
File Code: 2720
Date: May 14, 2007

William Jensen
President, Vail Resorts Mountain Division and Chief
Operating Officer, Vail Mountain
Vail Associates, Inc.
P.O. Box 7
Vail, CO 81658

Dear Bill,

My staff and I have reviewed the 2007 Summer Construction Plan dated April 24, 2007, for Vail and Beaver Creek Mountains. This letter addresses those projects within the Vail Category III area. I have approved the following projects which fall within the scope of the Vail Category III Ski Area Development EIS and 1997 Record of Decision, or those projects that have been previously approved or those projects that do not fall within the NEPA process by their nature/scope. These projects are also consistent with the 1999 U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Biological Opinion on the Vail Ski Area Category III Expansion. As these projects are located within the Elk Calving Closure, implementation of these projects may not begin until July 1, 2007.

VST 07-001 Wetland Maintenance

VST 07-002 Blue Sky Basin Mitigation Studies

VST 07-003 Mountain Signs

→ VST 07-006 Blue Sky Basin Timber Haul Road Rehabilitation

Once EPA requirements have been met, a site visit with a Forest Engineer will be required prior to implementation.

VST 07-013 Re-grade the Top of Chair 39

VU 07-003 Chair 37 Fuel Tank

VBF 07-003 Belle's Camp Storage



VAIL MOUNTAIN 2007
PROPOSED PROJECTS ON FOREST SERVICE LAND
2601.01 Slopes and Trails

Slopes and Trails

Requirements:

Projects and Descriptions

VST 07-001 Wetland Maintenance

The wetland created at the bottom of Tea Cup Bowl will be inspected and maintained. New plant material, soil, or fertilizer may be added if needed.

- Paul Fillion

VST 07-002 Blue Sky Basin Mitigation Studies

Elk pellet plot survey to be conducted by C.S.U. and the CDOW approved as part of VST 03/04/05-002.

- Paul Fillion

VST 07-003 Mountain Signs

- a. The tripod signs for Blue Sky Basin will be replaced with up to 25 more traditional signs designed with a ranch motif consistent with the Belle's Camp Area. All ground disturbance will be revegetated with the Cat III seed mix.
- b. Relocate and redo the lift maze information boards at the bottom of Chairs 2, 3, 4, 7, and 11. Some signs will be relocated to the maze entrance. Wiring will be buried. Mountain seed mix will be used for revegetation.
- c. Status board lights on Chairs 4 and 8 will be replaced with LED lights.

- Julie Rust

VST 07-005 Eagles Nest Fill

The area to the west of Eagles Nest, outside of the Gondola exit and Patrol Outpost requires a substantial amount of manmade snow to bring it to the appropriate grade. Fill from the Eagles Nest Ridge borrow site would be utilized to bring the grade of this area up in an effort to decrease the amount of snowmaking required. Previously approved.

- Paul Fillion

Slopes and Trails

Requirements:

Projects and Descriptions

VST 07-006 Blue Sky Basin Timber Haul Road Rehabilitation ←

Continue maintenance of the Timber Haul Road and wetlands per the approved EPA plan. Previously approved as VST 03/04/05-007.

- Paul Fillion

VST 07-007 Winch Cat Anchors

Continue with the installation of 12" steel pipe winch anchor points adjacent to trails on which winch operations occur. This will be a continuation of VST 03/04/05-007.

- Paul Fillion

VST 07-008 Bottom of Chair 21 Fences

A pole or buck and rail fence is proposed to replace the outside maze closures on Chair 21. The fence will prevent skiers from cutting under the maze closures and sliding down the steep banks above the China Bowl Bridge access roads which litters the roads with rocks. Additionally three snow fences will be installed above the maze area. Refer to map.

- Julie Rust

ST 07-009 Rockledge Road Ambulance Pick-up Completion

The Ambulance pick-up constructed in 2006 will be completed. The turn around will be widened slightly and compacted.

- Paul Fillion

VST 07-010 Tower 5, Avanti Terrain Modification

The sharp break over, which is a constant wear area, at Tower 5, Chair 2 would be softened. This project would require the re-grading of an area approximately 100' by 100'. The area would be revegetated with the Vail Mountain seed mix. Refer to map.

- Paul Fillion



Reply to: 1950/2720

Date: December 3, 1999

Vail 4a

To Interested Party:

The Forest Service is proposing to alter the previously approved timber hauling route for the Vail Category III Ski Area Development project.

During construction on the Category III project in the summer of 1999, approximately 1.0 MMBF (million board feet) of timber was harvested and decked in the Category III area. This would require approximately 250 truck loads to haul. Difficulty was encountered in getting the haul road (Lime Creek temporary road) to dry. After a series of site visits from federal agencies, the Environmental Protection Agency concluded that 0.7 acres of "jurisdictional wetlands" had been impacted without a 404 permit from the U.S. Army Corp of Engineers. The EPA ordered the road to be closed and the wetlands to be restored. This effectively prohibits use of the road and caused the Forest Service to consider other timber removal options.

The Forest Service now proposes to allow timber to be hauled down the front side of Vail Mountain through the Town of Vail and is seeking public comments to this proposal. This proposal does not affect other aspects of the Category III decision, and implementation of the project may still proceed.

Background: The Vail Category III Environmental Impact Statement estimated that a total of 6.71 MMBF of merchantable timber would be removed from the project area over a 3-5 year period of time (EIS pg 4-155). The EIS also estimated that the total number of log truck trips would be around 1,342 (EIS, pg 4-158). The EIS for the Vail Category III Ski Area Development analyzed and disclosed impacts of hauling over the front side of Vail Mountain through the Town of Vail. This alternative was not selected because of potential impacts to residents in the Town of Vail and public safety concerns for recreationist using the road on the front side of Vail Mountain.

Specific Proposal: The haul route from the Category III area would be up the Sleepytime Road, down the front side of Vail Mountain, down the Mill Creek road, past the bottom of Chair 1, along Vail Road and through the Roundabout onto I-70. This is believed to be the least impactful route to the residents in the Town of Vail. With an estimated 1.0 MMBF decked in Category III now (1999), and Vail Associates planning to log another 1.0 MMBF during the summer of 2000, there would be approximately 500 loads to haul during the summer of 2000. There would be an additional 250 log truck loads per year for the next 3 summers as well.

