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Google

40°08'32.99" N 99°49'29.03" W

elev. 680 m

Eye alt 1.32 km



United States Department of the Interior

FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE

Ecological Services
Nebraska Field Office
203 West Second Street
Grand Island, Nebraska 68801

September 18, 2008

Mr. Roger Powell
Furnas County Emergency Management
PO Box 408
Beaver City, NE 68926

RE: Proposed Communications Tower and Associated Infrastructure, Furnas County, Nebraska

Dear Mr. Powell:

The Service has responsibility under a number of authorities for the conservation and management of fish and wildlife resources. Chief among the Federal statutes with which our office deals are the Endangered Species Act (ESA) of 1973, Fish and Wildlife Coordination Act (FWCA), Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act (Eagle Act), and the Migratory Bird Treaty Act (MBTA). Compliance with all of these statutes and regulations are required for compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA).

This is in response to your December 28, 2007, request for comments and concurrence from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service) regarding the construction of an emergency communications tower in Furnas County, Nebraska. The tower is proposed to be a 300-foot guyed tower equipped with aircraft warning lights (i.e., red/white lights). An E-mail from you dated September 12, 2008, committed to equipping the guy wires of the proposed tower with bird flight diverters to avoid potential collisions by migratory birds, including the federally-listed as-endangered whooping crane. This commitment was based on the completion of a risk assessment at the tower site dated June 27, 2008.

Based on the information submitted, the Service concurs that the proposed tower construction project will have no adverse affects to fish and wildlife resources protected under the above authorities. Should changes to the proposed project change or new information regarding fish and wildlife resources become available, this determination is no longer valid. Further coordination/consultation with the Service will be necessary.

Moreover, under NEPA, the Nebraska Game and Parks Commission is provided an opportunity to comment and give recommendations for impacts to fish and wildlife resources of the State of Nebraska. Please contact Ms. Carey Grell, Nebraska Game and Parks Commission, 2200 N. 33rd Street, Lincoln, NE 68503-0370 for impacts to State fish and wildlife resources.

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The Service appreciates the opportunity to provide comments on this proposed project. Should you have any questions regarding these comments, please contact Mr. Robert Harms within our office at (308) 382-6468, extension 17.

Sincerely,



June M. DeWeese
Nebraska Field Supervisor

cc: NGPC; Lincoln, NE (Attn: Carey Grell)
NEMA; Lincoln, NE (Attn: Lynn Marshall)



NEBRASKA STATE HISTORICAL SOCIETY

1500 R STREET, P.O. BOX 82554, LINCOLN, NE 68501-2554

(402) 471-3270 Fax: (402) 471-3100 1-800-833-6747 www.nebraskahistory.org

Michael J. Smith, Director/CEO

January 7, 2008

Mr. Roger Powell
Furnas County Emergency Manager
PO Box 408
Beaver City, NE 68926-0408

RE: Furnas County communications tower replacement - HP#0712-078-01

Dear Powell:

Thank you for submitting information regarding the referenced proposed project for our review and comment. Our comment on this project and its potential to affect historic properties is required by Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, and implementing regulations 36 CFR Part 800.

Given the information provided, in our opinion historic properties will not be adversely affected by the project as proposed. Therefore, in accordance with 36 CFR 800.5(d)(1), you may proceed with the project as planned.

Should any changes in the project be made, or in the type of funding or assistance provided through federal or state agencies, please notify this office of the changes before further project planning continues.

Please retain this correspondence and your documented finding in order to show compliance with Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation act, as amended. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to call Stacy Stupka-Burda at 402-471-4770.

Sincerely,

L. Robert Puschendorf
Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer
Nebraska State Historic Preservation Office



Nebraska Game and Parks Commission

2200 N. 33rd St. / P.O. Box 30370 / Lincoln, NE 68503-0370

Phone: 402-471-0641 / Fax: 402-471-5528 / www.OutdoorNebraska.org

September 5, 2008

Roger Powell
Furnas County Emergency Management
P.O. Box 408
Beaver City, NE 68926

RE: Construction of a 300-foot guyed communication tower to replace an existing 180-foot tower, located within the city limits of Beaver City, Furnas County

Dear Mr. Powell:

Nebraska Game and Parks Commission (NGPC) staff members have reviewed the information for the proposal identified above.

NGPC has grown increasingly concerned about the recent increase in tower construction across Nebraska and impacts that this might have on populations of migratory birds. Siting of new towers does have the potential to adversely impact migratory birds depending on the tower height, presence of guy wires, and lighting. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service has adopted several guidelines to eliminate or minimize a tower's potential to cause unnecessary bird mortality. The NGPC supports these guidelines, which are summarized below. New communications equipment should be collocated on existing towers or other structures, when feasible. If a new tower must be constructed, it is encouraged to be located within an existing cluster of towers, and avoid locating near wetlands, riparian areas, known bird concentration areas and migration corridors. These towers should be no more than 199 feet above ground level using construction techniques that do not require guy wires. If the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) requires aviation safety lights, flashing white strobe lights should be used at night, with at least a 3-4 second dark phase between flashes, instead of a solid red or pulsating beacon. Current research indicates that solid or pulsating (beacon) red lights attract night-migrating birds at a much higher rate than white strobe lights. Red strobe lights have not yet been studied. Any security lighting for on-ground facilities and equipment should be down shielded to keep light within the boundaries of the site.

We have reviewed the Tower Site Evaluation Form Risk Assessment that was completed for this project, and was sent on August 26, 2008. The Risk Assessment states that the proposed tower project should include installation of appropriate lighting, that which adheres to the guidelines mentioned above, and the installation of bird flight diverters on the guy wires to minimize potential impacts to migratory birds. Based on our review of the Risk Assessment, aerial photographs, topographic maps, and our Natural Heritage database, we concur that the proposed project is not likely to adversely affect state-listed threatened or endangered species. Furthermore, based on the information provided, potential impacts to migratory birds would be minimized.

Thank you for the opportunity to review this proposal. If you have any questions regarding these comments, please contact me at (402) 471-5423.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Carey Grell".

Carey Grell
Environmental Analyst
Realty and Environmental Services Division

cc: Bob Harms, USFWS
Lynn Marshall, NEMA

TOWER SITE EVALUATION FORM

RISK ASSESSMENT

1. Location (Provide maps if possible):

State: NE County: Furnas Latitude/Longitude/GPS Grid: 40-8-21.0 N, 99-49-34.4 W
Datum: NAD27

City and Highway Direction (2 miles West on Hwy 20, etc.)

Hwy 89 to 12th St., turn right (N) to end of 12th (12th & U St.) North end of town on the fairgrounds.

2. Will the equipment be co-located on an existing tower or other existing structure (building, billboard, etc.)? (y/n) no If yes, type of structure:

If yes, no further information is required.

3. If no, provide proposed specifications for new tower:

Height: 300' Construction type (lattice, monopole, etc.): lattice

Guy-wired? (y/n) Yes No. bands: 3 Total No. Wires: 9-12

Lighting (Security & Aviation):

Day/night light at top

If tower will be lighted or guy-wired, complete items 4-18. If not, complete only item 19.

4. Area of tower footprint in acres or square feet: 30'x30' = 1044ft²

5. Length and width of access road in feet: none

6. General description of terrain (e.g., bluffs, ridgeline, rolling hills, flat to undulating)

Photographs of the site and surrounding area are beneficial:

Within city limits on county property, rolling hills

7. Meteorological conditions (e.g., incidence of fog, low ceilings, etc.):

Rarely foggy, 6-10 times/year

8. Soil type(s):

Loess

9. Habitat types and land use on and adjacent to the site (within 1-mile), by acreage and percentage of total:

Cropland, county land – corporate/business – recreational/public access, pasture

Native habitat) Loess mixed-grass prairie

(within 1 mile) Riparian deciduous forests

10. Dominant vegetative species in each habitat type:

Wheat, corn, soybeans, milo
Corporate land – brome grass

11. Average diameter breast height of dominant tree species in forested areas:

Elm, cottonwood, box elder, and ash

12. Will construction at this site cause fragmentation of a larger block of habitat into two or more smaller blocks? (y/n) no If yes, describe:

13. Is evidence of bird roosts or rookeries present? (y/n) no If yes, describe:

14. Distance to nearest wetland area (e.g., marsh, riparian, river, stream, lake, or other water feature):

Beaver Creek – 1 mile south

15. Distance to nearest telecommunications tower. The FCC offers an Antenna Structure Registration search feature on their website that allows you to search for registered towers within a specified radius of any proposed tower location. This search feature can be accessed at:

<http://wireless2.fcc.gov/UlsApp/AsrSearch/asrRegistrationSearch.jsp>

Additionally, a search feature at <http://www.berkana.com/tower.php3> allows users to search for all towers registered with the FCC based on specified search criteria such as city and state. The site will display maps as well as company name, address, latitude, longitude, elevation, height, etc., of towers registered with the FCC. The *nearby matches* link will find towers that are within approximately 10, 20, 50, and 100 miles of a particular tower.

Owner: Cellular, Inc. DBA Alltel Communications, Inc.

12.8 miles, 40-16-36.0 N, 99-59-20.0 W

16. Is there any potential for co-location of antennas on existing towers or other structures? If no, please explain why co-location would not be feasible:

It is possible to add antennas. There is an Alltel tower on old one and it will also be on the new one.

17. Based on the evaluation completed above, are there obvious measures (e.g., bird diverters, lighting modifications, tower modification) that should be incorporated at the tower and any appurtenant structure(s) to minimize impacts to migratory birds? (y/n) no If yes, describe:

Appropriate lighting (white or red, flashing least # of times per minute as required by aviation requirements). Bird diverters for local bird population protection.

18. Would the proposed facility likely affect listed or proposed endangered or threatened species or their habitats?

(y/n) no If yes, present findings:

19. Contact Information

Name of individual completing form: Laura Tiehen

Affiliation: University of Nebraska – Lincoln, Fish and Wildlife Department

Address: 124 Hardin Hall, 3310 Holdrege St, Lincoln, NE 68583

Telephone number: 402-472-0508

E-mail address: tiehen@bigred.unl.edu

Date form was completed: 6-27-08

20: Site Assessment Location & POC Information

Name of County: Furnas

County POC: Roger Powell

Address: P.O. Box 408, Beaver City, NE 68926

Telephone number: 308-268-5088

E-mail address: furnasem@atcjet.net