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Comments:

I have been living in the East Mountain area for nearly 40 years. Over that time I have used the Sandia Crest recreational area mostly for XC skiing and hiking. I have gone to the older restaurant several times. Normally I would oppose a project such as this in favor of keeping the forest quiet and pristine. However, the ski area owners came and presented their plan to a group meeting and made a major point out of financially supporting the ski area with the proceeds from the mountain coaster. They also made a big deal out of cutting down a minimal number of trees for the coaster's course. I thought that meant going down an existing ski run, but I now see that they are going through the trees. I would suggest that they take advantage of existing cleared space to keep more trees intact. Another possible problem is noise--and this is important for summertime hikers wanting a quiet natural experience. The coaster will make its own noise and the riders will probably be screaming on the downhill run. If plans are made to control the noise, I would be in favor of limited hours of operation. Fire is always a danger in the forest and as skiers almost never smoke on the slopes it's not a big concern during the winter. In the summer, fire is major concern and an iron fisted no-smoking policy would have to be enforced. So in summary, if the noise, tree destruction and fire hazard are appropriately addressed, AND the owners can demonstrate how the income from the coaster would be applied to keeping the ski area open and well maintained in the winter months, I am in favor of the mountain coaster plan.