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First name: Karen

Last name: Ghent

Organization: Ski and Snowboard Club Vail

Title: Alpine Program Director

Comments: Dear Mr. Fitzwilliams,

Thank you for the opportunity to comment both in person at the public meeting April 6th and through this comment forum.

I am the Alpine Program Director at Ski and Snowboard Club Vail. I have read and heard many of the comments, both for and against this project and hope that my perspective may provide additional details that further describe the reason for the request for action to complete this project.

Ski and Snowboard Club Vail (referred to as "the racing community" in many comments) appreciates the necessity to preserve the natural environment and protect the watershed. We support the Forest Service requirements and encourage compliance with environmental protection measures. After all, there would be no ski racing without the beautiful mountains and snow on which to race.

BUSY TRAINING VENUE

I am responsible with organizing the training on Gold Peak. We have extensive partnerships with the local schools and Vail Resorts, working to provide training during times that work within the mountain operating hours and the school day. We have no plans to increase the membership, as there is barely enough room on Gold Peak as it exists today to train those we have, to the standards an elite ski club requires. Of the roughly 135 days of possible training on the Gold Peak race venue, SSCV training was displaced from the Gold Peak Main Arena approximately 75 days. This constitutes over half our available training days, either due to preparation for or production of events on Gold Peak, further limiting the available training terrain for our local athletes. While we have designed an adequate system that organizes training, this expansion would significantly ease the congestion on the training venue and reduce the risk potential to our young athletes.

CORRECTIONS TO CONCERNS

In response to the Vail Homeowners concerns, I respectfully correct two misstatements in their opinion piece posted in the Vail Daily on April 14, 2017. The training and racing on the proposed venue would not "convert Golden Peak into an international level ski venue with year-long racing and training". The season would remain as it is currently - no change there.

Second, the finish arena would not require lengthening. We currently race and train Downhill and Super G events on Golden Peak with adequate room to stop at the finish. This expansion would allow for training and racing that meets International venue requirements for Downhill and Super G of vertical drop from start to finish, thus providing our athletes with more realistic preparation for the events in which they will be competing. Speeds will not change.

The ski club, which provides athletic training to over 600 local children also promotes the healthy lifestyle that this mountain community enjoys. We have grown to our current size because we are recognized as a leading ski club in the country and the world. We also pride ourselves on providing the community with a youth organization that is dedicated to fostering a passion for snow sports in the children of this great mountain resort. Seeing the completion of this ski area plan would enable the ski club to continue to offer the quality programming that parallels the quality of the Vail brand.

Sincerely, Karen Ghent