

CROSS CREEK

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Mr. Mel Bolling, Forest Supervisor
c/o Jay Pence, Teton Basin District Ranger
P.O Box 777
Driggs, ID 83401

10.1.2020

Dear Mr. Bolling,

You and your team are on the cusp of preparing the NEPA Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) in response to the Grand Targhee Resort Master Development Plan projects (GTRMDP). This EIS will appraise and disclose the anticipated environmental effects of implementing this massive plan. As a resident of Alta and a citizen of Teton Valley, I respectfully urge your most serious consideration of three encompassing categories and the impact targets and concerns listed below each.

Although I do not have sources, studies, and/or examples for the areas of likely impact that I list below (other than many photos of wildlife taken at our home in Alta or elsewhere nearby), I believe that a rigorous study of each of these category areas is critical to any EIS that the Forest Service could draft here.. Verifiable sources/studies/examples must come from the Forest Service prior to determining any possible action.

I. WILDLIFE

1. Teton Canyon and environs as a "Wildlife Corridor": elk, moose, and deer migration from forest to farm fields, summer to winter. Threat: significant habitat fragmentation as a result of removing 1200 acres from wilderness areas
2. Avalanche control on/in wildlife wintering grounds

II. THE LAND BELOW & THE SKY ABOVE

1. Traffic and road impacts, year-round, on Ski Hill Road and all routes leading to it (33), as well as "short-cuts" to Ski Hill (e.g., 2500 N., 5000 N., North Stateline Road) by trucks and cars of:
 - Construction crews
 - Additional GTR employees
 - Additional recreationists
2. Road impacts on byways listed above
3. Altered views of the mountain from Alta, WY and much of Teton Valley, ID
4. Light pollution from all newly improved areas (homes, restaurants, parking lots, etc.)
5. Deforestation in exchange for increased human impacts of roads, lifts, ski runs, cat trails, mountain biking trails.
6. Air pollution impact by avalanche control, vehicles (#1 above), and more private aircraft using the Driggs airport

7. A likely step beyond: heli-tours and attendant sensory assault on cohorts I and III, as well as II.

III. LOCAL CITIZENS

1. Impacts on history and legacy represented by farms and ranches, primarily in Alta
2. Additional employees necessary to build, maintain, and operate the new skiing terrain and amenities
= impact on rental market, traffic, public systems
3. Traffic impacts: delays, congestion
4. Noise impacts: from increased vehicular traffic of all kinds, from more planes and private jets in the skies
5. Storm water run-off connected to potable water sources on-site, in Alta, and in much of Teton Valley, ID
6. Safety impacts b/c of a single, winding road to GTR: earthquake, fire, vehicular collisions
7. The "Shared Road" concept impacted on all roads noted above (II.2)

While I understand that, to be economically viable, GTR just must continue to develop and improve its terrain and guest services, this kind of development has already been approved for GTR and not thus far fulfilled. Whatever results from the new and additional GTR projects proposal, it must be determined by those in authority not to diminish (at best) or eradicate (at worst) the very reasons people are drawn to Teton Valley to make their homes here or to visit: dark night skies, relative quiet, abundant wildlife sightings, uncrowded byways and trails.

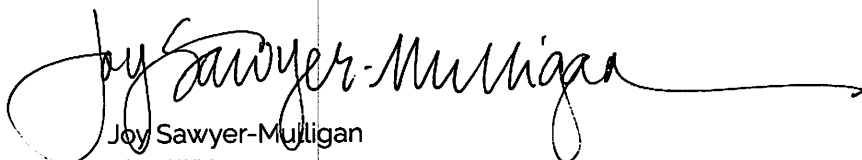
A thoughtful, comprehensive response to the GTRMDP is precisely the intent of NEPA half a century ago: "to empower local communities *to protect themselves and their environment* from dangerous, rushed or poorly planned projects" that impact not just federal lands, but all the human beings, wildlife, and ways of life affected in the wake of such danger--in this case, a sliver of Wyoming and virtually all of Teton County, Idaho, and its three cities.

Only by extensive, appropriately focused studies will there be a clear, incontestable answer to what citizens are asking for: proof that no harm will come to the wildlife, land, and people downhill from GTR during or after any construction, short-term or long-term.

What, in other words, are the true costs of redrawing a boundary line?

Thank you for your hard work and responsible dispensation of this matter.

Respectfully,



Joy Sawyer-Mulligan
Alta, WY