



June 12, 2024

**Via electronic submission**

Scott Fitzwilliams

c/o Sarah Strehle

Dillon Ranger District

White River National Forest

680 Blue River Parkway

Silverthorne, CO 80498-0620

**RE: Peak 9 Project at Breckenridge Ski Resort**

Dear Scott,

Breckenridge Ski Resort (BSR) submits these comments in response to the Forest Service's scoping notice for the 2024 BSR Peak 9 Project (project). BSR thanks the Forest Service for the opportunity to comment and asks that these comments be added to the administrative record.

The Peak 9 portal at BSR consists of two separate base areas with one detachable chair at each base that serves varying levels of terrain, including two Ski and Ride School teaching locations, and serves as a primary access point for over 40% of guests. In order to create a better experience for guests using the Peak 9 portal, this project aims to:

1. Improve flow and circulation at one of our most popular base areas and access points;
2. Disperse guests across Peak 9 and provide quicker access to nearby terrain on Peaks 8 and 10; and
3. Provide easy access to new mid-mountain teaching and learning terrain for beginners and Ski and Ride School guests.

Similar to the recent Peak 8 improvements, the addition of a gondola on private land out of the Peak 9 portal will allow skiers and riders of all levels to have a more efficient and progression-friendly way to experience Peak 9 by providing easier access to on-mountain terrain. Loading and unloading a chairlift is a learned skill for those who are just starting to ski and ride. The addition of a gondola at Peak 9 will better serve our beginners and Ski and Ride School guests who are just learning the fundamentals, while allowing the Quicksilver SuperChair to run more continuously with fewer starts/stops. The proposed teaching terrain on the Frontier trail will be targeted towards the



children's Ski and Ride School with a dedicated space supported by two carpets and a warming hut with restrooms. The new learning terrain will serve as a first step in the progression of the Ski and Ride School program, with the next level of terrain easily accessible from the gondola. Finally, the warming hut and cabin maintenance building adjacent to the gondola's mid-station will improve the experience of Ski and Ride School guests and provide operational efficiency for lift maintenance.

The top of the gondola will be located on Upper Silverthorne trail slightly below where the current A-Chair top terminal unloads. This location enables skier circulation to the north and encourages round-trip skiing and riding on the top section of the gondola as part of the Ski and Ride School learning progression terrain similar to the function that A-Chair currently provides. A new access road to the top terminal will be needed to construct and maintain the gondola.

In addition to the proposed gondola and improved learning terrain, the Peak 9 project will also include the replacement of C-Chair as described in the 2022 BSR Master Development Plan (MDP). The replacement of C-Chair will improve flow and circulation between Peaks 8 and 9 and improve access to underutilized terrain on the north side of Peak 9. The upgraded lift infrastructure will replace a fixed-grip double chairlift that is over 50 years old.

During the development of the 2022 MDP, BSR worked with the Forest Service to identify infill projects to improve the guest experience, while also minimizing impacts on resources. The majority of the Peak 9 project area has been previously surveyed for wetlands and botanical resources, and the project has been designed to avoid further disturbing these resources. Additional resource surveys will be conducted to cover the remaining project area. The project will occur in an area that already experiences extensive human activity. The White River National Forest Plan allocated the affected lands to BSR, and the project is within BSR's special use permit area and existing lift-served terrain. The project is consistent with BSR's 2022 MDP, as well as current Forest Plan standards and guidelines, and BSR does not anticipate that the project will increase peak day visitation.



In sum, the project will meet a critical need to reduce congestion and wait times at the Peak 9 portal and will improve the guest experience, especially for Ski and Ride School guests. BSR appreciates the efforts of the Forest Service in reviewing and guiding this project and looks forward to continuing to work with you and your staff.

Respectfully,

DocuSigned by:  
*Jon Copeland*  
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Jon Copeland

Vice President & COO  
Breckenridge Ski Resort

Cc: Adam Bianchi, Dillon Ranger District