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FEB 12 2004

DNRC - Trust Land Management Division

DS-252

D.N.R.C.

CHECKLIST ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

Project Name: Right-of-Way Applications

Proposed Implementation Date: February 15, 2004

Proponent: Central Montana Communications, Inc.

Type and Purpose of Action: Easements for an under ground fiber optic cable, 20 foot wide, 10 foot either side of the center line.

Location: SE1/4SE1/4, Sec. 16, T14N, R16E
N1/2N1/2, Sec. 12, T12N, R15E
N1/2NE1/4, Sec. 3, T12N, R14E
N1/2SW1/4, NW1/4SE1/4, Sec. 36, T12N, R16E
NW1/4NW1/4, Sec. 2, T12N, R14E

County: Fergus & Judith Basin

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MAR 16 2004

LEGISLATIVE ENVIRONMENTAL
POLICY OFFICE

PROJECT DEVELOPMENT

1. PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT, AGENCIES, GROUPS OR INDIVIDUALS CONTACTED: Provide a brief chronology of the scoping and ongoing involvement for this project.

Mt. DNRC, Central Montana Communications, Inc., Cliff Jacobson R/W Agent, Heberly & Associates, Jim Sands, PE., John Brumley.

2. OTHER GOVERNMENTAL AGENCIES WITH JURISDICTION, LIST OF PERMITS NEEDED:

None.

3. ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED:

The "No Action" alternative.
The alternative to issue the Right-of-Ways.

IMPACTS ON THE PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT

4. GEOLOGY AND SOIL QUALITY, STABILITY AND MOISTURE: Are fragile, compactible or unstable soils present? Are there unusual geological features? Are there special reclamation considerations?

[N] There are no special considerations or unusual geological features.

IMPACTS ON THE PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT

<p>5. WATER QUALITY, QUANTITY AND DISTRIBUTION: Are important surface or groundwater resources present? Is there potential for violation of ambient water quality standards, drinking water maximum contaminant levels, or degradation of water quality?</p>	<p>[N] There is little potential for water degradation from the construction of these R/W's.</p>
<p>6. AIR QUALITY: Will pollutants or particulate be produced? Is the project influenced by air quality regulations or zones (Class I airshed)?</p>	<p>[N] Pollutants and particulates will not be produced.</p>
<p>7. VEGETATION COVER, QUANTITY AND QUALITY: Will vegetative communities be permanently altered? Are any rare plants or cover types present?</p>	<p>[N] There are no rare plants or cover types present. The process used to put the cable into the ground will have little effect upon surface disturbance.</p>
<p>8. TERRESTRIAL, AVIAN AND AQUATIC LIFE AND HABITATS: Is there substantial use of the area by important wildlife, birds or fish?</p>	<p>[N] There is some use by wildlife but it is not substantial. The cable will be laid next to county roads in most cases.</p>
<p>9. UNIQUE, ENDANGERED, FRAGILE OR LIMITED ENVIRONMENTAL RESOURCES: Are any federally listed threatened or endangered species or identified habitat present? Any wetlands? Sensitive Species or Species of special concern?</p>	<p>[N] There are no species of special concern that utilize these areas that I am aware of.</p>
<p>10. HISTORICAL AND ARCHAEOLOGICAL SITES: Are any historical, archeological, or paleontological resources present?</p>	<p>[N] There are no known archaeological, historical or paleontological resources present that I am aware of. John Brumley of Heberly and Associates will do the cultural resource review. This will be sent in to the Department at a later date.</p>
<p>11. AESTHETICS: Is the project on a prominent topographical feature? Will it be visible from populated or scenic areas? Will there be excessive noise or light?</p>	<p>[N] There will not be excessive noise or light associated with the fiber optic cable laying. Some areas are populated, but not scenic.</p>

IMPACTS ON THE PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT

12. DEMANDS ON ENVIRONMENTAL RESOURCES OF LAND, WATER, AIR OR ENERGY: Will the project use resources that are limited in the area? Are there other activities nearby that will affect the project?	[N] Limited resources will not be used.
13. OTHER ENVIRONMENTAL DOCUMENTS PERTINENT TO THE AREA: Are there other studies, plans or projects on this tract?	[N] None.

III. IMPACTS ON THE HUMAN POPULATION

14. HUMAN HEALTH AND SAFETY: Will this project add to health and safety risk in the area?	[Y] This communications cable will enhance human health and safety, reducing risk in the area.
15. INDUSTRIAL, COMMERCIAL AND AGRICULTURAL ACTIVITIES AND PRODUCTION: Will the project add to or alter these activities?	[Y] All of these activities will benefit from the improved communications.
16. QUANTITY AND DISTRIBUTION OF EMPLOYMENT: Will the project create, move or eliminate jobs? If so, estimated number.	[N] New jobs will not be created.
17. LOCAL AND STATE TAX BASE AND TAX REVENUES: Will the project create or eliminate tax revenue?	[N] Taxes will not be affected.
18. DEMAND FOR GOVERNMENT SERVICES: Will substantial traffic be added to existing roads? Will other services (fire protection, police, schools, etc.) be needed?	[N] There will be some added traffic during the construction phase, but it will not be significant.
19. LOCALLY ADOPTED ENVIRONMENTAL PLANS AND GOALS: Are there State, County, City, USFS, BLM, Tribal, etc., zoning or management plans in effect?	[N] None.
20. ACCESS TO AND QUALITY OF RECREATIONAL AND WILDERNESS	[N] There are little recreational opportunities along the proposed R/W corridors.

III. IMPACTS ON THE HUMAN POPULATION

ACTIVITIES: Are wilderness or recreational areas nearby or accessed through this tract? Is there recreational potential within the tract?	
21. DENSITY AND DISTRIBUTION OF POPULATION AND HOUSING: Will the project add to the population and require additional housing?	[N] Additional housing will not be required.
22. SOCIAL STRUCTURES AND MORES: Is some disruption of native or traditional lifestyles or communities possible?	[N] Disruption is not likely.
23. CULTURAL UNIQUENESS AND DIVERSITY: Will the action cause a shift in some unique quality of the area?	[N] There should be no shift.
24. OTHER APPROPRIATE SOCIAL AND ECONOMICAL CIRCUMSTANCES:	[N] None.

EA Checklist Prepared By:
 BARNY D. SMITH, Lewistown Unit Manager, Northeastern Land Office



 Signature
 Date: February 11, 2004

IV. FINDING

25. ALTERNATIVE SELECTED:	The alternative to issue the Right-of-Ways.
26. SIGNIFICANCE OF POTENTIAL IMPACTS:	Minimal negative impacts are expected with this R/W issuance.
27. Need for Further Environmental Analysis: <input type="checkbox"/> EIS <input type="checkbox"/> More Detailed EA <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No Further Analysis	

EA Checklist Approved by:
 CLIVE ROONEY, Area Manager, Northeastern Land Office

 2/11/04

 DATE: