TAHOE REGIONAL PLANNING AGENCY

Mail
PO Box 5310
Stateline, NV 89449-5310

Location
128 Market Street
Stateline, NV 89449

Contact
Phone: 775-588-4547
Fax: 775-588-4527
www.trpa.gov

INITIAL ENVIRONMENTAL CHECKLIST FOR DETERMINATION OF ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT

Project Name: AT&T Project A020LET

APN/Project Location: 118-090-069

County/City: El Dorado County

Project Description:

AT&T California proposes the removal of two lengths of submarine telecommunications cable in Lake Tahoe and Emerald Bay in California. The longest cable is approximately 6-miles long and runs along the Southwestern shore of Lake Tahoe. The cable stretches from Baldwin Beach past Rubicon Point near Lester Beach. Most of the cable resides in the Emerald Bay and DL Bliss Underwater State Parks. This 6-mile cable comes up on shore a total of 6 times. The second cable rests at the mouth of Emerald Bay and spans approximately 1,000-feet. The shorter cable extends between the shores of Emerald Point and Eagles Point and lies in the Emerald Bay Underwater Park. The Project area for both cables lies within the Lake Tahoe Basin Management Unit of the USDA Forest Service. The cables largely rest on the lake bed, not within the substrate, and measure approximately 3-inches in diameter.

The cable removal is expected to occur in the Fall during the recreational off-season, no earlier than October. AT&T anticipates using three staging areas: the lake entry point for barge launch, the cut locations where cable comes up on shore, and the mobile barge. The cable will be removed using a 30-feet by 60-feet modular barge suitable for shallow water use. An outboard skiff will be used to maneuver the barge and is comparably sized to a recreational boat. These maritime vessels are delivered by semi-trucks with an estimated length of 70-feet to 10-feet width. Portions of the cable on land will be accessed from the barge from which a technician will approach the cut location on foot. Cable segments on shore are buried 4-6-inches. Sections of the cable may lie beneath large boulders, a mini excavator staged on the barge will be used to temporarily remove them. To remove the cable, it will be exposed at the high water line at 6,229.1-feet with hand tools or a mini excavator that will access the location by ramp from the barge, at which the cable will be severed. The cable will be cut with a reciprocating saw. A container will be used to collect particulates generated from the cable cutting operations. To minimize airborne cable particles, the cable will be kept wet during cutting operations. The cut end of the cable will be tied onto a steel cable and winched onto the barge, then spooled into segments. The portion above the high water line will be covered by a 3M shrink cap and reburied with hand tools. A touchdown monitor will observe the operation underwater and collect cable fragments that fall to the lake bed. A technician on the barge will skim fragments from the surface. Collected cable fragments will then be disposed into a container onboard. A technician will be responsible for monitoring plume events through visual observation and a turbidity meter.

Lake access is tentatively planned to be staged from the Tahoe Keys Marina. The Tahoe Keys Marina is approximately 2-miles East of Baldwin Beach. An invasive species inspection will occur on incoming marine craft prior to entering the lake.

It will be the responsibility of AT&T's contractor to dispose of the reclaimed cable at an approved facility in accordance with local, state, and federal regulations.

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The following questionnaire will be completed by the applicant based on evidence submitted with the application. All "Yes" and "No, With Mitigation" answers will require further written comments. Use the blank boxes to add any additional information and reference the question number and letter. If more space is required for additional information, please attached separate sheets and reference the question number and letter.

For information on the status of TRPA environmental thresholds click on the links to the Threshold Dashboard.

I. Environmental Impacts

1. Land

Current and historic status of soil conservation standards can be found at the links below:

- Impervious Cover
- Stream Environment Zone

Will the proposal result in:	Yes	No	No, with mitigation	Data insufficient
a. Compaction or covering of the soil beyond the limits allowed in the land capability or Individual Parcel Evaluation System (IPES)?	○	◉	○	○
b. A change in the topography or ground surface relief features of site inconsistent with the natural surrounding conditions?	○	◉	○	○
c. Unstable soil conditions during or after completion of the proposal?	○	◉	○	○
d. Changes in the undisturbed soil or native geologic substructures or grading in excess of 5 feet?	○	◉	○	○
e. The continuation of or increase in wind or water erosion of soils, either on or off the site?	○	◉	○	○
f. Changes in deposition or erosion of beach sand, or changes in siltation, deposition or erosion, including natural littoral processes, which may modify the channel of a river or stream or the bed of a lake?	○	◉	○	○
g. Exposure of people or property to geologic hazards such as earthquakes, landslides, backshore erosion, avalanches, mud slides, ground failure, or similar hazards?	○	◉	○	○

Discussion

Permanent impacts to land are not anticipated.

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2. Air Quality

Current and historic status of air quality standards can be found at the links below:

- Carbon Monoxide (CO)
- Nitrate Deposition
- Ozone (O3)
- Regional Visibility
- Respirable and Fine Particulate Matter
- Sub-Regional Visibility

Will the proposal result in:	Yes	No	No, with mitigation	Data insufficient
a. Substantial air pollutant emissions?	○	◉	○	○
b. Deterioration of ambient (existing) air quality?	○	◉	○	○
c. The creation of objectionable odors?	○	◉	○	○
d. Alteration of air movement, moisture or temperature, or any change in climate, either locally or regionally?	○	◉	○	○
e. Increased use of diesel fuel?	○	◉	○	○

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3. Water Quality

Current and historic status of water quality standards can be found at the links below:

- Aquatic Invasive Species
- Deep Water (Pelagic) Lake Tahoe
- Groundwater
- Nearshore (Littoral) Lake Tahoe
- Other Lakes
- Surface Runoff
- Tributaries
- Load Reductions

Will the proposal result in:	Yes	No	No, with mitigation	Data insufficient
a. Changes in currents, or the course or direction of water movements?	○	◉	○	○
b. Changes in absorption rates, drainage patterns, or the rate and amount of surface water runoff so that a 20 yr. 1 hr. storm runoff (approximately 1 inch per hour) cannot be contained on the site?	○	◉	○	○
c. Alterations to the course or flow of 100-yearflood waters?	○	◉	○	○
d. Change in the amount of surface water in any water body?	○	◉	○	○
e. Discharge into surface waters, or in any alteration of surface water quality, including but not limited to temperature, dissolved oxygen or turbidity?	○	◉	○	○
f. Alteration of the direction or rate of flow of ground water?	○	◉	○	○
g. Change in the quantity of groundwater, either through direct additions or withdrawals, or through interception of an aquifer by cuts or excavations?	○	◉	○	○
h. Substantial reduction in the amount of water otherwise available for public water supplies?	○	◉	○	○
i. Exposure of people or property to water related hazards such as flooding and/or wave action from 100-year storm occurrence or seiches?	○	◉	○	○
j. The potential discharge of contaminants to the groundwater or any alteration of groundwater quality?	○	◉	○	○
k. Is the project located within 600 feet of a drinking water source?	◉	○	○	○

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4. Vegetation

Current and historic status of vegetation preservation standards can be found at the links below:

- Common Vegetation
- Late Seral/Old Growth Ecosystems
- Sensitive Plants
- Uncommon Plant Communities

Will the proposal result in:	Yes	No	No, with mitigation	Data insufficient
a. Removal of native vegetation in excess of the area utilized for the actual development permitted by the land capability/IPES system?	○	◉	○	○
b. Removal of riparian vegetation or other vegetation associated with critical wildlife habitat, either through direct removal or indirect lowering of the groundwater table?	○	◉	○	○
c. Introduction of new vegetation that will require excessive fertilizer or water, or will provide a barrier to the normal replenishment of existing species?	○	◉	○	○
d. Change in the diversity or distribution of species, or number of any species of plants (including trees, shrubs, grass, crops, micro flora, and aquatic plants)?	○	◉	○	○
e. Reduction of the numbers of any unique, rare, or endangered species of plants?	○	◉	○	○
f. Removal of stream bank and/or backshore vegetation, including woody vegetation such as willows?	○	◉	○	○
g. Removal of any native live, dead or dying trees 30 inches or greater in diameter at breast height (dbh) within TRPA's Conservation or Recreation land use classifications?	○	◉	○	○
h. A change in the natural functioning of an old growth ecosystem?	○	◉	○	○

Discussion

Permanent impacts to vegetation are not anticipated.

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5. Wildlife

Current and historic status of special interest species standards can be found at the links below:

- Special Interest Species

Current and historic status of the fisheries standards can be found at the links below:

- Instream Flow
- Lake Habitat
- Stream Habitat

Will the proposal result in:	Yes	No	No, with mitigation	Data insufficient
a. Change in the diversity or distribution of species, or numbers of any species of animals (birds, land animals including reptiles, fish and shellfish, benthic organisms, insects, mammals, amphibians or microfauna)?	○	◉	○	○
b. Reduction of the number of any unique, rare or endangered species of animals?	○	◉	○	○
c. Introduction of new species of animals into an area, or result in a barrier to the migration or movement of animals?	○	◉	○	○
d. Deterioration of existing fish or wildlife habitat quantity or quality?	○	◉	○	○

Discussion

Permanent impacts to wildlife are not anticipated.

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6. Noise

Current and historic status of the noise standards can be found at the links below:

- Cumulative Noise Events
- Single Noise Events

Will the proposal result in:	Yes	No	No, with mitigation	Data insufficient
a. Increases in existing Community Noise Equivalency Levels (CNEL) beyond those permitted in the applicable Area Plan, Plan Area Statement, Community Plan or Master Plan?	○	◉	○	○
b. Exposure of people to severe noise levels?	○	◉	○	○
c. Single event noise levels greater than those set forth in the TRPA Noise Environmental Threshold?	○	◉	○	○
d. The placement of residential or tourist accommodation uses in areas where the existing CNEL exceeds 60 dBA or is otherwise incompatible?	○	◉	○	○
e. The placement of uses that would generate an incompatible noise level in close proximity to existing residential or tourist accommodation uses?	○	◉	○	○
f. Exposure of existing structures to levels of ground vibration that could result in structural damage?	○	◉	○	○

Discussion

Permanent impacts to noise standards are not anticipated.

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7. Light and Glare

Will the proposal:

	Yes	No	No, with mitigation	Data insufficient
a. Include new or modified sources of exterior lighting?	○	◉	○	○
b. Create new illumination which is more substantial than other lighting, if any, within the surrounding area?	○	◉	○	○
c. Cause light from exterior sources to be cast off -site or onto public lands?	○	◉	○	○
d. Create new sources of glare through the siting of the improvements or through the use of reflective materials?	○	◉	○	○

Discussion

Lighting is not proposed.

8. Land Use

Will the proposal:

	Yes	No	No, with mitigation	Data insufficient
a. Include uses which are not listed as permissible uses in the applicable Area Plan, Plan Area Statement, adopted Community Plan, or Master Plan?	○	◉	○	○
b. Expand or intensify an existing non-conforming use?	○	◉	○	○

Discussion

Changes in land use are not proposed.

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9. Natural Resources

Will the proposal result in:

	Yes	No	No, with mitigation	Data insufficient
a. A substantial increase in the rate of use of any natural resources?	○	◉	○	○
b. Substantial depletion of any non-renewable natural resource?	○	◉	○	○

Discussion

Permanent impacts to natural resources are not anticipated.

10. Risk of Upset

Will the proposal:

	Yes	No	No, with mitigation	Data insufficient
a. Involve a risk of an explosion or the release of hazardous substances including, but not limited to, oil, pesticides, chemicals, or radiation in the event of an accident or upset conditions?	○	◉	○	○
b. Involve possible interference with an emergency evacuation plan?	○	◉	○	○

Discussion

Risk of upset is not anticipated.

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11. Population

Will the proposal:

	Yes	No	No, with mitigation	Data insufficient
a. Alter the location, distribution, density, or growth rate of the human population planned for the Region?	○	◉	○	○
b. Include or result in the temporary or permanent displacement of residents?	○	◉	○	○

Discussion

Permanent impacts to populations is not anticipated.

12. Housing

Will the proposal:

	Yes	No	No, with mitigation	Data insufficient
a. Affect existing housing, or create a demand for additional housing?				
To determine if the proposal will affect existing housing or create a demand for additional housing, please answer the following questions:				
1. Will the proposal decrease the amount of housing in the Tahoe Region?	○	◉	○	○
2. Will the proposal decrease the amount of housing in the Tahoe Region historically or currently being rented at rates affordable by lower and very-low-income households?	○	◉	○	○

Discussion

Impacts to housing are not anticipated.

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13. Transportation / Circulation

Will the proposal result in:

		Yes	No	No, with mitigation	Data insufficient
a.	Generation of 650 or more new average daily Vehicle Miles Travelled?	○	◉	○	○
b.	Changes to existing parking facilities, or demand for new parking?	○	◉	○	○
c.	Substantial impact upon existing transportation systems, including highway, transit, bicycle or pedestrian facilities?	○	◉	○	○
d.	Alterations to present patterns of circulation or movement of people and/or goods?	○	◉	○	○
e.	Alterations to waterborne, rail or air traffic?	○	◉	○	○
f.	Increase in traffic hazards to motor vehicles, bicyclists, or pedestrians?	○	◉	○	○

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Impacts to transportation are not anticipated.

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14. Public Services

Will the proposal have an unplanned effect upon, or result in a need for new or altered governmental services in any of the following areas?:

	Yes	No	No, with mitigation	Data insufficient
a. Fire protection?	○	◉	○	○
b. Police protection?	○	◉	○	○
c. Schools?	○	◉	○	○
d. Parks or other recreational facilities?	○	◉	○	○
e. Maintenance of public facilities, including roads?	○	◉	○	○
f. Other governmental services?	○	◉	○	○

Discussion

Impacts to public services is not anticipated.

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15. Energy

Will the proposal result in:

	Yes	No	No, with mitigation	Data insufficient
a. Use of substantial amounts of fuel or energy?	○	◉	○	○
b. Substantial increase in demand upon existing sources of energy, or require the development of new sources of energy?	○	◉	○	○

Discussion:

Impacts to energy use are not anticipated.

16. Utilities

Except for planned improvements, will the proposal result in a need for new systems, or substantial alterations to the following utilities:

	Yes	No	No, with mitigation	Data insufficient
a. Power or natural gas?	○	◉	○	○
b. Communication systems?	○	◉	○	○
c. Utilize additional water which amount will exceed the maximum permitted capacity of the service provider?	○	◉	○	○
d. Utilize additional sewage treatment capacity which amount will exceed the maximum permitted capacity of the sewage treatment provider?	○	◉	○	○
e. Storm water drainage?	○	◉	○	○
f. Solid waste and disposal?	○	◉	○	○

Discussion

Impacts to utilities are not anticipated.

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17. Human Health

Will the proposal result in:

	Yes	No	No, with mitigation	Data insufficient
a. Creation of any health hazard or potential health hazard (excluding mental health)?	○	◉	○	○
b. Exposure of people to potential health hazards?	○	◉	○	○

Discussion

Impacts to human health are not anticipated.

18. Scenic Resources / Community Design

Current and historic status of the scenic resources standards can be found at the links below:

- Built Environment
- Other Areas
- Roadway and Shoreline Units

Will the proposal:

	Yes	No	No, with mitigation	Data insufficient
a. Be visible from any state or federal highway, Pioneer Trail or from Lake Tahoe?	○	◉	○	○
b. Be visible from any public recreation area or TRPA designated bicycle trail?	○	◉	○	○
c. Block or modify an existing view of Lake Tahoe or other scenic vista seen from a public road or other public area?	○	◉	○	○
d. Be inconsistent with the height and design standards required by the applicable ordinance, Community Plan, or Area Plan?	○	◉	○	○
e. Be inconsistent with the TRPA Scenic Quality Improvement Program (SQIP) or Design Review Guidelines?	○	◉	○	○

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Impacts to scenic resources are not anticipated.

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19. Recreation

Current and historic status of the recreation standards can be found at the links below:

- Fair Share Distribution of Recreation Capacity
- Quality of Recreation Experience and Access to Recreational Opportunities

Will the proposal:	Yes	No	No, with mitigation	Data insufficient
a. Create additional demand for recreation facilities?	○	◉	○	○
b. Create additional recreation capacity?	○	◉	○	○
c. Have the potential to create conflicts between recreation uses, either existing or proposed?	○	◉	○	○
d. Result in a decrease or loss of public access to any lake, waterway, or public lands?	○	◉	○	○

Discussion

Impacts to recreation are not anticipated.

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20. Archaeological / Historical

Will the proposal result in:

		Yes	No	No, with mitigation	Data insufficient
a.	An alteration of or adverse physical or aesthetic effect to a significant archaeological or historical site, structure, object or building?	○	◉	○	○
b.	Is the proposed project located on a property with any known cultural, historical, and/or archaeological resources, including resources on TRPA or other regulatory official maps or records?	○	◉	○	○
c.	Is the property associated with any historically significant events and/or sites or persons?	○	◉	○	○
d.	Does the proposal have the potential to cause a physical change which would affect unique ethnic cultural values?	○	◉	○	○
e.	Will the proposal restrict historic or pre-historic religious or sacred uses within the potential impact area?	○	◉	○	○

Discussion

Impacts to cultural or historical resources are not anticipated.

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21. Findings of Significance

	Yes	No	No, with mitigation	Data insufficient
a. Does the project have the potential to degrade the quality of the environment, substantially reduce the habitat of a fish population to drop below self-sustaining levels, threaten to eliminate a plant or animal community, reduce the number or restrict the range of a rare or endangered plant or animal or eliminate important examples of the major periods of California or Nevada history or prehistory?	○	◉	○	○
b. Does the project have the potential to achieve short-term, to the disadvantage of long-term, environmental goals? (A short-term impact on the environment is one which occurs in a relatively brief, definitive period of time, while long-term impacts will endure well into the future.)	○	◉	○	○
c. Does the project have impacts which are individually limited, but cumulatively considerable? (A project may impact on two or more separate resources where the impact on each resource is relatively small, but where the effect of the total of those impacts on the environmental is significant?)	○	◉	○	○
d. Does the project have environmental impacts which will cause substantial adverse effects on human being, either directly or indirectly?	○	◉	○	○

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DECLARATION:

I hereby certify that the statements furnished above and in the attached exhibits present the data and information required for this initial evaluation to the best of my ability, and that the facts, statements, and information presented are true and correct to the best of my knowledge and belief.

Signature:

Tammy Rodriguez	at El Dorado County	9/1/2022
Person preparing application	County	Date

Applicant Written Comments: (Attach additional sheets if necessary)

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Determination:

On the basis of this evaluation:

a.	The proposed project could not have a significant effect on the environment and a finding of no significant effect shall be prepared in accordance with TRPA's Rules of Procedure	☐ YES	☐ NO
b.	The proposed project could have a significant effect on the environment, but due to the listed mitigation measures which have been added to the project, could have no significant effect on the environment and a mitigated finding of no significant effect shall be prepared in accordance with TRPA's Rules and Procedures.	☐ YES	☐ NO
c.	The proposed project may have a significant effect on the environment and an environmental impact statement shall be prepared in accordance with this chapter and TRPA's Rules of Procedures.	☐ YES	☐ NO

Date ☐

Signature of Evaluator

☐

Title of Evaluator