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Big Mountain 1

January 27, 1998

Neil Malkasian
Tally Lake R.D.
1335 Hwy. 93 W
Whitefish, MT 59937

Dear Neil,

Here is a list of projects approved in the 1995 Record of Decision and an approximate schedule of completion. Keep in mind that this schedule is dependent on economic conditions.

Lifts:

Chair 8 -
T-bar 2 -

2000
2001

Runs:

Chair 8 runs -
T-bar 2 runs -

2000
2001

Snowmaking:

New well at top of Chair 2 -
New reservoir at top of Chair 2 -
Additional snowmaking pipe -
Chair 2 runs and Bio Ravine -

1999
1998
1998

Eating Facilities:

Expansion of Summit House seating area -
Chair 2 warming/ snack hut -

1998
2000

Road Construction:

Access road to Chair 8 and T-bar 2 -

2000

Horse Trail:

Trail to Summit -

2000

slope and one on the south side, and 289 acres of ski runs with a SAOT of 10,880 skiers per day. T-bar 3/Chair in Hellroaring Basin would not be constructed, but, limited access into Upper Hellroaring would be allowed. All skiers would be excluded from Hellroaring Basin after April 1 to protect grizzly bear habitat. Similarly, the out-of-bounds area east of Chair 8 runs would be closed to out-of-bound skiers after April 1. Snowmaking, well and reservoir would be added on south slopes.

Additional snowmobile restrictions would apply in April along with the closing of the warming/snack hut. Expansion of the Summit House, construction of an access road and a 1 mile road to access Chair 8 would be completed. To further protect wildlife habitat, implementation of Alternative E would also involve closure of approximately 43 miles of currently open Forest Service Roads on the north side of Big Mountain, and an additional 29 miles of currently closed roads would be allowed to brush-in. Summer activities would expand to include horse trail, mountain bike trail, hiking trail and paragliding.

ALTERNATIVE F (MODIFIED)

Alternative F (Modified) was developed to address concerns about water quality and fisheries and to further address safety concerns in Hellroaring. It also partially addresses wildlife concerns, but with less emphasis than does Alternative E. Implementation of Alternative F (Modified) would involve less ski area expansion and recreation opportunities than the Proposed Action (Alternative D Modified).

This alternative has 3 lifts: one on the north slope, one in Hellroaring and one on the south side, and 147 acres of ski runs, with a SAOT of 8670 skiers per day. Hellroaring would become part of the ski area. All skiers would be excluded from Hellroaring Basin after April 1. Similarly, the out-of-bounds area east of Chair 8 runs would be closed to out-of-bound skiers after April 1. Closures for skiers and snowmobilers are mitigation measures to protect grizzly bear habitat. Summer activities would expand to include mountain bike trail, hiking trail and paragliding. One mile of new road would be constructed.

Alternative F (Modified) would provide one new groomed snowmobile trail. New mitigation measures call for an April 1 closure of Taylor Creek snowmobile trail and a restriction of snowmobiles to a designated corridor on Canyon Creek from April 1 to 15 to keep snowmobiles off the south-facing avalanche slopes.

Construction of a warming/snack hut on the top of Chair 2 would be permitted. Each ski season, it would close after April 1. The Summit House would expand. Snowmaking, well and reservoir would be constructed. Alternative F (Modified) would involve approximately 14.05 miles of new road closures and allow 4.28 miles of roads currently closed to brush in.

Big Mountain 1

SPECIFIC FEATURES OF ALTERNATIVES

A complete list of features involved with each alternative is shown in Table 5.

Table 5. Summary of Activities and Facilities Proposed for The Big Mountain, by Alternative.

Activity or Facility	ALT A	ALT B	ALT C	ALT D (Modified)	ALT E	ALT F (Modified)	SE-LECTED
Ski Lifts	0	2	5	4	4	2	3
Acres of runs in Hellroaring	0	0	141	123	0	20	20
Gladed acres Hellroaring	0	0	7	14	7	11	11
Acres of runs North Slope	0	72	258	186	241	72	72
Gladed acres North Slope	0	10	0	7	0	10	7
Acres of runs South Slope	0	27	41	19	27	27	19
Gladed acres South Slope	0	7	0	14	14	7	14
Total acres	0	116	447	363	289	147	143