

NOTICE OF EXEMPTION

TO: Santa Barbara County Clerk of the Board of Supervisors

FROM: Megan Lowery, Planning & Development

The project or activity identified below is determined to be exempt from further environmental review requirements of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) of 1970, as defined in the State and County Guidelines for the implementation of CEQA.

APN: 005-030-002

Case Nos.: 12EMP-00000-00010

Location: 484 Ortega Ridge Road, Santa Barbara

Project Title: Verizon Temporary Telecommunications Facility

Project Description:

This Emergency Permit is based upon and limited to compliance with the project description, plans and all conditions of approval set forth below, including mitigation measures and specified plans and agreements included by reference, as well as all applicable County rules and regulations. The project description is as follows:

The proposed project is a request from Jay Higgins, agent for applicant, Verizon Wireless for an Emergency Permit to allow a mobile communications temporary facility. The temporary facility would be installed in the vacant lot of the property located at 484 Ortega Ridge Road, Santa Barbara area, APN 005-030-002, zoned RR-5. The facility would consist of mounting three (3) directional panel antennas to a 35-foot lattice tower erected on the bed of a trailer. The trailer would also hold the proposed support equipment cabinets to operate the facility, and would be connected to existing electrical service on the property via a temporary above ground pole and existing telephone service on the property via approximately 320 feet of underground trenching. No generator is proposed as part of this project. The facility would provide interim cellular service for Verizon Wireless between the decommissioning of the existing Verizon facility in Montecito (located at QAD) and the permitting/construction of a new permanent facility (either on the subject property or within two miles of the subject property). This permit allows for installation and operation of the temporary facility for twelve (12) months but not to exceed the duration of the loss of service event. This permit authorizes installation of the facility on November 6, 2012 and a twelve (12) month operational period, expiring on November 6, 2013. All temporary facility components authorized by this permit must be properly removed from the site prior to November 6, 2013. Any deviations from the project description, exhibits or conditions must be reviewed and approved by the County for conformity with this approval. Deviations may require approved changes to the permit and/or further environmental review. Deviations without the above described approval will constitute a violation of permit approval.

Name of Public Agency Approving Project: County of Santa Barbara
Name of Person or Agency Carrying Out Project: Jay Higgins, SAC Wireless

Exempt Status: (Check one)

- Ministerial
- Statutory Exemption
- Categorical Exemption
- Emergency Project
- Declared Emergency

Cite specific CEQA and/or CEQA Guideline Sections:

Section 15269: Emergency Projects

Subsection (b): “Emergency repairs to publicly or privately owned service facilities necessary to maintain service essential to the public health, safety or welfare.”

Reasons to support exemption findings:

The proposed project can be found categorically exempt from environmental review pursuant to Section 15269 of the Guidelines for the Implementation of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). CEQA Guidelines Section 15269(b) allows for “Emergency repairs to publicly or privately owned service facilities necessary to maintain service essential to the public health, safety or welfare.”

The removal of the QAD facility would have resulted in loss of Verizon service in the majority of the Montecito and Summerland area by November 16, 2012. Verizon’s radiofrequency engineer, Dewane Bonham provided the County with a letter dated August 8, 2012 that described the severity of this loss in service. Removal of the existing site would not only have impacted the large number of residents that are currently dependant on service, but it could have impacted emergency services in the area that rely on the service in carrying out their official duties. As a densely residential area, the facility area provides service for an estimated 20,428 residents within the gap area. In particular, Montecito foothills area is classified as “Very High” fire hazard severity zone. In the event of a fire emergency, the proposed facility would provide emergency services personnel with potentially lifesaving communications capability as well as the ability by residents to make emergency calls and the ability for E-911 services (i.e. reverse 911 calls to affected areas).

The proposed project is a request to authorize the location and operation of a temporary telecommunications facility on the subject property. The antennas and equipment are mounted to a mobile trailer. The proposed project does not require water or sewer service, and would not generate any solid waste, odors or dust. Electric and telephone utilities exist on the property and are easily connected to the site via above ground poles and minor trenching. Public services such as fire and law enforcement are not be required given the automated nature of the facility and restricted public access. Access would be provided by existing paved roads and additional traffic would be minimal (limited to one trip per month to the facility for maintenance). The project would not impose any impacts to biological or archeological resources and all facility components would be removed at the termination of the project. Therefore, the project is minor

in nature and would not have the potential to create any significant environmental effects. Therefore, it is subject to the statutory exemption under Section 15269 and no further environmental review is required.

Lead Agency Contact Person: Megan Lowery

Phone #: (805) 568-2517

Department/Division Representative: _____ Date: _____

Acceptance Date: _____

distribution: Hearing Support Staff
Project file (when P&D permit is required)
Date Filed by County Clerk: _____.