Data Submitted (UTC 11): 10/5/2021 9:21:47 PM
First name: Zack
Last name: Gatton
Organization:
Title:
Comments: Hi,

My name is Zack and I currently do not live in Minnesota, but I do no think the forest service should approve the special use permit for Lutsen expansion. My entire childhood an the majority of my adult life was spent growing up in Minnesota. I spent

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. I grew up in Minnesota spending my winters snowboarding and taking advantage of our cold winters. I spent countless afternoons riding at Buck Hill in Burnsville and Hyland Hills in Bloomington honing my skills and developing my love for the sport.

Like many however, I realized quickly that larger mountains and hills are much more prevalent when you head further West in the U.S. Every winter I would take one or two trips to states like Wyoming, Montana and Colorado for a big mountain trip where the vertical is plentiful and so is the snowfall. It was on these trips that I also discovered the joys of exploring the backcountry. It was thrilling to go into untamed areas and put down new lines where others had not gone. It gave me a new appreciation of how special our public lands are and how refreshing snowboarding and skiing can be when there are no chairlifts, no chalets, no sign of human interference other than the people out there exploring.

With this new knowledge and appreciation for the backcountry I returned home to Minnesota and tried to find a little slice of backcountry in the Midwest and I found it in Superior National Forest at places like Moose mountain. Our state is blessed with many things, but tall mountains is not one of them, which is why Moose mountain is all the more special. In a state where most large hills have been developed into ski areas, Moose has remained wild. It is a hidden gem that only the ones truly willing to explore know about.

In the last year I was blessed to find a job in the Pacific Northwest and now I get to live in an area with a huge wealth of areas to explore the backcountry and I really appreciate how even the resorts here respect the backcountry. They leave areas alone for those who are willing to really put in the effort and skin up a slope for a chance at fresh powder.

Minnesota does not have an abundance of places to explore the backcountry like the PNW or the Rockies and because of that we need to really hold onto and protect the few places where someone growing up or living in Minnesota can get a little slice of the true wild and backcountry. I hope you take this into consideration and protect Moose mountain going forward.

Thank you for your consideration.