

# Mono County Community Development Department

P.O. Box 347  
Mammoth Lakes, CA 93546  
(760) 924-1800, fax 924-1801  
commdev@mono.ca.gov

## Planning Division

P.O. Box 8  
Bridgeport, CA 93517  
(760) 932-5420, fax 932-5431  
[www.monocounty.ca.gov](http://www.monocounty.ca.gov)

August 18, 2022

To: Mono County Planning Commission

From: Bentley Regehr, Planning Analyst

Re: General Plan Amendment 22-01 and Mono Basin Hip Camp Specific Plan with CEQA 15183 Checklist

### Recommendation

It is recommended the Planning Commission take the following actions:

1. Adopt Resolution R22-09 making the required findings and recommending to the Mono County Board of Supervisors approve General Plan Amendment 22-01 and the Mono Basin Hip Camp Specific Plan, including finding that the project qualifies as a Statutory Exemption under CEQA Guidelines 15183.

### Alternate Actions

- A. Recommend conditions of project approval, the incorporation of which as part of the project would enable the Planning Commission to make the applicable findings to recommend approval of the staff recommendation to the Board of Supervisors; or
- B. Determine the required findings cannot be made and adopt a resolution recommending the Board of Supervisors deny approval of General Plan Amendment 22-01 and the Mono Basin Hip Camp Specific Plan.

If the Planning Commission recommends denial, it should identify in its motion the finding or findings that cannot be made and the substantial evidence in the administrative record that supports its determination.

### Background

The project requires approval of the following: (1) General Plan Amendment (GPA) to change the land use designation from Rural Residential (RR) to Specific Plan (SP); and (2) the Mono Basin Hip Camp Specific Plan. Project documents are available at 1290 Tavern Road, Mammoth Lakes, California or online at <https://www.monocounty.ca.gov/planning/page/hip-camp-general-plan-amendment-22-01-and-specific-plan>.

The project is located at 228 Cottonwood Canyon Road off State Route (SR) 167 in the Mono Basin (APN 013-210-026), approximately seven miles northeast of Mono City (Figure 1). The size of the parcel is 20 acres, located on both sides of Cottonwood Canyon Road.

Parcels along Cottonwood Canyon Road are a mix of RR, Agriculture (AG), and Resource Management (RM), with each parcel being at least 20 acres in size. Six residences gain access from Cottonwood Canyon Road.

The Specific Plan ([Attachment 1](#)) consists of three primary areas (Figure 2) with the following existing uses:

- Area 1 consists of an existing 10-foot x 12-foot bunkhouse, tent campsite, and steel fire ring.
- Area 2 has an existing tent site with a steel fire ring and an RV site.
- Area 3 is currently undeveloped.

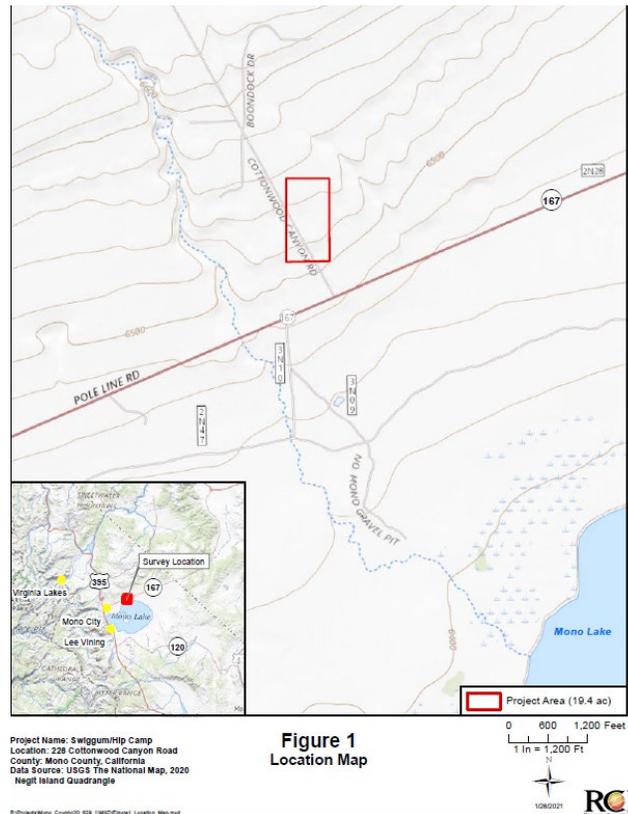
### Surrounding Land Use Designations

- APN 013-210-026 is designated Rural Residential (RR). The “RR” designation is intended to permit larger-lot single-family dwelling units with ancillary rural uses in areas away from developed communities.
- The land use designations adjacent to APN 002-110-021-000 are described below:

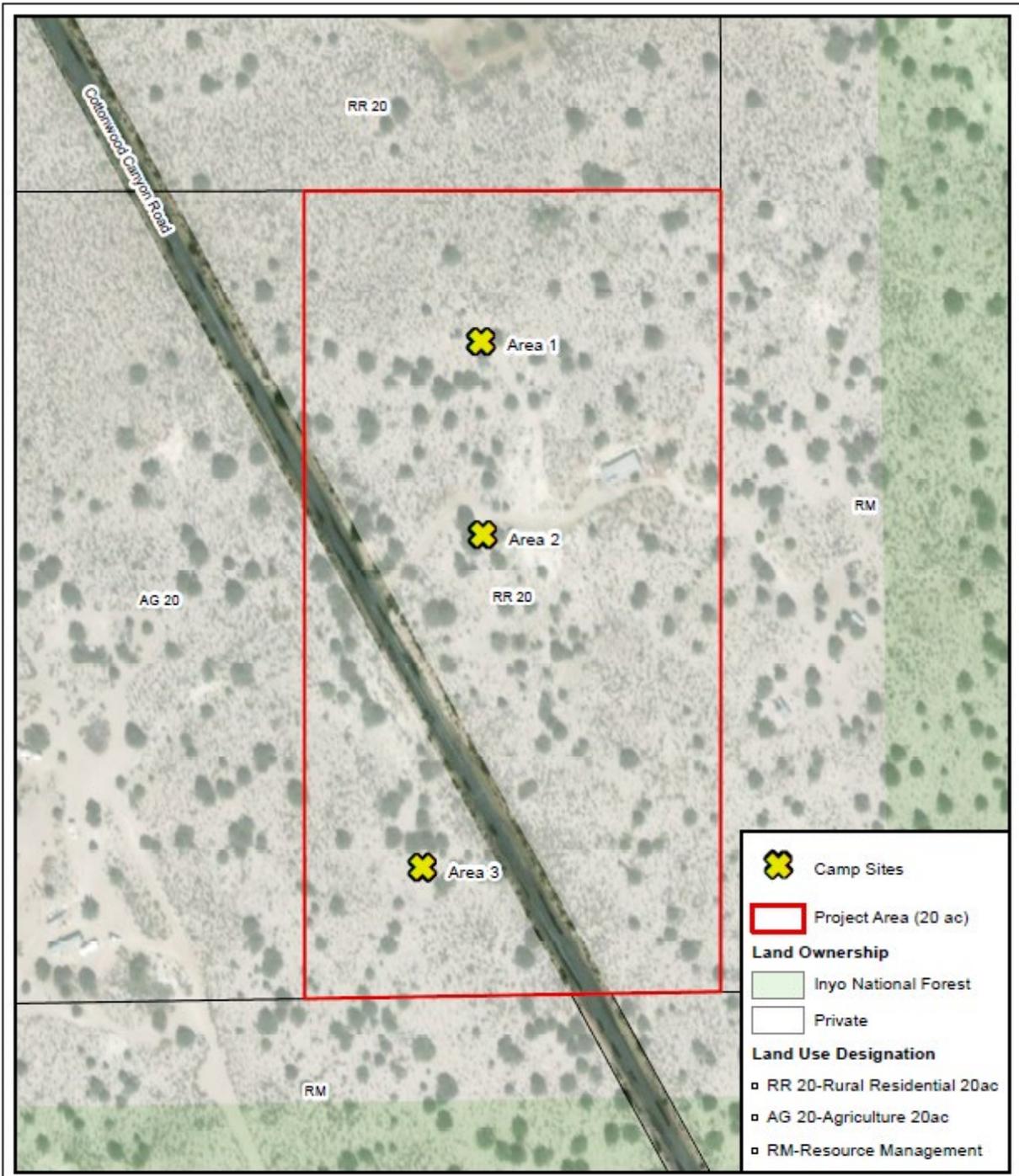
<b>East:</b>	National Forest – Resource Management (RM)
<b>West:</b>	Private Land – Agriculture (AG)
<b>South:</b>	National Forest – Resource Management (RM)
<b>North:</b>	Private Land – Rural Residential (RR)

The project site is adjacent to a privately owned Rural Residential (RR) parcel to the north and an Agriculture (AG) parcel to the west, and Resource Management (RM) parcels to the south and east which are owned by Inyo National Forest. The adjacent RR parcel to the north contains a single-family residence, which is approximately 700 feet from the nearest proposed use area and 200 feet to the adjoining property line. The other adjacent parcels do not have any existing structures. The next closest residence along Cottonwood Canyon Road is 1,600 feet from the nearest proposed use and 1,100 feet from the nearest property line.

**Figure 1: Project Location**



**Figure 2: Project Areas**



Project Name: Swiggum/Hip Camp  
 Location: 228 Cottonwood Canyon Road  
 County: Mono County, California  
 Data Source: ESRI Imagery Services,  
 Vivid Maxar 9/17/2019

**Figure 2**  
**Project Area**

0 100 200 Feet  
 1 in = 200 Ft



2/25/2021



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## Project Description

Proposed new activities include the development and operation of three seasonal (April 1 through November 30) recreational use sites. A summary of existing and allowable uses compared to the proposed land uses under the GPA are shown Table 1.

**Table 1. Summary Allowable Uses in Rural Residential and Proposed Specific Plan**

<b>Permit Conditions</b>	<b>Existing Use – Rural Residential</b>	<b>Proposed Use under Mono Basin Hip Camp Specific Plan</b>
Intent	Larger-lot single-family dwelling units with ancillary rural uses in areas away from developed communities. Small-scale agriculture permitted.	To provide for planned development in areas outside existing communities, or on large parcels of land within or adjacent to existing communities. The Specific Plan designation may also be applied to an area to provide direction for potentially conflicting or incompatible land uses.
Max Lot Coverage	40%	10%
Max Building Density	1 primary dwelling unit/lot, 1 detached accessory dwelling unit (ADU), 1 junior ADU	1 primary dwelling unit, accessory dwelling units as allowed under Chapter 16, 250-s.f. cabin, 120 s.f. bunkhouse, 3 campsites, 2 RV pads/hookups
Max Building Height	35'	35'
Setbacks	Front – 50' Rear – 30' Side – 30'	Front – 50' Rear – 30' Side – 30'
Minimum Lot Size	1 acre	20 acres
Permitted Uses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Single-family dwelling</li> <li>• Small-scale agriculture</li> <li>• Accessory buildings and uses</li> <li>• Animals and pets</li> <li>• Home occupations</li> <li>• Manufactured home used as a single-family dwelling</li> <li>• Accessory Dwelling Unit</li> <li>• Junior Accessory Dwelling Unit</li> <li>• Transitional and Supportive House</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Single-family dwelling (includes manufactured home)</li> <li>• Accessory Structures</li> <li>• Accessory dwelling units, as allowed under Chapter 16</li> <li>• Bunkhouse</li> <li>• Cabin</li> <li>• Three campsites with tent platforms</li> <li>• Two RV hookups</li> <li>• Three vault toilets</li> <li>• 40' storage container</li> </ul>
Uses Permitted Subject to Use Permit	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Recreational amenities, e.g. art galleries, country clubs, and golf courses</li> <li>• Kennel</li> </ul>	All uses not approved under the Specific Plan will require a Specific Plan Amendment.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Construction of an accessory building prior to construction of the main building</li> <li>• Mobile-home parks</li> <li>• Small-scale agriculture, including limited commercial agricultural activities</li> <li>• Manufactured housing subdivision</li> </ul>	
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Proposed Uses

The project proposes three development areas, in addition to the existing primary residence. Area 1 and Area 2 are proposing further uses in addition to the existing uses. Area 3 is currently undeveloped, and all proposed uses would be new development.

a. Area 1:

- i. Install new tent platform at existing tent site,
- ii. Install septic vault with connection to the existing 10’x12’ bunkhouse,
- iii. Improvements to the existing bunkhouse to comply with California Building Code,
- iv. Install a single stall vault toilet, and
- v. Install a 120v, 20-amp solar panel system.

b. Area 2:

- i. Construct a 250-s.f. cabin off an existing access road,
- ii. Install a platform tent site,
- iii. Install a septic vault and hook up at the existing RV site,
- iv. Install a single stall vault toilet, and
- v. Install 200-gallon propane tank

c. Area 3:

- i. Develop a new RV site with fire ring and picnic table (approximately 20’ x 40’)
- ii. Install a platform tent site,
- iii. Construct a gravel driveway (20’ x 100’) for access to Area 3,
- iv. Install a septic vault, and
- v. Add a single stall vault toilet.

Existing and proposed uses for each area are summarized in Table 2 below. All existing uses aside from the single-family residence are currently unpermitted. Conceptual site plans for each area are included in Appendix B of the Specific Plan [\(Attachment 1\)](#).

**Table 2. Summary of Existing Uses and Proposed Uses with Specific Plan**

Location	Existing Uses	Proposed Additional Uses
<b>Area 1</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 10' x 12' bunkhouse (must comply with the California Building Code and be permitted by the County prior to use)</li> <li>• Tent site with fire ring</li> <li>• Gravel access road</li> <li>• 3,000-gal water tank</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 120 v, 20-amp solar panel system</li> <li>• Platform for tent site</li> <li>• Connection to septic vault</li> <li>• Vault toilet</li> </ul>
<b>Area 2</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tent site with fire ring</li> <li>• RV site</li> <li>• Gravel access road</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 250-s.f. cabin</li> <li>• Platform for tent site</li> <li>• Septic vault with RV hookup</li> <li>• Vault toilet</li> <li>• 3,000-gallon water tank with filtration system</li> <li>• 200-gallon propane tank</li> </ul>
<b>Area 3</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Undeveloped</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• RV and tent site with fire ring</li> <li>• Gravel access road</li> <li>• Septic vault</li> <li>• Vault toilet</li> <li>• 2,000-gallon water tank with filtration system</li> </ul>
<b>Other</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1,560-s.f. manufactured home occupied full-time by applicant</li> <li>• 500-gallon propane tank</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 40' storage container</li> <li>• No additional structures proposed for check-in or guest related services</li> <li>• No items will be sold on-site</li> <li>• No road improvements other than the addition of gravel access road to Area 3</li> </ul>

**Table 3. Proposed Construction and Area of Disturbance for New (Non-Existing) Uses**

<b>Proposed Use</b>	<b>Temporary Disturbance Area (sq. ft.)</b>	<b>New Permanent Disturbance Area (sq. ft.)</b>
<b>Area 1:</b>		
Install 20' x 20' tent platform	--	400
Install new septic vault <sup>1</sup>	100	0
Install single stall vault toilet	0	300
Install new solar panel system, roof top, or ground mounted		400
<b>Area 2:</b>		
Construct 250 s.f. cabin	--	250
Install 20' x 20' tent platform	--	400
Install new septic vault with RV hook up <sup>1</sup>	100	0
Install single stall vault toilet	0	300
<b>Area 3:</b>		
Install RV site	0	800
Install 20' x 20' tent platform	0	400
Construct gravel driveway (20' x 100')	0	2,000
Install new septic vault <sup>1</sup>	100	0
Install single stall vault toilet	0	300
<b>Other</b>		
Storage Container (approx. 40' x 8') <sup>2</sup>	0	320
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,200</b>	<b>5,470</b>

<sup>1</sup> To be revegetated after installation. No permanent disturbance.

<sup>2</sup> Storage container will be located on Mono County recommended foundation approximately 40' x 8' wide.

**Table 4: Summary of existing and proposed infrastructure**

<b>Circulation</b>	Property is accessed from Cottonwood Canyon Road. Existing dirt roads on the site will be used to access Area 1 and Area 2. Area 3 proposes adding a dirt access road from Cottonwood Canyon Road. All roads are adequate for visitor traffic and emergency services.
<b>Septic</b>	Each of the three areas will have a separate septic vault installed with connections. The existing primary unit is already connected to septic.
<b>Water</b>	Private well with a solar pump.
<b>Electrical</b>	Utility lines serve the primary dwelling. Solar panels are used to generate power for the accessory uses. No generators are proposed for the project.

## Noticing & Public Outreach/Comments

The application was accepted at the June 1, 2020, Land Development Technical Advisory Committee (LDTAC) meeting. The project was noticed under SB-18 on July 29, 2020, with no comments received. The Planning Commission hearing was noticed in the August 6, 2022, edition of The Sheet ([Attachment 2](#)) and noticed to property owners within 300' on July 22. The Specific Plan and 15183 Checklist were posted to the website (<https://www.monocounty.ca.gov/planning/page/hip-camp-general-plan-amendment-22-01-and-specific-plan>) and sent to the Mono Basin Regional Planning Advisory Committee (RPAC) on August 3, 2022. The Specific Plan and 15183 Checklist were reviewed at the August 15, 2022, LDTAC meeting.

Fourteen public comment letters were received (Attachment 3). Six were in support of the project and eight were in opposition.

A summary of the comments is summarized below:

### Support

- Mr. Swiggum is a responsible owner and operator.
- The project provides additional camping and visitor accommodations that promote education of the region without being disruptive or negatively impactful.
- There is a lack of campgrounds in the Mono Basin and the proposal helps fill that need.

### Opposition

- Multiple comment letters raised concerns about fire safety and emergency response time.

Staff response: Project conditions to enhance fire safety are included in Goal 5 of the Specific Plan. The project proposes having fires only in designated campfire rings and campsites are subject to State defensible space standards, as indicated in the Specific Plan. Onsite water tanks provide an immediate water supply for fire suppression. CalFire expressed no concerns with serving the proposed project and the project is subject to state fire standards. While the Mono City Fire Department may respond to an incident on the property, it is outside their service area. The project is subject to the most restrictive fire standards between the USFS, BLM, and Mono County.

- Multiple comment letters raised concerns about noise.

Staff response: The project must comply with Mono County Noise Ordinance standards, and per conditions of the specific plan, no amplified sound systems would be permitted, the campground shall abide by the noise limitations presented in Mono County Code Table 10.16.060(A). No special events are permitted. Commercial uses shall only occur between April 30 and November 1.

- Multiple comment letters raised concerns about impacts to aesthetics.

Staff response: The project is not located in a State Scenic Highway corridor or the Mono Basin Scenic Area and would not have a significant adverse effect on a scenic vista. The project has no significant impacts, given that any new exterior lighting will be subject to General Plan Land Use Element Chapter

23, Dark Sky Regulations. The project is subject to additional measures, as outlined in the Specific Plan. New lighting, including lighting in Area 1, will be fully shielded and downward directed, with LED lighting temperature not to exceed 3000K. The project shall not use any reflective materials and shall use only dark, earth-tone colors.

- Multiple comment letters raised concerns about water quality.

Staff response: Wastewater disposal and potable water are subject to Mono County Environmental Health requirements. The project will not have a significant adverse impact to water quality for neighboring properties.

- Multiple comment letters raised concerns about the unfairness of a land use designation change.

Staff response: Any landowner in Mono County may apply for a land use designation change, which is subject to public hearings at the Planning Commission and Board of Supervisors, and ultimately, approval/denial by the Board.

## **CEQA**

Pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15162(a), Mono County has reviewed the proposed General Plan Amendment to change the property land use designation from Rural Residential (RR) to Specific Plan (SP) and has determined:

- The extent to which the potential impacts from the proposed project have already been addressed by the previously certified 2015 RTP/GPU EIR.
- There are no new circumstances or new information that would create new significant or more severe impacts or require new analysis.
- No new significant or more severe impacts have been identified that are not adequately addressed by previously approved project mitigation.

Mono County has determined that the proposed project and General Plan Amendment would have similar or reduced environmental impacts from those described in the certified 2015 RTP/General Plan Update EIR. There are no new significant environmental impacts or previously identified significant impacts made more severe by project changes, new circumstances, or new information. Therefore, Mono County has determined that analysis under Guideline 15183 is the appropriate CEQA document to address adoption of General Plan amendment in accordance with CEQA Guideline Section 15164 (Attachment 4).

CEQA Guidelines §15183 provides a specific CEQA review process for qualifying projects that are consistent with a community plan or zoning. Under these regulations (reflected in California Public Resources Code (PRC) §21083.3 and CEQA Guidelines §15183), projects that are consistent with the development density of existing zoning, community plan or general plan policies for which an Environmental Impact Report (EIR) was certified shall be exempt from additional CEQA analysis except as may be necessary to determine whether there are project-specific significant effects that are peculiar to the project or site that would otherwise require additional CEQA review. The Specific Plan will not increase density on the parcel. The RR land use designation in the Mono County General Plan stipulates a minimum parcel size of one acre (see RR Development Standards) which could allow for subdivision of the property into 20 one-acre parcels, each with a single-family residence, ADU, and jADU. Per state law, ADU's are not counted toward density, and therefore the maximum density under RR would be 20 units. The Specific Plan proposes one single-family unit, ADU, jADU, and two bunkhouses. Without the

ADUs, the proposed density is three units. Therefore, the project does not propose an increase in density over the existing land use designation and is consistent with the impacts evaluated in the General Plan EIR.

Findings for the 15183 Checklist are contained in Exhibit B of the attached Resolution R22-09 [\(Attachment 5\)](#).

## **General Plan Amendment Findings**

According to Chapter 48.020 of the Land Use Element, prior to taking an action to approve or recommend approval of a change in district designation classification, the Commission shall find as follows:

- A. The proposed change in land use designation is consistent with the text and maps of this General Plan;*
- B. The proposed change in land use designation is consistent with the goals and policies contained within any applicable area plan;*
- C. The site of the proposed change in land use designation is suitable for any of the land uses permitted within that proposed land use designation;*
- D. The proposed change in land use designation is reasonable and beneficial at this time; and*
- E. The proposed change in land use designation will not have a substantial adverse effect on surrounding properties.*

Findings for General Plan Amendment 22-01 are contained in Exhibit A of the attached Resolution R22-09 [\(Attachment 5\)](#).

This report has been reviewed by the Community Development Director.

### Attachments:

1. Specific Plan
2. Noticing
3. Public Comment Letters
4. CEQA 15183 Analysis
5. Resolution R22-09

**Mono Basin Hip Camp Specific Plan  
228 Cottonwood Canyon Road  
APN 013-210-026**

August 18, 2022

**PREPARED BY:**

Mono County Planning Department  
Post Office Box 347  
Mammoth Lakes, California 93546

**DRAFT**

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## **Executive Summary**

The Mono Basin Hip Camp Specific Plan proposes development of three seasonal (April 1 - November 30) camp sites on a partially developed 20-acre parcel located at 228 Cottonwood Canyon Road (APN 013-210-026). The Specific Plan was created concurrently with General Plan Amendment 22-01 to change the land use designation from Rural Residential (RR) to Specific Plan (SP) and with the accompanying analysis under California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines Section 15183 (Section 15183 Checklist). The Specific Plan establishes existing uses, permitted/proposed uses development standards, and implementation measures, and evaluates consistency with General Plan policies.

This document was prepared under specific plan legal requirements as described in Sections 65450 – 65457 of the California Government Codes (see Appendix A).

## **I. Introduction**

As outlined in the Mono County General Plan (MCGP), specific plans are intended to function as implementation mechanisms for the General Plan and to set standards for detailed land use. A specific plan must be consistent with the MCGP and becomes part of the MCGP upon adoption. Mono County currently has a number of adopted specific plans, including one other specific plan located in the Mono Basin (Tioga Inn Specific Plan).

Specific plans can be proposed by the Board of Supervisors or a private developer, and become the presiding land use designation upon approval. Mono County prepared the Mono Basin Hip Camp Specific Plan in coordination with the developer, based on a project description provided to the County. The developer is responsible for the costs of preparation, review, and project construction.

The Specific Plan (SP) land use designation is intended to provide for planned development in areas outside existing communities, or on large parcels of land within or adjacent to existing communities. The Specific Plan designation may also be applied to an area to provide direction for potentially conflicting or incompatible land uses.

Permitted uses for the property will be determined by the Mono Basin Hip Camp Specific Plan (“Specific Plan”) in accordance with Government Code §65451 and applicable provisions of the MCGP, ordinances, and the Mono County Code. Development standards (density, site disturbance/lot coverage, setbacks, etc.) will be determined by the Specific Plan. Any details or issues not covered by the development guidelines or regulations of the Specific Plan shall be subject to the regulations or standards set forth in applicable sections of the MCGP, County Code, Grading Ordinances, and other adopted ordinances, codes, or policies of the County.

The Specific Plan has been established in conjunction with General Plan Amendment (GPA) 22-01. GPA 22-01 will change the land use designation from Rural Residential (RR) to Specific Plan (SP).

Analysis under California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines Section 15183 (Section 15183 Checklist) has been prepared to satisfy environmental impact analysis requirements. The document evaluates the potential impacts of the proposed amendment to change the land use designation from RR to SP and the proposed uses under the Specific Plan. The Section 15183 Checklist provides a comparison of the impacts to those identified in the 2015 RTP/GPU to determine if the proposed amendment and Specific Plan would result in any new project-specific significant effects which are peculiar to the project and its site. The Mono County Board of Supervisors adopted the 2015 RTP/GPU and the EIR in December 2015.

Based on the considerations and analyses presented and based on the provisions contained in the Section 15183 Checklist, it was concluded that none of the conditions calling for preparation of an EIR occurred. The County of Mono, acting as Lead Agency,

therefore determined that the Section 15183 Checklist is the appropriate CEQA analysis for the proposed General Plan Amendment 22-01 and Specific Plan.

## II. Specific Plan Purpose

The establishment of the Specific Plan serves three main purposes for the project:

1. Maintain the rural, large lot character of the area by preventing subdivision and limiting development density, lot coverage, and site disturbance.
2. Permit only small-scale commercial activity compatible with surrounding land use designations and limit development to only the uses proposed by the project.
3. Protect the safety and aesthetic qualities of the area by incorporating additional fire safety and visual requirements above and beyond the General Plan.

## III. Project Setting

The project is located at 228 Cottonwood Canyon Road off State Route (SR) 167 in the Mono Basin (APN 013-210-026), approximately seven miles northeast of Mono City (Figure 1). The size of the parcel is 20 acres, located on both sides of Cottonwood Canyon Road.

Parcels along Cottonwood Canyon Road are a mix of RR, Agriculture (AG), and Resource Management (RM), with each parcel being at least 20 acres in size. Six residences gain access from Cottonwood Canyon Road.

The project consists of three primary areas (Figure 2) with the following existing uses:

- Area 1 consists of an existing 10-foot x 12-foot bunkhouse, tent campsite, and steel fire ring.
- Area 2 has an existing tent site with a steel fire ring and an RV site.
- Area 3 is currently undeveloped.

### Surrounding Land Use Designations

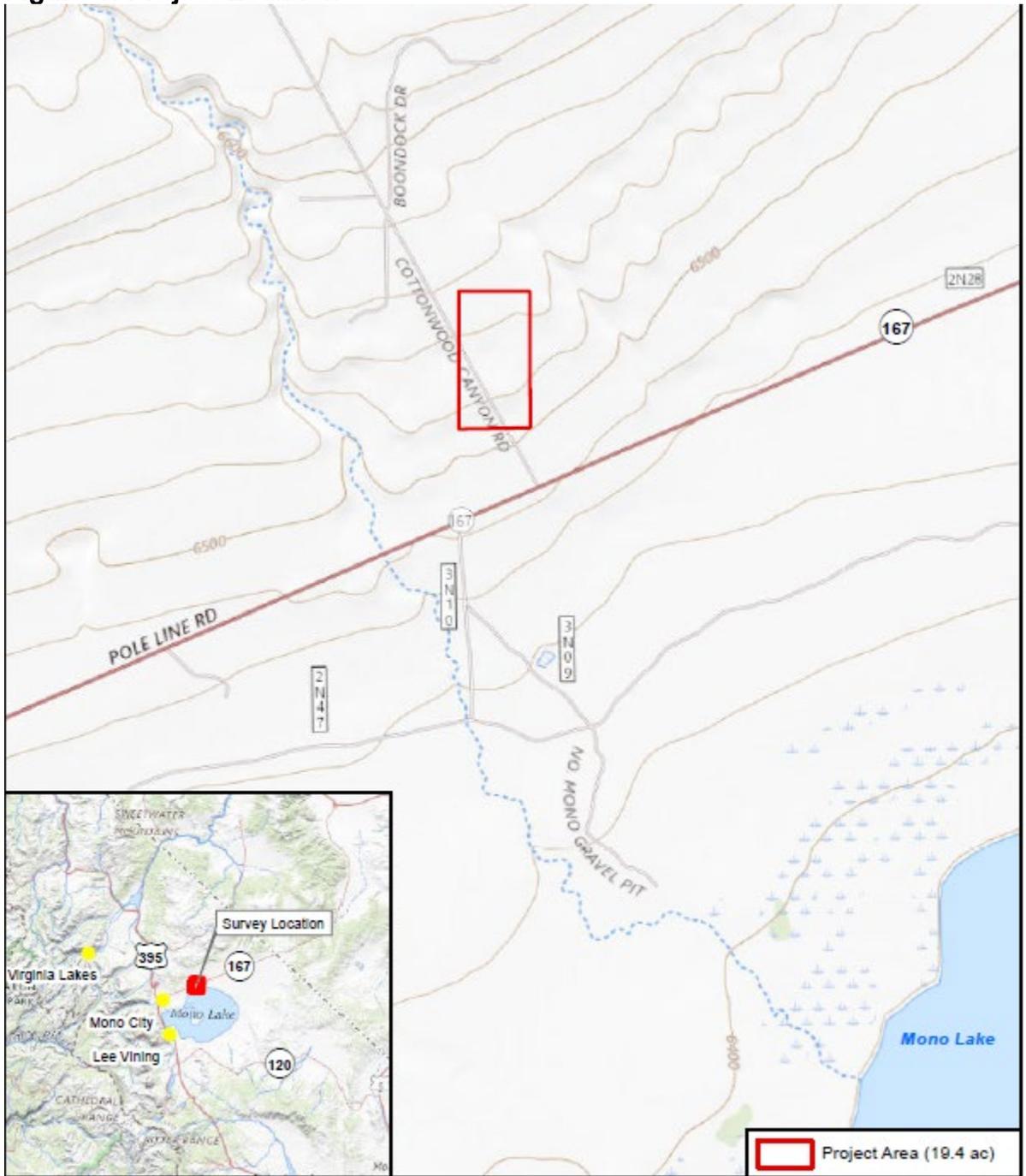
- APN 013-210-026 is designated Rural Residential (RR). The “RR” designation is intended to permit larger-lot single-family dwelling units with ancillary rural uses in areas away from developed communities.
- The land use designations adjacent to APN 002-110-021-000 are described below:

<b>East:</b>	National Forest – Resource Management (RM)
<b>West:</b>	Private Land – Agriculture (AG)
<b>South:</b>	National Forest – Resource Management (RM)
<b>North:</b>	Private Land – Rural Residential (RR)

The project site is adjacent to a privately owned Rural Residential (RR) parcel to the north and an Agriculture (AG) parcel to the west, and Resource Management (RM)

parcels to the south and east which are owned by Inyo National Forest. The adjacent RR parcel to the north contains a single-family residence, which is approximately 700 feet from the nearest proposed use area and 200 feet to the adjoining property line. The other adjacent parcels do not have any existing structures. The next closest residence along Cottonwood Canyon Road is 1,600 feet from the nearest proposed use and 1,100 feet from the nearest property line.

**Figure 1: Project Location**



Project Name: Swiggum/Hip Camp  
 Location: 228 Cottonwood Canyon Road  
 County: Mono County, California  
 Data Source: USGS The National Map, 2020  
 Negit Island Quadrangle

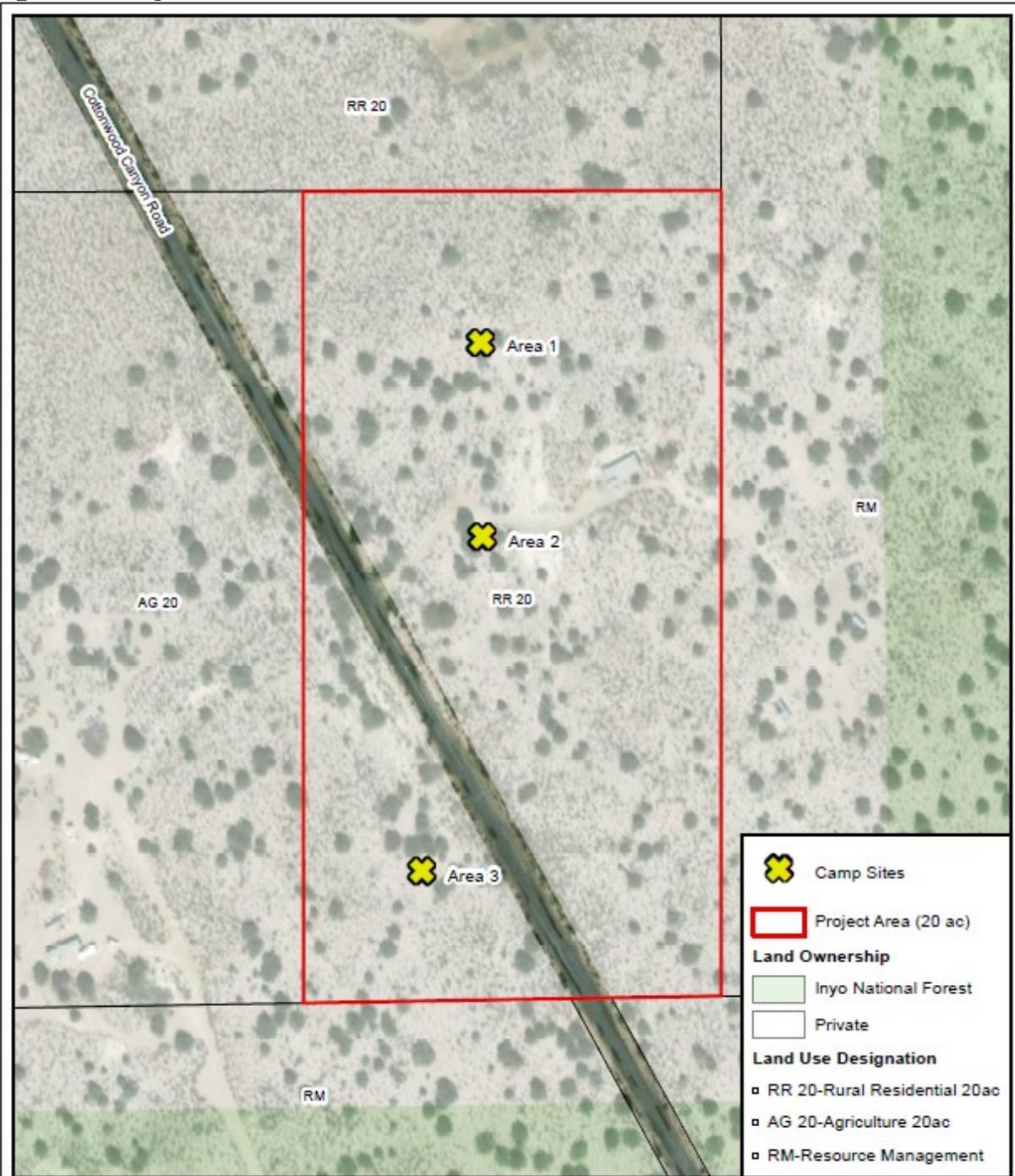
**Figure 1  
 Location Map**

0 600 1,200 Feet  
 1 in = 1,200 Ft



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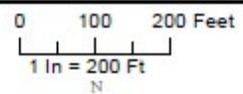
**Figure 2: Project Areas**



	Camp Sites
	Project Area (20 ac)
<b>Land Ownership</b>	
	Inyo National Forest
	Private
<b>Land Use Designation</b>	
	RR 20-Rural Residential 20ac
	AG 20-Agriculture 20ac
	RM-Resource Management

Project Name: Swiggum/Hip Camp  
 Location: 228 Cottonwood Canyon Road  
 County: Mono County, California  
 Data Source: ESRI Imagery Services,  
 Vivid Maxar 9/17/2019

**Figure 2  
Project Area**



2/25/2021



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## IV. Project Description

The project proposes three development areas, in addition to the existing primary residence. Area 1 and Area 2 are proposing further uses in addition to the existing uses. Existing development in Area 1 and Area 2 is currently unpermitted, but would be approved under this specific plan. Area 3 is currently undeveloped, and all proposed uses would be new development. Existing and proposed uses for each area is summarized in Table 1 below. The specific location of existing and proposed uses in each area is illustrated in the site plan images in Appendix B.

**Table 1: Summary of Existing Uses and Proposed Uses with Specific Plan**

<b>Location</b>	<b>Existing Uses</b>	<b>Proposed Additional Uses</b>
<b>Area 1*</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 10' x 12' bunkhouse (must comply with the California Building Code and be permitted by the County prior to use)</li> <li>• Tent site with fire ring</li> <li>• Gravel access road</li> <li>• 3,000-gal water tank</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 120 v, 20-amp solar panel system</li> <li>• Platform for tent site</li> <li>• Connection to septic vault</li> <li>• Vault toilet</li> </ul>
<b>Area 2*</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tent site with fire ring</li> <li>• RV site</li> <li>• Gravel access road</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 250-s.f. cabin</li> <li>• Platform for tent site</li> <li>• Septic vault with RV hookup</li> <li>• Vault toilet</li> <li>• 3,000-gallon water tank with filtration system</li> <li>• 200-gallon propane tank</li> </ul>
<b>Area 3</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Undeveloped</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• RV and tent site with fire ring</li> <li>• Gravel access road</li> <li>• Septic vault</li> <li>• Vault toilet</li> <li>• 2,000-gallon water tank with filtration system</li> </ul>
<b>Other</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1,560-s.f. manufactured home occupied full-time by applicant</li> <li>• 500-gallon propane tank</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 40' cargo container</li> <li>• No additional structures proposed for check-in or guest related services</li> <li>• No items will be sold on-site</li> <li>• No road improvements other than the addition of gravel access road to Area 3</li> </ul>

\*Existing uses in Area 1 and Area 2 currently unpermitted.

**Table 2: Summary of existing and proposed infrastructure**

<b>Circulation</b>	Property is accessed from Cottonwood Canyon Road. Existing dirt roads on the site will be used to access Area 1 and Area 2. Area 3 proposes adding a dirt access road from Cottonwood Canyon Road. All roads are adequate for visitor traffic and emergency services.
<b>Septic</b>	Each of the three areas will have a separate septic vault installed with connections. The existing primary unit is already connected to septic.
<b>Water</b>	Private well with a solar pump.
<b>Electrical</b>	Utility lines serve the primary dwelling. Solar panels are used to generate power for the accessory uses. No generators are proposed for the project.
<b>Solid Waste Disposal</b>	D&S waste will provide service for solid waste disposal.

## **V. Land Use Designation Regulatory Provisions**

Terms used in this Specific Plan shall have the same definition as given in the Mono County General Plan, unless specified otherwise herein. If any portion of these regulations is declared by judicial review to be invalid in whole or in part, such decision shall not affect the validity of the remaining portions.

Development standards for the Specific Plan were based on the existing and proposed uses for the project. Standards were also created to maintain similar or lesser impacts whenever possible when compared to the previous RR designation. For example, maximum lot coverage was reduced from 40% to 10% and setback standards remained the same. New permitted uses when compared to permitted uses under RR include a 250-s.f. cabin, 120 s.f. bunkhouse (existing), three campsites, and two RV pads/hookups. Any uses not stated in Table 3 below will require a Specific Plan Amendment.

**Table 3: Mono Basin Hip Camp Specific Plan Development Standards**

<b>Intent</b>	To provide for planned development in areas outside existing communities, or on large parcels of land within or adjacent to existing communities. The Specific Plan designation may also be applied to an area to provide direction for potentially conflicting or incompatible land uses.
<b>Max Lot Coverage</b>	10%
<b>Max Building Density</b>	1 primary dwelling unit, accessory dwelling units <sup>1</sup> , 250-s.f. cabin, 120 s.f. bunkhouse, 3 campsites, 2 RV pads/hookups <sup>2</sup>
<b>Max Building Height</b>	35'
<b>Setbacks</b>	Front – 50' Rear – 30' Side – 30'
<b>Minimum Parcel Size</b>	20 acres (existing size of parcel)
<b>Permitted Uses</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Single-family dwelling (includes manufactured home)</li> <li>• Accessory Structures</li> <li>• Accessory Dwelling Units</li> <li>• 40' cargo container, as permitted under Chapter 20 of the Land Use Element</li> </ul> <p>Limited scale guest accommodations, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bunkhouse</li> <li>• Cabin</li> <li>• Three campsites with tent platforms</li> <li>• Two RV hookups</li> <li>• Three vault toilets</li> </ul>
<b>Uses Permitted Subject to Use Permit</b>	All uses not approved under the Specific Plan will require a Specific Plan Amendment.

<sup>1</sup> As permitted under Chapter 16 of the Land Use Element

<sup>2</sup> Approval required through California Department of Housing and Community Development

## **VI. Specific Plan Policies and Implementation Measures**

### **A. Land Use**

**Goal 1. Provide for development and commercial activities consistent with the intent of the General Plan that minimizes environmental and community impacts.**

Implementation Measure 1.A. Site design and standards shall be consistent with Mono County policies governing development, the protection of natural resources, and community character of the Mono Basin.

Implementation Measure 1.B. The development standards herein shall regulate all development for the project site. In case of a conflict between this Specific Plan and the Mono County General Plan, the General Plan shall prevail.

Implementation Measure 1.C. Any details or issues not covered by the development guidelines or regulations of this Specific Plan shall be subject to the regulations or standards set forth in applicable sections of the Mono County General Plan, County Code, Grading Ordinances, and other adopted ordinances, codes, or policies of the County.

Implementation Measure 1.D. Project implementation shall substantially comply with the approved site plan and specific plan standards. No alternative development standards shall be permitted unless such standards are approved via mechanisms described in this Plan.

**Goal 2. Provide for residential development with ancillary uses.**

Implementation Measure 2.A. A residential unit, accessory dwelling units, and associated ancillary uses are permitted outright subject to only a building permit.

### **B. Aesthetics**

**Goal 3. Maintain the rural character and viewsheds of the Mono Basin.**

Implementation Measure 3.A. Outdoor lighting shall comply with General Plan Land Use Element Chapter 23 and, in addition, be fully shielded and downward directed, with preferred LED lighting temperature of 2300K, and not to exceed 3000K.

Implementation Measure 4.B. Exterior colors shall be dark earth-tone colors with non-reflective surfaces. Propane tanks shall be screened and enclosed if not a dark earth-tone color.

## C. Noise

### Goal 4. Provide for activities that are consistent with the tranquil character of the area.

Implementation Measure 4.A. All activities shall be in compliance with Mono County Code Chapter 10.16, Noise Regulation.

Implementation Measure 4.B. No special events outside the scope of proposed uses are permitted.

Implementation Measure 4.C. Amplified sound systems are prohibited.

Implementation Measure 4.D. An on-site manager shall maintain compliance at all times while the campground is operating.

## D. Safety

### Goal 5. Provide for general safety and reduction of hazardous conditions.

Implementation Measure 5.A. Construction is subject to a Mono County building permit.

Implementation Measure 5.B. The project is subject to General Plan Land Use Element Chapter 22 and all CalFire requirements.

Implementation Measure 5.C. Campfires shall occur only in designated campfire rings.

Implementation Measure 5.D. Commercial activities shall only operate seasonally (April 1 - November 30)

Implementation Measure 5.E. Fire suppression resources, including water tanks shall be maintained.

Implementation Measure 5.F. Project shall be subject to Mono County, US Forest Service, and BLM fire standards. In the case of conflicting standards, the strictest standard shall be applied.

Implementation Measure 5.G. Solid waste shall be kept in bear resistant containers.

## VII. Consistency with General Plan Policies

The Specific Plan is consistent with the relevant goals and objectives of the Mono County General Plan, as required by Government Code 65454 (see Appendix A). Consistency between the Specific Plan and General Plan is analyzed below.

*GOAL 1. Maintain and enhance the environmental and economic integrity of Mono County while providing for the land use needs of residents and visitors.*

*Objective 1.A. Accommodate future growth in a manner that preserves and protects the area's scenic, agricultural, natural, cultural and recreational resources and that is consistent with the capacities of public facilities and services.*

*Policy 1.A.5. Avoid the juxtaposition of incompatible land uses*

*Action 1.A.5.c. Utilize the Specific Plan process, where appropriate, for large projects that may include potentially incompatible land uses, or that may be incompatible with surrounding land uses.*

Implementation: The Specific Plan allows for small-scale commercial activity for a resident of the Mono Basin. Impacts and compatibility with surrounding land use designations have been analyzed through the Section 15183 Checklist. The Specific Plan contains implementation measures to accommodate the proposed uses while reducing impacts, including impacts to noise, safety, and visual resources. Permitted land uses in the area include commercial and agricultural activities which may be incompatible with residential uses, but are common on the Agriculture (AG) and Resource Management (RM). The property is bordered by AG and RM parcels. The Specific Plan aims to minimize the number of uses permitted to those only associated with the project and maintain as much consistency as possible with surrounding uses, including minimizing site disturbance to promote rural character.

*Policy 1.A.6. Regulate future development in a manner that minimizes visual impacts to the natural environment, to community areas, and to cultural resources and recreational areas.*

Implementation: The Specific Plan identifies actions to reduce visual impacts to surrounding properties, including the use of earth tone materials, compliance with dark sky regulations, and minimizing site disturbance to 10% (previous allowable site disturbance under the RR land use designation was 40%).

*Objective 1.E. Provide for commercial development to serve both residents and visitors.*

*Policy 1.E.4. Allow for the integration of small-scale commercial uses with associated residential uses, such as employee housing.*

Implementation: The Specific Plan allows for small-scale commercial uses limited to two cabins, two RV sites, and three campsites, while also allowing for housing for the property manager to live on-site.

*Policy 1.E.5. Commercial development should be compatible with community character.*

Implementation: The commercial part of the project maintains a rural aesthetic that is compatible with the surrounding rural character. The project will use non-reflective materials, contain buildings not exceeding one story, and will have minimal outdoor lighting and be dark sky compliant. The use is similar to permitted uses on the surrounding RM and AG land use designations.

*GOAL 10. Maintain the spectacular natural values of the Mono Basin and rural, small-town character of communities by managing growth, ensuring high-quality aesthetics, and providing for community development needs to enhance the quality of life for residents.*

*Objective 10.C.*

*Encourage building types and architectural design compatible with the scenic and natural attributes of the Mono Basin.*

*Policy 10.C.2. Support design practices that protect scenic vistas, energy efficiency, and “green” building practices.*

*Action 10.C.2.a. Encourage the siting and design of buildings to preserve scenic vistas.*

Implementation: The commercial buildings on the property use only solar energy for electricity. The buildings are placed in locations that minimize visual impact by utilizing natural topography.

*Policy 10.C.3. Preserve the dark night sky of the Mono Basin.*

*Action 10.C.3.a. Require compliance with and enforce Dark Sky Regulations.*

Implementation: Outdoor lighting will be minimal and will comply with General Plan Land Use Element Chapter 23 and, in addition, be fully shielded and downward directed, with LED lighting temperature not to exceed 3000K.

*GOAL 11. Grow a sustainable local economy with diverse job opportunities that offers year-round employment and wages that reflect the cost of living in the area.*

*Objective 11.A.*

*Plan for a diversified, sustainable economy.*

*Policy 11.A.1. Achieve a more-diversified economy and employment base consistent with the small-town, rural nature of the Mono Basin.*

Implementation: The project will create sustainable employment for a local resident of the Mono Basin.

*Objective 11.B.*

*Enhance and support the existing tourism-related economy.*

*Policy 11.B.1. Cultivate tourism-related programs and attractions that promote longer, multi-day visits.*

*Action 11.B.2.b. Support local recreational uses and visitor accommodations, such as existing campgrounds, hotels/motels, and RV parks.*

Implementation: The Specific Plan will allow for three campsites and two RV pads to support visitor accommodations in the Mono Basin.

*Objective 11.C.*

*Diversify the existing economic base and employment opportunities to achieve a more-sustainable economy.*

*Policy 11.C.2. Encourage and support new business development and entrepreneurial efforts that contribute to a mix of uses and services, and a wider range of employment opportunities.*

Implementation: The Specific Plan will allow for a new business that will provide employment for a local resident of the Mono Basin.

## **Appendix A: California Government Code**

The Mono Basin Hip Camp Specific Plan is consistent with the following specific plan legal requirements as described in Sections 65450 – 65457 of the California Government Codes:

### **65450. Preparation of specific plan**

After the legislative body has adopted a general plan, the planning agency may, or if so directed by the legislative body, shall, prepare specific plans for the systematic implementation of the general plan for all or part of the area covered by the general plan. (Repealed and added by Stats. 1984, Ch. 1009, Sec. 18.)

### **65451. Content of specific plan**

(a) A specific plan shall include a text and a diagram or diagrams which specify all of the following in detail:

(1) The distribution, location, and extent of the uses of land, including open space, within the area covered by the plan.

(2) The proposed distribution, location, and extent and intensity of major components of public and private transportation, sewage, water, drainage, solid waste disposal, energy, and other essential facilities proposed to be located within the area covered by the plan and needed to support the land uses described in the plan.

(3) Standards and criteria by which development will proceed, and standards for the conservation, development, and utilization of natural resources, where applicable.

(4) A program of implementation measures including regulations, programs, public works projects, and financing measures necessary to carry out paragraphs (1), (2), and (3).

(b) The specific plan shall include a statement of the relationship of the specific plan to the general plan.

(Amended by Stats. 1985, Ch. 1199, Sec. 5.)

### **65452. Optional subjects**

The specific plan may address any other subjects which in the judgment of the planning agency are necessary or desirable for implementation of the general plan.

(Repealed and added by Stats. 1984, Ch. 1009, Sec. 18.)

### **65453. Adoption/amendment procedure**

(a) A specific plan shall be prepared, adopted, and amended in the same manner as a general plan, except that a specific plan may be adopted by resolution or by ordinance and may be amended as often as deemed necessary by the legislative body.

(b) A specific plan may be repealed in the same manner as it is required to be amended.

(Amended by Stats. 1985, Ch. 1199, Sec. 6.)

### **65454. Consistency with General Plan**

No specific plan may be adopted or amended unless the proposed plan or amendment is consistent with the general plan.

(Added by Stats. 1984, Ch. 1009, Sec. 18.)

**65455. Zoning, tentative map, parcel map, and public works project consistency with specific plan**

No local public works project may be approved, no tentative map or parcel map for which a tentative map was not required may be approved, and no zoning ordinance may be adopted or amended within an area covered by a specific plan unless it is consistent with the adopted specific plan.

(Added by Stats. 1984, Ch. 1009, Sec. 18.)

**65456. Fees and charges**

(a) The legislative body, after adopting a specific plan, may impose a specific plan fee upon persons seeking governmental approvals which are required to be consistent with the specific plan. The fees shall be established so that, in the aggregate, they defray but as estimated do not exceed, the cost of preparation, adoption, and administration of the specific plan, including costs incurred pursuant to Division 13 (commencing with Section 21000) of the Public Resources Code. As nearly as can be estimated, the fee charged shall be a prorated amount in accordance with the applicant's relative benefit derived from the specific plan. It is the intent of the Legislature in providing for such fees to charge persons who benefit from specific plans for the costs of developing those specific plans which result in savings to them by reducing the cost of documenting environmental consequences and advocating changed land uses which may be authorized pursuant to the specific plan.

(b) Notwithstanding Section 66016, a city or county may require a person who requests adoption, amendment, or repeal of a specific plan to deposit with the planning agency an amount equal to the estimated cost of preparing the plan, amendment, or repeal prior to its preparation by the planning agency.

(c) Copies of the documents adopting or amending the specific plan, including the diagrams and text, shall be made available to local agencies, and shall be made available to the general public as follows:

(1) Within one working day following the date of adoption, the clerk of the legislative body shall make the documents adopting or amending the plan, including the diagrams and text, available to the public for inspection.

(2) Within two working days after receipt of a request for a copy of the documents adopting or amending the plan, including the diagrams and text, accompanied by payment for the reasonable cost of copying, the clerk shall furnish the requested copy to the person making the request.

(d) A city or county may charge a fee for a copy of a specific plan or amendments to a specific plan in an amount that is reasonably related to the cost of providing that document.

(Amended by Stats. 1990, Ch. 1572, Sec. 10.)

**65457. CEQA Exemption**

(a) Any residential development project, including any subdivision, or any zoning change that is undertaken to implement and is consistent with a specific plan for which an environmental impact report has been certified after January 1, 1980, is exempt from the

requirements of Division 13 (commencing with Section 21000) of the Public Resources Code. However, if after adoption of the specific plan, an event as specified in Section 21166 of the Public Resources Code occurs, the exemption provided by this subdivision does not apply unless and until a supplemental environmental impact report for the specific plan is prepared and certified in accordance with the provisions of Division 13 (commencing with Section 21000) of the Public Resources Code. After a supplemental environmental impact report is certified, the exemption specified in this subdivision applies to projects undertaken pursuant to the specific plan.

(b) An action or proceeding alleging that a public agency has approved a project pursuant to a specific plan without having previously certified a supplemental environmental impact report for the specific plan, where required by subdivision (a), shall be commenced within 30 days of the public agency's decision to carry out or approve the project.

## APPENDIX B – Additional Site Plans

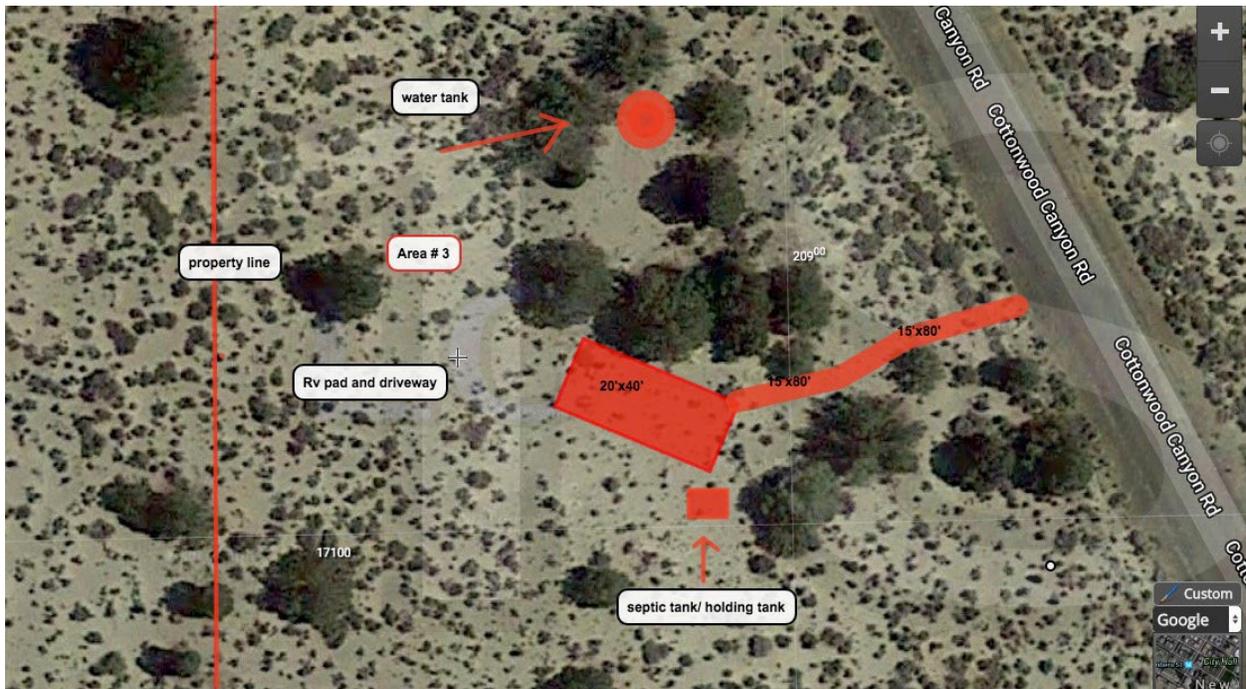
**Figure 1: Area 1**



**Figure B-2: Area 2**



**Figure B-3: Area 3**



# MONO COUNTY PLANNING COMMISSION

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PO Box 347  
Mammoth Lakes, CA 93546  
760.924.1800, fax 924.1801  
commdev@mono.ca.gov

PO Box 8  
Bridgeport, CA 93517  
760.932.5420, fax 932.5431  
[www.monocounty.ca.gov](http://www.monocounty.ca.gov)

August 2, 2022

To: The Sheet

From: Heidi Willson

Re: Legal Notice for **August 6** edition

Invoice: Heidi Willson, PO Box 347, Mammoth Lakes, CA 93546

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## NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that the Mono County Planning Commission will conduct a public hearing on **August 18, 2022**, in-person at Minaret Mall, Suite Z (above Starbucks), 437 Old Mammoth Road, Mammoth Lakes, California; and Mono County Offices, Annex I, CAO Conference Room, 74 N. School Street, Bridgeport, California; and remotely by livecast, as authorized by AB 361 at <https://monocounty.zoom.us/j/83257102601> and by telephone at 669-900-6833 (Meeting ID# is 832 5710 2601); where members of the public shall have the right to observe and offer public comment, to consider the following: **9:00 a.m. Hip Camp: General Plan Amendment 22-01 and Specific Plan.** The proposal is for a General Plan Amendment to change the land use designation from Rural Residential (RR) to Specific Plan (SP), and for a new Specific Plan which sets forth development standards and authorizes three camping areas with some combination of platforms for tents, fire rings, and RVs, and two cabins/bunkhouses. Each site will have vault toilets and other support infrastructure. A residential unit with accessory structures and utility infrastructure will also be authorized. The County intends to find the project exempt from review under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) pursuant to Section 15183 and will file a Notice of Exemption. Project materials, including CEQA, are available for public review online at <https://www.monocounty.ca.gov/planning/page/hip-camp-general-plan-amendment-22-01-and-specific-plan> and hard copies are available for the cost of reproduction by calling 760-924-1800. INTERESTED PERSONS are strongly encouraged to attend the meeting and to submit comments by **8 am on Wednesday, August 17**, to ensure timely receipt, to the Secretary of the Planning Commission, PO Box 347, Mammoth Lakes, CA, 93546, by email at [cddcomments@mono.ca.gov](mailto:cddcomments@mono.ca.gov), or via the in-person or livecast meeting (technology permitting), or by phone. If you challenge the proposed action(s) in court, you may be limited to raising only those issues you or someone else raised at the public hearing described in this notice, or in written correspondence delivered to Secretary to the Planning Commission at, or prior to, the public hearing.

###

April 8, 2022

Mono County Planning Commission  
Attention: Bentley Regehr  
POB 347  
Mammoth Lakes, CA 93456

**RE: OPPOSITION to Swiggum Hip Camp Proposal, 228 Cottonwood Canyon Road, Lee Vining**

Dear Bentley and Planning Commissioners,

I strongly oppose approval of this proposal and urge the Planning Commission to stand by the tenets and goals of the Mono County General Plan, which in my opinion this application does not serve.

**BACKGROUND AND COMMUNITY:** Since 2005 I have owned a house zoned Rural Residential on 20 acres on the North side of Mono Lake at 508 Cottonwood Canyon Road off Highway 167, part of a grouping of 10 contiguous private 20-acre parcels and 11 additional proximal parcels that range from 18 to 40 acres. Of these 21 smaller parcels in the area, 12 are zoned Rural Residential/RR20, 4 are Estate Residential/ER40, three are Agricultural/AG20, and one is Resource Management/RM. 12 of these parcels are developed with houses that are used part-time, and five have houses that are used full-time. Just down Highway 167 to the East there are another 14 more private parcels ranging from 4-60 acres, 3 with houses lived in full-time and 3 with houses used part-time. No parcel in this area of the North Basin enjoys any public utilities like water or grid electricity. We in the North Mono Basin are a predominantly residential community, majority zoned as such, and we treasure our peace, distance from denser population areas, and proximity to vast untrammled natural beauty. A number of residents happily pursue legal commercial activities on their properties (e.g., Joe and Jake Suppa, John and Maryanne Denney), but none are outwardly-facing endeavors selling the location itself to a larger public.

In recent years, however, two separate but proximal commercial touristic development projects in the area have been proposed to the County. The first, "Rea Ranch," a large multi-unit campground and music and entertainment center, complete with an ATV track and ATV onsite rentals on 40 acres currently zoned RM off 167, was accepted by the LDTAC in late 2020, but was withdrawn by the applicant in May 2021. Developing the parcel as proposed would have required a zoning change to Rural Resort/RU. The second proposal, ["Swiggum Hip Camp," is presently before us and would develop 20 acres at 228 Cottonwood Canyon Road](#) currently zoned Rural Residential into a commercial, nationally-accessed, online campground. As it happens, the Swiggum property is immediately to my South and I share a common East/West property line with it. Along with my own parcel, it is also the nearest private property West of the now-tabled Rea Ranch proposal. Both the Rea and Swiggum properties are less than a mile from each other, have frontage essentially on Highway 167, are adjacent to the Mono Lake National Scenic Area, and sit on or near the hub of the North Mono Basin -- Cottonwood Canyon Road -- serving as the "back road" to Bodie State Park. From a developer's perspective, both are exceptionally strategic parcels for touristic development.

My neighbor George Swiggum bought his manufactured home on 20 acres zoned Rural Residential in 2004, a year before I bought my place next door, also zoned Rural Residential. Based in Santa Barbara, he has always rented the house on the parcel to various full-time tenants, and like myself has enjoyed his property part-time, Summer or Winter, alone or with friends. We've been amicable neighbors over the years, though George's extremely loud multi-day 24 hour electronic music Summer rave parties in

the early aughts, attended by hundreds, did not endear him to the larger community or myself. The noise travelled for miles, and the County Sherriff was called many times by numerous residents.

In 2018, with the advent of the tech startup **Hip Camp** online campground listing and reservation service, a kind of “Airbnb for campers”, George began commercially marketing to the general public overnight stays in the funky sheds and cabins and informal campsites he’d built and enjoyed with his friends on his property over the years. It became an immediate success: see his two present listings on the Hip Camp site, <https://www.hipcamp.com/en-US/california/mono-camp/juniper-camp#reviews> and <https://www.hipcamp.com/en-US/california/mono-camp/pinon-camp> . When George began selling his campsites to the public in 2018, I voiced serious concerns to him about fire safety, the constant flow-through of vacationing strangers unschooled in fire danger, and the essentially unsupervised nature of the operation, with George living primarily elsewhere as an absentee landlord. He assured me that he would always personally be on the property whenever Hip Campers were there. That promise, alas, has turned out to be untruthful. By his own admission to me last year, George is onsite “about 30% of the time,” and the Hip Camp campground “is monitored by his tenant.”

Running a private commercial campground on a property zoned Rural Residential, much less one off-grid without services or sanitation or commercially-potable water and with structures not to code, is illegal. George surely knew this from 2018 onwards. Someone from the community finally flagged him (it was not me, and In February of 2020 County Code Enforcement issued a Notice of Violation to George, which I surmise precipitated his present application to not only legalize but expand his operation, accepted by the LDTAC in May 2020. Tellingly, George never informed me of his application; I only learned of it from a third party a year after it was accepted.

**It’s also crucial to note that George entirely ignored the County’s February 2020 Violation notice and ran his campground at full seasonal capacity for more than a year after submission of his development proposal in May 2020, until the County finally issued an Enforcement Citation with fines (again not precipitated by me) on May 17, 2021. Only then did public operations at his campground cease.**

#### **SPECIFIC PROPOSAL NEGATIVES:**

- 1. Fire Danger:** Applicant’s lot, and all the lots in the 167/CCR area, lie outside any assigned Fire District – and both nearest fire stations, BLM at Lundy Canyon and the Mono City Fire Protection District, oppose any changes allowing commercial camping in the region for this reason. The campground would allow a stream of essentially unsupervised vacationing strangers, unfamiliar with Mono County fire risks and procedures, to have multiple dispersed fires on the parcel. Applicant does not live full-time in the County and relies on a house tenant to manage the campground in his absence.
- 2. Zoning Unfairness to Neighboring Property Owners:** The proposal requests an exception to the County zoning ground rules about property use as defined by the General Plan. The Swiggum parcel, my own parcel, and the majority of private parcels in the area are zoned Rural Residential, and were that way when we bought them. When someone buys property, there is an expectation that the applicable zoning at point of purchase will remain the same on their own property and on those in the area, particularly if it’s residential zoning -- that someone’s home will not be suddenly bordered by a warehouse, by a restaurant, a hotel, a gas station – or by a nationally-marketed private commercial campground. George Swiggum bought a home zoned Rural Residential in 2004, as did I in 2005. Why should he get to change the fundamental

County ground rules of property usage just because he wants to turn his property into a tourist destination?

- 3. Inherently Marginal Infrastructure/Safety/Noise:** Applicant's lot is off-grid and without utility electricity, relying for power on solar p/v panels and battery storage on the one hand, or noisy diesel/gas generators on the other. Applicant's present and proposed solar infrastructure on the property is marginal. ***The proposal speaks of development allowing up to 21 campers onsite at a time, multiple tent camping spaces, 10-15 parking spaces, three fire rings, and two developed RV sites with hookups.*** That many campers and attendant vehicles will require additional power that will come from generators, which will create major noise and emissions in an otherwise notably quiet and natural area. Off-grid residential generator needs for primary or backup to solar are one thing, but are entirely another for ongoing commercial situations. It is important to note that applicant also specifically allows, cited on his Hip Camp online pages, campers to bring and use their own generators, vehicle-based and otherwise. Up to 21 campers (and pets) would also generate a significant amount of noise in and of themselves, especially on vacation and at night around campfires. Increased traffic on Cottonwood Canyon Road and in the overall area, with all the usual concerns, is inherent in applicant's proposal.
- 4. Non-Commercially Potable Groundwater:** All the lower Cottonwood Canyon Road lots, applicant's included, suffer from marginal well water quality that is high in arsenic due to proximity to Mono Lake – legally potable for private use, but not if provided to a general commercial public, which requires higher standards monitored by the State of California throughout the year. There is no simple way to make it potable in volume to commercial standards. Providing bottled water to campers is wasteful, trash-intensive and unsustainable.
- 5. Visual Aesthetics and Land Disturbance:** Applicant's proposal outlines development of an otherwise isolated, untouched and pristine part of their parcel – ***"AREA 3" on proposal maps*** -- that lies ***to the West*** of Cottonwood Canyon Road, where a new RV campsite is to be built with toilet/septic, 1000 gallon water tank, solar electric system, fire ring, tent camping and tables, and new driveway in, separated from the presently developed portion of applicant's property on the East side. This West campsite complex would be visible to all who drive lower Cottonwood Canyon Road.
- 6. Daily Flow of Transients/Distance from Law Enforcement/Medical:** While most campers are respectful, they do comprise real and additional risk for nearby property theft, dog intrusion, and noise as they play on their vacations, and inevitably effect a general intensification of property use far beyond the single residence and accessory dwelling units allowed by Rural Residential/RR zoning. There is a total lack of public services in the area, including emergency medical, and arrival of law enforcement and fire is delayed given the distance from Highway 395 and Lee Vining and Mono City (15 and 7.5 miles respectively).
- 7. Tribal/Cultural/Wildlife/Resource Damage Concerns:** the Kutzadika'a Tribe feels that Community Development assignment of the least demanding CEQA category to the project, "Addendum," is inappropriate, and that a fuller analysis of possible cultural resources is warranted. Wildlife and resource concerns attend to applicant's proposal as a whole.
- 8. Vague Timing:** The proposal outlines a vague timeline of "5 Years" to complete, which if approved would allow a possibly very long period of being able to semi-legally run a facility still uncompliant with pending sanitation, water, fire and safety standards.
- 9. Special Use Approvals Are Forever and a Slippery Slope:** If the project is approved, the conditions of approval are permanent and transferrable to future property owners. Expansion of the approved use would require another application, but we all know that successful execution of that new use over time tends to "grandfather" it in to the public consciousness, making later expansion of it that much more likely.

## **BROADER CONCEPTUAL COUNTY-WIDE NEGATIVES OF THE PROPOSAL:**

- 1. County Camping Needs, Planning, and Disruption of New Online Short-Term Rental Services:**  
Hip Camp as a disruptive technological platform poses especially thorny planning problems to not just Mono County, but every single scenic rural county in the United States. It is akin to the online short-term residential rental platforms, but with worse consequences and a slipperier profile: visitors are even more short-term and there is no single permitted code-compliant residence structure with water, sanitation and power – and perhaps a just a single evening fire pit -- that guests are confined to, but rather an amorphous, variously-sized “campground” with owner-built sites judged by a paying public to be more “authentic” the more eccentric and “off-grid” and “unique” they are. It also turns land-use planning and zoning on its head, with any enterprising property owner who chooses to “act first, beg forgiveness during, and legalize later” leading the County, rather than the other way around. A more proactive approach to the real need for more campsites in area, for example, might be for the County to investigate and designate an “overlay zoning district” of larger “camping corridors” near services, potable water, fire departments, the electric grid and so forth where property owners, if interested and if their parcels met certain conditions, could apply to build a somewhat pre-vetted campground if they wished, Hip Camp or otherwise.
- 2. County Processing Swiggum Proposal as a “Specific Plan” Versus Zoning Change from Rural Residential to Rural Resort:** For 20 months, from acceptance at the May 2020 LDTAC meeting to this past January 2022, Community Development stated that it was processing the proposal as a zone change from Rural Residential/RR, which specifically does not allow commercial campgrounds, to Rural Resort/RU, which does, with a Special Use Permit for the proposed new use. Then, late in the process, Comm Dev chose to change course and categorize the Swiggum application as a “Specific Plan,” which allows the proposal to avoid formally applying for a zoning change, and also better justifies the less-thorough “Addendum” CEQA permitting process assigned to the project by the Agency. The end result, if approved, would be almost the same – a campground Use Permit allowed by a Specific Plan would similarly exist in perpetuity and would attach to the property through successive owners – but the new approach makes an end-run around the intentions of the General Plan and lowers the bar for any future property owner to apply for an exemption from existing zoning for whatever pet project they might dream up. Why even bother with a General Plan if one can sidestep it via Specific Plan processing? Approval in these circumstances creates a tremendously bad precedent. Generally “Specific Plan” processing has been reserved by the County only for very large projects (like Dennis Domaille’s Tioga Inn workforce housing), and even then it’s problematic.

There is no easy way out here. However it’s packaged by Community Development – via zoning change RR to RU, or via a Specific Plan -- the Swiggum Hip Camp proposal imperils the principles of the County General Plan and rides roughshod over the fair interests of other parcels, residential and otherwise, in its immediate area. It is the wrong project, in the wrong place, proposed by the wrong entity.

Sincerely,

Michael Light

508 Cottonwood Canyon Road, Lee Vining 93541 and POB 460428, San Francisco 94146

**From:** [Heidi Willson](#)  
**To:** [Bentley Regehr](#)  
**Subject:** FW: Swiggum Hip Camp Proposal at 228 Cottonwood cyn. Rd  
**Date:** Monday, May 9, 2022 2:15:12 PM

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**From:** greenacres <greenacres@schat.net>  
**Sent:** Friday, May 6, 2022 12:11 PM  
**To:** CDD Comments <cddcomments@mono.ca.gov>  
**Subject:** Swiggum Hip Camp Proposal at 228 Cottonwood cyn. Rd

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**[EXTERNAL EMAIL]**

Dear Bentley and Planning Commissioners:

I am Opposed to the Swiggum Hip Camp Proposal. I also have serious concerns with adding more strangers to the area that is already in high fire danger each year. Lack of water and resources for camping and campfires. I believe that Michael Light covered most of my other concerns in his letter.

Thank you Marianne Denny

Box 69 Lee vining 40 year full time resident

Sent from my Verizon, Samsung Galaxy smartphone

**From:** [Kym Cochran](#)  
**To:** [Bentley Regehr](#)  
**Subject:** G Swiggum: Cottonwood Canyon Road  
**Date:** Monday, May 9, 2022 9:09:31 AM

---

You don't often get email from kymcochran@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

**[EXTERNAL EMAIL]**

May 8, 2022

To Whom It May Concern:

My name is Kym Cochran and I'm writing to you in support of George Swiggum's Mono Hip Camp Proposal on his private property on Cottonwood Canyon Road. I've known George for over 10 years, and can attest to his character, ethics and respect for nature. He is responsible, takes pride in what he does and truly believes in environmental sustainability. The motto of "leave no footprint" will, knowing George, be one of the ethos of his proposed hipcamp.

Mono Lake is not only a geographical treasure, but the legal history of Mono Lake's water level litigations serves as an inspirational modern day tale of Golieth – a grassroots campaign against LA Water District. George is the one who told me this tale, and made me love the area even more. Knowing George, I am confident he would be a responsible host, both to the visiting tourists and in keeping the serene beauty of Mono Lake intact.

Thank you for your time, and hopefully, your consideration in approving George Swiggum's Mono Lake Hip Camp on Cottonwood Canyon Road.

Respectfully,

Kym Cochran

[kymcochran@gmail.com](mailto:kymcochran@gmail.com)

**From:** [Teri Sliger](#)  
**To:** [Bentley Regehr](#)  
**Subject:** George Swiggum  
**Date:** Monday, May 9, 2022 12:54:59 PM

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You don't often get email from irenesliger2@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

**[EXTERNAL EMAIL]**

To whom it may concern, my name is Teri Sliger

I am writing in support of George Swiggum's Mono Hip Camp proposal on his private property on Cottonwood Canyon Rd.

I have known Mr. Swiggum since 1995 and have been visiting his property on Cottonwood Canyon Rd since he first purchased it. He and I have climbed El Cap together, been on international climbing and skiing trips together and driven across continents together. I know George as well as anyone. He is the right person to take on this responsibility.

George Swiggum has shown to be a responsible property owner for two decades, as well as an advocate for sustainability and the environment. He is not the type of person, nor is it in his interest, to allow campers, visitors, or anyone for that matter to disrespect the property, the landscape, or the community surrounding it.

With Mono County and Yosemite National Park being worldwide destinations, there is a shortage of space for visitors to camp and enjoy the open spaces that this area has to offer. Now, with the much needed enforcement of dispersed camping, I strongly believe that Mono County should welcome property owners willing to convert and manage their properties as small scale, well managed and supervised campgrounds.

I understand that a neighbor (second home owner) may not want visitors in their (second) neighborhood, similar to how nightly rentals can be frowned upon. However, Mono is a county based on tourism income. New and creative ideas must be implemented to continue to encourage tourism and protect our beautiful forests, one of a kind deserts and vast open spaces.

I have camped on Mr. Swiggum's property numerous times. As a resident of Mammoth Lakes for 12 years, I value the experience and camaraderie that his Hip Camp would offer to visitors of the Mono County/Yosemite area. It would allow access to an intimate camping experience under the supervision of someone with respectful knowledge of the fragile desert, unique mining history, and one of a kind Mono Lake landscape.

Mr. Swiggum's love and energy of the Mono Basin would encourage visitors to respect and preserve this amazing and unique landscape for future generations.

I encourage the Board to carefully consider the positive vs. negative impacts of the proposed Hip Camp and conclude that the value far outweighs the risk or "inconvenience" that a second home owner is presenting it to be.

Feel free to contact me @ [downununderdive@gmail.com](mailto:downununderdive@gmail.com) if you have any questions or concerns.

Sincerely-

Captain Josh Pearlman  
100 ton Master Captain

Owner- Down Under Dive and Detail, Advanture Van Conversions  
AMGA certified alpine climbing and ski mountaineering guide  
Former professional snowboarder and Mammoth Lakes resident  
30 year Sierra and Yosemite climber  
Bodie and Mono Lake lover

**From:** [Annie Moore](#)  
**To:** [cddcomments@mono.ca.gov](mailto:cddcomments@mono.ca.gov); [Bentley Regehr](#)  
**Subject:** George Swiggum's Hip Camp and Rezoning proposal.  
**Date:** Thursday, April 21, 2022 7:15:51 AM

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[EXTERNAL EMAIL]

We strongly oppose approval of this project and urge you to stand by the goals of the Mono County General Plan.

My wife and I have a house on 40 acres just Northeast of Mr. Swiggum's. Our property has been in our family since 1958. We feel that it is a bad idea to allow Mr. Swiggum's project to be approved. Why should he benefit from this at our expense.

#### ISSUES

Increased traffic and parking on Cottonwood Canyon Road.

A serious chance of a Wildfire due to the lack of supervision and just the potential number of people allowed to camp there.

There is no Fire Staffing or protection in our community.

Excessive increase in noise and light pollution from generators and loud music.

A decrease in property value.

Potential openings the doors to allow anyone to request a change in the Zoning.

There has to be a disclosure for the high Arsenic content in our water.

We do not want a mini Burning Man in Mono County.

Thank you. Joe and Annie Moore.

**From:** [Jen Cruz](#)  
**To:** [Bentley Regehr](#)  
**Subject:** George Swiggum's Mono Hip Camp proposal on his private property on Cottonwood Canyon Rd.  
**Date:** Friday, May 13, 2022 1:53:08 PM

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**[EXTERNAL EMAIL]**

To whom it may concern,

I am writing in support of George Swiggum's Mono Hip Camp proposal on his private property on Cottonwood Canyon Rd.

I have known Mr. Swiggum and have been visiting his property on Cottonwood Canyon Rd since 2005. I have spent time camping on his property on many occasions throughout the years. It is the perfect staging point for our trips snowboarding at June & Mammoth Mountain. I have also staged trips heading up into many other backcountry areas of the Eastern Sierras.

I studied Geology at Santa Barbara City College in 1998 through 2002. This gave me the unique opportunity of studying the Eastern Sierras including Mono lake during this time. It is a very special area. I am also a fly fisherman which makes George's property, once again located in the perfect place for staging my fishing trips up towards the Walker River tributaries, Bridgeport reservoir, south towards Crowley Lake and Owens valley. Finally, fishing the alpine river tributaries in the Eastern Sierra Nevada Mountains is all time in this region.

I know George as well as anyone. He is the right person to take on this responsibility. George Swiggum has shown to be a responsible property owner for two decades, as well as an advocate for sustainability and the environment. He is not the type of person, nor is it in his interest, to allow campers, visitors, or anyone for that matter to disrespect the property, the landscape, or the community surrounding it.

With Mono County and Yosemite National Park being worldwide destinations, there is a shortage of space for visitors to camp and enjoy the open spaces that this area has to offer. Now, with much needed enforcement of dispersed camping, I strongly believe that Mono County should welcome property owners willing to convert and manage their properties as small scale, well managed and supervised campgrounds.

I understand that a neighbor (second home owner) may not want visitors in their (second) neighborhood, similar to how nightly rentals can be frowned upon. However, Mono is a county based on tourism income. New and creative ideas must be implemented to continue to encourage tourism and protect our beautiful forests, one-of-a-kind deserts and vast open spaces.

I have camped on Mr. Swiggum's property numerous times. As a resident of Mammoth Lakes for 3 years and of North Lake Tahoe for 22 years, I value the experience and camaraderie that his Hip Camp would offer to visitors of the Mono County/Yosemite area. It would allow access to an intimate camping experience under the supervision of someone with respectful knowledge of the fragile desert, unique mining history, and one of a kind Mono Lake landscape.

Mr. Swiggum's love and energy of the Mono Basin would encourage visitors to respect and preserve this amazing and unique landscape for future generations.

I encourage the Board to carefully consider the positive vs. negative impacts of the proposed

Hip Camp and conclude that the value far outweighs the risk or “inconvenience” that a second home owner is presenting it to be.

Feel free to contact me @ jencruz13@hotmail.com if you have any questions or concerns.

Sincerely-  
Jennifer Cruz

California native  
Avid lover of the mountains  
Educator of the geology of the Eastern Sierras  
Outdoor enthusiast

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**From:** [Glenda Bayless](#)  
**To:** [cddcomments@mono.ca.gov](mailto:cddcomments@mono.ca.gov)  
**Cc:** [Bentley Regehr](#); [Bob Gardner](#)  
**Subject:** George Swiggum's May 19th hearing/application for re-zoning/Cottonwood Canyon Road  
**Date:** Friday, April 22, 2022 12:59:31 PM

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[EXTERNAL EMAIL]

Good afternoon Bentley. I have lived on Dobie Meadows road, in the North Mono Basin, for 22 years. I am 2 3/4 miles north east, from George's property. My first experience with George Swiggums was his 24/7, several day/night long parties at his Cottonwood Canyon road property, 24/7 several feet high bonfire(s), non stop African drum(s) (that I can hear like it is in my front yard) and vehicles parked on highway 167 and Cottonwood Canyon road from the very large party(s). Last summer/2021, when George Swiggums was operating his illegal HipCamp, there were unattended night fires at the camp(s), some very close to George's northerly neighbor, whose home is wood siding, and overflow vehicles parked along Cottonwood Canyon road.

North Mono Basin is rural, this area is far from all emergency services, even when I called Mono County Sheriff to request a stop to the midnight African drums at George's property, I was told by dispatch that there is no Deputy on duty.

To approve George Swiggum's application (May 19th hearing) for re-zoning on his North Mono Basin property is ludicrous, opening the gates to any and all development! Mono County would be the laughing stock of all California Counties, to set in place/process acceptance of new development(s), (especially on the door step of Yosemite National Park and Mammoth Mountain) by changing the re-zoning in North Mono Basin with no infrastructure(s) in place!

I urge you and your department, Bentley, to step up and learn, and do better than Joshua Tree who has lost the fight to re-zoning and over development, and be a role model California County, for the good and future of our communities and our wilderness!

Glenda Bayless

**From:** [Down Under Dive Service](#)  
**To:** [Bentley Regehr](#)  
**Subject:** George Swiggum's Mono Hip Camp Proposal  
**Date:** Monday, May 9, 2022 11:10:42 AM

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**[EXTERNAL EMAIL]**

To whom it may concern,

I am writing in support of George Swiggum's Mono Hip Camp proposal on his private property on Cottonwood Canyon Rd.

I have known Mr. Swiggum since 1995 and have been visiting his property on Cottonwood Canyon Rd since he first purchased it. He and I have climbed El Cap together, been on international climbing and skiing trips together and driven across continents together. I know George as well as anyone. He is the right person to take on this responsibility. George Swiggum has shown to be a responsible property owner for two decades, as well as an advocate for sustainability and the environment. He is not the type of person, nor is it in his interest, to allow campers, visitors, or anyone for that matter to disrespect the property, the landscape, or the community surrounding it.

With Mono County and Yosemite National Park being worldwide destinations, there is a shortage of space for visitors to camp and enjoy the open spaces that this area has to offer.

Now, with the much needed enforcement of dispersed camping, I strongly believe that Mono County should welcome property owners willing to convert and manage their properties as small scale, well managed and supervised campgrounds.

I understand that a neighbor (second home owner) may not want visitors in their (second) neighborhood, similar to how nightly rentals can be frowned upon. However, Mono is a county based on tourism income. New and creative ideas must be implemented to continue to encourage tourism and protect our beautiful forests, one of a kind deserts and vast open spaces.

I have camped on Mr. Swiggum's property numerous times. As a resident of Mammoth Lakes for 12 years, I value the experience and camaraderie that his Hip Camp would offer to visitors of the Mono County/Yosemite area. It would allow access to an intimate camping experience under the supervision of someone with respectful knowledge of the fragile desert, unique mining history, and one of a kind Mono Lake landscape.

Mr. Swiggum's love and energy of the Mono Basin would encourage visitors to respect and preserve this amazing and unique landscape for future generations.

I encourage the Board to carefully consider the positive vs. negative impacts of the proposed Hip Camp and conclude that the value far outweighs the risk or "inconvenience" that a second home owner is presenting it to be.

Feel free to contact me if you have any questions or concerns.

Sincerely-

Captain Josh Pearlman

100 ton Master Captain

Owner- Down Under Dive and Detail, Advanture Van Conversions

AMGA certified alpine climbing and ski mountaineering guide

Former professional snowboarder and Mammoth Lakes resident

30 year Sierra and Yosemite climber

Bodie and Mono Lake lover

--

Down Under Dive Service

333 Lake Ave, Suite E

Santa Cruz, CA 95062

831-479-0981

May 3, 2022

Jeff Hunewill  
Hunewill Land and Livestock Co., Inc.  
195 Hunewill Lane  
Wellington, NV. 89444

Mono County Planning Commission  
Attention: Bentley Regehr  
P.O. Box 347  
Mammoth Lakes, CA 93456

To Whom It May Concern:

This letter is written to oppose the Swiggum's Hip Camp Campground proposal on the 228 Cottonwood Canyon Road; the Bodie access road.

We own several large parcels Northeast of the proposed Hip Camp. The Hip Camp project has several inherent flaws that would impact our property.

1. Fire from windblown campfire embers could easily and rapidly burn through the heavy brush between Swiggum's property and ours. Remember the recent Walker Fire.
2. Loud music emanating from Swiggum's Hip Camp at all hours is easily heard from the house on our property. This has happened several times in the past few years. We did not buy property in the Mono Basin to listen to loud music.
3. In looking at the application it is apparent that very little effort was expended in addressing the impacts that would arise from construction of the Campground. Example: Animals effected by the Camp are listed only as rodents. There are certainly mule deer, and probably Sage Grouse as well as various other birds, mammals, and reptiles that should be considered.
4. Another element that must be addressed by the applicant is provision for potable water for campers. Water would need to be tested by Mono County Health to be sure it meets California drinking water standards.

For these and other reasons we are opposed to the development this Campground.

Sincerely,

Jeffrey B. Hunewill  
Hunewill Land and Livestock Co., Inc.

**From:** [Jeff Maples](#)  
**To:** [Bentley Regehr](#)  
**Cc:** [george swiggum](#)  
**Subject:** In Support of Hip Camp on George Swiggum's Property  
**Date:** Tuesday, May 31, 2022 3:16:07 PM

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[You don't often get email from jeffmaples@icloud.com. Learn why this is important at <https://aka.ms/LearnAboutSenderIdentification>.]

[EXTERNAL EMAIL]

Dear Mono County Supervisors and Area Residents,

We are writing today in support of George Swiggum's Mono Hip Camp proposal on his private property on Cottonwood Canyon Road in Mono County. Although we do not reside in Mono County, we are frequent visitors to wonderful area. We have known George for several years and have visited his property on numerous occasions. We have observed that George is a responsible property owner as well as a strong advocate for sustainability and the environment. He is also a creative artist and craftsman and takes a good deal of pride in his property. Based on our knowledge of George, he is not the type of person that is going to allow campers and visitors to disrespect and trash the property.

America has a significant campground shortage right now. We're sure Mono County rank's high in US counties visited by campers and our federal, state and local governments are falling short on camping spaces for them. As a result, many campers are forced to camp in a dispersed manner outside of official campgrounds. Unfortunately, not all these campers respect the land and many fail to dispose of their trash and waste properly, leaving a negative impact and eyesore on this beautiful land of ours. There is nothing more discouraging than seeing empty food and beverage containers documenting someone's unkept campsite (except, of course, windblown streams of toilet paper dangling from a nearby sagebrush). We would hope that Mono County would welcome property owners willing to convert and manage their properties as small, private campgrounds. We have visited Hip Camps in California, Nevada and Utah and have been impressed with how well they are managed.

We understand that some neighbors may not want visitors in their neighborhood, similar to how nightly rentals can be frowned upon. However, Mono County's budget is largely supported by tourism dollars and we need to be able to come up with creative ideas to continue to encourage visitors while protecting our beautiful forests and open spaces.

We strongly believe that George's Mono Hip Camp would be a great way to add a few more well managed spots for visitors to camp under the supervision of someone who will not allow visitors to trash or negatively impact this amazing land.

Thank you for your consideration,

Jeff & Sue Maples  
Carson City, NV

**From:** [Sarah Adams](#)  
**To:** [Bob Gardner](#); [BOS](#); [cddcomments@mono.ca.gov](mailto:cddcomments@mono.ca.gov); [Bentley Regehr](#)  
**Subject:** Opposition to proposed commercial type zoning in Bodie Hills Rural Residential Area  
**Date:** Tuesday, May 3, 2022 7:23:14 AM  
**Attachments:** [Letter against commercial zoning may 2022 \(1\).pages](#)

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Some people who received this message don't often get email from sarahjeanadams@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

**[EXTERNAL EMAIL]**

Mono County Planning Commission  
Attention: Bentley Regehr  
POB 347  
Mammoth Lakes, CA 93456  
EMAIL: [cddcomments@mono.ca.gov](mailto:cddcomments@mono.ca.gov) AND [bregehr@mono.ca.gov](mailto:bregehr@mono.ca.gov)

May 1, 2022

RE: Commercial Campground Proposal in Bodie Hills Rural Residential Neighborhood, on Cottonwood Canyon Road.

Dear Bentley, Planning Commissioners, and Others:

As a former long-time resident and homeowner in the Bodie Hills Rural Residential Neighborhood, I am concerned about the future integrity and sustainability of a peaceful, quiet residential area, comprised of single family residences and small agricultural enterprises. I believe that all homes in this community remain completely off-grid with stand-alone solar-powered systems, including well and septic systems, on their large lots.

For me, living on Cottonwood Canyon was Heaven on Earth. What an amazing wrap-around view of the entire Mono Basin, with White Mountains, the Mono Craters, Mono Lake and her islands and a good stretch of the Sierra Nevada range. I watched lightning shows and wind storms kick up alkali dust devils around the Basin. I enjoyed the late summer evening alpenglows on the patio; and the dramatic snowstorms from the warmth of my home. I felt safe on the 40 acres backing up to the Bodie Hills. I bet most of the homeowners in that neighborhood relish these elements too—the peace, privacy, views, and sense of safety.

Occasionally, cars would pass by on Cottonwood Canyon Road on the back route to the ghost town of Bodie. During the winter months the road was closed to Bodie, just beyond the last home on Cottonwood Canyon Road. The other visitors to the area were seasonal hunters and locals who'd come to hike, birdwatch and cross country ski. I'd see deer, antelope, bear, badger, weasel, sage grouse, rattle snakes and occasionally mountain lion tracks while on my dog walks. I loved the smell of the high desert sage. It was a tranquil environment...a sanctuary.

Nowadays, things are very different in the north Mono (Lake) Basin. The off-road tourism on and around the local Cottonwood Canyon-Bodie State Park corridor has dramatically increased. SUVs and large groups (often in excess of 20 riders) on high-speed ATVs, stir up the dust, disturb residents, wildlife, vegetation, and wear down the roads. Meanwhile the on-going drought has reached historic, thousand-year proportions. The Mono Basin, including the Bodie Hills Rural Residential Neighborhood, has always been forced to be particularly aware of natural resources. The very nature of a drought changes the quality and the quantity of the water available. The vegetation is natively arid; however, it is drier, ripe for wildfire with the right conditions.

The desire to experience living off-grid in an RV or camping out, brings mixed results. Driving one's own RV and hauling recreational vehicles means searching for parking spaces, camping spaces, using bushes as toilets, leaving trash behind, and creating forest fire hazards. How to satisfy and provide safe spaces for RVers and campers wanting to recreate in the wild outdoors?

There are likely better choices for campsites, on public lands away from residential neighborhoods, than in the fragile north Mono (Lake) Basin. An ideal campsite might have adequate shade, safe drinking water, an infrastructure with water to douse flames, protection from strong wind gusts, and rural space that doesn't encroach on neighbors' sense of peace, with the concern for fire danger, acrid scents, loud music, etcetera.

The arid high desert sage piñon forest is beautiful, yet with the increasing extreme weather events year-round, the wind can whip up surrounding dust, as well as white skies full of alkali dust, and make it difficult to breathe or see outside. An innocent camper's fire can turn into a raging basin-wide wildfire with spontaneous extreme winds. Tents can be blown away. It is a wild land out in the Mono Basin, and many visitors are truly not prepared for harsh, unexpected, non-seasonal weather. There needs to be an intelligent balance for protecting our residential communities and our wilderness.

Getting to the specific issue—approving a zoning change in the Bodie Hills Rural Residential Neighborhood (from Highway 167 north to Bodie Hills), which would support increased uses such as commercial camping en masse, is NOT a practical, safe, or sustainable choice, considering the safety hazards of the environment and the local residents, as well as paying guests. The nature of camping includes sleeping outside, having fire pits for warmth and cooking, and bathroom inconveniences. The concerns are real—water, fire, air, earth—all at risk and in need of careful attention. Better locations for camping should be considered elsewhere within Mono County.

I too understand the desire to generate a livelihood from one's property. Alternatives for homeowners desiring to be in the rural hospitality business, would be to rent their existing house(s) to short or long-term renters. Offering a rural house with exotic views, might be more economical than renting campsites, and safer, because the guests would have permanent shelter, potable water, comfortable beds, sheltered cooking in-kitchen, and sanitary shower and toilets connected to a septic system. In addition, the County would benefit because it would earn 12% TOT on each short term rental. It would further be an additional job opportunity for a local citizen to maintain and manage the house.

There is pressure to accommodate the cultural shifts in our American society to go rural; however, we need to look out for the adverse issues at hand and protect the environment and homeowners in places like the fragile north Mono (Lake) Basin.

On an upbeat note, in this year of 2022, three undeveloped parcels above Cottonwood Canyon Road (totaling 866 acres) were purchased by the Wilderness Land Trust to keep the land pristine. It is now an extension of Mt. Biedeman Wilderness Study Area. In my opinion, this is a huge step towards preserving this unique north Mono Lake Basin area.

*Sarah J. Adams*

[www.dutchpetesranch.com](http://www.dutchpetesranch.com); tel. 760/937-6581



**From:** [Ruth Garland](#)  
**To:** [cddcomments@mono.ca.gov](mailto:cddcomments@mono.ca.gov); [Bentley Regehr](#)  
**Cc:** [Bob Gardner](#); [BOS](#)  
**Subject:** Opposition to Swiggum's Hip Camp proposal  
**Date:** Tuesday, April 26, 2022 10:39:51 AM

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[EXTERNAL EMAIL]

April 26, 2022

Dear Bentley and Planning Commissioners,

We are entirely opposed to the approval of George Swiggum's current Hip Camp proposal.

In 2018 we purchased our property at 2935 Cottonwood Canyon Rd (zoned rural residential) because we appreciate the peace, quiet and natural beauty of the north Mono Basin. Since then we have been actively involved with our neighbors and the Wilderness Land Trust in preserving and further protecting the unique natural habit of the area. We have become current stewards of this extraordinary land.

Concerning expansion and legitimization of Hip Camp:

We are very concerned about fire danger, the increased noise, and high likelihood of poorly supervised vacationers. The sudden high winds here make casual transitory camping with fire rings an extreme hazard and the high gusty winds can pick up a spark in no time at all, not to mention blowing trash around. When folks first come to this area they are not prepared for these powerful unexpected gusts. Noise and emissions from the overnight generators, as well as the campers themselves will adversely affect many neighbors.

In the advent of an emergency there are inadequate public services for this proposal. The plan would place undue pressure on the local infrastructures of the fire department, sheriff and health responders.

The idea of rezoning our area is not a welcome change. What happened the General Plan?

The 'Specific Plan' concept in this case is a mind bender.

Who and what is the intention of this entity that wishes to circumvent the General Plan for this project?

I would like to hear from them and how they think this is truly a good idea for our beloved Mono basin at large?

We do not want the North Mono basin rezoned for any new commercial activities period- much less for a haphazard campground run by someone with a proven poor history of compliance to local regulations.

We ask you, how and on what grounds is this possibly a good idea?

Campgrounds need to be built, maintained and supervised responsibly in places where the zoning is already in place and the infrastructure is supportive.

This proposal does not meet any of these needs.

Please oppose this application.

Sincerely,

Ruth and Glenn Garland

2935 Cottonwood Canyon Rd  
Lee Vining CA 93541



**From:** [Justin Cummings](#)  
**To:** [Bentley Regehr](#)  
**Subject:** Support for Mono Hip Camp  
**Date:** Friday, May 13, 2022 9:17:02 AM

---

You don't often get email from cummingsj831@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

**[EXTERNAL EMAIL]**

To whom it may concern,

My name is Justin Cummings, former Mayor and current Council member for the City of Santa Cruz, but today I am writing you as a citizen. I am writing in support of George Swiggum's Mono Hip Camp proposal on his private property on Cottonwood Canyon Rd. As the former director of the UCSC Doris Duke Conservation Scholars Program we provided outdoor educational opportunities to expose students of color and students who are traditionally underrepresented in conservation to the outdoors. We took students on experiential learning trips to various parts of California, including the Eastern Sierras and Mono Lake. Not only did students gain an appreciation of the ecosystems at Mono lake and the surrounding communities, but it also allowed them to learn about the history of the region and the efforts that were made by local people to fight for conservation.

Increasing camping opportunities is not only a good way to help people connect with the outdoors, it also is an opportunity to generate revenue through tourism and a way to get people to appreciate the beauty and history of the region. From what I know about George, and the proposal of his camp, he is the right person to take on this responsibility. George Swiggum has shown to be a responsible property owner for two decades, as well as an advocate for sustainability and the environment. He is not the type of person, nor is it in his interest, to allow campers, visitors, or anyone for that matter to disrespect the property, the landscape, or the community surrounding it. With Mono County and Yosemite National Park being worldwide destinations, there is a shortage of space for visitors to camp and enjoy the open spaces that this area has to offer. Now, with the much needed enforcement of dispersed camping, I strongly believe that Mono County should welcome property owners willing to convert and manage their properties as small scale, well managed and supervised campgrounds.

I understand that a neighbor (second home owner) may not want visitors in their neighborhood, similar to how nightly rentals can be frowned upon. However, Mono is a county based on tourism income. New and creative ideas must be implemented to continue to encourage tourism and protect our beautiful forests, one of a kind deserts and vast open spaces. I value the experience and camaraderie that his Hip Camp would offer to visitors of the Mono County/Yosemite area. It would allow access to an intimate camping experience under the supervision of someone with respectful knowledge of the fragile desert, unique mining history, and one of a kind Mono Lake landscape. Mr. Swiggum's love and energy of the Mono Basin would encourage visitors to respect and preserve this amazing and unique landscape for future generations. I encourage the Board to support the proposed Hip Camp proposal and conclude that the value far outweighs the risk or "inconvenience" that a second home owner is presenting it to be. Governments should work with people who are trying to provide benefits to the overall community and this seems like it would be a great opportunity to do so.

Kind regards,

Justin Cummings

[Cummingsj831@gmail.com](mailto:Cummingsj831@gmail.com)

April 22, 2022

Mono County Planning Commission  
Attn: Bently Regehr

This is in regards to the Swiggum Hip Camp proposal on Cottonwood Canyon Rd., Lee Vining.

We own an approximately 24 acre parcel with a small cabin just to the south and west across Highway 167 from the project site. We are within the Mono Lake Scenic Area and are zoned RR/20. We have owned this property since 1984.

We are not in favor of this zone change and special use permit for a commercially developed camping area. It is inconsistent with the type of use by the surrounding property owners and the allowable use as defined under existing zoning RR/20.

Having a very transient group of people camping here translates into some real concerns, mainly fire. Many of these people will have limited or no experience with outdoor open campfires. With the erratic winds and vegetation types found on the Swiggum property, a devastating fire would destroy many of our properties and structures, and land within the Scenic Area. This area has very limited fire fighting resources, with most having to come from quite a distance. Furthermore, while there are small tanks shown on the site plans for potable water, there are no provisions for the volume of pressurized water needed to stop an escaped campfire before it got a foothold and became a wildfire.

Additionally, this type of usage typically creates more problems for law enforcement and EMS than uses that private property owners engage in. Adding to this problem is the remote location and response times needed.

Most of us purchased our properties and built our cabins/homes in this area specifically to enjoy the peace and serenity of the area and because of the assurance that the RR/20 zoning will protect that quality of life for all the property owners out here. Even if mitigating requirements were put on the project to help protect surrounding property owners from some of these concerns, the fact that the Swiggums have illegally operated this type of commercial business until being ordered by Mono County to stop, as well as

having loud parties and raves in the past without making the effort to obtain the proper permits, does not instill a lot of confidence that any mitigation requirements would be followed. Please vote "no" and deny this proposal.

Sincerely,

Rob and Susan Stockwell  
6344 Hwy 167,  
Lee Vining, CA

P.O. Box 647  
New Harmony, UT  
84757



**GENERAL PLAN AMENDMENT 22-01  
AND  
MONO BASIN HIP CAMP SPECIFIC PLAN**

**CEQA GUIDELINES §15183  
ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS  
(SCH# 2014-06-1029)  
August 2022**

**Lead Agency:**

Mono County Community Development Department  
Planning Division  
PO Box 347  
Mammoth Lakes, CA 93546

**Contact:**

Bentley Regehr, Planning Analyst  
Mono County Community Development Department  
760-924-4602

JoAnne Michael, Sr. Environmental Specialist  
Resource Concepts, Inc.  
775-883-1600

## Executive Summary

The Mono Basin Hip Camp Specific Plan proposes development of three seasonal (April 1 - November 30) campsites on a 20-acre parcel located along Cottonwood Canyon Road, in Mono County, California. Authorization of the project requires a change to the 2015 Regional Transportation Plan/General Plan Update (2015 RTP/GPU) under General Plan Amendment (GPA) 22-01. The amendment would change the adopted land use designation from Rural Residential (RR) to Specific Plan (SP). The project also requires approval of a Specific Plan document.

CEQA Guidelines §15183 provides a specific CEQA review process for qualifying projects that are consistent with a community plan or zoning. Under these regulations (reflected in California Public Resources Code (PRC) §21083.3 and CEQA Guidelines §15183), projects that are consistent with the development density of existing zoning, community plan or general plan policies for which an Environmental Impact Report (EIR) was certified shall be exempt from additional CEQA analysis except as may be necessary to determine whether there are project-specific significant effects that are peculiar to the project or site that would otherwise require additional CEQA review. The Specific Plan will not increase density on the parcel. The RR land use designation in the Mono County General Plan stipulates a minimum parcel size of one acre (see RR Development Standards) which could allow for subdivision of the property into 20 one-acre parcels, each with a single-family residence, ADU, and jADU. Per state law, ADU's are not counted toward density, and therefore the maximum density under RR would be 20 units. The Specific Plan proposes one single-family unit, ADU, jADU, and two bunkhouses. Without the ADUs, the proposed density is three units. Therefore, the project does not propose an increase in density over the existing land use designation and is consistent with the impacts evaluated in the General Plan EIR.

Mono County has existing land use, community plan and general plan policies for which an EIR was certified; including the Mono County General Plan, Final Environmental Impact Report (FEIR) certified in 2015 (SCH # 2014061029). This contains analysis of general plan policies for all required general plan elements.

The Mono County Planning Division has prepared an Initial Study checklist to determine whether there are project-specific significant effects that are peculiar to the project or to the site. As mandated by the CEQA Guidelines Section 15183, this checklist identifies whether environmental effects of the project:

1. Are peculiar to the project or the parcel on which the project would be located;
2. Were not analyzed as significant effects in a prior EIR on the land use, general plan, or community plan, with which the project is consistent;
3. If environmental effects are identified as peculiar to the project and were not analyzed in a prior EIR, are there uniformly applied development policies or standards that would mitigate the environmental effects;
4. Are potentially significant off-site impacts and cumulative impacts which were not discussed in the prior EIR prepared for the General Plan, community plan, or land use; or
5. Are there previously identified significant effects which, because of substantial new information that was not known at the time the EIR was certified, are determined to have a more severe adverse impact than discussed in the prior EIR.

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## 1.0 Introduction

This report presents the findings of an impact analysis under CEQA Guidelines 15183. The report will analyze the impacts resulting from the change in the land designation on a 20-acre parcel from Rural Residential (RR) to Specific Plan (SP). Additionally, this analysis reviews impacts required by the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) for the potential impacts resulting from a proposed Specific Plan for the Hip Camp developed campground.

The purpose of this document is to evaluate the potential impacts of the proposed amendment and specific plan and provide a comparison of the impacts to those identified in the 2015 RTP/GPU to determine if the proposed amendment and specific plan would result in any new or substantially more severe significant impacts than what was previously analyzed.

The complete 2015 RTP/GPU EIR documents are hereby incorporated by reference and can be accessed at: <https://monocounty.ca.gov/planning/page/general-plan-eir>

### 1.1 Project Information

The project consists of amending the current adopted land use designation for this 20-acre parcel from Rural Residential (RR) to Specific Plan (SP), and approval of a Specific Plan that outline the permitted uses for the parcel. Any future uses outside of the scope of the Specific Plan shall require an amendment.

The project is located at 228 Cottonwood Canyon Road off State Route 167 in the Mono Basin (APN 013-210-026) approximately seven miles northeast of Mono City, California. The size of the parcel is 20 acres, located on both sides of Cottonwood Canyon Road. Reference Figure 1.

Parcels along Cottonwood Canyon Road are a mix of RR, Agriculture (AG), and Resource Management (RM), with each parcel being at least 20 acres in size. Six residences gain access from Cottonwood Canyon Road.

The project consists of three primary use areas (reference Figure 2):

- Area 1 consists of an existing 10-foot x 12-foot bunkhouse, tent campsite, and steel fire ring.
- Area 2 has an existing tent site with a steel fire ring and an RV site.
- Area 3 is currently undeveloped.

*Surrounding Land Use Designations*

- APN 013-210-026 is designated Rural Residential (RR). The “RR” designation is intended to permit larger-lot single-family dwelling units with ancillary rural uses in areas away from developed communities.
- The land use designations adjacent to APN 013-210-026 are described below:

<b>East:</b>	National Forest – Resource Management (RM)
<b>West:</b>	Private Land – Agriculture (AG)
<b>South:</b>	National Forest – Resource Management (RM)
<b>North:</b>	Private Land – Rural Residential (RR)

The project site is adjacent to a privately owned Rural Residential (RR) parcel to the north and an Agriculture (AG) parcel to the west, and Resource Management (RM) parcels to the south and east which are owned by Inyo National Forest. The adjacent RR parcel to the north contains a single-family residence, which is approximately 700 feet from the nearest proposed use area and 200 feet to the adjoining property line. The other adjacent parcels do not have any existing structures. The next closest residence along Cottonwood Canyon Road is 1,600 feet from the nearest proposed use and 1,100 feet from the nearest property line.

*Access*

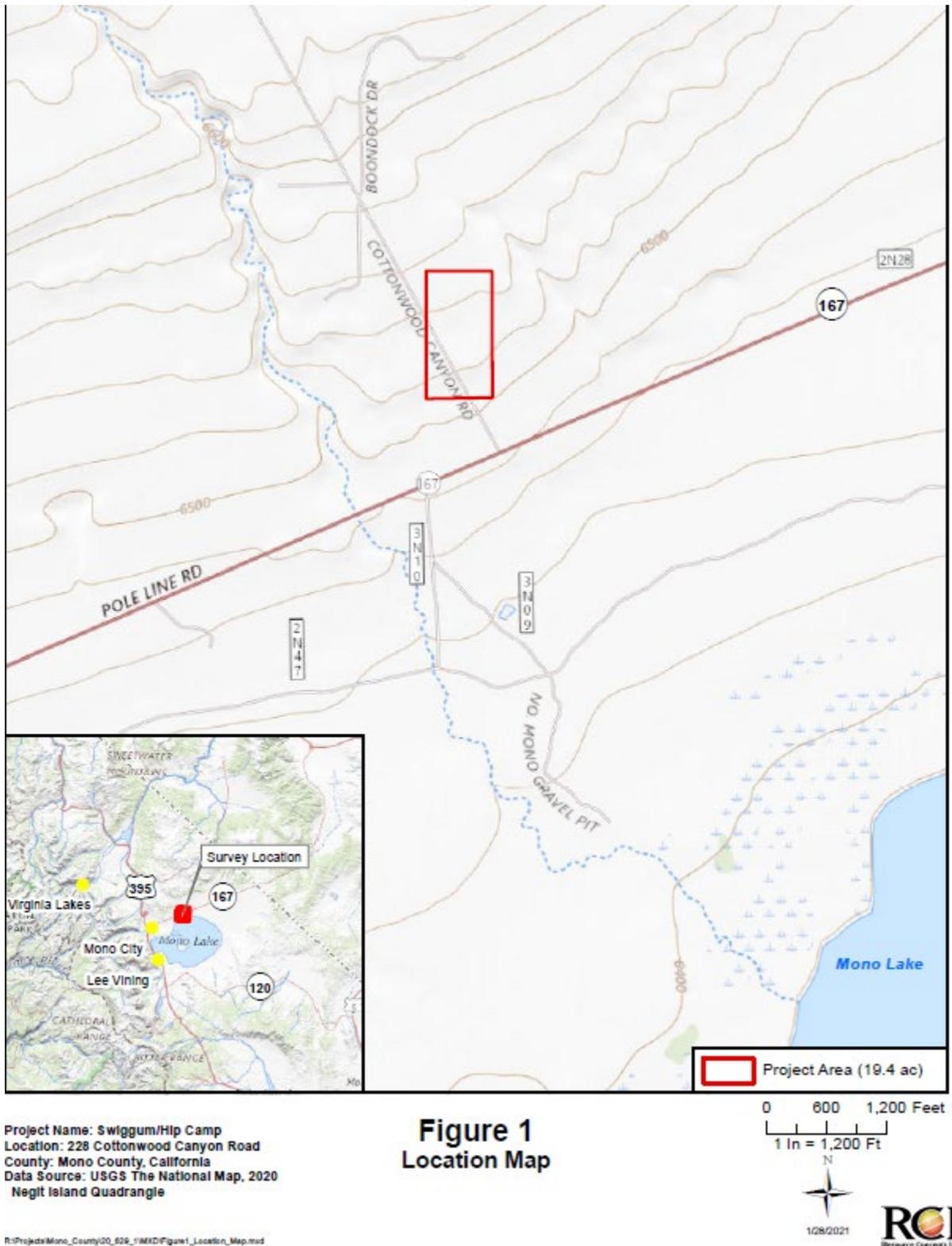
- Project areas 1 and 2 are currently accessed from an existing gravel road that extends from Cottonwood Canyon Road. Addition of a gravel road from Cottonwood Canyon Road to Area 3 is a component of the proposed project. Cottonwood Canyon Road is a County-maintained, gravel road with access from Highway 167. Reference Figure 2.

*Utilities*

- The existing utilities for the project area are as follows:

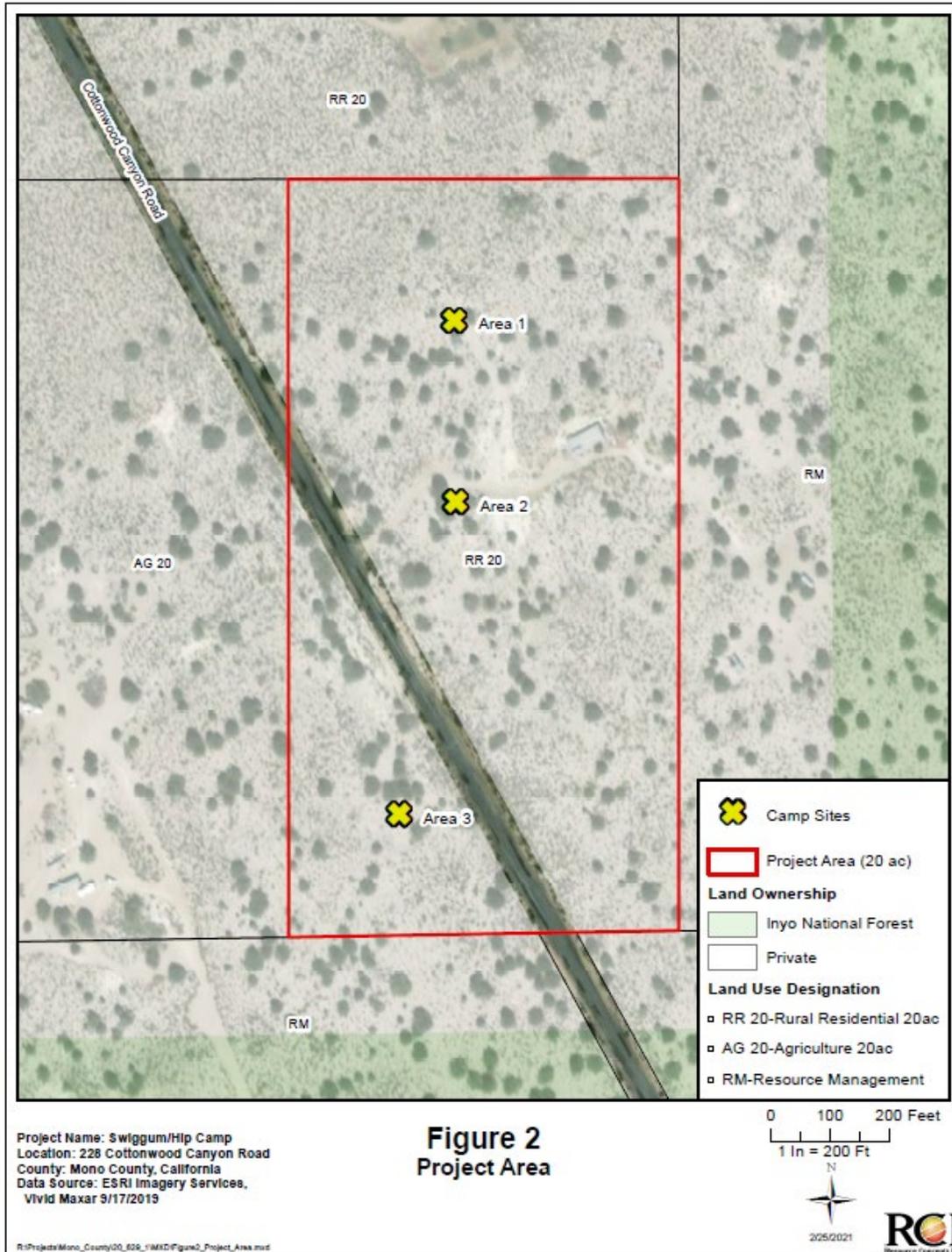
<b>Water Supply:</b>	Private well with solar pump
<b>Sewer:</b>	Septic for existing residence
<b>Garbage:</b>	none
<b>Electricity:</b>	Utility lines for primary residential unit; Solar panels for accessory uses

Figure 1. Location Map



R:\Project\Mono\_County\20\_628\_1\MKD\Figure1\_Location\_Map.mxd

Figure 2. Project Area



## 1.2 Project Description

The project requires a General Plan Amendment that changes the current land use designation of Rural Residential (RR) to Specific Plan (SP) for the purpose of developing a seasonal (April 1 to November 30) outdoor recreational facility. A summary of existing and allowable uses under the proposed specific plan are outlined in Table 1.

**Table 1. Summary Allowable Uses in Rural Residential and Proposed Specific Plan**

Permit Conditions	Existing Use – Rural Residential	Proposed Use under Mono Basin Hip Camp Specific Plan
Intent	Larger-lot single-family dwelling units with ancillary rural uses in areas away from developed communities. Small-scale agriculture permitted.	To provide for planned development in areas outside existing communities, or on large parcels of land within or adjacent to existing communities. The Specific Plan designation may also be applied to an area to provide direction for potentially conflicting or incompatible land uses.
Max Lot Coverage	40%	10%
Max Building Density	1 primary dwelling unit/lot, 1 detached accessory dwelling unit (ADU), 1 junior ADU	1 primary dwelling unit, accessory dwelling units as allowed under Chapter 16, 250-s.f. cabin, 120 s.f. bunkhouse, 3 campsites, 2 RV pads/hookups
Max Building Height	35'	35'
Setbacks	Front – 50' Rear – 30' Side – 30'	Front – 50' Rear – 30' Side – 30'
Minimum Lot Size	1 acre	20 acres
Permitted Uses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Single-family dwelling</li> <li>• Small-scale agriculture</li> <li>• Accessory buildings and uses</li> <li>• Animals and pets</li> <li>• Home occupations</li> <li>• Manufactured home used as a single-family dwelling</li> <li>• Accessory Dwelling Unit</li> <li>• Junior Accessory Dwelling Unit</li> <li>• Transitional and Supportive House</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Single-family dwelling (includes manufactured home)</li> <li>• Accessory Structures</li> <li>• Accessory dwelling units, as allowed under Chapter 16</li> <li>• Bunkhouse</li> <li>• Cabin</li> <li>• Three campsites with tent platforms</li> <li>• Two RV hookups</li> <li>• Three vault toilets</li> <li>• 40' storage container</li> </ul>
Uses Permitted Subject to Use Permit	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Recreational amenities, e.g. art galleries, country clubs, and golf courses</li> <li>• Kennel</li> <li>• Construction of an accessory building prior to construction of the main building</li> <li>• Mobile-home parks</li> </ul>	All uses not approved under the Specific Plan will require a Specific Plan Amendment.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Small-scale agriculture, including limited commercial agricultural activities</li> <li>• Manufactured housing subdivision</li> </ul>	
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As mentioned above, the project proposes three development areas, in addition to the existing primary residence. Area 1 and Area 2 are proposing further uses in addition to the existing uses. Area 3 is currently undeveloped and all proposed uses would be new development. Existing and proposed uses for each area is summarized in Table 2 below. All existing uses aside from the single-family residence are currently unpermitted.

**Table 2. Summary of Existing Uses and Proposed Uses with Specific Plan**

Location	Existing Uses	Proposed Additional Uses
<b>Area 1</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 10' x 12' bunkhouse (must comply with the California Building Code and be permitted by the County prior to use)</li> <li>• Tent site with fire ring</li> <li>• Gravel access road</li> <li>• 3,000-gal water tank</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 120 v, 20-amp solar panel system</li> <li>• Platform for tent site</li> <li>• Connection to septic vault</li> <li>• Vault toilet</li> </ul>
<b>Area 2</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tent site with fire ring</li> <li>• RV site</li> <li>• Gravel access road</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 250-s.f. cabin</li> <li>• Platform for tent site</li> <li>• Septic vault with RV hookup</li> <li>• Vault toilet</li> <li>• 3,000-gallon water tank with filtration system</li> <li>• 200-gallon propane tank</li> </ul>
<b>Area 3</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Undeveloped</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• RV and tent site with fire ring</li> <li>• Gravel access road</li> <li>• Septic vault</li> <li>• Vault toilet</li> <li>• 2,000-gallon water tank with filtration system</li> </ul>
<b>Other</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1,560-s.f. manufactured home occupied full-time by applicant</li> <li>• 500-gallon propane tank</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 40' storage container</li> <li>• No additional structures proposed for check-in or guest related services</li> <li>• No items will be sold on-site</li> <li>• No road improvements other than the addition of gravel access road to Area 3</li> </ul>

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## 2.0 California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Regulatory Guidelines

Pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15162(a), Mono County has reviewed the proposed General Plan Amendment to change the property land use designation from Rural Residential (RR) to Specific Plan (SP) and has determined:

- The extent to which the potential impacts from the proposed project have already been addressed by the previously certified 2015 RTP/GPU EIR.
- There are no new circumstances or new information that would create new significant or more severe impacts or require new analysis.
- No new significant or more severe impacts have been identified that are not adequately addressed by previously approved project mitigation.

Mono County has determined that the proposed project and General Plan Amendment would have similar or reduced environmental impacts from those described in the certified 2015 RTP/General Plan Update EIR. There are no new significant environmental impacts or previously identified significant impacts made more severe by project changes, new circumstances, or new information. Therefore, Mono County has determined that analysis under Guideline 15183 is the appropriate CEQA document to address adoption of General Plan amendment in accordance with CEQA Guideline Section 15164.

CEQA Guidelines §15183 provides a specific CEQA review process for qualifying projects that are consistent with a community plan or zoning. Under these regulations (reflected in California Public Resources Code (PRC) §21083.3 and CEQA Guidelines §15183), projects that are consistent with the development density of existing zoning, community plan or general plan policies for which an Environmental Impact Report (EIR) was certified shall be exempt from additional CEQA analysis except as may be necessary to determine whether there are project-specific significant effects that are peculiar to the project or site that would otherwise require additional CEQA review. The Specific Plan will not increase density on the parcel. The RR land use designation in the Mono County General Plan stipulates a minimum parcel size of one acre (see RR Development Standards) which could allow for subdivision of the property into 20 one-acre parcels, each with a single-family residence, ADU, and jADU. Per state law, ADU's are not counted toward density, and therefore the maximum density under RR would be 20 units. The Specific Plan proposes one single-family unit, ADU, jADU, and two bunkhouses. Without the ADUs, the proposed density is three units. Therefore, the project does not propose an increase in density over the existing land use designation and is consistent with the impacts evaluated in the General Plan EIR.

## 3.0 Impact Analysis

The focus of this analysis under CEQA Guidelines 15183 is to address the potential environmental impacts from the project that may result from a change in land use designation from Rural Residential (RR) to Specific Plan (SP) and approval of a Specific Plan that sets forth development standards and provides for specific uses.

The activities specifically analyzed in this report include the development and operation of three seasonal (April 1 through November 30) recreational use sites. The following activities support the recreational use sites and are in addition to the existing uses outlined in Table 2.

- a. Area 1:
  - i. Install new tent platform at existing tent site,

- ii. Install septic vault with connection to the existing 10'x12' bunkhouse,
  - iii. Improvements to the existing bunkhouse to comply with California Building Code,
  - iv. Install a single stall vault toilet, and
  - v. Install a 120v, 20-amp solar panel system.
- b. Area 2:
- i. Construct a 250-s.f. cabin off an existing access road,
  - ii. Install a platform tent site,
  - iii. Install a septic vault and hook up at the existing RV site,
  - iv. Install a single stall vault toilet, and
  - v. Install 200-gallon propane tank
- c. Area 3:
- i. Develop a new RV site with fire ring and picnic table (approximately 20' x 40')
  - ii. Install a platform tent site,
  - iii. Construct a gravel driveway (20' x 100') for access to Area 3,
  - iv. Install a septic vault, and
  - v. Add a single stall vault toilet.

**Table 3. Proposed Construction and Area of Disturbance for New (Non-Existing) Uses**

Proposed Use	Temporary Disturbance Area (sq. ft.)	New Permanent Disturbance Area (sq. ft.)
<b>Area 1:</b>		
Install 20' x 20' tent platform	--	400
Install new septic vault <sup>1</sup>	100	0
Install single stall vault toilet	0	300
Install new solar panel system, roof top, or ground mounted		400
<b>Area 2:</b>		
Construct 250 s.f. cabin	--	250
Install 20' x 20' tent platform	--	400
Install new septic vault with RV hook up <sup>1</sup>	100	0
Install single stall vault toilet	0	300
<b>Area 3:</b>		
Install RV site	0	800
Install 20' x 20' tent platform	0	400
Construct gravel driveway (20' x 100')	0	2,000
Install new septic vault <sup>1</sup>	100	0
Install single stall vault toilet	0	300
<b>Other</b>		
Storage Container (approx. 40' x 8') <sup>2</sup>	0	320
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,200</b>	<b>5,470</b>

<sup>1</sup> To be revegetated after installation. No permanent disturbance.<sup>2</sup> Storage container will be located on Mono County recommended foundation approximately 40' x 8' wide.

### 3.1 Alternatives Considered

Other alternatives to the adoption of a specific plan were evaluated and considered, including a land use designation change to Rural Resort (RU). Ultimately, these alternatives were deemed unsuitable due to the project’s location outside of a community or potential impacts due to outright permitted land uses that were allowed under the potential land use designation, but were not part of the proposed project.

### 3.2 Comparison of Current Project and Proposed Project Impacts

The determination of “significance” within the EIR assumes implementation of the General Plan EIR Policies and Actions and recommendation of mitigation measures. Implementation of the policies, actions, and mitigation measures often reduces potentially significant impacts to less than significant.

In some instances, implementation of the policies and actions, along with mitigation measures, reduces the impacts to the extent feasible, but some impacts remained significant and unavoidable in the 2015 RTP/GPU EIR. The adoption of the 2015 RTP/GPU EIR, with mitigation measures recommended within the 2015 General Plan EIR, included a statement of overriding considerations indicating the project will have significant adverse effects on the environment for certain resources. The following table compares the effects analyzed and significance of impacts as determined by the certified EIR with the potential for new impacts from the proposed project. The table identifies if the proposed project introduces new significant impacts that were not previously analyzed in the EIR or if the project increases the severity of an existing significant impact.

**Table 4. Comparison of Potentially Significant Impacts for Mono Basin Hip Camp Specific Plan**

IMPACT OF CURRENT PROJECT & MITIGATIONS <sup>1</sup> 2015 RTP/GPU EIR	IMPACT OF PROPOSED PROJECT
<b>LAND USE</b>	
<p>IMPACTS: Implementation of the 2015 RTP/GPU <i>would not have significant and unavoidable impacts</i> due to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(a) physically dividing an established community, and</li> <li>(b) conflicts with any applicable land use plan, policy, or regulation.</li> </ul>	<p><b>No Change.</b> The project area is currently located on land designated as Rural Residential (RR) and proposes a change to Specific Plan (SP). The project site is surrounded by land designated as Agriculture (AG) Rural Residential and Resource Management (RM) (Inyo National Forest). Adoption of the Specific Plan will decrease the maximum allowable lot coverage from 40% to 10%.</p> <p>The proposed change to SP and subsequent development of a seasonal (April 1 – November 30) recreational facility approved under the Mono Basin Hip Camp Specific Plan will not divide an existing community area and would be consistent with the General Plan, as amended, for permitted uses under the Mono Basin Hip Camp Specific Plan. Surrounding land use designations, including AG and RM, allow for similar commercial uses with similar compatibility impacts to the residential area as those proposed by the Specific Plan.</p>

<sup>1</sup> Mitigation measures are listed in Appendix D of the 2015 RTP/General Plan Update EIR and are available at: <https://monocounty.ca.gov/planning/page/general-plan-eir>. The measures are incorporated by reference rather than repeated for efficiency.

<b>IMPACT OF CURRENT PROJECT &amp; MITIGATIONS<sup>1</sup></b> 2015 RTP/GPU EIR	<b>IMPACT OF PROPOSED PROJECT</b>
	<p>The Specific Plan will not increase density on the parcel. The RR land use designation in the Mono County General Plan stipulates a minimum parcel size of one acre (see RR Development Standards) which could allow for subdivision of the property into 20 one-acre parcels, each with a single-family residence, ADU, and jADU. Per state law, ADU's are not counted toward density, and therefore the maximum density under RR would be 20 units. . The Specific Plan proposes one single-family unit, ADU, jADU, and two cabins/bunkhouses. Without the ADUs, the proposed density is three units. Any structures or uses outside the scope of the proposed Specific Plan would require a Specific Plan Amendment, which is a discretionary approval with public hearings.</p> <p>The project shall implement the General Plan Mitigation, Monitoring, and Reporting Plan (MMRP), as applicable, set forth in the 2015 General Plan Update Final EIR, which includes mitigation measures listed in the Final EIR and in Appendix D of the Draft EIR. Implementation of the MMRP will result in less than significant impacts from the project. The project does not introduce new significant impacts to land use.</p>

IMPACT OF CURRENT PROJECT & MITIGATIONS <sup>1</sup> 2015 RTP/GPU EIR	IMPACT OF PROPOSED PROJECT
<b>REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION AND CIRCULATION</b>	
<p>IMPACTS: Implementation of the 2015 RTP/GPU <i>would not have significant adverse</i> and unavoidable impacts on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(a) applicable plans, ordinance or policy establishing measures of effectiveness due to conflicts with circulation planning,</li> <li>(b) congestion management program, and</li> <li>(c) current emergency access or design hazards.</li> </ul> <p>The 2015 RTP/GPU would have <i>no impact</i> on air traffic patterns or adopted policies, plans or programs for public transit, bicycle, parking/pedestrian facilities, or decrease safety or performance of such facilities.</p>	<p><b>No Change.</b> The project would not change any potential impact identified in the 2015 RTP/GPU. The project is expected to increase the number of daily trips on Cottonwood Canyon Road corresponding to site use. Maximum occupancy would allow 18 people at one time, contributing to an additional 18 to 36 trips per day during late spring through fall, and would not cause a significant impact to transportation on Cottonwood Canyon Road. The portion of Cottonwood Canyon Road accessed by the project is considered an arterial road and is designated as Class 1 for snow removal (highest priority). The recreational resort will not be used during the winter months (December 1 – March 31).</p> <p>The project does not conflict with any available plans, ordinances or policies, circulation planning or emergency access.</p> <p>The project is not located in proximity to an airport. The nearest airport is in Lee Vining, approximately ten miles to the southwest. There are no public transit, bicycle, or parking/pedestrian facilities near the proposed site, therefore, none would be affected by the project.</p> <p>The project shall implement the General Plan MMRP, as applicable, set forth in the 2015 General Plan Update Final EIR, which includes mitigation measures listed in the Final EIR and in Appendix D of the Draft EIR. Implementation of the MMRP will result in <i>less than significant</i> impacts from the project. The proposed project does not create new significant environmental effects to regional transportation and circulation.</p>
<b>AIR QUALITY, CLIMATE CHANGE &amp; GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS</b>	
<p>IMPACTS: Implementation of the 2015 RTP/GPU <i>would not have significant and unavoidable impacts</i> due to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(a) conflicts with or obstruction of implementation of the air quality plan,</li> <li>(b) violations of an air quality standard or contribute substantially to an existing or projected air quality violation,</li> <li>(c) exposure to sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations,</li> <li>(d) creation of objectionable odors affecting a substantial number of people, and</li> <li>(e) generation of Greenhouse Gas Emission (GHG) emissions that may have a significant impact on the environment or conflict with an applicable</li> </ul>	<p><b>Reduced impacts.</b> The project is located in the Mono Basin, which is designated as non-attainment for the Coarse Particulate Matter (PM10) and ozone standards. PM10 in the Mono Basin results primarily from dust from the exposed lakebed of Mono Lake that resulted from reduced water levels due to Los Angeles Department of Water and Power water diversions. Ozone in Mono County is largely a result of pollutant transport from neighboring air basins (2015 RTP/GPU).</p> <p>To attain federal air quality standards, the Great Basin Unified Air Pollution Control District (GBUAPCD) has developed a State Implementation Plan (SIP). The EIR determined that implementation of the 2015 RTP/GPU would have no impact on implementation of the Mono</p>

<p><b>IMPACT OF CURRENT PROJECT &amp; MITIGATIONS<sup>1</sup></b> 2015 RTP/GPU EIR</p>	<p><b>IMPACT OF PROPOSED PROJECT</b></p>
<p>plan, policy or regulation adopted for the purpose of reducing GHG emissions.</p>	<p>Basin PM10 SIP. The GBUAPCD has adopted an Ozone Attainment Plan, which identifies Mono County as an ozone transport area that exceeds ozone standards due to emissions generated in the San Joaquin Valley. The proposed project would have no conflicts with and would not obstruct the implementation of these air quality plans. Generation of ozone from project activities would be temporary during construction and minimal relative to the ozone emissions entering the county from San Joaquin Valley.</p> <p>The proposed project would create a temporary, minor increase in exposed surfaces (approximately 1,200 s.f.) due to project construction. However, overall impacts would result in reduced impacts to air quality, climate change, and greenhouse gas emissions compared to the 174,240 s.f. of lot coverage allowed under the previously analyzed rural residential development land use designation. The specific plan proposal allows for 10% lot coverage, or 87,120 s.f.</p> <p>There are no sensitive receptors within proximity to the project area. The proposed project has no emissions of any criteria pollutants or odors.</p> <p>The project would result in a temporary increase in GHG during construction and from seasonal operation of the three (3) camp sites. GHG generation produced by the approximate 36 daily trips would be minimal and would not trigger a significant impact. The specific plan proposes a maximum of 3 units (the existing residence, a potential ADU, and potential junior ADU) and allows for a similar density to the RR land use designation. The cabin, bunkhouse, and campsites would produce minimal impacts, as they are not connected to utilities. The project will not increase the levels of GHG emissions to result in a change in the less than significant impacts imposed by implementation of the 2015 RTP/GPU.</p> <p>The project is consistent with the Mono County’s Resource Efficiency Plan which promotes, but does not require, energy efficiency by private development.</p> <p>The project shall implement the General Plan MMRP, as applicable, set forth in the 2015 General Plan Update Final EIR, which includes mitigation measures listed in the Final EIR and in Appendix D of the Draft EIR. Implementation of the MMRP will result in <i>less than significant</i> impacts from the project. The project does not create new significant environmental effects.</p>

IMPACT OF CURRENT PROJECT & MITIGATIONS <sup>1</sup> 2015 RTP/GPU EIR	IMPACT OF PROPOSED PROJECT
<b>BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES</b>	
<p>IMPACTS: Implementation of the 2015 RTP/GPU would result in <i>significant and unavoidable impacts</i> on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(a) candidate, sensitive, or special status species,</li> <li>(b) riparian habitat or sensitive natural plant community identified in local/regional policies, regulations, by California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) or United States Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS),</li> <li>(c) federally protected §404 wetlands,</li> <li>(d) the movement of a native resident or wildlife species or with established native resident or migratory wildlife corridors, and</li> <li>(e) conflicts with local biological protection ordinances.</li> </ul> <p>Project implementation would have <i>no impact</i> or conflict with provisions of an adopted Habitat Conservation Plan, Natural Community Conservation Plan, or other approved habitat conservation plan.</p>	<p><b>Reduced Impacts.</b> The USFWS Information for Planning and Consultation (IPaC 2021) does not list any federally listed species with potential on-site suitable habitat. The California Natural Diversity Database (CNDDDB 2021) does not map any documented occurrences of sensitive natural plant communities or other state-listed special status plant or wildlife species within the project area. There are no sensitive natural plant communities identified within the site. The approximate 0.15 acres of project-related ground disturbance would result in less impact than the land use designation of rural residential which allows up to 40% land disturbance per lot. The maximum disturbance area proposed under the specific plan is 10%. The project would not cause a substantial increase in severity of the previously identified significant and unavoidable effects to sensitive plants.</p> <p>The project area is not located within sage-grouse habitat proposed by USFWS in 2012, and the project area is not located near a deer migration corridor (2015 RTP/GPU).</p> <p>The National Wetlands Inventory (NWI 2021) mapper does not indicate any potential wetlands or riparian habitat on the property.</p> <p>There are no approved habitat conservation plans within the project area.</p> <p>Potential impacts are mitigated to the extent feasible through the 2015 General Plan Update MMRP, including mitigation measures listed in the Final EIR and in Appendix D of the Draft EIR, specifically Table 4.4-10 in Appendix D</p> <p>The project does not create new significant environmental effects or cause a substantial increase in severity of previously identified significant and unavoidable effects to biological resources.</p>
<b>GEOLOGY, SOILS &amp; MINERALS</b>	
<p>IMPACTS: Implementation of the 2015 RTP/GPU would have <i>significant and unavoidable impacts</i> due to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(a) exposure of people and structures to seismic effects,</li> <li>(b) substantial soil erosion or loss of topsoil,</li> <li>(c) being located on a geologic unit or soil that is unstable, or that would become unstable as a result of the project, and potentially result in a landslide, lateral spreading, subsidence, liquefaction or collapse, or be located on</li> </ul>	<p><b>No Change.</b> Project would not change any potential impact identified in the 2015 RTP/GPU. The proposed project is not located on an active fault zone (CA Dept of Conservation 2021). Seismic risks are a constant throughout Mono County and the project must comply with current seismic safety standards. These standards reduce seismic hazards to a level of 'acceptable risk' (2015 RPT/GPU EIR).</p>

<b>IMPACT OF CURRENT PROJECT &amp; MITIGATIONS<sup>1</sup></b> 2015 RTP/GPU EIR	<b>IMPACT OF PROPOSED PROJECT</b>
<p>expansive soil creating substantial risks to life or property.</p> <p>(d) soils incapable of adequately supporting the use of septic tanks or alternative wastewater disposal systems where sewers are not available for the disposal of wastewater.</p> <p>(e) loss of availability of a known mineral.</p> <p>The 2015 RTP/GPU would <i>not have significant impacts</i> for projects use of soils incapable of adequately supporting the use of septic tanks.</p>	<p>Project implementation will result in minor soil excavation (approximately 6,670 sq. ft.) and would not result in substantial erosion or increase the severity of the impact.</p> <p>The project is located on very sandy, excessively drained soils. The project proposes use of septic vaults to contain wastewater which would be regularly pumped out by a septic service. Project implementation is not located on unstable soils and will not increase the potential for landslides, lateral spreading, subsidence, liquefaction, or collapse, or located on expansive soils.</p> <p>There are no known mineral resources on site, therefore, project excavation will not deplete known mineral resources.</p> <p>Potential project impacts are mitigated to the extent feasible through the 2015 General Plan Update MMRP, including mitigation measures listed in the Final EIR and in Appendix D of the Draft EIR, specifically Table 4.5-5 of Appendix D.</p> <p>The project does not create new significant environmental impacts or a substantial increase in the severity of previously identified significant effects.</p>

IMPACT OF CURRENT PROJECT & MITIGATIONS <sup>1</sup> 2015 RTP/GPU EIR	IMPACT OF PROPOSED PROJECT
<b>PUBLIC HEALTH &amp; SAFETY, HAZARDS AND HAZARDOUS MATERIALS</b>	
<p>IMPACTS: Implementation of the 2015 RTP/GPU <i>would have significant and unavoidable impacts</i> due to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(a) potential release of hazardous materials through routine transport, use or disposal,</li> <li>(b) location on a site which is included on a list of hazardous material sites,</li> <li>(c) creating a safety hazard for people residing or working in an area located in an airport land use plan or within two miles of a public airport,</li> <li>(d) impaired implementation of or physically interfere with an adopted emergency response or excavation plan,</li> <li>(e) exposure of people or structures to a significant risk of loss, injury or death involving wildland fires,</li> <li>(f) exposure of people or structures to significant risk of avalanche, landslides, destructive storms or winds, rockfall or volcanic activity, and</li> <li>(g) inadequate emergency response, exposure to wildland fire risks, and exposure to avalanche, rockfall, storms, and volcanism.</li> </ul>	<p><b>No Change.</b> The proposed project would utilize propane stored in above ground tanks. Delivery of propane would be limited to once a year on average, would be similar to residential use levels, and would not cause an increase in the severity of the significant and unavoidable impacts.</p> <p>The site is not located on a site included on a list of hazardous material sites. It is not located within an airport land use plan or within two miles of a public airport.</p> <p>The impact to emergency response remains as identified in the 2015 RTP/GPU EIR. The site is in a Moderate CalFire State Responsibility Area Zone (California State Geoportals, 2021). Project conditions to enhance fire safety are included in Goal 5 of the Specific Plan. The project proposes having fires only in designated campfire rings and campsites are subject to State defensible space standards, as indicated in the Specific Plan. Onsite water tanks provide an immediate water supply for fire suppression. CalFire expressed no concerns with serving the proposed project and the project is subject to state fire standards. While local fire departments such as the Mono City Fire Protection District may respond to incidents at the property pursuant to mutual aid arrangements, the project site is located in a State Responsibility Agency. The Mono City Fire Protection District was invited to comment on the project and declined, stating project approval is the responsibility of the County.</p> <p>The project area is not in an area exposed to avalanche or rockfall. The project does not exacerbate exposure to storms and volcanism. The project will not trigger the need for additional public facilities.</p> <p>Potential impacts are mitigated to the extent feasible through the 2015 General Plan Update MMRP, including mitigation measures listed in the Final EIR and in Appendix D of the Draft EIR, specifically Table 4.6-13 of Appendix D.</p> <p>The project does not create new significant environmental impacts or a substantial increase in the severity of previously identified significant effects.</p>
<b>CULTURAL RESOURCES</b>	

<b>IMPACT OF CURRENT PROJECT &amp; MITIGATIONS<sup>1</sup></b> 2015 RTP/GPU EIR	<b>IMPACT OF PROPOSED PROJECT</b>
<p>IMPACTS: Implementation of the 2015 RTP/GPU would have <i>significant and unavoidable impacts</i> on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(a) prehistoric or historic resources,</li> <li>(b) paleontological resources, and</li> <li>(c) human remains and sacred lands.</li> </ul>	<p><b>No Change.</b> There are no known prehistoric, historic, or paleontological resources within the project area. There are no springs or other features likely to attract historical uses. Overall, potential impacts to cultural, historic, or paleontological resources would be less likely under the proposed change in land use designation and development of the proposed project due to a decrease in overall ground disturbance. The maximum site disturbance allowed has been decreased from 40% to 10% of the parcel. The project would not change any potential impact identified in the 2015 General Plan EIR. Tribal consultation letters were sent for the project in accordance with SB-18. No comments were received.</p> <p>The 2015 General Plan EIR MMRP contains mitigation measures for Cultural Resources in the Final EIR and Appendix D of the Draft EIR, specifically Table 4.7-2, that minimizes impacts to cultural resources to the extent feasible. The project does not create new significant environmental impacts or a substantial increase in the severity of previously identified significant effects. The General Plan EIR concludes a significant impact, largely because specific locations of potential resources have not been identified.</p> <p>In addition, in the event of the accidental discovery or recognition of any human remains, the project is subject to CEQA Guidelines section 15064.5 (e).</p>

IMPACT OF CURRENT PROJECT & MITIGATIONS <sup>1</sup> 2015 RTP/GPU EIR	IMPACT OF PROPOSED PROJECT
<b>HYDROLOGY, FLOODING, WATER QUALITY AND WATER SUPPLY</b>	
<p>IMPACTS: Implementation of the 2015 RTP/GPU would have <i>significant and unavoidable impacts</i> due to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(a) potential violation of water quality standards, violation of wastewater treatment or discharge requirements,</li> <li>(b) insufficient groundwater or surface water supplies to sustainably serve GP land uses from existing entitlements, facilities, and resources, and</li> <li>(c) alteration of exiting drainage patterns causing substantial erosion, siltation, flooding and polluted runoff.</li> </ul> <p>Implementation of the 2015 RTP/GPU would <i>not have significant impacts</i> due to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(d) placement of housing in 100-year flood hazard areas,</li> <li>(e) exposure of people or structures to a significant risk of loss, injury or death involving flooding, including flooding as a result of a levee or dam, and</li> <li>(f) exposure of people or structures to inundation by seiche, tsunami, or mudflows.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Reduced Impact.</b> The National Wetlands Inventory mapper does not indicate any potential wetlands or riparian habitat on the property, nor are there any naturally occurring water bodies on the property. Wastewater disposal for the campsites and cabins will be in buried septic vaults subject to the requirements and permitting of the Environmental Health Department, and therefore does not impact water quality.</p> <p>The project area is not located in a 100-year flood hazard area (FEMA 2021) and would not expose people or structures to 100-year flood hazards. There are no nearby levees, dams, or water bodies that would expose people or structures to a risk of loss, injury or death from flooding, seiche or tsunami due to dam or levee failure. The proposed uses will not require drainage or affect drainage patterns.</p> <p>The project shall implement the General Plan MMRP, as applicable, set forth in the 2015 General Plan Update Final EIR, which includes mitigation measures listed in the Final EIR and in Appendix D of the Draft EIR, specifically Table 4.8-10.</p> <p>The project does not create new significant environmental impacts or a substantial increase in the severity of previously identified significant effects.</p>
<b>RECREATION</b>	
<p>IMPACTS: Implementation of the 2015 RTP/GPU would have <i>significant and unavoidable impacts</i> due to projects that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(a) include recreational facilities or require the construction or expansion of recreational facilities that might have an adverse physical effect on the environment.</li> </ul> <p>The 2015 RTP/GPU would <i>not have significant impacts</i> on increasing the demand for recreational facilities.</p>	<p><b>Reduced Impact:</b> The project itself is a recreational facility and would potentially reduce the demand for existing recreational facilities. Project implementation would create a small level of disturbance for new structures (approximately 6,670 s.f.) but would not substantially increase the severity of the significant and unavoidable impacts analyzed in the certified EIR.</p> <p>The project shall implement the General Plan MMRP, as applicable, set forth in the 2015 General Plan Update Final EIR, which includes mitigation measures listed in the Final EIR and in Appendix D of the Draft EIR, specifically Table 4.9-3.</p> <p>The project does not create new significant environmental impacts or a substantial increase in the severity of previously identified significant effects.</p>
<b>AESTHETICS, LIGHT &amp; GLARE, SCENIC RESOURCES</b>	

IMPACT OF CURRENT PROJECT & MITIGATIONS <sup>1</sup> 2015 RTP/GPU EIR	IMPACT OF PROPOSED PROJECT
<p>IMPACTS: Implementation of the 2015 RTP/GPU would have <i>significant and unavoidable impacts</i> due to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(a) having a substantial adverse effect on a scenic vista or scenic view including trees, rock outcroppings, and historic buildings within a state scenic highway,</li> <li>(b) the substantial degradation of the existing visual character or quality of the site and its surroundings, and</li> <li>(c) creation of a new source of substantial light or glare that would adversely affect day or nighttime views.</li> </ul>	<p><b>No Change:</b> The project is not located in a State Scenic Highway corridor or the Mono Basin Scenic Area and would not have a significant adverse effect on a scenic vista. The project has no significant impacts, given that any new exterior lighting will be subject to General Plan Land Use Element Chapter 23, Dark Sky Regulations. The project is subject to additional measures, as outlined in the Specific Plan. New lighting, including lighting in Area 1, will be fully shielded and downward directed, with LED lighting temperature not to exceed 3000K. The project shall not use any reflective materials and shall use only dark, earth-tone colors.</p> <p>The project shall implement the General Plan MMRP, as applicable, set forth in the 2015 General Plan Update Final EIR, which includes mitigation measures listed in the Final EIR and in Appendix D of the Draft EIR, specifically Table 4.10-3.</p> <p>The project does not create new significant environmental impacts or a substantial increase in the severity of previously identified significant effects.</p>
<b>AGRICULTURE, FORESTS &amp; CONSERVATION</b>	
<p>IMPACTS: Implementation of the 2015 RTP/GPU would <i>not have significant impacts</i> to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(a) conversion of prime farmland, unique farmland, or farmland of statewide to nonagricultural use, or conflict with existing zoning for agricultural use or a Williamson Act Contract.</li> <li>(b) conflict with existing zoning for, or cause rezoning of, forest land or result in the loss of forest land or conversion of forest land to non-forest use.</li> </ul>	<p><b>No Change:</b> The project area is not designated prime farmland, unique farmland, or farmland of statewide importance, and does not conflict with a Williamson Act Contract.</p> <p>The project area is not located in forest land.</p> <p>The project shall implement the General Plan MMRP, as applicable, set forth in the 2015 General Plan Update Final EIR, which includes mitigation measures listed in the Final EIR and in Appendix D of the Draft EIR, specifically Table 4.11-5.</p> <p>The project does not introduce new significant impacts to agriculture, forest, or conservation.</p>
<b>POPULATION AND HOUSING</b>	
<p>IMPACTS: Implementation of the 2015 RTP/GPU would have <i>no impact</i> due to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(a) significant population growth in the area, or</li> <li>(b) displacement of a substantial number of residents or housing.</li> </ul>	<p><b>No Change:</b> The project does not create significant population growth. The proposed project would allow up to a maximum of 18 visitors at one time and could create up to two accessory dwelling units in addition to the existing primary residence. This is similar to the maximum density allowed under RR (one primary unit and up to two ADUs). No residents are displaced.</p> <p>The project shall implement the General Plan MMRP, as applicable, set forth in the 2015 General Plan Update Final</p>

IMPACT OF CURRENT PROJECT & MITIGATIONS <sup>1</sup> 2015 RTP/GPU EIR	IMPACT OF PROPOSED PROJECT
	<p>EIR, which includes mitigation measures listed in the Final EIR and in Appendix D of the Draft EIR.</p> <p>The project does not introduce new significant impacts to the Mono County population or housing.</p>
<b>PUBLIC SERVICES AND UTILITIES</b>	
<p>IMPACTS: Implementation of the 2015 RTP/GPU would have <i>significant and unavoidable impacts</i> due to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(a) creating a need for new or modified governmental facilities in order to maintain acceptable service ratios, response times or other performance objectives for any of the public resources: police protection, schools, other public facilities, services and utilities.</li> </ul> <p>The 2015 RTP/GPU would <i>not have significant impacts</i> effects:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(b) resulting in wasteful, inefficient energy and/or unnecessary consumption of energy, and</li> <li>(c) requiring services of a landfill with insufficient permitted capacity to accommodate the project's solid waste disposal needs.</li> </ul>	<p><b>No Change:</b> Due to the rural project location, police, fire, and other emergency response services could be impacted as identified in the 2015 RTP/GPU; however, due to the small number of people (maximum 18 visitors at one time), the project would not increase the severity of the significant and unavoidable impacts as described in the 2015 RTP/GPU.</p> <p>School services would not be impacted.</p> <p>The project was reviewed by CalFire and no concerns were raised in regard to serving the proposed project. The project will not trigger a need for new facilities or equipment to serve the proposed uses, as identified by the Mono City Fire Department. The project will not have an impact on wasteful energy consumption or landfill capacity.</p> <p>The project shall implement the General Plan MMRP, as applicable, set forth in the 2015 General Plan Update Final EIR, which includes mitigation measures listed in the Final EIR and in Appendix D of the Draft EIR, specifically Table 4.13-10.</p> <p>The project does not create new significant impacts to public services and utilities or a substantial increase in the severity of previously identified significant effects.</p>

IMPACT OF CURRENT PROJECT & MITIGATIONS <sup>1</sup> 2015 RTP/GPU EIR	IMPACT OF PROPOSED PROJECT
<b>NOISE</b>	
<p>IMPACTS: Implementation of the 2015 RTP/GPU would <i>not have significant impacts</i> due to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(a) a permanent or temporary increase in ambient noise levels or noise levels that exceed standards set by the general plan or noise ordinance or other applicable standards.</li> <li>(b) exposure of people to excessive ground-borne vibration or ground-borne noise levels, and</li> <li>(c) exposure of people working in the project area to excessive noise levels for an airport land use plan or within two miles of a public airport or public use airport or a private airstrip.</li> </ul>	<p><b>No Change:</b> The project does not have any permanent increased noise sources and is not located near an airport. Temporary increase in noise levels may occur during construction but would not exceed general plan standards. The project must comply with Mono County Noise Ordinance standards, and per conditions of the specific plan, no amplified sound systems would be permitted, the campground shall abide by the noise limitations presented in Mono County Code Table 10.16.060(A). No special events are permitted.</p> <p>The project shall implement the General Plan MMRP, as applicable, set forth in the 2015 General Plan Update Final EIR, which includes mitigation measures listed in the Final EIR and in Appendix D of the Draft EIR, specifically Table 4.14-11.</p> <p>The project does not introduce new significant impacts that would affect noise.</p>

### 4.0 Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Plan (MMRP)

No MMRP is needed. The Specific Plan for the project contains additional conditions that further address certain topics even though impacts are less than significant.

### 5.0 Conclusion

Based on the evidence and analyses provided in the Initial Study included at Section 3.2, the County of Mono, acting as Lead Agency, has determined that none of the environmental effects meet any the five findings under CEQA Guidelines §15183. Therefore, none of the findings can be made and it is concluded that the project qualifies under CEQA §15183.

All of the mitigation measures adopted by Mono County as part of the 2015 General Plan EIR remain in full force and effect. The complete list of mitigation policies and measures for the 2015 General Plan EIR is found in Appendix D at <https://monocounty.ca.gov/planning/page/general-plan-eir> and is hereby incorporated by reference.

### 6.0 References

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**RESOLUTION R22-09**

**A RESOLUTION OF THE MONO COUNTY PLANNING COMMISSION RECOMMENDING  
ADOPTION OF GENERAL PLAN AMENDMENT 22-01 TO CHANGE THE LAND USE  
DESIGNATION FROM RURAL RESIDENTIAL TO SPECIFIC PLAN AT APN 013-210-026 AND  
THE PROPOSED MONO BASIN HIP CAMP SPECIFIC PLAN, INCLUDING THE CEQA  
SECTION 15183 CHECKLIST**

**WHEREAS**, the application for a General Plan Amendment was accepted at the June 1, 2020, Land Development Technical Advisory Committee (LDTAC) Meeting; and

**WHEREAS**, General Plan Amendment 22-01 proposes to change the land use designation at APN 013-210-026 from Rural Residential to Specific Plan; and

**WHEREAS**, the Mono Basin Hip Camp Specific Plan sets forth development standards for three camping areas with a combination of platforms for tents, fire rings, and RVs, two cabins/bunkhouses, vault toilets, support infrastructure, and a residential unit with accessory structures; and

**WHEREAS**, the Planning Commission hearing was noticed in the August 6, 2022, edition of The Sheet, to surrounding property owners on July 22, 2022, and under the SB18 on July 29, 2020; and

**WHEREAS**, the proposed Specific Plan and CEQA §15183 Checklist were posted online and availability was noticed to the Mono Basin Regional Planning Advisory Committee (RPAC) email list on August 3, 2022; and the proposed project and CEQA §15183 Checklist were reviewed at the August 15, 2022, LDTAC meeting; and

**WHEREAS, public comment was received and responded to, and appropriate modifications were made to the project to address concerns that were raised; and**

**WHEREAS**, the proposal is subject to the terms and implementation measures provided in the Mono Basin Hip Camp Specific Plan; and

**WHEREAS**, the project qualifies under as a Statutory Exemption under California Environmental Quality Act (“CEQA”) Guidelines Section 15183.

**NOW, THEREFORE, THE MONO COUNTY PLANNING COMMISSION DOES HEREBY  
RESOLVE AS FOLLOWS:**

**SECTION ONE:** The Planning Commission finds that the foregoing recitals are true and correct. Having reviewed and considered the analysis in the staff report and testimony provided in the public hearing, the Planning Commission also makes findings in Exhibit A that the proposed General Plan Amendment to change the land use designation at APN 013-210-026 from Rural Residential to Specific Plan is suitable for the parcel.

**SECTION TWO:** Having reviewed and considered all information and evidence presented to it including public testimony, written comments, and staff reports and presentations, the Planning Commission



## **Exhibit A: General Plan Amendment Findings**

According to Chapter 48.020 of the Land Use Element, prior to taking an action to approve or recommend approval of a change in district designation classification, the Commission shall find as follows:

- A. The proposed change in land use designation is consistent with the text and maps of this General Plan;*

The proposed Amendment to change the land use designation from Rural Residential (RR) to Specific Plan (SP) is consistent with General Plan policies directing the County to use the specific plan process for planned development areas outside of existing communities, and once approved the Amendment will not alter consistency with the text or maps of the General Plan. The project is required to meet all provisions under the proposed Specific Plan. The Specific Plan was designed to create provisions that were similar to or more restrictive than the existing RR land use designation, including lot coverage, setbacks, and density. Lot coverage will be reduced from 40% to 10%, and setbacks will remain the same. The density proposed under the Specific Plan will be less than theoretical buildout under the RR land use designation. The RR land use designation allows for subdivision that would allow for up to 20 single-family residences with ADUs. The Specific Plan allows for a total of one single-family residence, ADU, junior ADU, and two bunkhouses, and eliminates the possibility of future subdivisions. Any additional structures or uses not covered by the Specific Plan will require an amendment to the Specific Plan, which will require a discretionary approval process with public hearings.

- B. The proposed change in land use designation is consistent with the goals and policies contained within any applicable area plan;*

The project supports County and Mono Basin objectives to support economic development and provide a variety of services. Approval of the General Plan Amendment and Specific Plan will enhance visitor accommodations, while maintaining the rural nature of the Mono Basin, including support of Dark Sky objectives. The project is consistent with the following General Plan policies:

### **MONO COUNTY LAND USE ELEMENT**

#### ***Objective 1.C.***

*Provide a balanced and functional mix of land uses.*

***Policy 1.C.1.*** *Designate adequate sites for a variety of land uses in order to provide for the land use needs of community areas.*

#### ***Objective 1.E.***

*Provide for commercial development to serve both residents and visitors.*

***Action 1.E.1.a.** Designate a sufficient amount of commercial land within communities to serve the needs of residents and visitors.*

**MONO COUNTY LAND USE ELEMENT, Mono Basin Area Plan Policies**

***Policy 10.C.3.** Preserve the dark night sky of the Mono Basin.*

***Action 10.C.3.a.** Require compliance with and enforce Dark Sky Regulations.*

***Objective 11.A.** Plan for a diversified, sustainable economy.*

***Policy 11.A.1.** Achieve a more-diversified economy and employment base consistent with the small-town, rural nature of the Mono Basin.*

***Objective 11.B.** Enhance and support the existing tourism-related economy.*

***Policy 11.B.3.** Support a sufficient bed base and visitor accommodations to support the tourism industry.*

*C. The site of the proposed change in land use designation is suitable for any of the land uses permitted within that proposed land use designation;*

The proposed Amendment and Specific Plan will not increase density and will provide limited visitor accommodations that are consistent with the rural nature of the area. The parcel and surrounding parcels are all at least 20-acres in size, allowing for space between uses. The Specific Plan was designed to create provisions that were similar to or more restrictive than the existing RR land use designation, including lot coverage, setbacks, and density. The proposed uses will not generate more traffic than the current land use designation at full buildout. The proposed commercial uses will be seasonal only (April 30 – November 1).

Small-scale commercial uses are consistent with surrounding land use designations. Agriculture (AG) allows for commercial activity as an outright permitted use and Resource Management (RM) allows for limited-scale lodging and recreation activities subject to a Use Permit. The large parcel sizes of the neighborhood contribute to the finding of no impacts to residential properties.

*D. The proposed change in land use designation is reasonable and beneficial at this time.*

The proposed uses enhance, diversify, and support the Mono Basin's tourism economy in a manner that is consistent with the rural setting of the neighborhood. As mentioned, the Specific Plan reduces the potential density on the parcel, while also providing additional implementation measures regarding fire safety, dark skies, and noise.

*E. The proposed change in land use designation will not have a substantial adverse effect on surrounding properties.*

As analyzed under California Environmental Quality Act ("CEQA") Guidelines Section 15183, the project is consistent with the General Plan EIR and Mono Basin Community Plan policies. The project will not increase density, as outlined in Finding The project also proposes further measures to reduce concerns related to safety, noise, and aesthetics. Implementation measures can be found under the attached Specific Plan (Attachment 2). As discussed in the CEQA Guidelines Section 15813 checklist (Attachment 1), the site is in a Moderate CalFire State Responsibility Area Zone (California State Geoportal, 2021). Project conditions to enhance fire safety are included in Goal 5 of the Specific Plan. The project proposes having fires only in designated campfire rings and campsites are subject to State defensible space standards, as indicated in the Specific Plan. Onsite water tanks provide an immediate water supply for fire suppression. CalFire expressed no concerns with serving the proposed project and the project is subject to state fire standards. While the Mono City Fire Department may respond to an incident on the property, it is outside their service area. The project is subject to the most restrictive fire standards between the USFS, BLM, and Mono County.

The project is not located in a State Scenic Highway corridor or the Mono Basin Scenic Area and would not have a significant adverse effect on a scenic vista. The project has no significant impacts, given that any new exterior lighting will be subject to General Plan Land Use Element Chapter 23, Dark Sky Regulations. The project is subject to additional measures, as outlined in the Specific Plan. New lighting, including lighting in Area 1, will be fully shielded and downward directed, with LED lighting temperature not to exceed 3000K. The project shall not use any reflective materials and shall use only dark, earth-tone colors.

The project must comply with Mono County Noise Ordinance standards, and per conditions of the specific plan, no amplified sound systems would be permitted, the campground shall abide by the noise limitations presented in Mono County Code Table 10.16.060(A). No special events are permitted. Commercial uses shall only occur between April 30 and November 1.

The project is subject to all implementation measures listed in the Mono Basin Hip Camp Specific Plan, which are designed to lessen or avoid impacts on surrounding land uses.

## **Exhibit B: CEQA 15183 Findings**

An Initial Study checklist has been created to determine whether there are project-specific significant effects that are peculiar to the project or to the site. As mandated by the CEQA Guidelines Section 15183, this checklist identifies whether environmental effects of the project:

1. *Are peculiar to the project or the parcel on which the project would be located;*

The project does not produce any effects peculiar to the project. The Specific Plan was designed to create provisions that were similar to or more restrictive than the existing RR land use designation, including lot coverage, setbacks, and density. The proposed uses are similar to those allowed in adjacent land use designations, including commercial activity on Agriculture (AG) and limited-scale lodging and recreational activities on Resource Management (RM), subject to Use Permit. In addition to the finding of no impacts, implementation measures contained within the Specific Plan further address concerns at the discretion of the County.

2. *Were not analyzed as significant effects in a prior EIR on the land use, general plan, or community plan, with which the project is consistent;*

No new effects were identified in the checklist that were not analyzed under the General Plan EIR or Mono Basin Community Plan.

3. *Are potentially significant off-site impacts and cumulative impacts which were not discussed in the prior EIR prepared for the General Plan, community plan, or land use.*

There are no off-site impacts or cumulative impacts identified in the checklist that were not covered by the General Plan EIR. The potential for impacts to neighboring properties, including noise and safety, are analyzed in the checklist and, in addition to the finding of no impacts, additional measures at the discretion of the County are identified in the Specific Plan.

Section 15183 also requires local agencies to determine:

1. *If environmental effects are identified as peculiar to the project and were not analyzed in a prior EIR, are there uniformly applied development policies or standards that would mitigate the environmental effects?*

There are no environmental effects that are identified as peculiar to the project that were not analyzed in a prior EIR. In addition to the finding of no impacts, implementation measures contained within the Specific Plan further address concerns at the discretion of the County.

2. *Are there previously identified significant effects which, because of substantial new information that was not known at the time the EIR was certified, are determined to have a more severe adverse impact than discussed in the prior EIR?*

For reasons discussed in the Initial Study, no information on previously identified significant effects have been identified that would cause a more severe adverse impact. Impacts to aspects such as noise generation, safety, and aesthetics will not be significantly greater than the effects already analyzed under the existing EIR. In addition to the finding of no impacts, measures identified in the Specific Plan at the discretion of the County will further address concerns of operating the site.