Data Submitted (UTC 11): 6/8/2020 6:39:51 PM
First name: Ben
Last name: Cross
Organization: Snowmobile Adventures LLC.
Title: Owner
Comments: I own and operate Snowmobile Adventures LLC. Snowmobile Adventures is a permit holder within the San Juan National Forest Columbine ranger district, Upper Hermosa compartment.

I oppose the current ice creek expansion plan. This will directly impact our operations as a permit holder within our operating permit. The proposed expansion plan area also affects all other backcountry users looking to access their public lands. Last but not least there would be a major negative impact on the local environment in a prime habitat.

I feel that before any decisions on this are made there needs to be a safe re route for all backcountry users to access public lands. The current access is called or referred to as the "snowmobile by-pass". It is a trail made for backcountry users to access public lands. This in return re routes them off of FS 578 "Pinkerton Toll Road" which is the main access point through spring summer fall. This was done so FS 578 could be closed and be used as more beginner down hill ski terrain for Purgatory customers. I feel when the "by-pass" was created it was rushed and not engineered correctly. This resulted in an unsafe access trail for all backcountry users. The "by-pass" is too steep and has too sharp of corners for our clientele and the majority of all other backcountry users to safely access there public lands. The by-pass was also built with the majority of the trail facing south which creates poor and unsafe conditions. Either the by-pass needs to be completely re engineered and re built and set to the same gradient as FS 578 or FS 578 should go back to being the main year round access point and have a re direct around the proposed ice creek area at the top.

I am also concerned with removing any more habitat within an area as special as the Hermosa Creek headwaters area. This is a very rugged area with 30 ft. cliff bands that cut through the middle of the proposed terrain. This rugged area is surrounded by low angle which makes sense for the development but also keep in mind this is a safe zone for local habitat.

I do agree Purgatory needs to address the issues of not having enough beginner ski terrain, but there are other issues that need to be dealt with beforehand. The geography of the ski area is unique and presents many challenges. But with good planning, communication, and development everyone including the moose that lives in ice creek can come out ahead!

Last but not least remember the sign that is directly within the proposed area.

'Let no one say it(And say it to your shame)That all was beauty here Until you came'