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Comments: I am opposed to this project for a number of reasons. First, the term "temporary shelters" is a misnomer. There is nothing temporary about the impact that these shelters will have. A 400 sq. ft. platform will have impacts on flora, fauna, and backcountry users that will last far longer than the proposed operating season; this is to say nothing of the 576 sq. ft. platform, or the 1200 sq. ft. platform. The attempts of these commercial enterprises to pass off shelters that are larger than some people's houses as "temporary" are disingenuous by any standard.

Secondly, the proposed shelters will simply not benefit the public in any way (quite the contrary), and will only serve to line the pockets of the guide services involved. Any benefit gained by the use fees paid to the USFS will be minimal compared to the impact. Baker Mountain Guides' proposal is complicated by the shelter site's proximity to private land and the difficulty of legal access; even if the shelter is opened to public use, public users will need to negotiate with the private landowner as well, which is a prohibitive condition. Aspire Adventure Running has proven themselves to be acting in bad faith by pursuing multiple shelter sites while only openly discussing the proposed Heliotrope shelter - they argue that the USFS is responsible for publishing this information, but they have an obligation as financial benefactors of the arrangement to make this information transparent. The installment of house-sized shelters at already-crowded sites such as Artist Point and Heliotrope TH is ill-conceived and irresponsible, and will only accomplish the opposite of Aspire's stated goal of spreading out impact. Furthermore, the guide service representatives at the community meeting displayed little in the way of forethought or comprehensive planning (after years with which to do so), and did little to persuade me that they are prepared for the responsibility of operating these shelters on public land.

These "temporary" shelters are nothing more than a naked money grab by commercial enterprises, and have no place in our wilderness. They will negatively impact the environment, the wildlife, and disadvantage backcountry users who don't have the cash to pay them for their services (or who simply want to go outside without snowmachines roaring past). Please uphold the rights of the public to enjoy and protect public land, and deny this project.