



National Headquarters

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The Honorable Ray LaHood
Secretary of Transportation
Department of Transportation
400 Seventh Street S.W., Room 10200
Washington, D.C. 20590

Dear Secretary LaHood:

We encourage the Secretary to use the TIGER II program to promote environmentally responsible and sustainable economic recovery. Projects that build upon existing investments and improve existing infrastructure while increasing safety and mobility will assist struggling rural communities by providing jobs and protecting wildlife and wild landscapes.

We are writing in strong support of Wyoming Department of Transportation's (WYDOT) proposal for TIGER II funding to construct a series of fencing, passages and related improvements to US 191, US 189 and Trappers Point in Sublette County, Wyoming. These improvements will significantly improve highway safety by reducing vehicle collisions in the area of one of America's most famous wildlife migrations. In a 2007 report to Congress, the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) stated that wildlife crossing structures have been shown to reduce wildlife-vehicle collisions by more than 80 percent.

Trappers Point is a set of narrow bottlenecks where thousands of mule deer, pronghorn antelope and moose cross Highway 191 at least twice each year on their annual migrations from Grand Teton National Park and the northern Green River Valley to winter range further south. In recent years, hundreds of wildlife-vehicle collisions have occurred along this stretch. And if the proposed improvements are not made, the hazard will only increase as traffic on this road is increasing rapidly with expanding development in Pinedale, Wyoming.

WYDOT's innovative proposal to construct first-of-their-kind wildlife crossing structures will benefit human safety and the movement of some of the most important migrating wildlife populations in the Greater Yellowstone Ecosystem. The interdisciplinary approach, interagency cooperation and improvements featured in the project are an excellent model of large scale habitat connectivity initiatives.

In addition to benefiting the natural environment, the project will help Wyoming's two leading industries, energy and tourism, both of which have been significantly impacted by recent economic conditions. As wildlife is important to the human inhabitants of the region as well, the project will also benefit livability in Wyoming and beyond.

Sincerely,

Timothy Male, PhD.
Vice President for Conservation Policy