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Organization:

Title:

Comments: Thank you for allowing the public the opportunity to comment on this proposed project. I have taken the time to provide comment in complete opposition of the proposed "expansion and improvement" of the Holland Lake Lodge. My family and I recently relocated to Michigan after living and working in the Seeley Swan area of Montana for the past decade. Over the past ten years, I worked as a wildlife biologist with the US Fish and Wildlife Service Partners program based in the Swan Valley and most recently as the area wildlife biologist for MT FWP based in the Blackfoot watershed.

The Seeley Swan Region is one of the most biologically intact regions in the lower 48 states and remains that way because it is one of the last remaining low elevation conifer-forest ecosystems. It is a valley rich with unique forested wetlands that provide a home to rare plant species and many migratory bird species dependent on the forage and security those wetlands provide. Large mammals move north and south following the Swan River and east and west from the Bob Marshall Wilderness to the Mission Mountains Wilderness and back. Native west-slope cutthroat and threatened bull trout rely on the Swan River and connected lakes to complete their life cycle.

I could continue to describe the Swan Valley's unique qualities, but to the point, additional development or expansion of existing infrastructure, especially infrastructure that is not critical, has no place in a landscape this unique and vital. I see this proposal as costing taxpayers money and rare natural resources for the profit of a few, not for the greater good, as Gifford Pinchot would have preferred. The forests of the Swan Valley are fire dependent and when, not if, a wildfire threatens the "improved and expanded" Holland Lake Lodge it will be the taxpayer to the rescue by way of the US Forest Service fire crews and resources. I do not want my tax dollars paying to maintain infrastructure and protect a lodge that will likely be too expensive and exclusive for the average person. This is not what the founders of the US Forest Service envisioned, and it is not what I want for my public lands. So I say, absolutely NO to the expansion and improvement of the Holland Lake Lodge.

Thank you for taking the time to read my comments!