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First name: Anon

Last name: Anon

Organization:

Title:

Comments: Thank you for this opportunity to comment on the proposed Holland Lake Lodge Project. I understand how difficult and expensive it is to repair a historic building while maintaining its historic character. They can also be difficult to repurpose in today's world.

However, I think this is a unique opportunity to maintain a historic lodge experience on the same level as national park lodges, although at a smaller scale. Instead of a recreation experience that can be had at many other modernized lodges; this could be an opportunity to create an experience that is disconnected from the modern world.

I realize scale is often what makes a project viable. I encourage you to investigate the Lodges on Seeley Lake and the Tamaracks Lodge on Seeley Lake. These are both Lolo National Forest Special Use Permits that were in the same situation as Holland Lake Lodge 30 years ago. The buildings were in poor condition. The sites were underused. But today they are successful businesses, without tripling the use and environmental impacts.

If this project goes forward, I suggest it does at a smaller scale. All buildings should be constructed away from the shoreline so they are not visible from the lake. This may require landscaping and planting native trees. Buildings should be finished in colors and materials that will blend into the forest. This will protect and possibly improve the views of recreationists on the lake. Trails should be designated and user created trails should be rehabilitated. I applaud your plans to only rent nonmotorized water craft.

The changes to the permit itself may lend itself to a categorical exclusion, but I think an EA or EIS would be needed to adequately assess the impacts to the surrounding area that lodge visitors may recreate on. The Holland Falls Trail is already overused to the extent that the hiker's experience is degraded at times when there isn't enough room at the falls for all the people that are there. As you know, the Swan Valley is home to many threatened, endangered and sensitive species. An EA or EIS would allow greater investigation into just how these species would be impacted by increasing visitation. I understand the Montana Department of Fish and Wildlife has responsibility over Holland Lake and the surrounding native wildlife. What are their comments on this project?

What does the Flathead National Forest plan say about management objectives for this area? Are there any recreation plans that set visitor use thresholds? If not, maybe you should set thresholds and triggers for management changes.

Thank you again for this opportunity to comment. While I agree that the Holland Lake Lodge needs repairs and upgrades, I hope it can be done at a smaller scale that won't negatively impact the Lodge or the surrounding environment that draws people there in the first place.