

D18(YELL)

RETURN RECEIPT REQUESTED

SEP 19 2008

Ms. Mary Hopkins
Wyoming State Historic Preservation Officer
State Historic Preservation Office
Barrett Building, 3rd Floor
2301 Central Avenue
Cheyenne, Wyoming 82002

Subject: Review and Comment on the Wireless Communications Services Plan Environmental Assessment for Yellowstone National Park and Request for Concurrence with Yellowstone National Park's Determination of No Historic Properties Adversely Effected

Dear Ms Hopkins:

Yellowstone National Park has released a Wireless Services Communication Plan Environmental Assessment (EA) that evaluates alternative approaches to protecting park resources and values by limiting the number, types, and locations of wireless services and facilities in the park. The EA includes four alternatives, each evaluated for environmental consequences. In order to consult with your agency as required under the National Historic Preservation Act, we request that you review Alternative C, our preferred alternative, and provide concurrence. Should Alternative C not be adopted as it is currently presented, we will contact you with our amended decision and request a separate review and concurrence.

The enclosed environmental assessment describes the siting criteria and provides background information about Yellowstone's Wireless Plan. The document specifies that proposed locations for infrastructure related to wireless services would be surveyed for surface and buried archeological resources prior to construction (pages 15-16). Construction would not be allowed to proceed if archeological resources are identified in the immediate area of the proposed project. Yellowstone has a well developed inadvertent discovery procedure for archeological resources uncovered unexpectedly and those procedures would be followed for all wireless-related ground disturbance.

Other historic properties in Yellowstone that may be affected by installation of wireless services are Historic Districts, National Historic Landmarks, and Cultural Landscapes. The environmental consequences of the Wireless Communications Services Plan to cultural resources are discussed on pages 97 through 104 of the environmental assessment. The Preferred Alternative C identifies possible sites at the Lake developed area on an existing tower near the wastewater treatment area (a non-visitor use area) or on the existing water tower in the Lake administrative area (also a non-visitor use area). Neither of these locations are within eligible or listed Historic Districts or Cultural Landscapes, or are within line of sight of the Lake Historic District, the Lake Fish Hatchery Historic District, or the proposed Lake Hotel National Historic Landmark.

The existing cell service and wireless communications infrastructure located on the top of Bunsen Peak would be relocated to a nearby area, Elk Plaza, and screened from the viewshed using the natural surroundings. Similarly, the existing cell tower would be removed from the historic Mt. Washburn Lookout in the Chittenden Road Historic District and, following the siting and design guidelines, be placed in an adjacent area reducing the impact of the modern structures to the documented historic properties.

The existing cell tower at Old Faithful would be relocated out of the developed area viewshed to an area near the existing water treatment plant, out of sight from the Old Faithful Historic District, the Old Faithful Inn National Historic Landmark, and the Grand Loop Road Historic District. Even though Yellowstone strives to screen modern developments naturally using landforms and natural vegetation, wildfires have destroyed the natural vegetative screens in the past and will possibly do so in the future.

Yellowstone National Park has determined the impact of the Wireless Communications Services Plan to be no historic properties adversely affected and we seek your concurrence with this determination. If you have questions, please contact Linda Mazzu, Chief of the Branch of Compliance, at (307) 344-2895.

Sincerely,

Suzanne Lewis
Superintendent

Concur: _____
Mary Hopkins, WYSHPO

Date: _____

Enclosure:
Wireless Communications Services Plan Environmental Assessment

Identical Letters Sent To:

Mark Baumler, Ph.D.
Montana Historic Preservation Officer
Montana Historical Society
P.O. Box 201202
Helena, Montana 59620-1202

Travis Pitkin, Compliance Archaeologist
Idaho State Historic Preservation Office
210 Main Street
Boise, Idaho 83702

cc (without enclosure):
Tom Olliff
Linda Mazzu
Dan Reinhart
Ann Johnson
Mike Reynolds

bcc:

Central Files

Supt. Files

✓YCR Files

No Reading Files

FNP:LMazzu:bec:9/17/08:2203

