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Organization:

Title:

Comments: I am writing to express my concerns about the proposed Sandia Mountain Ski Area Mountain Coaster Construction.

I oppose this project because:

1) The construction of the track will disrupt plant and animal life in an area already under stress from many visitors and man-made structures. An increase in visitors will also increase strain on the area- inevitably increasing litter, pollution from cars, damage to plant life, and disruption of animals.

2) The noise from the coaster will disrupt the serenity of the area for hikers and bikers, thereby decreasing tourism value rather than increasing it.

The Forest Service website states that comments which propose alternative solutions will be given more consideration than those that simply express opposition. This is understandable. However, I would like to point out that there is not actually a compelling problem in need of a solution here. The stated need for the project is to give visitors more to do year round and offer an activity for people who don't want to do more active things.

But there is a road going all the way to the top of the mountain, a tram that also goes to the ridge, a restaurant, picnic tables, and scenic viewpoints. There are plenty of ways to passively enjoy the mountain.

Having said that, here are some alternative ideas for improving visitor experience, especially for those not looking for an athletic experience:

Add a few more picnic areas in the pull off areas.

Hire local artists and educators to do nature education programming for children and adults (learning to know and love the ecology of a place is a big thrill- no skill required).

Thank you for your time and consideration.

I sincerely hope that at the very least an EIS will be required before further decisions are made. To but so so would be irresponsible and disrespectful to the public, who count on the forest service to protect public land.