

## Decision Memo

Telluride Ski and Golf, LLC

### Little Rose Winch Cat Project

USDA Forest Service  
Norwood Ranger District  
Grand Mesa, Uncompahgre and Gunnison National Forests  
San Miguel County, Colorado  
T. 42 N, R. 9 W, Section 13

#### Background

The Norwood Ranger District has considered a proposal from Telluride Ski and Golf, LLC (Telski) to build a catwalk at the top of the Little Rose ski run that would be used by a winch cat for early season snow compaction. During the ski season the catwalk would provide skier access to Little Rose and Andy's Gold ski trails.

The purpose and need for this action is to provide a safe platform for a winch cat to utilize a weighted roller in order to compact the snow on Little Rose. Early season snow compaction provides a consolidated base layer that helps to mitigate avalanche concerns throughout the season. Reducing avalanche concerns associated with Little Rose is a benefit to the skiing public. Currently, there is not a level spot that is safe for the winch cat operator to use the roller mechanism. Construction of the Little Rose catwalk would enhance the overall safety to the winch cat operator allowing them to do their job. The catwalk would also provide skier access during the winter months.

The proposed action will affect about 250-300 feet of ground at the top of the Little Rose run. The project will take place at an elevation of 12,000 feet and is located in a rock scree field. The construction phase will utilize heavy equipment and explosives to blast through the hardened rock layers. Material generated by the construction process will be broadcasted down slope in a manner that will not affect the existing trail.

#### Decision

I have decided to allow Telski to construct the Little Rose Winch Cat platform and the associated catwalk. The project will be implemented during the 2009 summer season and will be closely monitored by my staff members to ensure compliance.

This action is categorically excluded from documentation in an environmental impact statement or an environmental assessment under Category 31 .2 .3 Approval, modification, or continuation of minor special uses of National Forest System lands that require less than five contiguous acres of land (Forest Service Handbook 1909.15, Chapter 30).

expert terrain. It would noticeably increase the amount of lift-served extreme terrain, but would add little to the beginner and lower intermediate terrain. Table 2.4 summarizes the elements of the Prospect Basin Alternative.

### Telluride 2c, 2d

<b>Table 2.4. Summary of elements in the Prospect Basin Alternative</b>						
<b>Proposed Lift Pods</b> - Four lift pod elements are associated with the Prospect Basin Alternative. The CCC for the Prospect Basin Alternative would be 8,630 skiers. Nordic skiing would be affected in Prospect Basin. Efforts would be made to minimize impacts to nordic skiers.						
POD	Lifts (acres)	Trails (acres)	Restaurants and PHQs (acres)	Glades (acres)	Roads (acres)	Total Acres
Prospect Basin	7	232	2	107	0	348
Gold Hill	5	168	1	105	0.1	279.1
Lift #15	6	99	-	3	5.4	113.4
Lift #16	1	14	-	-	0	15
<b>Total</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>513</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>215</b>	<b>5.5</b>	<b>755.5</b>
<p>Acres derived from digitized AutoCAD base maps.            Patrol Headquarters (PHQ) acreages exclude those which are contained in proposed trails and glades.            Road acreages include those which are outside existing or proposed trails in the expansion area (22.3 total acres).</p>						
<p><b>Lift #6 Realignment</b> - The Lift #6 realignment would occur due to previous NEPA approvals in the recent Environmental Assessment process.</p>						
<p><b>Prospect Basin Lodge and Cabins</b> - The lodge and cabins are not elements of this alternative.</p>						
<p><b>Cropsey Mill Site</b> - The Prospect Basin and Gold Hill lift bases by the Cropsey Mill site would use a series of bridges and culvert to achieve adequate skier circulation, skier safety, and minimization of wetland impacts. On the west side of Prospect Creek, one bridge would span Cropsey Creek to enter the base area and three bridges would span Prospect Creek. The upper-most bridge would access the Gold Hill base terminal from the west side of Prospect Creek. The middle bridge would access the Prospect Basin base terminal from the east side of Prospect Creek, and the lower bridge would link the egress route to the east side, below the Prospect Basin base terminal. On the east side of Prospect Creek, a combination of perforated culvert and rock-lined ditch would be used to divert the bottom portion of Dynamo Creek and water from the seeps above the mill site to a sedimentation-filtration system. The mill site itself would remain intact.</p>						
<p><b>Restaurants</b> - A new restaurant would be located in mid-Prospect Basin and the Piunge Restaurant would be expanded. Restaurant capacities would match the maximum CCC the pods.</p>						
<p><b>Snowmaking</b> - The Prospect Basin Alternative would require snowmaking around the Cropsey Mill site including the Cropsey Mill site bridge network.</p>						
<p><b>Managed Off-Season Recreational Activities</b> - Off-season recreational activities would be similar to those under the No Action Alternative. About 5.9 miles of maintenance roads (3.6 miles within and 2.3 miles outside existing or proposed trails) would be built.</p>						

## PREFERRED ALTERNATIVE

The Forest Service's Preferred Alternative, consists of five groups of action-elements: 1) developing six new lift pods with their associated runs, trails, and gladed areas; 2) realigning Lift #6 and its associated trail and run system; 3) developing four new restaurants and expanding one existing restaurant; 4) expanding off-season recreational activities; and 5) developing a lodge and a series of small cabins in the Prospect Basin. There are from one to six separate elements within each of these five groups. Much like the Original Proposed Action, the Preferred Alternative would implement activities that were presented in varying amounts of detail in the 1980 Master Plan and/or the 1983 First Phase Mid-Capacity Development Plan. Table 2.5 summarizes the elements of this alternative.

## SKI AREA PROJECT RECORD:

Project Name: See Forever access road / bypass trail

Date: 9/2/2008

Project ID #:

Project Planner: Jeff Proteau

FS Administrator: Scott Spielman

Project Manager(s): Jeff Proteau

Project Description:

Construct an access road / bypass trail east of the existing See Forever ski trail. The access road / trail shall provide an access route from where the existing Wasatch trail meets the existing See Forever trail. The road / trail will travel east until it meets the Little Rose saddle (approximately 1700 l.f.). The road / trail will be 9 per cent grade from the saddle to the north ridge of Revelation Bowl and the 10 per cent from the ridge to where it meets the See Forever trail. The trail provides a ski/snowboard egress from the Revelation lift back to the See Forever trail. The north half of the road is primarily cut and the south half of the road is primarily fill (see attached engineered drawings). Fill will be deposited in the Little Rose Saddle to create a smooth transition to the ski way below the Gold Hill lift. The road/trail width is 22 feet to accommodate snow cat with a tiller.

The access road / trail shall replace the Wasatch trail for approximately 850 l.f from where it meets the See Forever ski trail to the north ridge of Revelation Bowl. Where the new road / trail meets the existing trail the grade will transition smooth without an abrupt grade change.

Project Elements:

1. Stake the alignment including centerline cut/fill stakes, slope stakes and offset stakes for grade checking.
2. Review staking with USFS.
3. Provide construction fence downhill of the excavation where needed to capture spoils and falling rock.
4. Pioneer an equipment access road along the road/trail alignment from the Little Rose saddle to the north ridge of Revelation Bowl for equipment access (articulating dump truck) to haul cut material to fill areas. Strip topsoil where available and stockpile for revegetation.
5. Construct road / trail by excavating to grade at the north end of the trail and loading into dump truck and hauling to fill portions of the road.
6. Spread fill material to build the road / trail platform and fill slope to design grade at Little Rose saddle and south portion of the road / trail.
7. Blend cut and fill banks to design grade.
8. Compact and level road / ski way surface using bulldozer.
9. Spread topsoil on fill banks where available.
10. Seed all cut and fill banks and edges of road / trail with Prospect Basin seed mix.
11. Install erosion control netting (coir jute netting) on cut and fill banks unless banks are primarily rock.
12. Spread and crimp straw at road edges.

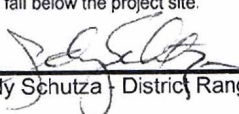
USFS REQUIREMENTS:

Is project within scope of Master Plan: YES

FS Specialists review: Scott Spielman and Ken Kowynia

Special construction stipulations & mitigation measures:

The construction fence must be installed prior to the commencement of any ground disturbing activities. The fence must run the full length of the road to mitigate rock fall below the project site.

 9/8/08  
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Judy Schutza District Ranger

**SKI AREA PROJECT RECORD:**

Project Name: Gold Hill Snow Cat Access road/trail  
 Project ID #:   
 FS Administrator: Scott Spielman  
 Project Manager(s): Jeff Proteau

Date: 10/3/2008  
 Project Planner: Jeff Proteau

**Project Description:**

Construct a snow cat access on the east side of Gold Hill by cutting a 22 foot wide platform with a 5% out slope. Inside bank shall be 3/4 : 1 or steeper where cut slope remains stable. End haul excavated material to See Forever ski way at the west side of the trail north of the top terminal platform. Excavated material shall be used to widen the trail by filling the west slope to the existing "catch trench". Fill material shall be graded downhill and west for the existing trail. The majority of the excavated material will be fractured rock which will provide stability to the fill slope. The access road/trail alignment shall run south for approximately 450 feet, then shall switchback north and shall be constructed up the slope to the ridge of Gold Hill. After building the platform to the top of the ridge the road shall turn south and the platform shall be leveled out for 1,100 feet until it reaches the summit of Gold Hill. ( See attached road/trail alignment and profiles).

**Project Elements:**

1. Stake the centerline of the snow cat access road.
2. Excavate platform 22 feet wide. Excavate to 3/4 : 1 slope on the uphill side of the platform or steeper if cut slope is stable.
3. End haul cut material to west edge of ski way and blend into slope. Add width to slope and fill to add width to trail.
4. When the road meets the ridge a 22 foot wide platform shall be constructed to the summit of Gold Hill.
5. Where topsoil exists at the ridge, topsoil shall be side cast adjacent to the road to be utilized for revegetation after the platform construction is complete.
6. Revegetated areas shall be seeded with Prospect Basin seed mix.
7. Straw mulch shall be spread over seeded areas and crimped with bulldozer grouser cleats.
8. Backcountry access gate shall be relocated south of where the access road meets the ridge. Exact location to be determined in the field.

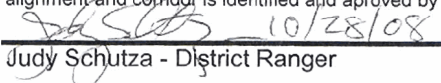
**USFS REQUIREMENTS:**

Is project within scope of Master Plan: YES

FS Specialists review: Scott Spielman & Ken Kowynia

Special construction stipulations & mitigation measures:

Once the lower section of the road is completed and the Gold Hill ridge is gained, work to the top of Gold Hill proper can not proceed until the road alignment and corridor is identified and approved by the project administrator.

 10/28/08  
 Judy Schutza - District Ranger