigation Measure HM-3: A certified geologist shall test serpentinite found in the project area for asbestos prior to the commencement of construction activities. If asbestos is found, the project plans shall be changed to avoid the serpentinite. If avoidance is not possible, all OSHA regulations shall be followed during work that could expose the construction crew to asbestos.

c) Emit hazardous emissions or handle hazardous or acutely hazardous materials, substances, or waste within one-quarter mile of an existing or proposed school?

There are no school sites within one-quarter mile of the proposed project alignment. Hazardous materials, such as fuels and asphalt, would be transported on public roads to and from the project area. Transportation routes would pass by public schools, such as Forks of Salmon Elementary School in Forks of Salmon, California. All transport activities would follow federal, state, and local regulations. Impacts would not occur and mitigation would not be required.

d) Be located on a site which is included on a list of hazardous materials sites compiled pursuant to Government Code Section 65962.5 and, as a result, would it create a significant hazard to the public or the environment?

There are no listed hazardous materials sites within the project alignment. There would be no impact associated with listed hazardous materials sites.

e) For a project located within an airport land use plan or, where such a plan has not been adopted, within two miles of a public airport or public use airport, would the project result in a safety hazard for people residing or working in the project area?

The project is not located within two miles of a public airport. Impacts would not occur and mitigation would not be required.

f) For a project within the vicinity of a private airstrip, would the project result in a safety hazard for people residing or working in the project area?

There are no private airstrips in the vicinity of the project alignment. No impacts to public safety hazards for people residing or working in the project area would occur.

g) Impair implementation of or physically interfere with an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan?

Access for emergency vehicles and evacuation from nearby areas in case of wildfire could be hindered by construction. Mitigation Measure HM-4 would require that the area of Salmon River Road at which construction activities are taking place be set up so that the entire road would not be blocked at any one time in order to decrease the risk of blocking emergency vehicle access. Metal plates would be kept nearby when trenching crosses through the roadway to cover trenches in case an emergency vehicle needs to pass through the construction area when complete road closure is necessary. With implementation of this mitigation measure, impacts to emergency vehicle access would be less than significant.

Mitigation Measures HM-4: The construction area shall be set up so that the entire road would not be blocked at any one time. If this is not feasible, then metal plates shall be kept nearby to cover trenches in case an emergency vehicle needs to pass through the construction area, or in case of evacuation.

h) Expose people or structures to significant risk of loss, injury or death involving wildland fires, including where wildlands are adjacent to urbanized areas or where residences are intermixed with wildlands?

The majority of the proposed project is surrounded by undeveloped, forested land. The natural vegetation increases risks for wildfire. There is a possibility to start a fire during construction as a result of the proposed project. The most likely cause of fire would be workers smoking and disposing of cigarettes off the road in dry grass, or vehicles parked over tall grass. As a part of

best construction practices, each vehicle on the construction area would be equipped with a fire extinguisher. Mitigation Measure HM-5 would require training of construction crews in fire prevention measures. Mitigation Measure HM-6 would allow smoking only in designated areas. Implementation of Mitigation Measures HM-5 and -6 would reduce impacts associated with ignition of wildfires to less than significant levels.

Mitigation Measure HM-5: Contractors shall receive training regarding the proper handling and/or storage of potential fire hazards, potential ignition sources (such as smoking or sparking equipment), and appropriate types of fire protection equipment.

Mitigation Measure HM-6: Smoking shall be allowed only in designated areas.

3.9 Hydrology and Water Quality

<i>Would the project:</i>	Potentially Significant Impact	Potentially Significant Unless Mitigation Incorporated	Less than Significant Impact	No Impact
<i>a) Violate any water quality standards or waste discharge requirements?</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
<i>b) Substantially deplete groundwater supplies or interfere substantially with groundwater recharge such that there would be a net deficit in aquifer volume or a lowering of the local groundwater table level (i.e., the production rate of pre-existing nearby wells would drop to a level which would not support existing land uses or planned uses for which permits have been granted)?</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
<i>c) Substantially alter the existing drainage pattern of the site or area, including through the alteration of the course of a stream or river, in a manner that would result in substantial erosion or siltation on- or off-site?</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
<i>d) Substantially alter the existing drainage pattern of the site or area, including through the alteration of the course of a stream or river, or substantially increase the rate or amount of surface runoff in a manner that would result in flooding on- or off-site?</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
<i>e) Create or contribute runoff water which would exceed the capacity of existing or planned stormwater drainage systems to provide substantial additional sources of polluted runoff?</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
<i>f) Otherwise substantially degrade water quality?</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<i>g) Place housing within a 100-year flood plain, as mapped on a federal Flood Hazard Boundary or Flood Insurance Rate Map or other hazard delineation map?</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
<i>h) Place within 100-year flood plain structures that would impede or redirect flood flows?</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
<i>i) Expose people or structures to a significant risk of loss, injury, or death involving flooding, including flooding as a result of the failure of a levee or dam?</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
<i>j) Inundation by seiche, tsunami, or mudflow?</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

EXISTING CONDITIONS

The project route is located within the jurisdiction of the North Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board. The proposed alignment crosses over Nordheimer Creek, Salmon River, Tripp Creek, and Lewis Creek. The Salmon River crossing is a bridge, while the three creek crossings are culverts. The Salmon River begins at the Marble, Russian, and Trinity Alps Mountains in

northern California. The Salmon River is a tributary of the Klamath River, and the two rivers converge at Somes Bar, California. The water in the Salmon River is of high quality.

The road is, on average, 450 horizontal feet away from the Salmon River, and is elevated 30 to 150 feet above the Salmon River along the extent of the project. There are several culverts that go under Salmon River Road along the length of the project area. There are drainage ditches parallel to the road in some places. The depth to the water table in the project area is greater than 80 inches (USDA 2008).

The Salmon River is designated a Wild and Scenic River (WSR). The Klamath National Forest Plan outlines certain goals for WSRs. The management goals related to hydrology are: prohibit water supply dams and major diversions; oppose hydroelectric facilities in most cases; and, prohibit flood control dams and levees (USFS 2001).

No mineralization, such as pyrite or other acid producing minerals that could affect water quality when disturbed, was observed during the site visit on July 15, 2008. In some areas uphill and downhill from the project alignment, there were large beds of wild blackberry bushes with ripe fruit. These bushes indicate near-surface water. These areas of near-surface water are all above or below the areas that would be disturbed by construction of this telecommunication line (Franks 2008).

IMPACTS

a) Violate any water quality standards or waste discharge requirements?

The proposed project would not discharge storm water or other contaminated liquids into any surface water feature during construction activities. Salmon River Road is, on average, 450 horizontal feet away from the Salmon River, and is elevated 30 to 150 feet above the Salmon River along the extent of the project. No physical disturbance would occur within any streams or water bodies; therefore, the project is not subject to National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) requirements. Siskiyou Telephone would not be required to obtain a NPDES permit, or prepare a Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP) for the proposed project because the total area disturbed would be fewer than 5 acres. There would be no impacts due to storm water discharge.

b) Substantially deplete groundwater supplies or interfere substantially with groundwater recharge such that there would be a net deficit in aquifer volume or a lowering of the local groundwater table level (e.g., the production rate of pre-existing nearby wells would drop to a level which would not support existing land uses or planned uses for which permits have been granted)?

The proposed project route is not located on or in proximity to any known source of groundwater nor would groundwater resources be used for construction. Construction would not cause interference of groundwater recharge because the project route would be restored to original conditions and the project would result in no net change in the amount of impervious surfaces. The new length of clean-gravel filled ditch that would be excavated for the proposed project would provide a natural drainage system to collect near-surface water that could have flowed down gradient. This intercepted water could provide a collection and disposal system of water that otherwise could cause landslides. The installation of this telecommunication line, if properly drained, would be beneficial to the stability of Salmon River Road. Mitigation Measure GEO-1 would ensure that the trench would be properly drained. This impact would be considered less than significant.

c) Substantially alter the existing drainage pattern of the site or area, including through the alteration of the course of a stream or river, in a manner which would result in substantial erosion or siltation on- or off-site?

Construction would not occur in any stream channel. No stream or river would be altered in a manner that would result in substantial erosion or siltation on- or off-site, nor would drainage patterns be altered in a way that would cause flooding.

d) Substantially alter the existing drainage pattern of the site or area, including through the alteration of the course of a stream or river, or substantially increase the rate or amount of surface runoff in a manner which would result in flooding on- or off-site?

No impact to drainage patterns of streams and rivers is expected as a result of the proposed project.

e) Create or contribute runoff water which would exceed the capacity of existing or planned stormwater drainage systems or provide substantial additional sources of polluted runoff?

Construction involved with the proposed project would occur during the dry season. Runoff volumes are not forecasted to be substantial; therefore, water volume would not exceed the capacity of natural storm water drainage paths. There are no constructed storm water drainage systems. All excavation activities would take place within existing roadways and unpaved areas adjacent to roadways. The project would not lead to increased runoff after construction activities are complete because of post-construction restoration to the original condition. No impacts are expected in regard to runoff capacity.

f) Otherwise substantially degrade water quality?

Construction activities have a remote potential to lead to transport of sediments from trenching and excavating activities. There is also a small potential for risk of a hazardous materials spill, which could potentially cause contamination of Salmon River, Nordheimer Creek, or near-surface water. To prevent impacts to water quality, Mitigation Measure HYD-1 would require the implementation of several Best Management Practices (BMPs). Mitigation Measure HM-1 would require the development of an SPCP. With implementation of these mitigation measures, impacts to water quality would be less than significant.

Mitigation Measure HYD-1: The following BMPs shall be implemented to mitigate any potential water resources impacts during construction of the proposed project:

- 1) Temporary sediment barriers shall be placed near sensitive habitat areas adjacent to the proposed project alignment to prevent any construction materials from entering these areas. Such barriers shall include devices such as certified weed-free straw bales, straw wattles, and silt fences. These devices shall be left in place until restoration activities are deemed successful and complete.
- 2) Following installation of the telecommunications system, trenched and excavated areas shall be compacted and graded to the natural contours of the area prior to construction activities.
- 3) Construction personnel shall be trained on the sensitive types of water resources found in the local area, and the measures to avoid or minimize impacts to those resources.

g) Place housing within a 100-year flood hazard area as mapped on a federal Flood Hazard Boundary or Flood Insurance Rate Map or other flood hazard delineation map?

The banks of the Salmon River area, from the area adjacent to Sauerkraut Mine and extending south, are located within a 100-year floodplain. The floodplain does not extend up the banks of the Salmon River far enough to reach the elevation of the project alignment. No housing would be constructed as part of the proposed project nor would any new structures be placed within a 100-year floodplain. The permanent structures that would be constructed would not redirect flood flows. No impacts related to 100-year flood plains would occur as a result of the project.

h) Place housing within a 100-year flood hazard area structures which would impede or redirect flood flows?

The floodplain of the Salmon River does not extend up the banks of the Salmon River to the elevation of the project alignment. No housing would be constructed as part of the proposed project nor would any new structures be placed within a 100-year floodplain. The permanent structures that would be constructed would not redirect flood flows. No impacts related to 100-year flood plains are expected as a result of the project.

i) Expose people or structures to significant risk of loss, injury or death involving flooding, including flooding as a result of the failure of a levee or dam?

The proposed project would not impact levees or dams, nor would it create any new water retaining or impeding features. No impacts related to flooding due to dam or levee failure would occur as a result of the proposed project.

j) Inundation by seiche, tsunami, or mudflow?

The project is not at risk of inundation by seiche, tsunami, or mudflow because it is not located in an area where these threats and hazards exist. Impacts would not occur and mitigation would not be necessary.

3.10 LAND USE AND PLANNING

<i>Would the project:</i>	<i>Potentially Significant Impact</i>	<i>Potentially Significant Unless Mitigation Incorporated</i>	<i>Less than Significant Impact</i>	<i>No Impact</i>
<i>a) Physically divide an established community?</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
<i>b) Conflict with applicable land use plan, policy, or regulation of an agency with jurisdiction over the project (including, but not limited to the general plan, specific plan, local coastal program, or zoning ordinance) adopted for the purpose of avoiding or mitigating an environmental effect?</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
<i>c) Conflict with any applicable habitat conservation plan or natural community conservation plan?</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

EXISTING CONDITIONS

The proposed project alignment lies entirely within the right-of-way of Salmon River Road. The project site has been previously disturbed and is currently used for transportation purposes.

Most of the surrounding lands are managed by the USFS, including the Nordheimer Flat Campground area (Figure 3.10-1). The project area is within the Klamath National Forest; however, Salmon River Road is owned and maintained by Siskiyou County. There are scattered residences in the area that would be served by the project or would have the ability to connect to the telecommunications line in the future. These residences are present as a result of long-standing mining claims in the area; no mines are known to be currently operational.

The Siskiyou County General Plan contains a Housing Element (2004). One of the goals within the Housing Element is to provide adequate sites and services to accommodate the Regional Housing Needs and satisfy existing demand (Siskiyou County 2004).

IMPACTS

a) Physically divide an established community?

Construction and maintenance of the proposed project would not cause the physical division of an established community. The road is an existing feature in the region. No impacts to established communities are expected as a result of the proposed project.

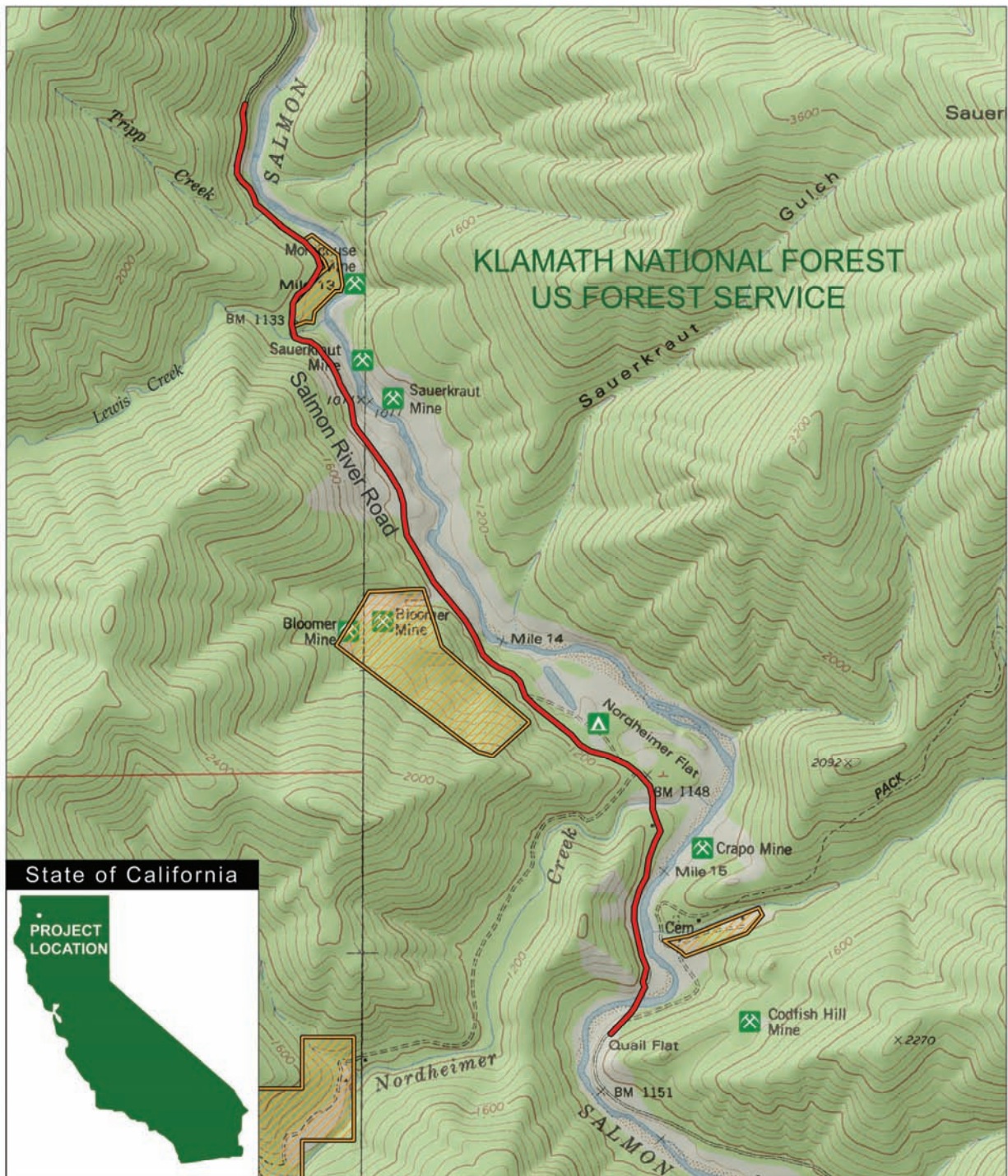
b) Conflict with any applicable land use plan, policy, or regulation of an agency with jurisdiction over the project (including, but not limited to the general plan, specific plan, local coastal program, or zoning ordinance) adopted for the purpose of avoiding or mitigating an environmental effect?

Construction and maintenance of the proposed project would not conflict with any applicable land use plan, policy, or regulation of an agency with jurisdiction over the proposed project. The use of this project alignment for telecommunication lines is consistent with the current use of the project area. The Klamath National Forest LRMP contains guidance for land use management around WSRs. One of the goals is to restrict new facilities or additional facilities, such as telecommunications lines, to existing rights-of-way (USFS 2001). The proposed project would comply with this management goal. No impacts with adopted land use plans and policies are expected as a result of the proposed project.

c) Conflict with an applicable habitat conservation plan or natural community conservation plan?

The proposed project would not conflict with any habitat conservation plans or natural community conservation plans. There are no natural-community conservation plans in Siskiyou County other than those authored by the USFS. An Environmental Impact Statement is being prepared for the proposed Fruit Growers Supply Company's Multispecies Habitat Conservation Plan, but the plan would only apply to Fruit Growers Supply lands. No impacts to habitat conservation plans are expected as a result of the proposed project.

Figure 3.10-1: Proposed Project Alignment and Land Ownership



SOURCE: ESRI 2006, USGS 1985, and RMT 2008

LEGEND



Proposed Project Alignment (2.76 miles)



Private Property

Campground

Mine (inactive)



3.11 MINERAL RESOURCES

<i>Would the project:</i>	<i>Potentially Significant Impact</i>	<i>Potentially Significant Unless Mitigation Incorporated</i>	<i>Less than Significant Impact</i>	<i>No Impact</i>
<i>a) Result in the loss of availability of a known mineral resource that would be of value to the region and residents of the state?</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
<i>b) Result in the loss of availability of a locally important mineral resource recovery site delineated on a local general plan, specific plan, or other land use plan?</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

EXISTING CONDITIONS

There are no active mining operations near the proposed project alignment; however, there are mining claims, and mines that are no longer active. Gold was the focus of the nearby mining claims (Mindat.org 2008). There are no mining claims within the project alignment, and there are no known mineral resources within the project alignment.

IMPACTS

a) Result in the loss of availability of a known mineral resource that would be of value to the region and the residents of the state?

No impacts to known mineral resources are expected as a result of the proposed project.

b) Result in the loss of availability of a locally-important mineral resource recovery site delineated on a local general plan, specific plan or other land use plan?

No impacts to locally-important mineral resources are expected as a result of the proposed project.

3.12 NOISE

<i>Would the project result in:</i>	<i>Potentially Significant Impact</i>	<i>Potentially Significant Unless Mitigation Incorporated</i>	<i>Less than Significant Impact</i>	<i>No Impact</i>
<i>a) Exposure of persons to or generation of noise levels in excess of standards established in the local general plan or noise ordinance, or applicable standards of other agencies?</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
<i>b) Exposure of persons to or generation of excessive ground borne vibration or ground borne noise levels?</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<i>c) A substantial permanent increase in ambient noise levels in the project vicinity above levels existing without the project?</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
<i>d) A substantial temporary or periodic increase in ambient noise levels in the project vicinity above levels existing without the project?</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<i>e) For a project located within an airport land use plan or, where such a plan has not been adopted, within two miles of a public airport or public use airport, would the project expose people residing or working in the project area to excessive noise levels?</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
<i>f) For a project within the vicinity of a private airstrip, would the project expose people residing or working in the project area to excessive noise levels?</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

EXISTING CONDITIONS

The proposed project alignment is located within the right-of-way of the Salmon River Road transportation corridor. Noise in the project area is normally caused by vehicular traffic along Salmon River Road. No major manmade sources of constant noise (such as industrial facilities) currently exist in the vicinity of the proposed action.

The noise level in quiet rural areas is typically around 30 decibels (dBA), while the noise level in wilderness areas is typically around 20 dBA (Caltrans 1998). Noise levels of vehicles traveling about 30 miles per hour tend to range between 62 and 81 dBA depending on the type and age of the vehicle (Caltrans 1995).

There are no noise ordinances in Siskiyou County, and the Siskiyou County General Plan Noise Element contains no guidance for construction-generated noise (Hickel pers. comm. 2008). The project area is not within city or town limits; therefore, there are no local standards regarding noise levels.

IMPACTS

a) Exposure of persons to or generation of noise levels in excess of standards established in the local general plan or noise ordinance, or applicable standards of other agencies?

Equipment operation is the primary noise source associated with construction activities. Noise levels are dependent on several factors, including the number of machines operating within an area at a given time and the distance between the sources(s) and receiving properties or receptors. Typically, noise generated from construction activities ranges between 80 and 90 dBA at a distance of 50 feet from the active construction area. This is comparable to noise levels of very loud shouting at 4 feet, or shouting at 2 feet, and can begin to contribute to hearing impairment (Siskiyou County 1978). People driving by the construction area or using the area for recreation purposes could be temporarily exposed to heightened noise levels. There are no noise standards for the project area, and therefore no impacts in regards to noise regulations are expected in association with the proposed project.

b) Exposure of persons to or generation of excessive groundborne vibration or groundbourne excessive noise?

Trenching may cause groundbourne vibration; however, trenching would generally avoid hard-rock areas as the majority of the roadway is constructed over engineered terrain. This avoidance of hard-rock areas would reduce groundbourne vibration to a less than significant level. There would be no impacts associated with excessive groundbourne noise.

c) A substantial permanent increase in ambient noise levels in the project vicinity above levels existing without the project?

The proposed telecommunications infrastructure would not emit noise. Periodic maintenance may introduce temporary noise from maintenance crew activity, but such noise would be temporary. No permanent increase in ambient noise is expected, and there would be no impact.

d) A substantial temporary or periodic increase in ambient noise levels in the project vicinity above levels existing without the project?

The proposed construction equipment and the associated noise levels are listed below in Table 3.12-1. The limited number of residents in the area, as well as some recreationists at the Nordheimer Flat Campground, may find the temporary construction noise levels intrusive and annoying. To ensure that the lowest level of noise is generated, all equipment used would have the appropriate mufflers and noise abatement equipment installed, per Mitigation Measure NO-1.

Table 3.12-1: Noise Levels from Construction Equipment		
Equipment	Quantity	Noise Level at 50 feet
Construction Operations		
Backhoe	3	78
Dump truck	3	76
Rock saw	1	90
One-ton truck (flatbed)	2	74

Table 3.12-1 (Continued): Noise Levels from Construction Equipment

Equipment	Quantity	Noise Level at 50 feet
Pickup truck	2	75
Water truck	1	80
Asphalt Operations		
Paver	1	77
Backhoe	1	78
Trench grinder (asphalt grinder)	1	111
Dump truck	4	76
Pickup truck	2	75

SOURCE: FHA 2008, Nietzel 2005, Beacon Solar LLC 2008

It is likely that construction noise would be audible from the Nordheimer Flat Campground and from the nearby residences that are accessed from Salmon River Road. However, as these sensitive receptors would be located some distance away from the project area, the noise levels experienced by these sensitive receptors would be lower than noise levels at the construction area. Additionally, forest exists between the Salmon River Road corridor and most of these residences, providing a natural noise buffer. Impacts due to noise would be temporary because construction would occur along only one portion of the road at a time. Even though noise impacts would be temporary in duration and would not affect any one sensitive noise receptor for an extended period of time, noise impacts could still be significant if construction activities occurred during evening and nighttime hours, or on Sundays. Mitigation Measure NO-2 would require that construction be limited to certain hours to minimize noise impacts during evening, nighttime, and Sunday hours. With implementation of Mitigation Measures NO-1 and NO-2, impacts from temporary increases to noise levels would be less than significant.

Mitigation Measure NO-1: All equipment used shall have the appropriate mufflers and noise abatement equipment installed and maintained as necessary.

Mitigation Measure NO-2: Construction activities shall take place during a ten-hour window between the hours of 7:00 AM and 7:00 PM Monday through Friday.

e) For a project located within an airport land use plan or, where such a plan has not been adopted, within two miles of a public airport of public use airport, would the project expose people residing or working in the project area to excessive noise levels?

There are no public airports or in the vicinity of the project, nor is the project located within an airport land use plan. No impacts associated with the project would be expected to occur in regard to public airports or airport land use plans.

f) For a project within the vicinity of a private airstrip, would the project expose people residing or working in the project area to excessive noise levels?

There are no private airstrips in the vicinity of the project. No impacts associated with the project would be expected to occur in regard to private airstrips.

3.13 POPULATION AND HOUSING

<i>Would the project:</i>	<i>Potentially Significant Impact</i>	<i>Potentially Significant Unless Mitigation Incorporated</i>	<i>Less than Significant Impact</i>	<i>No Impact</i>
<i>a) Induce substantial population growth in an area, either directly (for example, by proposing new homes and businesses) or indirectly (for example, through extension of roads or other infrastructure)?</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
<i>b) Displace substantial numbers of existing housing, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere?</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
<i>c) Displace substantial numbers of people, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere?</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

EXISTING CONDITIONS

The project alignment is within the developed Salmon River Road transportation corridor. There are limited residences near the project area on lands protected by mining claims. The majority of the lands surrounding the project area is managed by the Department of Agriculture U.S. Forest Service, and includes the Nordheimer Flat Campground; these lands do not contain areas for housing.

IMPACTS

a) Induce substantial population growth in an area, either directly (for example, by proposing new homes and businesses) or indirectly (for example, through extension of roads or other infrastructure)?

The proposed project is not anticipated to induce population growth. The telecommunications line would serve only a limited number of residences as there are few residences in the region, and future growth is expected to be minimal because the project alignment is surrounded mostly by USFS land. Construction workers would not permanently relocate to the project or staging area. There would be no impacts related to population growth due to the proposed project.

b) Displace substantial numbers of existing housing, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere?

The proposed project would not displace existing housing, and would not necessitate relocation and/or construction of replacement housing elsewhere. Construction workers would not permanently relocate to the area. The proposed project would have no impact on housing resources.

c) Displace substantial numbers of people, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere?

The proposed project would not displace existing population, and would not necessitate relocation and/or construction of replacement housing elsewhere. The proposed project would have no impact on housing resources related to population.

3.14 PUBLIC SERVICES

<i>Would the project result in substantial adverse physical impacts associated with the provision of new or physically altered government facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental impacts, in order to maintain acceptable service ratios, response times, or other performance objectives for any of the public services:</i>	<i>Potentially Significant Impact</i>	<i>Potentially Significant Unless Mitigation Incorporated</i>	<i>Less than Significant Impact</i>	<i>No Impact</i>
a) Fire protection?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
b) Police protection?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
c) Schools?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
d) Parks?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
e) Other public facilities?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

EXISTING CONDITIONS

Fire services to the project area are provided by the Salmon River Volunteer Fire and Rescue. Wildfire has been a significant issue in the project region during 2008, which brought firefighters and volunteers from all over the state of California and neighboring states. The Etna Fire department is the next closest resource for firefighting.

Police service in the area is provided by the Etna Police Department. The Forks of Salmon Elementary School is located in Forks of Salmon, approximately 2.8 miles east-southeast of the proposed project's eastern end.

The Nordheimer Flat Campground is located along the project alignment on the north side of Salmon River Road at postmile 13. This group campground is within the Ukonom Ranger District of the Klamath National Forest. Individual campsites are open year-round and group campsites are open from April to November, with the exception of during periods of wildfire in the region. Twelve campsites are available at \$7.00 per night, with a \$5.00 per night additional fee for each extra vehicle. Water is available from May through October. Rafting activities begin in the spring and continue until the water levels drop in early summer. Boat access to the river is available at the campground for 4x4 vehicles (USFS 2008).

The City of Etna has an ambulance service located at 450 Main Street and the Scott Valley Rural Health Clinic is located at 155 Diggles Street. Etna is located approximately 43 miles from the project route, by driving. The nearest hospital with an emergency room is the Fairchild Medical Center in Yreka, located approximately 71 driving miles from the project area.

IMPACTS

Result in substantial adverse physical impacts associated with the provision of new or physically altered governmental facilities, need for new or physically altered government facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental impacts, in order to maintain acceptable service ratios, response times or other performance objectives for any of the public services:

a) Fire protection?

The proposed project would not require additional fire services in the area. There would be no impact requiring further construction or expansion of services, and the proposed project would not impact fire protection and fire suppression objectives. The availability of telephone service at the Nordheimer Flat Campground would improve fire protection services by allowing faster contact with such services. No negative impacts to fire protection or suppression would occur as part of the proposed project.

b) Police protection?

The proposed project would not require additional police services in the area. There would be no impact requiring further construction or expansion of services, and the proposed project would not impact police objectives. The availability of telephone service at the Nordheimer Flat Campground would improve police services by allowing faster contact with such services. No negative impacts to police protection would occur as part of the project.

c) Schools?

The proposed project alignment would not be constructed adjacent to or near any public schools. The proposed project would not create a need for new schools. There would be no impact to schools associated with the proposed project.

d) Parks?

The only park in the vicinity of the project area is the Klamath National Forest. Klamath National Forest offers various recreational opportunities. During project construction, recreationists may notice construction equipment or increased noise levels if they are close to Salmon River Road. However, these impacts to parks and recreational resources would be temporary and less than significant.

e) Other public facilities?

Nordheimer Flat Campground is the only public facility that could be affected by the proposed project. Access to Nordheimer Flat Campground would not be blocked by the proposed project. Construction would occur on the side of Salmon River Road opposite the campground entrance. The proposed project would not require the construction of additional facilities at the campground or interfere with the operation of the campground. People staying at the campground could see construction equipment associated with the project, and may be subjected to noise from the project construction. These impacts would be temporary and less than significant. Refer to Section XIV Recreation for further discussion regarding the Nordheimer Flat campground.

3.15 RECREATION

<i>Would or Does the project:</i>	<i>Potentially Significant Impact</i>	<i>Potentially Significant Unless Mitigation Incorporated</i>	<i>Less than Significant Impact</i>	<i>No Impact</i>
<i>a) Increase the use of existing neighborhood and regional parks or other recreational facilities such that substantial physical deterioration of the facility would occur or be accelerated?</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<i>b) Include recreation facilities or require the construction or expansion of recreational facilities that might have an adverse physical effect on the environment?</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

EXISTING CONDITIONS

The proposed project would be within the right-of-way of Salmon River Road. Land surrounding this County road is part of the Klamath National Forest, except for small scattered parcels of land that are privately owned through long-standing mining claims.

The Nordheimer Flat Campground is located adjacent to the project area at post mile 13, as discussed above in Section 3.14 Public Services. The proposed project would allow for telecommunication service to be brought to the Nordheimer Flat Campground, as well as to several nearby residents.

Two telephone lines would be installed at the campground – one for the monitoring of water quality and another for emergency use by camp visitors. The construction and operation of these lines on the campground property and all other US DOA Forest Service lands has been granted a Categorical Exemption under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and has already been approved.

IMPACTS

a) Would the project increase the use of existing neighborhood and regional parks or other recreational facilities such that substantial physical deterioration of the facility would occur or be accelerated?

Bringing emergency telephone service to the Nordheimer Flat Campground could cause some increase in the use of the campground. Space at the campground is limited to twelve campsites. The proposed project would not lead to increased levels of use of the campground that would lead to significant deterioration of campground facilities. Impacts to existing recreational facilities would be less than significant.

b) Does the project include recreational facilities or require the construction or expansion of recreational facilities which might have an adverse physical effect on the environment?

The proposed project does not include recreational facilities, but does provide a new service to a recreational facility by installing telephone lines at the Nordheimer Flat Campground. Impacts to the construction or expansion of recreational facilities would be less than significant.

3.16 Transportation and Traffic

<i>Would the project:</i>	<i>Potentially Significant Impact</i>	<i>Potentially Significant Unless Mitigation Incorporated</i>	<i>Less than Significant Impact</i>	<i>No Impact</i>
<i>a) Cause an increase in traffic that is substantial in relation to the existing traffic load and capacity of the street system (i.e., result in a substantial increase in either the number of vehicle trips, the volume-to-capacity ratio on roads, or congestion at intersections)?</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<i>b) Exceed, either individually or cumulatively, a level of service standard established by the county congestion management agency for designated roads or highways?</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
<i>c) Result in a change in air traffic patterns, including either an increase in traffic levels or a change in location that results in substantial safety risks?</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
<i>d) Substantially increase hazards due to a design feature (e.g., sharp curves or dangerous intersections) or incompatible uses (e.g., farm equipment)?</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
<i>e) Result in inadequate emergency access?</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<i>f) Result in inadequate parking capacity?</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
<i>g) Conflict with adopted policies supporting alternative transportation (e.g., bus turnouts, bicycle racks)?</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

EXISTING CONDITIONS

The proposed project route is located in Siskiyou County. The project would be constructed within the right-of-way of the Salmon River Road transportation corridor. Salmon River Road is paved, and in some places barely wide enough for two-way traffic. Several turnouts exist along the project alignment. Existing paved roadways provide access to all components of the proposed project route. Traffic on this roadway is extremely light. The majority of the traffic is local residents and visitors to the Klamath National Forest.

IMPACTS

- a) Cause an increase in traffic which is substantial in relation to the existing traffic load and capacity of the street system (i.e., result in a substantial increase in either the number of vehicle trips, the volume to capacity ration on roads, or congestion at intersections)?**

Most of the equipment used for trenching would be left on-site for the duration of construction, and would be staged in one of the turnouts along the route. Reflective cones would be placed around the construction vehicles to alert any passersby of their presence. Dump trucks and transportation vehicles would not be left on-site when construction is not occurring (Eastlick pers. comm. 2008). Construction crews would use a staging site approximately 11 miles from the construction area for commute vehicles and for most construction materials. Some crew

members would carpool to the construction area from the staging area using diesel crew cab pickups, and the remaining crew members would carpool from nearby towns in Siskiyou County. The diesel crew cab pickups would also be used to transport fuel for equipment. Approximately 280 trips, measuring 22 miles each, would also be necessary to transport Class II Base Rock to the construction area and to transport unused trenching soils back to the gravel site (Eastlick per. comm. 2008). Additional trips would be needed to transport other equipment and materials to and from the worksite.

There would be times when construction would cause the closure of one lane of traffic. A traffic control person would ensure that vehicle traffic could safely pass through the construction zone. Motorists may be held from passing through the construction area for up to one hour during trenching activities across the roadway when it is not possible to keep the entire road open. This delay could create a lengthy wait for passage on Salmon River Road. Mitigation Measure TT-1 would require that any stoppage of traffic not exceed one hour in length to reduce potential impacts of road closure. A traffic control person would control the flow of traffic, and allow cars to pass the construction area safely during road closures. Specific traffic control measures shall be outlined in a Traffic Control Plan, submitted to Caltrans and the Siskiyou County Public Works Road Department, per Mitigation Measure TT-2. The increase in traffic and congestion would be less than significant with the implementation of these two mitigation measures.

Mitigation Measure TT-1: Complete closure of Salmon River Road shall not extend beyond one hour if there are vehicles waiting to pass through the construction area. If trenching is not completed, metal plates or a similar apparatus shall be placed over the trench and any waiting motorists shall be allowed to pass.

Mitigation Measure TT-2: Siskiyou Telephone shall prepare a Traffic Control Plan for the review and approval of Caltrans and the Siskiyou County Public Works Road Department.

b) Exceed, either individually or cumulatively, a level of service standard established by the county congestion management agency for designated roads or highways?

The level of service (LOS) standard for Salmon River Road would not be exceeded. Traffic on Salmon River Road is limited mainly to resident use, recreational visitor use, and maintenance vehicle use. Traffic on Salmon River Road is therefore extremely light, and there would be limited addition of vehicles due to construction and maintenance. There would be no permanent impact to, or exceedence of, level of service standards.

c) Result in a change in air traffic patterns, including either an increase in traffic levels or a change in location that results in substantial safety risks?

There would be no impact to air traffic patterns as a result of the proposed project.

d) Substantially increase hazards due to a design feature (e.g., sharp curves or dangerous intersections) or incompatible uses (e.g., farm equipment)?

No design features of Salmon River Road would be changed and the project area would be restored to its original condition upon completion of project construction, including backfilling of trenches and repaving or recontouring the trench surface. No impacts due to change in design features would occur as a result of the proposed project.

e) Result in inadequate emergency access?

Access by emergency vehicles and access for the purposes of evacuation from nearby areas in case of wildfire could be hindered by construction. As outlined in Mitigation Measure HM-3, the construction area would be set up so that the entire road would not be blocked at any one time. Metal plates would be kept nearby to cover trenches in case an emergency vehicle needs to pass through the construction area or in case an evacuation takes place and keeping one lane open at all times is infeasible. Impacts to emergency vehicle access would be less than significant with incorporation of this mitigation measure.

f) Result in inadequate parking capacity?

As stated above, for the duration of construction, most of the equipment used for trenching would be left on-site in one of the turnouts on Salmon River Road. Nordheimer Flat Campground would not be used for construction equipment parking. Reflective cones would be placed around the vehicles to alert any passersby of its presence. Salmon River Road is not typically used for parking by local residents, recreational visitors, or others; there would be no impact to parking as a result of the proposed project.

g) Conflict with adopted policies, plans, or programs supporting alternate transportation (e.g., bus turnouts, bicycle racks)?

There is no public transportation along Salmon River Road. There are no bus stops or bicycle racks along Salmon River Road. There would be no impacts related to adopted policies, plans, or programs supporting alternate transportation.

3.17 UTILITIES AND SERVICE SYSTEMS

<i>Would the project:</i>	<i>Potentially Significant Impact</i>	<i>Potentially Significant Unless Mitigation Incorporated</i>	<i>Less than Significant Impact</i>	<i>No Impact</i>
<i>a) Exceed wastewater treatment requirements of the applicable Regional Water Quality Control Board?</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
<i>b) Require or result in the construction of new water or wastewater treatment facilities or expansion of existing facilities, the construction of which would cause significant environmental effects?</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
<i>c) Require or result in the construction of new storm water drainage facilities or expansion of existing facilities, the construction of which would cause significant environmental effects?</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
<i>d) Have sufficient water supplies available to serve the project from existing entitlements and resources, or are new or expanded entitlements needed?</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
<i>e) Result in a determination by the wastewater treatment provider, which serves or may serve the project, that it has adequate capacity to serve the project's projected demand in addition to the provider's existing commitments?</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
<i>f) Be served by a landfill with sufficient permitted capacity to accommodate the project's solid waste disposal needs?</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
<i>g) Comply with federal, state, and local statutes and regulations related to solid waste?</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

EXISTING CONDITIONS

The project route is within the developed Salmon River Road. There are no utilities present in the project area. The closest utility power source is located approximately 18 miles to the west at Somes Bar (Eastlick pers. comm. 2008). Residents in the area provide themselves with power with the use of solar panels and/or generators. Water supply is from springs and/or wells, and wastewater is disposed of in septic systems.

IMPACTS

a) Exceed wastewater treatment requirements of the applicable Regional Water Quality Control Board?

The proposed project would not require wastewater disposal, and thus would not exceed wastewater treatment requirements of the Regional Water Quality Control Board.

b) Require or result in the construction of new water or wastewater treatment facilities or expansion of existing facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental impacts?

The proposed project would not require nor result in the construction of new water or wastewater treatment facilities or expansion of existing facilities.

c) Require or result in the construction of new storm water drainage facilities or expansion of existing facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental effects?

Salmon River Road has several culverts along the project length for drainage. The proposed project would involve trenching around the culverts to avoid impacts to the integrity of the structures. The proposed project would not require any additional stormwater drainage facilities. There would be no impacts related to storm water drainage facilities.

d) Have sufficient water supplies available to serve the project from existing entitlements and resources, or are new or expanded entitlements needed?

Potable water would not be used in any part of project construction. There would be no impact to water supply due to the proposed project.

e) Result in a determination by the wastewater treatment provider, which serves or may serve the project that it has adequate capacity to serve the project's projected demand in addition to the provider's existing commitments?

The proposed project would have no effect on the current capacity of the wastewater treatment provider because it would not generate wastewater. There would be no impacts related to wastewater capacity, and mitigation would not be necessary.

f) Be served by a landfill with sufficient permitted capacity to accommodate the project's solid waste disposal needs?

Waste generated by the proposed project would primarily consist of ground soil and rock from trenching activities during construction. This waste would consist of approximately 10 cubic yard dump truck loads per day, totaling approximately 3,500 cubic yards of ground soil and gravel. All of this solid waste would be disposed of at a gravel plant on Eddy Gulch Road (Figure 2.2-1) to be used for the reclamation of an old mining site. Asphalt removed during trenching would be reused in the trench backfill process and as a shoulder backing on the edge of the roadway. Asphalt has not been considered a hazardous substance in past projects, and is not expected to be considered hazardous for the Nordheimer Project (Eastlick pers. comm. 2008). The site is under a current permit with Siskiyou County. No landfills would be used during this project; therefore, there would be no project impacts regarding landfill capacity.

g) Comply with federal, state, and local statutes and regulations related to solid waste?

The project would produce solid waste during construction and would comply with all statutes and regulations related to solid waste. There would be no impacts in regard to solid waste, and mitigation would not be required.

3.18 MANDATORY FINDING OF SIGNIFICANCE

Does the project:	Potentially Significant Impact	Potentially Significant Unless Mitigation Incorporated	Less than Significant Impact	No Impact
a) <i>Have the potential to degrade the quality of the environment, substantially reduce the habitat of a fish or wildlife species, cause a fish or wildlife population to drop below self-sustaining levels, threaten to eliminate a plant or animal community, reduce the number or restrict the range of a rare or endangered plant or animal, or eliminate important examples of the major periods of California history or prehistory?</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b) <i>Have impacts that are individually limited, but cumulatively considerable? ("Cumulatively considerable" means that the incremental effects of a project are considerable when viewed in connection with the effects of past projects, the effects of other current projects, and the effects of probable future projects.)</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
c) <i>Have environmental effects that will cause substantial adverse effects on human beings, either directly or indirectly?</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

IMPACTS

a) Have the potential to degrade the quality of the environment, substantially reduce the habitat of a fish or wildlife species, cause a fish or wildlife population to drop below self-sustaining levels, threaten to eliminate a plant or animal community, reduce the number or restrict the range of a rare or endangered plant or animal or eliminate important examples of the major periods of California history or prehistory?

The project would not degrade the quality of the environment, substantially reduce the habitat of a fish or wildlife species, cause a fish or wildlife population to drop below self-sustaining levels, or eliminate important examples of the major periods of California history or prehistory. The project could impact a special status plant species. Potential impacts associated with this species would be mitigated to less than significant levels with the implementation of Mitigation Measure BIO-1.

b) Have impacts that are individually limited, but cumulatively considerable? ("Cumulatively considerable" means that the incremental effects of a project are considerable when viewed in connection with the effects of past projects, the effects of other current projects, and the effects of probable future projects)?

There are several other projects scheduled for the Klamath National Forest and Six Rivers National Forest that could occur at the same time as the proposed project. These projects are located at a distance far enough away from the proposed projects that there would be no cumulative impacts. The project would not have impacts that would be cumulatively

considerable because of the distance to other projects in the area, and the fact that the proposed project would have minimal impacts with the implementation of mitigation measures.

c) Have environmental effects, which will cause substantial adverse effects on human beings, either directly or indirectly?

The project would not adversely affect human beings directly or indirectly. The project would have a beneficial effect on residents in the area by providing telecommunication services.

4: REFERENCES

- Bacon, Warren R. 1979. The Visual Management System of the Forest Service, USDA. In: Elsner, Gary H., and Richard C. Smardon, technical coordinators. 1979. Proceedings of our national landscape: a conference on applied techniques for analysis and management of the visual resource [Incline Village, Nev., April 23-25, 1979]. Gen. Tech. Rep. PSW-GTR-35. Berkeley, CA. Pacific Southwest Forest and Range Exp. Stn., Forest Service, U.S. Department of Agriculture: p. 660-665.
- Beacon Solar, LLC. 2008. Beacon Solar Energy Project Application for Certification. Submitted to the California Energy Commission. March 2008.
- BioDiesel.org. 2008. Retail Fueling Sites. Website: <http://www.biodiesel.org/buyingbiodiesel/retailfuelingsites/showstate.asp?st=CA>. Accessed October 6, 2008.
- BLM (U.S. Bureau of Land Management). 2002. Glass Mountain Exploration Draft Environmental Assessment/Initial Study. EA#CA320-NEPA02-23. May 2002.
- Bloomfield, K. Kit, Moore, Joseph N., and Neilson Jr., Robert M. 2003. Geothermal Energy Reduces Greenhouse Gases. *Geothermal Resources Council Bulletin*. March/April 2003.
- Bryant, W.A. 2005. Digital Database of Quaternary and Younger Faults from the Fault Activity Map of California. Version 2.0. California Geological Survey.
- CALEPA (California Environmental Protection Agency). 2008. Cal/EPA "Cortese" List: Data Resources. Website: <http://www.calepa.gov/SiteCleanup/CorteseList/default.htm>. Accessed October 22, 2008.
- Caltrans (California Department of Transportation). 1998. *Technical Noise Supplement, Traffic Noise Analysis Protocol*. October 1998.
- _____. 1995. Use of California Vehicle Noise Reference Energy Mean Emission Levels (Calveno REMELS) in STAMINA2.0 FHWA Highway Traffic Noise Prediction Program. Technical Advisory, Noise. TAN 95-03. September 22, 1995.
- CARB (California Air Resources Board). .2008a. The California Almanac of Emissions and Air Quality: 2008 Edition.

Initial Study
Siskiyou Telephone Nordheimer Project

- _____. 2008b. Climate Change Proposed Scoping Plan: A Framework for Change. Website: http://carboncontrolnews.com/ccndocs/oct08/ccn10152008_scoping.pdf . Accessed October 27, 2008.
- _____. 2008c. California's Greenhouse Gas Emissions Inventory. Website: <http://www.arb.ca.gov/cc/inventory/data/forecast.htm>. Accessed October 6, 2008. July 29, 2008.
- _____. 2006. Area Designations Maps/State and National. Website: <http://www.arb.ca.gov/desig/adm/adm.htm>. Accessed September 3, 2008.
- CGS (California Geological Survey). 2002. California Geologic Provinces. Note 36.
- CPUC and BLM (California Public Utilities Commission and U.S. Bureau of Land Management). 2008. Draft Environmental Impact Report/Environmental Impact Statement and Proposed Land Use Amendment: San Diego Gas & Electric Company Application for the Sunrise Powerlink Project. SCH# 2006091071. DOI Control No. DES-07-58. January 2008.
- Eastlick, Carl. 2008. Siskiyou Telephone Company. Personal communication with Kristi Black and Chrissy Spanoghe. Various dates, 2008.
- EPA (U.S. Environmental Protection Agency). 2008. Individual Emissions – Personal Emissions Calculator. Website: http://www.epa.gov/climatechange/emissions/ind_calculator.html. Accessed October 6, 2008. October 6, 2008.
- FHA (US Department of Transportation Federal Highway Administration). 2008. Construction Equipment Noise Levels and Ranges. Website: <http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/environMent/noise/handbook/09.htm>. Accessed August 29, 2008.
- Franks, Alvin L. 2008. Environmental Geology and Slope Stability Study of Siskiyou Telephone Line Extension Salmon River Exchange, Siskiyou County.
- Goldfinger, Chris, et al. 2003. Holocene earthquake records from the Cascadia Subduction Zone and northern San Andreas Fault based on precise dating of offshore turbidites. *Annual Review of Earth and Planetary Sciences*. 31: 555-577. May 2003.
- Hickel, Rowland. 2008. Assistant Planner. Siskiyou County. Personal communication with Kristi Black. September 3, 2008.
- Humboldt County. 2000. Redwood Empire Public Television., Inc. (KKET) Draft Environmental Impact Report. Humboldt County Planning Division. Webpage: <http://co.humboldt.ca.us/planning/planning/keetower/toc.htm>. Accessed September 18, 2008.
- Live Oak Associates, Inc. 2008. *California Public Utilities Commission Nordheimer Flat Telecom Infrastructure Biological Evaluation Siskiyou County, California*. September 24, 2008.
- Mindat.org. 2008. Siskiyou County Mines Descriptions. Website: <http://www.mindat.org>. Accessed August 29, 2008.

- Nietzel, Rick. 2005. University of Washington Department of Environmental and Occupational Health Sciences: Probable Noise Levels of Common Construction Tools. Website: <http://staff.washington.edu/rneitzel/commontools.pdf>. Accessed August 29, 2008.
- PSC of Wisconsin (Public Service Commission of Wisconsin). 2008. Final EIS: Wisconsin Power & Light 300 MW Power Plant Volume 1. Public Service Commission of Wisconsin, PSC Ref # 98125. July 2008.
- Siskiyou County. 2004. County of Siskiyou Housing Element. March 2004.
- _____. 1978. County of Siskiyou Noise Element. December 1978.
- SRRC (Salmon River Restoration Council). 2008. A Quick Look at the Salmon River Watershed. Website: <http://www.srrc.org/watershed/index.php>. Accessed September 18, 2008.
- SWRCB (California State Water Resources Control Board). 2008. GeoTracker Database. Website: <https://geotracker.waterboards.ca.gov/>. Accessed October 30, 2008.
- UNH (University of New Hampshire). 2004. Greenhouse Gas Emissions Inventory: 1990-2003. July 2004.
- USDA (US Department of Agriculture). 2008. National Resource Conservation Service. Soils Survey Data for Klamath National Forest, Parts of Siskiyou County, California, and Jackson County, Oregon. September 4, 2008.
- USFS (United States Forest Service). 2008. Klamath National Forest Nordheimer Campground. Website: <http://www.fs.fed.us/r5/klamath/recreation/camping/nordheimer.shtml>. Accessed: October 2, 2008.
- _____. 2001. Klamath National Forest. Klamath National Forest Land and Resource Management Plan 1995, as amended.
- USGS (US Geological Survey). 2004. Quaternary fault and fold database of the United States: US Geological Survey Open-File Report Issue 03-417.
- Williams-Derry, Clark. 2007. Increases in greenhouse-gas emissions from highway-widening projects. Sightline Institute. October 2007.

***Initial Study
Siskiyou Telephone Nordheimer Project***

5: LIST OF PREPARERS AND AGENCIES/PERSONS CONTACTED

5.1 Lead Agency

This section lists those individuals who either prepared or participated in the preparation of this IS/MND. The CPUC is serving as the CEQA lead agency for preparation of this IS/MND. The following individuals from the CPUC were involved in the preparation of the document.

CALIFORNIA PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION

Jensen Uchida *Project Manager*

Jack Mulligan *Attorney*

5.2 Preparers

This IS/MND was prepared for and under direction of the CPUC by RMT, Inc., located in San Mateo, California. The following RMT, Inc. staff contributed to this report:

RMT, INC.

Laurie Hietter *Document Review/Senior Client Executive*

Jeff Smith *Project Manager/Senior Environmental Planner*

Pat Siefers *Document Review/Principal Planner*

Chrissy Spanoghe *Deputy Project Manager/Environmental Scientist*

Karin Greenacre *Air Quality Specialist*

Initial Study
Siskiyou Telephone Nordheimer Project

Dave Seitz	<i>Air Quality Specialist</i>
Bob Tidona	<i>Air Quality Specialist</i>
Kristi Black	<i>Environmental Scientist</i>
Corey Fong	<i>GIS Specialist</i>
Roger Luc	<i>Document Manager</i>
Dr. Alvin L. Franks	<i>Geologist</i>
Dr. Rick Hopkins	<i>Senior Wildlife Ecologist</i>
Davinna Ohlson	<i>Plant and Wildlife Ecologist</i>
Neal Kramer	<i>Botanist/Certified Arborist</i>
John Holson	<i>Principal Archaeologist</i>
Amy Kovak	<i>Archaeologist</i>
Brandon Christensen	<i>Archaeologist</i>

5.3 Agencies and Persons Contacted

The following agencies and persons were contacted during the preparation of this document:

CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND GAME

Richard Lis *Botanist and Plant Ecologist*

SISKIYOU COUNTY PLANNING DEPARTMENT

Rowland Hickel *Assistant Planner*

SISKIYOU TELEPHONE COMPANY

Carl Eastlick *Engineer*

UNITED STATES FOREST SERVICE, KLAMATH NATIONAL FOREST

Emelia Barnum *Environmental Coordinator*

**ATTACHMENT 1:
USFS CATEGORICAL
EXCLUSION**

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
FOREST SERVICE
Pacific-Southwest Region

DECISION MEMO

Special Use Permits

Salmon/Scott River Ranger District
Klamath National Forest
Siskiyou County, California

PROPOSED ACTION AND RATIONALE FOR DECISION

The Forest Service has made a decision to amend the Forest wide Special Use Permit to **The Siskiyou Telephone Company**. This amendment is for the trenching and placement of conduit cable along County road 2B01 and within the County right of way for approximately 6,600 feet, from Nordheimer Camp Ground (mile post 13) to a private parcel near Red Cap Creek (mile post 11). The new cable will not leave the county road prism. This project will begin at, T.10N., R.7E., Section 3, HM and end at T.11N., R.7E., Section 28, HM.

The use of National Forest System land (NFL) for this Special Use Permit has been in place and ongoing for some time. The telephone line will provide telephone service to a private residence. Amending this permit would reauthorize the holder to continue the use of NFL under a Special Use Permit issued under authority found in 36 CFR 251.53(a) and 16 U.S.C. 551.

SCOPING AND PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT

A general notice that Special Use Permits will be issued and renewed is included in the quarterly notice issued by the Klamath National Forest for resource management actions, which have environmental impacts, documented as required by the National Environmental Policy Act. No comments or concerns have been received in relation to the permit process.

REASONS FOR CATEGORICALLY EXCLUDING THE PROPOSED ACTION

Amending this permit is for a use which is in place and ongoing. The environmental impact of the proposed action is minimal, and consistent with the past uses of NFL. No threatened, endangered or sensitive species or cultural resources are known to exist within the project area. There will be no removal of vegetation. All practicable means to avoid or minimize environmental harm have been adopted. Protection of other resources is a requirement of the permitted use. Conditions or stipulations are included as part of the permit which require the holder to meet environmental protection measures or face termination of the permit and or civil or criminal penalties.

Based on the above information it is my determination that this activity will be of limited size, duration and degree of disturbance. I find the proposed action qualifies under provision FSH 1909.15, 31.2 Category 3. Approval, modification or continuation of minor special uses of National Forest System lands that require less than five contiguous acres of land.

Past experience and environmental analysis reveal that no extraordinary circumstances exist that might cause the action to have significant effects upon the human environment. This proposed action is therefore excluded from further documentation in either an environmental assessment or environmental impact statement.

Consistency with Other Laws and Regulations

I have determined that this action is consistent with the following legal requirements:

The authorization and amendment of permits and the use of NFL are consistent with the Klamath National Forest Land and Resource Management Plan.

No sensitive, threatened, or endangered species will be adversely impacted by the issuance of this permit or the continued use of NFL authorized by the permit.

ADMINISTRATIVE REVIEW OR APPEAL OPPORTUNITY

My decision is not subject to administrative appeal pursuant to 36 CFR 215.12: "The following decisions and actions are not subject to appeal under this part, except as noted: (f) Decisions for actions that have been categorically excluded from documentation in an environmental assessment or environmental impact statement in FSH 1909.15, Chapter 30, Section 31."

IMPLEMENTATION

Implementation of this proposal may take place immediately upon my issuance of this decision.

CONTACT

For further information contact: Curt Hughes at the Scott River District office or by phone at 530-468-1241.



PATRICIA A. GRANTHAM, Acting Forest Supervisor

3.3.08

Date

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) prohibits discrimination in all its programs and activities on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, religion, age, disability, political beliefs, sexual orientation, or marital or family status. (Not all prohibited bases apply to all programs.) Persons with disabilities who require alternative means for communication of program information (Braille, large print, audiotape, etc.) should contact USDA's TARGET Center at (202) 720-2600 (voice and TDD).

To file a complaint of discrimination, write USDA, Director, Office of Civil Rights, Room 326-W, Whitten Building, 1400 Independence Avenue, SW, Washington, D.C. 20250-9410 or call (202) 720-5964 (voice and TDD). USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
FOREST SERVICE
Pacific-Southwest Region

DECISION MEMO

Special Use Permits

Salmon/Scott River Ranger District
Klamath National Forest
Siskiyou County, California

PROPOSED ACTION AND RATIONALE FOR DECISION

The Forest Service has made a decision to amend the Forest wide Special Use Permit to **The Siskiyou Telephone Company**. This amendment is for the trenching and placement of conduit cable along County road 2B01 and within the County right of way for approximately 5,000 feet, from Crapo Creek to just below Nordheimer camp ground. A courtesy telephone will be installed at Nordheimer camp ground for public use. The new cable will leave the county road just below Nordheimer camp ground at the 13 mile post. The cable will follow a non-system dirt road for approximately 200 feet to private property. The non-system dirt road is currently under Special-Use permit to the current land owners. This project is located, T.10N., R.7E., Section 3, HM and T.11N., R.7E., Section 34, HM.

The use of National Forest System land (NFL) for this Special Use Permit has been in place and ongoing for some time. The telephone line will provide telephone service to the public and a private residence. Amending this permit would reauthorize the holder to continue the use of NFL under a Special Use Permit issued under authority found in 36 CFR 251.53(a) and 16 U.S.C. 551.

SCOPING AND PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT

A general notice that Special Use Permits will be issued and renewed is included in the quarterly notice issued by the Klamath National Forest for resource management actions, which have environmental impacts, documented as required by the National Environmental Policy Act. No comments or concerns have been received in relation to the permit process.

REASONS FOR CATEGORICALLY EXCLUDING THE PROPOSED ACTION

Amending this permit is for a use which is in place and ongoing. The environmental impact of the proposed action is minimal, and consistent with the past uses of NFL. No threatened, endangered or sensitive species or cultural resources are known to exist within the project area. There will be no removal of vegetation. All practicable means to avoid or minimize environmental harm have been adopted. Protection of other resources is a requirement of the permitted use. Conditions or stipulations are included as part of the permit which require the holder to meet environmental protection measures or face termination of the permit and or civil or criminal penalties.

Based on the above information it is my determination that this activity will be of limited size, duration and degree of disturbance. I find the proposed action qualifies under provision FSH 1909.15, 31.2 Category 3. Approval, modification or continuation of minor special uses of National Forest System lands that require less than five contiguous acres of land.

Past experience and environmental analysis reveal that no extraordinary circumstances exist that might cause the action to have significant effects upon the human environment. This proposed action is therefore excluded from further documentation in either an environmental assessment or environmental impact statement.

Consistency with Other Laws and Regulations

I have determined that this action is consistent with the following legal requirements:

The authorization and amendment of permits and the use of NFL are consistent with the Klamath National Forest Land and Resource Management Plan.

No sensitive, threatened, or endangered species will be adversely impacted by the issuance of this permit or the continued use of NFL authorized by the permit.

ADMINISTRATIVE REVIEW OR APPEAL OPPORTUNITY

My decision is not subject to administrative appeal pursuant to 36 CFR 215.12: "The following decisions and actions are not subject to appeal under this part, except as noted: (f) Decisions for actions that have been categorically excluded from documentation in an environmental assessment or environmental impact statement in FSH 1909.15, Chapter 30, Section 31."

IMPLEMENTATION

Implementation of this proposal may take place immediately upon my issuance of this decision.

CONTACT

For further information contact: Curt Hughes at the Scott River District office or by phone at 530-468-1241.

MARGARET J. BOLAND, Forest Supervisor

Date

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) prohibits discrimination in all its programs and activities on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, religion, age, disability, political beliefs, sexual orientation, or marital or family status. (Not all prohibited bases apply to all programs.) Persons with disabilities who require alternative means for communication of program information (Braille, large print, audiotape, etc.) should contact USDA's TARGET Center at (202) 720-2600 (voice and TDD).

To file a complaint of discrimination, write USDA, Director, Office of Civil Rights, Room 326-W, Whitten Building, 1400 Independence Avenue, SW, Washington, D.C. 20250-9410 or call (202) 720-5964 (voice and TDD). USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

**ATTACHMENT 2:
BIOLOGICAL
EVALUATION**



LIVE OAK ASSOCIATES, INC.

an Ecological Consulting Firm

CALIFORNIA PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION NORDHEIMER FLAT TELECOM INFRASTRUCTURE BIOLOGICAL EVALUATION SISKIYOU COUNTY, CALIFORNIA

Prepared by

LIVE OAK ASSOCIATES, INC.

Rick Hopkins, Ph.D., Principal and Senior Wildlife Ecologist
Davinna Ohlson, M.S., Senior Project Manager and Plant/Wildlife Ecologist
Neal Kramer, M.S., Botanist/Certified Arborist

Prepared for

MHA Environmental Consulting
Attn: Jeffrey Smith
4 West Fourth Avenue, Suite 303
San Mateo, CA 94402

September 24, 2008

PN 1231-01

TABLE OF CONTENTS

1.0 INTRODUCTION 1

 1.1 PROJECT DESCRIPTION..... 3

2.0 EXISTING CONDITIONS..... 4

 2.1 BIOTIC HABITATS 6

 2.2 SPECIAL STATUS PLANTS AND ANIMALS 7

 2.3 JURISDICTIONAL WATERS..... 16

3.0 IMPACTS AND MITIGATIONS 17

 3.1 SIGNIFICANCE CRITERIA 17

 3.2 RELEVANT GOALS, POLICIES, AND LAWS..... 18

 3.2.1 Threatened and Endangered Species 18

 3.2.2 Migratory Birds..... 19

 3.2.3 Birds of Prey 19

 3.2.4 Wetlands and Other Jurisdictional Waters..... 19

 3.2.5 Local Ordinances, Policies, and Habitat Conservation Plans 21

 3.3 IMPACTS AND MITIGATIONS SPECIFIC TO THE PROJECT SITE..... 21

 3.3.1 Loss of Habitat for Special Status Plants 21

 3.3.2 Loss of Habitat for Special Status Animals 23

 3.3.3 Disturbance to Migratory Bird Nests 23

 3.3.4 Disturbance to Waters of the United States or Riparian Habitats..... 24

 3.3.1 Loss of Habitat for Native Wildlife 25

 3.3.2 Interference with the Movement of Native Wildlife..... 25

 3.3.3 Degradation of Water Quality in Seasonal Drainages, Stock Ponds, and Downstream Waters 25

 3.3.4 Local Ordinances or Habitat Conservation Plans 26

LITERATURE CITED 27

APPENDIX A: VASCULAR PLANTS OF THE STUDY AREA 29

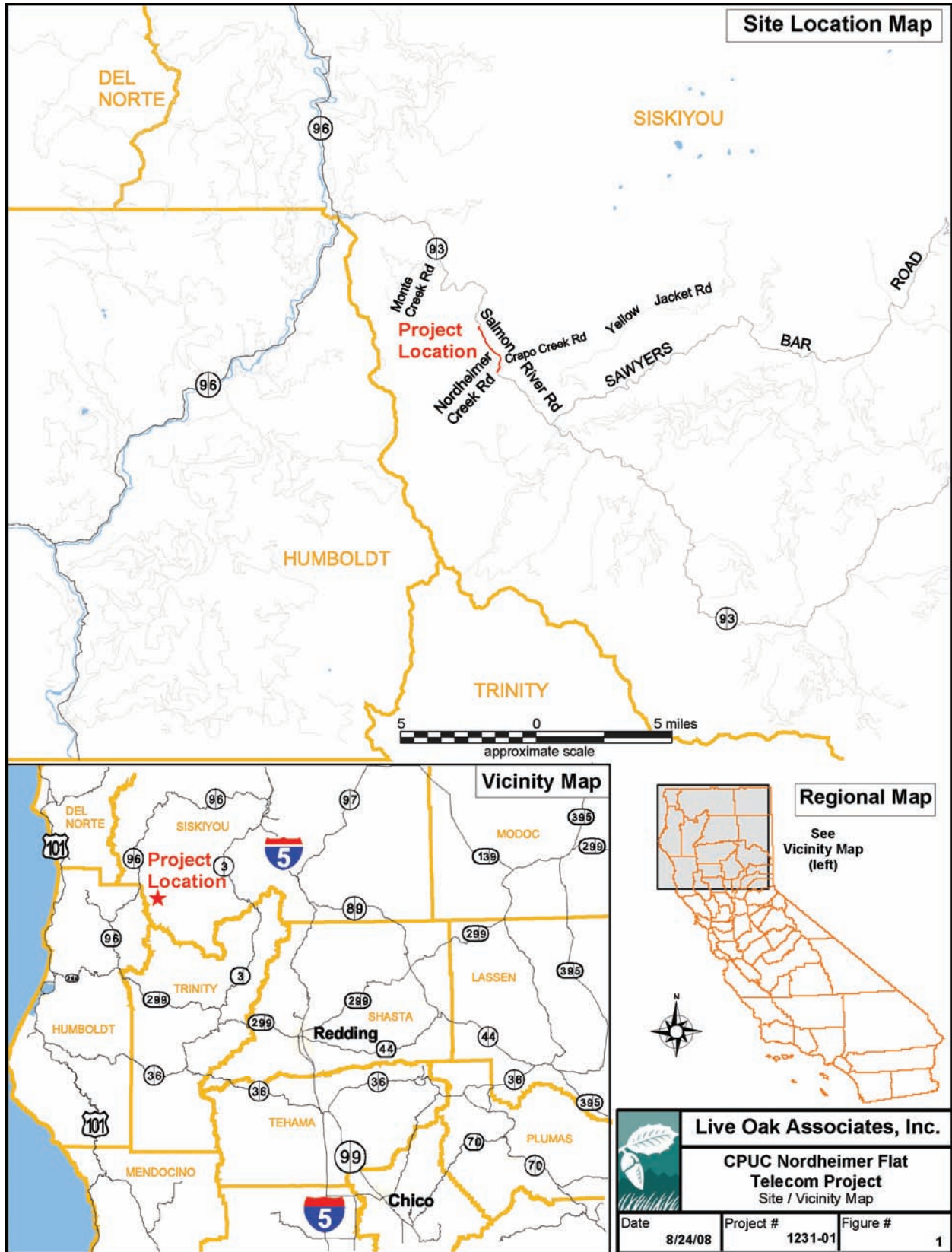
1.0 INTRODUCTION

Live Oak Associates, Inc. (LOA), has prepared the following report, which describes the biotic resources of the approximately 2.23-mile-long telecommunications infrastructure project site located along Salmon River Road near Nordheimer Creek Road in Forks of Salmon, Siskiyou County, California and evaluates likely impacts to these resources resulting from the trenching and laying of telecom cables along or beneath Salmon River Road. The project site is located in the Forks of Salmon and Orleans Mountain 7.5" U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) quadrangles in Section 3 of Township 10 North, Range 7 East and Sections 33 and 34 of Township 11 North, Range 7 East.

Construction projects can damage or modify biotic habitats used by sensitive plant and wildlife species. In such cases, these projects may be regulated by state or federal agencies, subject to provisions of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), and/or covered by policies and ordinances of Siskiyou County. This report addresses issues related to: 1) sensitive biotic resources occurring on the site; 2) the federal, state, and local laws regulating such resources, and 3) mitigation measures which may be required to reduce the magnitude of anticipated impacts. As such, the objectives of this report are to:

- Summarize all site-specific information related to existing biological resources;
- Make reasonable inferences about the biological resources that could occur onsite based on habitat suitability and the proximity of the site to a species' known range;
- Summarize all state and federal natural resource protection laws that may be relevant to possible future site development;
- Identify and discuss project impacts to biological resources likely to occur on the site within the context of CEQA or any state or federal laws; and
- Identify avoidance and mitigation measures that would reduce impacts to a less-than-significant level as identified by CEQA and that are generally consistent with recommendations of the resource agencies for affected biological resources.

Figure 1. Vicinity.



The analysis of impacts, as discussed in Section 3.0 of this report, is based on the known and potential biotic resources of the site, discussed in Section 2.0. Sources of information used in the preparation of this analysis included: 1) the *California Natural Diversity Data Base* (CDFG 2008), 2) the *Inventory of Rare and Endangered Vascular Plants of California* (CNPS 2001), and 3) manuals and references related to plants and animals of Siskiyou County. A reconnaissance-level field survey of the study area was conducted on July 15, 2008, by LOA ecologist Davinna Ohlson and on September 20, 2008 by LOA botanist Neal Kramer, at which time the principal biotic habitats and land uses of the site were identified, and the constituent plants and animals of each were noted.

1.1 PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The proposed project is the installation of approximately 2.23 miles of a telecommunications cable along and within Salmon River Road in order to provide land line telephone and dial-up internet service to four applicants in the Nordheimer Flat community. Installation of the telecom line will require approximately 11,756 ft. of trenching along Salmon River Road. The cable will be placed either under the roadway asphalt or in the roadside bar ditch. No trees are proposed for removal as part of the project, and where Salmon River Road crosses over seasonal drainage channels and other lower-order tributaries via culverts, trenching and the laying of cable will occur beneath the roadway but above the culvert (Carl Eastlick, per. comm., 15 July 2008).

2.0 EXISTING CONDITIONS

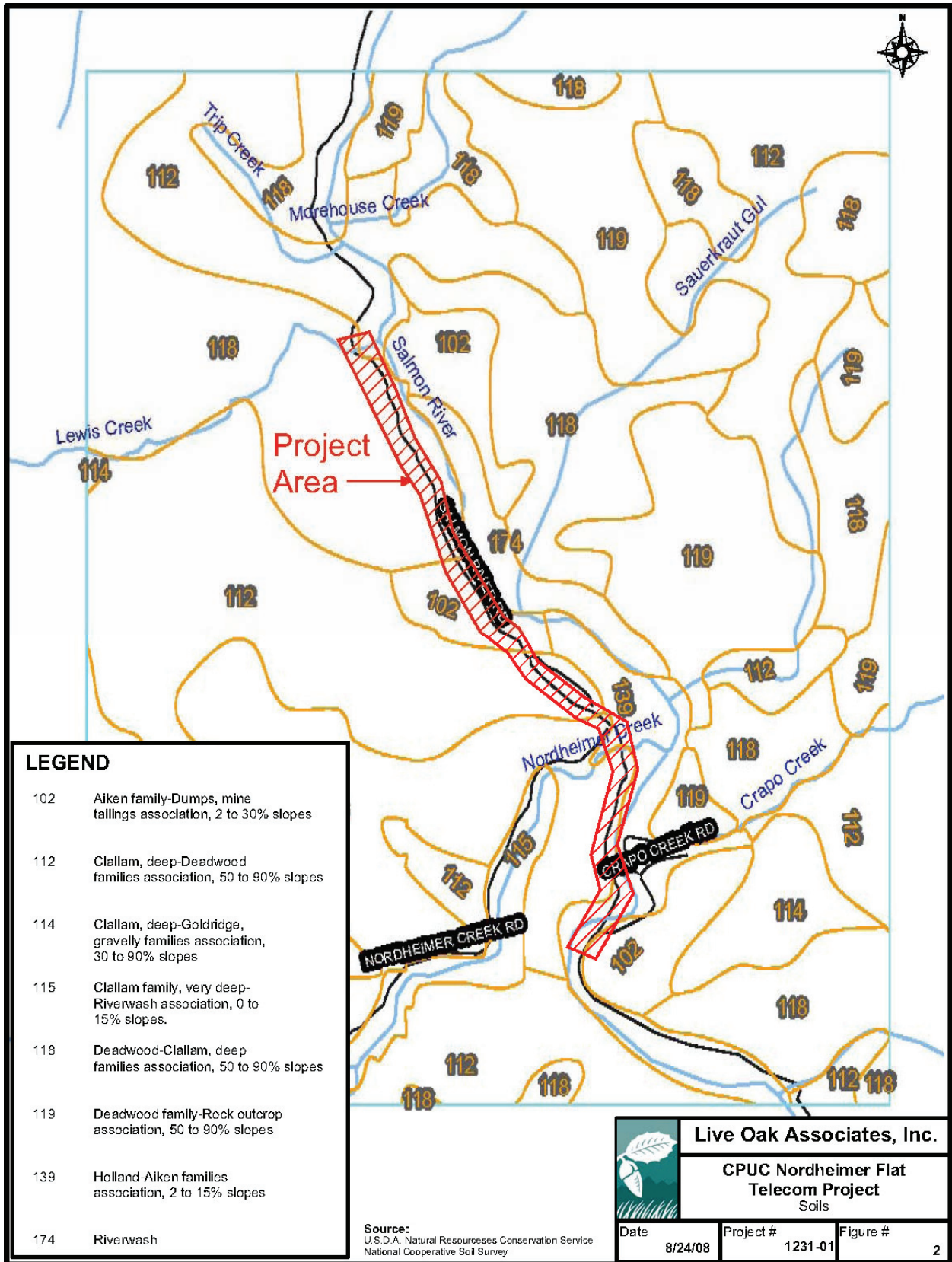
The project site is located in the community of Nordheimer Flat, near Forks of Salmon in Klamath National Forest. The site is entirely surrounded by mountains. The Salmon River generally occurs along the east side of Salmon River Road at the bottom of a sheer cliff. Because it occurs in a mountainous area, the site ranges in elevation from approximately 1100 ft. (335 m) National Geodetic Vertical Datum (NGVD) to approximately 1200 ft. (365 m) NGVD throughout the length of the site. The site itself consists of Salmon River Road and its roadside bar ditches.

Five soil types from three soil series—Aiken, Clallam, Deadwood, and Holland—were identified on the project site (Fig. 2; NRCS 2007). Of the four soils series, none are considered hydric, although hydric inclusions may occur. The active stream channel of the Salmon River consists of riverwash. Not considered an official soil type, the riverwash occurring onsite consists of water-deposited sediments. Therefore, riverwash is considered hydric. Hydric soils are soils that are saturated, flooded, or ponded long enough during the growing season to develop anaerobic conditions in the upper part. Under sufficiently wet conditions, they support the growth and regeneration of hydrophytic vegetation. None of the soils are known to support edaphic special status plant species (i.e., the soils of the site are neither serpentine nor alkaline).

Table 1. Soils occurring on the Nordheimer Flat project site (NRCS 2007).

Soil Series/Soil	Map Symbol	Parent Material	Drainage Class	Hardpan/Duripan	% Hydric
AIKEN SERIES Aiken-family Dumps, mine tailings association, 2 to 30% slopes	102	Residuum weathered from serpentinite	Moderately slow	No	0
CLALLAM AND DEADWOOD SERIES Clallam, deep Deadwood families association, 50 to 90% slopes Clallam family, very deep-Riverwash association, 0 to 15% slopes	112 115	Residuum weathered from metamorphic rock	Well-drained	No No	0 35
DEADWOOD SERIES Deadwood-Clallam, deep families association, 50 to 90% slopes	118	Residuum weathered from metamorphic rock	Well-drained	No	0
HOLLAND SERIES Holland-Aiken families association, 2 to 15% slopes	139	Residuum weathered from igneous and metamorphic rock	Well-drained	No	0

Figure 2. Soils.



Siskiyou County has warm to hot dry summers and cold winters. Annual precipitation in the general vicinity of the site averages 45 inches, most of which falls between October and April in the form of rain or snow (WRCC 2008). Stormwater readily infiltrates the soils of and surrounding the site; when field capacity has been reached, however, gravitational water drains into nearby seasonal tributaries and the Salmon River as shallow groundwater or as surface sheet flow.

Like the site itself, lands immediately surrounding the site to the east and south are part of Klamath National Forest. The Salmon River, nearby creeks and seasonal drainages, ridgelines, and valleys serve as wildlife movement corridors; therefore, sensitive plant and animal species occurring in the natural habitats in the region could access the site with relative ease.

2.1 BIOTIC HABITATS

One biotic habitat and one land use was identified on the project site. For the purposes of this report, the habitat has been classified as “ruderal,” and the land use is classified as “paved road.” A list of the vascular plant species observed on the project site are provided in Appendix A.

No plant or animal species were observed on the paved road. The roadside bar ditches, however, supported ruderal vegetation as well as some vegetation characteristic of the surrounding coniferous forest. Ruderal vegetation observed in the roadside bar ditches included non-native annual grasses of European descent, including silver hairgrass (*Aira caryophyllea*), rattail fescue (*Vulpia myuros*), soft chess (*Bromus hordeaceus*), ripgut brome (*Bromus diandrus*), and dogtail grass (*Cynosurus echinatus*). Forbs observed include the non-native English plantain (*Plantago lanceolata*), yellow star thistle (*Centaurea solstitialis*), Himalayan blackberry (*Rubus discolor*), and common sheep sorrel (*Rumex acetosella*), and the native Spanish clover (*Lotus purshianus*). Constituent plants of the surrounding coniferous forest included pine (*Pinus ponderosa*), Douglas-fir (*Pseudotsuga menziesii*), black oak (*Quercus kelloggii* sp.), poison oak (*Toxicodendron diversilobum*), and Pacific madrone (*Arbutus menziesii*).

The surrounding coniferous forest supports a diverse assemblage of wildlife, which may cross or move along the road from time to time. Amphibians and reptiles such as the ensatina (*Ensatina*

eschscholtzii), western fence lizard (*Sceloporus occidentalis*), western skink (*Eumeces skiltonianus*), and gopher snake (*Pituophis catenifer*), are expected to occur in the forest where sufficient cover (e.g., rock outcrops, logs, and dense leaf litter) exists.

Coniferous forests also provide habitat to a number of resident and migratory birds. Birds that could occur over the site include the northern goshawk (*Accipiter gentiles*), chestnut-backed chickadee (*Poecile rufescens*), northern flicker (*Colaptes auratus*), pileated woodpecker (*Dryocopus pileatus*), and winter wren (*Troglodytes troglodytes*). These and other birds may nest, forage, or winter in habitats adjacent to the site.

The understory vegetation in coniferous forests provides foraging habitat and cover for several mammal species. Brush rabbits (*Sylvilagus bachmani*) primarily feed on forbs and grasses, while deer mice (*Peromyscus maniculatus*) prefer insects and seeds. A mixture of over- and understory vegetation provides abundant leaf litter and a variety of flowers, leaves, and berries for the dusky-footed woodrat (*Neotoma fuscipes*). The western gray squirrel (*Sciurus griseus*) forages on a broad variety of fruits and green foliage both in trees and on the ground. The abundance of small mammals also potentially attracts larger mammalian predators known to occur in the region, including coyotes (*Canis latrans*), gray foxes (*Urocyon cinereoargenteus*), and mountain lions (*Puma concolor*).

2.2 SPECIAL STATUS PLANTS AND ANIMALS

Several species of plants and animals within the state of California have low populations and/or limited distributions. Such species may be considered “rare” and are vulnerable to extirpation as the state’s human population grows and the habitats these species occupy are converted to agricultural and urban uses. As described more fully in Section 3.2, state and federal laws have provided the California Department of Fish and Game (CDFG) and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) with a mechanism for conserving and protecting the diversity of plant and animal species native to the state. A sizable number of native plants and animals have been formally designated as “threatened” or “endangered” under state and federal endangered species legislation. Others have been designated as candidates for such listing. Still others have been designated as “species of special concern” by the CDFG. The California Native Plant Society

(CNPS) has developed its own set of lists of native plants considered rare, threatened, or endangered (CNPS 2001). Collectively, these plants and animals are referred to as “special status species.”

A number of special status plants and animals occur in the site’s vicinity (Fig. 3). These species and their potential to occur in the study area are listed in Table 2 on the following pages. Sources of information for this table included *California’s Wildlife, Volumes I, II, and III* (Zeiner et. al 1988), *California Natural Diversity Data Base* (CDFG 2008), *Endangered and Threatened Wildlife and Plants* (USFWS 2008), *State and Federally Listed Endangered and Threatened Animals of California* (CDFG 2008), and *The California Native Plant Society’s Inventory of Rare and Endangered Vascular Plants of California* (CNPS 2001). This information was used to evaluate the potential for special status plant and animal species that occur on the site. Figure 3 depicts the location of special status species found by the California Natural Diversity Data Base (CNDDDB). It is important to note that the CNDDDB is a volunteer database; therefore, it may not contain all known or gray literature records.

A search of published accounts for all relevant special status plant and animal species was conducted for the Forks of Salmon and Orleans Mountain USGS 7.5” quadrangles in which the project site occurs and for the ten surrounding quadrangles (Bark Shanty Gulch, Somes Bar, Medicine Mountain, English Peak, Sawyers Bar, Cecilville, Youngs Peak, Salmon Mountain, Hopkins Butte, and Orleans) using the California Natural Diversity Data Base Rarefind (CDFG 2008) [Table 2]. All species listed as occurring in these quadrangles on CNPS Lists 1A, 1B, 2, 3, or 4 were also reviewed.

Figure 3. Special status species.

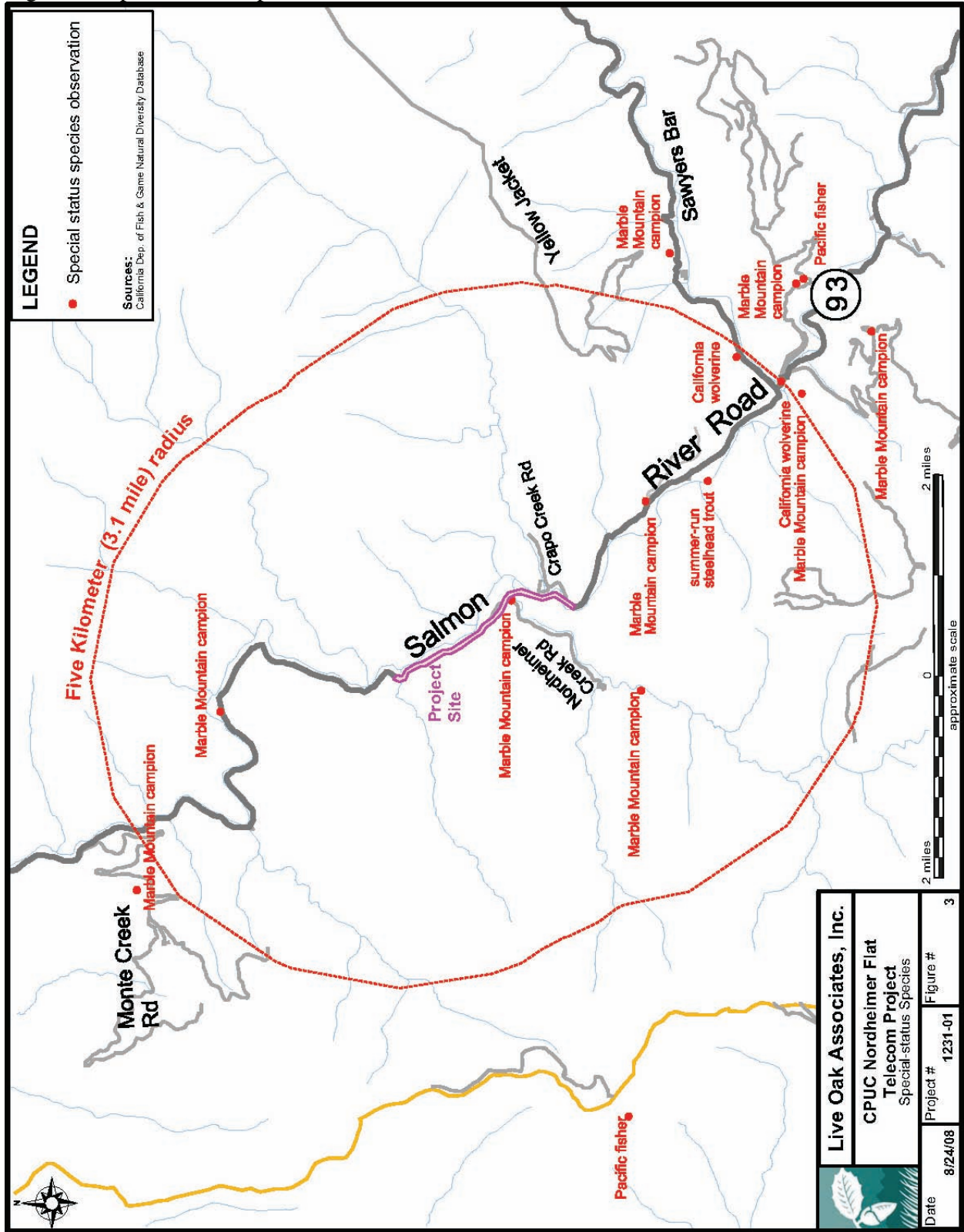


TABLE 2. LIST OF SPECIAL STATUS SPECIES THAT COULD OCCUR IN THE PROJECT VICINITY

PLANTS (adapted from CDFG 2008 and CNPS 2001)

Species Listed as Threatened or Endangered under the State and/or Federal Endangered Species Act

Species	Status	Habitat	*Occurrence in the Study Area
No plants on or in the vicinity of the site are listed under the State or Federal Endangered Species Acts.			

Other special status plants listed by CNPS

Species	Status	Habitat	*Occurrence in the Study Area
Pacific silver fir (<i>Abies amabilis</i>)	CNPS 2	Upper montane coniferous forests at elevations between 1700 and 2195 meters.	Absent. This species occurs at elevations well above those of the site.
Subalpine fir (<i>Abies lasiocarpa</i> var. <i>lasiocarpa</i>)	CNPS 2	Meadows and seeps, subalpine coniferous forests, and upper montane coniferous forests at elevations between 945 and 2225 meters.	Absent. This species occurs at elevations well above those of the site.
Oregon sedge (<i>Carex halliana</i>)	CNPS 2	Meadows and seeps, pinyon and juniper woodland, and subalpine coniferous forests, often on pumice, at elevations between 1370 and 2105 meters. Blooms July-September.	Absent. This species occurs at elevations well above those of the site.
Northern meadow sedge (<i>Carex praticola</i>)	CNPS 2	Meadows and seeps on mesic soils at elevations up to 3200 meters. Blooms May-July.	Absent. Suitable habitat for this species is not present on the site.
Shasta chaenactis (<i>Chaenactis suffrutescens</i>)	CNPS 1B	Lower and upper montane coniferous forests on sandy soils or serpentinite at elevations between 760 and 2800 meters. Blooms May-September.	Absent. This species occurs at elevations well above those of the site. This speci
Oregon fireweed (<i>Epilobium oregonum</i>)	CNPS 1B	Mesic openings of bogs and ferns and lower and upper montane coniferous forests at elevations between 500 and 2240 meters. Blooms June-September.	Absent. This species occurs at elevations well above those of the site.
Henderson's fawn lily (<i>Erythronium hendersonii</i>)	CNPS 2	Lower montane coniferous forests at elevations between 300 and 1600 meters. Blooms April-July.	Unlikely. Potentially suitable habitat for this species is present on the site. However, the last documented occurrence of this species in the region is from 1929.
Giant fawn lily (<i>Erythronium oregonum</i>)	CNPS 2	Openings of meadows and seeps and cismontane woodlands, sometimes on serpentinite or rocky soils, at elevations between 100 and 500 meters. Blooms March-May.	Unlikely. Potentially suitable habitat for this species is present on the site. However, the nearest documented occurrence of this species is undated and more than seven miles from the site.
Klamath gentian (<i>Gentiana plurisetosa</i>)	CNPS 1B	Mesic soils of meadows and seeps and of lower and upper montane coniferous forests at elevations between 1200 and 1900 meters. Blooms July-September.	Absent. This species occurs at elevations well above those of the site.

TABLE 2. LIST OF SPECIAL STATUS SPECIES THAT COULD OCCUR IN THE PROJECT VICINITY

PLANTS – cont’d.

Other special status plants listed by CNPS (cont’d.)

Species	Status	Habitat	*Occurrence in the Study Area
California globe mallow (<i>Iliamna lilibracteata</i>)	CNPS 1B	Montane chaparral, lower montane coniferous forests, mesic soils of North Coast coniferous forests, and riparian scrub, often in burned areas, at elevations between 60 and 2000 meters. Blooms June-August.	Unlikely. Potentially suitable habitat for this species is present on the site. However, the nearest documented occurrences of this species are more than twelve miles southwest of the site.
Heckner’s lewisia (<i>Lewisia cotyledon</i> var. <i>heckneri</i>)	CNPS 1B	Lower montane coniferous forests on rocky soils at elevations between 225 and 2100 meters. Blooms May-July	Unlikely. Potentially suitable habitat for this species is present on the site. However, the most recent documented occurrence of this species in the region is from 1976.
Coast Range lomatium (<i>Lomatium martindalei</i>)	CNPS 2	Coastal bluff scrub, lower montane coniferous forests, and meadows and seeps at elevations between 240 and 3000 meters. Blooms May-June.	Unlikely. Potentially suitable habitat for this species is present on the site. However, the nearest and most recent documented occurrence of this species in the region is from 1980, more than ten miles northwest of the site.
Wolf’s evening-primrose (<i>Oenothera wolfii</i>)	CNPS 1B	Sandy, usually mesic soils of coastal bluff scrub, coastal dunes, coastal prairies, and lower montane coniferous forests at elevations between 3 and 800 meters. Blooms May-October.	Unlikely. Moderately suitable habitat for this species is present on the site. However, the nearest and most recent documented occurrence of this species in the region is from 1945, more than nine miles southwest of the site.
White-flowered rein orchid (<i>Piperia candida</i>)	CNPS 1B	Broadleafed upland forests, lower montane coniferous forests, and North Coast coniferous forests, sometimes on serpentinite, at elevations between 30 and 1310 meters. Blooms May-September.	Unlikely. Potentially suitable habitat for this species is present on the site. However, the nearest documented occurrence of this species is more than five miles northwest of the site.
Northern holly fern (<i>Polystichum lonchitis</i>)	CNPS 3	Subalpine coniferous forests and upper montane coniferous forests on granitic or carbonate substrates at elevations between 1800 and 2600 meters. Blooms June-September.	Absent. This species occurs at elevations well above those of the site.
Robbins’ pondweed (<i>Potamogeton robbinsii</i>)	CNPS 2	Deepwater marshes and swamps or lakes at elevations between 1530 and 3300 meters. Blooms July-August.	Absent. This species occurs at elevations well above those of the site. Suitable habitat for this species is absent from the site.
Columbia yellow cress (<i>Rorippa columbiae</i>)	CNPS 1B	Mesic soils of meadows and seeps, pinyon and juniper woodland, playas, and vernal pools at elevations between 1200 and 1800 meters. Blooms May-September.	Absent. This species occurs at elevations well above those of the site.

TABLE 2. LIST OF SPECIAL STATUS SPECIES THAT COULD OCCUR IN THE PROJECT VICINITY

PLANTS – cont’d.

Other special status plants listed by CNPS (cont’d.)

Species	Status	Habitat	*Occurrence in the Study Area
Red-wool saxifrage (<i>Saxifraga rufidula</i>)	CNPS 2	Mesic and rocky soils of upper montane coniferous forests at elevations between 1860 and 2000 meters. Blooms March-July.	Absent. This species occurs at elevations well above those of the site.
Marble Mountain campion (<i>Silene marmorensis</i>)	CNPS 1B	Broadleafed upland forests, chaparral, cismontane woodlands, and lower montane coniferous forests at elevations between 170 and 1250 meters. Blooms June-August.	Possible. Potentially suitable habitat is present on the site. This species was documented on or near the site in 1987 and 1988 and has been documented several times within three miles of the site.
English Peak greenbriar (<i>Smilax jamesii</i>)	CNPS 1B	Marshes and swamps, broadleafed upland forests, lower and upper montane coniferous forests, and North Coast coniferous forests at elevations between 580 and 2500 meters. Blooms May-July.	Absent. This species occurs at elevations well above those of the site.
Buttercup-leaf suksdorfia (<i>Suksdorfia ranunculifolia</i>)	CNPS 2	Meadows and seeps and upper montane coniferous forests on mesic, rocky, or granitic soils at elevations between 1500 and 2500 meters. Blooms June-August.	Absent. This species occurs at elevations well above those of the site.
Howell’s tauschia (<i>Tauschia howellii</i>)	CNPS 1B	Subalpine coniferous forests and upper montane coniferous forests on granitic or gravelly soil at elevations between 1705 and 2500 meters. Blooms June-August.	Absent. This species occurs at elevations well above those of the site.
Robust false lupine (<i>Thermopsis robusta</i>)	CNPS 1B	Broadleafed upland forests and North Coast coniferous forests at elevations between 150 and 1500 meters. Blooms May-July.	Unlikely. Potentially suitable habitat for this species is present on the site. However, the nearest documented occurrence of this species is from 1931, more than eight miles west of the site.
Little-leaved huckleberry (<i>Vaccinium scoparium</i>)	CNPS 2	Subalpine coniferous forests on rocky soils at elevations between 1036 and 2200 meters. Blooms June-August.	Absent. This species occurs at elevations well above those of the site.

TABLE 2. LIST OF SPECIAL STATUS SPECIES THAT COULD OCCUR IN THE PROJECT VICINITY

ANIMALS (adapted from CDFG 2008 and USFWS 2008)

Species Listed as Threatened or Endangered under the State and/or Federal Endangered Species Act

Species	Status	Habitat	*Occurrence in the Study Area
Spring-run Chinook salmon (<i>Oncorhynchus tshawytscha spring-run</i>)	FT, CT	Migrate up freshwater rivers or streams in the spring and spend the remainder of the time in the ocean.	Absent. Suitable habitat for this species is absent from the site.
Bald eagle (<i>Haliaeetus leucocephalus</i>)	CE	Nests in the upper canopy of large trees, especially conifers, near lakes, reservoirs, and rivers.	Possible. Suitable habitat for this species is present in the form of large trees bordering and in the vicinity of the site.
Peregrine falcon (<i>Falco peregrinus anatum</i>)	CE	Individuals breed on cliffs in the Sierra or in coastal habitats; occurs in many habitats of the state during migration and winter.	Possible. Peregrine falcons may occur incidentally on the site if they forage over adjacent areas. Suitable nesting habitat is absent from the site.
Pacific fisher (<i>Martes pennanti (pacifica) DPS</i>)	FC	Uses cavities, snags, and logs for cover and denning. Needs large areas of mature, dense forest.	Unlikely. Pacific fishers may occur incidentally on the site if they den or forage in the surrounding habitat. Suitable denning and foraging habitat is absent from the site itself.
California wolverine (<i>Gulo gulo</i>)	CT	A variety of high elevation habitats in the North Coast mountains and Sierra Nevada. Uses caves, logs, burrows for cover and denning.	Unlikely. This species may occur incidentally on the site if they den or forage in the surrounding habitat. Suitable denning and foraging habitat is absent from the site itself.

California Species of Special Concern and Protected Species and Species Considered Sensitive by the USDA Forest Service

Species	Status	Habitat	*Occurrence in the Study Area
Summer-run steelhead trout (<i>Oncorhynchus mykiss irideus</i>)	CSC	Northern California coastal streams south to Middle Fork Eel river. Needs cool, swift, shallow water with loose gravel for spawning and large pools to spend the summer.	Absent. Suitable habitat for this species is absent from the site.
Upper Trinity River Chinook salmon ESU – fall run	USFS sensitive animals list	Migrate up freshwater rivers or streams in the fall and spend the remainder of the time in the ocean.	Absent. Suitable habitat for this species is absent from the site.
Del Norte salamander (<i>Plethodon elongates</i>)	CSC	Old-growth mixed conifer/hardwood ancient forests. Cool, moist, stable microclimate with deep litter layer in closed, multi-storied canopy.	Absent. Suitable habitat is absent from the site. The nearest documented occurrences of this species are from 1989, more than eleven miles from the site.
Western tailed frog (<i>Ascaphus truei</i>)	CSC	Perennial streams of montane hardwood-conifer, redwood, Douglas-fir, and ponderosa pine habitats.	Absent. Suitable habitat for this species is absent from the site.
Foothill yellow-legged frog (<i>Rana boylei</i>)	CSC	Frequents partly shaded, shallow, swiftly-flowing streams and riffles with rocky substrate in a variety of habitats.	Absent. Suitable habitat for this species is absent from the site. The nearest documented occurrence of this species is from 1985, more than twenty miles southwest of the site.

TABLE 2. LIST OF SPECIAL STATUS SPECIES THAT COULD OCCUR IN THE PROJECT VICINITY

ANIMALS – cont’d.

California Species of Special Concern and Protected Species and Species Considered Sensitive by the USDA Forest Service

Species	Status	Habitat	*Occurrence in the Study Area
Cascades frog (<i>Rana cascadae</i>)	CSC	Mountain lakes, small streams, and ponds in meadows or open coniferous forests.	Absent. Suitable habitat for this species is absent from the site. The nearest documented occurrences of this species are from 2002, more than fifteen miles northeast of the site.
Northwestern pond turtle (<i>Actinemys marmorata marmorata</i>)	CSC	Intermittent and permanent waterways including streams, marshes, rivers, ponds and lakes.	Absent. Suitable habitat for this species is absent from the site. The nearest documented occurrence of this species is from 2005, more than fifteen miles west of the site.
White-tailed kite (<i>Elanus leucurus</i>)	CP	Open grasslands and agricultural areas throughout central California.	Unlikely. Poor nesting and foraging habitat is present around the site. Suitable nesting and foraging habitat is absent from the site itself.
Northern goshawk (<i>Accipiter gentilis</i>)	CSC	Coniferous forests, usually nesting in large trees on north slopes near water.	Possible. Suitable habitat for this species is present in the form of large trees bordering and in the vicinity of the site.
Northern harrier (<i>Circus cyaneus</i>)	CSC	Frequents meadows, grasslands, open rangelands, freshwater emergent wetlands; uncommon in wooded habitats.	Absent. Suitable habitat for this species is absent from the site and its vicinity.
Golden eagle (<i>Aquila chrysaetos</i>)	CP	Typically frequents rolling foothills, mountain areas, woodland areas, sage-juniper flats, and desert habitats.	Unlikely. This species may occur incidentally on the site if they forage over adjacent areas. However, foraging habitat around the site is marginal. Suitable nesting habitat is present in the form of large trees bordering and in the vicinity of the site.
Burrowing owl (<i>Athene cunicularia</i>)	CSC	Open, dry grasslands, deserts and ruderal areas. Requires suitable burrows. This species is often associated with California ground squirrels.	Absent. Suitable habitat for this species is absent from the site and its vicinity.
Short-eared owl (<i>Asio flammeus</i>)	CSC	Transient or occasional breeder in grasslands, marshes, and in some agricultural lands of the San Joaquin Valley.	Absent. Suitable habitat for this species is absent from the site and its vicinity.
Black swift (<i>Cypseloides niger</i>)	CSC	Migrants and transients found throughout many habitats of state. Breeds on steep cliffs or ocean bluffs, or in cracks and crevasses of inland deep canyons.	Possible. Suitable nesting and foraging habitat is absent from the site itself but is potentially present in the surrounding landscape. Therefore, this species may occur incidentally over the site. The nearest documented occurrence of this species is from 1982, more than eight miles west of the site.
Vaux’s swift (<i>Chaetura vauxi</i>)	CSC	Migrants and transients move through the foothills of the western Sierra in spring and late summer. Breeds in coniferous forests.	Possible. Suitable nesting and foraging habitat is absent from the site itself but is present in the surrounding landscape. Therefore, this species may occur incidentally over the site.

TABLE 2. LIST OF SPECIAL STATUS SPECIES THAT COULD OCCUR IN THE PROJECT VICINITY

ANIMALS – cont’d.

California Species of Special Concern and Protected Species and Species Considered Sensitive by the USDA Forest Service

Species	Status	Habitat	*Occurrence in the Study Area
Tricolored blackbird (<i>Agelaius tricolor</i>)	CSC	Breeds near fresh water, primarily emergent wetlands, with tall thickets. Forages in nearby grassland and cropland habitats.	Absent. Suitable habitat for this species is absent from the site and its vicinity.
Pallid bat (<i>Antrozous pallidus</i>)	CSC	Grasslands, chaparral, woodlands, and forests of California; most common in dry rocky open areas that provide roosting opportunities.	Possible. Suitable roosting and foraging habitat is absent from the site itself but is potentially present in the surrounding landscape. Therefore, this species may occur incidentally over the site.
Townsend’s big-eared bat (<i>Plecotus townsendii townsendii</i>)	CSC	Primarily a cave-dwelling bat that may also roost in buildings. Occurs in a variety of habitats of the state.	Possible. Suitable roosting and foraging habitat is absent from the site itself but is potentially present in the surrounding landscape. Therefore, this species may occur incidentally over the site.
Humboldt marten (<i>Martes americana humboldtensis</i>)	CSC	Late-successional coniferous forests with low overhead cover from the Oregon border to Sonoma County.	Unlikely. Suitable nesting and foraging habitat is absent from the site itself but is potentially present in the surrounding landscape. Therefore, this species may occur incidentally on the site.
American badger (<i>Taxidea taxus</i>)	CSC	Found in drier open stages of most shrub, forest and herbaceous habitats with friable soils.	Absent. Suitable habitat for this species is absent from the site and its vicinity.
Ringtail (<i>Bassariscus astutus</i>)	CP	Occurs in dry, rocky, and mountainous areas with oaks and conifers.	Unlikely. Suitable nesting and foraging habitat is absent from the site itself but is potentially present in the surrounding landscape. Therefore, this species may occur incidentally on the site.

***Explanation of Occurrence Designations and Status Codes**

- Present: Species observed on the sites at time of field surveys or during recent past.
- Likely: Species not observed on the site, but it may reasonably be expected to occur there on a regular basis.
- Possible: Species not observed on the sites, but it could occur there from time to time.
- Unlikely: Species not observed on the sites, and would not be expected to occur there except, perhaps, as a transient.
- Absent: Species not observed on the sites, and precluded from occurring there because habitat requirements not met.

STATUS CODES

- | | | | |
|-----|---------------------------------|-----|---------------------------------------|
| FE | Federally Endangered | CE | California Endangered |
| FT | Federally Threatened | CT | California Threatened |
| FPE | Federally Endangered (Proposed) | CR | California Rare |
| FC | Federal Candidate | CP | California Protected |
| | | CSC | California Species of Special Concern |
-
- | | | | |
|------|---|---|---|
| CNPS | California Native Plant Society Listing | | |
| 1A | Plants Presumed Extinct in California | 3 | Plants about which we need more information – a review list |
| 1B | Plants Rare, Threatened, or Endangered in California and elsewhere | 4 | Plants of limited distribution – a watch list |
| 2 | Plants Rare, Threatened, or Endangered in California, but more common elsewhere | | |

2.3 JURISDICTIONAL WATERS

Jurisdictional waters include rivers, creeks, and drainages that have a defined bed and bank and which, at the very least, carry ephemeral flows. Jurisdictional waters also include lakes, ponds, reservoirs, and wetlands. Such waters may be subject to the regulatory authority of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE), the California Department of Fish and Game (CDFG), and the California Regional Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB). See Section 3.2.4 of this report for additional information.

Jurisdictional waters are absent from the site.

3.0 IMPACTS AND MITIGATIONS

3.1 SIGNIFICANCE CRITERIA

Approval of general plans, area plans, and specific projects is subject to the provisions of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). The purpose of CEQA is to assess the impacts of proposed projects on the environment before they are carried out. CEQA is concerned with the significance of a proposed project's impacts. For example, a proposed development project may require the removal of some or all of a site's existing vegetation. Animals associated with this vegetation could be destroyed or displaced. Animals adapted to humans, roads, buildings, pets, etc., may replace those species formerly occurring on the site. Plants and animals that are state and/or federally listed as threatened or endangered may be destroyed or displaced. Sensitive habitats such as wetlands and riparian woodlands may be altered or destroyed.

Whenever possible, public agencies are required to avoid or minimize environmental impacts by implementing practical alternatives or mitigation measures. According to Section 15382 of the CEQA Guidelines, a significant effect on the environment means a "substantial, or potentially substantial, adverse change in any of the physical conditions within the area affected by the project, including land, air, water, minerals, flora, fauna, ambient noise, and objects of historic or aesthetic interest."

Specific project impacts to biological resources may be considered "significant" if they would:

- Have a substantial adverse effect, either directly or through habitat modifications, on any species identified as a candidate, sensitive, or special status species in local or regional plans, policies, or regulations, or by the California Department of Fish and Game or U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service;
- Have a substantial adverse effect on any riparian habitat or other sensitive natural community identified in local or regional plans, policies, regulations or by the California Department of Fish and Game or U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service;
- Have a substantial adverse effect on federally protected wetlands as defined by Section 404 of the Clean Water Act (including, but not limited to, marsh, vernal pool, coastal, etc.) through direct removal, filling, hydrological interruption, or other means;
- Interfere substantially with the movement of any native resident or migratory fish or wildlife species or with established native resident or migratory wildlife corridors, or impede the use of native wildlife nursery sites;

- Conflict with any local policies or ordinances protecting biological resources, such as a tree preservation policy or ordinance; or
- Conflict with the provisions of an adopted Habitat Conservation Plan, Natural Community Conservation Plan, or other approved local, regional, or state habitat conservation plan.

Furthermore, CEQA Guidelines Section 15065(a) states that a project may trigger the requirement to make a “mandatory findings of significance” if the project has the potential to

Substantially degrade the quality of the environment, substantially reduce the habitat of a fish or wildlife species, cause a fish or wildlife population to drop below self-sustaining levels, threaten to eliminate a plant or animal community, reduce the number or restrict the range of an endangered, rare or threatened species, or eliminate important examples of the major periods of California history or prehistory.

3.2 RELEVANT GOALS, POLICIES, AND LAWS

3.2.1 Threatened and Endangered Species

State and federal “endangered species” legislation has provided the California Department of Fish and Game (CDFG) and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) with a mechanism for conserving and protecting plant and animal species of limited distribution and/or low or declining populations. Species listed as threatened or endangered under provisions of the state and federal endangered species acts, candidate species for such listing, state species of special concern, and some plants listed as endangered by the California Native Plant Society are collectively referred to as “species of special status.” Permits may be required from both the CDFG and USFWS if activities associated with a proposed project will result in the “take” of a listed species. “Take” is defined by the state of California as “to hunt, pursue, catch, capture, or kill, or attempt to hunt, pursue, catch, capture or kill” (California Fish and Game Code, Section 86). “Take” is more broadly defined by the federal Endangered Species Act to include “harm” (16 USC, Section 1532(19), 50 CFR, Section 17.3). Furthermore, the CDFG and the USFWS are responding agencies under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). Both agencies review CEQA documents in order to determine the adequacy of their treatment of endangered species issues and to make project-specific recommendations for their conservation.

3.2.2 Migratory Birds

State and federal laws also protect most birds. The Federal Migratory Bird Treaty Act (16 U.S.C., sec. 703, Supp. I, 1989) prohibits killing, possessing, or trading in migratory birds, except in accordance with regulations prescribed by the Secretary of the Interior. This act encompasses whole birds, parts of birds, and bird nests and eggs.

3.2.3 Birds of Prey

Birds of prey are also protected in California under provisions of the State Fish and Game Code, Section 3503.5, which states that it is “unlawful to take, possess, or destroy any birds in the order *Falconiformes* or *Strigiformes* (birds of prey) or to take, possess, or destroy the nest or eggs of any such bird except as otherwise provided by this code or any regulation adopted pursuant thereto.” Construction disturbance during the breeding season could result in the incidental loss of fertile eggs or nestlings, or otherwise lead to nest abandonment. Disturbance that causes nest abandonment and/or loss of reproductive effort is considered “taking” by the CDFG.

3.2.4 Wetlands and Other Jurisdictional Waters

Natural drainage channels and adjacent wetlands may be considered “Waters of the United States” (hereafter referred to as “jurisdictional waters”) subject to the jurisdiction of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE). The extent of jurisdiction has been defined in the Code of Federal Regulations but has also been subject to interpretation of the federal courts. Jurisdictional waters generally include:

- All waters which are currently used, or were used in the past, or may be susceptible to use in interstate or foreign commerce, including all waters which are subject to the ebb and flow of the tide;
- All interstate waters including interstate wetlands;
- All other waters such as intrastate lakes, rivers, streams (including intermittent streams), mudflats, sandflats, wetlands, sloughs, prairie potholes, wet meadows, playa lakes, or natural ponds, the use, degradation or destruction of which could affect interstate or foreign commerce;
- All impoundments of waters otherwise defined as waters of the United States under the definition;
- Tributaries of waters identified in paragraphs (a)(1)-(4) (i.e. the bulleted items above).

As recently determined by the United States Supreme Court in *Solid Waste Agency of Northern Cook County v. U.S. Army Corps of Engineers* (the SWANCC decision), channels and wetlands

isolated from other jurisdictional waters cannot be considered jurisdictional on the basis of their use, hypothetical or observed, by migratory birds. However, the U.S Supreme Court decisions *Rapanos v. United States* and *Carabell v. U.S. Army Corps of Engineers* (referred together as the Rapanos decision) impose a "significant nexus" test for federal jurisdiction over wetlands. In June 2007, the USACE and Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) established guidelines for applying the significant nexus standard. This standard includes 1) a case-by-case analysis of the flow characteristics and functions of the tributary or wetland to determine if they significantly affect the chemical, physical, and biological integrity of downstream navigable waters and 2) consideration of hydrologic and ecologic factors (EPA and USACE 2007).

The USACE regulates the filling or grading of such waters under the authority of Section 404 of the Clean Water Act. The extent of jurisdiction within drainage channels is defined by “ordinary high water marks” on opposing channel banks. Wetlands are habitats with soils that are intermittently or permanently saturated, or inundated. The resulting anaerobic conditions select for plant species known as hydrophytes that show a high degree of fidelity to such soils. Wetlands are identified by the presence of hydrophytic vegetation, hydric soils (soils saturated intermittently or permanently saturated by water), and wetland hydrology according to methodologies outlined in the 1987 Corps of Engineers Wetlands Delineation Manual (USACE 1987).

All activities that involve the discharge of fill into jurisdictional waters are subject to the permit requirements of the USACE (Wetland Training Institute, Inc. 1991). Such permits are typically issued on the condition that the applicant agrees to provide mitigation that result in no net loss of wetland functions or values. No permit can be issued until the Regional Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB) issues a certification (or waiver of such certification) that the proposed activity will meet state water quality standards. The filling of isolated wetlands, over which the USACE has disclaimed jurisdiction under the SWANCC decision, is regulated by the RWQCB. It is unlawful to fill isolated wetlands without filing a Notice of Intent with the RWQCB. The RWQCB is also responsible for enforcing National Pollution Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permits, including the General Construction Activity Storm Water Permit. All projects requiring federal money must also comply with Executive Order 11990 (Protection of Wetlands).

The California Department of Fish and Game has jurisdiction over the bed and bank of natural drainages according to provisions of Section 1601 and 1602 of the California Fish and Game Code (2003). Activities that would disturb these drainages are regulated by the CDFG via a Streambed Alteration Agreement. Such an agreement typically stipulates that certain measures will be implemented which protect the habitat values of the drainage in question.

3.2.5 Local Ordinances, Policies, and Habitat Conservation Plans

No local ordinances, policies, or habitat conservation plans are known to be in effect for the region.

3.3 IMPACTS AND MITIGATIONS SPECIFIC TO THE PROJECT SITE

The proposed project is the installation of approximately 2.23 miles of a telecommunications cable along and within Salmon River Road in order to provide land line telephone and dial-up internet service to four applicants in the Nordheimer Flat community.

For the purposes of this analysis, it is assumed that any future proposal by the applicant will be consistent with the general locations of the site as currently represented in the plans provided by Siskiyou Telephone (2007). Any appreciable difference in either scope or general location of the proposed project would require an additional impact assessment to ensure that unanticipated impacts to biotic resources are not likely to occur.

3.3.1 Loss of Habitat for Special Status Plants

Potential Impacts. Of the 24 special status plant species potentially occurring within the project vicinity, only Marble Mountain campion has the potential to occur on the site (Table 2).

The extent to which Marble Mountain campion is or is not present on the site is not currently known. Focused surveys within and in the vicinity of any future proposed trenching and piping areas should be conducted to determine this species' presence on, or absence from, the site. These focused special status plant surveys should be conducted prior to ground disturbance and should occur during the appropriate blooming season for the species. Surveys conducted in June and August should be sufficient to confirm its presence or absence.

Marble Mountain campion is considered a CNPS 1B list (“Plants rare, threatened or endangered in California and elsewhere”) species. As a CNPS 1B plant with no federal or state listing, impacts to Marble Mountain campion may be considered significant under CEQA. If detected on the site, a determination would need to be made as to whether or not impacts to individuals of this species should be considered significant. Due to the type of project activities (i.e., trenching and piping), impacts to habitat would be temporary in nature. The determination of the significance of impacts would be based on, but not limited to, criteria such as the temporary nature of the habitat impacts, extent of the species’ range, relative abundance of regional populations of the species in its range, the number of plant populations on the site.

If focused rare plant surveys determine that these species are absent from areas impacted by future development, then there would be no impact to habitat for these species, and mitigation would not be warranted.

Mitigation. Should one or more populations of Marble Mountain campion be detected within the project footprint, and should their loss be considered significant under CEQA, then mitigation measures would be required to offset impacts to these plant populations. If the project cannot be redesigned to avoid impacts to the identified species, then compensation measures should include development of an onsite restoration plan for these species. At a minimum, the plan should contain the following elements: 1) location of restoration areas, 2) propagation and planting techniques to be employed for the restoration effort, 3) timetable for implementation, 4) monitoring plan and performance criteria, 5) adaptive management techniques, and 6) site maintenance plan. The plan would need to be approved by the lead agency prior to the start of project construction and, because disturbances and impacts to the site would be temporary, should occur in the immediate vicinity of the identified population(s). The objective of this mitigation measure would be to replace the special status plants lost during trenching and piping activities. This and any other compensation for anticipated impacts should be consistent with local policies and ordinances, and any other federal or state regulations protecting these plant communities.

Implementation of the above measures is expected to reduce project impacts to a less-than-significant level to any special status plant species that may occur on the site.

3.3.2 Loss of Habitat for Special Status Animals

Potential Impacts. Twenty-six special status or sensitive animal species occur, or once occurred, regionally (Table 2). With the exception of the northern goshawk, bald eagle, peregrine falcon, black swift, Vaux's swift, and pallid bat, all of these species would be absent from or unlikely to occur on the site due to unsuitable habitat conditions. Proposed trenching and piping activities would have no effect on these species because there is little or no likelihood that they would be present at the time of construction.

The remaining special status animal species listed above may occur more frequently during foraging activities around the site. These species either occur on the site incidental to home range and migratory movements, thus using the site infrequently, or may forage on the site year-round or during migration. Project buildout would have a minimal effect on the breeding success of these species and would not result in the loss of foraging, nesting, and/or roosting habitat that is abundantly available regionally. Therefore, the loss of habitat for these species would be considered less than significant.

Mitigation. Mitigation measures are not warranted.

3.3.3 Disturbance to Migratory Bird Nests

Potential Impacts. Although no stick nests were observed in trees along Salmon River Road, a conclusive investigation of nesting birds was not conducted. Trees in the coniferous forest adjacent to the site provide suitable nesting habitat for migratory birds, including tree-nesting raptors. If a migratory bird, regardless of its federal or state status, were to nest in trees near the site prior to or during proposed construction activities, such activities could result in the abandonment of active nests or direct mortality to these birds. Construction activities that adversely affect the nesting success of special-status or non-special-status migratory birds, including tree-nesting raptors, or result in mortality of individual birds constitute a violation of

state and federal laws (see Section 3.2.3) and would be considered a significant impact under CEQA.

Mitigation. At this time, no trees are proposed for removal. Should trees need to be removed, however, their removal should occur during the non-breeding season (September 1 through January 31). If it is not possible to avoid tree removal or other disturbances during the breeding season (February 1 through August 31), a qualified biologist should conduct a pre-disturbance survey for tree-nesting raptors and other migratory birds in all trees within the operation footprint and within 250 feet of the footprint no more than 30 days of the onset of ground disturbance, if such disturbance will occur during the breeding season. If nesting migratory birds are detected on the site during the survey, a suitable activity-free buffer should be established around all active nests. The precise dimension of the buffer (up to 250 ft.) would be determined at that time and may vary depending on location and species. Buffers should remain in place for the duration of the breeding season or until it has been confirmed by a qualified biologist that all chicks have fledged and are independent of their parents. Pre-disturbance surveys during the non-breeding season are not necessary for migratory birds, as they are expected to abandon their roosts during quarry activities. Implementation of the above measures would mitigate impacts to migratory birds, including tree-nesting raptors, to a less-than-significant level.

3.3.4 Disturbance to Waters of the United States or Riparian Habitats

Potential Impacts. No wetlands or other jurisdictional waters occur on the project site. Therefore, state and federal regulations protecting jurisdictional waters are not relevant to project-related activities. For areas where lower order tributaries cross under the road via culverts, the laying of cables will occur beneath the roadbed but above the culverts. The project will also have no effect on riparian habitats or other sensitive natural communities, as no such areas occur on the project site.

Mitigation. Mitigation measures are not warranted.

3.3.5 Loss of Habitat for Native Wildlife

Potential Impacts. The entire site is consists of hardscape associated with Salmon River Road and its associated roadside bar ditches, which provide only low-quality habitat for most species. Any impacts to this habitat would be temporary. Due to the small amount of low-quality habitat that would be temporarily impacted by project development, the loss of habitat for native wildlife resulting from the proposed project would constitute a less-than-significant impact.

Mitigation. Mitigation measures are not warranted.

3.3.6 Interference with the Movement of Native Wildlife

Potential Impacts. Although the Salmon River runs along the site to the northeast at the bottom of a steep slope and facilitates the movement of wildlife through the region, the project site itself provides minimal dispersal habitat for native wildlife and does not function as a significant movement corridor for native wildlife. Proposed construction activities are not expected to have a significant effect on home range and dispersal movements of native wildlife that may occur in the region. The proposed repair work may result in a temporary disruption of local wildlife movements and would be expected to do so only during daylight hours. These activities are not expected to result in any permanent or substantial changes in use or movement patterns once construction is complete. Wildlife species presently utilizing this area as a corridor are expected to continue moving through it after project buildout. Therefore, the proposed project would have a less-than-significant impact on corridor-type movements of native wildlife within the region.

Mitigation. Mitigation measures are not warranted.

3.3.7 Degradation of Water Quality in Seasonal Drainages, Stock Ponds, and Downstream Waters

Potential Impacts. Proposed constructions activities will result in a small amount of soils left barren in the construction footprint. Additionally, extensive grading often leaves the soils of construction zones barren of vegetation and, therefore, vulnerable to sheet, rill, or gully erosion. Furthermore, runoff is often polluted with grease, oil, pesticide and herbicide residues, heavy metals, etc. These pollutants may eventually be carried to sensitive wetland habitats used by a diversity of native wildlife species.

The applicant is expected to comply with the provisions of a County grading permit, including standard erosion control measures that employ best management practices (BMPs). Projects involving the grading of large tracts of land must also be in compliance with provisions of a General Construction permit (a type of NPDES permit) available from the California Regional Water Quality Control Board. Compliance with the above permit(s) should result in no impact to water quality in seasonal creeks, reservoirs, and downstream waters from the proposed project and should not result in the deposition of pollutants and sediments in sensitive riparian and wetland habitats.

Mitigation. Mitigation measures are not warranted.

3.3.8 Local Ordinances or Habitat Conservation Plans

Potential Impacts. No local ordinances, HCPs, or NCCPs are known to be in effect for this project. Therefore, the proposed project would not be impacted by any local policies related to biological resources.

Mitigation. Mitigation measures are not warranted.

LITERATURE CITED

- California Department of Fish and Game. 2008. California fish and game code. Gould Publications. Binghamton, NY.
- _____. 2008. Annual report on the status of California state listed threatened and endangered animals and plants. The Resources Agency, Sacramento, CA.
- _____. 2008. California natural diversity database. The Resources Agency, Sacramento, CA.
- California Native Plant Society. 2001. Inventory of Rare and Endangered Vascular Plants of California (6th Edition). Rare Plant Scientific Advisory Committee, David P. Tibor, Convening Editor. California Native Plant Society. Sacramento, CA.
- EPA and USACE. 2007. Clean Water Act Jurisdiction Following the U.S. Supreme Court's Decision in *Rapanos v. United States & Carabell v. United States*. Environmental Protection Agency and U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. Washington, D.C.
- Natural Resource Conservation Service. 2007. Klamath National Forest Area, Parts of Siskiyou County, California, and Jackson County, Oregon, USDA. <http://websoilsurvey.nrcs.usda.gov/app/WebSoilSurvey.aspx>.
- Siskiyou Telephone. 2007. Flarity, Shannon/USFS courtesy phone. Trenching and pipe in county road. Siskiyou Telephone, Siskiyou County, CA.
- U.S. Corps of Engineers. 1987. Corps of Engineers wetlands delineation manual. Department of the Army.
- USACE. 2001. Minimum standards for acceptance of preliminary wetland delineations. U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Regulatory Branch. November 30.
- _____. 2006. Interim Regional Supplement to the Corps of Engineers Wetland Delineation Manual: Arid West Region. Engineer Research and Development Center.
- U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service. 2008. Endangered and threatened wildlife and plants.
- Wetland Training Institute, Inc. 1991. Federal Wetland Regulation Reference Manual. B.N. Goode and R.J. Pierce (eds.) WTI 90-1. 281pp.
- WRCC (Western Regional Climate Center). 2008. Climate summary for Forks of Salmon, California. WRCC: Reno, Nevada. <http://www.wrcc.dri.edu/cgi-bin/cliMAIN.pl?ca3151>.
- Zeiner, David C., William F. Laudenslayer, Kenneth E. Mayer and Marshal White. Ed. 1988. California's wildlife, volume I, amphibians and reptiles. Department of Fish and Game. Sacramento, CA. 272 pp.

_____. 1988. California's wildlife, volume II, birds. Department of Fish and Game.
Sacramento, CA. 731 pp.

_____. 1988. California's wildlife, volume III, mammals. Department of Fish and Game.
Sacramento, CA. 407 pp.

APPENDIX A

VASCULAR PLANTS OF THE NORDHEIMER FLAT PROJECT SITE

The plant species listed below were observed on the project site during field surveys conducted by Live Oak Associates on July 15 and September 20, 2008. Scientific nomenclature follows *The Jepson Manual* (Hickman 1993).

* Indicates introduced non-native species.

Key to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife wetland indicator status abbreviations:

OBL - obligate

FACW - Facultative Wetland

FAC - Facultative

FACU - Facultative Upland

UPL - Upland

+/- - indicates High or Low end of category.

NI - No investigation

<u>Scientific Name</u>	<u>Common Name</u>	<u>Wetland Status</u>
ACERACEAE - Maple Family		
<i>Acer macrophyllum</i>	bigleaf maple	FAC
ANACARDIACEAE - Sumac or Cashew Family		
<i>Toxicodendron diversilobum</i>	poison oak	UPL
APIACEAE - Carrot Family		
<i>Daucus pusillus</i>	rattlesnake weed	UPL
<i>Lomatium sp.</i>		
<i>Osmorhiza chilensis</i>	wood/ mountain sweet cicely	UPL
<i>Sanicula sp.</i>	sanicle	
<i>Torilis arvensis*</i>	field hedge parsley	UPL
APOCYNACEAE - Dogbane Family		
<i>Apocynum androsaemifolium</i>	bitter dogbane	UPL
<i>Vinca major*</i>	greater periwinkle	UPL
ASTERACEAE - Sunflower Family		
<i>Achillea millefolium</i>	yarrow	FACU
<i>Agoseris grandiflora</i>	California dandelion	UPL
<i>Arnica sp.</i>		
<i>Artemisia douglasiana</i>	mugwort	FACW
<i>Aster oregonensis</i>	Oregon white-topped aster	FAC

<i>Brickellia californica</i>	California brickellbush	FACU
<i>Centaurea solstitialis*</i>	yellow star thistle	UPL
<i>Cichorium intybus*</i>	chicory	UPL
<i>Cirsium occidentale</i>	cobwebby thistle	UPL
<i>Cirsium vulgare*</i>	bull thistle	FACU
<i>Conyza canadensis</i>	horseweed	FAC
<i>Eriophyllum lanatum</i>	common wooly sunflower	UPL
<i>Filago gallica*</i>	narrow leaved filago	UPL
<i>Gnaphalium canescens ssp. thermale</i>	white everlasting	UPL
<i>Hieracium albiflorum</i>	white-flowered hawkweed	UPL
<i>Lactuca serriola*</i>	prickly lettuce	FAC
<i>Lessingia nemaclada</i>	slenderstem lessingia	UPL
<i>Madia exigua</i>	small/ thread stem tarweed	UPL
<i>Madia gracilis</i>	slender tarweed	UPL
<i>Madia madioides</i>	woodland madia	UPL
<i>Micropus californicus var. californicus</i>	slender cottonweed	UPL
<i>Stephanomeria virgata ssp. pleurocarpa</i>	tall stephanomeria	UPL
BETULACEAE - Birch Family		
<i>Alnus rhombifolia</i>	white alder	FACW
<i>Corylus cornuta ssp. californica</i>	California hazelnut	NI
BRASSICACEAE - Mustard Family		
<i>Athysanus pusillus</i>	sand weed	UPL
<i>Lepidium nitidum</i>	shining peppergrass	UPL
CAMPANULACEAE - Bellflower Family		
<i>Campanula prenanthoides</i>	California/nodding harebell	UPL
CAPRIFOLIACEAE - Honeysuckle Family		
<i>Lonicera hispidula var. vacillans</i>	hairy/pink honeysuckle	UPL
<i>Symphoricarpos mollis</i>	creeping snowberry	UPL
CARYOPHYLLACEAE - Pink Family		
<i>Petrorhagia dubia*</i>	hairypink	UPL
CONVOLVULACEAE - Bindweed Family		
<i>Calystegia sp.</i>	morning-glory	
CORNACEAE - Dogwood Family		
<i>Cornus nuttallii</i>	mountian dogwood	UPL
CRASSULACEAE - Stonecrop Family		
<i>Sedum spathulifolium</i>	pacific stonecrop	UPL
CUPRESSACEAE - Cypress Family		
<i>Calocedrus decurrens</i>	incense cedar	UPL
DENNSTAEDTIACEAE - Bracken Family		
<i>Pteridium aquilinum var. pubescens</i>	bracken fern	FACU
DRYOPTERIDACEAE - Wood Fern Family		

<i>Dryopteris arguta</i>	coastal wood fern	UPL
<i>Polystichum imbricans ssp imbricans</i>	narrowleaf swordfern	UPL
EQUISETACEAE - Horsetail Family		
<i>Equisetum telmateia ssp. braunii</i>	giant horsetail	OBL
ERICACEAE - Heath Family		
<i>Arbutus menziesii</i>	Pacific madrone	UPL
<i>Arctostaphylos viscida ssp. viscida</i>	whiteleaf manzanita	UPL
EUPHORBIACEAE - Spurge Family		
<i>Chamaesyce maculata*</i>	large spurge	UPL
<i>Eremocarpus setigerus</i>	turkey mullein, dove weed	UPL
FABACEAE - Legume Family		
<i>Cercis occidentalis</i>	western redbud	UPL
<i>Lathyrus vestitus</i>	common Pacific pea	UPL
<i>Lotus crassifolius var. crassifolius</i>	big deervetch	UPL
<i>Lotus purshianus var. purshianus</i>	Spanish clover, Pursh's trefoil	UPL
<i>Lotus sp.</i>		UPL
<i>Lupinus bicolor</i>	miniature lupine	UPL
<i>Medicago lupulina*</i>	black medick, yellow trefoil	FAC
<i>Medicago sativa*</i>	alfalfa	UPL
<i>Melilotus alba*</i>	white sweetclover	FACU+
<i>Trifolium arvense*</i>	rabbitfoot clover	UPL
<i>Trifolium ciliolatum</i>	tree/foothill clover	UPL
<i>Trifolium dubium*</i>	shamrock, little hop clover	FACU*
<i>Trifolium hirtum*</i>	rose clover	UPL
<i>Trifolium pratense*</i>	red clover	FACU+
<i>Trifolium repens*</i>	white clover	FACU+
<i>Trifolium sp.</i>	clover	
FAGACEAE - Oak Family		
<i>Lithocarpus densiflorus</i>	tan oak, tanbark oak	UPL
<i>Quercus chrysolepis</i>	canyon live oak, golden cup oak	UPL
<i>Quercus kelloggii</i>	California black oak	UPL
GARRYACEAE - Silk-Tassel Family		
<i>Garrya fremontii</i>	Fremont silktassel, bearbrush	UPL
GROSSULARIACEAE - Gooseberry Family		
<i>Ribes roezlii var. cruentum</i>	Sierra gooseberry	UPL
HYDROPHYLLACEAE - Waterleaf Family		
<i>Eriodictyon californicum</i>	yerba santa	UPL
<i>Phacelia sp.</i>		UPL
HYPERICACEAE - St. John's Wort Family		
<i>Hypericum perforatum*</i>	klamathweed	UPL

IRIDACEAE - Iris Family*Iris sp.***JUGLANDACEAE - Walnut Family***Juglans regia**

English walnut

JUNCACEAE - Rush Family*Juncus patens*

common/spreading rush

FAC

Luzula comosa

wood rush

NI

LAMIACEAE - Mint Family*Prunella vulgaris*

lance-leaf self-heal

FAC*

LILIACEAE - Lily Family*Chlorogalum pomeridianum var. pomeridianum*

soap plant, amole

UPL

Dichelostemma ida-maia

firecracker flower

UPL

Disporum sp.

fairy bells

UPL

Smilacina racemosa

false Solomon's seal

FAC

LOASACEAE - Loasa Family*Mentzelia laevicaulis*

giant/smoothstem blazingstar

UPL

OLEACEAE - Olive Family*Fraxinus latifolia*

Oregon ash

FACW

ONAGRACEAE - Evening primrose Family*Epilobium brachycarpum*

panicled/autumn willowherb

UPL

Epilobium minutum

minute willowherb

UPL

ORCHIDACEAE - Orchid Family*Piperia elongata*

wood rein orchid

UPL

PHILADELPHACEAE - Mock Orange Family*Philadelphus lewisii*

wild mock orange

UPL

PINACEAE - Pine Family*Pinus ponderosa*

ponderosa pine

FACU

Pseudotsuga menziesii var. menziesii

Douglas-fir

UPL

PLANTAGINACEAE - Plantain Family*Plantago lanceolata**

English plantain

FAC-

*Plantago major**

common plantain

FACW-

POACEAE - Grass Family*Aira caryophylla**

silver hair grass

UPL

*Avena barbata**

slender wild oat

UPL

*Avena fatua**

wild oat

UPL

*Briza maxima**

rattlesnake/big quaking grass

UPL

*Briza minor**

little quaking grass

FACW-

*Bromus diandrus**

ripgut brome

UPL

*Bromus hordeaceus**

soft chess

FACW-

*Bromus madritensis ssp. rubens**

foxtail chess, red brome

UPL

Bromus sp.

brome

<i>Bromus tectorum</i> *	cheat grass	UPL
<i>Cynosurus echinatus</i> *	hedgerhog dogtail	UPL
<i>Elymus glaucus</i>	blue wildrye	FACU
<i>Elymus multisetus</i>	big squirrel tail	UPL
<i>Festuca californica</i>	California fescue	FACU*
<i>Gastridium ventricosum</i> *	nit grass	FACU
<i>Melica sp.</i>		UPL
<i>Poa bulbosa</i> *	bulbous bluegrass	UPL
<i>Vulpia microstachys var. pauciflora</i>	pacific fescue	UPL
<i>Vulpia myuros</i> *	foxtail fescue	FACU*
POLEMONIACEAE - Phlox Family		
<i>Collomia sp.</i>		UPL
<i>Gilia achilleifolia ssp. achilleifolia</i>	California gilia	UPL
POLYGALACEAE - Milkwort Family		
<i>Polygala cornuta var. cornuta</i>	Sierra milkwort	UPL
POLYGONACEAE - Buckwheat Family		
<i>Eriogonum nudum</i>	naked buckwheat	UPL
<i>Polygonum arenastrum</i> *	common knotweed	UPL
<i>Rumex acetosella</i> *	sheep sorrel	FAC-
PRIMULACEAE - Primrose Family		
<i>Trientalis latifolia</i>	Pacific starflower	FAC
PTERIDIACEAE - Brake Family		
<i>Aspidotis densa</i>	indian's dream	UPL
<i>Pentagramma triangularis ssp. triangularis</i>	goldback fern	UPL
RANUNCULACEAE - Buttercup Family		
<i>Clematis ligusticifolia</i>	virgin's bower	FAC
RHAMNACEAE - Buckthorn Family		
<i>Ceanothus cuneatus var. cuneatus</i>	buckbrush	UPL
<i>Ceanothus integerrimus</i>	deer brush	UPL
<i>Rhamnus purshiana</i>	cascara	NI
ROSACEAE - Rose Family		
<i>Amelanchier alnifolia</i>	Saskatoon serviceberry	FACU
<i>Malus sylvestris.</i> *	apple	
<i>Potentilla glandulosa</i>	sticky cinquefoil	FAC
<i>Prunus avium</i> *	sweet cherry	
<i>Rosa gymnocarpa</i>	wood rose	NI
<i>Rubus discolor</i> *	Himalayan blackberry	FACW*
<i>Rubus leucodermis</i>	blackcap raspberry	FAC
RUBIACEAE - Madder Family		
<i>Galium aparine</i>	goose grass, bedstraw	FACU
<i>Galium bolanderi</i>	Bolander's bedstraw	UPL

<i>Galium parisiense*</i>	wall bedstraw	FACU
SALICACEAE - Willow Family		
<i>Salix lasiolepis</i>	arroyo willow	FACW
SAXIFRAGACEAE - Saxifrage Family		
<i>Heuchera micrantha</i>	alum root	NI
SCROPHULARIACEAE - Figwort Family		
<i>Antirrhinum vexillo-calyculatum ssp. breweri</i>	Brewer's snapdragon	UPL
<i>Castilleja sp.</i>		
<i>Keckiella corymbosa</i>	red beardtounge	UPL
<i>Penstemon sp.</i>		
<i>Verbascum blattaria*</i>	moth mullein	FACW
<i>Verbascum thapsus*</i>	wooly mullein	UPL
SOLANACEAE - Nightshade Family		
<i>Solanum americanum</i>	small flowered nightshade	FAC
VERBENACEAE - Vervain Family		
<i>Verbena lasiostachys var. lasiostachys</i>	western vervain	FAC-
VITACEAE - Grape Family		
<i>Vitis californica</i>	California wild grape	FACW

**ATTACHMENT 3:
CONSULTATION
LETTERS**



Bay Area Division
900 Modoc St
Berkeley, California 94707

Phone: 510.524.3991
Fax: 510.524.4419
www.pacificlegacy.com

August 8, 2008

Larry Myers
Native American Heritage Commission
915 Capitol Mall, Room 364
Sacramento, CA 95814
Via Fax

Re: Nordheimer Telephone Line

Dear Mr. Myers:

We have been retained by RMT/MHA to conduct an archaeological assessment for a proposed telephone line in a rural area of Siskiyou County. The project proposes to install approximately 5000 feet of telephone line along County Road 2B01 from Crapo Creek to just below Nordheimer Campground in Siskiyou County. The project area is depicted on the Forks of the Salmon and Orleans Mt. 7.5' USGS Quads. The project is located in T. 10N, R.7E, Section 3 (Humboldt Meridian) and T. 11N., R.7E, Section 34 (Humboldt Meridian).

Please review the Sacred Lands Inventory to determine if there are any areas of concern to local Native American Groups within the project area. The attached map provides the area of potential impact.

Please send us a list of interested Native American groups for Siskiyou County. We will be contacting those groups for consultation. Should you need further information, I can be reached at (510) 524-3991, ext 1. Thank you for your kind attention to this matter.

Sincerely,

John Holson
Staff Archaeologist
Bay Area Division

Attachment: Project Area on 7.5' USGS Quadrangle



Bay Area Division
900 Modoc St.
Berkeley, California 94707

Phone: 510.524.3991
Fax: 510.524.4419
www.pacificlegacy.com

August 19, 2008

Quartz Valley Indian Community
Evette Lewis, Cultural Resources Coordinator
13601 Quartz Valley Road
Fort Jones, CA 96032

Re: Proposed Nordheimer Fiber Optic Line Project, along County Road 2B01 from Crapo Creek to just below Nordheimer Campground in Siskiyou County

Dear Ms. Lewis:

We have been retained by RMT/MHA Consulting, Siskiyou Telephone Company to conduct an archaeological assessment for a property located along County Road 2B01 from Crapo Creek to just below Nordheimer Campground in Siskiyou County, California. Siskiyou Telephone Company intends to install approximately 5,000 feet of telephone line along a three-mile corridor.

The attached map provides an overview of the proposed project area. The proposed project site is located on the Forks of the Salmon and Orleans Mt. 7.5' USGS Quadrangles, specifically it is situated in T. 10N, R.7E, Section 3 (Humboldt Meridian) and T. 11N, R.7E, Section 34 Humboldt Meridian.

The Sacred Lands Inventory on file with the Native American Heritage Commission (NAHC) has been reviewed. This review failed to indicate the presence of cultural resources in the immediate project area. The NAHC provided us with your name as a contact to identify any locations of concern to local Native American Groups within the project area. If appropriate, please provide us with any information you may have regarding locations of concern in the project area. This information will be used for project planning and will be kept confidential. If you do not feel it is appropriate to divulge the type of resource, it can be noted as "environmentally sensitive area".

You may respond by mail, email, phone, or visit our office in Berkeley to inspect our research files. We anticipate receiving your reply within 14 days. At present, there is no date for start of construction. If you have any questions, please contact me, at (510) 524-3991. Thank you for your kind attention to this matter.

Sincerely,

John Holson, M.A.
Principal Archaeologist
Bay Area Division
Ph: 510-524-3991 ext. 1

Attachment: Map of Project Area

7004 1350 0002 0125 4985

U.S. Postal Service™
CERTIFIED MAIL™ RECEIPT
(Domestic Mail Only; No Insurance Coverage Provided)

For delivery information visit our website at www.usps.com
FORT JONES CA 96032

OFFICIAL USE

Postage	\$ 00.42	0057
Certified Fee	\$2.70	13
Return Receipt Fee (Endorsement Required)	\$0.00	Postmark Here
Restricted Delivery Fee (Endorsement Required)	\$0.00	
Total Postage	\$3.12	08/19/2008

Sent To
 Quartz Valley Indian Community
 Rebekah Sluss,
 Environmental Coordinator
 13601 Quartz Valley Road
 Fort Jones, CA 96032

PS Form 3800, June 2002 See Reverse for Instructions

U.S. Postal Service™
CERTIFIED MAIL™ RECEIPT
(Domestic Mail Only; No Insurance Coverage Provided)

For delivery information visit our website at www.usps.com
FORT JONES CA 96032

OFFICIAL USE

Postage	\$ 00.42	0057
Certified Fee	\$2.70	13
Return Receipt Fee (Endorsement Required)	\$0.00	Postmark Here
Restricted Delivery Fee (Endorsement Required)	\$0.00	
Total Postage	\$3.12	08/19/2008

Sent To
 Quartz Valley Indian Community
 Evette Lewis,
 Cultural Resources Coordinator
 13601 Quartz Valley Road
 Fort Jones, CA 96032

PS Form 3800, August 2006

7007 1490 0000 6375 5167

7007 1490 0000 6375 5075

U.S. Postal Service™
CERTIFIED MAIL™ RECEIPT
(Domestic Mail Only; No Insurance Coverage Provided)

For delivery information visit our website at www.usps.com
FORT JONES CA 96032

OFFICIAL USE

Postage	\$ 00.42	0057
Certified Fee	\$2.70	13
Return Receipt Fee (Endorsement Required)	\$0.00	Postmark Here
Restricted Delivery Fee (Endorsement Required)	\$0.00	
Total Postage	\$3.12	08/19/2008

Sent To
 Quartz Valley Indian Community
 Ron Lincoln, Chairperson
 13601 Quartz Valley Road
 Fort Jones, CA 96032

PS Form 3800, August 2006 See Reverse for Instructions

U.S. Postal Service™
CERTIFIED MAIL™ RECEIPT
(Domestic Mail Only; No Insurance Coverage Provided)

For delivery information visit our website at www.usps.com
ORLEANS CA 95556

OFFICIAL USE

Postage	\$ 00.42	0057
Certified Fee	\$2.70	13
Return Receipt Fee (Endorsement Required)	\$0.00	Postmark Here
Restricted Delivery Fee (Endorsement Required)	\$0.00	
Total Postage	\$3.12	08/19/2008

Sent To
 Karuk Tribe of California
 Department of Natural Resources
 Leaf Hillman
 PO Box 282
 Orleans, CA 95556

PS Form 3800, August 2006 See Reverse for Instructions

7007 1490 0000 6375 5174

U.S. Postal Service™
CERTIFIED MAIL™ RECEIPT
(Domestic Mail Only; No Insurance Coverage Provided)

For delivery information visit our website at www.usps.com
REDDING CA 96003

OFFICIAL USE

Postage	\$ 00.42	0057
Certified Fee	\$2.70	13
Return Receipt Fee (Endorsement Required)	\$0.00	Postmark Here
Restricted Delivery Fee (Endorsement Required)	\$0.00	
Total Postage	\$3.12	08/19/2008

Sent To
 Cassandra Hensher
 320 Hilltop Drive, #224
 Redding, CA 96003

PS Form 3800, August 2006 See Reverse for Instructions