

Wireless Telecommunications Committee Annual Report for Calendar Year 2020

*Yellowstone National Park
January 1, 2020 to December 31, 2020*

The purpose of the Telecommunications Committee is to:

1. Receive and address requests for wireless service.
2. Ensure proposals adhere to the wireless communications plan.
3. Make recommendations to the Superintendent regarding any action to be taken.

Proposals Received	Date Received	Recommendation	Superintendent
1 AccessParks Wi-Fi to Old Faithful	7/16/2020	Limited approval	Approved
2 CenturyLink Radios at Old Faithful	11/21/2019	Approve	Approved

Bret De Young
Supervisory Telecommunications Specialist

Cameron H Sholly, Superintendent

Public comments were collected and considered throughout the scoping and planning process for the Wireless Communications Services Plan Environmental Assessment (EA). In lieu of public meetings, the NPS provides this annual report, available to the public, which includes; a list of proposals received/reviewed by the Wireless Telecommunications Committee (WTC), recommendations from the WTC to the Superintendent, action taken by the Superintendent, and a summary of each proposal. The Committee consists of four representatives from Park Planning, Resource Management, and Telecommunications and is led by the Supervisory Telecommunications Specialist.

Summary of Proposals Received:

1 AccessParks Wi-Fi to Old Faithful

AccessParks requested to install a point to point wireless radios system on 5 sites to provide Broadband Internet services to 45 specific Xanterra Yellowstone employee housing units and 447 specific Xanterra operated lodges and cabin units. Category 1 Concessioner, Xanterra Parks and Resorts (Yellowstone Contract 077), hired AccessParks to provide internet services to guests and employees in the properties where they are authorized to operate.

The action was determined to fit within the terms of a categorical exclusion and was categorically excluded from further NEPA analysis. No potential to cause effect to historic properties was identified and no extraordinary circumstances applied. The Committee recommended approval of this request.

The action was consistent with Yellowstone's Wireless Communications Services Plan. The Wireless Committee recommended a limited approval of this request in that a right-of-way (ROW) permit be issued for the proposed facilities to support the Old Faithful area only, due to the limited ability to monitor and inspect the installation of equipment. The other requested locations may be considered when the service to Old Faithful is complete.

2 CenturyLink Point to Point Microwave Radios at Old Faithful

CenturyLink requested a permit to install point to point microwave radios on the CenturyLink microwave tower, Verizon cell tower, Old Faithful Lodge, Old Faithful Snow Lodge, and Old Faithful Inn to improve services that support Xanterra Parks and Resorts operations. Decades old existing underground cable is incapable of supporting broadband network connections that are required to run modern reservation and business software applications in the Lodges and Hotels. Burying new cable was not an option due to the risk of geothermal disturbance. CenturyLink Engineers worked extensively with the NPS to find inconspicuous locations to mount 1-foot diameter antennas with integrated radios on the historic and non-historic buildings.

Two 12-inch diameter antennas will be installed at the top of the Old Faithful Inn West Wing Elevator Shaft, one 12-inch diameter antenna will be installed on the southwest exterior under the lowest part of the upper roof overhang of the Old Faithful Lodge Recreation Hall and one 12-inch diameter antenna will be installed on the south side and under the middle of the roof overhang of the exterior of the Snow Lodge. All 12-inch antennas will be painted to match the mounting surface. All antennas will receive wireless signals from similar antennas placed on the existing Verizon-owned Old Faithful Cell Tower, and the existing CenturyLink Central Office microwave tower located east of the Old Faithful Ranger Station.

The action was determined to be consistent with Yellowstone's Wireless Communications Services Plan and was determined to fit within the terms of a categorical exclusion and was categorically excluded from further NEPA analysis. No potential to cause effect to historic properties was identified and no extraordinary circumstances applied. The Committee recommended approval of this request.