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Organization:

Title:

Comments: My name is Pat Clark I am one of the folks representing the Clark Ranch, One of Holland Lake lodge's closest neighbors. I was born here at this ranch in an old homestead cabin just a couple miles from the lodge.. so I've seen the progression at Holland Lake over the last almost 45 years. When when I was a little boy we used to swim in that lake with the neighbor girls and there was never anybody else there. Just us and one of the neighborhood dogs who wasn't supposed to be there but always was. He'd be there always trying to get you to throw rocks to him and play fetch. In those days the lodge seemed far away.. It's a ways down the road from the swimming area but always in view. As I got older and the world got bigger, the lodge wasn't so far away and would be the turnaround point after bombing our bicycles through all of the campgrounds. Later we realized the lodge was a good place to maybe see a girl who wasn't from around there. So every now and then we would sneak onto the dock that used to have out there even though we knew we weren't supposed to and I don't think we ever got chased away once. Later in my teenage years just down the way from the lodge was a fantastic rope swing. A giant ponderosa pine leaned out over an unusually deep hole. Some brave soul climbed up there dozens and dozens of times to reattach that rope.. The Forest service would cut it down a few times a year. It was an erosion issue to be fair and I think they eventually cut that tree down.. which was the responsible thing to do.. But we bombed off that thing a million times without a care in the world. Never imagining that in the near future social media, Instagram, Facebook and Twitter would bring thousands of more people to this lake each summer. Some of my most treasured memories from my youth revolve around that lake. As an adult not much changed. Besides the fact that it's a bit busier now.. My favorite spot to take my son has always been just a ways into the trail. Just east of the lodge there is a rocky sandbar where you can walk out to what feels like the middle of the Lake. Just east of that is a wonderful little private peninsula seemingly ordained by the universe as the number one place to skinny dip.. These spots contains perhaps the most stunning view of nature's beauty in the world.. if you look west, you will see the back side of the mission mountains massive and gnarled snow covered nearly all year round.. a distant life giving behemoth. In the opposite direction you'll see Holland falls spraying white off the side of the mountain. It is possibly the most beautiful Serene little spot in the entire world and that's not an exaggeration.. this is what powder intends to package up and sell to its clients.. this one in a bajillion view, this quiet, peaceful, serene untouched beauty is what they want to package up and sell.. It's no secret. It's easy to see. The problem is they will be destroying the very thing they're trying to package up and sell.. at the meeting they made a great deal about sustainability and the crowd reacted accordingly. We're the ones who are trying to be sustainable. Here the best way to keep it pristine is to not expand and exploit it! I think what the people at Powder need to understand is that folks don't live in the swan valley because they want to do big business or because they love people. They live in the swan valley to get the hell away from people and be amongst nature.. to do their own thing in peace and quiet. It's a different breed of folks and high dollar concepts and corporate speak can be very unappealing, almost offensive to these folks.

After the meeting, I made sure to take a minute to talk to Christian, the owner of the lodge. I wanted to let him know that I thought he had been a great neighbor this last 25 years. Christian and his mom employed my sister a few times, my cousins worked there for him too. He supplied jobs to the neighborhood that wouldn't have been there in any other circumstance. I told him that I understood that 25 years at that place was a grind and I hope in all sincerity that he does figure something out and be able to retire. It's a lot of work, he's been doing it for a long time and it's never I don't think it's been easy. I told him that I thought that Powder in the Forest service really dropped the ball rolling this thing out in the beginning.. the community really in all honesty, felt like the Forest service was trying to sneak this one by us and that's why people are so upset. If Christian and the Forest service had introduced Powder as a potential new neighbor and ask for our input right out of the gate that could have avoided a lot of conflict.. The objection I don't think is with the concept of upgrading the lodge property so much as it is the expansion. The expansion proposed lands their Honeymoon cottage right in the middle of the beach where my son and I swim every summer.. Their New extra buildings will be scattered into the area currently used by the public and those memories that powder is trying to package up and sell so sweetly to the next generation

of tourists will be stolen from the locals. Their their new lodge is so large there is no part of the lake it won't be visible from... It'll be an enormous permanent egregious fixture on that tiny little lake that we will all come to regret if we let this happen. There was a lot of talk from the folks at Powder about how this was not going to turn into a big expansion and there wasn't going to be helicopter skiing and this was going to be a boutique style experience. If that is in fact the case then dial it back. Don't expand into new territory. Upgrade the existing buildings, add some fun new ones within reason and respect the history of our valley and your new neighbors.. Powder repeatedly mentioned the fact that as a corporation they needed to gain the trust of the public. There would be no better way to do that than to sit down with your neighbors like real human beings and discuss a compromise. I would encourage Christian and powder to spend some of that corporate money on some dialed back design plans that perhaps would be a little more palatable to the neighborhood, or be prepared for the possibility of a parade of hillbillies in kayaks protesting your expansion every weekend for years to come.. Like I said, the folks in this valley are a different breed and we won't just forget about this and let it go without a fight.