



# Practice Stewardship of Wildlife, Natural Resources, and Scenic Vistas (Theme 1)

## *Statement of Ideal*

***Maintain healthy<sup>2</sup> populations of all native species; and preserve the natural, scenic, and agricultural resources that define Teton County's character.***

### ***What does this theme address?***

- 1.1 – Wildlife***
- 1.2 – Water and Air Quality***
- 1.3 – Scenic Resources***
- 1.4 – Agricultural Resources***
- 1.5 – Access to Nature***

<sup>3,4,5,6</sup>

### **Why is this theme addressed?**

Teton County's abundant wildlife and natural and scenic resources are an international treasure. These resources largely define the community's natural, social, and economic character. Most members of the community live in the area because of the unparalleled access to wildlife, natural resources, and

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<sup>1</sup> Rec 48: (County 4-0, Town 6-1) Amend the title of Theme 1 to "Practice stewardship of wildlife, natural resources, and scenic vistas"

<sup>2</sup> Rec 49: (County 4-0, Town 7-0) Replace "viable populations" with "healthy populations" in Statement of Ideal and throughout theme, and add an indicator of 'health' and associated strategies

<sup>3</sup> Rec 103: (County 4-0, Town 2-3) Include all appropriate Game and Fish language into document

<sup>4</sup> Rec 191: (County 2-2, Town 2-2) The staff rewrite met the intent of the previous recommendations made

<sup>5</sup> Rec 193: (County 2-2, Town 1-3) Incorporate all seven 11/12 recommended actions from the JH Conservation Alliance into Theme 1

<sup>6</sup> Rec 195: (County 3-1, Town 1-3) Conservation Alliance 11/12 Action #2: Ensure that the red-lined, rewritten draft of Theme One that is sent to elected officials includes an incorporation of Wyoming Game and Fish comments

recreation. The community recognizes that its policies regarding development, transportation, recreation, and energy consumption ultimately have impacts on these resources. Members of the community wish to be responsible stewards of these important resources by supporting and maintaining the stewardship, conservation, and agricultural ethic that has been present throughout the county's history. Conservation of private lands has resulted in approximately 20,000 acres of permanently conserved open space. Another 15,000 acres are still in agricultural use.<sup>7</sup>

Teton County is part of the Greater Yellowstone Ecosystem—the largest generally intact ecosystem in the lower 48 states. Our location in this ecosystem sets the Town of Jackson and Teton County apart from other resort and rural communities, particularly in terms of the abundance of wildlife. Although 97% of Teton County is publicly protected from development, the dynamic natural systems unique to Teton County do not conform to jurisdictional boundaries. This makes wildlife throughout the ecosystem susceptible to the impacts of development. Privately owned lands in the county continue to provide critical habitat<sup>8</sup> for many species. Effective stewardship of these species requires protection of crucial resources and minimizing development impacts on private land, while balancing the need to protect private property rights.<sup>9</sup>

The human causes of natural and scenic resource degradation are not always immediately apparent. While direct local impacts can usually be identified and mitigated, it is the sum of direct and indirect impacts that, over time, threaten the health of the ecosystem at a regional scale. The human populations in Jackson Hole, Teton Valley, Idaho, and Star Valley, which have grown because of our community's natural beauty, have all had both direct and indirect impacts on the ecosystem at a local and regional level. The cumulative impact of energy consumption is a recent example of the way in which the sum of human impact creates a much larger threat to our ecosystem. Consumption of non-renewable energy is increasingly costly and contributes to climate change in ways that may threaten the health<sup>10</sup> of native species, attract non-native species, and diminish air and water quality. The cumulative effect of these impacts may only be apparent and measurable on a regional scale, which complicates our ability to appropriately plan and mitigate the impacts of development.

The importance of wildlife and natural and scenic resources is not just ecological and ideological. The conservation of these resources has a direct and profound effect on the economic well being of the community. Abundant wildlife, daily interactions with nature, and panoramic scenic vistas are central to the quality of life of Teton County residents, the quality of the visitor experience, and the foundation of our

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<sup>7</sup> Rec 70:(County 5-0, Town 1-6) Replace Paragraph with:Teton County's abundant wildlife, natural, and scenic resources are an international treasure, and the protection of these resources is our community's highest priority. We recognize that our policies regarding development, transportation, recreation, and energy consumption all have impacts on these resources, so it is our responsibility to create policies and enact regulations which protect them.

**Permanent Conservation**

Permanent conservation of private lands has resulted in about 20,000 acres of conserved open space. Another 15,000 acres are still in agricultural use. Agricultural use of large contiguous private land is most consistent with the goals of this Comprehensive Plan. Efforts aimed at the permanent conservation of such lands have the greatest potential to positively impact Teton County's wildlife, scenic, and natural resources, and should be our highest land use priority.

<sup>8</sup> Rec 212: (County 4-0, Town 6-0) Geneva Comments: Page 4 - change "Critical Winter Habitat" to "Critical Habitat"

<sup>9</sup> Rec 192: (County 4-0, Town 3-1) Insert into Theme 1, Why is this Theme Addressed, end of second paragraph: "while balancing the need to protect private property rights"

<sup>10</sup> Rec 49: (County 4-0, Town 7-0) Replace "viable populations" with "healthy populations" in Statement of Ideal and throughout theme, and add an indicator of 'health' and associated strategies

local economy.<sup>11</sup> The international desire to live and/or visit Jackson Hole depends upon the continued stewardship of wildlife and natural and scenic resources.<sup>12</sup>

## Principles and Policies<sup>13</sup>

### Principle 1.1—Maintain healthy<sup>14</sup> populations of all native species

*The community’s wildlife stewardship ethic must be understood in the context of our location within the Greater Yellowstone Ecosystem. The prevalence of elk, deer, moose, bald eagles, and other wildlife depends upon the health of the entire ecosystem. Without striving to support all native species, the intact ecosystem begins to break down<sup>15</sup>. Direct and indirect human impacts in Jackson Hole and surrounding valleys will have an impact on the health<sup>16</sup> of all native species.*

#### Policy 1.1.a: Protect wildlife on all property

Any and all growth impacts both wildlife and natural resources;<sup>17</sup> as do traffic growth and expansions to the transportation network.<sup>18</sup> As a result, wildlife and wildlife habitat will be protected on all property in Teton County.<sup>19</sup> Owners of existing platted lots building a single family home may not be subject to the same level of procedural review or mitigation as other developers,<sup>20</sup> but wildlife and habitat protections will extend to all properties. An updated Natural Resources Overlay (NRO) based on the criteria of Policy 1.1.b will identify the most crucial habitat. The most restrictive development regulations and transportation design standards should apply to the properties within this boundary.<sup>21</sup> Limiting the amount of direct impact on crucial habitat will

<sup>11</sup> Rec 83: (County 5-0, Town 5-0) Staff will insert County recommendation 8 ( Recognize that abundant wildlife, daily interaction with nature, and panoramic scenic vistas are central to the quality of life of Teton County residents, the quality of the visitor experience, and the foundation of our local economy.) into Theme 1 where appropriate

<sup>12</sup> Rec: 292: (County 4-0, Town 4-0) Remove all “What the Community Said About this Theme” boxes; instead reference appendices regarding public comment

<sup>13</sup> Rec 110: (County 2-2, Town 2-3) Make Conservation of Open Space its own principle

<sup>14</sup> Rec 49: (County 4-0, Town 7-0) Replace “viable populations” with “healthy populations” in Statement of Ideal and throughout theme, and add an indicator of ‘health’ and associated strategies

<sup>15</sup> Rec 55: (County 4-0, Town 5-0) Amend Principle 1.1 Sentence 3 to read: “Without supporting all native species within the ecosystem the web of support fall native species begins to weaken an the intact ecosystem begins to break down.” – or similar, tighter language

<sup>16</sup> Rec 49: (County 4-0, Town 7-0) Replace “viable populations” with “healthy populations” in Statement of Ideal and throughout theme, and add an indicator of ‘health’ and associated strategies

<sup>17</sup> Rec 115: (County 5-0, Town 3-2) Incorporate statement, “Recognize that any and all growth in the valley impacts both wildlife and natural resources.” Into Theme 1 where appropriate

<sup>18</sup> Rec 212: (County 4-0, Town 6-0) Geneva Comments: Add a statement to Policy 1.1 relating to wildlife and transportation.

<sup>19</sup> Rec 54: (County 4-0, Town 7-0) Throughout Theme 1 do not limit wildlife protection policies to implementation only in the Natural Resources Overlay

<sup>20</sup> Rec 205: (County 4-0, Town 6-0) The intent of the Planning Commission is to apply wildlife protections everywhere, without universally burdening existing platted lots with additional environmental analysis

<sup>21</sup> Rec 54: (County 4-0, Town 7-0) Throughout Theme 1 do not limit wildlife protection policies to implementation only in the Natural Resources Overlay

ultimately reduce the cumulative human impact on wildlife. Strategies to limit impacts to wildlife in the NRO include tools such as<sup>22,23</sup> encouraging clustered development to be located outside of the NRO,<sup>24</sup> compacting development footprints, reducing alteration to the natural landscape, and designing wildlife crossings.

### **Policy 1.1.b: Protect focal species and habitats<sup>25,26</sup>**

Elk, moose, deer, bald eagles, cutthroat trout, and trumpeter swans have been protected since 1994 and are symbolic of Teton County's abundant wildlife. However, their prevalence does not necessarily indicate ecosystem health. New regulations, incentives and programs to protect wildlife – including but not limited to an updated NRO – will be based on a focal group of species. Protecting the habitat of these focal species will, in turn, protect all native species. The habitat of the focal species will be the basis for all wildlife protection regulations and the most crucial focal species habitat will be the basis for the NRO. Until such protections are in place, critical habitat for elk, moose, deer, bald eagles, cutthroat trout, and trumpeter swans will continue to be protected and mapped using the most recently available data.<sup>27</sup>

### **Policy 1.1.c: Monitor cumulative human impacts**

The direct impacts of development on wildlife can typically be estimated and mitigated. However, the indirect and cumulative impacts of growth are more difficult to measure and predict. In complex situations, science cannot always provide precise answers in the timeframe of a decision-making process. Scientific study of cumulative impacts is an ongoing and complex process from which the community may draw conclusions and make policy decisions, but it can not provide all of the answers. Local, state, and federal governments must work with local biologists to create, and keep current, a baseline inventory of habitat, wildlife and climate. Policy decisions<sup>28</sup> related to cumulative effects will be based on this data.

### **Policy 1.1.d: Conserve large, contiguous, and connected open spaces**

Large and contiguous open spaces of habitat are the most valuable to wildlife because they protect connectivity between crucial areas, enable migration and reduce human conflict. However, small areas can also provide crucial habitat and may be critical to ensuring the countywide habitat connectivity needed to allow for migration.<sup>29</sup> Private efforts have been successful in permanently preserving such strategic lands. Continued

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<sup>22</sup> Rec 171: (County 3-2, Town 4-2) Maintain existing potential outside of the areas formerly known as nodes and add PRD options

<sup>23</sup> Rec 187: (County 0-5, Town 0-4) Consider further limiting home sizes in areas of critical wildlife habitat

<sup>24</sup> Rec 163: (County 4-1, Town 4-3) Development location – larger multiplier for clustering on-site of off-site development potential in a desired area should be a basis for the PRD:

- Outside crucial habitat areas (i.e. NRO, certain habitat types)
- Outside scenic areas (i.e. SRO)
- Adjacent to existing development

<sup>25</sup> Rec 197: (County 3-1, Town 2-2) Conservation Alliance 11/12 Action #4: Wildlife protection should be the primary consideration in all land use decisions (While balancing the need to protect private property rights)

<sup>26</sup> Rec 198: (County 3-1, Town 1-3) Conservation Alliance 11/12 Action #4: Wildlife protection should be the primary consideration in all land use decisions.

<sup>27</sup> Rec 56: (County 4-0, Town 4-1) Make no further changes to Policy 1.1.[b] and Principle 1.1 beyond recommendations 49, 54, and 55

<sup>28</sup> Rec 58: (County 4-0, Town 5-0) Policy 1.1.[c]: Replace “behavioral best practices” with “policy decisions”

<sup>29</sup> Rec 202: (County 4-0, Town 4-0) Conservation Alliance 11/12 Action #7: Add language that clearly explains why the protection of diversely sized-parcels is important. (The rewrite of what is now policy 1.4a, page 11, does not adequately capture this.) Vote to direct staff to include more language on the importance of maintaining connectivity throughout the valley as a whole.

public, private, and cooperative efforts are critical to conserving open space, particularly within the Natural Resources Overlay.

### **Policy 1.1.e: Require mitigation of impacts to crucial habitat**

Direct, indirect, and cumulative impacts to the ecosystem are inevitable as humans live, work, and play in the community. Acting as stewards of all native species, the town and county will require mitigation of unavoidable direct and indirect impacts to the ecosystem attributable to development and transportation.<sup>30</sup> Direct impacts are more easily quantified and therefore mitigated; however, programmatic steps should also be taken toward identifying and mitigating indirect and cumulative impacts.<sup>31</sup>

### **Policy 1.1.f: Encourage restoration of degraded areas**

The Town of Jackson and Teton County will support<sup>32</sup> public, private, and cooperative efforts on public and private lands to restore areas with ecological potential.

### **Policy 1.1.g: Design for wildlife permeability**<sup>33,34,35,36</sup>

<sup>37</sup>Development and transportation corridors will be designed to accommodate wildlife movement. Residential subdivisions, individual building sites, transportation corridors, and other types of development will use best management and design practices<sup>38, 39</sup> (wildlife friendly fencing, appropriate building placement, landscape clearing/modification, open spaces protected from recreation and pets, and others) to support wildlife movement.

### **Policy 1.1.h: Limit human noise**<sup>40</sup>

Excessive noise caused by human development and transportation has negative impacts on wildlife and humans alike. The town and county will continue to regulate the level sound heard across property lines and minimize the cumulative ambient noise that can be heard on surrounding State and Federal lands. Where possible the town and county will also restrict individual instances of noise creation without sacrificing community health, safety, and welfare.

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<sup>30</sup> Rec 212: (County 4-0, Town 6-0) Geneva Comments: Add a statement to Policy 1.1 relating to wildlife and transportation.

<sup>31</sup> Rec 73: (County 4-1, Town 7-0) Policy 1.1.e: Staff to rewrite to clarify intent of mitigating primarily development impacts and relationship with 1.1.[a]

<sup>32</sup> Rec 74: (County 4-1, Town 1-6) Replace “support” with “require”

<sup>33</sup> Rec 75: (County 3-2, Town 6-1) Begin each policy with an action verb

<sup>34</sup> Rec 52: (County 4-0, Town 7-0) Staff will insert the County’s 2<sup>nd</sup> (Designate areas appropriate for under- and over-passes and speed reductions in heavy volume wildlife-crossing areas.) and 3<sup>rd</sup> (Remove all exemptions to the wildlife friendly fencing ordinances and develop penalties for failure to remove existing unfriendly fencing throughout the county.)

<sup>35</sup> Rec 101: (County 4-0, Town 3-2) Stronger language in 1.1.g

<sup>36</sup> Rec 102: (County 4-0, Town 4-1) Strengthen 1.1.g language regarding transportation

<sup>37</sup> Rec 76: (County 5-0, Town 3-2) Policy 1.1.g: Do not except any areas from policy

<sup>38</sup> Rec 87: (County 2-2, Town 4-2) Define and clarify “best practices”

<sup>39</sup> Rec 77: (County 4-1, Town 2-2) Change “use best management and design practices” to “implement policy directives”

<sup>40</sup> Rec 90: (County 3-0, Town 6-0) Staff will research the legality of a policy regarding noise pollution and insert the appropriate policy in the appropriate location in the Plan

## **Principle 1.2—Preserve and enhance water and air quality<sup>41</sup>**

*The natural resources in Teton County are internationally recognized for their quality and beauty. Stewardship of these resources is important for the sustainability of healthy<sup>42</sup> populations of native species and for the health of the human community. Clean air and water are the most basic requirements of a healthy community.*

### **Policy 1.2.a: Buffer water bodies, wetlands, and riparian areas from development**

Water bodies, wetlands, and riparian areas provide crucial habitat and are necessary for the health<sup>43</sup> of native species. Wetlands and riparian areas are more important to wildlife and ecological health than any other habitat type. Wetlands also provide sediment and nutrient filtration and natural flood protection. Clean surface water provides cleaner potable water supplies and better functioning wetlands and riparian areas. Consequently, development will be designed to protect<sup>44</sup> the functionality of water bodies, wetlands, and riparian areas.

### **Policy 1.2.b: Require filtration of <sup>45</sup>runoff**

In those cases where natural filtration systems such as wetlands, floodplains, and riparian areas are not enough to effectively protect the quality of surface water the town and county will require best management practices<sup>46</sup> and enhancement of natural systems. This is especially applicable in developed areas along waterways such as Flat Creek, Cache Creek, and Fish Creek.

### **Policy 1.2.c: Monitor and Maintain water quality**

The extent of human impact on water quality in Teton County is not quantitatively known. It will be important to monitor the cumulative impacts of human actions and the effectiveness of mitigation efforts. The town and county will support baseline study and periodic reevaluation of Teton County water quality beyond the monitoring required by state and federal agencies.<sup>47</sup>

### **Policy 1.2.d: Improve air quality**

Air quality in Teton County is well within the levels mandated by the Environmental Protection Agency; however, our location in a high mountain valley exacerbates the effects of wood smoke, dust, vehicle exhaust<sup>48</sup> and other emissions on air quality. Strategies to improve air quality will include: reducing vehicle miles traveled,

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<sup>41</sup> Rec 78: (County 5-0, Town 5-0) Principle 1.2: Change header to “Preserve and enhance water and air quality”

<sup>42</sup> Rec 49: (County 4-0, Town 7-0) Replace “viable populations” with “healthy populations” in Statement of Ideal and throughout theme, and add an indicator of ‘health’ and associated strategies

<sup>43</sup> Rec 49: (County 4-0, Town 7-0) Replace “viable populations” with “healthy populations” in Statement of Ideal and throughout theme, and add an indicator of ‘health’ and associated strategies

<sup>44</sup> Rec 79: (County 5-0, Town 4-1) Policy 1.2.a last sentence: Change to: “Consequently, development will be designed to protect water bodies...”

<sup>45</sup> Rec 80: (County 5-0, Town 4-1) Policy 1.2.b: Strike the word “urban”

<sup>46</sup> Rec 87: (County 2-2, Town 4-2) Define and clarify “best practices”

<sup>47</sup> Rec 81: (County 5-0, Town 4-1) Policy 1.2.c: Staff to redraft language to clarify intent of surface water protection beyond requirements of other jurisdictions

<sup>48</sup> Rec 82: (County 5-0, Town 5-0) Policy 1.2.d: add “vehicle exhaust” to list of exacerbating effects

reducing wood burning emissions, reducing dust from unpaved roads and large construction sites, and offering incentives for the use of new technologies that reduce carbon emissions.<sup>49,50</sup>

### **Principle 1.3—Maintain the scenic resources of the area**

*Scenic resources, rural character, and dark skies play an important role in the community’s relationship with nature. The views of mountains, moraines, meadows, and other natural vistas provide residents and guests with a constant reminder of their location within the Greater Yellowstone Ecosystem and give Teton County its scenic character. Interruption of these natural forms by development detracts from scenic character and will be prevented as much as <sup>51</sup>possible.<sup>52</sup>*

#### **Policy 1.3.a: Maintain natural skylines**

The most prominent aspects of our landscape are the buttes, ridgelines, and mountains. Skyline protection in the town and county will be one of the bases for the Scenic Resources Overlay.<sup>53,54</sup> Development along butte tops and ridgelines will be restricted and mitigated so that only natural skylines are seen from State and select County and public roads.<sup>55,56</sup>

#### **Policy 1.3.b: Maintain expansive hillside and foreground vistas**

Views of expansive forested hillsides and foreground meadows are essential to the rural and scenic character of the community. Protection of scenic foregrounds and forested hillsides in the town and county will be the other basis for the Scenic Resources Overlay.<sup>57,58</sup> Views of these vistas from State and select County and public roads<sup>59,60</sup> will be protected. Development in such areas will retain these vistas by being located at the periphery of the expanse and naturally screened. Alteration of the landscape that screens the natural vista as well as the development will be avoided.

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<sup>49</sup> Rec 50: (County 4-0, Town 7-0) Add a Theme – Energy Conservation – and have Staff compile principles and policies that belong in the new theme and relocate principle 1.3 into the new theme

<sup>50</sup> Rec 47: (County 4-0, Town 7-0) Relocate Principle 1.4 and associated strategies and indicators [Staff recommends Theme 2]

<sup>51</sup> Rec 88: (County 1-3, Town 4-2) Insert ... as much as “reasonably” possible

<sup>52</sup> Rec 89: (County 3-1, Town 2-4) Change “and will be prevented as much as possible” to “and will be regulated”

<sup>53</sup> Rec 91: (County 4-0, Town 6-0) 1.5: Add a policy of continuing support of a Scenic Resource Overlay for the County

<sup>54</sup> Rec 92: (County 4-0, Town 6-0) 1.5: Staff will research the addition of Scenic Resource Overly policies for Town

<sup>55</sup> Rec 84: (County 4-0, Town 6-0) 1.5.a and 1.5.b: expand skyline/foreground protection beyond public roads/parks to all roads

<sup>56</sup> Rec 206: (County 3-1, Town 6-0) Limit scenic protection to State and select County and public roads

<sup>57</sup> Rec 91: (County 4-0, Town 6-0) 1.5: Add a policy of continuing support of a Scenic Resource Overlay for the County

<sup>58</sup> Rec 92: (County 4-0, Town 6-0) 1.5: Staff will research the addition of Scenic Resource Overly policies for Town

<sup>59</sup> Rec 84: (County 4-0, Town 6-0) 1.5.a and 1.5.b: expand skyline/foreground protection beyond public roads/parks to all roads

<sup>60</sup> Rec 206: (County 3-1, Town 6-0) Limit scenic protection to State and select County and public roads

### **Policy 1.3.c: Maintain natural landforms<sup>61</sup>**

Maintenance of natural landforms is important in order to avoid the perception that the landscape is manmade. All land disturbing activities will be required to fit natural contours by conforming to construction standards for land moving<sup>62</sup>.

### **Policy 1.3.d: Maintain dark night skies**

The prevalence of nature over the built form extends beyond the views that can be seen during the day. Lighting of individual developments cumulatively impacts the ability to see dark and starry night skies. Although lighting is required for public safety, especially along pedestrian corridors<sup>63</sup>; non-essential lighting will be limited and all lighting will be designed to meet dark skies best practices.<sup>64</sup> The town and county will incentivize existing development compliance with this policy.

## **Principle 1.4—Conserve remaining agricultural resources<sup>65</sup>**

*Historically, agriculture has been the largest land use in Teton County, and at one time played a major role in the economy and social ethic of the community. Throughout the years, the agricultural community has provided much of the stewardship of natural and scenic resources valued by the community. Most of the remaining agricultural land has been owned for multiple generations by the same families that own it today; and many of those landowners would like to continue agricultural operations on their land—if it is economically possible.*

### **Policy 1.4.a: Conserve agricultural lands and agriculture throughout Teton County**

Conservation of agriculture and agricultural lands maintains the historic western character of the community and preserves scenic and natural resources. Even relatively smaller pieces of agricultural land can be critically important in maintaining countywide connectivity of wildlife habitat.<sup>66</sup> Land use and other decisions will prioritize the conservation of agricultural lands and agricultural uses.<sup>67</sup> The county will explore incentives and support efforts of landowners and land trusts to permanently conserve agricultural<sup>69</sup> land for agriculture use.<sup>70,71</sup>

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<sup>61</sup> Rec 207: (County 3-1, Town 4-2) Leave recommended 1.3.c as written in the draft Theme 1 redline published 10/30/09.

<sup>62</sup> Rec 85: (County 4-0, Town 6-0) 1.5.c add “all land disturbing activities will be required to fit natural contours by conforming to construction standards for land moving”

<sup>63</sup> Rec 86: (County 3-1, Town 6-0) 1.5.d: add language addressing pedestrian and/or public safety

<sup>64</sup> Rec 87: (County 2-2, Town 4-2) Define and clarify “best practices”

<sup>65</sup> Rec 95: (County 3-1, Town 1-4) Staff will draft language that recognizes permanent conservation of large contiguous properties as one of our highest land use priorities

<sup>66</sup> Rec 202: (County 4-0, Town 4-0) Conservation Alliance 11/12 Action #7: Add language that clearly explains why the protection of diversely sized-parcels is important. (The rewrite of what is now policy 1.4a, page 11, does not adequately capture this.) Vote to direct staff to include more language on the importance of maintaining connectivity throughout the valley as a whole

<sup>67</sup> Rec 96: (County 4-0, Town 5-0) 1.6.b: prioritize conservation of agricultural use throughout Teton County

<sup>68</sup> Rec 97: (County 4-0, Town 5-0) 1.6.c: language should provide incentives for permanent open space

<sup>69</sup> Rec 106: (County 4-0, Town 5-0) 1.6.a: expand to apply to all parcel sizes



**Policy 1.4.b: Remove regulatory barriers to continued agriculture<sup>72</sup>**

Some regulations that are generally applicable to development are economically prohibitive when applied to agricultural development. Wildlife friendly fencing requirements for fence replacement, grading and erosion control permits for irrigation work, and environmental assessment of agricultural activities are all examples of regulations that may functionally or procedurally impede the continuation of agriculture.<sup>73</sup> Exemptions to such regulations will be provided where appropriate in order to enable continued agricultural use of property.

**Principle 1.5—Promote public stewardship of public lands<sup>74,75</sup>**

*Stewardship of natural and scenic resources is the community’s highest priority because of our strong connection to nature. Much of this connection results from enjoyment of natural resources on public lands. The Town and County cannot regulate the use of public lands, but will promote responsible use and continued access to the public lands within Teton County.*

**Policy 1.5.a: Promote responsible use of public lands<sup>76</sup>**

The community has made a strong commitment to stewardship of wildlife and natural resources as its top priority, and must act on this commitment in everyday life. Stewardship cannot be achieved through the management of growth and development on private lands alone; it must also be pursued through the responsible enjoyment of public lands. While private lands contain many critical habitats, 97% of the land in Teton County is publically owned and the use of this land by residents and visitors must be sensitive to direct, indirect, and cumulative impacts on wildlife and natural resources if the ecosystem is to be preserved. Local government will work with State and Federal agencies to promote stewardship and responsible use of public lands.

**Policy 1.5.b: Ensure continued access to public lands and waterways**

Ranchers, river guides, back country outfitters, and other commercial users of public lands have long understood that the responsible use of public lands today allows for continued use in the future. Individual users must accept the same responsibility. If each individual does not, public land managers will likely have to further regulate and restrict public use and access.<sup>77</sup> Beyond individuals’ responsibilities, local government and

<sup>70</sup> Rec 93: (County 4-0, Town 6-0) 1.6.a: delete the list of places in last sentence

<sup>71</sup> Rec 94: (County 1-3, Town 1-5) 1.6.add: “The conservation and agricultural use of large contiguous private land is also the most consistent land use with the goals of the Comprehensive Plan. Efforts aimed at the permanent conservation of such lands have the greatest potential to positively impact Teton County’s wildlife, scenic and natural resources, and should be our highest land use priority.”

<sup>72</sup> Rec 98: (County 3-1, Town 5-0) 1.6.c: staff will rewrite to focus on goal of policy which is the last sentence

<sup>73</sup> Rec 200: (County 3-1, Town 3-1) Conservation Alliance 11/12 Action #6: Add language that provides greater detail on potential types of exemptions and allowances for agriculture

<sup>74</sup> Rec 108: (County 4-0, Town 5-0) Rework 1.7 to clarify Staff’s intent

<sup>75</sup> Rec 204: (County 4-0, Town 6-0) Endorse - as a rewrite guide - Lisa's recommendations on principle 1.7 and policies a,b,c to address responsible use of public lands

<sup>76</sup> Rec 204: (County 4-0, Town 6-0) Endorse - as a rewrite guide - Lisa's recommendations on principle 1.7 and policies a,b,c to address responsible use of public lands

<sup>77</sup> Rec 204: (County 4-0, Town 6-0) Endorse - as a rewrite guide - Lisa's recommendations on principle 1.7 and policies a,b,c to address responsible use of public lands

private interests will coordinate with State and Federal agencies to preserve and <sup>78</sup>steward existing authorized access points to rivers, creeks, and State and Federal lands; and eliminate unauthorized access points. In particular, Teton County will promote the strategies of the Bureau of Land Management’s Snake River Resource Management Plan.

### **Policy 1.5.c: Provide recreation opportunities on private land**

As the population of the community grows so will the recreational use of public lands and associated pressures on wildlife. Trails, parks, pathways, dog parks, and other active recreational opportunities<sup>79</sup> will be provided on private lands in order to reduce pressure and limit recreation impacts on nearby public lands.

## **Strategies<sup>80</sup>**

The Town of Jackson and Teton County will undertake the following strategies in initial implementation of the policies of this theme. The town and county should periodically update strategies as tasks are completed or when additional action is necessary, based on monitoring of the Theme’s indicators.

### **Strategy 1.1: Establish an Environment Commission<sup>81</sup>**

- The Environment Commission will be an appointed volunteer committee of scientists charged with making recommendations to elected officials regarding stewardship of wildlife and natural resources.
- The Commission will be responsible for reviewing population data to determine the health of native species.<sup>82</sup>
- The Commission will create and maintain an action plan for research and studies related to wildlife and natural resource stewardship, and will help to coordinate data and efforts from multiple agencies.
- Part of their charge will be to address the challenges of evaluating cumulative impacts of human actions as described in Policy 1.1 b.
- Based on completed studies, and conclusions drawn from the indicators of this theme, the Commission will make recommendations to elected officials regarding appropriate land use and transportation<sup>83</sup> policies and/or regulatory changes.<sup>84</sup>

### **Strategy 1.2: Update Natural Resources Overlay (NRO) mapping and natural**

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<sup>78</sup> Rec 114: (County 4-0, Town 4-0) Take “creation” out of 1.7.b

<sup>79</sup> Rec 108: (County 4-0, Town 5-0) Rework 1.7 to clarify Staff’s intent

<sup>80</sup> Rec 194: (County 2-2, Town 3-1) Conservation Alliance 11/12 Action #1: Ensure that more specific data, language and mechanisms to protect wildlife are incorporated into the plan, and that existing data and knowledge are efficiently utilized. Science-based language from the existing 1994 Plan, references to specific reports that can provide a basis for land development regulations, and recent data (including updated maps of overlays) should be incorporated into the new plan. If the new plan is not going to include this specific, but necessary, information, it should refer to a plan, process, or document where the information will be gathered and available. (Insert in to strategies and indicators)

<sup>81</sup> Rec 104: (County 4-0, Town 3-2) Recommend to electeds that the Environmental Commission is established now

<sup>82</sup> Rec 49: (County 4-0, Town 7-0) Replace “viable populations” with “healthy populations” in Statement of Ideal and throughout theme, and add an indicator of ‘health’ and associated strategies

<sup>83</sup> Rec 116: (County 5-0, Town 5-0) Strategy 1.1: Define the Environmental Commission’s role to make land use and transportation recommendations

<sup>84</sup> Rec 113: (County 2-2, Town 1-4) Add a strategy: creation of an additional Wildlife Stewardship Plan under the direction of the Environmental Commission to detail implementation of Principle 1.1

### resource protection standards

- Create a vegetation cover map for the county in order to apply wildlife protection regulations throughout the Town and County and implement a focal species based NRO.
- Change the basis of the NRO, as the necessary research and evaluation is completed—from the current “species of special concern” to identified focal species that are indicative of entire ecosystem health.
- In the interim, work with Wyoming Game and Fish and other<sup>85</sup> partnering agencies and entities to update the Natural Resource Overlay (NRO) map to reflect the most recent “species of special concern” critical habitat data.
- Reevaluate and amend standards for development density, intensity, and design within the NRO to reduce development footprint and minimize impacts to wildlife.
- Evaluate and amend natural resource protection standards with a focus on water bodies, wetlands, riparian areas, and floodplains<sup>86</sup>.
- Identify areas appropriate for public and private ecological restoration efforts.
- Designate areas appropriate for under- and over-passes and speed reductions in heavy volume wildlife-crossing areas.<sup>87</sup>
- Remove all non-agricultural<sup>88</sup> exemptions to the wildlife friendly fencing standards and develop penalties for failure to remove existing unfriendly fencing throughout the county.

### <sup>89</sup>Strategy 1.3: Amend Land Development Regulations and the zoning map

- Evaluate and remap the Scenic Resources Overlay based on accumulated knowledge of potential visual impacts and changes to scenic policy.<sup>90</sup>
- Evaluate and amend lighting standards based on a dark skies policy.
- Evaluate noise standards based on cumulative noise impacts to neighboring public lands.

### Strategy 1.4: Establish a funding source to acquire open space

- Put to a vote of the community the establishment of a dedicated funding source for the acquisition of permanent open space for wildlife habitat protection, scenic vista protection and agriculture preservation<sup>91</sup>

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<sup>85</sup> Rec 120: (County 5-0, Town 5-0) Strategy 1.2, first bullet: strike “Wyoming Game and Fish” leave it as “most recent data” and include Wyoming Game and Fish as the primary partnering agency

<sup>86</sup> Rec 117: (County 5-0, Town 5-0) Strategy 1.2 third bullet: add “floodplains” to focus

<sup>87</sup> Rec 52: (County 4-0, Town 7-0) Staff will insert the County’s 2<sup>nd</sup> (Designate areas appropriate for under- and over-passes and speed reductions in heavy volume wildlife-crossing areas.) and 3<sup>rd</sup> (Remove all exemptions to the wildlife friendly fencing ordinances and develop penalties for failure to remove existing unfriendly fencing throughout the county.)

<sup>88</sup> Rec 209 (County 3-1, Town 6-0) Strategy 1.2 - Agriculture may be excepted from wildlife friendly fencing standards

<sup>89</sup> Rec 47: (County 4-0, Town 7-0) Relocate Principle 1.4 and associated strategies and indicators

<sup>90</sup> Rec 143: (County 4-0, Town 5-0) Move to Theme 8, Energy Conservation : Strategy 1.4, bullets 3 and 4; and Indicator 6

<sup>91</sup> Rec 196: (County 4-0, Town 3-1) Conservation Alliance 11/12 Action #3: Add the following strategy: “Establish a dedicated funding source to acquire permanent open space for wildlife habitat protection, scenic vistas preservation and agricultural preservation.” (Through the vote of the people) [would supersede Rec 105]

**Strategy 1.5: Responsibly Use Public Lands<sup>92</sup>**

- Support and create education and outreach programs that encourage the responsible use of public lands
- Research private policing options to enforce responsible use

**Indicators**

The community will use<sup>93</sup> the following indicators to monitor achievement of this theme’s values. Planning staff will compile the best available data from any appropriate agencies on each indicator in the period stated below and present the methods and results to the public and appointed and elected officials as detailed in the Administration chapter of this Plan. With indicator data as a guide, amendments to Plan policy or implementation may be pursued.<sup>94</sup>

Stewardship of Wildlife and Natural Resources Indicators <sup>95, 96</sup>	Baseline <sup>97</sup>	Goal	Review Period
1. Acres of land in conservation easement by primary conservation value		<b>increase, especially in NRO</b>	<b>1 yr</b>
2. Ratio of conserved land to developed land in NRO		<b>increase</b>	<b>1 yr</b>
3. Amount of material removed from storm water treatment units		<b>decrease</b>	<b>1 yr</b>
4. Water quality and sediment loading in all natural waterways <sup>98,99</sup>		<b>decrease</b>	<b>5 yr</b>
5. Ratio of successful habitat mitigation to habitat disturbance		<b>&gt;1:1</b>	<b>5 yr</b>
6. <sup>100</sup> Indicator species populations and population trends <sup>101</sup>		<b>healthy populations<sup>102</sup></b>	<b>1 yr</b>

<sup>92</sup> Rec 204: (County 4-0, Town 6-0) Endorse - as a rewrite guide - Lisa's recommendations on principle 1.7 and policies a,b,c to address responsible use of public lands

<sup>93</sup> Rec 139: (County 2-3, Town 4-1) Replace “will use” with “should consider using”

<sup>94</sup> Rec 199: (County 4-0, Town 3-1) Conservation alliance 11/12 Action #5: Add language that clearly explains how indicators will be used to draft and amend land development regulations. Language should be added that explains how a science-based monitoring program will be further developed with appropriate agencies and partners. A baseline column, with quantifiable documentation of existing conditions, should be added to all indicator tables in the new Plan.

<sup>95</sup> Rec 136: (County 4-1, Town 1-4) Add indicator: acres rehabilitated

<sup>96</sup> Rec 142: (County 4-1, Town 1-4) Add indicator: meters of wildlife unfriendly fencing removed

<sup>97</sup> Rec 199: (County 4-0, Town 3-1) Conservation alliance 11/12 Action #5: Add language that clearly explains how indicators will be used to draft and amend land development regulations. Language should be added that explains how a science-based monitoring program will be further developed with appropriate agencies and partners. A baseline column, with quantifiable documentation of existing conditions, should be added to all indicator tables in the new Plan.

<sup>98</sup> Rec 119: (County 5-0, Town 4-1) Indicator 4 should look at sediment loading in all waterways

<sup>99</sup> Rec 211: (County 4-0, Town 6-0) Waterways Indicator - Measure water quality in addition to sediment loading; limit indicator applicability to natural waterways

7. Agricultural acres		<b>monitor</b>	<b>1 yr</b>
8. Access points to waterways and public lands		<b>no net loss</b>	<b>1 yr</b>
9. Wyoming Game and Fish monitored populations <sup>103</sup>		<b>WGF targets</b>	<b>1 yr</b>
10. Air quality <sup>104</sup>		<b>Federal and State Standards</b>	<b>1yr</b>
11. Ambient night light <sup>105</sup>		<b>No increase</b>	<b>1 yr</b>
12. Ambient sound <sup>106</sup>		<b>No increase</b>	<b>1 yr</b>
13. Wildlife-vehicle collision fatalities <sup>107</sup>		<b>decrease</b>	<b>1 yr</b>

<sup>100</sup> Rec 143: (County 4-0, Town 5-0) Move to Theme 8, Energy Conservation : Strategy 1.4, bullets 3 and 4; and Indicator 6

<sup>101</sup> Rec 109: (County 4-0, Town 5-0) Look at indicators suggested by public and include in list for elected official review

Rec 137: (County 5-0, Town 5-0) Add indicator: Indicator species populations and population trends

<sup>102</sup> Rec 49: (County 4-0, Town 7-0) Replace “viable populations” with “healthy populations” in Statement of Ideal and throughout theme, and add an indicator of ‘health’ and associated strategies

<sup>103</sup> Rec 135: (County 5-0, Town 5-0) Add indicator: Game and Fish monitored populations, with a goal of the WGF targets

<sup>104</sup> Rec 138: (County 5-0, Town 5-0) Add indicator: air quality

<sup>105</sup> Rec 140: (County 4-1, Town 3-2) Add indicator: ambient night light

<sup>106</sup> Rec 141: (County 4-1, Town 4-1) Add indicator: ambient sound

<sup>107</sup> Rec 212: (County 4-0, Town 6-0) Geneva Comments: Add indicator to measure wildlife vehicle collision fatalities

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