

Ms. Judy Wolf  
Deputy, State Historic Preservation Officer  
State Historic Preservation Office  
Wyoming Department of State Parks & Cultural Resources  
2301 Central Avenue  
Cheyenne, WY 82002

December 24, 2003

Dear Ms. Wolf,

On August 31, 1999 the State Historic Preservation Office commented on a National Park Service (NPS) Environmental Assessment for a proposed cell tower in the Old Faithful area of Yellowstone National Park. The Old Faithful area is an historic district on the National Register of Historic Places (# 48YE486).

In your letter, you stated that Alternative A (the Western Wireless plan) would “result in an adverse effect to...the Old Faithful Historic District. In contrast, you concluded that the EA’s Alternative D (the NPS “preferred” alternative) “...will result in no adverse effect to national register property...” The NPS subsequently chose Alternative D, and the tower was constructed in the summer of 2001.

We write to inquire whether you have checked on the tower since that time. If not, I urge you to do so. The tower that was built does not conform to the proposal described in Alternative D.

Here is what Alternative D proposed:

“a monopole tower at a height of not more than ten feet above the existing tree tops. The tower would be camouflaged to appear in texture and color as the surrounding burned tree snags. The color of the two antenna mounted on the tower would be of the same color as the monopole...”

What exists today at Old Faithful is a stark, silvery pole (plus antennas) clearly visible from much of the historic district. The structure is not shielded by existing trees at all (there are hardly any trees standing), and no attempt has been made to camouflage the tower or the antennas in any way (texture or color). There are also three antennas now, not the two called for in Alternative D.

Public Employees for Environmental Responsibility (PEER) requests that the State Historic Preservation Officer re-open the adverse effect determination for the Old Faithful cell tower. The tower is not consistent with the Alternative that you concluded

would have no adverse effect. The tower should not be allowed to destroy the sense of majesty and awe that we all feel walking around this spectacular and historic part of America's first national park.

Sincerely,

Jeff Ruch  
Executive Director

cc: Ms. Suzanne Lewis, Superintendent, Yellowstone National Park  
Mr. John Fowler, Advisory Council on Historic Preservation