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**Scoping Notice for Keystone Resort  
Snowmaking Reservoir and Infrastructure Upgrading Plan  
White River National Forest  
Summit County, Colorado**

Date: February 13, 2004  
File code: 1950-1

Dear Interested Public,

The US Forest Service, Dillon Ranger District, is inviting public comment as part of an environmental analysis process evaluating the anticipated effects from the proposed development of a water storage pond for snowmaking and consolidation of wastewater treatment at the Summit House for Keystone Resort, located approximately 75 miles west of Denver (see attached map).

***Water Impoundment***

Keystone Resort proposes to construct an approximately six surface-acre snowmaking pond southeast of the Summit House on Keystone Mountain at approximately 11,500 feet in elevation. The reservoir would require the construction of a rockfill dam approximately 550 feet long and 40 feet high. The storage capacity of the pond would be approximately 110 acre-feet (35.8 million gallons) and would have an average depth of roughly 19 feet.

Construction of the snowmaking pond would entail approximately 13 acres of vegetation removal including 11.5 acres of ground disturbance, and it would involve two pipeline connections in the vicinity of the pond totaling approximately 3,000 linear feet. The snowmaking pond would not require additional water rights or an increase in the diversion rate over current approved levels. This proposed project would increase instantaneous flow availability, enabling Keystone to produce increased and higher quality snow during ideal climate conditions. This proposal may allow Keystone to better regulate diversion rates from the Snake River, resulting in improved stream flow.

***Wastewater Consolidation at Summit House***

Keystone proposes to consolidate wastewater treatment at the Summit House by retiring the existing wastewater system and connecting to municipal sewer provided by the Snake River Wastewater Treatment Facility. This would be accomplished via the installation of a buried sewer line from the Summit House down the Diamondback ski trail to the existing sewer main in Keystone Gulch. The proposed underground sewer line would be approximately 6,700 feet in length, with approximately 2.4 acres of ground disturbance associated with installation of the pipeline.

Connecting to the municipal sewer system would provide a more reliable service connection than the current, aging treatment facility. It would also reduce onsite environmental effects through consolidation of the sewage treatment activities.



The White River National Forest Revised Land and Resource Management Plan (2002 Forest Plan) provides guidance for all resource management activities on the Forest. The following purposes and needs address Forest goals of multiple benefits to people and ecosystem health. Specifically, this proposal seeks to improve the quality of Alpine skiing and snowboarding opportunities (2002 Forest Plan, Objectives 2a and 2a.8).

#### *Purpose 1*

To provide a high-quality winter recreation experience by enhancing the quality of machine-produced snow at Keystone Resort. This would require increasing instantaneous water flow availability in order to maximize snowmaking operations during optimal conditions [i.e. 0-9 degrees Fahrenheit (°F)].

#### *Need*

Keystone's existing snowmaking system diverts water directly from the Snake River. Per state and federal regulations, Keystone must maintain minimum instream water flows consistently throughout its diversion period. The result is that during optimal snowmaking periods, snowmaking operations are frequently halted when minimum instream flows are reached as a result of diversions (an average of two to three times per week during November and December). Therefore, Keystone often produces snow during less than ideal climate conditions in order to open and maintain skiable terrain in the early season. Increased instantaneous flows would enable Keystone to produce more snow during ideal climate conditions, thereby more efficiently utilizing water and power by maximizing snowmaking operations, allowing for a shortened snowmaking season. This would also result in enhanced quality snow production and improve the quality of the recreation experience by making more terrain available earlier in the season.

#### *Purpose 2*

To reduce the environmental effects (particularly to water quality) from the disposal of wastewater produced at the Summit House. This would be consistent with forest-wide direction to improve watershed conditions to provide the water quality necessary to support intended beneficial uses (2002 Forest Plan, Objective 1a).

#### *Need*

The existing on-site wastewater treatment system for the Summit House is antiquated and requires the maintenance of a septic system and leach field on public lands. The need is to transport wastewater away from the Summit House and connect to available infrastructure in Keystone Gulch maintained by the Snake River Wastewater Treatment Facility.

The responsible official for this project is J. Richard Newton, District Ranger for the Dillon Ranger District. The District Ranger will decide whether or not to implement the Proposed Action or another alternative developed by the Forest Service in response to specific resource issues. In addition, the responsible official will determine whether site-specific management requirements and/or mitigation measures will be required.

Your questions and comments regarding this proposal are an integral part of the environmental analysis process. Comments will be used to identify issues and develop alternatives to this proposal. Commentors should include: 1) name, address, telephone number, and organization represented, if any; 2) the title of the document for which the comment is being submitted; 3) specific facts, concerns or issues, and supporting reasons for the Responsible Official to consider. A summary of the analysis will be published in an Environmental Assessment (EA) and distributed to interested public.

Only those who submit timely and substantive comments will be eligible to appeal the final decision. For appeal eligibility, each individual or representative from each organization submitting comments must sign the comments or verify identity upon request. Send written comments to the Responsible Official: J. Richard Newton - District Ranger, P.O. Box 620, Silverthorne, CO 80498, via email to [comments-rocky-mountain-white-river-dillon@fs.fed.us](mailto:comments-rocky-mountain-white-river-dillon@fs.fed.us), or via fax to (970) 468-7735. You can also call (970) 468-5400 or hand deliver comments to the District Ranger's Office Monday-Friday between the hours of 8am and 5pm. For further information contact Mike Liu, Project Leader at (970) 262-3440. In order to be included in this analysis, comments must be postmarked or received no later than 30 days after publication of the legal notice in the Summit Daily News.

*Persons not responding to this mailing will not receive further information regarding this particular project.*

Sincerely,

J. Richard Newton  
District Ranger

enc: map

Comments received in response to this solicitation, including names and addresses of those who comment, will be considered part of the public record on this proposed action and will be available for public inspection. Comments submitted anonymously will be accepted and considered; however, those who only submit anonymous comments will not have standing to appeal the subsequent decision under 36 CFR Part 215. Additionally, pursuant to 7 CFR 1.279(d), any person may request the agency to withhold a submission from the public record by showing how the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) permits such confidentiality. Persons requesting such confidentiality should be aware that, under the FOIA, confidentiality may be granted in only very limited circumstances, such as to protect trade secrets. The Forest Service will inform the requester of the agency's decision regarding the request for confidentiality, and where the request is denied, the agency will return the submission and notify the requester that the comments may be resubmitted with or without name and address within (5) days.