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First name: Gary

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Organization:

Title:

Comments: Dear USFS and committee members who will greatly impact our wonderful backyard,

I would like to express my view on the GTR Expansion plan from a local perspective and insite of my own. Having grown up in Teton Valley, being born in the Driggs hospital in the early 80's, I feel like I have a unique perspective on this matter.

I would like to start with the positive impacts that will benefit Teton Valley. I believe that growth is a necessity to get our valley back on track with reality. Our housing is a crisis, our community is overpriced, and we are sending valuable resources across Teton Pass to build for the billionaires. If the USFS approves the expansion, it would enable resources to remain in the community for some time to come. I have watched the community rely on GTR for recreation travel, renting their ABB/VRBO, Housing while working multiple jobs, and, in doing so, create some semblance of community and culture. GTR has the community in mind for the future and would benefit many families and individuals in our valley.

The negative is obvious to me, however, and may not be prominent to those who have only lived here a short time comparatively. When GTR was allowed to purchase the base area with the land exchange, they were at the time required to purchase "Moose Habitat" Conservation, to the tune of 700 acres, to offset the impact that they would have on development. At the time, even as a child and into my young adult years, I clearly remember seeing many moose, mule deer, big horn sheep, as well as other ungulates and predators alike while using the resort and surrounding lands. This did not happen and was not enforced. In the decades that have passed, the numbers have declined, and the user count has increased on the USFS land leased by GTR. This is the tip of the proverbial spear, which is why I write this comment.

Currently, the USFS in conjunction with funding from the RMEF, have burned acres upon acres of prime mule deer habitat in Teton Canyo, thus reducing the presence of the mule deer in one of the most prominent south-facing winter ranges for the mule deer in the Tetons. The placement of a lift in the "South Bowl" would greatly reduce the migration and wintering corridor for mule deer, big horn sheep, and moose even further, potentially being the nail in the coffin for migration in that area. Please do not approve the expansion in "South Bowl," and please make community-minded decisions in what you do approve.

I think approving expansion in Mono Trees is less impactful, I believe more development on Freds is less impactful, and I believe that these things are plenty much to ask. Grand Targhee is a destination resort today, and it can be a world-class resort tomorrow. This would greatly elevate our community in so many ways, but it should not come at the expense of the nature that has no voice.

PLEASE DO NOT APPROVE DEVELOPMENT IN SOUTH BOWL.

PLEASE MAKE A COMMUNITY-MINDED AND NATURE-POSITIVE IMPACTFUL DECISION.

Thank you for taking the time to consider my comment on this matter.

Sincerely

Gary Mackenzie