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Comments: Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the Grand Targhee 2018 Master Development Plan Projects draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS). I am opposed to Grand Targhee Resort (GTR) expanding beyond its current boundaries for a variety of reasons. I do support Grand Targhee ski resort's growth and development, but not at the expense of its surrounding forests, parks and wilderness.

The DEIS analyzes a broad range of alternatives, including Alternative 3 that would authorize new development within Targhee's existing footprint, while not permitting the resort to expand. I see Alternative 3, with modifications, as a win-win for all interests. It allows the ski area to update its facilities and expand its lift-served terrain and offerings, while continuing to protect adjacent public lands that are important for wildlife and dispersed recreation.

Here are reasons that I am opposed to any resort boundary expansion at Grand Targhee Resort:

- Direct and indirect habitat loss for wildlife.
- Significant impacts to the many uses and users of Teton Canyon, including backcountry skiers, Nordic skiers and snowshoers, as well as summer recreationists. These impacts in both winter and summer include visual and noise impacts, the potential for resort-triggered avalanches to harm backcountry travelers, and visual and noise impacts in the non-snow months. The non-snow months are my primary concern -- the addition of lifts, cut trails and potential mountain bike trails will all have visual impacts to Teton Canyon.
- Lack of skier density. I spend a lot of time at GTR, both summer and winter. The skier density in the winter just doesn't warrant additional development. There is a relatively small number of skier days spread over an already large area.

I am concerned about the impact of placing a restaurant on the very top of Fred's Mountain which will impact the adjacent Wilderness and views from Grand Teton National Park. If approved, this restaurant should be located below the ridgeline where it would not be visible from the Wilderness or Park. The addition of new amenities such as on-slope restaurants is desirable and will enhance the skier experience at GTR.

While both expansion pods would bring negative impacts to wildlife, the expansion into South Bowl strikes at the heart of a conservation challenge the backcountry community is a key stakeholder in. Alternatives 2 and 4 would convert important bighorn sheep habitat in South Bowl into a ski resort and indirectly eliminate adjacent critical habitat through the disturbance caused by avalanche mitigation. Meanwhile, the Caribou-Targhee National Forest and other land managers in the Teton region have asked the backcountry ski community to voluntarily avoid important sheep habitat, including a portion of South Bowl! The mere proposal of expanding into this area is hypocritical.

As a skier and a conservationist, I believe it is important that we find a balance between recreation and wildlife habitat needs in the Teton Region, and keeping Targhee within its current boundaries is the best way to accomplish this on the West side of the Tetons.

Thank you for your consideration!

Chris Larson