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Comments: Commenting on the proposed projects under consideration at Taos Ski Valley, NM.

1) Generally speaking, I think the proposal for a base-to-base gondola is a sensible adjustment to a long-standing problem. Connecting the base areas via lift will allow several bottlenecks on the mountain (both in terms of chairlift and on-trail conditions) to be greatly reduced. When visitors are actively pursuing the access to the Kachina Basin area, this historically has jammed certain lift access along that route. It also puts a less-than-ideal number of people on the "avalanche road" leaving the top of chair #2 all at the same time; this ski trail is quite narrow, with skiers/boarders of different ability levels present, all trying to head in the same direction. That is less than ideal. Having the gondola will circumvent that bottleneck for both aesthetic and safety goals. Also, the gondola will assist in keeping vehicles off the roads of the surrounding Taos Ski Valley community. In winter those positives are obvious; in summer, such vehicle-reducing aspects improve the overall quality of place in the community as well as reducing the ever-present dust problems of commonplace gravel roads.

2) Replacement of lifts 2 and 8 are overdue at this point. Lift 2 bottlenecks terribly on good snow and/or busy days as visitors use it for access to Kachina Basin (see above comments on gondola) as well as those visitors who actually are interested in utilizing the lift 2 terrain. So you have extensive use by unrelated parties making for a less desirable situation. Lift 8 is slow and laboring and as such makes for an under-utilized area of the mountain. Its time has passed.

3) As I understand the design for the water storage tank, this is not to be accessing/using more water, but instead it is intended for better placement to offer easier (gravity assisted) utilization of water that is already allotted. If that is, indeed, the case, I favor this solution.

4) For nordic skiing and snowshoe trail use, I favor this aspect of recreation as long as no additional facilities are built and the trail system itself is attentive to any stream-side and sensitive vegetation impacts and such.

5) Whistlestop replacement would be a good idea. Not with a larger footprint, necessarily, but with a design that would go up--not out--as in similar footprint with higher-up sun-decks and such. Placement needs to be deliberate to not make the skier/boarder traffic in that area any more dangerous than it already is. If access to both lift 2 and the runs of Whitefeather and Powderhorn can be made safer in this process, that would be a big help. Again...this is already a hazardous traffic area; design needs to mitigate that as best as possible. Could be a challenge. As to another restaurant on the mountain, I'll take a wait-and-see perspective on that. Not sure a major restaurant high up on the mountain is necessary; perhaps something modest to allow folks to get out of the weather and a basic snack.

6) Having an additional hiking trail in the lift 4 area...I don't see any problem with that.