

Data Submitted (UTC 11): 9/10/2020 7:22:56 PM

First name: Brian

Last name: Cynkar

Organization:

Title:

Comments: To Whom It May Concern:

The proposed Grand Targhee Resort boundary expansion (read acquisition of more public lands) should not be permitted to happen for several different reasons.

1. Keep public lands public. Simply put, the Teton Range is not that big of an area to allow GTR to expand and thus restrict access to previously public lands. This scenario has already played out in the past with negative results. GTR proposed expansion will effectively eliminate historically free public access south into Teton canyon from the existing boundary year round. GTR has never demonstrated good stewardship with the land within its current boundary or allowing access within or surrounding their current boundary so one would expect the same within and surrounding any boundary addition. Great example of this is GTR continuous refusal to allow reasonable access to the backcountry (read public lands) from its boundary in the winter time. Whereas JHMR is an excellent example of allowing said access. Same state, same range, why not same policy? Does GTR not exist on public land and is surrounded by public land?

2. Wildlife. The effects of this expansion will stress wildlife in the proposed area as well as along Teton canyon, ski hill road, and all the way down into town. The idea to make another large destination ski resort with "extreme" terrain is obviously a ploy by GTR to increase visitation and therefore revenue. More people speeding around the valley will lead to more animal vs vehicle collisions. Look at the Moose Wilson road to JHMR. It's already happening and keeping it from expanding to both valleys is possible by denying this expansion. Not to mention all the critical winter range ski hill road traverses through also. People are already poaching the powder between road turns on the regular and chasing moose down the road with no where to jump the snow banks. We can prevent this from getting any worse and help our animal friends by not increasing visitation, which is exactly the aim of said expansion.

3. Development equals destruction. The Tetons are a small range. One large ski area is enough. Look at JHMR and the impact it has had on Teton Village and the Jackson valley. One would expect that GTR currently cannot financially afford to develop their own proposed expansion based on the fact that they struggle financially to operate with their current size. For example, the maintenance shed collapsed in a recent winter. If Targhee cannot keep their buildings from collapsing, how can they justify adding restaurants, lifts, and avalanche reduction work in seriously consequential avalanche terrain? GTR currently struggles to get the Mary's Nipple boot pack open. They have demonstrated again and again that they cannot afford this expansion or the number of new employees (and where will the employees live?). This would mean GTR is looking to sell out to a much larger corporation with much deeper pockets that could actually fund the proposed expansion. And what do large corporations do to ski areas? They develop real estate. Look over the hill to Jackson. Where will they develop that real estate? As close to the ski area as possible destroying even more public lands and wildlife habitat. In town they will look to develop short term high income properties thus further fueling the affordable housing crisis in the region. History repeats itself but it doesn't have to happen here in beautiful Teton valley.

We still have a chance right now to help keep our valley a wonderful coexistence between wildlife, wild lands and wild people. Denying GTR to expand in such proposed fashion will help the majority of all valley residents, human or otherwise. We do not need a second Jackson Hole. One is enough.

Thank you for your consideration and hard work