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First name: Katherine

Last name: Looney

Organization:

Title:

Comments: Dear Mr. Dunn,

Regarding the request by the Bell Lake Yurt owner to add a second backcountry yurt operation into the Granite Peak area:

I moved to Pony in 1994 with my husband and two daughters and we made Pony our home. We have recreated in the proposed area extensively since moving here, so know the area very well. My husband and I, along with many locals, have skied in the Granite Peak area to the point that every run has its own name. To allow a second yurt is not in the best interest of the many folks who do not want to engage in a commercial backcountry ski experience but would rather have an individual self guided trip. In the past, prior to the Bell Lake Yurt, we skied that area extensively as well and even managed ice fishing Bell Lake. Those days are long gone as the yurt traffic pushed us out. Really hoping the same thing doesn't come to fruition in the Granite Peak area.

Second:

The increased traffic from the Bell Lake Yurt on the South Willow Creek Road is manageable at this time. From my experience there is an average of 4 vehicles per yurt party. To add another 500 user days, potentially bringing in 500 more vehicles per season to the area would impact the road and area extensively. We are also seeing a tremendous increase in traffic in the South Willow Creek area, given the growth in Gallatin County and surrounding areas.

The yurt operator/owner and his guides have been quite friendly over the years and while the existing operation has done little for the local economy in Pony, it also has not had a negative impact thus far, other than essentially taking over the Bell Lake area and making it undesirable to recreate in the area.

Please find my comments worth consideration.