

Sue Helm

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
September 20, 2018

Mr. Scott Fitzwilliams, White River National Forest Supervisor
c/o Monte Lutterman, Mountain Sports Ranger via email, mlutterman@fs.fed.us
620 Main Street, Carbondale, CO 81623-0309

Re: NOPA Snowmass Snowmaking and Elk Camp Meadows Project

Dear Mr. Fitzwilliams,

Thank you for the opportunity to respond and to be a part of this process. I understand the Aspen Skiing Company's (ASC) need for snowmaking and support their request for this additional acreage as long as it falls within the parameters set forth through the work of all of the agencies looking at the needs of the ski area along with the needs of Snowmass Creek through the many years of study of impact on the Creek.

As a 25 year advocate for maintaining a viable ecosystem in Snowmass Creek, I enter these comments to be sure that this action complies with all of the past directives.

The addition of Ziegler Reservoir to the Snowmass Water and Sanitation District's (District) facilities should help in allowing additional snowmaking without impacts to Snowmass Creek. However, for that to be the case, it is imperative that the District follows the protocol for adding water to the Reservoir especially in low flow times.

Along with the Forest Service directives and those from previous court cases, please see that the flow regime set forth in the Army Corps of Engineer's letter to the District dated February 3, 1995 concerning withdrawals in a one in ten-year low flow event is honored.

In the 1994 Record of Decision for the Snowmass Ski area a monitoring program for Snowmass Creek was strongly encouraged. That program was set up and carefully followed for its 10 year duration. That has set forth a solid base line for Snowmass Creek. That was done in anticipation of increased snowmaking, new development in Snowmass Village, and concern about future climate changes causing drought.

Due to the financial downturn new development in the Village was slowed and fortunately the Valley continued to have a good snowpack through this time allowing for good stream flows in Snowmass Creek. New large development in Snowmass Village is due to start coming on line soon and we may now be experiencing our first really low flow event since the monitoring was completed. One year of low flows would not be enough to show what impacts these events could cause for the Creek, but if we have a few years of this pattern, a new monitoring program could be a way to evaluate impact of this increase in snowmaking and consequently of low flows on the aquatic system and the ecosystem of the Creek. Please consider including this in an approval.

Thank you for your consideration of all aspects of the proposed Snowmass Snowmaking and Elk Camp Meadows Project and its effect on Snowmass Creek. Please keep me in the process.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Sue Helm".

Sue Helm

Enclosed: Army Corps of Engineers February 3, 1995 letter from Art Champ to the Snowmass Water and Sanitation District