United States Department of the Interior
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE
GRAND TETON NATIONAL PARK
P.O. DRAWER 170
MOOSE, WYOMING 83012

IN REPLY REFER TO:

L7619 (GRTE)

SEP - - 2006

Dear Interested Party:

Enclosed is the Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS) for the Grand Teton National Park (GTNP) Transportation Plan. The need for the plan comes from a number of trends in park use and recreation preferences. While the overall number of recreational visits to the park has remained relatively stable over the past decade, some of the most popular activity areas and trailheads are experiencing increased use. The purpose of the Grand Teton National Park Transportation Plan is to proactively address and manage transportation-related issues.

The FEIS responds to public comments on the Transportation Plan Draft EIS received during the May 27, 2005 to August 25, 2005 comment period and incorporates additional information and analysis collected since the draft was released. The FEIS analyzes five alternatives for transportation-related improvements within GTNP, with Alternative 3a as the preferred alternative.

Alternative 1: *No Action* - assumes that current conditions and the current transportation system would be carried forward for the next 5 to 10 years.

Alternative 2: *Improved Road Shoulders*- has the primary objective of improving the park's ability to proactively address transportation issues and enhance the experiences of visitors within the park, with little or no construction of multi-use pathways or parking facilities. In order to enhance safety and the quality of visitor experience, approximately 18 miles of roadway shoulders would be widened on the Teton Park Road between Moose Junction and Signal Mountain Lodge.

Alternative 3: *Improved Shoulders and Multi-use Pathways* - proposes a system of multi-use pathways and shoulder improvements (widening) to provide enhanced and safer experiences for bicyclists and pedestrians. This alternative proposes realigning the Moose-Wilson Road in two areas, with the existing alignments being restored to natural conditions; approximately 3 miles of multi-use pathways on the Moose-Wilson Road from the Granite Canyon Entrance to the Laurance S. Rockefeller (LSR) Preserve; approximately 20 miles of separated multi-use pathways between the south boundary and North Jenny Lake Junction; and approximately 16 miles of improved road shoulders between North Jenny Lake Junction and Colter Bay.

Alternative 3a: *Preferred* - a new preferred alternative combining elements of the Draft EIS alternatives 3 and 4. Based on comments received during public review, Alternative 3a provides a wide range of transportation opportunities for bicyclists and pedestrians. This alternative proposes approximately 23 miles of separated multi-use pathways between the south boundary and String Lake Junction via North Jenny Lake Junction; approximately 16 miles of pathways within the road corridor between North Jenny Lake Junction and Colter Bay; an approximately 3-

mile pathway within the road corridor along Moose-Wilson Road from the Granite Canyon Entrance to the Laurance S. Rockefeller (LSR) Preserve; and the Moose-Wilson Road realignment in two areas, with the existing alignments being restored to natural conditions.

Alternative 4: *Multi-use Pathways* - proposes a system of separated multi-use pathways with approximately 36 miles of multi-use pathways between the south boundary and Colter Bay; multi-use pathways along approximately 7 miles of the Moose-Wilson Road; and the Moose-Wilson Road realignment in two areas, with the existing alignments being restored to natural conditions.

Common to All Action Alternatives:

- Over the next several years, the NPS would use a new adaptive management plan to test a number of different operational and management strategies for managing traffic, as well as pedestrian and bicycle use on the Moose-Wilson Road, to ensure the existing character of the road is maintained.

- A transit business plan would be developed to analyze whether it is feasible to initiate a transit system in and around Grand Teton National Park. The plan would help determine how such a system could be operated effectively and efficiently such that it is a financially sustainable system that could be provided by the private sector or other entity.

- GTNP would implement a research and monitoring program to evaluate more precisely the impacts of pathways on wildlife and wildlife viewers, and identify wildlife safety hazards for pathway users. This information will be used to guide future management actions.

- Visitor information systems would be expanded and improved. Road signs and other forms of information, including information about existing transit services, would be improved to inform park visitors about current traffic/use conditions in the Park.

- A pedestrian-crossing signal would be constructed at the bridge in the Moose Complex to increase visitor safety.

The complete FEIS is also available on the web at http://parkplanning.nps.gov. Additional CD copies of the *Grand Teton National Park Transportation Plan/EIS* are available at the Moose Visitor Center in the park and at the Reference Desk in the Teton County Library. The NPS intends to issue a Record of Decision in January 2007. For further information, call 307-739-3410.

I appreciate your participation in the development of this EIS and look forward to your continued participation in future planning projects.

Sincerely,

Mary Gibson Scott
Superintendent

Enclosure