

From: [Rebecca More](#)
To: [DNCR: Mt Washington Comments](#)
Subject: Mt. Washington Master Plan- Comments
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Dear Commissioners, Mount Washington Commission,

The Mount Washington Summit Master Plan is a **CRUCIAL** opportunity to plan for the future of this unique and **FRAGILE** eco-system.

The current draft Master Plan suggests a variety of competing goals, including capital improvements, protecting sensitive vegetation, enhancing visitor services, and furthering weather and science work conducted at the summit. I strongly urge the Commission to plan for activities that safeguard Mt. Washington's critical and endangered ecological role in the northeastern alpine zone and its iconic place in the historic and scientific fabric of our region.

For example, the proposal to put an overnight facility for visitors on the summit will **NOT** safeguard Mt. Washington's fragile eco-system for the long-term future, nor will it preserve the site for scientific and meteorological research and record-keeping. There is no public benefit that would justify such degradation of the summit.

The Commission should carefully consider the carrying capacity of the summit and plan for facilities that accommodate an appropriate number of **DAY-TIME ONLY** visitors. Encouraging any significant growth in the number of visitors would place an undue burden on the unique alpine ecology of this site, where sensitive plant species have already been significantly impacted by heavy use. In fact, **LIMITS** should be considered as at other sensitive environmental sites.

The Commission must plan for improving the physical accessibility of summit facilities and the visitor experience should be enhanced for all persons when considering any user fee proposals for future access.

The summit improvements should be informed by a comprehensive set of environmental studies well-**BEFORE** any consideration of proposed changes to understand potential impacts. A summit assessment should incorporate these environmental studies, to **Avoid** any potential impacts on Mt Washington's alpine ecology. Once the summit is degraded, it will not be possible to rectify, so "mitigation" is not relevant in this instance.

The Master Plan must seek to manage a sustainable footprint on Mount Washington that includes achieving net zero emissions and minimizing waste, noise and light pollution, and scenic impacts of current and future operations.

Finally, the Master Plan outlines additional studies, site plans, and operational plans that will need to be developed. These plans and their implementation should be done in close coordination with the United States Forest Service and other stakeholders to ensure the greatest degree of planning across a larger, integrated landscape.

Regards,
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