

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

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Governor's Office of Planning & Research

Oct 23 2020



*Making Conservation
a California Way of Life.*

STATE CLEARINGHOUSE

October 23, 2020

SCH # 2020090426
GTS # 04-CC-2020-00452
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CC/24/0.175

Syd Sotoodeh
Contra Costa County, Department of Conservation
and Development
30 Muir Road
Martinez, CA 94553

Crown Castle Telecommunications- Fish Ranch Road Facility- Draft Mitigated Negative Declaration (MND)

Dear Syd Sotoodeh:

Thank you for including the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) in the environmental review process for the Crown Castle Telecommunications-Fish Ranch Road Project. We are committed to ensuring that impacts to the State's multimodal transportation system and to our natural environment are identified and mitigated to support a safe, sustainable, integrated and efficient transportation system. The following comments are based on our review of the September 2020 draft MND.

Project Understanding

The proposed project seeks a land use permit to allow the construction of a telecommunications facility adjacent to State Route (SR)-24 at 1000 Fish Ranch Road. The facility will include one 60-foot tall mono-pine antenna structure with multiple smaller antennas serving T-Mobile and AT&T Wireless.

Landscape Architecture

The Landscaped Freeway status within the project area extends from Post Mile (PM) R0.40-R0.62 to R1.82-R2.85. No tree or shrub removal on State Right of Way (ROW) will be allowed without providing replacement with 1 year of project initiation.

Between PM R0.3 and 9.1, SR-24 is classified as an Officially Designated State Scenic Highway. As such, the tower and facility are required to have no negative visual impacts to motorists on EB/WB SR-24. In the event that there are visual impacts, the applicant may be required to submit an exception to underground utilities request to CPUC in order to construct the tower.

On page 6 of the Initial Study, the antenna tower is described to be disguised as a pine tree, However, in the same paragraph, the antenna is described to be disguise as an oak tree. Please clarify whether more than one tree-type antenna will be constructed and/or the type of tree the antenna will resemble.

Caltrans recommends that the branch density of mono-pine should be a minimum 3 branches per square foot and should extend beyond the antenna panels. Branch lengths should vary to give a natural (non-cylindrical/non-uniform) appearance.

Contractor staging/laydown areas shall avoid impacts to existing planting and root zones, as well as any irrigation systems. Replacement/repair will be required as necessary.

Thank you again for including Caltrans in the environmental review process. Should you have any questions regarding this letter, please contact Laurel Sears at laurel.sears@dot.ca.gov. Additionally, for future notifications and requests for review of new projects, please contact LDIGR-D4@dot.ca.gov.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Mark Leong". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Mark Leong
District Branch Chief
Local Development - Intergovernmental Review

cc: State Clearinghouse