



Town of Keystone, Colorado

Town Hall | 1628 Saints John Road | Keystone, Colorado | 970-450-3500

August 11, 2026

USDA Forest Service

Dillon Ranger District, Attn. Responsible Official

C/O Sarah Strehle

P.O. Box 620

Silverthorne, CO 80498

RE: Letter of Support – Arapahoe Basin 2026 Improvement Projects #334175

To Whom It May Concern:

On behalf of the Keystone Town Council, please accept this message as a Letter of Support for the Arapahoe Basin 2026 Improvement Projects, including the installation of Remote Avalanche Control Systems, expansion of snowmaking coverage, addition of two new parking lots, and construction of a pedestrian overpass.

The Keystone Town Council has reviewed the Project's documents and would offer the following specific comments to augment Arapahoe Basin's request for approval from the Dillon Ranger District:

- **Recreation Safety:** As a resort community focused on skiing and snowboarding activities, increasing safety factors for winter sport enthusiasts reduces risk to both participants and operators while preserving community culture and enhancing access to the outdoors. Remote Avalanche Control Systems (RACS) have proven to increase safety from avalanche dangers for recreationalists, drivers, and backcountry users across Colorado and the



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West. RACS have been in use in the region for more than a decade and have shown that the technology is a viable option to hand-thrown explosives and Avalauncher devices employed by ski patrol personnel. Reducing exposure to live explosives for workers is an efficient and smart way of limiting risk while increasing reliability in a highly-competitive economic environment for ski area operators.

- **Water Quality and Quantity:** The additional snowmaking capacity proposed would utilize existing water resources (and water rights) within the Upper Snake River basin, which is key for water supply and dilution for residents of the Town of Keystone. However, as 80% of water used for snowmaking returns to the drainage within which it is located during spring flows, it is the Town's hope that an expansion of snowmaking be mindful of water quality and quantity for the Keystone community, as allowed under Arapahoe Basin's existing water rights portfolio.
- **Climate Resiliency:** As seen during the 2025/2026 ski season, record low snowfall combined with higher-than-average temperatures require adaptive and innovative approaches to climate change. Increasing snowmaking capacity and duration can enhance visitation, allow businesses to stay open longer, keep employees working and receiving pay for themselves and their families, and extend operations into shoulder seasons that often have been challenging for small mountain communities. As winters appear to be continuing to shorten, adaptive techniques are critical to support for local residents, businesses, and communities.
- **Parking and Transit Demand Management:** Arapahoe Basin's renowned terrain and ski culture draws nearly half a million skier and snowboarder visits annually, with many loyal return customers that utilize services in Keystone and other areas of Summit County. This high level of visitation often stresses the existing parking and transit networks of not only Arapahoe Basin but also nearby areas of Summit County, including the Town of Keystone.



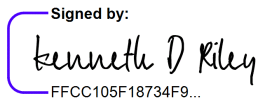
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Additional parking lots will reduce stress on travelers, the nearby local communities, and keep public transit viable during times of reduced budget and passenger capacity for transit services. With unlimited skier access returning to A-Basin via the Ikon Pass for 2026/2027, increased parking will be essential to meet recreational demands. It is the Town's suggestion that new parking lots be free of charge whenever practical.

Thank you for your consideration of these comments, and we appreciate the District's measured review of the proposal with a focus on enhancing recreational safety with the benefit of added climate resiliency and economic development in the Dillon Ranger District at Arapahoe Basin.

Sincerely,

Signed by:

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Kenneth D. Riley

Mayor, Town of Keystone