

December 10, 2004

William Wenzel
Chairman, Sauk County Board of Supervisors
290 Fifth Street
Prairie du Sac, WI 53578

Dear Mr. Wenzel:

It has come to our attention that the Sauk County Board of Supervisors is considering the installation of a telecommunications tower that would be visible from the Lower Wisconsin Scenic Riverway.

As an organization representing over 2,000 individuals, local watershed groups and businesses from Wisconsin and surrounding states, the River Alliance is very concerned that allowing this tower undermines the integrity of the Scenic Riverway and will cheapen the scenic riverway experience for river users. (A proposed tower at White Mound park has the same potential to degrade that natural area.)

Certainly a tower is not as conspicuous as a large house or other structure, but any structure that mars the beauty and natural setting of the river – which is what people have come to expect on the Lower Wisconsin – hollows the scenic river designation. There are so few places in southern Wisconsin where river users can enjoy such an experience.

Sauk County's stewardship of the Lower Wisconsin River is at stake. Though lands along the Riverway are under Sauk County's (and the local towns') jurisdiction, the Lower Wisconsin River is a state and national treasure whose value extends well beyond the boundaries of Sauk County. Your decision in many ways has statewide implications – for preserving natural beauty, for managing a resource for purposes beyond short-term local needs, and for choosing an option that serves everyone well.

To this last point, we understand that there is an alternate tower configuration that will cost the county more money, but would improve the effectiveness of the communications system and at the same time would leave the riverway unmarred by the sight of a tower.

We ask you to seriously consider the alternate plan for the telecommunications system, both for the safety of Sauk County citizens but also for the beauty and integrity of the Lower Wisconsin Riverway. Generations of anglers, paddlers and other river users will be grateful to you to have made the right choice to leave the river for them in its natural state.

Sincerely,

Denny Caneff
Executive Director

Cc Supervisor Joel Gaalswyk
Supervisor Rose White
Mark Cupp, executive director, Wisconsin Riverway Board