

Data Submitted (UTC 11): 9/9/2022 1:30:17 AM

First name: Andrew

Last name: kromarek

Organization:

Title:

Comments: Expanding Holland Lake Lodge almost certainly will reduce public access to the water and increase crowding in the already growing Missoula / Flathead area -- not even two paragraphs into the Holland Lake Lodge Master Development Plan, it is stated that "Upon completion, more people will be able to enjoy Holland Lake while having access to a higher quality and a wider range of accommodations and services," indicating that POWDR Inc. intends to commercialize to a greater extent than the previous owner.

Expanding access to the outdoors in Montana should first serve the people who live in the area and those who reside in the state as they are the ones who benefit and suffer the most from external changes. POWDR Inc., a company based out of Utah, is unlikely to be a steward to the land and will be after one thing, which is money. A quick Google search of POWDR Inc. results in a find that they are currently being sued by the father of a child who died at their resort at Mt. Bachelor in Oregon -- according to one article (1), "There have been seven ski-related deaths there since 2018. Three of those happened last winter." That does not sound like a company that takes what it means to have an outdoor-focused company as serious as it should, especially given the location of Holland Lake and its proximity to what may be the densest population of Grizzly Bears in the lower 48. Although there hasn't been a sighting at the lake in years, only 50 miles away in Ovando a woman was killed just last summer. I'm sure you could make an argument that increasing the human presence in the area will dramatically increase chances of bear sightings and run-ins.

Out-of-state developers claiming that their brand is "locally focused, delivering soulful experiences" seem to miss the mark. I fail to see what is soulful about staying at a resort of this size, offering services that could be found at nearly any nearby lake. If you are looking for seclusion, it doesn't make sense to go to a resort. If you are looking for predetermined activities in a developed area, why not go to one of the larger lakes nearby that already have plenty of amenities?

Although Holland Lake is listed as a 'Focused Recreation Management Area' (FRMA) I do not believe that growing the resort solves any issue that may be present. The definition states that "Focused recreation areas typically feature certain types of recreation activities that take place near or at a large lake or reservoir, developed ski area or year-round resort, large campground, or trail system" -- by this definition, I find it hard to justify growing an area even with the added benefits to increasing localized services. There are already so many services nearby and destinations to visit with greater features (and resorts that already exist,) this FRMA simply does not need it.

--

It is a disgrace to name the largest lodge to be built after Bob Marshall, a well-known conservationist and socialist who dedicated his life to ensuring that the public had a right to free and fair access to the outdoors. The commercialization of Montana's outdoors is most certainly a shortsighted cash-grab that doesn't even pretend to care about the land it abuses; and why should it? Out of state companies, as well as those in state who take advantage of the natural resources the state has to offer all the while reducing access to the general public present a greater disservice to the state than any growth could counter, as the most valuable aspect of Montana is its culture. Montanans have a duty to protect nature and to defend it from greed -- as we all do -- and giving into corporations that are able to buy out premier nature spots in the state for their own capital gain are destroying our culture. A quote from Bob Marshall:

"The sounds of the forest are entirely obliterated by the roar of the motor. The smell of pine needles and flowers and herbs and freshly turned dirt and all the other delicate odors of the forest are drowned in the stench of

gasoline. The feeling of wind blowing in the face and of soft ground under foot are all lost."

These environments are sensitive to us, and we must be sensitive in return as it does not take much change / growth on our end to have serious, unintended consequences.

(1): <https://www.insurancejournal.com/news/national/2022/09/01/683279.htm>