Mel Bolling 12 October 2020

C/O Jay Pence

Teton Basin District Ranger

P.O. Box 777

Driggs, Idaho 83422

RE: Grand Targhee Master Development Plan Proposal, Scoping Comments

To all it may concern,

I appreciate the opportunity given to the public to comment/object on the proposed development plan by Targhee. I have a number of concerns I would like to express, some with the overall project, and others with the proposed expansion into the South Bowl.

 **Losing our Heritage and Local Community**

One of my biggest concerns with this project is that it will destroy the community feel we have and be the beginnings of turning Teton Valley into simply another resort town mirroring the likes of Sun Valley, Park City, Big Sky, etc. The cost of living has already gone up dramatically in the last 30 years so much that many will commute over an hour to our Valley and even two hours to Jackson Hole for work. Many families who have been here for several generations are finding it more difficult to remain. Large resorts attract elites and others who often have no concern for local history and heritage, and no concern for preserving it. I am very concerned that this will mostly benefit the more privileged, not to mention that the price to ski has been going up and will likely only further increase with this expansion. This will only make more difficult for families of all classes to come and enjoy what we already have.

**Visual**

I have had numerous persons who when they visit tell me they love how bright the night sky is here and how well the stars can be seen. With the proposals concerning new buildings as well as more areas set apart for snow making. I am concerned that we will have undesirable side effects in the form of light pollution. Most of Targhee’s major buildings are currently hidden from view from many angles in the Valley, this new expansion would change that in a negative way in my opinion. Concerning the expansion into the South Bowl, I have no desire to see anything unnatural when I go into Teton Canyon. I go into the wilderness to get away from civilization and enjoy God’s creations. Ski lifts, buildings, and roads would serve as a major eye sore and detriment to the natural beauty found in Teton Canyon.

**Water**

My water comes from the Alta Culinary system, the source of which, is located directly south of Grand Targhee on the north side of Teton Canyon. In the past, as Targhee has shifted soil for bike trails as well as cat track maintenance/development, we have experienced degraded water quality. We have experienced silty and murky water conditions sometimes for weeks at a time when Targhee has been working on changes/developments. Additional development is a major concern for myself and everyone on this system as well. Additional development into the South Bowl could also affect our water, as well as degrade the waters of the Teton Creek drainage which includes waters for the town of Driggs.

**Backcountry use**

Considering that Motorized vehicle usage, i.e. motorbikes and snowmobiles, are incredibly limited up Teton Canyon it seems odd that we would bring in major development into the South Bowl. Many also enjoy skiing the area proposed for development knowing that it won’t be highly tracked, and it is already easily accessed with a short hike up peaked from the resort. There is a concern though for avalanche danger on that south facing slope, which is not a serious threat on other lift accessed areas as of yet.

**Prior approvals left undeveloped**

Grand Targhee has already had approvals to further develop areas such as Peaked, and yet nothing has been done. Considering this it seems very odd that further development is even being considered. A concern myself and others I have spoken with share is the possibility of a larger corporation such as Vail lying in wait to simply take over the project, again, furthering Grand Targhee’s accessibility away from locals and more towards elites. Gillett was pressed about this in the video meeting, his answer though, in my opinion, was less than satisfactory.

**Conflict of Interest**

 The fact that the same consulting firm that was hired by Grand Targhee Resort is the same one doing the Environmental Impact survey for the Forrest Service is quite frankly ridiculous and needs to be addressed.

Overall a great deal of what is going seems to be all out of want and not out of actual need. Prior approvals for development should be done first before allowing any further expansion/development.

Thank you for your consideration of my concerns.

Sincerely,

Tavner Wilson