

**National Telecommunications and Information Administration
Broadband Technology Opportunities Program
Finding of No Significant Impact
Horizon Telecom, Inc., Connecting Appalachian Ohio-Middle Mile Consortium Project**

Summary

Horizon Telecom, Inc., (Horizon) applied to the Broadband Technology Opportunities Program (BTOP) for a grant to install 1,960 miles of new fiber optic cable, 21 equipment shelters, and vaults and hand holes along the 20 miles of the cable that will be underground. The new middle mile infrastructure will connect 700,000 households, 37,000 businesses, and 592 community anchor institutions (CAIs). Most of the new fiber optic cable will be installed aerially within existing utility right-of-ways (ROWs) along roadways. The 21 equipment shelters will be constructed on private land adjacent to the ROWs, which is owned or will be purchased by Horizon. The proposed action passes through 34 counties in Ohio, and is referred to as the Horizon Telecom Project (Project).

The National Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA) awarded a grant for the Project to Horizon, through BTOP, as part of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA). The funding must be obligated and the Project completed within three years. This timeline will comply with the laws and regulations governing the use of this ARRA grant funding.

BTOP supports the deployment of broadband infrastructure in unserved and underserved areas of the United States and its Territories. As a condition of receiving BTOP grant funding, recipients must comply with all relevant Federal legislation, including the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (NEPA). Specifically, NEPA limits the types of actions that the grantee can initiate prior to completing required environmental reviews. Some actions may be categorically excluded from further NEPA analyses based on the specific types and scope of work to be conducted. For projects that are not categorically excluded from further environmental review, the grant recipient must prepare an Environmental Assessment (EA) that meets the requirements of NEPA. After a sufficiency review, NTIA may adopt the EA, use it as the basis for finding that the project will not have a significant impact on the environment, and issue a finding of no significant impact (FONSI). Following such a finding, the BTOP grant recipient may then begin construction or other activities identified in the EA as the preferred alternative, in accordance with any special protocols or identified environmental protection measures.

Horizon completed an EA for this Project in May 2011. NTIA reviewed the EA, determined it is sufficient, and adopted it as part of the development of this FONSI.

The Project includes:

- Installing a new broadband network of fiber optic cable along existing Federal, State, city or county utility ROWs through 34 counties in Ohio;
- Installing 1,940 miles of cable aerially and 20 miles buried underground;
- Installing vaults and hand holes along the underground sections of the Project;
- Installing 21 new equipment shelters on private property along the Project route; and

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- Providing fiber optic connectivity from the middle mile backbone to 592 CAIs.

Based on a review of the analysis in the EA, NTIA has determined that the Project, implemented in accordance with the preferred alternative, and incorporating best management practices (BMPs) and protective measures identified in the EA, will not result in any significant environmental impacts. In addition, NTIA, Horizon, and Ohio State Historic Preservation Office (OHPO) entered into a Programmatic Agreement (PA) to manage any potential impacts to historic and cultural resources that are subject to Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA). Therefore, the preparation of an EIS is not required. The basis for this determination is described in this FONSI.

Additional information and copies of the Executive Summary of the EA and FONSI are available to all interested persons and the public through the BTOP website (www2.ntia.doc.gov/) and the following contact:

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Purpose and Need

The purpose of the Project is to bring affordable broadband service to unserved and underserved communities in Ohio. The Project will deploy fiber in areas where, to date, it has not been economically feasible to install telecommunications infrastructure. The middle mile infrastructure will deliver broadband service to 34 counties, providing opportunities associated with broadband technology to 700,000 households, 37,000 businesses, and 592 CAIs.

Project Description

The Project involves installing 1,960 miles of new fiber and constructing 21 equipment shelters across Ohio. Approximately 1,097 miles of the Project cable will form the backbone network, and the remaining 863 miles of new cable will be lateral distribution lines that connect the backbone to 592 CAIs. Nearly all (99 percent) of the network will be installed aerially on existing utility poles. The remaining 1 percent of the fiber will be installed underground, via trenching or directional boring, or in exciting conduit. Some underground sections of the Project also require the excavation of drilling and receiving pits for directional boring operations, and

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the installation of vaults and handholds along the finished sections. Most construction occur place within public highway ROWs, along existing electrical distribution or telecommunication cable routes.

Cable will be installed on existing aerial utility poles by lashing new fiber cable to a ¼-inch galvanized steel strands that span between poles. In areas inaccessible by utility service vehicles, the cable will be pulled manually using a stationary reel method. In areas with vehicle access, the cable will be lashed as it is taken off the vehicle's reel (moving reel method). In both cases, the new fiber cable lashed to the galvanized steel strand. If needed, new poles will be placed next to the poles that will be removed.

In some cases, the fiber optic cable from a utility pole may be routed to existing underground conduit, with distance between the pole and the conduit manhole trenched or bored to connect the aerial segment to the existing underground duct. Directional boring also will be used in locations where aerial cable is not practicable, or where surface disturbance must be minimized, such as at road crossings, utility crossings, or sensitive environments (e.g., wetlands). Directional boring will install the cable at a minimum depth of 36 inches below ground level. Drilling and receiving pits for the directional boring operations will be refilled and restored to their original conditions after cable installation is completed at that location.

The Project will also include the placement of 21 equipment shelters at mid-span regeneration points along the backbone network. These equipment shelters will be prefabricated concrete structures, placed near the utility ROWs, on property owned or acquired by Horizon for the Project. Each shelter will be on a floating concrete slab foundation in ¼-acre plot enclosed by a security fence. Minimum excavation and grading will be required to create a level surface for the slab. The shelters will be served by commercial electric power providers, and be equipped with a backup generator and fuel tank. No new roads will be built to the equipment shelters, as their locations will be served by existing access roads.

Connection of the backbone network to the 592 CAIs will be installed in a restricted access communication room within the building. Existing chases, closets, or shafts will be used to route the wiring within the building. Horizon will not make any permanent structural changes or renovations in the CAIs. Fiber optic line will enter the CAIs through either aerial or underground connections. Equipment in historic buildings will be installed in a manner that preserves historic materials and features, and does not change the appearance of the building. All CAI connections will be completed in accordance with NTIA's BMPs, per the PA agreement, dated May 5, 2011.

Alternatives

The EA includes an analysis of the alternatives for implementing the Project to meet the purpose and need. NTIA also requires that an EA include a discussion of the no action alternative. The following summarizes the alternatives analyzed in the EA.

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Alternative 1 – Hybrid Fiber Installation (Preferred Alternative). This Project includes installation of 1,960 miles of new fiber optic cable, 21 equipment shelters, and vaults and hand holes along the 20 miles of the cable that will be underground. Most of the new fiber optic cable will be installed aerially within existing utility right-of-ways (ROWs) along roadways.

Alternative 2 – Buried Fiber Installation Alternative. The Project considered installing all 1,960 miles of fiber optic cable underground. The Buried Fiber Installation Alternative is similar to the Preferred Alternative, except it would require digging or plowing trenches or horizontal directional boring to install cable beneath roads, streams, rivers, and wetland areas. Additionally, this alternative was not selected as it would cost more and has greater potential for environmental and culture resource impact than the Preferred Alternative.

No Action Alternative. No action was also considered. This alternative represents conditions as they currently exist in Ohio. Under the no action alternative, new middle mile infrastructure would not be constructed. Many rural communities would continue to be unserved or underserved with respect to broadband internet access. Additionally, broadband services would not be provided to CAIs in the Project area. The EA examined this alternative as the baseline for evaluating impacts relative to other alternatives being considered.

Alternatives Considered But Not Carried Forward. Horizon considered two alternatives that were not carried forward: Wireless Alternative and All Aerial Installation. The Wireless Alternative would use microwave technology instead of fiber-optic cable. This alternative was found to not meet the purpose and need for the project because microwave technology does not currently support high-speed broadband service. Additionally, this alternative requires construction of hundreds of towers across the Project area, which would cost considerably more and cause greater environmental impacts than the Preferred Alternative. Similarly, the All Aerial Installation was considered for this Project. The All Aerial Installation was dropped because it would require installation of new poles and aerial lines in urban areas where aerial utility lines do not presently exist, which would add cost to the project and impact culture resources.

Findings and Conclusions

The EA analyzed existing conditions and environmental consequences of the preferred alternative and the no action alternative in 11 major resource areas, including Noise, Air Quality, Geology and Soils, Water Resources, Biological Resources, Historic and Cultural Resources, Aesthetic and Visual Resources, Land Use, Infrastructure, Socioeconomic Resources, and Human Health and Safety.

Noise

Short-term increases in ambient noise levels will occur during the Project construction period. Noise created by construction machinery used during installation will be temporary and localized, and comparable to typical traffic noise from the adjacent roadways. The only anticipated long-term noise impacts are associated with operation of the backup power generators installed at the 21 equipment shelters. However, the generators will be operated only

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during testing periods (approximately 30 minutes, monthly) and during commercial power outages. Based on these considerations, no significant impacts on noise are expected to occur as a result of Project implementation.

Air Quality

The Project will impact air quality during the construction period, and during testing and operation of the backup generators at the equipment shelters. Fiber optic cable installation will generate fugitive dust emissions from equipment for aerial fiber installation and due to trenching and directional boring that will disturb and expose surface soils. Similarly, there is potential for temporary dust emissions during site preparations for the shelter foundations. Air quality will also be affected by exhaust emission from delivery vehicles, construction equipment, and by testing and operation of the backup power generators at the 21 equipment shelters.

BMPs, such as reseeded to reestablish ground cover and construction vehicle track-out control measures (e.g., wheel cleaning), will be used to control air emissions and fugitive dust during the construction phase of the Project. Additionally, all construction equipment and vehicles will be maintained in good operating condition to minimize exhaust emissions. The operation of the 21 generator units will contribute negligible air emissions due to their infrequent use. In summary, the Project will cause a short-term, minor increase in the use of fossil fuel and associated greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions, and de minimis fugitive dust emissions from ground excavation are expected. With the implementation of BMPs, construction and operation of the planned network are not expected to have significant adverse impacts on air quality.

Geology and Soils

The Project will be installed in previously disturbed public ROWs and adjacent private property. The cable will be installed in these locations to, among other considerations, minimize impacts on geologic and soil resources. Equipment shelters will be constructed on shallow, graded concrete slabs. All installation methods will result in minor, temporary disruption of the soils. Erosion control measures and BMPs will be implemented before, during, and after construction activities. BMPs, for underground installation, such as restoration and reseeded of drilling and receiving pits, will be followed throughout the Project. Consequently, the Project is not expected to result in significant adverse impacts on geology or soils.

Water Resources

The Project's route crosses several rivers and streams, and numerous agricultural and roadside drainage ditches. Project construction activities involving soil disruption could cause erosion and present short-term, minor impacts on water resources. At all waterbody crossings, Horizon will install the fiber optic cable aerially on existing poles, pass the fiber optic cable through new or existing conduit affixed to bridges and culverts, or conduct directional boring 36 inches below the water body sediment. Therefore, rivers and streams will not be disturbed.

Minimal, temporary impacts may occur to wetland vegetation in areas where installation equipment is driven on ROWs in wetland areas to install aerial cable. In a letter dated January 25, 2011, the U.S. Army Corp of Engineers (USACE) Huntington District Office indicated that

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based on information, it did not appear that any Section 10 River segments would be crossed by the Project. USACE further indicated that the activity might be authorized under Nationwide Permit 12, for utility line crossings. They advised that preliminary grading or incidental movement of soils, for access or haul roads, or to construct storing or staging areas or pads in any waters/wetlands, or to stabilize banks with rock slope protection requires that a Section 404 Clean Water Act (CWA) permit be obtained prior to commencing such activities. USACE concluded that a Section 404 CWA permit will be needed if the Project does not substantially disturbs root systems, nor involves mechanized pushing, dragging, or other activities that will redeposit excavated soils into wetlands or other waters of the United States. The USACE also indicated that the temporary use of mats for equipment access was an acceptable BMP to minimize wetland impact.

The replacement of utility poles within wetlands may be authorized by USACE under the Nationwide Permit (NWP) 12, which authorizes activities that are required for the construction, maintenance, repair, and removal of utility lines and associated facilities in waters of the United States, provided that the activity does not result in the loss of greater than ½ acre of U.S. waters and there is no change in pre-construction contours. The replacement of Project poles should have only minimal, temporary impacts on wetland areas.

Ohio's Department of Natural Resources (ODNR) advised Horizon in a January 26, 2011 letter and recommended practices for the installation of fiber optic cable beneath river crossings and underground utility line crossings for State and National Wild, Scenic, and Recreational Rivers, from the ODNR's Division of Watercraft, Scenic Rivers Section. Because the Project will install all fiber optic cable across all rivers via existing or new conduit attached to bridges, underground installation methods and mitigation practices recommended by ODNR are not applicable.

BMPs for the Project include using load-bearing mats in wetlands to prevent installation equipment from sinking. By implementing industry standard BMPs and installing fiber optic cable aerially across all water resources, Horizon will be able to construct the network with little or no impact on water resources in the Project area.

Biological Resources

The Project will result in minor impacts on biological resources. Noise and human activity associated with fiber installation along the ROWs are expected to disturb some wildlife species, but these effects will be minor and temporary, and comparable to typical roadway traffic noises. Some disturbance to the ground surface and vegetation will also occur during construction activities. This disturbance will be largely limited to previously disturbed ROWs.

In a letter dated February 22, 2011, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) states that no Federal Wilderness areas, wildlife refuges, or designated critical habitat are within the Project area. As a result, such areas will not be adversely impacted by the Project. In same letter, USFWS concurs with the following findings, related to Section 7(a)(2) of the Endangered Species Act:

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Due to the Project location within previously disturbed ROWs, avoidance of suitable habitat, and avoidance of in-water work, the Project activity will have no effect on the purple catspaw pearl mussel, pink mucket pearl mussel, fanshell, clubshell, northern riffleshell, rayed bean, rabbisfoot, snuffbox, sheepsnose, Scioto madtom, Eastern hellbender, and bald eagle, because no impacts to the habitat of these species is anticipated. Additionally, the Project may affect, but is not likely to adversely affect the Indiana bat, American burying beetle, running buffalo clover, eastern prairie fringed orchid, northern monkshood, small whorled pogonia, timber rattlesnake, and eastern massasauga due to the Project nature, location, and implementation of avoidance and minimization measures.

In response to USFWS's recommendation, Horizon submitted a letter to ODNR Division of Wildlife (DOW) inquiring about the location of bald eagle nests within the Project Area. In a letter dated February 18, 2011, ODNR responded indicating that six bald eagle nests exist within the Project area. Of the six nests, one is within ½ mile of the Project corridor, east of the Village of Dennison in Tuscarawas County, approximately 350 feet away from an alternate fiber route (that may not be constructed). Per USFWS and ODNR recommendations, if the final design of the Project includes this area, Horizon will restrict all clearing, external construction, and landscaping activities within 660 feet of the nest to occur outside the nesting season (August through mid-January) and maintain established landscape buffers that screen activity from the nest. By implementing these measures, the Project should not adversely affect the bald eagle nest.

Based on this analysis and following the guidance of the USFWS and ODNR, Horizon will be able to construct the fiber network with no significant adverse impacts on biological resources.

Historic and Cultural Resources

On November 16, 2010, NTIA initiated Section 106 consultation for the project by sending a project notification letter to the Ohio Historic Preservation Officer (OHPO). This letter included a project description and general locational information, and notified OHPO that NTIA delegates certain Section 106 responsibilities to its BTOP recipients.

Horizon prepared a cultural resource impact study (CRIS) in January 2011 based on an Area of Potential Effects (APE) assuming that all underground lines and any pole replacements or reinforcements that might be required for aerial cable placement would be installed within existing rights-of-way or utility corridors that are currently characterized by disturbed soil contexts. The report recommended that intact archaeological deposits should not be affected, but proposed a range of strategies to avoid or minimize potential impacts to historic properties in the event that deviation from rights of way were required. Horizon requested concurrence that the project should have *no adverse effect on archaeological or historic architectural resources* provided that any changes in the scope of work followed the recommended avoidance/mitigation strategies and were coordinated with the NTIA and Ohio State Historic Preservation Office (OHPO).

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Horizon's findings and recommendations were submitted to the Ohio Historic Preservation Office (OHPO) on January 31, 2010. On March 11, 2011 the OHPO responded that they were unable to agree with the Conditional No Adverse Effect finding presented in the CRIS. The OHPO requested clarification on the identification and avoidance of archaeological deposits, and how the NTIA's Best Management Practices will be consistently applied in attaching broadband equipment to historic buildings. The OHPO also recommended that Horizon consult the Ohio Archaeological Council and other local stakeholders to solicit input on the project.

Horizon met with the OHPO in their office on March 15, 2011 to discuss measures to be addressed in a Programmatic Agreement (PA) to satisfy Section 106 consultation requirements.

Based on the discussion at the meeting, the letter comments from OHPO, and input from the NTIA, a draft PA was prepared and submitted for review by the NTIA's General Counsel on March 30, 2011. The PA was forwarded to the OHPO for concurrent review on April 11, 2011. The NTIA provided comments to the draft PA on April 20, 2011. The OHPO provided recommended revisions and general comments to the draft document on April 21, 2011. The comments of both agencies were incorporated into a final revised draft, which was sent by the NTIA to the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation (ACHP) with a request for consultation on April 25, 2011. The ACHP declined to participate in the PA on May 3, 2011.

The PA was signed by the NTIA and Horizon on May 4, 2011 and by the OHPO on May 5, 2011. The PA allows Horizon (upon approval by NTIA) to initiate construction on aerial portions of the project on existing overhead lines immediately, but establishes a review protocol applicable for underground fiber, new aerial lines, equipment shelters, and pole replacement.

The provisions of the PA specify that construction of the Project's underground lines and equipment shelters, and building connections to CAIs may constitute an Adverse Effect on Historic Properties. Due to these provisions, Horizon will not initiate any ground disturbance related to equipment installation or new construction; and will not install any new equipment or equipment upgrades, and will not construct any new equipment shelters that may impact historic properties until Section 106 review is complete. Horizon will redesign routes, as necessary, to avoid impacts on any known historic properties identified along portions of the route where new underground lines will be used. If the Project archaeologist determines that a potential exists for intact archaeological resource to be present within the construction area of potential effect (APE) for new overhead and underground lines, an archaeological survey will be conducted. During the construction engineering process, Horizon will identify the location of all 21 equipment shelters and ensure that no archaeological resources are present in the construction area.

An architect or architectural historian, meeting Federal professional qualifications, will instruct Horizon's project engineers and construction supervisors on methods of installing new fiber optic and communications equipment in historic buildings and to avoid any potential impact to historic properties. In addition, all new electronic equipment installed inside and all exterior cable will be delivered and attached to buildings according to NTIA's *Best Management*

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Practice: Attaching Broadband Equipment to Historic Buildings. In zoned areas, construction of new equipment shelters will be subject to local ordinances and will require approval, prior to construction.

Under the provisions of the PA, NTIA may, at its discretion and pending compliance with applicable laws and regulations, and concurrence with the OHPO, authorize Horizon to begin construction of any phase of this Project. As part of the post-award monitoring, Horizon is required to submit written documentation to OHPO and NTIA, describing the status and manner in which the terms of the PA are being implemented. Should previously unidentified archaeological resources, including human remains or cultural materials, or unanticipated effects be discovered during the implementation of this agreement, construction in the area shall cease immediately.

On November 18, 2010, the NTIA initiated consultation with Federally recognized Indian Tribes through the Federal Communication Commission's Tower Construction Notification System (TCNS). TCNS identified 17 tribes as having interest in the Project's geographical location. Of these 17 tribes, four (4) tribes, the Miami Tribe of Oklahoma, the Wyandotte Nation, the Shawnee Tribe, and the Ottawa Tribe of Oklahoma, requested further information about the Project. In response to those requests, Horizon sent letters to the Tribes on February 14, 2011 with detailed route maps and survey data for the project, along with an electronic copy of the CRIS. One of the tribes, the Shawnee Tribe, responded concurring with the concurring with a finding that "no known historic properties" will be negatively impacted by the Proposed Action. The three remaining tribes provided no response.

All construction will be restricted to previously disturbed areas. If any cultural material is discovered during construction, the OHPO will be notified immediately and construction halted until a qualified archaeologist assesses the cultural remains. If any human skeletal remains or protected Native objects are uncovered during construction, construction will stop immediately, and all consulting parties will be contacted. Based on these consultations and guidance, the Project is not expected to have significant adverse impacts on historic and cultural resources.

Aesthetic and Visual Resources

The Horizon Project primarily involves installing aerial fiber optic cable on existing poles within previously disturbed rights-of-way. No cable will be installed outside ROW lands. Portions of the Project will traverse the Wayne National Forest. According to correspondence with the U.S. Forest Service (USFS) dated April 12, 2011, Horizon will be required to obtain the necessary permits from the agency before entering Special Use Permit authorized areas to install fiber optic cable aerially on existing poles. However, no adverse impacts to the USFS lands are anticipated. In correspondence with Ohio Department of Natural Resources (ODNR), Division of Parks and Recreation, the Project involves crossing Division owned property, and an executed real estate agreement will be required before construction can begin in these locations along the Project route. The Project will also provide fiber service to two State parks: Deer Creek State Park in Mount Sterling, OH; and Shawnee Resort Lodge and Cabins, in Portsmouth, Ohio. For these institutions, no real estate agreement is necessary, as the State of Ohio will take ownership of the

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fiber optic cables once they have been installed. ODNR will provide Horizon with a perpetual right to use. No equipment shelters will be constructed on State park lands.

Fiber installation will have a short-term, minor, and temporary impact on aesthetic and visual resources due to the presence of construction equipment and limited soil disturbance. The 21 new equipment shelters will be installed in the ROWs or on adjacent properties acquired by Horizon. No equipment shelters or CAI connections are planned to be located in or near protected areas, State parks, or national parks. Equipment shelter exteriors will be compatible with the existing landscape and surrounding buildings. Accordingly, the Project is not expected to have a significant adverse impact on aesthetic and visual resources.

Land Use

All fiber optic cable will be installed in previously disturbed ROWs or adjacent properties. The 21 new equipment shelter sites will measure approximately ¼ acre and will be established on private land acquired by Horizon. Areas at drilling and exit pits, and around the 21 new equipment shelters, will be restored as close as practicable to original conditions. There will be minimal short-term effects and no long-term impacts on existing use or zoning. Therefore, the Project will have no significant impact on land use.

Infrastructure

The Project will not adversely impact any existing infrastructure and will add new infrastructure in the form of fiber optic cable and additional broadband capacity. Horizon will contact the Ohio Utilities Protection Service (OUPS) prior to any underground work that will be performed for the project, so existing buried utilities can be identified, located, and avoided. The 21 new equipment shelters will use commercial AC power, and have on-site backup generators and fuel tanks. There are no plans to create new roadways, temporary or otherwise, during the Project and all existing roadways, sidewalks, and bike trails will be crossed either aerially or underground by use of directional boring techniques. Project construction activities will result in a temporary interruption of traffic flow along the Project route. These interruptions are short-term and will subside when installation of the fiber is complete. The Project will improve communications infrastructure and is expected to result in improved transfer of information between CAIs, businesses, and individuals within the communities along the Project route. Overall, the Project will have a positive impact on infrastructure in Ohio.

Socioeconomic Resources

The Project will provide improved communications infrastructure to residents who do not have access to broadband services in Ohio. The middle-mile fiber backbone will also benefit these communities by providing broadband capabilities to 592 CAIs. An increase in both short-term and long-term employment opportunities are expected to result from the Project. Overall, the Project will have net positive impacts on socioeconomic resources.

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Human Health and Safety

It is unlikely that hazardous wastes will be encountered during Project installation, because most construction will be done by attaching fiber to utility poles. In areas where there are known contaminants, they are contained and are undergoing various stages of cleanup and remediation. However, to minimize the risk of exposure during ground disturbing activities (e.g., pole replacement, underground installation of fiber optic cable at some road crossings or CAI connections; or during the construction of equipment shelters), Horizon will inform construction crews of the potential to encounter contaminated sites. In addition, Horizon will provide the crews with applicable training and personal protective equipment so that in the event that contaminated materials are encountered, appropriate health and safety procedures are followed.

All construction activities will be conducted by qualified, licensed contractors who will follow applicable safety regulations, including all Federal, State, and local safety and health laws, and OSHA and DOT guidance for providing a safe working environment. Workers will be required to meet OSHA standards for worker visibility, equipment signage, and licensing requirements. Work within urban areas shall maintain safe pedestrian routes. With implementation of these protocols, the Project will not generate any significant adverse worker or traffic-related health or safety issues. Further, the new fiber will provide broadband service and directly connect medical facilities. The Project will enhance emergency and medical services and improve human health and safety throughout the Project area.

Cumulative Impacts

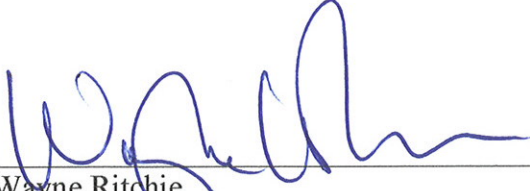
As described above, the Project will not have significant adverse impacts on any of the environmental resource areas evaluated in the EA. As such, no cumulative impacts on the environment are anticipated.

Decision

Based on the above analysis, NTIA concludes that constructing and operating the Project as defined by the preferred alternative, the signed PA, identified BMPs, and protective measures, will not require additional mitigation. A separate mitigation plan is not required for the Project. The analyses indicate that the proposed action is not a major Federal action that will significantly affect the quality of the human environment. NTIA has determined that preparation of an EIS is not required.

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