

Digital 299 Broadband Project

Project Information and Background

Vero Fiber Networks, a certified telecommunications service provider, is proposing to install fiber optic cable in Northern California along California State Route 299 (SR-299) from Eureka to Cottonwood.

The public was last contacted about the Project in 2019 when involved agencies collected comments during public scoping. The Project was put on hold for most of 2020, with a new proponent—Vero Fiber Networks—picking up the Project as the new owner to continue permitting and building Digital 299 as planned with minimal changes.

This newsletter is to inform you that the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA)/California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) document is ready for public review. The NEPA/CEQA document is a technical report analyzing the potential environmental effects of the Project. This report will be used by public agencies to support their decisions and authorizations.

We invite you to review the document and submit comments that you would like agencies to consider in their decision-making. Instructions for how to provide comments are included in this newsletter.

Project Location and Timeline

The Project alignment generally follows SR-299 from Eureka to Redding, and south to Cottonwood. This primary “backbone” alignment will be built as Phase I of the Project, estimated to begin construction in June or July 2022. Last-mile connections serving communities along the “backbone” will be built as Phase II of the project once Phase I is complete.

Data collection and technical studies were nearly complete when work on the Project was put on hold in 2020. Those efforts have been refreshed and completed in 2021. The results of those studies are being summarized for the public in the NEPA/CEQA document as part of this review phase.

How to Access the NEPA/CEQA Document

Electronic copies are available for download at the California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC), Shasta-Trinity National Forest (STNF), and Bureau of Land Management (BLM) Project websites:

CPUC: <https://ia.cpuc.ca.gov/environment/nfo/transcon/>

STNF: <https://www.fs.usda.gov/project/?project=56456>

BLM: <https://eplanning.blm.gov/eplanning-ui/project/2017155/510>

Hard copies are available at locations near Redding, Lewiston, Weaverville and Eureka (specific addresses provided below).

You can email Andrew Barnsdale or Tommy Alexander to request an electronic copy emailed directly to you:

- andrew.barnsdale@cpuc.ca.gov
- talexander@transcon.com

Getting Involved or Making Comments

How to Provide Comments

We welcome your comments on the Digital 299 NEPA/CEQA document. You can provide comments in the following ways:

- Complete and mail the enclosed pre-addressed comment form (note that postage is required)
- Call (888)-241-1890 and leave a detailed voice message; or
- Email your comment to either of the following individuals:
 - andrew.barnsdale@cpuc.ca.gov
 - talexander@transcon.com

The comment period is 30 days; comments must be received or post-marked no later than **February 2, 2022** for agencies to consider your input.

Comments are due by February 2, 2022.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

For more Project information, please visit: <https://ia.cpuc.ca.gov/environment/info/transcon/>

Hard copies of the NEPA/CEQA document are available at the following locations:

Redding City Hall
777 Cypress Avenue
Redding, CA 96001

Lewiston Community Cen.
130 Texas Avenue
Lewiston, CA 96052

Trinity County Library
351 Main Street
Weaverville, CA 96093

Humboldt Bay Aquatic Cen.
921 Waterfront Drive
Eureka, CA 95501

PROJECT PROCESS

1 PROJECT IDENTIFIED/PROPOSED

2 SCOPING & ISSUES IDENTIFICATION

Public comments & agency comments

3 RESOURCE ANALYSIS & ALTERNATIVE COMPARISON

4 IMPACT ANALYSIS & WRITING OF NEPA / CEQA DOCUMENT

5 DRAFT NEPA/CEQA DOCUMENT

Public comments & agency comments

6 FINAL NEPA/CEQA DOCUMENT

7 DECISION NOTICES

INITIAL COMMENTS ADDRESSED

ALL COMMENTS ADDRESSED

ENCLOSED:

Digital 299 Alignment Map
Comment Form