

From: Brig Graff <bggraff@gmail.com>
To: <gregg@utahcounty.gov>
Date: 7/22/2015 6:19 PM
Subject: I'm in favor of Snowbird in AF canyon

Gregg,

I know a lot of people probably are contacting you to express their fear about Snowbird putting a base area in AF Canyon, with a gondola up to Mineral Basin.

I guess I don't really have a horse in this race, since I don't really have any connections to Snowbird -- other than I like to ski there when there's good powder. I don't live near AF Canyon (I live in Holladay, near the mouth of Big Cottonwood Canyon) and my son is on a ski race team in Park City. So we only ski Snowbird a handful of times per year.

But we would ski it much more if there weren't such awful, terrible parking at Snowbird and ugly infuriating traffic in/near Little Cottonwood Canyon all the time. It makes it not worth it on the deep days. If you have to drive over there on a snowy day, especially days when it's closed for road avalanche control work, it is impossible to even get anywhere because of the cars waiting. And my friends who live at the mouth of LCC can't hardly get out of the house to go to work on those days because of the traffic.

So that's probably the primary reason I'm in favor of putting a Snowbird base area in AF Canyon -- to diffuse all the Utah County traffic that has to drive around point-of-the-mountain, clog I-15 and all the arteries going up to LCC, just to get to Snowbird. An alternate route for them to access Snowbird via AF Canyon would probably increase safety and reduce traffic near LCC. That's good for everyone.

Further -- more people would be able to get up & enjoy the higher elevations of AF Canyon. Though I live in Holladay, I have done lots and lots of backcountry skiing and touring in AF Canyon in previous years. It's a great place for that. And I think having a gondola over the top of it won't ruin that.

Snowbird wants it...so I think you have the leverage to get them to do it in a way that won't be as bad as everyone says it will. And will turn out to be a huge win.

Here are my suggestions:

- 1) Make the gondola required downloading -- no ski runs cut down AF Canyon. Just ride the gondola up to Mineral Basin, and at the end of the day ride it down to the AF Canyon base area.
- 2) To limit car traffic in and around AF Canyon, have Snowbird help pay to put in a trax train from Thanksgiving Point (FrontRunner stop) straight up AF Canyon to the Snowbird base area at Tibble Fork. Limit the number of cars that are allowed to go up there.
- 3) Snowbird would probably love that -- because then they can advertise that you could get from the Airport to your hotel at Snowbird without renting a car. Just ride the trains. This is more like Europe, when I've visited there and they have their "ski trains" from their city centers straight up into the mountains. Create that for Utah, and then every Trax and FrontRunner stop can begin having walkable communities build up around them --- because you can get straight up to the mountains without a car. Just connect the trains. How cool would that be for Utah?
- 4) Put a couple of stops for the train as it passes up past Adobe (my former employer -- I now work at Domo) and through the towns/neighborhoods towards AF Canyon. So that people in Lehi/AF/Alpine/etc can park and ride trax up to Snowbird without everyone driving towards the mouth of AF Canyon.
- 5) Have Snowbird create an environment-conscious walking village at the Tibble Fork base area -- with grocery stores, etc. Then even if tourists do rent a car, they can leave it parked and stay around the walking village. Or ride trax down AF Canyon into Cedar Hills to go to a grocery store. But regardless, with a little walking village there are going to be more people who will be able to go up there and enjoy AF Canyon in all seasons -- bringing in more tax revenue.
- 6) But Snowbird needs to design the Tibble base much better than their current base area in LCC -- which isn't very walkable, or welcoming. For

example, the fish ponds they have in LCC at the Snowbird base are just random and sitting unattractively near an ugly parking lot, etc. I would hope they would take the opportunity to make their Tibble Fork base area a well-designed and walkable place for all seasons. But you'll have to force it, Gregg --- because Powdr Corp never really did a good job of that when they owned Park City Mountain Resort. So I don't trust them on that front. Ugly parking lots and a worn-down base area was their way of running Park City Mountain Resort, and Snowbird's Tibble Fork base had better be an innovative and well-designed communal base area for all seasons.

Those are my random thoughts. I know they might sound crazy! But I actually really like this idea of putting a Snowbird base area in AF Canyon, and it has been bubbling in my mind for years ever since I first started backcountry skiing around AF Canyon several years ago. I think it can be done really poorly, and ruin the traffic near AF and the pristine-ness of AF Canyon. Or with these steps, you can create something amazing that exists nowhere else in the US. Train-based access to Snowbird, that helps reduce traffic and is better on smog/air quality than the current solution...where everyone sits idling their cars at the mouth of LCC, then find themselves required to park all up & down a steep and dangerous canyon road near Snowbird's current base area.

On a separate note -- to further reduce traffic and the risk to drivers of avalanches in Little Cottonwood Canyon, send a branch of Trax up Little Cottonwood from Sandy/Draper/etc. There used to be trains going up & down LCC years ago for the miners who worked up there. It would save lots of smog, traffic, and be much safer than people negotiating that road and the avalanche risk on snowy days. But my car was hit by a driver on that steep nasty road once, on a snowy day, and my brother and I were put in a very precarious situation as a result. So you can understand why I very much dislike the traffic and roads of LCC and am looking for chances to reduce smog/congestion/danger. While also creating something awesome for the state of Utah, that still preserves everything I love about AF Canyon -- and gives more people the chance to enjoy it.

Anyway -- my ideas are a bit nuts, I know. But good luck with the decisions & efforts you are making! And I hope you are able to use the leverage you have to get Snowbird to make this into a very good thing, instead of a mess.

Good luck!
Brig Graff