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Organization:

Title:

Comments: Dear Forest Service and all parties involved,

I am petitioning against the plans for a resort to be built by POWDR on and around Holland Lake, in Swan Valley, MT. The number of reasons this brings reservations and disapproval by so many local Montana residents far out way any number of acceptance or anticipation for such a project. Holland Lake and the lodge have been a treasured place for local Swan Valley residents and surrounding Flathead Valley residents, for decades. It's pristine and raw beauty is what draws so many to its shores to enjoy. Bringing in a resort, I and so many fear, would only destroy this beautiful location - bringing much more congested traffic and (let's be honest) sadly not everyone cares to take good care of Montana's natural forests, waters and lands.

I, and many others, are more than a little confused as to how this project is even being considered by the forest service. Being forest service land, this land should be protected from big companies and projects like this. This is Montana wilderness. Why are we trying to change that?

There is talk that this resort would bring more jobs to the valley, however, as we all know there are already a huge amount of jobs available that employers are struggling to get filled. No one can deny we have a HUGE staffing problem in the Flathead. And it's not simply that there aren't enough willing and available workers, it's that the positions and jobs available are either entry level or low wage positions that cannot provide enough income to account for the rise in living costs. In fact, resorts like the one planned for Holland Lake will only further drive it up, because it raises the commercial value of the surrounding communities. But if jobs can't keep up, we run into disasters like we did last year, with housing and living costs. And then we lose local, and hardworking, residents and their communities altogether. And what does that profit or gain?

Furthermore, building a resort to bring in "more money" into the valley, does not benefit the forest service or the lands, for it is the tax paying citizen of that state that pays that. Another resort is not the answer. On the contrary, it would be only disastrous for this beautiful lake - a very treasured and cherished place for Montanans.

As a born and raised Flathead valley resident, I grew up visiting, cherishing, and treasuring Holland Lake and many surrounding lakes and forests, and like too many other beautiful places in the valley, big tourism is taking over and further commercializing our pristine and naturally beautiful lands. Not to mention, robbing rural and local Montanan's from being able to enjoy (with our children and families now) the traditions and responsibilities of caring for and treasuring these lands.

I am not against restoring or upgrading the existing lodge to safe and necessary standards, and continued upkeep of the surrounding hiking trails and campground. In fact, many of us locals would gladly be for that. But with keeping the traditional buildings, and surrounding state land "untouched" and wild. That is what has always made Montana, Montana - this wild and beautiful land.

Holland Lake is one of the last destinations that is still wild, and it has drawn and attracted people from all around the world because of its natural beauty and wildness. Let's not further rob and deface Montana. We need to protect it! We need to encourage visiting and enjoying Montana's wilderness - for all! - but without trying to change it.

Thank you for your time, and I sincerely hope you will reconsider allowing this project.