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To whom it may concern:
I have been skiing at Jackson Hole Mountain Resort since my early twenties as an intermediate when I picked the sport back up following college. I made a point to visit the major ski areas in the west as an exploration. The first year I visited JHMR, I was awestruck by the natural grandeur, the quality of conditions, and the challenge of the mountain. I could not ski the entire area, and that was okay with me. In the following years I enrolled in lessons, attended ski camps at the resort, and followed friends around the mountain. The challenge was unlike most other ski areas I had visited; it was something to work on, something to try and master.

In 2018, my family and I moved to Jackson and I have been able to ski the mountain for 100 days each of the past two seasons. I am concerned, like many other skiers I talk to, that the management of the resort taking too many liberties with the crown jewel of skiing in the USA. The number of trees which have been removed in the past decade is disturbing and every year the resort seems to remove more. We depend on the trees for visibility in poor conditions, protection from the wind, and to preserve good snow in areas others may not see. Animals depend on trees for habitat. Summer hikers within the resort lease boundaries should be treated to shade and nature to the extent possible. In addition, the resort markets its environmental policies regarding wind power; can we not see the value of mature trees sequestering carbon and preserving a foothold for new generations of trees? Symbolically I find it very damaging that JHMR removes so many trees without mention. Surely a ski area must remove some in the course of business but does not need to go out of its way to do so. In the event trees must be removed, I would like to see a large-scale effort to re-forest previously damaged areas.

Similarly, making difficult ski runs less difficult through rock and tree removal hurts the appeal of the ski area for many. Just as I understood when first visiting, it is not important that every skier on the mountain can comfortably ski every single pitch. The beauty of this place rests in the things one cannot yet ski that brings them back for another go. I can talk about ski runs through the Alta Chutes with older skiers, knowing the challenge has been essentially unchanged for generations. Something very valuable is lost when we disrupt nature for mass appeal. Importantly, the Alta 1 chute serves as the test piece for skiers to evaluate their skills in relative safety, within view of the lift, with dangers clearly visible. Many skiers at JHMR get themselves into trouble in areas without such visibility. The run serves as a marker of one's ability in the progression that allows skiers to safely ski the entire mountain. Altering it and the other chutes on the ridge seems very short sighted to me. Just because you can do something, it doesn't mean you should. Trees and rocks should remain there as they have been since the start of the resort and people should adjust to the nature of the challenge rather than vice versa. We should not manage our resources for immediate gratification; I do not want to see my national forest degraded in this way. If skiers would like to ski less challenging terrain, many choices exist both at JHMR and other ski areas located in national forest land. We should protect what is unique about this particular place (in Alta Chutes and elsewhere) for future generations of skiers.

Specifically regarding proposed changes: If the Sublette Chair needs to be replaced, I would like to see it done in a manner which minimizes the number of trees taken and I would like to see previously disturbed areas actively re-forested to partly compensate. As previously stated, Alta Chutes should not be modified. I do not think a fourth Alta Chute should be created; by the time you ski that far down the ridge, the vertical drop becomes much less compelling. This area should be undisturbed for those seeking more adventure and less tracked snow. North Hoback Woods should remain as it is, the most challenging place to ski trees on the mountain. Visitors who disregard signage about the Hobacks should not be catered to; rather they should learn to pay better attention and respect the mountain. If necessary, place an access point in front of Hobacks entrance instead with additional warnings. I enjoy the contours of Sundance and Gros Ventre. Runs that are uniform from top to bottom

become boring and dangerous in their own right due to inability to stop after a fall, increased iciness, and faster skiers. The Slalom Run is the best place to ski moguls on the mountain. Manmade snow degrades this experience, in my view. Ashley Ridge is plenty wide; if the resort wants to groom it and make it an easier access to the lower mountain I wouldn't protest though I see no reason for tree removal at all. Restructuring upper Grand run could make sense as it is a high danger area; though it is notable that this was worsened by the increased capacity of the Thunder lift, this should be considered with respect to more uphill capacity on Sublette lift.

In summary, I object to continued efforts modify long-hallowed terrain on the forest land that Jackson Hole Mountain Resort leases in our national forest. There are plenty of places people can visit for easy terrain. This forest land should be allowed to maintain its natural allure and its trees should be left alone as the value-proving resources they are.

Best regards,
Pete Kocubinski