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Comments: I am in support of the position presented by Howie Garber Driggs, as posted in an op-ed, from tetonvalleynews.net. Reposted in its entirety below:

Grand Targhee resort is a popular destination. I enjoy skiing there. Most people in the community would like it to succeed. The new Colter lift is wonderful and has increased uphill carrying capacity from 3000 to over 5000 skiers. The lifts and runs are rarely crowded and even a 5-minute wait for a lift is rare. Grand Targhee currently claims 2600 skiable acres, more than heavily visited Jackson Hole's 2500 acres. Why does GTR need to expand the skiable terrain and privatize more public land?

Alternative 3 - "No Special Use area expansion" is the only alternative that makes any sense because it limits impacts to wildlife, avoids user conflicts, and respects adjacent wildlands. Alternative three makes desirable improvements to skier experience within the resort's existing footprint. I suggest that people advocate for alternative 3 and choose in-boundary amenities that seem appropriate. A restaurant at the top of Sacajawea would alleviate crowded restaurants at the base. Uphill capacity can be increased with a Crazy Horse Lift. A proposed lift on Palmer's Raceway with lights to train young skiers would be a service to the community. These twilight programs typically end by 6pm. Lights should be required to be off by 7 because Teton Valley is a dark sky community. A ridgeline restaurant at the top of Dreamcatcher would similarly disturb our dark skies and adjacent wilderness.

The proposed North Boundary Lift and on-mountain guest facilities in Rick's Basin would ruin a pristine multi-use area and require the thinning of a lovely aspen grove. Mountain bikers, nordic skiers and hikers enjoy this area without having to buy an expensive lift ticket.

The two expansions proposed are the South Bowl which faces Teton Canyon and Mono Trees which is the heavily forested area seen low on Peaked Mountain.

A ski lift and road in the South Bowl would be visible from the three most popular hiking trails in Teton Canyon and from peaks in Grand Teton National Park.

In winter, hundreds of nordic skiers, dog walkers and snowshoers use Teton Canyon every week. They should not be listening to bombs from avalanche control. As documented by remote camera, numerous species of wildlife would be disturbed. Backcountry skiers also use the South Bowl and would be denied access without a lift ticket. Both Grand Teton National Park and Wyoming Fish and Game previously responded negatively to a South Bowl expansion.

The proposed expansion of Mono Trees would require cutting thousands of trees, which would be visible from much of Teton Valley. Lower elevation is critical for winter wildlife.

The easiest solution to a lack of parking is more bus service. A bus stop with parking near Alta is needed.

There will be major downstream economic and quality of life impacts with a larger destination resort. It would change the character of Teton Valley. There are already two destination ski resorts in the region- Jackson Hole and Big Sky.

The Econorthwest Study documented the negative impacts of GTR expansion. Teton County, Wy. gets great economic benefit, while Teton County ID. gets increased road maintenance, sheriff, search and rescue, sewage

treatment, fire department, school and hospital costs, as well as unaffordable housing. The result will be more road damage, traffic, and air pollution. Property taxes will likely increase, and our two-lane highways will become more dangerous. There are many examples of communities that have been ruined after their regional ski hill became an expensive destination resort. Often teachers and nurses can't afford to live there. We can't blame Grand Targhee for explosive growth in Teton Valley; but it will accelerate it. People are moving here from Park City and Jackson because of these problems.

There is no question that resort expansion with added snowmaking will deplete ground water supply.

Approval of a major expansion would increase the likelihood of a sale to Vail or Alterra because of the massive capital needed. Major development is not inevitable. Please participate in your community's future. Public lands belong to all Americans. Privatizing more public land in Greater Yellowstone is rarely justified.