

KEEP TARGHEE INBOUNDS



Valley Advocates for
Responsible Development



Goals

1. **Be informed** - Grand Targhee Resort's impacts on public lands, recreation, community, and wildlife
2. **Take action** - Submit your public comments today



Grand Targhee Resort Proposal- USFS Timeline

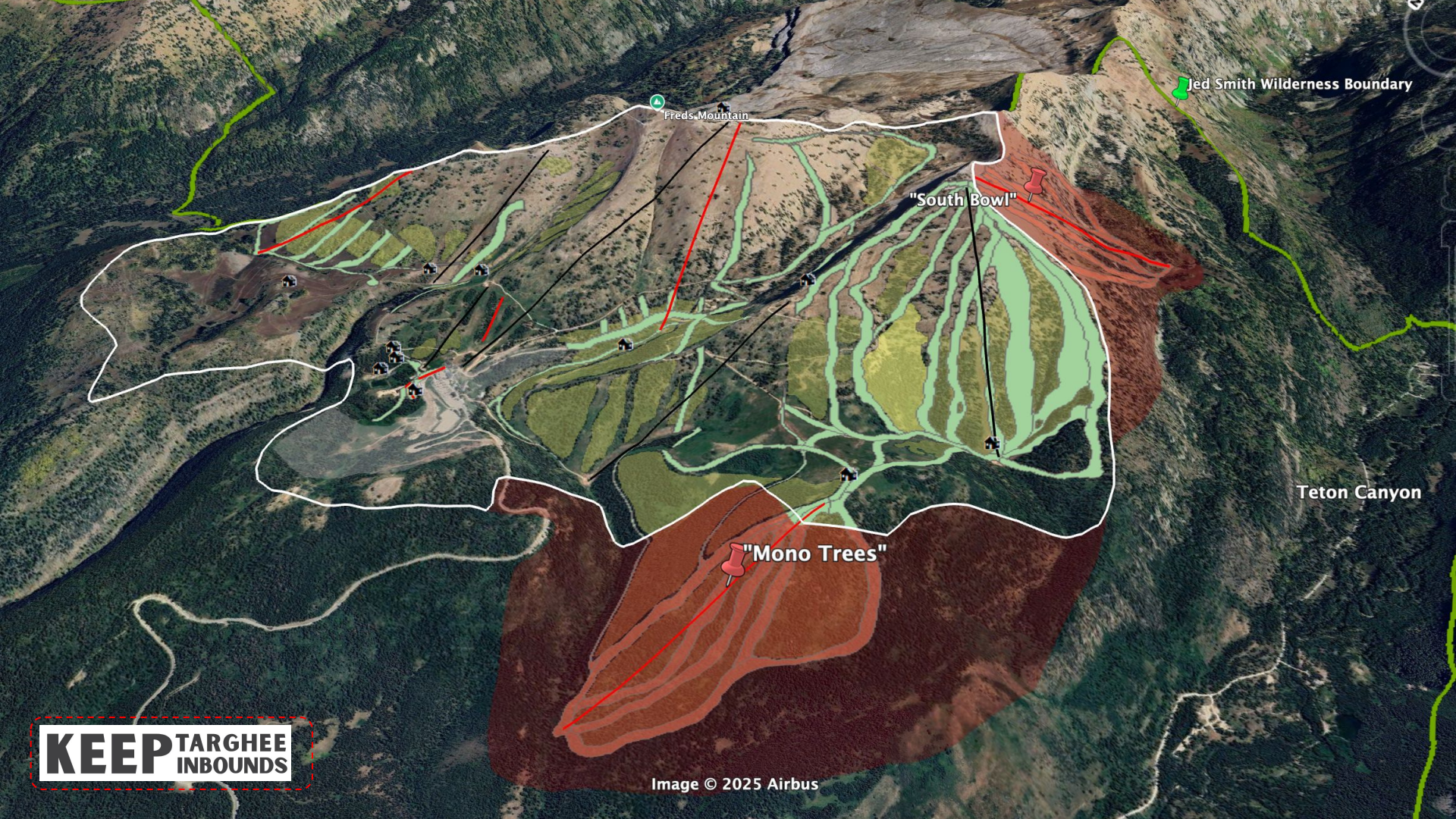
Milestone	Date
NOI in Federal Register	08/26/2020
DEIS NOA in Federal Register	03/21/2025
FEIS NOA in Federal Register	10/2025 (Estimated)
Objection Period Start	10/2025 (Estimated)
Decision	04/2026 (Estimated)
Implementation	05/2026 (Estimated)

Scoping comment period

DEIS comment period: March 21 – June 20, 2025

People/organizations who commented at scoping or DEIS will have opportunity to file an objection

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Jed Smith Wilderness Boundary

Fred's Mountain

"South Bowl"

Teton Canyon

"Mono Trees"

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Image © 2025 Airbus

Alternatives- You Choose

- ❑ **Alternative 1 :** No action/no new development

- ❑ **Alternative 2 (GTR's proposed action):** Full approval of GTR's request:
 - **South Bowl Expansion (266 acres):** 60 acres of new ski runs, access road, ski lift, ski patrol building, vault toilet, rescue cache, & two avalaunchers.
 - **Mono Trees Expansion (600 acres):** 97 acres of new ski runs, access roads, ski lift, & mountaintop cabin.
 - Additional proposed projects within current boundaries: Upgrades to 2 lifts, 4 new lifts, 214 new acres of ski runs, 550 new acres of glading, expanded snowmaking (57 acres), 5 new guest facilities (Fred's Mountaintop restaurant), tubing facility, nordic/snowshoe/fat bike trails, 29 new miles of summer trails, and a "summer activity zone" with zip lines and aerial courses.

- ❑ **Alternative 3: No Expansion** + Approve all proposed projects within current boundaries.

- ❑ **Alternative 4: South Bowl Expansion** + Approve all proposed projects within current boundaries.

- ❑ **Alternative 5: Mono Trees Expansion** + Approve all proposed projects within current boundaries.

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- ❑ **Alternative 3: No Expansion** + Approve all proposed projects within current boundaries. **+ MODIFICATIONS**

- ❑ **Alternative 4: South Bowl Expansion** + Approve all proposed projects within current boundaries.

- ❑ **Alternative 5: Mono Trees Expansion** + Approve all proposed projects within current boundaries.

Ways in which the Proposed Action conflicts with Targhee Forest Plan

- Removes **scenery protections** for South Bowl and Mono Trees.
- Supersedes forest plan protections for **aquatic resources** in South Bowl and Mono Trees.
- Tree clearing and construction activities within the Mono Trees expansion area contradicts standards for **goshawk habitat**.
- The forest plan prohibits tree clearing within 30-acres of a **flamulated owl** and **boreal owl** nests. Tree clearing is proposed within all of 5 flamulated owl nesting areas within the existing SUP. There is a boreal owl nest in the Mono Trees area and another within Targhee's existing SUP. The majority of the Mono Trees boreal owl nest area (24.1 acres) would be gladed or clearcut for ski terrain. A small amount (1.1 acres) of the other nest area would be impacted.
- The forest plan restricts human disturbances from March 15 through July 31 to avoid adverse impacts at known falcon nest sites. Proposed activities across all action alternatives are within 2 miles of 2 known **peregrine falcon** eyries in Teton Canyon but expansion into South Bowl would have the greatest impact on peregrine falcons because of the proximity to the eyries
- New development adjacent to the **Jedediah Smith Wilderness** conflicts with forest plan directives (*Maintaining the natural diversity of wildlife species is the highest priority*) and threatens opportunities for solitude and unconfined recreation within the JSW as mandated by the Wilderness Act of 1964

Submit Public Comments

Submit Public Comments

From a Forest Supervisor's perspective...

Organizational influences:

- Ski industry lobby is strong
- USFS has 'bias for action'

What the decision-maker considers:

- Need for the proposal
- Current Forest Plan direction
- Impacts on the environment (wildlife, water, wilderness, etc.)
- Impacts on the culture, economy, and infrastructure of adjacent communities
- Assuming this decision will be challenged, what decision can USFS defend?

Submit Public Comments



The most powerful comments:

- Connect your opinion with existing laws, regulations, plans (including county/municipal plans), research, etc.
- Point out specific issues/deficiencies with the DEIS
- Clearly state your position Ex. “I do not approve / I approve....”

Submit Public Comments



2 ways to **write & submit** your comments to the USFS today:

1. Comment sheet (at your table)
2. USFS online comment form



*Pro tips:

- You must include your full name and address to count
- Visit jhalliance.org/wild-places/targhee/ for talking points

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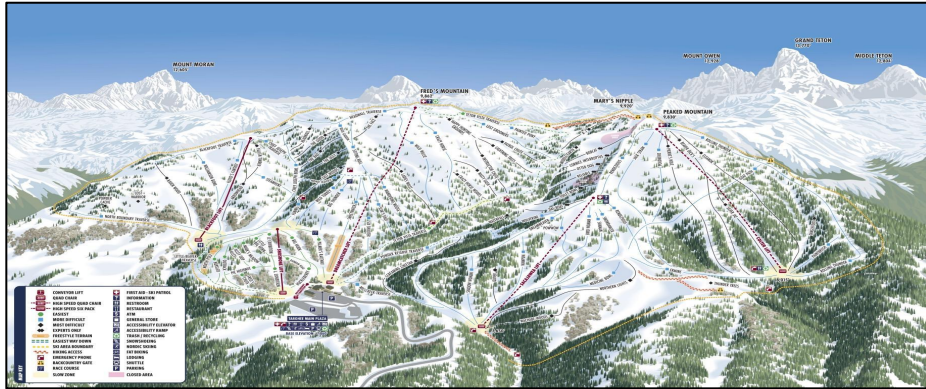
Recreation



Is there really a need?

GTR vs JHMR

GTR



JHMR



<i>resort</i>	<i>acres</i>	<i># of skiers</i>
JHMR	2500	~715,000 (2019)
GTR	2602	~250,000 (2023-24)

Growth of Backcountry Skiing

- **“Alpine touring - 2nd fastest growing sport in the U.S. with a 115% participation growth the past 4 years.”**
 - Increasingly crowded backcountry trailheads
 - AIARE avalanche courses: annual average of 11,325 participating (2023-2025)
 - Increase in gear sales

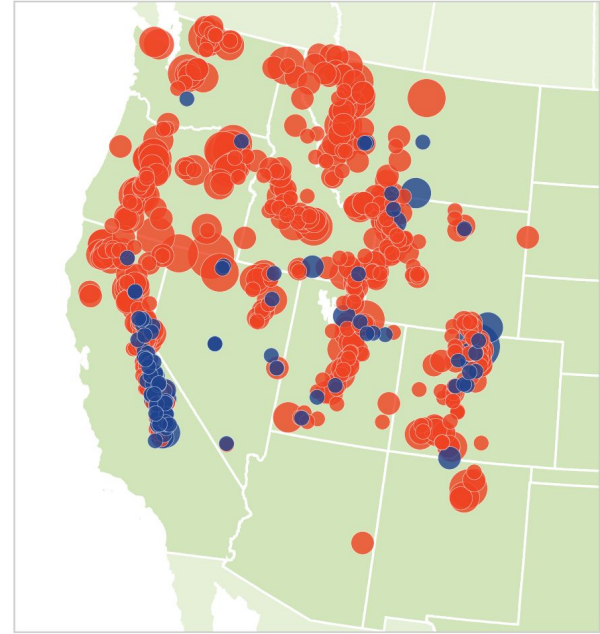


GTR proposes expansion into bighorn sheep habitat, while agencies ask backcountry skiers to observe voluntary closures.

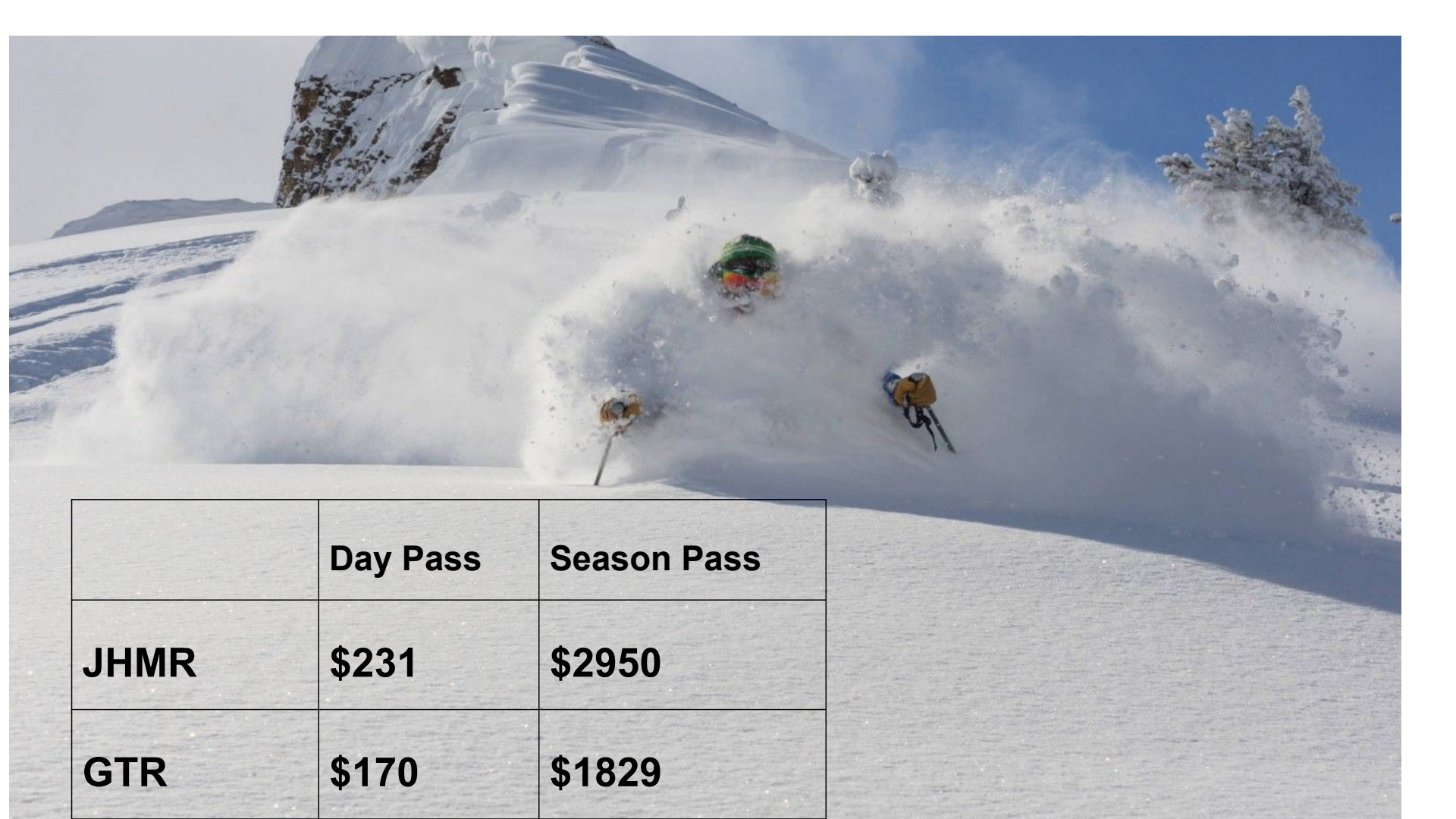
Voluntary & Hard Bighorn closures



A new south-facing ski slope with climate change?



**Change in snowpack
1953-2023**



	Day Pass	Season Pass
JHMR	\$231	\$2950
GTR	\$170	\$1829

Loss of Wildlands; Loss of the Sacred



Copyright: Morrie Lanza/The Big Outside

Jedediah Smith
WILDERNESS

The Wilderness Act of 1964 protected much of our public lands as designated Wilderness and gives a succinct definition of those areas:

"A wilderness, in contrast with those areas where man and his work dominate the landscape, is hereby recognized as an area where the earth and its community of life are untrammeled by man, where man himself is a visitor that does not remain."

Congress designated 123,451 acres on the west side of the Teton Range as the Jedediah Smith Wilderness in 1984. Some of the area's most popular winter recreation destinations lie within the Wilderness. These areas include: Teton Mountain, Teton Peak and the northwest slope of Glory Peak which is behind

**GTR expansion is
a violation of the
Wilderness Act of
1964**

Caribou-Targhee National Forest

The information is provided in partnership with the Idaho Department of Lands





Community



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Community

Socio-economic Impacts:

- Housing
- Labor supply
- Public services

Community

GTR Base Area Development:

- 120-acre private inholding
- Increased units (96 to 450)
- Increased commercial (37,000 sf to 150,000 sf)
- Increased occupancy (3,000 gpd to 6,200 gpd)
- Application submitted to TCWY

Community

2022 ECONorthwest Study Conclusions:

- Timing and pace of GTR development will determine severity of impacts.
- Teton County, ID government would see “only costs.”
- City of Driggs infrastructure needs would “far outweigh” any increased lodging sales tax increases.
- Visitor & employee demand would exacerbate existing housing shortage.

Community

2022 ECONorthwest Study Recommendations:

- Cost Share
- Fire / EMS Contracts
- Broad affordable housing strategies
- Coordination with GTR on phasing timing of development

Community

What is *responsible* development?:

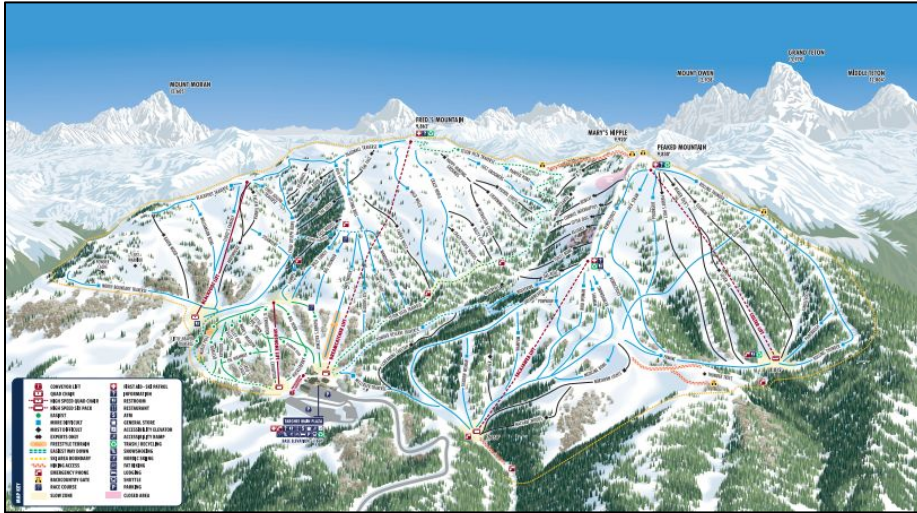
- Balance growth with what the Valley can handle - phasing
- No Expansion -
 - Open spaces and wild places
 - Vibrant communities and community character
- Alternative 3 - *ish...*

Wildlife, Habitat, & Water



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Does GTR need to privatize more public land?



Grand Targhee Resort

- 2,600 skiable acres
- 200,000 annual skiers

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Jackson Hole Mountain Resort

- 2,500 skiable acres
- >500,000 annual skiers

Purpose and Need? Public Interest?

From DEIS Executive Summary:

- The purpose of, and need for, the Forest Service's action is to decide whether to grant a special use permit (SUP) for the project.
- The CTNF will consider the application for use of NFS lands and determine if the project **is in the public interest and is appropriate.**

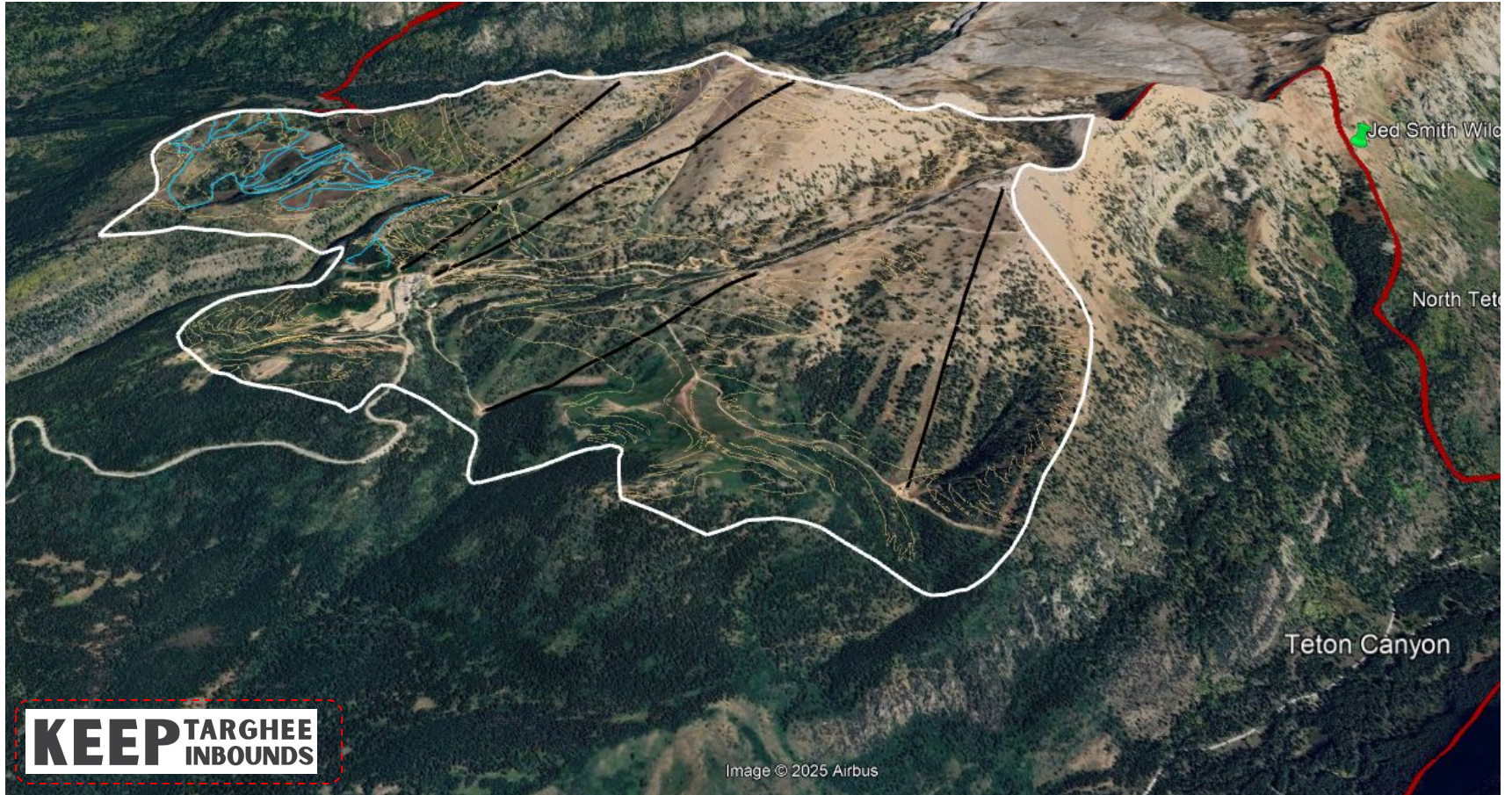
From DEIS section 1.3 Purpose and Need:

- Grand Targhee identified a need to improve the recreational experience and address shortcomings in their terrain offerings and operations in order to remain viable in the competitive destination skier/rider market.

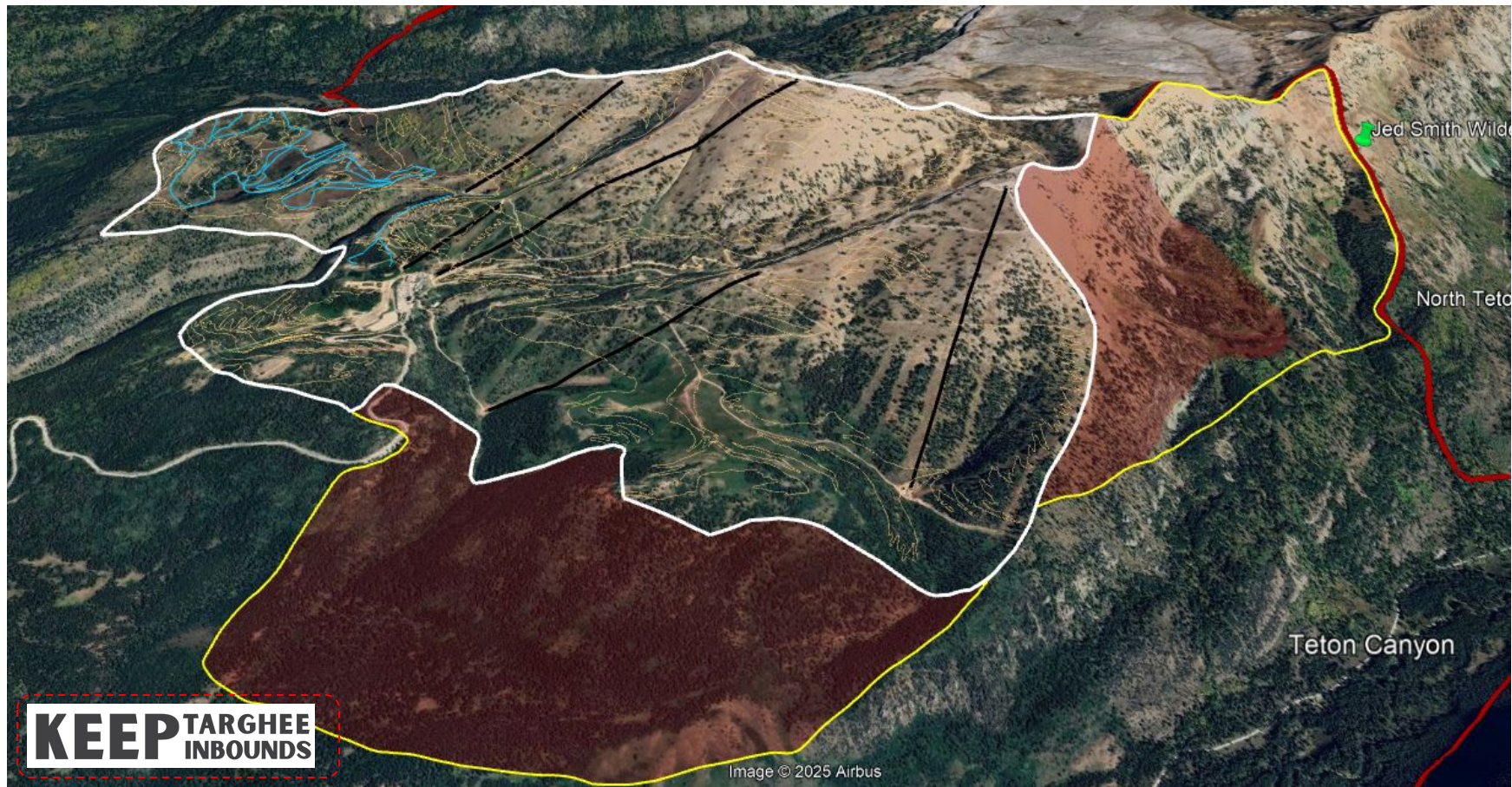
Not in the Public Interest

Not moving land toward a desired condition

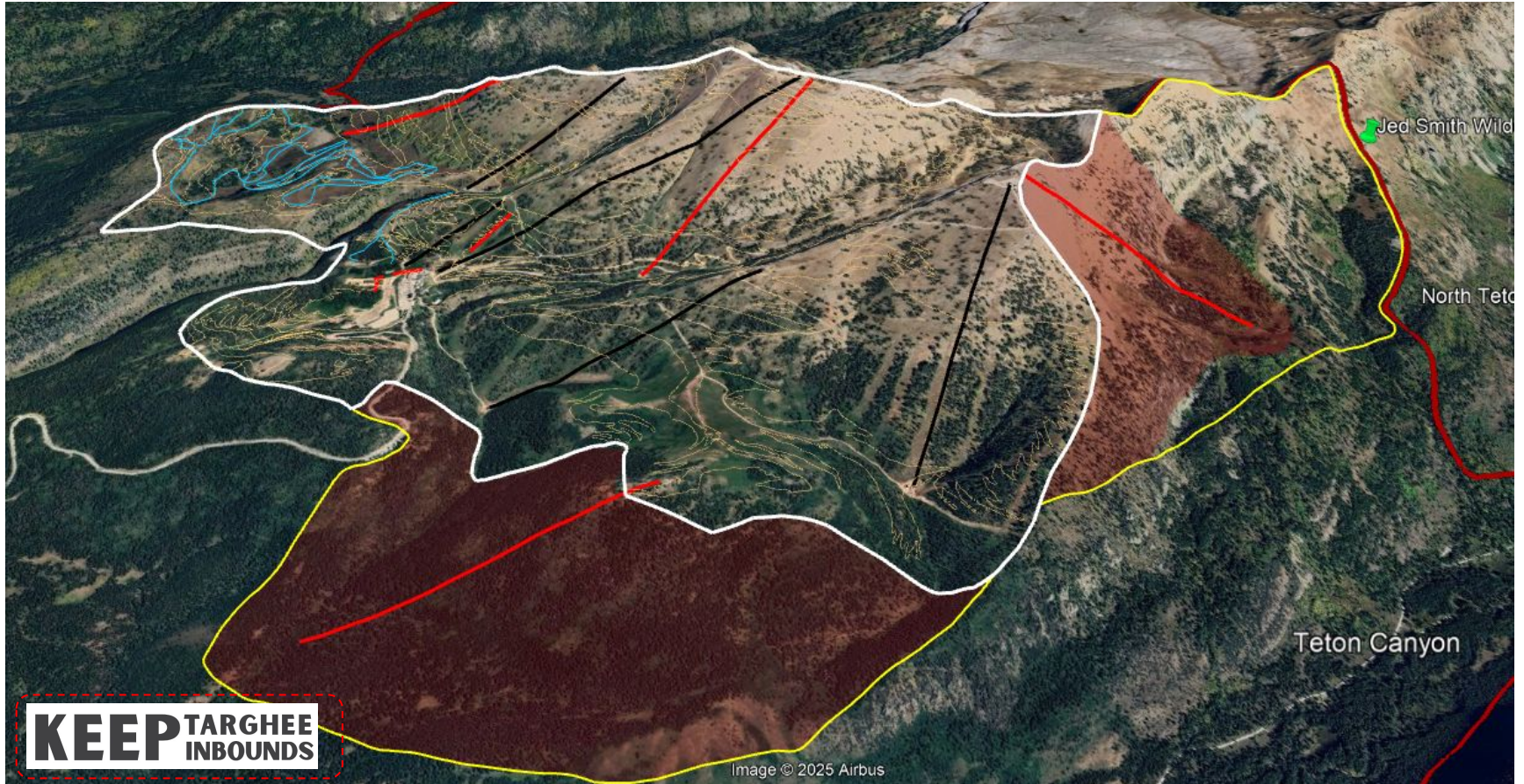
GTR Current Special Use Permit - Current Conditions



GTR Proposed Expansion Areas



GTR Proposed Lifts (red)



GTR Proposed Glading



GTR Proposed Ski Runs



GTR Proposed Guest Facilities



Wildlife Impacts of a South Bowl Expansion

Eliminate critical secure habitat for grizzly bears, increasing human-bear conflicts, and raising the risk of bear mortalities.

The vulnerable and declining Teton Bighorn sheep herd will lose valuable habitat and access to rare mineral lick, compromising the population.

Wolverines will lose expansive denning habitat in South Bowl.

Whitebark Pine - over 11 acres mid-high density will be removed.

Peregrine falcon nests and nesting habitat will be disrupted.

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Wildlife Impacts of a Mono Trees Expansion

Canada lynx will lose over 200 acres of habitat in Mono Trees expansion.

Expansion requires a rezoning of both South Bowl and Mono Trees. Let's not privatize our precious public lands.

Water Impacts: POWJH

- 57 acres of snowmaking = 23 million gallons of water
- 179 acres of wetlands impacts
- Risk of pollution to Mill Creek, Teton River, and local drinking water

Proposed tree clearing and lift installation will impact many protected species. Forest Plan amendments will be needed for actions that will disturb:

- American goshawks
- Boreal owls
- Flammulated owls
- Three-toed woodpeckers

Q & A



Hilary Eisen (Winter Wildlands Alliance, heisen@winterwildlands.org) - background & process



Laura Jo West (USFS Supervisor, retired) - public comment tips



Niki Richards (Valley Advocates for Responsible Development, niki@tetonvalleyadvocates.org) - community



Gary Kofinas (Teton Backcountry Alliance, gpkofinas@alaska.edu) - recreation & wilderness



Kevin Krasnow (Jackson Hole Conservation Alliance, kevin@jhalliance.org) - wildlife & water

COMMUNITY MEETING



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