

Notice of Exemption

To: Office of Planning and Research
P.O. Box 3044, Room 113
Sacramento, CA 95812-3044

From: California Public Utilities Commission
505 Van Ness Avenue
San Francisco, CA 94102-3298

County Clerk County of: Modoc
Address: 108 E. Modoc Street
Alturas, CA 96101

County Clerk County of: Lassen
Address: 220 S. Lassen St. #5
Susanville, CA 96130

County Clerk County of: Sierra
Address: 100 Courthouse Sq. Rm 11
PO Drawer D
Downieville, CA 95936

Project Title: Prineville to Reno Fiber Optic Project

Project Applicant: Zayo Group, LLC

Project Location - Specific:

The Proposed Project alignment would enter California near the town of New Pine Creek, Oregon and travel south through Modoc County (59.8 miles), including through the City of Alturas (1.6 miles), then through Lassen County (129.6 miles), and across the northeastern corner of Sierra County (3.1 miles) into Nevada at the town of Cold Springs. The Proposed Project alignment crosses through unincorporated communities in Modoc County, including New Pine Creek, Davis Creek, Ramsey, and Likely, as well as the City of Alturas. Within Lassen County, the Project traverses the communities of Sage Hen, Pinnio, Madeline, Brockman, Moran, Termo, Litchfield, Standish, Buntingville, Milford, and Doyle. In Sierra County, the Project does not pass through any cities or census-designated communities.

The majority of the Proposed Project alignment (185.6 miles) would be within the U.S. Highway 395 (US 395) right-of-way, which is managed by the California Department of transportation (Caltrans). A portion of the line between the communities of Standish and Buntingville in Lassen County would follow the country roads Standish Buntingville Road (Lassen County Road A3) for 7.35 miles and Cummings Road for 1.15 miles before returning to the right-of-way parallel to US 395. Staging areas, materials storage areas, and Inline Amplifiers (ILAs) would be located on private land outside of the rights of way.

Project Location – City: Alturas (1.6 miles)

Project Location – County: Modoc, Lassen, Sierra

Description of Nature, Purpose, and Beneficiaries of Project:

Zayo Group, LLC (Zayo or Applicant), a California telephone corporation, proposes the construction and operation of an underground fiber optic network from Prineville, Oregon, to Reno, Nevada, spanning a total of 433.8 miles. The Proposed Project components include a new fiber optic cable, in-line amplifiers (ILAs), and vaults and line markers. Along the majority of the route, conduit to house the new fiber optic cable would be buried 36 to 42 inches deep using a combination of plowing or trenching construction techniques. Alternatively, horizontal directional drilling would be used to cross under water bodies and roads, and where necessary to avoid existing infrastructure or biological or cultural resources. For some water- or road-crossing locations, the conduit may be affixed to the side or underside of bridges. Ancillary equipment would be installed at three small buildings that would serve as ILA sites. Fiberglass vaults would be installed flush to the ground approximately every 2,500- to 3,500 feet along the Proposed Project alignment to provide maintenance access and at splice locations. Line markers, which would be co-located with the vaults along the Proposed Project corridor, are 4-foot-tall flexible fiberglass posts that would be used to mark the location of the buried conduit. Construction staging areas would be located within the right-of-way adjacent to the Proposed Project alignment, and materials storage yards would be located at existing industrial or commercial space in Alturas, Madeline, Termo, and Standish. All construction activities would be conducted in compliance with Caltrans requirements and county longitudinal

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utility encroachment permit procedures. Zayo plans to install conduit beyond the immediate need of the current Project to ensure future capacity.

The objectives of the Project are as follows:

- Provide connectivity for major California business between regional hubs in Nevada and Oregon, for which connectivity is of major importance to a significant number of the largest employers in California.
- Provide opportunities for improved quality of rural broadband in Nevada, California, and Oregon.
- Provide affordable broadband services to currently underserved communities.
- Remain within existing road rights-of-way to reduce impacts to undisturbed areas and to limit the number of necessary contract parties to a feasible number.
- Install a fiber optic trunk line cable buried underground to provide a secure and protected route.
- Avoid or minimize impacts to environmental resources.

Name of Public Agency Approving Project: California Public Utilities Commission

Name of Person or Agency Carrying Out Project: Zayo Group, LLC

Exempt Status (**check one**):

- Ministerial (Sec. 21080(b)(1); 15268);
- Declared Emergency (Sec. 21080(b)(4); 15269(b)(c));
- Emergency Project (Sec. 21080(b)(4); 15269(b)(c));
- Categorical Exemption. State type and section number:
- Statutory Exemption. State code number: Public Resources Code Section 21080.51 (SB 156)

Reasons why project is exempt:

Zayo's Prineville to Reno Fiber Optic Project meets the requirements under Public Resources Code Section 21080.51 for the SB 156 CEQA Statutory Exemption. The SB 156 Exemption Report is available for review on CPUC's project website:

<https://ia.cpuc.ca.gov/environment/info/ecorp/prineville/index.html>

Lead Agency Contact Person: Connie Chen

Area Code/Telephone/Extension: (405) 703-2124

If filed by applicant:

1. Attach certified document of exemption finding.
2. Has a Notice of Exemption been filed by the public agency approving the project: yes no

Signature: Connie Chen

Date: 8-11-2023

Title: Public Utilities Regulatory Analyst, Energy Division

- Signed by Lead Agency Signed by Applicant

Authority cited: Sections 21083 and 21110 Public Resources Code
Reference: Sections 21108, 21152, and 21152.1 Public Resources Code

Date Received for filing at OPR: