

August 6, 2021

Planning and Building Department  
Teton County Wyoming  
200 S Willow Street  
Jackson, WY 83001

Dear Teton County Planning and Building Department and Commissioners,

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the latest Wildlife Friendly Fence Amendment draft per the Teton County Land Development Regulation's update. The changes made to the draft amendment after the July 12<sup>th</sup> meeting have improved the code significantly and we are grateful for all the work going into this process. In this letter, we offer further concerns to be considered before a final draft is approved.

Our specific concerns are:

1. A second illustration is needed for the top rail fencing design for purposes other than livestock control, to show a maximum height of 38"
2. Thank you for adding "Special Purpose Only" next to buck and rail and worm fencing, however, ideally, buck and rail and worm fence would not be so blatantly demonstrated in the LDR as it leads landowners to consider some of the least-ideal fences based on aesthetics alone without due consideration for wildlife movement. We suggest completely removing worm fencing as an acceptable exemption on rocky or wet soil. This type of fence is purely installed for aesthetics and is a complete barrier for wildlife calves and fawns. If there is no real containment value for livestock or pets with worm fencing, then we see no need to approve it within the County.
3. We hope that the Planning Commission and staff will reconsider including landscape fencing installed to protect trees and shrubs from wildlife browsing in the Wildlife Friendly Fence Land Development Regulation amendment. By its definition, landscape fencing is meant to exclude wildlife and so is not wildlife friendly. Installing landscape fencing is not an uncommon practice, especially with new and sensitive landscaping. Requiring that these fences meet minimal standards to reduce the impact on wildlife due to entanglement is of utmost importance to meet the Comprehensive Plan's goal to improve wildlife permeability. Entanglement in fences that don't meet any safety standards and that are meant to exclude wildlife often leads to wildlife death (see figure 1 for an example of entanglement). Additionally, wholesale protection of yards from browsing wildlife should also not be exempt from the Wildlife Friendly Fence Land Development Regulation as it completely excludes wildlife from large tracts of land and limits landscape permeability for wildlife (see figure 2 below). We suggest a requirement to only protect individual plants or small flower beds.

Again, thank you for the opportunity to engage in this process. We are excited to move forward with an amended version of Section 5.1.2: Wildlife Friendly Fencing that realizes the Comprehensive Plan's goal to increase wildlife permeability.

Sincerely,

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*Figure 1. This bull elk has landscape fencing entangled in its antlers. In some situations, this has led to the death of the animal entrapped and/or hindered by the burden of the fence. Photo credit: Buckrail.*



*Figure 2. This wildlife exclusion fence, likely meant to protect landscaping from foraging wildlife, encompasses a large piece of private land that could otherwise be used by wildlife for movement and foraging on established plants. We suggest that in a situation similar to this, the exclusion fence only be used on individual plants, not wholesale across a yard.*