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Comments: USFS, Kurt Steele,

I've attended your public meetings and I've read your published information. The only thing I can agree with is the existing facility needs attention. Why it has been allowed to fall in to such disrepair is a matter of debate and ultimately unimportant. I strongly disagree with everything else proposed. Its size and impact are too much for this small fragile lake and the surrounding area.

Your intention is to "categorically exclude the proposed project from documentation in an environmental impact assessment". Your first public meeting on this was September 8. It was poorly conducted and organized. I received my postcard in the mail notifying me of this meeting September 7. Notice of this meeting didn't appear on your website until September 6. You stated at your meeting that "no decision has been made to approve or disapprove this project". Given everything I've seen to date, any thinking person would have to wonder if the true intention here is to shortcut the process, rubber stamp, and fast track this ill-advised and inappropriate development.

Your proposed set backs of 20' from the lake are too close. Your proposed tree removal is also too close to the shore. Your stated intention is for "improved view corridors". For who? Certainly not for those on the lake wishing to enjoy the unspoiled views of Holland Falls, the Swan, and Mission ranges. The USFS has historically placed a high value on this experience and has limited development close to the lake shore. It is evident in the well thought out design and placement of the campgrounds, trail heads, and day use areas. It is also evident in the significant set backs of the cabins on the lake's southside. Why the change in ideology?

It is going to take a lot of visitor traffic and staff to support this company's investment. The numbers suggested are significant and probably understated. Your proposal does provide guarantees; more sewage, trash, dust, noise, light, crime, fire danger, and greater pressure on the wildlife, waterfowl, and fish-particularly the endangered and threatened species present. We are also guaranteed a hit to the water quality, both in the lake and the aquifer. A case in point, is the two new "exempt" wells being proposed. According to the Clark Fork Coalition's website, an "exempt well is that which is 100' deep with flows less than 35 gpm, and uses less than 10 acre feet of water per year". These wells are "exempt from regulatory oversight". They further state drilling multiple smaller wells instead of fewer larger wells, in reality, allows the developer an unrestricted use of water that can negatively impact the ground water levels and stream flows. Developers, they claim, have been exploiting this loophole in state law for years.

If this project is approved I fear the damage inflicted will be just the beginning. This corporation does not do things in a small way. If you like the Wasatch Range in Utah; you'll love what they'll do to the Swan. The current 15 acre lease will grow to 115, then to 1,015, and keep growing. This is what Ski companies do with the complicit USFS and BLM. I foresee summer visitor's waverunners and wake boats tied up to the shore by the dozens. I can hear their bass heavy stereos blasting out their favorite music. New trailheads in the winter will be filled with snowmobilies. Helicopters will be transporting skiers high into the peaks for their true backcountry experience. New ski runs will be built in the north facing slopes of the Swan Range. New lodges and gondolas will provide the accommodations and access. It does not seem so farfetched when you consider what's happened in Big Sky with Yellowstone Club, Whitefish with Big Mountain, and our very own neighbor Paws Up. And, the wildlife, the loons, the endangered and treated species, the crystal clear water that everyone was to enjoy, well, it won't be here will it?

Please do the right thing and deny this project.

