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First name: Jefferson

Last name: Slagle

Organization:

Title:

Comments:

I am a frequent Teton Canyon and Grand Targhee skier. I recognize the recreational and economic value Grand Targhee provides to the region, and their need to expand to meet skier needs. I do not oppose the proposed construction of the Peaked lift to extend lift-served skiing into Grand Targhee's existing cat skiing terrain. However, I strongly oppose Grand Targhee's proposed expansion into the South Bowl and Mono Trees areas.

The Tetons are a relatively small range, and pressure on backcountry ski resources has increased significantly in recent years. Much of the backcountry skiing on the west side of the Tetons requires long-distance approaches from trailhead, limiting their use to multi-day excursions or very fit skiers who can put in long days. The proposed expansion area includes some of the few places on the west side that offer a relatively short approach to sustained, high-quality skiing in good conditions. Removing access to these resources would increase pressure on already-overused zones such as Teton Pass, Coal Creek, and Mount Oliver. It would also displace Yostmark Backcountry Tours from this area, harming a business that has been a good citizen in Teton Valley for many years.

I am also concerned at the potential impacts of expansion on bighorn sheep, mule deer, elk, lynx, wolverine, black and grizzly bears, and other wildlife, and would like to see additional studies on how the additional noise, nighttime light, and activity would affect these populations.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment during this scoping period. I look forward to your decision.

Jefferson Slagle