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First name: Juan

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Organization:

Title:

Comments: Dear Supervisor Pierson,

I am writing to express my strong opposition to the proposed expansion of Grand Targhee Resort, as outlined in Alternatives 2, 3, 4, and 5 of the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS).

Much of the public focus has been on the expansion of the resort boundaries-and rightly so. The environmental consequences of this proposal are profound and deeply concerning. The development threatens fragile ecosystems that are home to endangered and sensitive species, poses serious risks to our watershed, and places increased pressure on local infrastructure and services already at capacity. Perhaps most troubling, this plan would result in the effective privatization of 866 acres of public land.

However, even development within the current Special Use Permit (SUP) area-specifically, the large-scale construction and base area expansion detailed in Alternative 3-raises significant environmental, social, and economic red flags. As reported in the Jackson Hole News & Guide [1], the proposed expansion includes over 250,000 square feet of new development, with additional hotel rooms, condominiums, and expanded commercial facilities such as the Trap Bar.

The DEIS outlines extensive clear-cutting and grading required to implement this expansion, along with the addition of more than 20 acres of snowmaking. The impacts include:

1. Increased water consumption and degradation: Snowmaking is an inefficient and unsustainable use of water, especially in a region already experiencing strain on its water resources. Estimates show that 7% to 35% of water used in snowmaking is lost to evaporation. Moreover, water used for resort operations returns to the watershed with reduced quality, negatively affecting downstream users.
2. Widespread environmental disruption: Development will degrade water quality, increase stormwater runoff, reduce groundwater supply, contribute to wildlife-vehicle collisions, and increase energy consumption and pollution-all in a region already vulnerable to the effects of climate change.
3. Overburdening of local infrastructure and services: Teton Valley is already struggling with affordable housing shortages, limited emergency services, school crowding, and inadequate transportation infrastructure. Further resort expansion will only exacerbate these challenges, while offering little proven economic benefit to the broader community.

As Valley Advocates for Responsible Development (VARD) has pointed out, the "No Action Alternative" (or Alternative 1) is the best path forward for Teton County. It avoids:

- * Increased stress on already fragile infrastructure, housing, and services;
- * Higher traffic volumes and inadequate parking capacity;
- * Fragmentation of wildlife habitat, including corridors used by bighorn sheep, grizzly bears, and migratory birds;
- * Construction-related disruption such as erosion, water table impact, and invasive species spread;
- * Social inequality and economic strain from increased visitation and workforce housing demands.

Our public lands should be managed for the long-term health of ecosystems, not short-term commercial gain. I urge the Forest Service to reject Alternatives 2, 3, 4 or 5-and any option that expands resort infrastructure at the expense of our community's environment, water, wildlife, and quality of life. The responsible choice is to prioritize

conservation, not commercialization.

Sincerely,
Juan Gallego-Calderon
Victor, ID

[1] https://www.jhnewsandguide.com/news/town_county/as-public-debates-forest-service-expansion-grand-targhee-proposes-new-base-area-hotel-condos/article_5a8fd1a0-193b-4f21-8e47-a21e86bcf273.html?block_id=1847294