



News Release

For Further Information Contact:
Larry Williamson
307-353-2300
www.grandtarghee.com

FEDERAL DISTRICT JUDGE RULES ON SQUIRREL/GRAND TARGHEE LAND EXCHANGE

A Land Exchange Proposal involving Grand Targhee Resort and Squirrel Meadows was reviewed by Federal judge, B. Lynn Winmill on Thursday, August 9. Judge Winmill disputed one of four claims brought to suit on the exchange and ruled that the Targhee Land Exchange and Environmental Impact Statement, on said Exchange, needs further study and information. In question was a discussion of four Forest Service constraints on development in the “no-action” alternative. Based on this finding, the decision will be delayed until further information is developed to fulfill requirements set forth by NEPA, the National Environmental Policy Act. Three key points the Judge ruled favorably on:

* The Forest Service fulfilled the requirements of NEPA by properly discussing the environmental impacts of a land exchange.

*It is not only probable but highly likely that 21 acres of Squirrel Meadows remaining in private ownership after the land trade will be taken into public ownership.

*The Forest Service’s appraisal of the lands to be exchanged was “thorough and complete” satisfying the requirement that the lands be of equal value.”

Grand Targhee has supported and will continue to support the Forest Service through this NEPA process. “We’re appreciative of Judge Winmill’s thorough review of the legal claims brought forth in the litigation over the federal government’s proposed Grand Targhee-Squirrel Meadows land exchange, said Larry Williamson, Grand Targhee’s general manager. Jerry Reese, Forest Supervisor for the Caribou-Targhee National Forest continues, “We are disappointed that all four points were not dismissed, but it is encouraging that the court supported the Forest in the other claims. It’s unfortunate that we are delayed in our efforts to acquire important grizzly bear habitat.” The Forest Service is reviewing the decision to determine what additional analysis is required to comply with NEPA.

August 10, 2001