
5.0 OTHER REQUIRED CONSIDERATIONS

5.1 SIGNIFICANT IRREVERSIBLE ENVIRONMENTAL CHANGES

According to Section 15126.2(c) of the State CEQA Guidelines, “[u]ses of nonrenewable resources during the initial and continued phases of the project may be irreversible since a large commitment of such resources makes removal or nonuse thereafter unlikely. Primary impacts and, particularly, secondary impacts (such as highway improvement which provides access to a previously inaccessible area) generally commit future generations to similar uses. Also, irreversible damage can result from environmental accidents associated with the project. Irretrievable commitments of resources should be evaluated to assure that such current consumption is justified.” Therefore, the purpose of this analysis is to identify any significant irreversible environmental effects of project implementation that cannot be avoided.

Both construction and operation of the project would necessarily lead to the consumption of limited, slowly renewable, and non-renewable resources, committing such resources to uses that future generations would be unable to reverse. The new development would require the commitment of resources that include: (1) building materials; (2) fuel and operational materials/resources; and (3) the transportation of goods and people to and from the project site.

Construction of the project would consume certain types of lumber and other forest products, the raw materials in steel, metals such as copper and lead, aggregate materials used in concrete and asphalt such as sand and stone, water, petrochemical construction materials such as plastic, petroleum based construction materials and other similar slowly renewable or nonrenewable resources. Additionally, fossil fuels for construction vehicles and equipment would also be consumed. In terms of project operations, the following slowly renewable and nonrenewable resources would be required: natural gas and electricity; petroleum based fuels; fossil fuels, and water. Title 24 of the California Administrative Code regulates the amount of energy consumed by new development for heating, cooling, ventilation, and lighting purposes. Nevertheless, the consumption of such resources would represent a long-term commitment of those resources.

The project site is located within the Urban Growth Boundary of the Town of Mammoth Lakes. As such, while the development of the project would commit the land to a resort facility, such a commitment would be justified based on the location of the site adjacent to the slopes of Mammoth Mountain. MMSA Chair 15 is designated as one of five activity nodes in the Town. Activity nodes are intended to be the focal points around which resort and related tourist activities are concentrated. In addition, the Town has a goal of establishing the community as a

year-round destination resort. The project would serve to create an activity node and establish year-round activity in the area. In addition, the project would provide amenities for guests as well as residents within the neighborhood.

The commitment of the nonrenewable resources required for the construction and operation of the project would limit the availability of these resources for future generations or for other uses during the life of the project. However, continued use of such resources would be of a relatively small scale and would be consistent with projected regional and local growth in the area. As such, the use of such resources would not be considered significant.

5.2 GROWTH-INDUCING IMPACTS

Pursuant to Section 15126.2(d) of the State CEQA Guidelines, an EIR must address whether a project will directly or indirectly foster growth. Section 15126.2(d) reads as follows:

“[An EIR shall] discuss the ways in which the proposed project could foster economic or population growth, or the construction of additional housing, either directly or indirectly, in the surrounding environment. Included in this are projects which would remove obstacles to population growth (a major expansion of wastewater treatment plant, might, for example, allow for more construction in service areas). Increases in the population may further tax existing community service facilities so consideration must be given to this impact. Also discuss the characteristic of some projects which may encourage and facilitate other activities that could significantly affect the environment, either individually or cumulatively. It must not be assumed that growth in any area is necessarily beneficial, detrimental, or of little significance to the environment.”

Implementation of the proposed project would involve the development of an area within the Juniper Springs Master Plan Area. The Master Plan envisioned phased build-out of the area as a mixed use area, including primarily residential uses with ancillary commercial uses and parking. The project would replace an existing temporary tent facility that provides commercial uses in support of the MMSA ski facility. The project would result in the development of a lodge facility with transient housing and associated commercial uses at one of the four key access portals to the Mammoth Mountain ski area. As such, the project would encourage both economic growth from the revenue generated by the project and population growth from the increased employment that would occur as a result of the project.

The project would result in an increase in employment, which may bring new residents into the area. However, the Town addresses the impacts of new development on the supply of affordable housing through the Affordable Housing Mitigation Regulations (AHMR) contained

in the Zoning Code. Under the AHMR, new developments must provide housing for the estimated number of employees that earn below median income levels, or 58.5% of its full time equivalent employees (FTEE). The project would comply with the Town's requirement regarding the provision of affordable housing.

The proposed Eagle Lodge Base Area Development would include hotel/condominium or hospitality operations that would provide housing for transient visitors. In addition, the project would provide services for visitors to the area as well as for residents within the neighborhood. The project would not increase the portal capacity but would improve the services that are provided at the existing ski facility. In addition, the project would provide for year-round use of the area through the provision of indoor and outdoor assembly areas that can support community cultural events during the non-ski season.

The project would contribute to the overall economic well being of the community through the provision of high occupancy transient beds within the resort community. The project would also provide amenities including convenience retail, conference space, public parking, and food and beverage services. The project would expand the City's commercial base as well as improve the City's tax base, which would be a beneficial impact.

An existing temporary tent facility currently provides some of the commercial amenities that would be provided by the project. As such, infrastructure is already in place to support the proposed development. The proposed project would not involve any extension of infrastructure, such as roads or utilities. Consequently, it would not open up undeveloped areas to new development. The project would replace an existing temporary facility and therefore, would constitute infill development, which, by its very nature, is not growth-inducing.

The proposed project would be located primarily within the Town's Urban Growth Boundary and within an area that is well-served by existing infrastructure. The Town has accounted for the project in its long-range plans for infrastructure and services. Since the proposed project constitutes infill development within a developed area and does not require the extension of new infrastructure through undeveloped areas, project implementation would not remove an obstacle to growth.

5.3 ISSUES FOUND NOT TO BE SIGNIFICANT

Section 15128 of the CEQA Guidelines states:

“An EIR shall contain a statement briefly indicating the reasons that various possible significant effects of a project were determined not to be significant and

were therefore not discussed in detail in the EIR. Such a statement may be contained in an attached copy of an Initial Study.”

In addition to the environmental impact categories analyzed in detail in this EA/EIR, the Town of Mammoth Lakes determined through the preparation of an Initial Study (see Appendix A of this EIR) that the proposed project would not result in potentially significant impacts with respect to agricultural resources; cultural resources (historic); geology and soils; hazards and hazardous materials; mineral resources; public services (police, fire, and schools); recreation; and utilities and service systems (solid waste).

5.4 SIGNIFICANT UNAVOIDABLE ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS

The potentially adverse effects of the proposed project are discussed in Chapter 3, Affected Environment and Environmental Consequences, of this document. Mitigation measures have been recommended that would reduce all of the significant impacts to a less than significant level, with the exception of significant and unavoidable impacts in the following areas:

- Aesthetic impact to visual resources from vantage point KOP #2;
- Cumulative roadway noise impacts due to cumulative traffic volumes; and
- Cumulative impacts relative to water supply at Town buildout in 2025.

These impacts are discussed further in Section 3.5, Noise; Section 3.9, Aesthetics; and Section 4.0, Cumulative Impacts, respectively.

5.5 POTENTIAL SECONDARY EFFECTS

Section 15126.4(a)(1)(D) of the CEQA Guidelines requires that, “If a mitigation measure would cause one or more significant effects in addition to those that would be caused by the project as proposed, the effects of the mitigation measure shall be discussed but in less detail than the significant effects of the project as proposed.” With regard to this section of the CEQA Guidelines, the potential impacts that could result with the implementation of each mitigation measure proposed for the project was reviewed. The following provides a discussion of the potential secondary impacts that could occur as a result of the implementation of the measures by environmental issue area.

Land Use

Since the project would not result in significant impacts to land use, no mitigation measures are required. Therefore, no secondary impacts regarding land use would occur.

Transportation

Mitigation Measure TR-1 addresses construction parking. Mitigation Measure TR-1 would not include physical improvements but rather a means to ensure that construction parking is available without affecting sensitive uses in the project vicinity. Mitigation Measure TR-2 addresses construction truck traffic. TR-2 would not include physical improvements but rather a means through which to ensure that potential disruptions to traffic and access are not affected. Mitigation Measures TR-3 and TR-4 would require the construction of traffic improvements, including a right-turn lane and single-lane roundabout, respectively. The implementation of physical improvements could result in secondary effects, such as traffic, noise, and air quality. However, appropriate construction practices intended to minimize impacts would be required. For example, the implementation of best management practices with regard to erosion, the watering of construction sites, the use of properly operating equipment, and the use of noise reduction devices would minimize environmental impacts. In addition, traffic flow during construction of the improvements would be considered by the Town.

Mitigation Measure TR-5 provides options to reduce the parking demand at the site. These measures would serve to increase the use of alternative transportation thereby reducing environmental impacts. Mitigation Measures TR-6 through TR-10 address site circulation issues and include things such as the installation of signs, and modifications to the site design to improve circulation and avoid on-site conflicts. These measures would not result in secondary effects.

Air Quality

Since the project would not result in significant impacts to air quality, no mitigation measures are required. Therefore, no secondary impacts regarding air quality would occur.

Noise

All of the noise mitigation measures would be implemented during construction of the project and, thus, would be temporary in nature. Mitigation Measures NOI-1 through NOI-5 require that construction equipment be fitted with noise mufflers, proper maintenance of construction equipment, placement of stationary noise generating equipment as far as possible from sensitive uses, and posting of name and telephone number of a contact person on-site. In

addition, measures NOI-2 through NOI-5 address blasting on site and require testing to ensure that blasting would not exceed the vibration threshold. Implementation of these measures would not result in physical changes to the environment but would ensure that noise and vibration are reduced during construction to less than significant levels. As such, implementation of these measures would not result in secondary impacts.

Biological Resources

Mitigation Measure BIO-1 ensures the implementation of the Migratory Bird Treaty Act (MBTA). This measure would require a biological survey be conducted prior to the removal of vegetation, if removal occurs between February and September. In the event that nesting is observed, the biologist shall recommend a buffer area with a specified radius to be established. Provision of a buffer area would not result in a significant effect but would rather provide an undisturbed area within which no intrusion shall be allowed until the young had fledged and left the nest. Mitigation Measure BIO-2 requires the installation of exclusionary fencing adjacent to drainage. The approximately 4 foot high fencing would be in place during construction in the area of the drainage. The installation would be overseen by a qualified biological monitor to ensure that impacts to biological resources would not occur. The fencing would not result in visual impacts due to its size and the limited duration. As such, no significant secondary impacts would result from implementation of these mitigation measures.

Cultural Resources

Mitigation Measure CUL-1 would require a monitor during the ground-disturbing construction activities affecting the alluvial deposits and upper three feet of the glacial deposits in the project area. The presence of a monitor would not result in impacts and would ensure that any discovered archaeological remains would be protected. Mitigation Measure CUL-2 addresses the unexpected discovery of human remains. As such, no significant secondary impacts would result from implementation of these mitigation measures.

Employment, Population, and Housing

Mitigation Measure POP-1 addresses the provision of housing in the event that construction workers come to the Town from outside of Mono or Inyo Counties. The implementation of the measure would not result in the construction of new housing given the short-term nature of the construction project. In addition, the measure is intended to preserve the existing housing stock in the RMF-1 zone within the community for permanent residents.

Aesthetics

Mitigation Measures AES-1 and AES-2 address the construction phase of the project. AES-1 is intended to ensure that the site is maintained in a visually attractive manner. Mitigation Measure AES-2 requires a hauling plan. AES-3 would require that the berm on the north side of Majestic Pines Road is replaced and enhanced after the construction period. Mitigation Measure AES-4 requires the submittal and review of an outdoor lighting plan to ensure that on-site lighting is consistent with the Town's Lighting Ordinance. Mitigation Measure AES-5 requires the implementation of a snow plowing and cindering plan or the installation of heat traced pavement along Majestic Pines Road to ensure that shading does not result in hazardous conditions to the north of the site. As such, no significant secondary impacts would result from implementation of these mitigation measures.

While the project would result in a significant view impact at KOP #2, no mitigation measures are available to reduce the significance of impacts to the visual resources from KOP #2.

Hydrology and Water Quality

Mitigation Measure HYD-1 would require monitoring of existing on-site wells to assess seasonal groundwater underflow rates. Mitigation Measure HYD-2 requires the installation of two wells upgradient of the construction area. The location of the wells would need to be reviewed to ensure that no impacts to biological resources would occur. The installation would be within the parameters of the development analyzed with regard to air quality and noise.

Mitigation Measure HYD-3 requires the installation of a sump pump system in the underground parking garage. The sump pump system would be located within the area the construction area on the site. Mitigation Measure HYD-4 addresses the size of the detention facilities that would be installed as part of the project and therefore, has been included in the analyses conducted for the project. As such, no significant secondary impacts would result from implementation of these mitigation measures.

Water Supply

Mitigation Measure WTR-1 would require the provision of a work area on the site to ensure adequate area is available for MCWD to conduct any necessary maintenance for Well 16. In addition, WTR-2 would require the installation of a standpipe to ensure adequate fire flows to the site. No significant secondary impacts would result from implementation of these mitigation measures.

Wastewater

Mitigation Measure WW-1 addresses the timing of the completion of an improvement being implemented by MCWD. The improvement would not result in any environmental impacts.

Stormwater

Since the project would not result in significant impacts to stormwater, no mitigation measures are required. Therefore, no secondary impacts regarding stormwater would occur.