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United States Department of the Interior

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE
INTERMOUNTAIN REGION
12795 West Alameda Parkway
P.O. Box 25287
Denver, Colorado 80225-0287



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WYOMING GAME & FISH
WILDLIFE DIVISION
CHEYENNE, WYOMING

Mr. Brian R. Nesvik
Chief Game Warden
Chief, Wildlife Division
Wyoming Game and Fish Department
5400 Bishop Blvd.
Cheyenne, WY 82006

Dear Mr. Nesvik:

I appreciated the opportunity to meet with you and Wyoming Game and Fish Department Director Scott Talbott on September 4, 2014, at Grand Teton National Park. Superintendent David Vela and several members of the park staff were also in attendance, as was Tim Fuchs from your Jackson office. We discussed many issues that day, including management of wildlife within park boundaries. A particular issue we discussed was related to the management of gray wolves on private inholdings within the park, a matter that you had originally raised in a letter dated March 12, 2013. This has been an extremely complex and difficult issue to address, has involved multiple technical, policy, and legal representatives from both of our agencies, and has taken months to conclude. Your patience has been greatly appreciated. As a result, we believe this has strengthened the collaborative partnership between the National Park Service and Wyoming Game and Fish Department (WGFD).


Most of the National Park Service's regulations found within Title 36 of the Code of Federal Regulations apply only on federal lands. But several of them, including 36 CFR 2.2 – Wildlife Protection, apply to lands within a park area that, regardless of land ownership, are under the legislative jurisdiction of the United States. For many years we assumed that 36 CFR 2.2 applied on private inholdings within Grand Teton and prohibited the taking of wildlife on those inholdings. While NPS continues its interest in ensuring that wildlife management on private inholdings does not negatively impact park resources, we have concluded that 36 CFR 2.2 does not apply to private inholdings within Grand Teton.

As a consequence of that conclusion, we agreed to the following:

- The Wyoming Game & Fish Department will take the lead in responding to wildlife management issues on privately-owned lands within the park, and will coordinate with park staff when necessary and appropriate.

- However, if that incident also involves, or any part of that incident occurs on National Park Service land, then Grand Teton National Park should also be notified simultaneously with Wyoming Game and Fish.
- Grand Teton National Park is willing to enter into an agreement with Wyoming Game and Fish. Such an agreement would allow and define how Grand Teton National Park employees could work cooperatively to appropriately resolve issues involving wildlife on privately owned lands within or abutting Grand Teton National Park.
- If an incident involving wildlife and domestic animals occur on National Park Service property, the primary contact is the National Park Service. This includes all neighbors and partners who hold an active grazing permit or companies holding concession contracts.
- NPS staff and WGFD will further discuss how to coordinate our efforts in implementing the new protocols, including when/how we inform the affected land owners, how we collaboratively address wildlife issues in general, and how we roll-out this new information for the general public.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Tammy Whittington". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Tammy" being more prominent than the last name "Whittington".

Tammy Whittington
Associate Regional Director
Resource Stewardship and Science

cc: David Vela, GRTE Superintendent
Scott Talbott, WGFD Director
Tyson Powell, Solicitor