

Comments sought on Squaw-Alpine gondola

Tahoe National Forest is about to begin the environmental review process for the proposed Squaw Valley to Alpine Meadows gondola.

In September, the Forest Service received the application from Squaw Valley Ski Holdings to install, operate, and maintain an aerial ropeway system connecting Squaw Valley and Alpine Meadows ski areas. This proposal also included an alteration to current avalanche mitigation techniques including the installation of Gazex exploders.

If the gondola were approved, it would require an amendment to an existing special use permit for Alpine Meadows Ski Area. The proposal is consistent with the resort's master development plan. The Forest Service said it passed the screening criteria for consideration to use National Forest System lands and amend the existing permit consistent with Forest Service land use regulations.

A full description of the project, including maps, is available **online**.

The purpose of the scoping period is for interested parties to provide early and meaningful participation on this project and to learn more about the project. Respondents should include: (1) name, address, telephone number, and organization represented, if any; (2) reference the "Squaw Valley to Alpine Meadows Base-to-Base Gondola Project" and (3) specific facts, concerns or issues, and supporting reasons why they should be considered.

Written comments must be submitted via mail to scoping_comment@squawalpinegondola-eis.com.

Two public meetings will be held on May 9 to gather comments on the scope of the project. Both meetings will be at the Resort at Squaw Creek, Monument Peak Room, 400 Squaw Creek Road, Olympic Valley. The first meeting will be from 2-4pm and the second from 6-8pm. These meetings will be held jointly with Placer County regarding their analysis of the project under the California Environmental Quality Act. Representatives from the Tahoe National Forest, Squaw Valley Ski Holdings, LLC, and Placer County will be present to answer questions and provide additional information on this project.