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Title:

Comments: I am 100% OPPOSED to POWDR's proposal to expand development at Holland Lake.

I urge you to say NO to this entire, massive, ghastly proposal that will absolutely destroy all of the Holland Lake, Seeley-Swan area, and bring nothing but overdevelopment, water pollution, unmanageable traffic, overcrowding, deforestation, decimation of wildlife, and economic disaster to Montana's citizens, who will never be able to afford to enjoy Holland Lake again.

I am a lifelong resident of Montana and am extremely shocked and appalled that the Forest Service plans to allow this colossal overdevelopment under a Categorical Exclusion, without even the pretense of an environmental analysis. That is a slap in the face to us, the public, because, as the FS has forgotten: WE OWN THESE LANDS! AND WE SAY NO!

The categorical exclusion the FS intends to use is typically for small projects with no environmental impacts, like painting outhouses and picnic tables, but this proposal far exceeds the scope and limitations allowed. Here are just a few of the problems with this proposal, all 100% certain to happen.

WATER POLLUTION IS ABSOLUTELY CERTAIN

Shamefully, Powdr's proposal does not even include, nor will the FS require, this out-of-state corporation to even re-line the existing sewage pond, let alone build one that won't pollute Holland Lake and all nearby waterways. Powdr's proposed overdevelopment will certainly, and totally foreseeably, do to Holland Lake and the Seeley-Swan exactly what Big Sky area's overdevelopment has done to the Gallatin River - inject so much pollution into the water that the once pristine, blue-ribbon Gallatin River has become Big Sky's Sewage Canal. And why? Solely to benefit the wealthy.

LOGGING, DEFORESTATION, SEDIMENTATION = MORE WATER POLLUTION AND EXACERBATES GLOBAL WARMING

I worked for 10 years as a log scaler for Plum Creek Timber and saw that company completely deforest all of its lands in the Seeley-Swan, destroy wildlife habitat and leave acres of knapweed in its clearcuts. This proposal seeks to log hundreds of the relatively few mature trees remaining in that area for parking lots and recreational development. The Seeley-Swan has already lost the vast majority of its forests to logging, and this proposal only worsens that reality, and will cause global warming to worsen, with fewer trees to cool and shade the land and absorb atmospheric carbon. Also, 100% of logging projects result in sedimentation into adjacent waterways, that this will be no exception (take it from a former logger - we know!). The logging, as always, will bring in noxious weeds, which then will be sprayed, adding even more pollution to Holland Lake. And why? All to benefit the wealthy.

NEGATIVE IMPACTS TO WILDLIFE HABITAT & ENDANGERED SPECIES

Several wildlife species currently hanging onto existence by a thread will be severely impacted by this development. These include grizzly bears and lynx, bull trout and quite probably even wolverines, as the developers push further and further into the surrounding forest habitat with trails, roads, mountainbiking, skiing, aerial lifts, more & more humans, and further decimate wildlife habitat.

Then, of course, there's the inevitable rush for real estate development, especially considering that all of Plum

Creek's (now Weyerhaeuser's) checkerboard sections are now totally deforested, and ready for out-of-staters to build mansions there. Remember, after all, that Plum Creek re-defined itself as a Real Estate Investment Trust after it clearcut all of its forests in Montana. This project will certainly bring plenty of out-of-state real estate development to Holland Lake and the Seeley-Swan, as the wealthy flock there to buy their 'piece of Montana', thus completely destroying the area's wildlife habitat and further endangering the existence of endangered and threatened species.

The increased traffic alone on the narrow Seeley-Swan highway will unquestionably result in many wildlife-vehicle collisions, killing not just endangered species, but humans too. And why? Solely to benefit the wealthy.

SOCIAL & ECONOMIC IMPACTS TO LOCALS

Again, Big Sky is the perfect example of what will happen in the Seeley-Swan if this proposal is approved: Only wealthy people can afford to live in Big Sky. The entire area is financially out of reach for most Montanans. The 'working class' people who build the homes & businesses, wait tables, clean hotel rooms, and perform all the services for the wealthy in-migrants cannot afford to live there at all. Approval of Powdr's project is absolutely certain to cause the same economic inequality in the Holland Lake area and beyond, as even longtime residents cannot afford the taxes on their modest homes and are completely priced out of the area. And why? Solely to benefit the wealthy.

I'll say it once again: THIS IS OUR LAND!! WE SAY "NO" TO THIS DEVELOPMENT!

Sincerely,
Polly Pfister
Helena, MT