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First name: Peter

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Organization:

Title:

Comments: Dear Scott Fitzwilliams-

I am writing to express my concerns about the proposed expansion to Vail Mountain at Golden Peak. Being that Vail already stretches over 5 thousand acres and is the third largest ski resort in North America, I find myself asking when Vail Resorts will be satisfied with the extent of its boundaries or whether expansion will be sought indefinitely. In particular, I am concerned about the impacts on wildlife habitat. Deer and elk populations have already suffered due to habitat fragmentation and disturbance from recreation as Vail, Vail Resort and the communities in the valley have expanded. The disturbance to wildlife is not simply limited to the boundaries of the resort either. Skiers are increasingly using Vail's lifts and a bit of human power to access out of bounds terrain in East Vail and elsewhere. Furthermore, skiers have been shown to disturb elk behavior from as far as 1500 yards away. This expansion would not simply impact the 40 acres that would be subject to development but would impact wildlife much further away. Breeding habits of the Minturn and Vail deer and elk herds have already been so heavily impacted that the state has resorted to culling bears and mountain lions. It's time for humans to take some responsibility for declining populations of these iconic species by checking our expansion into their breeding habitat. Thanks you for taking the time to consider my comments.

Sincerely,

Peter Wadden