

Communication Tower Recommendations

Surrounded by steep mountain walls, the Sabinal River Valley is a natural paradise of clear water streams with rock bottoms, towering cypress trees, great spreading live oaks, narrow canyons lined with cedars and colorful deciduous hardwoods, limestone cliffs, pure fresh air, and dark night skies. The Sabinal River Valley is home to many species of wildlife and is on the flyway for migratory birds, including the endangered Golden Cheeked Warbler and Black Capped Vireo. It is incumbent on everyone to reduce the negative impact of the human footprint on this great natural paradise.

As a steward of the Sabinal River Valley, Keep Utopia Beautiful offers the following suggestions:

- Given the dismal experience of simply putting a notice in the newspaper, companies planning to erect a communication tower are encouraged to take additional steps to ensure that local residents are fully aware of their plans. Residents in proximity to a planned installation site should be contacted individually. Billboard signs should be erected on the sides of roads passing near the proposed site. The tower builder is encouraged to invite impacted residents to a town hall meeting, where their concerns can be addressed and alternatives can be discussed.
- Towers should be located no closer than a half mile from any flowing stream, specifically the Sabinal River and its tributaries. Any closer will be a blight upon the view of our scenic waterways.
- Consideration should be given to the impact of the tower on migratory birds, particularly endangered species.
- Consideration should be given to protection of ancient Native American camp sites and burial mounds. While the larger camp sites are easily identifiable, there are numerous small camp sites located along the banks of the Sabinal River and its tributaries that are not easily identifiable.
- Tower heights should be low enough that blinking aviation safety lights are not required. This may necessitate locating towers on points of higher elevation. If there are lights at the base of towers they should be aimed downward and shielded to minimize impact on the dark sky.
- Tower foundations should not damage riparian areas, marshlands, or the rock and gravel strata that are the source of water for seeps and springs that feed our waterways. Standard geological and geotechnical methodology should be used to verify that no damage will be done.
- Towers should not be located in close proximity to dwellings.