



EA Construction & Operation of Verizon Wireless Communications Tower Site at NSA Crane

The Proposed Action

Purpose and Need: The purpose of the proposed action is to provide reliable cell phone service throughout as much of NSA Crane's nearly 63,000 acre facility, and to as many of the people who are present here as possible. The action would take place by the end of 2017 followed by ongoing use of the tower and associated equipment for its intended purpose.

Proposed Project Area



Purpose and Need for the Proposed Action

At present the nearest cell phone tower to NSA Crane is located 5.8 miles away (outside the facility), and its signal does not provide adequate coverage for the NSA Crane installation. Following the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001, it was determined that NSA Crane had an urgent need for a cell tower that could provide reliable service to the entire facility. At that time, a cell-on-wheels (COW) was installed at a temporary location near the central portion of the facility. It has been determined that the COW must be taken out of service. Without the COW, there will be little or no cell signal for the NSA Crane facility.

Alternatives

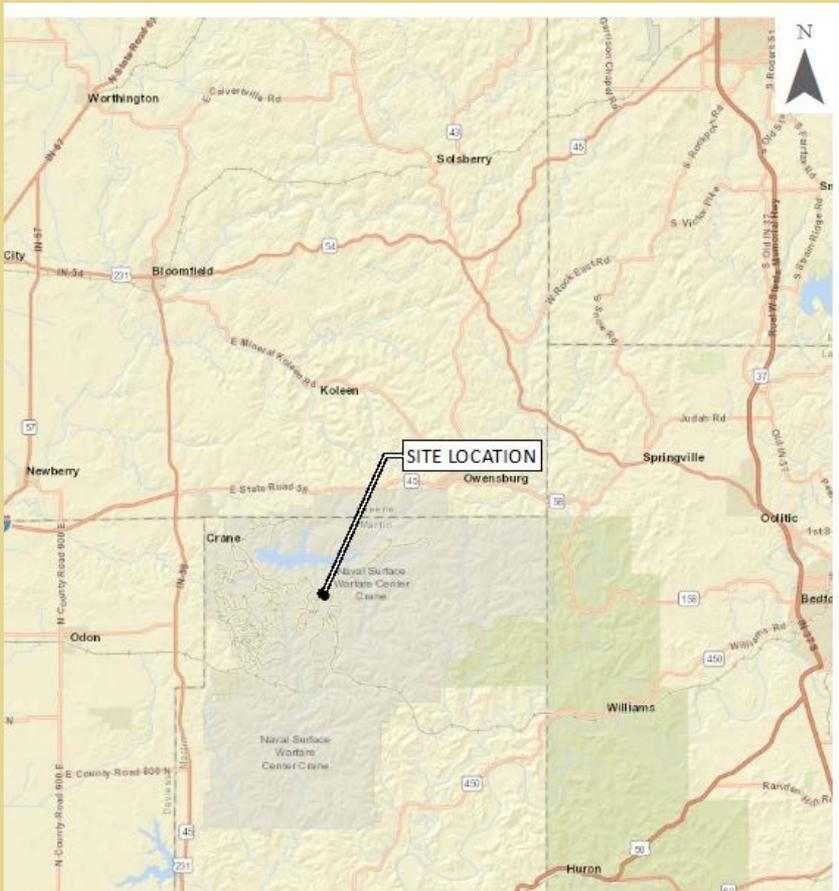
Alternatives were developed for analysis based upon the following reasonable alternative screening factors: provide maximum cellular coverage on base, located outside Explosive Safety Quantity Distance (ESQD) arcs, located in close proximity to existing utilities and services, including power and base communication lines, and located at a relatively high ground surface elevation. The Navy is considering one action alternative that meets the screening factors and the purpose and need for the Proposed Action, as well as a No Action Alternative.

Alternative 1 (Preferred Alternative) would build a 410-foot (overall height) self-support telecommunications tower located north of Building 3173. The undertaking would include a 120-foot by 120-foot lease area, and proposed utility/access easement of 0.09 acre immediately adjacent from the lease area. The tower site and associated equipment would be contained within a 90-foot by 90-foot compound surrounded by a 7-foot high chain link fence. Additionally, a fiber route easement will run approximately 4.85 miles long by 20 feet wide, from NSA Crane to the proposed cell tower site. The majority of the fiber optic line will be aerial, along existing utility poles. A small section of approximately 1,400 feet will run west, underground along the north side of Highway 5.

Under the No Action Alternative, the provision of cell coverage for the base outside explosive arcs and maximizing this coverage would not be achieved. The existing tower is a temporary Cell on Wheels (COW) located near a water tower (structure 2536). This alternative is not viable, as the need for this project includes a permanent tower to improve service coverage throughout the base outside the ESQD arcs and this tower cannot be within the ESQD arcs.



Location Map



Scope of the EA

The Council on Environmental Quality and National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) regulations and Navy instructions for implementing NEPA specify that an Environmental Assessment should address those resource areas potentially subject to impacts. In addition, the level of analysis should be commensurate with the anticipated level of environmental impact.

Due to the nature of the Proposed Action, some project-related effects are expected. Therefore, the following resource areas are addressed in this EA: cultural resources, biological resources, visual resources, airspace, infrastructure, and public health and safety. Because potential impacts were considered to be negligible or nonexistent, the following resource areas were considered, but not evaluated in detail in this EA: air quality, water resources, geological resources, land use, noise, hazardous materials and waste, socioeconomics, environmental justice, and transportation.

Please send comments to the following: Naval Support Activity NEPA Program Manager, at B-3245 Code PRX42, 300 HWY 361, Crane, Indiana 47522 or glenn.redavid@navy.mil.