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First name: Harvey

Last name: Sobieck

Organization:

Title:

Comments: To the Forest Supervisor

I have several concerns regarding this proposed project. My gravest concern is the erosion/sedimentation that will occur to the drainages and wetlands below the area that will be cleared for the ski runs, roads, etc. The nearby Poplar River has just been taken off the impaired water quality list after having a massive 3 million dollar restoration project (2/3 of the funding coming from state and federal funds which mean taxpayer dollars). The MPCA report listed the river was impaired due to sedimentation from natural and human development in the form of ski runs, roads, parking lots, etc. What would the permittee do to keep this from happening again? Your analysis shows that 56-62% of the acreage to be developed as having a Severe to Very Severe erosion rating.

I also would like to know how the proposed permit area will be delineated on the ground. I spoke to a local land surveyor who told me that due to a lack of monumented corners in this specific area that a rather large survey would have to be completed in order to restore the necessary corners needed to delineate the permit boundary properly. The Forest Service cannot manage its land properly if it doesn't know its own boundaries.

Lastly I am very skeptical about the data given regarding the number of skiers per day currently (approximately 2850) and that they project a 3% yearly increase to up to over 6000 skiers a day in 20-25 years. They say now at certain times the lifts and parking lots exceed current capacity. How many days does this happen in an approximately 120 day ski season. 10? 15? I have personally been at the ski hill where there are only a few chairlifts running and very few skiers on the slopes. Do we really need to expand this ski area for so few "crowded" days. Also everyone knows about the lack of adequate housing now in Cook County. How will they solve the housing problem for the increased number of employees needed for this expansion?

For these reasons (and I know there are many others) I do not believe the Lutsen Ski Hill expansion should be permitted to commence via a Forest Service Special Use Permit. Please pick Alternative 1 (no change) in your decision. Thank you.