

Data Submitted (UTC 11): 3/30/2021 4:25:36 PM

First name: Tannia

Last name: Esparza

Organization:

Title:

Comments: I'm writing to express my opposition to the Sandia Peak Mountain Coaster Project. As a longtime advocate, community organizer and community builder alongside people across the state, I know that when communities who are directly impacted by decisions about their lives, are not at the center of decision making, efforts to move projects forward are harmful as a result of the huge disconnect to community.

While this project sounds like an economic investment toward potential revenue, it lacks a foundational and ethical responsibility to include and center the Pueblo of Sandia, the current and ancestral stewards of this sacred land in these decisions. The environmental harm-including additional displacement of plant and animal life, required to dig the foundations for the proposed structures, will have long term impacts to the people who live with and honor this land. The mountain already creates an abundant environment for recreation year round. During our pandemic year, it's received and increase in visitors who are able to access it because it remains accessible at minimal to no cost. I urge the forest service to meaningfully engage Sandia Pueblo in its decision making, encourage public engagement with the mountain in ways that honor the relationship to the land stewarded by our Indigenous Communities, find creative projects that encourage our communities' relationship to the mountain in culturally and environmentally responsible ways.