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First name: Eleanor

Last name: Finlay

Organization:

Title:

Comments: I am opposed to the proposed expansion of facilities at Golden Peak in Vail.

1) It has been well documented that the wildlife in Eagle County is in a tailspin. Elk, Deer and Moose herds are declining at an alarming rate and this is happening so fast that it is undetermined exactly what the cause is. Also, birds and other wildlife in our county are declining. The best guess is that all this harm to the wildlife is caused by stress on the animals due to human causes. Habitat loss is probably the number one cause, but also the fact that humans do not honor trail closures, nor do most people keep dogs on a leash (or in human voice control) when in the mountains. Mountain bikes which now are in the backcountry even in the winter are an extreme threat. If humans or dogs even cause wildlife to have to get up and move,(even if not at a run,) the wild animal may not survive the winter due to extra calorie loss. This expansion will cause additional pressure on wildlife both in terms of loss of habitat and in terms of a longer season of high intensity activity at high elevations on the mountain.

2) WATER. There is not one person I know who is not worried about water! We are getting less snow, shorter winters, overwhelming increases in usage due to population growth and sustained drought conditions in every season. To allocate a huge amount of water to additional snow making seems reckless and unwise...even unethical.

3) Air quality. Cutting down more and more trees in Eagle county takes away the natural air cleaning mechanism that trees provide, not to mention habitat for birds who can not survive without the forest.

4) Quality of life. Most of us came to Eagle County for the lifestyle and that is dependant on being able to enjoy activities that get us out into nature. Quiet, solitude, exercise, ability to enjoy wildlife quietly in their setting and adventure in a pristine setting is vital to quality of life. Unfettered development is threatening all this. I see poorly regulated (or non regulated) development all over the county without proper consideration to whether the infrastructure can support it. I see devopment that fails to consider the needs of wildlife and habitat.

I see that Vail Resorts seems to have record quarters again and again. The wildlife and habitat suffers more and more. I do not think the bottom line of the corporation is more important than the natural environment.

I strongly oppose this expansion.