

Data Submitted (UTC 11): 9/16/2022 9:50:27 PM

First name: Nicole

Last name: Rosenleaf Ritter

Organization:

Title:

Comments: Between 2004 and 2021, my family owned a cabin in Condon. During that time, we spent countless hours at the day use area at Holland Lake. My two kids, now 14 and 18, grew up swimming, floating, skipping rocks, hiking, picnicking, and sunbathing at the lake.

Obviously, we chose Holland Lake in part because of its proximity to our cabin, but more than that, we chose it because of its tranquility. We knew there would be some crowds, but the roads would never be crowded or dangerous, and boat traffic would be very limited--just enough to give the kids some fun waves to swim through.

I grew up in Great Falls, and we would scrimp and save to rent a cabin for a week on Swan Lake--until the cabin where we always stayed was sold to new owners, and we could no longer afford our little week at the lake. It seems clear that's what will happen once an out-of-state corporation hell-bent on extracting profits from the world's most beautiful areas takes over the land and property at Holland Lake Lodge. An affordable getaway for ordinary Montanans will no longer be accessible. It won't happen immediately, but it's almost certain that my own children will not be able to return with their families someday to Holland Lake.

I live in Bozeman, an hour from Big Sky, so I am in a pretty strong position to tell you that turning Montana into a playground for the wealthy can only end in the destruction of our natural resources and communities. The once-pristine Gallatin River turns green with toxic algae every summer, thanks to untreated wastewater from Big Sky's celebrities and billionaires, and sewage spills are a regular occurrence. Wealthy tourists bring their money, but very little of it ends up in the pockets of hardworking service employees. Meanwhile, lifelong Montanans can no longer afford even to recreate at Big Sky, much less live there while they serve rich people or build third homes for corporate tycoons.

Is this really the future we want for Montana? Rich, out-of-staters taking advantage of everything Montana has to offer while the people who live here work three jobs to afford rent? That's the future POWDR and its ilk can offer us. Let's slow down and take a hard look at what selling off our heritage will cost us in the long run.