

Copper 5

roughly the 11,680-foot elevation level. Minimal vegetative clearing (approximately 0.04 acre) would be required for the implementation of this lift upgrade. Construction and maintenance access are present to both the existing bottom, and proposed top terminal locations. Power for the lift would be routed underground from the existing underground electrical distribution line in an adjacent mountain access road via a spur approximately 300 feet in length.

Tucker Lift

Approximately 4,100 feet in length, the proposed Tucker Lift would originate at an elevation of 10,760 feet and terminate at 12,330 feet above sea level. The proposed chairlift would be installed at a capacity of 1,200 skiers-per-hour and would provide lift service to the Tucker Mountain pod, which is currently a hike-to area for skiers willing to traverse/walk around the head of the bowl from the top of the Mountain Chief Lift. A construction and maintenance access road is proposed for development crossing portions of private land lying immediately to the south and east of the bottom terminal. In total the proposed access road would be approximately 4,200 feet in length. Of this distance, approximately 1,000 feet would be on NFS lands. Power for this proposed lift would be routed to the bottom terminal within the proposed access road.

Snowmaking

Additional Snowmaking Coverage

CMR currently provides snowmaking coverage on approximately 356.5 acres of skiing terrain. The Proposed Action includes installation and operation of an additional 314.3 acres of snowmaking coverage for a resort total of 670.8 acres covered. This additional coverage includes 39.9 acres common to all action alternatives plus 274.4 acres specific to this alternative. The additional coverage areas are depicted on Figure II-2, Appendix E. The proposed additional coverage would require approximately 270.2 acre-feet of water per year. All proposed snowmaking additions would utilize broadcast snowmaking technology, which minimizes snow grooming time needed for trail preparation. Implementation of the proposed additional snowmaking would involve the installation of compressed air and water lines along the trails proposed for coverage. In order to avoid certain sensitive wetland areas, portions of the proposed pipelines would be installed aboveground, set on helical posts. Figure II-2, Appendix E, shows the areas proposed for above-ground pipe installation.

Increasing Snowmaking Diversion Capacity

As a portion of this analysis process, CMR proposes to increase their physical rate of water diversion at the existing Tenmile Creek intake from five cfs to seven cfs. CMR's existing intake and diversion structure was approved in 1997 and constructed in 1998 (USDA Forest Service 1997). It allows CMR to divert water directly from Tenmile Creek for snowmaking purposes. Increasing the allowed rate of diversion would permit CMR to process water into machine-made snow at an increased rate during snowmaking operations. With the proposed increase in diversion rate, CMR would be required to remain within allocated water rights and maintain established In-stream Flow agreements. The existing intake infrastructure is currently sized to accommodate this increase without any additional construction or retrofitting of the facility.


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Further, my decision preserves Old Growth character by permitting removal of *only* trees sized less than 16 inches DBH in implementing the widening.

Also analyzed in the FEIS action alternatives is 1.5 acres of grading along the *West Bench Egress*, in conjunction with the tree removal. Consistent with the reduction in tree removal percentage, I am *not approving* the approximately 1.5 acres of grading in this area, because the FEIS analysis shows that the effects to water resources caused by grading in this area, close to the Water Influence Zone (WIZ) of Union Creek, cannot be adequately mitigated.

Snowmaking

Snowmaking Coverage

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- My decision approves snowmaking on the following trails, as described under alternatives 2, 3, and 4 of the FEIS:
 - Lovely watershed (7.4 acres)
 - *Carefree* (7.4 acres)

Alternative 5 of the FEIS does not include snowmaking in the Lovely watershed because several snowmaking components were eliminated as part of its design to reduce effects to water resources. My decision to allow this snowmaking as part of the Selected Alternative is based on the analysis within the FEIS which reveals that the approval will satisfy WCPH Management Measures for stream health.

- My decision approves snowmaking on the following trails, as described under alternatives 2 and 3 of the FEIS:
 - Far East Watershed (32.6 acres)
 - *Cabin Chute* (11.5 acres)
 - *Highline* (21.1 acres)

Similarly, Alternative 5 of the FEIS does not include snowmaking in the Far East watershed as part of its intent to reduce effects to water resources. The Selected Alternative includes snowmaking within the Far East watershed on the basis of the analysis within the FEIS, which concludes that the 32.6 acres of snowmaking coverage analyzed under the Proposed Action can take place, while maintaining stream health in this watershed, as required by WCPH Management Measures.

- My decision *does not approve* snowmaking on the following trails proposed for coverage under FEIS Alternative 5:
 - Wheeler Gulch watershed (30.0 acres)
 - *Sluice* (4.8 acres)
 - *Coppertone* (17.3 acres)
 - *Liberty* (6.3 acres)
 - *Collage* (1.5 acres)

I have decided not to approve snowmaking coverage within the Wheeler Gulch watershed because the FEIS analysis concludes that sufficient mitigation measures are not available to adequately offset anticipated effects to water resources in Wheeler Gulch.

Fremont Glades 2-5

Widening and opening these four existing chutes (which total 4.9 acres in combined size) will entail removing roughly 15 percent of the existing trees at the bottom of each chute allowing skiers to more easily exit. Within the forested areas to be gladed, the existing crown closure is approximately 50 percent. CMR is approved to reduce trees in these four areas by 15 percent.

Blackjack to Tucker Ski-way

This access trail will connect the bottom terminals of the existing Blackjack Lift and the approved Tucker Lift, shown in Figure ROD-1. Approximately 1,500 feet in length, this ski-way will be approximately 0.86 acre in area and have a width of 25 feet.

Copper Bowl Emergency Egress

I authorize CMR to develop an emergency egress from the base of the approved Tucker Lift downhill and east towards State Highway 91. My approval authorizes that portion of the emergency egress occurring on public lands. This corresponds to the section of the egress that extends east from the Tucker Mountain access road (described below), to the WRNF boundary (CMR's SUP boundary with Climax Molybdenum land), a length of approximately 650 feet. This trail will be approximately 25 feet wide. Development of the remainder of the egress (approximately 3,350 feet in length) will occur on Climax Molybdenum property, contingent upon Climax Molybdenum granting access to CMR. Climax Molybdenum has issued a letter to CMR documenting its willingness to negotiate with CMR for emergency egress access across its property (Climax Molybdenum 2005).

The development of this egress will allow guest and employees to exit the area in the event of a lift failure and will facilitate rapid evacuation of patients with life-threatening conditions.

Snowmaking



Snowmaking Coverage

My decision approves snowmaking on the following trails (shown in Figure ROD-1).

- o Formidable watershed (44.4 acres)
 - *Formidable (10.9 acres)*
 - *Oh No (11.9 acres)*
 - *Ore Deal (5.9 acres)*
 - *Too Much (15.7 acres)*

The analysis of stream health in the FEIS reveals that the approved snowmaking within this watershed will maintain stream health conditions. I am requiring mitigation measures, outlined in Table ROD-5, entry 32, to ensure that stream health will be maintained in this watershed.

My decision approves snowmaking on the following trails (shown in Figure ROD-1), contingent upon successful stream health mitigation (refer to Table ROD-5, entries 30 and 31). Specifically, my authorization of snowmaking in these areas requires that coincident with installation of snowmaking infrastructure, stream restoration/stabilization projects and trail drainage improvements must be implemented. These drainage improvements will offset peak flow effects associated with this snowmaking approval, thereby maintaining stream health with respect to

bank stability. By offsetting effects to peak flows, the mitigated condition will maintain stream health even under increased water yields resulting from new snowmaking in the Union Creek watershed, maintaining stream health in compliance with the requirements of WCPH Management Measures.

- Union Creek watershed (62.0 acres)
 - *Easy Feelin'* (8.9 acres)
 - *American Flyer* (19.8 acres)
 - *Windsong* (14.1 acres)
 - *Soliloquy* (4.9 acres)
 - *Retreat* (13.8 acres)
 - *Flyer-Timberline Traverse* (0.5 acres)

In approving snowmaking in the Union Creek watershed, I have made the following adjustments to the proposed snowmaking terrain coverage, in comparison to Alternative 5 of the FEIS:

- The approved coverage along *Soliloquy* has been reduced by 0.8 acres.
- The approved coverage along the *Flyer-Timberline Traverse* has been reduced by 1.8 acres, and re-aligned to match the actual position of the existing traverse from the top of the American Flyer to the Timberline Express lift.
- The approved coverage along the *Retreat* trail, extending from the top of the Mountain Chief lift, has been reduced by 0.7 acres.

These adjustments result in a 3.3 acre total reduction of approved terrain. This adjustment brings the approved snowmaking terrain into balance with the available disconnection mitigation credit identified within the FEIS analysis for Alternative 5, ensuring that my approval maintains stream health conditions within the Union Creek watershed. In all, I am authorizing a total of 62.0 additional acres of snowmaking within the Union Creek watershed. By making these adjustments and requiring full mitigation as outlined in Table ROD-5, entries 30 and 31, my decision will maintain stream health within the Union Creek watershed.

My decision *approves* snowmaking on the following trails (shown in Figure ROD-1).

- Wheeler Gulch watershed (1.8 acres)
 - *Retreat* (1.8 acres)


I authorize implementation of a small area of snowmaking within the Wheeler Gulch watershed, despite the fact that this watershed currently exhibits Diminished stream health. This segment of snowmaking will occur near the summit of Union Peak, far from the Wheeler Gulch stream system. In addition, the management requirement outlined in Table ROD-4, entry 36, will ensure that this snowmaking runoff is not routed to the Wheeler Gulch stream system, thereby maintaining stream health in accordance with WCPH requirements.

These considerations will improve the overall winter and summer recreation experience while minimizing environmental impacts from the implementation of the included projects. The mitigation requirements provide a means to achieve the Purpose and Need of the FEIS in the most environmentally responsible manner.

Burial of Snowmaking Lines in Areas Currently Approved for Snowmaking

CMR is approved to locate and permanently install snowmaking pipelines and associated hydrants on the lower *Roundabout*, lower *Collage*, and *Fairplay* ski trails, shown in Figure ROD-1. These trails currently receive snowmaking coverage via temporary hoses extended over the ground from adjacent ski trails with permanent underground snowmaking lines. Implementation will entail installation of permanent underground air and water lines.

Increased Snowmaking Diversion Capacity



My decision authorizes CMR's physical rate of water diversion to increase from five cubic feet per second (cfs) to seven cfs, at the existing diversion structure on Tenmile Creek. Increasing the allowed rate of diversion will allow CMR to process water into machine-produced snow at an increased rate during snowmaking. With the increase in diversion rate, CMR will be required to remain within allocated water rights and maintain compliance with established in-stream flow agreements with the State of Colorado. The existing intake infrastructure is currently sized to accommodate this increase without any additional construction or retrofitting of the facility. In order to offset the effects to downstream fisheries habitat on Tenmile Creek below CMR's diversion point, and to maintain compliance with Forest Plan Standards and WCPH Management Measures, I am requiring CMR to mitigate incremental diversions above five cfs via one-for-one releases from Clinton Reservoir. The details of this mitigation are outlined in the Table ROD-5, entry 70.

Conversion of Existing Snowmaking Infrastructure to Modern Technology

I authorize CMR to install modern broadcast snowmaking technology on existing snowmaking trails not currently utilizing this technology. Replacement and update will occur as warranted. Replacement lines will be in the same locations as the existing lines except where particular resource constraints warrant otherwise. New lines will be installed adjacent to and/or on top of existing lines without removal of the old lines in order to minimize disturbance and limit cost. My decision to approve the conversion of existing snowmaking trails to the modern broadcast snowmaking technology will improve the operational efficiency of CMR's snowmaking system, optimizing water and energy use.

Lifts

Sierra Lift Upgrade

The existing Sierra Lift is approved for realignment and lengthening. Approximately 3,660 feet in length, the upgraded lift will originate at 11,355 feet elevation and terminate at 12,265 feet elevation in a small saddle atop Union Peak. The upgraded lift will be approximately 790 feet longer than the existing Sierra Lift, with a top terminal sited 150 feet higher and roughly 710 feet to the southeast of the present top terminal. The realignment to the top of Union Peak (see Figure ROD-1) will improve access to Union Bowl and the terrain on the backside of the lift within Copper Bowl.

Alpine Lift Upgrade

My decision approves an upgrade to the existing Alpine Lift capacity to accommodate 2,400 skiers-per-hour and lengthening the lift in its current alignment. At approximately 6,280 feet in