

Skip Songer
Vertical Bridge
Skip.Songer@verticalbridge.com

Gary Brekke
Windrunners
windrunners18@gmail.com

Subject: Need for Reliable Cell Phone Reception in Eagle River Valley

The Eagle River Valley Community Council (ERVCC) would like to request Vertical Bridge and its contractor Windrunners explore the possibility of installing a cell tower past Milepost (MP) 8 on Eagle River Road in the Eagle River Valley. Currently cell service at the upper reaches of Eagle River Valley is spotty to non-existent. Improved reception would help our community greatly in case of wildfire, earthquake or other emergency.

Access to our valley is limited to Eagle River Road. A wildfire in the Eagle River Valley has potential to be very fast moving and block road access depending upon wind and weather. Residents and visitors could easily be trapped.

Cell service is increasingly important for urgent communications. The Municipality of Anchorage recently installed a new phone alert system (RAVE) replacing Nixle. This technology sends text messages to subscribers in case of emergency. Unfortunately, this system will not work in Eagle River Valley due to lack of cell coverage.

Anchorage's Community Wildfire Protection Plan (CWPP) identifies communication infrastructure as critical for reporting, notification and evacuation. Lack of reliable communication for timely reporting or notification is a known risk that could be easily mitigated.

In 2022, Vertical Bridge installed a 125' steel monopole tower to replace an existing wooden tower (Site Number US-AK-4008) at P & M Gardens at 21144 Eagle River Road, approximately Milepost 3. We request you consider installing an additional tower closer to Eagle River Nature Center or other suitable location on Eagle River Road.

Please do not hesitate to contact us if you need additional information or letters of support. The ERVCC looks forward to working with you on this important addition to critical communication infrastructure.

Sincerely

Julie K. Jessen
President,
Eagle River Valley Community Council

Joy Webb
Secretary,
Eagle River Valley Community Council