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Organization:

Title:

Comments: I am writing to share my family's deep opposition and concern regarding development of the proposed Holland Lake Lodge expansion.

It's a family tradition for us to camp at Holland Lake at least once a year, as is the case for generations of families from Helena and Great Falls.

On our family's most recent trip about three weeks ago, we were delighted to awaken to the call of the loons that we had seen nesting on the lake near the lodge earlier this spring.

Common Loon populations are declining across their range and are a Species of Concern in Montana, with only 72 territorial pairs. <https://fwp.mt.gov/conservation/wildlife-management/common-loon#:~:text=Montana%20has%20the%20largest%20population,number%20of%20pairs%20has%20increased.>

Recreational use at Holland Lake, as it currently stands, is protective of the loons. Pressure on the lake is limited by the number of camping sites and parking spots for overnight and day use. These slots are available to all on a fair and affordable basis. A limited amount of more expensive lodging is available at the lodge, accommodating those who cannot camp, and is well-balanced with campground usage.

Expansion of the lodge would upset this balance, jeopardizing at least one fragile species and forever changing the pristine nature of this lake that families of all income levels and walks of life can enjoy.

Public land is to be managed by the U.S. Forest for the general public to responsibly use and enjoy in perpetuity. It's not to be managed to favor those who can pay top dollar for short-term game at the long-term expense of this public treasure.

Local businesses have lobbied for the expansion project because of the economic development it will bring. However, this is not relevant to the decision at hand regarding the future of this fragile and irreplaceable alpine lake.

Please do not allow the Holland Lake Lodge expansion to go forward. Approval would harm fragile species and forever change the nature of this place that has been responsibly managed for decades for the public to enjoy, regardless of income level.

Thank you for your consideration.

Best regards,

Karen Ogden Hollow
Helena, MT