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Comments: I am opposed to any further expansion of Grand Targhee. I am a life-long Teton Valley resident and pass holder at Targhee. I love skiing at Targhee, however there are many reasons I am against their expansion. I feel that any further expansion of Targhee would be extremely detrimental to the wildlife of the area. I also think that Teton Valley and its rural beauty is not equipped for the big resort that Targhee has said they want to become. There is insufficient infrastructure to house large style resorts. I also believe that there are costs that would land, not on the owners of Targhee, but on Teton County Idaho as a result of the expansion. Any positive impacts on the community are not enough to outweigh the drawbacks.

After reading the proposed expansion of Targhee, my main concern was how it would negatively impact the wildlife in the area. Primarily, I can see how it would negatively affect the big horn sheep range in the South Bowl area. After reading the letter sent from the Wyoming Game and Fish Department to the Forest Service regarding the proposed expansion, it is apparent that this would go against several decades of work and large sums of monetary effort to protect the big horn sheep population. Our local sheep are a small, isolated herd, and there have been concerns for their survival for decades. The aforementioned letter specifically lines out how increased expansion in the proposed South Bowl area will push sheep away from one of their few, life saving natural salt licks in the area, as well as some of their top tier winter habitat, which is already scarce. Additional concerns were voiced on the effects of increased access to surrounding land, effects of avalanche control, effects of habitat alteration by tree removal, etc. Something that the Game and Fish did not bring up in this letter is that in 2020 and 2022, large sums of money were spent in cooperation with the National Park Service to kill an entire population of mountain goats that had been living in the area since 1960, based the risk they posed to potentially spread disease to the bighorn sheep population, although they were not even actively doing so at the time. If an entire population of animals that had called the Teton Range home for as long as any "local" could hope to claim did not have a right to live in the range for just the risk of affecting the sheep population, I cannot fathom how Targhee can be allowed to expand on the range of these sheep when it will actively be a detriment to them, not just a risk. Furthermore, it is not just the sheep that will be negatively affected by the expansion. The endangered wolverine is known to live in the proposed areas of expansion. The local elk population that is dwindling from lack of space will have even less room to move and live. Recent studies have shown that mule deer populations around the Rockies have steadily declined due to lack of habitat. Both the Mono Trees and South Bowl areas are places where mule deer live and spend their time in the summer. The lack of trees and shrubbery that provide cover for these deer would negatively affect them, not to mention the increased human presence would push them out of the area and interrupt their breeding, further hindering the mule deer population. The proposed expansion also takes place in areas that are currently closed to humans for wildlife winter range. If I or anyone else were to simply walk into these areas during the winter it would be considered a serious, prosecutable offense, yet Targhee is now proposing to have thousands of people ski through these areas each day of the winter, build lifts and buildings, bring in machinery, perform avalanche control, and in general cause a remarkably greater disturbance than a single hiker would cause.

Finally, the infrastructure of Teton Valley is not equipped for more population and vehicle influx. As it is, there are times when the light in Driggs is backed up half way to Victor. More people and a larger resort would only worsen this problem. Is Targhee going to pay for new roads and lights? Is there even room for more roads and lights? Even if there were, would that be in the best interest of our community? I know that I am not alone in loving Teton Valley for its rural beauty, and wanting to live here for the small town feel and open spaces. More roads, lights, etc. lead to turning this beautiful rural oasis into a bustling Park City 2.0. These are questions that have not been answered, and I believe that these reasons alone, notwithstanding a myriad of others, are enough to prevent Targhee from expanding further.