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Organization:

Title:

Comments: As a Montanan and a resident of Missoula County, I am submitting this comment to express my opposition to the proposed development and expansion of the Holland Lake Lodge facility on U.S. Forest Service land. My family and I frequently visit and enjoy the beauty of the Holland Lake area and appreciate that visiting this relatively undeveloped, quiet natural area is accessible and affordable for everyday Montanans. Forest Service lands are owned by the people of the United States. The motto of the Forest Service is "caring for the land and serving people." This proposed project fails in both categories.

The proposed development will negatively impact the area and our environment more broadly. No matter what systems are installed, there will be negative impacts on water quality through increased discharge of wastewater, increased use of domestic water (including in buildings and landscaping), and contamination with fertilizers and pesticides of infiltration and runoff water from landscaping (e.g., irrigation, sprinklers). Increased energy usage will contribute to our growing climate crisis - through not only energy usage at the site but also increased travel to and from the site by tourists coming from far away. The proposed development is not consistent with USFS's charge to care for the land.

Increased human visits, including during the winter, will have negative impacts on the area's wildlife that depend on the USFS land, including the endangered grizzly as well as wolverines. Additional species likely to be negatively impacted by increased human pressure in this area include bull trout, whitefish, Canada lynx, piping plovers, and migratory birds of various species.

With respect to serving the people, the thousands of comments submitted in opposition to this project and the contrastingly very few submitted in support indicate that this project is, generally, not supported by the people (especially those who live nearby and who will, therefore, be most impacted). Further, regarding serving the entirety of the people of the United States, visiting this proposed development will only be within reach for the wealthy few. The USFS has a mission to serve the people of the United States, not to serve the rich people of the world who have the means to visit Montana for an exclusive, luxury wilderness experience.

Just because an area could be developed doesn't mean it should. The Holland Lake area is a place of rare beauty and solitude treasured by those who visit to hike and camp, swim and paddle. The proposed development plan is incompatible with the USFS's mission to care for the land and serve the people. I oppose this development and hope that the USFS will adhere to its mission by rejecting this development.

Sincerely,

Beth Covitt