

File Code: 1950

Date: September 7, 2021

Dear Interested Party:

The United States Forest Service (Forest Service), Superior National Forest (SNF), is seeking comments on a Draft Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) that analyzes the environmental effects of the Lutsen Mountains Ski Area Expansion Project. Lutsen Mountains Resort (Lutsen Mountains) currently operates on private land and is proposing to expand onto National Forest System lands located within the Tofte Ranger District of the SNF.

Three alternatives are analyzed in detail in the Draft EIS: Alternative 1 (No Action Alternative), Alternative 2 (Proposed Action), and Alternative 3. Public input at this time will help refine the analysis in the Draft EIS and guide the decision-making process for the project. I am currently evaluating the recreational benefits of these projects against the identified resource impacts these projects may create. A project decision will be made after considering information contained within the analysis, public comments, and staff recommendations.

Comments on the Draft EIS will be accepted for 45 days from publication of the Notice of Availability (NOA) in the Federal Register or until **October 25, 2021** (the anticipated publication date of the NOA is September 10, 2021). The NOA provides the sole means of calculating the close of the Draft EIS comment period. The entire DEIS is available for review on the SNF website at: <https://www.fs.usda.gov/project/?project=52440>. Hardcopies may be reviewed at the Tofte Ranger District office in Duluth, Minnesota. CDs of the Draft EIS are available upon request.

Written comments must be submitted via mail to: Constance Cummins, Forest Supervisor, c/o Michael Jiménez, Project Leader, Superior National Forest, 8901 Grand Avenue Place, Duluth, MN 55808. Electronic comments including attachments can be submitted on the project website at: <https://cara.ecosystem-management.org/Public//CommentInput?Project=52440>, or via email to comments-eastern-superior@usda.gov (please include “Lutsen Mountains Ski Area Expansion Project” in the subject line). The project can be reviewed in more detail through an interactive viewer here: <https://arcg.is/18mzzu>. A virtual public meeting will be hosted on October 5, 2021, to provide the SNF an opportunity to provide additional details on the project and to allow the public to ask questions and provide input. Additional details on this virtual public meeting, as well as how to access the meeting, will be provided on the project website.

To be most effective when submitting comments, please include: (1) name, address, telephone number, and organization represented, if any; (2) reference the “Lutsen Mountains Ski Area Expansion Project”; (3) specific concerns or issues with the Draft EIS, and supporting reasons why they should be considered by the Responsible Official; and (4) page numbers and paragraphs, if applicable, of any concerns or issues in question. Only those who submit timely and specific written comments will have eligibility to file an objection under 36 CFR §218.8. For objection eligibility, each individual or representative from each entity submitting timely and



specific written comments must either sign the comment or verify identity upon request. A scanned signature may serve as verification on electronic comments. Individuals and organizations wishing to be eligible to object must meet the information requirements in 36 CFR §218.25(a)(3).

Comments received, including the names and addresses of those who comment, will become part of the public record for this project and will be subject to review pursuant to the Freedom of Information Act.

Thank you for your interest and participation in this important project. To obtain additional information about the Lutsen Mountains Ski Area Expansion Project and Draft EIS, please contact Michael Jiménez, Project Leader, Superior National Forest, by phone at (218) 626-4383 or by email to michael.jimenez@usda.gov.

Sincerely,

 X *Constance Cummins*

Signed by: BRIAN VOSBERG
CONSTANCE CUMMINS
Forest Supervisor

cc: Michael Jimenez