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Mr. James Duran, Forest Supervisor
c/o Paul Schilke, Winter Sports
Coordinator, PO Box 110
Questa, NM 87556

87556-011010



March 25, 2023

Mr. James Duran, Forest Supervisor
c/o Paul Schike, Winter Sports
Coordinator P.O. Box 110
Questa, NM 87556

Dear Mr. Duran and Mr. Schike,

My name is Kathy Bennett and I am a resident of the Village of Taos Ski Valley. I was unable to attend the Forest Service presentation on the 23rd, due to a snowstorm and I had to get home. Please accept this document as my feedback/opinions to the Forest Service presentation. Thank you.

Several years ago, the Village of Taos Ski Valley, decided to spread and coat Twining Road with Mag Chloride in an attempt to eliminate the dust problem that affects the homes located on this road in the summer time. I have experienced it myself, when the dust gets so very bad that you can't see in front of you as you drive along that road. It's like driving in a dense fog. People accelerate on that road as it goes uphill and they think they can make it "to the top" if they go faster. Wrong, just makes the dust worse.

Mag Chloride cannot be good for the environment. Vegetation has to be dying off due to this chemical. Although I think this is accurate, I have no viable proof, just my gut feel.

Secondly, people drive up Twining Road to park at their favorite destination and hike to Williams Lake or Wheeler Peak and perhaps go to their homes in that area. These trails are the most popular hiking trails in Northern New Mexico. Parking spaces are filled at least by 8:00 a.m., and hikers proceed to park on both sides of the road, because there are no other spaces. This prohibits emergency equipment from reaching the Kachina area. This is a serious situation.

Winter season experiences drivers that roar up Twining Road, hoping they can make it okay, and just find a spot to park so they can ski their favorite trails accessible from Chair 4. (This eliminates parking outside of the resort center and riding up chair 1.) This amounts to the same problems as stated in the previous paragraph. A gondola could eliminate this problem.

I am excited that the Taos Ski Valley Corporation is willing to resolve the above problems at a tremendous cost to them. They are truly a "B" Corporation and 100% environmentally conscience. They are hoping to erect a Gondola from the Base of the Resort Center to the Kachina Area so people don't find it necessary to drive to Kachina and little if any, dust will be produced. The dust problem will be greatly reduced, as well as traffic going up and down Twining Road. The Gondola could bring additional adventure into the lives of hikers and skiers as they don't need to deal with the steep road and they don't need to search in vain for a parking space. Riding the gondola could be great fun and could bring additional revenue to the Village, the County, and the State, even if the ride is free.

If the NM Carson Forest is willing to permit the building and operation of a Gondola, it would truly be a win-win situation, and we would all owe a debt of gratitude to the Taos Ski Valley Corporation as well as the Carson National Forest Service. Thank you for reading my comments.

Other bullet items on the proposal and my comments are as follows:


Replace lifts 2 and 8 - expensive, but makes for a better ski experience.

Install a new booster station, water tank – absolutely necessary as the Kachina area does NOT have adequate fire suppression. This is obviously very important.

All remaining bullet items are an attempt to make a better skier, boarder, and hiker experience for all our guests. I hope you will take these into consideration and they are beneficial to all.

Thank you very much for reading my comments.

Sincerely,



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P.S. As a major contributor to our Village becoming a certified Fire Wise Community, I have one additional question. Is there a way, in the summer time, to prevent riders on the proposed gondola from throwing cigarette butts out the windows? We couldn't and can't do it with people driving up Twining Road. I just worry about wildland fires. Thanks.