

GONDOLA TOWER TOUR

A TOWER-BY-TOWER
LOOK AT UDOT'S
APPROVED GONDOLA
PROJECT



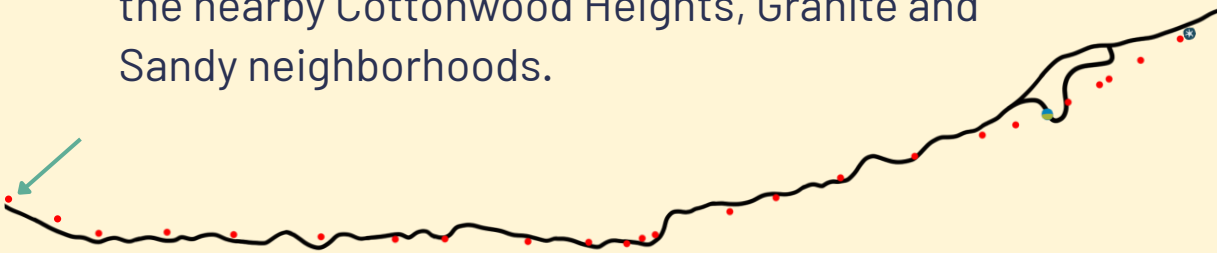
Tower 1B

40°34'32.7"N 111°47'06.1"W

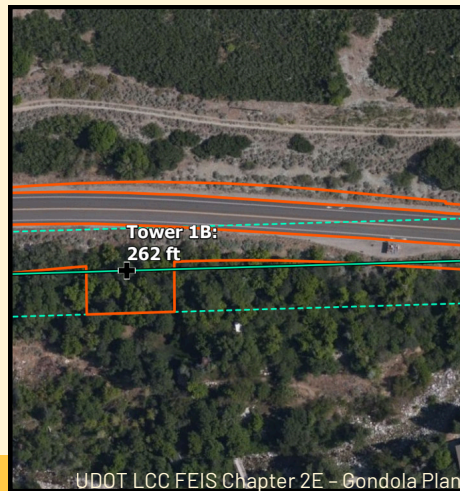
262 ft

MOUTH OF LITTLE COTTONWOOD CANYON

Attached to the Base Station, Tower 1B stands at a sky-scraping height of 262 feet, making it the tallest structure. The base station and tower would dominate the nearby Cottonwood Heights, Granite and Sandy neighborhoods.

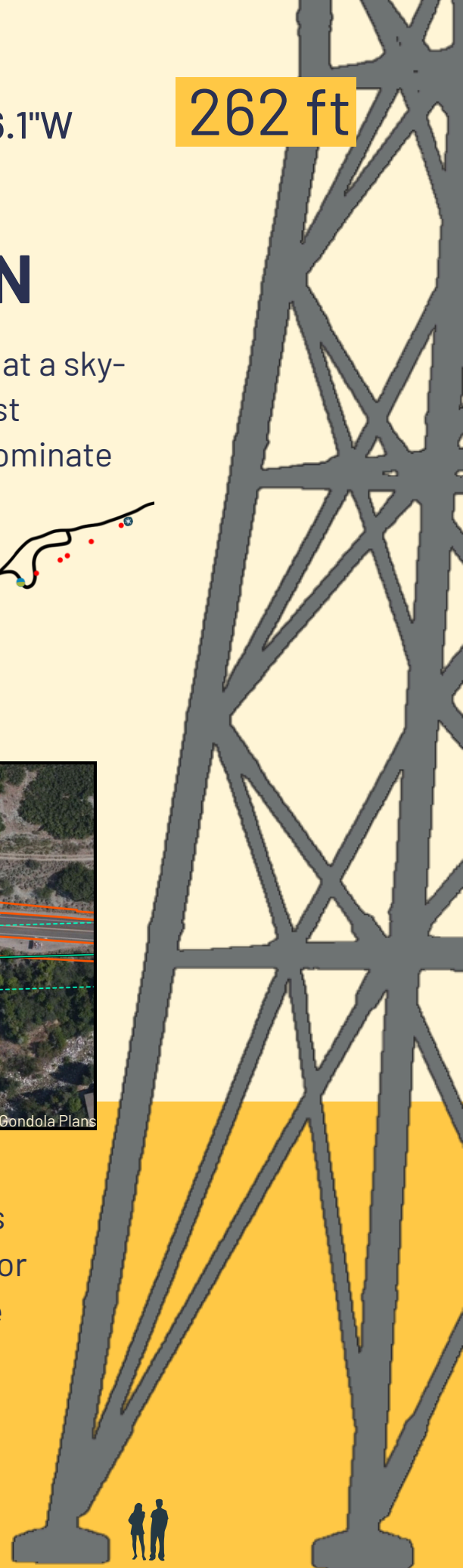


Granite Community Council



UDOT LCC FEIS Chapter 2E - Condola Plans

A graphic on the right side of each page shows the tower, with a 6-foot-tall person next to it for scale. Tower 1B is so tall, that at this scale, the tower extends an additional 8 inches off the page.



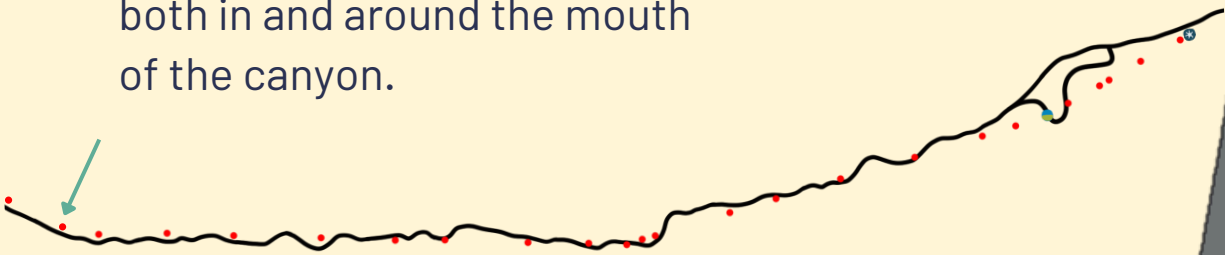
Tower 2B

40°34'27.7"N 111°46'48.6"W

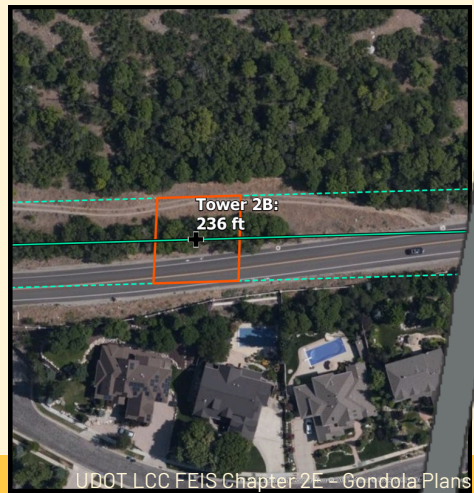
236 ft

GRANITE COMMUNITY

Self proclaimed, "Gateway to Little Cottonwood Canyon", the Granite Community was originally settled in the late 1850s and early 1860s. It is located in southeast Salt Lake County and includes areas both in and around the mouth of the canyon.

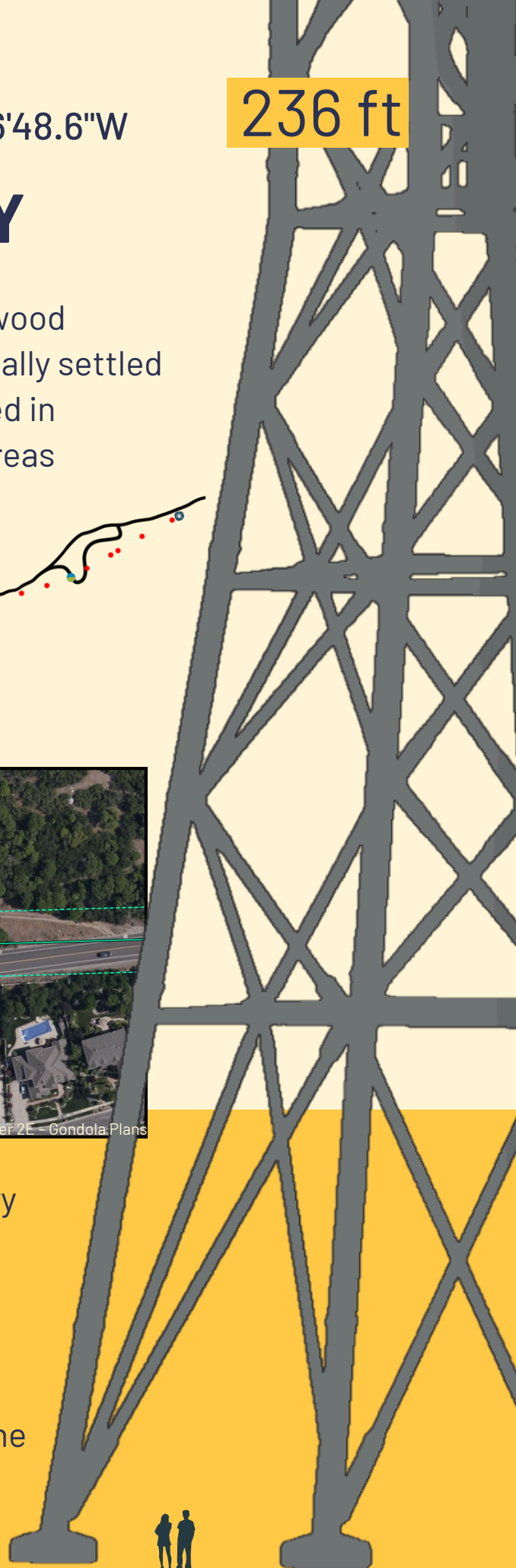


Granite Community



UDOT LCC FEIS Chapter 2E - Gondola Plans

Granite is best known for the Temple Quarry which began operation in 1859. Stone from this quarry was used to build the Salt Lake Temple of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, the Utah State Capitol, and several other homes and buildings in the Salt Lake Valley.¹



Angle Station

40°34'22.1"N 111°46'32.5"W

LITTLE COTTONWOOD PARKING LOT

In the proposed gondola system, an angle station is placed when the cable carrying the cabins needs to change direction horizontally. Unlike standard towers which support the cables vertically along a straight path, angle stations redirect the cable in a new direction. This is the first of two needed in Little Cottonwood Canyon.



Their comparative complexity to the towers requires their footprint to be larger. This one is larger than the Little Cottonwood Parking Lot near the mouth of the canyon. The whole gondola system is planned to stretch eight miles in length, presenting a new layer of difficulty – especially given that it had never been attempted before with this type of gondola.

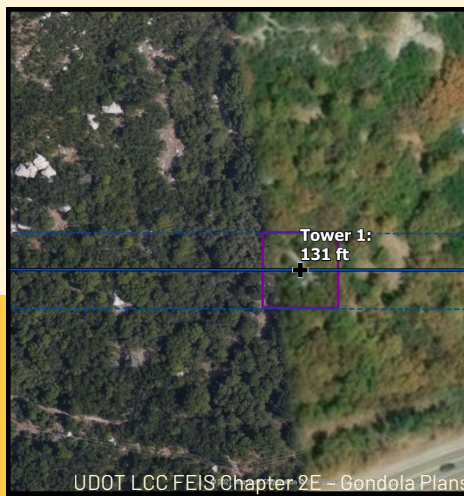
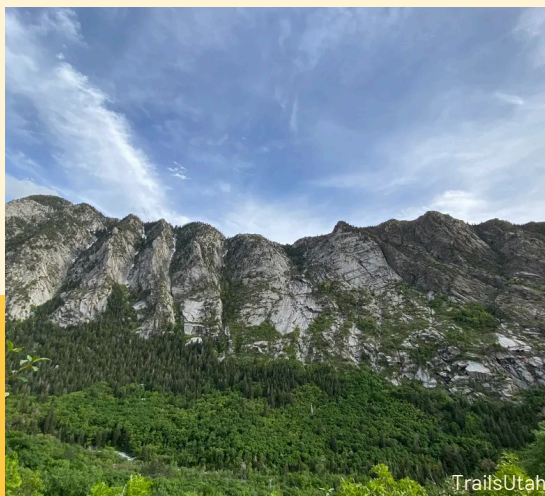
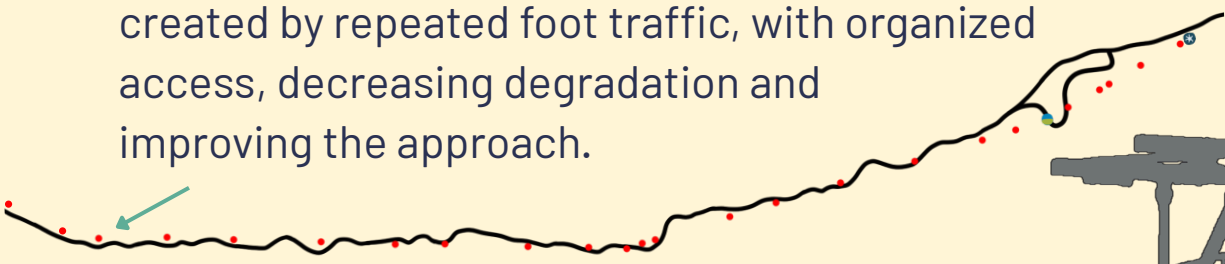
Tower 1

40°34'20.4"N 111°46'15.0"W

131 ft

ALPENBOCK LOOP TRAIL

This tower lies just east of the Alpenbock Loop, the access trail to climbing sectors like Secret Garden and Cabbage Patch. The trail replaced informal social paths, created by repeated foot traffic, with organized access, decreasing degradation and improving the approach.



The Alpenbock Loop Trail is recognized as the largest climbing access trail project on U.S. Forest Service land and exemplifies sustainable recreational design.²

At 131 feet tall with cable and cabins overhead, how will this tower diminish recreation in that area?

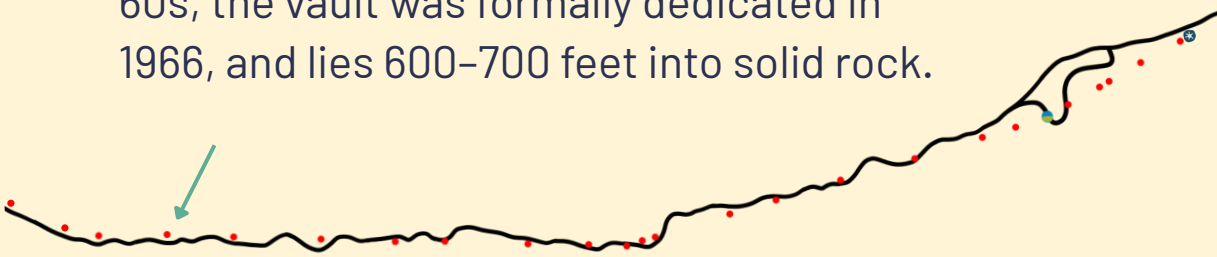
Tower 2

40°34'19.8"N 111°45'44.3"W

164 ft

GRANITE MOUNTAIN RECORDS VAULT

Tower 2 is to be placed just outside Granite Mountain Records Vault, an archive excavated deep into the north side of Little Cottonwood Canyon. Constructed between the late 1950s through the mid 60s, the vault was formally dedicated in 1966, and lies 600–700 feet into solid rock.



Hirsch



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Within this secure complex are over 2.4 million rolls of microfilm and around one million microfiche, representing approximately 3 billion pages of genealogical and historical records of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.³



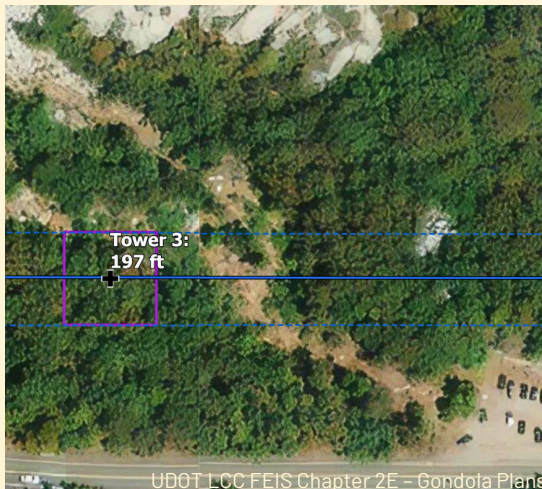
Tower 3

40°34'19.2"N 111°45'10.8"W

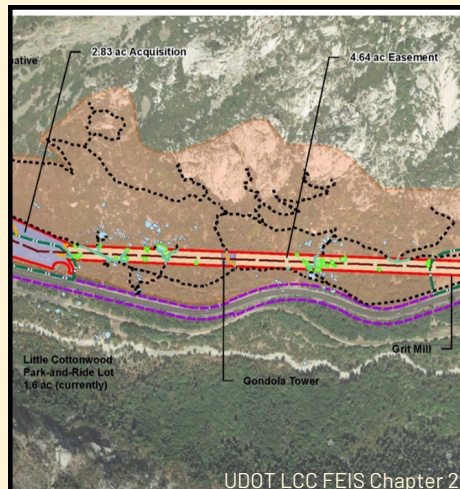
197 ft

GATE BUTTRESS

In 2017, the Salt Lake Climbers Alliance, the Access Fund, and the the The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints formalized the recreational lease for the Gate Buttress area, securing legal access to about 138 boulder problems and nearly 588 climbing routes on approximately 140 acres of private land.⁴

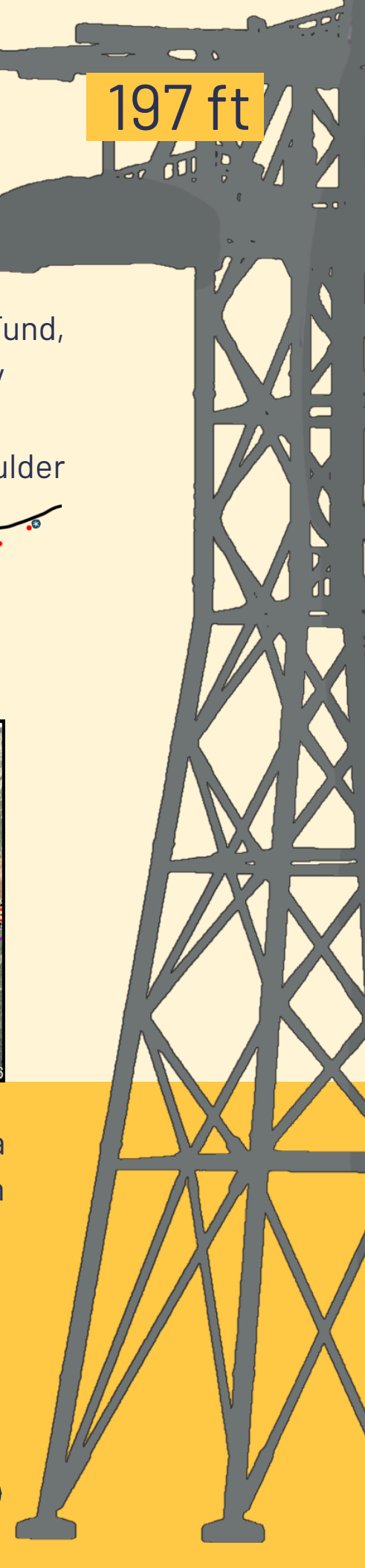


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UDOT LCC FEIS Chapter 26

The potential destruction of boulders during gondola construction is only one impact. Highlighted in green above, are all of the climbing boulders that would be affected by gondola cables and cabins directly overhead. The aesthetic and ambiance of Little Cottonwood Canyon would be significantly degraded with the addition of a gondola.⁵



Tower 4

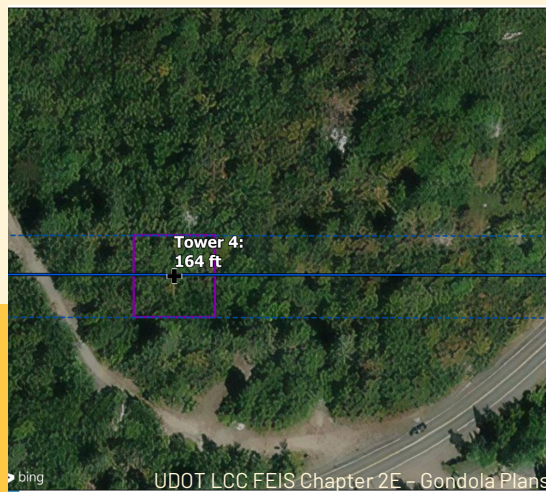
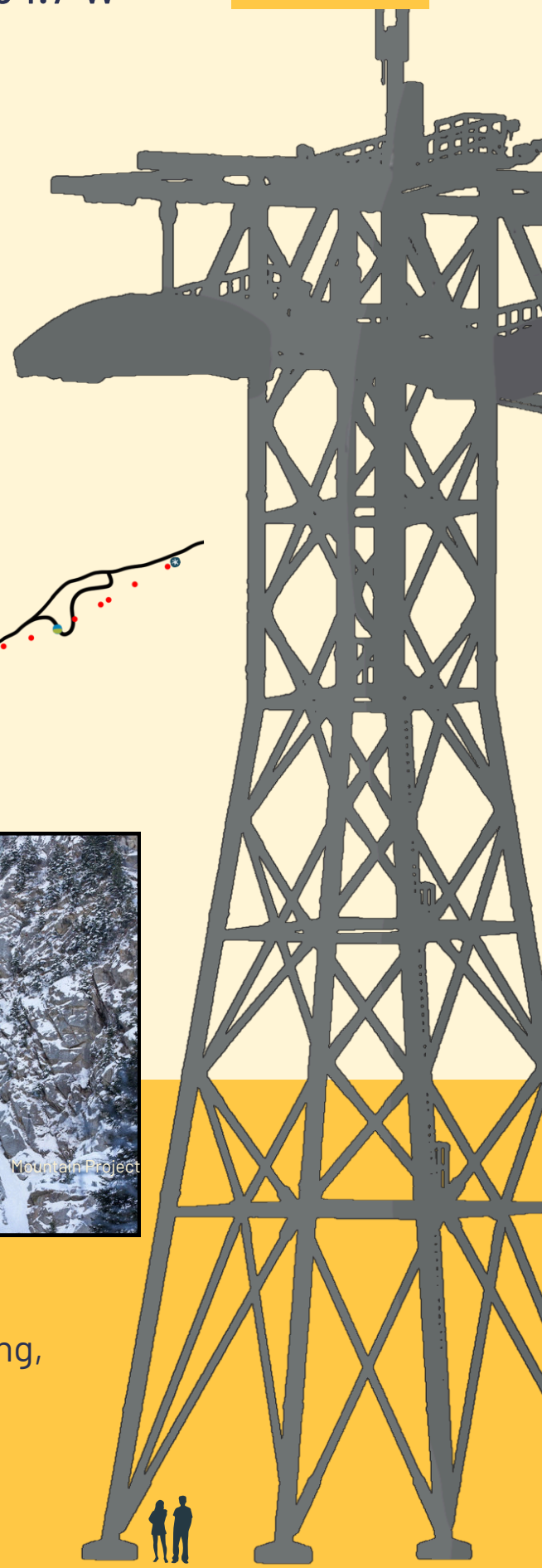
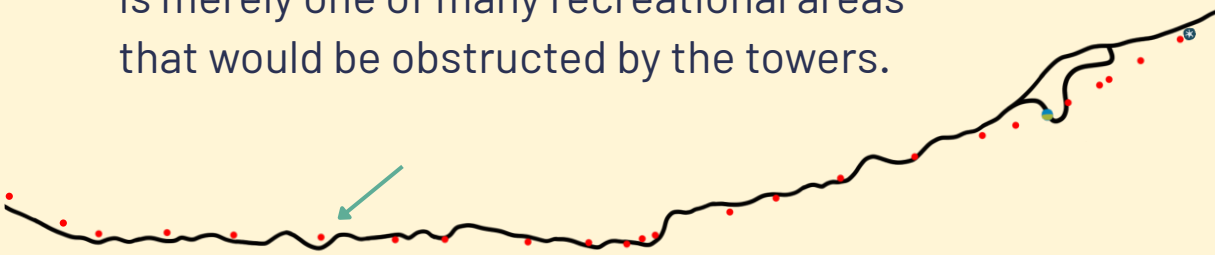
40°34'18.0"N 111°44'34.7"W

164 ft

GREAT WHITE ICICLE

The proposed tower would be located in the access area for the Great White Icicle, a highly popular multi-pitch ice climb in Utah, due to its accessibility from Salt Lake City and relatively short approach.

However, access to the Great White Icicle is merely one of many recreational areas that would be obstructed by the towers.



While the Great White Icicle melts each spring, Tower 4 would be permanent.



Tower 5

40°34'16.8"N 111°44'02.6"W

164 ft

WILDLIFE CORRIDOR

This untouched terrain is part of broader canyon areas that allow for diverse and expansive wildlife corridors. In this area you might encounter small mammals such as marmots, mule deer, and ermines!

Will construction fragment habitat or disrupt wildlife corridors?

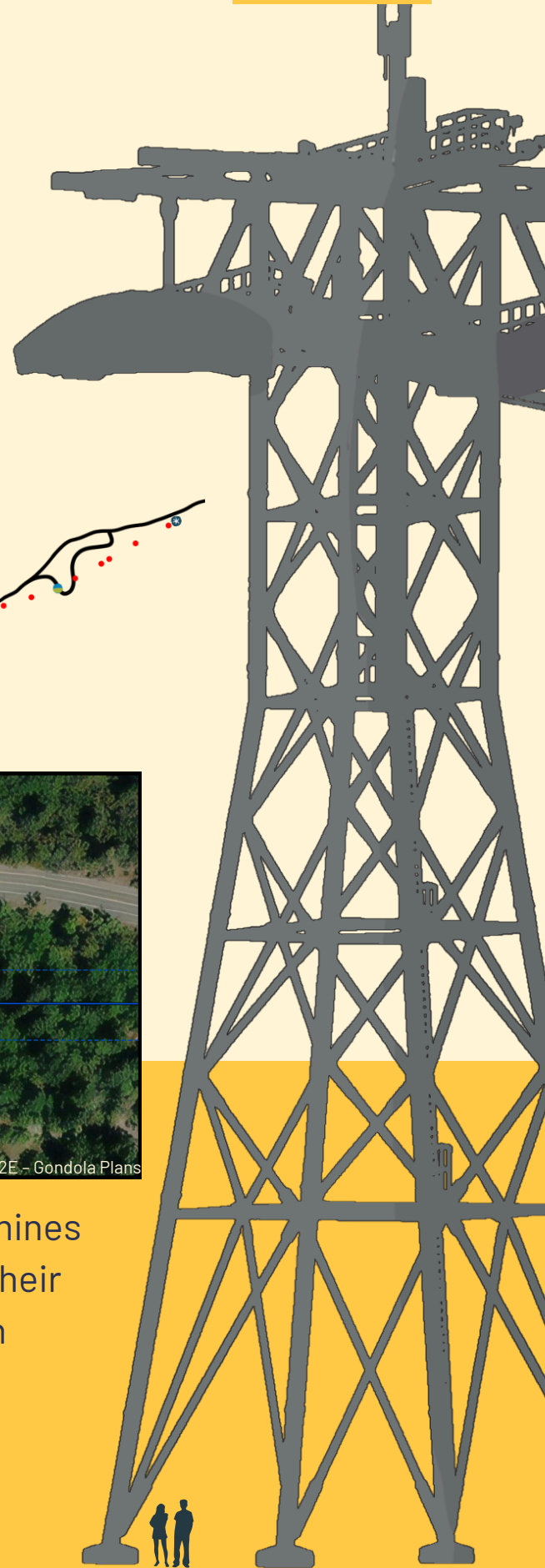


Friends of Alta



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Ermine fun fact: Masters of camouflage, ermines turn brown in warmer months to blend into their surroundings, then shift to white in fall when shorter daylight hours trigger a hormonal response that reduces pigment in their fur.⁶



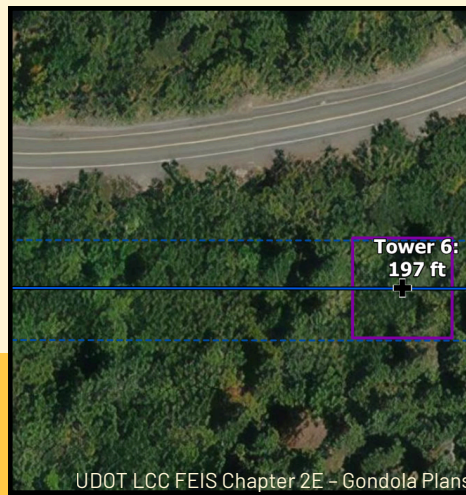
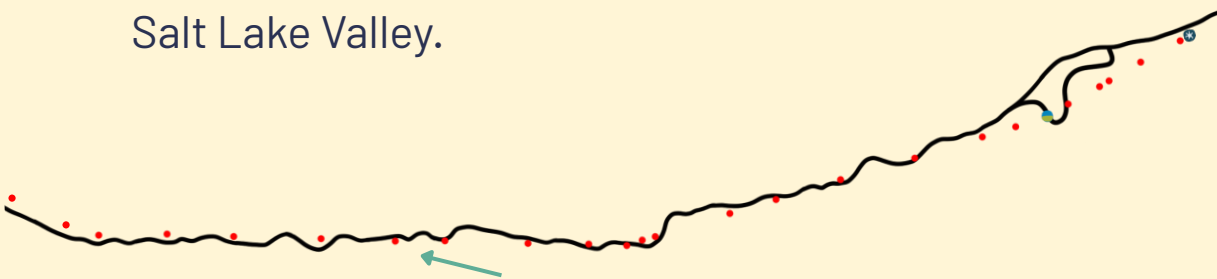
Tower 6

40°34'17.2"N 111°43'39.3"W

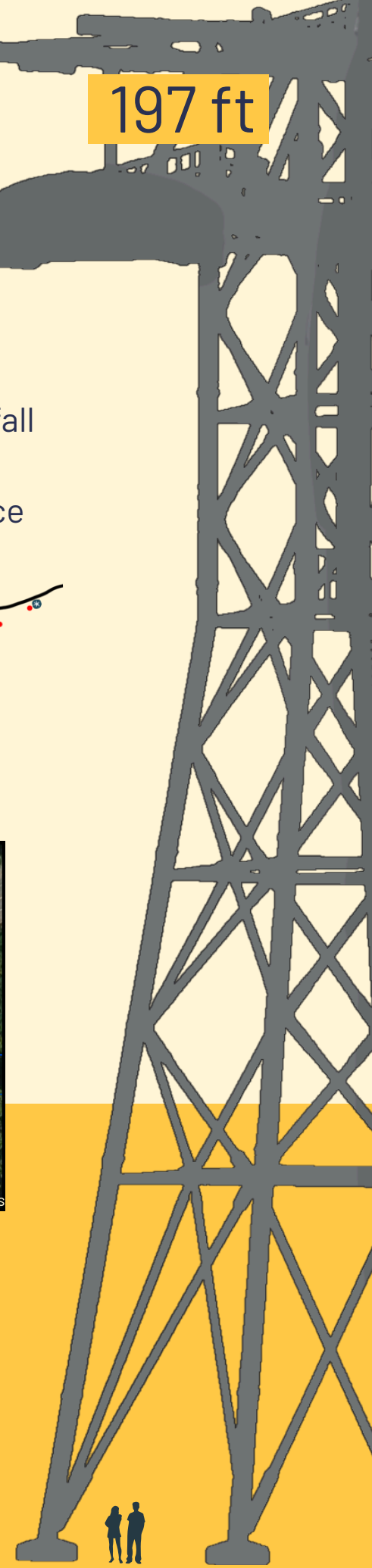
197 ft

LISA FALLS

Lisa Falls is a family friendly hike, leading to a waterfall cascading down water-smoothed granite. Lisa Falls contributes to Little Cottonwood Creek, a vital source of drinking water for the Salt Lake Valley.



The granite that composes the canyon walls from the mouth for nearly 6 miles, is part of the 30-million-year-old Little Cottonwood stock, which supported 19th century mining.



Tower 7

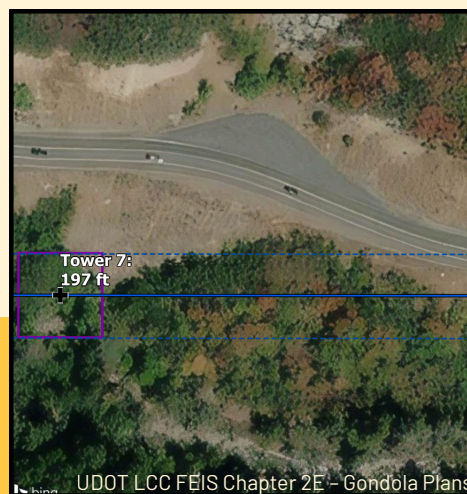
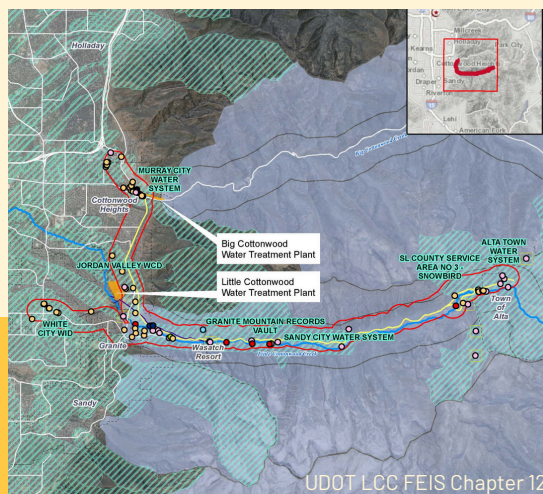
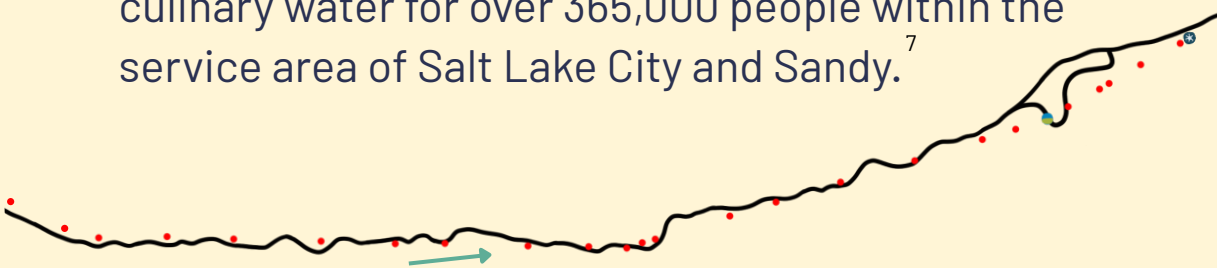
40°34'15.8"N 111°43'04.0"W

197 ft

LITTLE COTTONWOOD CREEK

Little Cottonwood Creek originates as outflow from Secret Lake, flows through the canyon (~27.7 miles total length) later entering the urban valley, supplying water and hydropower.

The Little Cottonwood Creek watershed provides culinary water for over 365,000 people within the service area of Salt Lake City and Sandy.⁷



Historic tailings from early mining and smelting continue to influence water chemistry; how will constructing infrastructure next to the creek affect water quality?



Tower 8

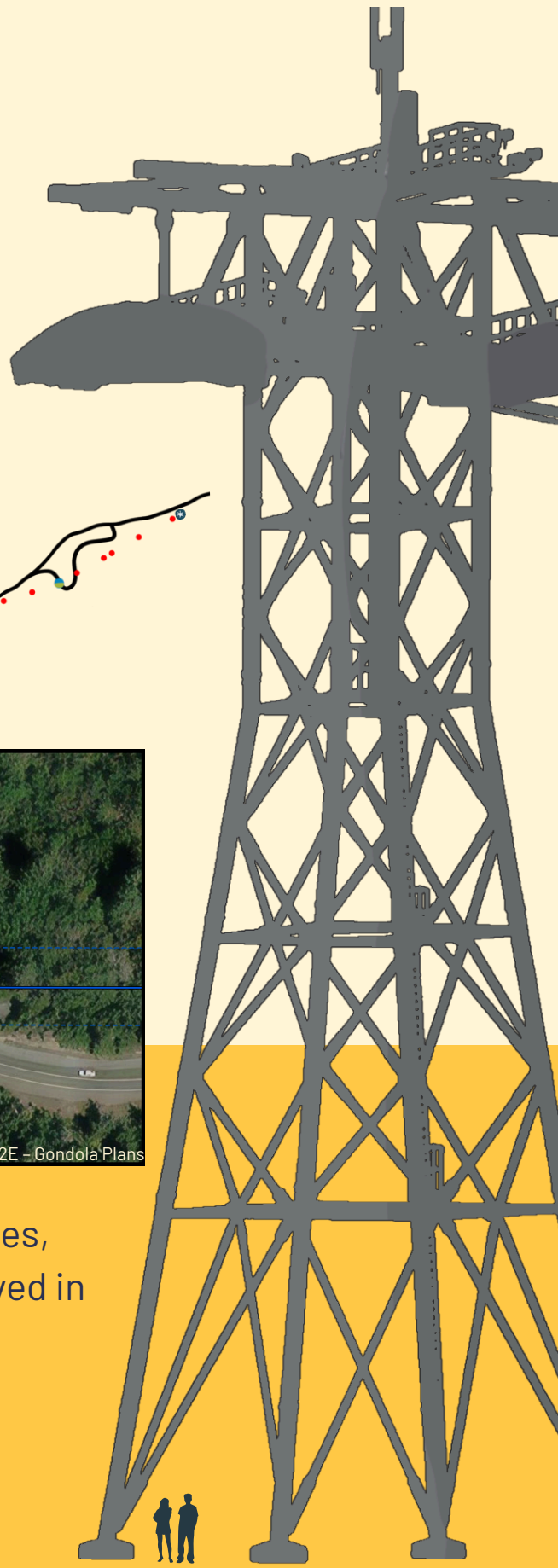
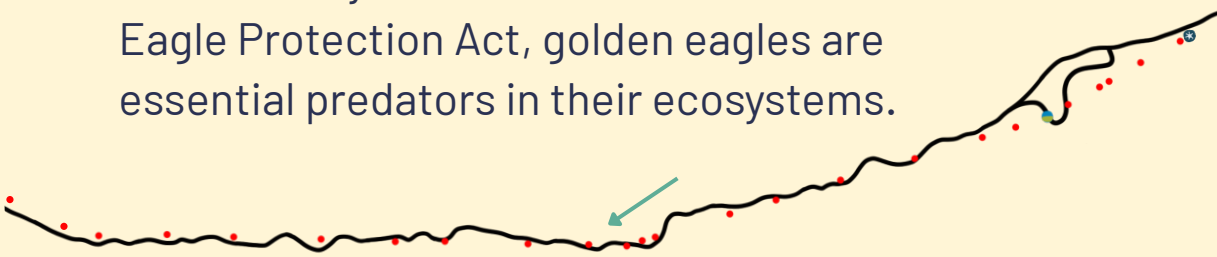
40°34'16.1"N 111°42'34.8"W

186 ft

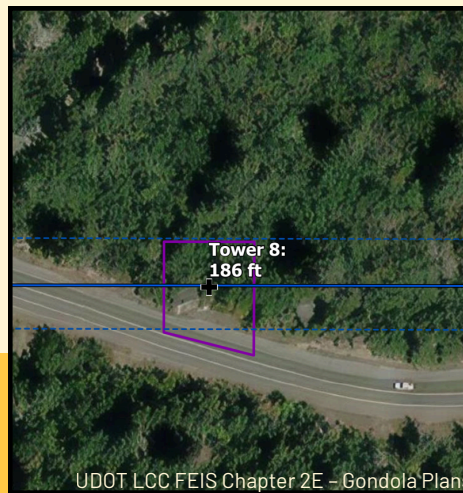
GOLDEN EAGLE

This is another untouched area, part of the broader canyon terrain that allows for a diverse and expansive wildlife corridor. Golden eagles have been sighted near this area.

Protected by the 1940 Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act, golden eagles are essential predators in their ecosystems.



Ron Dudley



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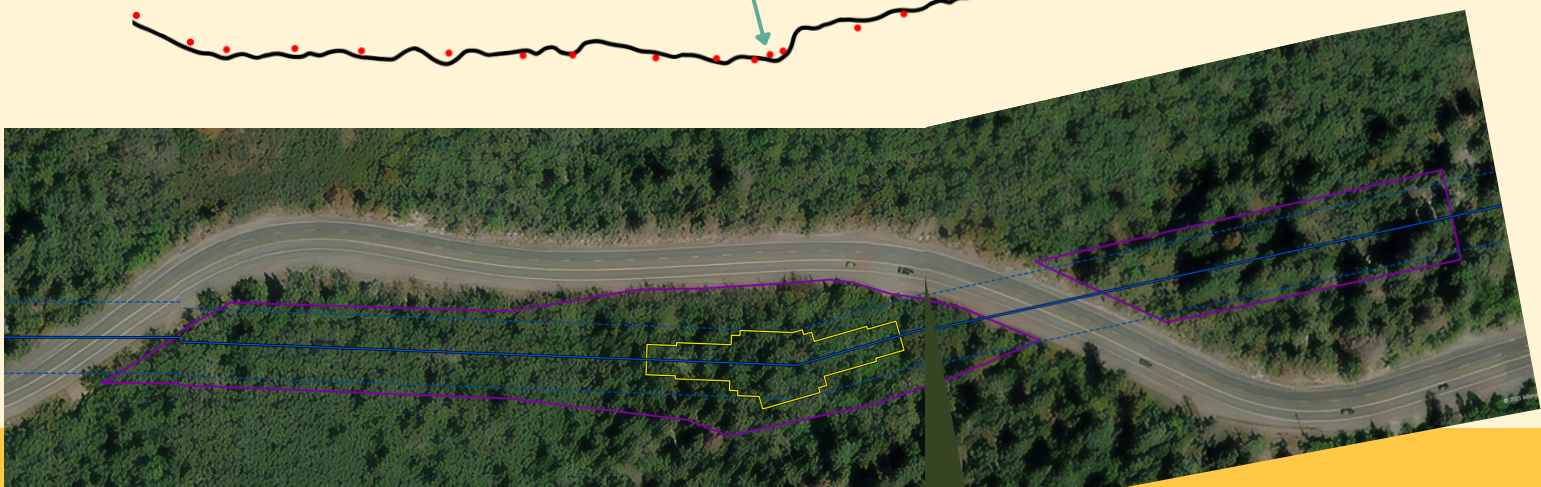
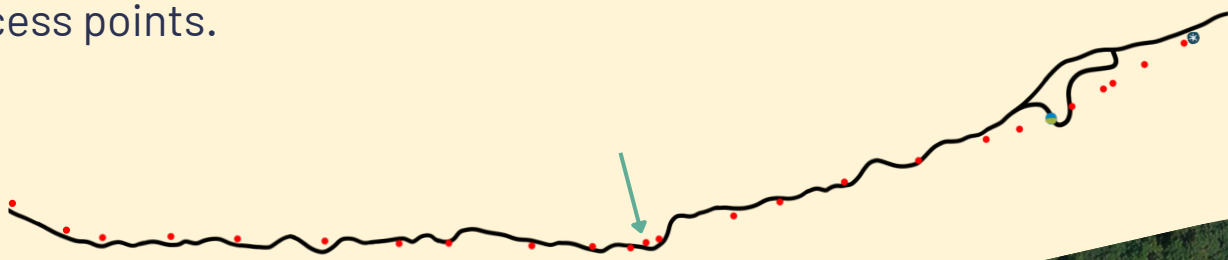
The Act prohibits harming or disturbing eagles, including their nests; both have been observed in Little Cottonwood Canyon.⁸

Angle Station

40°34'14.3"N 111°42'18.9"W

TANNERS FLAT ANGLE STATION

The second angle station has a larger footprint than its predecessor, covering approximately five acres, making it the largest structure in the canyon. This angle station demonstrates the scale of this massive project, plus its inability to ease the traffic congestion it was proposed to address. The gondola would primarily serve resort users heading to just two resorts; making it inapplicable and largely irrelevant for the broader mix of canyon users—hikers, climbers, sightseers, and workers—who require flexible schedules and multiple access points.



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Not only does the gondola fail to address the year-round demand on canyon infrastructure, but it also assumes that people will park miles away, board a separate transit system, and accept significantly longer travel times—all while paying premium fares. In practice, many will likely continue driving, leaving congestion largely unchanged.

Tower 9

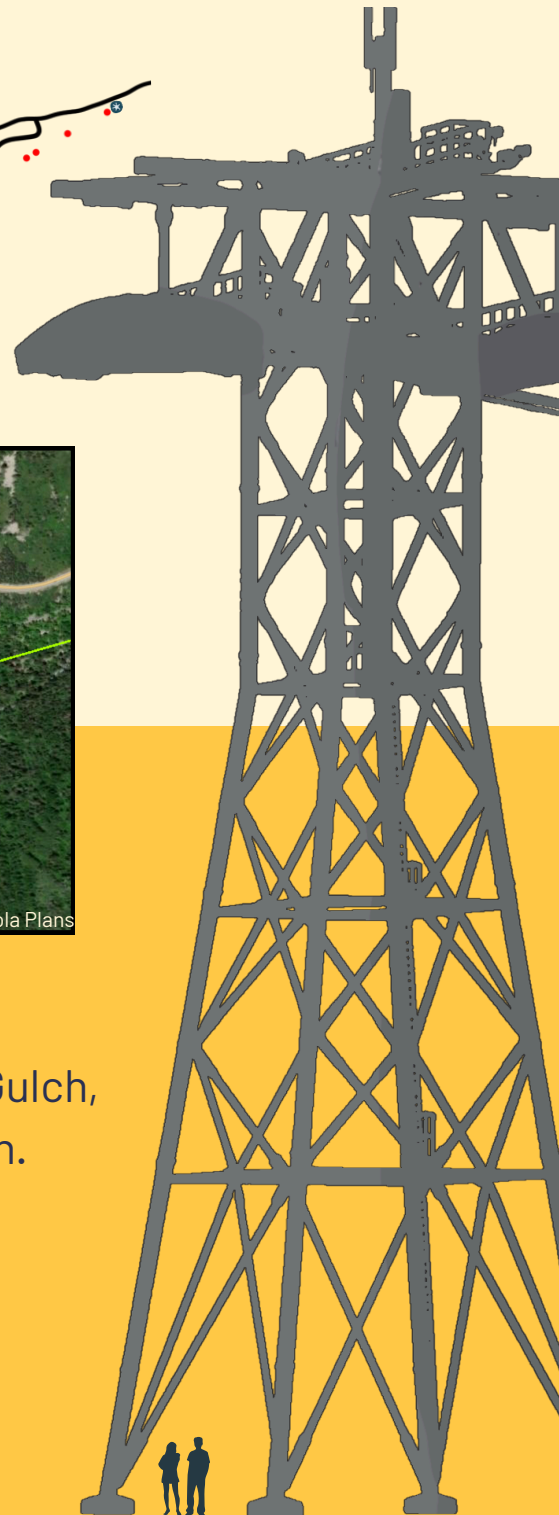
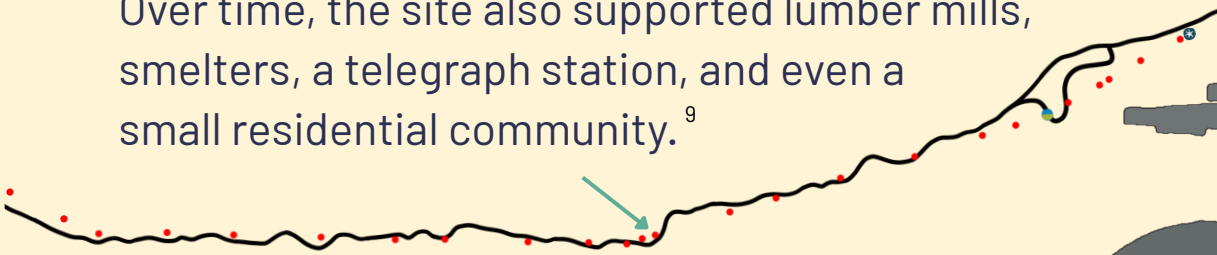
40°34'17.2"N 111°42'05.7"W

131 ft

TANNERS FLAT CAMPGROUND

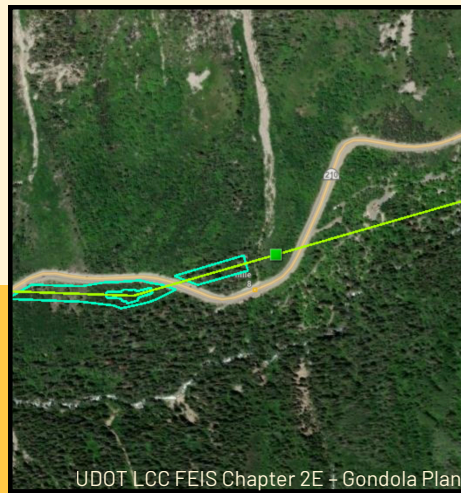
Tower 9 sits across the road from Tanners Flat Campground. The area was a vital staging ground for ore transported from the canyon's upper mines during the late 1800s and early 1900s.

Over time, the site also supported lumber mills, smelters, a telegraph station, and even a small residential community.⁹



Tanners Flat Campground

UDOT



UDOT LCC FEIS Chapter 2E + Gondola Plans

Tower 9 is positioned below one of the most hazardous avalanche chutes, known as Tanners Gulch, an expanse with stunning cliffs and rugged terrain. The Utah Department of Transportation (UDOT) recognizes this area slides annually, reaching the roadway below.

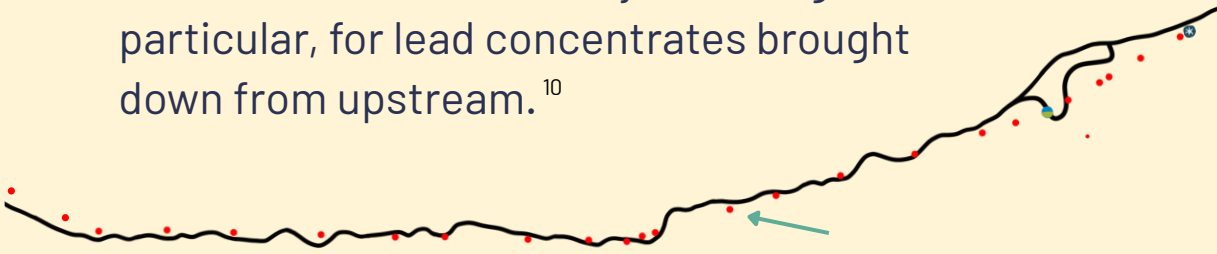
Tower 10

40°34'25.5"N 111°41'31.4"W

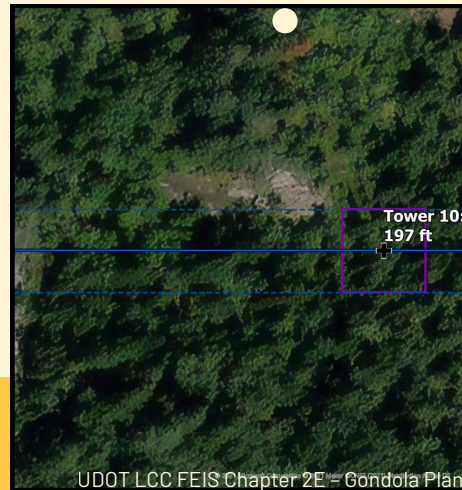
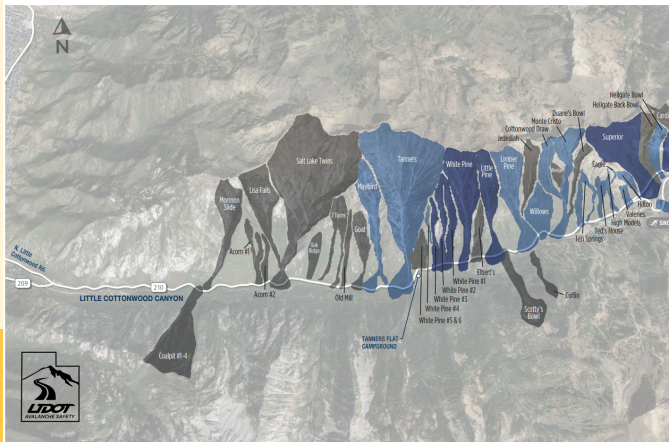
197 ft

TANNERS FLAT MINE

The Tanners Flat Mine was a historic lead mine located next to tower ten's location. This site was the hub for transporting ore for Little Cottonwood Canyon mining—in particular, for lead concentrates brought down from upstream.¹⁰



LITTLE COTTONWOOD CANYON SLIDE PATH ZONES



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The site at Tanners Flat is also notably located within the avalanche path of White Pine #1, the first of the 6 prominent and frequently active slide zones included in White Pine. This area lies adjacent to several well-known alpine climbing and couloir routes, including the White Pine Chutes—notably White Child, Red-Headed Stepchild, and Mormon Gash.



Tower 11

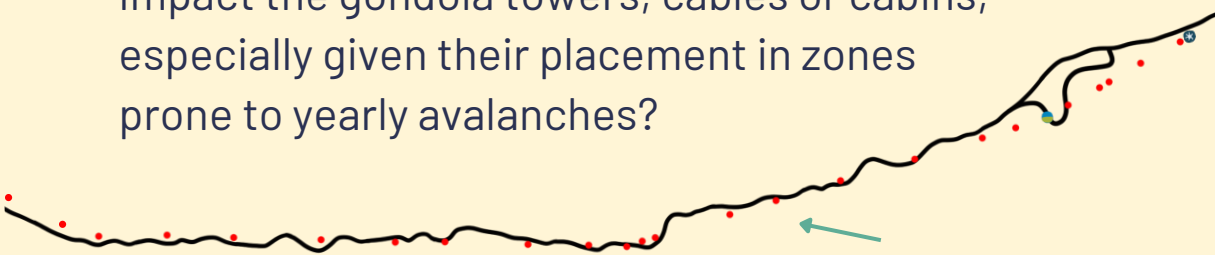
40°34'30.4"N 111°41'11.5"W

197 ft

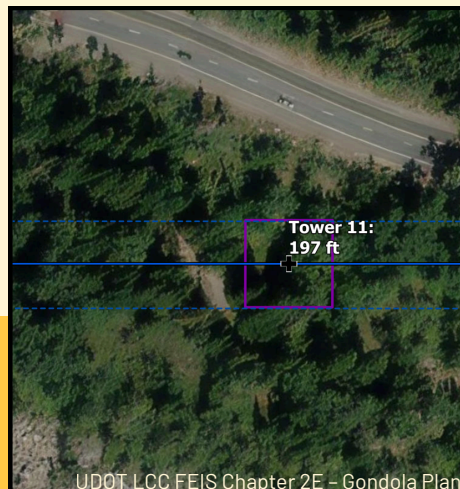
LITTLE PINE

This location lies directly in the avalanche slide zone of Little Pine slide.

How will avalanche debris or powder blasts impact the gondola towers, cables or cabins, especially given their placement in zones prone to yearly avalanches?

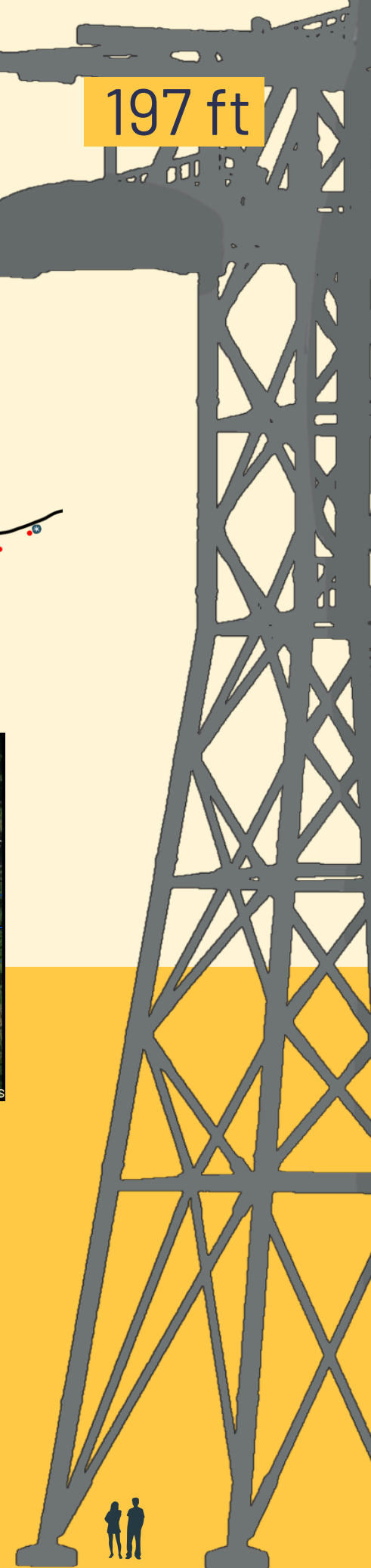


Mountain Project



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This area provides recreational access to White Pine South, and climbing areas like Party Pit and the Euro Roof Area. Each gondola tower proposed in Little Cottonwood Canyon would be a permanent, industrial structure—originating at the ground exceeding the height of nearby natural features like trees, boulders, and even popular landmarks



Tower 12

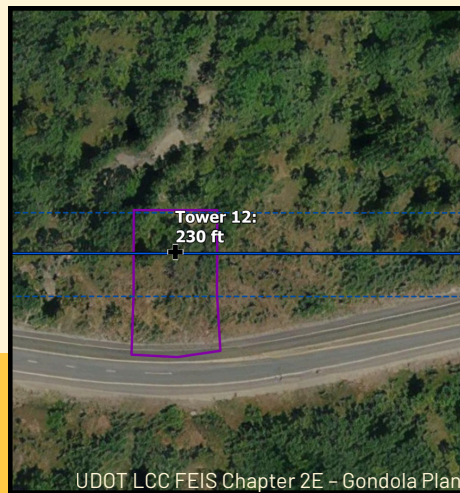
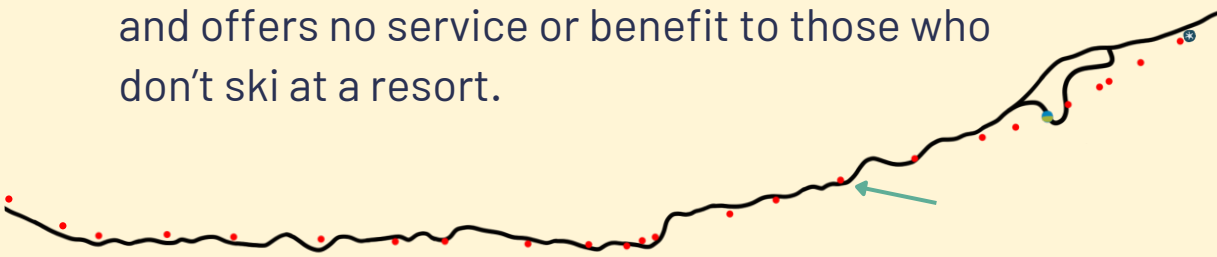
40°34'35.6"N 111°40'43.4"W

230 ft

WHITE PINE TRAILHEAD

The White Pine Trailhead is the gateway to the White Pine bouldering and backcountry skiing zones, as well as the scenic alpine White Pine Lake trail; a favorite for summer and winter canyon users.

All users of this popular stop will be excluded by the gondola, which bypasses this key access point entirely and offers no service or benefit to those who don't ski at a resort.



Could less invasive alternatives (e.g., electric buses, road tolling, traffic metering) offer traffic congestion benefits with fewer impacts?



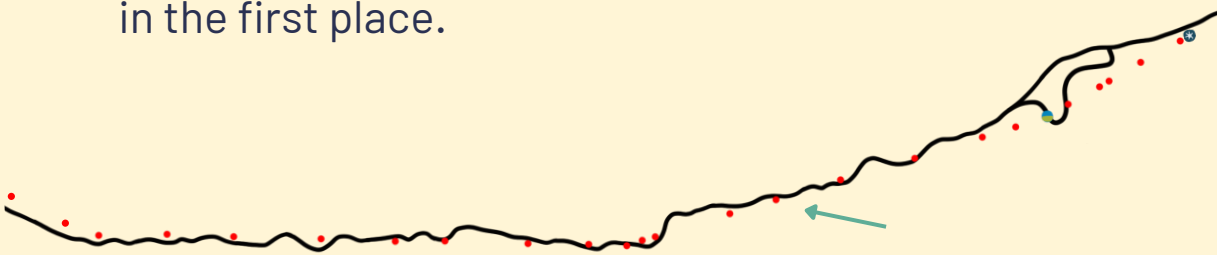
Tower 13

40°34'42.7"N 111°40'10.9"W

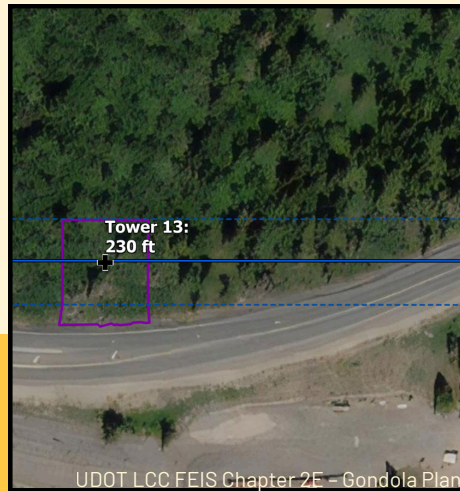
230 ft

SNOWBIRD ENTRANCE

This tower marks the gateway to Snowbird Resort, a year-round destination for skiers/boarders, hikers, climbers, and backcountry travelers. While intended to improve resort access, the gondola's towers risk degrading the landscape that draws visitors to Snowbird in the first place.



UDOT



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The gondola could increase the number of users entering the canyon, perhaps by thousands, directly into the heart of Snowbird via a gondola which could overwhelm lift lines, terrain zones, and lodge facilities not designed for that volume.



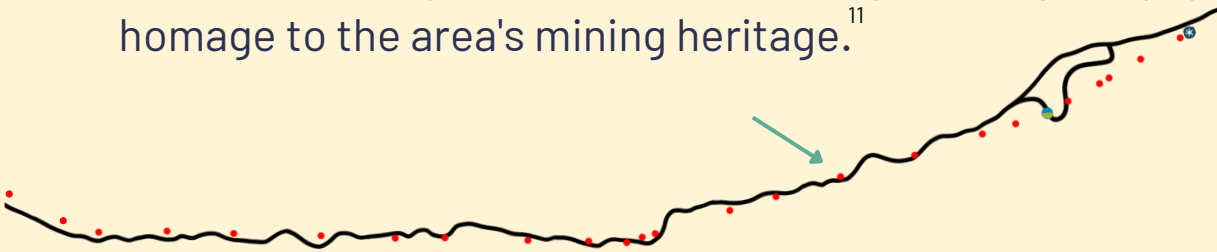
Tower 14

40°34'49.8"N 111°39'38.3"W

197 ft

IRON BLOSAM LODGE

The Iron Blossam Lodge is named after an original Little Cottonwood Canyon mining claim called "Iron Blossam"—a phonetic misspelling of "Iron Blossom." The spelling was intentionally retained when naming the lodge to pay homage to the area's mining heritage.¹¹



UDOT



UDOT LCC FEIS Chapter 2E - Gondola Plans

UDOT mockups show just how dramatically the gondola infrastructure would alter the landscape here, disrupting not only natural views but also access, parking, and lodge logistics. During Interlodge events—when avalanche danger requires all individuals in the canyon to shelter indoors—the potential strain of increased canyon visitors, with limited indoor capacity, raises serious concerns about safety and emergency preparedness.



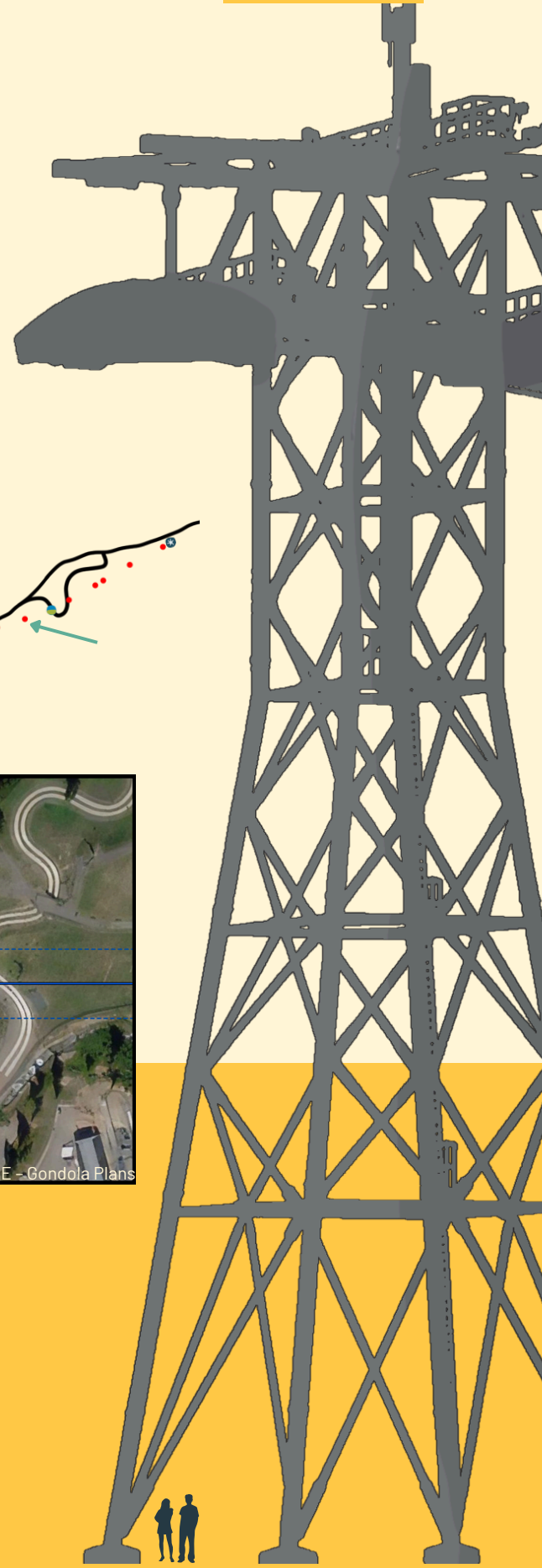
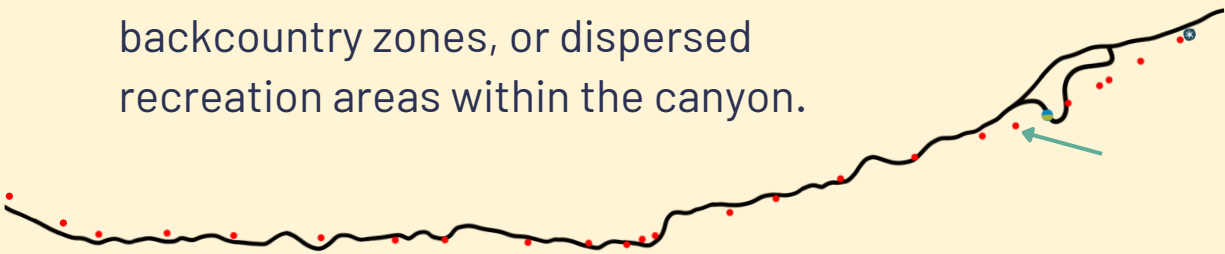
Tower 15

40°34'53.2"N 111°39'24.0"W

164 ft

SNOWBIRD CENTER

After Tower 15, the gondola would make its first of two stops. Transporting visitors from the valley base station to Snowbird, then continuing to Alta, its final stop. While marketed as a public transit solution, the gondola ends at two, private, for-profit ski resorts with no user access to trailheads, backcountry zones, or dispersed recreation areas within the canyon.



Would a gondola, estimated to cost \$1.4 billion in taxpayer money, increase private resort access and benefit private businesses that are the only two stops, using public funds?

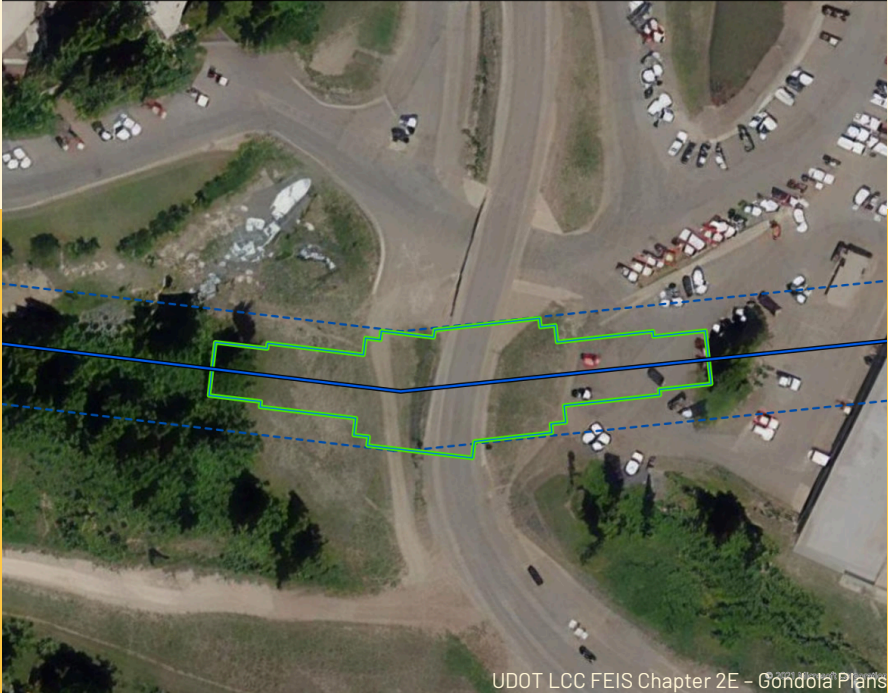
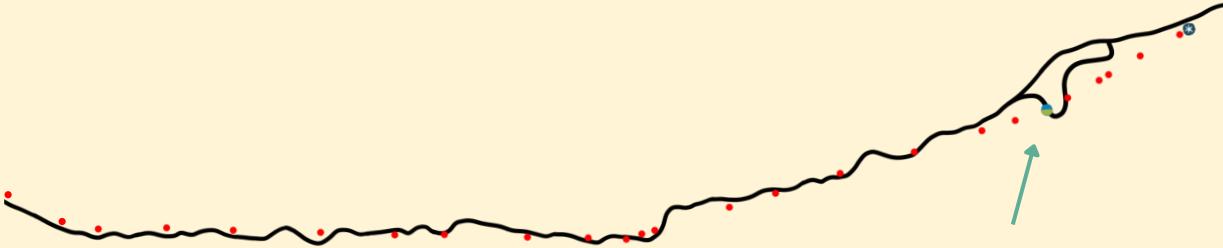


Resort Dropoff

40°34'56.6"N 111°39'10.1"W

SNOWBIRD STATION

The gondola's first stop would be placed where the Bypass Road goes over Cliff Lodge Dr. Beyond its location, little is publicly known about the design, or impacts of this mid-station. No details have been provided on how this infrastructure would integrate with existing resort facilities—or what changes it might bring to the surrounding terrain and visitor experience.



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Tower 16

40°34'58.6"N 111°38'59.8"W

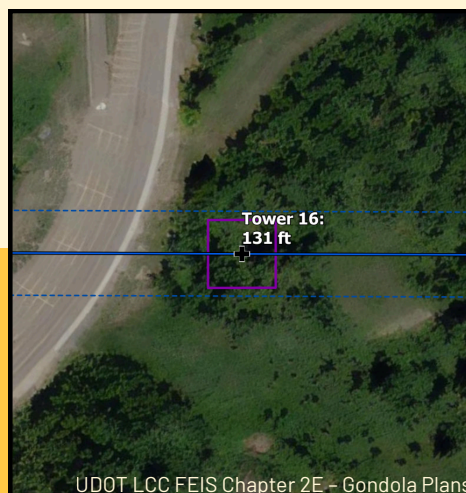
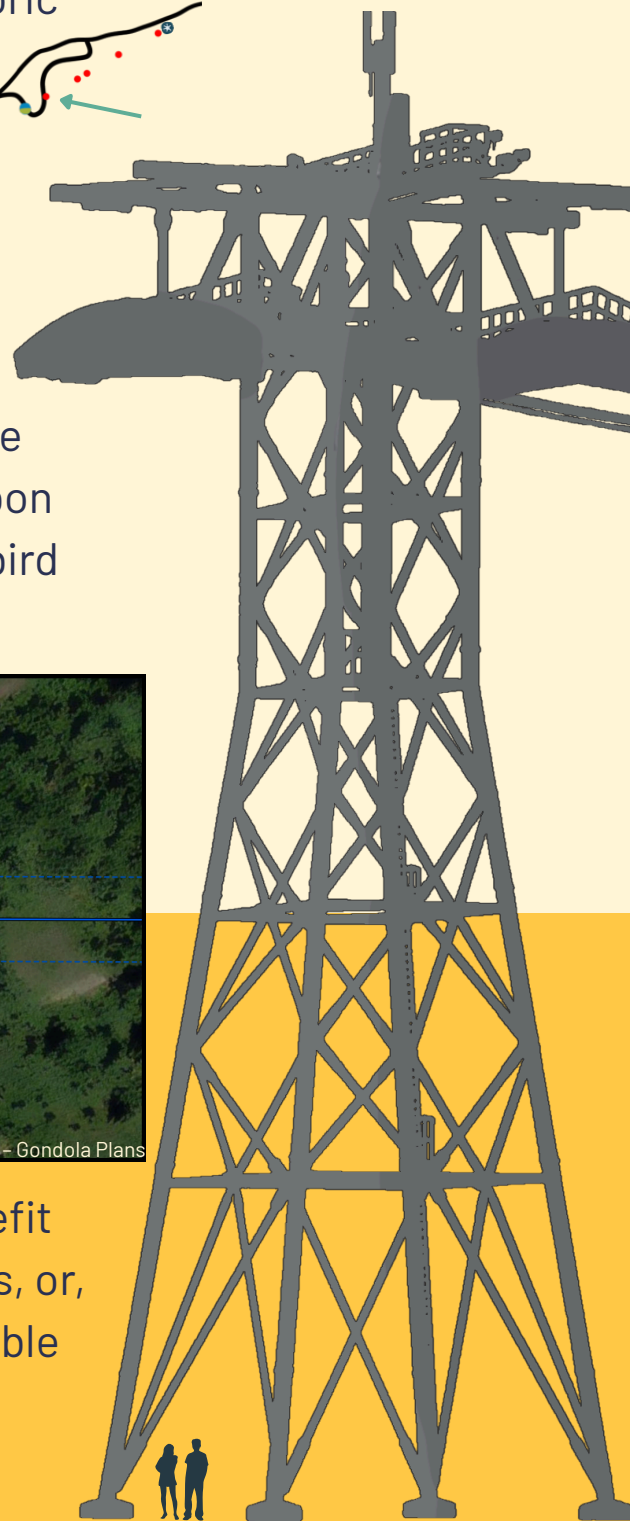
131 ft

BYPASS ROAD

This area is known as the Alta Bypass Road, this road provides an alternate route when snow slides close the main road under Mount Superior. This area lies within the historic Little Cottonwood Mining District.¹²



“Closed to Interlodge travel” – is a safety protocol requiring individuals to remain indoors. During the 2025 season, an avalanche buried three cars near this location, whereupon Interlodge restrictions were issued for Snowbird Village during that cleanup.



A question remains whether there is any benefit to a gondola during extreme avalanche events, or, whether it and any occupants are still vulnerable to the same risks as users of the road?

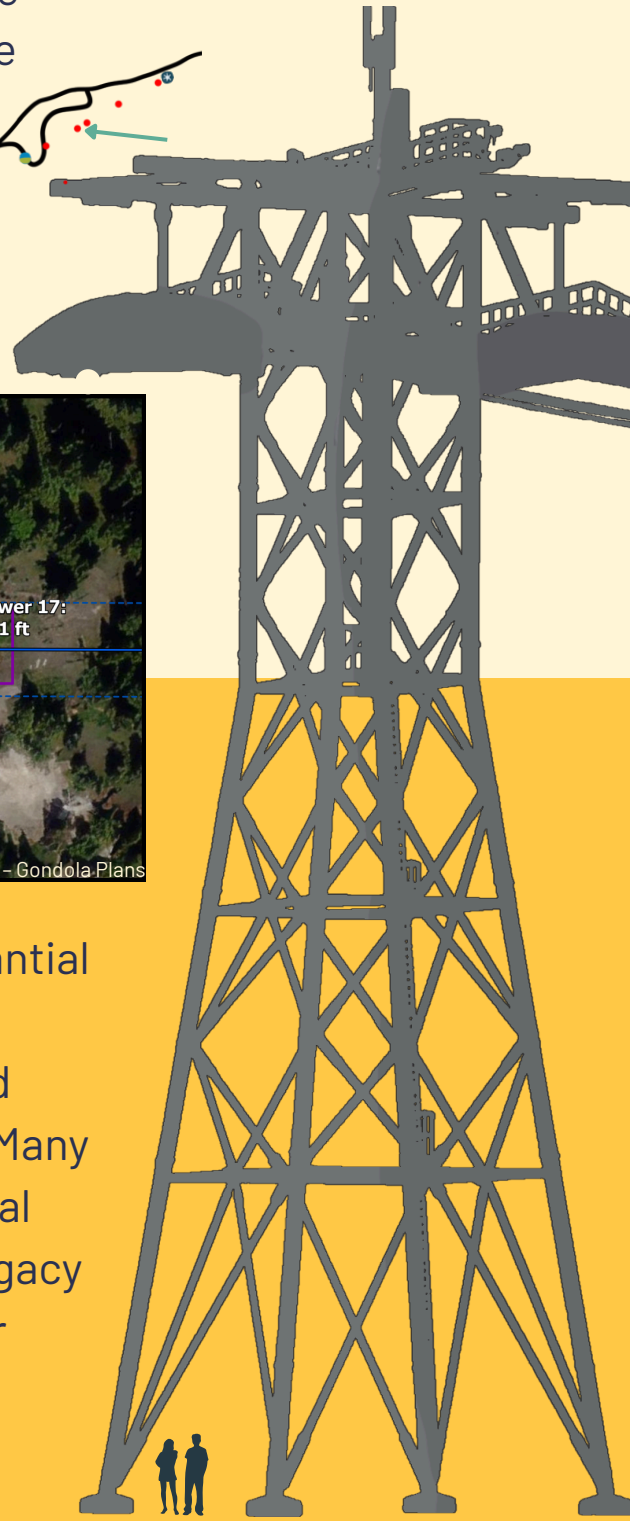
Tower 17

40°35'04.3"N 111°38'41.8"W

131 ft

SELLS MINE

The Sells mine, was a lead, zinc, silver, bismuth, and copper mine. Though it is not as large as the Emma Mine just up the canyon, it is an example of the numerous small-scale prospecting sites in the Little Cottonwood Mining District.¹³



Deseret News - abandoned mines
www.deseret.com/utah/2020/07/29/21305192/are-abandoned-mines



UDOT LCC FEIS Chapter 2E - Gondola Plans

Installing each gondola tower requires substantial ground disturbance—including excavation for foundations, access roads for equipment, and potential blasting on steep, unstable slopes. Many tower locations lie within or adjacent to critical wildlife habitat, rare alpine vegetation, and legacy mining sites that may release heavy metals or toxins when disturbed.¹⁴

Tower 18

40°35'08.2"N 111°38'35.4"W

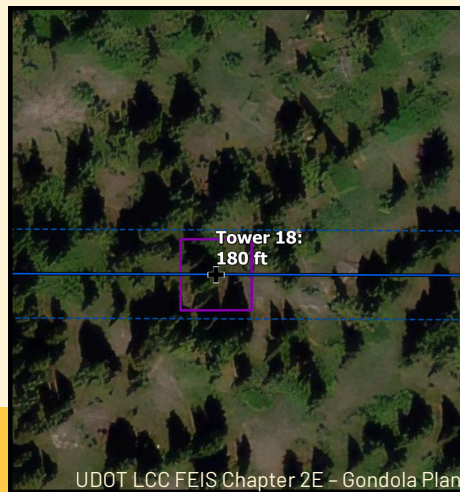
180 ft

SHIRAS MOOSE

The Shiras moose, also known as the Wyoming or Yellowstone moose, is one of four recognized moose subspecies in North America. The habitat for this subspecies includes much of the Rocky Mountains. It is also the only type of moose found in the state of Utah, including at the top of Little Cottonwood Canyon.

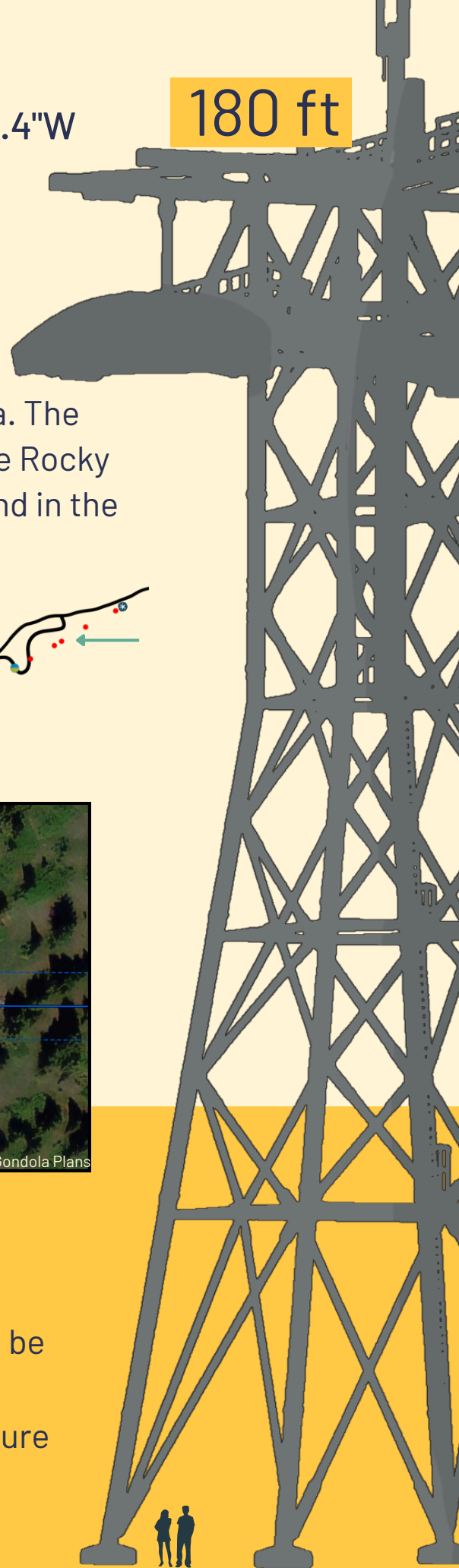


@Lydebug



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This tower is the most distant from the road. While Utah Department of Natural Resources (DNR) data indicates that moose rarely venture into the areas where the gondola towers would be located, this does not eliminate concerns regarding the heightened industrial infrastructure that the gondola would introduce.



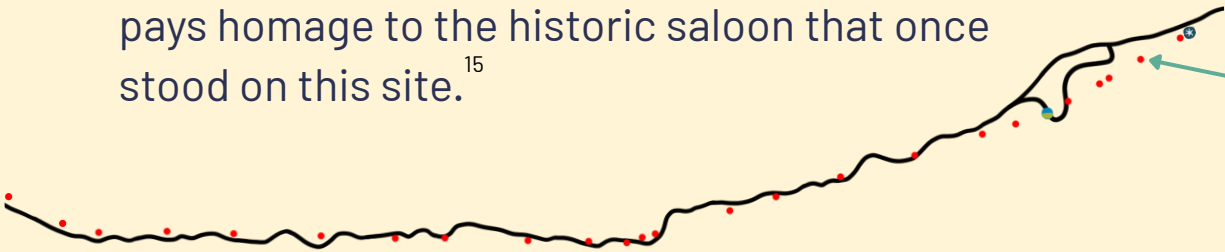
Tower 19

40°35'14.2"N 111°38'26.5"W

230 ft

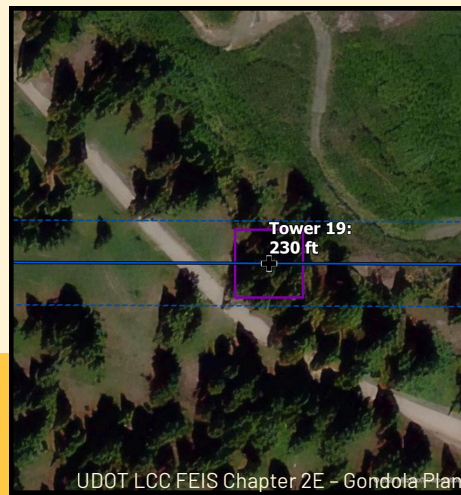
GOLD MINERS DAUGHTER

At 230 feet tall, Tower 19 is one of the tallest towers. It would loom over Alta's Goldminer's Daughter, a long-standing ski-in/ski-out lodge at the base of Alta Ski Area, adjacent to both the Collins and Wildcat lifts, gathering spot for morning preparations and après ski. Originally built in the early 1960s, the lodge pays homage to the historic saloon that once stood on this site.¹⁵



The goldminer's daughter. Ski

<https://www.skimag.com/ski-resort-life/the-goldminers-daughter/>



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The name "Goldminer's Daughter" reflects the broader legacy of 19th and early 20th century mining activity—including the famed Emma Mine—that shaped Alta and Little Cottonwood Canyon's early development.



Tower 20

40°35'21.6"N 111°38'08.6"W

131 ft

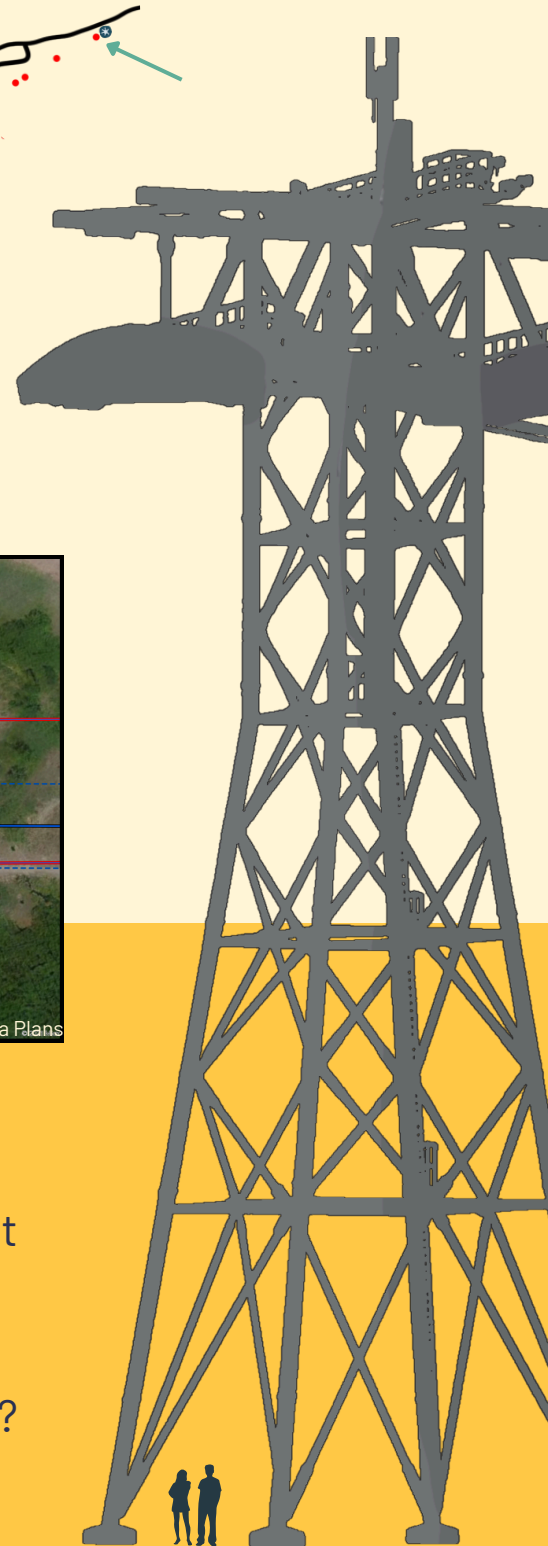
ALTA LODGE

Tower 20 falls within the grounds of the Alta Lodge, Alta's first ski-in lodge and its original slope-side accommodation, built in 1940 by the Denver & Rio Grande Railroad and continuously family-owned since 1959.

Alta Ski Area opened in 1939, with the construction of a single chairlift. The ski resort has long been defined by its deep connection to the mountain, ecosystem, and environment.¹⁶



This connection is mirrored in the town of Alta's vision and values, scaled to its remote alpine setting. Would offloading thousands of guests just after tower twenty at the Alta Terminal station, between the Alta Lodge and Rustler Lodge, overwhelm the natural setting of the Town of Alta?

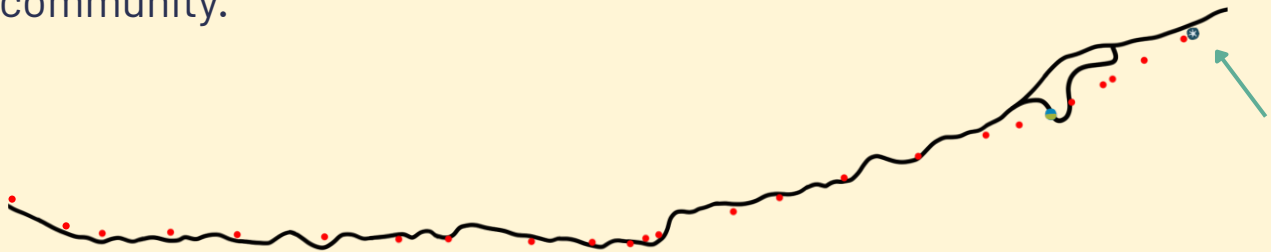


Resort Dropoff

40°35'23.8"N 111°38'04.6"W

ALTA STATION

The final gondola stop is expected to be situated near the base of Alta Ski Area. As with the Snowbird terminal, specific plans have not been disclosed. The lack of publicly available detail leaves open questions about the scale, visibility, and environmental impact of placing a high-capacity terminal in Alta's small, alpine community.



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