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SEP 16 2008

Dear Tribal Chairperson or Designated Representative:

The National Park Service (NPS) has prepared a wireless communications services plan for Yellowstone National Park to protect park resources and to provide direction for implementation of potential wireless services and infrastructure in the future. This plan would protect park resources and values by limiting the types and locations of wireless services and infrastructure in Yellowstone National Park. Any new and appropriate wireless infrastructure would only be established at locations adhering to strict siting criteria. Wireless communication services covered in this plan include cellular phone services, NPS two-way radio systems, resource monitoring stations, and wireless fidelity (WiFi) services.

This environmental assessment (EA) evaluates four alternatives for the proposed plan: A) No Action; B) reduction in wireless services; C) allow a limited increase in wireless services; and D) allow a substantial increase in wireless services. Alternative C is the park's preferred alternative; this alternative would add cellular coverage to the Lake area and improve cellular coverage at Canyon and Tower-Roosevelt. When feasible, the cell tower at Old Faithful would be relocated from its current location to a site near the water treatment plant to further reduce the impact on the viewshed. Antennas located at Mount Washburn would be relocated from the existing fire lookout and placed on a new platform tower adjacent to the lookout to reduce impacts to the viewshed from the historic lookout and improve visitor and park staff safety. On Bunsen Peak, obsolete equipment would be removed and the cellular phone facility would be relocated to Elk Plaza. The electric transmission line to the summit of Bunsen Peak would remain, but the equipment shed would be replaced with smaller equipment (e.g., cabinet sized weatherproof enclosures). Internet-WiFi access would be available at many of the park's hotels and stores and to residences in park development areas.

This EA has been prepared in compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) to provide the decision-making framework that 1) analyzes a reasonable range of alternatives to meet objectives of the proposal, 2) evaluates potential issues and impacts to Yellowstone's resources and values, and 3) identifies mitigation measures to lessen the degree or extent of these impacts.

The Environmental Assessment is now available for public review and comment at the National Park Service website *Planning, Environment, and Public Comment* (<http://parkplanning.nps.gov/>). You may also call Doug Madsen at (307) 344-2017 to request a hard copy. We encourage you to review the Environmental Assessment and send us your thoughts by October 31, 2008. You may submit comments online at <http://parkplanning.nps.gov/> or you may mail or hand-deliver comments to the address above.

Two public meetings are scheduled to discuss the plan. The first is October 1, 2008, from 6:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m. in the Bozeman Library located at 626 East Main, Bozeman, Montana. The second meeting is to be held on October 2, 2008, at the U.S. Forest Service Office Conference Room located at 1405 Hollipark Drive, Idaho Falls, Idaho, again from 6:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m.

Your comments will be considered as we move toward a decision. We look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,

Suzanne Lewis
Superintendent

bcc:

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Supt. Files

Linda Mazzu

YCR

No Reading Files

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