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Organization:

Title:

Comments: Comments on proposed Holland Lake Lodge expansion:

Over a 50 year period, I have visited Holland Lake several times associated with wilderness backpacking trips, canoeing, and friends' weddings.

For decades, Holland Lake has provided a serene and pristine environment for numerous Montana generations to enjoy.

The small Holland Lake Lodge has provided, over the decades, a unique opportunity for the public to visit and "take in" the lake's quiet serenity and its pristine mountain setting. Such public opportunities are becoming rarer and rarer to experience.

Today, too many new recreational improvements and developments are too large and are an intrusion to the beautiful natural settings they are placed adjacent to or within.

I totally agree with Jeffrey Smith's comments:

"This is a major development in a public forest enjoyed by generations of Montanans like me and my family. I've begun trips into the Bob (Marshall Wilderness) from Holland Lake. I've canoed just as the ice broke. I've caught trout with my wife when we were the only ones on the lake. I've camped with my family and taken visitors to the lake. At a time when Montana is changing and private individuals and wealthy corporations are buying up lands and restricting access and crowding out John Q. Public, you need to pay attention to the purpose of our national forests."

As a retired wildlife biologist (30+ years in Montana), my experiences and knowledge support Chris Servheen's comments:

The negative effects of plunking a large resort down on Holland Lake won't be limited to the 15-acre property, said Chris Servheen, former U.S. Fish and Wildlife Grizzly Bear Recovery Coordinator. It would also bring in a lot of people who aren't used to being in bear country.

"I'm sure this organization is going to be promoting recreation beyond the 15-acre site, and all these things can displace bears, lynx and other wildlife and can increase the number of confrontations. It can even increase the mortality risk for bears because of the increasing number of people in the area and the fact that some bears may be displaced from more secure places into places where there are people and the mortality risk is higher. I think it's important to realize this impact goes way beyond the 15 acres. I think it requires a very detailed environmental analysis - it can't be just tossed aside as 'no big deal.' It is a big deal. They're making the site ready for three times as many visitors and a longer visitor season."

I speak for many long-time Montanans when I say we take great pride in our state's natural beauty, wildlife populations, and wild landscapes, and the opportunities to enjoy it in small groups with family and friends.

Small gatherings promote enjoyment of one's environment, while large business ventures are usually associated with making profits at the expense of one's environment.

The size of the existing Holland Lake Lodge is perfect for the true enjoyment of its setting. I give a big thumbs

down to the proposed Holland Lake Lodge expansion.

Thanks for the opportunity to comment.

Rick Kerr
Choteau