

Re: Use Permit # U_2019_0011, Property Owner Bette Nixon, Project Applicant AT&TT

Dear Mendocino County Supervisors,

The following quote is the Mission Statement of our Board of Supervisors:

The Mendocino County Board of Supervisors' Mission Statement includes:

"The County's mission is to deliver services that meet: Public safety, health, social, cultural, education, transportation, economic, and environmental needs of our communities".

I am requesting that you reject this proposed cell tower project. Throughout the Draft Negative Declaration, it is stated in all categories that there is "No Impact, or Less Than Significant Impact." There are in fact many impacts of great concern.

This tower project is in a **"Very High Fire Hazard"** Zone. Adding any additional fire hazards to our very vulnerable county is extremely concerning, considering the already extremely high fire danger demonstrated in both in the past few years, and in the present including the current vast August Complex fire, which has threatened our community in Willits. We have also experienced multiple lightening fires in Mendocino County. The proposed tower site is in a very high fire hazard area with dying Oak and Pine trees. Electrical equipment and towers attract lightening. With Climate Change bringing unpredictably high winds, fires are spreading at rapid speed. Adding this cell tower complete with diesel storage and batteries in this very high fire hazard zones seems incomprehensible. Please review and adopt safer options to provide high-speed internet. Communication plans for Mendocino County must expand the use of underground fiber-optic cables, which are already in place in the Pine Mountain area. Also, some of our cell towers failed during the 2017 fires in Mendocino County. I rely on my landline for safety messages. During the PGE shut-off in 2019, some cell towers again failed. For many, the only means of communication were our landlines.

An Environmental Impact Report is needed re this proposed project. Under **Biological Resources**, all categories a) through f) state "No Impact." to any species habitat, riparian habitat, wetlands, etc. This report should include specific review of and impact on all species of plants and wildlife, including migratory species. In addition to the disruptive effect on species through construction, road widening, etc., it has been widely scientifically documented that radio frequency radiation (RF) and microwave radiation have substantial negative effects on animals, birds, fish, and insects (including bees and butterflies). I am requesting that the County authorize a comprehensive biological and botanical field study to be completed and publicly available prior to any further ground-breaking activities. I also oppose having cell towers in areas zoned as Rangeland (RL), regarding the welfare of the horses and other present or future range animals. I am also concerned about the negative effects to any farm projects, including the growing of food and vegetables. I saw no mention of this in the Negative Declaration. Any applications for towers should also take Residential zoning and population density into consideration.

Regarding the proposed tower facility site, on Page 6 of the **Planning Commission Staff Report for Major Use Permit states: “MCC Section 20.196.020 (C)** That such use will not under the circumstances of that particular case, constitute a nuisance or be detrimental to the health, safety, peace, morals, comfort or general welfare of persons residing or working in or passing through the neighborhood of such proposed use, or be detrimental or injurious to property and improvements in the neighborhood or to the general welfare of the county; provided, that if any proposed building or use is necessary for the public health, safety or general welfare, the finding shall be to that effect; The proposed wireless communication facility will not constitute a public nuisance or be detrimental to the health, safety, peace, morals, comfort or general welfare of persons residing or working in the area of the proposed use if constructed in conformance with the recommended Conditions of Approval.” I fail to understand why it is stated above that this will not impact public health, safety or general welfare without very detailed studies specific to the proposed site.

I see no references regarding the cumulative effects from RF Emissions from existing towers, and from the many proposed AT&T cell towers in Mendocino County. Please provide comprehensive studies on the cumulative effects of all towers in Mendocino County before any further action is taken re this project.

The Draft Negative Declaration states that “The nearest existing or proposed school is located approximately 4.6 miles northwest of the project site. The Applicant has demonstrated conformance with EMF standards. Therefore, there would be a **less than significant impact from emissions as a result of implementing the proposed project**”. I ask: **Is not any impact on children significant enough to warrant further review?** Federal standards based on EMF emissions of over 2 decades ago, do not demonstrate current effects on women, children, fetuses or even the average sized man. Federal standards are outdated for realistic assessment of a significant or “a less than significant impact” from emissions in today’s world per current scientific research. I understand the report refers to the Willits Charter School. Does the mention of this perhaps infer some acknowledgement that emissions from cell towers can be detrimental to the health of children? Most Willits schools are also within close range of the Charter School. For example, Baechtel Grove Middle School is only a further 0.5 miles from the Charter School, per Google directions, (therefore less than 0.5 miles as the crow flies). Children are at high risk from detrimental EMF exposure. The public deserve to know what that “Less than significant impact” will be. And what of the children on living on Pine Mountain close to the tower. Would the impact on them be greater than at the Willits Charter School? What will be the impact to the children who currently live within a number of feet from the cell tower facility site? Has anyone already actually studied the actual current levels of RF Radiation at any of the Willits school sites while they are in session?

Attachments N and Q of the staff report show drawings/plans of the proposed tower facility which state “Future Microwave” and include a drawing of a microwave dish. After 4G LTE, comes 5G which, AT&T Mobility and their partners can add at any time when it may be lucrative for them to do so. If this project is approved, future impacts from enhancements at the site will not have public hearings for the community to voice their concerns. I am hereby requesting that the County Planners provide further information to the public regarding the

specific distance(s) that the radiation from a future microwave dish will reach. I have heard 6.2 miles. If this is so, could this not affect all of the schools within the City of Willits? I request that our County Supervisors do no harm.

How much will the RF emissions from the proposed cell Tower impact fragile patients at Howard Hospital? Will the County or the telecommunications agencies fund safe spaces for the EMF sensitive in our hospitals? In Britain, Gatwick Airport has recently added EMF safe zones. Who will be sued or liable for the wrongful injury or death, and loss of ability to live a normal healthy, life and to work? For those having heart problems due to EMF, and subsequently being treated in a hospital where the EMF levels are already high, having no precautionary safe measures in place may be a fatal. I understand that due to Federal guidelines, the County is not required to review, or should ignore potential health effects of cell towers, antennae and potential future enhancements such as microwave dishes. However, Mendocino County signed its Precautionary Principle Policy which states: "There is a duty to take anticipatory action to prevent harm". I ask that you follow this path and do no harm.

I thank you in advance for exploring the above concerns further to mitigate the risks before moving forward with the proposed Pine Mountain cell tower.

Most sincerely,
Jan Phallen-Fike
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