

Draft Environmental Assessment

Watertown, SD Wireless Communications Tower

Watertown, Codington County, SD

Interoperable Emergency Communications Grant Program

FEMA 2009-IP-T9-0046

October 2010



FEMA

**U.S. Department of Homeland Security
Washington, DC 20472**

ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESMENT
for
WATERTOWN COMMUNICATIONS TOWER

CITY OF WATERTOWN, SOUTH DAKOTA

CODINGTON COUNTY EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT
PO BOX 12
Watertown, SD 57201

and

DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY (DHS)/
FEDERAL EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT AGENCY (FEMA)-
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SECTION ONE: BACKGROUND

INTRODUCTION

Funding for this project was awarded to the South Dakota Department of Public Safety (SDDPS) under the Department of Homeland Security (DHS)-Federal Emergency Management Agency's (FEMA) Homeland Security Interoperable Emergency Communications Program. The project was authorized by Codington County Emergency Management who received funding in the amount of \$192,000 from the FY 2009 Interoperable Emergency Communications Program.

In accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969, the Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) regulations implementing NEPA (40 Code of Federal Regulations [CFR] Parts 1500 through 1508), and DHS Management Directive 5100.1, FEMA must fully understand and consider the environmental consequences of actions proposed for federal funding.

PURPOSE AND NEED

It is Codington County EM's objective to have improved radio coverage throughout Codington County. In a large portion of Codington County there are issues related to the loss of radio coverage at this time. Consequently, there is a need to ensure that the public safety telecommunication infrastructure is capable of providing and maintaining radio coverage, especially during an emergency event. Therefore, the specific need addressed in this proposal is that of providing sufficient system capability to achieve radio coverage throughout Codington County.

SECTION TWO: ALTERNATIVES ANALYSIS

The following alternatives were considered to address the need for radio coverage in all of Codington County: the No Action alternative, Renting space on existing cell tower and (Proposed Action) Construction of new 190ft Communications tower for improved coverage of Codington County.

ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED AND DISMISSED

Purchasing an existing tower was not an option as there were no towers available to purchase. It was considered to rent space on an existing antenna or tower. However, this would not have been a cost-effective option. Therefore, this alternative was dropped from further consideration.

ALTERNATIVE 1 – NO ACTION ALTERNATIVE

Under the No Action alternative, the Codington County radio communications system would not receive a radio coverage upgrade. The current coverage system is in dire need of upgrading to improve overall radio communications for the entire Codington County

area. Consequently, the risk of coverage loss during an emergency event would continue to jeopardize command control, rescue, or event analysis operations.

ALTERNATIVE 2 - CONSTRUCTION OF TELECOMMUNICATION FACILITY AT CITY OF WATERTOWN SITE (PROPOSED ACTION)

The proposed project site is located in the City of Watertown, Codington County, South Dakota. The site is in section 31, Township 117 N, Range 52 1W, in Codington County, South Dakota. The property is owned by the City of Watertown. An aerial photo of the current site is attached. Codington County EM has analyzed the proposed construction of telecommunication infrastructure at the City of Watertown site, including a 190-foot tower with antennas, cabling, and associated electronic equipment, to provide improved radio coverage to its existing public safety radio communications system. Codington County EM determined that the proposed City of Watertown tower project would successfully address radio coverage issues.

The proposed tower will utilize an equilateral triangular pattern with either steel pipe or solid steel legs, and tubular or angle steel cross bracing with bolted construction. The cross bracing is angular solid tubing and is welded to the legs. The sections are hot-dipped galvanized after fabrication. This tower shall be engineered to specifically meet and adequately handle the equipment to be installed.

The tower and appurtenances would be located on property owned and operated by the City of Watertown. This site is also the location of the Watertown Police Department.

SECTION THREE: AFFECTED ENVIRONMENT AND IMPACTS

PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT

While historic properties, flood plains, wetlands, prime farmlands, airport runway clear zones and other environmentally sensitive areas exist within the City of Watertown, none of the aforementioned areas are found within the boundaries of the proposed project site.

This project will not create adverse impacts on any of the environmental areas in the following sections of this environmental assessment. No mitigation measures will need to be implemented as a result of the construction and operation of this project. The overall physical environment within the project area will not be significantly impacted by the construction of the proposed communications tower.

The table on the following page summarizes the potential impacts of the Proposed Action Alternative, and identifies conditions or mitigation measures to minimize those impacts, where appropriate. Following the summary table, each environmental area is treated in greater detail.

ENVIRONMENTAL AREA (check only one box)	No Consultation Required	Consultation Required and Completed	Permit Consistent with Applicable Plans/Standards	Project Consistent with Applicable Plans/Standards	Conditions/Safeguards Mitigation Required	All determinations need explanation. Reference to documentation sources, notes and correspondence. Attach additional sheets if necessary.
1. HISTORIC PROPERTIES		X				This project will have no affect on historic and archaeological sites – SD SHPO/FEMA Region VIII Environmental Officer/Sisseton Wahpeton Oyate THPO
2. FLOOD HAZARD PROJECTION		X				This project is not affected by nor will it affect a flood hazard area--see correspondence from the US Corps of Engineers
3. WETLAND PROTECTION		X				The project will not significantly impact area wetlands-- see letters from the US Fish and Wildlife Service, SD Game, Fish and Parks
4. DRINKING WATER AND GROUNDWATER PROTECTION		X				This project will not affect the local drinking water or groundwater in general-- see letters from SD Department of Environment and Natural Resources
5. ENDANGERED SPECIES		X				The project will not significantly impact endangered species-- see letters from the US Fish and Wildlife Service and SD Game, Fish and Parks
6. AIR QUALITY PROTECTION		X				This project will not affect the local air quality standards-- see letters from SD Department of Environment and Natural Resources
7. SOLID WASTE		X				The project will not be affected by sanitary landfill areas, abandoned dumps, or other solid waste disposal sites. Project debris will be disposed of in an approved solid waste facility.- see letters from SD Department of Environment and Natural Resources
8. WATER QUALITY		X				This project will not impact state water quality standards-- see letters from SD Department of Environment and Natural Resources
9. NOISE	X					The project will not affect nor be affected by the ambient noise level in the local area except temporarily during project construction.
10.MAN-MADE HAZARDS 24CFR PART 51 C&D		X				The project will not be affected by nor affect man-made hazards in the town. See attached information.
11.FARMLAND PROTECTION		X				This project will not affect prime farmland--see letters from the US Natural Resources Conservation Service
12.AIRPORT RUNWAY CLEAR ZONES	X					This project will not affect nor be affected by airport runway clearance zones.

PHYSICAL RESOURCES

Farmland Protection

The Farmland Protection Policy Act (FPPA) (P.L. 97-98, Sec. 1539-1549; 7 U.S.C. 4201, et seq.), which states that federal agencies must “minimize the extent to which federal programs contribute to the unnecessary conversion of farmland to nonagricultural uses,” was considered in this EA. Prime farmland is characterized as land with the best physical and chemical characteristics for the production of food, feed, forage, fiber and oilseed crops (USDA, 1989). Prime farmland is either used for food or fiber crops or is available for those crops; it is not urban, built-up land, or water areas. The proposed project site is located within the corporate boundaries of the City of Watertown and has been used for commercial development for many decades prior to this proposed project. The proposed project site does not contain prime or unique farmland.

Impact Threshold – The proposed project may have an adverse impact on prime or important farmlands if it requires said farmlands to be removed from production to allow for the project to progress. The Natural Resources and Conservation District in Huron, SD determined that the proposed action would have no impact on prime or significant farmland.

No Action Alternative - Under the No Action alternative, no impacts to prime or important farmland would occur.

Proposed Action Alternative - Under the Proposed Action, no significant impacts to prime or important farmland would occur.

Air Quality Protection

The Clean Air Act requires the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to set National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS) for pollutants considered harmful to public health and the environment. The Act established two types of national air quality standards: primary standards set limits to protect public health, including the health of “sensitive” populations such as asthmatics, children, and the elderly, and secondary standards set limits to protect public welfare, including protection against decreased visibility, damage to animals, crops, vegetation and buildings. The current criteria pollutants are: Carbon Monoxide (CO), Nitrogen Dioxide (NO₂), Ozone (O₃), Lead (Pb), Particulate Matter (PM₁₀), and Sulfur Dioxide (SO₂).

An environmental review response letter received from South Dakota Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) stated that the project will have little or no impact on air quality.

Impact Threshold - Mitigation measures will have to be identified and implemented if the proposed project will have an adverse impact on air quality within the project area. The

SD DENR has determined that this project will not result in a significant impact on air quality.

No Action Alternative – Under the No Action alternative, there would be no impacts to air quality because no construction would occur.

Proposed Action Alternative - Under the Proposed Action, there could be short-term minor impacts to air quality during the construction phase due to heavy equipment use. Measures would be taken to limit emission of fugitive dust, including watering down of construction areas. No significant impacts to air quality are anticipated.

WATER RESOURCES

There are no rivers, lakes, streams or other water bodies on or near the site. The nearest water resource, the Big Sioux River, is in excess of one half of a mile to the west of the site.

Water Quality

Environmental review response letters received from South Dakota Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) stated that the project will have little or no impact on surface water quality.

Impact Threshold - Mitigation measures will have to be identified and implemented if the proposed project will have an adverse impact on water quality within the project area. The SD DENR has determined that this project will not result in a significant impact on water quality.

No Action Alternative - Under the No Action alternative, no impacts to surface water resources would occur.

Proposed Action Alternative - Under the Proposed Action, there would be no significant impacts to surface water.

Drinking Water and Groundwater Protection

Environmental review response letters received from South Dakota Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) stated that the project will have little or no impact on drinking water quality or ground water quality.

Impact Threshold - Mitigation measures will have to be identified and implemented if the proposed project will have an adverse impact on drinking water and groundwater protection within the project area. The SD DENR has determined that this project will not result in a significant impact on drinking water and groundwater protection.

No Action Alternative - Under the No Action alternative, no impacts to drinking water or groundwater resources would occur.

Proposed Action Alternative - Under the Proposed Action, there would be no significant impacts to drinking water or ground water due to the type of activity and the small size of the project area (less than 5 acres). A National Pollution Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permit is not necessary for this project.

Wetland Protection

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) regulates the discharge of dredged or filled material into waters of the U.S., including wetlands, pursuant to Section 404 of the Clean Water Act (CWA). Additionally, Executive Order 11990 (Protection of Wetlands) requires federal agencies to avoid, to the extent possible, adverse impact of wetlands.

A formal request was sent to the USACE Omaha District to determine if the proposed project would impact any known wetlands. The US Army Corps of Engineers has stated the project will not involve a regulated discharge of fill material. Therefore, the activity is not subject to Department of the Army regulatory authorities and no permit pursuant to Section 404 of the Clean Water Act is required from the U.S. Army Corp for the proposed tower project.

Impact Threshold - Mitigation measures will have to be identified and implemented if the proposed project will have an adverse impact on wetlands located within the project area. The USACE has determined that this project will not result in a significant impact on wetlands.

No Action Alternative - Under the No Action alternative, no impacts to wetlands would occur.

Proposed Action Alternative - Under the Proposed Action, no impacts to wetlands are anticipated, because the proposed project site is not located in or near a wetland.

Floodplains

Executive Order (EO) 11988 (Floodplain Management) requires federal agencies to take action to minimize occupancy and modification of the floodplain. Specifically, EO 11988 prohibits federal agencies from funding construction in the 100-year floodplain unless there are no practicable alternatives.

The City of Watertown participates in the Flood Insurance Rate Map (FIRM) process and FIRM map 4600160065C (Effective Date September 28, 2007) was used to determine that the proposed communications tower location is not located within a floodplain.

Impact Threshold - Mitigation measures will have to be identified and implemented if the proposed project will be located within the boundaries of a flood plain protection area. A

review of the Watertown Flood Insurance Rate Map (Panel 65 of 100 – Map Number 4600160065C) determined that this project will not be located within a flood hazard protection area and will not have an adverse impact on flood hazard protection.

No Action Alternative - Under the No Action alternative, no impacts to floodplains would occur.

Proposed Action Alternative - Under the Proposed Action, no impacts to floodplains are anticipated, because the proposed project site is not located in or near a floodplain.

COSTAL RESOURCES

According to the U.S. Maritime Protected Areas Map found at the NOAA website (<http://mpa.gov/dataanalysis/mpainventory/mpaviewer/mpaviewer.swf>) there are no protected costal resources in the City of Watertown, South Dakota.

BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES

The vegetation in the area consists of landscaped trees, grasses and shrubs. The entire area has been developed for a century or more and no unbroken prairie sod or old-growth timber exists within the project area. All of the vegetation within the project area has been planted for landscaping purposes and none of the vegetation within the project area exists today as it did prior to the settlement of Watertown in the late 1800's.

According to the United States Fish and Wildlife Service Species Reports, the following threatened and endangered species have been identified as occurring within the boundaries of Codington County, and the City of Watertown: Whooping Crane (bird), Arctic Peregrine Falcon (bird), Mountain Plover (bird), Topeka Shiner (fish) and Dakota Skipper (insect). Although there are threatened and endangered species potentially occurring within the project area, none of them will be negatively impacted by this proposed communications tower project.

Threatened and Endangered Species and Critical Habitat and Wildlife and Fish

In accordance with Section 7 of the Endangered Species Act (ESA) of 1973, the project area was evaluated for the potential occurrences of federally listed threatened and endangered species. The ESA requires any federal agency that funds, authorizes, or carries out an action to ensure that their action is not likely to jeopardize the continued existence of any endangered or threatened species (including plant species) or result in the destruction or adverse modification of designated critical habitats (FEMA 1996).

A formal request was submitted to the South Dakota Department of Game, Fish and Parks (GFP) and United States Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) to determine if the proposed project will impact any federal or state-listed threatened or endangered species. A response letter was received from GFP which says the project is not likely to adversely

affect state-listed threatened or endangered species. Also a letter was received from FWS stating the same.

Impact Threshold - Mitigation measures will have to be identified and implemented if the proposed project will have an adverse impact on endangered species within the project area. The US Fish and Wildlife Service has determined that this project will not result in a significant impact on endangered species.

No Action Alternative - Under the No Action alternative, no impacts to threatened or endangered species would occur.

Proposed Action Alternative - Under the Proposed Action, no impacts to threatened or endangered species are anticipated.

Migratory Birds

Under the Migratory Bird Treaty Act, taking, killing or possessing migratory birds is unlawful. Migratory birds are a federal trust resource that the US Fish and Wildlife Service is authorized to protect, and the Service has put forth recommendations for communication tower design and height to mitigate collision-related mortality.

Construction of the proposed communications tower has been determined to be the best option because co-locating the communications equipment on an existing tower or other structure is not an available option. The tower will be below 199 feet above ground level and will not require guy wires. The tower will be marked and/or lighted in accordance with FAA Advisory circular 70/7460-1 K Change 2, Obstruction Marking and Lighting, red lights – Chapters 4, 5 (Red), & 12 and will not be a part of a multiple-tower array or antenna farm.

According to responses from consulting agencies, this project will not be sited in or near wetlands, other known bird concentration areas, in known migratory or daily movement flyways, or in habitat of threatened or endangered species. The site is not in an area with a high incidence of fog, mist, and low ceilings.

Service personnel or researchers from the Communication Tower Working Group will be allowed access to the site to evaluate bird use, conduct dead-bird searches, to place net catchments below the tower but above the ground, and to place radar, Global Positioning System, infrared, thermal imagery, and acoustical monitoring equipment as necessary to assess and verify bird movements to gain information on the impacts of various tower sized, configurations, and lighting systems.

Impact Threshold – Mitigation measures outlined in the Service Interim Guidelines For Recommendations On Communications Tower Siting, Construction, Operation and Decommissioning issued by the US Fish and Wildlife Service will be implemented as practical for this project.

No Action Alternative - Under the No Action alternative, no impacts to migratory birds would occur.

Proposed Action Alternative - Under the Proposed Action, tower design and location would mitigate collision-related bird mortality. The tower would have the white/red pulsating combination per the suggestion of the NGPC according to the FAA regulations.

CULTURAL RESOURCES

The existing built environment surrounding the project site consists of a mixture of steel and brick buildings that are primarily industrial in nature. To the north, there are steel buildings that house heating and cooling and retail lumber businesses. To the west, there are steel and brick buildings that both house the same heating and cooling business. To the south, there is a parking lot and a steel building occupied by Watertown Area Transit. To the east, there is a 48.75 MW Power Plant owned and operated by Missouri River Energy Services. None of the adjacent properties are listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

Beyond the buildings immediately adjacent to the project site exists a variety of industrial, commercial and residential properties. These buildings are a mixture of brick, steel and wood construction and none of them will be significantly impacted, either visually or physically, as a result of this project.

In addition to review under NEPA, consideration of impacts to cultural resources is mandated under Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA), as amended, and implemented by 36 CFR Part 800. Requirements include identification of significant historic properties that may be impacted by the Proposed Action. Historic properties are defined as archaeological sites, standing structures, or other historic resources listed in or eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP).

As defined in 36 CFR Part 800.16(d), the Area of Potential Effect (APE), “is the geographic area or areas within which an undertaking may directly or indirectly cause changes in the character or use of historic properties, if such properties exist.”

Historic Properties

The South Dakota State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) determined that construction of a telecommunications facility does not contain recorded historic resources and will not require a survey. SHPO also determined that the tower will have not effect for archaeological, architectural, or historic properties.

Impact Threshold - Mitigation measures will have to be identified and implemented if the proposed project will have an adverse impact on historic properties within the project area. The SD SHPO and FEMA’s Region VIII Regional Environmental Officer have determined that this project will not result in a significant impact on historic properties.

No Action Alternative - Under the No Action Alternative, no impacts to cultural resources would occur.

Proposed Action Alternative - Under the Proposed Action, no impacts to cultural resources are anticipated. If historic or archaeological materials are discovered during construction, all ground disturbing activities shall cease and FEMA/NSHS will be notified.

American Indian/Native Hawaiian/Native Alaskan Cultural/Religious Sites

Section 106 of the NHPA requires consultation with Federally-recognized Indian tribes who may have potential cultural interests in the project area, and acknowledges that tribes may have interests in geographic locations other than their seat of government. A letter was sent to the Sisseton Wahpeton Oyate Tribal Historic Preservation Officer, Dianne Desrosiers, requesting her opinion on the project area. Dianne responded with no concerns about the proposed project.

Impact Threshold - Mitigation measures will have to be identified and implemented if the proposed project will have an adverse impact on areas that are culturally significant to Native Americans within the project area. The Sisseton Wahpeton Oyate Tribal Historic Preservation Officer has determined that this project will not result in a significant impact on sites that are culturally significant to Native Americans.

No Action Alternative - Under the No Action Alternative, no impacts to Indian religious or archaeological sites would occur.

Proposed Action Alternative - Under the Proposed Action, no impacts to Indian religious or archaeological sites are anticipated.

SOCIOECONOMIC RESOURCES

The City of Watertown was founded in 1879 and is located at the intersection of US Highway 81 and Interstate 29 in northeast South Dakota. The site location chosen for this proposed communication tower is located in central Watertown near a mixture of commercial and residential properties and one of the original railroad lines that was present prior to the founding of Watertown in 1879 and the ground at the site has been disturbed significantly in the past. The most recent use of the project site was as a greenhouse – a business that has not been operational for several years.

Environmental Justice (Executive Order 12898)

Executive Order 12898 (Federal Actions to Address Environmental Justice in Minority Populations and Low-Income Populations) mandates that federal agencies identify and address, as appropriate, disproportionately high and adverse human health or environmental effects of their programs, policies, and activities on minority and low-income populations.

Impact Threshold – The proposed project may have an adverse impact on environmental justice if a disproportionately high number of minority and low-income populations are negatively impacted by the proposed action. Demographic information from the 2000 US Census revealed that no minority or low-income populations would experience negative environmental consequences as a result of the proposed action.

No Action Alternative – Under the No Action Alternative, there would be no disproportionately high and adverse effects on minority or low-income populations. All populations could potentially be adversely affected by a loss of radio coverage during an emergency.

Proposed Action – Under the Proposed Action, no disproportionately high and adverse impacts on minority or low-income populations are anticipated. The radio coverage upgrade would benefit all populations by improving communication related to public safety.

Noise

Noise is generally defined as unwanted sound. Sound is most commonly measured in decibels (dB) on the A-weighted scale, which is the scale most similar to the range of sounds that the human ear can hear. The Day-Night Average Sound Level (DNL) is an average measure of sound. The DNL descriptor is accepted by federal agencies as a standard for estimating sound impacts and establishing guidelines for compatible land uses. EPA guidelines, and those of many other federal agencies, state that outdoor sound levels in excess of 55 dB DNL are “normally unacceptable” for noise-sensitive land uses such as residences, schools, or hospitals.

Impact Threshold – If the proposed project generates a significant level of noise then it will have an adverse impact on noise levels within the project area. The Watertown Chief of Police determined that the proposed action will have no impact on noise.

No Action Alternative - Under the No Action alternative, no significant impacts to noise would occur.

Proposed Action Alternative - Under the Proposed Action, temporary short-term increases in noise levels are anticipated due to construction activities and the use of heavy equipment. The proposed project does not readily create noise, except for occasional backup power generator activation. There do not appear to be any noise sensitive land uses within the area of potential effect.

Solid Waste

An environmental review response letter received from South Dakota Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) stated that the project will have little or no impact on waste management (hazardous waste/solid waste/asbestos).

Impact Threshold – Mitigation measures will have to be identified and implemented if the proposed project will have an adverse impact on solid waste facilities within the project area. The SD DENR has determined that this project will not result in a significant impact on solid waste.

No Action Alternative – Under the No Action alternative, there would be no impacts to waste management because no construction would occur.

Proposed Action Alternative - Under the Proposed Action, no significant impacts to waste management are anticipated.

Man-Made Hazards

This project is not being constructed for residential, institutional, recreational, commercial or industrial use and mitigating hazardous materials or hazardous gases will not be necessary.

Impact Threshold – This portion of the review will not be subjected to additional scrutiny because the proposed action will not result in the construction of residential, institutional, recreational, commercial or industrial usage.

No Action Alternative - Under the No Action alternative, no man-made hazards would need to be mitigated.

Proposed Action Alternative - Under the Proposed Action, no man-made hazards would need to be mitigated.

Airport Runway Clear Zones

A review of the airport runway clear zones in the City of Watertown shows that this project will not be located within the boundaries of any airport runway clear zones.

Impact Threshold – The proposed project may have an adverse impact on airport runway clear zones if it is located within the boundaries of an airport runway clear zone. A review of the existing Watertown Regional Airport runway clear zone map revealed that the proposed action would not take place within an airport runway clear zone.

No Action Alternative - Under the No Action alternative, no impacts to airport runway clear zones would occur.

Proposed Action Alternative - Under the Proposed Action, there would be no significant impacts to airport runway clear zones.

Zoning and Land Use

The project is located in the zoning jurisdiction of the City of Watertown, carries a zoning designation of I-1 Light Industrial District (radio and television studios, communication transmitting and receiving towers are permitted uses under the I-1 designation) and has received approval for construction from Watertown's zoning department. The project site is currently owned and operated by the Watertown Police Department.

SECTION FOUR: CUMULATIVE IMPACTS

Cumulative impacts are those effects on the environment that result from the incremental effect of an action when added to past, present and reasonably foreseeable future actions, regardless of what agency (federal or nonfederal) or person undertakes such other actions. Cumulative effects can result from individually minor but collectively significant actions taking place over a period of time.

There are no known on-going or planned projects in the vicinity of the proposed project site. Therefore, no cumulative impacts are anticipated.

SECTION FIVE: PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Public notices pertaining to the finding of no significant impact to the environment and a request for release of funds will be published in the local newspaper prior the start of this proposed project and public comments and concerns will be received and addressed prior to funds being released.

SECTION SIX: MITIGATION MEASURES AND PERMITS

In accordance with applicable local, state, and federal regulations, the applicant would be responsible for acquiring any necessary permits prior to commencing construction at the proposed project site.

A determination made by the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) allows for construction of the tower structure as long as lighting and painting standards are followed.

The City of Watertown applied for and received an antenna structure registration with the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) on March 1, 2010. The FCC Registration Number (FRN) for this communications tower is 0002403947.

The City of Watertown has already approved and issued building permits for this project.

There are no permits issued by the State of South Dakota that are required for this project.

As previously mentioned, under the Proposed Action, the tower will be built in accordance with all FAA, FCC and local regulations and conditions.

SECTION SEVEN: CONSULTATIONS AND REFERENCES

The following agencies and organizations were contacted and asked to comment on the proposed project.

- City of Watertown
- First District Association of Local Governments
- South Dakota State Historic Preservation Office
- U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
- South Dakota Department of Game, Fish and Parks
- U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
- Federal Aviation Administration
- Natural Resource Conservation Service
- South Dakota Department of Environment and Natural Resources

SECTION EIGHT: CONCLUSION

No impacts to geology, floodplains, wetlands, socioeconomic resources, environmental justice, or cultural resources are anticipated under the Proposed Action. During the construction period, there are potential short-term and minor impacts to soils, surface water, air quality, and noise. All short-term impacts require conditions to minimize and mitigate impacts to the proposed project site and surrounding areas. The proposed 190-foot telecommunications tower could have potential adverse impacts on migratory birds. However, the tower's location outside of sensitive habitats and flyways would mitigate collision-related bird mortality.

The new system set up on the 190 foot communications tower would be a great asset to the residents of the City of Watertown and Codington County in the event of an emergency. Fire fighters, rescue squad and the sheriff's department would be able to communicate with each other in almost every point of the county.

SECTION NINE: LIST OF PREPARERS AND ATTACHEMNTS

This EA was prepared by Ted Haeder, First District Association of Local Governments, Watertown, South Dakota.

Attachments are as follows:

1. Map of tower site
2. Air photos of the tower site
3. FCC Antenna Structure Registration
4. Tower Systems Inc. – tower quote and design
5. FIRM Map
6. Environmental and Historic Preservation Screening Memo (EHPSM)
7. Email responses pertaining to EHPSM
8. Environmental assessment letters from responding agencies
9. FAA Determination of No Hazard to Air Navigation