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Organization:

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Comments:

To whom it may concern:

We would like to address several concerns we have with the Grand Targhee Resort Major Development Plan(GTRMDP) of 2018 as it pertains to the Environmental Impact Statement that is being addressed during the Public Scoping Period. To be clear, we have been season ticket holders for many years and have skied GTR since 1988. We believe that their founding vision,(1960's) started as a non-profit was achieved: "The resort was originally founded as a nonprofit organization with the intentions of providing an economic benefit for the communities and resident of Teton Valley.." (2018 Master Development Plan, GTR, page 2). In the 2010's GTR vision for the area was stated: "the resort is still owned and operated by the Gillett family, who continue the tradition of providing a high quality guest experience and catering to locals, families, and destination visitors, while maintaining the resort's unique and intimate character" ( 2018 GTR MDP page 4.) An expansion beyond the current Special Use Permit (SUP) does not fit with the intent of the original non-profit status and definitely doesn't support a unique and intimate character for this special place we love as Grand Targhee.

The problem for the area considered for development at GTR is it's open and visible location, neither shielded by trees, peaks or canyons. It sits on the east side of Teton Valley and can be viewed for many miles. Unlike many other large ski developments where ski areas are tucked away from view, this cannot be hidden.

1. Our first concern is:

A. Visual Impact and harmony: the CTNF must consider how the addition of structures above the tree line such as restaurants and night skiing will impact the harmony of the Teton Range. This public land should serve all residents, even the non-skiers.

Any development such as restaurants should be directed towards the bottom of lifts such as Blackfoot or Sacajawea not at the top of Fred's Mountain, Blackfoot, or Sacajawea lifts.

B. Night sky Ordinance: Opening the mountain to night skiing will impact the most precious and appreciated feature of Teton Valley, our dark night skies. "According to the 2016 groundbreaking "World Atlas of Artificial Night Sky Brightness", 80 % of the world's population lives under sky glow. In the U.S. and Europe 99% of the public can't experience a natural night." (International Dark-sky Association<https://www.darksky.org/>.) Again, what impact does this proposed MDP within GTR current Special Use Permit have on the harmony and dark skies? It reminds us of a home on the hill in nearby Tetonia. The view must be beautiful but for those below it is incongruent with the landscape and sticks out horrendously. Do not let this be the legacy of GTR.

2. Proposed Expansion:

A. South Bowl Expansion- Any expansion into the Teton Canyon area, specifically the current North canyon trail access would be an assault on the beauty, serenity, wildlife, and health of the canyon. This expansion includes the popular access to Table Mtn. There is no way to protect the multitude of wildlife, some endangered such as the Big Horn Sheep, wolverines, lynx to name a few. (Winter Wildlife Alliance.org). Again, this National Forest is for all citizens, not just those who choose to purchase and pay for entry to ski or bike. Allow this accessible area to remain wild and free from development, from roads that scar the hillside, metal chairlifts that don't respect the tranquility, and loss of trees that cause erosion. There is not a place on earth as peaceful as this trail in this valley, an escape from mankind in the early mornings watching moose, deer, marmots, etc live in such a harmonious environment.

B. Mono Trees Expansion: The area requested that expands GTR to Teton Canyon Road will be harmful to the wildlife. Hiking this trail 2-3x a week it is an escape to nature, what it is intended to be. I encounter deer, moose, and bear activity in this location. CTNF has already prohibited entry to the popular Mill Creek Trail during winter months to protect wildlife. How can you forgo this protection for further development? The number of healthy aspen trees and evergreens that would be gladed would affect runoff, erosion and wildlife. Any additional encroachment from the GTR into the Mill Creek Trail area should be denied for it's impact.

3. Teton Valley Livability

The detrimental affect on the ruralness and character of Teton Valley Idaho would be catastrophic. Teton County WY will not be responsible for the human activity this expansion will bring. Yet they decide what

improvement can be made on the private land of GTR. Carbon imprint and noise from increased air traffic, pollution from car exhausts, crowding and congestion must be addressed and mitigated. Unlike Teton CO. WY, our airport is in the middle of residential and commercial development. GTR viability as a destination ski resort should not be a concern of the CTNF. The people you serve are the citizens who have entrusted our land to your care, to preserve for generations a rural, laid back, family-oriented experience. The impact from drainage into the Teton River, increase traffic that cannot be handled by a one stop-light town, the increase in living/housing prices that the Valley residents could not afford...these are environmental impacts that cannot be sidestepped in favor of a private company seeking to continue to use public lands for their benefits and expansion. How honest is GTR in their quest for expansion? Does having a new private gated-community, Tributary, who has a private lounge at GTR foreshadow private ski runs for the rich who will use this ski area?

There must be a clear vision and foresight into what this MDP particularly the expansion means to those who will see the rural character and culture of our community changed because of the unnecessary expansion beyond their original SUP. Once a tree is down, roads are built..(such as the blight from the valley seen by the graded service road to Peaked Peak), then nature sighs, the wildlife die, and humans are less whole by the damage that cannot be undone.

Respectfully submitted,  
Debbie and Bob Whipple