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First name: Fabiola D.

Last name: Teter

Organization:

Title:

Comments: James Duran, Forest Supervisor

Sent via CNF's public comment portal at:

<https://cara.fs2c.usda.gov/Public/CommentInput?Project=61390>

Re: Taos Ski Valley Gondola and Other Improvements Projects

Dear Mr. Duran:

I am Fabiola Dominguez Teter. I have lived in Arroyo Hondo, NM my entire life. It is with great sadness that I am commenting to the Taos Ski Valley Gondola and Other Improvements Project. I view this project as a project of total devastation and desecration of our beautiful mountain. In the past it provided joy and peace to those of us who have lived in our communities. As a child I grew up listening to stories shared by my mother about her experiences of Twining as it was known, long before it became Taos Ski Valley. Mother lived to be one hundred years old and often reminisced about those days and visits to relatives and friends that lived and gathered in Twining and all the downstream communities. The times spent picnicking, camping, fishing with family and friends along the Rio Hondo River. A time when one could drink and cook with the pristine clear water that flowed down to Arroyo Hondo and on to the Rio Grand. A time when the children could wade and catch fish by hand, swim and splash, laugh and share in the joy and blessing of a river that sustained every part of their lives. She loved her drives to Twining as she knew it but as it became Taos Ski Valley and began to change, change by the ambition and greed of those who had never known the beauty and peace the mountain offered and the joy of a river that only wanted to continue to flow through the valleys. She saw and recognized that one day the mountain would cry with tears of sorrow for it could no longer survive without the love it had known. And she, wise as she was, knew the river would slowly dry, the aquifers would be drained, there would be little ground water to mine and no surface water flowing through our Acequias to water gardens, orchards, fields that sustain and feed our animals or human needs. My mother knew her beloved mountain and river would soon die due to the greed for more and more by those who could and would never love the mountain and the river as she had. Yes, my mother knew that she had lived the best years of her life when Taos Ski Valley was, once upon a time, known as Twining. Her heart was broken knowing that her grandchildren, great grandchildren and future generations would never know the peace and joy the mountain and the river had brought her during her life time. So, I plead with my Taos Ski Valley Neighbors, not with malice, and with the current owner of Taos Ski Valley, and the Forest Service decision makers to rethink their plans. Smaller is better than bigger if it means saving what is left of our precious mountain and miraculous river.

My mother's story is my story as well for I have followed the same traditions. We farm and irrigate the land that my grandparents and parents owned. I was a commissioner for the Plaza Ditch in Arroyo Hondo and irrigate from the three ditches in Arroyo Hondo. The Plaza Ditch, The Llano Ditch, and the Atalaya Ditch. Arroyo Hondo is the last community to receive the water that flows through the Rio Hondo and is diverted to our three Acequias (ditches). During summer months there is less and less water in the Rio Hondo. At times there are segments of the river that go completely dry. When there is less water flowing in the river there is less water for our Acequias. Because Arroyo Hondo is the last community to get the water there is less water for our three acequias and we are unable to completely irrigate our lands. The taking of more water by Taos Ski Valley to fill a 500 million storage tank, snow making, current resident homes and the new planned development of condos, resident homes, hotels and restaurants would severely impact downstream communities but, especially, Arroyo Hondo which is where segments of the Rio Hondo go completely dry. Less and less water is the biggest concern and daily reports indicate the situation will only get worse and projects such as the one planned by Taos Ski Valley who is already taking more water than entitled will be devastating for our downstream communities. There has

been complete failure on the part of the Forest Service to investigate how the TSV plans to fill a 500 million tank to store water and for all their other wants and needs. True the State Engineer has that role to deal. With but the Forest Service has the responsibility to work with other agencies to obtain necessary information in order to make an informed decision.

Septic tanks at the top of the mountain should not be an option or allowed . Septic tanks require constant draining and the FS has a responsibility to investigate the impacts to the mountain and the Hondo river.

I incorporate and add all comments submitted by Acequia Commissioners, Dr. Sylvia Rodriguez and all other parties who have commented regarding all issues pertaining to file 61390. Taos Ski Valley Gondola and other improvements.