

## ***Pennington County***

### ***Commissioners***

315 Saint Joseph Street

Rapid City, SD 57701

(605) 394-2171

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April 21, 2009

The Honorable Stephanie Herseth Sandlin  
331 Cannon House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

RE: SAGE CREEK CROAD (FAS 6533)

Dear Honorable Representative Herseth Sandlin:

The Pennington County Commissioners are seeking your consideration and support for Highway Priority Project Funds to improve Sage Creek Road. Pennington County, through the South Dakota Department of Transportation, is eligible under Title 23 (Highways), to receive funding for Project FAS 6533 Sage Creek Road. Because of the limited funding resources available to Pennington County, we would be unable to fund this project without federal assistance.

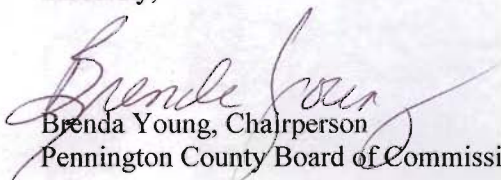
**Sage Creek Road traverses the Northwest portion of the Badlands National Park, is a tourist route, provides access to a campground, scenic viewing area, and is a major farm to market route. The road provides access from Highway 44 to Interstate 90. No other corridors between SD Highway 73 and Farmingdale, SD are available for heavy truck traffic of agricultural products, from portions of Pennington, Jackson, and Shannon Counties.**

**Completion of this project would improve the road by replacing the existing gravel surface with asphalt surfacing, providing safety benefits to the traveling public, including tourists. The safety of this road can be greatly enhanced and provide for a reduction in the number of accidents. We will eliminate aggregate loss and airborne emissions by 7,773 pounds per day, or 1,043 tons per year. Water quality would be improved and the long-term demand for aggregate sources, which are scarce in this area, would be reduced.**

**This project would provide economic development benefits by improving farm to market access and would provide an asphalt surface road for tourists visiting the Badlands National Park. Increased use would be expected as a tourist route, truck route, which would result in an improved business climate for the Badlands National Park and the surrounding area.**

If this project request is approved, Pennington County will conduct a series of public hearings to allow the public comment on the project and discuss the merits of the project. We will contact the Badlands National Park for input approval, comments, and support of the project.

Sincerely,

  
Brenda Young, Chairperson  
Pennington County Board of Commissioners