

Data Submitted (UTC 11): 3/18/2021 12:41:08 AM

First name: Anthony

Last name: Albright

Organization:

Title:

Comments: I would like to give my account of an event that occurred during my employment at Purgatory as a snow-maker/ laborer. During the winter of 2017/2018 (at my best estimate), there existed a snow-making project on the backside of the resort where a mile long water line had frozen solid. To thaw the line, a dual engine, diesel powered glycol heater/ pump was rented and drug out to the Purgatory Creek wetlands. The machine had 1000 feet of garden hose rolled up on spools in which the glycol was pumped through, and the snow-makers would unspool the hose and wrap it around the frozen water line. When the water line had thawed, we would drain the water, respool the glycol hose, and move the heater/ pump machine down the line and repeat the process with the next frozen section. This process was time consuming, but it had been deemed the only way to thaw the line. The General Manager was rushing crews to move the thawing process along, and his idea was to have someone step on the glycol hose while the heater/ pump machine drove through the willows surrounding Purgatory Creek. The glycol hose (2 lengths of 500 ft. hose no more than a garden hose with multiple threaded connection points) broke under stress. Glycol was spewing out of the ends so we shut the machine off. The General Manager (at that time) taped the broken ends of hose back together with electrical tape and told us to continue unraveling and setting up the thawing machine. We did so, and then our shift was over, so we changed shifts with the next crew. The next day I showed up to my shift to find out that the electrical tape fix had failed the previous night. Inevitably, glycol spilled into the wetlands before this was discovered. I don't believe anything was reported or done to contain the spill.

The reason I share this story in particular is because it is one example of negligence on behalf of the ski resort to expand their profits with little or no regard for the land they operate on. I have felt guilt ever since that event for not blowing a whistle back then. I had tried to warn Yeoman of the fact that the hose was overly stressed and may break. I was disturbed to find out that we may have severely hurt the fish and wildlife population around Purgatory Creek, and possibly poisoned the headwaters of the Hermosa Creek watershed.

I believe the operations managers receive a lot pressure from the resort owner and Mountain Capitol Partners investors to expand and improve ski terrain, but also to keep labor costs to a bare minimum. The forest and employees get the short sticks when MCP runs the game. I have no reason to believe that the organization will handle this expansion of terrain into Ice Creek responsibly, and I doubt they have ever had any regard for the effects that ski mountain operation has on wildlife or vegetation in the area.