



**FRIENDS
OF ALTA**

January 5, 2022

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Friends of Alta

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Kody Fox, Executive Director

Bekee Hotze, District Ranger

Salt Lake Ranger District

United States Forest Service

6944 South 3000 East

Cottonwood Heights, UT 84121

RE: FONSI- Alta Summer Road

Dear District Ranger Hotze,

Friends of Alta is a public charity dedicated to conserving and protecting the environment and character of Alta. As Alta's local land trust, we sincerely appreciate the opportunity to provide comments related to our concerns about the US Forest Service's finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) regarding the request to pave the first 700 feet of the Alta Summer Road and plow half of it during winter months. This plan would necessitate road widening, the removal of a significant number of trees, build a shelf on the downhill side of the road, and create a bank on the uphill side. The road is an entry point for Summer and Winter recreators and this modification and paving of roadway would create a barrier for skiers wishing to access Albion Basin and have a negative impact on the environment. The groomed summer road is not only an access route to the backcountry, but it has also long been a safe and popular winter recreation destination for families with young children to walk, sled and play in the Wasatch. That tradition would suffer greatly with the introduction of a paved and plowed roadway for cars. This combination of actions would undoubtedly have a detrimental effect to our watershed and create an unacceptably dangerous road barrier for skiers who will now face increased risk from vehicle interaction. Given the numerous challenges facing our

canyon, both environmentally and economically, Friends of Alta (FOA) believes that the correct approach to take with this issue is a holistic one that takes into consideration all of the costs and benefits of each of the significant issues currently facing Alta before making a final decision. Only then can you confidently declare that there would be no significant impact. The practical approach would be to wait for the resolution of issues including but not limited to finalizing a permanent solution to canyon road congestion to allow for a full picture of what may be and may not be necessary for vehicles and overall transport. A decision of no significant impact with all of the current information still outstanding is simply not taking into account the entire (ever changing) picture.

For these reasons, I respectfully request that the Forest Service reconsider its finding of No Significant Impact.

Sincerely,

Kody R. Fox
Executive Director
Friends of Alta



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.