

Data Submitted (UTC 11): 10/2/2022 10:42:53 AM

First name: Alan

Last name: Czarnowsky

Organization:

Title:

Comments: I grew up in Montana and first came to Holland Lake on a camping trip as a young man in 1967. I remember venturing from the campground over to the Holland Lake Lodge to buy a soda and candy bar - all my budget would allow at that time of life.

Given the beauty and serenity of Holland Lake and the Swan valley, I have returned almost every year after that initial visit, by myself, or with friends and family. My early stays involved the Forest Service campgrounds, but, as time went on, I decided to stay at the Holland Lake Lodge, where my wife and I were always treated with wonderful hospitality. For the past twenty years, we tried to make annual stay at the Lodge for two or three days.

Our love of the Swan valley persisted and now my wife and I are full time residents of this wonderful valley. But we love Holland Lake and often take visitors to our home to hike to the falls, enjoy refreshments at the Lodge, and when possible treat ourselves to dinner there. And, even though we live close by, my wife and I continue our yearly stay at the Lodge. Some people laugh at us for taking our vacation at a place only a few miles away - but that is how much we enjoy the place, the owner and the staff.

Over the years, I have noticed that Lodge and the cabins slowly deteriorating with age - the normal state for buildings not build to current building codes and approaching 80 years of age. I know that feeling. And with many people and their families wanting to have the same enjoyment that I have known through the years, it has become harder and harder for my wife and I to have a spontaneous dinner at the Lodge, take visitors to dinner, and even schedule our annual stay.

It seems appropriate that to prevent a total waning of the Lodge and cabins that a considerable investment needs to be infused into the site. It would be so sad to see this wonderful place decay to the point that it is no longer here. I also believe that a responsible expansion of the site would be beneficial for the folks who live in the Swan valley and the many visitors from Montana and beyond who want to enjoy this place, as I have for over 50 years.

I also understand that the Lodge is a private business, and the Forest Service and others should consider that fact. Should the Forest Service decide against a responsible upgrade and expansion of the property, it seems that the agency would be subject to a takings of individual company's right to conduct a profitable business or even sell their ownership to another entity.

The key is being responsible and it seems that the underlying tone of the proposed Master Development Plan fulfills that goal. Yet, I have listed questions and concerns that the Forest Service should address in their environmental analysis of their decision making about the proposal.

Purpose: The owners and the Forest Service should carefully articulate the purpose and need for the new master plan. Knowing that will help determine the ultimate scope of the project.

Alternatives: The Forest Service should look at possible alternatives to the proposal, keeping the above purpose of the project in mind. Specifically, if the proposed master plan is denied, would the business continue to be viable or would the Lodge deteriorate to a condition where it would no longer be able to profitably operate.

Construction Schedule: The Master Development Plan does not address a construction schedule. That would be helpful to understand the effects of the "upgrade" through time.

Consistency with Forest Service Management of the region: What are the future management objectives of the Forest Service for its administered lands in the Holland Lake and surrounding areas. How does that relate not only to the Lodge but also to the cabins across the Lake on Forest Service administered lands, the increase in motorized boating on the lake, camping and hiking or horse back riding in the area? Maybe this question is tied to the current and future land use of the area - in particular on Forest Service administered areas.

Air Quality: Part of the road into the Lodge and the trail head to Lower Holland Falls is gravel/dirt and there is considerable fugitive dust in the summer months. The road also develops pot holes and "wash-boarding". I understand this is a Forest Service road. What are the plans to maintain this road and lessen or eliminate dust generation?

Soils and Vegetation: With the proposed expansion, how will vegetation, in particular, how many trees will need to be removed? And will soil material be removed prior to construction and stockpiled for later reapplication. The Master Development Plan talks about reseeding, but no listing of specific species are given. It would be nice to know if the seed mixture involves native or introduced species, with reasoning behind the plans.

Surface Water: With increased recreational use (including the Lodge, the nearby campgrounds, the motorized use of the lake and the numerous cabins on the south side of Holland Lake), what plans will be in place to ensure the continued water quality of the lake. Here, I am interested in both what is planned as part of the Lodge's Master Development Plan (i.e., stormwater control both during construction and operations, water use and treatment, septic facilities and protection of the lake shore) and from a cumulative basis for all the surrounding uses. I am especially curious how sanitary waste is handled at the many cabins on the south side of the lake and the petroleum degradation from motorized use of the lake.

Noise. Will there be noise impacts from the construction? And what will be the duration of such impacts? In addition, how does that construction noise compare the noise generated by jet skies and motor boats that use the lake?

Transportation and Traffic: What are the current traffic levels on Highway 83 and the road to the Holland Lake Lodge? What is the history of such traffic over the past ten years. Even without the implementation of the Master Development Plan, what are the projections for traffic increase on the main roads in the area? What are the seasonal fluctuations of traffic loads? With the completion of the Lodge "upgrades", what would be the projected percent increase in overall traffic to Highway 83 and the road to the Lodge?

Recreation: The proposed Master Development Plan for the Lodge explains that there would increase in overall night guest capacity from 50 to 156, with an anticipated average of 90-120 guests per night. How does this relate to the overall night capacity use of the nearby Forest Service campgrounds on or near Holland Lake, say within a 5-10 mile radius of Holland Lake. With increasing recreation in the region (Glacier National Park has sure seen a major increase in annual visitation), does the Forest Service have plans to increase the capacity of the existing campground or add additional campgrounds in the area. What about the potential for an increase in hotels, motels, bed & breakfast or other private accommodations in the Condon/Holland Lake region?

Socioeconomics: The Forest Service environmental review should address the seasonal and annual socioeconomic effects of the Plan. How much will the "expansion" increase local population during construction and then during operations? To what percentage? Will construction workers live on site during the expansion? Or where? What is the projected construction and operational employment? Are there plans to hire local people for construction and operations? And to what extent are houses or rental properties available in the immediate area to accommodate workers - in particular during the summer construction season? The environmental review should also consider the effects to local community and public services, such as the school population, fire and police (sheriff/highway patrol) capacities, and trash handling?

In conclusion, I support the development plan, believing the benefits will outweigh the negatives. Done correctly, I believe an enhanced and enlarged Lodge site will become a valuable addition to the area - a facility that local people and visitors will cherish for generations to come.

Thank you for your consideration of my comments, and I look forward to the forthcoming analysis and the environmental protections that will ensure that Holland Lake retains the beauty and wonders for which I have enjoyed for many years.