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Organization:

Title:

Comments: I am writing to express my strong opposition to the proposed expansion of Grand Targhee Ski Resort, and my support for Alternative 1 of the DEIS. As a fifth generation Alta resident, I care deeply for my community of Teton Valley and am incredibly concerned about the impacts of this expansion. While development can bring economic benefits, the negative consequences of this project more than outweigh the positive. My greatest concerns include the following:

Like many people who grew up here, my dream is to remain living in the valley. The realization of this dream gets further away every year as real estate prices and living costs shoot up annually. A resort expansion would greatly accelerate this, increasing both housing prices and the overall cost of living. Long-term residents and local workers are already struggling with affordability. The influx of seasonal and high-income property buyers will make it even harder for essential workers, including teachers, healthcare professionals, and service industry employees, like myself and my parents, to live in or near the community they serve.

Additionally, there is already a huge problem with speeding on Ski Hill Rd, the main access route to the resort. My family lives right off that road, have had an increasing number of close calls over the last few years with speeding motorists, and have ceased moving any animals on that road if we can help it. An expansion will draw more people-and with it, more traffic, more noise, and unfortunately, more crime. We have started locking our farm buildings for the first time, as several pieces of property have disappeared. The expansion would make these public safety issues worse and further burden our law enforcement and emergency response resources. The expansion, and frankly any new construction, will negatively affect several families drinking water. Every time that the resort starts construction, inevitably our drinking water quality decreases. What is usually clear, clean mountain water turns brown and contains sediment. In my eyes, it is not right that an expansion project that would increase revenue for a business should be able to casually destroy a source of water that has been providing for people for generations.

And what about the habitat fragmentation for wildlife? For a community that is so passionate about the wildlife and outdoors, it is unbelievable to me that we would even consider a project that so heavily affects the wild spaces around us.

Grand Targhee states in the DEIS Purpose and Need for Action section that the expansion is necessary because they, "identified a need to improve the recreational experience and address shortcomings in their terrain offerings and operations in order to remain viable in the competitive destination skier/rider market." That is not a good enough reason for me to be ok with the myriad consequences of any expansion or action. As the commissioners of Teton County Wyoming said in a draft letter opposing large scale expansion, the resort's request is based on wants, not needs.

My grandfather was an original supporter of the creation of Grand Targhee because he saw the lack of economic prosperity in the valley and wanted to help provide opportunity for his neighbors. This proposed expansion will do the opposite. Instead of helping families and our community, it will only be harming us. Who will reap the benefits if this project goes through? A few people within a private business and regional/destination sport enthusiasts.

Who will reap the negative consequences? The people that we should care most about, our full time community members who make living in such an incredible place possible and worthwhile.

Sincerely, Olivia Wilson