October 16, 2015

Sue Masica, Intermountain Regional Director
National Park Service
12795 Alameda Parkway
Denver, CO 80225

David Vela, Superintendent
Grand Teton National Park
P.O. Box 170
Moose, WY 83012

Dear Director Masica and Superintendent Vela,

I am disappointed in your response to my September 11, 2015 letter (cooperating agency involvement on the Moose-Wilson Corridor Project). The State Of Wyoming has been a generous partner to the National Park Service (NPS) on projects important to NPS, including Jenny Lake and state land exchanges. The NPS is unwilling to show the same consideration on a project important to the local community and state where there is an important public safety issue. You failed to address my concerns or to recognize the valuable role cooperating agency expertise can and should play in arriving at a positive solution for the Moose-Wilson road.

I reiterate, a plan for non-motorized transportation and vehicle access that protects park resources can be achieved, but only with early and meaningful engagement of local and state cooperators. I use the words “early” and “meaningful” deliberately. The special expertise of cooperating agencies in federal land management decisions is invaluable. It requires an exchange of ideas as alternatives are being developed, not after decisions have been made. In this project, cooperating agencies have expertise and meaningful input on issues such as road and parking design for traffic flow and human safety, wildlife management mitigation, cultural resource mitigation and adaptive management strategies. In-depth discussions that lead to well-thought out action that best serves visitors to Grand Teton National Park requires the NPS to commit to thoughtful engagement with cooperating agencies.

I ask that you improve communication and review periods for cooperating agencies.

Sincerely,

Matthew H. Mead
Governor

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