



COMMISSIONERS Michael P. Bleak; Paul Cozzens; Ken Robinson

ASSESSOR – Karsten Reed **ATTORNEY** – Chad E. Dotson **AUDITOR** – Lucas Little

CLERK - Jonathan T. Whittaker **RECORDER** – Carri Jeffries

SHERIFF – Kenneth Carpenter **TREASURER** – Nicole B. Rosenberg

P.O. Box 429, 68 South 100 East, Parowan, Utah 84761 435.477.8300, F 435.477.8847

August 11, 2025

Kevin Wright, Forest Supervisor
C/O Matt Loscalzo
Dixie National Forest
820 N Main
Cedar City, UT 8472

Subject: Scoping Comments on Proposed Expansion Project – Brian Head Resort, Dixie National Forest

Dear Mr. Wright,

Under the National Forest Management Act (NFMA), the United States Forest Service (USFS) is required to meaningfully involve local governments in federal land-use planning processes. These coordination requirements are further supported by the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), which mandates that federal land-use planning be consistent with state and local plans.

Iron County maintains that the management of public lands must support multiple uses, prevent the waste of natural resources, and protect the health, safety, and welfare of the public. We recognize that the proposed project has the potential to increase visitation and enhance opportunities for both residents and visitors to enjoy the natural beauty and recreation offerings of our National Forests—during both winter and summer seasons.

Project Overview

The proposed project on Dixie National Forest (DNF) land includes the following components:

- Expansion of Brian Head Resort's special use permit area by 1,651 acres
- Construction of up to 382 acres of new ski trails and 14 new lifts
- Development of four new on-mountain restaurants and eight new ski patrol facilities
- Installation of 19 miles of new snowmaking lines (covering 186 acres)
- Construction of up to 10 miles of new administrative roads and improvements to 5 miles of existing roads
- Installation of up to 13 miles of new utility infrastructure
- Re-routing of an existing snowmobile route
- Vegetation management activities across 520 acres

Iron County acknowledges the recent Supreme Court ruling in *Seven County Infrastructure Coalition v. Eagle County*, and respectfully requests that the Dixie National Forest (DNF) focus its environmental analysis on the **direct** effects of the proposed project, in alignment with the Court's guidance regarding indirect effects.

Key Scoping Issues for Consideration

Iron County encourages the Forest Service to consider the following issues during the environmental review process:

1. Multi-Use Access and Impacts on Current Land Users
 - Evaluate how the proposed expansion affects access to public lands.
 - Analyze impacts on local residents and existing businesses that rely on the current land use.
2. Traffic and Visitation
 - Assess the anticipated increase in vehicle and pedestrian traffic resulting from expanded recreation use.
3. Infrastructure and Utilities
 - Analyze the project's direct impacts on roads, utilities, water supply, sewer capacity, and any infrastructure expansion needs.
4. Winter Use Impacts
 - Evaluate the direct environmental impacts associated with increased winter recreation activity, including snowmaking and trail usage.
5. Summer Recreation and Land Use
 - Consider the implications of increased summer recreation such as hiking, mountain biking, OHV, and other outdoor activities on the forest ecosystem.
 - Seek an egress and ingress for OHV travel from Brain Head to the Red Desert OHV Trail.
6. Grazing Resources
 - Assess potential impacts on grazing allotments and associated range conditions.
7. Wildlife Habitat
 - Evaluate impacts on local wildlife populations, particularly elk, deer, grouse, and black bears that utilize the area as summer habitat.

Iron County appreciates the opportunity to provide these scoping comments and looks forward to continuing to collaborate with the Dixie National Forest to ensure that the forest is managed for multiple sustainable uses. We remain committed to supporting increased recreation opportunities while safeguarding the long-term health of our public lands and the well-being of the Iron County citizens.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Paul Cozzens", with a long horizontal line extending to the right.

Paul Cozzens
Chairman, Iron County Commission

CC: Jon Whittaker, County Clerk