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Organization:

Title:

Comments: To Whom it May Concern,

Please accept this letter as my comments on Holland Lake Lodge Master Development Plan (HLL MDP) I value the opportunity to weigh in on this proposal.

A little about me, I grew up in the Swan Valley near Condon and have spent most of my 38 years living and working in the valley. Around 12 years of serving and bartending at Holland Lake Lodge. I have also spent a lot of time recreating on the many public lands in the Swan Valley. It is clear that use on our public lands has increased a lot over the years, but the past 5 years have seen tremendous growth in the number of folks recreating and using campsites, dispersed areas, the trailheads and trails. Many are suffering from overuse such as unburied human waste, litter, over flowing parking lots, habituated bears....the list goes on. I do not believe that enlarging the parking lot at Holland Trailhead will mitigate the many problems that very heavily used area has, in a few years the proposed expanded parking lot will likely be over flowing too! I would like to see additional vault toilets at the trailhead. Proper management tools, such as turning Holland Lake into a "no wake lake" and restricting dispersed camping near trailhead would do a much better job at addressing some of the current negative impacts on the area. I have heard that our emergency services (which are staffed by volunteers) currently feel over burdened by the many emergency calls generated by visitors and recreation in our rural valley, this is a concern to me.

Holland Lake and the surrounding public lands will be impacted by the HLL MDP as currently proposed, I urge the USFS to thoroughly investigate these impacts with an Environmental Assessment or Environmental Impact Statement. I am particularly concerned and ask the USFS to carefully investigate and mitigate negative impacts of; increased bear-human conflict, nesting loons, bull trout, aquatic invasive species, water quality, and wintering range for ungulates. I would like to see any additional revenue generated for the USFS by this special use permit to translate into increased funding for trail maintenance, bear managers, law enforcement and recreational management on the Swan Lake Ranger District. The USFS needs to complete management plans for the Holland Lake area, and the recommended wilderness.

Onto the HLL MDP special permit site itself, while I am excited about some aspects of the HLL MDP, the biggest negative for me is the many new buildings, I would suggest a reduction on the number of cabins/bunkies and the size of the Bob Marshall Lodge, an occupancy of around 100 seems appropriate. This would do a lot to preserve some of the original character of this special and secluded site. I would also like to see the USFS stipulate a bigger setback from the lakeshore itself, 20 feet for buildings is not adequate to protect water quality, wildlife needs, and to preserve other users' experiences out on the water. I would also like to see the oldest building on site (currently used as the Gift Shop) saved instead of torn down; to preserve the early history of the valley, future educational opportunities and enjoyment for the public. The list of what I support on HLL MDP is: employee housing, winterization of buildings, increased visitor services and outdoor educational services, bear resistant waste-site, recycling, dark sky friendly outdoor lighting, water and energy conservation, non-motorized water recreation, no pesticides and fertilizers, and removing vehicles from lakeshore areas.

Thank you for your time and consideration,

Apryll Verboven