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Comments: I am writing to express my strong opposition to the Environmental Assessment conducted by the Carson National Forest regarding Taos Ski Vally Inc.'s proposal to build a gondola and other resort infrastructure. It is truly terrifying to witness the absolute disregard for the environmental and cultural impacts this project would impart on this land and our beautiful, vibrant, community. Conducting an EA versus an NEPA was your first mistake-most likely an intentional choice. The standards set by a more thorough and comprehensive assessment, such as those set by NEPA, would have given more thought and attention to alternative proposals. It would have given the community an opportunity to weigh in on this monumental decision that affects us all. Such a short sighted approach significantly undermines the assessment, and rings alarm bells on many levels. Moreover, the reliance of a third party contractor suggests that this assessment was not impartial and therefor ultimately only serves the interests of Taos Ski Vally Inc.

Beyond the initial ick of this assessment and how it was conducted, there are some very critical concerns within it that need to be addressed.

Snowmaking and expanding infrastructure will most certainly impact the Rio Hondo Watershed, raising concerns of sustainability as water usage will continue to increase as TSVI continues to grow. This growth will undoubtedly lead to an increase in waste water and septic loads, which could pose serious threats to the quality of our watershed. The EA's assessment fails analyze these potential threats.

The proposed Gondola would pose a direct threat to public access to Williams Lake and Wheeler Peak Wilderness. The potential restriction or outright elimination of driving access to the trailhead would greatly hinder backcountry skiers, hikers, and all outdoor enthusiasts.

In light of these concerns, I strongly urge the Forest Service to hit the pause button. Rewind and conduct a more thorough assessment.

Ask permission from the Indigenous peoples of this land. Ask for input and ideas from the people who actually live here. Consider the wider view, the water, the animals, the economy, climate change. Please don't diminish and destroy this land and its people for profit and power.