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Comments: October 28, 2026

Kevin Wright
Forest Supervisor, Dixie National Forest
c/o Matt Loscalzo, Project Manager

820 North Main Street
Cedar City, Utah 84721

Re: Brian Head Resort Expansion Draft Environmental Impact Statement
Project No. 292353

Supplemental Comments and Clarifications to October 21, 2026 Letter

Dear Mr. Wright:

Please accept this letter as a supplement to our previously submitted letter dated October 21, 2026, titled "Brian Head Resort Draft Expansion Environmental Impact Statement Comments" (Original Letter). Please associate this supplement with that submission and retain both in the project record. We continue to support Alternative Four and the protection of existing grazing operations, water resources, public access, historic resources, and neighboring private property.
This supplement corrects and clarifies certain statements in the Original Letter and provides additional support and specific requests for the Final EIS. Where the two letters are inconsistent, please rely on the corrections and qualifications below. Except as expressly corrected or qualified here, we reaffirm the concerns in the Original Letter and our earlier scoping comments. References below distinguish pages of the Original Letter from pages of the Draft EIS.

1. Clarification of Alternative Four's footprint and effects.
The Original Letter's descriptions of Alternative Four as expansion within the existing footprint (pp. 2 and 6) were too broad. Table 2.3-1 of the Draft EIS (p. 38) shows an 881-acre expansion of the special-use permit area, from 887 to 1,768 acres, with seven additional lifts and 210 additional acres of developed ski terrain. Our support is for that reduced expansion, which excludes the Navajo Ridge to Dry Lakes Pod, rather than for an alternative confined to the existing permit boundary.
Alternative Four also omits the Peak Lift and Ridge Lifts 1 and 2, with snowcat access to the terrain those lifts would otherwise serve. Other infrastructure remains, including Summit Lift and Dragon's Back Lift extending to the ridge. Our statements about eliminating impacts and protecting views (Original Letter, pp. 4-6) should therefore be understood as referring to the specific development avoided, not an assurance of no new disturbance or no visible infrastructure. We request preservation of those exclusions and analysis of the effects of the remaining facilities and operations. (Draft EIS, pp. 23-24.)

2. Grazing concerns require analysis of practical operating effects.

Appendix A of the Draft EIS (p. 151) relies on unchanged grazing authorizations and boundaries to conclude that grazing effects would be insignificant. It also acknowledges temporary construction disruptions and anticipates coordination through Annual Operating Instruction meetings. Our Original Letter (pp. 1-2) condensed that rationale. Our principal concern is that an unchanged authorization does not establish that grazing will remain practicable after physical changes to the land.

Please analyze effects on usable forage, livestock movement, stockwater, pasture access, gathering, and operating costs from grading, roads, vegetation removal, fencing, and associated recreation. Identify affected allotments and improvements, the acreage and duration of disturbance, and any reduction in usable grazing capacity. Permanent infrastructure and reasonably foreseeable summer use may affect grazing even when skiing occurs in winter.

We qualify the categorical statements in the Original Letter about grazing having no environmental effects, aspen removal necessarily reducing forage, and livestock operations being universally incompatible with ski areas. These outcomes depend on site conditions and management. Please evaluate this operation and compare existing forage with the productivity, accessibility, recovery time, and invasive-plant risks of proposed graded and revegetated areas. References to the area as pristine describe its largely undeveloped character for ski-resort infrastructure, while recognizing its existing roads, grazing, and recreation uses.

Our request for a written, enforceable assurance (Original Letter, p. 1) is clarified as a request for specific protections in the decision and applicable resort authorizations: livestock passage, gates and fencing, stockwater access, construction scheduling, advance notice, restoration standards, and responsibility for repairs. Please establish monitoring and corrective-action requirements. Annual coordination should implement those protections rather than defer evaluation of material effects until construction.

3. Water concerns rest on unresolved effects and identified supply deficits.

We correct the statement on page 3 of the Original Letter that snowmaking provides no aquifer recharge. The relevant question is how much water returns to which aquifer or watershed, and when. The Draft EIS acknowledges that necessary groundwater investigation was not completed and that the specific affected resources and the magnitude, location, and timing of effects remain unknown. Its planning-level 20-percent snowmaking loss factor does not measure total depletion of the source aquifer or establish that the remaining water returns to it. These uncertainties also apply to Alternative Four. (Draft EIS, pp. 124, 129-130, 134, 138.)

Our farm depends on underground water rights and pumping in Parowan Valley. We request investigation of potential connections between resort withdrawals, mountain recharge, and existing wells and springs. Our statements about slope exposure, snow retention, and increased snowmaking should be evaluated as concerns requiring site-specific analysis, rather than treated as measured estimates of future water demand.

The Draft EIS identifies the following annual snowmaking demand and dedicated supply under its stated planning assumptions. The dedicated-supply comparison is distinct from the legal volume of water rights. (Table 3.7-3, p. 124.)

Alternative Total demand
(acre-feet)

Dedicated supply
(acre-feet)

Shortfall
(acre-feet)
Two 496.6 393.3 103.3
Three 496.6 393.3 103.3
Four 403.0 393.3 9.7

Alternative Four reduces demand but does not resolve every supply or groundwater issue. Please identify reliable supply, explain how any deficit would be addressed, and evaluate seasonal pumping and drought-year conditions. Complete the investigation needed to assess effects on existing water users and groundwater-dependent resources, disclose the findings for meaningful public review before the final decision, and establish measurable monitoring and corrective measures.
We also correct our description of the water-change process (Original Letter, p. 3). Utah Code § 73-3-3(5) places an evidentiary burden on the applicant; a subjective assertion alone does not state that standard. Required state approvals remain important. The Draft EIS identifies change applications and restrictions on certain snowmaking ground disturbance pending approval. (P. 125.) Please retain those requirements and explain how the federal decision will address the hydrologic uncertainties identified in the EIS.

4. Multiple-use policy and existing access rights.
We clarify the reference to a multiple-use law from the 1970s (Original Letter, p. 2) by relying here on the Multiple-Use Sustained-Yield Act of 1960, 16 U.S.C. §§ 528-531. It recognizes recreation, range, watershed, and other purposes and does not require management to maximize financial returns. It also does not guarantee every existing use on every acre. Our position is that Alternative Four better accommodates the competing uses and values identified in our comments.
Our statements that snowmobile and livestock routes cannot be restricted or are categorically beyond Forest Service jurisdiction (Original Letter, pp. 4-5) require qualification. We request identification and protection of valid existing access rights, supported by the applicable records and law. Historic use and county designations should be examined, but their existence alone should not be treated as establishing immunity from all federal regulation. We do not intend this clarification to relinquish any valid right held by an affected party.

5. Public access, transportation, and local economic effects.
The Original Letter's statements that Dry Lakes Road necessarily would be plowed year-round (pp. 2-4) describe a concern requiring clarification. Please identify proposed winter service methods, whether plowing would occur, the resulting effects on snowmobiling and livestock access, and who would bear maintenance and safety costs. We likewise qualify the statement that hunting cannot occur in a ski resort (p. 5): please evaluate the actual restrictions, displacement, and user conflicts associated with this proposal.
The Draft EIS itself identifies five miles of state-managed snowmobile route elimination under Alternatives Two and Three and rerouting through Brian Head Town. Alternative Four avoids that route elimination. (Table 2.3-1, p. 38; pp. 51-53.) Please assess route continuity, road crossings, public and outfitter access, and temporary and permanent restrictions on roads and trails. The avoidance of those changes remains a substantial reason for our support of Alternative Four.
Our economic statements (Original Letter, p. 3) express concern about local costs and

seasonal vulnerability; they should not be treated as quantified findings about tourism multipliers or how much spending leaves the community. Please explain whether the EIS's traffic and socioeconomic analyses adequately account for Parowan Canyon and Parowan, peak seasonal conditions, emergency access, construction, and reasonably foreseeable development. Identify needed improvements, responsibility for costs, effects on existing businesses, and the sensitivity of projected benefits to low-snow years.

6. Historic resources, wilderness, and neighboring private property.
We retain our concern for the Sorrel Trail and original Jensen Sawmill site known as the Cedar setting, associated in our family's history with the construction of Southern Utah University's original buildings. The absence of their names from the public EIS does not itself establish that they were omitted from the cultural resource inventory. Please confirm whether these specific resources and their settings were evaluated and identify appropriate protection measures, using direct coordination for sensitive information. (Original Letter, p. 4; Draft EIS, pp. 97-99.)
Our reference to invasion of Ashdown Gorge Wilderness (Original Letter, p. 4) is clarified as concern about development adjacent to the boundary and its indirect effects. Appendix A describes the Dry Lakes Pod as abutting the wilderness, with limited anticipated visual and noise effects and potential invasive-plant spread. (Draft EIS, p. 152.) We do not assert that the proposal authorizes construction inside the wilderness. Please substantiate the anticipated effects and the effectiveness of protective measures.

Our concerns about nearby private property remain. We request analysis of potential trespass, noise, drainage changes, fencing, and interference with existing access. Our earlier wording should not be read as asserting that resort approval itself grants access across our private property. Our family's connection to Brian Head Peak, including Charles Burton's work on the original overlook, also remains an important basis for preserving its scenic and historic character.

7. Requested action and treatment of these supplemental comments.
We respectfully request that the Forest Service:
(a) Consider this supplement together with the Original Letter, applying the specific corrections and qualifications above while addressing the underlying concerns.
(b) Select Alternative Four with its exclusion of the Navajo Ridge to Dry Lakes Pod and omission of the Peak Lift and Ridge Lifts 1 and 2.
(c) Provide the requested grazing, groundwater, supply, access, and other analyses and respond to each numbered issue in the Final EIS.
(d) Incorporate specific protections, responsible parties, monitoring, and corrective-action requirements into the decision and applicable authorizations.
Our family supports a reasonable compromise that accommodates resort growth while protecting the land, water, working operations, public access, and heritage on which our community depends. These clarifications are intended to make our concerns more precise and useful to the decision-making process. Thank you for considering this supplement.

Respectfully submitted,

Burton Ranches LLC
Burton Land and Livestock LLC

David M. Burton and Deia P. Burton Family Living Trust

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David M. Burton

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Deia P. Burton

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David M. Burton Jr.

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Brandon P. Burton

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Aleshea B. Willis

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Crystal B. Francks