

# Squaw applies to build on-mountain coaster



Squaw Valley wants to have a coaster similar to Heavenly's. Photo/LTN file

**By Kathryn Reed**

Squaw Valley wants to build a coaster similar to what Heavenly Mountain Resort has at the top of the gondola.

The Timberline Twister would be near the base of the resort between the Far East and Red Dog chairlifts in an area that is zoned for this type of use.

The resort is in the preliminary stages of getting this built. Several agencies need to approve it, including Placer County, Squaw Valley Fire Department, Lahontan Regional Water Quality Control Board, and Placer County Air Pollution Control District.

The dissenters are already lining up.

“Does KSL really think Tahoe needs another manmade

attraction?" Tom Mooers of Sierra Watch asked in a press release. "Aren't the mountains and the lakes attractive enough already?"

To the visiting public, the answer to the second question would be "no" – at least if Heavenly is any indication. The South Shore resort has increased its non-winter offerings on the mountain, to which people are saying yes to.

Andy Wirth, president and COO of Squaw Valley Ski Holdings, told *Lake Tahoe News*, "Unsurprisingly, Sierra Watch continues to try to mislead the community with the deliberate exaggerations and contrivances they've concocted."

The ride is not a traditional roller coaster like something at Six Flags. They are closer to the ground, might have a small loop, are scenic in nature, and are not loud. They are gravity powered for the most part.

Summer recreation is a growing trend at ski resorts as they try to become year-round destinations. Activities outside of winter sports also helps them as climate change takes hold and in normal years cuts the season short.

Heavenly's coaster was offline this summer because it was severely damaged from the record snowfall last winter. Squaw plans to work with industry officials to help prevent the same outcome with its coaster.