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Organization:

Title:

Comments: The Flathead National Forest is trying to subvert public input and approve a mega-expansion of the Holland Lake Lodge facilities on public land with inadequate environmental analysis and restricted public participation. This is a big mistake because this place is close to the hearts of many of us who have visited it for decades.

You should be ashamed of yourselves doing this on the sly without informed public input and with no Environmental Assessment or Environmental Impact Statement.

Your loyalty should be with the American people and particularly with people who know and love Holland Lake, not with the "adventure lifestyle company" POWDR, an out-of-state development firm. We like the historic lodge, and we don't want some flimsy, in-the-middle-of-the-night analysis to destroy the rustic natural character of Holland Lake and the upper Swan Valley.

I urge you to say NO to the Bob Marshall Lodge (28 rooms, two-story, 13,000 square feet), 10 lake cabins (650 square feet each), 16 smaller studio cabins (250 square feet each), the New Welcome Center (2,000 square feet, single-story building), the Mission Mountains Restaurant (3,000 square feet) constructed adjacent to the Old Lodge, with indoor seating capacity for 100 guests and outdoor seating for an additional 30 guests.

I urge you to say NO to the small watersport building (400 square feet), new maintenance building (2,000 square feet) and employee housing (2,000 square feet).

Your idea of announcing this mega-expansion on September 1, right before Labor Day weekend, is tacky. You need to provide plenty of time to review this development and any supplementary documents, including the Forest Service's 16-page "scoping" document.

Your idea that this mega-development should be "categorically excluded" from Environmental Assessment or Environmental Impact Statement absurd and ludicrous. Your shortcut paves the way for poor public policy. You are not constructing an outhouse or a tool shed.

This is a major development in a public forest enjoyed by generations of Montanans like me and my family. I've begun trips into the Bob from Holland Lake. I've canoed just as the ice broke. I've caught trout with my wife when we were the only ones on the lake. I've camped with my family and taken visitors to the lake. At a time when Montana is changing and private individuals and wealthy corporations are buying up lands and restricting access, and crowding out John Q. Public, you need to pay attention to the purpose of our national forests. You need to be preserving public lands.

The Flathead National Forest must provide adequate time public comments and prepare an Environmental Impact Statement that fully assesses the potential impacts of this mega-development on this historic, rustic area and its natural ecosystems. Then you must reevaluate your plans based on the public's comments and objections.