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Title:

Comments: COMMENTS ON PROPOSED TARGHEE EXPANSION

Thank you for accepting my comment. I am writing in strong opposition of the proposed Targhee expansion.

As a lifelong local and Targhee skier I have grown up in the shadow of these mountains. I have watched changes come to the valley - some positive, others less so. While I recognize that time brings change, it is critical that change be managed from a perspective of retaining what makes Teton Valley special, rather than what brings the most financial benefit to a small group of disinterested parties.

It is difficult for me to understand the benefit that this development would bring to the area aside from economic considerations on the side of the developers. Even as I read through the public comments, it appears that those most in favor of the expansion are those with second homes in the area who are concerned with property values and encouraging tourism to our valley for their own personal benefit.

On the other hand, there are many detrimental effects that this change would bring to our mountain:

1. Infrastructure and parking requirements: the current infrastructure will not accommodate the changes being considered. Roads would need to be constructed, and areas that are currently pristine would be tarnished with pavement. This would greatly impact those who currently recreate in those areas both summer and winter, not to mention the wildlife that rely on these routes for migration.
2. Air pollution: as it currently stands, we have air pollution risk with one road leading to Targhee. This expansion will greatly increase this risk and create potential health hazards for residents in the area.
3. Light and noise pollution: Teton Canyon is a quiet, calm, wilderness. Bringing in ski lifts, heavy equipment, roads, and restaurants will cause irreversible damage to our dark and quiet skies.
4. Wildlife impact: many animals reside in Teton Canyon. The south side of Targhee is a haven for this wildlife as it's accessibility is currently limited. Creating this expansion will cause irreparable harm to these habitats and put many species at risk, including the Teton Range sheep that is already being threatened with extinction.
5. Water and sewer: based on the geology of the area and the history of sewage disposal at Targhee it is clear that there will be issues. It will likely become necessary to pipe sewage to the sewage treatment plant which will need upgrades and additional construction to effectively dispose of waste.
6. Other environmental concerns: avalanche mitigation efforts in the steep terrain will require many changes to be made to the natural topography. Trees will be removed, cliff bands navigated, and the south side of the mountain - now a pure and beautiful wilderness, will become an eyesore.

As I consider these factors, I am convinced that this development is nothing more than a short-sighted attempt to pad pockets rather than to protect an environmental wonder. We are stewards of this resource and must act wisely. We only have one chance to protect this place - if we are not mindful we will deplete the irreplaceable resources we treasure. Future generations will pay for the decisions we make today. Time, proper planning, and mindful change is what will keep Targhee pure and keep Targhee wild.

I strongly oppose the Targhee expansion into Teton Canyon. Please seek profits elsewhere and act responsibly

to protect our wild places.

Thank you,  
Holly Guerra