

*Below are comments that Becky Tillson, Alliance Wildlands & Community Planning Associate, verbally presented at the Dec. 5, 2011, Jackson Town Council public hearing regarding sketch plan approval of the START transit operations and maintenance facility to be built in Karns Meadow.*

Thank you for the opportunity to comment.

A new facility for START is clearly an important community amenity, and we are very supportive of the upgrades to the public transit system, specifically the opportunities for the busses to be stored indoors.

We appreciate the efforts on the part of the design team and the Jackson Town Council to minimize and mitigate impacts on wildlife, as well as the sustainability and energy conservation initiatives.

We do continue to be concerned about the potential impacts on the sensitive ecology of Karns Meadow, particularly with regard to incremental encroachments into the meadow, the indirect or off-site impacts of the project, and the increase in the intensity of human use that a complete street, for example, would create.

We are concerned that with increasing activity in the meadow will come reduced utility of the area as a wildlife corridor. It is currently a connector and a critical piece of wildlife habitat in town, protected largely by the vision and efforts of this council.

We appreciate the efforts of the design team and hope that you will continue to keep the best interests of our wildlife in mind as you discuss this project. Thank you.