

May 22, 2020

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

Subject: Comments on the Lutsen Mountains Ski Area Expansion Project

Dear Ms. Cummins:

I am pleased to provide this letter of support for the Lutsen Mountains Ski Area expansion project. Since 2015, I have served as the commissioner of the Department of Iron Range Resources & Rehabilitation, a State of Minnesota development agency located in Eveleth, Minnesota. Our mission is to invest resources to foster vibrant growth and economic prosperity in northeastern Minnesota.

The Lutsen Mountains Ski Area expansion project ties in well with our agency's efforts to enhance livable communities in the region. I believe this project will improve the quality of life in the region by diversifying winter recreational opportunities. The anticipated increase in winter visitation will also have a positive economic impact in Cook County and the surrounding area.

In addition, our agency owns Giants Ridge Resort Area in Biwabik, a four-season recreation destination. Although Giants Ridge is managed by a hospitality management company, I know first-hand the importance of making strategic investments in the enterprise to improve the overall guest experience and ensure future viability. The Lutsen Mountains Ski Area project will increase the facility's competitiveness and survival in the Midwest ski area market, while improving the regional quality of life. I strongly urge approval of this worthwhile project.

Sincerely,



Mark R. Phillips
Commissioner