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Organization:

Title:

Comments: I am writing in opposition of expansion of the privately owned Lutsen Mountain Resort (LMR), into the publicly owned US Nation Forest Land for reasons listed below:

LMR claims a project justification is: 1.) Construct additional traditionally cleared alpine ski trails and undeveloped, minimally maintained lift-served terrain to address the current deficit in beginner and expert terrain and to enhance the existing terrain variety and skiing experiences at Lutsen Mountains.

Comment: LMR should be able to find small areas to construct new beginner trails on their property. The need for expert ski trails for expert skiers does not justify the 'irreplaceable loss of 220 acres' of public forest land. Expert skiers would likely go to the Rocky Mountains.

LMR claims a project justification is: 2.) Improve skier circulation and reliable snow conditions, particularly on Eagle Mountain and Moose Mountain.

Comment: If the ski hills are at or near capacity, then the owners should be happy and simply limit the number of skiers to a certain number each day. It means the owners are not in an operational deficit, without an expansion. Also, the justification argument for improving reliable snow conditions (new snow making equipment) is not valid, as new snow making equipment can be purchased, without having to expand the site and lose 220 acres of public forest.

LMR claims a project justification is 3.) Improve base area, guest services, and operational facilities to meet the ever-increasing expectations of the local, regional, and destination skier markets.

Comment: LMR should consider a major remodeling of the base area, for their existing site area. The expectations of the local and regional skiers does not justify the permanent loss of 220 forest acres. The US Forest Service should and must consider the racial and economic class of the group (skiers) which will benefit from the loss 220 acres of forest. I believe that the skiing class of people are predominately white, upper-class and/or wealthy. The US Forest Service and/or LMR should answer this question: How will the poor, under-privileged, black, Latino, Indigenous populations benefit from this loss of 220 acres of public? If the only group to benefit from the loss of 220 acres of public forest land are white, upper-class people, then this project should not be approved.

I would like to thank the US Forest Service and Lutsen Mountain Resorts (LMR) for considering my comments.