

Connie Cummins Forest Supervisor, Superior
National Forest c/o Michael Jimenez, Project Leader
8901 Grand Avenue Place Duluth, MN 55808
comments-eastern-superior@usda.gov

Subject: Comments on the Lutsen Mountains Ski Area Expansion Project

Dear Forest Supervisor Cummins,

I have been a resident of Cook County for 9 years and it feels more like home than any other place I've lived. Lutsen Mountains and its best in the Midwest terrain was one of the reasons I moved to the county after living in Illinois, Wisconsin, Maryland and Colorado. Proximity to abundant public land was the other reason I moved here. I believe Lutsen Mountain's proposed expansion will enhance the skiing experience, provide continued and additional tourism to the area, create local jobs, and boost revenue for local businesses. I am very supportive of this project.

Not only will this expansion greatly benefit the local economy, but I believe it is also an important improvement for Lutsen Mountains. As a past ski patroller at Lutsen Mountains and avid skier, I have desired and heard Lutsen's guests desire for more beginner terrain, more expert terrain and fewer pinch points with inconsistent or icy snow conditions. Lutsen is unique in the Midwest in its quality of alpine skiing terrain and its potential to satisfy all skier types with this Special Use Permit should not be ignored. I have experienced first hand how skier preferences (and my own) have changed over the years, expectations have increased, and how many ski areas have not survived. I believe this expansion will help Lutsen Mountains remain competitive by:

- Expanding beginner and expert terrain. Lutsen Mountains is currently lacking in this terrain, and this expansion will attract a wider variety of skill levels.
- Improving the skier's experience with better circulation and more reliable snow due to upgraded snowmaking.
- Improving guest services by enhancements to the base area and additional parking.
- Bolstering Cook County's reputation as a premiere outdoor destination.

Furthermore, as a professional in natural resource management and as a past attendee of the Poplar River Management Board, I have witnessed Lutsen's commitment to sustainably managing their land and reducing human impacts to the Poplar River watershed. I believe the well designed Lutsen Mountains Master Development Plan and regulatory review processes will avoid significant impacts to soil, water resources, special natural areas, wildlife and cultural resources. I am also

supportive of sustainable activities that allow current and future generations to connect with nature and find value in it. This is increasingly important and the proposed use of 495-acres of Superior National Forest will connect more people to nature than if it remained in its current condition. That is a trade-off I support for my public lands.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Philip Larson". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Philip Larson

157 The Grade Grand Marais, MN 55604