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Comments: To: Brian Glaspell, Forest Supervisor, c/o Sarah Strehle, Mountain Sports Permit Administrator

A-Basin has traditionally been one of the better stewards of public land.

The stated purpose of the proposed action is to "enhance the quality of the on-mountain experience at A-Basin by improving operational efficiency, guest arrival experience, employee safety, and the ski area's ability to provide early-season terrain through additional snowmaking coverage".

Several of these things could be addressed in other ways with much less environmental damage.

Parking

The Forest Service should encourage increasing parking capacity with sensible expansion of the existing lots.

From the NOPA_Arapahoe Basin 2026 Improvement Projects:

"The Moose Hollow area is forested and located on a hillside with slopes ranging from approximately 15 to 30 percent. Development of the lot would require tree removal, grading, and cut/fill." The proposed Upper Upper Last Chance parking lot would "include widening of US 6 for new turn lanes, grading, retaining walls, and drainage features".

The Parking Lot Study Plan mentions the "potential on-the-ground elements associated with the parking improvements, including parking areas, drainage improvements, detention ponds, retaining walls, culverts, pedestrian connections, vehicular circulation improvements, snow storage areas, and construction access."

These significant disruptions will degrade rather than enhance the "on-mountain experience", not to mention the wetlands, forest, and wildlife habitat.

Snowmaking expansion

I question removing the 25% limitation on withdrawal from the North Fork of the Snake River to expand snowmaking capacity. Will plans monitoring stream flow, and fish, insect, and toad populations have the ability to reduce diversions if there are negative impacts?

And again from the Improvement Project document: "New snowmaking lines within the Montezuma Bowl would be located primarily in undisturbed areas and would require tree removal, ground disturbance, and trenching", and "a 40-foot-wide disturbance corridor is assumed for installation of new snowmaking lines."

Limited expansion of snowmaking on the front side of the mountain is reasonable. Considerable disturbance of the Montezuma Bowl for expanding snowmaking to another watershed on the sunny side of the mountain is not.