Staff Report for Administrative Approval

Weber County Planning Division

Synopsis

Application Information

Application Request:	Consideration and action on de minimus changes to replacement of the Becker Ski Lift at Snowbasin Resort, located at 3925 E Snowbasin Road, Huntsville, Utah, 84317
Type of Decision:	Administrative
Applicant:	Snowbasin Resort Company
Authorized Agent:	Peter Traum
File Number:	CUP 2025-07

Property Information

Approximate Address:	3925 E Snowbasin Rd, Huntsville, UT, 84317
Project Area:	5500' in length, 23 Towers
Zoning:	Destination Recreation Resort (DRR-1)
Existing Land Use:	Ski Resort
Proposed Land Use:	Ski Resort
Parcel ID:	20-043-0005
Township, Range, Section:	Township 7 North, Range 1 East, Section 29 SE

Adjacent Land Use

North:	U.S. Forest Service Land	**South:**	U.S. Forest Service Land
East:	Ski Resort/Snowbasin Road	**West:**	Ski Resort

Staff Information

Report Presenter:	Tammy Aydelotte taydelotte@co.weber.ut.us 801-399-8794
Report Reviewer:	RG

Applicable Ordinances

- Title 101, Chapter 1 (General Provisions) Section 7 (Definitions)
- Title 108, Chapter 4 (Conditional Use Permit, amendment)
- Title 104, Chapter 29 (Destination and Recreation Resort Zone - DRR-1, Conditional Uses)

Summary and Background

Snowbasin has submitted a proposal that includes replacing the Becker lift, shifting the base of the Becker Lift by approximately 227 feet to the west. The terminal location at the top will remain. This proposal consists of 23 new towers.

Analysis

General Plan: Weber County will continue to pursue recreational development opportunities with existing and future recreation resorts in the Ogden Valley planning area, while advocating for the diversification of recreational and cultural opportunities, including camping facilities (2.1.1, pg. 45, Ogden Valley General Plan).

Zoning: The subject property is located within the DRR-1 Zone. The purpose and intent of this zone is as follows:

"The purpose of this chapter is to provide flexible development standards to resorts that are dedicated to preserving open space and creating extraordinary recreational resort experiences while promoting the goals and objectives of the Ogden Valley general plan."

Under LUC 104-29-8 Yurts are a permitted use in the DRR-1 zone.

Development Standards: The following site development standards per the requirements in the DRR-1 Zone:

(1) Lot area and lot width: None (LUC §104-29-2).
(2) Front yard setback: None.
(3) Side yard setback: None.
(4) Rear yard setback: None.

There is no anticipated change to the impact of replacing the existing lift.

This proposal meets all of the site development standards stated in §104-29-2 (DRR-1 Zone). The exhibits show the project area well within standards. Full report(s) is/are on file with Weber County.

There is a geologic hazard study (performed by GSH, job no. 3361-006-25) submitted with this request. Comments and recommendations can be found in Exhibit C of this report. All recommendations contained in the submitted report(s) shall be followed.

Conditional Use Review: The existing ski resort is allowed as a conditional use within the DRR-1 Zone. The applicant is seeking an approval to amend their CUP, through a de minimus change of replacing a lift and relocating the base approximately 227' to the west. *"The planning director may approve revisions to an approved design review plan that he/she determines are de minimis. Proposed revisions shall be considered de minimis if the planning director determines the changes to be slight, inconsequential, and not in violation of any substantive provision of this Code."*

Public Safety and Health: The applicant is currently working with the County Engineer, with a county SWPPP, and with Building Inspection. Weber Fire District has issued approval of this project.

Tax Clearance: The 2024 taxes are paid in full. The 2025 taxes are not due until November 30, 2025.

Staff Recommendation

The Planning Division recommends approval of de minimus changes to the ski resort facility, specifically replacement of the Becker ski lift, located at approximately 3925 E Snowbasin Rd. This recommendation for approval is subject to all review agency requirements.

This recommendation is based on the following findings:

1. The existing use conforms to the Ogden Valley General Plan.
2. The existing use will not cause harm to the natural surroundings.
3. The existing use, if conditions are imposed, will comply with applicable County ordinances.
4. The existing use, if conditions are imposed, will not deteriorate the environment of the general area so as to negatively impact surrounding properties and uses.

Date of Administrative Approval: MAY 28, 2025

Rick Grover

Exhibits

A. Application
B. Narrative/Site Plans
C. Geologic Hazard Report Comments

Area Map

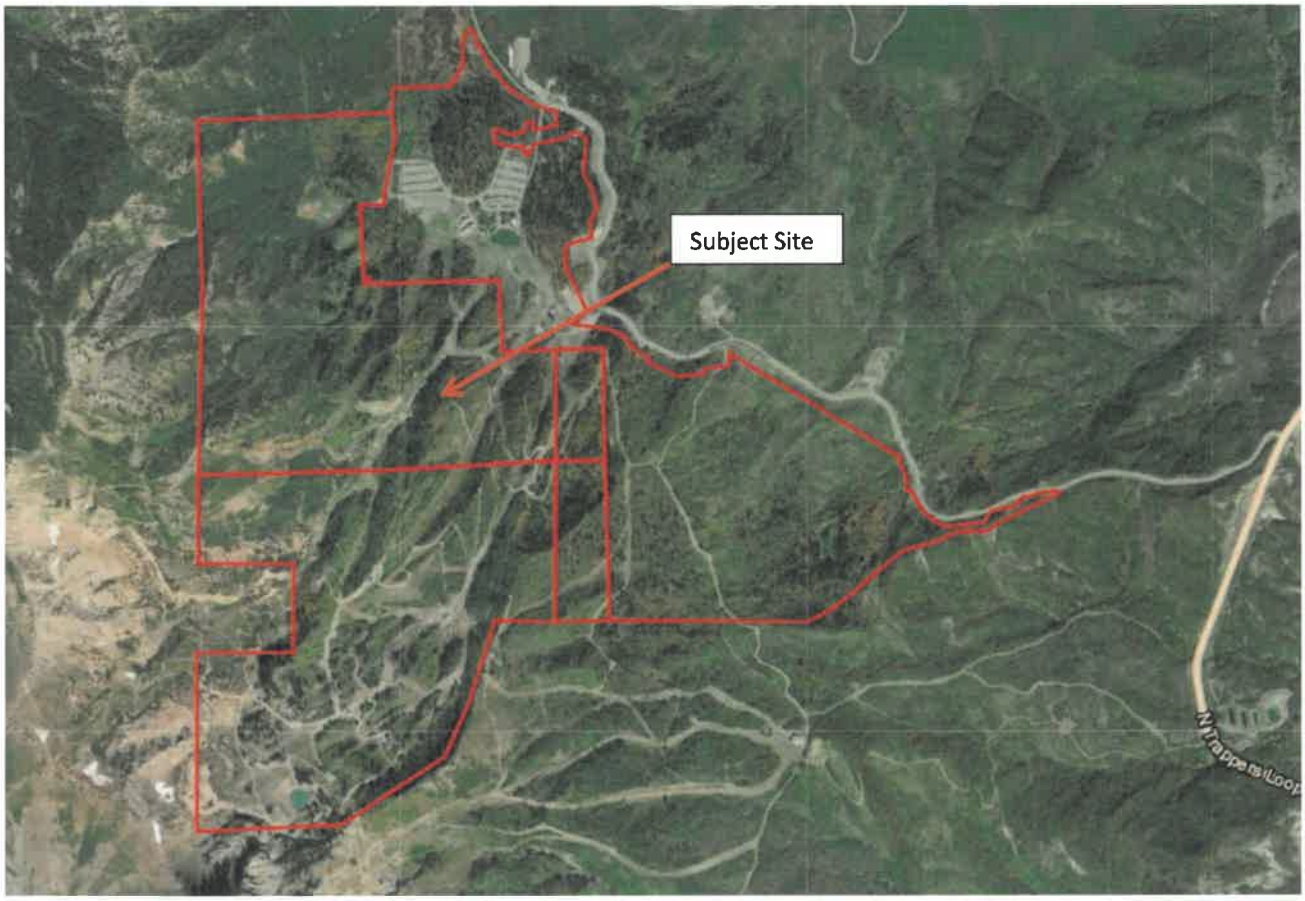


Exhibit A - Application

Snowbasin Resort -Conditional Use Permits

+ Add Follower | Change Status | Change Review Due Date | Edit Project

Address:	3925 E Snowbasin Road, Huntsville, UT, 84317	**Project Status:**	Accepted
Maps:	County Map, Google Maps	**Status Date:**	5/1/2025
Project Type:	Conditional Use Permits	**File Number:**	
Sub Type:	Conditional Use Permits	**Project Manager**	
Created By:	Peter Traum		
Created On:	4/30/2025		

Application | Documents 13 | Comments 1 | Reviews 2 | Followers 11 | History | Reminder 0 | Payments 1 | Internal 0

Documents

+ Add Document | Print

List of project documents. Review documents can be found under the Review tab.

Document	Date Uploaded	Private	Options
Building renderings			
Easement documents			
Engineered Plans			
Original Snowbasin Becker Preliminary Submittal.pdf	4/30/2025	False	Download Remove Edit
Original C52356FC120624.pdf	4/30/2025	False	Download Remove Edit
Geologic hazards study			
Original 3361-006-25 Proposed New Becker Ski Lift Geologic Reconnaissance.pdf	4/30/2025	False	Download Remove Edit
Geotechnical report			
Original 3361-006-25 Proposed New Becker Ski Lift Geologic Reconnaissance.pdf	4/30/2025	False	Download Remove Edit
Landscaping Plan			
Narrative			
Original Becker Lift 2024_RW clean 2023 05 16.docx	4/30/2025	False	Download Remove Edit
Notice of decision			
Other			
Original SWPPP_BeckerLift.pdf	4/30/2025	False	Download Remove Edit
Permits issued			
Planning staff report			
Signage Plan			
Site Plan			
Original Becker Lift Construction Overview (County).pdf	4/30/2025	False	Download Remove Edit
Original GSN Site Plan.pdf	4/30/2025	False	Download Remove Edit
Original SWPPP Site Plan.pdf	4/30/2025	False	Download Remove Edit
Original Top Terminal Only.pdf	4/30/2025	False	Download Remove Edit
Original Bottom Terminal Rear Load Only.pdf	4/30/2025	False	Download Remove Edit
Original New becker Alignment - March 18 2023 - FOR LP-Model.pdf	4/30/2025	False	Download Remove Edit
Time Extension			
Water and Wastewater Plan			
Original SWPPP_BeckerLift.pdf	4/30/2025	False	Download Remove Edit
Uncategorized Documents			

Exhibit B – Project Narrative/Site Plans

Snowbasin – Becker Lift

Operational November 2024

Overview

The Becker lift is 37 years old and will either require significant year-over-year investment to ensure safety and continued operation or replacement in the near term. Due to the age of this lift, parts availability issues, skier capacity issues and the overall skier experience a lift replacement is recommended at this time. Replacement of Becker will improve access to both the Strawberry and Demoisy lifts along with the terrain these lift service spreading visitation out across the Strawberry terrain.

Improved access to the vast terrain in Strawberry is imperative for growth at Snowbasin. As skier visits at the beginner to intermediate levels have increased overtime, terrain accommodating this specific demographic has become pivotal to our daily operation. Replacing the Becker lift with a highspeed sixpack will provide the infrastructure necessary to support accessibility to this underutilized area of the resort while expanding usage of our existing runs and lifts.

Total replacement cost is estimated at $10 million; actual costs may deviate +/- 10% from this estimate. An update to this summary will be provided in the event costs or projections change.

Risks / Upside

Replacing Becker will support several key long-term initiatives for the resort. An updated Becker lift will provide easier and more direct access to Strawberry. With the Strawberry terrain accounting for 1/3 of the resort's total terrain, replacing Becker will provide an additional highspeed out-of-base lift with the opportunity to spread skiers out more efficiently while improving the overall skiing experience. The 22/23 season saw substantial season pass holder and partner pass product growth. Given this growth along with anticipated future growth, the expectation to improve the guest experience in this regard will require continued attention and consideration.

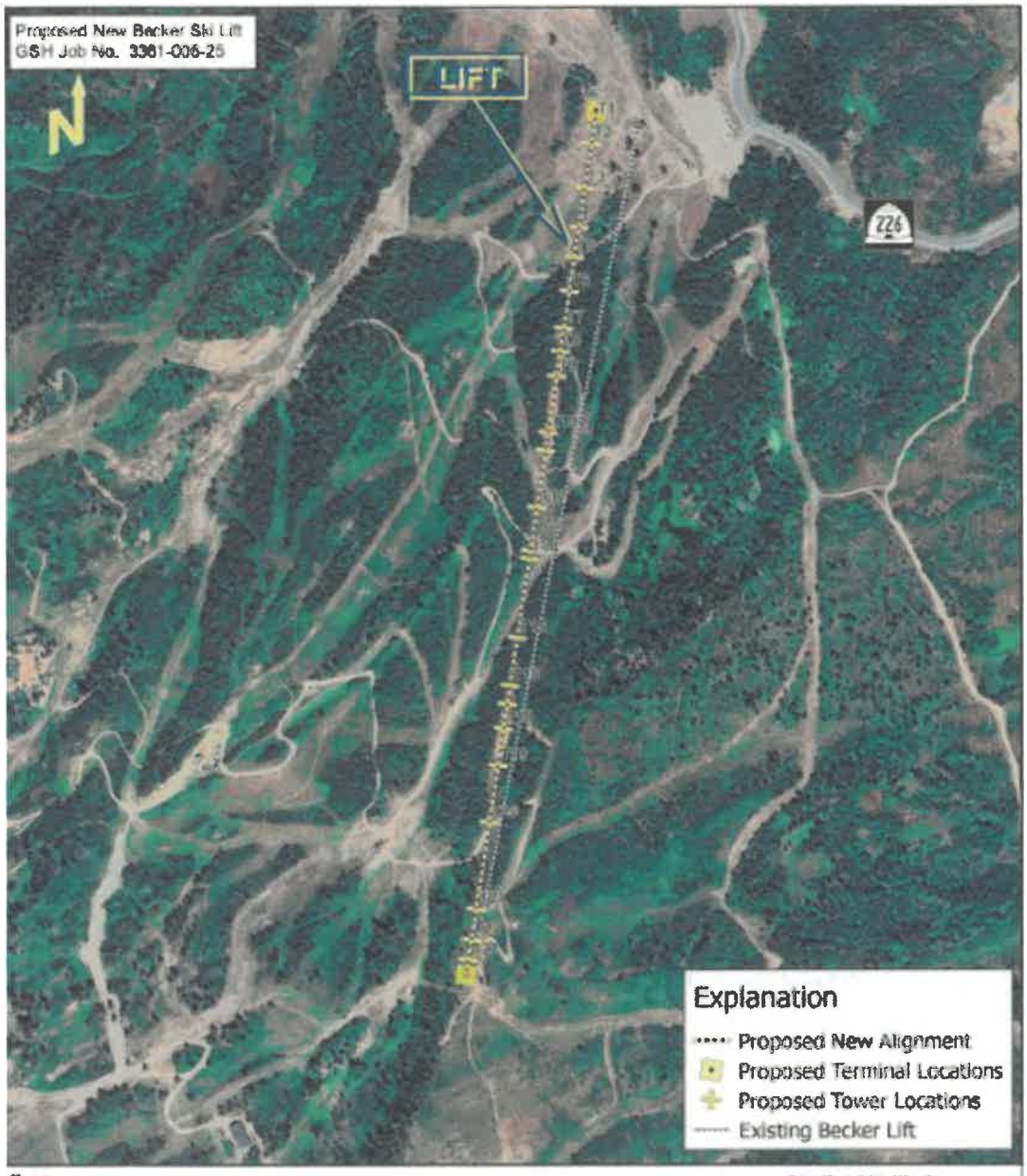
Replacing Becker will assist in growing the Snow Sports program. The terrain Becker accesses accounts for 85% of the resort's Snow Sports teaching terrain. As the Snow Sports program continues to expand, the replacement of Becker is essential. The addition of the Ridgeline "pod" will also support this initiative and will be presented on in the near future as well.

The replacement of Becker will also trigger several earthworks projects in and around the Bear Hollow area which, by far, receives the most guest feedback requesting improvement each year. The ski run from the bottom of Middle Bowl to the base area currently consists of numerous pinch points creating overcrowding along with several safety and operational concerns. The replacement of the Becker lift will facilitate widening existing terrain in this area and the creation of new runs that will greatly improve flow on the mountain and the skiing/riding experience.

Becker's useful life is almost up, and we need to consider safety risks to the condition of the asset. We are beginning to replace components due to structural fatigue which is an indication of reaching the machine's designed service life. We spend an average of $12,000/yr. on labor on top of normal preventative maintenance just to address aging equipment. An extra $30,000/yr. minimum is spent on replacing chair and tower components. This needs to continue for the next 6 years to completely replace the remaining axles, bushings and saddles. Replacing Becker now will also avoid needing to replace the original haul rope. Our rope inspector has informed us that the Becker haul rope can no longer be shortened or repaired. Any more broken wires or lightning damage will require us to replace the haul rope which could cost up to $100k. All of this extra work is performed to mitigate the safety risks of operating a 37yrs old

chairlift. Replacing Becker would provide more valuable time and resources for the Porcupine Lift and 1998 Doppelmayr lifts.

Overall, there is significant upside to completing this project in 2024.



Base:
2024 ~0.59 Color Google Earth®
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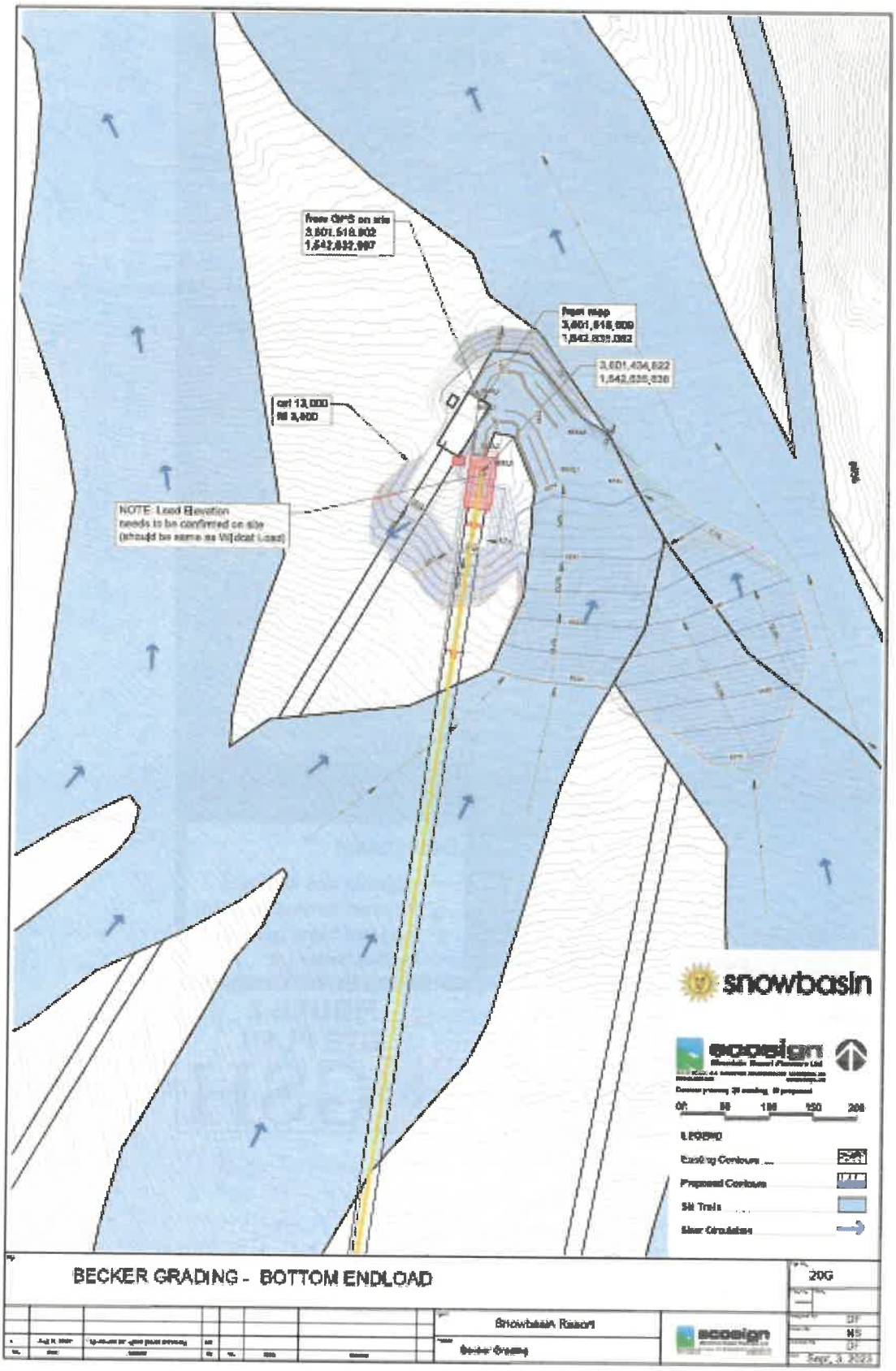
FIGURE 2
SITE PLAN

GSH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fill 3,400
NOTE: Load Elevation
needs to be confirmed on site
(should be same as Wildcat Load)
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LEGEND
Existing Contours
Proposed Contours
Ski Trails
Skier Circulation
BECKER GRADING - BOTTOM ENDLOAD
20G
Snowbasin Resort
Becker Grading
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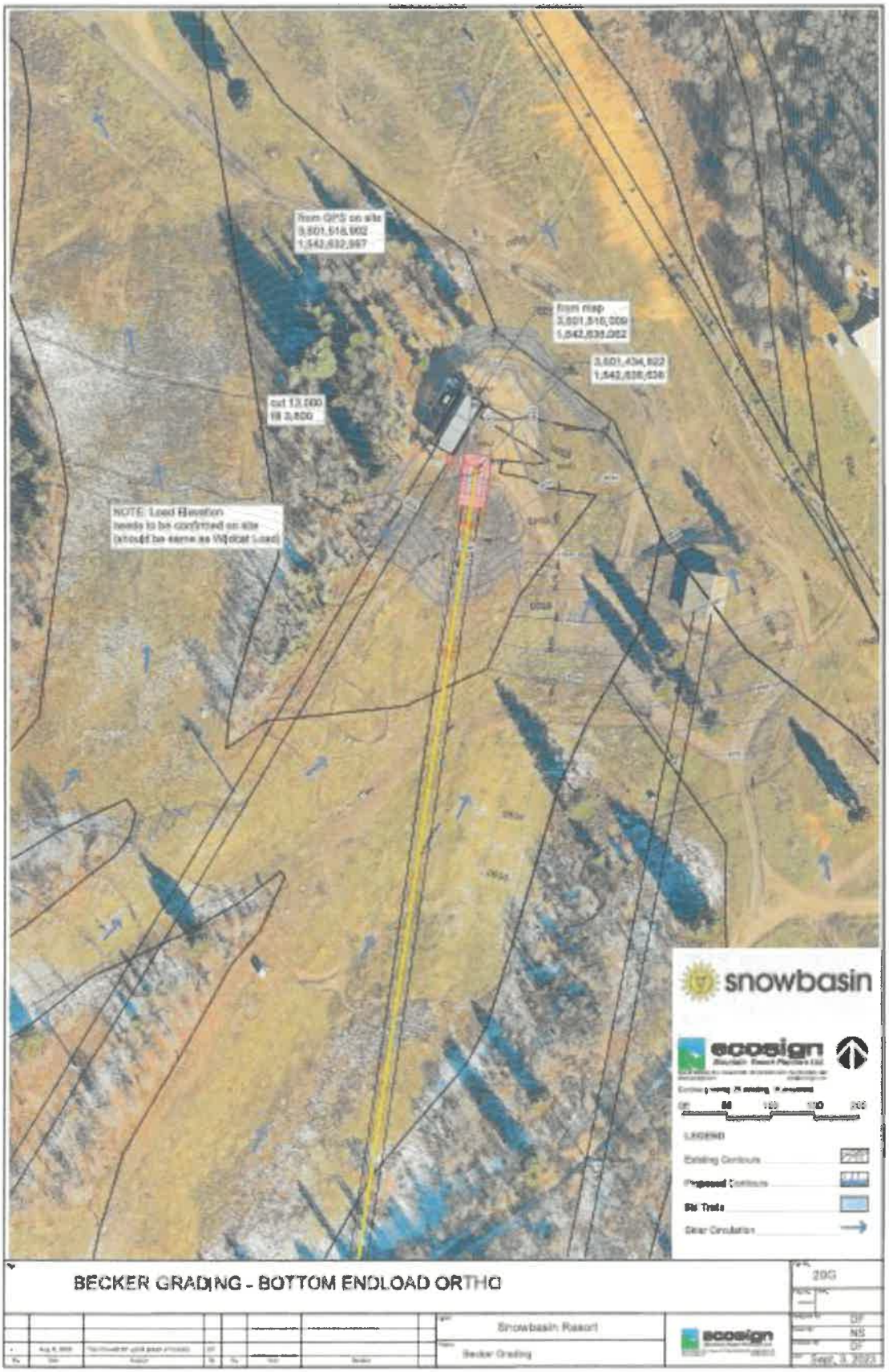
Sept. 3, 2023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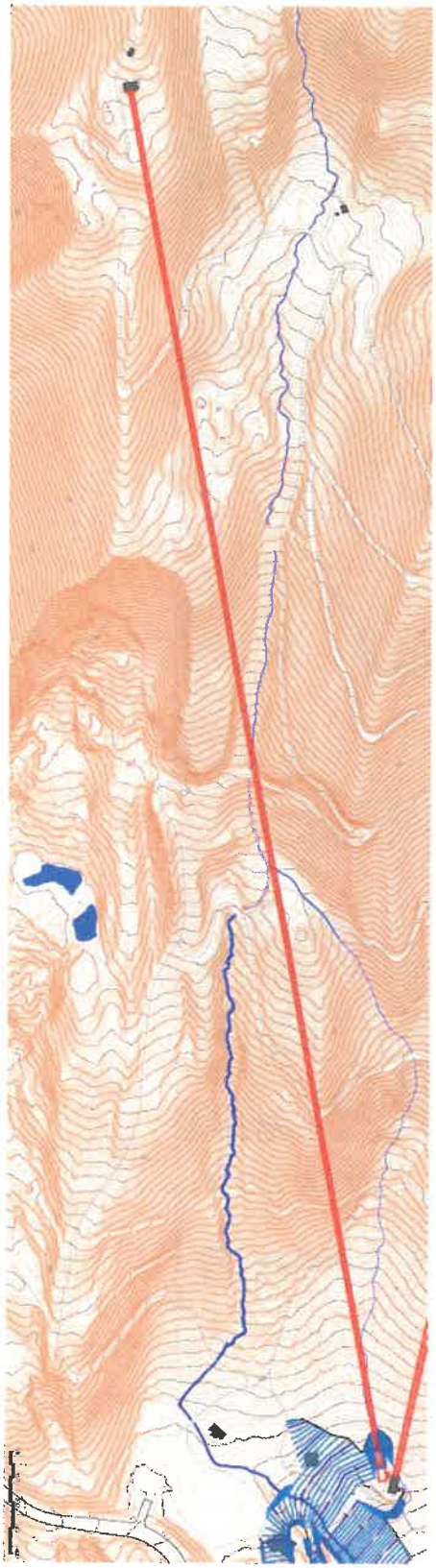

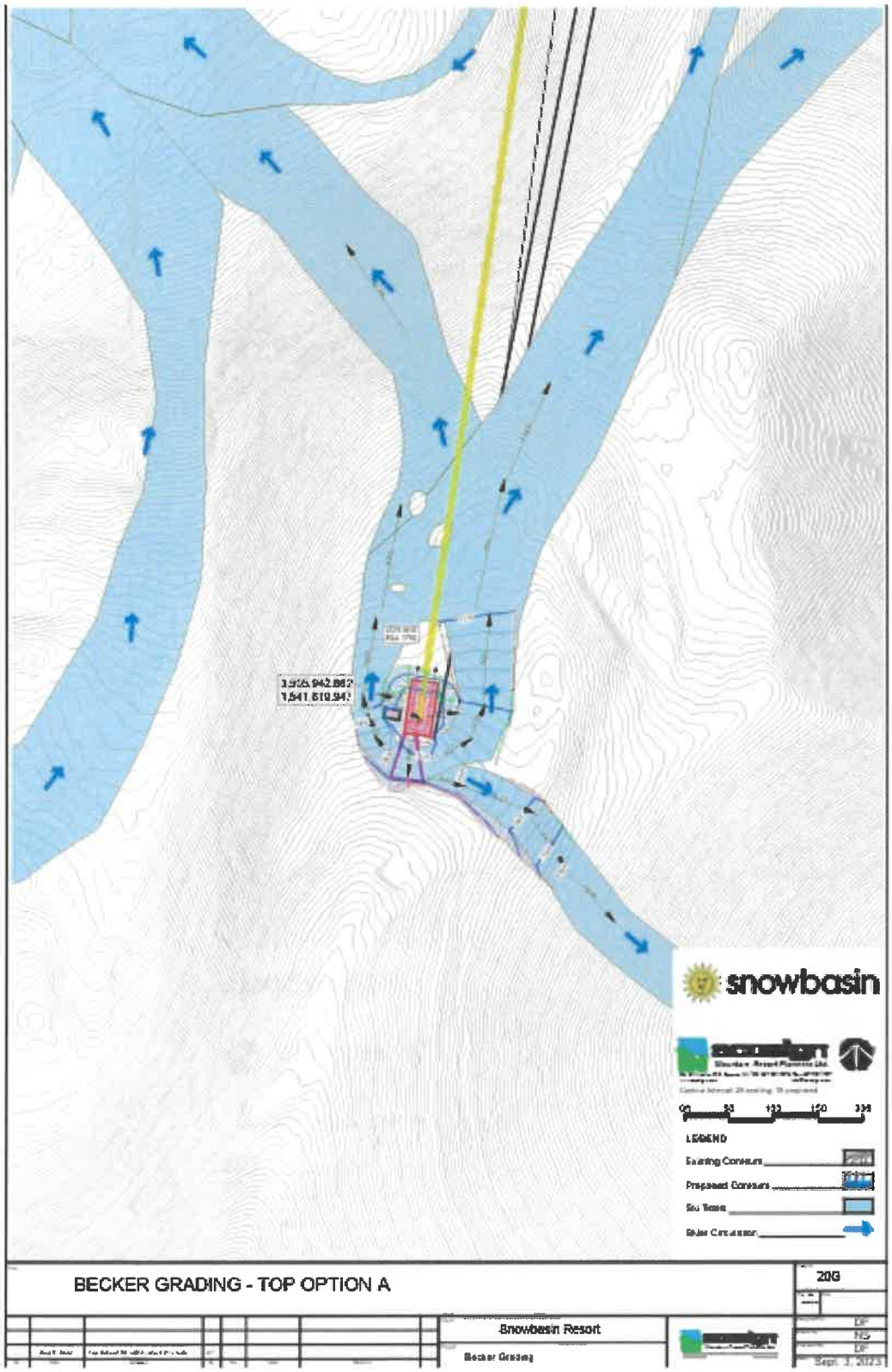
snowbasin
LEGEND
BECKER GRADING - TOP OPTION A
20G
Snowbasin Resort
Becker Grading
Sept. 3, 2023

Full engineered plans on file with Weber County.

Based upon the findings of this review we believe that the proposed new alignment is not adversely exposed to the geological hazards specified in the Section 108-22 Natural Hazard Areas of the Weber County Code (2025).

Tower and terminal foundations may be constructed over suitable natural soils and/or bedrock. The most significant geotechnical aspects of the site are the potential to encounter non-engineered fills, particularly where unimproved access roads have been graded or where previous lift tower and terminals were located and the mass movement deposit mapped within the vicinity of Tower T-19.

Prior to proceeding with construction, demolition and removal of any existing lift towers and terminals (if in conflict with the new alignment), debris, surface vegetation, root systems, topsoil, non-engineered fill (if encountered), and any deleterious materials from beneath an area extending out at least 3 feet from the perimeter of the proposed foundation footprints is required. All existing utility locations should be reviewed to assess their impact on the proposed construction and abandoned and/or relocated as appropriate.

A qualified representative from GSH must observe each foundation excavation to verify that all unsuitable soils have been removed and that suitable soils and or bedrock has been encountered prior to placing structural fill or constructing foundations. Specific recommendations for each excavation observation will be communicated during the site visit and formally within a letter documenting the observations and recommendations.

From a geological standpoint it is our opinion that the new alignment project be permitted to move forward with the appropriate Geotechnical Engineering support for the terminal and tower location foundation design, and siting.