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Organization:

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Comments: Hello,

I'm writing to join the voice of the public in vehemently opposing the proposed development by the POWDR corporation at Holland Lake, and strongly encourage the Forest Service to not approve the project that intends to destroy historic structures and the natural environment.

Holland Lake Lodge owner Christian Wohlfeil has said that "the resort needs some TLC and an upgrade." This may be true; historic buildings often do need additional and specific maintenance to be preserved properly. But the leveling of 10 structures is not "TLC." Building 30 new structures and increasing accommodation capacity by 312% is not "an upgrade." This is a full-scale redevelopment on sensitive public land.

Flathead National Forest supervisor Kurt Steele is quoted as saying "...the public input is important for me to hear before determining if this proposal is in the best interest of the American people." That classification is a curious choice. If the American people are interested in seeking out POWDR-operated recreation and facilities, there are 10 other lodges in California, Colorado, Oregon, Vermont, Nevada, and Utah (and another in Canada) that should meet their needs. Montanans have made it clear that out-of-state developers, corporations, and investment real estate vultures do not have our best interests at heart. Their opportunity acquisitions have brought a nation-leading housing crisis to the state, have sucked up accessible land from the hands of the public, threaten the environment amid a worldwide climate crisis, and have pushed out residents who've called Montana home for decades, resulting in severe degradation of both our culture and communities.

I've had camping family reunions at Holland Lake, caught cutthroat on dry flies from a canoe with my father, and hiked Wolverine Peak to view the lake from above. My friends were engaged at the Falls. Thousands and thousands of Montanans have stories just like this, but the opportunity to have these valuable and meaningful experiences is reduced when we assist or are complicit in turning our public lands into exclusive playgrounds for wealthy non-residents. Tourism is a major part of Montana's seasonal economy, and these out-of-staters are more than welcome to experience with the rest of us all that this state has to offer. If they want a true Montana getaway, maybe they can rent a raft from a local outfitter, or take a float trip with a local fishing guide, or rent some mountain bikes from a local cycle shop, instead of giving their money to an adventure theme park corporation from Park City, Utah.

Respectfully,

Brady Schwertfeger