

Data Submitted (UTC 11): 10/1/2021 7:13:25 PM

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Organization:

Title:

Comments: I have skied all over the country, I'm a backcountry skier and a resort skier. I believe that there needs to be more options for backcountry skiing in the midwest. It's rare to find that sort of terrain in Minnesota. Moose mountain provides that opportunity.

This terrain is also used by trail runners, SHT hikers, and other outdoor enthusiasts who want to enjoy trails in undeveloped forests. This proposed project would negatively impact these multi-season recreation opportunities and scenery.

Tourism isn't solely reliant on the ski industry. The outdoor recreation economy relies on multi-use recreation opportunities, with developed and undeveloped forests. If Lutsen would like to expand their business, they can explore alternative options for snow sports and summer activities within their private land. Or work with the backcountry ski community to provide better access and education into the backcountry.

The Superior National Forest is a carbon sink, a vital natural asset in the fight against climate change, with the boreal forests in this woodland storing more carbon than any other terrestrial ecosystem. We have to protect this unique landscape, for climate, wildlife habitat, water quality and outdoor recreation.

I am writing to ask that you deny permission to Lutsen Mountains to develop pristine public lands with chairlifts, parking lots, base facilities and on-mountain chalets for commercial use. Moose Mountain is some of the best and only terrain for backcountry skiing, Nordic touring and other sustainable, public-access winter recreation in Minnesota.

Some of my concerns with the current Draft EIS are:

- * The Purpose and Need statement is too narrow. It doesn't consider a variety of skier uses, such as backcountry and sidecountry, or other non-skiing uses.
- * The evidence does not support the need for expansion and would cause environmental harm.
- * Commercial expansion would reduce equitable access to a limited resource on public lands: vertical terrain, untracked snow, quiet forests (not just for skiers but also for family snowplay, snowshoeing and any other non-fee activities)
- * Based on climate goals set by the current administration, we need to be protecting 30% of our lands rather than developing them

Please do not approve the proposed Special Use Permit for a Lutsen Mountains Resort expansion. Leave the terrain and our public lands the way they are.

Thank you for your consideration.