

Data Submitted (UTC 11): 10/7/2022 4:01:48 AM

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Comments: I am strongly opposed to the expansion of the Holland Lake Lodge. The proposal warrants careful scrutiny including a rigorous environmental assessment. All eyes are on the Forest Service and this proposed project. We expect the Forest Service to manage our public land in the public interest.

I believe this public outcry is a reflection of our desire to be the public in our public lands, to have a voice in the decisions that impact the places that surround and define us. We, the public in Montana, are concerned about encroachment on habitat, wildlife collisions on highways, and other pressures on wildlife that will lead to conflicts and deaths. This concern is combined with a deep weariness and wariness of wealthy vacation development in Montana.

The plan to tear down historic buildings and replace them with more, new, larger, upscale buildings to cater to wealthy clients is at odds with the character of Holland Lake and the Swan Valley. This type of proposed development on public land suggests that public land access is being sold to the highest bidder. While the development may put a strain on local resources, a new corporate neighbor would be unlikely to participate positively in the communities of Condon and Seeley Lake. The proposed plan would result in the destruction on buildings eligible for the Historic Register. There would also be unacceptable impacts on the owners of family cabins who also lease public land on Holland Lake, as well as to the public who visit Holland Lake, the Falls, the Owl Cabin, and the neighboring trails including those that access the Bob Marshall Wilderness.

I once walked around Holland Lake while visiting the Owl Cabin in December. I saw many animal tracks in the snow, but I saw no people. Once while walking to Holland Falls in the summer with my child, I met a grandmother who paddled across the lake in a canoe to ferry her grandchildren to the hiking trail. These are the experiences that we, the public, seek at Holland Lake.

I can imagine the development: the traffic and the noise (first construction and later the noise of parties, mowing and snow removal...). The proposed plan reflects a dramatic change to the character of the Lodge and the use of the leased land. Development and year-round use would lead to water pollution, impacts on wildlife, impacts to trails and impacts on the experience of hikers and packers as well as significant pressure on nearby wilderness and wilderness access.

We, the public, value Holland Lake and the surrounding area. Holland Lake is not a business. The land is not a business. The area should not be sacrificed to make this private business more profitable.