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Organization:
Title:
Comments: I am a full-time resident of Brian Head and am submitting this comment as someone who has spent most of my life living, working, and recreating in Utah's mountain communities.

I grew up in Park City with the Uintas as our backyard for backcountry snowmobiling, later lived and worked at Snowbird, and now call Brian Head home. My family was actively involved in the Park City community as it grew more than 30 years ago, so I have watched firsthand how dramatically a mountain town can change over a generation.

I am not opposed to growth. Growth is inevitable. But the mountains are forever, and I believe sustainable growth requires us to think carefully about what we preserve for the people who will live and recreate here long after us.

Our mountains have never belonged to just one type of recreation. They bring together skiers, snowboarders, snowmobilers, hikers, hunters, climbers, families, local businesses, employees, visitors, and people who simply want an opportunity to experience the outdoors. Maintaining that diversity is part of what makes Utah's mountain communities special.

Snowmobiling in particular has been part of my family for as long as I can remember. It brings together people of different ages and physical abilities in a way that many winter activities cannot. My mom can no longer ski because of her knees, but she can spend an entire day on a snowmobile. When she came to visit me in Brian Head, one of the ways I was able to share my new home and these mountains with her was by taking her on a snowmobile tour. Three generations of a family can go out riding together even when they may not all be able to spend a day together on the ski hill.

That is why maintaining established snowmobile trails and connectivity matters. Once access and connected trail systems disappear, they can be incredibly difficult to recreate later. These routes are part of our recreation infrastructure and are used by residents, visitors, businesses, and the broader winter community. Motorized winter access can also have importance beyond recreation, including supporting access into remote terrain when needed.

I also believe it is important that decisions about Brian Head's future include the full range of people who use these mountains. Until recently, I personally had no idea how significantly the proposed expansion could affect the snowmobile community. If someone who lives in Brian Head year-round and has a lifelong connection to snowmobiling was unaware of those concerns, I worry that many other residents and visitors may be unaware as well.

There are many voices that deserve to be heard as Brian Head grows. Skiing is an important part of this community, but it is not the only reason people come here, work here, raise families here, or love these mountains.

I ask the Forest Service to carefully consider alternatives and design choices that preserve established snowmobile access and trail connectivity while allowing Brian Head to grow responsibly. I want to see a future where the resort can thrive alongside snowmobiling and the many other forms of recreation that make this place special.

Growth is inevitable. The mountains are forever. Let's make sure there is still room in them for generations to come. I support Alternative 4