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First name: Joshua
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Organization:
Title:
Comments: Dear USFS,

I strongly object to the Alta Chutes terrain alterations proposed in this document. A huge part of why a lot of us moved here was to be taught by this unwieldy and wild terrain that is offered at JHMR, and so by "watering it down" and making it more accessible to the average skier you are chipping away at the core of what brought so many here and what continues to bring so many here. I understand that the Alta chutes are challenging terrain and skiers and snowboarders can get themselves into hairy situations on them, but that doesn't necessitate terraforming and making permanent changes to the mountain. In any sport you have things that are approachable to the beginner and things that cater to the so-called expert. In golf for example there are pitch and putt courses that tend to be simple and straightforward. You also have unforgiving par 5s that give any golfer a challenge - so by the documents logic we should do away with all par 5s and make them easy and fun for everyone? If you zoom out and apply this logic elsewhere it quickly starts unravel.

Now let's take the proposed North Hoback Woods egress expansion. I equally object to this proposal for many of the same reasons stated above. The mountain cannot and will not every be 100% approachable and accessible to skiers of all abilities. That should not be the goal here or the guiding light of JHMR policy and decision making. I understand making things safer for skiers - like eliminating choke points and trying to reduce congestion on other areas of the mountain - I think a lot of those proposals are common sense ideas (like the lower ashley ridge and werner widening proposals). However - felling 140 ft. wide corridor of old growth trees just so that inexperienced skiers who are 'over their heads' can have a safe egress? What is really being done here? It is not the ski resorts job to coddle and hold the hand of the inexperienced skier by trying to make historically expert terrain accessible to all. Will this precedent affect future decisions? Maybe an escalator that can take you back up and out of the Expert Chutes if you realize it's too challenging for you? A warming hut mid way down Tower 3 with a series of heated tunnels to guide you safely back to the base of Thunder? This mountain is unforgiving and full of expert terrain, it is a big part of why many of us came here - to learn from this terrain, be humbled by it, and hopefully improve because of it. By watering the mountain down to make it more 'accessible' you are taking that growth opportunity away from future skiers of this mountain.

Thanks for considering my opinions regarding these proposals.