

Crested Butte Mountain Resort Files Appeal with U.S. Forest Service

Mt. Crested Butte, Colo. - Today Crested Butte Mountain Resort (CBMR) filed an appeal with the U.S. Forest Service disputing the agency's decision last month to reject the resort's proposed expansion onto Snodgrass Mountain without conducting a public review under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA).

The proposed Snodgrass expansion is critical for the long-term viability of CBMR and the economic health of the East River Valley in Gunnison County. The proposed expansion would increase the amount of intermediate and advanced terrain at CBMR with 276 acres of skiing served by three lifts, a beginner carpet and a connector gondola from Crested Butte Mountain. Snodgrass Mountain is located adjacent to Crested Butte Mountain.

Snodgrass Mountain has been designated for ski area expansion in the Grand Mesa, Uncompahgre and Gunnison Forest Plan (GMUG) since 1979, and has been included in CBMR's special use permit since 1982.

"The decision the Forest Service made is fundamentally flawed," stated Tim Mueller, president of CBMR. "We are confident this decision will be set aside. Our appeal demonstrates that the Forest Service did not follow its own regulations, violated federal law and made a decision in a private process that is deeply offensive to the right of the public to participate in public lands decisions."

"Our appeal shows that every one of the 'kitchen sink' reasons listed in the Forest Service decision does not hold up," added Mueller.

The NEPA process is designed to protect the public as the Forest Service is required by law to be objective, respond to public comments and explain its decision.

"The Forest Service is capable of running a great NEPA process for Snodgrass Mountain," said Mueller. "We think the Forest Service owes it to the public to decide the future of the ski area and the community in a public NEPA process rather than behind closed doors without allowing public participation. We believe the Forest Service can and will do a better job than it has."

In its appeal CBMR has asked the Forest Service to initiate a public and objective NEPA process for Snodgrass.

CBMR's appeal was filed with the Regional Forester in Denver. The appeal regulations give Forest Supervisor Charlie Richmond 30 days to respond to the appeal unless the time is extended.

The Forest Service originally said its decision was not appealable. On Dec. 16, 2009 the Forest Service notified CBMR that it could appeal. CBMR appreciates the Forest Service's recognition of the right to appeal.

The Forest Service issued a decision on Nov. 5, 2009 denying the resort the ability to enter into the public review process under NEPA for its Snodgrass Mountain expansion proposal. CBMR believes the Forest Service did not follow its own regulations or the procedures it follows at other ski areas, and made a decision that directly impacts the future of the ski

area and the economic stability of the East River Valley in Gunnison County without preparing objective formal studies and without asking for public comments.

Support for CBMR and a fair public process continues to swell locally, regionally and nationally. The vast majority of the community is shocked at the denial of due process.

Click [here](#) for more background information and learn more about the Snodgrass Mountain proposed expansion by visiting snodgrassfacts.com.