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First name: Krysta

Last name: DeVries

Organization:

Title:

Comments: Dear Mr. Steele and Ms. Mavor,

I am writing to oppose the planned expansion to the Holland Lake Lodge.

I have had the opportunity to enjoy the majesty of Holland Lake and its surrounding areas for all 35 years of my life. I grew up on this lake and it holds an incredibly important place in my heart. I have many concerns regarding the proposed mega-resort expansion to the Holland Lake Lodge. One of my biggest concerns is the immense scope of the project. The extent of the proposed expansion far exceeds what this small mountain lake can support. The expanded footprint represents a substantial departure from current conditions. As it stands, the lake is enjoyed by recreators of all kinds, from all backgrounds. The proposed resort is almost certain to cater to the ultra-rich. The capacity of the mega-resort proposed will choke out access for local Montanans hoping to enjoy this magical place. I can't help but think this is a failure on the part of the Forest Service to be good stewards of public lands FOR the public.

The proposed setbacks for the new construction are ridiculous. A 20-foot setback offers essentially no buffer between the mega-resort and the lakefront. This is sure to disturb not only other recreators on the lake but also wildlife habitats. In addition, there should be much more attention given to water quality, waste and invasive species issues not addressed in the current proposal.

I believe it is an egregious error for the USFS to consider this proposal under a categorical exclusion. Holland lake is a natural forest lake with an extremely fragile ecosystem. The Holland Lake area is home to several endangered species and borders the Bob Marshall Wilderness Area. The Forest Service has failed to consider significant environmental impacts to endangered species and designated critical habitats that will result from this expansion. The proposal raises a host of ecological, historical and cultural concerns that cannot possibly be adequately addressed through the categorical exclusion process.

I request that the USFS consider suitable alternatives that would preserve the Holland Lake experience. This could include designating the lodge a historic site. I wish to preserve the culture of not only the Holland Lake area, but of Montana itself. Peaceful and serene recreation in nature is at the core of Montana values. How can we expect to preserve this with a mega resort on this tiny natural forest lake?

Thank you for considering my comments.

Sincerely,

Krysta DeVries