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First name: Miya

Last name: King-Flaherty

Organization:

Title:

Comments:

To Bryan West, Project Manager:

I am commenting in response to this proposed project that I strongly object to--the Mountain Coaster in the Sandia Peak Ski Area. Most concerning, Cibola National Forest is considering granting the proposal a Categorical Exclusion under the National Environmental Policy Act -- i.e., not conducting any environmental review.

Additionally, I oppose this project for the following reasons:

The coaster will be within view and earshot of beloved trails such as the Crest and 10K.

-- The project is proposed to build on and around the current ski footprint. Can the landscape handle an increase in traffic in a such small area? In year one, the Mountain Coaster is estimated to have 75,000 to 100,000 riders. The Sandia Peak Tramway transports 250,000 visitors annually up and down the western slope of the Sandia Mountains and already operates at maximum capacity during most weekends and holidays. Tell the Forest Service these questions must be addressed.

-- The Mountain Coaster would be built near the Sandia Wilderness Area and operate year-round, hugely impacting wildlife. The following threatened or endangered species may be present: New Mexico meadow jumping mouse; Mexican spotted owl; Southwestern willow flycatcher; and Yellow-billed cuckoo. If the USFS issues a categorical exclusion there will be NO ANALYSIS on wildlife impact. Tell the Forest Service it must complete an Environmental Assessment.

-- The construction of this coaster will require the cutting of trees in the project area, which should be spelled out clearly to analyze the impact on the natural resource and the loss to carbon storage. We need our forest, especially in these times of drought.

Allowing for this proposed project to go through is not responsible stewardship of our forest and for the reasons above, I strongly oppose this moving forward.

Thank you,

Miya