



National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior

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Grand Teton National Park Media Release

Safety Improvements with Gros Ventre Roundabout Begin in April Travelers Should Expect Delays

MOOSE, WY — Construction of a roundabout and other safety improvements located at the intersection of U.S. Highway 26/89/191 and Gros Ventre Road and Sagebrush Drive in the southern area of Grand Teton National Park will begin on Monday, April 2. Construction activities are planned to continue through the end of November.

Grand Teton National Park Superintendent David Vela said, "There will be traffic impacts related to this safety improvement project, and we highly encourage travelers to plan ahead for minimal delays and to be aware of the construction schedule for related impacts." Vela said the park is coordinating with Teton County and others to work together to best minimize impacts and provide for safe access for all users as multiple road improvement and safety projects may be occurring this year.

The primary construction activities at the intersection of U.S. Highway 26/89/191 and Gros Ventre Road and Sagebrush Drive will include:

- construction of a roundabout with a landscaped center island,
- creation of a temporary two-lane bypass road with a pathway for use during construction,
- relocation of the existing north-south pathway along U.S. Highway 26/89/191,
- addition of a quarter-mile pathway segment to connect with Sagebrush Drive,
- installation of a formal parking area on the Gros Ventre Road near the intersection,
- installation of a snowplow turnaround on the north side of the intersection, and
- repavement on a short section of the highway south of the intersection to the Gros Ventre Bridge.

During construction, a two-lane bypass with a separated pathway will be maintained to reduce congestion on the highway. Due to reduced speed through the construction zone, **travelers should plan for approximately 15-minute delays between 5 a.m. to 8 p.m. and approximately 30-minute delays at night between 8 p.m. to 5 a.m.**

During the construction of the temporary bypass, the **Gros Ventre Road may be closed for up to five nights in the late spring to early summer from approximately 6 p.m. to 5 a.m.** The **Gros Ventre Road may also be closed up to two weeks after September 15, 2018, between 9 a.m. and 3 p.m.** to complete final roadway improvements. Gros Ventre Road traffic will be rerouted via the Antelope Flats Road during these times.

There will be a temporary **pathway closure between the Gros Ventre River Bridge and north of the Gros Ventre Intersection through May 15, and again in late September.** Pathway traffic may travel on the roadway shoulder through the Gros Ventre Junction area during the closures.

Any road or pathway closure dates will be confirmed approximately one week in advance of the closure via media release, roadside signs, park road information phone line, park website and park social media. These include:

- Grand Teton National Park Road Information Line at 307-739-3682,
- www.nps.gov/GRTE,
- Facebook Grand Teton National Park @GrandTetonNPS, and
- Twitter Grand Teton National Park @GrandTetonNPS.

No parking will be allowed within approximately one-half mile radius of the Gros Ventre intersection throughout the entire construction duration, including the Gros Ventre Road and Sagebrush Drive. Vehicles will be allowed to park in paved parking areas or pullouts located along U.S. Highway 26/89/191.

The Gros Ventre intersection on US Hwy 26/89/191 has an average daily traffic volume of approximately 14,200 vehicles and almost 200 bicycle riders during the summer season. Safety concerns have been identified at this location, and the Federal Highway Administration indicates that this type of intersection has the greatest safety risks of any type of intersection in the country. It is a high-speed, two-lane rural road with an unsignalled intersection.

Superintendent Vela said, “The Gros Ventre intersection is an extremely high-use area with some serious safety risks that need to be addressed.” These safety risks include:

- Cyclists crossing the highway with vehicles frequently exceeding the posted speed limit,
- Pathway users often not observing traffic controls,
- Poor sight distances, advanced warning signs and pavement markings,
- Safety risks with left turns in the intersection from Gros Ventre Road and Sagebrush Drive,
- Poor sight lines for vehicles turning or crossing the intersection from Gros Ventre Road and Sagebrush Drive,
- Visibility of pathway users to drivers is often obstructed by parked vehicles,
- Confusion of unfamiliar drivers at the intersection, and
- High presence of wildlife crossing the road.

A roundabout is a circular roadway at an intersection designed to expedite the flow of vehicle traffic through an intersection and reduce accidents, as well as a reliable design to slow traffic through the area. It also provides an opportunity for pedestrians and bicyclists to navigate the intersection safely and efficiently.

For several years the park has been working with the Federal Highway Administration, Wyoming Department of Transportation and Teton County traffic experts to determine that a modern roundabout is the most effective solution to provide the best balance of improved safety, protection of wildlife and visual quality, and cost at the Gros Ventre Intersection. The completed roundabout will accommodate existing and future traffic volumes. Other alternatives that were reviewed included tunnels under the highway and Gros Ventre Road, bridge underpass with additional pathway, pedestrian bridge, overpass or underpass with on and off ramps, stop light, and activated pedestrian crossing.

The construction contract for the roundabout and other safety improvements was awarded to HK Contractors from Idaho Falls, Idaho.

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