

Data Submitted (UTC 11): 6/11/2025 11:27:38 PM

First name: Michael

Last name: Keator

Organization:

Title:

Comments: Greetings,

Thank you for your efforts with this project and the dedication you put into it.

1) Is there a need for the expansion of the Grand Targhee Ski Resort?

US Forest Service has the numbers for visitation for Targhee and Jackson Hole. Targhee has more skiable acres than Jackson Hole Resort and a third of the visitation. This fact would lead one to believe there is no justifiable need for expansion.

2) Impacts to the local community of Teton Valley.

Since the resort is in Teton County, Wyoming all tax benefits with stay in Teton County, Wyoming. All negative impacts of the expansion will be within Teton County, Idaho. Residences of Teton Valley will be negatively affected by traffic congestion in the city of Driggs and on Ski Hill Road. Affordable housing will become even more scarce and expensive just to satisfy the needs of the Grand Targhee Resort in Wyoming! Their increased staffing requirements will be the burden of Teton Valley Idaho. With all large ski areas, the price of house only increases to the point that only the rich can afford to live in the area affected by the ski area while the community suffers with EMS, fire, medical, police and county employee staffing shortages.

3) Environmental Impacts.

For a ski resort that cannot pass the "is there a need" evaluation, it is hard to understand the need to negatively affect the local environment on public lands. The study shows the negative effects to the watershed which ends up in Teton County, Idaho. Whitebark pine forest directly related to the sustainability of the grizzly bear population will be severely damaged with the expansion proposal. Building a restaurant along the boundary of the Jedediah Smith Wilderness goes against all wilderness interpretation. Are we going to make our wilderness areas look like Central Park in NYC? Wherever one looks throughout the United States and the world there are issues with water use and availability. Increases snow making puts a drain on the aquifer during the time of the year when it is now being replenished. There was no long-term study completed on the sustainability of water in Teton Valley, Idaho for the snowmaking operation and the expanded growth to the valley.

4) Adverse effects to wildlife habitat.

When the logging begins it is very obvious to the average person that all forms of wildlife will be negatively affected. Also, local backcountry skiers voluntarily stay out of identified big horn sheep habitat. The expansion plan wants to build a ski lift and complete avalanche control operations in the same area of big horn sheep habitat. How can this be justified when there is no demonstrated need for the expansion in the first place. There is no justification for this level of wildlife disturbance unless it is for the enjoyment of the rich who will benefit.

5) The big picture.

Grand Targhee Ski Resort in its current form is one of the nicest resorts that demonstrates the use of public lands for all people. For people and families that can still afford to ski and recreate outdoors this is their only option. If this expansion goes through and as stated by the owner of Grand Targhee, he is looking for the rich to prioritize using public lands. Everyone else will be priced out. We already have Jackson Hole that cannot support their working population and relies on workers from Teton Valley, Rexburg etc. If the expansion goes through and the influence on the valley is like every other ski resort then where is the work force coming from, Idaho Falls? The highway system cannot support the current working commute without gridlock in Driggs.

I support Alternative 3 with modifications. Allow Grand Targhee to expand within its current boundary. Do not

allow the development of a restaurant on top of the mountain. Ensure the resort produces a parking plan since they did not identify a plan.