



File Code: 1950

Date: March 31, 2008

Dear Friend of the Ashley

The Ashley National Forest has two Communication Use Leases that expired December 31, 2006 on the Vernal Ranger District. The two leases are for (1) Questar InfoComm Inc., Communications Lease #VRL4057; and (2) State of Utah, Division of Information Technology Services, Communications Lease #VRL1036. Both leases are for existing communication facilities located on Grizzly Ridge Communication Site (T. 1 S., R. 22 E., Sec. 17, SLM) west of State Highway 191.

**Questar InfoComm, Inc.:**

Currently has one building and two towers. Lattice towers are self-supporting; one at 60 ft. and one at 120 ft. tall. The current types of uses include microwave, PMRS, and telemetry radio systems. Their tenants furnish commercial mobile radio and cellular service. This holder previously held a 10-year lease and was in full compliance at the time of expiration.

Customer/tenant: Union Telephone Company, Nextel.

**State of Utah, Division of Information Technology Services:**

Currently has one building and one tower. Lattice tower is self-supporting at 120 ft. tall. The current type of use is for wireless microwave and radio communications. This holder previously had a 20-year lease and was in full compliance at the time of expiration.

Customer/tenant: Utah Education Network (University of Utah), Western Wireless (formally American Rural Cellular), Uintah Basin Electronic Telecommunications (UBET-UBATC), and Ashley National Forest.

All facilities are located on the Grizzly Ridge communications site. Access to the communications site and facilities is provided along Forest Road #10056. The permittees and their tenants access their facilities along existing routes, in conformance with the Ashley National Forest, Vernal Ranger District Travel Map. Before the lease expirations, both permittees were in full compliance with the terms and conditions of their special use authorizations. The project files are located at the Supervisor's Office.

I am proposing to renew the Communication Use Leases issued to Questar InfoComm Inc. and State of Utah, Division of Information Technology Services for another 30 years. Intermountain Region (R4) policy directs forests to renew communications leases to the maximum time-frame allowed of 30 years. No new actions or developments are proposed, solely to renew the expiring communication use leases through December 31, 2038.



Communication sites are a viable use on the Ashley National Forest. These facilities provide communication support to manage Questar's natural gas pipeline, provide communication support for public education through the State of Utah, and provide tenant support that offer public services such as mobile radio services and cellular wireless support to the region. Mobile radio and cellular wireless services would be severely impacted in the region without these facilities.

This action may be categorically excluded from documentation in an environmental impact statement or an environmental assessment because the decision is to approve "the continued use of land where such use has not changed since authorized and no change in the physical environment or facilities are proposed (FSH 1909.15, Sec. 31.2.3h)." The categorical exclusion is appropriate in this situation because there are no extraordinary circumstances potentially having effects which may significantly affect the environment. Any decision issued under this authority would not be appealable under 36 CFR 215. However, determination of the appropriate level of analysis and documentation will be made only after reviewing specialist reports, biological evaluations/assessments, public comments, and other pertinent information and analyses.

You are invited to comment on the project at this time. Comments that are specific are most helpful. Comments received in response to this notice, including names and addresses of those who comment, will be considered part of the public record for this project. Send your written comments to:

Nicholas T. Schmelter, District Ranger  
Vernal Ranger District  
355 North Vernal Ave.  
Vernal, UT 84078

Comments can also be e-mailed to [comments-intermtn-ashley@fs.fed.us](mailto:comments-intermtn-ashley@fs.fed.us). It would be most useful to receive your electronic comments in MS Word (\*.doc) or rich text format (\*.rtf). Comments are due by **May 16, 2008**. For further information concerning this proposal, please contact Omero Torres by phone at (435) 781-5124.

Thank you for your interest and participation in the management of the Ashley National Forest.

Sincerely,