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## IV. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ANALYSIS

### L. RECREATION

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#### INTRODUCTION

This section describes current recreational uses on the Project site, in the Town of Mammoth Lakes (Town) and in the surrounding area. Additionally, it describes ways in which the Project could lead to an increased demand for recreational facilities, physical deterioration of existing recreational facilities, or the need for the creation or expansion of recreation facilities, the construction of which could have an adverse effect on the environment.

#### ENVIRONMENTAL SETTING

##### Project Site

The Project site consists of the remaining portion of the total 345 acres in the 1981 Master Plan; the remaining acreage is approximately 237 acres. The 237 acres includes 94 acres that were added to the Master Plan area via a land exchange with the United States Forest Service (USFS). In 2005, a land exchange (2005 Land Exchange) was completed between the USFS and Snowcreek Investment Co. in order to acquire enough land to extend the existing privately owned publicly accessible nine-hole golf course to create an 18-hole course (refer to Figure III-3). The 2005 Land Exchange resulted in the acquisition of 94 acres from the USFS for golf course/recreation use. As a part of the 2005 Land Exchange process, Snowcreek Investment Company entered into a covenant with the Town that protected the exchanged parcel from residential housing, commercial lodging, transient occupancy, and being further subdivided. The covenant is monitored by the Eastern Sierra Land Trust (see Appendix K).

No developed or undeveloped parkland exists on the Project site. The Project site currently consists of disturbed and undeveloped land, the privately owned publicly accessible Snowcreek Resort nine-hole golf course and driving range, and the open space land acquired through the 2005 Land Exchange.

##### Regional Setting

The Town is located on the eastern flank of the Sierra Nevada in Mono County. Recreational opportunities in the area include, but are not limited to: Mammoth Mountain Ski Area, Smoky Bear Flat, Mammoth Lakes Basin, Devil's Postpile National Monument, Red's Meadow, Bodie State Historic Park, Inyo National Forest, Mono Lake Tufa State Reserve, and the John Muir and Ansel Adams Wilderness Areas. Additionally, the eastern entrance to Yosemite National Park is 32 miles to the north. The Town sits at an altitude of 7,900 feet, and the surrounding mountains rise to elevations exceeding 13,000 feet. During the summer, temperature averages range from 40 to 80 degrees Fahrenheit (F). Winter

temperatures average from 10 to 40 degrees F and snowfall at Mammoth Mountain Ski Area averages 385 inches.<sup>1</sup>

## Local Setting

The Town's economy is tourism based, with the mainstay of the Town's tax revenue coming from the Transient Occupancy Tax (TOT), which is a 12% tax added to the rental of any lodging facility and campgrounds for stays less than a month. The 2000 census showed the base year-round population to be 7,094.<sup>2</sup> However, the Town is subject to large fluctuations in resident populations and visitation levels due to its tourism based economy. During the peak winter season, the population-at-one-time (PAOT) can increase to over 35,000 individuals.<sup>3</sup> The Town's 2003 General Plan Housing Element projects that the permanent population will reach 11,000 individuals by 2024.<sup>4</sup> Additionally, the Town predicts that the resident population will increase by roughly 2,000 people during peak tourism season.<sup>5</sup>

The Project site is located at the southeast edge of the Town, and is bordered by the Inyo National Forest, (United States Forest Service [USFS] land) on its southern and eastern sides, near the base of Sherwin Range. Mammoth Creek runs through the northern portion of the property from the west in an easterly direction. The site is relatively flat, with a slight rise along the northern and southern boundaries. The Project site supports natural and disturbed habitats including basin sagebrush, meadow, wet meadow, upper montane chaparral, alder-willow riparian, developed/disturbed areas and irrigation ditches/retention basins. The Project site has been used as pastureland for cattle grazing in the past. The surrounding Inyo National Forest land is heavily used for both summer and winter recreational activities.

## Local Parks and Recreational Facilities

### *Town Parks*

The Town owns and operates 14.26 acres of land for public park use. In addition, Mammoth Lakes has obtained approximately 32 acres of parkland through a joint operation agreement with Mono County and a lease from the Los Angeles Department of Water and Power. The Town's parkland is further supplemented by Special Use Permits from the USFS for access to a total of 27.52 acres of land. The inclusion of leased and permitted lands provides over 73.78 acres of currently developed parkland for public use. See Table IV.L-1 for acreage by individual park.

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<sup>1</sup> Mammoth Lakes Visitors Bureau website, <http://www.visitmammoth.com/static/index.cfm?contentID=9>, retrieved by CAJA staff, December 11, 2006.

<sup>2</sup> Town of Mammoth Lakes - Housing Element, December 2003, page 8.

<sup>3</sup> Mammoth Lakes Visitor Bureau website, <http://www.visitmammoth.com/static/index.cfm?contentID=9>, retrieved by CAJA staff, December 11, 2006.

<sup>4</sup> Town of Mammoth Lakes - Housing Element, December 2003, page 8.

<sup>5</sup> Town of Mammoth Lakes - Housing Element, December 2003, page 8.

**Table IV.L-1  
Active Parkland Owned By or Available to the  
Town of Mammoth Lakes**

<b>Park</b>	<b>Town Owned Acreage</b>	<b>Leased/Special Use Permit Acreage</b>
<b>Active Parks</b>		
Community Center Park	5.18	0
Mammoth Creek Park East & West	4.97	+/- 15
Shady Rest Park	0	12.52
Trails End Park	4.11	0
Whitmore Park	0	+/- 32
<b>Total Acres</b>	<b>14.26</b>	<b>59.52</b>
<i>Source: Town of Mammoth Lakes, <a href="http://www.ci.mammoth-lakes.ca.us/General%20Plan/DEIR.htm">http://www.ci.mammoth-lakes.ca.us/General%20Plan/DEIR.htm</a>, retrieved by CAJA staff, January 3, 2007. Mono County Assessor's Staff, correspondence with Town of Mammoth Lakes Tourism &amp; Recreation Staff, March 2, 2007. Steve Speidel, Principal Planner, Town of Mammoth Lakes, correspondence via Jen Daugherty, Assistant Planner, CAJA staff, July 24, 2007.</i>		

The closest Town park to the Project is Mammoth Creek Park, located on the east and west side of Old Mammoth Road near the northeast corner the Project site (refer to Table IV.L-1). The park consists of approximately 15 acres of USFS land and 4.97 acres of Town-owned land. Mammoth Creek Park East amenities include the Hayden Cabin museum, picnic tables, restroom facilities, and trails. Mammoth Creek Park West includes children's play area, art sculpture, walking and biking trails, restroom, picnic tables, trails and paved parking.

Beyond dedicated parks, the Town offers recreational programs, youth and adult sports leagues, enrichment and community service classes, swim lessons, swim team, and special events. Apart from those provided by the Town, the community contains additional public, private semi-public, and commercial recreation facilities (refer to Table IV.L-2 for cumulative totals).<sup>6</sup>

<sup>6</sup> Town of Mammoth Lakes, <http://www.ci.mammoth-lakes.ca.us/General%20Plan/DEIR.htm>, CAJA staff, January 3, 2007.

**Table IV.L-2  
Existing Recreational Facilities in Mammoth Lakes**

Type of Facility	Number	Location(s)
Gymnasium	2	Mammoth High School, Snowcreek Athletic Club
Baseball/Softball/multi-use fields	7	Mammoth Elementary School, Mammoth High School, Shady Rest Park (3), Whitmore Recreation Area (2 fields)
Tennis Courts	11+	Snowcreek Athletic Club (5 courts), Community Center Park (6 courts), plus other in private developments
Swimming Pools	3+	Snowcreek Athletic Club (2), Whitmore Pool, plus others in private developments
Hot Springs	2	Hot Creek (temporary closure at this time), Red's Meadow
Meeting Facilities	6	Community Center (only Town Facility), Mammoth Mountain Inn, Sierra Nevada Inn, Canyon Lodge, Sierra Holiday Trailer Park, Fire Station, USFS Visitor Center, Mammoth Mall
Handball/Racquetball Courts	5	Snowcreek Athletic Club (5 courts)
Boating/Fishing	3	Lakes Basin, Crowley Lake, Convict Lake
Cross Country Skiing	3	Tamarack Ski Center (Lakes Basin), Sierra Meadows, Shady Rest
Downhill Skiing	2	Mammoth Mountain Ski Area, June Mountain Ski Area
Snowmobiling	4	Smokey Bear Flat, Mammoth Mountain Ski Area
Dog Sledding	2	Sierra Meadows, Shady Rest
Moto Cross	1	Mammoth Moto Cross Track
Volleyball Courts	1	Shady Rest Park
Golf	2	Snowcreek, Sierra Star
Equestrian Facilities	4	Agnew Meadows Park Station, Mammoth Pack Outfit, Sierra Meadow Equestrian Center, Red's Meadow Pack Station
Hiking/Backpacking Trailheads	5+	Agnew Meadow, Red's Meadow/Devil's Postpile, Lakes Basin (several), Sherwin Lakes, Convict Lake
Camping	18+	Shady Rest, Pine Glen, Sherwin Creek, Lake Mary, Lake George, Coldwater, Agnew Meadows (group), Agnew Meadows, Upper Soda Springs, Pumice Flat, Minaret Falls, Devil's Postpile, Red's Meadow, Convict Lake, Camp High Sierra, Mammoth Mountain RV Park
Picnic Areas	6+	Shady Rest, Mammoth Creek, Community Center, Minaret Vista, Lakes Basin, Earthquake Fault
Historic Sites	4	Hayden Cabin/Museum, Mill City, Mammoth City, and Mammoth Consolidated Mine
Interpretive Centers	2	Mammoth City Rangers Station and Visitors Center, and Mammoth Mountain Ski Area
Natural Reserves	1	Valentine Natural Reserve
Skate Boarding Park	2	Trails End Park which includes the Volcom Brother's Skate Park, and Shady Rest
<i>Source: Town of Mammoth Lakes, <a href="http://www.ci.mammoth-lakes.ca.us/General%20Plan/DEIR.htm">http://www.ci.mammoth-lakes.ca.us/General%20Plan/DEIR.htm</a>, retrieved by CAJA staff, January 3, 2007; updated by Town of Mammoth Lakes Staff, July 13, 2007.</i>		

### ***Town Trail System***

The Mammoth Lakes Trail System Plan (MLTSP) was developed as a separate component of 1990 Parks and Recreation Element of the General Plan. The MLTSP provides guidelines for trail designation and development, as well as projections for potential trails in the planning area.<sup>7</sup>

### ***State Parks***

Mono Lake Tufa State Reserve (Reserve) is the closest state park to the Town at a distance of roughly 29 miles. The Reserve provides interpretive walks, wildlife viewing, cross country skiing, hiking, swimming, boating, and visitor center services.

### ***Federal Parks***

Located just outside of the Town, Devil's Postpile National Monument provides additional recreational opportunities. Visitation in summer months requires the use of a shuttle, leaving from Mammoth Mountain Resort, to enter the park as private vehicle access is restricted. The Monument offers a variety of recreation prospects such as hiking and camping as well as scenic opportunities provided by the postpile geologic formations and Rainbow Falls.

The Town is surrounded by the Mammoth Ranger District of the Inyo National Forest (INF). The INF comprises more than two million acres and includes seven designated wilderness areas comprising 650,000 acres. Recreational opportunities provided by the INF include camping, hiking, picnicking, backpacking, equestrian use, and off-highway vehicle use. There are also two ski resorts on INF land that offer alpine skiing and snowboarding (Mammoth Mountain and June Mountain). Over 100 miles of groomed trails are maintained for multipurpose winter use with an additional 45 miles of cross-country ski trails.<sup>8</sup>

### **Regulatory Setting**

The Quimby Act of 1965 is a State law that allows local legislative bodies to adopt requirements for the dedication of land for parks or recreational purposes, payments of fees in-lieu-of land dedication, or a combination of both, as a condition of approval for a subdivision. The requirements must be adopted by ordinance, with definite standards for determining the amount of land dedicated, or fees paid, and the requirement must have a reasonable relationship (nexus) to the use of the facilities by the future inhabitants of the subdivision. In order to meet conditions required for application of the Quimby Act, the Town included a Park and Recreation element in April of 1990, as an amendment to their 1987

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<sup>7</sup> *Mammoth Lakes Trail System Plan – May 1991, pg 45-46*

<sup>8</sup> *Inyo National Forest, Stateparks.com website at <http://www.stateparks.com/inyo.html>, retrieved by CAJA staff on July 16, 2007.*

General Plan. The 1987 General Plan is currently in the process of being updated following a four year planning and review process. A Draft Program EIR was previously prepared and circulated regarding an earlier version of the General Plan Update. A Notice of Preparation (NOP) for the Draft Program EIR was distributed on April 25, 2003. A Draft Program EIR was prepared and distributed to the public for review from February to May 2005 for public comments. Based on the extent and range of comments received, the Town determined that the proposed General Plan should be revised to the extent that required recirculation of a Revised Draft Program EIR. The Revised Draft Program EIR was circulated for public review from October 31, 2005 to December 14, 2005. The Town is currently considering the Revised Draft Program EIR and the General Plan Update for certification and adoption at this time. Because the adoption of the Draft 2007 General Plan is an ongoing process, the standard for analysis used in this Draft EIR is based on the 1987 General Plan. Draft 2007 General Plan policies on recreation that are relevant to the Project are analyzed in Chapter 9 Parks, Open Space, and Recreation. The 1987 General Plan contains a 1990 Parks and Recreation Element that includes information related to future acquisition and development of recreation facilities. General Plan policies on recreation that are relevant to the Project are analyzed in Section IV.H (Land Use).

Section 15.16.085 of the Town's Municipal Code provides for the creation of a special fund for Parks and Recreation Facilities, and development fees that must be paid before permits will be issued. These development impact fees range from \$5,228 per unit to \$8,713 per unit.<sup>9</sup> Additionally, Section 17.16.100 stipulates multifamily projects exceeding 20 units provide 150 square feet of on-site common/recreation area per unit. This area includes recreation rooms, swimming pools, spa facilities, tennis courts, etc.<sup>10</sup>

The Town recently collaborated with the Inyo National Forest and the California State Parks to create a Winter Recreational Needs Assessment (WRNA) survey. A working report on the WRNA findings was published in February of 2005. The purpose of the survey was to identify the winter recreational uses for the area and to determine what future opportunities and needs remain. Concerns about increased trail and facility use, conflicts between motorized and non-motorized recreational users, and potential issues with environmental pollution and the need for land conservation were considered. The working report represents Phase I of a three-phase project. Phase II will consist of the creation of a list of specific actions and alternatives that may be considered in response to the needs and opportunities identified. Phase III will consist of environmental and regulatory review of the actions proposed in Phase II. At this time only the survey and report phase of the WRNA is complete. Both of the remaining phases are dependent upon future funding.<sup>11</sup>

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<sup>9</sup> Town of Mammoth Lakes, *June 2007 Developer Impact Fee Schedule*, July 25, 2007.

<sup>10</sup> Mammoth Lakes Municipal Code, <http://municipalcodes.lexisnexis.com/codes/mammothlks/>, retrieved by CAJA staff January 16<sup>th</sup>, 2007.

<sup>11</sup> Mammoth Lakes Region of the Inyo National Forest Winter Recreation Needs Assessment Survey, Findings, Working Report, February 2005. Prepared by INF, Town, & CSP, with assistance from Center for

The Survey revealed that, based on 691 respondents, cross-country skiing, downhill skiing, and snowmobiling are the top three winter uses in the area. Nineteen percent of the respondents commented that improvement is needed in some areas. Snowmobile users requested more open accessible areas, with access to the Sherwin Range and the Mammoth Lakes Basin, while cross-country skiers and snowshoe interests requested improvements to groomed trails around the Town and increased buffers between snowmobile areas. Other respondents requested more snow parks with adequate parking and restrooms, more back-country warming huts, and more opportunities to ice-skate outdoors.

## **ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS**

### **Threshold of Significance**

In accordance with Appendix G of the *CEQA Guidelines*, the proposed project could have a significant environmental impact if it would:

- (a) Increase the use of existing neighborhood and regional parks or other recreational facilities such that substantial physical deterioration of the facility would occur or be accelerated.
- (b) Include recreational facilities or require the construction or expansion of recreational facilities which might have an adverse physical effect on the environment.

### **Project Impacts and Mitigation Measures**

#### ***Impact REC-1***

As previously discussed, the Project site consists of the remaining portion of the total 345 acres in the 1981 Master Plan; the remaining acreage is approximately 237 acres. The 237 acres includes 94 acres that were added to the Master Plan area via a land exchange with the United States Forest Service (USFS) in 2005.

As discussed in detail in Section III (Project Description), the Project is intended to fulfill the vision of the previously approved 1981 Master Plan. Upon final approval of the Project, Snowcreek VIII, Snowcreek Master Plan Update – 2007, will effectively replace the existing 1981 Snowcreek Master Plan for the acres yet to be developed.

In addition to the development previously constructed or approved in the Snowcreek Master Plan, the Project has been designed to integrate 1,050 residential units and approximately 75,000 square feet of resort, recreation, retail, and public amenities components. Implementation of the Project would result in the development of 1,050 new dwelling units and would generate approximately 2,562 new residents,

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*Collaborative Policy, and California State University, Sacramento. Retrieved from [http://www.fs.fed.us/r5/invo/news/2005/02/winter\\_needs\\_assessment.shtml](http://www.fs.fed.us/r5/invo/news/2005/02/winter_needs_assessment.shtml) by CAJA staff, December 11, 2006.*

including approximately 475 school-aged children, and thus, would create an additional demand of 12.81 acres (see calculations below) for parks and recreational services.<sup>12, 13</sup> Current population patterns in the Town indicate that households similar to those proposed by the Project are not occupied year round, therefore this is a conservative estimate. The Project is viewed as a resort recreation center with residential uses, outdoor use areas, and multiple options for recreational and public amenities. These include: an expanded privately owned publicly accessible golf course; a publicly accessible golf clubhouse; a public parking area and publicly accessible Outfitters' Cabin designed to serve as a hub for summer and winter recreational activities, and provide retail services and equipment rental for these types of activities; a publicly accessible Natural Resources and Historic Interpretive Center (Interpretive Center); a publicly accessible Market/General Store; retail space; a publicly accessible lounge; private fitness area; private resident's pool; publicly accessible spa/wellness center; and publicly accessible ice skating pond/rink associated with the resort Hotel.

In accordance with the Town's requirement, the preliminary parkland dedication requirements for the Project have been calculated and are as follows:

$$A = .005 \times UP$$

A = Amount of parkland required, in acres

U = Total number of approved dwelling units in the subdivision

P = Population density per dwelling unit

.005 = 5 acres of parkland per 1,000 residents

**Whereas,**

U = (125) Hotel Room/Suite units + (75) Private Residence Club (PRC)/suite units + (850) residential dwelling units = 1,050 total residential units

P = 2.44

**Therefore,**

$$(.005) \times (1,050) \times (2.44) = 12.81 \text{ acres.}$$

Following the Town's requirement of five acres of parkland per 1,000 residents, the parkland requirement for the Project is approximately 12.81 acres. The Project would expand the existing privately owned, but publicly accessible golf course, into the 155-acre Snowcreek Golf Course. In addition, as previously stated the Project would provide other recreational facilities including a publicly accessible golf clubhouse, Outfitters' Cabin, Interpretive Center, and ice skating rink/pond. The Project's proposed

<sup>12</sup> James Maxey, Business Manager, Mammoth Unified School District, correspondence, October 23, 2006.

<sup>13</sup> United States Census Bureau, Census 2000; www.census.gov, CAJA staff, December 8, 2006.

recreational and public amenities, as listed above, in conjunction with the Town's current facilities and the collection of Developer Impact Fees (DIFs) that support the Town's park and recreation fund would be adequate to accommodate the Project's demand for parks and recreational services.<sup>14</sup> As development occurs within the Project area, DIFs will be paid to the Town to offset the recreational facilities and maintenance. Appendix M of this Draft EIR includes the Town's current Developer Impact Fee Schedule dated June 2007. Therefore, with payment of DIFs and the Project's provision of new publicly available recreational amenities, the Project's impacts on Town parkland would be *less-than-significant* and no mitigation measures are required.

The National Forest land surrounding the Project site will likely experience increased use as a result of Project implementation. In particular, the development of the Outfitters' Cabin as a designated access point to the Inyo National Forest would potentially serve to focus backcountry recreational trip launches at a location that is presently frequented by fewer visitors. This increase may potentially lead, over time, to some level of deterioration of these areas. However, no formal capacity study has been completed to determine excessive use levels within the Inyo National Forest.<sup>15</sup> The USFS has a number of management options available to reduce and mitigate visitor impacts including limiting visitor numbers, redirection to more suitable areas, and impacted area closures.<sup>16</sup> The Inyo National Forest recognizes that recreation, as identified in the Inyo National Forest Land Resource Management Plan (LRMP) is the most important public resource available on the Inyo National Forest.<sup>17</sup> In addition, the development of the Outfitters' Cabin as a focal point for entry into the Inyo National Forest would alleviate existing incursions to private property by backcountry users and would serve to reduce impacts observed at other access routes in current use. The Project would not physically alter or produce any direct impact on land within the Inyo National Forest. Therefore, potential impacts to the National Forest land adjacent to the Project site would be *less-than-significant* and no mitigation measures are required.

### ***Impact REC-2***

Implementation of the Project would result in the removal of privately owned publicly accessible driving range facilities located in the eastern section of parcel 40-070-10 and the northeast corner of parcel 40-070-11. Additionally, the existing privately owned publicly accessible nine-hole Snowcreek Golf Course would be temporarily closed for minor changes. However, development on the Project site would include a resort component with recreational elements and additional, stand-alone recreation components. Resort component recreation elements available to paying Snowcreek guests and residents consist of a fitness

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<sup>14</sup> Town of Mammoth Lakes Municipal Code Chapter 15.16 §15.16.085 part D. and 15.16.081 part D, CAJA staff, June 21, 2007.

<sup>15</sup> Phone correspondence with Mike Schlafmann, Inyo National Forest Winter Recreation Specialist, January 9, 2007, CAJA Staff.

<sup>16</sup> Ibid.

<sup>17</sup> USFS Comment Letter on the Town's 2005 General Plan Update EIR to Bill Taylor, Deputy Community Development Director from Molly Brown, District Ranger of Mammoth/Mono Districts, December 24, 2005.

area, a pool, a spa/wellness center, and an ice skating pond. While the ice skating pond/rink is considered part of the resort Hotel, it would be open to the general public for a fee. Stand-alone privately owned publicly accessible for a fee recreation components consist of a golf clubhouse and expansion of the existing nine-hole golf course to 18 holes. The Interpretive Center and an Outfitters' Cabin would be available to the general public. The Interpretive Center would include free public restrooms as well as a space to accommodate meetings and to dispense educational materials. The Outfitters' Cabin would provide free public parking and would serve as the hub of year-round recreational activities such as hiking, biking, fishing, cross country skiing, snow-shoeing, hay rides and sleigh rides. Retail services and equipment rental would be provided to serve these types of activities.

A detailed analysis of the potential impacts of the construction of the on-site recreational facilities associated with the Project is presented throughout Section IV (Environmental Impact Analysis) of this Draft EIR. No policies concerning the availability of golf driving ranges have been adopted by the Town. Thus, despite the removal of a privately owned publicly accessible driving range and the temporary loss of use of the existing nine-hole golf course for minor changes, the Project would increase the overall amount of public and private recreation opportunities in the Mammoth Lakes area. Therefore, Project impacts affecting Town recreation facilities would be *less-than-significant*.

### ***Impact REC-3***

As previously stated, the Project consists of build-out of the remaining approximately 237 acres of the Master Plan area in order to fulfill the vision of the previously approved 1974 and 1981 Master Plans. The Project is viewed as a resort recreation center with residential uses, outdoor use areas, and multiple options for recreational and public amenities (as described in Impact REC-1). However, the Project also relies on existing recreational elements in the surrounding area. These recreational elements include, but are not limited to, the Mammoth Mountain Ski Area, the Sherwin Range, Kerry Meadow Trail and the Inyo National Forest. Because much of the Project relies on and will create some additional demand upon these existing recreational elements, the Project will have some impact, but not a significant impact, on existing recreational resources, as previously discussed.

The privately owned Project site has periodically been crossed by pedestrians and hikers for purposes of obtaining access to the Sherwin Range and Inyo National Forest. The development of the Project will require persons who may have previously crossed the Project site to now hike around the perimeter of the Project site to reach these areas. The Project applicant has proposed to provide a portal along the eastern edge of the Project site. That access, while not as convenient as the current access points and routes, will be permitted and lawful and will be enhanced with a facility that will provide opportunities for persons entering those public lands to rent ski equipment and other sports equipment. With this portal and the associated amenities, the impact will be *less than significant*.

## CUMULATIVE IMPACTS

### *Impact REC-4*

As shown in Table II-1 (Environmental Setting), the related projects in the Town are primarily residential projects. Residential projects typically have the greatest impact on parks and recreational facilities, because they generate the greatest users of parks and recreational facilities – families with children. Therefore, development in Mammoth Lakes will continue to increase demand at all levels for recreational opportunities and facilities.

As of October 2005, the Town of Mammoth Lakes has owned or leased 41.78 acres of parkland available to the public as neighborhood and community parks (e.g., Whitmore Park and Pool is a regional park). Given the 2000 census figure of 7,094 residents and the Town requirement of five acres of parkland per 1,000 residents, 35.47 acres of parkland are requisite. The Town population is projected to reach 11,000 residents by 2024.<sup>18</sup> Following Town guidelines, 58 acres of parkland will be required at that time. The Town will need to acquire an additional 16.22 acres of parkland beyond its current holdings in order to satisfy this projected demand.

According to the draft 2005 General Plan Update Draft EIR, the Town has proposed the expansion of its park and recreation facilities to allow the Town to maintain its standard of 5 acres per 1,000 residents.<sup>19</sup> Table IV.L-1 includes planned public parkland which would help to meet the requirements of the build-out population. Although new facilities have been proposed by the Town, construction has not begun, and therefore these facilities do not serve to mitigate the immediate need for more parks. However, as with the Project, the applicants of the related projects would be required to pay DIFs that support the Town's park and recreation fund; payment of these fees would fully mitigate any impact that the related projects would have on park and recreational services. As stated previously, the Project's impacts to park services would be less than significant. Therefore, cumulative impacts to park services would be ***less than significant*** and no mitigation measures are required.

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<sup>18</sup> Town of Mammoth Lakes - Housing Element, December 2003, page 8.

<sup>19</sup> Town of Mammoth Lakes, <http://www.ci.mammoth-lakes.ca.us/General%20Plan/DEIR.htm>, CAJA staff, December 11, 2006.

### **State and Federal Lands**

The state and federal parks and forests in the area attract visitors from not only the Sierra Nevada region, but greater California, and the rest of the country as well. As the population in the region increases, usage of these state and federal lands is likely to increase as well. Consequently, increased usage could result in potentially adverse impacts.

As discussed above under Project Impacts, the state and federal park and forest systems have several tools available to address environmental impacts resulting from both existing and future visitor usage such as fee collection, the ability to place limits on numbers of visitors, and periodically restricting or closing access to certain areas. The decision to use any or all of these measures, as well as others, would be dependent upon observed need and patterns of use and would be made by state and federal land managers responsible for protecting and managing visitor use within each of these areas. Therefore, cumulative environmental impacts to state or federal park and forest lands as a result of the Project would be *less-than-significant* and no mitigation measures are required.

### **LEVEL OF SIGNIFICANCE AFTER MITIGATION**

Project specific impacts to recreation would be *less than significant*.