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Comments: Thank you for considering my comments submitted in response to the Grand Targhee Master Plan DEIS. I am a resident of Driggs, Idaho, and I enjoy skiing, hiking and attending music festivals at Grand Targhee. I support adopting a modification of Alternative 3, allowing for expanded development within the existing ski area boundaries, but denying the proposal for a restaurant on top of Fred's Mountain, and not allowing the cutting of whitebark pine within the ski area's current boundaries.

I am opposed to Alternatives 2, 4 and 5 for the following reasons:

Expansion into the South Bowl area (Alternatives 2 & 4)

Wildlife: Expanding Grand Targhee's boundary into the South Bowl area will negatively affect wildlife, particularly the Teton herd of bighorn sheep, which is currently protected by a voluntary travel closure in this area. It is inherently inconsistent that the USFS requests the public to respect this voluntary closure while at the same time entertaining a proposal to expand the ski area into this same area.

Whitebark Pine: The South Bowl supports a significant population of whitebark pine, a species recently designated as "Threatened" under the Endangered Species Act. The DEIS's analysis of the expansion's impact on whitebark pine is vague, confusing and based on inadequate field observations. In addition, given the threatened status of the whitebark pine, cutting of any 5-needle pine (it is too difficult to differentiate between whitebark pine and limber pine without cones present) within the current boundary under Alternative 3 should be prohibited without further on-the-ground analysis by qualified specialists.

Equitable Public Recreation Opportunities: Allowing Grand Targhee to expand into the South Bowl will impact public recreation in Teton Canyon. Public lands should provide a spectrum of opportunities to the public, and this expansion would amount to taking a popular recreational resource partially maintained by voluntary donations and converting it to a paid (and expensive) experience.

Expansion into Mono Trees area (Alternatives 2 & 5)

Equitable Public Recreation Opportunities: The expansion of the ski area's boundary into the Mono Trees area will impact recreational use in the Mill Creek area, a popular non-fee cross-country ski trail. Again-the USFS should strive to provide a wide selection of recreational opportunities across the economic spectrum. For both the South Bowl and the Mono Trees areas, a more robust analysis of recreational displacement impacts should have been included in the DEIS.

Additional Lower-Elevation Lift Unnecessary: While I can attest to the challenges that the winter weather presents to skiers at Grand Targhee, there is no compelling need for expansion of the boundary into Mono Trees to provide a lower-elevation option for foggy days-Alternative 3 provides for a new, lower elevation lift on the North Boundary within the current ski area boundary. This North Boundary lift will also do a better job of spreading out skier use than putting a new lift next to the Sacajawea lift (also popular on foggy days).

Objections to Increasing the Boundaries of the Ski Area (Alternatives 2, 4 & 5)

Equitable Public Recreation Opportunities: While I respect Grand Targhee Resort's desire to expand, and I want them to remain successful and thrive into the future, I don't believe that the large-scale expansion represented by Alternatives 2, 4 and 5 is in the public's best interest. As I have stated previously, the USFS should provide

recreational opportunities across the economic spectrum of the American public. Grand Targhee Resort is cherished by locals and visitors from across the country for its laid-back "vibe" and its affordability. I often find myself on a chairlift with people from all parts of the country who have been spending their ski vacations at Targhee for many years. They are not wearing expensive ski outfits or skiing on the newest skis. Large-scale expansion of GTR will undoubtedly come with higher lift ticket prices, and will price-out the current clientele. The needs of more affluent skiers are already met locally by the USFS at Jackson Hole Mountain Resort, and regionally by the private sector at Big Sky Resort.

**Inadequate Public Infrastructure:** The analysis of parking needs to accommodate the anticipated growth in visitation generated by any large-scale expansion is based on unlikely assumptions and incomplete related plans. In order to accommodate more visitors without increasing day skier parking, the DEIS analysis relies on the assumption that 70% of employees and 30% of day skiers will use public transportation or carpooling to reach the mountain; reaching this goal will depend on providing additional Park-and-Ride areas in Teton County, Idaho. The new City of Driggs Transportation Plan is only in draft form, and does not contain plans that would accommodate the parking needs of Alternatives 2, 4 or 5, nor does Teton County, Idaho have public funds sufficient to meet these needs.

**Objections to Restaurant on Fred's Mountain (Alternatives 2, 3, 4 & 5)**

**Scenic Values:** A restaurant at the top of the Dreamcatcher Lift will negatively affect the scenic values of the Jedidiah Smith Wilderness, Grand Teton National Park, and the Teton Scenic Byway; it is incompatible with the Wilderness Act and inconsistent with the current Forest Plan. It is not necessary or in the public's best interest- food and drink are readily available in the base area at the bottom of the Dreamcatcher lift, one short, straight-forward ski run away. The better option is a restaurant at the top of the Sacajawea lift-it would not be visible from the wilderness or the national park, and it spreads skier use out to an adjacent mountain (Peaked). Returning to the base area from Sacajawea or Colter is a longer, less pleasant experience that many skiers avoid until the end of the day.

I apologize for the length of this submission-I think that there are many legitimate reasons to deny Grand Targhee's proposal to expand the ski resort boundaries; I chose to focus on just a few that I find most compelling. I look forward to your response.