United States Department of the Interior

National Park Service
Badlands National Park
25216 Ben Reifel Rd
Interior, SD 57750

10D (BADL)

January 16, 2024

Honorable Pete Buttigieg
U.S. Secretary of Transportation
1200 New Jersey Avenue SE
Washington, DC 20590

Subject: FY2024 RAISE Grant Discretionary Grant Application

Dear Secretary Buttigieg,

Please consider this letter written confirmation of our full support of Pennington County's application for RAISE grant funding to assist in planning activities for the Bombing Range Road Safety Improvements Planning Project.

This RAISE grant application addresses one of the region's most critical transportation infrastructure needs, positively impacting not just Pennington County but also the Pine Ridge Indian Reservation, and the community of Scenic. The current condition of this vital community roadway presents safety, accessibility, and environmental risks. The proposed planning project will enable the county to assess the extent of existing roadway damage and determine the best, most effective and most environmentally sound approach to reconstructing/rehabilitating the road. Completion of the project will ensure ongoing access to critical services as well as provide a safe route for freight trucks that use Bombing Range Road to deliver essential goods to very rural and remote communities both on and off the Reservation.

This project also addresses much needed infrastructure support that will impact economic development and recovery, emergency response times, traveler safety, access, mobility, and connectivity. This roadway is heavily traveled by visitors and tourists to the Badlands National Park and is an essential piece of infrastructure that supports the regional and statewide tourism economy and access to the Pine Ridge Indian Reservation.

While this project has been a priority for some time, neither the County nor the Oglala Sioux Tribe have adequate financial resources to address the planning or construction needs. The County is, however, committed to a 20 percent match of local dollars to exemplify the importance of the project and commitment to its completion.

We hope you will support this project through RAISE planning grant award. We look forward to the opportunity to partner with the USDOT on this exciting endeavor. Please feel free to contact me if you should have any questions or would like to discuss this further.

Thank you!

Sincerely,

ERIC VEACH

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Eric R. Veach
Superintendent, Badlands National Park