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Organization:

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Comments: Hi there,

I strongly oppose that the Holland Lake Lodge Facility Improvement & Expansion #61746 project should be approved or move forward for many reasons. I am urging you to not approve this project and permit.

The first reason being that common loons live and nest on Holland Lake every single year and are designated by the USFS as a sensitive species and a species of concern by the state of Montana. Their nesting location that is blocked off every year from people recreating on the lake is within a distance of the proposed expansion project that would most certainly negatively impact their sensitive nesting season. This project and expansion would reasonably prevent the loons from nesting on the lake and potentially lead to them stopping the use of the lake as critical habitat.

What's more, the project itself would most certainly affect this sensitive species due to noise and traffic from construction vehicles and people. After the project is completed, the level of expansion will bring far more people and traffic toward or near the nesting area that would further discourage loons from using the lake as critical habitat.

Holland Lake is a gorgeous and serene mountain lake, but it is small. The size and level of expansion for this project is something fit for larger lakes such as Swan or Flathead lake where the infrastructure and size of the water body could sustain such an enormous increase in visitors to the area.

The current lodge has six cabins and 9 rooms, hosting in the realm of anywhere from 20-50 guests at a time. The proposal as it stands will expand the capacity for guests well beyond what the current infrastructure can sustain, adding more traffic in the form of cars, people, light and noise pollution and boats/watercrafts on the lake. This increase will greatly impact an area frequently by other threatened or endangered species like bull trout, grizzly bear or Canada lynx. Even beyond critical infrastructure, the lake itself is not of a size where this project is responsible or ethical considering the land ethic of Montanans to protect areas of pristine wilderness.

Having a small lodge, campground and private dwellings makes sense at Holland Lake - allowing an out of state developer to turn the area into a large resort does not make any sense at all.

Do we have to expand development everywhere? At what point do we draw the line? The current balance at Holland Lake of protected natural areas and areas where people can camp, stay or recreate functions beautifully. This project and approving this permit will upset this delicate balance that exists currently and degrade the area for the wildlife that call Holland Lake home as well as interfere with preserving and protecting this area for future generations in Montana.

Thank you for your time,

Caitlin Gill