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Comments: The Forest Service's proposal to expand/develop the Holland Lake Lodge as outlined in the USFS' Facility Expansion Project Scoping Document differs immensely from the USFS's stated responsibility to protect our federal lands and wild places. There is currently a major lack of transparency regarding the USFS's plans for the Expansion Project. As proposed, the project would add a massive complex to the Holland Lake shore, with a massive lodge and restaurant that would be not only extremely out-of-place for the lakefront; but would also have a major impact to their natural surroundings.

Holland Lake is a very important part of the regional ecosystem, and serves an important purpose for many animals in the greater area, namely deer and elk. The lodge as a year-round resort would bring a massive increase in traffic and winter recreation to the area during a season where animals use the lake as a wintering ground. Noise and chemical pollution from activities such as snowmobiling could greatly affect the local ecosystem and stress the wildlife during an already strenuous season. Additionally, Highway 83 already puts heavy strain on the local wildlife populations and environment. Can the USFS address the environmental impacts of increased visitation and usage of this roadway and the greater area?

On the note of wildlife impacts, bringing year round visitors would add to the potential of dangerous encounters, namely between humans and bears. Additional stress, increased familiarity with humans, and a heavily used local ecosystem will put people and animals at increased risk of conflict.

There is no doubt that the existing Holland lake Lodge is in need of renovation and repairs, however these should not come at the expense of the charm and beauty of the lake and local wildlands. A project with more clarity and less impact would better serve locals and other visitors in the long-term. And crucially, an Environmental Impact Assessment is necessary before any part of this proposed project can advance.

Sincerely,

Lyle Pastrana Ferguson