

Data Submitted (UTC 11): 3/24/2023 1:57:30 AM

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Organization:

Title:

Comments: Thank you to the Forest Service and Taos Ski Valley for hosting the informational meeting. I live in Taos Ski Valley. Not because I am rich, but because a tiny cabin up there was the only affordable place I could find to rent when my last rental was sold. I have lived in the area for 16 years and have spent much of my time off in the summers hiking the ski valley. I have seen it go through tremendous drought the past couple years. Last summer the Gavilan spring was dry, and cows that were brought to pasture there brought themselves back down looking for water. I know that water is a precious resource in Taos County and is often in short supply, and that many people are concerned about that.

I am in support of the proposed projects at Taos Ski Valley. Being a ski valley resident, I would like to see a robust fire suppression system. The Village of Taos Ski Valley's emergency management plan includes using the TSV base area as a shelter in case of highway 150 being closed. I would like to know that enough water is being stored to keep that emergency plan shelter safe in that event. I hope we don't see fire come that close, but if we do it would be great to have an island of safety for people, animals, and wildlife. I think that developing a Nordic and snowshoeing area is a fabulous idea. That is a relatively low impact way to facilitate people's enjoyment of nature. I think a hiking trail around lift 4 is a wonderful idea. I walk the service road often, and although I love having it to myself, I know it is a beautiful area that many people would enjoy. I don't hike Williams Lake anymore because it is too busy, and diverting some flow from that trail would take some pressure off of the fragile ecosystem there. I absolutely support the Gondola project. In the summer I see the hiker parking overflowing and people parking half a mile down the road. That road is narrow and treacherous, and often not well maintained. In the winter I have seen multiple cars careen down the road out of control, endangering the life of the drivers and anyone they encounter. Offering another option to driving that road for skiing, backcountry skiing, and hiking would be a safer option. It would also take some pressure off of the Village that is already stretched thin trying to upgrade their infrastructure in other areas.

People from all over the country and world come here to enjoy Taos and the mountains. They are not going to go away. We need to be proactive about developing ways for them to enjoy the area while managing their impact and I think that a Gondola, more hiking trails, Nordic and snowshoe trails would do that.