

Data Submitted (UTC 11): 4/16/2021 11:00:00 AM

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Comments: I am writing to express my opposition to the above referenced project in the Sandia Mountains. This facility, if built, will be scarcely 800 feet away from the 10K South hiking trail, one of the most scenic of the trails on the east side of the mountain, and one that provides important access to other trails in the network. The noise generated by people using the coaster will carry for a long distance and will destroy any sense of solitude for hikers and bikers using this trail. The Sandias are not Cliff's Amusement Park or the New Mexico State Fair. They provide an important respite from an increasingly busy and noisy world.

The existence of mountain coasters in the Colorado Rockies has been used as a justification for putting one here. However, the two environments are not comparable. The Rockies are a huge mountain range, tens of miles across. A handful of facilities like this in the Rockies has a negligible impact on a mountain range that is so vast. On the other hand, the Sandias are a small "sky island" surrounded by high desert and human development, and are thus very vulnerable to proposals like this one. This fact was recognized by Congress back in the 1970s when the Sandia Mountain Wilderness was created. While the Ski Area lies outside the Wilderness itself, the noise and activity it will generate will impact the nearby Wilderness.

There are already plenty of activities available to people in that part of the Sandias that do not involve hiking or biking. There is the Tram, the new and improved restaurant, the Crest Highway, and the Ski Area. We do not need another commercial activity in this part of our mountain.