

23 March 2018

William Dunkelberger, Supervisor
Humboldt-Toiyabe National Forest
1400 Franklin Way
Sparks, NV 89431

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HTNF - S.O.

Dear Mr. Dunkelberger;

I lived and worked in Reno from 1974 to 2014 before retiring from Spectir LLC of Reno and moving to Sonoma County to be with relatives and friends. As a hiker, climber, skier, I spent quite a bit of time in the area of the 3,446 acres of acquired Galena lands in the Carson Range. I worked for years with concerned citizens, including the Friends of Mount Rose, as we mounted an effort to defeat the wildly-inappropriate Galena Resort proposal, offered by, among others, the Alpine Meadows Ski Corporation. The sacrifices that would have been made by that development, including buildover of de-facto wildlands, would have altered irrevocably one of the more marvelous and spectacular such mountain lands close to a population center. As a result, shepherded in part by the lengthy efforts of Senator Richard Bryan, a substantial acreage of these lands, slightly more than 3,446 acres, were set aside as an undeveloped area, and was subsequently added in part to the Mount Rose wilderness area. This area is an all-seasons wonderland, which supports cross-country and randonnee skiing in my experience from as early as September to as late as June in some years. It also supports some great wildflower walks in the Galena Creek Canyon, accessed by the trail to the Mount Rose summit. Some truly spectacular wildflower gardens would have been sacrificed, had the resort gone forward. We described further the impacts that the added traffic would have had on residents of Incline Village, who must use the Mount Rose highway for travel into Reno for work at residences at either end. We mentioned that one of their snowmaking ponds was located in an avalanche path mapped by their own expert, Hans Frutiger, posing a potential disastrous flood potential on Galena Fan should an avalanche cycle such as occurred in 1986 send a major avalanche into the pond. To our relief, our recommendation to eliminate such an open pond in the proposed Atoma development was heeded by the Mount Rose owners.

In my opinion, the undeveloped skiing is as good as any other comparable site in the lower 48 states near a major population center, including some world-famous areas for such activities in Idaho, Montana, Wyoming, Utah and Colorado.

I am not so easy with the relatively-small ceding of some few hundred acres of the lands we fought so long and hard to maintain in their natural state, since it potentially opens the door for other business proposals in the future to seek access to the lands for profit. I have seen how developers, flush with money, can sweep into an area like ours, and dazzle locals with the idea of more revenue from business interests. But I am persuaded that the plan as presently proposed does provide, if not a permanent protection of the status of the 3,446 acres, a close to our long effort, now stretching back more than 30 years, to give final protection of these marvelous lands, for the rich enjoyment of all the citizens of Reno, Washoe County, and citizens from any location.

Please be sure to understand that these lands are a precious, invaluable asset to the quality of life in the Reno area, and that the preservation of these lands in a natural state is, without doubt, the best possible use of this area. I thank the USFS for their efforts on the Draft Mt. Rose EIS and strongly support the proposed amendment to the Forest Plan to restrict all future commercial development on 3,446 acres of acquired Galena lands in the Carson Range.

Sincerely yours,



William A. Peppin
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