Data Submitted (UTC 11): 8/21/2026 2:20:23 AM
First name: Gregg
Last name: Jakoby
Organization:
Title:
Comments: Dear Forest Supervisor Fitzwilliams,
Please accept these formal scoping comments regarding the proposed Arapahoe Basin Ski Area Projects on White River National Forest land. As a concerned citizen and user of our public lands, I am writing to strongly oppose two specific components of the current proposal: the construction of the Rios parking lot and the expansion of the snowmaking infrastructure.I urge the U.S. Forest Service to rigorously analyze the following environmental and community impacts in the upcoming Environmental Assessment (EA):1. Environmental Impacts of the Rios Parking Lot ExpansionThe proposed Rios parking lot expansion introduces significant environmental risks to a fragile alpine ecosystem that the Forest Service is tasked with protecting.Watershed Degradation: Paving or clearing land for a new parking lot next to US Highway 6 will dramatically increase toxic runoff, including oil, automotive fluids, and road salt. This runoff directly threatens the water quality of the North Fork of the Snake River.Wildlife Fragmentation: This area serves as a critical corridor for alpine wildlife, including the Canada lynx and Rocky Mountain bighorn sheep. Expanding the physical footprint of parking infrastructure deeper into the forest permanently destroys native habitat and disrupts crucial migratory patterns.Failure to Address the Root Issue: Adding parking spots encourages more single-occupancy vehicles, worsening peak-day traffic congestion on Loveland Pass. The Forest Service should instead require Arapahoe Basin to invest in robust public transit and shuttle solutions.2. Ecological Impacts of Snowmaking ExpansionDoubling the snowmaking footprint from 75 acres to 140 acres places an unsustainable burden on local natural resources during a time of increasing climate volatility.Streamflow Depletion: Diverting massive volumes of water for snowmaking alters the natural hydrology of local streams. Reduced streamflows during the late fall and early winter can devastate macroinvertebrate populations and native trout habitats.Soil Erosion and Compilation: Artificial snow is significantly denser than natural snow. This weight compacts subalpine soils, prevents natural water infiltration, and causes severe soil erosion during the spring melt, permanently scarring the landscape.Energy Consumption: The infrastructure required to pump water uphill to power 140 acres of snowmaking demands an enormous amount of electricity. This conflicts with broader federal mandates to reduce carbon emissions on public lands.Conclusion and Requested ActionFor these reasons, I request that the Forest Service select the "No Action" Alternative regarding the Rios parking lot and the snowmaking expansion. If the project moves forward, the EA must include comprehensive, binding mitigation plans that protect our watersheds and wildlife.Thank you for your time and for protecting our shared public lands. Please keep me informed of all future notices, draft decisions, and objection periods regarding this project.
Sincerely,
Gregg Jakoby