MONO COUNTY GENERAL PLAN UPDATE

CONSERVATION/OPEN SPACE
ELEMENT

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Table of Contents

I. Introduction **1**

II. Issues/Opportunities/Constraints **2**

Open Space 2
Biological Resources 2
Water Resources and Water Quality 3
Agriculture, Grazing, and Timber 4
Mineral Resources 5
Energy Resources & Resource Efficiency 5
Visual Resources ..... 6~~7~~
Outdoor Recreation ..... 7~~8~~
Cultural Resources ..... 7~~8~~
Public Health and Safety & Air Quality ..... 8~~9~~

III. Policies ..... **9~~1~~ ~~0~~**

Open Space ..... 9~~1~~ ~~0~~
Biological Resources ..... 10 ~~12~~
Water Resources and Water Quality ..... 17 ~~18~~
Agriculture, Grazing, and Timber ..... 25 ~~28~~
Mineral Resources ..... 29 ~~32~~
Energy Resources & Resource Efficiency ..... 33 ~~36~~
Visual Resources ..... 49 ~~54~~
Outdoor Recreation ..... 55 ~~60~~
Cultural Resources ..... 58 ~~63~~
Public Health and Safety & Air quality ..... 63 ~~68~~

DRAFT

TABLE OF TABLES

TABLE 1: Mono County Mineral Resource Classifications ..... 33 ~~36~~

TABLE 2: Mineral Land Classification Citations ..... 33 ~~36~~

TABLE OF FIGURES

FIGURE 1: Hot Creek Deer Migration Zone ..... 35 ~~38~~

FIGURE 2: Hot Creek Buffer Zone ..... 36 ~~39~~

DRAFT

I. INTRODUCTION

Mono County's Conservation/Open Space Element is a combination of mandatory General Plan elements: the Conservation Element and the Open Space Element.

State law (Government Code §65302 (d)) requires the Conservation Element to include policies for the conservation, development, and utilization of natural resources including water, forests, soils, rivers, lakes, fisheries, wildlife, minerals, and other natural resources. The Conservation Element shall consider the effect of development, as described in the Land Use Element, on natural resources located on public lands, including military installations, and shall identify rivers, creeks, streams, flood corridors, riparian habitats, and land that may accommodate floodwater for purposes of groundwater recharge. The Conservation Element may also address:

- The reclamation of land and water;
- Prevention and control of the pollution of streams and other waters;
- Regulation of the use of land in stream channels and other areas required for the accomplishment of the conservation plan;
- Prevention, control, and correction of the erosion of soils, beaches, and shores;
- Protection of watersheds; and
- The location, quantity and quality of the rock, sand and gravel resources.

The Open Space Element is the county's Open Space Plan. Open space is defined in Government Code §65560 as any parcel or area of land or water essentially unimproved and devoted to an open-space use and designated in an open space plan for one or more of the following reasons, to:

- Provide outdoor recreation;
- Preserve natural resources;
- Manage production of resources;
- Provide for public health and safety;
- Support the mission of military installations; and
- Protect Native American places, features and objects (see PRC §5097.9 and 5097.993).

This Element serves as the county's Open Space Plan and contains policies to designate lands for open-space uses.

An inventory of the county's resources (the Master Environmental Assessment or MEA) is the foundation of the Conservation/Open Space Element. The goals, objectives, policies, and actions in this Element are based upon information in the MEA. The Conservation/Open Space Element opens with an overall Open Space Goal followed by goals, objectives, policies, and actions for the following nine resource areas:

Biological Resources;
Water Resources and Water Quality;
Agriculture, Grazing, Timber;
Mineral Resources;
Energy Resources;
Visual Resources;
Outdoor Recreation;
Cultural Resources; and
Public Health and Safety.

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II. ISSUES/OPPORTUNITIES/CONSTRAINTS

OPEN SPACE

1. Approximately 94% of the land in Mono County is publicly owned; approximately 88% of the public land is federally owned. Public lands in the county are managed by the US Forest Service (USFS), the Bureau of Land Management (BLM), the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW), the State Lands Commission, and the Los Angeles Department of Water and Power (LADWP). Much of the federal land is managed as open space by the Humboldt-Toiyabe and Inyo national forests and the BLM in order to provide outdoor recreation opportunities, grazing opportunities, and to protect the natural resources. The County has no planning authority on those lands. Much of the land owned by the LADWP also remains open space in order to protect watershed values. LADWP lands are used for grazing and outdoor recreation. The County has planning authority on those lands except for activities directly relating to LADWP's public utility purpose.

2. Since such a great percentage of the land in the county remains open space and since the County has no direct authority over much of that land, one of Mono County's main concerns about open space is coordinating County policies with the land use policies of the agencies managing the public lands. The County is also concerned about the impacts of federal open space policies on county resources.

3. The open space value of lands owned by the LADWP and the Walker River Irrigation District (WRID) is a major concern. Much of that land was acquired for watershed protection and remains essentially open space. It includes wetlands, riparian and wildlife habitat, and land adjacent to and visible from scenic highways.

4. Open space within community areas for parks and recreational use is a concern. All of the communities in the county have existing park sites, but the extent and type of facilities at those sites vary. The Long Valley area also has a regional park facility at Whitmore that is shared with the Town of Mammoth Lakes. The desire to expand and/or improve existing facilities must be balanced with long-term maintenance costs. Increased population throughout the county will require increased community recreational facilities and maintenance costs (see Circulation Element for policies on facilities).

5. Most communities lack a comprehensive trail system for walking, biking, equestrian, and cross-country ski use, and are interested in developing local trail systems.

6. Various areas in Mono County are subject to a variety of natural hazards, including floods, fire, avalanches, and geologic hazards. The protection of those areas as open space is a valuable method of protecting people and property from the potential impacts of those hazards.

7. The Marine Corps Mountain Warfare Training Center (MCMWTC) operates a base on Department of Defense land along State Route 108, and utilizes training grounds primarily on US Forest Service (USFS) lands, both of which are outside the jurisdiction of Mono County. The MCMWTC is developing a conservation plan with the USFS to address the effects of military operations on natural resources, and a Military Encroachment Zone map is included in the General Plan maps at https://monomammoth.maps.arcgis.com/home/.

BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES

1. Mono County's fish and wildlife populations and plant communities contribute substantially to the tourist-based economy, recreation, and aesthetic enjoyment of the county's resources. These resources are important not only for their direct and indirect benefits to residents and visitors, but also for their inherent ecological value.

2. The biological resources in the county contribute to the local economy in several ways. Fishing, hunting, sightseeing, numerous recreational activities, agriculture and grazing are all directly dependent on the natural resources in the county.

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3. The protection and enhancement of natural habitats is a critical element in preserving and restoring the long-term existence of local wildlife. Riparian woodlands, wetlands, migration corridors, sagebrush steppe, and wintering and summering grounds are recognized as critical, highly localized wildlife habitat. Increased recreational use in the county and increased development, particularly in areas outside existing community areas, creates potential impacts to the long-term sustainability of fish and wildlife populations and plant communities through degradation of resources and increased conflicts between wildlife and humans.

4. The cumulative impacts of increased development and recreational usage on natural habitats and local wildlife are a major concern. In particular, the cumulative impacts of development on deer herds and sage grouse are a concern throughout the county.

5. Resource management agencies have given special status to a number of plant and animal species that are known or expected to occur in the county. In addition, a number of locally significant species have been identified. The protection of these species is a concern.

6. Endangered and threatened species, and their associated listings under the Endangered Species Act (ESA), are becoming a greater concern in Mono County. These species are valuable to Mono County, directly contributing to the local economy and recreational aspects, and representing healthy natural resources and landscape that is critical to quality of life.

7. ESA listings often cause an immediate fear of overregulation and a sense that community needs are incompatible with species conservation. However, Mono County has recently been successful cooperating with conservation partners to preclude a listing because of adequate species protection, demonstrating human activity can be compatible with species conservation. Even when the County does not directly participate in conservation efforts, utilizing best-available science to meet both conservation and community needs is in the County's best interest.

8. A number of agencies are involved in wildlife resource management in the county, including the USFS, BLM, CDFW, and the US Fish and Wildlife Service. Each of these agencies has jurisdiction over certain aspects of the protection and enhancement of wildlife habitat and local wildlife populations. The County must work with these agencies and other agencies that are responsible for other areas of resource management, such as the Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS), Lahontan Regional Water Quality Control Board, and the US Army Corps of Engineers.

9. The protection and enhancement of streams, wetlands, and riparian areas is a critical element in preserving and restoring water quality and water supply, and addressing ecological functions such as erosion, sedimentation, fire risk, and wildlife habitat. Increased development, recreation, and water development and/or extraction has the potential to impact the long term health of these ecological communities.

WATER RESOURCES AND WATER QUALITY

1. Water is a highly valued resource in Mono County. Rivers, streams, lakes, and aquifers supply water for domestic, agricultural and recreational uses, support abundant wildlife and fisheries, and are an important aesthetic component of the local landscape. As an example, Crowley Lake serves as a reservoir for the city of Los Angeles, provides habitat for fish and wildlife, and provides a variety of recreational opportunities. Water resources in Mono County have been heavily impacted over the years by the export of large volumes of water for use outside the county, a practice that has been detrimental to local water users and the natural environment within the county. The potential for future export, particularly of groundwater, is a continuing concern.

2. Water for future development is a concern. Communities are served by a variety of public and private entities such as public utility districts, community service districts, mutual water companies, small private systems and individual wells. . Existing water rights are in some cases inadequate for future expansion and additional surface water is becoming impossible to obtain due to concerns about in-stream and water-dependent resources. Inadequate and insufficient data about many groundwater resources hinders projections on meeting future demand from those sources. The California Statewide Groundwater Elevation

Monitoring program (CASGEM), initiated in 2009 has begun generating valuable groundwater data. Potential off-site impacts on natural resources as a result of groundwater extraction are also a concern. In addition, wells for existing development are running dry in some areas; pumping new and deeper wells is expensive. The Sustainable Groundwater Management Act of 2014 provides a framework for the future monitoring and management of groundwater resources statewide.

3. The availability of water for future development is also affected by new requirements concerning water quality. Existing community water systems that do not meet the standards set by the Lahontan Regional Water Quality Control Board will have to update their systems. The cost of doing so may inhibit the ability of those systems to provide additional water for future development.

4. Four communities have community sewer systems – Bridgeport, Lee Vining, June Lake, and Hilton Creek. Other areas are served by septic systems. Septic disposal requirements imposed by the Lahontan RWQCB affect the development potential in some areas. In areas that do not currently have sewer systems, the Lahontan RWQCB may require a sewer system deemed necessary to meet water quality objectives. The cost of installing and maintaining a system may preclude additional development in areas currently served by septic systems.

5. The county's current good water quality may be affected by land management practices, sewage disposal, construction practices, solid waste disposal, and road maintenance techniques. There is a concern in some areas about the potential impacts of increased storm-water runoff resulting from increased development. Potential impacts include increased stream flows, siltation, erosion, loss of aquatic habitat, and impacts to roads.

6. The sale or leasing of water for environmental restoration is an increasing concern in the northern portion of the county. Impacts to agricultural operations, wildlife habitat, and hydrologic resources and health could affect economic and landscape characteristics in the county.

AGRICULTURE, GRAZING, AND TIMBER

1. Livestock grazing (cattle and sheep) is a historic use in the county and one that contributes to the rural character of the area and to the area's scenic appeal. Much of the land used for grazing is federally owned. LADWP lands are also leased for grazing.

2. Agricultural land contributes to the area's scenic appeal as well as to the county's economy. Preservation of agricultural and grazing land can provide important open space and wildlife habitat, especially where there are pressures to develop intensively. The most productive agricultural lands are primarily located in the Antelope Valley, Bridgeport Valley, Long Valley, Fish Lake Valley and Tri-Valley. Some areas have experienced conflicts between agricultural uses and non-agricultural uses, primarily residential development, in the past, and could experience these conflicts again as the development market improves. The desire for increased residential development and smaller lot sizes in those areas conflicts with the need to maintain larger lot sizes for viable agricultural operations. Water availability, including groundwater, is a potential limiting factor for continued agricultural viability.

3. The County has participated in the Williamson Act, providing tax relief to agriculture landowners who agree to keep their lands in production. This program helps maintain the economic viability of agriculture in Mono County. The State previously reimbursed lost tax revenue through subvention payments, but this is no longer the case. Whether or not the County will continue to subsidize this program for the long term is a decision that will be made by the Board of Supervisors. The County is currently not accepting new Williamson Act contracts due to lack of subvention payments.

4. Sound agricultural management can be compatible with wildlife management objectives; e.g., sage grouse habitat, and greenhouse gas emission reduction through carbon sequestration, providing multiple resource benefits.

5. Except for fuelwood cutting, timber is rarely harvested commercially in the county and is a minor economic resource. Federal harvests would be regulated by federal timber policies, and harvests on private lands is regulated by Cal Fire.

MINERAL RESOURCES

1. Mono County has significant mineral resources within its boundaries. While the extraction of mineral resources is essential to the needs of society and contributes to the economy of Mono County, there is continuing concern over whether mineral resources should be developed, and, if development does occur, how to ensure that it will not cause significant adverse environmental impacts. Mono County may be preempted from imposing land use regulations on state or federal lands, however mining activities on state or federal lands must comply with County environmental regulations.

2. The Surface Mining and Reclamation Act of 1975 (SMARA) stipulates that local governments must plan for the conservation and development of identified significant mineral resource deposits and provide for the reclamation of mined lands. The intent of SMARA is to assure that "the production and conservation of minerals are encouraged, while giving consideration to values relating to recreation, watershed, wildlife, range and forage, and aesthetic enjoyment" (SMARA, Section 2712 (b)). While local jurisdictions are required to address the conservation and development of mineral resources as one factor in their land use planning, SMARA does not dictate land use policy. SMARA also requires the adoption of reclamation plans for active mining operations.

ENERGY RESOURCES & RESOURCE EFFICIENCY

1. Mono County has significant renewable energy resources within its boundaries, including geothermal, hydroelectric, biomass, solar and wind. Issues have arisen and will continue to arise as to whether these resources should be developed, and, if development does occur, how assurances can be made that it will not cause significant adverse effects on the environment. In addition, the impacts of long-distance transmission corridors associated with regional energy development projects are a growing concern.

2. Geothermal: The principal issues faced by Mono County regulatory authorities during the administrative proceedings accompanying the initial applications (in the 1980s) for existing geothermal permits involved the question of whether geothermal operations would affect the fumaroles and geothermally influenced pools, streams and springs in the Casa Diablo area, including Hot Creek Fish Hatchery and Hot Creek Gorge. The thermally influenced springs are also factors in the productivity of the Hot Creek Fish Hatchery. Impacts to deer herds and migration corridors is also a significant concern. Considerations of air quality impacts and public health and safety are extremely important for the use of these resources, as well as potential impacts to visual, biologic, and water resources. Through its permitting authority, the County imposed a detailed monitoring program that has yielded several years of data establishing less than significant impacts from the geothermal extraction activities of this project. Recently, a replacement plant was approved to increase efficiency, and a new plant was approved on adjacent USFS lands, over which the County had limited authority.

   Recently, interest in small-scale and residential geothermal applications through underground systems has been increasing. These systems are compatible with green building design and greenhouse gas reduction measures, which the County encourages, and are regulated by the California Building Code.

   Hydroelectric: Surface waters in Mono County provide valuable habitat for aquatic and terrestrial species as well as enhancing the visual quality of the surrounding landscape. The protection of these waters is of paramount importance, both for species directly or indirectly dependent on such resources, and for the support of the recreational economy. Certain streams in Mono County are already extensively diverted for hydroelectric power or to supply water for export. The environmental damage done by water diversions to riparian plant communities, wildlife, fisheries, and recreational and visual resources can be severe. County policies are directed toward restoring damage that has already occurred, preventing additional damage from occurring, and minimizing unacceptable change to stream environments.

3. Solar: Solar farms usually require large areas; therefore, the major impacts of commercial scale solar energy development include visual resource degradation, site disturbance, and habitat destruction. Commercial scale solar projects also utilize a substantial amount of water, which may or may not be readily available. Some of the best solar resources in the county are associated with valley floors, which are commonly used for agricultural production and provide key wildlife habitat for species like the sage grouse. At the residential scale, installations are largely controlled by the Solar Rights Act and California Building Code, and are compatible with green building design and greenhouse gas reduction measures. The County encourages residential solar by providing prescriptive designs for ground-mounted and roof-mounted installations.

4. Wind: there are significant wind resources within Mono County on both federal and private lands. Development of this energy source will inevitably involve the placement of tall towers which have visual, noise and biological resource impacts, including direct avian mortality. The County desires to influence any proposal for wind generation within Mono County to protect resources of interest.

5. Biomass: Creating a market for and utilizing woody biomass from fuel reduction, defensible space and habitat improvement projects is of significant interest due to the locally high fire hazard, species conservation efforts (such as pinyon and juniper tree removal for sage grouse habitat), and potential economic development benefits. In 2014, "A Comprehensive Feasibility Study for a Heat and/or Power Biomass Facility and Expanded Forest Products Utilization in Mono County, California," was completed. The study found an inadequate biomass supply for a combined heat-and-power (CHP) plant in the Mammoth Lakes area due to the 2:1 ratio necessary to obtain financing, and recommended development of thermal-only projects. Considerations of air quality, visual and biological impacts, as well as public health and safety, are extremely important in the development of any biomass project.

6. Other unanticipated energy resources could be proposed for development in Mono County. Impacts to environmental, social, and economic aspects, as well as public health and safety, are extremely important to consider in the use of other resources.

7. Electrical transmission lines and fluid conveyance pipelines (including gas pipelines) can be highly visible elements in the landscape if they are not routed and constructed carefully. Because of their linear nature and the need for access, not only for construction but for routine maintenance, the placement of transmission lines and pipelines often is not only conspicuous, but can contribute to erosion, water quality degradation, and loss of wildlife habitat.

8. Energy conservation can save consumers money, reduce air pollution and greenhouse gas emissions from fossil fuel generation and fuel burning, improve the use of resources, and reduce the need for energy production and transmission facilities. It is to the benefit of Mono County and its residents to pursue energy conservation and to use readily available alternative energy resources when such use is environmentally acceptable.

9. Waste reduction actions decrease the amount of material that ends up in a landfill, thereby reducing the GHGs produced in waste decomposition. They also help to conserve landfill space, decreasing the need for the County to dedicate additional space or develop potentially costly alternatives. These actions can save money as well; for example, efforts to reduce the amount of paper used in County government operations decreases the office supply costs for the County.

VISUAL RESOURCES

1. Outstanding scenery is one of Mono County's significant attributes. The county's scenic beauty and dramatic vistas attract tourists and recreationists, and are valued by residents.

2. Major issues to be addressed in protecting and enhancing visual resources in Mono County are protecting views from major travel routes and recreation destinations; improving the opportunity for visitors to view spectacular scenery (e.g., by providing additional turnouts and scenic vista points); designing community

and man-made structures to blend in and be compatible with the surrounding environment; and coordinating scenic policies of local and federal agencies so that they complement each other.

3. Mono County participates in the State Scenic Highways Program, and designated sections are described in the Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) in the Circulation Element (see Scenic Routes/Scenic Highway Designation in Issues and Needs chapter). County-designated Scenic Highways are also described in the RTP, along with federally designated Scenic Byways in Mono County. In addition, a Scenic Byway Planning Grant is underway to develop a formal plan and application to seek designation of US 395 through Mono County as a National Scenic Byway.

4. The visual impacts of utility corridors and overhead utility lines have become an issue both in community areas and undeveloped areas. The Public Utilities Commission (PUC) regulates transmission lines; the County has authority over some distribution lines. The Mono County General Plan currently requires underground utility lines unless certain findings can be made and a use permit is approved for overhead lines (see Chapter 11 of the Land Use Element).

5. The Mono County General Plan provides for design review in community areas through the implementation of a Design Review District. Currently, there is one Design Review District in the county in the Wheeler Crest Planning Area. The intent of this district is to maintain and enhance the aesthetic qualities of community areas. Similarly, the Scenic Combining District is intended to minimize the visual impacts of development in scenic areas outside communities, especially in areas adjacent to and visible from designated scenic highways and other important scenic areas.

OUTDOOR RECREATION

1. Natural resource-based outdoor recreation is and will continue to be the foundation of Mono County's economy. Maintaining the high quality of local recreation facilities and opportunities is a major goal requiring the preservation and enhancement of high-quality natural resources. Recreation issues involve providing community recreation facilities for residents; providing sufficient recreation facilities outside community areas for both residents and visitors; providing connections and trail links between communities and various recreation areas; using existing recreation areas and facilities more efficiently; and ensuring that the type of recreation use, where it is located, and when it is developed corresponds to the County's ability to support it with visitor accommodations and services.

   Since much of the recreation in the county takes place on federal lands, it is the federal land management agencies (USFS and BLM) that develop policies and facilities for the recreational use of that land. The County needs to participate in federal policy development and coordinate with those policies in order to avoid duplication of services and to maximize recreational opportunities in the county.

2. A variety of formal and informal stakeholder groups have formed around recreational issues and should be engaged in future recreation discussions.

CULTURAL RESOURCES

1. Mono County's cultural heritage is a rich and valuable resource. Excellent examples of Native American, mining, ranching, and recreational settlements exist in the county and several sites are nationally known. In Mono County, cultural resources include buildings, sites, structures, objects and districts of interest to Mono County, the region, California and the nation. The term "cultural resources" includes both archaeological and historical resources.

2. Despite cultural resources planning efforts at the federal, state and local levels, a large number of cultural resources outside settled communities remain uninventoried and without any type of preservation or protection. The chance that these resources will remain intact is diminishing rapidly. Ignorance, economic pressures, and increased development and recreational use contribute to the ongoing damage sustained by the county's cultural resources.

3. As is true for all of the county's resources, most of the cultural resources in the county are found on public lands. There are extensive federal and state laws governing the protection of cultural resources, both archaeological and historical. The USFS and the BLM have policies governing their implementation of these laws. The federal land management agencies also have inventories of cultural resources on their property.

4. There are several museums in the county, numerous historic sites, and numerous archaeological sites. The Native American groups in the area are active in cultural resources preservation, as are the museums, the USFS, and the BLM. There is an opportunity to coordinate these efforts.

PUBLIC HEALTH AND SAFETY & AIR QUALITY

1. Public Health and Safety issues in Mono County focus on air quality, water quality, noise levels, protection from hazardous materials and waste, and protection from natural hazards. Air quality is addressed in this section of the Conservation/Open Space Element; water quality is addressed in the Water Resources section of the Conservation/Open Space Element; noise is addressed in the Noise Element; hazardous materials and waste are addressed in Mono County's Integrated Waste Management Plan; and protection from natural hazards is addressed in the Safety Element.

2. One of the county's most valuable resources is its good air quality. The county is designated as a non-attainment area for the state particulate matter (PM_{10}) and ozone standards, and the Mono Basin is designated as a non-attainment area for the national PM_{10} standard. PM_{10} in the Mono Basin results primarily from dust from the exposed lakebed of Mono Lake; levels are higher on the north shore of Mono Lake than in Lee Vining due to the prevailing wind conditions. PM_{10} concentrations in the Mono Basin have remained relatively stable between 2000 and 2012 with much lower concentrations in Lee Vining and higher concentrations on the north shore (see www.arb.ca.gov, PM_{10} Trends Summary). For ozone, the State Air Resources Board concluded that ozone exceedance in the Great Basin Air Basin (Alpine, Inyo and Mono Counties) was caused by transport from the San Joaquin Valley Air Basin; the Great Basin Unified Air Pollution Control District adopted an Ozone Attainment Plan for Mono County that identified the county as an ozone-transport area, and required the adoption of a New Source Review Rule requiring Best Available Control Technology for emissions over 25 tons per year.

3. The Great Basin Unified Air Pollution Control District (GBUAPCD) regulates air quality in the area and establishes standards for the area. Currently, the GBUAPCD is focusing its efforts in Mono County on Mammoth and the Mono Basin. Mammoth has established regulation to control wood-burning emissions as part of its plan to meet the agency's standards. Similar regulations may be applicable in other areas of the county, such as June Lake and Crowley Lake. There is also the potential in these areas for increased transit services to reduce emissions in order to meet the agency's standards.

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III. POLICIES

OPEN SPACE

GOAL 1. Preserve natural open-space resources which contribute to the general welfare and quality of life for residents and visitors in Mono County and to the maintenance of the county's tourism economy.

Objective 1.A.
Preserve existing open space.

Policy 1.A.1. Concentrate development in existing communities in order to preserve large expanses of open space.

Action 1.A.1.a. Implement policies in the Land Use Element that promote development in existing communities.

Policy 1.A.2. Outside existing communities, cluster development in order to maximize open space.

Action 1.A.2.a. Implement policies in the Land Use Element that limit development outside existing communities.

Policy 1.A.3. Protect agricultural uses to maintain the open-space character of the county.

Action 1.A.3.a. Maintain large lot sizes in agricultural areas in order to protect agricultural uses.

Action 1.A.3.b. Avoid conversion of lands currently used for agricultural production to non-agricultural use, unless such a conversion could enhance other critical resource values.

Action 1.A.3.c. Support the Land Conservation Act of 1965 (the Williamson Act) to preserve open space and agricultural uses of land within the fiscal means of the County and as directed by the Board of Supervisors.

Action 1.A.3.d. Upon full restoration of subvention payments from the State, consider approving new Williamson Act contracts.

Policy 1.A.4. Continue to designate undeveloped lands owned by out of county agencies such as the Los Angeles Department of Water and Power (LADWP), and the Walker River Irrigation District (WRID), or by utility entities such as Liberty Utilities, and Southern California Edison (SCE) as "Open Space" ("OS") in the Land Use Element. Exceptions to this policy may include lands adjacent to community areas needed for community uses, or lands outside community areas needed for public purposes.

Policy 1.A.5. Restrict development in areas constrained by natural hazards, including but not limited to, flood, geologic hazards and avalanche hazards.

Action 1.A.5.a. Implement policies contained in the Safety Element.

Policy 1.A.6. Coordinate policies in the county General Plan with policies in the USFS's Land and Resource Management Plans for the Inyo and Humboldt-Toiyabe national forests and the BLM's Resource Management Plan in order to coordinate open-space programs.

Policy 1.A.7. Implement policies in other sections of the General Plan relating to preservation of open space.

Policy 1.A.8. Work with appropriate agencies, organizations, and individuals to preserve open space permanently for wildlife habitat, viewshed values, recreational uses, or other resource protection purposes.

Action 1.A.8.a. Keep current on land acquisition and disposal plans and activities of federal and state land management agencies and the LADWP in order to achieve a coordinated effort to preserve and maintain open space for purposes such as natural resource protection, scenic views and recreation.

Action 1.A.8.b. During the Specific Plan and subdivision processes, consider conditions of approval such as the use of open space, conservation, and scenic easements; the dedication of open space by project sponsors; the use of deed restrictions that require setbacks and the preservation of natural vegetation and wildlife habitat, cultural resources and recreational values; or other provisions that preserve the open-space values of an area.

Action 1.A.8.c. Consider full fee acquisition by the County or other agencies through purchase at fair market value.

Action 1.A.8.d. Evaluate available methods to encourage the acquisition of key open-space areas for resource values, including the use of taxes, tax-incentives, state and federal funding, grants, and other programs.

Action 1.A.8.e. Consider the use of Transfer of Development Rights (TDR) or Purchase of Development Rights (PDR) to preserve additional open space.

Action 1.A.8.f. Investigate private funding, including conservation groups such as the Eastern Sierra Land Trust, Nature Conservancy or Trust for Public Lands.

Action 1.A.8.g. Continue supporting local land conservation organizations, such as the Eastern Sierra Land Trust.

Action 1.A.8.h. Outside community areas, consider land trades involving private lands in Mono County and federal lands elsewhere.

Objective 1.B.
Improve the health, resilience and carbon sequestration capacity of the natural and agricultural landscape.

Policy 1.B.1. Maintain and manage open space to protect from fire and erosion.

Action 1.B.1.a. Proactively manage the county's current parks, open space, recreational facilities, and other natural areas owned or operated by the County to ensure the long-term health and viability of trees and other vegetation.

Action 1.B.1.b. Evaluate future opportunities to convert closed landfills to open space.

Policy 1.B.2. Encourage other programs that protect natural areas.

Action 1.B.2.a. Promote biomass heat/energy utilization projects meeting environmental standards as a means to incentivize fuel reduction projects for healthy forests by creating an economic market for woody biomass.

Policy 1.B.3. Provide open space in support of the mission of military installations; e.g., the Marine Corps Mountain Warfare Training Center (MCMWTC).

Action 1.B.3.a. Implement policies in the Land Use Element to prevent incompatible land uses and provide for military activities.

BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES

GOAL 2. Maintain an abundance and variety of vegetation, aquatic and wildlife types in Mono County for recreational use, natural diversity, scenic value, and economic benefits.

Objective 2.A.
Maintain and restore botanical, aquatic and wildlife habitats in Mono County.

Policy 2.A.1. Future development projects shall avoid potential significant impacts to animal or plant habitats or mitigate impacts to a level of non-significance, unless a statement of overriding considerations is made through the EIR process.

Action 2.A.1.a. Future development projects with the potential to significantly impact animal or plant habitats shall assess site-specific resource values and potential impacts prior to project approval. Examples of potential significant impacts include:

a. substantially affecting a candidate, sensitive, rare or endangered species of animal or plant or the habitat of the species; and/or

b. interfering substantially with the movement of any resident or migratory fish or wildlife species; and/or

c. substantially diminishing habitat for fish, wildlife, or plants, including wetlands and riparian areas.

The analysis shall:

a. be funded by the applicant;

b. be prepared by a qualified person under the direction of Mono County and in consultation with the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW);

c. assess existing conditions in the general project vicinity, including the identification of any listed or candidate threatened or endangered species or habitats of special concern, and annual and daily wildlife movement patterns and corridors;

d. describe the impacts of the proposed development upon animal and plant habitat extent, quality and connectivity within the project site and on surrounding areas; and

e. recommend project alternatives or measures and monitoring to avoid or mitigate impacts to animal and plant habitat.

Mitigation measures and associated monitoring programs shall be included in the project plans and specifications, and shall be made a condition of approval for the project. The project sponsor shall fund the monitoring and shall be responsible for remedying deficiencies.

Action 2.A.1.b. Project design should first seek to avoid impacts. Unavoidable impacts should next be minimized, and finally mitigated. Examples of potential appropriate mitigation measures for projects identified by Action 1.1 as having significant impacts to animal and plant habitats include:

a. requiring cluster development and/or large acre minimum parcel sizes (e.g., in key deer habitat, at least 20 acres for winter range and migration corridors, and at least 40 acres for critical winter range and critical corridors);

b. encouraging future development to locate in less-sensitive areas or on sites adjacent to previously developed areas;

c. encouraging fence designs that allow for the movement of wildlife and protect against mortality (e.g., sage grouse);

d. where necessary, requiring leash laws as a condition of project approval, in order to control domestic animals in developments in key wildlife habitat. Encourage monitoring and reporting of dog/wildlife problems in developments in deer and sage grouse habitat;

e. requiring project designs to: a) protect important habitat features that are difficult or impossible to replace such as springs and seeps, large trees, old growth, relatively undisturbed caves, wetlands, water courses or water bodies; b) protect or replace valuable habitat features such as snags, downed logs, man-made water sources, salt licks, spawning grounds, leks, thermal cover, and other features where feasible; and/or c) minimize or eliminate the loss of wildlife trails and collision threats associated with roadway crossings;

f. requiring project designs to protect important cultural features that also function as wildlife habitat, such as, but not limited to, abandoned mine workings that function as habitat for bat species and small mammals, and as shelter for a variety of avian species;

g. maintaining and enhancing cover to provide visual barriers to help maintain habitat use. For example, terrain features, vegetation, and shielded lighting can be utilized to reduce or avoid visual disturbance impacts in major deer use areas;

h. when wetland and riparian disturbance cannot be avoided, seek restoration of adjacent habitat or compensation through an acceptable mitigation fee or other program pursuant to CEQA requirements to meet Section 404 of the Clean Water Act;

i. designing projects to limit the conveyance of pollutants and sediments from runoff into wetlands and riparian areas (see Appendix B, Low Impact Development guidelines);

j. requiring project design to minimize the redirection of wildlife movement, and in no case shall linear barriers such as fences or other design features direct wildlife onto highly traveled roadways;

k. requiring project with the potential to impact nesting bird populations to consult with appropriate state and federal agencies, and potentially prepare a nesting bird plan approved by CDFW as a condition of approval; and

l. requiring development projects affecting and adjacent to wetland or riparian areas to undertake habitat restoration, including the removal of non-native species, when feasible, to ensure ecosystem function.

Action 2.A.1.c. Consult with and honor the permitting and regulatory authority of state and federal agencies, including the US Army Corps of Engineers, the USFWS, CDFW, and the State Water Resources Control Board, with regard to wetlands and waterways.

Action 2.A.1.d. Native vegetation is strongly encouraged for landscaping, erosion control, or other purposes. Use of non-native vegetation shall require an assessment and mitigation of the effects of the introduced species, and in no case shall invasive non-native species be approved.

Action 2.A.1.e. Landscaping and revegetation plans shall include measures to control invasive, non-native plants including weeds and annual grasses.

Action 2.A.1.f. For non-native plant removal, mechanical controls should be considered over chemical controls, where possible.

Action 2.A.1.g. Projects outside community areas within identified deer and sage grouse habitat areas, (see the Biological Resources Section of the Master Environmental Assessment), which may have a significant effect on deer or sage grouse resources shall submit a site-specific study performed by a recognized and experienced biologist in accordance with Action 1.1.

Action 2.A.1.h. Projects with features that have the potential to be attractive nuisances to wildlife shall include an assessment of the potential impacts from those features in the project analysis and proposed mitigation measures.

Action 2.A.1.i. Mining development projects shall be required to submit a Reclamation Plan with the project application. Other types of projects (e.g., geothermal development) may be required to submit a Reclamation Plan with the project application. The Reclamation Plan must comply with the standards in Mono County Code (section 7.10).

Action 2.A.1.j. In accordance with CEQA, monitor adopted mitigation measures and refine future efforts as appropriate.

Action 2.A.1.k. The County may initiate cumulative impact assessments for selected wildlife resources if it appears that the combined effects of multiple projects may be significant. Such assessments shall be funded from appropriate development fees or other available sources.

Action 2.A.1.l. Limit road development in valuable habitat areas to the minimum required to achieve necessary access.

Action 2.A.1.m. Geothermal projects within the Hot Creek deer migration zone (see Figure 1) shall not be permitted unless a finding is made that potential impacts to deer have been avoided or mitigated to a level of non-significance.

Action 2.A.1.n. Geothermal projects within the Hot Creek deer migration zone may be prevented upon a finding that they will interfere with adopted regulations or herd plan goals of the CDFW.

Action 2.A.1.o. Where other mitigation measures cannot reduce impacts to a level of non-significance, a mitigation fee levied on proposed development may be used to enhance habitat elsewhere. In some crucial, non-replaceable habitats, this may not be a viable option.

Action 2.A.1.p. In coordination with the CDFW and other appropriate agencies, provide information and educational programs to landowners and developers on how to improve wildlife habitat on their property.

Action 2.A.1.q. Work with the CDFW, Caltrans, and other appropriate agencies to develop, fund and implement a program to minimize wildlife collisions (also see the Regional Transportation Plan).

Action 2.A.1.r. Work with the USFWS to ensure compliance with the Migratory Bird Treaty Act[1].

Policy 2.A.2. Protect and restore threatened and endangered plant and animal species and their habitats.

Action 2.A.2.a. If a project is likely to have significant impacts on any state or federally listed threatened or endangered species, the County will consult fully with appropriate agencies and organizations, such as the CDFW, the USFWS, and the CNPS, concerning project alternatives and mitigation measures.

Action 2.A.2.b. Support the acquisition of areas with threatened or endangered species by federal or state land management agencies or land conservation organizations.

Action 2.A.2.c. Work with appropriate agencies and organizations to investigate the feasibility of establishing preservation areas to protect and restore threatened and endangered species.

[1] Recommended conservation measures are available at http://www.fws.gov/birds/management/project-assessment-tools-and-guidance/conservation-measrues.php

Action 2.A.2.d. Work with the USFWS and other appropriate agencies to protect and restore listed species and their habitats while also minimizing impacts to county residents and visitors.

Policy 2.A.3. Protect and restore sensitive plants, wildlife and their habitat, and those species of exceptional scientific, ecological, or scenic value.

Action 2.A.3.a. Enforce maximum site disturbance standards in appropriate land use designations in the Mono County General Plan.

Action 2.A.3.b. Require landscape plans to incorporate the use of native vegetation when feasible. The transplanting of existing vegetation and use of locally collected seed may be required in the landscape plan.

Action 2.A.3.c. When applicable, revegetation and landscape plans should include provisions to retain and re-establish upland vegetation, especially bitterbrush and sagebrush, as important mule deer and sage grouse habitat.

Action 2.A.3.d. In order to protect their special value to plant diversity and wildlife habitat, limit development in edge zones, riparian areas, and wetlands.

Action 2.A.3.e. Projects within key sage grouse habitat shall not be permitted unless a finding is made that potential impacts have been avoided or mitigated to a level of non-significance or a statement of overriding considerations is approved. Potential mitigation measures may include:

- Minimizing site disturbance and limiting it to the poorest quality habitat on the parcel (e.g., near trees, away from leks and water, etc.);
- Siting structures taller than 6 feet or above the sagebrush average height outside the line of sight of a lek;
- Minimizing the installation of fencing and all fencing shall be of a wildlife friendly design, which may include the following specifications: not taller than 42", three strands, bottom strand a minimum of 16" from the ground, top wire marked for visibility, lay down and let-down fencing, and avoidance of posts serving as avian predator perches. Other designs may be warranted depending on the wildlife concerns of the areas, and the BLM, USFWS and/or CDFW should be consulted;
- Installing perch deterrents on structures taller than 6 feet or above the sagebrush average height;
- Controlling domestic animals on the property;
- Designating seasonal use restrictions;
- Restoring native vegetation or otherwise improving vegetative habitat, including removal of invasive trees and annual grasses, and reducing fire risk on nearby public lands;
- Contributing financially to an established program undertaking habitat restoration within Mono County; and
- Including other measures developed in consultation with key Bi-State sage grouse partners (e.g., USFWS, CDFW, BLM, USFS), including considerations to mitigate impacts to reduced connectivity and fragmentation.

Action 2.A.3.f. Review ministerial permits in sage grouse habitat for impacts and make every effort to work with the applicant to include mitigation measures, including those in Action 2.A.3.e.

Action 2.A.3.g. Participating in collaborative conservation efforts to minimize adverse impacts to sensitive species.

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Action 2.A.3.h. Maintenance agreements and procedures for roads and other infrastructure shall consider impacts to special-status species including consultation with appropriate state and federal agencies.

Policy 2.A.4. Participate in the Bi-State Local Area Working Group on sage grouse conservation and assist with the implementation of the Bi-State Action Plan.

Action 2.A.4.a. Assist with coordination, communication and administration of the working group and associated conservation efforts, including reporting, education events, and outreach.

Action 2.A.4.b. Partner on sage grouse conservation projects and monitoring, including habitat management and improvement, signage, drainage improvements, fence removal and modification, and annual lek counts.

Action 2.A.4.c. Work with partners to implement the Bi-State Action Plan over the next 10 years, including responsibilities specific to Mono County such as the development of General Plan policies (included in this Element) and planning for the closure of Benton Crossing Landfill.

Policy 2.A.5. Prohibit construction activities such as grading in sensitive habitats prior to environmental review in compliance with CEQA and the Mono County Grading Ordinance.

Policy 2.A.6. During construction, utilize soil conservation practices and management techniques to conserve naturally occurring soils.

Action 2.A.6.a. Projects requiring a grading permit shall prepare a plan for the protection, conservation, and future use of naturally occurring soils that are suitable as a plant growth medium. The plan shall ensure that stockpiled soils and graded materials are protected from contamination, chemical and physical degradation, and erosion throughout all stages of the project life.

Policy 2.A.7. Support the acquisition of valuable wildlife habitat by federal or state land management agencies or land conservation organizations.

Action 2.A.7.a. Support acquisition of important wildlife areas through outright purchase, land donations, trades, purchase of easements, and related options.

Action 2.A.7.b. Provide information to property owners on incentives for protecting key wildlife habitat, including conservation easements, purchase at fair market value, land trades, etc.

Action 2.A.7.c. Work with appropriate agencies and organizations to investigate the feasibility of establishing habitat preservation areas to protect and improve significant habitat areas.

Action 2.A.7.d. The Economic Development Department should work with the Fisheries Commission to advise the County on fish and related wildlife issues.

Policy 2.A.8. Restrict or seasonally limit OHV and other recreational uses in valuable habitat areas in order to protect those resources.

Policy 2.A.9. Maintain water quality for fishery habitat by enforcing the policies contained in the Water Quality and Agriculture / Grazing/ Timber sections of the Conservation/Open Space Element.

Policy 2.A.10. Support efforts to regulate in-stream flows and lake levels to maintain fishery and other wildlife values, including riparian habitat.

Action 2.A.10.a. Cooperate with the CDFW to obtain adequate habitat protection in connection with Stream or Lake Alteration Agreements and in-stream flow agreements when required for developments.

Action 2.A.10.b. Study the feasibility of enlarging existing reservoirs, or implementing other alternatives in order to enhance fishery and wildlife resources. Various alternatives include improving water quality and water-bird nesting, and establishing minimum pools.

Action 2.A.10.c. Encourage restoration of fishery and riparian habitat that has been degraded or lost.

Action 2.A.10.d. Work with the CDFW and other appropriate agencies to prevent and remove unnatural blockages and other impediments to fish movement wherever appropriate.

Policy 2.A.11. In order to provide richer angling diversity, and to increase the wild trout population and stimulate tourism, support efforts to manage fisheries in accordance with their biological capabilities.

Action 2.A.11.a. Support the development and implementation of trout enhancement programs by the Mono County Economic Development Department.

Action 2.A.11.b. Work with the CDFW and other appropriate entities to enhance fishery resources. Potential projects include improving spawning areas, providing additional angler education and interpretive programs and facilities.

Action 2.A.11.c. Pursue grant funding for fisheries enhancement.

Policy 2.A.12. Promote the non-consumptive use of existing fisheries, where appropriate.

Action 2.A.12.a. Work with the CDFW and other appropriate entities to identify appropriate areas for catch-and-release programs or other appropriate restrictions, and to implement such programs or restrictions.

Action 2.A.12.b. Work with the CDFW and other appropriate entities to provide educational material on the non-consumptive use of fisheries; e.g., information on the proper technique for catch-and-release fishing.

Policy 2.A.13. Support state and federal efforts to maintain trout fisheries in appropriate remote locations. (See CDFW's High Mountain Lakes Project Region 6.)

Action 2.A.13.a. Support continued and/or enhanced stocking of appropriate backcountry lakes.

Action 2.A.13.b. Recognize certain lakes and streams in the backcountry may be more appropriate for the conservation of sensitive, threatened or endangered species, such as the listed Sierra Nevada yellow-legged frog. These habitats are likely to be isolated water bodies with natural barriers to fish in wilderness areas, free of chytrid fungus infection, lacking self-sustaining fish populations, and identified for habitat protection by the CDFW.

Policy 2.A.14. When feasible, supplement CDFW fish stocking efforts with a County-supported stocking program.

Action 2.A.14.a. As funding permits, continue the County's current fish stocking program.

Policy 2.A.15. Develop and implement programs to use county Fish and Wildlife fine revenues, and other state and federal funds, to meet the objective of maintaining and restoring botanical, aquatic and wildlife habitats in the county. Possible programs could include measures to improve fish and wildlife habitat (e.g., placement of cattle fencing and fish screens), implementation of measures to reduce deer road kill, etc.

Action 2.A.15.a. Prioritize projects benefitting sage grouse habitat such as fence removal or retrofit (with markers and/or letdown features), perch deterrents on potential raptor perches, grading or road projects to improve hydrologic flow, and raven control at the Benton Crossing Landfill.

WATER RESOURCES AND WATER QUALITY

GOAL 3. Ensure the availability of adequate surface and groundwater resources to meet existing and future domestic, agricultural, recreational, and natural resource needs in Mono County.

Objective 3.A.
Continue to develop a comprehensive countywide water resource database.

Policy 3.A.1. Compile baseline data and assessments on the basic components of watersheds and their hydrologic units including groundwater basins, within the county.

Action 3.A.1.a. Cooperate with relevant agencies and organizations to develop and maintain a comprehensive hydrologic record of watersheds, hydrologic units and groundwater basins.

Action 3.A.1.b. Reference local watershed assessments and other available data for existing conditions and incorporate assessment results into resource management planning.

Action 3.A.1.c. Continue to support and implement the California Statewide Groundwater Elevation Monitoring (CASGEM) program and comply with the requirements of the Sustainable Groundwater Management Act of 2014 (SGMA).

Action 3.A.1.d. Work with local water providers, LADWP, the Tri-Valley Groundwater Management District, Walker River Irrigation District, Lahontan RWQCB and other water and resource management agencies to calculate water budgets[2] and develop water management plans for each watershed in the county.

Action 3.A.1.e. Support research and monitoring to better understand impacts of water-related projects on environmental resources.

Objective 3.B.
Identify and secure adequate water for future local domestic needs while maintaining natural resources.

Policy 3.B.1. Assist and encourage the communities of Mono County and local special districts to secure additional water rights within local water basins as necessary for the orderly growth of local communities.

Policy 3.B.2. Encourage the preparation of water management plans by local water providers.

Action 3.B.2.a. Assist special districts in securing available grant moneys for water management planning.

Policy 3.B.3. Encourage the USFS and the BLM to assist local communities in securing the water resources necessary to accommodate community demands, particularly those demands that directly and indirectly result from increased activities on adjacent federal lands.

Action 3.B.3.a. Review and comment on development proposals on federal lands and require full environmental review on out-of-drainage transfers.

Policy 3.B.4. Work with small water systems to comply with state and federal requirements.

Action 3.B.4.a. Continue to support regional cooperative efforts to pursue funding for development, implementation, monitoring, and long-term maintenance of small water systems.

[2]A water budget is a model of the relationship between the inputs and outputs of a particular hydrologic unit.

Policy 3.B.5. Encourage the consolidation of small water providers to increase operational and service efficiency.

Action 3.B.5.a. Require new developments to be served by existing water providers, where feasible, rather than creating new service entities.

Policy 3.B.6. Future development projects shall avoid potential significant impacts to local surface and groundwater resources or mitigate impacts to a level of non-significance, unless a statement of overriding considerations is made through the EIR process.

Action 3.B.6.a. Future development projects with the potential to significantly impact surface or groundwater resources shall assess any potential impacts prior to project approval. Examples of potential significant impacts include:

a. substantially degrading or depleting surface or groundwater resources; and/or

b. interfering substantially with groundwater recharge.

The analysis shall:

a. be funded by the applicant;

b. be prepared by a qualified person under the direction of Mono County;

c. assess existing conditions in the general project vicinity;

d. identify the quantity of water to be used by the project. Quantities shall be estimated for annual totals, monthly averages, and peak day/peak month usage;

e. identify the source(s) of water for the project and provide proof of entitlement to that water. If the proposed source is to be a special district or mutual water system, a "will-serve" letter shall be required. If the proposed source is ground or surface water, the application shall indicate that the proponent has entitlement to the source and the quantity of water required;

f. describe the impacts of the proposed development upon water resources within the project site and on surrounding areas, including a drawdown analysis of groundwater (when applicable) through pump test(s); and

g. recommend project alternatives or measures to avoid or mitigate impacts to water resources.

Mitigation measures and associated monitoring programs shall be included in the project plans and specifications and shall be made a condition of approval for the project.

Policy 3.B.7. Limit development to a level that can be reasonably supported by available local water resources.

Action 3.B.7.a. Require development projects to obtain "will serve" letters from applicable service agencies.

Action 3.B.7.b. For areas not served by an existing water system, require future development projects to demonstrate, prior to permit issuance, that sufficient water exists to serve both domestic and fire-flow needs of the development and that use of that water will not deplete or degrade water supplies in the area, or adversely impact natural resources.

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Action 3.B.7.c. Deny development projects that have not demonstrated the availability or entitlement to a supply of water adequate to meet the needs of the proposed project and as required by SB 610 and SB 211.

Objective 3.C.
Conserve Mono County's water resources and water supply while maintaining ecosystem health through water conservation programs.

Policy 3.C.1. Encourage reduced water consumption in residential and nonresidential properties.

Action 3.C.1.a. Encourage and promote the installation of residential gray-water systems on existing residential and commercial properties that meet appropriate regulatory standards.

Action 3.C.1.b. Encourage installation of water conservation measures, including recycled water projects where feasible, in new and existing homes, businesses and County facilities.

Action 3.C.1.c. Encourage new residential and commercial construction and new County facilities to exceed CALGreen water conservation requirements.

Action 3.C.2.d. Encourage prospective homebuyers to conduct water efficiency audits at point of sale for commercial and residential properties.

Action 3.C.2.e. Assess, maintain, repair, and program existing irrigation systems to minimize water use, including parking lot landscaping, public restrooms and parks, and recreational facilities.

Action 3.C.2.f. Encourage and support regional water conservation strategies through partnerships such as the Inyo Mono Integrated Regional Water Management Group.

Policy 3.C.3. Water intensive development proposals shall include water conservation measures as a condition of approval of the project.

Action 3.C.3.a. Implement the Water Efficient Landscape Ordinance.

Policy 3.C.4. Encourage effective water conservation programs for communities outside Mono County that benefit from water resources originating in the county.

Objective 3.D.
Protect the Public Trust values of the resources of Mono County. (The Public Trust doctrine recognizes that some types of natural resources are held in trust by government for the benefit of the public. Water resources have been recognized historically as a resource subject to the public trust.)

Policy 3.D.1. Encourage and support agencies responsible for reviewing water rights applications to consider the effects of existing and proposed water diversions upon interests protected by the Public Trust.

Action 3.D.1.a. If necessary, file formal protests with the State Water Resources Control Board when the County determines that granting a water rights application would be harmful to Public Trust values.

Action 3.D.1.b. Require water projects that may impact Public Trust values to avoid or mitigate those potential adverse impacts.

Policy 3.D.2. Oppose any legislative or regulatory efforts to undermine or weaken protection afforded to county water resources by the Public Trust.

Objective 3.E.
Encourage the beneficial use of water resources while protecting local water users and biological resources from the adverse effects of water transfers.

Policy 3.E.1. Regulate out-of-basin water transfers from private lands in the unincorporated area of the county, in accordance with the following actions.

Action 3.E.1.a. Where not preempted by state law, require a water transfer permit from the Mono County Planning Commission for out-of-basin water transfers.

Action 3.E.1.b. Applications for permits for out-of-basin water transfers shall be submitted to the county Planning Division and shall include the following information:

a. point of extraction;

b. amount of extraction;

c. nature and location of conveyance facilities; and

d. identification of potential impacts to the environment such as wildlife and riparian habitat, wetlands, in-stream habitat, other water users (e.g., agricultural operators), and also including indirect effects such as the potential for increased flood risk due to reduced wetlands, and increased fire hazard risk that could result in increased sedimentation and reduced groundwater recharge capacity.

Applications for water transfer permits shall include a processing fee, together with applicable environmental fees.

Action 3.E.1.c. In addition to the Groundwater Transfer Ordinance findings, the Planning Commission shall make the following findings to issue a water transfer permit:

a. That the proposed project meets all reasonable beneficial water needs, including uses in-stream and for agricultural operations and recreational purposes, within the basin of origin; and

b. That the proposed project adequately protects water quality, in-stream flows, lake levels, riparian areas, vegetation types, sensitive/rare wildlife and habitat, and related resources such as the visual quality and character of the landscape; and is not likely to increase indirect effects such as flooding, wildfire, and/or sedimentation, or reduce groundwater recharge capacity. Projects that do not adequately protect these resources shall be denied.

Action 3.E.1.d. The Planning Commission shall review all water export projects in the unincorporated area for consistency with the County General Plan and any applicable Area Plans.

Policy 3.E.2. Implement the Groundwater Transfer Ordinance for out-of-basin groundwater transfers, and consider other local mechanisms to regulate groundwater exports including the provisions of the Sustainable Groundwater Management Act.

Action 3.E.2.a. Initiate the process to establish local Groundwater Sustainability Agencies where required by law to monitor groundwater use and regulate out-of-basin groundwater transfers in appropriate areas of the county.

Action 3.E.2.b. Applications for groundwater export projects shall obtain a Groundwater Transfer permit (Mono County Code section 20.01), which requires the assessment of the potential impacts of the project prior to project approval in accordance with CEQA, and requires findings to be made. In addition, indirect impacts of increased wildfire risk and sedimentation resulting from fire, and increased flood risk and reduced recharge rates due to reduced or degraded wetlands and riparian areas, should be considered.

Policy 3.E.3. Oppose federal and state legislation and regulations that provide preferential status to out-of-county water appropriators or that allow for increased water diversions from Mono County.

Policy 3.E.4. Evaluate participation in the Walker Basin Restoration Program (WBRP).

Action 3.E.4.a. Pursue funding with the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation (NFWF) to collect and analyze all the information necessary for the County to determine if and how participation in the WBRP may be possible, including full CEQA review to assess the potential effects on various resources, a potential pilot water transaction program, and any necessary General Plan policy updates.

Action 3.E.4.b. Ensure any participation in the WBRP is consistent with General Plan policies, particularly the area plan polices for the Antelope and Bridgeport Valleys, and policies to protect agricultural uses and natural resources.

Objective 3.F.
Promote the restoration and maintenance of Mono Lake, tributary streams, and downstream areas of the aqueduct system in Mono County, including Grant Lake, the Upper Owens River, Crowley Lake, and the Owens River Gorge.

Policy 3.F.1. Work with the appropriate agencies to develop and implement a comprehensive water management plan for Mono Basin and the downstream areas of the aqueduct system. The water management plan should ensure that Mono Lake and the local aqueduct system are managed in a manner that protects the ecological and fisheries values of the Mono Basin and downstream areas of the aqueduct system.

Action 3.F.1.a. Support the State Water Resources Control Board Decision 1631 requiring minimum flows to Mono Lake to maintain the lake level over 6,391 feet above mean sea level.

Action 3.F.1.b. Support management of the aqueduct system that avoids drastic fluctuations in stream flows.

Action 3.F.1.c. Ensure that any comprehensive water management plan developed as per Policy 1, above, is consistent with the USFS's existing Comprehensive Management Plan for the Mono Basin National Forest Scenic Area.

Action 3.F.1.d. Manage Crowley Reservoir to protect its fishery and recreational opportunities.

Action 3.F.1.e. Manage the Upper Owens River to protect the quality of the fishery.

Objective 3.G.
Reestablish streams impacted by diversions in the Mono Basin and Long Valley hydrologic units with flows adequate to support fish populations, riparian habitat, and associated recreational and scenic values.

Policy 3.G.1. Support minimum flows in all streams impacted by water diversions.

Action 3.G.1.a. Review technical documents prepared for the Mono Basin, Upper Owens, and Crowley Lake areas in order to provide input to the LADWP's water management plan on a periodic basis.

Policy 3.G.2. Provide land use controls that facilitate the restoration of impacted stream channels and adjacent areas.

GOAL 4. Protect the quality of surface and groundwater resources to meet existing and future domestic, agricultural, recreational, and natural resource needs in Mono County.

Objective 4.A.

To the extent not preempted by State or Federal law, preserve, maintain, and enhance surface and groundwater resources to protect Mono County's water quality and water-dependent resources from the adverse effects of development and degradation of water-dependent resources, including compliance with AB 685.

Policy 4.A.1. Future development projects shall avoid potential significant impacts to water quality in Mono County, or mitigate impacts to a level of non-significance unless a statement of overriding considerations is made through the EIR process.

Action 4.A.1.a. Future development projects with the potential to significantly impact water quality shall assess the potential impact(s) prior to project approval. Examples of potential significant impacts include:

a. substantially degrading water quality; and/or

b. contaminating a public water supply; and/or

c. causing substantial flooding, erosion or siltation.

In areas determined by the County to be of special significance, such an analysis and associated mitigation measures may be required even if the proposed project conforms to water quality standards established by the Lahontan Regional Water Quality Control Board for the project area.

The analysis shall:

a. be funded by the applicant;

b. be prepared by a qualified person under the direction of Mono County;

c. assess current water quality in the general project vicinity;

d. describe the impacts of the proposed development upon water quality within the project site and on surrounding areas, including a quantification of potential runoff and sedimentation from erosion, contamination that could enter the surface or groundwater system, calculations or mapping related to flooding, and potential cumulative on-site and off-site hydrologic effects on water quality;

e. for projects with the potential to significantly affect groundwater resources, the analysis may be required to include hydrologic mapping, studies of water flows, groundwater resources, aquifer properties, and baseline quality data; and

f. recommend project alternatives or measures to avoid or mitigate impacts to water quality, including a plan for long-term monitoring of water quality.

Mitigation measures and associated monitoring programs shall be included in the project plans and specifications and shall be made a condition of approval for the project.

Policy 4.A.2. Control erosion at construction projects.

Action 4.A.2.a. Ensure that Lahontan Regional Water Quality Control Board regulations for erosion control are met as a condition for County permit approvals.

Action 4.A.2.b. Work with Lahontan to develop standards and regulations for specific areas of the unincorporated area. Reflect these standards in applicable County regulations, such as the Grading Ordinance (Chapter 13.08).

Action 4.A.2.c. Work with Lahontan to enforce erosion control standards for development on private land.

Action 4.A.2.d. Require posting of a performance bond in compliance with the county Grading Ordinance.

Action 4.A.2.e. Work with Lahontan in the development and revision of erosion- control standards.

Policy 4.A.3. Adjust current practices that cause excessive erosion in order to avoid or mitigate such erosion.

Action 4.A.3.a. County staff and contractors shall follow County grading standards when maintaining County roads, rights of way, and property.

Action 4.A.3.b. Request that state and federal agencies enforce requirements to minimize erosion.

Action 4.A.3.c. Promote the use of cattle fences, appropriately designed to minimize wildlife impacts (see Biological Resources policies), and fish screens in range areas next to streams and lakes where scientific data and management policies indicate the practice to be beneficial to wildlife and livestock.

Action 4.A.3.d. Consider amending the county Grading Ordinance to address water quality concerns.

Policy 4.A.4. Establish buffer zones where recharge occurs, including adjacent to surface waters, wetlands and riparian areas. As required by State law, rivers, creeks, streams, flood corridors, riparian habitats and land that may accommodate floodwater for purposes of groundwater recharge and stormwater management are identified in the County's general plan maps at https://monomammoth.maps.arcgis.com/home/, which include FEMA and National Wetland Database maps.

Policy 4.A.5. Projects within 30 feet of or that may otherwise impact wetland or riparian vegetation shall implement best management practices as recommended by the State Water Quality Control Board.

Policy 4.A.6. Discourage development within 30 feet of recharge, riparian, and wetland areas to minimize trampling, erosion and siltation impacts, and consider amending the General Plan to specify use and setback requirements. Continue to enforce setback requirements from surface waters.

Policy 4.A.7. Continue to support "no net loss" of wetlands at a regional scale.

Action 4.A.7.a. Establish policies for the management of wetlands in Mono County, including cooperation and compliance with state and federal agencies that manage wetlands.

Action 4.A.7.b. Continue collaborating with applicable agencies to monitor the status of wetlands, such as annual reporting to the Lahontan Regional Water Quality Control Board.

Policy 4.A.8. Manage stormwater runoff to protect water quality throughout communities.

Action 4.A.8.a. As required by the Lahontan Regional Water Quality Control Board, projects must provide post-construction stormwater management plans. Developers should utilize stormwater control measures that are compatible with low-impact development solutions (see General Plan Appendix), such as rain gardens, green roofs, detention ponds, bioretention swales, pervious pavement, vegetated infiltration ponds, and other measures provided by the California Stormwater Quality Association (www.casqa.org) to effectively treat post-construction stormwater runoff, help sustain watershed processes, protect receiving water, and maintain healthy watersheds.

Action 4.A.8.b. Use non-toxic fertilizers in County parks and landscaped areas to reduce potential water quality issues through stormwater runoff.

Action 4.A.8.c. Maintain drainage systems associated with roads and public infrastructure for stormwater management.

Action 4.A.8.d. Complementary design features with the potential to improve habitat such as settling basins, vaults, and bank stabilization should be considered when designing or maintaining culverts. Culverts should be analyzed and designed to limit unintended adverse impacts such as degraded water quality, erosion and siltation of wetlands.

Action 4.A.8.e. Subject to the availability of County resources, provide education and advice on LID measures that could be incorporated into project designs.

Action 4.A.8.f. Update the Mono County Grading Ordinance to ensure consistency with Lahontan Regional Water Quality Control Board regulations.

Policy 4.A.9. Drill holes, such as those that are used for mining, geothermal development, structural investigation, and water development, shall be abandoned and plugged in conformity to state requirements for the protection of groundwater resources and public health and safety.

Objective 4.B.
Protect water from chemical or bacterial contamination.

Policy 4.B.1. Sewage treatment facilities shall be adequate to protect beneficial uses of surface and groundwater.

Action 4.B.1.a. Cooperate with Lahontan to monitor water quality.

Action 4.B.1.b. Encourage federal, state, and local agencies to maintain adequate sanitary treatment capacity at their facilities.

Action 4.B.1.c. Promote the rehabilitation and replacement of aging wastewater infrastructure.

Policy 4.B.2. Promote energy-efficient wastewater treatment and biosolids recycling practices.

Action 4.B.2.a. Work with wastewater service providers to implement an audit, cycling, and equipment-replacement program to increase energy efficiency for water and wastewater pumps and motors.

Action 4.B.2.b. Where feasible, replace septic systems with community package treatment systems.

Policy 4.B.3. Degradation of water quality from livestock shall be minimized.

Action 4.B.3.a. As necessary, investigate the use of fencing, alternate grazing patterns, and/or reduction in the number of animals grazed, or other measures to protect stream water quality and habitat for sensitive species such as the Yosemite Toad and sage grouse (see Biological Resources policies for sage grouse fence design recommendations).

Action 4.B.3.b. Recommend that salt blocks, supplemental food supplies, or chemicals used in treating animals be located sufficiently far from surface water and used in such a manner as to protect water quality.

Policy 4.B.4. Chemicals used for road maintenance should be applied in a manner that does not cause degradation of water quality.

Action 4.B.4.a. County staff and contractors shall not use environmentally damaging methods for de-icing roads.

Action 4.B.4.b. Work cooperatively with other agencies such as Caltrans and the Town of Mammoth Lakes to achieve the most environmentally sound methods of de-icing roads.

Action 4.B.4.c. Request further study of proposed de-icing methods before their widespread use.

Action 4.B.4.d. Enforce Lahontan's standards for road maintenance and weed control; work with other agencies to do the same.

Policy 4.B.5. Use of fertilizer, pesticide, and other chemicals on vegetation or soil in recharge zones should be minimized.

Action 4.B.5.a. Work with the county Agricultural Commissioner and the Natural Resources Conservation Service to institute controls to protect water quality.

Action 4.B.5.b. Work with the county Agricultural Commissioner and the Natural Resources Conservation Service to promote effective and minimal use of chemicals in landscaping and agriculture.

Policy 4.B.6. Assist in the management and control of toxic chemicals or other substances from extractive, industrial, manufacturing, household, or commercial uses.

Action 4.B.6.a. Assist appropriate agencies, such as Lahontan Regional Water Quality Control Board and EPA, in enforcing regulations pertaining to hazardous waste management.

Action 4.B.6.b. Implement hazardous waste management policies in the Integrated Waste Management Plan.

AGRICULTURE, GRAZING, AND TIMBER

GOAL 5. Preserve and protect agricultural and grazing lands in order to promote both the economic and open-space values of those lands.

Objective 5.A.
Encourage the retention of agricultural and grazing lands.

Policy 5.A.1. Discourage the conversion of agricultural lands to non-agricultural uses.

Action 5.A.1.a. Future development projects with the potential to convert prime agricultural land to non-agricultural use or to impair the productivity of prime agricultural land (as defined in Government Code Section 56064) shall assess the potential impact(s) prior to project approval. The analysis shall:

a. be funded by the applicant;

b. be prepared by a qualified person under the direction of Mono County;

c. assess existing conditions in the general project vicinity;

d. describe the impacts of the proposed development upon prime agricultural lands within the project site and on surrounding areas; and

e. recommend project alternatives or measures to avoid or mitigate impacts to prime agricultural land to a level of non-significance, unless a statement of overriding considerations is made through the EIR process.

Mitigation measures and associated monitoring programs shall be included in the project plans and specifications and shall be made a condition of approval for the project.

Action 5.A.1.b. Establish adequate minimum parcel sizes for viable agricultural lands and encourage consolidation of undersized parcels. Consider amending the General Plan to address minimum parcel sizes in appropriate land use designations. An exception to this policy may occur when it is proposed to parcel an existing farmhouse from the remaining agricultural lands.

Action 5.A.1.c. Limit extension of urban services such as sewer beyond existing Special District sphere-of-influence boundaries.

Action 5.A.1.d. Consider the availability and financing of public services and utilities in any decision to convert an area from agricultural to non-agricultural uses. Applicants for projects that have the potential to convert prime agricultural land to a non-agricultural use shall, as part of the required impact analysis, provide a fiscal impact section that documents anticipated service and fiscal impacts on Mono County and other local agencies.

Action 5.A.1.e. Require the preparation of a specific plan for proposed subdivisions in agricultural areas, as determined by planning staff. A specific plan may be required if any of the following conditions applies:

a. The proposed subdivision would substantially change the use in the area;

b. The proposed subdivision would be growth-inducing;

c. The proposed subdivision would result in a mix of uses in the area; or

d. The proposed subdivision would affect prime agricultural land.

Policy 5.A.2. Develop adequate amounts of farm-worker and farm-family housing in agricultural areas in order to support the efficient management of local agricultural production activities.

Action 5.A.2.a. Encourage farm operators to provide sufficient housing for permanent and seasonal agricultural employees and family members in addition to the housing permitted by the applicable density.

Action 5.A.2.b. Locate agricultural employee housing where it promotes efficiency of the farming operation and has minimal impact on productive farmland.

Action 5.A.2.c. Allow clustering of employee housing.

Policy 5.A.3. Encourage the development of programs that offer financial incentives to farm owners to reduce reliance on subdivision and sale of land to raise operating capital.

Action 5.A.3.a. Use voluntary purchase or consider amending the developments credit program to resemble a more typical transfer of development rights program to limit intrusion of residential development in agricultural lands.

Action 5.A.3.b. Support property and estate tax relief measures that assess long-term agriculture at farm use value.

Action 5.A.3.c. Support the use and expansion of Williamson Act contracts over County-designated agricultural lands.

Action 5.A.3.d. Support agricultural conservation easements and working lands programs by entities such as the Eastern Sierra Land Trust and NRCS.

Policy 5.A.4. Provide for the raising, harvesting and production of fish in the same manner as the harvesting and production of agricultural products.

Action 5.A.4.a. Allow aquaculture and its related facilities and activities in all agricultural areas.

Policy 5.A.5. Consider establishing a countywide standing agricultural committee to address issues affecting agricultural landowners in the county, including range management. The committee should be integrated with the County's existing regional and community planning advisory committees.

Objective 5.B.
Mitigate conflicts between agricultural and non-agricultural uses in designated agricultural areas.

Policy 5.B.1. Limit land uses within viable agricultural areas to those that are compatible with agricultural uses.

Action 5.B.1.a. Maintain, in those agricultural land use categories where small parcels may be permitted, the largest land area for agricultural use. Limit the number of clustered lots in any one area to avoid the potential conflicts associated with residential intrusion.

Action 5.B.1.b. Where clustered subdivision is permitted, separate clusters on one site from those on another site unless it is clearly demonstrated that the resulting lots will not create the appearance of, or conflicts associated with, residential intrusion. Any subdivision that proposes to cluster parcels of 10 acres or less, shall locate those lots around existing residences on the parcel being subdivided. The intent of this policy is to minimize the impact of residential parcels on adjacent agricultural operations.

Action 5.B.1.c. Wherever practical, where clustered subdivision is permitted, use natural features such as ridge tops, creeks, and substantial tree stands to separate the small parcels from the farming areas.

Action 5.B.1.d. Where clustered subdivision is permitted, to the extent allowed by law, place an agricultural easement in perpetuity, or other appropriate mechanism, on the residual farming parcel(s) at the time that the subdivision occurs. The easement shall be conveyed to the County or other appropriate nonprofit organizations.

Policy 5.B.2. The primary use of any parcel within an agricultural land use category shall be agricultural production and related processing, support services and visitor-serving services. Residential uses in these areas shall recognize that the primary use of the land may create agricultural "nuisance" situations such as flies, noise, odors, and spraying of chemicals.

Action 5.B.2.a. Facilitate agricultural production by permitting limited agricultural support service uses that support local agricultural activities and are not harmful to the long-term agricultural use in the area.

Policy 5.B.3. Ensure access to irrigation facilities.

Action 5.B.3.a. As a condition of approval for subdivisions and other applicable development projects, require easements or other appropriate mechanisms to ensure access to irrigation facilities.

Action 5.B.3.b. Amend the subdivision ordinance to include measures for the protection of access to irrigation facilities by applicable entities.

Objective 5.C.
Promote sound management practices to preserve and enhance the economic and open-space values of the land, as well as natural resources, water resources and other public trust values, and sequester carbon.

Policy 5.C.1. Determine the environmental impacts associated with grazing activities in the Long Valley Caldera and on other private lands and LADWP lands in the county.

Action 5.C.1.a. Provide input to the Lahontan Regional Water Quality Control Board's investigation of grazing impacts on Crowley Lake.

Action 5.C.1.b. Consider designating sensitive portions of the Long Valley Caldera and other appropriate areas in Mono County for Natural Habitat Protection; restrict or prohibit grazing in areas so designated.

Action 5.C.1.c. Promote the restoration of private lands degraded by grazing.

Action 5.C.1.d. Encourage use of federal land management agency procedures for grazing management practices on private and LADWP lands.

Action 5.C.1.e. Consider cooperative management, monetary assistance by the County and/or public purchase in areas where it is determined that grazing conflicts with fishery uses.

Action 5.C.1.f. Work with the LADWP to maintain high-quality sage grouse habitat in Long Valley, including habitat resulting from grazing and irrigation practices.

Action 5.C.1.g. Promote grazing practices that enhance or are compatible with wildlife habitat values, such as wildlife escape ramps from watering troughs, wildlife friendly fencing (see Biological Resources policies), adhering to vegetation utilization standards applicable to public lands, and other appropriate measures.

Policy 5.C.2. Support optimal agricultural practices.

Action 5.C.2.a. To the extent feasible, purchase locally grown food for County events and purposes.

Action 5.C.2.b. Encourage community gardens and farmers markets to support the availability of healthy, locally grown produce.

Action 5.C.2.c. Promote conservation tillage and other agricultural practices to retain carbon fixed in soils.

Action 5.C.2.d. Provide financial or other incentives for low-income residents to purchase fresh produce at farmers markets.

Action 5.C.2.e. Offer incentives (e.g., development credits, support for the Williamson Act) to promote the preservation of farmland, open space, and sensitive lands.

Action 5.C.2.f. Support the Great Basin Unified Air Pollution Control Districts standards for the burning of agricultural residue.

Action 5.C.2.g. Encourage best practices in fertilizer and pesticide use.

Action 5.C.2.h. Research carbon sequestration programs on agricultural lands.

Action 5.C.2.i. Proactively collaborate with stakeholders to avoid and minimize impacts to water quality from livestock and grazing activities, and ~~R~~recognize and support the Regional Water Quality Control Board, Sierra Business Council and UC Davis incentives for ranchers to install and monitor the efficacy of grazing management practices in an effort to protect and improve water quality.

GOAL 6. Allow timber harvesting and fuelwood cutting on private lands consistent with the maintenance of recreational, scenic, and natural resource values.

Objective 6.A.
Regulate timber harvesting and fuelwood cutting on private and LADWP lands.

Policy 6.A.1. During the permit review process, require compliance with Cal Fire's timber harvesting regulations for private lands.

Policy 6.A.2. Require the removal of all non-native trees from wetlands, riparian corridors, and adjacent upland buffers, except large roadside and fencerow trees (typically exceeding 24 inches in diameter) due to their value as aesthetic resources.

Objective 6.B.
Ensure a healthy forest resource.

Policy 6.B.1. Work with Cal Fire and federal land management agencies to minimize the impacts of new development on forest resources.

Action 6.B.1.a. Limit the size of new forest openings, including roadways.

Action 6.B.1.b. Discourage disturbance or removal of forest litter, to maintain the natural catchment and cycling of nutrients.

Policy 6.B.2. Encourage fuel reduction and other management treatments to improve forest health, such as reduced catastrophic fire potential, invasive species management, and reduced disease and insect outbreaks.

Action 6.B.2.a. Support the development of a market to utilize biomass from these types of forest health projects.

Action 6.B.2.b. Promote provisions to remove all non-native trees from wetlands, riparian corridors, and adjacent upland buffers as part of the project, except large roadside and fencerow trees.

MINERAL RESOURCES

GOAL 7. Provide for the conservation and development of mineral resources in a manner that minimizes land use conflicts and maintains a quality environment.

Objective 7.A.
Locate and identify significant mineral resource deposits.

Policy 7.A.1. Pursue methods that will elevate Mono County's status from a "Low" priority to a "Very High" or "High" priority with respect to the California Department of Conservation, Division of Mines and Geology, priority schedule for *Mineral Land Classification Studies*.

Policy 7.A.2. The *State Mineral Land Classification Reports*, as completed and transmitted to Mono County by the State Geologist, shall be utilized to locate and identify:

A. Areas containing little or no mineral deposits.

B. Areas containing significant mineral deposits.

C. Areas containing mineral deposits, the significance of which requires further evaluation.

Action 2.1: The detailed maps and text associated with *State Mineral Land Classification Reports* and/or *State Board of Mines and Geology Designations* shall be kept on file with the Planning Division and made available for public review upon request (see Table 2).

Policy 7.A.3. Until the State Geologist finalizes and transmits *State Mineral Land Classification Reports* for all areas of Mono County, pursue other methods and funding sources that could be utilized to identify where locally important and/or potentially significant mineral resource deposits may exist.

Action 7.A.3.a. In cases where conflicts may arise between *State Mineral Land Classification Reports* and Mineral Resource Mapping in the **MEA**, the *State Mineral Land Classification Reports* shall take precedence or, if necessary, cases shall be decided on a case-by-case basis in consultation with representatives from the state Division of Mines and Geology.

Action 7.A.3.b. The **MEA** Mineral Resource Mapping is intended to be utilized as resource material only and should not be construed, in and of itself, as dictating land use policy. The accuracy of the **MEA** Mineral Resource Mapping is not sanctioned by the County.

Action 7.A.3.c. The Planning Division shall update and incorporate changes to the **MEA** Mineral Resource Mapping as new information becomes available.

Action 7.A.3.d. MEA Mineral Resource Mapping and all reference materials associated with the development and/or modification thereof shall be kept on file with the Planning Division and made available for public review upon request.

Objective 7.B.
Conserve and protect areas containing significant mineral deposits in a manner that avoids or minimizes land use conflicts.

Policy 7.B.1. Significant mineral resource deposits identified in *State Mineral Land Classification Reports* shall be assigned to a "DMG" classification on the **MEA** Mineral Resource Maps. The purpose of this assignment shall be to:

A. Recognize mineral information classified by the State Geologist and transmitted by the State Mining and Geology Board.

B. Assist in the management of land uses that may affect areas of statewide and regional significance.

C. Emphasize the conservation and potential for development of the identified mineral deposit.

Action 7.B.1.a. Prior to permitting a use that would threaten the potential to extract minerals in an area classified by the State Geologist as an "area containing significant mineral deposits," the applicant shall provide a report in conformity to applicable provisions of SMARA. The report shall be funded by the applicant and at a minimum shall:

a. be prepared by a qualified professional under the direction of Mono County;

b. assess the significance of the mineral resource and describe the impacts of the proposed development upon future mineral resource development;

c. specify the reasons why the proposed use should be permitted; and

d. propose project alternatives and/or mitigation measures to avoid or reduce potential project impacts with respect to the resource.

Action 7.B.1.b. Land use decisions involving areas designated by the state Mining and Geology Board as "areas of regional and/or statewide significance" shall also consider the importance of the minerals to their market region, the state, and the nation as a whole and not just the importance to the County's area of jurisdiction.

Action 7.B.1.c. Prior to permitting a use that would threaten the potential to extract minerals in an area classified by the State Geologist as an "area containing mineral deposits the significance of which requires further evaluation," the County may require the applicant to provide a report prepared in

conformity to the specifications in Action 1.1 above. The report shall be submitted to the State Geologist for review and comment.

Action 7.B.1.d. *State Mineral Land Classification Reports* shall be reviewed by the Planning Division. Areas designated by the State Geologist as "areas containing significant mineral resource deposits" shall be assigned to an appropriate land use designation that shall emphasize the conservation and potential for development of the resource.

Action 7.B.1.e. Prior to permitting a use that would threaten the potential to extract "locally important and/or potentially significant mineral resource deposits," the County may require the applicant to provide a report prepared in conformity to the specifications in Action 1.1 above. The report shall be submitted to the State Geologist for review and comment.

Policy 7.B.2. The possible existence of a mineral deposit should not preclude use of land for a higher and better use.

Objective 7.C.
Manage all mineral resource development activities in a manner that adequately protects the public health, safety, and welfare as well as environmental and socio-economic values.

Policy 7.C.1. Mineral resource development projects shall meet or exceed applicable provisions of CEQA, NEPA, SMARA, Mono County LUE Chapter 35 (reclamation plans) and the Mono County Environmental Handbook.

Action 7.C.1.a. Mineral resource development projects shall strive to avoid or mitigate potentially significant adverse environmental impacts. Significant adverse impacts that cannot be mitigated to a level of non-significance shall require findings of overriding consideration in conformity to CEQA.

Action 7.C.1.b. Require an Environmental Impact Report (EIR), with appropriate mitigation, for all open pit mining operations that are subject to permit requirements as specified in SMARA and that propose to utilize a cyanide heap leaching process.

Action 7.C.1.c. Encourage project proponents to meet with County personnel and responsible/trustee agencies as early as possible, prior to submitting an application, in order to identify the scope and magnitude of issues that may be considered environmentally significant.

Action 7.C.1.d. Encourage the public, through appropriate public notice, to participate in the scoping process for all mineral resource development projects.

Policy 7.C.2. Mineral resource development projects shall comply with all applicable provisions of the county's General and Area Plans, along with requirements set forth in the California Surface Mining and Reclamation Act (SMARA); the California Code of Regulations, Title 14, "Mining and Geology"; and County ordinances.

Action 7.C.2.a. Mineral resource development activities may be permitted only in those areas designated for Resource Management and Resource Extraction. Extraction of saleable materials/aggregates (e.g., sand or gravel) may also be permitted in areas designated Agriculture and Resource Extraction.

Action 7.C.2.b. Recreational mining (the extraction of minerals that does not require a county, state or federal permit of any type, and does not utilize mechanized earth-moving equipment) shall be permitted in all districts.

Action 7.C.2.c. Surface and subsurface mining operations shall obtain a mining use permit, including approval of a reclamation plan (Mono County LUE Chapter 35), prior to commencing surface disturbance activities.

Action 7.C.2.d. Develop appropriate application forms to expedite the application and processing of mineral resource exploration, development, and reclamation projects. Update these forms as necessary to reflect applicable federal, state, and county regulatory changes.

Policy 7.C.3. Surface mining operations located on federal lands shall conform to applicable provisions of SMARA.

Action 7.C.3.a. Administration and coordination of surface mining activities on lands administered through the BLM shall be in conformity to the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the BLM and the County.

Action 7.C.3.b. Pursue methods, such as a MOU or Joint Powers Agreement, to address the administration and coordination of surface mining activities on lands administered through the USFS.

Policy 7.C.4. Explore methods to implement a countywide mineral extraction fee or tax. The purpose of this fee or tax shall be to compensate the County for the depletion of its non-renewable mineral resources.

Policy 7.C.5. Periodically review filing, processing, and inspection procedures to ensure that staff time allocated to mineral resource development is adequately reimbursed through the assessment of appropriate fees.

Policy 7.C.6. Periodically review and where necessary propose amendments to the Mineral Resource Management Policies. All such amendments shall be submitted to the State Board of Mines and Geology for review and comment prior to adoption.

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TABLE 1: MONO COUNTY MINERAL RESOURCE CLASSIFICATIONS

Mineral Resource Area 1 (MRA-1): Areas where adequate information indicates that no significant mineral deposits are present, or where it can be judged that there is little likelihood for their presence. This area shall be applied where well developed lines of reasoning, based upon economic geologic principles and adequate data, demonstrate that the likelihood for occurrence of significant mineral deposits is nil or slight.

Mineral Resource Area 2 (MRA-2): Areas where adequate information indicates that mineral deposits are present or where it is judged that there is a high likelihood for their presence. This area shall be applied to known mineral deposits or where well developed lines of reasoning based upon economic geologic principles and adequate data demonstrate that the likelihood for occurrence of significant mineral deposits is high.

Mineral Resource Area 3 (MRA-3): Areas containing mineral deposits the significance of which cannot be evaluated from available data.

Mineral Resource Area 4 (MRA-4): Areas where available information is inadequate for assignment to any other Mineral Resource Area classification.

Scientific Resource Area (SRA): Areas containing unique or rare occurrences of rocks, minerals, or fossils that are of outstanding scientific significance shall be classified in this zone.

Department of Mines and Geology (DMG): Areas that have been classified by the State Geologist and/or designated by the state Board of Mines and Geology.

TABLE 2: MINERAL LAND CLASSIFICATION CITATIONS

MINERAL LAND CLASSIFICATION OF THE EUREKA, SALINE VALLEY AREA, INYO AND MONO COUNTIES. Sacramento: California Department of Conservation, Division of Mines and Geology, Special Report 166 (1993).

MONO COUNTY MINING DATABASE AND RELATED NARRATIVE. Susan K. Flynn, Editor. Sutter Creek, California: Geotechnical Research and Development, May 1990. The data contained in this document provided the basis from which the (MEA) mineral resource maps were prepared, in addition to compiling a comprehensive bibliography of geologic and mineral resource documents about the county.

ENERGY RESOURCES & RESOURCE EFFICIENCY

GOAL 8. Establish a regulatory process with respect to both geothermal exploration and development that ensures that permitted projects are carried out with minimal or no adverse environmental impacts.

Objectives A-E and the associated policies and actions are pursuant to a 1989 Settlement Agreement.

Objective 8.A.
Establish separate permit processes for geothermal exploration and for geothermal development.

Policy 8.A.1. Mono County ordinances, rules and regulations shall establish a phased permit process for geothermal development in accordance with the provisions of this Element.

Action 8.A.1.a. The permit for the first phase (exploration) shall regulate geothermal exploration and reservoir characterization activities. It shall be called the "geothermal exploration permit." The primary purpose of this exploratory phase is to determine hydrologic, geologic and other relevant physical characteristics of the geothermal resource that might be developed.

Action 8.A.1.b. During the exploratory phase, the permittee shall develop sufficient data to determine whether there is a geothermal resource adequate to sustain the proposed development project.

Action 8.A.1.c. The permit for the second phase (development) shall regulate geothermal development and operations. It shall be called the "geothermal development permit." The purpose of the development phase is to regulate all geothermal development, including the siting and construction of facilities, conditions of operation, and the maintenance of roads and equipment, and to assure the protection of the environment. This phase also includes the termination of operations and reclamation of the site.

Action 8.A.1.d. The implementing ordinances, rules and regulations shall provide for the use of common environmental documentation for both permit stages when consistent with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA).

Action 8.A.1.e. Whether an activity is exploratory or developmental shall be determined by reference to regulations of the California Division of Oil and Gas.

Objective 8.B.
Establish procedures for project review that comply with, and, where determined to be necessary by the Board of Supervisors, exceed existing environmental protection laws.

Policy 8.B.1. Mono County, through its permitting process, shall assure compliance with existing law and the carrying out of policies relating to restricted development zones.

Action 8.B.1.a. Permits for both geothermal exploration and development shall contain conditions that assure compliance with CEQA and with applicable laws and regulations of Mono County and other agencies with jurisdiction.

Action 8.B.1.b. Except for projects in the vicinity of Casa Diablo and associated monitoring or mitigation wells or other facilities, a proposed geothermal project within either the Deer Migration Zones (see Figure 1) or Hot Creek Buffer Zone (see Figure 2) identified in this Element shall not be permitted, notwithstanding the provisions of CEQA or the County guidelines, unless a finding is made that all the identified environmental impacts of the proposed project are reduced to less-than-significant levels by the permit conditions.

Objective 8.C.
Establish procedures that assure that the cumulative impacts of geothermal and other projects on hydrologic and biologic resources are mitigated to less-than-significant levels.

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FIGURE 1: HOT CREEK DEER MIGRATION ZONE

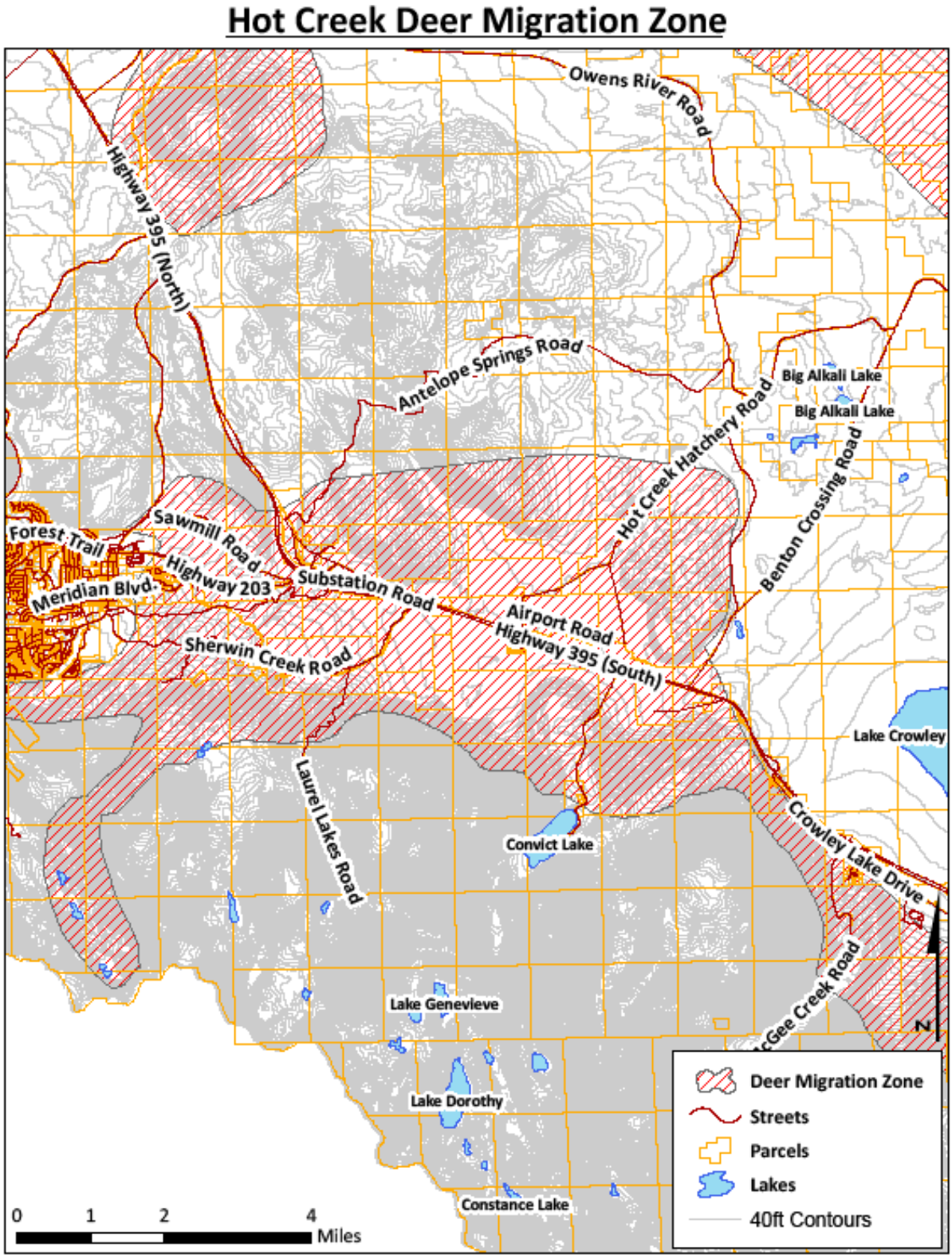
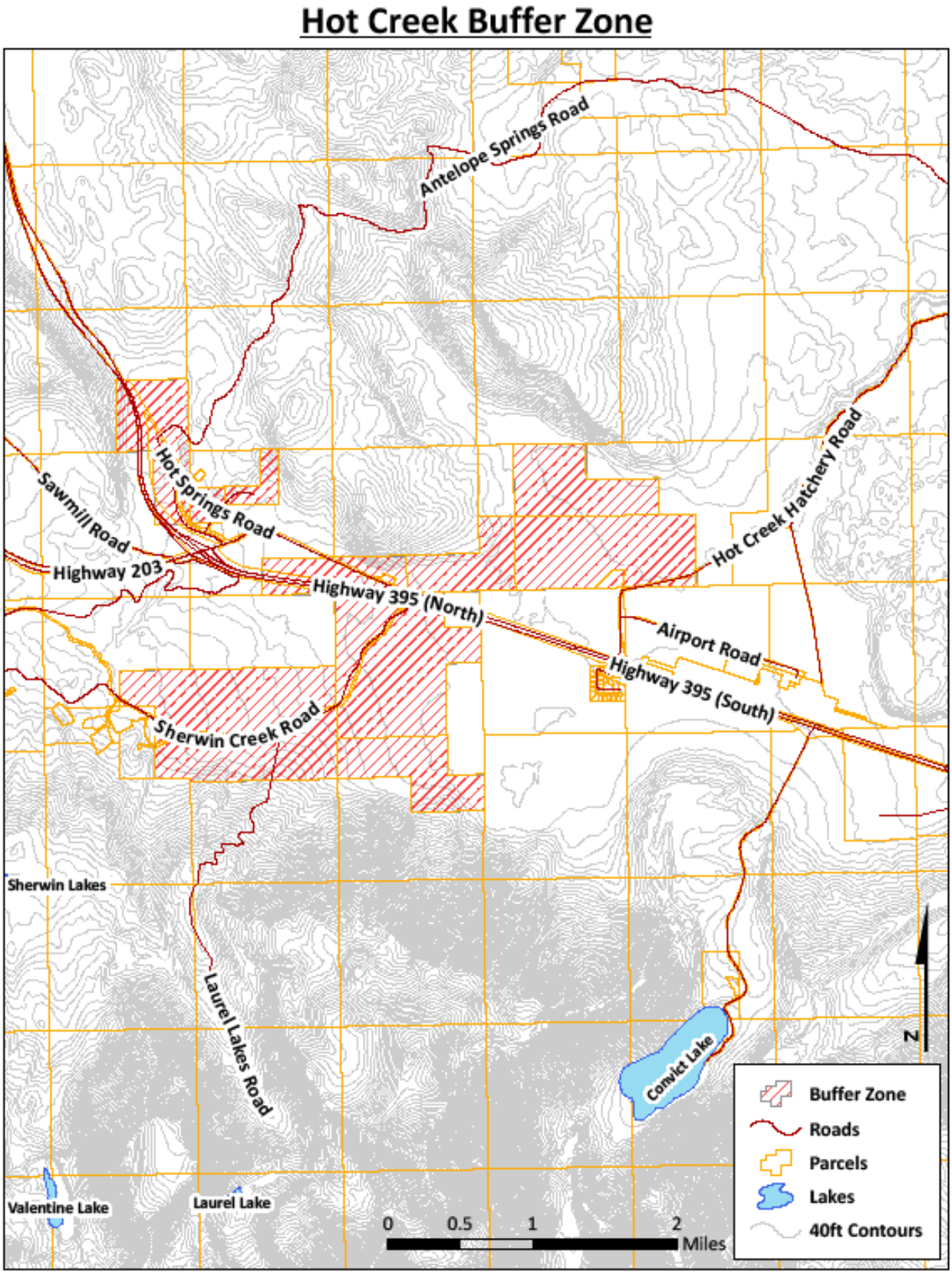


FIGURE 2: HOT CREEK BUFFER ZONE



Policy 8.C.1. Geothermal development projects shall be phased so that the operational impacts of a permitted project can be assessed before a subsequent project is permitted within an area that may be affected by the permitted project.

Action 8.C.1.a. After a permit for geothermal development has been issued by Mono County, no subsequent application for a permit for geothermal development within an area that may be affected by the permitted project shall be accepted until hydrologic and biologic monitoring data relating to the permitted development has been collected for a period of not less than two years. If an area in which a new permit for geothermal development is sought has been previously developed and hydrologic and biologic monitoring data has been collected in the area for in excess of two years, it shall be not less than six months before the new application is accepted.

Action 8.C.1.b. Geothermal exploration and development operations shall be monitored, and the monitoring data shall be evaluated by the Mono County Community Development Department (MCCDD) and the Long Valley Hydrologic Advisory Committee (LVHAC), or other appropriate regional hydrologic committees, and CDFW. The purpose of the monitoring is to determine whether there are or may be adverse hydrologic or biologic impacts. The data and evaluations, to the extent they are not proprietary, shall become a part of the record of any proceeding to consider subsequent geothermal exploration or development permit applications within the Hot Creek Buffer Zone, the deer migration zones, or any other regions that may be affected by the existing projects.

Action 8.C.1.c. Prior to the issuance of any permit for either geothermal exploration or development within the Hot Creek Buffer Zone, the MCCDD shall prepare a written analysis of the cumulative hydrologic and biologic impacts of the proposed project and other development projects of any kind or nature that may individually or cumulatively affect springs, streams, fumaroles, or significant biologic resources within the zone. The analysis shall be a part of the record.

Action 8.C.1.d. Except for projects in the vicinity of Casa Diablo and associated monitoring or mitigation wells or other facilities, and notwithstanding the provisions of CEQA or the County guidelines, where there is credible scientific evidence contained in the foregoing cumulative impact analysis that shows that the project for which a permit is sought, taken together with other development and development projects, may substantially adversely affect springs, streams, or fumaroles within the Hot Creek Buffer Zone, the permit shall not be granted.

Objective 8.D.
The permit holder shall establish data collection for hydrologic and biologic mitigation and monitoring programs to serve as the basis for assuring protection of hydrologic and biologic resources and water quality and quantity. These programs shall be approved by the MCCDD, after consultation with the LVHAC or another appropriate regional hydrologic advisory committee, and the CDFW, prior to implementation.

Policy 8.D.1. Geothermal exploration and development projects shall be sited, carried out and maintained by the permit holder in a manner that best protects hydrologic resources and water quality and quantity.

Action 8.D.1.a. During the permit processing period, the applicant for a geothermal development permit shall submit draft hydrologic and biologic monitoring plans to the MCCDD. The plans and proposed mitigation measures, as modified and as accepted by the County or its officers, boards and commissions, shall be approved as part of the initial use permit conditions, if a permit is granted.

The operator under a geothermal development permit shall implement the hydrologic resource monitoring plan to monitor baseline conditions and detect changes in the existing hydrothermal reservoir pressures and shallow aquifer water levels, as well as the discharge (flow) rate and temperatures of selected thermal springs in the project area, if any exist.

Action 8.D.1.b. The monitoring plans shall include a formula to calculate the appropriate portion of costs to be repaid to the County by the permit holder in the event that the County expends monies to collect baseline data for the plans.

Action 8.D.1.c. Upon the basis of relevant scientific evidence and the recommendation of the LVHAC or another appropriate hydrologic review committee, the monitoring plans may be amended during operations upon prior written approval of the MCCDD or the Planning Commission.

Action 8.D.1.d. The hydrologic and biologic resource monitoring plans shall include:

a. A schedule for periodically collecting and submitting data to the MCCDD;

b. A schedule for preparing a periodic monitoring report to the MCCDD; and

c. Provisions for periodic review and assessment of the monitoring data by qualified consultants.

Action 8.D.1.e. The applicant for a geothermal development permit shall prepare a baseline data report to be included as part of the hydrologic and biologic resource monitoring plans that identifies all significant hydrologic and biologic baseline information available for the project area. Permit conditions shall require that the permit holder or operator continually collect and submit production data to the MCCDD. The frequency and manner of data collection must be approved by the MCCDD, after consultation with the LVHAC or another appropriate hydrologic advisory committee, and the California Department of Fish and Wildlife.

Action 8.D.1.f. If scientific evidence indicates that geothermal exploration or development is significantly threatening, or causing, pressure or temperature changes to springs, streams or fumaroles within the areas of the Hot Creek Gorge or Hot Creek Hatchery that are beyond the natural variations determined through baseline data collection, the permit holder shall implement such mitigation measures as are required by the MCCDD, including, but not limited to, the following:

a. Drilling and monitoring new observation wells, or otherwise amending the hydrologic resource monitoring plan;

b. Reorienting existing exploration, production or injection operations, or any of them, to increase or decrease hydrologic reservoir temperatures or pressures at the appropriate locations;

c. Injecting hot geothermal fluid from the production area directly into injection wells at the appropriate locations to compensate for pressure or temperature changes in the direction of Hot Creek Gorge springs and Hot Creek Hatchery springs, if either group of springs has been shown to be adversely affected by the permit holder's operations;

d. Drilling new injection wells in the vicinity of the project area and injecting hot geothermal fluid from the production area to compensate for temperature and pressure decreases in the direction of Hot Creek Gorge springs and Hot Creek Hatchery springs, if either group of springs has been shown to be adversely affected by project operations; and

e. Curtailing or entirely discontinuing geothermal operations.

Action 8.D.1.g. In order to minimize hydrothermal reservoir pressure declines, and provided the conditions do not conflict with regulations of the California Division of Oil and Gas, development permit conditions shall require the reinjection of substantially all extracted geothermal fluids. Incidental uses of the produced geothermal fluids (i.e., well drilling, well testing, emergency fire water makeup) are exempted from this injection requirement.

Action 8.D.1.h. The permit holder shall prepare and submit to the MCCDD, prior to commencement of construction, a detailed blowout contingency plan, which includes a description of blowout prevention equipment required during drilling. Sufficient cold water shall be stored by the permit holder at each well site to quench the well should a blowout occur during drilling.

Water used for this purpose shall not be extracted from surface water sources in a manner that would harm aquatic vertebrate species dependent upon the surface water source. The plan shall provide for regular maintenance and testing of equipment. It shall be approved by the MCCDD prior to operations as condition of the permit.

Action 8.D.1.i. If biologic monitoring indicates that permitted geothermal exploration, development and operations, or any of them, have significant adverse effects, then the County shall take such action as is necessary to reduce the effects to less-than-significant levels, including curtailing or entirely discontinuing geothermal operations.

Action 8.D.1.j. Binary working fluids shall be cooled without the use of additional hydrologic resources and without creating additional environmental impacts.

Action 8.D.1.k. The consumptive use of surface water and groundwater, consistent with the reasonable needs (as determined by the MCCDD) of project operations and personnel, shall not decrease the natural flow of surface waters or the perennial yield of groundwater.

Action 8.D.1.l. Appropriate measures shall be taken to confine fluid spills. The capacity of the containment facilities shall be equal to at least twice the volume of the entire fluid contents of the facility, including pipeline capacity and the amount that would flow until automatic shutdown devices would stop the flow.

Action 8.D.1.m. No geothermal development located within the Hot Creek Buffer Zone shall occur within 500 feet on either side of a surface watercourse (as indicated by a solid or broken blue line on US Geological Survey 7.5- or 15-minute series topographic maps).

Action 8.D.1.n. Permit conditions for both geothermal exploration and development shall assure that required reclamation is completed within one year after a project is completed. Reclamation plans shall contain provisions that assure the protection of springs, streams, and fumaroles from erosion, sediment transport, and similar adverse effects. Plan provisions shall also assure that project sites are restored as closely as reasonably possible to natural conditions, as determined by the MCCDD, in consultation with the Visual Review Committee.

Action 8.D.1.o. All geothermal permit applications, environmental documentation and proposed project conditions shall be referred to the appropriate hydrologic advisory committee and the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) prior to final action on the permit applications.

Action 8.D.1.p. The County shall cooperate with the CDFW in promptly referring documentation on proposed geothermal projects to it.

Action 8.D.1.q. Permits for both geothermal exploration and development shall incorporate by reference and require compliance with all applicable rules and regulations of other governmental agencies meant to protect the environment, including the CDFW, the California Division of Oil and Gas, the Lahontan Regional Water Quality Control Board, and the Great Basin Unified Air Pollution Control Board.

Action 8.D.1.r. All geothermal pipelines potentially visible in scenic highway corridors or important visual areas shall be obscured from view by fences, natural terrain, vegetation, or constructed berms, or they shall be placed in stabilized or lined trenches.

Objective 8.E.
Permit conditions for geothermal exploration or development projects shall minimize impacts on deer migration within the deer migration zones identified in this Element.

Policy 8.E.1. Deer are an important natural, biological, and recreational resource. Geothermal exploration, development and operations shall be undertaken in a manner that minimizes or prevents adverse effects on deer population and migration within the deer migration zones.

Action 8.E.1.a. All policies and actions applicable to geothermal development generally that do not conflict with policies specifically applicable to deer migration zones shall be enforced by appropriate permit conditions.

Action 8.E.1.b. Development may be prevented in any part of a deer migration zone upon a finding that it will interfere with adopted regulations of the California Department of Fish and Wildlife and the goals of the CDFW deer herd management plans.

Action 8.E.1.c. The County shall cooperate with the CDFW in devising conditions meant to carry out this policy.

Objective 8.F.
Geothermal exploration and development projects shall be carried out with the fewest visual intrusions reasonably possible.

Policy 8.F.1. Permit conditions shall require compliance with all applicable policies and actions of the Conservation/Open Space Element.

Objective 8.G.
The permit holder shall establish procedures that ensure that neither geothermal exploration nor development will cause violations of state or federal ambient air quality standards or the rules and regulations of the Great Basin Unified Air Pollution Control District (GBUAPCD).

Policy 8.G.1. Permit conditions shall require compliance with all requirements of the regional air pollution control district, and with all other applicable provisions of the Conservation/Open Space Element.

Action 8.G.1.a. Air quality shall be monitored by a representative of the MCCDD, or the regional air pollution control district with jurisdiction. The costs of such monitoring shall be funded by the permit holder or project operator.

Objective 8.H.
Mono County shall establish procedures that assure that neither geothermal exploration nor development creates unacceptable noise.

Policy 8.H.1. Project conditions shall require compliance with all applicable provisions of the Noise Element and the County Noise Ordinance.

GOAL 9. Permit the productive and beneficial development of geothermal resources consistent with the objectives of Goal I and national and local interests.

Objective 9.A.
Provided that the environment is protected in the manner required by the policies and actions of Goal I of this section of the Conservation/Open Space Element, County policy shall ensure the orderly and sound economic development of geothermal resources under the appropriate circumstances.

Policy 9.A.1. Decisions on applications for geothermal development permits may take into account evidence of national needs for alternative energy development.

Policy 9.A.2. Decisions on applications for geothermal development permits should be relatively more favorable during times of scarcities of other energy sources.

Action 9.A.2.a. Applicants for permits for geothermal exploration and development may be required to submit information showing the benefits of geothermal energy during the proposed period of geothermal operations. Benefit may be established by showing a contract for the sale of geothermal power to a utility engaged in the business of providing electrical power to the general public.

Policy 9.A.3. Mono County's geothermal resources shall be managed in a manner that assures reasonable economic benefits to the citizens and businesses of the county.

Action 9.A.3.a. Applicants for permits for geothermal development shall be required to submit information showing the economic benefits or detriments of the proposed development during the proposed period of operation.

Action 9.A.3.b. Decisions on applications for development permits should not be made in the absence of information showing the economic benefit or detriment of such development to the citizens and businesses of Mono County, including impacts on natural resources.

Action 9.A.3.c. Geothermal development permits should not be granted in the absence of a reasonable showing of economic benefit to the community, unless findings are made that there are overriding state or national energy needs.

GOAL 10. Protect the natural resources of Mono County from the potentially damaging effects of water storage and diversions for hydroelectric power generation.

Objective 10.A.
Prevent conflict between the environment and hydroelectric power generation uses.

Policy 10.A.1. All hydroelectric power generation projects located on land under Mono County jurisdiction shall require a use permit.[3]

Objective 10.B.
Water diversions for hydroelectric power generation shall not occur on any stream that already has more than 20% of its length that is not contained in a wilderness area affected by water diversions or in a watershed that already has more than 25% of its average annual inflow diverted.

Policy 10.B.1. Mono County shall cooperate with the CDFW, State Water Resources Control Board, the BLM, the USFS, and the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission, in assessing impacts to streams from existing and proposed hydroelectric power generation, diversion for consumptive use, or other uses.

Action 10.B.1.a. Mono County shall develop, as part of its hydrologic database, information on water diversions (see the Water Resources Section of this Element).

Policy 10.B.2. The County shall consult with those federal and state decision-making bodies having the authority to grant permits for hydroelectric plants.

Objective 10.C.
Water diversions for hydroelectric power generation shall not be permitted to occur on any stream when credible scientific evidence indicates potential significant impacts to habitat for sensitive, listed or candidate threatened or endangered species; important spawning areas or other fishery values; key recreational resources; or viability for hydrologic research purposes, unless a statement of overriding considerations is made through the EIR process.

Policy 10.C.1. Mono County shall cooperate with the CDFW, US Fish and Wildlife Service, the BLM, and the USFS in assessing potentially sensitive surface water resources.

Action 10.C.1.a. Mono County shall develop, as part of its hydrologic database, information on water resources and areas that should be protected (see the Water Resources Section of this Element).

[3]Only those retrofit projects that entail major revisions to or replacement of the primary components of the system (i.e., penstock, generator, diversion structure, etc.) shall require a use permit.

Policy 10.C.2. The County shall provide input to those federal and state decision-making bodies having the authority to grant permits for hydroelectric plants regarding criteria to be evaluated prior to issuing or denying permission to develop further the hydroelectric potential of already impacted streams and watersheds.

Objective 10.D.
Hydroelectric facilities shall be sited so that they are not easily visible from scenic highways or important visual areas.

Policy 10.D.1. Project conditions shall require compliance with all applicable provisions of the Conservation/Open Space Element.

GOAL 11. Encourage appropriately scaled renewable energy generation for use within the county.

Objective 11.A. Increase renewable energy generation that is consistent with the county's visual and aesthetic qualities and values.

Policy 11.A.1. Support and incentivize residential and nonresidential distributed renewable energy generation.

Action 11.A.1.a. Pursue installation of solar photovoltaic systems, power purchase agreements, or solar collective programs to meet all or part of the electrical energy requirements of County-owned or -leased buildings.

Action 11.A.1.b. Continue offering and promoting incentives (e.g., streamlined permitting, prescriptive designs, fee waivers/reductions) to encourage installation of photovoltaic systems on new or existing buildings.

Action 11.A.1.c. Continue offering workshops and information for residents and businesses to provide resources and permitting assistance for those interested in adding renewable energy systems to their properties.

Policy 11.A.2. Encourage community-scale (<3 MW) renewable energy development on suitable lands, such as a biomass co-generation facility if sufficient supply becomes available.

Action 11.A.2.a. Support the development of appropriately sited community-scale renewable energy systems that meet critical evaluation criteria, such as environmental standards, sensitive species, financial feasibility, and transmission capacity.

Action 11.A.2.b. Work with utility providers, regulatory agencies, and local stakeholders to develop technical, environmental, and social feasibility.

Policy 11.A.3. Work with applicable agencies to minimize the impacts to the environmental, visual, recreational, wildlife habitat and noise environment within the county for alternative energy development on federal, state, LADWP or other agency lands.

Action 11.A.3.a. Advocate for no adverse project impacts to the visual, recreational, and noise environment in Mono County.

Action 11.A.3.b. Advocate for no adverse projects impacts to wildlife habitat in Mono County, including sage grouse habitat and wind energy development impacts to migratory birds.

GOAL 12. Regulate development of large-scale wind and solar energy resources to ensure that environmental impacts are mitigated and the project is compatible with existing and planned land uses.

Objective 12.A.

Large-scale solar and wind energy facilities shall not adversely impact the visual, recreational, and wildlife habitat resources, and noise environment in Mono County.

Policy 12.A.1. Project conditions shall require compliance with all applicable provisions of the Conservation/Open Space Element and the Noise Element.

Policy 12.A.2. Wind energy facilities shall not adversely affect wildlife.

Action 12.A.2.a. Wind energy facilities shall be sited so as to avoid flight paths of migratory birds.

GOAL 13. Regulate use of other energy resources for power generation to ensure that environmental impacts and impacts to public health and safety are minimal.

Objective 13.A.
During the course of evaluating any power generation project under the jurisdiction of Mono County, the California Energy Commission shall be consulted.

Policy 13.A.1. Mono County Community Development Department shall solicit assistance from the CEC for the purposes of reviewing proposed power generation facilities.

Objective 13.B.
Power generation facilities shall not adversely impact the visual resources, recreational resources, and noise environment in Mono County.

Policy 13.B.1. Project conditions shall require compliance with all applicable provisions of the Conservation/Open Space Element and the Noise Element.

Objective 13.C.
Emissions from the operation of power plants shall not adversely impact wildlife habitat, residents, or visitors and shall not constitute a hazard to public health and safety.

Policy 13.C.1. Project conditions shall require compliance with all applicable provisions of the Conservation/Open Space Element and the Safety Element.

GOAL 14. Minimize the visual, environmental, and public health and safety impacts of electrical transmission lines and fluid conveyance pipelines.

Objective 14.A.
Electrical transmission and distribution lines and fluid conveyance pipelines shall meet the utility needs of the public and be designed to minimize disruption of aesthetic quality. See also Chapter 11 of the Land Use Element.

Policy 14.A.1. New major steel-tower electrical transmission facilities shall be consolidated with existing steel-tower transmission facilities except where there are technical or overload constraints or where there are social, aesthetic, significant economic, or other overriding concerns.

Action 14.A.1.a. Require selection of rights of way to preserve the natural landscape and minimize conflict with present and planned uses of land on which they are to be located.

Action 14.A.1.b. Encourage the joint use of transmission and pipeline corridors to reduce the total number of corridors and service and access roads required.

Action 14.A.1.c. Require the coordination of siting efforts so that other comparable utility uses can share rights of way in a common corridor where feasible.

Action 14.A.1.d. The County shall adopt a proactive position in the future siting of transmission and pipeline corridors by working with utilities and project proponents to specify those locations where transmission corridors are acceptable.

Action 14.A.1.e. Cooperate with the USFS and BLM in planning the use of utility corridors.

Policy 14.A.2. At the expense of the project proponent, comprehensive and detailed planning studies, including review of all feasible alternatives, shall demonstrate a clear need for new transmission lines or fluid conveyance pipelines, prior to the siting of these facilities.

Policy 14.A.3. New transmission or distribution lines or fluid pipelines shall be buried when such burial does not create unacceptable environmental impacts or the potential to contaminate shallow groundwater resources.

Policy 14.A.4. Where burial is not possible, transmission facilities and fluid pipelines shall be located in relation to existing slopes such that topography and/or natural cover provide a background where possible.

Policy 14.A.5. Transmission line rights of way shall avoid crossing hills or other high points at the crests. To avoid placing a transmission tower at the crest of a ridge or hill, space towers below the crest or in a saddle to carry the line over the ridge or hill. The profiles of facilities should not be silhouetted against the sky.

Policy 14.A.6. Where transmission line rights of way cross major highways or rivers, the transmission line towers shall be carefully placed for minimum visibility.

Policy 14.A.7. Avoid diagonal alignments of transmission lines through agricultural fields to minimize their visibility.

Policy 14.A.8. Require location of access and construction roads so that natural features are preserved and erosion is minimized. Use existing roads to the extent possible.

Policy 14.A.9. Require that materials used to construct transmission towers harmonize with the natural surroundings. Self-protecting bare steel and other types of non-reflective surfaces are appropriate in many areas. Towers constructed of material other than steel, such as concrete, aluminum, or wood should be considered. Coloring of transmission line towers to blend with the landscape should be considered.

Policy 14.A.10. Above-ground transmission lines shall be non-specular wire construction.

Objective 15.B.
Transmission and distribution lines shall not adversely impact wildlife, fisheries, or public health and safety.

Policy 15.B.1. New transmission or distribution lines shall avoid open expanses of water, wetland, and sagebrush steppe, particularly those heavily used by birds. They shall also avoid nesting and rearing areas.

Policy 15.B.2. Avoid the placement of transmission or distribution lines through crucial wildlife habitats such as deer fawning and migration areas, and sage grouse lekking and brood-rearing habitat.

Policy 15.B.3. Design transmission lines to minimize hazards to raptors and other large birds, and require the installation of anti-perching devices when overhead placement in sensitive habitat is unavoidable.

Policy 15.B.4. Where burial is not possible, overhead transmission lines shall provide a maintenance and fire safety plan.

GOAL 15. Encourage the prudent use of energy and to allow substitution of alternative energy sources for conventional energy when such substitution would result in minimal environmental impacts.

Objective 15.A.
Promote the direct use of geothermal, biomass and other heat sources provided that such use does not conflict with recreational uses and does not create unmitigatible environmental impacts.

Policy 15.A.1. Support the use of direct alternative heat sources in Mammoth Lakes, Bridgeport, and other communities where such resources are available.

Action 15.A.1.a. Identify applications for the direct use of alternative heat sources, in addition to space heating, which could support environmentally compatible light industry (such as greenhouses, aquaculture, vegetable dehydration, etc.).

Action 15.A.1.b. Cooperate with other agencies and jurisdictions on the development and implementation of projects utilizing alternative heat sources.

Action 15.A.1.c. On potential thermal biomass projects, work with applicable entities to develop a tight management plan for on-site wood chip storage and handling to avoid spontaneous wood pile combustion, and determine distance to residential neighborhoods and uses to avoid complaints about odors.

Policy 15.A.2. Through participation in the LVHAC Hydrologic Monitoring Program, ensure the implementation of adequate geothermal reservoir monitoring for those direct use projects that have the potential to affect Hot Creek Hatchery springs or Hot Creek Gorge springs.

Goal 16. Improve energy efficiency in existing buildings.

Objective 16.A.
Improve the information and support available to residential and nonresidential property owners to reduce energy use.

Policy 16.A.1. Work with nonprofits and utility providers to provide property owners with technical assistance, energy efficiency programs, and financial incentives.

Action 16.A.1.a. Support and publicize compact fluorescent (CFL) or light-emitting diode (LED) giveaways, and incandescent bulb exchange programs.

Action 16.A.1.b. Work with utility providers to encourage home/commercial audits and energy efficiency retrofits.

Action 16.A.1.c. Support or host events that highlight and promote successful programs.

Action 16.A.1.d. Promote and reward energy efficiency efforts of local visitor-serving and recreational businesses.

Policy 16.A.2. Provide green building information and resources in a publicly available format, such as a dedicated page on the County website.

Action 16.A.2.a. Provide green building information and resources.

Action 16.A.2.b. Provide information about programs, rebates such as the California Solar Initiative, on-bill financing, or other financial incentives to help residents and businesses complete energy-saving measures such as audits and whole-house retrofits.

Action 16.A.2.c. Provide information on low-income assistance programs, such as weatherization.

Action 16.A.2.d. Provide information to local businesses about resource-efficient procurement opportunities.

Objective 16.B.
Increase the number of programs available and accessibility to capital to assist residential and nonresidential properties with implementation of resource-efficient practices.

Policy 16.B.1. Provide programs and information to reduce existing energy use.

Action 16.B.1.a. Offer a property assessed clean energy (PACE) financing program for residential and nonresidential energy efficiency.

Action 16.B.1.b. Work with the Great Basin Unified Air Pollution Control District to provide incentives to replace non-certified woodstoves with Environmental Protection Agency-certified wood or pellet stoves or propane units.

Policy 16.B.2. Encourage energy-efficient measures and practices through standard County programs, such as well and building permits.

Action 16.B.2.a. Promote installation of variable frequency drive water pumps to serve existing residential buildings.

Action 16.B.2.b. Encourage voluntary upgrades of residential and nonresidential HVAC systems.

Action 16.B.2.c. Encourage energy audits and voluntary retrofits for residential and nonresidential buildings at the time of sale or major renovation (>50% of building square footage, or addition of >500 square feet).

Policy 16.B.3. Provide incentives and information to support upgrades to rental properties, non-primary housing, and other types of housing.

Action 16.B.3.a. Promote opportunities to improve energy efficiency and install renewable energy systems in rental or secondary homes.

Action 16.B.3.b. Provide information on programs such as upgrades to mobile homes, blow-in insulation, and double-paned glazed low-e windows.

Objective 16.C. Reduce energy use in existing County facilities.

Policy 16.C.1. Continue progress toward net zero energy use in County facilities.

Action 16.C.1.a. Seek funding for and then develop a net zero energy feasibility study for County facilities that would include renewable energy generation, whole-building energy audits, construction costs and return on investment horizons, and potential time frames.

Action 16.C.1.b. Consider installing cool roof materials on existing and new County-owned buildings.

Action 16.C.1.c. Replace appliances and equipment in County-owned and leased buildings with energy-efficient models.

Action 16.C.1.d. Develop and implement a schedule—for example, through whole-building energy audits—to address no cost/low cost energy retrofit projects in County-owned and -leased buildings.

Action 16.C.1.e. Reduce energy demand in County-owned buildings by capturing "daylighting" opportunities.

Action 16.C.1.f. Collaborate with owners of leased buildings to audit and benchmark energy use, retrofit for efficiency, and develop a preferred leasing agreement that incorporates energy-efficient practices.

Policy 16.C.2. Continue to manage maintenance and ongoing programs that support energy reduction.

Action 16.C.2.a. Periodically audit and benchmark energy use in County-owned buildings to identify opportunities for energy efficiency and conservation.

Action 16.C.2.b. Ensure that HVAC and lighting systems in County-owned and -leased buildings are operating as designed and installed.

Action 16.C.2.c. Continue to use energy management software to monitor real-time energy use in County-owned and -leased buildings to identify energy usage patterns and abnormalities.

Action 16.C.2.d. Install motion sensors, photocells, and multi-level switches to control room lighting systems in County-owned and -leased buildings.

Action 16.C.2.e. Encourage utility providers to install smart meters on County-owned buildings.

Goal 17. Reduce energy use in new construction and major renovations.

Objective 17.A.
Increase green building practices in new construction and major renovations.

Policy 17.A.1. Support and promote residential and nonresidential green building construction.

Action 17.A.1.a. Offer incentives (e.g., streamlined permitting, prescriptive designs, fee waivers/reductions) for green building practices, such as verifiable green building practices that exceed state or local minimum standards, ground-source heat pumps, or photovoltaic solar installations.

Action 17.A.1.b. Work with utility providers to provide information to businesses about available rebates for new residential and commercial buildings that exceed Title 24 by at least 15%.

Action 17.A.1.c. Offer technical expertise and assistance for community members, builders, and businesses undertaking green building projects.

Action 17.A.1.d. Provide information on how contractors can attend energy efficiency training.

Policy 17.A.2. Continue to transition to green building practices in new County facilities.

Action 17.A.2.a. Consider certification by a third-party rater to ensure all new County facilities and renovations of existing facilities comply with green building standards.

Action 17.A.2.b. Target meeting net-zero energy requirements or exceeding minimum Title 24 requirements for new County buildings and renovation of existing facilities.

Goal 18. Collaborate with community partners, and empower the public to improve resource efficiency within the county.

Objective 18.A. Leverage resources regionally to build capacity for resource efficiency programs.

Policy 18.A.1. Work with local schools to support educational opportunities that promote resource efficiency.

Action 18.A.1.a. Collaborate with high schools to provide students with resource-based internship opportunities.

Action 18.A.1.b. Partner with local community colleges and grade schools to develop classes or workshops with a resource focus.

Policy 18.A.2. Collaborate with local, state, and regional agencies and organizations to identify resource conservation opportunities and share information.

Action 18.A.2.a. Integrate energy conservation discussions and opportunities into projects or efforts with other federal, state, and regional agencies.

Action 18.A.2.b. Utilize the Regional Planning Advisory Committees to create ongoing opportunities for community members to provide feedback on resource policies and programs.

Action 18.A.2.c. Promote the Mono County "Living Light Guide" that outlines steps residents and businesses can take to reduce energy and water use, recycle, and use alternative transportation.

Action 18.A.2.d. Include information in County mailings, websites, and other media about actions that individuals and businesses can take to improve resource efficiency.

Action 18.A.2.e. Participate in the CoolCalifornia Challenge which challenges local agencies to engage residents in taking action to reduce household energy use and vehicle miles traveled.

Policy 18.A.3. Support and participate in the outreach, education, and collaboration efforts of the Eastern Sierra Energy Initiative partnership.

Action 18.A.3.a. Distribute giveaway items, such as reusable bags and compact fluorescent (CFL) light bulbs, to encourage environmental responsibility.

Action 18.A.3.b. Develop public service announcements and/or talk shows related to resource efficiency.

Action 18.A.3.c. Use social media to inform the community about resource efficiency activities and opportunities.

Action 18.A.3.d. Host a leadership summit for community leaders, school groups, and businesses to gather and share resource conservation experiences, expertise, strategies, and ideas.

Action 18.A.3.e. Provide recognition programs for individuals, groups, and businesses that adopt resource efficiency practices.

Goal 12. Reduce generation of waste within the county. (See also the County's Integrated Waste Management Plan.)

Objective 12.A. Reduce waste deposited in the County's landfills.

Policy 12.A.1. Increase composting and recycling programs, and reduce waste generation, throughout the county.

Action 12.A.1.a. Identify and encourage reducing, reusing, and recycling opportunities for construction and demolition waste.

Action 12.A.1.b. Establish a program to use the maximum amount of organic waste possible generated within the county to produce compost for use in parks and landscaping.

Action 12.A.1.c. Increase opportunities for e-waste and hazardous materials collection and recycling.

Action 12.A.1.d. Evaluate current recycling infrastructure relative to future needs and anticipated waste generation. Provide incentives for new recycling infrastructure facilities in the county.

Action 12.A.1.e. Encourage the installation of recycling receptacles and containers at multi-family housing developments.

Action 12.A.1.f. Explore measures to reduce waste from commercial operations, such as banning single-use bags and polystyrene containers.

Policy 12.A.2. Promote a standard of reduce, reuse, and recycle within County government operations.

Action 12.A.2.a. Provide County staff with information on recycling items such as ink cartridges, toner, batteries, and light bulbs.

Action 12.A.2.b. Encourage paper use reduction through activities such as:
- Promoting a "think before you print" campaign.
- Reducing margins and logos on County templates, letterhead, and memos.
- Setting printer default options to print double-sided pages.
- Using computer software that removes blank pages and images from documents.
- Using "e-copy" machines that allow users to scan and distribute documents via e-mail.
- Uploading bid documents using online resources.
- Requiring fewer or smaller-sized copies of project plans or submittals, and allowing digital submittals.
- Using electronic devices for agendas and notes at public meetings.

Action 12.A.2.c. Review and implement the adopted procurement policy to establish purchasing standards for climate-friendly products.

Policy 12.A.3. Partner with other agencies, such as the Town of Mammoth Lakes, on green procurement, waste reduction, and recycling activities.

Objective 12.B. Reduce greenhouse gas emissions from County solid waste operations.

Policy 12.B.1 Reduce or offset methane generation from County landfills.

Action 12.B.1.a. Investigate new technologies available to capture methane at County landfills.

Action 12.B.1.b. Identify opportunities to install renewable energy systems at County landfills.

VISUAL RESOURCES

GOAL 13. Protect and enhance the visual resources and landscapes of Mono County.

Objective 13.A.
Maintain and enhance visual resources in the county.

Policy 13.A.1. In order to protect and enhance important scenic resources and scenic highway corridors as identified in the **MEA**, designate such areas throughout the county for Open Space, Agriculture, Resource Management, or similar low intensity uses.

Action 13.A.1.a. Identify important scenic resources, including scenic highway corridors, in the **MEA**.

Policy 13.A.2. Coordinate county visual resource policies with federal and state visual policies and objectives.

Action 13.A.2.a. Work with federal, state, local, and other appropriate organizations to review and coordinate the protection and enhancement of the county's scenic resources.

Policy 13.A.3. Preserve the visual identity of areas outside communities.

Action 13.A.3.a. Concentrate future development in or adjacent to existing communities.

Action 13.A.3.b. Retain the rural character of areas outside existing communities by restricting development to low-intensity uses; high-intensity uses outside communities should be permitted only through the Specific Plan process.

Action 13.A.3.c. Avoid the inclusion of scenic areas within spheres of influence for urban service providers.

Action 13.A.3.d. Consider providing opportunities for development in scenic areas in exchange for permanent open-space preservation.

Policy 13.A.4. Protect significant scenic areas by maintaining land in those areas in public ownership.

Action 13.A.4.a. Encourage the use of federal and state designations that recognize significant scenic areas.

Action 13.A.4.b. Encourage the transfer of ownership of visually significant private land to public land management agencies or land conservation organizations for the purpose of preserving scenic resources.

Action 13.A.4.c. Encourage private landowners with visually significant property to grant or sell a conservation easement to a land conservation organization to protect the land as open space, including continued agricultural uses.

Action 13.A.4.d. Continue to use land use regulations and subdivision regulations to preserve open space for scenic purposes.

Action 13.A.4.e. Conserve scenic highway corridors by maintaining and expanding large-lot land use designations in areas within view of scenic highways.

Policy 13.A.5. Restore visually degraded areas when possible.

Action 13.A.5.a. Promote reclamation of existing quarry sites to natural conditions following exhaustion of the mineral resource or abandonment of operations.

Action 13.A.5.b. Work with existing uses to mitigate the adverse visual impacts of those uses; e.g., by painting, landscaping, or otherwise screening the use.

Action 13.A.5.c. Encourage private restoration of disturbed sites.

Action 13.A.5.d. Consider visual impacts during the Grading Permit Process.

Action 13.A.5.e. Require the restoration of disturbed sites following construction, but prior to issuance of a Certificate of Occupancy.

Policy 13.A.6. Restore abandoned roadway sections and/or improvements along scenic highways.

Action 13.A.6.a. Require the governmental entity responsible for the roadway abandonment to restore the road bed and adjacent area to a condition comparable to surrounding lands.

Objective 13.B.
Maintain a countywide system of state and County-designated scenic highways[4]. (See RTP for designated roads.)

[4]**Scenic Highway** - Any freeway, highway, road, street, boulevard, or other public right of way that traverses an area of unusual scenic quality and has been designated as a Scenic Highway by the county Board of Supervisors and/or the State of California.

Policy 13.B.1. Maintain existing State-designated scenic highways.

Action 13.B.1.a. Enforce required regulations for protection of roadways designated as state scenic highways.

Action 13.B.1.b. Work with appropriate agencies to protect visual resources within existing designated scenic highway corridors[5].

Action 13.B.1.c. Work with Caltrans to ensure that state scenic highways are properly signed.

Policy 13.B.2. Seek state scenic highways designation for additional mileage in Mono County.

Action 13.B.2.a. Apply to Caltrans for designation of additional Mono County roadways as state scenic highways.

Policy 13.B.3. Maintain existing County-adopted scenic highways.

Action 13.B.3.a. Study the feasibility and desirability of a County signing program for County-adopted scenic highways.

Policy 13.B.4. Designate additional mileage for the County-adopted scenic highway system.

Action 13.B.4.a. Identify appropriate new road segments for designation.

Policy 13.B.5. Seek state designation of County-adopted scenic highways as official County scenic highways.

Action 13.B.5.a. Apply to Caltrans for designation of County-adopted scenic highways as official County scenic highways.

Policy 13.B.6. Support designation of appropriate highways as National Scenic Byways.

Objective 13.C.
Ensure that development is visually compatible with the surrounding community, adjacent cultural resources, and/or natural environment.

Policy 13.C.1. Future development projects shall avoid potential significant visual impacts or mitigate impacts to a level of non-significance, unless a statement of overriding considerations is made through the EIR process.

Action 13.C.1.a. Future development projects with the potential to have a substantial, demonstrable negative aesthetic effect shall provide a visual impact analysis prior to project approval. Examples of a substantial, demonstrable negative aesthetic effect include:

a. Reflective materials;

b. Excessive height and/or bulk;

c. Standardized designs that are utilized to promote specific commercial activities and that are not in harmony with the community atmosphere;

[5]**Scenic Highway Corridor** - The area of land generally adjacent to (within 1,000 feet) and visible from the highway, which requires protective measures to ensure perpetuation of its scenic qualities. Scenic Highway Routes consist of both the public right of way and the scenic corridor.

d. Architectural designs and features that are incongruous to the community or area and/or that significantly detract from the natural attractiveness of the community or its surroundings;

e. Dust or steam plumes; and

f. Excessive night lighting.

The analysis shall:

a. be funded by the applicant;

b. be prepared by a qualified person under the direction of Mono County;

c. assess the visual environment in the general project vicinity;

d. describe the impacts of the proposed development upon views and scenic qualities within the project site and on surrounding areas; and

e. recommend project alternatives or measures to avoid or mitigate visual impacts.

Mitigation measures shall be included in the project plans and specifications and shall be made a condition of approval for the project.

Policy 13.C.2. Future development shall be sited and designed to be in scale and compatible with the surrounding community and/or natural environment,

Action 13.C.2.a. Utilize the General Plan design guidelines (see appendices) for residential, commercial, and industrial development projects. At a minimum, the following development standards shall apply:

a. Projects should not dominate the natural environment, and should complement existing community character; the scale, design, and siting of a project should be appropriate for the setting;

b. Building mass should be varied and should be appropriate for the surrounding community or area. Facades in commercial districts should be varied;

c. Project siting and structural design should be sensitive to the climate, topography, and lighting of the surrounding environment;

d. The design, color, and building materials for structures, fences, and signs shall be compatible with the natural environment and/or surrounding community;

e. Visually offensive land uses shall be adequately screened through the use of landscaping, fencing, contour grading, or other appropriate measures;

f. The visual impacts of parking areas shall be minimized through the use of landscaping, covered parking, siting that screens the parking from view, or other appropriate measures;

g. Signs shall comply with the county's Sign Ordinance;

h. Standardized commercial structures, design, and materials shall not be allowed (e.g., a chain franchise shall be designed with materials and finishes that harmonize with the surrounding area);

i. Industrial areas shall be as compact as possible;

j. Exterior lighting shall be shielded and indirect, shall be minimized to that necessary for security and safety, and shall comply with the Dark Sky Regulations where applicable;

k. All new utilities shall be installed underground, in conformity with applicable provisions of the Mono County General Plan (see Chapter 11 of the Land Use Element);

l. Existing roads shall be utilized whenever possible. Construction of new roads should be avoided except where essential for health and safety;

m. Earthwork, grading, and vegetative removals shall be minimized; and

n. All site disturbances shall be revegetated with a mix of species native to the site and shall control for the establishment of invasive, non-native plants including annual grasses. A landscaping plan shall be submitted and approved for all projects.

Action 13.C.2.b. County staff may require project modifications as necessary to implement Policy 2 and Action 2.1 above.

Action 13.C.2.c. Encourage the establishment of Design Review Districts within community areas, in order to provide design guidelines that are more specific to each community.

Action 13.C.2.d. Apply the Scenic Combining District designation in order to minimize the impacts of development in scenic areas outside communities, including in scenic highway corridors.

Action 13.C.2.e. Require the establishment of building envelopes during the subdivision process, where appropriate, to mitigate visual impacts.

Action 13.C.2.f. Work with federal and state agencies on development projects on their lands to ensure that potential adverse visual impacts are fully mitigated.

Action 13.C.2.g. Existing visually offensive land uses located within scenic highway corridors should be adequately landscaped or otherwise screened.

Action 13.C.2.h. Require any expansion of existing visually offensive land uses within scenic highway corridors to be adequately landscaped or otherwise screened.

Action 13.C.2.i. Require visually compatible drainage improvements in scenic highway corridors, and comply with the requirements of applicable agencies such as the CDFW, Lahontan Regional Water Quality Control Board, and Army Corps of Engineers. When feasible, do not place streams in underground drainage structures.

Action 13.D.2.j. Reconsider development impact fees and other funding to improve new drainage systems in communities, and consider a requirement for development to fully mitigate drainage impacts.

Policy 13.C.3. Proposed transmission and distribution lines shall be designed and sited to minimize impacts to natural and visual resources.

Action 13.C.3.a. Install utilities underground in conformity with Chapter 11 of the Land Use Element and the Mono County Code.

Action 13.C.3.b. Require that utilities for all new subdivisions be installed underground, unless specific hardships can be demonstrated in conformity with the Mono County Code.

Action 13.C.3.c. Pursue the establishment of underground utility districts within scenic highway corridors as a mechanism to place existing overhead lines underground.

Action 13.C.3.d. Apply to SCE for financial support to convert eligible overhead lines to underground utilities.

Action 13.C.3.e. Enforce the policies in the Energy section of the Conservation/Open Space Element pertaining to the siting and design of transmission lines and fluid conveyance pipelines.

Action 13.C.3.f. Avoid siting cellular towers in Bi-State sage grouse habitat to the extent possible; if no alternatives exist, site towers in lowest quality habitat possible.

Policy 13.C.4. Promote revegetation and reforestation programs along County roads, including designated scenic highways.

Action 13.C.4.a. Seek funding and work with appropriate agencies to develop and implement revegetation and reforestation programs along County roads, including scenic highways.

Action 13.C.4.b. Revegetation plans should include measures to ensure the control of invasive, non-native plants including annual grasses.

Action 13.C.4.c. Revegetation plans should utilize plantings from local native stock, including adjacent riparian and wetland plants, and locally collected seed when feasible.

Action 13.C.4.d. Seek ways to form partnerships that will facilitate mitigative control or eradication of invasive non-native plants in and around town areas. Identify and explore methods of forming collaborations, funding, and facilitating such programs.

Policy 13.C.5. Minimize the visual impact of signs within designated scenic highway corridors.

Action 13.C.5.a. Prohibit billboards and off-premises advertising signs within scenic highway corridors.

Action 13.C.5.b. Amend the Sign Ordinance to regulate the number, type, size, height, design, materials, color and texture of on-premise attached signs within scenic highway corridors.

Action 13.C.5.c. Require a use permit for all on-premise freestanding signs in scenic highways corridor.

Action 13.C.5.d. Amend the Sign Ordinance to clarify the amortization procedures for non-conforming signs.

Policy 13.C.6. Establish and implement roadway improvement standards for designated scenic highways.

Action 13.C.6.a. Make every effort to work within existing rights of way rather than constructing new roads through scenic areas.

Action 13.C.6.b. Ensure that aesthetics is a major consideration in the design of any new roads through scenic areas.

Action 13.C.6.c. In order to minimize the disruption that can result from the construction of a new road through a scenic area, clear cutting and hillside cuts should be avoided whenever possible.

Objective 13.D.
Heighten awareness of Mono County's unique visual environment.

Policy 13.D.1. Tourist facilities should be located to take advantage of scenic views. (Also see RTP policies.)

Action 13.D.1.a. Work with federal, state, and local agencies to construct roadside turnouts with interpretive information for scenic vistas.

Action 13.D.1.b. Work with federal, state, and local agencies to develop a scenic vista signing program that marks scenic viewpoints from roadways.

Policy 13.D.2. Provide roadside improvements for designated county and state scenic highways. (Also see RTP policies.)

Action 13.D.2.a. Work with appropriate agencies and individuals to develop scenic view areas and roadside stops whenever feasible within scenic highway corridors.

Action 13.D.2.b. Install bicycle lanes, equestrian trails, and foot trails where appropriate along scenic highways.

Action 13.D.2.c. Protect and enhance all historical structures and points of interest and the visual state of their surroundings whenever possible within and adjacent to scenic highway corridors.

Action 13.D.2.d. Encourage the USFS, the BLM, and Caltrans to provide funding for roadside improvements.

Policy 13.D.3. Continue to conduct an anti-litter campaign along County roadways.

Action 13.D.3.a. Continue to place garbage cans at pullouts where appropriate along roadways.

Action 13.D.3.b. Encourage participation in Caltrans' Adopt-A-Highway Program.

Action 13.D.3.c. Continue to enforce litter abatement laws, including fines.

OUTDOOR RECREATION

GOAL 14. Provide opportunities for outdoor recreation to meet the needs of residents and visitors in a manner that conserves natural and cultural resources.

Objective 14.A.
Provide sufficient recreational facilities and opportunities for residents.

Policy 14.A.1. Each community should have a community center, when supported by local residents, and a full range of community recreation facilities.

Action 14.A.1.a. Maintain existing community recreation facilities first, and then seek to improve and expand.

Action 14.A.1.b. Work with communities and other groups as feasible to operate and maintain parks.

Policy 14.A.2. Plan, design, and construct parks and recreation facilities to coincide with projected growth.

Action 14.A.2.a. Provide new park facilities and outdoor recreation amenities to accommodate growing populations.

Action 14.A.2.b. County park facilities should be accessible to all segments of the population, including persons with disabilities, young, and elderly, where feasible.

Action 14.A.2.c. Encourage the formation of a self-supporting park system by employing user fees (where appropriate), concessionaire revenues, soliciting grants and private contributions, requesting volunteer help, and by other means that further cost-effective park operations.

Action 14.A.2.d. Continue working with the Town of Mammoth Lakes to provide joint use park and recreation facilities. Ensure equitable support by the Town for the provision of these services.

Action 14.A.2.e. Identify, designate and acquire sites for parks and other recreation facilities of sufficient size and location for future development.

Action 14.A.2.f. Prioritize site acquisitions.

Action 14.A.2.g. Where feasible, acquire public lands for parks and ball fields through land exchanges and special use permits.

Action 14.A.2.h. Develop and adopt a funding plan to acquire sites and/or conservation easements and to fund needed recreation facilities.

Action 14.A.2.i. Continue pursuing state and federal grant moneys and moneys available from nonprofit corporations for the acquisition, construction, and maintenance of parks and other recreation facilities.

Action 14.A.2.j. Promote the establishment and enactment of development impact fees requiring new developments to dedicate land, contribute to a fund, or a combination of both, for parks and recreational purposes.

Action 14.A.2.k. Through the Specific Plan process, provide incentives for developers to dedicate areas for parks and to plan for the development of parks.

Policy 14.A.3. The location and design of recreational facilities should reflect environmental constraints and site characteristics.

Action 14.A.3.a. All applications for recreational projects shall be required to address the potential adverse impacts of the development. Applications shall include measures to mitigate potential impacts.

Action 14.A.3.b. Locate and design community parks to minimize their effects on surrounding land uses.

Action 14.A.3.c. Provide adequate buffer zones around community parks.

Action 14.A.3.d. Minimize the use of outdoor lights.

Policy 14.A.4. Through the Specific Plan process, provide incentives for developers to provide public indoor recreation facilities, such as swimming facilities, basketball courts, etc.

Objective 14.B.
Provide sufficient recreational facilities and opportunities outside community areas for residents and visitors.

Policy 14.B.1. Work with appropriate agencies and organizations to provide a full range of recreation opportunities to meet varied interests.

Action 14.B.1.a. Provision of County parks should occur in coordination with federal, state, and local agencies, and other recreation providers to avoid duplication of services and to ensure a full range of recreation opportunities.

Action 14.B.1.b. Participate in the development of recreation plans and policies with other agencies and organizations.

Policy 14.B.2. Recreational development outside community areas should be responsive to environmental limitations and market demand.

Action 14.B.2.a. Applications for such recreational projects shall be required to address the potential adverse impacts of the development. Applications shall include measures to mitigate potential impacts.

Action 14.B.2.b. Development proposals for major recreation facilities outside community areas may be required to submit a market-demand analysis.

Policy 14.B.3. Reduce incompatibility between recreation uses and neighboring uses.

Action 14.B.3.a. Review locations of proposed recreational uses to ensure that the location is compatible with neighboring uses.

Policy 14.B.4. Protect natural resources from overuse due to recreational uses.

Action 14.B.4.a. Work with appropriate agencies to develop capacity goals for recreation facilities and to monitor visitor usage at recreation facilities.

Policy 14.B.5. Preserve rivers that provide recreational opportunities.

Action 14.B.5.a. Pursue Wild and Scenic River designation for appropriate County waterways.

Objective 14.C.
Provide convenient and safe access to recreation sites. Also see the Regional Transportation Plan and Mono County Trails Plan (in the RTP Appendices).

Policy 14.C.1. Local trails should connect to regional and interstate trails, where feasible.

Action 14.C.1.a. Inventory and map all trails in Mono County.

Action 14.C.1.b. Meet with federal and state agencies to identify priority trail links.

Action 14.C.1.c. Seek partnerships and funding to develop and construct trail improvements, including trails on public lands.

Action 14.C.1.d. Investigate the feasibility of creating trails in utility corridors.

Action 14.C.1.e. Meet with other agencies to compare capital improvement programs and eliminate overlap of projects.

Policy 14.C.2. Encourage connections between trails and other transportation systems; e.g., public transit systems.

Policy 14.C.3. When appropriate, major recreation destinations, such as lakes, ski areas or cultural resource areas, should have public transportation systems that serve them as an alternative to the private automobile.

Action 14.C.3.a. Development applications for major recreation projects shall address traffic impacts. The analysis shall include mitigation measures.

Policy 14.C.4. All communities should have trails and public transit services that link the community to adjacent recreation opportunities, where feasible.

Policy 14.C.5. Provide for public access from public roadways to navigable waterways through the subdivision process in a manner consistent with the Subdivision Map Act and other applicable laws.

Objective 14.D.
Encourage and promote year-round use of seasonal recreation areas and facilities.

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Policy 14.D.1. Seasonal facilities should provide opportunities for alternative uses in the off-season.

Action 14.D.1.a. Where appropriate, encourage multi-season programming for recreation facilities, such as June Mountain Ski Area, and amenities, such as the use of alpine ski trails for summer mountain bike use.

Action 14.D.1.b. Increase public awareness of seasonal recreation opportunities through promotional programs.

CULTURAL RESOURCES

GOAL 15. Identify, preserve, restore, and interpret cultural resources[6] in Mono County.

Objective 15.A.
Provide a comprehensive approach to cultural resources management.

Policy 15.A.1. Establish a Cultural Resources Management Program.

Action 15.A.1.a. Develop a Cultural Resources Management Ordinance that includes criteria, standards, and guidelines for identifying, preserving, and protecting the county's cultural resources.

Action 15.A.1.b. Establish a Cultural Resources Management Commission to administer the Cultural Resources Management Program, to identify cultural resources, to apply for cultural resources grants, to act as a liaison with federal, state, and local agencies involved in cultural resources management, and to review development proposals affecting significant cultural resources.

Action 15.A.1.c. Consider membership in the California Preservation Foundation and the National Trust for Historic Preservation to keep apprised of pending legislation, workshops, publications, available funding, educational opportunities and incentive for implementing historic preservation programs.

Policy 15.A.2. Establish a Local Mono County Historic Register of historical or architecturally significant sites, places, historic districts or landmarks.

Action 15.A.2.a. Develop criteria in cooperation with other federal, state, and local agencies to determine which cultural resources are significant.

Action 15.A.2.b. Develop procedures in the Cultural Resources Management Ordinance for the preservation and protection of significant resources, including guidelines for the use of mitigation measures to address the impacts of development on cultural resources.

Action 15.A.2.c. Prioritize sites to be nominated to the National Register of Historic Places and/or as California Historic Landmarks or Points of Historical Interest, as well as routes to be nominated for National Trails designation or the California Trails System.

Action 15.A.2.d. Make recommendations to the Board of Supervisors concerning the local designation of cultural landmarks and districts.

[6]In Mono County, cultural resources include buildings, sites, structures, objects and districts of interest to Mono County, the region, California and the nation. The term "cultural resources" includes both archaeological and historical resources.

Action 15.A.2.c. Adopt an ordinance establishing that buildings on the Mono County Historic Register shall be deemed "qualifying structures," eligible to use the State Historical Building Code pursuant to Section 18955 of the Health and Safety Code.

Eligibility criteria for listing shall be as follows:
A property is eligible for consideration to be listed on the Mono County Register if it meets one of the following criteria:

A. Buildings and structures on the National Register of Historic Places, and/or the California Register of Historic Places shall be automatically eligible to be included on the Mono County Historic Register;

B. It exemplifies or reflects significant elements of Mono County's cultural, social, religious, economic, political, engineering or architectural history;

C. It is identified with historic persons or with important events in local, state or national history;

D. It embodies distinguished architectural characteristics valuable for a study of a period style or method of construction or is a valuable example of the use of indigenous materials or workmanship;

E. It is representative of a notable work of a master builder or architect;

Policy 15.A.3. Obtain funding to implement the Cultural Resource Management Program.

Action 15.A.3.a. Apply to the State Office of Historic Preservation for Certified Local Ordinance Status and Certified Local Government status.

Action 15.A.3.b. Consult with federal, state, and nonprofit groups concerning the availability of grants and funding for cultural resources preservation and management. Seek funding from available sources.

Action 15.A.3.c. Consider using historic preservation to bolster applications to fund transportation projects including bicycle/pedestrian pathways, grants, etc.

Policy 15.A.4. Encourage private preservation and conservation efforts.

Action 15.A.4.a. Contact owners of privately owned cultural resource sites to discuss long-term plans for the sites and the possibility of obtaining grants or loans for restoration.

Action 15.A.4.b. Encourage productive and economically attractive uses of historic properties and structures.

Action 15.A.4.c. Provide technical assistance to private owners of cultural resource properties wishing to preserve, protect, or restore their properties.

Action 15.A.4.d. Consult with Mono County Economic Development Department to maximize potential advantages of historic preservation of cultural resource properties.

Policy 15.A.5. Encourage a coordinated and cooperative approach to cultural resources management.

Action 15.A.5.a. Work with appropriate federal, state, and local agencies in the development and implementation of the Cultural Resource Management Program.

Action 15.A.5.b. Implement procedures for consulting with local Native American groups and with the California Native American Heritage Commission to ensure that federal and state requirements

concerning the preservation and protection of Native American remains are met. Integrate consultation procedures with CEQA requirements.

Action 15.A.5.c. Adopt provisions in the Cultural Resource Management Ordinance to ensure that traditional Native American religious and cultural practices are protected.

Action 15.A.5.d. Support efforts to gain tribal recognition for the Mono Lake Indian Community. (See Mono Basin Plan: Page 29: Goal 3; Objective A; Policy 5; Action 5.1)

Objective 15.B.
Identify and inventory cultural resources in Mono County.

Policy 15.B.1. Work with private land owners to conduct a comprehensive inventory of cultural resources on private lands.

Action 15.B.1.a. Work with federal, state, and local agencies to analyze current data on cultural resources in the county, to develop a work program for a cultural resources inventory on private lands in the county, and to coordinate with inventory data on public lands.

Action 15.B.1.b. Investigate cooperative approaches to conducting a cultural resources inventory.

Action 15.B.1.c. Seek public involvement in the inventory process.

Action 15.B.1.d. Seek funding and establish procedures for an ongoing update of the inventory.

Objective 15.C.
Preserve, protect, and restore (where appropriate) the cultural resources of Mono County.

Policy 15.C.1. Future development projects shall avoid potential significant impacts to cultural resources or mitigate impacts to a level of non-significance, unless a statement of overriding considerations is made through the EIR process.

Action 15.C.1.a. Future development projects with the potential to significantly impact cultural resources shall provide an analysis of the potential impact(s) prior to project approval. Examples of potential significant impacts include:

a. disrupting or adversely affecting a prehistoric or historic archaeological site or a property of historic or cultural significance to a community or ethnic or social group, or a paleontological site except as a part of a scientific study; and/or

b. conflicting with established recreational, educational, religious or scientific uses of the area.

The analysis shall:

a. be funded by the applicant;

b. be prepared by a qualified person under the direction of Mono County;

c. assess the cultural resources in the general project vicinity;

d. describe the impacts of the proposed development upon cultural resources within the project site and on surrounding areas; and

e. recommend project alternatives or measures to avoid or mitigate impacts to cultural resources.

Mitigation measures shall be included in the project plans and specifications and shall be made a condition of approval for the project.

Action 15.C.1.b. Develop criteria in cooperation with other federal, state, and local agencies, to determine which cultural resources are significant.

Action 15.C.1.c. Develop procedures in the Cultural Resource Management Ordinance for the preservation and protection of significant resources, including guidelines for the use of mitigation measures to address the impacts of development on cultural resources.

Action 15.C.1.d. Prioritize sites to be nominated to the National Register of Historic Places and/or as California Historic Landmarks or Points of Historical Interest, as well as routes to be nominated for National Trails designation or the California Trails System.

Action 15.C.1.e. Make recommendations to the Board of Supervisors concerning the local designation of cultural landmarks and districts.

Policy 15.C.2. Explore all available measures, including the purchase of easements, dedication to the County, tax relief, the purchase of development rights, the formation of a local land trust, and the consideration of reasonable project alternatives in order to avoid development on or adjacent to culturally sensitive sites.

Policy 15.C.3. Establish buffer zones around significant cultural resource sites to protect the integrity of the resource, as well as the integrity of the setting.

Action 15.C.3.a. Work with the State Department of Parks and Recreation to address compatible land uses adjacent to State Historic Park properties.

Action 15.C.3.b. Encourage the State to purchase properties adjacent to State Historic Park properties in order to prevent impacts from future adjoining incompatible uses.

Action 15.C.3.c. Support the acquisition of areas with cultural resource values by federal or state land management agencies or land conservation organizations.

Action 15.C.3.d. Protect existing open space and/or designate or acquire open space around identified cultural properties to provide buffer space and to protect historic settings.

Action 15.C.3.e. Encourage other federal, state, and local agencies, as well as private individuals and organizations, to provide buffer zones around cultural properties.

Policy 15.C.4. Restore and maintain significant cultural resource sites.

Action 15.C.4.a. Adopt policies and standards in the Cultural Resource Management Ordinance for the maintenance and restoration of significant cultural resources.

Action 15.C.4.b. Establish a fund for the purchase, maintenance, and restoration of significant cultural resources.

Action 15.C.4.c. Study the potential of amending the General Plan to establish a cultural resource overlay designation and/or local cultural resource or historic districts. Parcel owner consent shall be obtained prior to rezoning property for historic preservation or listing on County register.

Policy 15.C.5. Implement incentives to encourage private preservation and conservation efforts.

Action 15.C.5.a. Develop tax incentives for the preservation or faithful restoration of properties with identified cultural resource value. Consider implementation in Mono County of the Mills Act; 1986 Tax Reform Act, Marks Historical Rehabilitation Act, among other tax incentives.

Action 15.C.5.b. Adopt the State Historic Building Code, in lieu of the Uniform Building Code, for significant historic structures.

Action 15.C.5.c. Establish requirements in the Cultural Resources Management Ordinance for compatible alterations and additions to historic structures.

Action 15.C.5.d. Allow minor variations from land use designation requirements (e.g., setbacks, parking standards) to maintain the historic quality of cultural properties.

Action 15.C.5.e. Consider adopting fee waiver provisions to include waiving development permit fees for site review, site development, and conditional use permits for work done on Mono County Historic Register and National Register structures that is consistent with the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Treatment of Historic Properties with Guidelines for Preserving, Rehabilitating, Restoring and Reconstructing Historic Buildings.

Action 15.C.5.f. Consider reducing or waiving building fees for structures using the State Historical Building Code.

Action 15.C.5.g. Demolition Permits: require approval of a new development plan and issuance of required Grading and/or Building Permits and review by the Historic Preservation Commission or documentation of an imminent safety hazard (as defined by the Health and Safety Code) prior to issuance of a demolition permit for buildings with historic designations. The Historic Preservation Review Commission shall also review all demolition permits for buildings 50 years of age or older in any zoning district or a cultural resources study shall be required prior to approval of a demolition permit.

Objective 15.D.
Interpret and make accessible to the public cultural resources in Mono County where feasible and appropriate.

Policy 15.D.1. Develop cooperative interpretation and education programs on cultural resources in Mono County.

Action 15.D.1.a. Work with federal, state, and local agencies and organizations to inventory existing interpretive and educational programs and to develop additional interpretive and educational programs, including living history programs.

Action 15.D.1.b. Utilize handouts developed by the USFS, the BLM, and the State Department of Parks on the restrictions on gathering artifacts or damaging cultural properties and the penalties involved in violations, and shall make these handouts available at existing visitor facilities.

Objective 15.E.
Promote Mono County's cultural resources, when feasible and appropriate.

Policy 15.E.1. Highlight Mono County's cultural resources, when feasible and appropriate, in promotional materials.

Action 15.E.1.a. Work with federal, state, and local agencies and organizations to develop a list of which cultural resources and activities in the county can be promoted without adverse harm to the resource.

Action 15.E.1.b. Encourage the USFS, the BLM,, local Chambers of Commerce, and the Town of Mammoth Lakes to include cultural resources and activities in promotional materials.

Action 15.E.1.c. Encourage local communities and Chambers of Commerce to develop and promote local historically oriented special events.

Action 15.E.1.d. Encourage local communities and agencies to support and promote traditional folk arts such as Native American arts and crafts and traditional Western crafts.

Action 15.E.1.e. Study the feasibility of establishing a County historic designation program, with roadside markers.

Objective 15.F.
Set an example for cultural resources management through proper private and public stewardship of the county's cultural resources.

Policy 15.F.1. Promote cultural resources management practices by demonstrating proper stewardship of the County's cultural resources.

Action 15.F.1.a. Retain the Mono County Cultural Resource Commission as an advisory agency to review projects on or involving County property, with the potential to impact cultural resources.

Action 15.F.1.b. Enlist the Mono County Cultural Resources Commission to inventory all County-owned properties more than 45 years old.

Policy 15.F.2. Administration of the actions listed in this Element is the shared responsibility of the Board of Supervisors, Community Development Department, and the Mono County Cultural Resources Commission with the Community Development Department serving as the primary administrator at the direction of the Board of Supervisors. Cooperating agencies include the Mono County Economic Development Department, the Mono County Historical Societies (various) and the California Office of Historic Preservation.

PUBLIC HEALTH AND SAFETY & AIR QUALITY

GOAL 16. Achieve and maintain excellent air quality, water quality, and noise quality such that public health and the environmental character of the county is protected.

Objective 16.A.
Maintain a high level of air quality that protects human health and wildlife, and prevents the degradation of scenic views.

Policy 16.A.1. Maintain air quality by complying with standards and regulations established by the Great Basin Unified Air Pollution Control District (GBUAPCD).

Action 16.A.1.a. Maintain countywide attainment of ambient standards for carbon monoxide (CO), nitrogen dioxide (NO_2), and sulfur dioxide (SO_2).

Action 16.A.1.b. Support GBUAPCD implementation of State Implementation Plans for PM_{10} in the Mono Basin and town of Mammoth Lakes, and ozone countywide.

Action 16.A.1.c. Provide public education by referring applicable parties such as stationary source operators, construction managers, and agricultural operators to the GBUAPCD to ensure compliance with standards and regulations.

Action 16.A.1.d. Comply with Mammoth Air Basin SIP requirements for vehicle miles traveled – see the Regional Transportation Plan in the Circulation Element and RTP Objective 7.C.2.

Policy 16.A.2. Support improved regional forest management to reduce local impacts to visual resources and public health due to smoke from forest fires.

Action 16.A.2.a. Support and encourage forest health projects on the western slope to reduce the likelihood of catastrophic fires that will transport smoke to the Eastern Sierra.

Policy 16.A.3. Future development projects shall avoid impacts to air quality or mitigate impacts to a level of non-significance, unless a statement of overriding considerations is made through the EIR process.

Policy 16.A.3.a. Future development projects with the potential to significantly impact air quality shall assess potential impacts prior to project approval. Examples of potential significant impacts include:

a. Violating any ambient air quality standard; and/or

b. Contributing substantially to an existing or projected air quality violation; and/or

c. Exposing sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations or odors.

The analysis shall:

a. be funded by the applicant;

b. be prepared by a qualified person under the direction of Mono County;

c. assess existing conditions in the general project vicinity;

d. describe the impacts of the proposed development upon air quality within the project site and on surrounding areas; and

e. recommend project alternatives or measures to avoid or mitigate impacts to air quality.

Mitigation measures shall be included in the project plans and specifications and shall be made a condition of approval for the project.

Policy 16.A.4. Promote mixed-use neighborhood commercial/residential development near employment centers to reduce the number of vehicle miles generated by land use development.

Action 16.A.4.a Support transit and similar transportation measures to ski areas, such as a park-and-ride system.

Policy 16.A.5. Reduce dust generation resulting from exposed alkali lake beds.

Action 16.A.5.a. Support the State Water Resources Control Board Decision 1631 requiring minimum flows to Mono Lake to maintain the lake level over 6,391 feet above mean sea level.

Policy 16.A.6. Reduce emissions from wood-burning appliances.

Action 16.A.6.a. Require that all new wood-burning appliances be Phase II EPA certified.

Policy 16.A.7. Minimize the amount of fugitive dust generated by construction and other activities.

Action 16.A.7.a. Require project sponsors and their contractors to employ dust abatement techniques such as: sprinkling of exposed areas, preventing haul trucks from being overfilled, and sweeping spilled material off paved roads.

Policy 16.A.8. Encourage agricultural practices that reduce the amount of dust generated from tilling.

Action 16.A.8.a. Work with local resource conservation districts, the US Natural Resources Conservation Service, agricultural officials, and the GBUAPCD to assist landowners in adjusting agricultural practices to reduce dust generation.

Policy 16.A.9. Reduce the amount of dust entrained by vehicle movement over paved and unpaved roads.

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Action 16.A.9.a. Require the paving or treatment of roads accompanying new development projects, in conformity to the County road standards.

Action 16.A.9.b. Consider the paving or treating of existing unpaved roads in the county considered to be significant dust sources through capital improvement plans, special assessment districts, or other sources.

Action 16.A.9.c. Cinders used for winter road maintenance should be applied in a manner that does not cause degradation of air quality.

Policy 16.A.10. Restrict OHV use in order to minimize air quality impacts.

Action 16.A.10.a. Consider coordinating OHV use on private lands and County roads with the OHV use established by the USFS and BLM for public lands.

Objective 16.B.
Maintain a high level of water quality that protects human health and wildlife habitat.

Policy 16.B.1. Implement policies contained in the Water Resources section of the Conservation/Open Space Element.

Objective 16.C.
Maintain existing ambient noise levels to protect human health and preserve habitat values.

Policies to achieve this objective are included in the Noise Element of this plan.

Objective 16.D.
Provide for the safe transfer, storage, and disposal of hazardous materials and waste in order to protect human health and the environment.

Policies to achieve this objective are included in the Mono County Integrated Waste Management Plan.

GOAL 17. Protect the public from natural hazards, such as volcanoes, earthquakes, avalanches, floods, and fires.

Policies to achieve this goal are included in the Safety Element of this plan.

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