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Organization:

Title:

Comments: I am a resident of Minnesota, an active ski instructor, a frequent visitor to the Tofte and Lutsen area in all seasons, and a member/supporter/hiker of the Superior Hiking Trail. My comments focus the following subjects:

1. The accuracy of the references toward acceptance or agreement of partners such as The Superior Hiking Trail Association (SHTA).
2. The use/impact to the Superior National Forest lands of Alternative 2 and 3.
3. The degree of risks to the environment and the region should Lutsen Mountain Resort 's plans not be achieved.

Regarding item 1, I have reviewed the recent published position paper/comments of the SHTA from October 18, 2021 which cites a number of inaccuracies and issues that do not represent or agree with their positions. In addition, the financial impacts or costs to SHTA of possible re-routes do not meet or agree with their understanding. As a result, I stand with SHTA's position in opposition of Alternatives 2 or 3.

As a member of SHTA, I want to ensure that there be no adverse financial responsibility falling on them. Furthermore, if the EIS over, under, or mistakenly states impacts of other partners, constituents, or resources impacted in the project, then I question the overall validity of the EIS.

On item 2, as a ski instructor, I believe that the acreage of 450 to 460 of NFS lands under Alternatives 2 or 3 of the SUP is too much land to risk for what I believe to be a project over 20 years of development with a flawed projection of future skier visits. In addition, I question how Lutsen will be able to meet the huge increase in FTE's needed to staff either of the expansion alternatives. Certainly, population will increase in Cook County, but I would expect that to be a number of older residents, many of whom would not want to work in a challenging winter, outside environment. Having visited this area over the last 10 years, most businesses have not had sufficient employees to meet and serve customers. I do not see that situation changing given all the current political and economic issues now or in the next 10 years. As a US taxpayer, I am opposed to the large number of acres of forest lands to be developed in these proposals. In addition, I do not support the expansion as one that meets my definition of stewardship of our national forests and natural resources.

Regarding item 3, I do not see any references or plans for remediation or recovery of lands once committed to the alternatives 2 or 3. I believe we are of the precipice of climate crisis which continues to change our state, nation, or world. Land, water, vegetation, and wildlife will all be impacted as the EIS clearly states should development take place. I see no references to costs associated with development, or investments that NFS is requesting on behalf of Lutsen for this project. Nor, do I see any pledge of an 'escrow' account should this project not be completed to the scale envisioned, or if damage (foreseen or unforeseen) during the development. Absent this information, I cannot support the expansion alternatives.