4.15 - Transportation

4.15.1 - Introduction

This section describes the existing setting for transportation and potential effects from project implementation on the sites and their surrounding areas. It also considers impacts likely to be incurred in the future if additional sites are proposed or if existing sites are modified.

4.15.2 - Existing Conditions

The proposed project is the construction and operation of a communication tower network. Currently, the vacant lands upon which the sites will be located do not generate any traffic. There are no trips specifically to or from the sites at this time. The only exceptions to this condition are the Big Maria, Box Springs, Elsinore Peak, Red Mountain, Santa Rosa Peak, and Whitewater sites, which currently house existing County communication facilities. The only traffic taking place at these locations is visitation by technicians, which typically occurs once monthly.

As can be seen in the individual site descriptions in Appendix A, the majority of the towers sites are located in areas that are considerably far removed from improved transportation infrastructure. The sites will utilize existing unimproved roads, or, in a handful of cases, will require the construction of unimproved roadways to access the sites. See Section 3, *Project Description*, for a discussion on the roadwork that will be required at these sites. Regardless of the work required, these roads will have access to the sites as their sole purpose. Use of the roadways and access to the sites will be restricted to authorized users only.

Five of the proposed sites are located within 2 miles of either airports or private airstrips. A review of Airport Compatibility Maps for the County of Riverside found that none of the proposed sites are located within an Airport Influence Area.

4.15.3 - Thresholds of Significance

According to the CEQA Guidelines' Appendix G, Environmental Checklist, to determine whether impacts to population and housing are significant environmental effects, the following questions are analyzed and evaluated:

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 ratio on roads, or congestion at intersections)?

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

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?

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

e.) Result in inadequate emergency access?

f.) Result in inadequate parking capacity?

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

4.15.4 - Project Impacts and Mitigation Measures

This section discusses potential impacts associated with the development of the project and provides mitigation measures where appropriate.

Traffic Increase

Impact T-1	**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 ratio on roads, or congestion at intersections)?** **[CEQA Transportation Threshold 15(a)]**

Impact Analysis

The construction and operation phases of each of the project sites will each create their own traffic activity. During the 60- to 120-day construction phase, contributions to local traffic systems will be derived from workers traveling to and from the site and from building materials, construction equipment, and supplies being delivered to the site. If the site is remote, the construction workers will be encouraged to carpool in order to ease strain on the local roads. Towards the end of the construction period, traffic will be generated by vehicles as they remove construction equipment and construction debris. During the operational phase of each site, traffic will be generated by technicians and maintenance workers accessing the sites as they go about their duties.

During the construction phase of the project, the County intends to construct anywhere from four to six sites at a time. These sites could be reasonably close to one another, or they could be scattered across the County. The number of construction workers per site will typically range from four to six persons. Off-road construction equipment will be delivered to the site by truck, as will construction materials. Based on the activities described above, the number of trips to and from each site will probably not exceed 20 trips per day. If six sites were under construction at any given time, this would result in approximately 120 trips per day Countywide. Considering the hundreds of thousands of trips that are undertaken within the County each day, the traffic generated by the project during the construction phase of the project will be negligible.

During the operational phase of the project, the number of trips to and from the sites will be even less than during the construction phase. The sites will typically be visited monthly by a radio technician representing each of the users at the site. Since the County will be providing other governmental

users with the opportunity to collocate at the sites, there may be several users at a given site. The number of users at each site will vary, and there will be limits to the number of users that can use a single site based on space constraints on both the tower and in the equipment shelters. It is unlikely that these constraints will allow more than six users to maintain a presence at each site. If that were the case, then the number of monthly trips to and from each site will be approximately 12 trips per month. Countywide, this would result in approximately 600 vehicular trips per month. Again, this small number of trips would be negligible when considered against the millions of vehicular trips undertaken each month within the County.

Considering the negligible number of trips likely to be generated during the construction and operational phases of the project, the impact of the project in terms of traffic capacity and congestion is less than significant.

Level of Significance Before Mitigation

Less than significant impact.

Mitigation Measures

No mitigation is required.

Level of Significance After Mitigation

Less than significant impact.

Level of Service Standards

Impact T-2	**Exceed, either individually or cumulatively, a level of service standard established by the county congestion management agency for designated roads or highways? [CEQA Transportation Threshold 15(b)]**

Impact Analysis

Level of Service (LOS) standards are determined by local governments to determine the level of congestion on area roadways. Roadways and intersections are assigned a letter grade that denotes their level of congestion. The rating system ranges from letters A through F, with the letter A indicating a roadway that essentially flows unimpeded and the letter F indicating a serious congestion condition. Ratings are generated using predictive factors depending on existing traffic conditions and surrounding land uses. The LOS system is useful in predicting the level of impact that a project will have on roadways in the area. It is especially useful in determining the impact of residential and commercial projects that will generate a substantial number of trips in a relatively small area.

The system is not particularly applicable to the proposed project. The number of vehicular trips that will be generated during either the construction or operational phases of the project is of such a small amount when measured against existing traffic conditions in any given area that an attempt to model the project's impact using LOS analysis would provide results that would not be particularly useful. Even using a worse case scenario, the amount of traffic that the project would contribute to even the worst LOS condition would be of such a negligible quantity that the exercise would be unproductive.

Given these considerations, it must be determined that the project's impact in this regard would be less than significant.

Level of Significance Before Mitigation

Less than significant impact.

Mitigation Measures

No mitigation is required.

Level of Significance After Mitigation

Less than significant impact.

Air Traffic Patterns

Impact T-3	**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?** **[CEQA Transportation Threshold 15(c)]**

Impact Analysis

Five of the proposed sites are located within two miles of either airports or private airstrips. Table 4.15-1, below, identifies these facilities. A review of Airport Compatibility Maps for the County of Riverside found that none of the proposed sites are located within an Airport Influence Area. Additional towers may be identified by the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) as needing mitigation of potential hazards to air traffic.

Table 4.15-1: Sites Located Within Two Miles of an Airport Facility

Site Name	Proposed Tower Height (feet)	Airport or Airstrip	Distance (miles)	Within Airport Influence Area?
Arlington	80	Riverside Municipal Airport	2.3	No
Corona	80	Corona Municipal Airport	1.6	No
Green River	160	Corona Municipal Airport	2.3	No
Sunnyslope	100	Flabob Airport (RIR)	2	No
Winchester	140	Hemet-Ryan Airport	2	No

The FAA and the California Department of Transportation's Division of Aeronautics provided comments to the NOP regarding the placement of towers near airports. The comments stated that federal and State regulations require that towers near airports be given special consideration. In accordance with Federal Aviation Regulations, Part 77 "Objects Affecting Navigable Airspace" a Notice of Proposed Construction or Alteration (Form 7460-1) is required by the FAA for towers in the vicinity of a public-use airport. Any facilities with the potential to create a hazard to aviation are required to undergo review by the FAA.

If it determines it necessary, the FAA may condition certain requirements for these sites, including enhanced-visibility paint schemes or special lighting. Sites are also required to comply with applicable airport land use plans, which govern the heights of structures within defined areas around airports. The purpose of this review is to ensure that the construction of new facilities will not create hazards to aviation. All towers that meet the criteria will be required to undergo this process prior to construction as part of standard regulatory compliance.

The City of Corona also requested that the County assess the proposed Corona tower site and whether or not the proposed site would be located within Zone D of the Corona Municipal Airport's compatibility map. Zone D designates a Primary Traffic Pattern and Runway Buffer area for the airport. Structures in this area are not allowed to exceed 70 feet in height. A review of the airport's compatibility map found that the proposed Corona tower site is not located within Zone D. Rather it is located approximately 800 feet south of Zone D, and therefore is not within the airport's influence area. Therefore, the project's impact in this regard is less than significant.

A review of Airport Compatibility Maps for the Corona Municipal Airport, Flabob Airport, Hemet-Ryan Airport, and Riverside Municipal Airport found that none of the sites are located within any airport's influence area or within any zone where height restrictions would be required. Therefore, the project's impact in this regard is less than significant.

The project itself will not typically include the use of aircraft during its construction and operation. On an emergency basis, helicopters may be dispatched to provide expedited repairs to particular sites during an outage or other occurrence, but this use will occur irregularly and would in any case be facilitated within standard aviation management guidelines. Therefore, the project's impact in regards to increased air traffic would be less than significant.

Level of Significance Before Mitigation
Less than significant impact.

Mitigation Measures
No mitigation is required.

Level of Significance After Mitigation
Less than significant impact.

Traffic and Roadway Hazards

Impact T-4	**Substantially increase hazards due to a design feature (e.g., sharp curves or dangerous intersections) or incompatible uses (e.g., farm equipment)?**
	[CEQA Transportation Threshold 15(d)]

Impact Analysis
Any access roads constructed for the project will be restricted to authorized users only and will be designed and constructed to professional engineering standards for roadways of their type. Except

during construction, all vehicles accessing the sites will be highway registered and therefore not an incompatible use. During the construction phase of the project, all offroad construction equipment will be trucked to the sites by highway legal equipment haulers. Therefore, the project will not create hazards in this regard and the impact will be less than significant.

Level of Significance Before Mitigation

Less than significant impact.

Mitigation Measures

No mitigation is required.

Level of Significance After Mitigation

Less than significant impact.

Emergency Access

Impact T-5	**Result in inadequate emergency access? [CEQA Transportation Threshold 15(e)]**

Impact Analysis

This threshold largely applies to projects where construction and operation could inhibit or obstruct the flow of traffic in an area and thus make it difficult for emergency vehicles to access or operate within certain areas. An example of such a project might be a venue that attracts a great deal of traffic (community events, places of business, etc.) and thus could impede the ingress and egress of emergency vehicles in the event of an emergency. This threshold is not particularly applicable to this project. Regardless, the tower sites will have such a small footprint and will generate such a small amount of traffic that construction and operation of the facilities would be extremely unlikely to create a hazardous situation in terms of emergency access. Therefore, the impact in this regard would be less than significant.

Level of Significance Before Mitigation

Less than significant impact.

Mitigation Measures

No mitigation is required.

Level of Significance After Mitigation

Less than significant impact.

Parking Capacity

Impact T-6	**Result in inadequate parking capacity?**
	[CEQA Transportation Threshold 15(f)]

Impact Analysis

The parking requirements at each site will be negligible, and will typically only be necessary for maintenance or technician crews arriving in perhaps one or two vehicles at any given time. Space at each facility will be adequate to meet these requirements. During construction, more vehicles may be present, but this will be a temporary situation and will not impinge on the parking needs of others. Therefore, no impact would occur.

Level of Significance Before Mitigation

No impact.

Mitigation Measures

No mitigation is required.

Level of Significance After Mitigation

No impact.

Conflict with Alternative Transportation

Impact T-7	**Conflict with adopted policies, plans or programs supporting alternative transportation (e.g. bus turnouts, bicycle racks)?**
	[CEQA Transportation Threshold 15(g)]

Impact Analysis

Policies relating to alternative transportation amenities typically apply to residential areas and places of business where the provision of these facilities is appropriate. The majority of the tower sites will be in areas where alternative transportation is neither available nor applicable. After construction, persons accessing the sites will generally be required to arrive in individual vehicles that are specially equipped for the purpose (maintenance trucks, etc.). Therefore, this threshold is not particularly applicable to this project and no impact would occur.

Level of Significance Before Mitigation

No impact.

Mitigation Measures

No mitigation is required.

Level of Significance After Mitigation

No impact.

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