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Comments: Date: Thursday, June 19, 2025

To: Kim Pierson

Caribou-Targhee Forest Supervisor

1405 Hollipark Dr.

Idaho Falls, Idaho. 83401

Re: Grand Targhee Resort DEIS Comments

Dear Forest Supervisor Pierson,

Thank you for the opportunity for me to provide my comments regarding the recently Grand Targhee Resort DEIS. For the record, both my wife and I are permanent (year-round) residents of Driggs, Idaho and we've both purchased season passes for Grand Targhee Resort for many years. My wife and I ski regularly at GTR, both alpine and Nordic, and in addition, we recreate at the resort in the summer months as well, as we are both avid mountain cyclists and hikers. In short, we both enjoy and appreciate the benefits of having a ski resort nearby that we can access year-round. That said, it is also true that much of what we like about GTR has to do with the fact that it is not a major destination resort, and that it offers an alternative to higher profile resorts such as Jackson Hole, Sun Valley, and Big Sky.

It is interesting to note that in the DEIS, Section 1.3.1 Proponent Objectives, it states: "It (GTR) is known for the intimate, low-density skiing experience that it offers, including short lift lines, diverse traditional and hike-to terrain, and outstanding views of the Tetons." Later in this same section it states: "To address industry growth, maintain its market niche, and meet increasing guest expectations, GTR must continue to develop and improve its on-mountain and base area offerings. These developments are needed in direct response to evolving consumer demands and the competitive regional and destination skier markets."

I certainly agree that what we love about GTR is the intimate, low-density skiing experience that it offers, including short lift lines, diverse traditional and hike-to terrain, and outstanding views of the Tetons. These are the precise characteristics we appreciate about GTR. Yet, in the same section, the authors state that due to "industry growth," "market niche," and "increasing guest expectations, GTR must continue to develop." However, I could find no supporting evidence in the DEIS that would justify those objectives. For example, where are the data that show that GTR is not a profitable enterprise presently? Further, based on our experience over the years, it seems clear that GTR is doing an excellent job of meeting its "market niche." Finally, regarding the claim that they need to "meet guest expectations," I note a complete absence of any objective data derived from direct surveys of GTR patrons with respect to their expectations. I find it difficult to believe that after all the years GTR has been in operation that they've never felt the need to conduct a survey of their patrons. As such, I would suggest that as part of the approval process, the FS ask GTR to provide the data that show that their patrons have expectations beyond what GTR presently provides. This should not be too difficult, assuming they have these data. On the other hand, if they don't have any data, how do they know anything about "increasing guest expectations?"

As I'm not an expert on federal management of public lands, and further, I have no experience with the

application, as well as, review and approval process, I'm comfortable lending my full support to the stated position of Teton County, WY, regarding the DEIS. You have received the letter they submitted and as such, there is no need for me to repeat their concerns and recommendations. I also concur with the letter you received from Teton County, Idaho Commissioners Dan Powers and Brad Wolfe. Again, as it aligns very well with the concerns expressed by their counterparts in Teton County, Wyoming, I give them my full support as well. As both counties are recognized as Cooperating Agencies in this process, it is my sincere hope that their concerns/recommendations will be recognized as representing the sentiments of many residents of their respective jurisdictions.

I feel compelled to also comment on what I believe should be a "red flag" to the FS decision makers who ultimately determine which Alternative is most appropriate after weighing all the evidence. In response to some recent press coverage by local media in the Teton Valley, the current CEO of Grand Targhee Resort has been publicly quoted, expressing his dissatisfaction with the recommendations from the Teton County, WY Commissioners. While this is most certainly his legal right, the nature and tenor of his public comments do not instill confidence that he is willing to work with local communities to reach a consensus regarding his expansion plans. Specifically, Mr. Gillett stated that he was both "offended and appalled" by the positions of his respective Commissioners, regarding the DEIS, and later accused these same government officials of being, "incorrect, uninformed, and/or biased opinions." Given that Mr. Gillett is asking a federal agency to approve his request to significantly expand his private business on public lands, his public statements are concerning, to say the least.

Thank you for the opportunity to share my thoughts. I will be making another comment later.

Sincerely,

Ron Pfeiffer  
Driggs, Idaho