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Organization:

Title:

Comments: Thank you for the opportunity to comment on this proposed development at Holland Lake. I am a Missoula County resident and have enjoyed the beauty of the area around Holland Lake. I have enjoyed meals at Holland Lake Lodge and my wife and I spent a weekend at the lodge to celebrate our 15th anniversary many years ago. It is indeed a special place.

I recognize that the lodge and its facilities are aging and in dire need of upkeep and modernization. I am not opposed to improvements to the lodge if done right. Unfortunately, the current proposal and the plans outlined by POWDR do not seem at all in concert with the special character of Holland Lake. I urge the Flathead National Forest to consider very carefully the consequences of any development actions at Holland Lake to the ecosystem of the area and the people of Missoula County and surrounding areas who cherish the solace and beauty of the area. I have read the letter submitted by Lee Anderson of Montana Fish Wildlife and Parks and I share the same concerns.

Also, while I write this comment as a private citizen, I have over two decades of service to the US Forest Service myself and I have earned professional certification as a Senior Wildland Fire Ecologist from the Association of Fire Ecology. As such, I urge the Flathead National Forest to seriously consider the consequences of added development in the very fire-prone (and ecologically fire-adapted) ecosystem of the Holland Lake area. Please look at the map of wildfire risk provided at this link: <https://wildfirerisk.org/explore/0/30/30063/3000017050/>. It illustrates very clearly that the community of Condon (and surrounding area) has higher wildfire risk than almost all communities in the state of Montana. Existing structures around Holland Lake should be made as fire-resistant as possible, and incorporation of ignition-resistant building principals needs to be part of any new construction.

As I said, I do not oppose making improvements to the amenities at Holland Lake lodge if done right. But I do oppose development at Holland Lake that would harm aquatic and terrestrial habitats, degrade water quality, dramatically increase vehicle traffic, encourage motorized vs. non-motorized recreation on the lake, create a high-end and high-dollar playground for the wealthy that compromises the tranquility the lake provides to locals, and/or increases the likelihood of a disastrous outcome from the inevitable wildfire that will someday burn around the lake. Therefore, I ask the Flathead National Forest to take the comments and concerns of local citizens very seriously and only move forward with improvements that will maintain the special ecological and social character of Holland Lake and that go through a thorough and transparent multi-agency environmental review.

Thank you again for the opportunity to comment.