

Data Submitted (UTC 11): 5/20/2025 8:10:26 PM

First name: Kenneth

Last name: Wiseman

Organization:

Title:

Comments: To: Caribou-Targhee National Forest Supervisor

RE: Support for Grand Targhee Resort Expansion - Public Comment

Dear Forest Service Planning Team,

As a local resident of Teton Valley and someone who skis over 150 days each winter, I am writing to voice my strong support for the proposed expansion of Grand Targhee Resort, Alternative 2 - Proposed Action, as detailed in the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS).

Living in this community and spending nearly every day on the mountain, I've watched Grand Targhee evolve from a hidden gem into a regional destination that now draws thousands of skiers and riders each season. This growth is real and accelerating. According to recent projections, visitation at Grand Targhee is expected to increase from current levels of approximately 175,000 skier visits annually to over 250,000 within the next 10-15 years. The proposed action is an expansion of skiable acreage by 33.25% while the number of skier visits will increase by 42.86% over 10-15 years. This kind of growth cannot be accommodated without proactive investment in terrain, lift capacity, and skier infrastructure. The expansion of additional terrain will help keep the skiing experience tolerable and uncrowded.

Even now, on peak weekends and holidays, the resort reaches its limits-with long lift lines, and congested slopes, especially on beginner and intermediate terrain. These impacts are felt not only by visitors, but by us as locals who rely on Targhee for daily recreation, community gathering, and economic vitality.

The proposed expansion into the Mono Trees and South Bowl areas is a balanced and strategic response to these pressures. By adding lift-served terrain in lower-use forest areas and upgrading older lifts and on-mountain facilities, the resort will be able to spread out skier traffic, enhance safety, and preserve the quality of the guest experience that has always made Targhee unique.

Some have raised concerns about protecting backcountry access and forest health. As someone who treasures the wilderness character of our region, I believe both goals can be achieved simultaneously. The Forest Service has a track record of overseeing responsible resort development that incorporates wildlife safeguards, trail buffers, and environmental mitigation. With thoughtful implementation and continued public input, we can protect what makes this place special while adapting to the undeniable realities of growth.

The choice before us isn't whether Grand Targhee grows-it's how it grows. I strongly encourage you to adopt Alternative 2, which allows this well-planned, environmentally reviewed expansion to proceed. Teton Valley is changing, and this project will help ensure that our local ski area continues to thrive in a way that serves both our residents and future generations of visitors.

Sincerely,

Kenneth Wiseman

Preliminary data from the National Ski Areas Association (NSAA) indicates that the 2024-25 season marked the second-highest visitation on record at U.S. ski areas, with a total of 61.5 million skier visits, a 1.7% increase over the previous season:

<https://mailchi.mp/nsaa/2025-may-skier-visits-media>