

CALIFORNIA STATE LANDS COMMISSION

100 Howe Avenue, Suite 100-South
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Established in 1938

April 29, 2019

JENNIFER LUCCHESI, Executive Officer

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2019049159

SCH # _____

CSLC File Ref: MND #796

W27136; W30150.13

**NOTICE OF PUBLIC REVIEW AND INTENT TO ADOPT A
MITIGATED NEGATIVE DECLARATION**

(State CEQA Guidelines, sections 15072 and 15073)

A Mitigated Negative Declaration (MND) has been prepared by the California State Lands Commission (CSLC), as lead agency under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) (Pub. Resources Code, § 21000 et seq.), in response to an application submitted by RTI Infrastructure, Inc. for the RTI Infrastructure, Inc. Manchester Subsea Cables Project (Project). The MND was prepared in compliance with the requirements of CEQA, the State CEQA Guidelines (Cal. Code Regs., tit. 14, § 15000 et seq.), and CSLC Regulations (Cal. Code Regs., tit. 2, § 2901 et seq.).

Project Title: RTI Manchester, Inc. Manchester Subsea Cables Project

Project Location: Manchester, Mendocino County

Project Description: The Project would install subsea fiber optic cables for telecommunication services connecting California to four different locations in Asia and Australia. The Project includes installation of structures on land (terrestrial) and in ocean (marine) just north of unincorporated town of Manchester, Mendocino County. The Project involves installing four 5- to 6-inch-diameter steel conduits offshore, primarily through horizontal directional drilling extending approximately 0.6 miles offshore from an onshore landing site and installing approximately 10 miles of underground conduits onshore on both sides of the State Route 1 and other public roads to one of three cable landing stations in Manchester. The cables would be pulled from offshore through these conduits and, once connected, would transmit signals to the technical hubs in Silicon Valley (south of San Francisco). The four different transpacific routes would stabilize and diversify telecommunications connections in case of disasters interrupting telecommunication data exchange.

The Project MND can be downloaded, in PDF format, at <https://www.slc.ca.gov/ceqa/>. Electronic or paper copies of the MND are also available for review at the locations below:

Coast Community Library
225 Main Street
Point Arena, CA 95468

California State Lands Commission¹
100 Howe Ave., Suite 100-South
Sacramento, CA 95825

The MND is available for at least a 30-day review and comment period beginning Monday, April 29, 2019 and ending Wednesday, May 29, 2019. All comments must be received by **5:00 PM Wednesday, May 29, 2019**, and can be sent to:

California State Lands Commission or Email: CEQA.comments@slc.ca.gov
Attention: Afifa Awan
100 Howe Ave., Suite 100-South
Sacramento, CA 95825-8202

Important Notes to Commenters

1. You are encouraged to submit electronic copies of your written comments. If written comments are sent by email, please send the comments to CEQA.comments@slc.ca.gov and write the following in the subject line of your email: RTI Manchester Subsea Cables Project.
2. If you represent a public agency, please provide the name, email address, and telephone number for the contact person in your agency for the Project.
3. Before including your mailing or email address, telephone number, or other personal identifying information in your comment, please be aware that the entire comment—including personal identifying information—may become publicly available, including in the MND and posted on the Internet). The CSLC will make available for inspection, in their entirety, all comments submitted by organizations or businesses or by individuals identifying themselves as representatives of organizations or businesses.

The Project's MND will be considered for adoption at the June 28, 2019, scheduled meeting of the CSLC, unless otherwise stated on the CSLC's website. The specific time and location will be posted on the CSLC's website at <https://www.slc.ca.gov/> when specific meeting information becomes known.

Should you have any questions or need additional information, please contact Afifa Awan at (916) 574-1891 or Afifa.Awan@slc.ca.gov.

Jennifer Lucchesi
Executive Officer

¹ All documents referenced in the MND will also be available at this address for public review during normal working hours. (State CEQA Guidelines, § 15072, subd. (g)(4).)



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INITIAL STUDY/MITIGATED NEGATIVE DECLARATION

RTI INFRASTRUCTURE, INC. MANCHESTER SUBSEA CABLES PROJECT

April 2019



CEQA Lead Agency:

California State Lands Commission
100 Howe Avenue, Suite 100 South
Sacramento, California 95825

Applicant:

RTI Infrastructure, Inc.
268 Bush Street, #77
San Francisco, CA 94104



MISSION STATEMENT

The California State Lands Commission provides the people of California with effective stewardship of the lands, waterways, and resources entrusted to its care through preservation, restoration, enhancement, responsible economic development, and the promotion of public access.

CEQA DOCUMENT WEBSITE

www.slc.ca.gov/ceqa/

Geographic Location (Point at Mean High Water Line)

Latitude: 39° 03.0' N
Longitude: 123° 48.05' W
NAD83 Datum

Cover Photo: Steve Pappas
(Photo courtesy of ICF)

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1 This Initial Study/Mitigated Negative Declaration (IS/MND) has been prepared by the
2 California State Lands Commission (Commission or CSLC), as lead agency under the
3 California Environmental Quality Act (Pub. Resources Code, § 21000 et seq.), to analyze
4 and disclose the environmental effects associated with the proposed RTI Infrastructure,
5 Inc. Manchester Subsea Cables Project (Project). The Project would authorize RTI
6 Infrastructure, Inc. (Applicant or RTI) to build the infrastructure in terrestrial and marine
7 areas to be able to connect up to four fiber optic cables coming from Asia and Australia
8 (Figure ES-1).

9 The CSLC prepared an MND because it determined that, while the IS identifies potentially
10 significant impacts related to the Project, mitigation measures (MMs) incorporated into
11 the Project proposal and agreed to by the Applicant will avoid or mitigate those impacts
12 to a point where no significant impacts occur.

13 **PROPOSED PROJECT**

14 As the world relies on faster digital media and telecommunication systems (cell phones,
15 Internet, voice, streaming videos, banking transactions, shopping online, etc.), the data
16 transferring systems need to be updated to keep up with the technical advancements to
17 transmit uninterrupted telecommunication data. The proposed Project is going to help
18 transmit telecommunication data at a much faster speed with more connections between
19 the United States and Asia and the United States and Australia (Figure ES-1).

20 The Project would be located both on land (terrestrial) and in ocean (marine) areas just
21 north of the unincorporated town of Manchester, Mendocino County. The terrestrial
22 components of the telecommunication cable systems would be located above submerged
23 lands, or above the ordinary high-water mark to the onshore cable landing parcel (CLP)
24 (Figure ES-2). The initial support facilities, including the horizontal directional drilling of
25 four marine steel bore pipes offshore (5 or 6 inches in diameter), would be constructed in
26 2019 and 2020 for all of the cables coming to Manchester from 2020 until 2025. The four
27 different routes in the ocean stabilize and diversify telecommunications connections in
28 case of disasters interrupting data exchange.

29 Each cable would arrive offshore, it would be pulled through a marine steel bore pipe,
30 and then brought on land to the CLP. Each cable would then be routed through an
31 underground conduit system on both sides of State Route 1 (SR 1) and public roads to
32 connect with one of the three existing cable landing stations in Manchester that would
33 transmit signals to the technical hubs in Silicon Valley (south of San Francisco)
34 (Figure ES-2).

35 The marine cables coming from Asia or Australia (Figure ES-1) would cross the Pacific
36 Ocean, cross the continental shelf, would be pulled through the newly installed marine

1 steel bore pipes under the beach and bluff, and exit on land in the CLP (Figure ES-2).
 2 Each cable would be laid directly on the seafloor where the water is deeper than 5,904
 3 feet. If the water is less than approximately 5,904 feet deep, then each cable would be
 4 buried. Depending on seafloor substrate, the cable would be plowed or post-lay buried
 5 under the seafloor.

6 **ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS AND PROPOSED MITIGATION MEASURES**

7 The environmental issues checked below in Table ES-1 would be potentially affected by
 8 this Project; a checked box indicates that at least one impact would be a “potentially
 9 significant impact.” The Applicant has agreed to Project revisions, including the
 10 implementation of MMs and Applicant Proposed Measures (APMs) that would reduce the
 11 potential impacts to “less than significant with mitigation,” as detailed in Section 3.0,
 12 *Environmental Checklist and Analysis*, of this MND. Table ES-2 lists the proposed MMs
 13 and APMs designed to reduce or avoid potentially significant impacts. With
 14 implementation of the proposed MMs and APMs, all Project-related impacts would be
 15 reduced to less than significant levels.

Table ES-1. Environmental Issues and Potentially Significant Impacts

<input type="checkbox"/> Aesthetics	<input type="checkbox"/> Agriculture and Forestry Resources	<input type="checkbox"/> Air Quality
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Biological Resources	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Cultural Resources	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Cultural Resources – Tribal
<input type="checkbox"/> Energy	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Geology, Soils, and Paleontological Resources	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Greenhouse Gas Emissions
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Hazards and Hazardous Materials	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Hydrology and Water Quality	<input type="checkbox"/> Land Use and Planning
<input type="checkbox"/> Mineral Resources	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Noise	<input type="checkbox"/> Population and Housing
<input type="checkbox"/> Public Services	<input type="checkbox"/> Recreation	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Transportation
<input type="checkbox"/> Utilities and Service Systems	<input type="checkbox"/> Wildfire	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Mandatory Findings of Significance

Table ES-2. Summary of Mitigation Measures and Applicant Proposed Measures

Biological Resources
MM BIO-1: Provide Environmental Awareness Training
MM BIO-2: Conduct Biological Surveying and Monitoring
MM BIO-3: Delineate Work Limits and Install Temporary Construction Barrier Fencing to Protect Sensitive Biological Resources
MM BIO-4: Identify and Avoid Sensitive Biological Resources through Use of Directional Boring
MM BIO-5: Implement Best Management Practices for Horizontal Directional Drilling and Directional Boring Activities
MM BIO-6: Prepare and Implement an Inadvertent Return Contingency Plan

Table ES-2. Summary of Mitigation Measures and Applicant Proposed Measures

MM BIO-7: Prepare and Implement a Site Restoration Plan
MM BIO-8: Install Escape Ramps in Open Trenches
MM BIO-9: Conduct Surveys for Point Arena Mountain Beaver
MM BIO-10: Limit Construction Period to Minimize Impacts on Point Arena Mountain Beaver
MM BIO-11: Avoid Point Arena Mountain Beaver Populations and Burrows
MM BIO-12: Survey for and Avoid Behren's Silverspot Butterfly and Lotis Blue Butterfly Habitat
MM BIO-13: Conduct Pre-Construction Nesting Bird Surveys and Implement Avoidance Measures
MM BIO-14: Conduct Appropriately Timed Floristic Surveys of Remaining Areas
MM BIO-15: Inspection and Burial of Cable
MM BIO-16: Cable Entanglements and Gear Retrieval
MM BIO-17: Prepare and Implement a Marine Wildlife Monitoring and Contingency Plan
MM BIO-18: Boring Beneath Environmentally Sensitive Habitat Areas
MM BIO-19: Locate Work and Staging Areas for the CLP and Associated Facilities outside Wet Meadow Habitat
MM BIO-20: Minimize Crossing of Hard Bottom Substrate
MM BIO-21: Contribute Compensation to Hard Substrate Mitigation Fund
MM BIO-22: Control of Marine Invasive Species
MM HAZ-1: Hazardous Materials Management and Contingency Plan
MM HYDRO-1: Prepare and Implement a Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan
Cultural Resources
MM CUL-1: Discovery of Previously Unknown Cultural Resources
MM CUL-2: Conduct a Pre-Construction Offshore Archaeological Resources Survey
MM CUL-3: Conduct a Pre-Construction Offshore Historic Shipwreck Survey
MM CUL-4: Prepare and Implement an Avoidance Plan
MM CUL-5: Unanticipated Discovery of Human Remains
Cultural Resources – Tribal
MM TCR-1: Discovery of Previously Unknown Tribal Cultural Resources
MM TCR-2: Tribal Cultural Resources Treatment Plan
Geology, Soils, and Paleontological Resources
MM HYDRO-1: Prepare and Implement a Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan
Greenhouse Gas Emissions
MM GHG-1: Purchase GHG Carbon Offsets for Construction Emissions
Hazards and Hazardous Materials
MM HAZ-1: Hazardous Materials Management and Contingency Plan
MM HAZ 2: Contaminated Materials Management Plan
MM HYDRO-1: Prepare and Implement a Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan
MM BIO-5: Implement Best Management Practices for Horizontal Directional Drilling and Directional Boring Activities
MM BIO-6: Prepare and Implement an Inadvertent Return Contingency Plan

Table ES-2. Summary of Mitigation Measures and Applicant Proposed Measures

Hydrology and Water Quality
MM HYDRO-1: Prepare and Implement a Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan
MM HAZ-1: Hazardous Materials Management and Contingency Plan
MM HAZ-2: Contaminated Materials Management Plan
MM BIO-5: Implement Best Management Practices for Horizontal Directional Drilling and Directional Boring Activities
MM BIO-6: Prepare and Implement an Inadvertent Return Contingency Plan
MM BIO-7: Prepare and Implement a Site Restoration Plan
Noise
MM N-1: Restrict Terrestrial Construction Work on Sundays
Recreation
MM T-1: Publication of U.S. Coast Guard Local Notice to Mariners
Transportation
MM N-1: Restrict Terrestrial Construction Work on Sundays
MM T-1: Publication of U.S. Coast Guard Local Notice to Mariners
Commercial Fisheries
APM-1: Fishing Agreement
APM-2: Marine Anchor Plan

Figure ES-1. Proposed Cable System Alignments

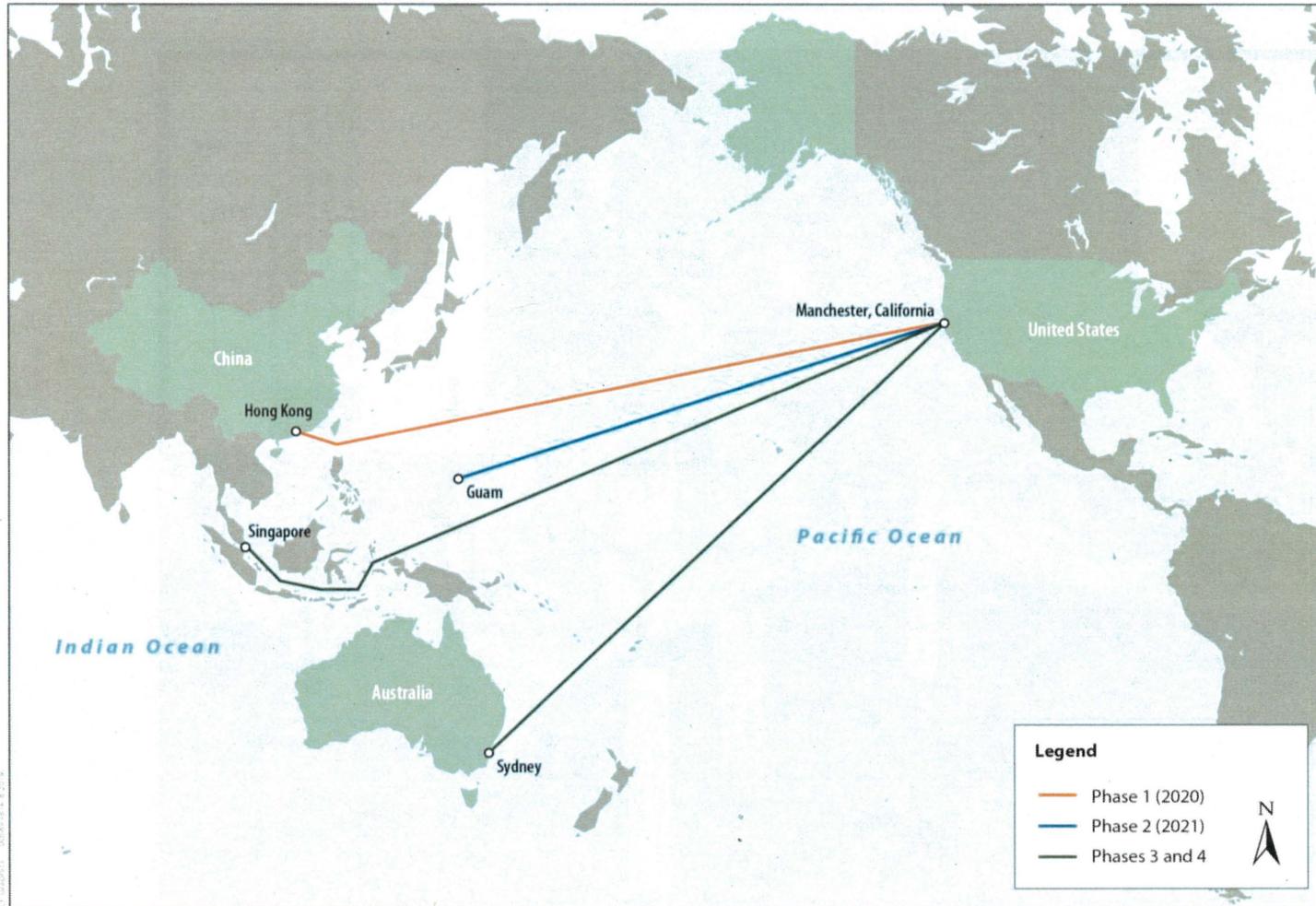


Figure ES-2. Project Location

