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Title:

Comments: [External Email]Lutsen Mountains Ski Area Expansion Project

[External Email]

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Mr. Jimenez,

I am writing to voice my opposition to both Alternatives 2 and 3 for the Lutsen Mountains Ski Area Expansion Project. Expansion of the ski operation puts short-term profit and recreational gains ahead of long-term protection of high-quality ecological habitats, including habitats on north-facing slopes that are likely to be extremely important for species as the climate continues to warm in northern Minnesota.

Although I no longer live in Cook County, I am very familiar with the forests within the proposed expansion area. They are some of the most diverse in northern MN. Development of roads, lifts, and ski slopes is not compatible with the need to protect rare plant and animal species in these forests.

The proposed project is extremely likely to introduce non-native plant species and change the microclimate of adjacent forest tracts. The projects will also have adverse impacts on avian communities and disrupt movement of large carnivores which have an important impact on native plant diversity by controlling deer populations.

The best choice to protect the biodiversity of this forest and its enjoyment by the public is to not permit the expansion of the ski area.

Thank you for taking the long-term perspective and the Forest Service's obligation to project native biodiversity into consideration.

Sincerely,
Beth Lynch

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