

Snowbasin Mountain Plan Proposal

Purpose and Need

The objective of the mountain plan is to provide mountain facilities to help increase resort user capacity, improve circulation patterns and decrease the potential for base area, parking and access road congestion. The plan proposes a group of projects designed to meet the above stated objective.

Specifically the mountain plan proposes the removal and/or alteration of two existing lifts (Little Cat and Wildcat), installation of four additional lifts, snowmaking on three additional trails and minor recontouring and construction of connector trails and trails servicing new lifts. The plan also proposes construction of a new parking area on Trapper's loop and a guest services building near the base of the existing Strawberry Gondola. Finally we propose the inclusion of the Maples campground into our special use permit boundary to facilitate Nordic ski trails and summer outdoor programs.

User days at Snowbasin have increased approximately 15-20% per year since 2002. Snowbasin enjoyed the largest annual user days total in 2006-07 with over 230,000 guests, including our largest single user day of approximately 5800 guests. The current parking capacity is approximately 1500 vehicles. Assuming 2.5 passengers/car our parking capacity, road ingress and trail capacity are exceeded on user days approaching 6000.

Based on projected increases in annual user days, Snowbasin can expect to exceed the 6000 user day by next season, and to exceed 300,000 visits per year in two to three years. At 500,000 annual visitors peak season winter day visitor numbers will exceed 10,000 and the guest experience will be negatively affected. A major limitation, even with today's user numbers, is the congestion in Bear Hollow and Blue Grouse. We believe it is important to plan for increased user visits by expanding mountain facilities to maintain low carrying capacity numbers, reduce trail congestion in the Needles area, and to provide increased access and guest services in the Strawberry area.

Proposed Mountain Facilities

Lifts

The locations of the proposed new lifts are designed to: 1) take better advantage of existing terrain, 2) increase use of the Strawberry and the abundant intermediate terrain it accesses, 3) provide alternative access to existing Strawberry terrain when the Strawberry Gondola is not operating, 4) provide easier access from Strawberry to the Needles base area, 5) alleviate congestion on the Mt. Allen Tram to access No Name, 6) open additional beginner and teaching terrain and 7) provide additional parking away from the Needles base area.

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