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Comments: [External Email]Lutsen expansion.

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Re the proposal of Lutsen ski area to acquire additional public land for expansion of downhill skiing. After reading thoughts from both sides I have come to the conclusion that I must strongly oppose the very thought, for several reasons:

1. As a commissioner on the Cook County Planning Commission and Board of Adjustment I participated with many other residents and businesses as well as public hearings to develop our current Land Use Planning Guide from which I quote:

"The Physical Setting: A Wild Land Cook County's blend of diverse natural resources and features, including its climate, attracts people to visit and live in the county and is the foundation for most of its economic activity. The county's distinctiveness is founded upon its relatively low levels of development and population that are enhanced by a sense of undeveloped wildness and remoteness expressed, in part, by the presence of Lake Superior, the Boundary Waters Canoe Area Wilderness, and other large tracts of publicly accessible land. This is furthered by its unique mix of seacoast and forest and lakes and mountains, its large expanses of relatively intact ecosystems, and its relatively unpolluted setting. Although the depth of individuals' understanding of and reaction to the physical setting may vary, there is a broadly shared acceptance of the inherent value of these features and the need to sustain them into the future."

This guide is the basis for which we look at any new use of our resources, we rely on it making decisions for each applicant for a building permit or making adjustments to existing developments. The Lutsen proposal has never been balanced against this document because the land is public now, but if the land becomes private it should be required to meet our land use considerations, my judgement at this point is that it does now and would not.

2. As a former Supervisor for the Cook County Soil and Water District I saw many grandiose plans for expanded recreational opportunities, very few of which earned approval for sustainability of resources. While we worked cooperatively with Lutsen on significant problems in the past, including restoration of the Poplar River and ski slope erosion protection. I have not seen that as a requirement and dealing with it after the fact is unacceptable. Most recently we acted to monitor and stabilize a collapsing hillside on which condos should never have been built. While SWCDs do not make approvals or disapprovals on projects, they do evaluate for the negative potential, sustainability is foremost.

3. As a founding member of the Superior Cycling Association I worked closely with the USFS in developing several mountain bike trails and establishing IMBA standards for a sustainable construction, use and maintenance of those trails, and ultimately to insure that they expanded the use of the forest with the smallest possible impact. The ski hill would take that relationship away in its entirety and replace it with private high impact use for a small select few who can afford it. I think such use is incompatible with Cook County's future.

4. As an AIS Watercraft inspector I have spent many days monitoring Caribou and several other nearby lakes

and seen the heavy impact of concentrated tourist use on the lakes, they ARE becoming more threatened by groups from the larger resorts, water quality is going down, fishing has become poorer, increasing use to a boutique crowd as envisioned by Bryce Cambell will not benefit the county or its most significant resources.

5. As a fixed income full time resident I have concerns about increased utility cost, increased road maintenance costs and property taxes. Living here is already more expensive than it should be, making it more expensive to appeal to the wealthy and privileged is going the wrong way, future recreational land use development must be inclusive, affordable and sustainable, anything less cannot be tolerated.

In summation I believe the only beneficiary of this proposal is Bryce Campbell