



November 6, 2023

RE: Trestles Subdivision

To Teton County Planning Commission:

Dear Commissioners:

Please accept the following comments regarding the proposed Trestles Subdivision on W 2000 S. Please see the comments below. During the Concept Plan review, the City submitted comments regarding parks, transportation, and other concerns regarding the impacts of this and other developments in the area. When the Planning & Zoning Commission considered the Concept Plan, the Commission recommended that the applicant work to address the many concerns of the City and other stakeholders. I and city staff have met with the applicant since the Concept Plan was approved, however, we do not see much meaningful change in this application from the Concept Plan.

This area is identified as appropriate for Mixed Agriculture/ Rural Neighborhood development in your Comprehensive Plan. Teton County's Comprehensive Plan further describes this area as appropriate for:

Mixed Agriculture / Rural Neighborhood: Mixed Agriculture / Rural Neighborhood areas are located south of Driggs and east of Highway 33. These areas are predominantly rangeland and agricultural land and have high scenic qualities. The area along the highway south of Driggs provides a visual separation and distinct edge between the city and the more rural area to the south. Desired future character and land uses include: Agriculture Ranching low to medium where appropriate, low density residential, with provisions for clustering/conservation development to preserve views Conservation and wildlife habitat enhancement/protection.

The Trestles Preliminary Plat does not represent Agricultural Ranching, low density residential, clustering/conservation development or wildlife habitat enhancement. The City of Driggs supports the Teton County Comp Plan. We share many of the same goals within our adopted Comprehensive Plan, which incorporated great input and support from many, many county residents. We share a desire to support density within cities. Trestles, along with the nine other proposed developments in this area would essentially create another city and create sprawl in this scenic corridor. Both Comprehensive Plans



208-354-2362
M-TH 8:30am - 5pm
F 8:30am - 1pm



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60 South Main Street
PO Box 48
Driggs, ID 83422



clearly support a hard edge to the city. The south end of the city at Teton Creek beautifully demonstrates this, but continued sprawl in this area will blur this line.

For these reasons, I do not support the Trestles development, but if you, as a P&Z member, decide to approve it regardless, please take your time and carefully consider the decision criteria in front of you. Please review the Fiscal Impact Analysis, which conveniently addresses a handful of the developments in this area, and ensure that this application appropriately mitigates the impacts that it creates. Please consider the following:

- 1) **Transportation Impacts:** The City of Driggs is concerned that the proposed subdivision is in the Scenic Corridor in addition to the level of traffic that would be generated by the proposed development and the nine others in this area and the resulting impact on intersections with state highway 33 and traffic growth on highway 33 and Driggs arterials and collector roads. The City requests that:
 - a. The findings of the Traffic Impact Study should be required to be implemented by the Developer. This encompasses the turn lane headed north and south on highway 33 and a right turn lane on 2000 S. These should be required;
 - b. Bicycle and pedestrian connectivity to the highway 33 Pathway be required, including the construction of an underpass under highway 33 to ensure safe routes for all travelers. I do not agree with the assertion in the applicant's PSFA, which states that a trail within the development will satisfy needs or mitigate impacts to existing trails. Residents in this area deserve safe alternative transportation routes connecting them to services.
- 2) **Subdivision Access:** The more northern portion of the development, referred to as "Phase II," appears to only have one access point on "Trestles Road" for forty buildable lots, since Fall Creek subdivision has appeared to deny access through their private road. This does not meet Fire code requirements and needs to be addressed.
- 3) **Parks Impacts:** The City of Driggs is concerned that continued development in the county increases demand for city park and recreation facilities and that this is not being met by the county impact fees, which are designated only for fairgrounds improvements. Furthermore, the Trestles Development does not include any park space, only open space close to the highway, which conveniently satisfies scenic corridor setbacks and floodplain and more generally appears to be awkward and questionably functional. This is not meaningful or useful open space, this is a convenient colocation in an area that isn't buildable anyways, and it will not mitigate any impacts on the City's existing parks. The City requests that:





- a. Park land and improvements (e.g., playground and field or courts) be required of the developer on subdivision land which will decrease the demand on parks created by this development in a meaningful way. Or, the county should collect impact fees from the development to go toward City of Driggs parks. Such fees could be remitted to the cities, which are currently providing park space accessible to all county residents, or held in a fund to be used toward future countywide (including in-city) recreation and park improvements.
- 4) Housing: The City of Driggs is concerned that future housing growth will not adequately address the attainability goals established through the Teton County Joint Housing Authority, including the impact of Short Term Rentals on new housing growth. The City would like to strongly encourage the developer to consider a restriction on Short Term Rentals within their CC&Rs. Additionally, the applicant had suggested to me during one of our meetings that this and/or the other development in the area be used to provide housing for area teachers. I would like to encourage the developer to implement this and provide a meaningful benefit to our school system and community.

Thank you for considering our concerns.

Sincerely,

Mayor August Christensen



TETON COUNTY FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICT
PO Box 474 • 911 North Hwy. 33
Driggs, Idaho 83422 • (208) 715-5201



Teton County Board of Commissioners

Teton County Planning & Zoning Commission

150 Courthouse Drive

Driggs, ID. 83422

RE: Cumulative impact of proposed development on traffic safety

Dear members of Planning and Zoning Commission and Board of Commissioners:

In recent history, Teton County has felt the adverse effects on traffic due to a rapidly growing community and increased visitation. Our community regularly sees high speed, high impact motor vehicle collisions along the Highway 33 corridor as it stretches through Driggs and Victor. These collisions often times result in severe injuries or fatalities and alter traffic flow for hours at a time.

Many stakeholders like Teton County and Teton County Fire Rescue have come to the table in a collaborative effort to understand the effects of the traffic and look toward solutions to the associated risks that motorists are facing on Highway 33. Those conversations have led to immediate fixes like public education, improved signage and quick road enhancements like rumble strips and striping. The more long-term remedies have lead to conversations around long range planning, traffic studies, partnering with Idaho Transportation Department and future improved roadway design and construction projects to accommodate the increased traffic.

In the interest of public safety, I would encourage the Planning and Zoning Commission and Board of Commissioners to take into account the cumulative effects on the multiple developments that are being proposed just South of Driggs. While they may be proposed incrementally or taken into consideration in a singular fashion, the cumulative effects may be overlooked in terms of motorist safety and future fiscal impacts when road improvements are warranted.

Respectfully,

Mike Maltaverne-Fire Chief

Teton County Fire Rescue



April 8, 2022

Teton County Planning & Zoning Commission
Planning Department
150 Courthouse Drive, Rm 107
Driggs, ID 83422

Dear Planning and Zoning Commissioners,

This letter, on behalf of Teton Regional Land Trust (TRLT), is in regard to the proposed Trestles Subdivision, one of three proposed developments north of E 2000 S and east of State Highway 33. The Trestles, Wildflower Ridge, and Hillman Farm proposed subdivisions are located directly east of a contiguous block of permanent conservation easements held by TRLT that run west from State Highway 33 to the confluence of Teton Creek and the Teton River. The attached map depicts the proximity of the proposed developments to these and other conserved properties.

The Trestles Subdivision, in combination with the proposed Wildflower Ridge and Hillman Farm subdivisions, would result in 139 residential lots on approximately 442 acres of irrigated agricultural land, a majority of which is designated as prime farmland soils. Concept plans for each of the proposed subdivisions indicate that each lot would include individual domestic wells and septic systems.

The 1,014 acres of conservation easement land west of the proposed subdivisions were permanently protected for their scenic, natural, and wildlife habitat values. As the holder of these conservation easements, the Land Trust is responsible for ensuring that the conservation values of these properties remain intact. These conserved properties provide wetlands of great regional significance that are fed by springs and spring-fed creeks flowing on the west side of Highway 33. In turn, these springs and creeks support riparian and instream habitats vital to fish and wildlife in the watershed and provide water for agricultural uses.

Spring Creeks have relatively constant chemical composition and temperature that makes them conducive to supporting a high aquatic diversity and biomass. Six Springs Creek, which originates from springs just west of Highway 33 and is a tributary to Teton Creek, supports the densest Yellowstone cutthroat trout spawning in the upper Teton Basin. Yellowstone cutthroat trout (YCT), Idaho's state fish, is designated as a sensitive species by the Bureau of Land Management and US Forest Service and is a priority species in the US Fish and Wildlife Service Idaho Fish and Wildlife Office Priority Conservation Strategy (2017). YCT, which require cool and clean water, currently only occupy about 43% of their historic range (Endicott et al. 2016). The Teton River, including its tributaries fed by spring creeks west of Highway 33, supports one of the most important remaining fluvial YCT populations in the Upper Snake Basin (IDFG 2017). A major consideration for the long-term persistence of YCT is protecting and improving water quality and instream habitat to provide adequate cover and spawning resources for the species (IDFG 2007).

All spring-fed creeks that originate and flow through the neighboring conservation easements eventually enter the Teton River. These creeks not only support agricultural uses on the conservation easement properties by supplying surface water for irrigation and stockwater for livestock, but also ultimately contribute to flows in the Teton River, helping support fish and wildlife habitat associated with the River and the delivery of water to other downstream water users.

The conservation easements neighboring the proposed Trestles Subdivision and adjacent proposed subdivisions are consistent with the goals of the 2012 Teton County Comprehensive Plan that includes specific objectives and policy recommendations to support land and water conservation strategies. In an effort to fulfill our obligation to protect the conserved resources of these easement properties, TRLT would like to make the Commissioners aware of the proximity of the proposed developments to these important resources. We encourage the Commissioners to consider the cumulative potential impacts on water resources that support the conservation values and agricultural uses on the neighboring conservation easement properties.

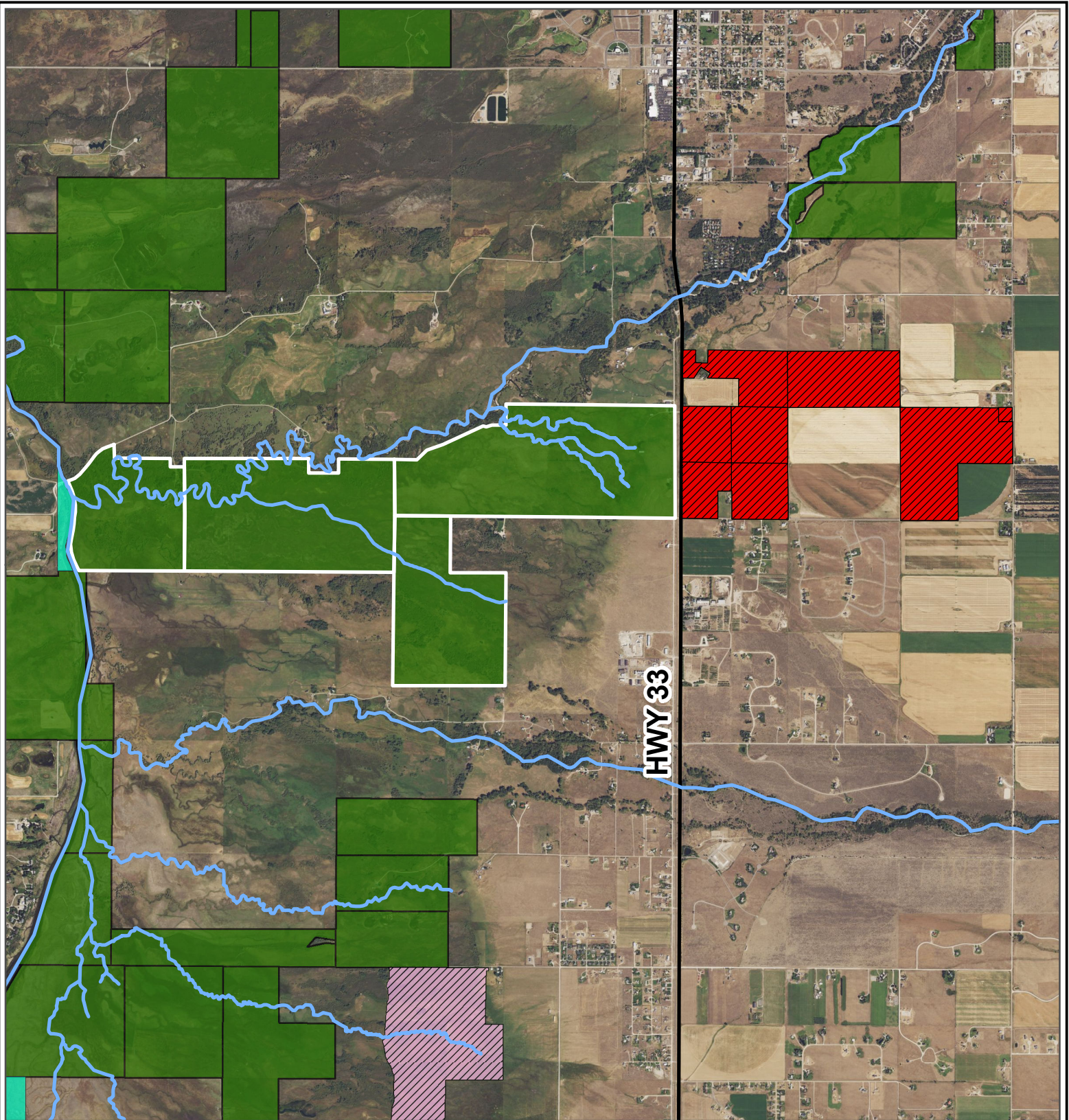
The Land Trust is committed to ensuring the integrity of the resources we steward. Thank you for your consideration and helping us ensure that these lands remain protected for the benefit of present and future generations.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Tamara Sperber". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Tamara Sperber
Conservation Director

encl



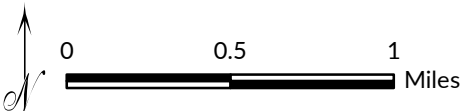
Proposed Development's Proximity to Protected Lands



TRLT Conservation Easements



Proposed Developments



USDA-FSA Aerial Imagery 2019
Map by Teton Regional Land Trust, 2022



TETON REGIONAL LAND TRUST

Nov. 3, 2023 This letter is meant to address the proposed Trestles Subdivision and continued development in Teton Valley, Idaho.

I believe a moratorium should be placed on any new building/subdividing in the valley until a study can be made on the growth will have on the aquifer and infrastructure.

The Trestles project consists of 66 residential lots in the 1st phase. That means 66 wells and septic systems, this subdivision will impact a major wildlife corridor and raptor breeding habitat and only setting aside 2 open space lots.

It will impact an already busy roadway on E 2000^s. It is already difficult to turn onto Hwy 33 from E 2000 S. Like most road in the valley E 2000 S and S 1000 E are oiled, narrow farm roads. S 1000 E, after crossing E 2000 S, going south is a gravel pot holed road.

There is no noticeable attention focused on the infrastructure. The roads are not designed to handle the continued growth of the valley.

Thank you for reading the letter. A concerned neighbor on S 1000 E.

Sincerely,
Judy Burnside



Fwd: Im worried

1 message

Jade Krueger <jkrueger@co.teton.id.us>
To: Mitzi Van Arsdell <mvanarsdell@co.teton.id.us>

Wed, Nov 8, 2023 at 6:58 AM

Can you put this in the public comment folder for Wildflower and Trestles?

Thank you,

----- Forwarded message -----

From: **Linda S Unland** <lindaunland@mac.com>
Date: Tue, Nov 7, 2023 at 5:11 PM
Subject: Im worried
To: Jade Krueger <jkrueger@co.teton.id.us>

Dear P & Z Commissioners and Jade

We have a voluminous problem in Teton Valley. The amount of subdivisions that have applied for approval, many of them slipping in right before the new code went into effect making these parcels 2.5 instead of the new 20 acre requirements, are both overwhelming and outrageous. If they are all approved, we will have a continuum with nothing but subdivisions (much like every big city, especially the I 25 corridor from Fort Collins to Denver, to Colorado Springs). I know that is not what you all want for Teton Valley and it is certainly not what I want.

We all have a chance to make this valley different, keep it beautiful, and, hopefully, have well thought out, moderate growth. With all of these projects awaiting your approval, our valley could be turned into something totally different, almost overnight.

I plead with you guys all to consider everything as carefully as you can conceivably do, always keep it in mind that we don't want another corridor of little box houses. Perhaps a moratorium would be the right approach.

Thanks for serving on this commission.

Best regards,

Linda Unland

Linda Unland
1933 E 4000 N
Driggs, ID. 83422
970.471.5740

Sent from my iPad Linda Unland
970.471.5740

Sent from my iPad

--

Jade Krueger, AICP

Pronouns: She/her/hers
Planning Administrator
Teton County Planning Department
(208) 354-2593 ext. 200
jkrueger@co.teton.id.us

FYI - I will be on vacation from November 27 to December 15th with no access to email. Please be mindful that no Administrator determinations will occur during this time. Thank you

150 Courthouse Drive
Driggs, Idaho 83422



The Planning Department hours are M-Thurs 9-3:00 p.m.; Fridays 9-12:00 p.m.



Sharon Fox <sfox@co.teton.id.us>

Trestle and Wildflower reserve

1 message

jennifer carter <jcarter83455@gmail.com>
To: pz@co.teton.id.us

Tue, Nov 7, 2023 at 8:29 PM

Please stop the sprawl of Driggs south. The roads are over crowded and have no turn lanes. More people are killed each year. The aquifer is getting bled dry with all the landscaping and ponds and none of these subdivisions take into account affordable housing for actual residents. We have enough platted subdivisions, must we further burden our infrastructure and the remaining wildlife corridors. Please respect the zoning limits and keep development closer to the existing towns. I vote no for Wildflower Reserve where they will demolish all the wildflowers and grow houses. And no to Trestle Sub. Stop the southern sprawl.

Sincerely, Jennifer Carter
, Full time. Teton Valley Resident.



Sharon Fox <sfox@co.teton.id.us>

Public Comment Re: Trestles and Wildflower Reserves Subdivisions

1 message

Alena McIntosh <alena.jeni@gmail.com>
To: pz@co.teton.id.us

Fri, Nov 3, 2023 at 4:58 PM

Dear Planning and Zoning Commission,

I am writing to express my concerns over the proposed Trestles and Wildflower Reserves Subdivisions. I grew up in Teton Valley and have passed by the land south of Driggs more times than I can count. Every time I drive by I am grateful that we still have a scenic corridor between The Spud and Driggs that has not been marred by subdivisions and sprawl. I ask you to deny these applications as they do not provide benefit to our community, but will seriously detract from the character of our Valley. In addition, during last winter's brutally cold temps and high snow levels, large herds of Elk could be seen in those fields. What will happen when their essential winter range is cut even further? The proposed density with the use of septic systems is also of extreme concern given our intensifying water contamination issues. Please consider the legacy that we hope to leave for future residents of this Valley. You have a chance to protect one of the last truly great pieces of the 'Drictor' corridor, which represents the agricultural heritage of Teton Valley - please do not squander it.

Thank you for you time and service to our community.

Best,

Alena McIntosh



Sharon Fox <sfox@co.teton.id.us>

Public Comment in opposition to Wildflower Reserve and Trestles 1 and 2

1 message

Anna Trentadue <anna@tetonvalleyadvocates.org>

Fri, Nov 3, 2023 at 4:35 PM

To: Jade Krueger <jkrueger@co.teton.id.us>, pz@co.teton.id.us

Cc: Mike Maltaverne <mmaltaverne@tetoncountyfire.com>, Doug <dself@driggsidaho.org>, Mayor August <mayor@driggsidaho.org>, Leanne Bernstein <lbernstein@driggsidaho.org>

Dear Planning Staff and Planning & Zoning Commission:

There is a stark decision before you: respect Driggs' growth policies which protect the pristine southern border of town, or allow sprawl to creep south almost all the way to the Spud Drive-In. If Wildflower Reserve and Trestles 1 and 2 are approved as currently proposed under the old 2.5-acre zoning code, the open and pristine scenic entrance to Driggs that we all love and value will be gone, forever.

No property owner has an absolute, unfettered right to receive approval for large-scale development. It is a special privilege that should not be taken lightly. In order to recommend approval, you must affirmatively be able to make a fact-based finding that there is sufficient evidence in the record to meet every single piece of the preliminary plat criteria for large subdivisions and rural reserve PUD's.

The burden of proof does not allow you to resolve evidentiary ambiguities in favor of the developer-applicant. The burden of proof is on the applicant to proactively build a fact-based record that supports and resolves every single evidentiary question. **If the facts don't support the criteria, this preliminary plat must be denied.**

The big bargaining chip being offered by the Trestles/Wildflower team is affordable housing: ***sacrifice this pristine border of town for the sake of providing workforce housing.***

With this proposed bargain in mind, please consider the following:

1. There are no firm commitments to affordable housing in either the Wildflower or Trestles application materials.

Many projects give great lip service to the value of workforce housing. But actions speak louder than words. In reviewing the file, no tangible commitments have been made to affordable housing. No units have been deed restricted or committed to the Housing Authority. Many times, a developer presents rosy *estimates* of how cheaply they will be able to construct homes in their developments once they gain plat approval - but those are just words. A verbal estimate is not backed by any kind of contract or established fact. It is hollow. It is revocable. It provides no assurances that trading open space for affordable housing is a good bargain. And unfortunately, we have seen how those empty estimates and hollow words never quite seem to ring true once the plat gets recorded.

2. Please respect the purpose of conservation easements in the immediate area.

The Teton Regional Land Trust has spent considerable staff time and financial resources establishing the Gilroy conservation easements to the north of Trestles. The Gilroy easements solidify the pristine border to Driggs, and help protect Teton Creek. The Gilroy easements are not a stepping stone to permitting density outside of the City. The Gilroy easements are actively preserving the Teton Creek corridor as the line in the sand: the place where Driggs ends and the country begins. Let's keep it that way.

3. The applicant's request for a regulatory takings analysis should be interpreted as a sign of bad faith.

Having practiced land use law in Teton County since 2007, I have never seen an applicant retain legal counsel to contest the Idaho Transportation Department's proposed traffic mitigations - especially at only the concept phase. Not only is this request very premature since no final decisions have been rendered at this point, it's clearly a shot across the bow. If the purpose of [their letter from legal council](#) was to intimidate and escape from the well-established need for safety improvements along HWY33, then it nudges us to scrutinize their application materials even more closely. If the applicant has *already lawyered up* to contest a simple addition of turning lanes at 2000S, I am concerned they will likewise look for opportunities to cut costs and save on other public improvements that may affect our safe roads and clean groundwater.

We all know this area south of Driggs is special. It's one of the last intact swaths of active agricultural land. This incredible scenic entrance happily greets everyone coming into Driggs. The value of this gorgeous gateway is well recognized in the new county zoning code, which gives this area its own, unique zoning designation of Rural Residential 20-acre average density. No other area in Teton County has this designation, which highlights the preciousness of this City→Country transitional border that has existed for over a century now.

So in other words

Driggs ends at the tree line. *Let's keep it that way!*

Anna Trentadue
Program Director / Staff Attorney
(208) 354-1707 Office in Driggs
anna@tetonvalleyadvocates.org



We work for Teton Valley! Please think about supporting us with a **DONATION**. Together, we will continue to help shape policy, guide development, and provide outreach to preserve natural resources and protect the rural character of our Valley.



April 5, 2022

RE: Trestles Subdivision

To Teton County Planning Commission:

Dear Commissioners:

Please accept the following comments regarding the proposed Trestles subdivision on W 2000 S. Please see the comments below.

- 1) **Transportation Impacts:** The City of Driggs is concerned that the proposed subdivision is in the Scenic Corridor in addition to the level of traffic that would be generated by the proposed development and the resulting impact on intersections with state highway 33 and traffic growth on highway 33 and Driggs arterials and collector roads. The City requests that:
 - a. Idaho Transportation Department be consulted and provided a copy of the application in order to ensure that intersection impacts are properly mitigated;
 - b. Bicycle connectivity to the Hwy 33 Pathway be required – either via road connection or other – including a marked and signed crossing.
- 2) **Parks Impacts:** The City of Driggs is concerned that continued development in the county increases demand for city park and recreation facilities and that this is not being met by the county impact fees, which are designated only for fairgrounds improvements. The City requests that:
 - a. Park land and improvements (e.g., playground and field) be required of the developer. Such fees could be remitted to the cities, which are currently providing park space accessible to all county residents, or held in a fund to be used toward future countywide (including in-city) recreation and park improvements.
- 3) **Housing:** The City of Driggs is concerned that future housing growth will not adequately address the attainability goals established through the Joint Housing Authority, including the impact of Short Term Rentals on new housing growth. The City





CITY OF DRIGGS

OFFICE OF THE MAYOR

recommends:

- a. Encourage (or require) the developer to create recorded CCR's which would limit or prevent the homes from being used as Short Term Rentals.

Thank you for considering our concerns.

Sincerely,

Mayor August Christensen



208-354-2362
M-TH 8:30am - 5pm
F 8:30am - 1pm



mayor@driggsidaho.org
DRIGGSIDAHO.ORG



60 South Main Street
PO Box 48
Driggs, ID 83422

Judy Burnside
1178 S. 1000 E.
Driggs, Idaho 83422

Jade Krueger
Senior Planner of
Teton County
150 Courthouse Dr., Rm 107
Driggs, Idaho 83422

Dear Ms. Krueger:

Thank you for listening to my concerns about the subdivisions proposed for the property off Hwy 33 and 2000 S. You ask if I would submit my concerns in writing. The following are my concerns for the mentioned subdivisions and future growth of Teton Valley Idaho.

1. The Valley's aquifer -

Teton Valley has not received adequate rain or snowfall necessary to recharge the aquifer for many years. According to an article in the Jackson Hole Daily, Tuesday, March 1, 2022, February 2022 is the second driest year on record for moisture received. Bruce Mason, Teton Valley's weatherman, in an article in the Teton Valley News, Wednesday, April 20, 2022, expressed similar concerns about the moisture received this year.

I believe if the Valley's growth continues unchecked, the future of the existing wells and water availability does not look very promising.

2. Sewage waste handling and Septic Tanks -

I am concerned that the addition of 200+ houses septic tanks to the proposed subdivisions poses a great risk of contamination of existing wells and the aquifer.

I don't believe it is feasible to connect these houses to the city sewage system as it is already over loaded. Another major concern is the city sewage

system is next to wet lands. All of land on Bates Rd, both sides of the road, is wet lands all the way to the river and a wildlife corridor for moose and deer.

3. Open Space and designated wildlife corridor -

I did not see any indication of open space or wildlife corridor in the proposed subdivision plats. That section of land is a major throughfare for moose and deer year round and sometimes elk. They are traveling from the river to the foothills of the Teton mountain range.

Have you noticed the deer bodies littering the road from Victor to Teton? I have also counted 10 moose killed on this throughfare from December 2021 to date. This is only the ones I have personally seen. Let's be honest the entire valley is a wildlife corridor. Look at the deer and moose that roam the Driggs city limits, especially in the winter.

There was an article in the Jackson Hole Daily about bike path being built between Victor and Jackson. There are two underpass planned for construction for the bicycle/pedestrian traffic, possible by grants. In Wyoming just before entering Pinedale there is an overpass for wildlife over the freeway. If there are grants for bicycles/pedestrians underpasses/overpasses, maybe there are grants for wildlife underpasses and overpasses. But that is a discussion for another day.

4. Roads -

1000 E is a major artery of the valley. It is

a major road to the County Landfill/Transfer station. It is an oiled road with many patches and potholes, heavily traveled by the heavy dump trucks from the numerous gravel pits and farm equipment. 2000 S. is also a heavily traveled road.

Our roads are mainly gravel or oiled and are not designed to handle the traffic now much less for the expected future traffic load. Just trying to get on the hwy from 2000 S. anytime of the day is a trial of patience.

These are just a few of my concerns. Not just for the proposed subdivisions but for the entire valley.

Sincerely,
Judy Burnside

Enclosed are copies of the mentioned newspaper articles. Also a recent one in the Teton Valley News; Wednesday, Apr. 20, 2022, stating the Transfer Station is full to capacity already with the current construction in the valley.

WEATHER

Cool Clear Water

By **BRUCE MASON**

As far as water goes, this year has been a heart-breaker, with hopes for plenty of water dashed time after time. But this week, those hopes are on the rise once again. Mid-April brought us the highest precipitation amounts we've seen since early January. It wasn't enough to

bring the amount of water that's fallen up to normal, but now we are over 80% of average and counting. More rain and snow on Easter weekend and this week will help even more.

There is more good news in the snowy hills around us. According to the Henry's Fork Foundation, the water in the snow is now over 70% of average, no longer the

lowest since 2007. Colder than usual temperatures will keep that water in reserve as snow in the mountains even as it melts on the valley floor. Again, unsettled weather this week will keep the hopeful trend going. We probably won't get to average or break the drought, but there is progress.

Love it or hate it, the wet, sometimes snowy



spring weather is just what we need to keep our communities thriving. The long-term outlooks from the Climate Prediction Center still call for an



BRUCE MASON

Somewhere between a drought and a flood would be just right.

average to below-average amount of precipitation in April and then getting unusually drier (and hotter) as we move into the summer. But the outlook for this week is

good. Around here, May is our wettest month of the year, more reason for hope that things won't get too bad this summer after all. Hope for the best, but keep your feathers numbered.

TETON VALLEY

THIS EDUCATOR PEN
A5

CAUTION AND COMMON SENSE
B3

APRIL'S FOOLS



Onslaught of subdivisions continues

By JULIA TELLMAN

As the Teton Board of County Commissioners works on revisions to the proposed new land development code, the flood of applications for large subdivisions in the unincorporated county shows no sign of slowing.

"We're looking at a record breaking year," the county's new senior planner, Jade Krueger, said about the number of subdivision applications that have been submitted to the planning department. There have been 19 so far in the first quarter of 2022; 2021 saw 58 total.

Meanwhile, the building out of existing lots continues. The number of permits that have come into the county building department so far this fiscal year (123 total, including 59 single family homes) have outstripped last fiscal year (92 in the same time frame, with 53 single family homes).

Krueger was hired at the end of 2021, filling the large gap left behind when both county planners resigned last summer. She moved from the Colorado front range to Jackson to be with her partner, but said she has visited Teton Valley many times and was familiar with some of the challenges and advantages of being a planner here.

"We're at such a critical point in terms of planning, as both an agricultural and mountain community," she said. "That's kind of what drew me to Teton Valley."

More SUBDIVISIONS | A4

Subdivisions/ from A1

In a report to the board of county commissioners on March 28, Krueger noted that there are currently 105 applications being processed by the department. Some of those are conditional use permits, temporary use permits, boundary adjustments, and lot splits, but there is also a raft of large subdivisions in the pipeline. That number does not include the almost 100 pre-application meetings that she and contract planning administrator Leanne Bernstein have worked through in the past few months.

"We were really backlogged for awhile there with pre-application meetings [a requirement for development proposals] but we've been able to dig out," Krueger said.

During those conferences, the planner will look at the property and proposal, flag any issues, determine what is allowed according to the code, and talk the developer through any necessary studies or requirements.

The next step for large subdivisions (10 or more lots, or for property falling within an overlay) is a concept plan public hearing before the Teton County Planning & Zoning Commission.

On April 12 alone, the Teton County P&Z will be reviewing two concept plan applications that amount to 48 lots, and one preliminary plat application for another 24 lots.

On March 8 the P&Z approved the concept plans for three subdivisions totaling 45 lots, and on Feb. 8 the commission approved concept plans for two subdivisions with 20 lots total. A public hearing for a 44-lot subdivision southeast of Driggs was continued until June, pending more information, and a 47-lot

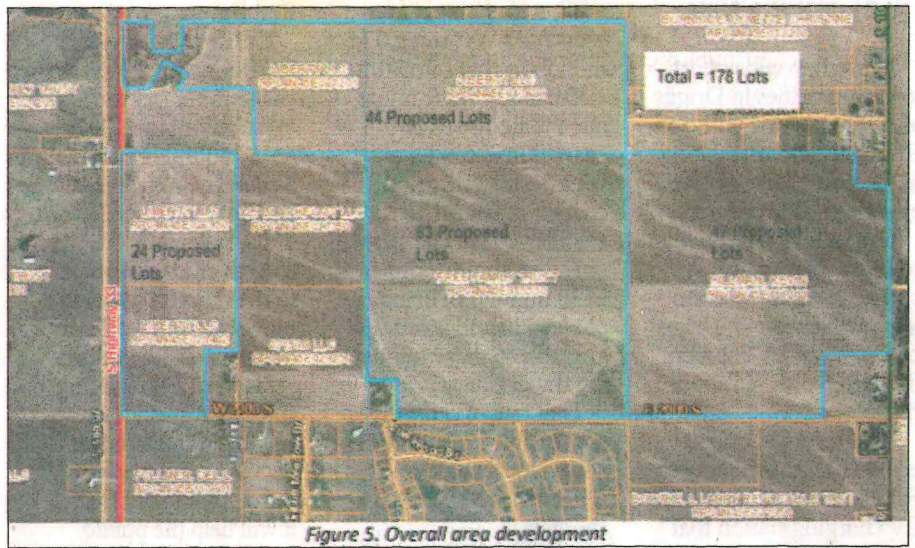


Figure 5. Overall area development

COURTESY IMAGE

The area around 2000 S east of Highway 33 is a hot spot for proposed new subdivisions. These applications are all in the concept plan phase as of the end of March.

subdivision in the same area will be reviewed at some future point.

These totals don't include small two- to four-lot subdivision applications, of which there have been quite a few in the past year.

After concept plan approval, a developer needs to submit a preliminary plat, which undergoes public hearings in front of P&Z and the board of county commissioners. According to the planning department report, there are 37 subdivisions awaiting preliminary plat submission and five that have hearings scheduled before the P&Z or BOCC.

Because a preliminary plat is a much more detailed document than a concept plan, Krueger said the hold-up may be because local engineering firms are just as busy as public agencies.

"We anticipate that we'll be processing the current load of applications for the next 18 months to two years," she predicted.

After preliminary plat approval, the applicant installs public infrastructure on the property, then must submit a final plat to the BOCC for one more public hearing before the lots can be officially divided and sold.

The planning department is awaiting 11 final plats, and four final plat hearings have been scheduled.

Some of the hot spots in the valley include the area around 2000 S, south of Driggs and east of the highway. There are 178 lots being proposed in various subdivisions in that quadrant, not including a 121-lot subdivision further south. The 4000 N corridor southwest of Teton is also the site of a few future subdivisions, as is the area of impact around the City of Victor.

Many have speculated that the rush of new subdivision applications has been caused by the pending adoption of an updated land development code. The proposed draft code, which has been under review by the BOCC since February, does away with the county's existing residential zones of 2.5-acre and 20-acre minimum density allowances, and instead uses an average density equation that would not enable the same kinds of subdivisions being proposed now.

Krueger said that the existing code is clunky and hard to navigate, and that she's looking forward to the adoption of the new code.

"I've worked for bigger communities, and when you reach a certain stage in development you need to update the code to keep up with current planning and good practices," she said.

She added that in her professional experience, she hasn't seen a board that was more dedicated to working through the details of a code than the Teton BOCC. "They're taking their time, thinking critically about what will work, taking into account the comments from P&Z and the concerns of the public."

Krueger said she's excited to be working shoulder-to-shoulder with planners like Bernstein and Doug Self with the City of Driggs, who are in the process of implementing the valley's first affordable and workforce housing policies.

"People are looking in the right direction and making the right policies," she said. "It can seem like a daunting task but I think the next few years will be telling."

Information on pending subdivisions and meeting agendas can be found at tetoncountyidaho.gov and in the public notices published in the Teton Valley News every week.



KATHRYN ZIESIG/JACKSON HOLE DAILY

Eight-year-old skier Delaney Lighthart cracks a smile as Lindsey Vonn hands back her ski after signing it and a copy of Vonn's new memoir, "Rise," on Friday at Valley Bookstore. After meeting Vonn, Delaney joined her twin sister, Ella, and the two excitedly looked over their newly autographed books and skis. Read more about Vonn's visit in Wednesday's Jackson Hole News&Guide.

Water metric hits a low

By BILLY ARNOLD
JACKSON HOLE DAILY

The amount of liquid water in the snowpack at Snake River Basin precipitation stations hit record lows in February.

"I knew it was pretty low for the month, but I didn't realize it was that low," said Jim Fahey, a Wyoming hydrologist with the Natural Resources Conservation Service.

February levels of snow water equivalent, or SWE, at the Moran station hit their lowest in 110 years on record, clocking in at 18% of average.

SWE is a measure of liquid stored in the snowpack, water that moistens the landscape, hedges against wildfires, bolsters flows in the Upper Snake River for recreationists and fish, and irrigates fields downstream in Idaho.

Two other stations near Afton also re-

ported record lows in February. Others came in close to the bottom. February SWE levels at the station in Moose were the second lowest in 63 years — around 15% of average.

At the Jackson station, the month's recordings were the fourth lowest in 177 years — about 24% of average.

That comes after a month-and-a-half-long dry spell in the Tetons. A ridge of high pressure is sending Pacific storms to the Pacific Northwest and southern Rockies instead of Jackson Hole.

"It's like dropping a giant boulder into the river," Mountain Weather meteorologist Jim Woodmencey said. "Water's got to flow around it."

SWE is a measure of water in the snowpack, not the total amount of snow that has fallen. But snowfall levels for the month are likewise just a bit shy of all-

time lows.

Woodmencey said the Rendezvous Bowl weather station is reporting roughly 26 inches of snow for the month.

That's up four inches from the record low of 22 inches in February 1991, but down roughly 50 inches from the 74-inch average in the last 47 years.

"Not the driest," Woodmencey said of February. "But second place."

Both Fahey and Woodmencey were cautiously optimistic about precipitation in the next month. Snow water equivalents tend to peak in the first week or so of April, and then decline as temperatures warm.

Forecasts, Woodmencey said, are for below normal temperatures and above normal precipitation in the first half of March, including a possible Friday storm.

"I'm hoping for a miracle March," Fahey said.

tion's plans to combat climate change.

The justices heard more than two hours of arguments over whether to limit the EPA's power to regulate carbon dioxide emissions from electric utilities on the same day a U.N. science report painted a dire picture of global climate change.

A major report from a U.N. panel of hundreds of scientists detailed how climate change — caused by the burning of coal, oil and natural gas — is already taking a deadly toll and will get worse. Just how much worse depends on how quickly the world cuts its carbon emissions, with coal being the biggest polluter, the report said.

At the high court, the justices took up an appeal from 19 mostly Republican-led states and coal companies that contend the EPA has only narrow authority to regulate carbon output.

Some conservative justices appeared skeptical of broad EPA authority over carbon dioxide emissions, but there could be obstacles to issuing a major ruling. Among these are arguments from power plant operators serving 40 million people that call on the court to maintain the companies' flexibility to reduce emissions while maintaining reliable service.

See *EMISSIONS* on page 9

Transfer station overwhelmed by increased intake

By CONNOR SHEA

In a sign of the growth of Teton Valley, the construction increases seen over the last few years are manifesting themselves in the amount of waste seen at the Teton County Transfer Station.

As a part of a discussion on April 11 centering around the county extending a hauling contract with PSI Waste Systems and RAD Curbside, officials discussed the large increases in waste volume.

The county ended up extending the contract, with a performance bond, but the bigger questions remained around how to keep up with the waste.

Officials are worried as Idaho Falls' PSI Waste Systems and RAD Curbside are both feeling the effects of having

to keep up with increasingly larger quantities of waste.

Teton County public works director Darryl Johnson is worried about the amount of waste the transfer station has been seeing come in.

"The biggest challenge is quantity. Things are crazy everywhere," said Johnson.

The transfer station has been so overwhelmed that waste is piling up in places it shouldn't be.

"We have had an uncomfortable amount of solid waste sitting on the floor from one day to another," said Johnson.

Teton County solid waste supervisor Danny O'Donnell echoed Johnson's sentiment.

"We're busier than ever, we're already breaking records. We need two extra trips in addition to what we have normally. We are set to have a buildup, and we've seen in the past that that's

a dangerous situation," said O'Donnell.

Although not as serious as the blaze last fall, there was another trash fire on April 1 that was caught before it could get out of control. The fire ignited while a RAD truck was dumping its load at the transfer station.

A transfer station employee saw the blaze as the load was being dumped and quickly controlled the blaze with a large bucket of snow and sand. Teton County Fire assisted in extinguishing the fire before loading the wet material into the back of a PSI truck that hauled it off safely.

While the fire was minor, it is a sure sign that things are quite hectic at the transfer station.

The county commissioners, discussing with both PSI and RAD, tried to find a way to better haul the waste away from the transfer station so it doesn't



COURTESY PHOTO

Vehicles queue at the Teton County Transfer Station entrance in 2020. This year the center has seen a large increase in waste volume.

run out of room. Officials stated that the biggest headaches are coming from unsorted construction and demolition waste.

"This week I needed an extra RAD truck to come in and do our haul because we're getting

about three times the construction and demolition material that we had been getting two years ago, even last year," said Jeremy Harris, PSI site manager.

Trash/ from A1

"A lot of the construction and demolition material we see is roll-off (dumpster) materials and it's 50-70 percent wood that could be sorted, pulled, and moved to our diversion pile. Same thing with metal. These are things that can be sorted. They're just not getting done because it's cheaper not to or because it's not a requirement," said Harris.

RAD Owner Dave Hudacsko also attested to the increase in construction and demolition waste, particularly in the demand for those roll-off dumpsters.

"We have about 20% more roll-offs out right now than we did this time last year," said Hudacsko. "I can also see that there are a lot more roll-offs ready to get called in."

The tough thing with unsorted C&D waste is that while the loads won't reach the weight limits set by PSI, the volume that the waste occupies is ultimately the limiting factor. That's causing a severe decrease in each haul's efficiency.

"The construction and demolition material that is coming in unsorted makes our trucks light. They're filling the same volume, even though they weigh less," said Harris.

Solutions for the increasingly complex problem of more waste intake are focused on outreach to contractors, adding more drivers, and hauling to other transfer stations.

There will be a long road to see those solutions implemented

however with many logistical challenges along the route.

When looking in from the outside the easy-out solution seems to just add more drivers.

PSI's Harris suggested adding another driver to be sent up to pick up a load in Driggs on Thursdays. Currently, PSI, based in Idaho Falls, sends a truck and driver to Driggs on Tuesdays and Saturdays. O'Donnell was not sure adding another haul day would be enough.

"As far as an extra driver on Thursdays, that's not going to completely solve our problem this summer. If we have the same amount of material as last year, one extra truck a week might do it, but I don't think it will," said O'Donnell.

It being 2022 however, staffing remains the biggest roadblock.

"The shortcoming now is staffing, we're working through it, to make sure that we have enough drivers to go up to Driggs," said Harris.

Harris stated that new changes to Idaho's CDL regulations will also have a big impact on the ability to hire, and even retain, drivers.

"There is going to be a shortage of CDL drivers now in the next 18 months because the state has come out and is now requiring all CDL drivers to go to school, so they are predicting that we're going to lose 20-25 percent of our CDL drivers in the next 18 months," said Harris.

Despite those concerns, Harris is confident that he can add at least some help in the short term.

■ Local

Construction on Teton Pass Trail moves ahead

BY TIMOTHY J. WOODS
JACKSON HOLE DAILY

Drivers crossing Teton Pass on Highway 22 should be prepared for some delays, as construction work on the Teton Pass Trail, a pedestrian and bicycle pathway over the pass into Idaho, has resumed.

According to Wyoming Department of Transportation spokesperson Stephanie Harsha, the work being done will connect the Teton Pass Trail to the Centennial Trail in Idaho. Harsha said the work extends about a mile into Wyoming on the north side of the highway, ending at Trail Creek Campground.

The project is being overseen by the Western Federal Lands Highway Division, and the contract was awarded to a construction company out of Idaho Falls, Idaho, said Wyoming Pathways Executive Director Tim Young on Wednesday.

Rodney "Blaine" Johnson, the project engineer with the Western Federal Lands Highway Division, was not able to be reached Wednesday.

"What's being worked on right now is

there is an underpass planned at Mike Harris [Campground] on the Idaho section, and then there's the second underpass that's planned at Trail Creek Campground," Young said. "So the contractor is going to be installing bicycle/pedestrian underpasses for the highway there.

"It will access the two campgrounds, so that'll be very good to have that safe underpass for people that are biking or walking, and the people that are staying at the campgrounds will have a great way to be able to access the town of Victor or other recreation destinations by their bike if they want to."

Young said he understands this stretch will be completed by June, and the next portion connecting Trail Creek to Coal Creek will be designed and constructed using BUILD Grant funds won by Teton County and several other partners in Wyoming and Idaho.

Though there's more work to do, it looks like the vision of connecting the communities of Jackson and Driggs, Idaho, with a safe pathway is coming together, Young said.

"It's very exciting," he said.

9/8/2021

Teton County Mail - B & W Ranch Estates Subdivision



Sharon Fox <sfox@co.teton.id.us>

B & W Ranch Estates Subdivision

2 messages

Gwenn Heilesen [REDACTED]
To: "pz@co.teton.id.us" <pz@co.teton.id.us>

Tue, Sep 7, 2021 at 3:20 PM

As the property owners of the land immediately west of this proposed subdivision, we would like to point out a few concerns we anticipate:

1. This is a wildlife corridor. We have lived here for 20 years. We have a constant stream of moose, deer and elk who pass through this property throughout the year. There have been deer herds and moose who have wintered here as well as elk who pass through.
2. We are concerned about the effects 24 septic tanks will have on our well, or will this subdivision be required to hook up the Driggs sewage system as Ironwood was when it was built.
3. Knowing that there are many subdivisions throughout Teton County which are not built out, do we really need another platted subdivision where the vacant, unkept lots will be left to grow weeds and become an eyesore?

We look forward to your considerations of these matters at the meeting on September 14.

Ray and Gwenn Heilesen