

The Mountain Accord, who's jurisdiction is the middle wasatch, from I-80 to Little Cottonwood Canyon, is in the process of voting on July 13 for a 416 acre land swap of public forest land that we all use and enjoy in American Fork Canyon which resides in Utah County. This is where they crossed the line.

MA agrees to get 1400 undevelopable acres given to the public in LCC, ..good for them...while AF canyon loses 416 acres of prime real-estate public land giving it to snowbird which allows continuous lands connecting all their existing private land cumulating into over 3400 acres, which essentially impacts over 10,000 acres of unspoiled, undeveloped land butting against wilderness with a 5 mile gondola all the way down to Tibble Fork....bad for us. Why would snowbird trade 1400 acres for a mere 416? Why has snowbird invested millions of dollars buying up property in AF canyon over the years along with watershares...snowbird, will develop all these lands, cut in ski runs, build storage facilities, build condos and housing through their own admission, and close off public access, in favor of fee based, regulated recreation on private lands. Snowbird has come to the county commissioners dozens of times requesting amendments and changes to the zoning in AF canyon. First it was for the 2 mineral basin chairs in 1997, granted, camels nose is in the tent, then it was in 2006 for a warming hut, granted, camels head is in the tent, then it was for zip lines, alpine slides, mountain coasters in 2011, camels shoulders in the tent, then a little later amendments to allow for guided tours with ATV's, horses, Etc, granted. camels mid body in the tent. 2015 was a avalanche gun which would allow them to do control work in the new areas they plan on developing. Hind quarters in the tent. Now snowbird is coming asking for 416 prime pristine acres of our lands. If this is granted the camels whole body is in the tent and Utah and Wasatch County residents are kicked out of AF canyon, sold out to private interest and commercialism. Not only that but who will pick up the bill? It seems the sales tax will still reside in Salt lake county while Utah county receives the impact.

A quote from ~~the~~ the Mountain Accord Website on why we need mountain accord:

“The Central Wasatch mountains are beloved by those of us who live along both sides of its ridge line. We hike, we bike, we ski, we discover wildlife, we ramble and amble and find solitude amid one of the world's most spectacular backyards. And even as these mountains are source of peace and spiritual renewal they are also, literally, the reason life is possible in Utah's arid climate. More than 500,000 people rely on these mountains as a water source. And Utah is one of the fastest growing states in the union in no small part because of the quality of life these

mountains provide.”

We couldn't agree more... We are the Southern Wasatch. We love our mountains and canyons for the same reasons stated here, not less.

From the mountain accord task force recommendations June 7th they mentioned what the ~~ended~~^{extended} outcome is :

a) Avoid further mountain development except at clustered nodes at base of ski areas, thoughtfully designed to complement the natural setting and encourage walking, biking, and transit use.

MA Parties agreed that broad land preservation and transfer of private lands to public ownership, (not the other way around as in this case) combined with Ski Area enhancements and a rail system with tunnels, would best fulfill several Mountain Accord objectives, including:

- Water resource protection
- Preservation of lands for environmental values, including watershed protection, wildlife habitat, ecosystem health, and aesthetics
- Preservation of lands that offer unique recreation experiences and access
- Prioritization of preservation of lands that are contiguous to other open space
- Reduction of checkerboard USFS property ownership pattern (i.e., secure inholdings)
- Consolidation of Ski Area ownership at the base of the ski resorts

Giving 416 acres of public forest lands to snowbird essentially allowing for a full blown ski resort in AF canyon does none of the objectives above, except making snowbirds land continuous, which allows for the largest expansion of a ski resort in the wasatch, as well as access through American Fork Canyon. How does this preserve our lands for environment values, watershed protection, wildlife habitat, and in my opinion the most important one..aesthetics. It doesn't! When is enough enough. We have 10 resorts in the wasatch, all that are within 30-60 minute drive of anywhere in the wasatch range, are we willing to exploit the last holdout undeveloped unspoiled place for more bragging rights and a few dollars? Are we so concerned with getting more people up in the mountains that we are spoiling the very reason we go into the mountains? How far must we soon drive to get away from the hand of man, which is what going into the mountains is all about.

I've lived for over 40 years at the base of timpanogos and near American Fork Canyon. I've been a professional nature photographer here in Utah for over 25 years. I've taken over a million photographs. Over 75% were captured around the alpine loop and American Fork Canyon. Its beauty is unsurpassed. Not once have I had a request to have storage sheds, ski poles and trams, towers, roller coasters, zip lines, condos and houses in this gorgeous landscape. American Fork Canyon is the crown jewel of the wasatch.

As Utah county commissioners you hold the key that would allow snowbird to receive zone changes to make AF canyon a Deer Valley, Mountain Sprawl, Mountains that we all use dotted with million dollar homes. In an article from the SL Tribune, March 20th, 2012, Commission Chairman Larry Ellertson said Utah County wants to be a participant in land-swap talks so residents can weigh in on any proposals. Well, a vote is happening in less than 3 weeks on those land swaps and the general public and many city officers no nothing about it. I hope you will listen to the largest stake holders in the Canyon, the people!

It all comes down to this (show photograph) or This (show photograph with tram)

Please Protect and Preserve American Fork Canyon.