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## Updates on the Route 611 Closure

I want to share some insights into the ongoing discussions regarding the prolonged closure of Route 611 in the Delaware Water Gap National Recreation Area, which has been closed since December 6, 2022.

The devastation this extended closure has had on our community cannot be overstated. To put it simply, this project involves multiple government agencies with competing interests, which has severely stagnated a path forward. Finding middle ground has not been easy. PennDOT has serious public safety concerns about this roadway, while the National Park Service has a mission to maintain the park's resources. These interests often conflict, especially when there are limited options. The work needed to address the safety concerns requires a permit from the National Park Service. The two agencies and other stakeholders are speaking frequently but have yet to reach a consensus.

I wish I could snap my fingers and make this happen individually, but I have been extremely vocal and active in pushing each entity to be a team player and think of the greater good and the needs of our community. I do believe the agencies are close to a creative solution to alleviate this closure. The key government agencies include the National Park Service, Pennsylvania Department of Transportation (PennDOT), Federal Highway Administration, and Indigenous Tribal Leaders.

Route 611, owned and maintained by PennDOT, traverses the Delaware Water Gap National Recreation Area, which is managed by the National Park Service. Initially closed in April 2022 due to heavy rains washing out sections, it reopened after repairs. Subsequently, another rockslide occurred months later, prompting the need for enhanced safety measures. PennDOT's plan originally proposed removing 2,500 cubic yards of rock along a mile stretch to prevent further incidents. Following onsite evaluations with stakeholders, PennDOT reduced this to 125 cubic yards, the minimum amount deemed sufficient to safely open a single lane.