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Comments: Re: Taos Ski Valley Gondola and Other Improvements Project

I want to express support for the Project. I view projects proposed by Taos Ski Valley with appropriately healthy suspicion until I am comfortable that the projects will benefit not only TSV, but will also redound overall to the benefit, and not the detriment, of the Taos community. I believe that the proposed Project satisfies that test.

TSV is a for-profit entity, and as such, it is expected that TSV will try to be at least profitable enough to survive in the long term. The Taos community has a legitimate interest in the long-term survival of TSV, because the community benefits from the ski tourism that TSV generates. Anything that significantly improves the skier experience at TSV should help TSV compete and survive, which should also benefit the Taos community.

The proposed enhancements to the skier experience, as described in the Scoping Letter, are undeniable. Replacing aging Lifts 2 and 8 seems like a no-brainer for the continued effective operation of the resort. Adding the Base-to-Base Gondola and upgrading the mid-mountain food service facilities seems necessary for the resort to remain competitive. I ski at TSV as many as 65-70 days a season and have ridden on the lifts with many IKON Pass visitors from CO, TX and elsewhere who deride the sad state of TSV's lifts and dining facilities. And I can also attest to the fact that the residents of the Taos community who ski at TSV are some of the most outspoken complainers about these facilities.

Permitting snowboarding at TSV made it possible for families and groups with snowboarders to enjoy visiting Taos. Similarly, adding Nordic and Snowshoe Trails and a Lift 4 Hiking Trail should make available alternative activities for groups of tourists that are not composed entirely of Alpine skiers. Or for those-including many residents of the Taos community-who simply would like to engage in those types of alternative activities from time to time.

It goes without saying that water is a scarce and precious commodity in the Taos community. Everyone would like to have more. TSV is proposing a way to get more for itself that apparently does not involve taking more from the rest of the Taos community. This fact is especially important to me, with five acres to irrigate from the Des Montes Ditch in El Prado.

After 40 years of skiing at Taos Ski Valley, I want TSV to survive so that I can continue to enjoy world-class skiing only minutes from my house. I also want the Taos community to continue to benefit the outdoors activities that TSV offers to the Taos community and from the tourism that TSV brings.