
3.0 ENVIRONMENTAL CONSEQUENCES

3.2 RECREATION

INTRODUCTION

This section addresses the impacts on recreation as a result of construction and operation of the Proposed Action and Alternatives. The analysis also addresses the consistency of the Proposed Action and Alternatives with respect to the United States Department of Agriculture Forest Service (Forest Service) policies and the *Town of Mammoth Lakes 2007 General Plan Update*. The recreation analysis focuses on whether the Proposed Action and Alternatives would provide recreational benefits.

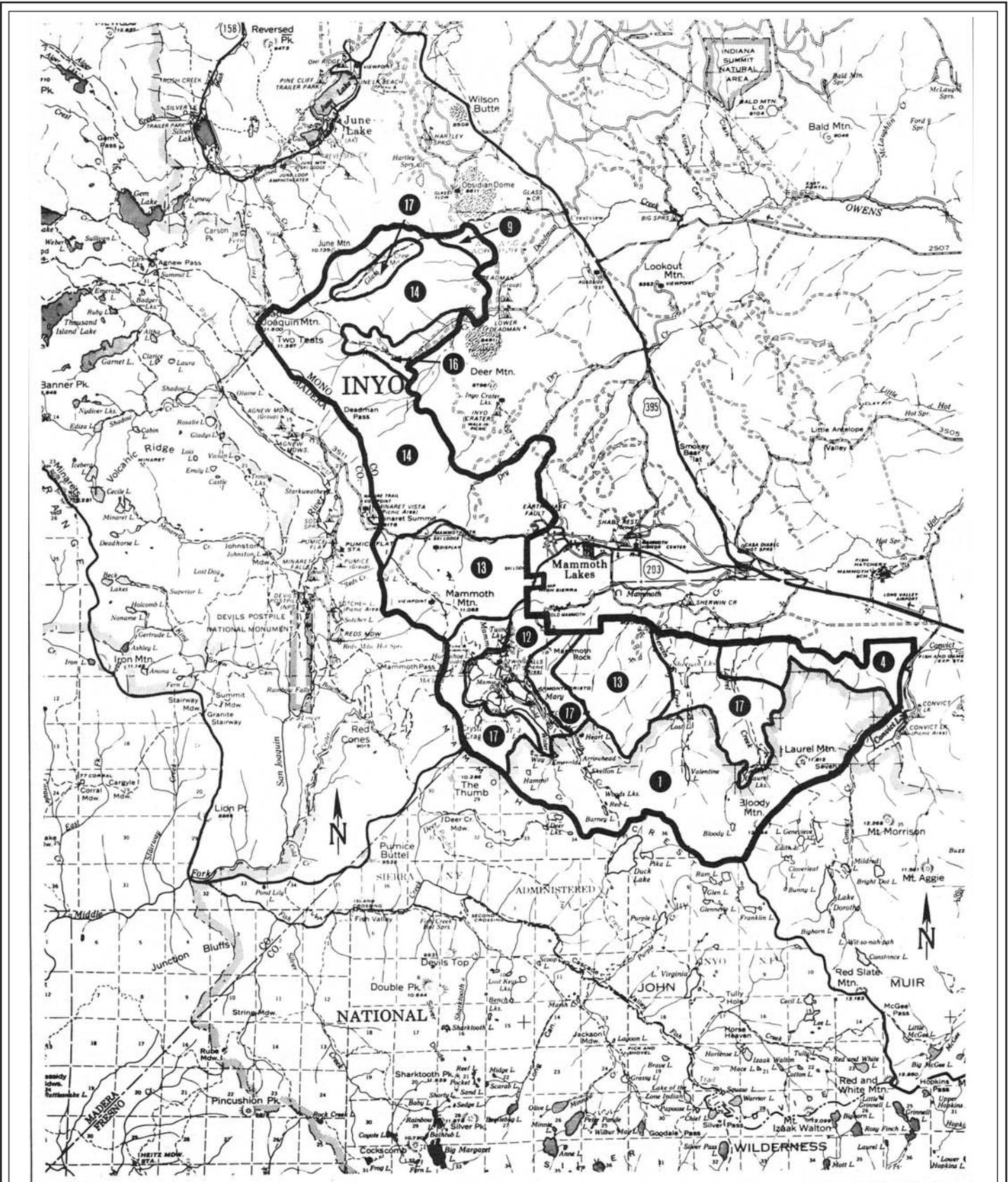
3.2.1 REGULATORY FRAMEWORK

a. Federal Level

(1) Forest Service

The Ski Back Trail site is an area contained within the Mammoth Mountain Ski Area (MMSA) Forest Service permit boundary and within the Rural Recreational Opportunity Spectrum (ROS) class of the Mammoth Escarpment Management Area, as illustrated in Figure 5 on page 40. The Rural ROS class has a recreation management emphasis to maintain and manage existing downhill ski areas for public use. The ROS class setting is described as, “accessible by conventional road and substantially modified with structures or other cultural modifications. Users would experience much interaction with others; there would be little opportunity for isolation.” Applicable policies include the following:

- Permit further expansion of areas already developed for alpine skiing. Expansion may include runs, lifts, base areas, and access to a degree that is often not compatible with other resource management options. (INF LRMP 1988, Rx #13, p.138)
- Utilize existing developed facilities, roads, and trails for both summer and winter recreation activities, whenever possible, before developing new ones for exclusive seasonal use. (INF LRMP 1988, Rx #13, p.78)



Not to scale

Figure 5
Mammoth Mountain Escarpment Areas

Source: Sierra Nevada Forest Plan.

b. Local Level

As previously described in Section 1.0, Introduction/Purpose and Need, of this Final EA, the Town of Mammoth Lakes (Town) and MMSA have a close relationship due to their physical land connection and economic dependency. As such, despite the fact that the Proposed Action does not require approval by the Town, it is necessary to ensure that the Proposed Action is consistent with the relevant Town's plans and policies.

(1) Town of Mammoth Lakes 2007 General Plan Update

The *Town of Mammoth Lakes 2007 General Plan (General Plan Update)* includes the Parks, Open Space, and Recreation Element in order to “create an attractive quality of life and contribute to public health by encouraging physical activity and an appreciation of nature.” Goals and policies applicable to the Proposed Action and Alternatives include the following:

- Parks, open space, and recreation create an attractive quality of life and contribute to public health by encouraging physical activity and an appreciation of nature. We emphasize a variety of outdoor winter and summer activities.

P.3.A. Policy: Ensure public routes for access to public lands are provided in all developments adjacent to National Forest lands.

P.3.B. Policy: Coordinate with multiple organizations, agencies and jurisdictions to plan, steward, interpret, promote and sustain trails, public access and outdoor recreation amenities in the Mammoth Lakes region.

P.4. Goal: Provide and encourage a wide variety of outdoor and indoor recreation readily accessible to residents and visitors of all ages.

P.4.A. Policy: Expand recreational opportunities by proactively developing partnerships with public agencies and private entities.

P.4.B. Policy: Provide an affordable and wide range of year-round recreational opportunities to foster a healthy community for residents and visitors. Activities include but are not limited to:

- | | |
|----------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| • downhill skiing & snowboarding | • back-country skiing & snowboarding |
| • cross-country skiing | • snowshoeing |
| | • sledding |

- dog sledding
- ice skating
- snowmobiling
- sleigh rides
- tennis
- swimming
- soccer
- racquetball
- snow play
- skateboarding
- day & backcountry hiking
- walking
- interpretive trails & signage
- climbing
- touring
- street & mountain biking
- camping
- fishing
- fall-color viewing
- birding
- health & fitness
- off-highway vehicles
- equestrian activities
- BMX

3.2.2 AFFECTED ENVIRONMENT

As previously described, the proposed Ski Back Trail area is located within the MMSA Forest Service permit boundary. This area also includes two existing beginner/intermediate mountain bike trails (Uptown and Downtown) for summer use but does not have a developed downhill ski trail for winter recreation use.

a. Winter

MMSA services approximately 13,500 skiers on typical winter Saturdays and approximately 19,000 skiers on peak holidays. Skiers access MMSA through four primary base facilities referred to as portals which include Eagle Lodge, Canyon Lodge, Main Lodge, and The Village. Each portal is designed and located to balance the entrance of skiers onto MMSA, as well as provide amenities including beginner and intermediate skiable terrain for recreational enjoyment. The Village portal is the newest portal and services an existing 3,200 visitors and is planned to serve 6,400 visitors at buildout.¹² Of the remaining hotel units to be developed in The Village, the Hillside and the second phase of 8050 are under construction; the One Hotel is

¹² *The planning document for the development of the Village area is The North Village Specific Plan adopted by the Town of Mammoth Lakes Town Council in 2000. This document details the number of hotel/bed and commercial units and associated occupancies at build out to be 6,400 visitors. Not all visitors who vacation in the mountains are skiers. The standard calculation for visitors who will ski is 1:1.7 according to Ecosign Mountain Resort Planners Ltd. 2007.*

scheduled to break ground in the spring of 2008; and the Mammoth Crossings Hotel complex and the Marriot Hotel are currently seeking final tract map approval from the Town of Mammoth Lakes. Buildout of the area is estimated to be completed by 2010. Buildout of The Village also includes completion of the second leg of the Village Gondola, which will allow skiers originating at The Village to continue up the mountain rather than unload at Canyon Lodge.

(1) Trail Capacity at Village Portal

As displayed in Table 3 on page 44, unlike the Canyon Lodge portal, The Village portal and its corresponding Village Gondola have no existing down-slope trail capacity.

(2) Village Gondola Down-Load Capacity

The Village Gondola currently provides direct access to the Canyon Lodge from The Village and serves visitors within a walking distance of a one-quarter mile radius, as well as riders arriving via bus or drop-off to the Village Transfer Station, as described in Section 2.0, Proposed Action and Alternatives, of this Final EA. There are approximately 3,200 peak day skiers that currently originate out of The Village portal. The one-way operating capacity of the Village Gondola is approximately 2,200 skiers per hour based on an observed car capacity of 10 to 12 skiers.¹³ During typical winter Saturday afternoons and peak holidays, there is a high demand for return trips on the Village Gondola to The Village.

The Village Gondola adequately up-loads skiers over the two hour period of time between 8:00 A.M. and 10:00 A.M. with minimal delays. However, it does not have the capacity to down-load the same number of skiers in the one hour period of 3:30 P.M. to 4:30 P.M. at the end of the day, which is a typical condition in the ski industry. Given personal habits and the time it takes to get equipment gathered, tickets bought, and parties organized, skiers have a tendency to start their ski day over a two hour period but once out on the slopes want to maximize their experience by skiing as long as possible. As shown in Table 4 on page 44 the lack of down-load capacity for the Village Gondola results in up to 700 skiers waiting in line up to 20 minutes on peak Saturdays. These wait times are projected to increase as the buildout of The Village is actualized (est. 2010). The potential demand for the Village Gondola on peak days is projected to be approximately 6,400 skiers per hour which will result in skiers waiting in lines of over an hour and half to down-load at the end of the day.

¹³ *The maximum capacity of the Village Gondola is 15 skiers per car, though the maximum capacity has not been achieved in practice. The speed of the Village Gondola is approximately 20 feet per second with a one-way trip taking approximately 4 minutes 15 seconds.*

Table 3

Canyon Lodge and Village Portal Chair Capacity vs. Trail Capacity

Chair	Chair Capacity*	Trail Capacity*
Chair 7	700	425
Chair 8	660	1,060
Chair 16	1,460	972
Chair 17	1,160	715
Chair 22	960	1,255
Poma	550	0 ^a
Heimo's Platter	360	0 ^a
Canyon Carpet	100	0 ^a
Canyon Carpet West	100	0 ^a
Total	6,050	4,427
Village Gondola	2,200	0

^a The beginner platters and carpets are counted in the slope capacity for the chair lifts.

^b The second leg of the Village Gondola will be able to disperse intermediate/advanced skiers farther up on the mountain rather than unloading at Canyon Lodge.

* Chair & Trail Capacity is based on Skier Carrying Capacity (SCC). The measurement in Mammoth Mountain Ski Area's Draft Master Development plan 64pp as the number of skiers that a given ski area or chair catchment area can comfortably support, or those that may be accommodated at one time. A ski area or chair catchment area's SCC is a function of vertical transport feet demand per skier, vertical transport feet supplied per hour, difficulty of terrain, and scope of support.

Source: Ecosign Mountain Resort Planners Ltd., 2007 Draft Update of MMSA Master Development Plan (2007).

Table 4

Peak End of Day Village Gondola Queue

Year	Gondola Demand	Approximate Wait Time	Approximate Skiers in Queue
2004 Peak Saturday	2,550 skiers	10 minutes	350 skiers ^a
Existing Peak Saturday	2,900 skiers	20 minutes	700 skiers ^a
Future Peak Saturday	6,400 skiers	115 minutes	4200 skiers

^a Number of people observed in the queue by MMSA employees in the 2004 ski season.

Source: LSA Associates, Inc., June 2007.

b. Summer

As noted above, Uptown and Downtown mountain bike trails currently start at the northwest corner of Forest Trail and Minaret Road, within the area of the proposed Ski Back Trail. These mountain bike trails are used to access the Main Lodge during the summer. They are beginner/intermediate single track trails that meander through the existing natural forest terrain for approximately three miles. These two trails are a part of the MMSA Bike Park trail

system and MMSA maintains the trails. They are open to the public without fee east of the MMSA garage facility.

3.2.3 ENVIRONMENTAL CONSEQUENCES

a. Methodology

(1) Construction Phase

Construction of the Proposed Action and/or Alternatives will have no impact on winter recreational facilities as none currently exist on this site. Construction of the Proposed Action and/or Alternatives could have short-term impacts on summer recreational facilities since they would only occur during the summer months. Therefore, impacts will be assessed in regards to whether construction activities would significantly impact the existing mountain bike trails.

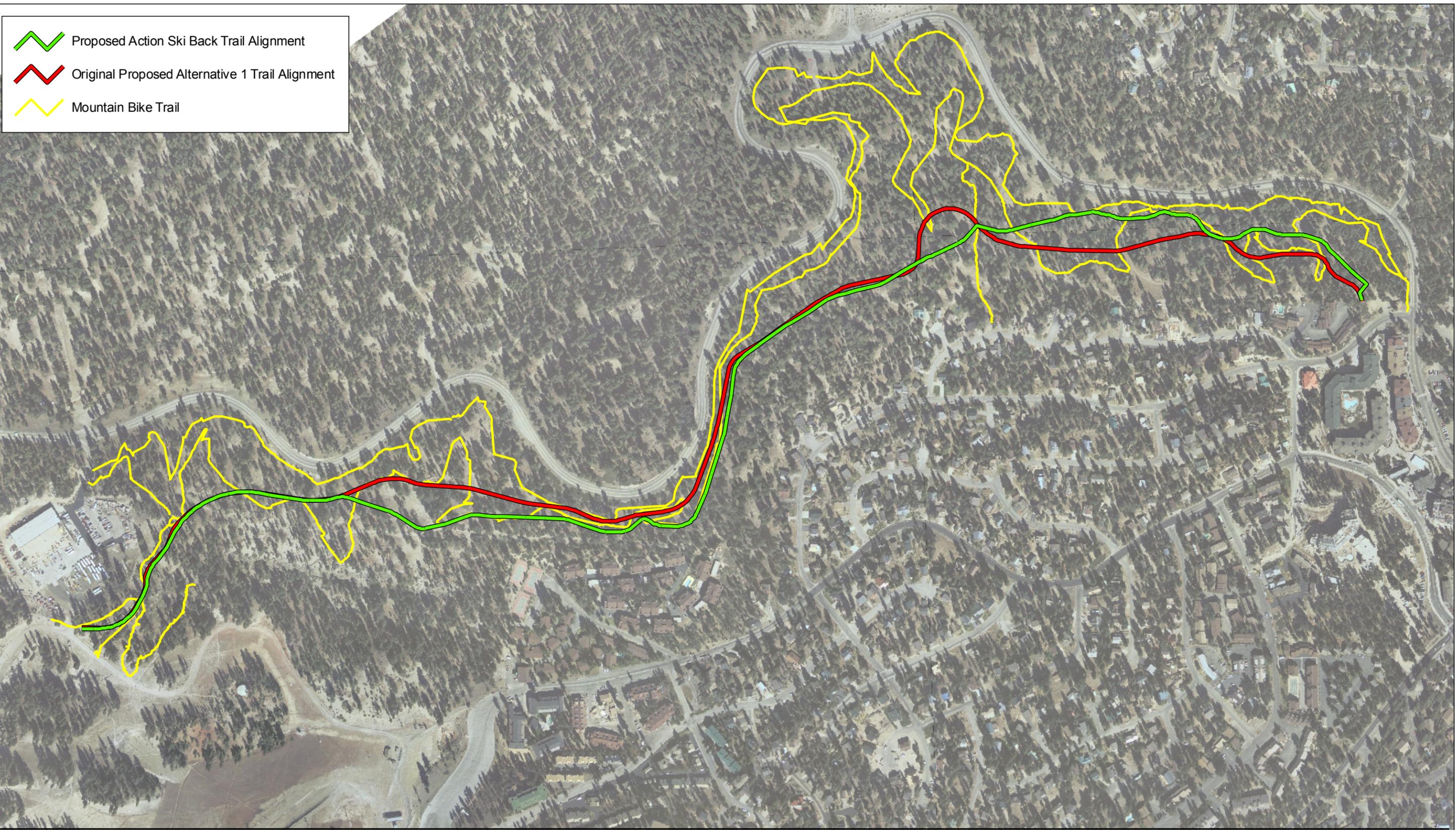
(2) Operational Phase

Winter operational recreation impacts are assessed using a maximum demand potential of skiers using the Village portal at build-out to access the mountain compared to the existing conditions in order to determine if the Proposed Action and/or Alternatives would provide additional down-slope capacity alleviating wait time at the Village Gondola and be able to provide a new recreational experience to skiers originating at The Village portal. Operational impacts were also analyzed for summer recreational facilities in regards to utilization of the proposed Ski Back Trail by mountain bikers.

b. Environmental Consequences of the Proposed Action

(1) Construction Impacts

Construction of the Proposed Action is expected to start in the spring of 2008 and would take approximately six months to complete and would be operational for the 2008/2009 winter season. The Uptown and Downtown mountain bike trails are used to access the Main Lodge and are within the proposed Ski Back Trail alignment area. The proposed Ski Back Trail would intersect the mountain bike trails a total of 25 times and would overlap the mountain bike trails for approximately 2,800 feet of the total 7,800 feet; refer to Figure 6 on page 46 for an illustration of where the Proposed Action would intersect the mountain bike trails. Therefore, construction of the proposed Ski Back Trail would require the closure of the mountain bike trails during the weekdays but open to riders on the weekends. Access to the Town and Village would remain available on the weekdays through Canyon Lodge via Shotgun and Paper Route and Big



-  Proposed Action Ski Back Trail Alignment
-  Original Proposed Alternative 1 Trail Alignment
-  Mountain Bike Trail



Figure 6
Impacts to MMSA Mountain Bike Trail

Ring bike trails. The closure of the mountain bike trails for the summer during weekday construction would provide a safe construction environment while minimizing the risk to the public. The Proposed Action Ski Back Trail alignment is configured and would utilize slope retention techniques to minimize the impacts to the existing mountain bike trails by more closely keeping to the natural terrain with minimal cut and fill and tree removal. In addition, in response to public comments, cut and fill on side-hill portions of the proposed Ski Back Trail would be balanced with the goal to safely retain trees. In addition, Mitigation Measure 3.2-1 would ensure that the mountain bike trails would be fully restored after construction. Restoration of the mountain bike trails would ensure the balance of uses for both winter and summer guests by providing the best possible experience in both settings, which is consistent with the *General Plan Update* and the *MMSA Master Development Plan*. The closure and re-routing of the mountain bike trails would be a short-term impact. Construction of the proposed Ski Back Trail would not result in adverse effects to summer recreational facilities.

(2) Operational Impacts

(a) Winter

As previously described, there is no down-slope ski trail capacity at The Village portal and skier return demand for the Village Gondola at the end of the day exceeds down-load capacity. It was observed in 2004 that the lack of down-load capacity resulted in up to 700 skiers in the queue on peak Saturdays waiting in line approximately 20 minutes. The cumulative conditions at build out (est. 2010) will result in the potential demand for the Village Gondola on peak days to be approximately 6,400 skiers per hour which will require skiers to wait in lines of over an hour and a half to down-load at the end of the day. Refer to Table 5 on page 48, which identifies the approximately wait time for skiers downloading on the gondola under existing and buildout conditions.

The Proposed Action adds down-slope capacity to The Village portal and provides an alternative to waiting in line to down-load on the Village Gondola and the Canyon Lodge Gondola and public transit to the lodges. It is estimated that skiers staying in accommodations within a one-quarter mile radius of a skier base facility will ski/walk to their accommodations, if available and conditions are favorable. The maximum slope capacity for the proposed Ski Back Trail alignment is 2,400 skiers per hour, but taking into account the design characteristics of the trail, it is estimated to serve 900 to 1,200 skiers per hour.

Given the following analyses, it can be concluded that the proposed Ski Back Trail has an existing peak day demand of approximately 1,400 skiers per hour and future demand on peak days of approximately 2,800 skiers per hour. As the maximum carrying capacity of the trail is estimated to be 1,200 skiers per hour, the Ski Back Trail will function as an important part of the mountains ability to alleviate the excess demand of Village Gondola but would not fully alleviate all of the demand on peak days at buildout.

Table 5

Peak End of Day Village Gondola Queue With and Without Ski Back Trail

Gondola Peak Day	Gondola Demand	Approximate Wait Time	Approximate Skiers in Queue ^a
Existing Peak Saturday	3,200 skiers	27 minutes	1,000 skiers
Buildout Peak Saturday	6,400 skiers	115 minutes	4,200 skiers
Existing Peak Saturday with SBT	2,000 skiers*	0 minutes	0 skiers
Buildout Peak Saturday with SBT	5,200 skiers*	80 minutes	3,000 skiers

* The comfortable carrying capacity of the Ski Back Trail is 1,200 skiers per hour.

^a Subtracted 2,200 to get the approximate number of skiers in the queue.

Source: Demand calculated off of existing and future buildout of accommodations in the North Village Specific Plan and the additional accommodations with a one quarter mile radius of the Village Gondola.

Ski Back Trail Demand Analysis:

1. The Village Gondola down-load capacity is 2,200 people per hour. Given the trail use characteristic assumptions, 60 percent are skiers and 85 percent of the skiers are intermediate level and above, approximately 1,120 of the Village Gondola riders per hour would be able to use the proposed Ski Back Trail.
2. Diversion of riders from the Village Gondola down-load line peak day for existing and future buildout conditions.
 - a. There are approximately 2,800 existing potential skiers within a one-quarter mile radius of the Village Gondola and approximately 400 skiers using the Village Transit Station and/or are dropped-off at The Village. Given the trail use characteristic assumptions, approximately 1,400 of these 3,200 skiers may desire to use the proposed Ski Back Trail per hour rather than waiting in line, however the maximum comfortable carrying capacity of the trail is constant at 1,200 skiers per hour.¹⁴ Therefore, development of the proposed Ski Back

¹⁴ Existing Village core portal lodging facilities accommodate 3,200 visitors. In addition, there are 820 visitor accommodations outside of the Village core but within walking distance (one-quarter mile) of the Village Gondola, which totals 4,020 existing potential visitors who can access the Village Gondola. Industry standard assumes that 70 percent of visitors staying within a one-quarter mile radius of a base portal facility are recreational skiers, which equals approximately 2,800 potential skiers who would use the Village Gondola to access the Mountain plus an additional 400 arriving from the transit connection or drop off. Given the trail use characteristic assumptions, 60 percent skiers of which 85 percent are intermediate level and above, approximately 1,400 of the 3,200 skiers could desire use of the proposed Ski Back Trail per hour.

Trail would reduce the existing demand on the Village Gondola to 2,000 skiers per hour rather than 3,200 and would therefore, be able to download with minimal wait in line.

- b. Future buildout of The Village core portal facilities will accommodate 6,400 potential skiers. Given the trail use characteristics, approximately 2,800 of these 6,400 skiers may desire use of the proposed Ski Back Trail per hour however, the maximum comfortable carrying capacity of the trail is constant at 1,200 skiers per hour.¹⁵ Therefore, development of the proposed Ski Back Trail would reduce future demand on the Village Gondola to 5,200 skiers per hour rather than 6,400 and would reduce the number of skiers waiting in line to approximately 3,000, with a wait of approximately 80 minutes rather than 115 minutes.

The Proposed Action has the potential to partially alleviate the existing and future excess demand for the down loading of the Village Gondola by approximately 1,200 skiers per hour while also providing down-slope capacity for The Village which would improve the recreational experience of visitors. The Proposed Action would also provide additional winter recreational facilities that would be consistent with the *General Plan Update* and the *MMSA Master Development Plan* and the *North Village Specific Plan* by having a pedestrian/skiable alternative, balancing the use and attractiveness of each of MMSA's portals, and enhancing the recreational experience of visitors. The Proposed Action would not result in adverse effects to winter recreational facilities.

(b) Summer

Implementation of the Proposed Action would not result in operational impacts to the existing mountain bike trails as the Proposed Action would develop a skiing trail that would only be utilized during the winter ski season when the mountain bike trails would be inaccessible. However, it should be noted that since the proposed Ski Back Trail would traverse the mountain bike trails, that during the summer, mountain bikers may utilize the proposed Ski Back Trail as opposed to the mountain bike trails. Therefore, Mitigation Measure 3.2-2 is included in order to ensure protection of the proposed Ski Back Trail and limit the use of the proposed Ski Back Trail

¹⁵ Future build-out of The Village core portal facilities will accommodate 6,400 visitors. In addition, there will be approximately 1,000 visitor accommodations outside of the Village core but within a walking distance of a one-quarter mile radius at buildout, which total approximately 7,400 future potential skiers who can access the Village Gondola. Industry standard assumes that 70 percent of visitors staying within a one-quarter mile radius of a base portal facility are recreational skiers plus an additional 400 arriving from the transit connection or drop offs totaling approximately 6,400 potential skiers. Given the trail characteristic assumptions, 60 percent skiers of which 85 percent are intermediate level and above, approximately 2,800 of the 6,400 skiers associated with the future buildout of The Village, could desire use of the proposed Ski Back Trail per hour.

by mountain bikers. Implementation of the recommended mitigation measure would ensure there would be no adverse impacts to summer recreational facilities.

(3) Mitigation Measures

Mitigation Measure 3.2-1: The project applicant shall restore the conditions of the Uptown and Downtown mountain bike trails, as established prior to any construction activities. Restoration shall include, but not be limited to, re-grading of the mountain bike trail alignment and the provision of adequate improvements including drainage and vegetation.

Mitigation Measure 3.2-2: The project applicant shall provide barriers consistent with the natural terrain during the summer along all sections in which the proposed Ski Back Trail intersects the mountain bike trails, in order to limit mountain bikers traversing the proposed Ski Back Trail.

c. Environmental Consequences of Alternative 1 – Original Alignment Proposal

(1) Construction Impacts

Construction of Alternative 1 would impact portions of the Uptown and Downtown mountain bike trails. Specifically, the Original Alignment Proposal would overlap the mountain bike trails for approximately 4,280 feet of the approximately 7,700 foot Original Alignment Proposal and would cross the mountain bike trails a total of 29 times; refer to Figure 6 for an illustration of where Alternative 1 would intersect the mountain bike trails. However, the re-routing of the mountain bike trails during the weekdays for the summer during construction would provide a safe construction environment while minimizing the risk to the public. It should also be noted that the mountain bike trails would be open on the weekends. Finally, Mitigation Measure 3.2-1 would ensure that the mountain bike trails would be fully restored after construction. Restoration of the mountain bike trails would ensure the balance of uses for both winter and summer guests by providing the best possible experience in both settings, which would also be consistent with the *General Plan Update* and the *MMSA Master Development Plan*. Construction impacts to the mountain bike trails would be short-term and therefore, construction of Alternative 1 would not result in adverse effects to summer recreational facilities.

(2) Operational Impacts

(a) Winter

As previously described, there is no down-slope capacity at The Village portal and skier return demand for the Village Gondola at the end of the day exceeds down-load capacity. The

lack of down-load capacity results in up to 700 skiers in the queue on peak Saturdays waiting in line approximately 20 minutes and the cumulative conditions at build out (est. 2010) will result in the potential demand for the Village Gondola on peak days to be approximately 6,400 skiers per hour which will require skiers to wait in lines of over an hour and half to down-load at the end of the day.

Similar to the Proposed Action, Alternative 1 would add additional down-slope capacity to skiers in The Village portal as well as provide an alternative to waiting in line to down-load the Village Gondola or the Canyon and Main Lodge transit system on busy days. Specifically, approximately 1,120 of the Village Gondola riders would be able to comfortably ski on the Ski Back Trail per hour. In addition, under existing conditions, approximately 1,400 skiers would be likely to choose sliding down the proposed Ski Back Trail rather than waiting in line for the Village Gondola and under buildout conditions, up to 2,800 skiers would be likely to choose the proposed Ski Back Trail. However, the trail characteristics are the same as the proposed alignment and would comfortably carry 1,200 skiers per hour. Alternative 1 would be consistent with the *General Plan Update* and the *MMSA Master Development Plan*. Alternative 1 would not result in adverse effects to winter recreational facilities.

(b) Summer

Implementation of Alternative 1 would not result in operational impacts to the existing mountain bike trails as Alternative 1 would develop a skiing trail that would only be utilized during the winter ski season when the mountain bike trails would be inaccessible. However, it should be noted that since the proposed Ski Back Trail would traverse the mountain bike trails, that during the summer, mountain bikers may utilize the Ski Back Trail as opposed to the mountain bike trails. Therefore, Mitigation Measure 3.2-2 is included in order to ensure protection of the proposed Ski Back Trail and limit the use of the proposed Ski Back Trail by mountain bikers. Implementation of the recommended mitigation measure would ensure there would be no adverse effects to summer recreational facilities.

d. Environmental Consequences of Alternative 2 – Transit Emphasis Alternative

(1) Construction Impacts

Under Alternative 2, the proposed Ski Back Trail would not be constructed. Instead, there would be an increased emphasis on transit provisions focused on returning skiers to The Village. There would not be any construction activities or adverse effects to the mountain bike trails for the Transit Emphasis Alternative.

(2) Operational Impacts

(a) Winter

Alternative 2 would not develop the proposed Ski Back Trail. As such, it would not alleviate the excess demand for the down-load of the Village Gondola and the Canyon Lodge Gondola and public transit to the lodges, or provide down-slope capacity for The Village. Alternative 2 would not provide additional winter recreational facilities and would not be consistent with the *MMSA Master Development Plan* and the *North Village Specific Plan*. Therefore, Alternative 2 would result in adverse effects to winter recreational facilities due to the fact that it would not alleviate demand for the down loading of the village gondola nor provide any additional recreational opportunities, and would result in down loading queues of approximately two hours on peak days.

(b) Summer

Alternative 2 would not develop the proposed Ski Back Trail and therefore, would not require development of barriers prohibiting mountain bike riders traversing the proposed Ski Back Trail. Therefore, there would be no adverse effects to summer recreational facilities with implementation of Alternative 2.

e. Environmental Consequences of Alternative 3 – No Action Alternative

(1) Construction Impacts

Under Alternative 3, the proposed Ski Back Trail would not be constructed. Therefore, there would not be any construction activities or adverse effects for the No Action Alternative.

(2) Operational Impacts

(a) Winter

Alternative 3 would not develop the proposed Ski Back Trail. As such, it would not alleviate the existing and future excess demand for the down-load of the Village Gondola nor provide additional down-slope capacity for The Village. Alternative 3 would not provide additional winter recreational facilities and would not be consistent with the *General Plan Update*, *MMSA Master Development Plan*, or the *North Village Specific Plan*. Therefore, Alternative 3 would result in adverse effects to winter recreational facilities due to the fact that it would not alleviate demand for the down loading of the Village Gondola nor provide any

additional recreational opportunities, and would result in down loading queues of approximately two hours on peak days.

(b) Summer

Alternative 3 would not develop the proposed Ski Back Trail and therefore, would not require development of barriers prohibiting mountain bike riders traversing the proposed Ski Back Trail. Therefore, there would be no adverse effects to summer recreational facilities with implementation of Alternative 3.

f. Conformity with Applicable Plans and Policies

The Proposed Action and Alternative 1 would develop an alpine skiing trail within the Forest Service rural ROS class of the Mammoth Escarpment Management Area. Therefore, it would include expansion of areas already developed for alpine skiing. The proposed Ski Back Trail would be designed to provide for user safety and to harmonize with the natural environment by minimizing impacts to the natural terrain and by maintaining existing Timber stands to the extent possible. In addition, as described in Section 3.8, Visual Resources, the Proposed Action and Alternative 1 would have a Scenic Class that reflects the general goals of the INFLRMP maintaining Partial Retention, and even perhaps Retention, so that the existing visual character of the proposed Ski Back Trail area would not change. As described in Section 3.6, Biological Resources, the Proposed Action and Alternative 1 would not develop the proposed Ski Back Trail in which the integrity of major mule deer staging areas would be compromised during the spring and fall migration and would not disturb northern goshawk nest sites. All construction activities associated with the Proposed Action and Alternative 1 would be required to comply with Rule 1403 of the South Coast Air Quality Management District (SCAQMD) in order to ensure that dust abatement procedures during construction and other activities do not generate significant dust. In addition, construction activities would also utilize existing developed facilities, including roads and trails for access to the proposed Ski Back Trail. Construction of the proposed Ski Back Trail would also ensure slope stabilization with the provision of providing five to six walls where slopes would need to be stabilized consistent with the ski slopes. Finally, after construction of the proposed Ski Back Trail is completed, all temporary access corridors would be re-vegetated with native materials and plants. Therefore, the Proposed Action and Alternative 1 would be consistent with the applicable policies of the INFLRMP, and therefore, also consistent with the *General Plan Update*, *MMSA Master Development Plan*, and the *North Village Specific Plan*.

Alternative 2 would not involve any construction activities and instead would provide four additional bus trips during the peak hours. Therefore, this Alternative would not have to comply with any of the construction policies and would not conflict with any of the visual

policies of the INFLRMP. In addition, this Alternative would consider a mass transit option to personal vehicle trips from the Main Lodge and associated parking areas to The Village during the peak hour. However, this Alternative would not permit further expansion of areas already developed for alpine skiing. Regardless, Alternative 2 would be consistent with the applicable policies of the INFLRMP, but would not be consistent with the *General Plan Update*, or the *MMSA Master Development Plan*, or the *North Village Specific Plan*.

The No Action Alternative would not develop an alpine ski trail to help alleviate the existing and future excess demand for the down-load of the Village Gondola, or provide down-slope capacity for The Village. Therefore, Alternative 3 would not provide additional winter recreational facilities and would not be consistent with the policies of the INFLRMP, the *General Plan Update*, *MMSA Master Plan*, or the *North Village Specific Plan*.