June 9, 2025

 Kim Pierson, Forest Supervisor Teton County Commissioners c/o Jay Pence,

Teton Basic District Ranger [1405 Hollipark Drive Idaho Falls, ID 83401](https://www.google.com/maps/search/1405+Hollipark+Drive+Idaho+Falls,+ID+83401?entry=gmail&source=g)

(I could not find an email for K. Pierson)

 RE: Grand Targhee Master Development Plan Projects

Dear Ms. Pierson,

Please accept the following comment from Teton County, Idaho, regarding the Grand Targhee Resort SUP Expansion Draft Environmental Impact Statement. Grand Targhee Resort is part of the valued present-day unique character of Teton Valley and has served an important role in the community’s economic development and healthy quality of life.

Expanded capacity and facilities to sustain the resort’s viability is desirable - to the degree that it supports the community’s objectives and delivers a positive net impact in Teton County, Idaho.

In addition to reviewing and considering analyses contained in the Draft EIS, Teton County, Idaho made the following findings: ***This is a letter from the City of Driggs, which was then forwarded to the County Commissioners. I have written the commissioners twice and sent them my replies to the 7 listed concerns. I would like you to remember we have 15,000 pop. At least 2/3 are adults and only 100 attended the Open House and I read you only had 740 comments, please do not let the whiners dictate your decision. If they really wanted no expansion they would stop skiing and that will never happen.***

1. Teton County has outstanding concerns about how the base area buildout of 450 units and 150,000sf of commercial will impact local services in Idaho, including: transportation, workforce housing, law enforcement, visitor services, emergency medical and recreation facilities. ***This statement is misleading. Grand Targhee has always tried to provide housing for their employees. Teton County Idaho gets paid very well for the contracts they have for those base services, fire, police, emergency medical. They provide transportation buses not only for their employees but also for people who want to use the hill to ski, and local families. As for other services, restaurants, retail stores and the hospitality sector benefit greatly from the ski hill. I have been here since 1996 and the other item they provided was when things were slim and finding work was difficult because all the amenities we have now that didn't exist then, they provided jobs. Jobs to help the locals get through the winter.***

 2. Existing rapid growth in the community is already stressing public services, decreasing affordability and degrading our small-town character and natural environment. ***Rapid growth is not Grand Targhee’s fault. Restrictive zoning laws are what increase the affordability of housing. Small town character? Look at our downtown, we look like Seattle, Portland and Jackson. That small town character boat floated 10 years ago. Show me the data of how the natural environment is being degraded? When the county does nothing but promote us as a Tourism town instead of growing Teton county's infrastructure, what did they expect would happen.***

3. State laws are becoming increasingly restrictive on local taxing authority and budgets, reducing the ability of Idaho jurisdictions to maintain public service levels under higher growth scenarios. ***Then I guess I will be asking our commissioners, state senators, and house representative officials about the laws and see what we can do to change them. We need to be vocal and go to our Idaho's Legislature about these issues. Not blame Targhee!***

4. The resort is a driver of population growth and real estate development in Teton County, Idaho, and the magnitude of the resort’s expansion has the potential to correspondingly exacerbate the already high rate of growth and development in Teton County, Idaho. ***That's a pip! Magazine articles, word of mouth, it used to be cheaper prices that brought people here, less restrictive tax laws, cost of living was lower. Again, the former commissioners promoted us as the tourism place to be. Grand Targhee is not the driver of growth...I know of no real estate contract that says no growth will happen after you sign on the dotted line.***

5. The leisure & hospitality industry generates mostly low-wage jobs, which creates more need for low-income housing that must be addressed by the community. ***Unless you were here in the 90's low-income housing is a myth. In fact, there is no such thing as low income housing unless you're talking about the projects in NYC or Downtown LA and look at what they are now, housing ghettos. We have had a housing issue since around 2007. We like to talk about it, but we never really do anything positive about it. The recent Land Use Code change with the restrictive zoning created this issue. NOT Grand Targhee.***

6. Our residents place a high value on protecting wildlife, the environment and scenic views, including the dark night sky. ***They don't place that high a value, they will go up to ski, no matter what. The dark night sky is the stupidest invention ever. I can see it in the cities, but here, what a joke. There is more wildlife now than when I first came. It is arrogant that any human thinks that he can fully understand the wildlife population. I asked to be provided with data. Never given.***

7. Water availability has become a critical issue for the County. ***Another false LIE. I would suggest that you contact Kathleen Price, our last EIPH employee. She is excellent and even though the previous commissioners constantly screamed about the water and septic, how is a business in Wyoming affecting water in Idaho. In fact, my water comes from Wyoming and yet when it crosses the Stateline, Idaho says it is theirs. (I am a farmer) I asked to be provided with data. Never given.***

May 8, 2025, the Teton County Board of County Commissioners hosted a Town Hall to gather public sentiment regarding the Draft EIS. Over 100 members of the community attended, online and in-person, to make comments inline with the findings outlined in this letter, as well as other concerns. Based on the Draft EIS analyses and the above criteria and findings, Teton County, Idaho supports and recommends a modified Alternative 3, No SUP Expansion, with removal of the Restaurant/Bar from the top of Fred’s Mountain, given that it would allow a moderate amount of capacity expansion, with correspondingly less severe impacts on Idaho public service levels than the proposed action, while also protecting valuable natural resources important to the community’s wellbeing. ***I tried to keep to the facts. What I see happening is emotional, non-truthful or not the full story being told when Cities write letters like this. The Forest service is the only one who has to make the decision. You were entrusted to do your due diligence. I support # Alternative 5. \****

***It has come to my attention that the recent article in the Teton Valley News listed 10 items not seven. This letter was written by Dan Reyes the county manager and Dan Powers, Democrat commissioner. It was not presented at a public meeting or approved by all the commissioners.***

***Thank you,***

***Penny NM Vasquez***