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November 16, 2026

The Honorable Kevin J. Lilly
Assistant Secretary for Fish and Wildlife and Parks
U.S. Department of Interior
1849 C Street, NW
Washington, DC 20240

Re: Request for Meaningful Engagement on the Moose-Wilson Corridor Record of Decision Amendment

Dear Assistant Secretary Lilly:

The Teton County Board of County Commissioners appreciates the Department of the Interior's prompt response to our letter about the National Park Service's Amendment to the Moose-Wilson Corridor Comprehensive Management Plan Record of Decision. The unresponsive reply did not directly address several of the County's central concerns.

Our concern is with both the process that produced the amended decision and the Department's reply to our letter. The decision adds a new, separated pathway through a resource-rich corridor, yet the County had no meaningful opportunity to discuss that change with the Park Service before the amendment was issued.

Teton County has been a responsive and responsible cooperating agency in the Moose-Wilson Corridor EIS. As such, we have unique local expertise that can and should inform substantial revisions to the final Record of Decision. For example, the pathway's effect on wildlife and the potential threat to pathway users from wildlife, whether from moose, bears, bison or otherwise, are significant concerns that should be addressed. The possible ecological benefits of relocating the 1.7 miles of this road between Sawmill Ponds Overlook and "Witmer Junction" away from the base of Huckleberry Ridge where it currently courses through the wetlands and over springs to a location in the sagebrush habitat east of the current alignment also warrant additional attention.

We bring special expertise that can inform pathway and/or roadway design, management techniques to reduce human-wildlife encounters and the impacts of those encounters on either wildlife or human visitors to the corridor. In the truncated process to revise the ROD, we had no opportunity to provide such expertise. Please help us understand why the process did not include even one meeting with County Commissioners, County staff or the public.

The reply largely referred us to published planning documents and web pages. Those materials provide background, but they do not answer the County's questions about the amended decision or explain how our concerns were evaluated. We ask for a substantive response to the points in our earlier letter.

We remain concerned by the conclusion that the 2016 Final Environmental Impact Statement provides sufficient analysis for this amendment. Although the pathway was evaluated under Alternative D, it was not selected in the 2016 Record of Decision. The 2026 amendment selects that pathway with alignment refinements amid changed visitor-use conditions. In our view, the amendment represents a substantial departure from the assumptions and outcomes evaluated during the original planning process. Given the significance of the proposed pathway and its potential impacts on transportation, visitor use, wildlife resources, cultural sites, and the broader community, additional environmental review and public engagement is appropriate.

The reply also referred to a gateway community meeting. An hourlong virtual meeting did occur in June on wide-ranging topics, but the Moose-Wilson Corridor was not the focus of the discussion, nor was it discussed during the full-day August meeting held at Colter Bay. In fact, these meetings highlighted current projects and future priorities in need of competing resources and funding with the 2026 amendment. As an affected local government and a cooperating agency in the original planning process, the County should be directly included in discussions about this corridor.

Most importantly, this process appears inconsistent with Secretary's Order 3434, which calls for ongoing communication with gateway community leaders, early engagement on changes affecting access, and timely consideration of local input in park planning and decisions. It requires meaningful dialogue, responsiveness to stakeholder concerns, and a willingness to engage directly with affected local governments and communities. Please explain how the Department and Park Service applied those directions to the 2026 amendment and how they will engage the County going forward.

Teton County remains committed to working constructively with the Department and the Park Service. We request a meeting with you and appropriate Department and Park Service officials at your earliest convenience, in Jackson, in Washington, D.C., or by videoconference. We would also welcome a joint site visit to the Moose-Wilson corridor to discuss the project on site.

We believe that open communication, collaboration, and meaningful engagement are essential to achieving effective and lasting management solutions for the Moose-Wilson Corridor. We respectfully ask that the Department reconsider its approach to local government engagement on this matter and provide the opportunity for a direct discussion of the concerns outlined above.

Thank you for your consideration. We look forward to your response and a direct discussion of the future of this important landscape.

Sincerely,

Mark Newcomb, Chair
Teton County Board of County Commissioners

Attest: Maureen E. Murphy
Teton County Clerk

STATE OF WYOMING
COUNTY CLERK
TETON COUNTY

Cc: The Honorable U.S. Senator Joh Barrasso; The Honorable U.S. Senator Cynthia Lummis; The Honorable U.S. Representative Harriet Hageman; and Grand Teton National Park Superintendent Chip Jenkins.