



Alpine Meadows

Ski Corporation

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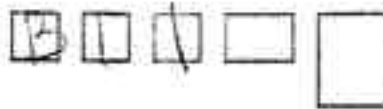
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July 11, 2000

USDA Forest Service CAET
Attn: Roadless Areas NOI
Post Office Box 221090
Salt Lake City, Utah 84122

RECEIVED
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RE: Comments on Roadless Initiative

Dear Roadless Areas Staff:

We at Alpine Meadows Ski Resort understand that the Forest Service is seeking comments on what actions and alternatives should be considered in the proposed Roadless Initiative and respectfully submit the following comments regarding the National Forest System Roadless Initiative.

Alpine Meadows Ski Resort is in California located between Tahoe City and Truckee along the Sierra Crest. The resort is approximately 2,000 acres in size incorporating two drainages, Bear Creek and Ward Creek. Approximately two thirds of the resort is located on Forest Service land and under Special Use Permit with the U.S. Forest Service.

The ski resort was developed in 1960 and has a 40-year partnership with the Forest Service in providing recreation to the public and protecting public lands. Two thirds of the resort is located in the Bear Creek drainage within the Truckee Ranger District in the Tahoe National Forest. This District's staff is the governing agency for the resort. The remaining portion of the resort is located within the Ward Creek drainage, which is within the Tahoe Basin.

Alpine Meadows recognizes the value of protecting roadless areas and the benefits that roadless areas provide including water quality, protection of wildlife habitats and recreation. As a ski resort operator, we also recognize the value in expanding recreational opportunities to the users of the National Forest System. We believe that providing roadless protection should not limit or curtail recreational opportunities that have historically existed on Federal lands. In developing its roadless protection plan, the agency should take into account public and private commitments, both financial and land

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use agreements that have been made with respect to ski areas. We feel strongly that any proposal should provide sufficient flexibility to improve and expand ski resort operations in the future. We would also request that roadless protections not be applied to areas surrounding or next to ski resorts. We believe that the goal of protecting roadless areas could be better achieved by accommodating public recreational used at managed recreation sites such as ski resorts.

Because of its specific location, Alpine Meadows is within the jurisdiction of a variety of regulatory agencies including the Tahoe Regional Planning Agency; California Regional Water Quality Control Board – Lahontan Region; U.S. Forest Service – Tahoe National Forest, Truckee Ranger District and U.S. Forest Service – Lake Tahoe Basin Management Unit. Additionally, to our west, we are bordered by the Granite Chief Wilderness Area and to the north are private lands unavailable to development. Future development and expansion plans for the ski resort could include lands to both the south and east. Within these areas exist old logging roads. In some instances, these roads have seen little use for some time and have become overgrown. Although it is unclear to us whether these roads would be included in the Roadless Initiative and abandoned, we would request that these not be included in the plan. These areas have seen significant disturbance since the turn of the century and the use of these roads may be necessary for the ski resort's expansion plans in the future.

We thank you for your consideration of these comments.

Sincerely,



Kent Hoppingamer
President and General Manager

KH:fe

cc: Larry Heywood, Director of Mountain Operations