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Comments: I taught skiing at all 4 SkiCo Mountains for 45 years so have a lot to say about the need for more cell phone communication availability in certain areas of our mountains. I will address each area separately below.

Snowmass: First of all there is zero cell service at the Meadows at the top of the Elk Camp Gondola. This is the beginner/learning area and where a lot of the injuries occur. It is extremely frustrating and dangerous not to be able to contact ski patrol when a client needs assistance on that part of the mountain. The Ski Co removed all the wired phones which were used to call Ski Patrol when an accident occurred, so now someone wishing to call Ski Patrol HAS to use their cell phone. This is an urgent matter of safety.

Another area without service in Snowmass is the Two Creeks area. This is also a very important place that requires cell service as the children from Aspen Valley Ski Club meet at the base of that area for 8 Saturdays each winter and it is impossible to contact parents via cell phones from that base area.

The Campground expert zone in Snowmass is also lacking in service so one cannot contact patrol easily there, if one witnesses an accident.

Highlands: The base of Highlands has basically zero cell service. The service improves once one rides up the lift but it is absurd that the base of the mountain which contains the Ritz Carlton does not have cell service. Once again, contacting parents or relatives of injured skiers is of great importance and should be a priority.

I doubt there is cell service at the base of Highlands Bowl, but there are a lot less skiers there and everyone should be an expert, so hopefully a less accident prone area.

Buttermilk: The entire area of West Buttermilk where all the beginners tend to ski has zero cell phone coverage. Once again, it is impossible to contact patrol to report an accident or the need for assistance anywhere on that part of the Mountain.

The Cliffhouse has cell service so I am not sure why the SkiCo needs a tower there, unless it will service the West Buttermilk part of the mountain. I would suggest a tower at the Base of West Buttermilk.

Aspen Mtn. Aspen has excellent cell phone coverage and I have never had a problem making calls or sending emails from that mountain. It's possible people want 5G service there, but it's not for the safety of skiers.

Doug Throm is wrong when he was quoted in the Aspen Daily News on 8/8/24 as stating that cell phone service should not be an "expectation." It is a necessity when trying to report accidents. Doug and none of the other members of P&Z in Aspen have ever taught skiing, so they don't realize how important it is to get patrol to the scene of an accident as quickly as possible.

Nowadays, I NEVER see ski patrol skiing around looking for accidents. As a matter of fact, in the most dangerous and congested parts of Aspen Mtn. such as Spar Gulch and above lift 3, and Ruthies there is rarely a patrol person in sight. Good Cell phone coverage is essential for the safety of everyone involved.

I have seen towers disguised as pine trees, which blend into the scenery. Perhaps this is something which should be considered.

Thank you for reading this.

