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## IV. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ANALYSIS

### J. POPULATION & HOUSING

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#### INTRODUCTION

This section addresses the following: (1) the potential of the Project to induce population and/or housing growth; (2) the degree to which the Project would cause growth in comparison to adopted population and housing growth forecasts; (3) the consistency of the Project with adopted regional and local policies; and (4) the potential of the Project to affect the balance between jobs and housing. In addition, the potential cumulative population and housing impacts of the Project in combination with all known related projects are evaluated in this section.

#### ENVIRONMENTAL SETTING

##### Existing On-site Physical Conditions

The portions of the Project site where development would occur under the Project are currently undeveloped. As such, these portions of the Project site do not contain any existing residents, employees, or livable housing units.

##### Housing

The total number of housing units in the Town increased 12 percent from 1990 to 2000 as shown in Table IV.J-1. Multi-family housing experienced the greatest increase during this time period. By 2024 the total number of housing units in the Town is anticipated to increase approximately 69 percent from 9,871 in 2004 to 16,710 in 2024.

**Table IV.J-1**  
**Housing Unit Growth Trends (1990 – 2024)**

Year	Units	Numerical Change	Percent Change
1990	7,102	-	
2000	7,960	858	12%
2004	9,871	1,911	24%
2024	16,710	6,839	69%

*Source: United States Census Bureau, Census 2000; www.census.gov, CAJA staff, December 8, 2006.*

## **General Plan Housing Element**

### *Household Tenure*

Census data concluded that there were 2,814 households residing in Mammoth Lakes during 2000, 53.9 percent of which were classified as family households. Although there are more housing units in Mammoth Lakes than there are households, housing units are not affordable or available for the average resident. Census 2000 data shows the housing unit count to be 7,960, but only 2,814 of these housing units are occupied year round. The remaining 4,579 housing units (57.5 percent) are owned by second homeowners and are utilized on a seasonal, recreational, or occasional basis.<sup>1</sup> Additionally, of the 2,966 households in 2004, 2,560 were employee households.<sup>2</sup>

### *Overcrowded Households*

The United States Census Bureau defines overcrowding as a housing unit that is occupied by more than one person per room (not including kitchens and bathrooms). Overcrowded households are defined as those with 1.01 or more persons per room, and units with more than 1.5 persons per room are considered severely overcrowded.

According to the 2000 census, 301 households in Mammoth Lakes are living in overcrowded conditions compared to the 164 units that were overcrowded in 1990. Mammoth Mountain Ski Area employees have an average of 2.8 roommates compared to the 2.3 roommates of the average Mammoth area employee. These numbers may not be reflected in census data because many ski area employees are not permanent residents.

In comparison with the statewide average for overcrowding (15.2 percent), census data shows the Town of Mammoth Lakes has fewer overcrowded units than the average California community. However, the true number of overcrowded households is likely greater than reflected in the census due to seasonal overcrowding, which was not accounted for in the census data.

### *Housing Units by Type*

As noted, although there are more housing units located in Mammoth Lakes than there are households, the majority of these units are second homes for the owners and used for seasonal, recreational, or occasional occupation. Census data show single-family detached homes are the most common form of

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<sup>1</sup> *Eastern Sierra Housing Needs Assessment, prepared by Housing Collaborative, Inc., December 2004, page 58.*

<sup>2</sup> *Eastern Sierra Housing Needs Assessment, prepared by Housing Collaborative, Inc., December 2004, page 62.*

residential housing (3,309 units). However, the combined total for multi-family units is higher (5,721 units).<sup>3</sup>

*Regional Housing Need*

A Regional Housing Needs Allocation Plan is required pursuant to Section 65584 of Article 10.6 of state housing element law. The housing need is the minimum number of units needed to serve the Town of Mammoth Lakes, to project household population and to accommodate a normal vacancy rate and the expected loss of housing stock. In a January 8, 2002 letter, the State of California Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD) provided a range of numbers of housing units for which the Town of Mammoth Lakes should plan (refer to Table IV.J-2).<sup>4</sup>

**Table IV.J-2  
Mammoth Lakes Fair Share of Regional Housing Needs (2001- 2008)**

<b>Income Group</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Very Low	60	20.2%
Low	53	17.9%
Moderate	69	23.2%
Above Moderate	114	38.4%
<b>Total</b>	<b>296</b>	<b>99.7%</b>
<i>Source: Regional Housing Need Plan</i>		

*Affordable Housing Mitigation Regulations*

The Town Council adopted Affordable Housing Mitigation Regulations (Chapter 17.36) in 2006. The regulations address the development of workforce housing sufficient to mitigate the increased workforce housing demand created by a project. In order to determine the potential impact of a project, a formula is used to estimate the number of fulltime equivalent employees for each business type. The result is that projects are required to provide housing for the estimated number of its fulltime equivalent employees (FTEE). For every one FTEE generated by a project, a minimum of 250 square feet of living space is required to fulfill regulations.

A housing mitigation development plan must be submitted along with the Project generating the need for workforce housing. On-site housing is preferred. However, the regulations do allow Alternate Housing Proposals. These may deviate from the requirement for new construction of on-site workforce housing including provision of off-site housing, in-lieu fees, establishing a housing credit, or other alternate mitigation plan. Alternate Housing Proposals may be approved if the Town finds the proposal provides a greater community workforce housing benefit. Affordability levels range from 80 percent to 200 percent

<sup>3</sup> California Department of Finance, Demographic Research Unit, Table 2: E-5 City/County Population and Housing Elements, January 1, 2006.

<sup>4</sup> Town of Mammoth Lakes. - Housing Element, December 2003, page 17.

of median household income with the majority being affordable to households making median income or less.<sup>5</sup>

Commercial projects less than 5,000 square feet, residential projects with less than 5 units, visitor lodging projects with fewer than 4 rooms, and all projects in the industrial zones may pay a fee in lieu of providing housing. To encourage on-site housing in commercial projects beyond the mitigation regulations, shared parking is permitted.<sup>6</sup>

**Population**

***Population Characteristics and Growth Forecasts***

The Town of Mammoth Lakes is experiencing growth rates similar to the rest of the Eastern Sierra region. As of 2000, the full-time resident population was 7,094 with a growth rate of 48 percent from 1990 to 2000. The permanent population at build-out is expected to grow from approximately 7,600 residents in 2004 to approximately 11,000 people in 2024 (refer to Table IV.J-3).<sup>7</sup> Actual build-out population will depend on the types and density of units actually developed (not all properties are anticipated to develop at the maximum density).

**Table IV.J-3  
Population Growth Trends (1970 – 2024)**

Year	Population	Numerical Change	Percent Change
1970	3,528	-	-
1980	3,929	401	11%
1990	4,785	856	22%
2000	7,094	2,309	48%
2003	7,495	401	6%
2004	7,569	74	1%
2024	11,000	3,431	45%

*Source: Census Bureau and Town of Mammoth Lakes – General Plan Housing Element, December 2003. .*

The Town is prone to large fluctuations in the total non-resident population because of the seasonal nature of its tourism economy. During peak tourist seasons, the community and Mammoth Mountain Ski Area require many more employees (more than can be filled by the full-time resident community). As a result, the resident population increases by 2,000 during the peak tourism season.

<sup>5</sup> Town of Mammoth Lakes Revised Draft Program EIR, 2005 General Plan Update – Population, Housing and Employment, October 2005, page 4-231.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid.

<sup>7</sup> Town of Mammoth Lakes - Housing Element, December 2003, page 8.

## Employment

Due to Mammoth Lakes' tourism-based economy the majority of the population living in Mammoth Lakes is employed in the retail and services industry, education, and health and social services as shown in Table IV.J-4. It is this employment group that is most profoundly impacted by increasing real-estate values and rents. Escalating real-estate values are forcing many employees to relocate further and further away from their place of full-time employment. Many households must spend more than 30 percent of their monthly income on housing, or are faced with increased commuting costs and potentially decreased living standards.<sup>8</sup>

**Table IV.J-4  
Employment by History 2000**

Industry Type	2000	
	Number	Percent
Agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting, and mining	40	.9
Construction	350	8.1
Manufacturing	113	2.6
Wholesale trade	77	1.8
Retail trade	424	9.8
Transportation and warehousing, and utilities	60	1.4
Information	46	1.1
Finance, insurance, real estate and rental and leasing	166	10.8
Professional, scientific, management, admin.	379	8.8
Educational, health and social services	482	11.2
Arts, entertainment, recreation, and services	1,598	37.1
Other services	117	2.7
Public administration	161	3.7
<b>Total</b>	<b>4,013</b>	<b>100</b>
<i>Source: Census Bureau (2000 Census, SF3: P49)</i>		

## ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS

### Thresholds of Significance

As stated in §15126.2(d) of the *CEQA Guidelines*, "It must not be assumed that growth in any area is necessarily beneficial, detrimental, or of little significance to the environment." Based on Appendix G of the *CEQA Guidelines*, a project would have a significant impact on population and housing resources if the project would:

<sup>8</sup> *Town of Mammoth Lakes Housing Element, December 2003, pages 8-9.*

- (a) Induce substantial population growth in an area, either directly (for example, through extension of roads or other infrastructure);
- (b) Displace substantial numbers of existing housing necessitating the construction of replacement housing; or
- (c) Displace substantial numbers of people, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere.

As discussed in the Initial Study that was prepared for the Notice of Preparation (see Appendix A to this EIR), there would be no impact with respect to thresholds (b) and (c) listed above because the portions of the Project site to be developed under the Project are currently undeveloped and the Project would therefore not displace existing housing or people. Therefore, only threshold (a) listed above is addressed in the following discussion.

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

#### ***Impact POP-1 Population Growth Associated with Employment***

##### *Population Growth Due to Temporary Jobs*

The Project would result in employment opportunities during its construction period. However, construction-related employment opportunities would not likely result in household relocation by construction workers to the vicinity of the Project site for various reasons, including the following:

- Construction employment has no regular place of business; rather, construction workers commute to job sites that may change several times a year.
- Many construction workers are highly specialized (e.g., crane operators, steelworkers, masons, etc.) and move from job site to job site as dictated by the demand for their skills.
- The work requirements of most construction projects are also highly specialized, and workers are employed on a job site only as long as their skills are needed to complete a particular phase of the construction process.
- Some construction workers would likely be drawn from the construction employment labor force (eight percent of the total labor force) already present in the Town and surrounding communities. The construction of the Hotel would require specialized workers (as mentioned above), and the developer would likely employ these workers from outside the Town and area.

Consequently, Project-related construction workers would not be likely to relocate their place of residence as a consequence of working on the Project. Therefore, Project impacts would be ***less than significant*** and no mitigation measures are required.

### Population Growth Due to Permanent Jobs

The Project includes 340,000<sup>9</sup> square feet of Hotel rooms/suites and Private Residence Club (PRC)/suite units, 25,000 square feet of Conference and Meeting space, 12,900 square feet of Spa/Wellness Center space, 10,000 square feet of Restaurant/Bar/Lounge space, 10,000 square feet of Retail space, a 3,500 square foot Market/General Store, 3,000 square foot Golf Pro Shop, 8,000 square foot Residence's Club/Management Offices, 1,700 square foot Outfitters Cabin and a 900 square foot Natural Resources and Historic Interpretive Center. In addition to the new residents associated with the proposed residential uses, the Project would create an estimated 925 FTEEs (as shown in Table IV.J-5). These employees would either: (1) live in the residences constructed as part of the Project, (2) already reside in the Town, (3) commute to the Town, or (4) relocate to the Town. The State of California documents the Town of Mammoth Lakes' unemployment rate at 5.3 percent, totaling 300 people in May 2007.<sup>10</sup> Therefore, some of the employment associated with the Project could be filled by persons from the existing employment base in the Project area and/or by future residents at the Project site. However, for a conservative analysis, it is assumed that all 925 employees would relocate to the area, introducing 925 employee-related residents to the Town through indirect population growth due to permanent jobs. This is consistent with the growth anticipated in the 2007 General Plan. Therefore, impacts associated with population growth due to permanent jobs would be *less than significant*.

**Table IV.J-5  
Estimated Employee Generation**

Development Area	Square Feet	FTEE Generation Rate (per Square Foot)	Estimated Number of FTEE <sup>(b)</sup>
Non-Residential Space	75,000	0.00042	32
Hotel/Condo	340,000	0.0005	170
Homes (Residential Condo)	1,445,000 <sup>(a)</sup>	0.0005	723
<b>Total</b>			<b>925</b>
<p><i>Notes:</i></p> <p>(a) Based on an average of 850 square feet per one half of a dwelling unit (i.e., 1,700 square feet x 850 Homes [Residential Condo Units] = 1,445,000 square feet).</p> <p>(b) The final numbers will be determined when applications for use permits and tentative maps are submitted.</p> <p>Sources: Town of Mammoth Lakes Title 17 Zoning, Chapter 17.36 Housing, 2006.</p>			

<sup>9</sup> 340,000 square feet does not include the 100,225 square feet of Back of the House/Hotel operations because this area in and of itself does not generate employees. The generation of these employees has been calculated using the square footage for the Hotel Rooms/Suites and the Private Residence Club (PRC)/suite units.

<sup>10</sup> State of California Employment Development Department <http://www.calmis.ca.gov/file/lfmonth/monosub.xls>

***Impact POP-2 Population Growth Associated with New Infrastructure***

Infrastructure associated with the Project would serve the Project site and would not facilitate additional development as a result of increased infrastructure. Therefore, impacts associated with the development of the Project would be *less than significant*.

***Impact POP-3 Population Growth Associated with New Housing***

The Project would result in construction of 1,050 dwelling units. The Project is anticipated to contribute ten percent to future buildout development (in combination with all remaining Snowcreek developments). Therefore, impacts to population growth associated with the development of the Project would be less than significant.

Additionally, the Project will comply with the Affordable Housing Mitigation Regulations Town Municipal Code 17.36 and will provide housing for the estimated 925 Full Time Equivalent Employees (FTEEs) associated with the Project. A housing mitigation development plan will be submitted along with the Project generating the need for the housing (see Appendix N). Currently, that plan includes a combination of the following measures: (1) 80 on-site units, (2) housing credits, and (3) payment of in-lieu fees. Housing will be provided at 250 square feet per FTEE. Therefore, impacts to workforce housing associated with the development of the Project would be *less than significant*.

**CUMULATIVE IMPACTS*****Impact POP-4***

Of the 41 related projects listed in Table II-1 (Related Projects) in Section II (Environmental Setting) of this EIR, 34 include residential developments within the Town, totaling approximately 3,674 residential units that would accommodate a population of approximately 8,900 persons. When combined with the Project's 1,050 units and estimated population of 2,562 persons, cumulative residential development amounts to approximately 4,724 units and approximately 11,462 persons.

By 2024, development of the Project in conjunction with the applicable related projects would account for approximately 28 percent of the 16,710 anticipated housing units and for approximately 19 percent of the 60,700 anticipated total population.

For the reasons noted above, development of the Project in conjunction with the applicable related projects would assist the Town in meeting its fair share of regional housing need, constituting a beneficial rather than adverse housing impact.

Because development of the Project and the related projects would help address a portion of unmet housing demand and serve anticipated population growth in the Project area, either directly (e.g., by

proposing new homes and businesses), or indirectly (e.g., through extension of roads or other infrastructure), cumulative impacts would be *less than significant*.

## **LEVEL OF SIGNIFICANCE AFTER MITIGATION**

Project specific impacts to population and housing would be *less than significant*.

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