

Huron-Manistee National Forests
Mio, Harrisville, and Tawas Districts
Amendment and Administrative Changes to CenturyTel's Special Use Permit

The Huron-Manistee National Forests received an application from CenturyTel to amend their existing communications permit. The request is to replace an existing buried fiber optics cable between Hale and Sand Lake along Esmond/Vaughn Road, a paved county road. The proposed action is located in sections 20, 21, 22, 27, 34, and 35, T32N, R6E, Plainfield Township, Iosco County, Michigan. The current fiber optics cable is deteriorating and replacing it with a larger cable would improve services to Sand Lake area. A portion approximately one half mile south from Curtis Road to the beginning of the Grant Township line and Sand Lake would be relocated to the opposite side of the road. Moving the cable would reduce some of the conflicts with other buried utilities in the same road ROW.

The existing cable would be abandoned in place and the above ground steel cabinets/pedestals would be removed. The cable would be located within the cleared ROW of the road, approximately 28 feet from the centerline. Above ground cabinets/pedestals would be set 32 feet from the road centerline. Location markers would be green farm stakes with an orange warning sign to identify the line on the ground.

Construction would be limited to the 10 foot ROW, 5 feet either side of buried cable centerline, approximately 23,575 total feet x 10 feet / 43,560 sq feet/acre = 5.4 total acres. The relocation to the opposite side of the road is approximate 7,870 feet or 1.8 acres.

The Huron-Manistee National Forests also propose to separate CenturyTel's current communications permit into two. This is an administrative action only. Forest Service regulations require separate permits for installation, use, and maintenance of copper wire and fiber optic cables and associated improvements. CenturyTel has one telephone permit that covers both types of cable ROWs. The existing permit will continue to cover the copper wire rights-of-way. The new permit would cover the fiber optic cable rights-of-way. The new permit would be for the same term as the existing, December 31, 2025.

The existing ROWs are located in Alcona, Iosco, and Ogemaw Counties as follows: Alcona County - T25N, R5-7E, and T26N, R6-7E; Iosco County - T24N, R4-6E, T23N, R5-6E and T22N, R6E; Ogemaw County - T24N, R4E.

When separating the permits any updates of cable locations and descriptions would be made to correct discrepancies in the permit and add any new or amended conditions to the permit.

If you have any comments or additional information regarding this proposal please contact Pat Thompson, at the Mio Ranger District, 107 McKinley Road, Mio, Michigan 48647, (989) 826-3252, TTY - (989) 826-3592.