



January 6, 2009

Teton County P&Z
89 North Main Street
Driggs, Idaho 83422

RE: Milk Creek Estates preliminary plat.

Dear Commissioners,

Valley Advocates for Responsible Development (VARD) supported the original design of this PUD because it was in keeping with the rural character of the valley's north end and preserved the bulk of Milk Creek Canyon with a road alignment that encouraged homes and driveways to be built on the flat land outside of the canyon corridor.

The plan has now changed, and the newly proposed Milk Creek road will require significant cut and fill into the south wall of the canyon. The driveways to lots 4-7 will be located in some of the steepest areas of the canyon and also require significant cut and fill. This new arrangement also facilitates homes being built on both sides of the canyon corridor. The cut and fill will be visible from Highway 33 and the location of the homes rimming the canyon will undermine the value of this open space. (*See Attachments A and B.*)

When we initially supported this project at concept, little was known about the importance of the remaining islands of wooded habitat in this fragmented landscape. Since then, neighboring J Lazy H Ranch has proposed a large-scale restoration to the surrounding landscape, and there

have been group efforts by north-end developers to preserve large contiguous swaths of wildlife corridors.

We recognize the tug-of-war presented by this particular piece of property: it is located in a highly visible area along Highway 33, which functions as the scenic “gateway” to Teton Valley, but contains a valuable wildlife corridor down the middle. If the building envelopes are pulled out of Milk Creek Canyon, they will be visible from the highway. However, if they are put down in the canyon, the principle value of this open space is diminished. Really, it comes down to mitigation of impacts: the original proposal at least reduced development impacts to the canyon corridor whereas the new plan creates hillside construction that is highly visible from the highway while also cutting into the canyon corridor.

If this new design is going to be the plan for Milk Creek Estates, VARD respectfully requests the developer to address the following issues created by this new plan:

1. Provide a visualization of these cut and fills along with a slope stabilization and revegetation plan. (*See Teton County Code 9-6-4-H.*)
2. Map the location of building envelopes and driveways. (*See Teton County Code 9-3-3-A, 9-6-4-B-5, and 9-6-4-G.*)
3. Conduct a wildlife inventory of impacts to Milk Creek Canyon created by this new design, (*See Teton County Code 9-3-3-B, 9-7-6-C-1, and 9-7-6-C-2.*)

Thank you once again for all of your time and consideration in the service of our community.

Sincerely,

Anna Trentadue
VARD Program / Staff Attorney