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Organization:

Title:

Comments: United States Forest Service

Caribou-Targhee National Forest

Kim Pierson, Forest Supervisor

1405 Hollipark Drive

Idaho Falls, ID 83401

RE: Grand Targhee Resort Master Development Plan Projects Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) Public Comment

Dear Supervisor Pierson:

As a resident of Alta, I want Grand Targhee Resort to be successful. However, I do not believe there is a need for Targhee to expand beyond the current permitted boundaries to achieve this desired result.

Some version of the draft EIS Alternative 3 makes the most sense to me.

I have many concerns about the environmental impact on the Jedediah Smith Wilderness Area and all the Wilderness values for which it was established. It is a place away from the urban life where most Americans live, a place for peace and quiet, a place to seek solace and gain inspiration from nature. Our Wilderness areas are unique and irreplaceable. They harbor species of plants and animals not found in downtown Denver, or even Driggs for that matter. The visual impact of a restaurant, the physical impact of out-of-bounds skiers (and search and rescue squads), and the increased traffic will all have negative impacts on areas Congress has set aside to protect.

There are also many legitimate concerns about the infrastructure. The local housing market is increasingly making first homes unattainable for workers. The presence of large second homes, as is common in a destination ski resort, will do nothing to lower these rising prices. The single road to Targhee has stalled traffic on a busy ski day now. The presence of many more amenities at the resort will only exacerbate this traffic issue and make it more difficult for emergency vehicles to get to Alta and the resort.

People with scientific backgrounds far exceeding my own have written about specific impacts on our precious water resources, the Whitebark Pine and other vegetation, our endangered wildlife, the night skies, and biological diversity overall. The negative impacts this expansion would have on the Greater Yellowstone ecosystem are intolerable.

Finally, I would urge you to consider the intangible loss of our rural community character. Yes, the value of my home will increase, but the value of living in a healthy environment, and the necessity of adding an extra hour in the grocery store to visit with friends, will decrease our quality of life significantly.

Sincerely,

Janna Rankin