

USDA Forest Service

Attn: Michiko Martin, Regional Forester, Objection Reviewing Officer

333 Broadway Blvd SE

Albuquerque, NM, 87102

Submitted via <https://cara.fs2c.usda.gov/Public//CommentInput?Project=61390>

Re: Objection regarding Taos Ski Valley, Gondola And Other Improvements Projects

Objection Reviewing Officer,

The following objection is submitted on behalf of Patrick Grace

This Objection is filed pursuant to, and in compliance with, 36 C.F.R. Part 218, Subparts A and B. I have previously filed timely, specific and substantive written comments in accordance with 36 C.F.R. 218(a). As required by 36 C.F.R. § 218.8(d), Objector provides the following information:

Patrick Grace

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Victor, ID 83455

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It has come to my attention that the proposed actions for so-called improvements to Taos Ski Valley including a gondola from the base area to lift 4, as well as a restaurant at the top of lift 7 have been tentatively approved. It is my understanding that the tentative approval was green-lighted with only an EA (Environmental Assessment) and not a properly thorough EIS (Environmental Impact Statement). This assessment is not acceptable, the area in which the proposed developments are slated is a tiny life-zone ecologically for the Southwest, and incredibly sensitive. The restaurant at the top of lift 7 raises many concerns for me and its impacts on the watershed. I think it is a bad idea. The entire backside of TSV in summer consists of many springs that emanate from the ground nurturing wildflowers, forbs, grasses, large mule deer, bears, pine martens, many songbirds, raptors, and impressive bighorn sheep. Downstream beneficiaries of these headwaters, in particular, the acequias that nourish people, and the many

beautiful ecosystems created as a result, are directly interwoven with what happens in the sub-alpine, and alpine zones. The vitality of the Rio Grande is directly bound to the connectivity of those acequias. The placement of such proposed facilities warrants a much more in depth analysis based on the absolute best of current science and knowledge.

Conduct a thorough EIS (Environmental Impact Statement).

Our grandchildren's children expect nothing less of us for their futures.

The second objection that I raise is in regards to the proposed gondola.

This is not a viable, holistic answer to the over-use argument. Heavy traffic in popular National Forest Wilderness areas is not new, look to other National Forests and see what they have come up with for solutions. Washington State and California have been dealing with these problems for decades.

There are other remedies.

Access to trailhead parking at Williams Lake cannot be eliminated.

Summer or Winter.

The gondola will not and cannot replace public access to our public lands.

A more thorough assessment must occur regarding the societal impact that such a proposal could have on the future.

Conduct a proper EIS (Environmental Impact Statement)

Again, these are serious decisions that impact the course that we plot for those who have yet to be born. Let's be wise in the decisions we make as stewards of this great land.

Respectfully Yours,

Patrick Grace