# Public Comment on the Grand Targhee Resort Master Development Plan DEIS

## 1. Unfair Economic Burden on Teton County, Idaho

Teton County, Idaho stands to absorb the majority of the impacts from any resort expansion — including traffic, housing strain, public service demands, and the loss of rural character — without receiving any corresponding tax revenue. Grand Targhee Resort is located in Wyoming, yet Idaho residents, infrastructure, and local governments would bear the brunt of increased visitation and development pressure.

Choosing Alternative 1 would avoid worsening housing affordability, traffic congestion, and infrastructure costs in Driggs and surrounding areas. Maintaining the resort at its current scale is the most fiscally responsible option for nearby Idaho communities.

## 2. Irreplaceable Wildlife Habitat at Risk

Expansion into the South Bowl and Mono Trees areas, as proposed in other alternatives, would irreversibly damage high-quality wildlife habitat. These forested areas provide critical seasonal range and movement corridors for species such as:
- Moose and mule deer,
- Northern goshawk,
- Boreal owl,
- Potential Canada lynx habitat.

The DEIS clearly acknowledges the fragmentation and degradation of habitat that would result from new ski terrain, lift infrastructure, and road construction. Alternative 1 is the only alternative that preserves this intact habitat completely, in line with Forest Plan goals and ecosystem stewardship responsibilities.

## 3. Preserving Iconic Scenic Views and Backcountry Character

The vistas surrounding Grand Targhee — including views from Table Mountain, Teton Canyon, Grand Teton National Park, and the Teton Scenic Byway — are among the most celebrated in the region. The proposed expansion areas are visible from many of these treasured hiking and recreation routes.

Selecting Alternative 1 will ensure that no new lifts, trails, or construction scar the skyline or intrude upon the wild character of these public lands. Once these visual intrusions are built, they cannot be undone. The “No Action” alternative respects the unique visual heritage of the Teton region.

## 4. Expansion Not Justified by Demand or Capacity

The DEIS and resort data confirm that Grand Targhee currently operates well below its Comfortable Carrying Capacity (CCC). Lift lines and crowding are not ongoing issues outside of a handful of peak days. The existing terrain and infrastructure already provide high-quality experiences for the number of skiers currently visiting.

Given this, there is no demonstrated need for new terrain or expanded operations. Building speculative capacity based on uncertain projections is both fiscally and environmentally irresponsible. Alternative 1 avoids unnecessary expansion and allows for a more sustainable path forward.

## Conclusion

The No Action alternative offers the clearest and most responsible path to preserving public lands, protecting wildlife, and maintaining the rural and scenic integrity of the Teton region. Grand Targhee Resort already provides valuable recreation within its existing footprint. There is no need to expand at the expense of forest resources, wildlife habitat, and community stability.

I urge the Forest Service to select Alternative 1 in the Final EIS. The cost of expansion is too high — and unnecessary.

Sincerely,
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