



PROSPERITY NORTH

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May 23, 2020

Connie Cummins
Forest Supervisor, Superior National Forest
c/o Michael Jiminez, Project Leader
8901 Grand Avenue Place
Duluth, MN 55808

Subject: Comments on the Lutsen Mountains Ski Area Expansion Project

Dear Connie:

At their meeting on May 12, 2020, the board of the Cook County/Grand Marais Economic Development Authority (EDA) approved a motion to send a letter of support for the Lutsen Mountains Ski Area Expansion Project. The vote was four in favor, two opposed and one absent. The motion carried. Those opposed expressed concerns regarding 1854 Treaty Rights.

Research indicates that 80% of the Cook County economy relates to tourism. Lutsen Mountains is the largest attraction to Cook County in the winter. Our community depends on the success of the ski area which brings visitors and spending at local businesses. Lodging, dining, shopping, transportation rely on these guests to support their year-round enterprises and the jobs they provide.

The components of the proposed expansion achieve recreational goals in the Superior National Forest land management plan, enhance socio-economic benefits to the community, and address longstanding needs at Lutsen Mountains in a way that is environmentally and economically sustainable.

Lutsen Mountains has a long and well-respected history in the ski industry. Generations of families and friends have traveled here to enjoy the experience. The recreational opportunities offered at Lutsen Mountains complement the summer activities that attract visitors to the North Shore. This enables us to enjoy year-round business, employment, and tax revenue. Our “shoulder season” is consistently getting shorter. A strong economy has made it possible for many local businesses to offer higher wages and benefits to their employees.

We understand that the Lutsen Mountains Ski Area Expansion will include design details to protect scenic qualities and minimize impacts on old growth, wildlife, soils, and wetlands. The process will also include consultation with the Forest Service and Grand Portage Band of Lake Superior Chippewa and other tribes to address and mitigate their concerns.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide this letter of support for the Lutsen Mountains Ski Area Expansion Project. Please contact me if there are any questions or if I can be of assistance in any way.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Mary Somnis". The signature is fluid and includes a decorative flourish at the end.

Mary Somnis
Executive Director