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Organization:

Title:

Comments: I OPPOSE the expansion at Holland Lake.

Furthermore, I request the USFS engage in a full environmental review of the project, taking into special consideration the strong opposition of the local community to this expansion.

My family and I have been visiting and enjoying Holland Lake since the mid 1990's. My husband and I were married at the lodge in a tiny ceremony in 1995; our daughter's christening ceremony was held there in 1998; we spread the ashes of a close family friend there in 2020; and I have continued to join my family there as well as take students there for ecological field work and natural history courses over the intervening years. My husband and I first encountered the lake and the lodge after leading a trail crew in the Bob Marshall Wilderness in 1993 and hiking out with our crew to Holland Lake to be picked up after 6 weeks: what a marvel to discover. The geological, biological, and social values of this unique place cannot be overemphasized: there is no place here for the disturbance associated with a long-term construction project and the crowds of people flocking year-round to the area in the aftermath.

Those who oppose this proposal may have no tools but the ESA or NEPA to stop the project and that is unfortunate. I hate to see grizzlies and lynx used inappropriately as hammers against this project when, in my opinion, it primarily comes down to a social issue: so few places like this exist and we should protect the remaining quiet(ish) possibilities for contemplation and solitude. Frankly, I would prefer the lodge to downsize, but also recognize the social and economic value it provides. At least in the current situation, the lodge and associated buildings aren't winterized so the activity at the lake is restricted to a busy summer season. The expansion would mean a constant source of people and noise and intrusion.

I wish we had better tools to defend this special place from greed and the monetization of the natural world. As it is, we have NEPA review and I hope to God the USFS comes to its senses in this process to DENY THE PROPOSED EXPANSION.