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First name: Jim

Last name: Cordes

Organization:

Title:

Comments: Deny the development of 500 acres of public land

Our family is a neighbor to the Lutsen Mountain Ski Area. We strongly appose the the development of 500 acres of public land for the following reasons:

As a family living in our location for the last 20 years we have seen hundreds of acres of forest land developed in our area both on Lake Superior's shore and elsewhere. The Forest Service should do it's part to help maintain the environment expected by the public of this National Forest area. Since we built our homes here we have dealt with the Forest service regarding access and fees. We are allowed only one small access to our land which causes hardship to us and now to see a possibility of 500 acres of public land going into a commercially owned business seems very discriminatory.

Cook County cannot bear the additional tourists attracted by this expansion. The law enforcement, road upkeep, health care (every winter we see many skiing customers brought to the Grand Marais hospital and flown or driven to Duluth), also lodging facilities for more tourists as well as lodging for more ski hill workers. We hear all of the time that Cook county cannot furnish housing for even the new residents or workers that we have here now. Cook County has few full time residents to pick up the taxes for the Counties current infrastructure. For the Forest Service to cause us to pay more to support the ski area would be a big mistake, raising taxes causing old time residents, like ourselves to leave their homes.

Minnesota has few areas of rare "Old Growth" forest land. The "Old Growth" maple forest considered to be given to commercial interests will even further reduce this important rare Minnesota treasure and would surely degrade the status of a adjacent State SNA which was recently donated to the State by a local land owner. Foreign commercial interests are looking at harvesting maple stands in our area. These tracts of maple, once thought of as being of little commercial value have been now found to be of commercial value. I understand that Japanese or other commercial interests will be or are pressuring the USDA for access to these area stands. To allow the transfer of this rare tract of land to the Ski Hill will even further degrade our once beautiful and wild Superior National Forest area.

Thank you for denying this development request.

James Cordes Lutsen

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