Data Submitted (UTC 11): 11/23/2021 4:09:44 PM
First name: Robin
Last name: Vora
Organization:
Title:
Comments: [External Email]Lutsen Mountains Ski Area Expansion Project

[External Email]
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Thank you for the opportunity to comment further on the Lutsen Mountains Ski Area Expansion. I am glad to see Alternative 3 removes some native high value native forest from ski area development. I still believe the proposed expansion of the ski area is over-development and not a good idea. Most of the concerns I stated in my email of May 26, 2020 remain concerns about the project. Please review my list below again. I urge selection of the No-Action Alternative.

Thank you for your time and further consideration.
Robin Vora
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Ely, MN 55731
Tel. 541 598 4143

---------- Forwarded message ---------
From: Robin Vora <robinvora1@gmail.com>
Date: Tue, May 26, 2020 at 7:31 PM
Subject: Lutsen Mountains Ski Area Expansion Project
To: <comments-eastern-superior@usda.gov>

The proposed expansion of Lutsen Mountains ski area onto adjacent National Forest is over-development and generally a bad idea. The problems would be many:
* net loss of valuable forest;
* the forest contain communities ranked by the Minnesota County Biological Survey as being of outstanding statewide biodiversity significance;
* portions of Moose and Eagle Mountains contain important white cedar forests -- a declining ecosystem;
* the addition of glade skiing between the cleared runs will results in loss of understory shrubs and trees over a very wide area;
* the declining and much admired paper birch forest would be further adversely impacted by the stress of opening and thinning of the forest;

* the ski area would be a large, unnatural break in these beautiful mountains, and detract from the Forest Plan goal of a scenic landscape;
* a temporary 142-acre clearcut for forest management would be condemned, 142 acres of permanent clearing with development is unacceptable;
* special use permits should not be granted when there may be alternatives on private land -- added facilities such as restaurants, ski shops, rental facilities, and parking could be provided in town with a shuttle to the existing parking lot;

* the clearings and development will result in runoff into Lake Superior below;

* the clearings, understory removal, roads, and significant increase in human presence will greatly impact wildlife by loss of habitat and direct disturbance;
* the threatened Canada lynx will be adversely impact by the tremendous human intrusion into forest;
* the hills along the North Shore of Lake Superior already have an abundance of recreation impacts, the added cumulative effects of the proposed expansion of Lutsen Ski Area need to be analyzed in detail and are significant;
* the expansion will greatly increase vehicle miles driven and resulting greenhouse gas emission exacerbating climate change warming and increase accidents with loss of human and animals lives (and injury) along the highways providing access to the North Shore;
* energy intensive snow-making and operation of lifts and facilities will result in more fossil fuel emissions from production of the added electricity and contribute to negative climate change; and

* in an area that is warming from climate change it doesn't make sense to invest in intensive snow sports.

I request the U.S. Forest Service analyze all the points I make above in detail. I think it should result in an obvious disapproval of the ski area expansion.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Robin Vora
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