

The U.S. Forest Service, Superior National Forest has prepared an Environmental Assessment (EA) for the Lake County Fiber Optic Project. The purpose of the project is to evaluate and consider approving a Special-Use Authorization to allow Lake County to install, operate, and maintain fiber optic cable, both buried and aerial on existing utility poles, which is intended to increase the rural broadband utility services in the area. The project is located along multiple road rights-of-way in Lake and St. Louis Counties. The EA is available at our website at www.fs.usda.gov/goto/superior/projects under the Lake County Fiber Optic page, or hardcopy by request.

The project is an activity implementing a land management plan and not authorized under the HFRA; therefore the project is subject to Forest Service regulations at 36 CFR 218, Subparts A and B. Only individuals or organizations who submit timely and specific written comments regarding the proposed project during the comment period on this EA are eligible to file an objection to the decision on the project. The opportunity to comment on the EA ends 30 days following the date of publication of this legal notice in the Duluth News Tribune. Comments submitted by individuals or organizations must meet the following requirements outlined in 36 CFR 218.25(a)(3) to have standing to object:

- Name and postal address (Email recommended but not required)
- Title of the proposed project
- Specific written comments as defined in 36 CFR 218.2 regarding the proposed project, along with supporting reasons
- Signature or other verification of identity upon request and identification of the individual or entity who authored the comments. For comments listing multiple entities or multiple individuals, a signature or other means of verification must be provided for the individual authorized to represent each entity and for each individual in the case of multiple names.

A scanned signature or other means of verifying the identity of the individual or entity representative may be used for electronically submitted comments.

- Individual members of an entity must submit their own comments to establish personal eligibility; comments received on behalf of an entity are considered as those of the entity only.

The Responsible Official for the project is Brenda Halter, Superior National Forest Supervisor.

Comments may be submitted to the Responsible Official via the following methods:

- Written comments to: Brenda Halter, Forest Supervisor, Subject: Lake County Fiber Optic Project, Superior National Forest, 8901 Grand Avenue Place, Duluth MN 55808.
- Oral comments must be provided during normal business hours via telephone. Elizabeth Schleif is the project contact and can be reached at (218) 626-4373.
- Send faxed comments to: Forest Supervisor, Subject: Lake County Fiber Optic Project, (218) 365-7563.
- Send electronic mail comments to: comments-eastern-superior@fs.fed.us, Subject: Lake County Fiber Optic Project. Acceptable formats for electronic comments are: text (.txt), MSWord 6.0 or higher (.doc), portable document format (.pdf), or rich text format (.rtf).

Acceptable formats for electronic comments include email message, plain text (.txt), rich text format (.rtf), Word (.doc) or portable document format (.pdf). All comments will become part of the official record and as such, may be made available for public examination.

For more information, or questions concerning this project or the comment process, please contact Elizabeth Schleif, Superior National Forest at 218-626-4373 (office), or by postage at 8901 Grand Avenue Place, Duluth, MN 55808.