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Luther Propst
Natalia D. Macker
Len Carlman

United States Congresswoman Harriet Hageman
Wyoming
1227 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

April 28, 2025

The Honorable Congresswoman Harriet Hageman:

The Teton County Board of County Commissioners writes to express our continued concern and to seek your assistance regarding the impacts facing our community due to the federal government's firings, reductions in force, and the lack of communication about the capacity of the US Forest Service and other important federal partners to ensure that public safety and essential tasks will still be provided by our federal partners as we head into the busiest time of year for visitation.

Might we secure your assistance in working with the Administration of President Trump, United States Secretary of Agriculture Brooke Rollins, United States Secretary of Interior Doug Burgum, and others? We need your help to restore full staffing and associated levels of service across the following agencies:

- Bridger-Teton National Forest (BTNF) Headquarters in Jackson, and each of its six Ranger Districts: Blackrock Ranger District, Jackson Ranger District, Pinedale Ranger District, Greys River Ranger District, Big Piney Ranger District, and Kemmerer Ranger District.
- Teton Basin Ranger District on the Caribou-Targhee National Forest in Driggs, Idaho.
- Grand Teton National Park and Yellowstone National Park.
- U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, particularly the National Elk Refuge; and
- the Wyoming Cooperative Fish and Wildlife Research Unit at the University of Wyoming managed through the United States Geological Service.

Might you be able to help? "Full staffing" at these agencies was already a just-barely-enough level of support; the cuts that are happening to these valued partners are damaging and irresponsible.



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Through these conversations, we have been informed that Ranger Districts and the Supervisor's Office lack the staff to conduct basic day-to-day tasks. Some Ranger Districts have equipment needed to fight wildfires, but no staff to drive the vehicles. If there's a wildfire, firefighting rigs will be left in parking lots because there's no one left who can drive them. Some Ranger Districts use horses to access the deep backcountry to conduct routine forest maintenance, but, now, there are not enough staff who are trained to handle the stock. Staff worry that they will be forced to sell valuable assets – not because they no longer have a need – but because there are no staff to operate the assets. Operating firefighting equipment requires extensive training and certifications. Not having staff to operate this equipment puts our community at risk for the spread of wildfire, including loss of property and life.

Our Board also worries that our federal partners will not be able to contract Type 1 helicopters and other aviation apparatus used for wildfire management. Aviation plays a crucial and integral role in wildfire suppression by providing rapid aerial support for ground crews and directly targeting fire hotspots with water and/or fire retardant. Additionally, our Board worries that our federal partners will not be able to contract waste management services, which poses health, safety, and environmental concerns and can also become a fire hazard.

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United States Senator John Barrasso
Wyoming
307 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

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United States Senator Cynthia Lummis
Wyoming
Russell Senate Office Building
Suite SR-127A
Washington, DC 20510

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