

**NEGATIVE DECLARATION**

**FILE:** S13-0004

**PROJECT NAME:** Verizon Monopine (Pleasant Valley)

**NAME OF APPLICANT:** GTE Mobilnet of California Limited Partnership c/o Complete Wireless

**ASSESSOR'S PARCEL NO.:** 078-060-16

**SECTION:** 28 **T:** 10N **R:** 12E

**LOCATION:** Site is on the south side of Rainbow Ridge Road, 0.25 miles east of the intersection with Pleasant Valley road in the Pleasant Valley area.

- GENERAL PLAN AMENDMENT:**                      **FROM:**                      **TO:**
- REZONING:**                      **FROM:**                      **TO:**
- TENTATIVE PARCEL MAP**     **SUBDIVISION TO SPLIT**                      **ACRES INTO**                      **LOTS**  
**SUBDIVISION (NAME):**
- SPECIAL USE PERMIT TO ALLOW:** Installation of a cell tower facility consisting of one 100-foot monopine with nine antennas and the future installation of two microwave dishes, one 250-square foot equipment compound surrounded by slatted and wire-topped chain link fencing, and one standby diesel generator with a 210 gallon fuel tank.
- OTHER:**

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**REASONS THE PROJECT WILL NOT HAVE A SIGNIFICANT ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT:**

- NO SIGNIFICANT ENVIRONMENTAL CONCERNS WERE IDENTIFIED DURING THE INITIAL STUDY.**
- MITIGATION HAS BEEN IDENTIFIED WHICH WOULD REDUCE POTENTIALLY SIGNIFICANT IMPACTS.**
- OTHER:**

In accordance with the authority and criteria contained in the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), State Guidelines, and El Dorado County Guidelines for the Implementation of CEQA, the County Environmental Agent analyzed the project and determined that the project will not have a significant impact on the environment. Based on this finding, the Planning Department hereby prepares this NEGATIVE DECLARATION. A period of thirty (30) days from the date of filing this negative declaration will be provided to enable public review of the project specifications and this document prior to action on the project by COUNTY OF EL DORADO. A copy of the project specifications is on file at the County of El Dorado Community Development Agency, Planning Division, 2850 Fairlane Court, Placerville, CA 95667.

**This Negative Declaration was adopted by the**                      *(hearing body)* **on**                      *(date).*

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Executive Secretary



**COUNTY OF EL DORADO PLANNING SERVICES  
2850 FAIRLANE COURT  
PLACERVILLE, CA 95667**

**INITIAL STUDY  
ENVIRONMENTAL CHECKLIST FORM**

**Project Title:** S13-0004, Verizon Monopine (Pleasant Valley)

**Lead Agency Name and Address:** County of El Dorado, 2850 Fairlane Court, Placerville, CA 95667

**Contact Person:** Lillian MacLeod, Project Planner

**Phone Number:** (530) 621-5355

**Property Owner's Name and Address:** John Blevens, 5440 Rainbow Ridge Road, Placerville, CA 95667

**Project Applicant's Name and Address:** Complete Wireless 2009 V Street, Sacramento, CA 95818

**Project Agent's Name and Address:** David Downs, 2009 V Street, Sacramento, CA 95818

**Project Location:** South side of Rainbow Ridge Road approximately 0.25 miles east of the intersection with Pleasant Valley Road in the Pleasant Valley area.

**Assessor's Parcel Number(s):** 078-060-16

**Zoning:** TPZ (Timberland Preserve Zone)

**Section:** 28      **T:** 10N **R:** 12E

**General Plan Designation:** RR (Rural Residential)

**Description of Project:** Installation of a cell tower facility consisting of one 100-foot monopine with nine antennas and the future installation of two microwave dishes, one 250-square foot equipment compound surrounded by slatted chain link fencing, and one standby diesel generator with a 210 gallon fuel tank.

**Surrounding Land Uses and Setting:**

	<u>Zoning</u>	<u>General Plan</u>	<u>Land Use</u> (e.g., Single Family Residences, Grazing, Park, School)
Site:	TPZ	RR	Residential
North:	RE-5	LDR	Residential
East:	TPZ/RA-20	RR	Undeveloped/Residential + TMA
South:	RE-5	RR	Residential
West:	RE-5	LDR	Residential

**Briefly Describe the environmental setting:** The lot lies at an average of 2,750 feet above mean sea level and has a 10 percent southeasterly slope gradient. Vegetation consists of non-native grasses and forbs, native oaks, and conifers. The area around the monopine site has no mature trees or shrubs due to clearing done around 2005 for a water pipeline installation by the El Dorado Irrigation District (EID).

**Other public agencies whose approval is required (e.g., permits, financing approval, or participation agreement.):**

CDA Building Division

**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.

	Aesthetics		Agriculture Resources		Air Quality
	Biological Resources		Cultural Resources		Geology / Soils
	Hazards & Hazardous Materials		Hydrology / Water Quality		Land Use / Planning
	Mineral Resources		Noise		Population / Housing
	Public Services		Recreation		Transportation/Traffic
	Utilities / Service Systems		Mandatory Findings of Significance		

**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 project proponent. 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** is required.
- I find that the proposed project **MAY** have a "potentially significant impact" or "potentially significant unless mitigated" impact 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 in attached sheets. An **ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT** 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 or **NEGATIVE DECLARATION**, pursuant to applicable standards; and b) have been avoided or mitigated pursuant to that earlier EIR or **NEGATIVE DECLARATION**, including revisions or mitigation measures that are imposed upon the proposed project, nothing further is required.

Signature: Lillian Macleod Date: 5/22/13

Printed Name: Lillian Macleod, Senior Planner For: El Dorado County

Signature: Peter Maurer Date: 22 May 2013

Printed Name: Peter Maurer, Principal Planner For: El Dorado County

### **EXISTING and PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT**

The site is currently developed residentially consistent with the rural residential zoning and character of the surrounding area.

The proposed project is a special use permit to allow installation of a 100 foot tall monopine with three sectors containing three antennas each, for a total of nine antennas. Two microwave satellites will be installed on the monopine at a future time. A 50 by 50 foot compound will enclose the 12 by 16 foot equipment shelter, diesel generator, and 210 gallon fuel tank behind a six-foot tall, chain link slatted and gated fence. The equipment shelter will be connected to the monopine by underground power and telecommunication cables.

### **ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS**

The project parcel is zoned TPZ, which allows for growing and harvesting forest products subject to the *Forest Taxation Reform Act of 1976*. The cell tower facility, to include the monopine, equipment compound, underground cables, and access road, is situated in an area of the parcel that has been previously cleared of trees and shrubs. As such, the Agricultural Commission determined that impacts from construction and operation of the cell tower facility will have no negative impact on "any existing or future agricultural or timber harvesting pursuits."

The project site is not in an Important Biological Corridor. The project site does not contain riparian features, habitat, or federally protected wetlands; or mineral resources classified MRZ-2x. No fish and wildlife species listed as protected by the State or federal government pursuant to the 2004 General Plan EIR were found on site; however, the biological survey (Foothill Associates, 10/24/12) indicated the potential for three special status plant species (*Horkelia parryi*, *Arctostaphylos nissenana*, *Calochortus clavatus*) and nesting of red-tailed and red-shouldered hawks to occur on site. If construction takes place between March 1 to August 15, the applicant will be required to conduct surveys for the presence of the concerned plant and avian species and if found, take necessary measures to protect the species in coordination with the state Department of Fish and Wildlife or the California Native Plant Society. The site is within the winter range of the Grizzly Flat deer herd. No significant fencing is being proposed that would limit the migration of this herd.

The proposed installation of the cell tower facility will not require any grading that would impact air quality plans or standards, including greenhouse gases; impact or degrade cultural resources; or increase odors or pollution concentrations to any discernable level. Any noise generated from installation of the cell tower facility will be subject to General Plan Policy 6.5.1.11 reducing any noise impacts from temporary construction to less than significant. Operational noise from air conditioning units in the equipment shelter and weekly testing of the back-up generator will generate combined noise levels of 40.3dBA measured at 100 feet from the nearest residence to the west (Hammett & Edison, Inc., 7/11/12). As such, the maximum generated noise level will be significantly less than the daytime limit of 50dBA allowed under General Plan Policy 6.5.1.10.

A two-state system will provide continuous wireless communication coverage in case of a power outage. It will consist of a back-up battery that will be recharged by a standby diesel generator running off of a 210 gallon fuel tank. The proposed diesel generator and fuel tank meets UL certification. The equipment shelter will contain a fire extinguisher and the cell tower facility will contain a fire alarm connected to a nation-wide alerting system. The access road will be constructed to support and provide

adequate turn-around for an emergency fire vehicle. As such, impacts from fire hazards will be less than significant.

The cell tower facility is proposed for installation over 100 feet from the nearest property line to the west and approximately 300 feet from the roadway. The existing vegetation will screen the equipment compound from view from the roadway. Photosimulations indicate the monopine will blend in with the heavily treed area and have no impact on the visual quality of the site or its surroundings. Oak canopy covers 12 percent of the 1.27 acre project development area. Ninety percent of this canopy is required to be retained under General Plan Policy 7.4.4.4. The applicant is proposing to remove two oak trees totaling 128 square feet of canopy, which equates to 0.003 acres. In compliance with the Interim Interpretive Guidelines for El Dorado County General Plan Policy 7.4.4.4.(Option A), the applicant will be required to plant one oak tree on the property as replacement ( $0.003 \times 200 \text{ trees} = 0.6 \text{ trees}$ ). The arborist report (Foothill Associates, 10/25/12) suggests a blue oak be planted on the project parcel to replace those removed, ensuring consistency with the General Plan and reducing impacts on oak canopy to less than significant.

The cell tower facility will be installed on a site that has Josephine soils (JuE) that are low in expansiveness and considered stable. El Dorado County does not appear on the Alquist-Priolo lists so that the potential for earthquake or ground shaking activity is low in the region. However, any potential impact caused by installing the cell tower facility in the project area would be offset by compliance with the Uniform Building Code earthquake standards. Compliance with the County *Grading, Erosion, and Sediment Control Ordinance* would ensure that grading for the access road and equipment compound would protect drainage patterns in the project area, reducing erosion or loss of topsoil to less than significant.

Based on the radiofrequency electromagnetic field (RFE) analysis (Hammett & Edison, Inc., 7/11/12), the public exposures at ground level and second floor building level will be 0.92 and 1.2 percent of the public exposure limits, respectively. As concluded in the analysis, occupational exposure to the contractors and maintenance personnel "must comply with FCC occupational exposure guidelines whenever work is required near the antennas themselves". Hazards to the public and carrier personnel from RFE exposure will be less than significant.

Traffic impacts will consist of a temporary increase from construction and installation activities. Once completed, the cell tower facility will be computer-monitored from a central office. Ongoing maintenance will require a technician to visit the site only one to two times per month. Any increase in traffic from installation and operation of the cell tower facility will be less than significant.

#### **MANDATORY FINDINGS**

- a. No impacts have been found that would reduce potential wildlife or plant habitat on the site, reduce wildlife or plant populations below self-sustaining levels, or restrict the range or migratory habits of a rare or endangered animal. Any cultural or archeological resources discovered during construction shall be protected with the standard condition requiring cessation of the activity until determination of the value and disposition of the resource has been made by a qualified specialist.
- b. No cumulative impacts from the proposed stand-alone cell tower facility have been determined to exist.

- c. Any radiofrequency emissions effects that could possibly cause substantial adverse effects on human beings have been analyzed against FCC requirements for direct and indirect impacts and found to be well below the thresholds of significance. The monopine will blend in with the surrounding vegetation reducing its visual impact on the public

### SUPPORTING INFORMATION SOURCE LIST

The following documents are available at El Dorado County Planning Services in Placerville.

El Dorado County General Plan Draft Environmental Impact Report  
Volume 1 of 3 – EIR Text, Chapter 1 through Section 5.6  
Volume 2 of 3 – EIR Text, Section 5.7 through Chapter 9  
Appendix A  
Volume 3 of 3 – Technical Appendices B through H

El Dorado County General Plan – A Plan for Managed Growth and Open Roads; A Plan for Quality Neighborhoods and Traffic Relief (Adopted July 19, 2004)

Findings of Fact of the El Dorado County Board of Supervisors for the General Plan

El Dorado County Zoning Ordinance (Title 17 - County Code)

County of El Dorado Drainage Manual (Resolution No. 67-97, Adopted March 14, 1995)

County of El Dorado Grading, Erosion and Sediment Control Ordinance (Ordinance No. 3883, amended Ordinance Nos. 4061, 4167, 4170)

El Dorado County Design and Improvement Standards

El Dorado County Subdivision Ordinances (Title 16 - County Code)

Soil Survey of El Dorado Area, California

Interim Interpretive Guidelines for El Dorado County General Plan Policy 7.4.4.4. (Option A) (Adopted 11/9/06; Amended 10/12/07)

California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Statutes (Public Resources Code Section 21000, et seq.)

Title 14, California Code of Regulations, Chapter 3, Guidelines for Implementation of the California Environmental Quality Act (Section 15000, et seq.)

*Pleasant Valley Road Project Oak Tree Canopy Survey*, Foothill Associates, October 25, 2012.

*Pleasant Valley Road Project Biological Survey and Wetland Determination*, Foothill Associates, October 24, 2012

Acoustic Analysis for Verizon Wireless Site No. 249684, Hammett & Edison Inc., July 11, 2012.

Radiofrequency Electromagnetic Emissions Analysis for Verizon Wireless Site No. 249684, Hammett & Edison Inc., July 11, 2012