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Title:

Comments: To give a categorical exclusion to the proposed development of Holland Lake Lodge is insufficient given the scope of the plans. The development and its effects need a thorough review, which an EIS would provide.

The impacts of the proposed development will expand beyond the allotted 15 acres due to increased visitor use and intensity of that use. Tripled capacity of the lodge and year-round usage would impact wildlife and create the potential for more conflicts with bears. Habitat disturbance by expanded recreational activities must also be considered.

The lodge is located in prime habitat for grizzly bears, which are protected under the ESA. The Swan Valley in general is a vital travel corridor for grizzlies and other large mammals. Such travel corridors are necessary to maintain healthy genetic diversity for these species.

Over the years I have attended three weddings and one memorial service at the Lodge. In addition I've hiked to the falls and into the Bob Marshall Wilderness numerous times, as well as camped and canoed by Holland Lake. Holland Lake Lodge has epitomized the best that Montana has to offer visitors who are willing to meet it on its own terms. The modest footprint of the current lodge - three season, modest size, quiet activities - dovetails well with the landscape, the wildlife, and the rural community. Change will come, but we must view clearly what those changes will mean and how the people, the landscape, and the wildlife could be irreparably harmed by these 'improvements.'