



April 30, 2015

Dear Mountain Accord Executive Committee,

Friends of Alta (FOA) appreciates the opportunity to add these comments to the letter we submitted on March 16, 2015 regarding the proposed Blueprint. Since 1981, Friends of Alta has been protecting the environment and character of Alta including watershed and wildlife habitat. We are a 501(c)(3) organization mainly supported by individuals who want to conserve Alta's open spaces and leave a lasting legacy for their families. Friends of Alta remains engaged and supportive of the Mountain Accord process because of the collaborative nature of the process, the large stakeholder group, and positive opportunities for the future of the Central Wasatch. We believe there is a chance for us to make integrated decisions that replace the piecemealed approach to development that has been occurring. We are very supportive and encouraged by the work being done by the Federal Designation Taskforce to add an additional layer of protection to public lands in the Central Wasatch. **The number one priority of this designation must be watershed protection!** We also want to make sure we are loud and clear in our opposition to a train coming up Little Cottonwood Canyon and to a tunnel connecting Alta with Big Cottonwood Canyon.

The next step in the Mountain Accord process calls for the Executive Committee to review and consider comments received by the public and stakeholders and then make revisions, and possibly adopt or recommend a proposed Blueprint that could be implemented through local jurisdictions, Federal Agencies and/or acts by Congress. We strongly urge the Executive Committee to define and agree upon their purpose and need, before reviewing the proposed Blueprint as this will provide a unifying lens and strategy for Executive Committee members to consider the opportunities and problems which we are trying to solve through the Mountain Accord process. We strongly request that the Mountain Accord process begin discussing how many people the canyons can support while preserving the watershed, supporting sustainable businesses, maintaining a quality recreational experience, and not eroding the possibility to find solace in our canyons. Each footprint matters! We need to agree upon what the capacity is, then develop management plans to maintain functioning ecosystems and a healthy watershed.

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In Memoriam

Bill Levitt, 1917 – 2009

Friends of Alta

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www.friendsofalta.org

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The Mission of Friends of Alta is to protect the environment of Alta, including watershed and wildlife habitat areas; to preserve Alta's unique character and heritage; and to encourage stewardship and sustainability of Alta's environment and community.



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FOA continues to be in opposition to the proposed train up Little Cottonwood Canyon and the tunnel connecting the train through to Big Cottonwood Canyon and Park City. The October 2014 transportation white paper that was produced reads biased in favor of a train and does not adequately provide justification for such an exorbitant amount of public funds to be spent on a train. It also does not thoroughly enough justify why the consultants abandoned consideration of certain modes. We urge the Executive Committee to thoughtfully consider and evaluate other transportation solutions that are phase able (such as buses) that will increase safety, operate in the existing road corridor, and are financially responsible. Additionally, we ask that the Albion Basin Summer Road and summer management efforts by the Town of Alta, USFS and local stakeholders be considered in this process.

FOA is very supportive of maintaining Alta's end of the canyon character. Except for enhancements to summer trail connectivity we do not support Alta being connected via lifts or tunnels with Big Cottonwood Canyon. Alta is a world famous destination at the top of Little Cottonwood Canyon, and the proposed train and tunnel combination threatens that unique character by turning Alta and Little Cottonwood Canyon into another stop on the line between Sandy and Park City. How you get to Alta matters! We do support safe and reliable transit to and from our community. We are also concerned about the potential cumulative environmental impacts caused by the construction and operation of a train and tunnel in Alta.

As the Executive Committee reviews the Cottonwood Canyons Taskforce (CCTF) land exchange recommendations we ask that you consider the following.

1. Have we as stakeholders had enough time to carefully consider the advantages/disadvantages of this land swap and potential unintentional consequence? Let's continue the dialogue; it only seems to be getting richer and more thoughtful. Can Mountain Accord allow the necessary time to thoughtfully consider impacts to the Town to avoid unintended consequences?
2. The land exchanges be subject to NEPA.
3. The private inholdings in Albion Basin have brought conflict to Alta for many years. We would like to see ALL private inholdings brought into public ownership. Due to its iconic mountain backdrops, lush wetlands, flora (over 200 species of wildflowers) and fauna we strive to leave a lasting legacy of watershed protection and magnificent open spaces in Albion Basin.
4. FOA is supportive and sees public access benefits by transferring Alta and Snowbird Ski Areas private property from Mount Superior east to Grizzly Gulch into public ownership.



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5. FOA is generally supportive of the Alta Ski Area trading its land in the upper reaches of the Alta Ski Area special use permit boundary area for a reasonable amount of land (partly determined during the valuation process) in the base area as long as ALL the land in the upper reaches is included (not a piecemeal approach that leaves out certain parcels/lots). Currently, at least 17 lots in Albion Basin owned by the Alta Ski Area that are not included in the proposal.
6. FOA is supportive of the Alta Ski Area being able to trade for land in the base area that they currently have buildings on.
7. The roughly 160 acres of land that Alta Ski Area is seeking to acquire in the base area must be of equal or lesser value to the land being traded in the upper reaches of the mountain. FOA is not supportive of allowing the ski area to purchase additional acreage if the valuation is out of balance.
8. We support the effort of the Town of Alta to acquire land through this process in the base area for public purposes such as transit, trailheads, watershed protection, and community space. We suggest these lands be deeded to the public bodies responsible for those purposes.

Lastly, if stakeholders are identified as being absent in the process, we encourage the Mountain Accord to welcome them into process.

Sincerely,

Mimi Levitt & Jen Clancy