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Bob Reese, District Ranger
Pinedale Ranger District
P.O. Box 220
Pinedale, WY 82941

Dear Sir:

This letter is with reference to the planned expansion of Lakeside Lodge as proposed in the Master Development Plan submitted by High Plains Marina, LLC. I have read a summary of the development plan and would like to go on record as strongly opposing the proposed action. Although I have several concerns, my principal objection relates to the water quality of Fremont Lake.

By way of background, I have been a part-time resident in the Pinedale area since 1964 (via a USFS special-use permit for a summer home at Sylvan Bay) and a practicing research hydrologist for more than 40 years. Because of my part-time residency, much of my hydrological research during the last 30 years has been in the Pinedale area; accordingly, my knowledge of local water resources, especially as related to Fremont Lake, is extensive. In addition to my research, several other scientific studies have been conducted on the waters of Fremont Lake. The results of these studies are published in the scientific literature; the information is available to any interested party. Also, all of us that have an association with Pinedale know that Fremont Lake is the source of the Town's domestic water supply. Accordingly, any water-quality degradation of Fremont Lake has a direct and potentially disastrous impact on Pinedale's water supply.

As to water quality, Fremont Lake has outstanding water quality that is chemically dilute and, for practical purposes, biologically pure. Principal factors in the high quality of Fremont Lake water are the geology and the wilderness character of almost all of the drainage area contributing to Fremont Lake. The chemical diluteness that provides for favorableness of the water also lessens the buffering against potential water-quality degradation. Frequently, it takes little man-induced impact, even when intentions are good, to create unavoidable degradation of such waters. From my experiences in land use and water resources, I can assure you that the proposed development will negatively impact the waters of Fremont Lake.

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Most often from surface-water sources, the Safe Drinking Water Act requires that domestic water supplies be treated by filtration unless they meet source water-quality criteria and site specific conditions including watershed control. I believe these guidelines apply to Pinedale's water supply. The wilderness character of the watershed upstream of Fremont Lake is a better watershed control than could be applied by mandate. Unfortunately, the proposed expansion of Lakeside Lodge is likely to upset this watershed control and lead to exceedingly costly water treatment requirements.

In summary, the waters of Fremont Lake are uniquely high in water quality and provide an excellent domestic water supply for Pinedale. Small, even seemingly insignificant, land use can have devastating negative impact on water quality. And I foresee this as a consequence of the proposed action. As you and your staff evaluate the proposal, give attention to the importance of water quality; I strongly encourage you to disallow the planned expansion of Lakeside Lodge.

Sincerely,

William W. Emmett

cc: Mayor, Town of Pinedale