



**California Environmental Quality Act  
NOTICE OF INTENT TO ADOPT A MITIGATED NEGATIVE DECLARATION FOR THE  
ASH HILL COMMUNICATION SITE PROJECT**

**LEAD AGENCY:** California Department Fish and Wildlife

**CONTACT:** Julia Karo (909) 278-2950

**SUBJECT:** Notice of Intent to Adopt a Mitigated Negative Declaration pursuant to Sections 21092 and 21092.3 of the Public Resources Code and CEQA Guidelines Section 15072

**PUBLIC REVIEW PERIOD:** February 20, 2024, to March 21, 2024

**Project Location:** The proposed Project is located in San Bernardino County, California, approximately 8 miles east of the community of Ludlow, just south of Interstate 40 (I-40). The project is in the Mojave Desert on the south slope of the Bristol Mountains. The proposed communication site, access roads, and all ancillary components would be entirely on Bureau of Land Management (BLM) managed lands.

**Project Description:** The proposed Project by InterConnect Towers, LLC (Applicant), aims to enhance cellular communication capability along I-40 in San Bernardino County, California. The Project entails the construction of a multi-carrier communication site on BLM-administered land. Key components of the Project include a 196-foot communication tower, an equipment shelter, solar arrays, propane generators, and a secure perimeter fence. Upon completion of construction, any temporarily disturbed areas will be meticulously restored. The Project area is northeast of National Trails Highway (Route 66) and north of the Burlington Northern Santa Fe (BNSF) railroad. The facility is designed to accommodate a minimum of four national carriers and government agencies. Existing access roads would be utilized to connected to the Project site. The Project is subject to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and requires and Incidental Take Permit (ITP) under the California Endangered Species Act (CESA) for the protection of the Mojave Desert tortoise (*Gopherus agassizii*). The ITP, if issued by CDFW subject to certain conditions, would remain in effect for 30 years. In addition, the Applicant submitted a Lake and Streambed Alteration (LSA) Agreement notification to CDFW, which would have a term of 5 years or less. The ITP and LSA are collectively referred to as “the permits.” CDFW, consistent with their obligation as the CEQA lead agency, has analyzed and disclosed the environmental effects of the proposed Project as part of the “whole of the action” in the Initial Study/Mitigated Negative Declaration (IS/MND). Notwithstanding the proposed exercise of CDFW’s regulatory authority under the California Fish and Game Code, the MND addresses other potential environmental impacts across the resource spectrum that may result from construction, operations, and maintenance, and decommissioning of the Project over the 30-year period and are relevant under CEQA. The primary objectives of the proposed Project are to enhance coverage capabilities, meet telecommunication requirements, and ensure adherence to rigorous environmental standards.

Temporary access and staging would be required for construction. The number of workers at the project site on any given day during construction would typically vary between four and six. Flagging would be completed by a licensed land surveyor under BLM supervision. Site grading and clearing would be required. Total days of construction would be approximately 45 days. Construction is anticipated to begin in 2023. Construction would occur 6 days a week from 7 a.m. to 5 p.m. There would be no fill imported or exported for construction of the Project. Therefore, construction trips would be limited to construction worker trips. Equipment would be staged at the Project site for the duration of construction, limiting the amount of construction trips to mobilization and demobilization.

Contingency plans are to be at the direction of BLM. All industry safety requirements would be strictly adhered to at all times. No industrial waste or toxic substances would be generated or created during the construction process. Common hazardous substances, including oil, fuel, coolants, lubricants, and batteries, would be used during construction and transported within the right-of-way.

**Location of Mitigated Negative Declaration Available for Public Review:** The IS/MND may be viewed online at <https://wildlife.ca.gov/Notices/CEQA>.

**Public Comment Period:** By this notice, CDFW is announcing the opening of the 30-day comment period (February 20, 2024, to March 21, 2024). All written comments must be received by March 21, 2024, by 5:00 p.m. (end of the 30-day public review period).

**Commenting on Mitigated Negative Declaration:** Written comments on the MND must be addressed to:

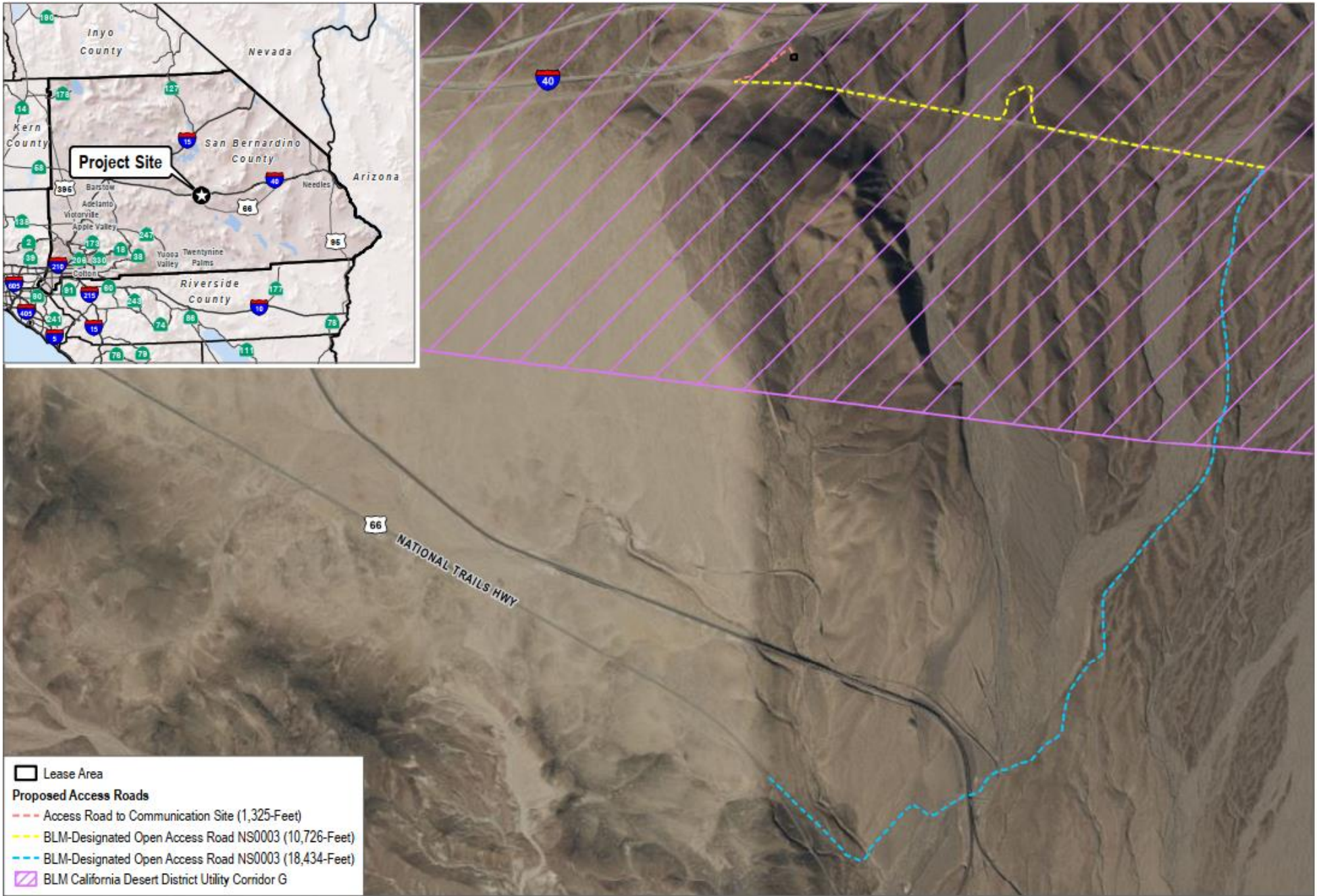
**California Department of Fish and Wildlife, Inland Deserts Region**

**Attention:** Julia Karo, Project Manager

**Mailing Address:** 3602 Inland Empire Boulevard, Suite C-220, Ontario, California 91764

OR via email: [Julia.Karo@wildlife.ca.gov](mailto:Julia.Karo@wildlife.ca.gov) (subject line: "**Ash Hill Project MND Comments**")

The Project site is not located on any list of places formally recorded as containing hazardous materials.



SOURCE: AECOM 2022; County of San Bernardino; Bing Maps

**FIGURE 2-1**  
**Project Location**  
 Ash Hill Communication Site Project