DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT
for the Construction of
a New Public Safety Communications Tower

Dallam County, Texas

April 2015

Department of Homeland Security (DHS)/
Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA)-
Grants Program Directorate
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LIST OF ACRONYMS

The following is a partial list of acronyms used throughout this document.

CFR	**Code of Federal Regulations** - The codification of the general and permanent rules and regulations promulgated by executive departments and agencies of the federal government of the United States.
DHS	**US Department of Homeland Security** – the federal agency charged with the primary responsibilities of protecting the United States and its territories (including protectorates) from and responding to terrorist attacks, man-made accidents, and natural disasters. The federal agency through whom the SHSP funding necessary to implement the proposed new communications tower project was provided.
EPA	**Environmental Protection Agency** - An agency of the US federal government created for the purpose of protecting human health and the environment by writing and enforcing regulations based on laws passed by Congress.
FAA	**Federal Aviation Administration** - The national aviation authority of the US; an agency within the US Department of Transportation with the authority to regulate and oversee all aspects of American civil aviation.
FCC	**Federal Communications Commission** - An independent agency of the US government, created by Congress to regulate interstate communications by radio, television, wire, satellite, and cable in all 50 states, the District of Columbia and U.S territories.
PANCOM	**Panhandle Communications System** – The communications system serving the public safety communications needs of the first responders in the Texas Panhandle
PRPC	**Panhandle Regional Planning Commission** – The Council of Governments serving the 26-county area of the Texas Panhandle. The PRPC has been charged by its governing body with ensuring the maintenance and operations of the PANCOM system.
SAA	**State Administrative Agency** – The division within the Texas Department of Public Safety that is charged with the administration of the SHSP program in Texas
SHSP	**State Homeland Security Program** – The SHSP is a component the US Dept. of Homeland Security's Homeland Security Grant Program which supports core capabilities across the five mission areas of Prevention, Protection, Mitigation, Response, and Recovery.
THC	**Texas Historical Commission** – The THC is the designated State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) for the State of Texas. The mission of the THC is "*to protect and preserve the state's historic and prehistoric resources for the use, education, enjoyment, and economic benefit of present and future generations*."

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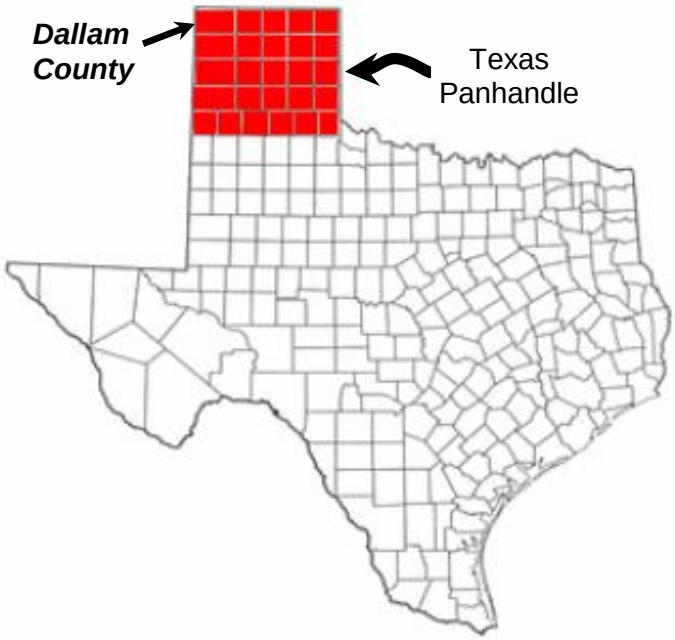
1.0 Introduction

The PRPC was created under Chapter 391 of the Texas Local Government Code to serve the 26 counties and 63 municipalities of the Texas Panhandle. Established in 1969, the Planning Commission assists local governments in planning, developing, and implementing programs designed to improve the general health, safety, and welfare of the citizens in the Texas Panhandle. With a population of 427,927, the Panhandle region covers an area of nearly 26,000 square miles; an area larger in size than 10 states of the union.

Rank by Land Area in Square Miles		
Rank	State	Land Area
41	West Virginia	24,229.76
42	Maryland	12,406.68
43	Hawaii	10,930.98
44	Massachusetts	10,554.57
45	Vermont	9,614.26
46	New Hampshire	9,349.94
47	New Jersey	8,721.30
48	Connecticut	5,543.33
49	Delaware	2,489.27
50	Rhode Island	1,545.05



The PRPC is governed by a 26-member Board of Directors representing jurisdictions across the Panhandle. The PRPC Board has appointed 15 different advisory committees, whose members appropriately represent the region geographically, to oversee the PRPC's primary program service areas. One such advisory committee, the Panhandle Regional Emergency Management Advisory Committee (PREMAC), has been charged by the PRPC Board with the oversight of the Panhandle's Regional Preparedness Program. The primary goal of the program is to better prepare the region's first responders to mitigate, prevent and/or respond to and recover from large-scale, man-caused or natural disasters.

Since 2007, PRPC staff, at the direction of the PREMAC and with the authorization of the PRPC Board of Directors, has completely rebuilt the public safety communications system serving the Panhandle region. Funded for the most part under the State Homeland Security Program (SHSP), the system currently consists of a P-25 compliant network of 52, VHF Narrowband tower sites interconnected with microwave dishes to provide for redundancy and region-wide communications resiliency. The system serves the entire 26-county area of the Panhandle and has been given the moniker of "PANCOM". PRPC staff has since been charged with keeping the PANCOM system well-maintained and in constant good working order by the PRPC Board of Directors.

In FY14, the PREMAC and the PRPC Board of Directors approved the submission of a grant application by the PRPC to the SAA to support the construction of a new public safety communication tower to improve radio receptivity in Dallam County; located in the far northwest corner of the Panhandle (see map above).

The proposed project was subsequently funded under Federal Grant Award Number EMW-2014-SS-00029 and through SAA Award Number 14-SR 99017-05.

The PRPC is using local funds (non-federal/non-state) to acquire a 6-acre tract in the central part of Dallam County to support the implementation of this project. This particular location was selected because it sits on a natural rise that lies adjacent to US Hwy 87; a critical roadway that runs north/south through the County. From this location, the tower will be able to hit the western and northern reaches of Dallam County; greatly improving public safety radio reception across 2/3 of the County. The federal funds would only be used to cover the costs of installing the new communications tower and associated equipment. This project is being undertaken to help improve public safety for the residents/first responders in this part of the County as well as, for the interstate motorists that travel US Hwy 87.

In accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) of 1969, the Council on Environmental Quality regulations implementing NEPA (40 Code of Federal Regulations [CFR] Parts 1500 through 1508), and DHS' Office of Grants and Training (G&T) policy for NEPA compliance (MD 5100.1), the G&T must fully understand and consider the environmental consequences of actions proposed for federal funding. This Environmental Assessment was prepared in order to provide that understanding.

2.0 Purpose and Need

The PRPC has been tasked with the operations/maintenance of PANCOM; the public safety radio system serving the entire 26-county Panhandle region. The system's backbone is comprised of 52 radio tower sites interconnected with microwave dishes. Approximately $8 million in SHSP funding was used to construct the system. However, due to funding limitations, in numerous instances during the initial system build-out, the PRPC had to utilize less-than-optimally placed existing tower sites to ensure that at least a basic level of first responder radio communications could be achieved region-wide.

With this project, the PRPC now intends to relocate off an existing site in Dallam County to a new location approximately 5 miles away. The PRPC is currently leasing space on the existing tower and other long-standing tenants were occupying the tower's higher reaches before the PRPC arrived. Consequently, the PANCOM antenna has been relegated to a mid-range height on the tower (approx. 200').

The benefit of moving to the proposed location will be to improve signal strength and radio reception in the central and northern parts of the County to the New Mexico state line. This new site sits on a crest located along US Highway 87; a heavily traveled roadway that runs north and south through Dallam County. At the present, radio reception in this part of the County can often be patchy and intermittent.

The need being addressed with this project is the lack of adequate first responder radio coverage in the central/northern parts of Dallam County. The purpose of this project is to alleviate that need by constructing a new radio tower at a higher elevation than the site now being used and by raising the PANCOM antenna to a greater height than the space allocation granted on the leased location. This tower will also support the redundant capabilities of the region's 9-1-1 system.

This project consists of the construction of a 300-foot guyed tower in Dallam County at N36-16-23.0, W102-51-21.4. The tower will meet FCC's rule 47 U.S.C. 303(q) and FAA Advisory Circulars 47 CFR 17.21 – 17.58 for lighting and marking requirements. A chain link fenced area around the tower base will measure 50' X 50' X 6' and fencing will surround each of the three guy anchors. A 12' X 20' equipment shelter and foundation and a 2' X 3' generator pad will be located within the fenced area. Being in close proximity to a public road, no additional access drives will needed to provide site access.

3.0 Alternatives

The following alternatives were considered to address the need for improved/reliable radio coverage in Dallam County.

3.1 No Action Alternative

This option was considered unacceptable as there is a defined need to improve public safety radio communications coverage in Dallam County. Taking no action would allow this problem to persist; leaving residents and first responders in the central/northern parts of the County to the whims of the current coverage pattern.

3.2 Proposed Action

The proposed action is to construct a new communications tower in a more desirable location in Dallam County. The proposed site, which is the subject of this assessment, is at a higher elevation than is the tower site currently being leased. Because it will be owned by the PRPC, the PANCOM antenna can also be raised to the pinnacle of the tower. The combination of higher elevation and physically raising the antenna height will vastly improve radio coverage in the parts of the County served by the tower. Dallam County is approximately 900 miles in size and this new tower will be used to provide improved radio coverage across two-thirds of the County.

3.3 Other Action Alternatives

There are no other tower alternatives in this part of Dallam County; leased or otherwise. The two options available are 1) to build a new tower in a better location; or 2) remain on the existing site knowing that there are vulnerabilities in the current coverage patterns that could potential place the safety and welfare of area residents and first responders at risk.

3.3 Alternatives Considered and Dismissed

The option of remaining on the existing site was dismissed because staying on that tower will do nothing to resolve the area's coverage issues. Moving to another leased site was also dismissed because there are no other available towers in this part of the County. The site selected for this new tower is the ideal location for effectively reaching hard-to-hit areas of the County.

4.0 Affected Environment and Potential Impacts

This section provides a detailed description of the proposed tower site and discusses the potential impacts that might result from the construction of a new communications tower at this location.

4.1 Physical Resources

4.1.1 Geology, Soils, and Seismicity

The thumbnail to the left depicts the soil distribution across the 6.0 acre tract in Dallam County where the PRPC intends to erect the proposed new tower. The site can generically be described as being located at the intersection of US Hwy 87 and Perico Lane in the central part of Dallam County. A wide-area view of the site location is found as an attachment in the Appendices section.

Map Unit Legend

Dallam County, Texas (TX111)

Map Unit Symbol	Map Unit Name	Acres in AOI	Percent of AOI
DaB	Dallam loamy fine sand, 0 to 3 percent slopes	0.6	10.1%
DlA	Dallam fine sandy loam, 0 to 1 percent slopes	1.1	19.1%
DlB	Dallam fine sandy loam, 1 to 3 percent slopes	4.2	70.8%
Totals for Area of Interest		**6.0**	**100.0%**

The table to the left identifies the soil constituents in the area of interest for the Dallam County tower site. The information was provided by the USDA's Natural Resources Conservation Service. This project involves the installation of a new 300' tower with a 3' X 3' X 3' anchor drilled to a depth of 12' to hold the tower in place. In addition, 3 guy wires will be used to brace the tower to withstand the maximum wind speeds projected for the area. These guy lines will be held in place with 3' X 5' X 3' anchors drilled to a depth of 12'.

A 12' X 20' equipment shelter and foundation and a 2' X 3' generator pad will be built at the base of the tower. The tower/shed/generator will be enclosed with chain link fencing measuring 50' X 50' X 6'. Each of the three guy anchors will also be fenced.

The Farmland Protection Policy Act (FPPA) (P.L. 97-98, Sec. 1539-1549; 7 U.S.C. 4201, et seq.), 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 6-acre project site lies in a corner of a section currently being used for agricultural production. The property owner required and the PRPC agreed that the tower would not in any way interfere with his farming operations. The 6-acre tract is covered in native grasses which the previous landowner had no intentions of farming. This project will not contribute to the unnecessary conversion of farmland to a nonagricultural use.

There is no seismic activity in the area. According to the US Geological Service's Geologic Hazards Science Center, the probability of magnitude 5.0 or greater earthquake occurring in or within 50 km of the proposed project area during the next 25 years is 0% to < .01%.

The USDA website indicates the soil in the area is suitable for this type of construction. The area is fairly level and shows no indication of cross-lot runoff, wales or drainage flows. There are no active rills or gullies on or nearby the proposed project site.

This project should have no adverse effects or impacts on soils in or around the proposed tower site. Additional visualizations of the project site and area soils are found in Attachment 1 of the Appendices.

No Action Alternative - Under the No Action alternative, no impacts to seismicity, geology, or soils would occur.

Proposed Action - Under the Proposed Action, no impacts to seismicity or geology are anticipated. The conditions in the area would be conducive to supporting the types of construction activities involved with the project.

4.1.2 Air Quality

The Clean Air Act requires the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to set National Ambient Air Quality Standards 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). There may be some slight disturbance of the soils during the tower installation that might temporarily create some blowing dust. However, measures would be taken to limit emission of fugitive dust during the tower installation phase; including, as necessary, the watering down of construction areas. It's anticipated that this project will have no long-term adverse effect or impact on the area's 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 - Under the Proposed Action, there could potentially be short-term minor impacts to air quality during the construction phase due to heavy equipment use. Measures would be taken to limit any impacts. No long-term impacts to air quality are anticipated.

4.1.3 Climate Change

This project will create slight to imperceptible levels of greenhouse gases. The tower equipment will be powered primarily by electricity. The back-up generator will be fueled with propane and used only during power interruptions. There may be some short-term emissions during the construction phase (from equipment and vehicle use). However, once construction is complete, operational emissions will be limited to the use of electricity (which powers the site's radios, lights and environmental-controls of the site's equipment shed). The back-up generator will only be used for brief periods during power outages until electrical power can be restored. It's anticipated that this project will have no adverse effects or impacts on climate change.

No Action Alternative - Under the No Action alternative, no impacts on climate change would occur.

Proposed Action - Under the Proposed Action, no impacts on climate change are anticipated. There may be a brief period of emissions during the project's construction phase (from the use of construction equipment). The likelihood of further emissions will greatly diminish once the new tower site becomes operational.

4.2 Water Resources

4.2.1 Water Quality

Located at elevation 4,372 NGVD; the project site lies over the Ogallala Aquifer. The water table in the area is estimated to be 125' deep. The adjacent landowner is pumping groundwater to irrigate his crops but this project will not use or consume water. There are no active water sources in or around the proposed project site. This project will have no adverse effects or impacts on water quality or water resources in the area.

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

Proposed Action - Under the Proposed Action, potential impacts to surface or ground water resources would be non-existent or minimal. A National Pollution Discharge Elimination System permit will not be needed for this project.

4.2.2 Wetlands *

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers 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. Additionally, Executive Order 11990 (Protection of Wetlands) requires federal agencies to avoid, to the extent possible, adverse impact of wetlands. There is a US Fish & Wildlife Service-designated wetland approximately .51 mile to the west of the proposed project site. This project will not create any discharges or have any adverse effects or impacts on a wetland.

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

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

4.2.3 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. Flood Insurance Rate Maps (FIRMs) are used to identify the regulatory 100-year Floodplain for the National Flood Insurance Program. The FEMA Flood Map Service Center was consulted during this assessment; however no FIRMS have been developed for the Perico area of Dallam County; the area in which the proposed project site lies. A topographic map of the area was also review. There is no floodplain designation for the area but the topographic map indicates that the area's elevation and terrain is not consistent with a floodplain. Moreover, there are no known reports or evidence of past flooding in the area. This project will not impede or impair a designated or known floodplain area.

Proposed Action Alternative - Under the Proposed Action, no impacts to a floodplain would occur.

Proposed Action - Under the Proposed Action, no impacts to a floodplain would occur; there are no floodplains or flood hazard areas in or nearby the proposed project area.

4.3 Coastal Resources

The proposed project site is located over 725 miles away from a coastal area of the US. This project does not involve the placement, erection or removal of materials nor create an increase in the use intensity in a coastal zone area. This project will have no impact or adverse impact on a coastal zone.

Proposed Action Alternative - Under the Proposed Action, no impacts would occur to coastal resources.

Proposed Action - Under the Proposed Action, no impacts no impacts would occur to coastal resources; the project site is located over 725 miles away from the closest coastal zone.

4.4 Biological Resources

4.4.1 Threatened and Endangered Species and Critical Habitat *

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). The proposed project site is located in a barren pocket wedged between US Hwy 87, a heavily trafficked roadway, and a field that is currently under agricultural production. The vegetation on and around the proposed site consists primarily of native, low-growing grasses including side-oats grama, blue grama, buffalograss, and traces of little bluestem. Some yucca and sand sagebrush can also be found in this area. According to the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department (TPWD) Natural Diversity Database (TXNDD), there are no known locations of threatened or endangered plant species occurring within the study area.

The ESA also provides for the conservation of “critical habitat”, the areas of land, water, and air space that an endangered species needs for survival. These areas include sites with food and water, breeding areas, cover or shelter sites, and sufficient habitat to provide for normal population growth and behavior. One of the primary threats to endangered and threatened species is the destruction or modification of essential habitat areas by uncontrolled land and water development. No designated critical habitat for any endangered/threatened species occurs in or nearby the proposed project area.

Attachment G in the Appendices lists those fish and wildlife species with a geographic range that includes Dallam County and that are considered by FWS and/or TPWD to be endangered, threatened, or rare. Sources reviewed to develop the list include FWS (2008), TPWD (2009), and TXNDD (2008).

It should be noted that inclusion on the list does not imply that a species is known to occur in the study area, but only acknowledges the potential for occurrence. Only those species listed as endangered or threatened by FWS are afforded federal protection.

While many avian species are known to migrate through the Dallam County, there is no evidence that the proposed project site is being used for roosting, nesting or brooding by bird species. Further, there is no indication that the parcel of land in which the proposed project site lies is inhabited by any of the animal, reptile or insect species listed on the TPWD Annotated County List of Rare Species for Dallam County. Given its location, the surrounding land uses and type of vegetative cover, the area is considered to have limited value for harboring or supporting threatened or endangered wildlife species. There are no sensitive bird habitats located in or around the proposed project site and the tower would not be located in a flyway.

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

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

4.4.2 Wildlife and Fish

The following is a list of fauna that may occasionally frequent the area of Dallam County in which the proposed project site lies. This is comprehensive list of all the fauna known to inhabit or spend time in Dallam County but does represent a definitive list of species known to inhabit the proposed project site. This list was extracted from an Environmental Assessment conducted the Southwestern Public Service Company in 2009 to support the construction of a 115-kV Transmission line in Dallam and Sherman Counties (http://www.powerfortheplains.com/projects/dallam-sherman/collateral/Dallam-Sherman-Environmental-Assessment.pdf).

Native reptiles may include: ornate box turtle (*Terrapeneornata ornata*), red-eared slider (*Trachemys scripta elegans*), yellow mud turtle (*Kinosternon flavescens flavescens*), common snapping turtle (*Chelydra serpentina serpentina*), and lizards such as the eastern collared lizard (*Crotaphytus collaris collaris*), northern earless lizard (*Holbrookia maculate maculate*), Texas horned lizard (*Phrynosoma cornutum*), southern prairie lizard (*Sceloporus undulates consobrinus*), great plains skink (*Eumeces obsoletus*), and prairie-lined racerunner (*Cnemidophorus sexlineatus viridis*). Snakes in the area include the New Mexico blind snake (*Leptotyphlops dulcis dissectus*), Kansas glossy snake (*Arizona elegans elegans*), ground snake (*Sonora semiannulata*), eastern yellow-bellied racer (*Coluber constrictor flaviventris*), prairie ring-necked snake (*Diadophis punctatus arnyi*), plains hog-nosed snake (*Heterodon nasicus nasicus*), Brazos water snake (*Natrix harteri*), central plains milk snake (*Lampropeltis triangulum gentilis*), western coachwhip (*Masticophis flagellum testaceus*), bull snake (*Pituophis catenifer sayi*), mountain patch-nosed snake (*Salvadora grahamiae grahamiae*), plains black-headed snake (*Tantilla nigriceps nigriceps*), blotched water snake (*Nerodia erythrogaster transversa*), Texas night snake (*Hypsiglena torquata jani*), Texas longnose snake (*Rhinocheilus lecontei tessellates*), western garter snake (*Thamnophis radix haydenii*), checkered garter snake (*Thamnophis marcianus marcianus*), New Mexico garter snake (*Thamnophis sirtalis* dorsalis), prairie kingsnake (*Lampropeltis calligaster calligaster), great plains rat snake (Elaphe guttata emoryi), desert kingsnake (Lampropeltis getula splendida), and speckled kingsnake (Lampropeltis getula holbrooki). A couple of venomous species also occur in*

the region, including the western diamondback rattlesnake (Crotalus atrox) and prairie rattlesnake (Crotalus viridis viridis) (Garrett and Barker, 1987; Tennant, 1998; Dixon, 2000).

Year-round avian residents include the eared grebe (Podilymbus podiceps), black-crowned night-heron (Nycticorax nycticorax), white-faced ibis (Plegadis chihi), great blue heron (Ardea herodias), turkey vulture (Cathartes aura), red-tailed hawk (Buteo jamaicensis), northern harrier (Circus cyaneus), sharp-shinned hawk (Accipiter striatus), Cooper's hawk (Accipiter cooperii), ferruginous hawk (Buteo regalis), peregrine falcon (Falco peregrinus), American kestrel (Falco sparverius), ring-necked pheasant (Phasianus colchicus), scaled quail (Callipepla squamata), northern bobwhite (Colinus virginianus), American coot (Fulica americana), killdeer (Charadrius vociferus), mourning dove (Zenaida macroura), white-winged dove (Zenaida asiatica), greater roadrunner (Geococcyx californianus), barn owl (Tyto alba), burrowing owl (Athene cunicularia), great horned owl (Bubo virginianus), belted kingfisher (Ceryle alcyon), northern flicker (Colaptes auratus), red-headed woodpecker (Melanerpes erythrocephalus), downy woodpecker (Picoides pubescens), ladder-backed woodpecker (Picoides scalaris), eastern phoebe (Sayornis phoebe), loggerhead shrike (Lanius ludovicianus), brown thrasher (Toxostoma rufum), curve-billed thrasher (Toxostoma curvirostre), blue jay (Cyanocitta cristata), American crow (Corvus brachyrhynchos), Chihuahuan raven (Corvus cryptoleucus), horned lark (Eremophila alpestris), blue-gray gnatcatcher (Polioptila caerulae), American robin (Turdus migratorius), cedar waxwing (Bombycilla cedrorum), common yellowthroat (Geothlypis trichas), spotted towhee (Pipilo maculatus), red-breasted nuthatch (Sitta canadensis), rock wren (Salpinctes obsoletus), Bewick's wren (Thryomanes bewickii), house wren (Troglodytes aedon), chipping sparrow (Spizella passerine), vesper sparrow (Pooecetes gramineus), lark sparrow (Chondestes grammacus), savannah sparrow (Passerculus sandwichensis), song sparrow (Melospiza melodia), Bullock's oriole (Icterus bullockii), lark bunting (Calamospiza melanocorys), house finch (Carpodacus mexicanus), red crossbill (Loxia curvirostra), pine siskin (Carduelis pinus), American goldfinch (Carduelis tristis), eastern bluebird (Sialia sialis), northern mockingbird (Mimus polyglottos), European starling (Sturnus vulgaris), northern cardinal (Cardinalis cardinalis), red-winged blackbird (Agelaius phoeniceus), eastern meadowlark (Sturnella magna), western meadowlark (Sturnella neglecta), yellow-headed blackbird (Xanthocephalus xanthocephalus), common grackle (Quiscalus quiscala), great-tailed grackle (Quiscalus mexicanus), brown-headed cowbird (Molothrus ater), field sparrow (Spizella pusilla), and house sparrow (Passer domesticus) (Texas Ornithological Society [TOS], 1995; Seyffert, 2001).

Many species of birds migrate through the study area in the spring and fall, including such winter residents as the mallard (*Anas platyrhychos*), blue-winged teal (*Anas discors*), green-winged teal (*Anas crecca*), canvasback (*Aythya valisineria*), redhead (*Aythya americana*), ruddy duck (*Oxyura jamaicensis*), cinnamon teal (*Anas cyanoptera*), northern shoveler (*Anas clypeata*), northern pintail (*Anas acuta*), American wigeon (*Anas americana*), snow goose (*Chen caerulescens*), Ross's goose (*Chen rosii*), Canada goose (*Branta canadensis*), American white pelican (*Pelecanus erythrorhynchos*), Mississippi kite (*Ictinia mississippiensis*), bald eagle (*Haliaeetus leucocephalus*), merlin (*Falco columbarius*), falcon (*Falco mexicanus*), sandhill crane (*Grus canadensis*), common snipe (*Gallinago gallinago*), common nighthawk (*Chordeiles minor*), common poorwill (*Phalaenoptilus nuttallii*), scissor-tailed flycatcher (*Tyrannus forficatus*), northern shrike (*Lanius excubitor*), common raven (*Corvus corax*), ruby-

crowned kinglet (*Regulus calendula*), Townsend's solitaire (*Myadestes townsendi*), Swainson's thrush (*Catharus ustulatus*), hermit thrush (*Catharus guttatus*), yellow-rumped warbler (*Dendroica coronata*), American tree sparrow (*Spizella arborea*), clay-colored sparrow (*Spizella pallida*), white-crowned sparrow (Zonotrichia leucophrys), grasshopper sparrow (*Ammodramus savannarum*), white-throated sparrow (*Zonotrichia albicollis*), Lincoln's sparrow (*Melospiza lincolnii*), McCown's longspur (*Calcarius mccownii*), lapland longspur (*Calcarius lapponicus*), and dark-eyed junco (*Junco hyemalis*). Summer migrant species expected to reside in the study area during the summer months include cattle egret (Bubulcus ibis), American bittern (*Botaurus lentiginosus*), green heron (*Butorides virescens*), chimney swift (*Chaetura pelagica*), Swainson's hawk (*Buteo swainsoni*), eastern kingbird (*Tyrannus tyrannus*), cliff swallow (*Petrochelidon pyrrhonota*), barn swallow (Hirundo rustica), Cassin's sparrow (*Aimophila cassinii*), blue grosbeak (*Guiraca caerulea*), western kingbird (*Tyrannus verticalis*), painted bunting (*Passerina ciris*), dickcissel (*Spiza americana*), western tanager (*Piranga ludoviciana*), yellow warbler (*Dendroica petechia*), orchard oriole (*Icterus spurius*), and black-and-white warbler (*Mniotilta varia*).
Numerous other migrating species, such as arctic shorebirds wintering on the Gulf coast, northern passerines wintering in Central and South America, raptors, and waterfowl, may pass through or over the study area during spring and fall migrations (TOS, 1995; Seyffert, 2002).

Common mammals of this region include the Virginia opossum (*Didelphis virginiana*), desert shrew (*Notiosorex crawfordi*), least shrew (*Cryptotis parva*), eastern mole (*Scalopus aquaticus*), hoary bat (*Lasiurus cinereus*), big brown bat (*Eptesicus fuscus*), silver-haired bat (*Lasionycteris noctivagans*), western pipistrelle (*Pipistrellus Hesperus*), Townsend's big-eared bat (*Corynorhinus townsendii*), Pallid bat (*Antrozous pallidus*), Brazilian free-tailed bat (*Tadarida brasiliensis*), eastern red bat (*Lasiurus borealis*), nine-banded armadillo (*Dasypus novemcinctus*), eastern cottontail (*Sylvilagus floridanus*), desert cottontail (*Sylvilagus audubonii*),black-tailed jackrabbit (*Lepus californicus*), eastern fox squirrel (*Sciurus niger*), spotted ground squirrel (*Spermophilus spilosoma*), thirteen-lined ground squirrel (*Spermophilus tridecemlineatus*), black-tailed prairie dog (*Cynomys ludovicianus*), plains pocket gopher (*Geomys bursarius*), yellow-faced pocket gopher (*Cratogeomys castanops*), plains pocket mouse (*Perognathus flavescens*), silky pocket mouse (*Perognathus flavus*), hispid pocket mouse (*Chaetodipus hispidus*), Ord's kangaroo rat (*Dipodomys ordii*), beaver (*Castor canadensis*), western harvest mouse (*Reithrodontomys megalotis*), plains harvest mouse (*Reithrodontomys montanus*), white-footed mouse (*Peromyscus leucopus*), deer mouse (*Peromyscus maniculatus*), northern pygmy mouse (*Baiomys taylori*), northern grasshopper mouse (*Onychomys leucogaster*), hispid cotton rat (*Sigmodon hispidus*), eastern white-throated woodrat (*Neotoma leucodon*), southern plains woodrat (*Neotoma micropus*), porcupine (*Erethizon dorsatum*), coyote (*Canis latrans*), kit fox (*Vulpes velox*), gray fox (*Urocyon cinereoargenteus*), ringtail (*Bassariscus astutus*), common raccoon (*Procyon lotor*), American badger (*Taxidea taxus*), striped skunk (*Mephitis mephitis*), eastern spotted skunk (*Spilogale putorius*), mountain lion (*Puma concolor*), bobcat (*Lynx rufus*), pronghorn (*Antilocapra americana*), mule deer (*Odocoileus hemionus), and white-tailed deer (Odocoileus virginianus), (Davis and Schmidly, 1994; Manning and Jones, 1998; Schmidly, 2004).*

There are no streams, creeks or ponds in or in proximity to the proposed project site. Therefore, there were no fish or aquatic species available in the area to consider as part of this assessment.

No Action Alternative - Under the No Action alternative, no impacts to wildlife and fish would occur.

Proposed Action - Under the Proposed Action, no impacts to wildlife and fish are anticipated. To mitigate the potential for collision-related bird mortality, the tower would be equipped with flashing strobe lights in accordance with FAA regulations and bird deflector devices to alert on-coming birds to the guy wire hazards.

4.5 Cultural Resources *

4.5.1 Historic Properties

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."

The THC's Texas Historic Sites Atlas and the US National Park Service's National Register of Historic Places were both consulted to determine the presence of any cultural resources in or around the proposed project area. THC lists one site in the vicinity of the proposed project site; the Perico Cemetery. The NRHP lists one site for Dallam County (#92001375); which is the Dallam County Courthouse located to the south of the project area in the City of Dalhart. There are no other records or evidence to indicate the potential presence of cultural resources in or near the proposed project site. This project will not damage, disturb, impair or adversely affect any cultural resources.

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

Proposed Action - 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 the SHPO will be immediately notified.

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

There is no evidence or accounts of any Native American cultural/religious sites being in or nearby the proposed project site. 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 description of the project was sent to the four tribes/nations that have indicated an interest in potential developments in Dallam County including the Jicarilla Apache Nation, the Apache Tribe of Oklahoma, the Comanche Nation and the Kiowa Indian Tribe of Oklahoma. The implementation of this project will not adversely affect or impact Native American cultural or religious sites in the area. To the best of anyone's knowledge, no such sites exist in or nearby the proposed project site.

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

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

4.6 Socioeconomic Resources

4.6.1 Environmental Justice *

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. The proposed project site is located well outside of any areas of population concentration in an area of the County that is primarily under agricultural production. This project is designed to improve first responder communications in the northern and central parts of the County to enhance public safety for all area residents; regardless of ethnicity or income level. This project will help to ameliorate the intermittent radio reception that can occur in this part of the County and will provide a benefit to all residents within the service areas of the responder agencies that operate in the area.

No Action Alternative – Under the No Action Alternative, there would be no beneficial impact on minority or low-income populations. However, all residents could potentially be adversely impacted by the vulnerabilities in the current coverage pattern if no action is taken.

Proposed Action – Under the Proposed Action, no disproportionately high and adverse impacts on minority or low-income populations are anticipated. The improved radio coverage would benefit all residents in the area by strengthening the ability of local first responders to communicate on a timely and accurate basis.

4.6.2 Hazardous Material

The proposed project site is being procured by the PRPC using non-federal, non-state funding. FEMA funds will be used to install the communications tower, a communications shed, a generator and site fencing. Prior to procurement, the site was investigated for the presence of any pre-existing hazardous materials. There is no indication that any hazardous materials have ever been stored on or buried within the vicinity of the site. There are no TRI's listed for this site on the EPA's TRI Explorer. From visual inspection and search of available records; the proposed project site appears to be free of any anteceding hazardous materials. The PRPC does intend to install a 250-gallon above-ground propane tank on the site to provide fuel for the tower's back-up generator. The tank will be built, installed and maintained in accordance with DOT standards, 29 CFR Part 1910.110 and other applicable regulations and standards.

No Action Alternative – Under the No Action Alternative, there would be no hazardous material impacts.

Proposed Action – Under the Proposed Action, up to 250 gallons of propane would be stored on site and above-ground to provide fuel to the tower's back-up generator.

Any risks associated with the on-site storage of this material will be mitigated through the use of a properly designed tank, meeting ASME standards; that is installed in accordance with 29 CRF and regularly inspected by PRPC staff to ensure the efficacy of the equipment.

4.6.3 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.

The Noise Control Act of 1972 (42 U.S.C. 4901) further states "*that, while primary responsibility for control of noise rests with State and local governments, Federal action is essential to deal with major noise sources in commerce control of which require national uniformity of treatment*." The purpose of the Act is "*to establish a means for effective coordination of Federal research and activities in noise control, to authorize the establishment of Federal noise emission standards for products distributed in commerce, and to provide information to the public respecting the noise emission and noise reduction characteristics of such products*."

This project will have nominal impact on sound levels in the area. The nearest facility to the proposed site is approximately ½ mile to the north. It is a grain elevator whose noise output far exceeds the noise levels that might be generated with the operation of the tower. The low-level hum of the tower's equipment will be nearly inaudible compared to traffic sounds coming from US Hwy 87, which lies directly adjacent to the proposed site. This project will have little to no adverse effects or impacts on noise levels in or around the proposed project site.

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

Proposed Action - Under the Proposed Action, temporary short-term increases in noise levels are anticipated during construction. Except for the equipment shelter's exterior HVAC equipment cooling unit and occasional backup power generator activation the tower itself won't create noise. The site is located over ½ miles from any public areas; the closest residence (which is currently unoccupied) is also over ½ mile away. There do not appear to be any noise sensitive land uses within reach of the proposed site.

4.6.4 Traffic

Access to the proposed site will be off of Perico Lane, a 2-lane caliche road that intersects with US Hwy 87 at the southwest corner of the proposed project site. Perico Lane is a lightly traveled roadway; used periodically by local farmers and ranchers to move equipment or livestock and/or to access fields or pastures to the east and south of the proposed site.

There are no TxDOT traffic counts available for Perico Lane; however, based on observations, vehicle movement on Perico lane is infrequent and somewhat seasonal.

There may be some temporary disruptions to local traffic patterns during the construction phase of this project; which will last approximately 1 week. The potential for disruption can be mitigated by moving construction vehicles to the mouth of Perico Lane (where it meets US Hwy 87) when not in use. The Lane widens at this point such that the construction vehicles can be staged on one side of the Lane and still allow sufficient access to thru-traffic. The potential for disruptions will all but disappear once construction is complete. The only traffic to the site will then be when PRPC staff conducts scheduled maintenance visits to the site or when repairs/adjustments have to be made to the tower equipment and/or when the back-up generator's propane tank has to be refilled. This project will have little to no adverse effects or impacts on traffic patterns in or around the proposed project site.

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

Proposed Action - Under the Proposed Action, temporary short-term interruptions in normal traffic patterns may occur during the project's construction phase. However, once construction is completed, it's anticipated that the potential for traffic interference will all but dissipate. The only traffic in/out of the site thereafter will come as a result of quarterly site visits and/or occasional repair or propane tank re-fueling visits.

4.6.5 Public Service and Utilities

One of the primary advantages of installing the new communications tower on the proposed site is the proximity of utilities; power lines run along the west and south boundaries of the proposed project site. The ready access to power will not help to control the costs of running electricity to the tower's equipment shed; it will also help to minimize the amount of environmental disturbance on the site. The electrical demands of the tower equipment will not overburden the electrical supply. The average monthly utilities on other communications towers maintained by the PRPC average approximately $90 a month (based on a year-round average).

There are no other known public utilities in the area. An investigation was made to determine the presence of underground petroleum or gas lines in the area using maps provided by the Pipeline Group®. There was no indication of buried lines under or nearby the proposed project site. However, the tower installation company will be required to contact the Pipeline Group® prior to the start of construction (using the Texas One-call or Texas811 services) to verify there are no lines in the area before any excavation work is done. This project will have negligible impact on the area's public service and utilities.

No Action Alternative - Under the No Action alternative, no impacts on public service or utilities would occur.

Proposed Action - Under the Proposed Action, the new communications tower will draw electricity from the local power supply; though the consumption of power will be fairly nominal. No other utilities or services will be affected because there are no other public services or utilities in the area. Though none appear to exist at this time, before any construction work begins, the contractor will confirm once again that there are no buried petro-chemical lines under or nearby the proposed project site.

4.6.6 Public Health and Safety

The new communications tower will be equipped with repeaters and antennas to support land mobile radio use (for first responders) and a microwave dish to provide redundant roll-over capabilities for the Panhandle region's 9-1-1 system. This equipment may emit some levels of Radio Frequency (RF) and microwave radiation. The FCC describes RF and microwave radiation as follows.

Electromagnetic radiation consists of waves of electric and magnetic energy moving together (i.e., radiating) through space at the speed of light. Taken together, all forms of electromagnetic energy are referred to as the electromagnetic "spectrum." Radio waves and microwaves emitted by transmitting antennas are one form of electromagnetic energy. They are collectively referred to as "radiofrequency" or "RF" energy or radiation. Note that the term "radiation" does not mean "radioactive." Often, the terms "electromagnetic field" or "radiofrequency field" may be used to indicate the presence of electromagnetic or RF energy.

The RF waves emanating from an antenna are generated by the movement of electrical charges in the antenna. Electromagnetic waves can be characterized by a wavelength and a frequency. The wavelength is the distance covered by one complete cycle of the electromagnetic wave, while the frequency is the number of electromagnetic waves passing a given point in one second. The frequency of an RF signal is usually expressed in terms of a unit called the "hertz" (abbreviated "Hz"). One Hz equals one cycle per second. One megahertz ("MHz") equals one million cycles per second.

The FCC goes onto to describe the potential health effects of this energy release.

At relatively low levels of exposure to RF radiation, i.e., levels lower than those that would produce significant heating; the evidence for production of harmful biological effects is ambiguous and unproven. Such effects, if they exist, have been referred to as "non-thermal" effects. A number of reports have appeared in the scientific literature describing the observation of a range of biological effects resulting from exposure to low-levels of RF energy. However, in most cases, further experimental research has been unable to reproduce these effects. Furthermore, since much of the research is not done on whole bodies (in vivo), there has been no determination that such effects constitute a human health hazard. It is generally agreed that further research is needed to determine the generality of such effects and their possible relevance, if any, to human health. In the meantime, standards-setting organizations and government agencies continue to monitor the latest experimental findings to confirm their validity and determine whether changes in safety limits are needed to protect human health.

Studies have shown that environmental levels of RF energy routinely encountered by the general public are typically far below levels necessary to produce significant heating and increased body temperature. However, there may be situations, particularly in workplace environments near high-powered RF sources, where the recommended limits for safe exposure of human beings to RF energy could be exceeded. In such cases, restrictive measures or mitigation actions may be necessary to ensure the safe use of RF energy.

The FCC's RF emissions guidelines are published in 47 CFR §1.1307(b) and the RF exposure standards appear in 47 CFR §§1.1310 and 2.1093.

The PRPC confirms that the tower and all associated antennas will not cause human exposure to levels of RF emissions in excess of the FCC-adopted guidelines [47 CFR §1.1307(b)] and that the tower and all its associated antennas will comply with the RF exposure standards as provided within 47 CFR §§1.1310 and 2.1093.

This project is anticipated to have a significant and beneficial impact on public safety. The whole intent of erecting a tower at this particular location is to strengthen public safety radio reception across the northern and central parts of Dallam County. This location sits on a high point in the County that will help to increase signal strength throughout the area served by the tower. This project will have negligible impact on the area's public health but will have a beneficial impact on the area's public safety.

No Action Alternative - Under the No Action alternative, no impacts on public health or public safety would occur.

Proposed Action - Under the Proposed Action, certain levels of RF will be emitted by the new communications tower but their impact on human health will be none to negligible. In order to mitigate any potential impact, PRPC will ensure that the tower antenna, microwave dish and all associated equipment fully comply with the FCC's RF emissions and exposure guidelines and standards. This project will provide a benefit to public safety by enhancing the ability of the area's first responders to communicate clearly and effectively when responding to public safety emergencies in Dallam County.

4.7 Summary Table

This section is used to summarize the findings of this environmental assessment.

Affected Environment	Potential Impacts	Mitigation Measures
Soils		
No Action	No Impact	Not Applicable
Proposed Dallam County Tower Site	No adverse impacts anticipated. Construction activities may cause some disturbance, but effects to soils would be minor and temporary.	As necessary, NDPES best management practices will be used during construction to prevent erosion.
Seismicity		
No Action	No Impact	Not Applicable
Proposed Dallam County Tower Site	No adverse impacts; there is no seismic activity in the area.	Since no adverse effects are anticipated, there are no impacts to be mitigated.
Farmland Protection		
No Action	No Impact	Not Applicable
Proposed Dallam County Tower Site	No impacts anticipated; no currently used farmland is being taken out of production. The PRPC has committed to ensuring that	Per an agreement with the neighboring landowner; no activity related to this project will impede his farming operations. The

Affected Environment	Potential Impacts	Mitigation Measures
	no project activities interfere with the farming activities occurring in the field abutting the project site.	area beneath the tower can still be grazed by cattle.
Air Quality		
No Action	No Impact	Not Applicable
Proposed Dallam County Tower Site	No long-term adverse impacts are anticipated. Air quality may temporarily be affected during construction.	Best management practices will be utilized during construction to minimize blowing dust.
Climate Change		
No Action	No Impact	Not Applicable
Proposed Dallam County Tower Site	Nominal to no adverse impacts anticipated. The only fossil fuels to be used on site will be the propane in the back-up generator.	Ensure the exhaust on the site's back-up generator is equipped and maintained with a clean air filter.
Water Resources		
No Action	No Impact	Not Applicable
Proposed Dallam County Tower Site	No adverse impacts are anticipated; there is no surface water in the area and there will be no effect on groundwater resources.	Since no adverse effects are anticipated, there are no impacts to be mitigated.
Water Quality		
No Action	No Impact	Not Applicable
Proposed Dallam County Tower Site	No adverse impacts are anticipated.	Since no adverse effects are anticipated, there are no impacts to be mitigated.
Wetlands		
No Action	No Impact	Not Applicable
Proposed Dallam County Tower Site	No adverse impacts are anticipated; the proposed project site is not located in or nearby a wetland.	Since no adverse effects are anticipated, there are no impacts to be mitigated.
Floodplains		
No Action	No Impact	Not Applicable
Proposed Dallam County Tower Site	No adverse impacts are anticipated; the proposed project site is not located in or nearby a floodplain.	The PRPC will coordinate with the County's FPA to ensure no impacts will occur.
Coastal Resources		

Affected Environment	Potential Impacts	Mitigation Measures
No Action	No Impact	Not Applicable
Proposed Dallam County Tower Site	No adverse impacts are anticipated; the proposed project site is located well outside a Coastal Zone.	Since no adverse effects are anticipated, there are no impacts to be mitigated.
Threatened and Endangered Species		
No Action	No Impact	Not Applicable
Proposed Dallam County Tower Site	No adverse impacts are anticipated; even though certain listed species are thought to inhabit the County	The use of white / red strobe lights and visual markers on guy wires will help to mitigate avian mortality.
Critical Habitat		
No Action	No Impact	Not Applicable
Proposed Dallam County Tower Site	No adverse impacts are anticipated; the project area is not considered to be critical or sensitive habitat.	Since no effects are anticipated, there are no impacts to be mitigated. However, measures will be taken to minimize ground cover disturbances.
Wildlife and Fish		
No Action	No Impact	Not Applicable
Proposed Dallam County Tower Site	No adverse impacts are anticipated; there are common species of fauna in the area but the project activities are not expected to cause lasing impacts on local populations. No run-off will occur that might affect aquatic species.	The use of white / red strobe lights and visual markers on guy wires will help to mitigate avian mortality. Measures will be taken to minimize ground cover disturbances.
Cultural Resources		
No Action	No Impact	Not Applicable
Proposed Dallam County Tower Site	No adverse impacts are anticipated	If human remains or artifacts are discovered during construction, all ground disturbing activities shall cease and the County JP/FEMA/THC will be notified.
Historic Properties		
No Action	No Impact	Not Applicable

Affected Environment	Potential Impacts	Mitigation Measures
Proposed Dallam County Tower Site	No adverse impacts are anticipated	If historic or archaeological materials are discovered during construction, all ground disturbing activities shall cease and FEMA/ THC will be notified.
American Indian Religious Sites		
No Action	No Impact	Not Applicable
Proposed Dallam County Tower Site	No adverse impacts are anticipated	If evidence of an American Indian religious site is discovered during construction, all ground disturbing activities shall cease and FEMA/THC/ interested tribal groups will be notified.
Environmental Justice		
No Action	No Impact	Not Applicable
Proposed Dallam County Tower Site	No adverse impacts are anticipated.	This project will provide universal benefits to all residents in Dallam County. No groups will be disproportionately impacted by the project.
Hazardous Materials		
No Action	No Impact	Not Applicable
Proposed Dallam County Tower Site	Nominal to no adverse impacts are anticipated.	Propane will be stored and maintained in a tank complying with the ASME standards
Noise		
No Action	No Impact	Not Applicable
Proposed Dallam County Tower Site	No long-term adverse impacts anticipated.	Project construction is anticipated to take no longer than 1 week.
Traffic		
No Action	No Impact	Not Applicable
Proposed Dallam County Tower Site	No long-term adverse impacts anticipated.	Measures will be taken to shunt equipment out from traffic lanes during construction
Public Service and Utilities		
No Action	No Impact	Not Applicable

Affected Environment	Potential Impacts	Mitigation Measures
Proposed Dallam County Tower Site	No long-term adverse impacts anticipated.	This project is designed to improve public safety communications in Dallam County.
Public Health and Safety		
No Action	No Impact	Not Applicable
Proposed Dallam County Tower Site	No to Negligible Impact	Project will comply with the applicable provisions of 47 CFR §1.1307(b), §§1.1310 and §§ 2.1093.

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

6.0 Agency Coordination, Public Involvement and Permits

The Dallam County Sheriff's Office and the Dalhart Fire Department were consulted with regard to the placement of this new communications tower and how it would help to resolve some of the first responder communications issues in the County. The PRPC Board of Directors, along with the PRPC's senior management, have discussed this project in open meetings. The PRPC's monthly Board of Director meeting agendas are posted in accordance with the State of Texas' Open Meeting Acts requirements. To meet the State requirement for communications coordination, the PRPC has also notified the Statewide Interoperability Coordinator of its intent to develop this new communications tower. The agencies listed below were also contacted for comment on the proposed project.

- Texas Historical Commission
- US Fish and Wildlife Service
- Federal Aviation Administration
- Comanche Nation
- Apache Tribe of Oklahoma
- Kiowa Indian Tribe of Oklahoma
- Jicarilla Apache Nation

The Draft Environmental Assessment has been posted on the front-page of the PRPC's website (www.theprpc.org) to provide the public with easy access to review the document. Hard copies of the draft were made available to the public in the main foyer of the PRPC's offices located at 415 West Eighth Avenue, Amarillo, Texas. In addition, copies of the draft were mailed to the Dalhart City Hall and the Dallam County Courthouse in order to provide further public access to the document.

In accordance with applicable local, state, and federal requirements, the PRPC is responsible for obtaining any necessary permits or approvals prior to commencing construction at the proposed project site or operating the tower, including any that are required by the FCC and FAA.

7.0 Mitigation

To the extent possible, the PRPC will use all feasible means available to minimize and/or mitigate the adverse effects and impacts of this project on the environment and the residents of Dallam County. The more specific measures are listed on the table shown in Section 4.7 of this assessment. In the same breath, the PRPC will work to optimize the benefits of this project to enhance the public safety improvements for the good of the County's residents and first responders.

8.0 Conclusion

No impacts to geology, soils, seismicity, water resources, water quality, floodplains, wetlands, socioeconomic resources, environmental justice or cultural resources are anticipated under the Proposed Action. There may potentially be short-term and minor impacts to soils, air quality and noise during the project's construction phase. Mitigation actions have been identified to reduce their effect on the proposed project site and surrounding area. This new communications tower could possibly have an adverse effect on migratory birds. However, the tower will be equipped with features to decrease the potential for bird mortality and the project site is located outside of sensitive habitats and flyways that might otherwise increase that potential.

The new communications tower will help to improve first responder radio receptivity in Dallam County; firefighters, EMS and law enforcement would be able to communicate with each other at nearly every point of the County. This enhanced capability will also benefit agencies from neighboring counties (including New Mexico) that respond into Dallam County under the Panhandle's Regional Mutual Aid Agreement during large-scale disaster events. This tower will be available to support the Band Class 14 LTE network being implemented by FirstNet/Texas to provide public safety at-large with 21st-century communication tools to further enhance their ability to protect the public.

9.0 References

Soil Survey of Dallam County, Texas:
http://www.nrcs.usda.gov/Internet/FSE_MANUSCRIPTS/texas/dallamTX1975/dallamTX1975.pd

USDA NRCS Web Soil Survey:
http://websoilsurvey.nrcs.usda.gov/app/

TPWD Rare, Threatened and Endangered Species of Texas:
http://tpwd.texas.gov/gis/rtest/

Texas Natural Diversity Database (TXNDD):
https://tpwd.texas.gov/huntwild/wild/wildlife_diversity/txndd/

Panhandle Wildlife Habitat Management:
http://tpwd.texas.gov/landwater/land/habitats/high_plains/habitat_management/

National Wetlands Inventory:
http://www.fws.gov/wetlands/

National Register of Historic Places:
http://www.nps.gov/nr/research/

THC Texas Historic Sites Atlas:
http://atlas.thc.state.tx.us/

FEMA Map Service Center:
http://msc.fema.gov/portal

EPA TRIs in Dallam County:
http://iaspub.epa.gov/triexplorer/tri_getcounties.getcounties?report=tri_release.chemical&scriptname=chemical&state=48&c_year=2013&c_industry=ALL&c_chemical=_ALL_&c_chemlist=&c_coreyear=&c_indlist=&c_usrState=&c_fips=00000&c_tabrpt=1&c_zip=&c_chk0=true&c_chk1=false&c_chk2=false&c_chk3=true&c_chk4=false&c_chk5=false&c_chk6=&c_chk7=&c_chk8=&c_chk9=&c_chk10=

EPA EnviroMapper:
http://www.epa.gov/emefdata/em4ef.home

FCC Radio Frequency Safety:
http://transition.fcc.gov/oet/rfsafety/rf-faqs.html#Q1

Cornell University Law School; Legal Information Institute:
https://www.law.cornell.edu/cfr/text/47/1.1307

Noise Control Act of 1972:
http://www.epa.gov/air/noise/noise_control_act_of_1972.pdf

THC Tribal Consultation Guidelines:
http://www.thc.state.tx.us/project-review/tribal-consultation-guidelines

FAA Airport information for Dallam County, TX
http://www.faa.gov/airports/airport_safety/airportdata_5010/

10.0 List of Preparers

This Environmental Assessment was prepared by the staff of the PRPC's Regional Services Department; aided by staff of the PRPC's Local Government Services Department. Both departments have an extensive background and experience in the preparation of such assessments; having performed numerous environmental assessments for projects funded under the US Department of Housing and Urban Development's Community Development Block Grant Program, the US Economic Development Administration's Economic Development Assistance grants and the TPWD's Outdoor Recreation Grants Program and Trails Grant to name a few.

The lead for this Environmental Assessment was:

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11.0 Appendices

Attachment A: Site Photos

Attachment B: Project Location Map

Attachment C: Distribution of Soil Types & Soil Limitations

Attachment D: Distribution of Soil Types & Soil Limitations

Attachment E: Area Wetlands Map

Attachment F: Area Floodplain Map & Area Elevation Map

Attachment G: Dallam County Rare, Endangered and Threatened Species List

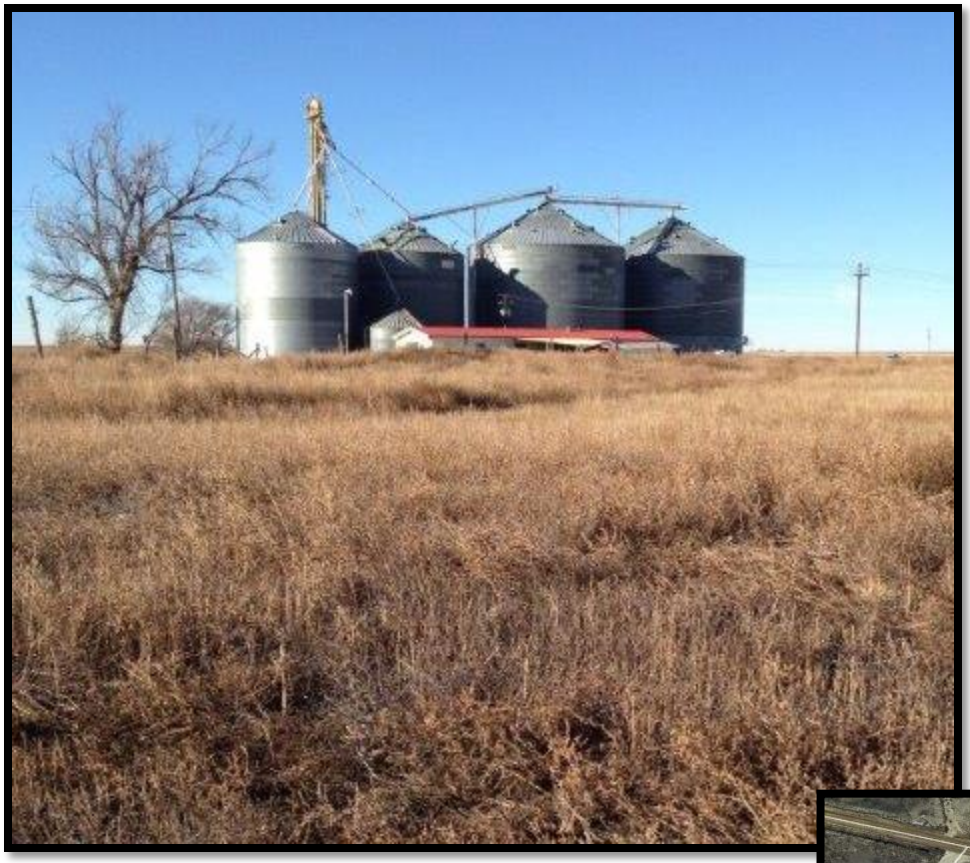
Attachment H: Proposed Project Site NEPA Land Use Checklist

Attachment I: Notification Letters to Interested Tribal Groups

Attachment J: Notification Letter to the Texas Historical Commission

Attachment K: Federal Aviation Administration Notification

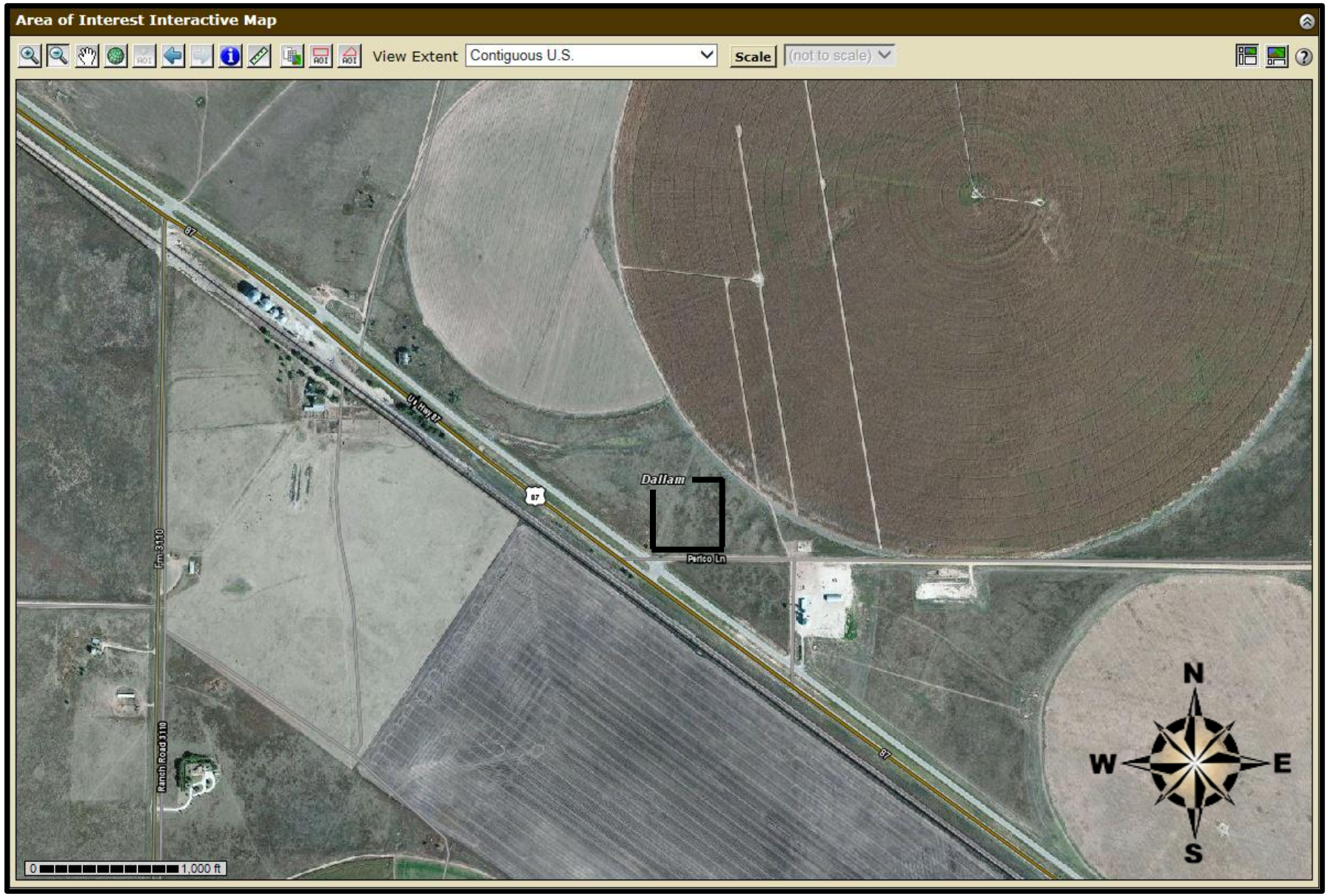
Proposed Project Site: Site Photos



View of the small elevator located approximately .62 miles to the northwest of the proposed project site. The vegetation / native short grasses depicted in the foreground are predominant throughout the project site area.

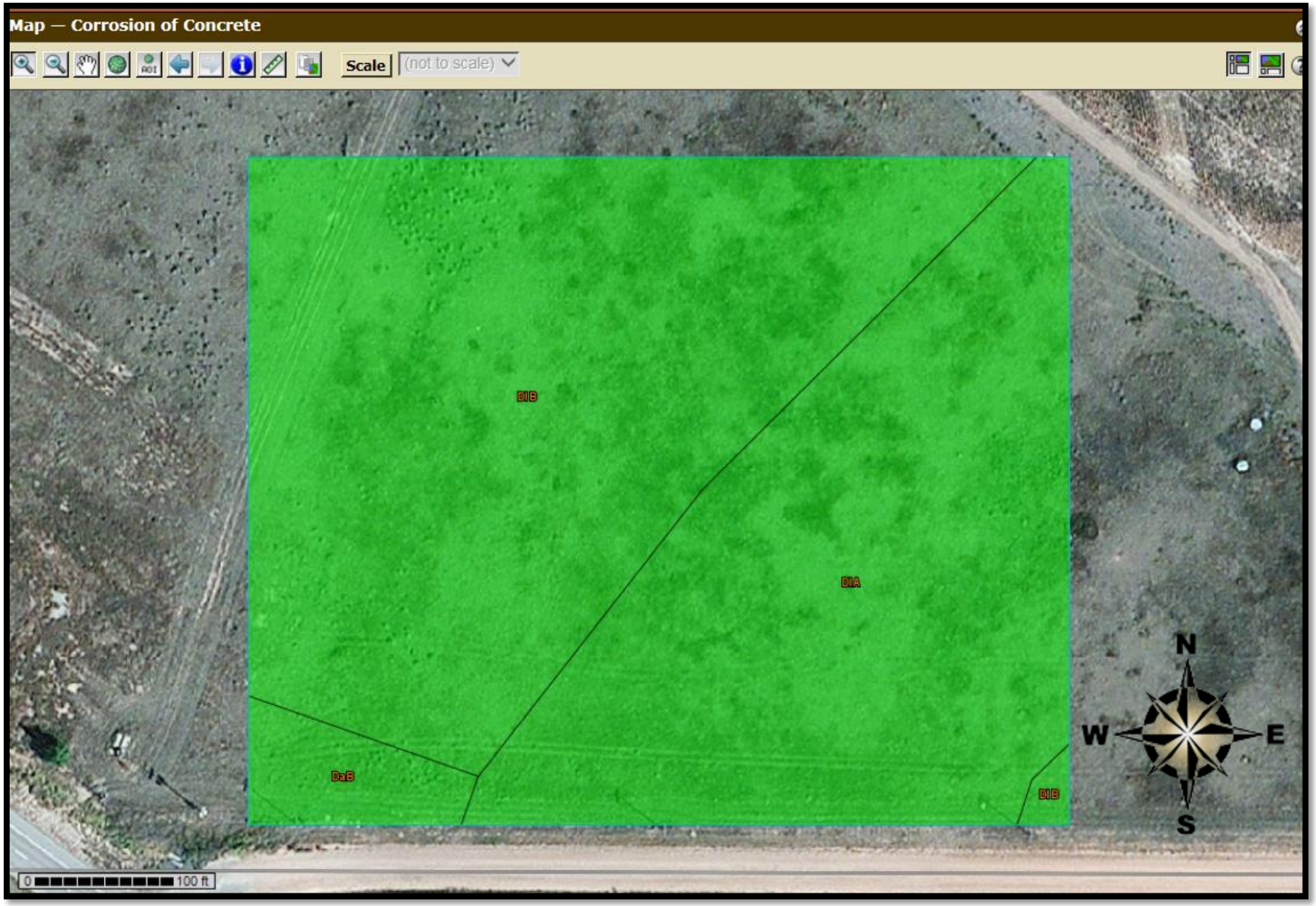
View looking west along Perico Lane. The roadway is used occasionally by local farmers / ranchers to access fields and pastures to the west of the proposed project site. The inset shows an overhead view of a livestock feeding facility located approximately .2 miles to the west of the proposed project site. It appears as if the facility has not been used recently. This new communications tower will be located well outside the ROW of Perico Lane and it will not impede or inhibit travel on the roadway.

PROPOSED PROJECT SITE: Located at the intersection of Perico Lane and US Hwy 87; Dallam County, Texas
(N36-16-23.0 / W102-51-21.4)



Attachment B

PROPOSED PROJECT SITE: Distribution of Soil Types



Attachment C

PROPOSED PROJECT SITE: Soil Limitations

This section summarizes the potential soil limitations based on the types of construction activities involved with the proposed project.

Tables – Pier-beam Building Foundations (TX) – Summary By Map Unit

Summary by Map Unit – Dallam County, Texas (TX111)

Map Unit Symbol	Map unit name	Rating	Component name (%)	Ration reasons (numeric values)	Acres in AOI	% of AOI
DaB	Dallam loamy fine sand 1 to3 percent slopes	Not limited	Dallam (100%)		0.6	10.1%
DIA	Dallam fine sandy loam, 0 to 1 percent slopes	Not limited	Dallam (100%)		1.1	19.1%
DIB	Dallam fine sandy loam, 1 to 3 percent slopes	Not limited	Dallam (100%)		4.2	70.8%
Totals for Area of Interest					6.0	100.00%

Table – Pier-beam Building Foundations (TX) – Summary by Rating Value

Summary by Rating Value

Rating	Acres in AOI	Percent of AOI
Not limited	6.0	100%
Totals for Area of Interest	6.0	100%

Description – Pier-beam Building Foundations (TX)

Pier-beam foundations consist of reinforced-concrete pad footings or continuous, reinforced-concrete spread footings and beams that support a commercial structure or dwelling above grade. These foundations are less susceptible to damage caused by shifting of the soil than other foundations. If extreme shifting of the soil occurs, the foundation can be easily adjusted.

The ratings for pier-beam building foundations are based on the soil properties that affect excavation and construction costs. The properties that affect the load0supporting capacity include depth to a water table, ponding, flooding, subsidence, and liner extensibility (shrink-swell potential). The properties that affect the ease and amount of excavation include depth to a water table, ponding flooding, slope, depth to bedrock or a cemented pan, hardness of bedrock or a cemented pan, and the amount and size of rock fragments in the soil.

Read more at: http://websoilsurvey.nrcs.usda.gov/app/WebSoilSurvey.aspx

Tables – Corrosion of Concrete - Summary By Map Unit

Summary by Map Unit – Dallam County, Texas (TX111)

Map Unit Symbol	Map unit name	Rating	Component name (%)	Ration reasons (numeric values)	Acres in AOI	% of AOI
DaB	Dallam loamy fine sand 1 to3 percent slopes	Not limited	Dallam (100%)		0.6	10.1%
DIA	Dallam fine sandy loam, 0 to 1 percent slopes	Not limited	Dallam (100%)		1.1	19.1%
DIB	Dallam fine sandy loam, 1 to 3 percent slopes	Not limited	Dallam (100%)		4.2	70.8%
Totals for Area of Interest					6.0	100.00%

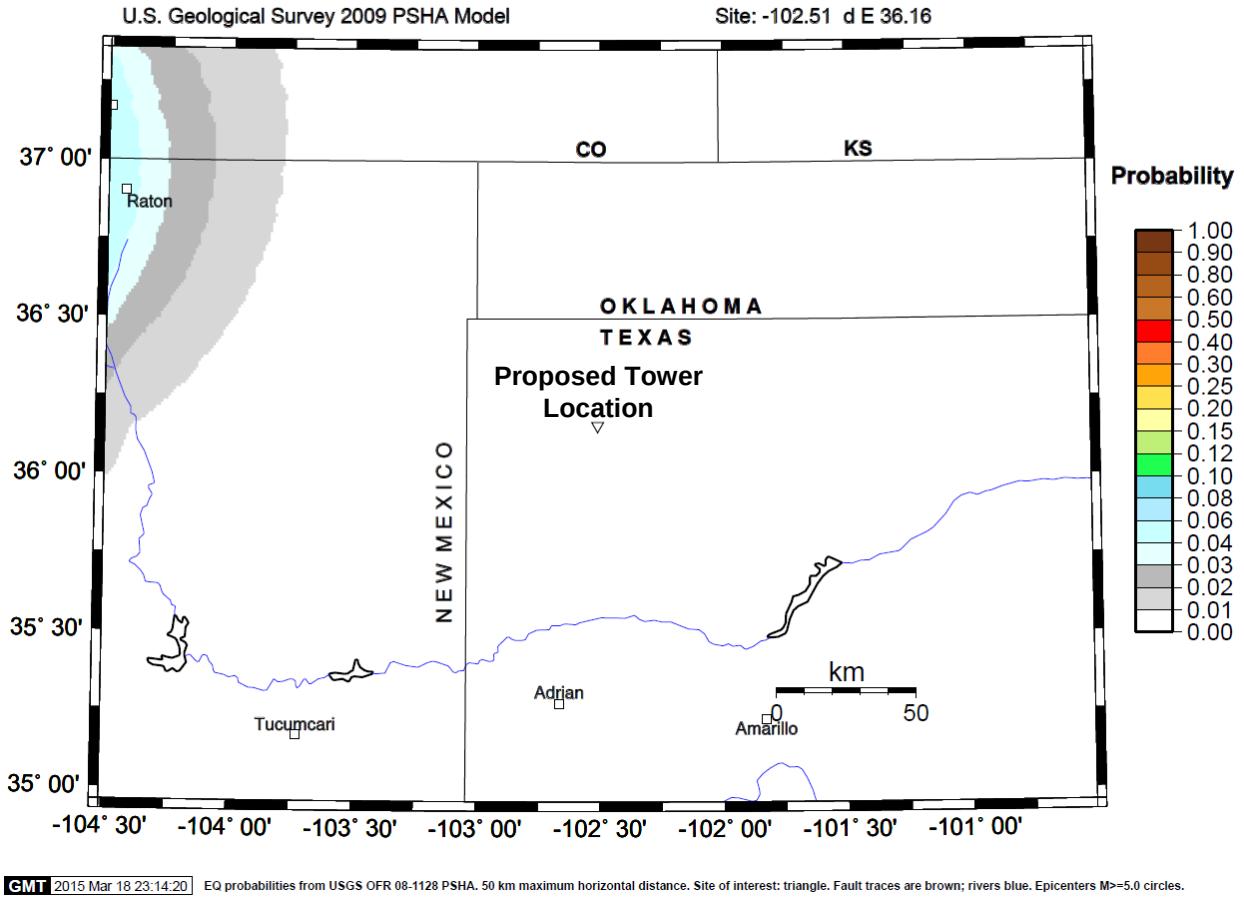
Description – Pier-beam Building Foundations (TX)

"Risk of corrosion" pertains to potential soil-induced electrochemical or chemical actions that corrodes or weakens concrete. The rate of corrosion of concrete is based mainly on the sulfate and sodium content, texture, moisture content, and acidity of the soil. Special site examination and design may be needed if the combination of factors results in a severe hazard of corrosion. The concrete in installations that intersect soil boundaries or soil layers is more susceptible to corrosion than the concrete in installations that are entirely within one kind of soil or within one soil layer.

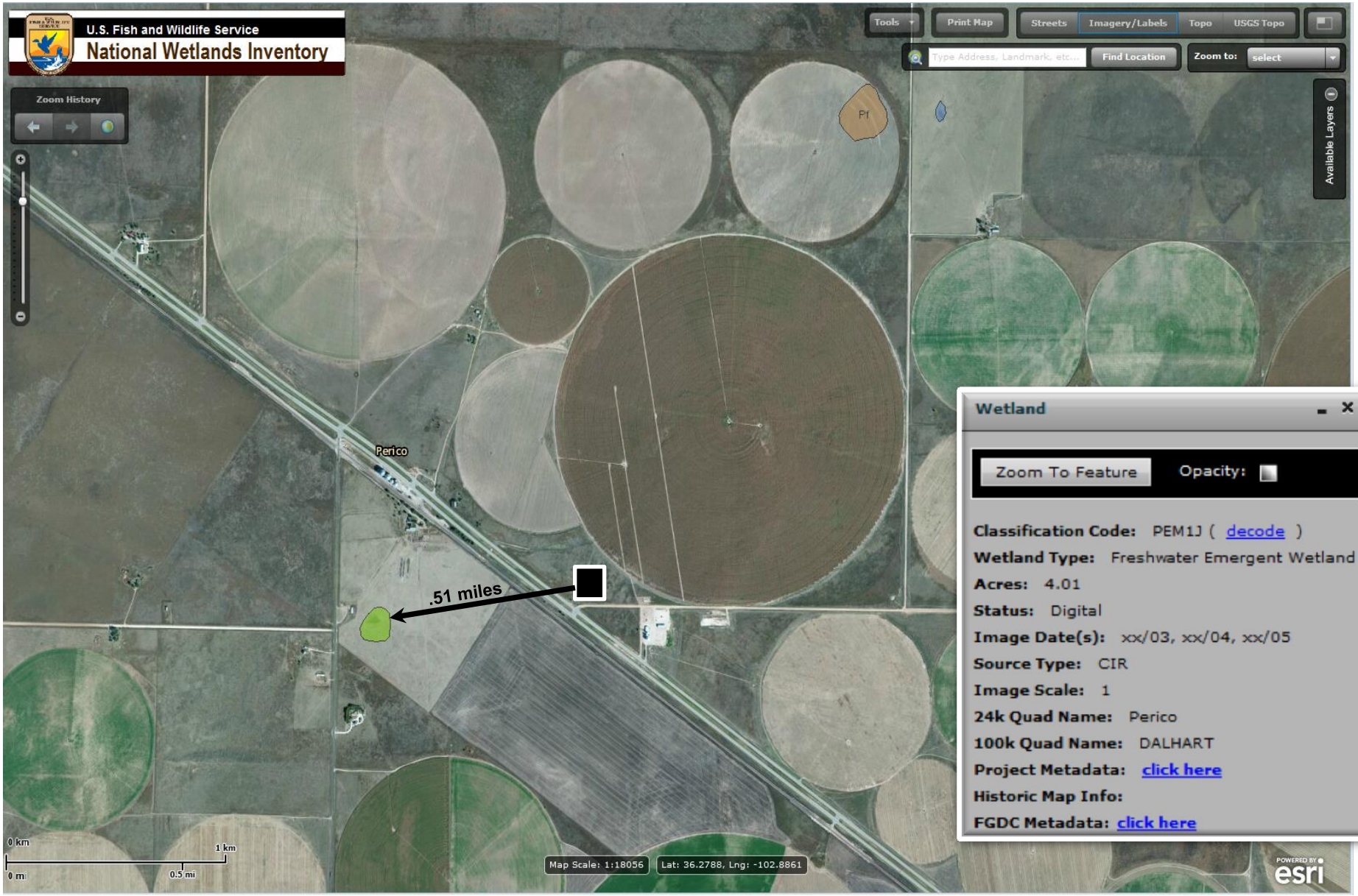
The risk of corrosion is expressed as "low", "moderate", or "high".

PROPOSED PROJECT SITE: Earthquake Probability

Probability of earthquake with M > 5.0 within 25 years & 50 km

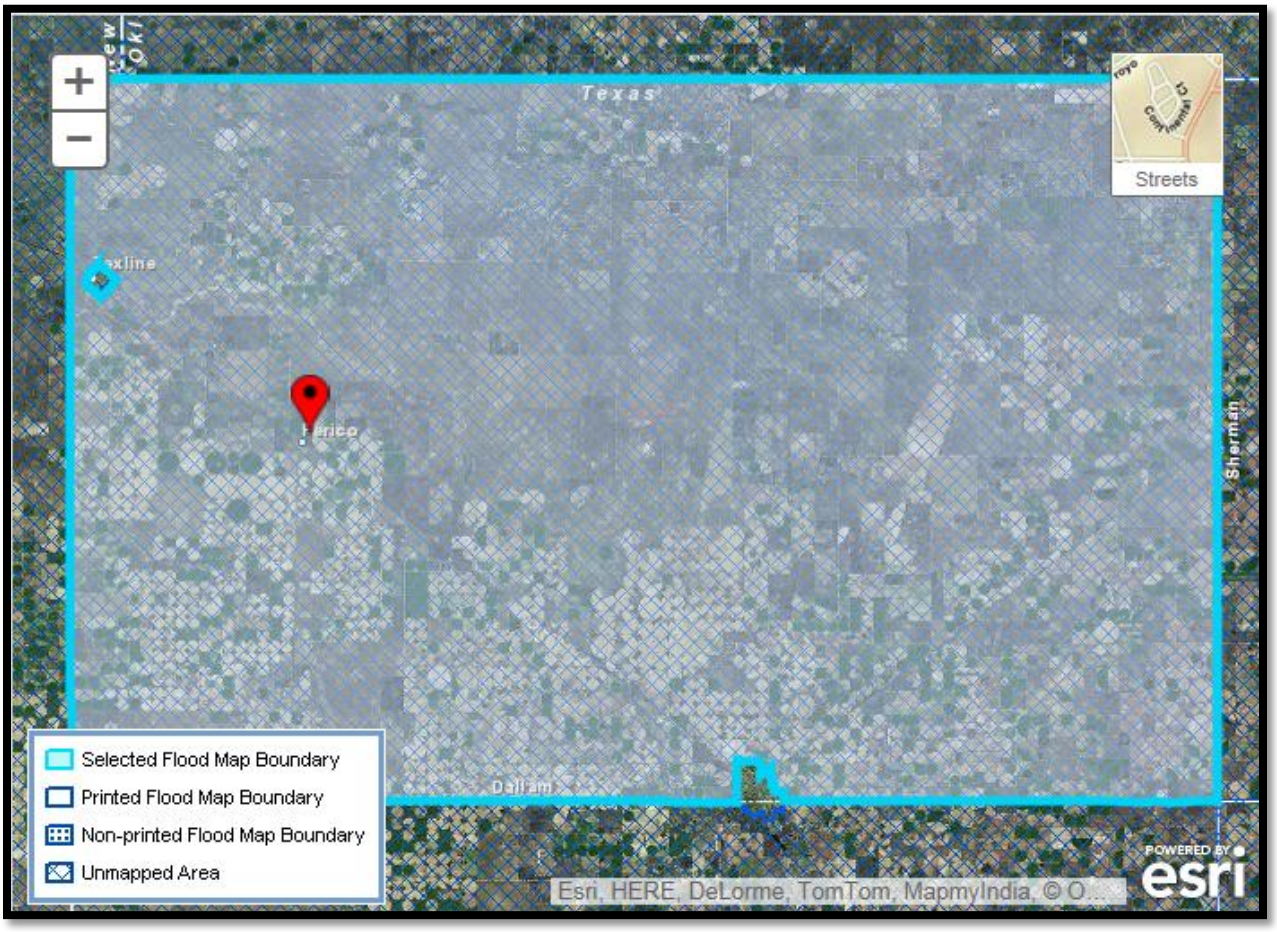


PROPOSED PROJECT SITE: Proximity to Nearest Wetland

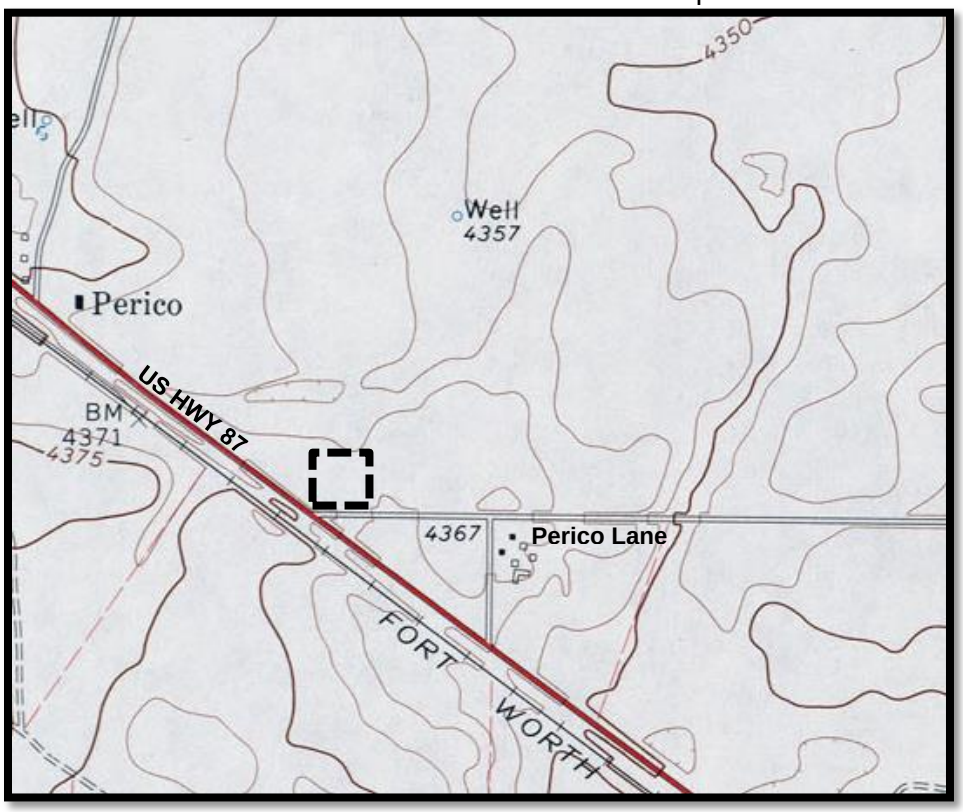


Attachment E

PROPOSED PROJECT SITE: Floodplain Map (Area Unmapped)



PROPOSED PROJECT SITE: Elevation Map



PROPOSED PROJECT SITE: Dallam County Rare, Endangered and Threatened Species List

Texas Parks & Wildlife Dept.
Annotated County Lists of Rare Species Last Revision: 4/28/2014

DALLAM COUNTY

BIRDS		Federal Status	State Status
American Peregrine Falcon	*Falco peregrinus anatum*	DL	T

year-round resident and local breeder in west Texas, nests in tall cliff eyries; also, migrant across state from more northern breeding areas in US and Canada, winters along coast and farther south; occupies wide range of habitats during migration, including urban, concentrations along coast and barrier islands; low-altitude migrant, stopovers at leading landscape edges such as lake shores, coastlines, and barrier islands.

Arctic Peregrine Falcon *Falco peregrinus tundrius* DL

migrant throughout state from subspecies' far northern breeding range, winters along coast and farther south; occupies wide range of habitats during migration, including urban, concentrations along coast and barrier islands; low-altitude migrant, stopovers at leading landscape edges such as lake shores, coastlines, and barrier islands.

Baird's Sparrow *Ammodramus bairdii*

shortgrass prairie with scattered low bushes and matted vegetation; mostly migratory in western half of State, though winters in Mexico and just across Rio Grande into Texas from Brewster through Hudspeth counties

Bald Eagle *Haliaeetus leucocephalus* DL T

found primarily near rivers and large lakes; nests in tall trees or on cliffs near water; communally roosts, especially in winter; hunts live prey, scavenges, and pirates food from other birds

Ferruginous Hawk *Buteo regalis*

open country, primarily prairies, plains, and badlands; nests in tall trees along streams or on steep slopes, cliff ledges, river-cut banks, hillsides, power line towers; year-round resident in northwestern high plains, wintering elsewhere throughout western 2/3 of Texas

Lesser Prairie-Chicken *Tympanuchus pallidicinctus* T

arid grasslands, generally interspersed with shrubs such as sand sagebrush, sand plum, skunkbush sumac, and shinnery oak shrubs, but dominated by sand dropseed, sideoats grama, sand bluestem, and little bluestem grasses; nests in a scrape lined with grasses

Mountain Plover *Charadrius montanus*

breeding: nests on high plains or shortgrass prairie, on ground in shallow depression; nonbreeding: shortgrass plains and bare, dirt (plowed) fields; primarily insectivorous

Peregrine Falcon *Falco peregrinus* DL T

both subspecies migrate across the state from more northern breeding areas in US and Canada to winter along coast and farther south; subspecies (F. p. anatum) is also a resident breeder in west Texas; the two subspecies' listing statuses differ, F.p. tundrius is no longer listed in Texas; but because the subspecies are not easily distinguishable at a distance, reference is generally made only to the species level; see subspecies for habitat.

Texas Parks & Wildlife Dept.
Annotated County Lists of Rare Species Last Revision: 4/28/2014

Prairie Falcon *Falco mexicanus*
open, mountainous areas, plains and prairie; nests on cliffs

Western Burrowing Owl *Athene cunicularia hypugaea*
open grasslands, especially prairie, plains, and savanna, sometimes in open areas such as vacant lots near human habitation or airports; nests and roosts in abandoned burrows

Whooping Crane *Grus americana* LE E
potential migrant via plains throughout most of state to coast; winters in coastal marshes of Aransas, Calhoun, and Refugio counties

INSECTS Federal Status State Status

Wiest's sphinx moth *Euproserpinus wiesti*
aeolian dunes and blowouts within more extensive sandy vegetated areas with Oenthera latifolia; caterpillars feed on leaves of Oenthera latifolia; adult nectar sources not known, adults fly from Apr - early Jun, lay eggs on the host plants, larvae feed through May, then burrow into loose sand to pupate and emerge the following spring

MAMMALS Federal Status State Status

Black bear *Ursus americanus* T/SA;NL T
bottomland hardwoods and large tracts of inaccessible forested areas; due to field characteristics similar to Louisiana Black Bear (LT, T), treat all east Texas black bears as federal and state listed Threatened

Black-footed ferret *Mustela nigripes* LE
extirpated; inhabited prairie dog towns in the general area

Black-tailed prairie dog *Cynomys ludovicianus*
dry, flat, short grasslands with low, relatively sparse vegetation, including areas overgrazed by cattle; live in large family groups

Gray wolf *Canis lupus* LE E
extirpated; formerly known throughout the western two-thirds of the state in forests, brushlands, or grasslands

Pale Townsend's big-eared bat *Corynorhinus townsendii pallescens*
roosts in caves, abandoned mine tunnels, and occasionally old buildings; hibernates in groups during winter; in summer months, males and females separate into solitary roosts and maternity colonies, respectively; single offspring born May-June; opportunistic insectivore

Texas Parks & Wildlife Dept.
Annotated County Lists of Rare Species Last Revision: 4/28/2014

Plains spotted skunk *Spilogale putorius interrupta*

catholic; open fields, prairies, croplands, fence rows, farmyards, forest edges, and woodlands; prefers wooded, brushy areas and tallgrass prairie

Swift fox *Vulpes velox*

restricted to current and historic shortgrass prairie; western and northern portions of Panhandle

Western small-footed bat *Myotis ciliolabrum*

mountainous regions of the Trans-Pecos, usually in wooded areas, also found in grassland and desert scrub habitats; roosts beneath slabs of rock, behind loose tree bark, and in buildings; maternity colonies often small and located in abandoned houses, barns, and other similar structures; apparently occurs in Texas only during spring and summer months; insectivorous

REPTILES Federal Status State Status

Texas horned lizard *Phrynosoma cornutum* T

open, arid and semi-arid regions with sparse vegetation, including grass, cactus, scattered brush or scrubby trees; soil may vary in texture from sandy to rocky; burrows into soil, enters rodent burrows, or hides under rock when inactive; breeds March-September

PROPOSED PROJECT SITE: **NEPA LAND USE CHECKLIST**

Site #: NA	**Site Name**: Dallam County Tower Site	**Site Address**: At the intersection of Perico Lane & US Hwy 87; Dallam Co. Texas		
Coordinates: N36-16-23.0 / W102-51-21.4	Expert Federal / State Jurisdictional Agencies	Summarize any preliminary finding of positive effects	Check one Box	
			Yes	No
1. Will the facility be located in an officially designated wilderness area?	National Park Service, U.S. Forest Service, Bureau of Land Management, National Wilderness Preservation System			**X**
2. Will the facility be located in an officially designated wildlife preserve	U.S. Dept. of Interior—Fish & Wildlife Service (USFWS), National Wildlife Refuge System			**X**
3. Will the facility affect listed and proposed threatened or endangered species or designated critical habitat?	United States Fish and Wildlife Service, State Wildlife Agency			**X**
4. Will the facility affect districts, sites, buildings, structures or objects listed, or eligible for listing, in the National Register of Historic Places?	State Historic Preservation Office			**X**
5. Will the facility affect Indian Religious sites?	Native American Tribal Groups			**X**
6. Will the facility be located in a Flood Plain?	Federal Emergency Management Agency			**X**
7. Will the facility construction involve significant change in surface features?	PRPC staff managing the project construction work			**X**
8. Will the antenna towers and/or supporting structures be equipped with High Intensity White Lights?	PRPC staff managing the project construction work			**X**
9. Will the facility result in human exposure to radiation in excess of the applicable safety standards?	PRPC staff managing the project construction work			**X**
Additional Considerations				
10. Will the facility be located within one mile of a National Scenic or Historic Trail?	National Park Service			**X**
11. Will the facility affect National Wild and Scenic Rivers?	National Wild and Scenic River System			**X**

The undersigned has reviewed and approved the completion of this NEPA Checklist for the above-mentioned site.

Prepared by: PRPC Regional Services Staff

Signature: _____ April 20, 2015

Gary Pitner; Executive Director Date

PANHANDLE REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION

April 20, 2015

Mr. Ronald D. Twohatchet
Chairperson
Kiowa Indian Tribe of Oklahoma
P.O. Box 369
Carnegie, Oklahoma 73015

In Regard To:

Consultation Under 36CFR 800.4(j)
State Homeland Security Grant Program (SHSP)
SAA Award Number 14-SR 99017-05
Dallam County, TX (N36-16-23.0 / W102-51-21.4)
New Communications Tower Project

Dear Mr. Twohatchet,

The Panhandle Regional Planning Commission (PRPC) has built and now maintains a public safety radio communications system that serves the entire 26-county area of the Texas Panhandle. The system, called PANCOM, was built with funding provided through the SHSP grant program.

The PRPC has had some challenges in providing clear, reliable radio reception across Dallam County from PANCOM's current Dallam County tower location (a leased site). The PRPC recently received some additional SHSP funding to build a new tower at an alternate location that will provide us the ability to improve radio communications across the County (see attached map). By improving first responder radio communications; this project will also contribute to an improvement to public safety in the coverage area served by this new tower.

Generally speaking, the proposed project includes the construction of a new 300' guyed wire communications tower on a 6-acre tract located at the intersection of US Hwy 87 and Perico Lane in Dallam County (N36-16-23.0 / W102-51-21.4). The project also includes the installation of a communications shelter at the tower base. The shelter and tower base will be fence-enclosed.

As the designated representative of the Kiowa Indian Tribe of Oklahoma; you're being contacted in accordance with the provisions of 36CFR 800.4(j). The Kiowa Indian Tribe of Oklahoma has indicated that Dallam County is within the Tribe's area of interest. Having done our due diligence review and assessment, the PRPC believes that the proposed project site contains no cultural resources or artifacts and has no significance to the Kiowa Indian Tribe of Oklahoma.

Should you disagree with this finding and have additional information we should consider, or if you have any questions, please do not hesitate to call. If we don't hear from you within thirty calendar days, the PRPC will assume that you agree within our determination and will proceed with the project. Thank you Sir.

Sincerely,

Gary Pitner, Executive Director
Panhandle Regional Planning Commission

415 West Eighth Avenue
P.O. Box 9257
Amarillo, TX 79105
(806) 372-3381
(806) 373-3268 (fax)
www.theprpc.org

Attachment I

PANHANDLE REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION

April 20, 2015

Mr. Alonzo Chalepah
Acting Chairperson
Apache Tribe of Oklahoma
P.O. Box 1220
Anadarko, Oklahoma 73005

In Regard To:

Consultation Under 36CFR 800.4(j)
State Homeland Security Grant Program (SHSP)
SAA Award Number 14-SR 99017-05
Dallam County, TX (N36-16-23.0 / W102-51-21.4)
New Communications Tower Project

Dear Mr. Chalepah,

The Panhandle Regional Planning Commission (PRPC) has built and now maintains a public safety radio communications system that serves the entire 26-county area of the Texas Panhandle. The system, called PANCOM, was built with funding provided through the SHSP grant program.

The PRPC has had some challenges in providing clear, reliable radio reception across Dallam County from PANCOM's current Dallam County tower location (a leased site). The PRPC recently received some additional SHSP funding to build a new tower at an alternate location that will provide us the ability to improve radio communications across the County (see attached map). By improving first responder radio communications; this project will also contribute to an improvement to public safety in the coverage area served by this new tower.

Generally speaking, the proposed project includes the construction of a new 300' guyed wire communications tower on a 6-acre tract located at the intersection of US Hwy 87 and Perico Lane in Dallam County (N36-16-23.0 / W102-51-21.4). The project also includes the installation of a communications shelter at the tower base. The shelter and tower base will be fence-enclosed.

As the designated representative of the Apache Tribe of Oklahoma; you're being contacted in accordance with the provisions of 36CFR 800.4(j). The Apache Tribe of Oklahoma has indicated that Dallam County is within the Tribe's area of interest. Having done our due diligence review and assessment, the PRPC believes that the proposed project site contains no cultural resources or artifacts and has no significance to the Apache Tribe of Oklahoma.

Should you disagree with this finding and have additional information we should consider, or if you have any questions, please do not hesitate to call. If we don't hear from you within thirty calendar days, the PRPC will assume that you agree within our determination and will proceed with the project. Thank you Sir.

Sincerely,

Gary Pitner, Executive Director
Panhandle Regional Planning Commission

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Amarillo, TX 79105
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Attachment I

PANHANDLE REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION

April 20, 2015

Mr. Johnny Wauqua
Chairperson
Comanche Nation
P.O. Box 908
Lawton, Oklahoma 73502

In Regard To:

Consultation Under 36CFR 800.4(j)
State Homeland Security Grant Program (SHSP)
SAA Award Number 14-SR 99017-05
Dallam County, TX (N36-16-23.0 / W102-51-21.4)
New Communications Tower Project

Dear Mr. Wauqua,

The Panhandle Regional Planning Commission (PRPC) has built and now maintains a public safety radio communications system that serves the entire 26-county area of the Texas Panhandle. The system, called PANCOM, was built with funding provided through the SHSP grant program.

The PRPC has had some challenges in providing clear, reliable radio reception across Dallam County from PANCOM's current Dallam County tower location (a leased site). The PRPC recently received some additional SHSP funding to build a new tower at an alternate location that will provide us the ability to improve radio communications across the County (see attached map). By improving first responder radio communications; this project will also contribute to an improvement to public safety in the coverage area served by this new tower.

Generally speaking, the proposed project includes the construction of a new 300' guyed wire communications tower on a 6-acre tract located at the intersection of US Hwy 87 and Perico Lane in Dallam County (N36-16-23.0 / W102-51-21.4). The project also includes the installation of a communications shelter at the tower base. The shelter and tower base will be fence-enclosed.

As the designated representative for the Comanche Nation; you're being contacted in accordance with the provisions of 36CFR 800.4(j). The Comanche Nation has indicated that Dallam County is within the Nation's area of interest. Having done our due diligence review and assessment, the PRPC believes that the proposed project site contains no cultural resources or artifacts and has no significance to the Comanche Nation.

Should you disagree with this finding and have additional information we should consider, or if you have any questions, please do not hesitate to call. If we don't hear from you within thirty calendar days, the PRPC will assume that you agree within our determination and will proceed with the project. Thank you Sir.

Sincerely,

Gary Pitner, Executive Director
Panhandle Regional Planning Commission

Cc: Mr. Jimmy Arterberry THPO
Comanche Nation

415 West Eighth Avenue
P.O. Box 9257
Amarillo, TX 79105
(806) 372-3381
(806) 373-3268 (fax)
www.theprpc.org

Attachment I

PANHANDLE REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION

April 20, 2015

Mr. Levi Pesata
President
Jicarilla Apache Nation
P.O. Box 507
Dulce, NM 87528

In Regard To:

Consultation Under 36CFR 800.4(j)
State Homeland Security Grant Program (SHSP)
SAA Award Number 14-SR 99017-05
Dallam County, TX (N36-16-23.0 / W102-51-21.4)
New Communications Tower Project

Dear Mr. Pesata,

The Panhandle Regional Planning Commission (PRPC) has built and now maintains a public safety radio communications system that serves the entire 26-county area of the Texas Panhandle. The system, called PANCOM, was built with funding provided through the SHSP grant program.

The PRPC has had some challenges in providing clear, reliable radio reception across Dallam County from PANCOM's current Dallam County tower location (a leased site). The PRPC recently received some additional SHSP funding to build a new tower at an alternate location that will provide us the ability to improve radio communications across the County (see attached map). By improving first responder radio communications; this project will also contribute to an improvement to public safety in the coverage area served by this new tower.

Generally speaking, the proposed project includes the construction of a new 300' guyed wire communications tower on a 6-acre tract located at the intersection of US Hwy 87 and Perico Lane in Dallam County (N36-16-23.0 / W102-51-21.4). The project also includes the installation of a communications shelter at the tower base. The shelter and tower base will be fence-enclosed.

As the designated representative for the Jicarilla Apache Nation; you're being contacted in accordance with the provisions of 36CFR 800.4(j). The Jicarilla Apache Nation has indicated that Dallam County is within the Nation's area of interest. Having done our due diligence review and assessment, the PRPC believes that the proposed project site contains no cultural resources or artifacts and has no significance to the Jicarilla Apache Nation.

Should you disagree with this finding and have additional information we should consider, or if you have any questions, please do not hesitate to call. If we don't hear from you within thirty calendar days, the PRPC will assume that you agree within our determination and will proceed with the project. Thank you Sir.

Sincerely,

Gary Pitner, Executive Director
Panhandle Regional Planning Commission

Cc: Mr. Jeffrey Blythe: THPO
Jicarilla Apache Nation

415 West Eighth Avenue
P.O. Box 9257
Amarillo, TX 79105
(806) 372-3381
(806) 373-3268 (fax)
www.theprpc.org

Attachment I

PANHANDLE REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION

April 20, 2015

Mr. Mark Wolfe
Executive Director
Texas Historical Commission
P.O. Box 12276
Austin, Texas 78711

In Regard To:

Consultation Under 36CFR 800.4(a)
State Homeland Security Grant Program (SHSP)
SAA Award Number 14-SR 99017-05
Dallam County, TX (N36-16-23.0 / W102-51-21.4)
New Communications Tower Project

Dear Mr. Wolfe,

The Panhandle Regional Planning Commission (PRPC) has built and now maintains a public safety radio communications system that serves the entire 26-county area of the Texas Panhandle. The system, called PANCOM, was built with funding provided through the SHSP grant program.

The PRPC has had some challenges in providing clear, reliable radio reception across Dallam County from PANCOM's current Dallam County tower location (a leased site). The PRPC recently received some additional SHSP funding to build a new tower at an alternate location that will provide us the ability to improve radio communications across the County (see attached map). By improving first responder radio communications; this project will also contribute to an improvement to public safety in the coverage area served by this new tower.

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In accordance with the provisions of 36CFR 800.4(a) and the Antiquities Code of Texas (Texas Natural Resources Code, Section 191.0001 et. seq.), the City of Groom has conducted a historical and cultural survey and reviewed the published list of the National Register of Historic Places and the most recent publication listing state historic places. To the best of our knowledge the project site has no archaeological or historical significance.

Should you disagree with our findings and have additional information we should consider, or if you have any questions, please do not hesitate to call. If we do not hear from you within thirty calendar days, we will assume that you agree within our determination and will proceed with the project. Thank you Sir.

Sincerely,

Gary Pitner, Executive Director
Panhandle Regional Planning Commission

415 West Eighth Avenue
P.O. Box 9257
Amarillo, TX 79105
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Attachment I

Proposed Project Site: FAA Notification

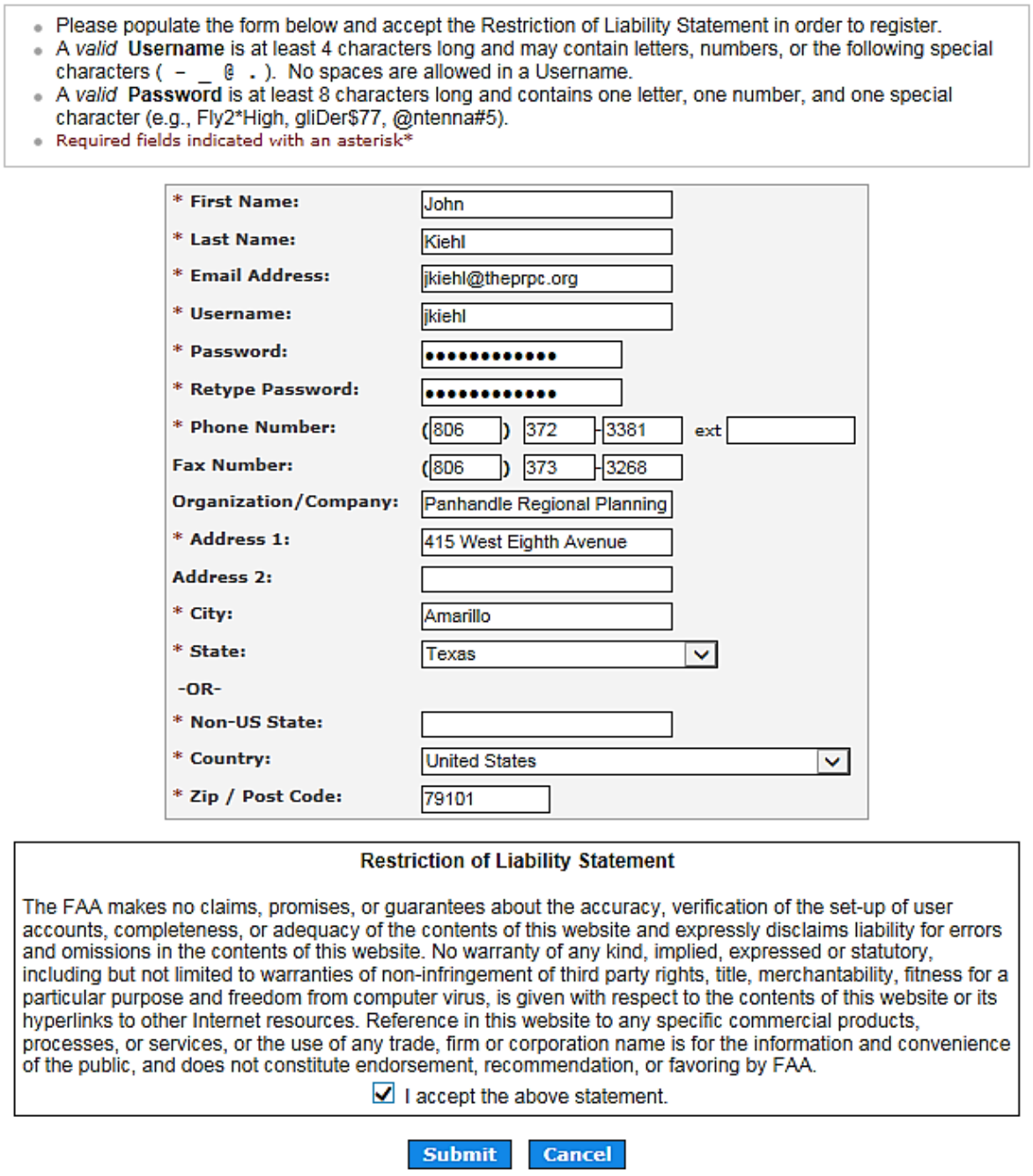
The NEBTEX LAND CO Airport is the only airfield within 5 miles of the proposed project site. It is a privately-owned facility located approximately 1.4 miles to the southwest of the proposed project site. The facility's 2600' X 50' turf runway runs north/south. FAA records do not include the frequency of take-offs/landings for this facility. The new communications tower will be equipped with a flashing strobe beacon in accordance with FAA/FCC regulations. The new communications tower should not adversely affect or interfere with the approach patterns to this privately owned facility.

Information pertaining to this facility can be found of the Federal Aviation Administration's website at: http://www.faa.gov/airports/airport_safety/airportdata_5010/menu/#reports.

14 CFR Part 77.9 states that any person/organization who intends to sponsor any of the following construction or alterations must notify the Administrator of the FAA:

- any construction or alteration exceeding 200 ft above ground level

- any construction or alteration:
  - within 20,000 ft of a public use or military airport which exceeds a 100:1 surface from any point on the runway of each airport with its longest runway more than 3,200 ft
  - within 10,000 ft of a public use or military airport which exceeds a 50:1 surface from any point on the runway of each airport with its longest runway no more than 3,200 ft
  - within 5,000 ft of a public use heliport which exceeds a 25:1 surface
- any highway, railroad or other traverse way whose prescribed adjusted height would exceed the above noted standards
- when requested by the FAA
- any construction or alteration located on a public use airport or heliport regardless of height or location.



- Please populate the form below and accept the Restriction of Liability Statement in order to register.
- A *valid* **Username** is at least 4 characters long and may contain letters, numbers, or the following special characters (- _ @ .). No spaces are allowed in a Username.
- A *valid* **Password** is at least 8 characters long and contains one letter, one number, and one special character (e.g., Fly2*High, gliDer$77, @ntenna#5).
- Required fields indicated with an asterisk*

* First Name:	John
* Last Name:	Kiehl
* Email Address:	jkiehl@theprpc.org
* Username:	jkiehl
* Password:	••••••••••••
* Retype Password:	••••••••••••
* Phone Number:	(806) 372-3381 ext
Fax Number:	(806) 373-3268
Organization/Company:	Panhandle Regional Planning
* Address 1:	415 West Eighth Avenue
Address 2:	
* City:	Amarillo
* State:	Texas
-OR-	
* Non-US State:	
* Country:	United States
* Zip / Post Code:	79101

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The PRPC has initially registered on the FAA's Obstruction Evaluation/Airport Airspace Analysis site (https://oeaaa.faa.gov/oeaaa/external/portal.jsp) and will submit the requisite notification information to the FAA once this draft has been approved.