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March 22, 2018

Bill Dunkelberger, Spvr.
Humboldt-Toiyabe National Forest
1200 Franklin Way
Sparks, NV 89431

Re: comments on the draft EIS on proposed Mt. Rose Ski Tahoe Atoma Area Expansion

Dear Spvr. Dunkelberger,

As one of the many Reno citizens who participated in the community effort to "save" our treasured Mt. Rose from a proposed ski resort/casino development in the 1980's and 1990's, I am submitting these comments on the draft Mt. Rose Ski Tahoe Atoma Area Expansion draft Environmental Impact Statement (dEIS). I commend the USFS for developing a focused dEIS and the two action alternatives in response to the proposal to expand the Mt. Rose Ski area across the Mt. Rose Highway, while also honoring and respecting the public acquisition and donation of these acquired Galena lands to the Humboldt-Toiyabe National Forest in 1994. I strongly support the proposed amendment to the Forest Plan, the modifications to the original expansion proposal, and Alternative 3 which best addresses substantive public concerns.

1. Proposed Amendment to the Forest Plan: I strongly support the proposed Forest Plan Amendment in both action alternatives, "Land acquired through the 1994 Galena Resort Land Exchange located within Management Area 2 (Carson Front), with the exception of the proposed Atoma Area and the Chutes. Standard - Commercial development shall not be permitted on 3,446 acres of NFS land in the area known as the Galena Land Exchange with the exception of the proposed Atoma Area (112 acres) and the Chutes (131 acres) already in the Mt. Rose SUP."

It took our community over a decade to successfully oppose the ski resort/casino development proposal in these high elevation, scenic, watershed lands in the Carson Range. Nevadans, working with the American Land Conservancy and federal and state agencies across the State, successfully raised funds through the sale of public lands in Southern Nevada to purchase the private Galena lands from its owners and dedicate them to the US Forest Service for public uses.

2. Addressing Scoping Issues and Environmental Impacts: The public raised many scoping issues about the expansion proposal, including its potential impacts on public health and safety, recreation, scenic and cultural resources, and wildlife, plant, watershed and soils resources, as well as continued public recreational access to the acquired Galena lands. I support the modifications (Section 1.4.1) to the original proposal which were made to minimize its negative impacts on the human and biological environment, including public health and safety.

3. Alternative 3: One of my greatest concerns with the expansion was the isolation of the Galena area from the main Mt. Rose Ski area (across a very busy and dangerous highway in the winter), especially for the most vulnerable young skiers. I appreciate the US Forest Service addition of Alternative 3, including the restroom on National Forest lands, to enhance the skiing experience for youngsters and

their parents as well as the stacking of the ski lift over the skier bridge in order to reduce impacts on the scenic quality of the Mt. Rose Highway area as well as the requirement for the construction of the skier bridge before any additional construction disturbances would be allowed on the Atoma expansion site. Therefore, I strongly support the preferred Alternative 3.

4. Additional comments:

a. Restoration: While the dEIS mentions the USFS removal of the Atoma building and re-contouring of its parking area, it does not address the restoration of other parts of the acquired lands on which scars remain from the ski resort/casino proposal. These would include the removal of the road, west of the Atoma building, which was used to access the well sites, the well pads and casings and the unnatural piles of boulders from construction activities. Please add these to the Preferred Action.

b. Volunteer opportunities: In addition, I strongly urge the Humboldt-Toiyabe National Forest to develop management plans and projects on the remaining 3,446 acres of acquired Galena lands which provide opportunities for public engagement and participation in land and resource management on the most popular and heavily used national forest lands in Northern Nevada. These might include the assistance of volunteers to help counter the threats to forest health, including attacks by pine beetles and white pine blister rust on whitebark and Western white pine conifers, efforts to reduce or eliminate invasive noxious species, and volunteer projects to enhance recreational access, including construction and maintenance of trails, as well as restoration of overused areas.

Thank you for considering my comments on the dEIS. I look forward to working with the US Forest Service to better manage and protect the lands and resources of the acquired Galena Lands in the Carson Ranger District of the Humboldt-Toiyabe National Forest.

Sincerely,



Rose Strickland