

MINUTE ITEM

This Calendar Item No. C55 was approved as
Minute Item No. 55 by the California State Lands
Commission by a vote of 3 to 0 at its
6-14-99 meeting.

**CALENDAR ITEM
C55**

A 2, 3

S 1, 4

PRC 4662.9

06/14/99
WP 4662.9
K.Walker
M. Griggs

**ADOPTION OF MITIGATED NEGATIVE DECLARATION FOR
REMOVAL OF EXISTING COAXIAL CABLE FROM THE
CALIFORNIA/NEVADA BORDER TO RED BLUFF, CALIFORNIA,
THROUGH LASSEN, PLUMAS AND TEHAMA COUNTIES**

APPLICANT:

Kevin Lorenzini
AT&T Corporation
1431 N. Market Blvd., Suite 9
Sacramento, California 95834

AREA, LAND TYPE, AND LOCATION:

The cable route goes from the California/Nevada border near Susanville, to Red Bluff, through Lassen, Plumas and Tehama Counties crossing under sovereign lands at the Sacramento River.

AUTHORIZED USE:

The coaxial cable was previously used for telecommunications purposes, but has been replaced by fiber optics lines in other locations, and AT&T wishes to remove the cable and return the right-of-way to its previous condition.

OTHER PERTINENT INFORMATION:

On May 24, 1972, the Commission approved issuance to American Telephone and Telegraph (AT&T) of a continuous use Right of Way Permit, effective July 1, 1972, for a submarine cable across the Sacramento River near the confluence with East Sand Slough in Red Bluff, Tehama County. This crossing was part of a larger project that connected Utah to California by coaxial cable for telephone transmission purposes. With the advent of fiber optic technology and the completion of AT&T's fiber optic cable network, the coaxial cable is no longer needed. AT&T intends to remove the cable system, restore the land, and relinquish its rights of way on public lands.

Pursuant to the Commission's delegation of authority and the State CEQA Guidelines (Title 14, California Code of Regulations, section 15025), the staff has

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caused to be prepared a Proposed Mitigated Negative Declaration identified as CSLC ND 697, State Clearinghouse No. 99052025. This document was prepared by Jones and Stokes Associates and copies were circulated for review and comment to Responsible and Trustee Agencies and the public from May 7 to June 7, 1999, pursuant to the provisions of the CEQA.

The Mitigated Negative Declaration addresses the potential impacts of removing the cable and potential accidents during this removal. The topics analyzed include Aesthetics, Agricultural Resources, Air Quality, Biological Resources, Cultural Resources, Geology and Soils, Hazards and Hazardous Materials, Hydrology and Water Quality, Land Use, Mineral Resources, Noise, Population and Housing, Public Services, Recreation, Transportation and Traffic, and Utilities and Service Systems. A summary of the specific impacts and mitigation for measures which have been incorporated into the project for each resource category are included in the Mitigation Monitoring Program, prepared in conformance with the provisions of the CEQA (Public Resources Code section 21081.6) shown in Exhibit "B".

Based upon the Initial Study, the Proposed Mitigated Negative Declaration, and the comments received in response thereto, there is no substantial evidence that the project will have a significant effect on the environment; Title 14, California of Regulations, section 15074 (b).

Pursuant to the provisions of Lease No. PRC 4662.9, should the Lessee desire to terminate this agreement, Lessee shall, upon Lessor's approval, remove all property and equipment placed by or for Lessee in and across said Lease Premises. Lessee now wishes to terminate the Lease and abandon the facilities. AT&T proposes to remove the coaxial cable from the Lease Premises by pulling the cable from beneath the Sacramento River. Upon completion of the abandonment project, AT&T will provide evidence to staff that the cable was either removed or abandoned in place pursuant to the conditions contained in the Mitigation Monitoring Program. Staff will present their recommendations regarding termination of the Lease at a succeeding Commission meeting.

This activity involves lands identified as possessing significant environmental values pursuant to Public Resources code sections 6370, et seq.

Based upon the staff's consultation with the persons nominating such lands and through the CEQA review process, it is the staff's opinion that the project, as proposed, is consistent with its use classification.

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EXHIBITS:

- A. Location Map
- B. Mitigation Monitoring Program

COMPLIANCE DATES:

Adoption of Mitigated Negative Declaration Pursuant to the provisions of the CEQA (Public Resources Code 21100.2): July 12, 1999

PERMIT STREAMLINING ACT DEADLINE:

July 12, 1999

RECOMMENDED ACTION:

IT IS RECOMMENDED THAT THE COMMISSION:

CEQA FINDING:

1. CERTIFY THAT A PROPOSED MITIGATED NEGATIVE DECLARATION, CSLC ND NO. 697, STATE CLEARINGHOUSE NO. 99052025, WAS PREPARED FOR THIS PROJECT PURSUANT TO THE PROVISIONS OF THE CEQA AND THAT THE COMMISSION HAS REVIEWED AND CONSIDERED THE INFORMATION CONTAINED THEREIN.
2. ADOPT THE PROPOSED MITIGATED NEGATIVE DECLARATION AND DETERMINE THAT THE PROJECT, AS DESCRIBED THEREIN, WILL NOT HAVE A SIGNIFICANT EFFECT ON THE ENVIRONMENT.
3. ADOPT THE MITIGATION MONITORING PROGRAM, AS CONTAINED IN EXHIBIT B, ATTACHED HERETO.
4. FIND THAT THIS ACTIVITY IS CONSISTENT WITH THE USE CLASSIFICATION DESIGNATED BY THE COMMISSION FOR THE LAND PURSUANT TO PUBLIC RESOURCES CODE SECTIONS 6370, ET SEQ.

AUTHORIZATION:

5. AUTHORIZE THE ABANDONMENT OF THE EXISTING COAXIAL CABLE FROM THE PREMISES COVERED BY LEASE PRC 4662.9, BY EITHER REMOVAL OF THE COAXIAL CABLE OR LEAVING THE CABLE IN PLACE BY CUTTING AND CAPPING, PURSUANT TO

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THE CONDITIONS CONTAINED IN THE MITIGATION MONITORING PROGRAM TO AVOID IMPACTS TO WETLAND RESOURCES.

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EXHIBIT A: LOCATION MAP

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EXHIBIT B: MITIGATION MONITORING PROGRAM

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Section 1.0 Introduction

1.1 PROJECT BACKGROUND

AT&T Corp. (AT&T) is proposing to remove a 131-mile underground coaxial cable system and associated facilities between the Nevada/California border (east of Susanville) and Red Bluff, California (Figure 1). This system, installed in the early 1970s, consists of coaxial cable, manholes, equalizers, and cable marker posts. With the advent of fiber optic technology and the completion of AT&T's fiber optic cable network, the coaxial cable is no longer needed. AT&T intends to remove the cable system, restore the land in specific locations, and relinquish its rights-of-way on public lands. Additional information on the proposed removal project is provided in the expanded initial study (IS) in Volume I. References cited in this plan also are provided in Volume I, Chapter 6.

1.2 LEAD AND TRUSTEE AGENCIES

The 131-mile proposed removal project occurs completely within California and therefore is subject to the requirements of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). The California State Lands Commission (SLC) is the designated state lead agency for approval of this project under CEQA. The California Department of Fish and Game (DFG) is a trustee agency under CEQA and has participated along with the SLC in developing the project IS and this mitigation monitoring plan (MMP). This MMP has been prepared pursuant to CEQA (Cal. Pub. Res. Code 21000 et seq.) and the State CEQA Guidelines (14 CCR 15000 et seq.).

The coaxial cable right-of-way crosses many jurisdictions and will require approvals and permits from various federal, state, and local agencies. This proposed removal project is also subject to compliance with other federal environmental regulations such as the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), Section 404 of the Clean Water Act, and Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA).

For purposes of granting right-of-way access across U.S. Bureau of Land Management (BLM) lands and granting a special-use permit across U.S. Forest Service (USFS) lands, an environmental assessment (EA) and finding of no significant impact (FONSI) was adopted under NEPA in August 1998. BLM's Eagle Lake Field Office was the lead BLM agency. Lassen National Forest was the federal cooperating agency. A cooperating agency is any federal agency other than the lead agency that has jurisdiction by law or special expertise with respect to the environmental effects expected to result from a proposal. (40 CFR 1508.5; 1501.6.) BLM and USFS are also responsible for compliance with Section 106 of the NHPA. Compliance with Section 106 of the NHPA is being done independently by the BLM Eagle Lake and Redding Field Offices and the Lassen National Forest and is discussed in a separate cultural resources inventory report (Jones & Stokes Associates 1998c).

1.3 SUPPORTING TECHNICAL DOCUMENTATION

The following technical studies and documents have been prepared in support of the expanded IS. Copies of the reports will be provided to the resource monitors prior to the initiation of mitigation monitoring activities:

- Botanical Resources Study Report for the AT&T Coaxial Cable System Removal Project - Nevada/California border to Red Bluff, California (Jones & Stokes Associates 1998a);
- Cultural Resource Inventory Report for the At&t Coaxial Cable Removal Project - Lucin, Utah to Red Bluff, California, Phase I: Lucin, Utah to the Nevada/California State Line (Jones & Stokes Associates 1998b) (not available for public circulation);
- Delineation of Waters of the United States for the AT&T Corp.'s 131-Mile Coaxial Removal Project, California (Jones & Stokes Associates 1998c);
- Wildlife Resources Study Report for the AT&T Coaxial Cable System Removal Project - Nevada/California Border to Red Bluff, California (Jones & Stokes Associates 1998d);
- Environmental Assessment - AT&T Corps.' Right-Of-Way Abandonment Plan for AT&T Corps.' Coaxial Cable System Right-Of-Way: Lucin, Utah to Red Bluff, California (Jones & Stokes Associates 1998e);
- Right-of-Way Abandonment Plan for the AT&T Lucin, Utah to Gerlach, Nevada and Gerlach, Nevada to Red Bluff, California Coaxial Cable Removal Projects (Brungardt Honomichl & Company 1998). This document includes the following plans as appendices: reclamation plan, stormwater pollution prevention plan, spill prevention and contingency plan, and fire prevention and response plan; and
- Revegetation Plan for AT&T Corps.' Coaxial Cable System Right-Of-Way: Lucin, Utah to Red Bluff, California (Jones & Stokes Associates in prep.).

1.4 PURPOSE OF THIS MITIGATION MONITORING PLAN

When approving a negative declaration, the lead agency also must adopt a monitoring or reporting program for those mitigation measures included in the negative declaration or made a condition of project approval to avoid significant effects (Pub Res. Code Sec. 21081.6). The monitoring plan must ensure compliance with mitigation measures that were adopted or made conditions of project approval. The objectives of the monitoring are to:

- ensure that mitigation measures are properly implemented
- provide feedback to agency staff and decision makers about the effectiveness of their actions,
- provide learning opportunities for improving mitigation measures on future projects, and
- identify the need for enforcement action before irreversible environmental damage occurs.

Environmental commitment to avoid or minimize the potential for significant impacts on environmental resources have been incorporated into the project design and construction as part of the proposed removal

projects. This MMP was prepared to confirm that these environmental commitments are fully implemented. The MMP will be considered by the SLC in conjunction with project review.

This MMP is considered a working document and will incorporate conditions of permits as they are issued by agencies with jurisdiction over the project. Construction contractors will be required to comply with the MMP, and applicable revisions to the MMP will be distributed to construction contractors.

Section 2.0 Reporting and Field Organization

2.1 MITIGATION MONITORING RESPONSIBILITY

As the lead agency under CEQA, the SLC is required to monitor this project to confirm that the required mitigation measures are implemented. The SLC or its designee is responsible for ensuring full compliance with the provisions of this MMP. AT&T or its designee has primary responsibility for implementation of the MMP. The purpose of mitigation monitoring is to document that the required mitigation measures are implemented and that these measures avoid significant impacts.

AT&T or its designee shall ensure that any deviation from the procedures identified under the MMP is approved by the SLC and other appropriate agencies. Any deviation shall be reported immediately to the SLC and appropriate agencies by AT&T or its designee.

AT&T or its designee shall inform the SLC of any mitigation measures that are not or cannot be successfully implemented. The SLC will assess whether alternative mitigation is appropriate and specify to AT&T the subsequent actions required.

2.2 FIELD ORGANIZATION

The proposed cable removal project will be divided into two construction contracts or segments. Each construction segment will be approximately 65 miles long. Field construction offices will be set up at Susanville, Chester, and Red Bluff to facilitate construction management.

The AT&T construction management effort will be led by a project manager from the engineering firm. Under the project manager will be a resident project engineer, lead contract compliance inspector (CCIs), CCIs, and an environmental coordinator (EC). A lead biological monitor (LBM), and field biological and cultural resources monitors will also be retained to oversee implementation of the mitigation measures. Figure 2 illustrates general field organization, including direct and indirect communication and lines of authority.

2.3 REPORTING PROCEDURES

2.3.1 Field Reports

Each resource monitor shall complete a daily log (Exhibit 1) and forward it to the EC at the end of the week. LCIs also shall complete daily logs. On a weekly basis, CCIs shall forward completed form to the lead CCI, who shall submit copies to the EC. Daily logs shall be kept on file for future reference.

For identified resources, the field resource monitor shall complete an environmental site monitoring report (Exhibit 2). This form is in triplicate so that it can be submitted upon completion of preconstruction resource staking, construction monitoring, and post-construction site evaluation. Once a week, completed forms for identified resources shall be forwarded to the LBM, who shall review and submit the forms to the

EC. Field resource monitors shall submit the second and third copy of the form as each phase of construction monitoring is completed for the specific resource.

Other field reports shall be completed as specified in permits and plans (e.g., the first person to observe a spill must complete a report as described in the spill prevention and containment plan ([Brungardt Honomichl and Company 1998]). Additional reporting requirements for environmental commitments are identified in Section 3.0.

The EC shall enter pertinent information from monitoring reports into a database. Weekly reports shall be generated and faxed to DFG for review.

A violation report (**Exhibit 3**) shall be completed by any project construction management or environmental representative who observes a violation. Photo documentation shall accompany the report when possible. Field monitors shall notify the LBM of violations. The LBM shall immediately alert the EC. The EC shall notify SLC, DFG, and other appropriate agencies of the violation. By the next working day, the resource monitor shall submit a completed violation form to the LBM, who shall forward the form to the EC on receipt. The EC shall immediately fax the violation report to SLC, DFG, and other appropriate agencies.

2.3.2. Progress Reports

The EC shall submit a monthly letter report to the SLC. This report shall contain progress of construction, resulting impacts, mitigation implemented, violations and remediation measures, and all other noteworthy elements of the project and the monitoring program. The SLC will provide copies of these reports to interested resource agencies on request.

Final mitigation monitoring reports shall be prepared on completion of the removal project and provided to the SLC and DFG after completion of all removal and reclamation activities. The SLC will provide copies of the final reports to interested resource agencies on request.

2.3.3 Long-Term Monitoring

It is anticipated that monitoring procedures discussed in this plan will be conducted during the construction phase of the project (including preconstruction, construction, and reclamation activities completed immediately after removal activities). As identified in mitigation measures B-5 and B-22, monitoring and reclamation commitments could require several years after construction is completed. These environmental commitments contain site-specific reporting requirements to ensure that long-term restoration and revegetation actions are successfully implemented. The AT&T EC and SLC will be responsible for tracking monitoring of long-term environmental commitments.

EXHIBIT 1

DAILY LOG

PROJECT _____

SECTION _____

FINANCIAL PROJECT NO. _____

Date _____

Hrs. Worked _____ To _____ ; _____ To _____

Location From _____ To _____

Weather _____ Temp. Range _____

Nature of Work _____

Contractor _____

General _____

Irregularities and Action Taken _____

Signed _____

Title _____

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ENVIRONMENTAL SITE MONITORING REPORT

Preconstruction Resource Staking

Name: _____ Resource No. _____

Date: _____ Segment/Station No: _____

Protection Method and Length: _____

Date Staked by Monitor: _____

(Be sure to mark stakes with resource number and protection method to be installed by contractor)

Observations: _____

Construction Monitoring

Name: _____ Date: _____

Is correct protection method in place and working? Y N NA

Monitoring Observations: _____

Post Construction Site Evaluation

Name: _____ Date: _____

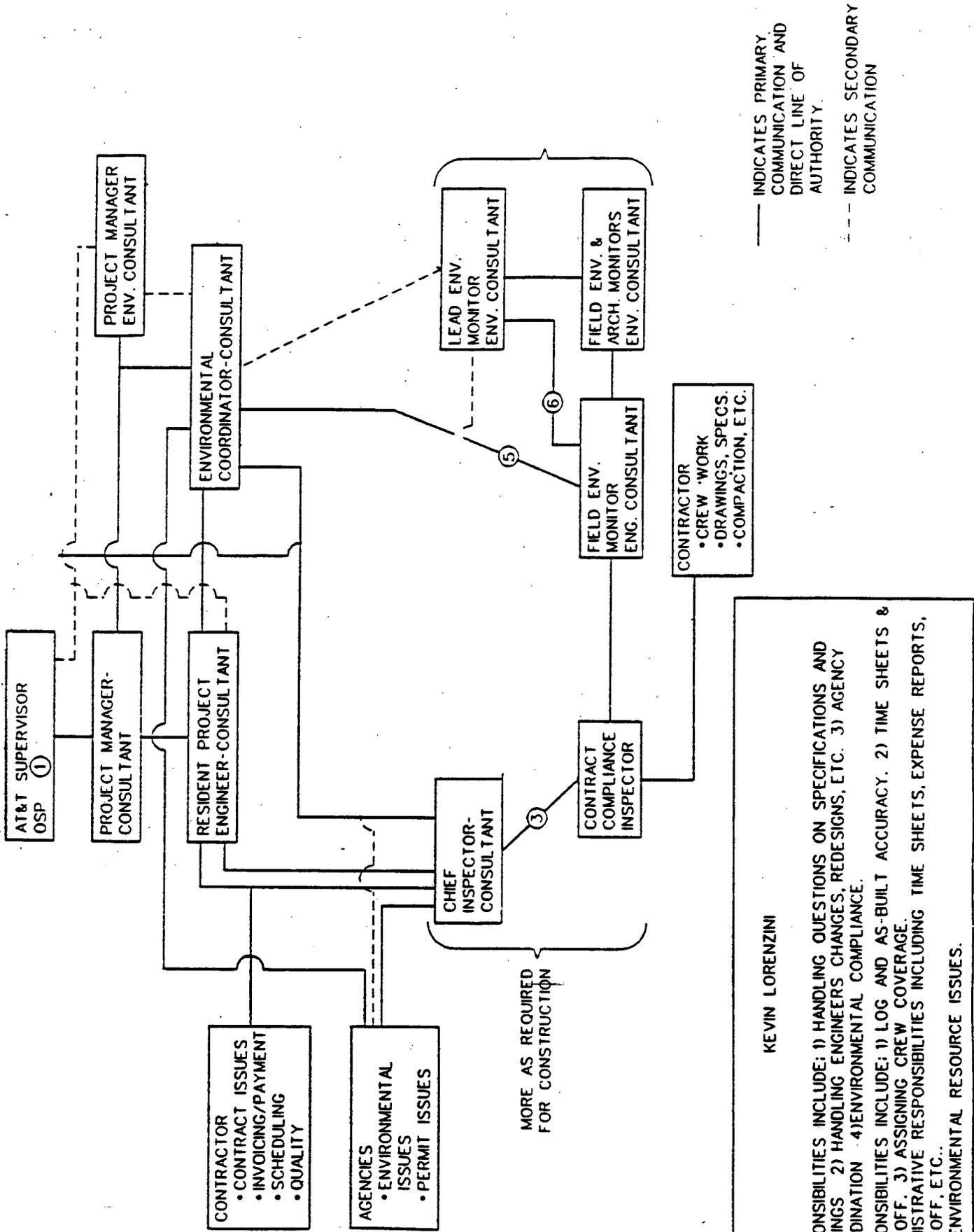
Have protection methods been removed? _____

Any site damage? _____

Site Restoration Recommendations

Photo # _____

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— INDICATES PRIMARY,
COMMUNICATION AND
DIRECT LINE OF
AUTHORITY.
- - - INDICATES SECONDARY
COMMUNICATION

NOTES:

① CALLENDAR

② RESPONSIBILITIES INCLUDE: 1) HANDLING QUESTIONS ON SPECIFICATIONS AND DRAWINGS 2) HANDLING ENGINEERS CHANGES, REDESIGNS, ETC. 3) AGENCY COORDINATION 4) ENVIRONMENTAL COMPLIANCE.

③ RESPONSIBILITIES INCLUDE: 1) LOG AND AS-BUILT ACCURACY. 2) TIME SHEETS & TIME OFF. 3) ASSIGNING CREW COVERAGE.

④ ADMINISTRATIVE RESPONSIBILITIES INCLUDING TIME SHEETS, EXPENSE REPORTS, TIME OFF, ETC..

⑤ ALL ENVIRONMENTAL RESOURCE ISSUES.

KEVIN LORENZINI

Figure 2. General Field Organization for the AT&T Cable Removal Project

Section 3.0 Mitigation Monitoring Program

This monitoring program summarizes the mitigation measures that have been incorporated into AT&T's proposed coaxial cable removal project as "environmental commitments". AT&T is ultimately responsible for implementing these environmental commitments. To ensure that the environmental commitments are implemented appropriately, AT&T will be assisted by project engineers, contract compliance inspectors, construction personnel, resource monitors (biologists and archeologists), and an environmental coordinator. These individuals are identified in this program under "responsible party" and will monitor and oversee implementation of the commitments. As lead agency, the SLC will ensure that AT&T complies with the requirements of this mitigation monitoring program. DFG (a trustee agency) will be involved with monitoring compliance of biological resource commitments for the SLC. During construction, in case of unforeseen circumstances, the contractor may request that SLC or DFG grant an environmental variance. The variance will be reviewed by SLC or DFG. If the variance is approved, the contractor shall comply with all conditions set forth in the variance.

3.1 GENERAL ENVIRONMENTAL COMMITMENTS

AT&T shall implement the following general environmental commitments as part of the proposed removal project:

- implement project-specific plans (including revegetation plan, reclamation plan, stormwater pollution prevention plan, spill prevention and contingency plan, and fire prevention and response plan),
- implement state and federal permit conditions (e.g., Section 404 permit, Section 401 water quality certification, and streambed alteration agreement),
- conduct an environmental training program for all construction and engineering personnel,
- retain field resource monitors to monitor construction activities and implementation of monitoring program (monitors will work under the direction of the SLC and DFG).

In case of unforeseen circumstances, the contractor may request that SLC or DFG grant an environmental variance. The variance will be reviewed by SLC or DFG. If the variance is approved, the contractor shall comply with all conditions set forth in the variance.

3.2 AESTHETICS

Impact: Possible Short-Term Effect on Visual Quality from Disturbance to Revegetated Areas during Removal of the Coaxial Cable System

Mitigation Measure A-1: Rehabilitate Landforms on Public Lands to Adjacent Site Conditions.
AT&T shall rehabilitate landforms on public (i.e., BLM) lands to the existing character of the landscape

prior to removal of the cable through implementation of measures in the reclamation plan prepared for the project (Brungardt Honomichl & Company 1998). The overall effect of the cable removal activities may be seen but shall not attract attention. Additionally, removal may allow a low level of change in the landforms, but must repeat the basic elements of form, line, color, and texture found in the predominant natural features of the characteristic landscape. All other areas shall be allowed to restore naturally.

Responsible Party: AT&T, contract compliance inspectors, and resource monitors.

Timing: After removal activities are complete.

Monitoring Program: The contract compliance inspectors shall oversee rehabilitation of site conditions. The resource monitors shall conduct a post-removal evaluation to confirm that site conditions have been stabilized in a manner that shall allow vegetation to establish and land forms to rehabilitate to adjacent site conditions.

3.3 AGRICULTURAL RESOURCES

There are no mitigation measures required for agricultural resources.

3.4 AIR QUALITY

There are no mitigation measures required for air quality.

3.5 BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES

Impact: Possible Disturbance of Special-Status Plant Populations

Mitigation Measure B-1: Completely Avoid Direct and Indirect Impacts on CNPS List 1B Plant Populations. Red Bluff dwarf rush (*Juncus leiospermus* var. *leiospermus*) is the only CNPS List 1B species in the project study area. The species exists in vernal pools and swales at the Red Bluff Airport. Direct and indirect impacts on Red Bluff rush shall be completely avoided as part of the removal project by cutting, capping, and leaving the cable in the ground under vernal pools and vernal swales at the Red Bluff Airport unless the cable is in plastic conduit that can be easily removed without disturbance to the habitat. Prior to cable removal, a setback buffer shall be established by the resource monitor in the field. The setback buffer shall be at least 20 feet from the habitat area. This avoidance area is located approximately between South Jackson Street and Paskenta Road and is shown on the aerial photographs in Volume II.

Responsible Party: Contract compliance inspectors, resource monitors, and DFG monitor.

Timing: During cable removal activities.

Monitoring Program: The locations of Red Bluff dwarf rush occurrences have been identified on the aerial photograph strip maps. The contractor shall be directed by the resource monitor and contract compliance inspector to attempt to pull the cable from the vernal pools and swales at the Red Bluff Airport. If the cable can not be pulled, the contractor shall be directed to cut and cap the cable. A

resource monitor shall be onsite during removal activities at the Red Bluff Airport to ensure that all occurrences of Red Bluff dwarf rush and their associated habitat (vernal pools and swales) are completely avoided. A DFG monitor shall verify compliance.

Mitigation Measure B-2: Avoid Substantial Impacts on Special-Status Plant Populations. This mitigation measure applies to the following four CNPS List 2 plant occurrences located during 1998 field surveys: Great Basin onion (*Allium atrorubens* var. *atorubens*), silverleaf milk-vetch (*Astragalus argophyllus* var. *argophyllus*), nodding buckwheat (*Eriogonum nutans*), and spiny milkwort (*Polygala subspinosa*). Populations of dwarf downingia (*Downingia pusilla*), a CNPS List 2 species, shall be avoided along with Red Bluff dwarf rush, as described under mitigation measure B-1, by pulling or cutting and capping the cable under vernal pools at the Red Bluff Airport.

To avoid significant impacts on CNPS List 2 species, the resource monitor shall stake and flag populations identified in the construction corridor and staging areas. The monitor shall then direct the AT&T contractor to attempt to pull the cable from under the demarcated population. At this time, if the cable cannot be pulled, the resource monitor shall take the following steps:

- Direct the contractor to cut and cap the cable under occurrences of nodding buckwheat and silverleaf milk-vetch.
- Notify the appropriate land management and/or resource agencies (Lassen National Forest, BLM, and DFG) 10 days in advance of alternative removal activities that pulling of the cable was unsuccessful.
- If approved by these agencies, excavate the appropriate topsoil depth (approximately 2 to 6 inches depending on the species) from the population site and stockpile with intact roots, rhizomes, and seed bank in areas that shall be trenched. The topsoil material shall be replaced immediately during postremoval revegetation activities with little compaction to encourage water filtration and soil oxygenation. This revegetation activity shall be monitored by a qualified botanist familiar with the local flora.
- Contact the appropriate land management and/or resource agencies after removal and restoration activities are complete and report findings.

AT&T shall also implement the following measures to minimize impacts on all special-status plants:

- Minimize disturbance in areas that support special-status plants by limiting cable dragging and attempting to remove the cable by pulling or ripping methods.
- To the extent possible, schedule removal activities in areas that support special-status plants to periods when the plants are not flowering or fruiting (this period varies depending on the species, but generally occurs after July and August for most species in the project region).

Responsible Party: Contract compliance inspectors, resource monitors, botanists familiar with the local flora, and DFG monitor.

Timing: During cable removal activities.

Monitoring Program: The monitoring program is discussed in detail in the mitigation measure. A DFG monitor will verify compliance.

Mitigation Measure B-3: Confine Construction Equipment and Associated Activities to the Coaxial Cable and Road Rights-of-Way in Areas That Do Not Support Sensitive Resources. Construction equipment shall be confined to coaxial cable and road rights-of-way in areas that support sensitive resources (e.g., riparian and wetland communities and special-status species). During the environmental training program, construction personnel shall be informed about the importance of conducting removal activities away from these designated areas. The contract compliance inspectors, environmental coordinator, and resource monitors shall make sure that construction equipment and associated activities avoid any disturbance of sensitive resources outside the coaxial cable and road rights-of-way.

Responsible Party: Environmental coordinator, contract compliance inspectors, resource monitors, and DFG monitor.

Timing: Prior to and during cable removal activities.

Monitoring Program: During the environmental training program, construction personnel shall be informed about the importance of conducting removal activities away from these designated areas. The contract compliance inspectors, environmental coordinator, and resource monitors shall make sure that construction equipment and associated activities avoid any disturbance of sensitive resources outside the coaxial cable and road rights-of-way. A DFG monitor will verify compliance.

Mitigation Measure B-4: Retain Qualified Biologists and Resource Specialists to Monitor Removal Activities near Specified Sensitive Biological Areas. AT&T shall retain biologists or other resource specialists to monitor removal activities in each construction segment. Biological resource monitors shall locate and stake previously identified sensitive resources before removal activities begin in specified segments and patrol areas to ensure that barrier fencing, stakes, and required setback buffers are maintained. They shall also be responsible for monitoring removal activities in areas that support special-status species, woody riparian vegetation, wetlands, and perennial drainage crossings.

Responsible Party: AT&T and its consulting engineers.

Timing: Prior to and during cable removal activities.

Monitoring Program: Biological resource monitors shall locate and stake previously identified sensitive resources before removal activities begin in specified segments and patrol areas to ensure that barrier fencing, stakes, and required setback buffers are maintained. They shall also be responsible for monitoring removal activities in areas that support special-status species, woody riparian vegetation, wetlands, and perennial drainage crossings. These monitors are additional support for the general resource monitors assigned to each removal segment (see discussion in Section 2.0 of this MMP).

Impact: Possible Introduction of New Noxious Weeds or Spread of Existing Noxious Weed Infestations

Mitigation Measure B-5: Avoid the Dispersal of Noxious Weeds in the Existing Coaxial Cable Right-of-Way. To avoid the introduction or spread of noxious weeds into previously uninfested areas, AT&T shall implement the following measures as part of the proposed removal project:

- Relocate noxious weed infestation areas at least 1 month prior to any removal activities in the cable removal areas.
- Treat small, isolated weed infestations less than 1 acre in size with BLM-approved eradicators, herbicides, or other appropriate treatment (e.g., hand pulling) at an appropriate time to prevent and/or destroy viable seed.
- Educate construction supervisors and managers on weed identification and about the importance of controlling and preventing the spread of noxious weed infestations.
- Clean equipment at designated wash stations after leaving noxious weed infestation areas (these wash stations shall be identified by the resource monitors prior to removal activities in a particular segment).
- Seed all disturbed areas with certified weed-free native and non-native mixes provided in the revegetation plan.
- Conduct a follow-up inventory of the coaxial cable right-of-way to verify that removal activities have not resulted in the introduction of new noxious weed infestations. An inventory letter shall be prepared and provided to BLM, Lassen National Forest, and DFG within 2 years after coaxial cable system removal activities have been completed stating what weeds are present on the right-of-way, the extent of the population, and what actions have been taken to control noxious weed infestations.
- If new noxious weed infestations are located during the follow-up inventory, the appropriate land management and/or resource agency shall be contacted to determine the appropriate species-specific treatment methods.

Responsible Party: The construction contractor, contract compliance inspectors, resource monitors, plant ecologist, and DFG monitors.

Timing: Prior to and during coaxial cable system removal activities.

Monitoring Program: Noxious weed infestations shall be relocated by the resource monitors prior to construction. The contract compliance inspectors, resource monitors, and DFG monitors shall routinely inspect removal activities to verify that construction equipment is being cleaned of soil and plant matter at designated wash stations. A follow-up inventory of the coaxial cable right-of-way shall be conducted by a plant ecologist to verify that removal activities have not resulted in the introduction of new noxious weed infestations. An inventory letter shall be prepared and provided to BLM, Lassen National Forest, and DFG within 2 years after coaxial cable system removal activities have been completed stating what weeds are present on the right-of-way, the extent of the population, and what actions have been taken to control noxious weed infestations. A DFG monitor will verify compliance.

Impact: Possible Disturbance of Habitat for the Valley Elderberry Longhorn Beetle

Mitigation Measure B-4: Retain Qualified Biologists and Resource Specialists to Monitor Removal Activities near Specified Sensitive Biological Areas. Described above.

Mitigation Measure B-6: Avoid Disturbance to Elderberry Shrubs along the Coaxial Cable Right-of-Way. To avoid to VELB habitat, resource monitors shall identify and mark with flagging all elderberry shrubs within 50 feet of the right-of-way. All affected areas requiring protection have been marked on the construction drawings. Six of the 12 elderberry shrub sites shall require avoidance measures because of their proximity to the right-of-way. These areas are located between the following marker posts along the right-of-way:

- 1763+800' to 1763+950'
- 2032+800' to 2032+850'
- 2033+1,300' to 2033+1,350'
- 2045 to 2045½
- 2052+600' to 2058
- 2060+250' to 2060+400'

Orange barrier fencing shall be installed around all shrubs to further avoid inadvertent effects. Protected shrubs shall be specified on the construction drawings. No ground-disturbing activities shall be permitted within 25 feet of an elderberry shrub. All shrubs within 25 feet of potential ground-disturbing activities shall be avoided by attempting to pull the coaxial cable under the affected elderberry shrub from a site outside the 25-foot buffer zone. If the coaxial cable cannot be pulled at these sites, the contractor shall be directed by the resource monitor to cut and cap the coaxial cable and leave it in place.

Responsible Party: Resource monitors and contract compliance inspectors.

Timing: Prior to and during removal activities.

Monitoring Program: The resource monitors shall identify and mark with flagging all elderberry shrubs within 50 feet of the cable right-of-way. Orange barrier fencing shall be installed around all shrubs within 25 feet of potential ground-disturbing activities. The resource monitor shall be onsite to oversee removal activities near elderberry shrubs. A DFG monitor will verify compliance.

Impact: Possible Disturbance to Habitat for Vernal Pool Fairy Shrimp and Vernal Pool Tadpole Shrimp

Mitigation Measure B-4: Retain Qualified Biologists and Resource Specialists to Monitor Removal Activities near Specified Sensitive Biological Areas. Described above.

Mitigation Measure B-7: Avoid Disturbance to Vernal Pool Fairy Shrimp and Vernal Pool Tadpole Shrimp Habitat. To avoid disturbance to vernal pool fairy shrimp and vernal pool tadpole shrimp, wildlife biologists conducted surveys and coordinated with project engineers to identify all potential vernal pool habitat within and near the right-of-way. All potential habitat that requires protection has been marked on the construction drawings. These areas are located at the following marker posts along the right-of-way:

- 1737+750' to 1737+950'
- 2019+50' to 2027+1,150'
- 2075 to 2076+50'
- 2076+200' to 2077 ½
- 2078 to 2087

All avoidance areas shall be identified in the field using staking and flagging or barrier fencing. To avoid direct impacts, no ground-disturbing activities shall be permitted within 20 feet of any potential habitat. To avoid indirect impacts, no ground-disturbing activities shall be permitted with 250 feet of any potential habitat that has a hydrological connection to the disturbance area. Where the cable is in conduit, AT&T shall avoid disturbing the site by attempting to pull the coaxial cable from beneath vernal pools from a site outside the specified buffer zone. If the coaxial cable is not in conduit or otherwise cannot be pulled from the above locations, the contractor shall be directed by the resource monitor to cut, cap, and leave the coaxial cable in place outside the buffer zone. Flagging or barrier fencing shall be removed immediately following coaxial cable system removal and reclamation activities.

Responsible Party: Resource monitors and contract compliance inspectors.

Timing: Prior to and during removal activities.

Monitoring Program: The resource monitors shall identify and mark with flagging all vernal pool habitat within 20 feet of the cable right-of-way. The resource monitors and contract compliance inspectors shall be onsite to oversee removal activities near areas identified as vernal pool fairy shrimp and tadpole shrimp habitat to ensure protective barriers are maintained and that the contractor avoids all vernal pools and buffer zones. A DFG monitor will verify compliance.

Impact: Possible Disturbance to California Red-Legged Frogs in Drainages that Intersect the Coaxial Cable Right-of-Way

Mitigation Measure B-4: Retain Qualified Biologists and Resource Specialists to Monitor Removal Activities near Specified Sensitive Biological Areas. Described above.

Mitigation Measure B-8: Avoid Disturbance to the California Red-Legged Frog. To avoid impacts on the California red-legged frog, wildlife biologists have identified and shall stake and flag all potential habitats along the coaxial cable system right-of-way in the field. All affected areas requiring protection have been marked on the construction drawings. Of the eight sites that support suitable habitat for the California red-legged frog, two require avoidance measures because of their proximity to the right-of-way. These areas are located between the following marker posts along the right-of-way:

- 1697+200' to 1697+400'
- 1747 to 1747+200'

A no-disturbance buffer shall be established extending 25 feet from the edge of the habitat area. No ground-disturbing activities shall be permitted within this area. Staking and flagging or barrier fencing shall be used to indicate the boundaries of the buffer. Where the cable is in conduit, the contractor shall be directed to avoid disturbance of the site by attempting to pull the coaxial cable from under the affected habitat from a site outside the buffer zone. If the coaxial cable is not in conduit or otherwise cannot be pulled from this location, the contractor shall cut and cap the coaxial cable and leave it in place

outside the buffer zone. Flagging or barrier fencing shall be removed immediately following coaxial cable system removal and site restoration.

Responsible Party: Wildlife biologists, resource monitors, contract compliance inspectors, and DFG monitors.

Timing: Prior to and during cable removal activities.

Monitoring Program: The locations of two streams potentially occupied by California red-legged frog that cross the cable right-of-way have been identified on the aerial photograph strip maps. Wildlife biologists or the resource monitors shall establish the 25-foot boundaries around these streams using staking and flagging or barrier fencing. The contractor shall be directed by the resource monitor and contract compliance inspector to attempt to pull the cable at these sites. If the cable cannot be pulled, the contractor shall be directed to cut and cap the cable. A resource monitor shall be on-site during removal activities at both sites to ensure that all potential habitat is completely avoided. A DFG monitor will verify compliance.

Impact: Disturbance of Potentially Active Bald Eagle Nests

Mitigation Measure B-4: Retain Qualified Biologists and Resource Specialists to Monitor Removal Activities near Specified Sensitive Biological Areas. Described above.

Mitigation Measure B-9: Avoid Disturbing Active Bald Eagle Nests. To avoid disturbing nesting bald eagles, wildlife biologists shall conduct preconstruction or construction year breeding surveys in portions of the project study area identified as potential habitat. All potentially occupied habitat has been marked on the construction drawings. Possible nesting habitat for bald eagle is located between the following marker posts along the right-of-way:

- 1404 to 1413
- 1518 to 1531

Surveys of potentially occupied nesting habitat within 0.5 mile of the right-of-way shall be conducted by searching with binoculars all suitable nest trees in the survey area to find nests. If surveys indicate that nests are inactive or potential habitat is unoccupied during the construction year, no further mitigation measures shall be required. If active nests are found, resource monitors shall establish a 0.5-mile-wide no-disturbance buffer around the active nest. For bald eagles, all buffer zones shall be based on line-of-sight. If topographical features obstruct the line-of-site of an active nest within the buffer zone, the buffer may be reduced based on consultation with the local BLM, Lassen National Forest, or DFG representative. The portion of the coaxial cable system right-of-way that is within the designated buffer zone shall be identified on the construction drawings and in the field by staking and flagging. If construction activities occur only during the nonbreeding season (August 1 to January 1), no surveys shall be conducted.

The preconstruction surveys shall be conducted during spring and summer 1999. To avoid effects on active nest sites, no removal activities shall occur within the specified buffer zone during the breeding season between January 1 and August 1, or until it is determined that young have fledged. Surveys shall not be conducted in areas where project activities shall occur only during the nonbreeding season (August 1 to January 1).

Responsible Party: Wildlife biologists, resource monitors, contract compliance inspectors, and DFG monitors.

Timing: Prior to and during cable removal activities.

Monitoring Program: Prior to ground-disturbing activities, wildlife biologists shall conduct surveys to determine the presence of active bald eagle nests within 0.5 mile of the cable right-of-way. If active nests are found, resource monitors shall flag the beginning and end of the buffer zone. The contractor shall be directed by the resource monitor and contract compliance inspector to postpone activities within the buffer zone until August 1 or until young have fledged. A DFG monitor will verify compliance.

Impact: Disturbance of Potentially Active Swainson's Hawk Nests

Mitigation Measure B-4: Retain Qualified Biologists and Resource Specialists to Monitor Removal Activities near Specified Sensitive Biological Areas. Described above.

Mitigation Measure B-10: Avoid Disturbing Active Swainson's Hawk Nests. Wildlife biologists identified all potential habitat for Swainson's hawk in the project study area. All potentially occupied habitat has been marked on the construction drawings. These areas are located between the following marker posts along the right-of-way:

- 10 to 12 (two potential sites)
- 1071 to 1158 (numerous sites)
- 2033 to 2068 (numerous sites)

To avoid disturbing active Swainson's hawk nests, wildlife biologists shall conduct preconstruction or construction year surveys of all potentially active nest sites within 0.5 mile of the right-of-way. Surveys shall be conducted by searching with binoculars all suitable nest trees to find active nests. If surveys indicate that nests are inactive or potential habitat is unoccupied during the construction year, no further mitigation measures shall be required. If active nests are found, resource monitors shall establish a 0.5-mile-wide no-disturbance buffer around the active nest. All buffer zones shall be based on line-of-sight. If topographical features obstruct the line-of-site of an active nest within the buffer zone, or if other factors reduce the likelihood of disturbance, then the buffer may be reduced based on consultation with DFG. The portion of the right-of-way that is within the designated buffer zone shall be identified on the construction drawings and in the field by staking and flagging. If construction activities occur only during the nonbreeding season (August 15 to March 1), no surveys shall be conducted.

The preconstruction surveys shall be conducted during spring and summer 1999. To avoid effects on active nest sites, no removal activities shall occur within the specified buffer zone during the breeding season, between March 1 and August 15, or until it is determined that young have fledged. Surveys shall not be conducted in areas where project activities shall occur only during the nonbreeding season (August 15 through March 1).

Responsible Party: Wildlife biologists, resource monitors, contract compliance inspectors, and DFG monitors.

Timing: Prior to and during cable removal activities.

Monitoring Program: Prior to ground-disturbing activities, wildlife biologists shall conduct surveys to determine the presence of active Swainson's hawk nests within 0.5 mile of the cable right-of-way. If active nests are found, resource monitors shall flag the beginning and end of the buffer zone. The contractor shall be directed by the resource monitor and contract compliance inspector to postpone activities within the buffer zone until August 1 or until young have fledged. A DFG monitor will verify compliance.

Impact: Possible Disturbance to Active Greater Sandhill Crane Nests

Mitigation Measure B-4: Retain Qualified Biologists and Resource Specialists to Monitor Removal Activities near Specified Sensitive Biological Areas. Described above.

Mitigation Measure B-11: Avoid Disturbing Active Greater Sandhill Crane Nests. Wildlife biologists identified all potential habitats for sandhill crane within and near the right-of-way. All potentially occupied habitat has been marked on the construction drawings. These areas are located between the following marker posts along the right-of-way:

- 1166 to 1170+800' (Piute Creek)
- 1265+700' to 468+350' (Hog Flat Reservoir)
- 1276+175' to 1279+450'
- 1413+200' to 1418+200' (Lake Almanor)
- 1488+600' to 1495 (Stump Ranch)
- 1511+450' to 1512+400' (Feather River Meadows)
- 1526 to 1529+300' (Wilson Lake)
- 1545 to 1545+900' (Child's Meadow)
- 1585 to 1595 (Battle Creek)

To avoid disturbing greater sandhill crane nests, wildlife biologists shall conduct surveys in all potential greater sandhill crane habitat. If it is determined that the species is not nesting, no further mitigation measures shall be required. If the species is found to nest in a meadow crossed by the coaxial cable system right-of-way, AT&T shall postpone removal activities in that meadow, or up to a 0.5-mile-wide radius around each active nest, during the crane's breeding season, March 1 through September 30.

Preconstruction surveys shall be conducted in spring or summer 1999 using survey methods described in Littlefield (1995). At active sites, removal activities shall be postponed during the breeding season, March 1 through September 30.

Responsible Party: Wildlife biologists, resource monitors, contract compliance inspectors, and DFG monitors.

Timing: Prior to and during cable removal activities.

Monitoring Program: Prior to ground-disturbing activities, wildlife biologists shall conduct surveys to determine the presence of active greater sandhill crane nests at the locations described above. If active nests are found, resource monitors shall flag the beginning and end of the buffer zone. The contractor shall be directed by the resource monitor and contract compliance inspector to postpone activities within the buffer zone until September 30. A DFG monitor will verify compliance.

Impact: Potential Disturbance to Active Great Gray Owl Nests

Mitigation Measure B-4: Retain Qualified Biologists and Resource Specialists to Monitor Removal Activities near Specified Sensitive Biological Areas. Described above.

Mitigation Measure B-12: Avoid Disturbing Active Great Gray Owl Nests. To avoid impacts on great gray owl, wildlife biologists identified all potential habitats within and near the right-of-way. All potentially occupied habitat has been marked on the construction drawings. These areas are located between the following marker posts along the right-of-way:

- 1166 to 1170+800' (Piute Creek)
- 1265+700' to 1268+350' (Hog Flat Reservoir)
- 1276+175' to 1279+450'
- 1413+200' to 1418+200' (Lake Almanor)
- 1488+600' to 1495 (Stump Ranch)
- 1511+450' to 1512+400' (Feather River Meadows)
- 1526 to 1529+300' (Wilson Lake)
- 1545 to 1545+900' (Child's Meadow)
- 1585 to 1595 (Battle Creek)

Disturbances to active great gray owl nests shall be avoided by initially determining the location of nests by conducting protocol-level surveys in all potential habitat (using the April 1995 "Survey Protocol for the Great Gray Owl" issued by the Regional Interagency Executive Committee). If no great gray owls are detected during these surveys, no additional mitigation measures shall be required. If great gray owls are detected during surveys and found to be nesting within 0.25 mile of the coaxial cable system right-of-way, resource monitors shall establish a buffer zone at a 0.25-mile radius around the nest site. To avoid disturbing nesting great gray owls, removal activities shall be postponed within the specified buffer zone until after the nesting season or after it is determined that young have fledged.

Two protocol-level surveys for great gray owls shall be conducted each year for 1998 and 1999 according to federal guidelines (1998 survey results are described in Section 4). To avoid disturbing nesting great gray owls, no removal activities shall be permitted within the specified buffer zone during the nesting season of March 15 to August 15 or until it is determined that young have fledged.

Responsible Party: Wildlife biologists, resource monitors, contract compliance inspectors, and DFG monitors.

Timing: Prior to and during cable removal activities.

Monitoring Program: Prior to ground-disturbing activities, wildlife biologists shall conduct surveys to determine the presence of active great gray owl nests within 0.25 mile of the cable right-of-way. If active nests are found, resource monitors shall flag the beginning and end of the buffer zone. The contractor shall be directed by the resource monitor and contract compliance inspector to postpone activities within the buffer zone until August 15 or until young have fledged. A DFG monitor will verify compliance.

Impact: Possible Removal of Willow Flycatcher Habitat and Disturbance to Active Nests

Mitigation Measure B-4: Retain Qualified Biologists and Resource Specialists to Monitor Removal Activities near Specified Sensitive Biological Areas. Described above.

Mitigation Measure B-13: Avoid Disturbing Willow Flycatcher Habitat and Active Nests. To avoid impacts on willow flycatcher, wildlife biologists identified all potential habitats within and near the right-of-way. All affected areas requiring protection have been marked on the construction drawings. These areas are located between the following marker posts along the right-of-way:

- 18+400' to 18+600'
- 1152+500' to 1154
- 1164+300' to 1166+100'***
- 1170+200' to 1170+450'***
- 1248+600' to 1249+150'
- 1249+100' to 1249+300'
- 1276+200' to 1279+450'
- 1372 to 1372+100'***
- 1414+300' to 1416+525'
- 1516+400' to 1517+50'***
- 1559+250' to 1560+150'***
- 1587+350' to 1587+650'***

Possible habitat exists within the right-of-way of six sites (listed above and marked with asterisks). Habitat associated with the six remaining sites is outside but within 0.25 mile of the right-of-way.

To avoid disturbance-related effects on this species, construction activities shall be postponed at active sites until after the breeding season. Surveys shall be conducted (using survey protocols for willow flycatcher developed by Craig et al. 1992) at all sites listed above to determine if breeding adults are present. If breeding adults are present, a buffer zone with a 0.25-mile radius shall be established around each active site during the breeding season (March 1 through August 15). If it is determined that the species is not nesting, no further mitigation measures shall be required for disturbance-related effects.

To avoid habitat-related impacts, no willow flycatcher habitat shall be removed during coaxial cable system removal activities. At the six sites where habitat exists within the right-of-way, and where the cable is in conduit, AT&T shall initially attempt to pull the coaxial cable from sites at least 50 feet from the edge of the suitable riparian habitat. If the coaxial cable is not within conduit or otherwise cannot be pulled at these sites, it shall be cut and capped.

Responsible Party: Wildlife biologists, resource monitors, contract compliance inspectors, and DFG monitors.

Timing: Prior to and during cable removal activities.

Monitoring Program: Resource monitors shall stake and flag the 50-foot buffer zone at each of the six habitat sites that occur within the right-of-way. The contractor shall be directed by the resource monitor and contract compliance inspector to attempt to pull the cable at these sites. If the cable cannot be pulled, the contractor shall be directed to cut and cap the cable. A resource monitor shall be onsite

during removal activities at each site to ensure that all potential habitat is completely avoided. A DFG monitor will verify compliance.

In addition, prior to ground-disturbing activities, wildlife biologists shall conduct surveys to determine the presence of willow flycatchers nests at all potentially occupied sites described above. If willow flycatchers are detected, resource monitors shall flag the beginning and end of the 0.25-mile-radius buffer zone. The contractor shall be directed by the resource monitor and contract compliance inspector to postpone activities within the buffer zone until August 15.

Impact: Possible Disturbance to Active California Spotted Owl and Northern Goshawk Nests

Mitigation Measure B-4: Retain Qualified Biologists and Resource Specialists to Monitor Removal Activities near Specified Sensitive Biological Areas. Described above.

Mitigation Measure B-14: Avoid Disturbing California Spotted Owl Nests. To avoid impacts on California spotted owl, wildlife biologists identified all potential habitats within and near the right-of-way. All potentially occupied habitat has been marked on the construction drawings. These areas are located between the following marker posts along the right-of-way:

- 1227 to 1255+500'
- 1363 to 1367+400'
- 1384 to 1387
- 1394 to 1399
- 1404 to 1413
- 1418+400' to 1437
- 1444 to 1447
- 1503 to 1511
- 1518 to 1587
- 1619 to 1684
- 1687 to 1691

The right-of-way in these areas has been previously cleared of trees, and thus no spotted owl habitat shall be removed by project activities. Project-related disturbances to active California spotted owl nests shall be avoided by initially conducting protocol-level surveys in all potential habitat areas to determine the location of nests. If no spotted owls are detected during surveys, no additional mitigation shall be required. If spotted owls are detected during surveys and are found to be nesting within 0.25 mile of the right-of-way, resource monitors shall establish a 0.25-mile-radius buffer zone around the nest site. To avoid disturbing nesting spotted owls, project activities shall be postponed within the buffer zone during the breeding season.

Surveys for spotted owls shall be conducted from March to August 1998 and 1999 according to federal guidelines (see the discussion of 1998 survey results in Section 4). To avoid disturbing nesting spotted owls, no construction activity shall be permitted within the buffer zone during the nesting season, March 15 to August 30, or until it is determined that young have fledged.

Responsible Party: Wildlife biologists, resource monitors, contract compliance inspectors, and DFG monitors.

Timing: Prior to and during cable removal activities.

Monitoring Program: Prior to ground-disturbing activities, wildlife biologists shall conduct surveys to determine the presence of active California spotted owl nests within 0.25 mile of the cable right-of-way. If active nests are found, resource monitors shall flag the beginning and end of the buffer zone. The contractor shall be directed by the resource monitor and contract compliance inspector to postpone activities within the buffer zone until August 30 or until young have fledged. A DFG monitor will verify compliance.

Mitigation Measure B-15: Avoid Disturbing Northern Goshawk Nests. Wildlife biologists identified all potential habitats for northern goshawk within and near the right-of-way. All potentially occupied habitat has been marked on the construction drawings. These areas are located between the following marker posts along the right-of-way:

- 1227 to 1255+500'
- 1363 to 1367+400'
- 1384 to 1387
- 1394 to 1399
- 1404 to 1413
- 1418+400' to 1437
- 1444 to 1447
- 1503 to 1511
- 1518 to 1587
- 1619 to 1684
- 1687 to 1691

The right-of-way in these areas has been previously cleared of trees, and thus no northern goshawk habitat shall be removed by project activities. Project-related disturbances to active northern goshawk nests shall be avoided by initially determining the location of nests by conducting protocol-level surveys in all potential habitat areas. If no northern goshawks are detected during surveys, no additional mitigation shall be required. If northern goshawks are detected during surveys and are found to be nesting within 0.25 mile of the project right-of-way, resource monitors shall establish a 0.25-mile-radius buffer zone around the nest site. To avoid disturbing nesting northern goshawks, project activities shall be postponed within the buffer zone during the breeding season.

Surveys for northern goshawks shall be conducted from March to August 1998 and 1999 according to federal guidelines (see the discussion of survey results in Section 4). To avoid disturbing nesting northern goshawks, no construction activity shall be permitted within the buffer zone during the nesting season, March 15 to August 30, or until it is determined that young have fledged.

Responsible Party: Wildlife biologists, resource monitors, contract compliance inspectors, and DFG monitors.

Timing: Prior to and during cable removal activities.

Monitoring Program: Prior to ground-disturbing activities, wildlife biologists shall conduct surveys to determine the presence of active northern goshawk nests within 0.25 mile of the cable right-of-way. If active nests are found, resource monitors shall flag the beginning and end of the buffer zone. The