Appendix A

Notices and Scoping Materials

A1 Notice of Preparation (April 22, 2016)

A2 Initial Study (April 22, 2016)

A3 Notice of Intent (April 29, 2016)

A4 Updated Notice of Preparation (September 2, 2016)

A5 Scoping Comment Summary

A6 Scoping Comment Report

A1

Notice of Preparation (April 22, 2016)

COUNTY OF PLACER
Community Development Resource Agency

Michael J. Johnson, AICP
Agency Director E. J. Ivaldi, Coordinator

ENVIRONMENTAL COORDINATION SERVICES

DATE: April 22, 2016

TO: California State Clearinghouse
Responsible and Trustee Agencies
Interested Parties and Organizations

SUBJECT: Notice of Preparation of a Draft Environmental Impact Report for the Proposed Squaw Valley-Alpine Meadows Base-to-Base Gondola Project

REVIEW PERIOD: April 22, 2016 to May 23, 2013

Placer County is preparing an Environmental Impact Report (EIR) for Squaw Valley-Alpine Meadows Base-to-Base Gondola Project (project or B2B), which would include installation, operation, and maintenance of a winter-time only/ski season only gondola connecting the Squaw Valley and Alpine Meadows ski areas. The project would also include installation, operation, and maintenance of an avalanche control system within proximity to the Alpine Meadows portion of the gondola alignment. Placer County (County) has prepared an Initial Study to analyze these actions and has identified potentially significant environmental effects. The County will therefore prepare an environmental impact report (EIR) for the project to satisfy the requirements of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) (Public Resources Code [PRC] Section 21000 et seq.), and will serve as the lead agency for CEQA compliance. Concurrent with posting of this NOP in support of the EIR, the U.S. Forest Service (USFS) is publishing a separate Notice of Intent (NOI) to prepare an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) pursuant to the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). The EIS will evaluate the environmental effects resulting from the USFS amending the existing Special Use Permit (SUP) issued for the operation and maintenance of Alpine Meadows to allow construction and operation of the proposed B2B project. The EIR and EIS will each be prepared and considered for approval separately by Placer County and the USFS, respectively. Each agency will prepare their environmental review document to comply with applicable statutory requirements, CEQA for the County and NEPA for the USFS. This notice meets the CEQA noticing requirements for a Notice of Preparation (NOP) to provide responsible agencies and interested persons with sufficient information to make meaningful responses as to the scope and content of the EIR. Your timely comments will ensure an appropriate level of environmental review for the project.

Project Description: The project proposes a Squaw Valley-Alpine Meadows Base-to-Base Gondola Project which would include installation, operation, and maintenance of a gondola connecting the Squaw Valley and Alpine Meadows ski areas. The project would also include installation, operation, and maintenance of an avalanche control system within the Alpine Meadows portion of the gondola alignment.

Project Location: The project area is located at 2600 Alpine Meadows Road, Tahoe City; 1960 Squaw Valley Road, Olympic Valley extending from the base of the Alpine Meadows Ski Area to the base of the Squaw Valley Ski Area.

For more information regarding the project, please contact Heather Beckman, at (530) 581-6286. A copy of the NOP is available for review at the Tahoe City Library, Truckee Library, Placer County Community Development Resource Agency (Auburn), Placer County Administrative Offices in Tahoe City, and on the Placer County website:

http://www.placer.ca.gov/departments/communitydevelopment/envcoordsvcs/eir

NOP Scoping Meeting: In addition to the opportunity to submit written comments, two public scoping meetings will be held by the County to inform interested parties about the proposed project, and to provide agencies and the public with an opportunity to provide comments on the scope and content of the EIR. The meeting will be held on Monday, May 9, 2016 from 2:00-4:00 p.m. and from 6:00-8:00 p.m. at The Resort at Squaw Creek; Monument Peak Room, 400 Squaw Creek Road, Olympic Valley.

NOP Comment Period: Written comments should be submitted at the earliest possible date, but not later than 5:00 p.m. on **May 23, 2016** to Shirlee Herrington, Environmental Coordination Services, Community Development Resource Agency, 3091 County Center Drive, Suite 190, Auburn, CA 95603. (530) 745-3132, Fax: (530) 745-3080, cdraecs@placer.ca.gov.

NOTICE OF PREPARATION
OF A DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT

Date: April 22, 2016

To: Agencies and Interested Parties

From: Placer County

Subject: **Notice of Preparation of a Draft Environmental Impact Report for the Proposed Squaw Valley-Alpine Meadows Base-to-Base Gondola Project**

Review Period: April 22, 2016 to May 23, 2016

Squaw Valley Ski Holdings, LLC (project applicant) is proposing the Squaw Valley-Alpine Meadows Base-to-Base Gondola Project (project or B2B), which would include installation, operation, and maintenance of a winter operations only gondola connecting the Squaw Valley and Alpine Meadows ski areas. The project would also include installation, operation, and maintenance of an avalanche control system within proximity to the Alpine Meadows portion of the gondola alignment. Placer County (County) has prepared an Initial Study to analyze these actions and has identified potentially significant environmental effects. The County will therefore prepare an environmental impact report (EIR) for the project to satisfy the requirements of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) (Public Resources Code [PRC] Section 21000 et seq.), and will serve as the lead agency for CEQA compliance.

PURPOSE OF THIS NOTICE OF PREPARATION

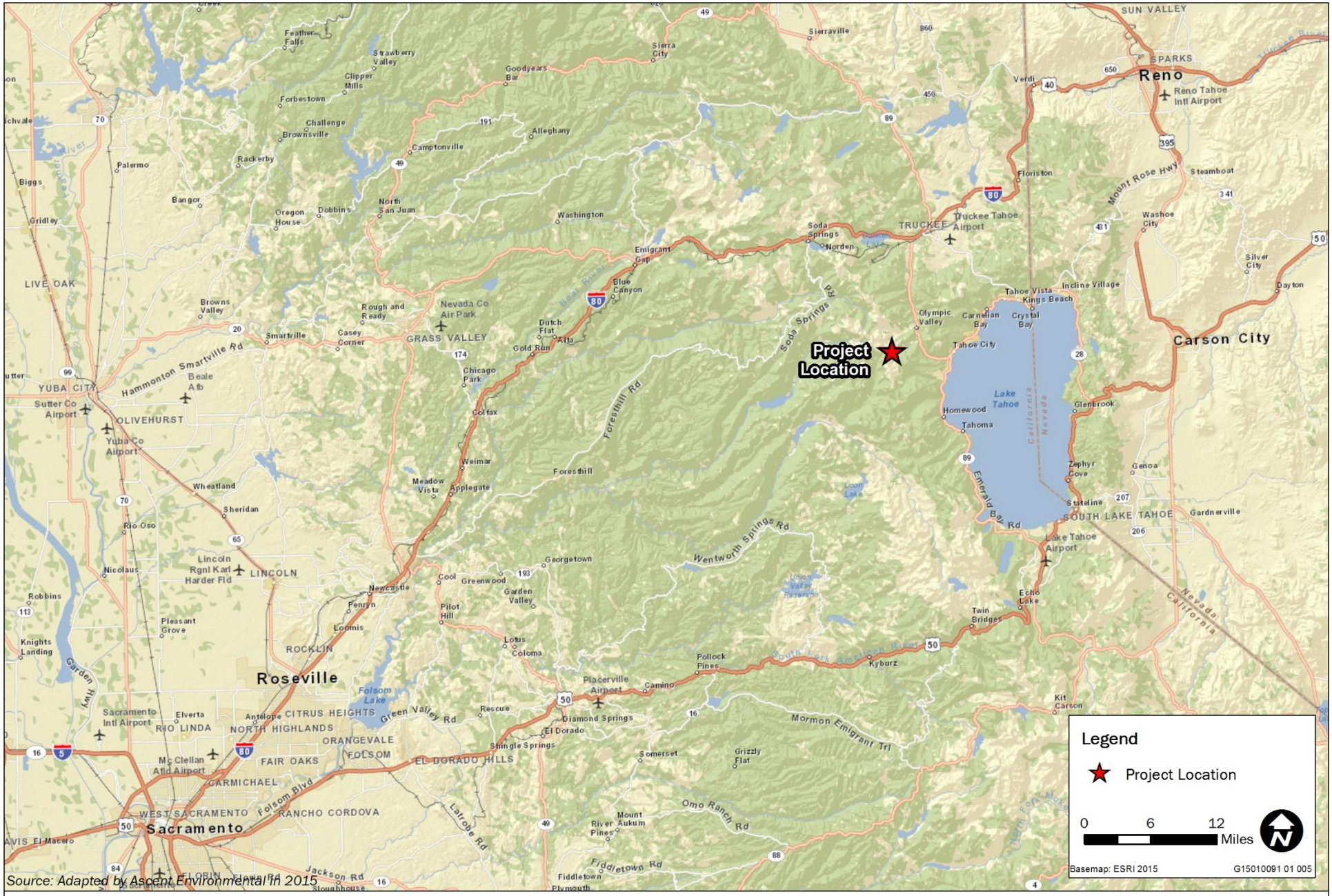
In accordance with the State CEQA Guidelines (14 California Code of Regulations [CCR] Section 15082), the County has prepared this notice of preparation (NOP) to inform agencies and interested parties that an EIR will be prepared for the above-referenced project. The purpose of an NOP is to provide sufficient information about the proposed project and its potential environmental impacts to allow agencies and interested parties the opportunity to provide a meaningful response related to the scope and content of the EIR, including mitigation measures that should be considered and alternatives that should be addressed (State CEQA Guidelines 14 CCR Section 15082[b]).

The project location, description, and potential environmental effects are summarized below. A more detailed project description is included in the attached Initial Study.

Concurrent with posting of this NOP in support of the EIR, the U.S. Forest Service (USFS) is publishing a separate Notice of Intent (NOI) to prepare an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) pursuant to the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). The EIS will evaluate the environmental effects resulting from the USFS amending the existing Special Use Permit (SUP) issued for the operation and maintenance of Alpine Meadows to allow construction and operation of the proposed B2B project. The EIR and EIS will each be prepared and considered for approval separately by Placer County and the USFS, respectively. Each agency will prepare their environmental review document to comply with applicable statutory requirements, CEQA for the County and NEPA for the USFS. For further information related to the EIS please contact Joe Flannery, Winter Sports Specialist, (530) 587-3558 ext.243, jflannery@fs.fed.us.

PROJECT LOCATION

The project area is located in the Sierra Nevada, in Placer County (Exhibit 1). The project would extend from the base of the Alpine Meadows Ski Area to the base of Squaw Valley Ski Area (Exhibit 2). The portion of the project area located within the Alpine Meadows Ski Area would be located on National Forest System (NFS) lands that are part of the Tahoe National Forest (TNF) and are leased by the Alpine Meadows Ski Area and subject to special use permit by the USFS. Approximately one quarter of the proposed gondola would be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South Fork American River
Emigrant Gap
Blue Canyon
Dutch Flat
Alta
Gold Run
Colfax
Weimar
Applegate
Meadow Vista
Foresthill
Auburn
Newcastle
Penryn
Loomis
Rocklin
Roseville
Granite Bay
Folsom
Orangevale
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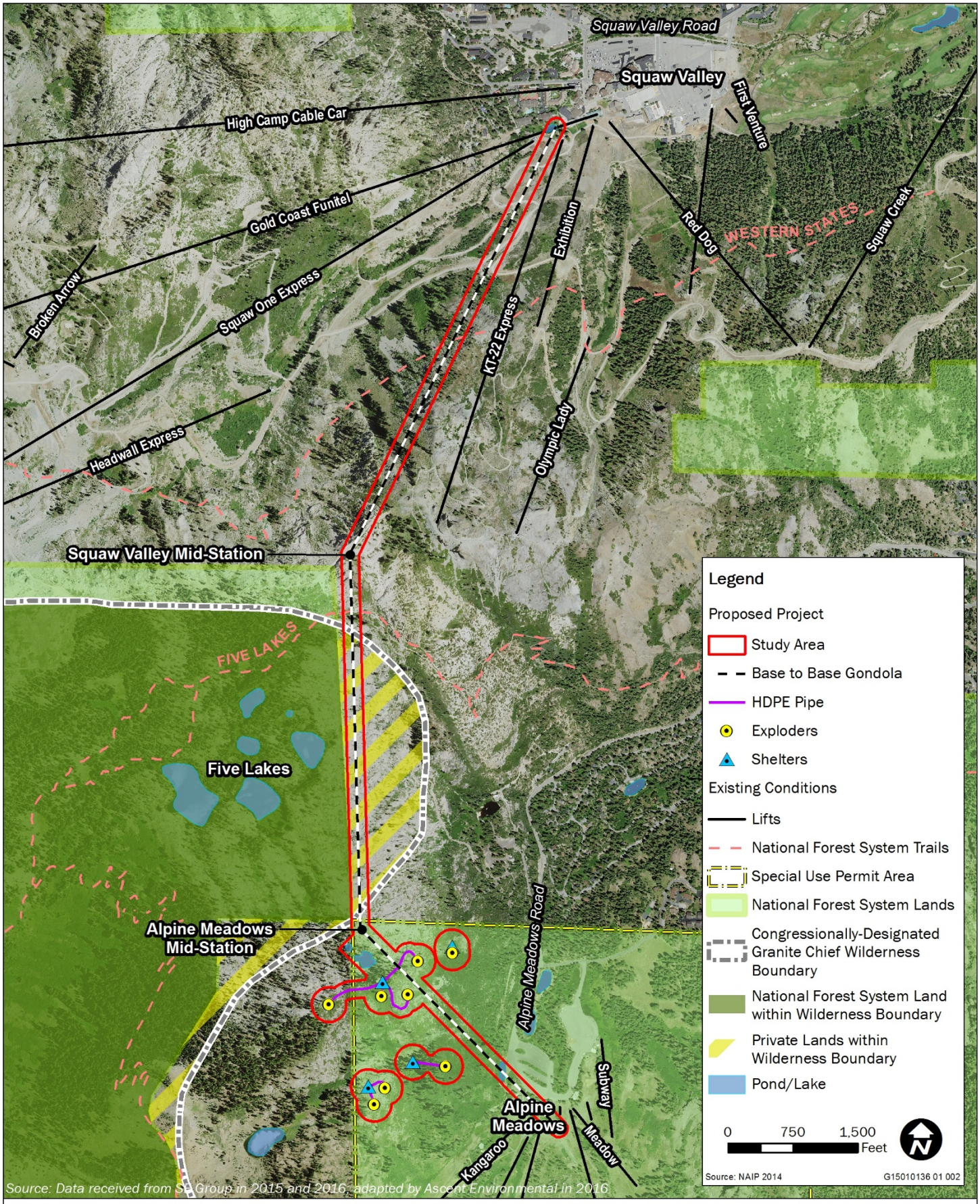


Exhibit 2 **Project Site**

located on NFS lands. Immediately north of Alpine Meadows, the alignment crosses an area of private property that is not part of the Alpine Meadows or Squaw Valley ski areas. The remainder of the project area is within the Squaw Valley Ski Area and would be on private lands owned by Squaw Valley Ski Holdings, LLC. In one portion of the private lands the project alignment crosses through the congressionally designated boundary of the Granite Chief Wilderness (GCW) that extends into this private property. However, the Wilderness Act does not apply to private property and this private property is not managed, maintained, or considered part of the GCW.

PROJECT BACKGROUND

Squaw Valley Ski Area and Alpine Meadows Ski Area are separate ski facilities north of Lake Tahoe. They are proximate to each other, and are both under ownership of, and operated by, the project applicant. One lift ticket (or season pass) provides access to both facilities. Squaw Valley and Alpine Meadows each offer a different winter sports and resort amenity experience. Among the two ski areas, Squaw Valley has a higher percentage of advanced/expert terrain and a majority of resort amenities (e.g., accommodations, restaurants, shopping, entertainment). Alpine Meadows, however, has more beginner and intermediate terrain, but limited amenities. A shuttle bus currently provides roadway access between the ski areas throughout the day. This intra-resort access is often considered inconvenient, as it requires skiers/boarders to exit the mountain, walk with their equipment to the shuttle stop, wait up to 30 minutes for the shuttle, and travel approximately 15 minutes to the shuttle stop at the other ski area. The project is being proposed to enhance the visitor experience at both the Squaw Valley and Alpine Meadows ski areas by providing more direct access to existing ski terrain and/or resort amenities via a gondola lift system providing limited waiting time to board and a 16-minute transit time. The more direct access would also allow the Squaw Valley ski and snowboard schools improved access to the beginner terrain at Alpine Meadows.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION SUMMARY

(See Chapter 1 of the attached Initial Study for a more detailed project description.)

Base-to-Base Gondola

Facilities

The applicant proposes to install, operate, and maintain an aerial ropeway system connecting the Squaw Valley and Alpine Meadows base areas as well as an avalanche control system consisting of remotely operated gas-activated exploders (Gazex exploders). The proposed lift would be configured as an eight-passenger gondola and have a design capacity of approximately 1,400 persons per hour in each direction. Travel time between the ski areas is estimated at approximate 16 minutes. In total, the lift would be approximately 13,000 feet in length (based on slope length) of which, approximately 3,300 feet (25 percent) would be sited on NFS lands (i.e., in the TNF). Table 1 provides a summary of the proposed facilities and the land ownership for each facility.

Table 1-1 Project Facilities

Facility	Private Land	NFS Lands	Total
Aerial Ropeway System	9,700 feet	3,300 feet	13,000 feet
Towers	24	11	37
Terminal	1 base terminal, 1 mid-station	1 base terminal, 1 mid-station	2 base terminals, 2 mid-stations
Gazex Exploders	1	7	8

The Alpine Meadows base terminal would be located on USFS lands between the Roundhouse Express and the Hot Wheels Chair ski lifts. The Squaw Valley base terminal would be located on private lands between the bottom terminals of the KT-22 and Squaw One express ski lifts. The gondola would be designed with two mid-stations; one atop the *Saddle* trail ridgeline approximately 1,100 feet southwest of the KT-22 lift top terminal (the Squaw Valley mid-station on private lands), the other would be about 650 feet northwest of *The*

Buttress in the northern portion of the Alpine Meadows ski area (the Alpine Meadows mid-station on NFS lands [i.e., Tahoe National Forest]).

Each of the base terminals would include a deck and cabin storage areas, and the total facility (base terminal, deck, and cabin storage area) would disturb approximately 0.5 acre. Additionally, grading is proposed at the Alpine Meadows base area to improve the connectivity between the base lodge and the Summit and Roundhouse chairlifts. This project would add fill material to reduce the slope between the lodge and the chairlifts, resulting in approximately 1.6 acres of disturbance. Ground disturbance for the mid-stations would be approximately 0.5 acre each, and the tower footings would disturb a maximum of approximately 0.5 acre (37 towers x 600 square feet maximum disturbance each). In total, the proposed gondola would disturb up to approximately 4.1 acres.

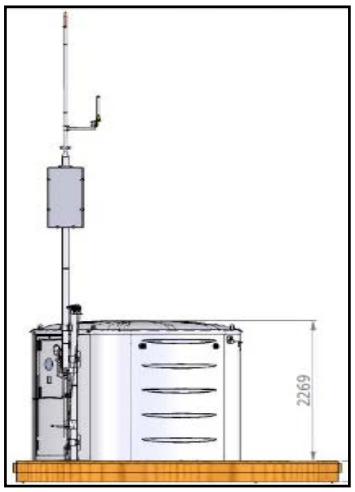
Operation

The proposed gondola would transport visitors in both directions between the two resorts. In the winter months, visitors would be able to on- or off-load from the gondola at both base terminals and both mid-stations. The gondola would typically operate each day from just before the ski areas open until just after closing, and would only operate during the ski season. The gondola cabins would be removed and stored at the base stations when not in use during the ski season and as needed during winter storm events.

Gazex Avalanche Mitigation System

Installation of the proposed gondola would necessitate changes to Alpine Meadow's current snow safety and avalanche hazard mitigation program. Therefore, the project would include installation, operation, and maintenance of up to eight Gazex exploders (seven on NFS lands) in the vicinity of *The Buttress, Bernie's Chute, Bernie's Bowl, North Poma Rocks Gully, Pond Slide*, and *Poma Rocks*. Gazex exploders ignite propane and oxygen gas in a controlled volume explosion within the Gazex tubes, creating a concussive blast above the snow surface in key avalanche trigger locations. Filling of the tubes with gas and ignition is controlled remotely. Installation of the Gazex exploders would require two concrete footers for anchoring of each tube (Exhibit 3). The upper concrete footing would be approximately 3.5 feet by 8 feet, with a total disturbance area of approximately 15 feet by 15 feet. The lower concrete footing would be approximately 5 feet by 5 feet, with a total disturbance area of approximately 7 feet by 7 feet. The disturbance required for each exploder would vary depending on its location. Operation of the Gazex system would also include installation of four shelters to house propane and oxygen tanks. Each shelter would be approximately 7 feet by 7 feet and would be set on a small aboveground platform (approximately 10 feet by 12 feet), anchored for stability (Exhibit 3). Alpine Meadows ski area would ensure that all combustible gasses are removed or depleted from each shelter at the end of each ski season to diminish wildfire concerns. Refilling of the tanks would be conducted annually using over-the-snow vehicle or a helicopter to deliver full tanks to the shelters.

Typical Exploder



Typical Shelter

Exhibit 3 **Typical Gazex Exploder and Shelter**

POTENTIAL ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS

The EIR will describe the direct and indirect potentially significant and significant environmental impacts of the proposed project. Based on the results of the Initial Study prepared for the proposed project (and attached to this NOP or available on the County's website), the County has determined that the EIR will result in potentially significant environmental impacts in the following topic areas, which will be further evaluated in the EIR:

- Aesthetics
- Air Quality
- Biological Resources
- Geology, Soils, and Seismicity
- Greenhouse Gases and Climate Change
- Hydrology and Water Quality
- Land Use and Planning
- Noise
- Recreation
- Transportation and Circulation
- Utilities and Service Systems
- Cumulative Impacts

Aesthetics

The project area is located within a scenic alpine setting, with steep mountains, jagged peaks, meadows, and creeks. The proposed project includes development of a gondola and avalanche mitigation system that would alter the viewshed in the project area. The project may result in adverse effects to scenic vistas, particularly as viewed from Squaw Valley Road (a County-designated scenic roadway), Alpine Meadows Road, Granite Chief Wilderness, Five Lakes Trail, and from surrounding residential areas. Development of the proposed project would change the existing visual character within the project area. These issues will be evaluated in the EIR.

Air Quality

During construction of the proposed project, criteria air pollutant emissions would be temporarily and intermittently generated. Operation of the proposed project would result in air pollutant emissions from project-generated motor vehicle trips and stationary sources. Construction- and operations-related emissions could adversely affect sensitive receptors in the vicinity. Nearby sensitive receptors include residences, condominiums, and lodging facilities. These issues will be evaluated in the EIR.

Biological Resources

Special-status plant or wildlife species could potentially occur in the project area. Additionally, the surrounding forested mountain areas—while disturbed due to residential development and ski use—provide habitat for special-status plant and wildlife species, and could be indirectly affected by project implementation (e.g., disturbance of nesting birds during construction). Implementation of the proposed project could result in disturbance or take of special-status species or disturbance or removal of suitable habitat for these species or interference with wildlife movements.

Aquatic features identified in the project area include freshwater ponds, bog, ephemeral streams, and drainages. The project could potentially remove, fill, or hydrologically interrupt wetlands identified in the project area and could potentially affect jurisdictional waters.

Placer County's Tree Preservation Ordinance (Placer County Code, Article 12.20) is applicable to all native, landmark trees, riparian zone trees, and certain commercial firewood operations. In accordance with the Tree Preservation Ordinance, a discretionary project shall evaluate the potential impacts to all protected tress sized 6-inches diameter at breast height or larger as part of the development review process. Implementation of the project could result in removal of trees protected under the tree ordinance. These issues will be evaluated in the EIR.

Geology, Soils, and Seismicity

Depending on wind and rain conditions, grading activities and improvements could result in the potential for erosion and sedimentation of site soils both on- and off-site. In addition, portions of the project area are

located within the run-out areas of some avalanche zones and would include construction of new structures and uses within potential avalanche hazard areas. These impacts will be evaluated further in the EIR.

Greenhouse Gases and Climate Change

Greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions generated by the proposed project during construction would predominantly be in the form of carbon dioxide (CO_2). Emissions would be associated with mobile-source exhaust from construction worker commute trips, truck haul trips, and equipment used in the project area (e.g., excavators, graders, helicopters). Operation of the proposed project would also result in GHG emissions from area sources including stationary equipment such as operating internal combustion engine powered generators. These issues will be evaluated in the EIR.

Hydrology and Water Quality

The project area drains into Squaw Creek and Bear Creek, both of which drain into the Truckee River. Due to excessive sediment load, Squaw Creek is listed by the Lahontan Regional Water Quality Control Board (LRWQCB) as an impaired water body in accordance with Clean Water Act Section 303(d). Bear Creek and the Truckee River are also listed as impaired waterways on the 303(d) list. However, LRWQCB is in the process of considering delisting Bear Creek. Construction activities could result in soil erosion, siltation, or flooding. Specifically, construction activities such as grading could result in disturbance of soils and sediments that could be carried into surrounding water bodies during storm events. Further, accidental discharges of construction-related fuels, oils, hydraulic fluid, and other hazardous substances could contaminate stormwater flows or increase siltation in nearby water bodies, resulting in a reduction in stormwater quality on or downstream of the project area. New impervious surfaces that would be constructed as part of the project could increase the volume of runoff coming from the project area or alter the drainage pattern of the project area sufficiently to result in increased erosion or siltation. Runoff could contain oils, grease, fuel, sediments, brake dust, and other potential water pollutants. During storm events, these pollutants could be carried to downstream receiving waters of Squaw and Bear Creeks and eventually the Truckee River. These issues will be evaluated in the EIR.

Land Use and Planning

The *Squaw Valley General Plan Land Use Ordinance* (SVGPLUO) contains text indicating that new ski lifts would be limited to those shown on maps included in the SVGPLUO (i.e., Squaw Valley General Plan Map and the Future Potential Ski Lifts Map). These maps do not include the proposed gondola; therefore, the gondola may be considered in conflict with the SVGPLUO, and an amendment to the SVPLUO may be required.

Further, portions of the project area are located on the TNF, and the project will need to be evaluated for consistency with the Forest's Land and Resource Management Plan (Forest Plan) as well as any other applicable TNF planning documents. A portion of the proposed project on private property would cross through the congressionally designated boundary of the GCW. However, the Wilderness Act does not apply to private property and this private property is not managed, maintained, or considered part of the GCW. Nonetheless, compatibility with the GCW will need to be evaluated. These issues will be evaluated in the EIR.

Noise

Construction-related noise sources would include both mobile and stationary on-site equipment (e.g., all-terrain vehicles, helicopters, spider excavator), as well as blasting. Construction would also generate truck trips associated with the delivery of supplies and hauling away of excess fill and construction debris. Construction noise levels could potentially exceed the daytime hourly and maximum standard of 55 and 70 dBA respectively, as defined by the Placer County Code. Operation of the proposed project would result in additional employees and associated daily vehicle trips. Additionally, the project includes operation of a new gondola and Gazex exploders for avalanche control, which could generate noise that could disturb nearby sensitive land uses. The project's long-term operations could result in the exposure of people to additional long-term operational noise levels, and additional noise may exceed the applicable County noise standards. These issues will be evaluated in the EIR.

Recreation

The proposed project may increase the use of adjacent USFS lands including the GCW by providing access to a remote area. Although this increase in use is not expected to result in the need for additional facilities that could cause a significant effect on the environment, it could result in the deterioration of existing facilities, including trails. This issue will be evaluated further in the EIR.

Transportation and Circulation

Project construction would result in construction worker commute trips and haul truck trips (for delivery and transport of materials and equipment) to and from the project area, resulting in increased traffic levels on local roadways. Operation of the project is expected to result in very few additional employee trips. It may reduce intra-resort vehicle travel, as skiers would be able to access either resort from one or the other resort by the project's new gondola. However, because the project has the potential to increase the overall attraction of both ski areas, it may increase resort visitation. Long-term project operation could result in adverse roadway conditions, including decreased level of service and increases in congestion. These issues will be evaluated in the EIR.

Utilities and Service Systems

The demand for additional water supply, and related effects, is tied to potential increased use of the ski areas. While increased water demand is expected to be minor, the project's effects on water demand will be evaluated in the EIR. In addition, the proposed project would require consumption of energy and fuels during construction and would increase the long-term demand for propane and electricity for operation of the project. The use of propane and electricity would be limited to the winter months; however, the project would increase the long-term demand for propane and electricity and the amount needed to serve the project is not known at this time. These issues will be evaluated further in the EIR.

Cumulative Impacts

Implementation of the proposed project could potentially result in significant impacts to the above resource areas. When taken together with the effects of past projects, other current projects, and probable future projects, the project's contribution to the overall cumulative effect of all these activities could be considerable. These issues will be evaluated in the EIR.

ALTERNATIVES TO BE EVALUATED IN THE EIR

In accordance with the State CEQA Guidelines (14 CCR Section 15126.6), the EIR will describe a range of reasonable alternatives to the proposed project that are capable of meeting most of the projects' objectives, and that would avoid or substantially lessen any of the significant effects of the project. The EIR will also identify any alternatives that were considered but rejected by the lead agency as infeasible and briefly explain the reasons why. The EIR will provide an analysis of the No-Project Alternative and will also identify the environmentally superior alternative.

POTENTIAL PERMITS AND APPROVALS REQUESTED

The project applicant is requesting the following actions and approvals from Placer County:

- Certification of a Final Environmental Impact Report;
- Amendment of the *Squaw Valley General Plan and Land Use Ordinance*;
- Conditional Use Permit; and
- Further analysis will determine if a Parking Variance is required.

In addition, the project may require permit approvals from Responsible Agencies.

DOCUMENTS AVAILABLE FOR PUBLIC REVIEW

The NOP and Initial Study are available for public review at the following locations:

Tahoe City Library
740 N. Lake Blvd
Tahoe City, CA 96145

Truckee Library
10031 Levon Avenue
Truckee, CA 96161

Placer County
3091 County Center Drive, Suite #190
Auburn, CA 95603

The NOP and Initial Study are also available for public review on Placer County's website: http://www.placer.ca.gov/Departments/CommunityDevelopment/EnvCoordSvcs/EIR.aspx.

PROVIDING COMMENTS

Agencies and interested parties may provide the County with written comments on topics to be addressed in the EIR for the project. Because of time limits mandated by State law, comments should be provided no later than 5:00 p.m. on **May 23, 2016**. Please send all comments to:

Placer County, Community Development Resources Agency
3091 County Center Drive, Suite 190
Auburn, CA 95603
Attention: Shirlee Herrington, Environmental Coordination Services
Telephone: (530) 745-3132 Fax: (530) 745-3080
Email: cdraecs@placer.ca.gov

Agencies that will need to use the EIR when considering permits or other approvals for the proposed project should provide the name of a contact person. Comments provided by email should include "Squaw Valley-Alpine Meadows Base-to-Base Gondola Project NOP Scoping Comment" in the subject line, and the name and physical address of the commenter in the body of the email.

All comments on environmental issues received during the public comment period will be considered and addressed in the Draft EIR, which is anticipated to be available for public review in fall 2016.

PUBLIC SCOPING MEETING

Two public scoping meetings will be held by the County to inform interested parties about the proposed project, and to provide agencies and the public with an opportunity to provide comments on the scope and content of the EIR. The meeting times and location are as follows:

May 9, 2016
First meeting from 2:00-4:00 p.m. and second meeting from 6:00-8:00 p.m.
The Resort at Squaw Creek; Monument Peak Room
400 Squaw Creek Road, Olympic Valley

The meeting space is accessible to persons with disabilities. Individuals needing special assistive devices will be accommodated to the County's best ability. For more information, please contact Heather Beckman (at the contact information above) at least 48 hours before the meeting.

As stated above, concurrent with posting of this NOP and information on the scoping meeting in support of the EIR, the USFS is publishing a separate NOI to prepare an EIS pursuant to NEPA. The public scoping meeting in support of the CEQA process will also function as a scoping meeting in support of the federal EIS. Representatives from both the County and the USFS will be present at the scoping meeting to answer

questions and accept scoping input. The EIR and EIS will each be prepared and considered for approval separately by Placer County and the USFS, respectively. Each agency will prepare their environmental review document to comply with applicable statutory requirements, CEQA for the County and NEPA for the USFS. For further information related to the EIS please contact Joe Flannery, Winter Sports Specialist, (530) 587-3558 ext.243, jflannery@fs.fed.us.

A2

Initial Study (April 22, 2016)

Squaw Valley-Alpine Meadows Base-to-Base Gondola Project

Initial Study

PREPARED FOR:
Placer County,
Planning Services Division
775 North Lake Boulevard
Tahoe City, CA 96145

April 2016

Squaw Valley-Alpine Meadows Base-to-Base Gondola Project

Initial Study

PREPARED FOR:

Placer County
Planning Services Division
775 North Lake Boulevard
Tahoe City, CA 96145

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April 22, 2016

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

Chapter/Section		Page
ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS		ii
1	PROJECT DESCRIPTION	1-1
1.1	Project Background	1-1
1.2	Project Location	1-1
1.3	Project Objectives	1-4
1.4	Description of the Proposed Project	1-4
1.5	Potential Permits and Approvals Required	1-9
2	INITIAL STUDY ENVIRONMENTAL CHECKLIST	2-1
2.1	Aesthetics	2-4
2.2	Agriculture and Forest Resources	2-8
2.3	Air Quality	2-12
2.4	Biological Resources	2-17
2.5	Cultural Resources	2-21
2.6	Geology and Soils	2-23
2.7	Greenhouse Gas Emissions	2-29
2.8	Hazards and Hazardous Materials	2-32
2.9	Hydrology and Water Quality	2-36
2.10	Land Use and Planning	2-41
2.11	Mineral Resources	2-44
2.12	Noise	2-45
2.13	Population and Housing	2-49
2.14	Public Services	2-51
2.15	Recreation	2-54
2.16	Transportation/Traffic	2-56
2.17	Utilities and Service Systems	2-60
2.18	Mandatory Findings of Significance	2-64
3	REFERENCES	3-1
4	REPORT PREPARATION	4-1

Exhibits

Exhibit 1-1	Project Vicinity	1-2
Exhibit 1-2	Project Site	1-3
Exhibit 1-3	Typical Gazex Exploder and Shelter	1-7

Tables

Table 1-1	Project Facilities	1-4
Table 2.12-1	Sound Level Standards for Sensitive Receptors	2-42
Table 2.13-1	Placer County Population 1980 to 2014	2-45
Table 2.14-1	Schools that Serve Squaw Valley	2-48

ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

AB	Assembly Bill
AQAP	air quality attainment plan
ARB	California Air Resources Board
BMPs	best management practices
CAAQS	California Ambient Air Quality Standards
CAL FIRE	California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection
CalPeco	California Pacific Electric Company, LLC,
Caltrans	California Department of Transportation
CBC	California Building Code
CDFW	California Department of Fish and Wildlife
CEQA	California Environmental Quality Act
CGS	California Geological Survey
CHP	California Highway Patrol
CO	carbon monoxide
CO_2	carbon dioxide
CWA	Clean Water Act
dB	decibels
EIR	environmental impact report
EIS	environmental impact statement
EPA	U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
ESA	Phase I Environmental Site Assessment
FMMP	Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program
GCW	Granite Chief Wilderness
GHGs	greenhouse gases
HDPE	high-density polyethylene
kV	kilovolt
L_{max}	maximum sound level
L_{xx}	percentile-exceeded sound level
MCAB	Mountain Counties Air Basin
NAAQS	National Ambient Air Quality Standards
NEPA	National Environmental Policy Act
NFS	National Forest System
NO_2	nitrogen dioxide
NO_X	oxides of nitrogen
NPDES	National Pollution Discharge Elimination System
NRCS	Natural Resources Conservation Service
NTFPD	North Tahoe Fire Protection District

O_3	ozone
PCAPCD	Placer County Air Pollution Control District
PCCP	*Placer County Conservation Plan*
PM_{10}	inhalable particulate matter
$PM_{2.5}$	fine particulate matter
PRC	Public Resources Code
project applicant	Squaw Valley Ski Holdings, LLC
project or B2B	Squaw Valley-Alpine Meadows Base-to-Base Gondola Project
ROG	reactive organic gases
RWQCB	Regional Water Quality Control Board
SB	Senate Bill
SO_2	sulfur dioxide
SR	State Route
SRAs	State Responsibility Areas
SVFD	Squaw Valley Fire District
SVGPLUO	*Squaw Valley General Plan and Land Use Ordinance*
SVPSD	Squaw Valley Public Services District
SWPPP	stormwater pollution prevention plan
SWRCB	State Water Resources Control Board
TART	Tahoe Area Regional Transit
TNF	Tahoe National Forest
TPZ	Timberland Production
TTSD	Tahoe Truckee Sierra Disposal Company
TTUSD	Tahoe-Truckee Unified School District
USACE	U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
USFS	U.S. Forest Service
USFWS	U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

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1 PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Squaw Valley Ski Holdings, LLC (project applicant) is proposing the Squaw Valley-Alpine Meadows Base-to-Base Gondola Project (project or B2B), which would include installation, operation, and maintenance of a winter operations only gondola connecting the Squaw Valley and Alpine Meadows ski areas. The project would also include installation, operation, and maintenance of an avalanche control system within the Alpine Meadows portion of the gondola alignment.

1.1 PROJECT BACKGROUND

The Squaw Valley Ski Area and the Alpine Meadows Ski Area are separate ski facilities north of Lake Tahoe. They are proximate to each other, and are both under ownership of, and operated by, the project applicant. One lift ticket (or season pass) provides access to both facilities. Squaw Valley and Alpine Meadows each offer a different winter sports and resort amenity experience. Between the two ski areas, Squaw Valley has a higher percentage of advanced/expert terrain and a majority of resort amenities (e.g., accommodations, restaurants, shopping, entertainment). Alpine Meadows, however, has more beginner and intermediate terrain, but limited amenities. A shuttle bus currently provides roadway access between the ski areas throughout the day. This intra-resort access is often considered inconvenient, as it requires skiers/boarders to exit the mountain, walk with their equipment to the shuttle stop, wait up to 30 minutes for the shuttle, and travel approximately 15 minutes to the shuttle stop at the other ski area. The project is being proposed to enhance the visitor experience at both Squaw Valley and Alpine Meadows ski areas by providing more direct access to existing ski terrain and/or resort amenities via a gondola lift system providing limited waiting times to board the gondola and a 16-minute transit time between ski areas. The more direct access would also allow the Squaw Valley ski and snowboard schools improved access to the beginner terrain at Alpine Meadows.

A portion of the proposed project would be within the Tahoe National Forest (TNF), in a part of the Alpine Meadows ski area that operates under the U.S. Forest Service (USFS) Alpine Meadows Special Use Permit. Issuance of a special use permit amendment will require compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). USFS will prepare an environmental impact statement (EIS) to analyze environmental impacts of the proposed project pursuant to the requirements of NEPA, and Placer County will prepare an environmental impact report (EIR) to analyze environmental impacts of the proposal pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). The USFS and Placer County will coordinate the NEPA and CEQA analyses for consistency. For further information related to the EIS, please contact Joe Flannery, Winter Sports Specialist, (530) 587-3558 ext.243, jflannery@fs.fed.us.

1.2 PROJECT LOCATION

The project area is located in the Sierra Nevada, in Placer County (Exhibit 1-1). The project would extend from the base of the Alpine Meadows Ski Area to the base of the Squaw Valley Ski Area (Exhibit 1-2). The portion of the project area located within the Alpine Meadows Ski Area would be located on National Forest System (NFS) lands that are part of the TNF and are leased by the Alpine Meadows Ski Area and subject to special use permit by the USFS. Approximately one quarter of the proposed gondola would be located on NFS lands. Immediately north of Alpine Meadows, the alignment crosses an area of private property that is not part of the Alpine Meadows or Squaw Valley ski areas. The remainder of the project area is within the Squaw Valley Ski Area and would be on private lands owned by Squaw Valley Ski Holdings, LLC. In one portion of the private lands the project alignment crosses through the congressionally designated boundary of the Granite Chief Wilderness (GCW) that extends into this private property. However, the Wilderness Act does not apply to private property and this private property is not managed, maintained, or considered part of the GCW.

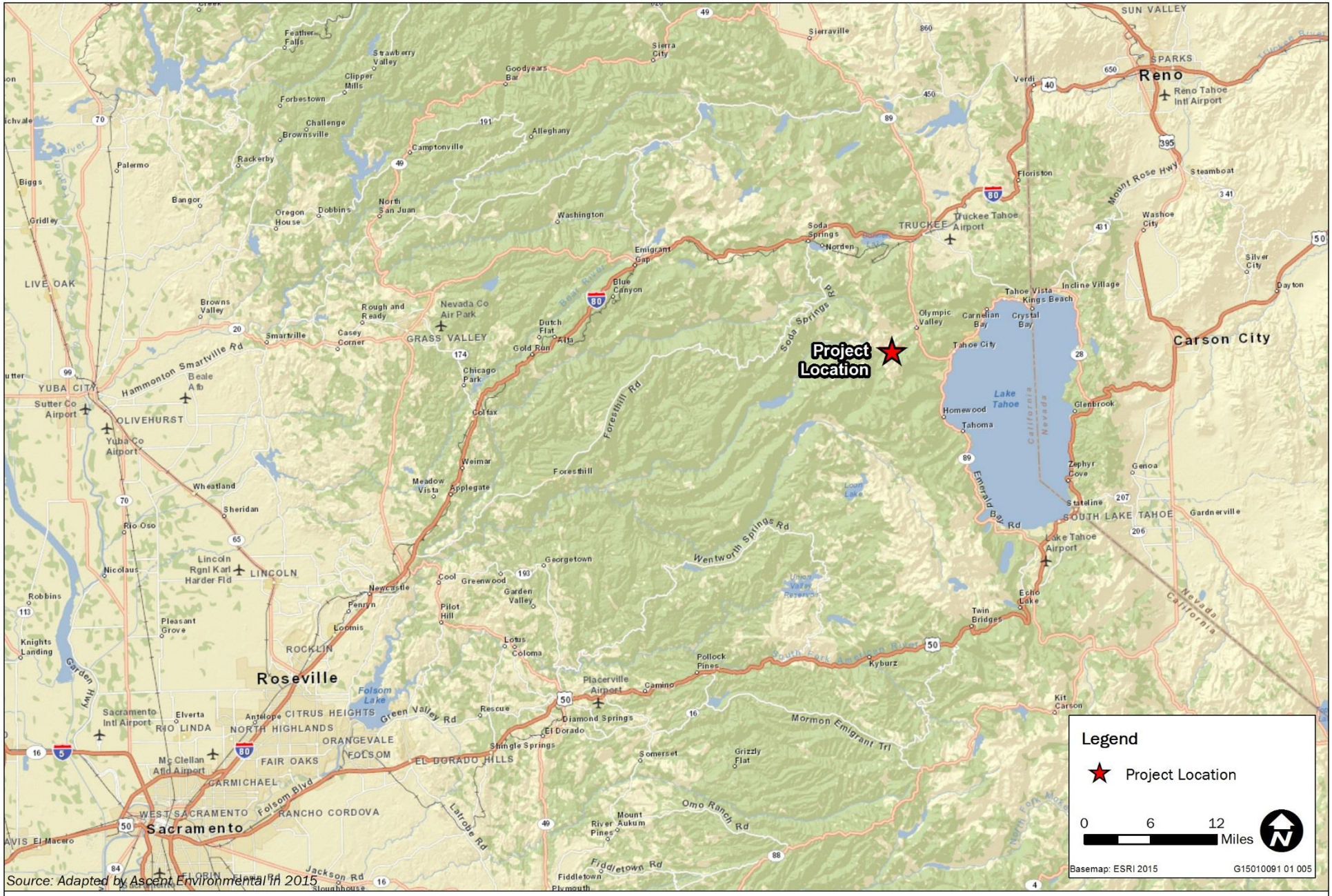


Exhibit 1-1

Project Vicinity

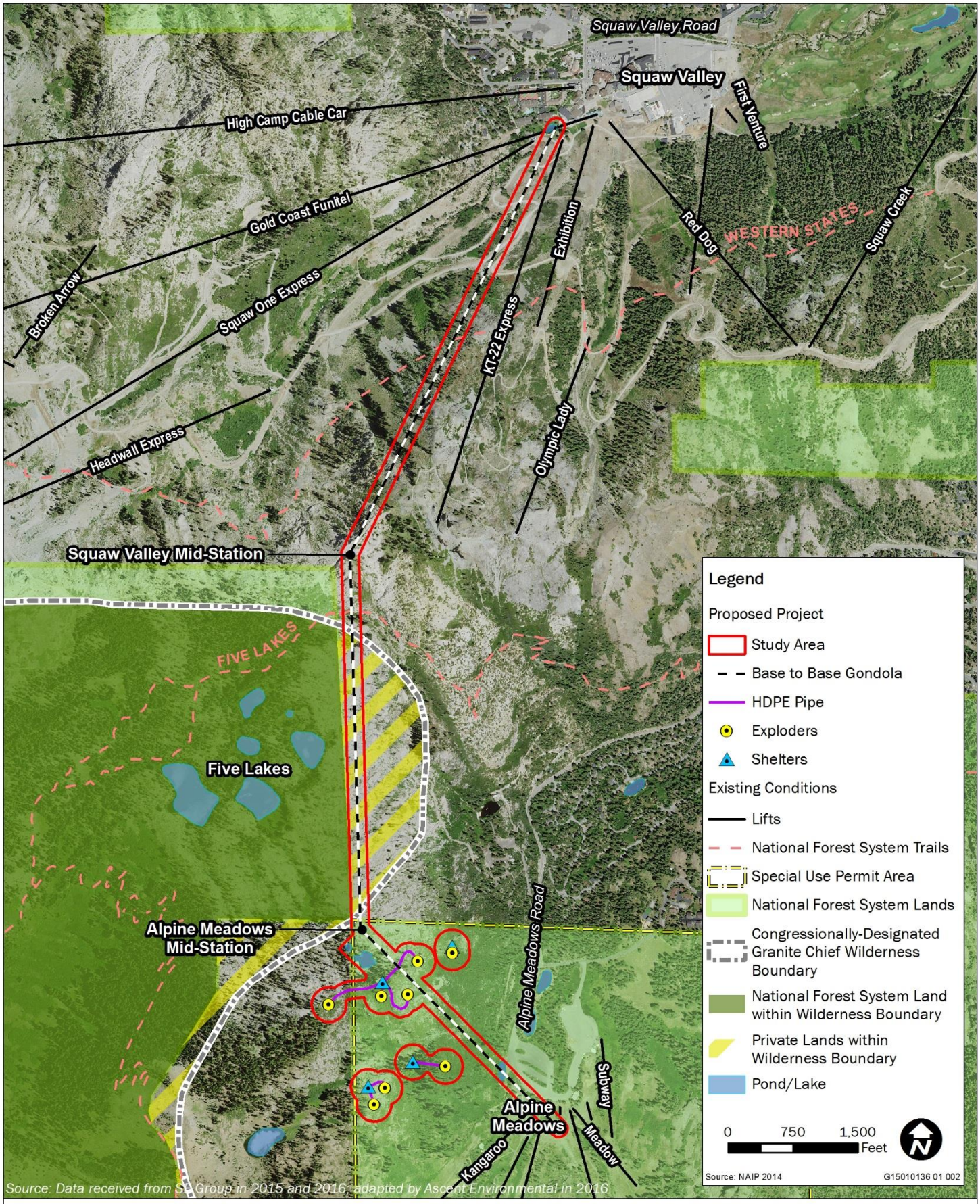


Exhibit 1-2 **Project Site**

1.3 PROJECT OBJECTIVES

The purpose of the project is to enhance the visitor winter-time experience at both Squaw Valley and Alpine Meadows ski areas by providing direct access between the resorts in terms of skiable terrain and resort amenities.

The objectives of the project include:

- enhance the visitor experience at Squaw Valley and Alpine Meadows by providing easy, and potentially faster, intra-resort access to terrain and amenities at both ski areas;
- reduce visitor and Resort Shuttle System travel on roadways between the resorts;
- provide opportunities for skiers to off-load at the two mid-stations to provide easier access to existing skiable terrain;
- provide a system where the segments between the Alpine Meadows base terminal and mid-station and the Squaw Valley base terminal and mid-station can operate independently from the remainder of the gondola so that each segment can function as a ski lift if the remainder of the gondola is not operational due to weather, maintenance, or other factors;
- use a facility alignment that allows vehicles and equipment to reach gondola cabins from the ground to evacuate people from the cabins, if necessary, during an emergency situation; and
- replace existing avalanche control measures used in the Alpine Meadows area, that could not be used with the proposed gondola in place due to the potential for damage to gondola facilities (i.e. artillery, hand shots), with an effective avalanche control system that is compatible with gondola operation.

1.4 DESCRIPTION OF THE PROPOSED PROJECT

The applicant is proposing a gondola, operated in the winter time only, that provides direct access between the Squaw Valley and Alpine Meadows ski areas, and modifications to the Alpine Meadow's snow safety and avalanche hazard mitigation program in proximity to the proposed gondola.

1.4.1 Base-to-Base Gondola

FACILITIES

The applicant proposes to install, operate, and maintain an aerial ropeway system connecting the Squaw Valley and Alpine Meadows base areas as well as an avalanche control system consisting of remotely operated gas-activated exploders (Gazex exploders) associated with the Alpine Meadows portion of the gondola alignment. The proposed lift would be configured as an eight-passenger gondola and have a design capacity of approximately 1,400 persons per hour in each direction. Travel time between the ski areas is estimated at approximately 16 minutes. In total, the lift would be approximately 13,000 feet in length (based on slope length) of which, approximately 3,300 feet (25 percent) would be sited on NFS lands (i.e., in the TNF). Table 1-1 provides a summary of the proposed facilities and the land ownership for each facility.

Table 1-1 Project Facilities

Facility	Private Land	NFS Lands	Total
Aerial Ropeway System	9,700 feet	3,300 feet	13,000 feet
Towers	24	11	37
Terminal	1 base terminal, 1 mid-station	1 base terminal, 1 mid-station	2 base terminals, 2 mid-stations
Gazex Exploders	1	7	8

The Alpine Meadows base terminal would be located on USFS lands within the TNF and situated southeast of the Alpine Meadows base lodge between the Roundhouse Express and the Hot Wheels Chair ski lifts. This facility would resemble a typical base terminal of a detachable chairlift. The terminal would have a footprint of approximately 24 feet by 84 feet and would be approximately 30 feet tall. It would be designed to blend with the natural environment to the maximum extent possible. The terminal would be on an elevated foundation and no material would be excavated or removed from the facility footprint. Minimal ground disturbance would be required where the foundation footers are anchored. The terminal would also include a deck integrated with the existing lodge deck and a cabin storage facility to store a portion of the gondola cabins when they are taken off the aerial ropeway system. The disturbance area for the based terminal, deck, and cabin storage area combined would be approximately 0.5 acre.

Additionally, grading is proposed at the Alpine Meadows base area to improve the connectivity between the base lodge and the Summit and Roundhouse chairlifts. This project would add fill material to reduce the slope between the lodge and the chairlifts, resulting in approximately 1.6 acres of disturbance.

The Squaw Valley base terminal would be located on private lands between the bottom terminals of the KT-22 and Squaw One express chairlifts in the current location of Cushing Pond and would be of similar size and configuration as the Alpine Meadows base terminal. This terminal would also include a deck and cabin storage facility, and the total facility would have a disturbance footprint of approximately 0.5 acre.

The gondola would be designed with two mid-stations; sometimes referred to as angle stations as they are located where the cable system would change direction and create an “angle.” The mid-station closest to Squaw Valley (the Squaw Valley mid-station) would be on private lands on top the *Saddle* trail ridgeline approximately 1,100 feet southwest of the KT-22 lift top terminal. The Squaw Valley mid-station would be located a minimum of 175 feet from the congressionally designated boundary GCW (Exhibit 1-2), and would be accessible via existing mountain work roads. The mid-station closest to Alpine Meadows, the Alpine Meadows mid-station, would be approximately 650 feet northwest of *The Buttress* on NFS lands in the northern portion of the Alpine Meadows Ski Area, and a minimum of 80 feet from the congressionally designated boundary of the GCW (Exhibit 1-2).

Each mid-station would resemble a typical base terminal of a detachable chairlift, with two buildings arranged to form an angle. Each building would have a footprint of approximately 24 feet by 84 feet and would be approximately 30 feet tall. Overall ground disturbance for each mid-station would be approximately 0.5 acre. The mid-stations would be designed to blend with the natural environment to the maximum extent possible.

The towers would have an average height of approximately 30 feet, but could reach approximately 60 feet near the Alpine Meadows base area to achieve sufficient clearance. The disturbance area for each tower would range from approximately 300 to 600 square feet. The anticipated disturbance area for all 37 towers combined would not exceed 0.5 acre.

During the winter season, visitors would be able to on- or off-load at both base stations and/or either of the mid-stations. Initially, only the Squaw Valley mid-station would be available to on- or off-load passengers. After the first several years of operations, the Alpine Meadows mid-station would also become available for on- and off-loading.

Transport to each mid-station could be operated independently if the other portion of the gondola were shut down due to storms, high winds, or other factors (i.e., the Alpine Meadows side of the gondola could operate if the Squaw Valley side were shut down, and vice versa). This would allow the operating base terminal/mid-station connections to operate as ski lifts.

As stated above, each of the base terminals would disturb approximately 0.5 acre. An additional 1.6 acres of grading disturbance would occur at the Alpine Meadows base terminal. Ground disturbance for the mid-stations would be approximately 0.5 acre each, and the tower footings would disturb a maximum of 0.5 acre

(37 towers x 600 square feet maximum disturbance each). In total, the gondola would disturb up to approximately 4.1 acres.

The gondola is not proposed for summer operation and all of the gondola cabins would be removed from the ropeway and stored at the base terminals during the summer months. This would reduce the visible infrastructure along the ropeway system during the non-ski season; however, the towers, ropeway, mid-terminals, and base station facilities (and Gazex facilities, see below) would remain visible. Gondola cabins may also be stored off the ropeway at night during the winter, particularly during storm or wind events.

The gondola would be powered by connections to electrical service at each base station. The project would not require installation of an electric power line from the base station to either mid-station. Electricity to both mid-stations would be supplied via a "line generator" that uses the moving lift to generate the necessary power at the station. During non-operational periods, a small generator would supply power to each mid-station's electrical equipment.

With respect to the portion of the project adjacent to the GCW, the applicant has indicated it has located the project as far away from the GCW boundary on NFS lands as possible so as to avoid direct impacts within the GCW. The applicant has designed the project to be as close as possible to the eastern Granite Cliffs between the mid-stations while still placing the alignment where physical evacuation of cabins while they are on the aerial ropeway could be achieved.

Snowmaking is not proposed for the Alpine Meadows mid-station, and grooming around the terminal would occur on an as add needed basis (typically after snow and wind events) by snow shoveling and snow cat grooming.

OPERATION

The proposed gondola would transport visitors in both directions between the Squaw Valley and Alpine Meadows ski areas during winter operations only. The gondola would typically operate each day from just before the Alpine Meadows and Squaw Valley ski areas open until just after closing. The gondola cabins would be removed from the ropeway and stored at the base terminals during the summer season and as needed during winter storm events. The only operation during the non-ski season would be for short periods associated with maintenance and testing, including occasionally moving Individual cabins, or small numbers of cabins, across the system. Approximately 10 net new employees (8 seasonal and 2 year-round) would be needed for operation of the proposed project.

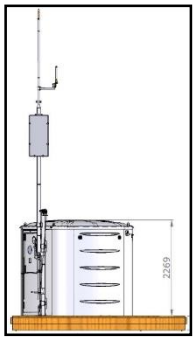
1.4.2 Gazex Avalanche Mitigation System

Installation of the proposed gondola would necessitate changes to Alpine Meadow's current snow safety and avalanche hazard mitigation program. Avalanche control in this location is currently provided by artillery. Specifically, eight current artillery targets and many of the current hand shot placements for avalanche mitigation would no longer be practical because of the location of the proposed gondola. There would be risk of direct artillery and indirect shrapnel impact to the gondola and lift towers. Therefore, to replace the existing avalanche control methods in the vicinity of the proposed gondola, the project would include installation, operation, and maintenance of up to eight Gazex exploders (seven on NFS lands) in the vicinity of *The Buttress, Bernie's Chute, Bernie's Bowl, North Poma Rocks Gully, Pond Slide*, and *Poma Rocks*. Gazex exploders utilize propane and oxygen gas stored in tanks that is delivered by a small pipeline to Gazex tubes where the gas mixture is ignited in a controlled volume explosion. This creates a concussive blast exiting the Gazex tube above the snow surface in key avalanche trigger locations. The filling of the tubes with gas and ignition is controlled remotely. Installation of the Gazex exploders would require two concrete footers for anchoring of each tube (Exhibit 1-3). The upper concrete footing would be approximately 3.5 feet by 8 feet, with a total disturbance area of approximately 15 feet by 15 feet. The lower concrete footing would be approximately 5 feet by 5 feet, with a total disturbance area of approximately 7 feet by 7 feet. The

disturbance required for each exploder would vary depending on its location. The exploder tubes are roughly 15 to 16 feet in length to ensure the opening remains above the snow surface. Operation of the Gazex exploders would involve installation of four shelters to house propane and oxygen tanks. Each shelter would be approximately 7 feet by 7 feet and would be set on a small aboveground platform (approximately 10 feet by 12 feet), anchored for stability (Exhibit 1-3). The shelters would be constructed of wood and steel covered in fiberglass and include an antenna approximately 22 feet tall. The shelters are typically white, and would be designed to blend visually with the surrounding environment to the maximum extent possible. From each shelter, 1- to 2-inch diameter high-density polyethylene (HDPE) pipes carry the combustible gases (pressure fed) to the exploder tubes. In total, approximately 3,000 feet of 1- to 2-inch HDPE pipe would be installed aboveground to connect the four shelters with the eight exploders. Installation of this pipe would not require any ground disturbance. The pipe would be dark in color and may be sheathed to protect it from rodents, rock fall, and snow creep.

The Gazex exploders and gas tank shelters would remain in place year-round. The Alpine Meadows Ski Area would ensure that all combustible gasses are removed or depleted from each shelter at the end of each ski season to diminish wildfire concerns and tanks would not be refilled until immediately prior to the ski season, after fire season is over. Full oxygen and propane tanks would typically be flown to the shelters by helicopter at the beginning of the ski season, and the empty, or near empty tanks removed by helicopter at the end of the season. If a tank is emptied during the ski season, it may be replaced with a full tank by helicopter, or potentially filled by over-the-snow vehicle.

Typical Exploder



Typical Shelter

Exhibit 1-3 **Typical Gazex Exploder and Shelter**

The exploders would have a self-contained power supply that would be electrically powered by 12 V battery and recharged by solar panel.

1.4.3 Construction

Construction activities associated with the proposed project would include grubbing/clearing of on-site vegetation, excavation and relocation of soil on the site, backfilling and compaction of soils, and construction of proposed facilities. Construction access to the base terminals would be via existing roads within the ski areas. Construction equipment (including tracked excavators and a crane) for construction of the Alpine Meadows base terminal would be staged in the existing Alpine Meadows parking area, which is adjacent to the proposed base terminal (approximately 500 feet away). Access to the Alpine Meadows mid-station would primarily be via helicopter or by transporting equipment and materials to the site over-the-snow in the spring prior to construction. Permanent access roads to the Alpine Meadows mid-station are not proposed; however, there may be limited use of tracked vehicles or small all-terrain vehicles (ATVs) during construction. An excavator would be flown to the mid-station site to assist with construction. Additionally, a "spider excavator" (a crawling excavator with "legs" capable of working in very steep terrain) would be used to excavate tower foundations along the ropeway. The Squaw Valley mid-station would be accessed via an existing road that extends from the base of Squaw Valley Ski Area to the upper KT-22 terminal.

It is anticipated that the Alpine Meadows mid-station would be elevated above a granite outcropping and thus there would be minimal excavation and material removed for the terminal and foundations. The Alpine Meadows mid-station could be anchored directly to the rock or to concrete caps poured directly on the rock. Some rock blasting may be required, and this material would be scattered on site. It is anticipated that grading and earth moving will be required as part of construction of the Squaw Valley mid-station. It is currently estimated that approximately 850 cubic yards of material on site would be moved to support foundation construction, and an additional 1,250 cubic yards of material would be moved around the mid-station to create slopes and topography that support skier/boarder loading and unloading.

Disturbance for each tower would vary based on its location; towers accessible to an excavator could result in a total disturbance of 600 square feet (including spoil storage) if site conditions allow for a hole to be dug. For towers with more limited construction access, spider excavators could be used to dig a hole for the foundation resulting in approximately 300 square feet of disturbance (including spoil storage). Some towers could be constructed by flattening the surface and pouring a concrete footer above grade, which would not result in any spoils. Towers located on granite outcroppings could require some drilling/blasting, but would likely be secured directly to the rock, or anchored to concrete poured directly on the rock, and would not result in excavated ground disturbance. Material removed for tower footings would be stored adjacent to the tower location in an area of approximately 100 square feet, then scattered on-site, likely on top of the footer.

Staging areas for tower construction equipment and materials would be located in the parking areas of both Squaw Valley and Alpine Meadows, as helicopters would be used to set most towers. Materials and equipment for portions of the project on NFS lands would be staged in the Alpine Meadows parking lot.

Vegetative clearing for installation of the project components would be required, and up to approximately 500 trees total would need to be cleared in the project area. Necessary tree removal would be accomplished via helicopter, skidding, hauling off-site, chipping, burning, or lop-and-scatter, depending on specific site conditions and accessibility.

Construction of the Gazex exploders would be principally by hand crews working in steep locations. Drilling for footers would be completed with a wagon drill, jack leg drill, or similar small portable drilling equipment. No temporary or permanent access roads would be required. Concrete and infrastructure would be flown in place by helicopters. The helicopter and materials would be staged in the existing parking area at Alpine Meadows.

The following components would be common to all construction activities undertaken for the proposed project:

- Temporary and permanent erosion control best management practices (BMPs) will be installed and maintained prior to, during, and after construction activities.
- Disturbed areas will be revegetated and mulch or matting will be applied immediately following construction activities.
- Construction equipment will be stored in previously disturbed areas, to the extent possible. In areas where no previously disturbed areas exist, equipment will be stored on exposed granite pads where there is little or no vegetation.
- A Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan will be prepared and implemented with protocols for project activities.
- Whenever possible, prior to grading, existing topsoil will be removed and stockpiled in a previously disturbed area. Stockpiles will be covered to prevent wind erosion.
- Following construction, topsoil will be re-spread on the disturbed site, mulched, and re-seeded with native or naturalized seed mix favoring cold tolerant plants.

- Temporary erosion control measures will be utilized on disturbed sites to minimize the potential for soil erosion during construction. Soil disturbing activities will be avoided during periods of heavy rains.
- Erosion control blankets (e.g., coir logs or jute netting) or heavy mulch comprised of organic materials will be used on slopes greater than 10 percent.

1.5 POTENTIAL PERMITS AND APPROVALS REQUIRED

Several agencies will be involved in the consideration of proposed project elements. As the lead agency under CEQA, Placer County is responsible for considering the adequacy of the environmental analysis and determining if the overall project should be approved. USFS is also independently conducting NEPA review for all federal actions associated with the project concurrently with the CEQA review for the project.

Permits and approvals may be required from the following federal, state, and local agencies for construction and operation of the proposed project:

FEDERAL

- **U.S. Forest Service**: Special Use Permit Amendment for actions on USFS lands.
- **U.S. Army Corps of Engineers**: Compliance with Section 404 of the Clean Water Act if discharge of fill to Waters of the U.S. occurs and /or if any wetlands are identified and cannot be avoided by the proposed project.
- **U.S. Environmental Protection Agency**: Concurrence with Clean Water Act Section 404 permit.
- **U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service**: Potential compliance with Section 7 of the federal Endangered Species Act (ESA).

STATE

- **California Department of Fish and Wildlife, Region 2**: Compliance with the California ESA; potential permits under Section 2081 of the Fish and Game Code if take of listed species is likely to occur; Section 1602 streambed alteration agreement if any construction activities occur within the bed or bank of adjacent waterways.
- **California State Office of Historic Preservation**: Compliance with Section 106 of NHPA (in coordination with the USFS).
- **Lahontan Regional Water Quality Control Board**: National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) construction stormwater permit (Notice of Intent to proceed under General Construction Permit) for disturbance of more than 1 acre, discharge permit for stormwater, and Clean Water Act Section 401 water quality certification or waste discharge requirements.

LOCAL

- **Placer County:** Conditional Use Permit and Squaw Valley General Plan Amendment. Further analysis will determine if a Parking Variance is required.
- **Placer County Air Pollution Control District**: Authority to construct (for devices that emit air pollutants); permit to operate; Air Quality Management Plan consistency determination.

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2 INITIAL STUDY ENVIRONMENTAL CHECKLIST

PROJECT INFORMATION

1. Project Title:	Squaw Valley-Alpine Meadows Base-to-Base Gondola Project
2. Lead Agency Name and Address:	Placer County, Planning Services Division, 775 North Lake Tahoe Boulevard, Tahoe City, CA 96145
3. Contact Person and Phone Number:	Heather Beckman, (530) 581-6286
4. Project Location:	2600 Alpine Meadows Road, Tahoe City; 1960 Squaw Valley Road, Olympic Valley
5. Project Sponsor's Name and Address:	Squaw Valley Ski Holdings, LLC, 1960 Squaw Valley Road, P.O. Box 2007, Olympic Valley, CA 96146
6. General Plan Designation:	Forest Recreation
7. Zoning:	Forest Recreation, Open Space, and Neighborhood Commercial
8. Description of Project:	See Chapter 1, "Project Description"
9. Surrounding Land Uses and Setting: (Briefly describe the project's surroundings)	See Chapter 1, "Project Description" and Discussions of Environmental Setting below.
10: Other public agencies whose approval is required: (e.g., permits, financing approval, or participation agreement)	See Chapter 1, "Project Description"

ENVIRONMENTAL FACTORS POTENTIALLY AFFECTED::

The environmental factors checked below would be potentially affected by this project, involving at least one impact that is a "Potentially Significant Impact" as indicated by the checklist on the following pages.

☒ Aesthetics	☐ Agriculture and Forest Resources	☒ Air Quality
☒ Biological Resources	☐ Cultural Resources	☒ Geology / Soils
☒ Greenhouse Gas Emissions	☐ Hazards & Hazardous Materials	☒ Hydrology / Water Quality
☒ Land Use / Planning	☐ Mineral Resources	☒ Noise
☐ Population / Housing	☐ Public Services	☒ Recreation
☒ Transportation / Traffic	☒ Utilities / Service Systems	☒ Mandatory Findings of Significance
		☐ None with Mitigation

DETERMINATION (To be completed by the Lead Agency)

On the basis of this initial evaluation:

☐ I find that the proposed project could not have a significant effect on the environment, and a **NEGATIVE DECLARATION** will be prepared.

☐ I find that although the proposed project COULD have a significant effect on the environment, there WILL NOT be a significant effect in this case because revisions in the project have been made by or agreed to by the project proponent. A **MITIGATED NEGATIVE DECLARATION** will be prepared.

☒ I find that the proposed project **MAY** have a significant effect on the environment, and an **ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT** is required.

☐ I find that the proposed project **MAY** have a "potentially significant impact" or "potentially significant unless mitigated" impact on the environment, but at least one effect 1) has been adequately analyzed in an earlier document pursuant to applicable legal standards, and 2) has been addressed by mitigation measures based on the earlier analysis as described on attached sheets. An **ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT** is required, but it must analyze only the effects that remain to be addressed.

☐ I find that although the proposed project could have a significant effect on the environment, because all potentially significant effects (a) have been analyzed adequately in an earlier **EIR** or **NEGATIVE DECLARATION** pursuant to applicable standards, and (b) have been avoided or mitigated pursuant to that earlier **EIR** or **NEGATIVE DECLARATION**, including revisions or mitigation measures that are imposed upon the proposed project, nothing further is required.

Signature	Date
Crystal Jacobsen	04/19/16
Printed Name	**Title**
Crystal Jacobsen	Environmental Coordinator

Placer County Community Development
Resource Agency

EVALUATION OF ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS

1. A brief explanation is required for all answers except "No Impact" answers that are adequately supported by the information sources a lead agency cites in the parentheses following each question. A "No Impact" answer is adequately supported if the referenced information sources show that the impact simply does not apply to projects like the one involved (e.g., the project falls outside a fault rupture zone). A "No Impact" answer should be explained where it is based on project-specific factors as well as general standards (e.g., the project will not expose sensitive receptors to pollutants, based on a project-specific screening analysis).
2. All answers must take account of the whole action involved, including off-site as well as on-site, cumulative as well as project-level, indirect as well as direct, and construction as well as operational impacts.
3. Once the lead agency has determined that a particular physical impact may occur, then the checklist answers must indicate whether the impact is potentially significant, less than significant with mitigation, or less than significant. "Potentially Significant Impact" is appropriate if there is substantial evidence that an effect may be significant. If there are one or more "Potentially Significant Impact" entries when the determination is made, an EIR is required.
4. "Negative Declaration: Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated" applies where the incorporation of mitigation measures has reduced an effect from "Potentially Significant Impact" to a "Less Than Significant Impact." The lead agency must describe the mitigation measures, and briefly explain how they reduce the effect to a less than significant level (mitigation measures from "Earlier Analyses," as described in (5) below, may be cross-referenced).
5. Earlier analyses may be used where, pursuant to the tiering, program EIR, or other CEQA process, an effect has been adequately analyzed in an earlier EIR or negative declaration. Section 15063(c)(3)(D). In this case, a brief discussion should identify the following:
   a) Earlier Analysis Used. Identify and state where they are available for review.
   b) Impacts Adequately Addressed. Identify which effects from the above checklist were within the scope of and adequately analyzed in an earlier document pursuant to applicable legal standards, and state whether such effects were addressed by mitigation measures based on the earlier analysis.
   c) Mitigation Measures. For effects that are "Less than Significant with Mitigation Measures Incorporated," describe the mitigation measures which were incorporated or refined from the earlier document and the extent to which they address site-specific conditions for the project.
6. Lead agencies are encouraged to incorporate into the checklist references to information sources for potential impacts (e.g., general plans, zoning ordinances). Reference to a previously prepared or outside document should, where appropriate, include a reference to the page or pages where the statement is substantiated.
7. Supporting Information Sources: A source list should be attached, and other sources used or individuals contacted should be cited in the discussion.
8. This is only a suggested form, and lead agencies are free to use different formats; however, lead agencies should normally address the questions from this checklist that are relevant to a project's environmental effects in whatever format is selected.
9. The explanation of each issue should identify:
   a) the significance criteria or threshold, if any, used to evaluate each question; and
   b) the mitigation measure identified, if any, to reduce the impact to less than significance.

2.1 AESTHETICS

ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
I. Aesthetics. Would the project:				
a) Have a substantial adverse effect on a scenic vista?	☒	☐	☐	☐
b) Substantially damage scenic resources, including, but not limited to, trees, rock outcroppings, and historic buildings within a state scenic highway?	☒	☐	☐	☐
c) Substantially degrade the existing visual character or quality of the site and its surroundings?	☒	☐	☐	☐
d) Create a new source of substantial light or glare which would adversely affect day or nighttime views in the area?	☐	☐	☒	☐

2.1.1 Environmental Setting

Aesthetic resources are generally defined as both the natural and built features of the landscape that contribute to the public's experience and appreciation of the environment. Depending on the extent to which a project's presence would negatively alter the perceived visual character and quality of the environment aesthetic impacts may occur.

This analysis is based on review of site plans and aerial photographs of the project area as well as a site visit conducted on October 20, 2015. Photographic simulations of the proposed project will be prepared for the EIR.

The project vicinity is characterized by steep mountain slopes. Three major peaks dominate the western edge of Squaw Valley: Granite Chief (9,050 feet), Emigrant Peak (8,700 feet), and Squaw Peak (8,885 feet). The Alpine Meadows portion of the project area is dominated by two peaks: Ward Peak (8,637 feet) and Scott Peak (8,289 feet).The project area would be located on the slopes, and along the connecting ridgeline, of Squaw Valley and Alpine Meadows ski areas, across private property in between the two ski areas, as well as a perpendicular crossing of the Five Lakes Trail and a USFS trail easement. It would be within a scenic landscape, with mountainous terrain dominating much of the viewshed, and embedded within existing development at each of the base locations, including buildings and ski lift facilities. The surrounding mountains, particularly in locations with ski runs, are snow covered in the winter. In the summer, the ski infrastructure, including modified mountain slopes where trees have been removed, access roads, and lift towers can detract from the overall visual character. Nevertheless, even with modified slopes, the valley and mountain viewshed is visually appealing.

Squaw Valley Road provides access to the Squaw Valley ski area, and is a designated scenic roadway by Placer County. Alpine Meadows Road is not designated as a scenic roadway by the County. State Route (SR) 89, which is an eligible state scenic highway by the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans), is located approximately 2 miles east of the project area. However, the project area would not be visible from SR 89. The Granite Chief Wilderness (GCW) (i.e., designated wilderness on National Forest System (NFS) lands) is located west of the project area, and the proposed project would be visible from some points within the GCW.

2.1.2 Discussion

a) Have a substantial adverse effect on a scenic vista?

Potentially Significant Impact. A scenic vista is defined as a viewpoint that provides expansive views of a highly valued landscape for the benefit of the general public. As described in the *Placer County General Plan* (Policy 1.K.1), Placer County considers resources such as river canyons, lake watersheds, scenic highway corridors, ridgelines, and steep slopes to be valuable scenic resources (Placer County 1994a). The project area contains views of ridgelines, steep slopes, and other features that would be considered scenic resources, providing scenic vistas from several viewpoints.

The proposed project would include an aerial ropeway system connecting the Squaw Valley and Alpine Meadows base areas with cabin storage facilities and decks, towers, and two angle/mid-stations, and installation of eight Gazex exploders for avalanche control. There would also be four approximately 7-foot by 7-foot shelters to house oxygen and propane for the Gazex exploders near several of the Alpine Meadows ski runs (e.g., The Buttress, Bernie's Bowl, North Poma Rocks). Development of the project would be visually consistent with existing ski lift facilities at Squaw Valley and Alpine Meadows. The project design (including but not limited to the number and height of lift towers) has been developed to minimize visual impacts from the GCW regardless of time of year. Views of the towers and aerial ropeway would be minimized from the GCW and the Five Lakes portion of GCW particularly in the May through October timeframes (those timeframes whereby no gondola cabins will occupy the ropeway). However, the project would still be an intensification of development in a mountain setting and would require tree removal that could result in adverse effects to scenic vistas including from the Five Lakes Trail. This impact would be potentially significant and this issue will be analyzed further in the EIR.

b) Substantially damage scenic resources, including, but not limited to, trees, rock outcroppings, and historic buildings within a state scenic highway?

Potentially Significant Impact. No designated state scenic highways exist in the project area. SR 89, located approximately two miles to the east of the project area, is an eligible state scenic highway (Caltrans 2011), but the project area is not visible from SR 89. The project may be visible from Squaw Valley Road, which is a designated scenic roadway by Placer County. The County does not designate Alpine Meadows Road as a scenic roadway. The proposed project would be designed consistent with the surrounding development and ski lift facilities. However, the project may adversely affect views from Squaw Valley Road. Therefore, this impact would be potentially significant and this issue will be analyzed further in the EIR.

c) Substantially degrade the existing visual character or quality of the site and its surroundings?

Potentially Significant Impact. The project area is located in an area of northeastern Placer County that is surrounded by a striking visual landscape, with jagged peaks, meadows, creeks/rivers, and forests dominating the viewshed. Notwithstanding its natural alpine surroundings, much of the immediate project vicinity is developed/disturbed with ski lift facilities and related ski area infrastructure (e.g., ski runs, access roads). Both base areas would be constructed within areas surrounded by existing buildings and ski lift facilities. The base terminals would be designed to conform to the existing character of each ski area. The project area between the proposed mid-stations is primarily undeveloped in its current state, but is visible to skiers on adjacent slopes or ski lifts and hikers on the Five Lakes Trail. Although the gondola cabins would be removed in the summer months, the project would still degrade the visual character of the area for hikers and visitors in the GCW, which is protected for its pristine natural beauty. The aerial ropeway overhead would not directly block views for hikers, but would detract from the visual quality of the area. Therefore, this impact would be potentially significant and this issue will be analyzed further in the EIR.

d) Create a new source of substantial light or glare which would adversely affect day or nighttime views in the area?

Less-than-Significant Impact. Minimal lighting may be required on the base terminals for safety and security purposes, such as during low cloud and heavy snow conditions, and the mid-stations would include emergency lighting only. There will be no lighting on the towers. Glare could be created if any reflective building materials are used. However, towers will either be light galvanized or painted in a color consistent with the surroundings to reduce glare, similar to existing towers at Squaw Valley and Alpine Meadows. The amount of lighting used would be minimized and would be similar to existing lighting within the surrounding ski areas. In addition, it is anticipated that adoption of various measures to reduce potential light and glare would further reduce this impact. Therefore, this impact would be less than significant.

2.2 AGRICULTURE AND FOREST RESOURCES

ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
II. Agriculture and Forest Resources.				
In determining whether impacts to agricultural resources are significant environmental effects, lead agencies may refer to the California Agricultural Land Evaluation and Site Assessment Model (1997, as updated) prepared by the California Department of Conservation as an optional model to use in assessing impacts on agriculture and farmland. In determining whether impacts to forest resources, including timberland, are significant environmental effects, lead agencies may refer to information compiled by the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection regarding the state's inventory of forest land, including the Forest and Range Assessment Project and the Forest Legacy Assessment project; and forest carbon measurement methodology provided in Forest Protocols adopted by the California Air Resources Board.				
Would the project:				
a) Convert Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, or Farmland of Statewide Importance (Farmland), as shown on the maps prepared pursuant to the Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program of the California Resources Agency, to non-agricultural use?	☐	☐	☐	☒
b) Conflict with existing zoning for agricultural use or a Williamson Act contract?	☐	☐	☐	☒
c) Conflict with existing zoning for, or cause rezoning of, forest land (as defined in Public Resources Code section 12220(g)), timberland (as defined by Public Resources Code section 4526), or timberland zoned Timberland Production (as defined by Government Code section 51104(g))?	☐	☐	☐	☒
d) Result in the loss of forest land or conversion of forest land to non-forest use?	☐	☐	☒	☐
e) Involve other changes in the existing environment, which, due to their location or nature, could result in conversion of Farmland to non-agricultural use or conversion of forest land to non-forest use?	☐	☐	☒	☐

2.2.1 Environmental Setting

The California Department of Conservation Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program (FMMP) classifies agricultural land in eight categories based on soil quality and irrigation status. FMMP data is not available for the portion of Placer County in which the project would be located, because there is no farmland in this area.

The California Land Conservation Act of 1965, commonly referred to as the Williamson Act, enables local governments to enter into contracts with private landowners for the purpose of preserving agriculture and

restricting unnecessary conversion to urban uses. Under the contract, landowners receive reduced property tax assessments based on the property's value for farming and open space uses as opposed to full market value. As noted above, there is no farmland in the project area, and neither the project area nor surrounding sites are under a Williamson Act contract.

"Forest land" is defined in Public Resources Code (PRC) Section 12220(g) as:

> land that can support 10% native tree cover of any species, including hardwoods, under natural conditions, and that allows for management of one or more forest resources, including timber, aesthetics, fish and wildlife, biodiversity, water quality, recreation, and other public benefits.

"Timberland" is defined in PRC Section 4526 as:

> land, other than land owned by the federal government and land designated by the board as experimental forest land, which is available for, and capable of, growing a crop of trees of any commercial species used to produce lumber and other forest products, including Christmas trees. Commercial species shall be determined by the board on a district basis after consultation with the district committees and others.

Placer County (1994a) has established a zoning designation for Timberland Production (TPZ) to encourage prudent and responsible forest resource management and the continued use of timberlands for the production of timber products and compatible uses. The TPZ district is intended to be an exclusive area for the growing and harvesting of timber and those uses that are an integral part of a timber management operation. The project area does not contain land that is zoned Timberland Production.

Much of the project area consists of steep granite slopes that support a limited number of trees and would not be considered forest land or timberland. However, there are small pockets of trees along the gondola alignment that could meet the definition of forest land and timberland. The land between the Alpine Meadows base terminal and the Alpine Meadows mid-station is NFS land (i.e., U.S. Forest Service [USFS] land) and would therefore not meet the definition of timberland. All but one of the Gazex exploders and all of the gas storage shelters are located in this area.

2.2.2 Discussion

a) Convert Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, or Farmland of Statewide Importance (Farmland), as shown on the maps prepared pursuant to the Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program of the California Resources Agency, to non-agricultural use?

No Impact. The project would not be located on or adjacent to farmland; therefore, the project would not convert farmland to non-agricultural use. No impact would occur.

b) Conflict with existing zoning for agricultural use or a Williamson Act contract?

No Impact. The project would not be located on or adjacent to farmland or land associated with a Williamson Act contract; therefore, the project would not conflict with zoning for agricultural use or a Williamson Act contract. No impact would occur.

c) Conflict with existing zoning for, or cause rezoning of, forest land (as defined in Public Resources Code section 12220(g)), timberland (as defined by Public Resources Code section 4526), or timberland zoned Timberland Production (as defined by Government Code section 51104(g))?

No Impact. The project area is situated in the Sierra Nevada, surrounded by forest land; however, the project would be located within an area with zoning designations that envision ski area development. These

designations are intended to retain the general character of the forest environment while also permitting active recreational development. Uses could include picnic areas, hiking trails, ski trails, parks, and outdoor amphitheaters, as well as parking for ski facilities. Moreover, to a certain extent, some tree removal could be expected to allow for this type of development. There is no land zoned as timberland or Timberland Production within or adjacent to the project area; therefore, the proposed project would have no impact related to timberland zoning. The proposed project does not include any rezoning.

d) Result in the loss of forest land or conversion of forest land to non-forest use?

Less-than-Significant Impact. The project area contains pockets of trees that would meet the definition of forest land. However, the dispersed removal of individual trees would not result in the loss of forest land or conversion of forest land to a non-forest use. Therefore, the project would have a less-than-significant impact on forest land.

e) Involve other changes in the existing environment, which, due to their location or nature, could result in conversion of Farmland to non-agricultural use or conversion of forest land to non-forest use?

Less-than-Significant Impact. See items a) through d). The project would not be located on or adjacent to farmland; therefore, the project would not convert farmland or otherwise result in the conversion of farmland to non-agricultural use. No impact would occur.

Indirect impacts on forest land can occur in two ways: (1) by urban development increasing property values, or extending infrastructure, thereby placing pressure on adjacent forest land to convert to non-forest use; or (2) through land use conflicts between the proposed use and the forest use leading eventually to the diminishment of the forest use (for example, reduction of forest land as a result of ski-related deforestation).

See items c) and d). The land within the project area does contain some forested pockets; however, the proposed project would be consistent with the existing land use designations that are generally protective of forest lands and would not result in conversion of forest land to non-forest uses. The project does not extend utilities or otherwise provide infrastructure that would induce further development in the project vicinity. This impact would be less than significant.

2.3 AIR QUALITY

ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
III. Air Quality.				
Where available, the significance criteria established by the applicable air quality management or air pollution control district may be relied on to make the following determinations.				
Would the project:				
a) Conflict with or obstruct implementation of the applicable air quality plan?	☒	☐	☐	☐
b) Violate any air quality standard or contribute substantially to an existing or projected air quality violation?	☒	☐	☐	☐
c) Result in a cumulatively considerable net increase of any criteria pollutant for which the project region is non-attainment under an applicable federal or state ambient air quality standard (including releasing emissions which exceed quantitative thresholds for ozone precursors)?	☒	☐	☐	☐
d) Expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations?	☒	☐	☐	☐
e) Create objectionable odors affecting a substantial number of people?	☐	☐	☒	☐

2.3.1 Environmental Setting

The project area is located in Placer County, which spans three air basins; the portion of Placer County within which the project area is located is within the Mountain Counties Air Basin (MCAB) near its eastern edge. The MCAB also includes all of Amador, Calaveras, Mariposa, Nevada, Plumas, Sierra, and Tuolumne counties, and the western portion of El Dorado County.

Air quality within Placer County is regulated by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), the California Air Resources Board (ARB), and the Placer County Air Pollution Control District (PCAPCD). Each agency develops rules, regulations, and/or policies to comply with applicable legislation.

EPA and ARB have set ambient air quality standards for certain air pollutants to protect the public health and welfare. EPA has established National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS) for the following criteria pollutants: carbon monoxide (CO), ozone (O_3), sulfur dioxide (SO_2), nitrogen dioxide (NO_2), inhalable particulate matter (PM_{10}), fine particulate matter ($PM_{2.5}$), and lead (Pb). ARB has set California Ambient Air Quality Standards (CAAQS) that are the same or are more stringent than the corresponding federal standards. The CAAQS also include standards for sulfates, hydrogen sulfide, and visibility.

If an area has not achieved the NAAQS or CAAQS for any criteria pollutant, EPA and ARB classifies it as a nonattainment area for the respective criteria pollutant. A nonattainment area is required to have an air quality attainment plan (AQAP) to attain and maintain the required standards.

Placer County is currently designated as a nonattainment area for the state and national ambient air quality ozone standards, and the state PM_{10} standards (ARB 2013b).

Local air quality is characteristic of the Lake Tahoe area: generally, good with some locations experiencing high pollutant concentrations during the peak-use period of winter (due to the high traffic volumes and climatic conditions). The air quality emissions generated in the project vicinity are primarily associated with motor vehicle traffic, maintenance equipment, some area sources (including fireplaces and other residential activities), and some stationary sources of emissions (e.g., boilers, mountain facilities).

Sensitive receptors in the project area include residences, condominiums, and lodging facilities to the southwest, south, and southeast of the proposed Squaw Valley base terminal. The nearest residential or similar sensitive receptors to proposed project facilities in the Alpine Meadows area is approximately 0.4 mile from the Alpine Meadows base terminal.

2.3.2 Discussion

a) Conflict with or obstruct implementation of the applicable air quality plan?

Short-Term Construction

Potentially Significant Impact. During construction of the proposed project, criteria air pollutant emissions would be temporarily and intermittently generated from a variety of sources. Project-related excavation and site grading activities would generate fugitive particulate matter (PM) dust emissions. Fugitive PM dust emissions are primarily associated with ground disturbance and material transport and vary as a function of parameters such as soil silt content and moisture, wind speed, acreage of disturbance area, and the intensity of activity performed with construction equipment. Exhaust emissions from diesel equipment, material transport trips, and construction worker-commute trips also contribute to short-term increases in PM emissions, but to a lesser extent. Exhaust emissions from these construction-related mobile sources would also include reactive organic gases (ROG) and oxides of nitrogen (NO_X). Although construction of the scale associated with the proposed project (four buildings, tower footings, Gazex equipment) would normally not be considered sufficient to conflict with PCAPCD's AQAP, this issue will be analyzed further in the EIR to determine if a significant impact might occur.

Long-Term Operation

Potentially Significant Impact. Development of the proposed project would result in air pollutant emissions from area sources such as testing of emergency backup generators and propane gas consumption. Vehicle trips associated with the proposed project would also generate mobile source emissions. This issue will be analyzed further in the EIR to determine whether a significant impact might occur.

b) Violate any air quality standard or contribute substantially to an existing or projected air quality violation?

Short-Term Construction-Related Criteria Air Pollutants and Precursors

Potentially Significant Impact. See item a), above. Construction-related ground disturbance, in combination with construction worker trips and delivery truck trips, has some potential to result in criteria air pollutants that exceed applicable air quality standards. Although construction of the scale associated with the proposed project (several buildings, two decks, tower footings, Gazex equipment) would normally not be considered sufficient to potentially violate air quality standards, this impact is considered potentially significant and this issue will be analyzed further in the EIR.

Long-Term Operational-Related Regional Criteria Air Pollutant and Precursor Emissions

Potentially Significant Impact. See item a), above. Project operation would result in air pollutant emissions from project-generated stationary and mobile sources. Thus, project-generated emissions from operation have some potential to violate or contribute substantially to an existing or projected air quality violation, including the nonattainment status of Placer County for ozone (ROG and NO_x) and PM_{10}. Although emissions of the scale associated with the proposed project would normally not be considered sufficient to violate air quality standards, this issue will be analyzed further in the EIR to confirm whether or not a significant impact might occur.

Project Related Local Mobile-Source Carbon Monoxide Emissions

Less-than-Significant Impact. CO concentration is a direct function of vehicle idling time and, thus, traffic flow conditions. Under specific meteorological conditions, CO concentrations near congested roadways and/or intersections may reach unhealthy levels with respect to local sensitive land-uses such as residential areas, schools, and hospitals. Occurrences of elevated localized CO concentrations (i.e., "hotspots") are often associated with heavy traffic congestion, which most frequently occur at signalized intersections of high-volume roadways. Project construction would include additional traffic; however, it would be temporary and would be minimal compared to existing traffic volumes. In addition, there is the potential, which will be studied in the EIR, that the proposed project could reduce long-term traffic volumes to some degree along SR 89 (between Squaw Valley and Alpine Meadows ski areas) as well as on Squaw Valley Road and Alpine Meadows Road because skiers would have access to both ski areas without driving, or taking the shuttle bus, between the two. If there ultimately is a net increase in traffic volumes associated with the proposed project, the trips generated would not be sufficient to contribute substantially to a potential CO hot spot given the high volumes of traffic needed to generate such a hot spot. Analysis of traffic generated by the Village at Squaw Valley Specific Plan, which would generate traffic substantially greater than the proposed gondola, found that CO concentrations would not exceed applicable standards (Placer County 2015a). Therefore, this impact is considered less than significant and will not be evaluated further in the EIR.

c) Result in a cumulatively considerable net increase of any criteria pollutant for which the project region is non-attainment under an applicable federal or state ambient air quality standard (including releasing emissions which exceed quantitative thresholds for ozone precursors)?

Short-Term Construction-Related Increase of any Criteria Pollutant

Potentially Significant Impact. Placer County is currently designated as a nonattainment area for the state and national ambient air quality ozone standards, and the state PM_{10} standards (ARB 2013b). Construction-related ground disturbance, in combination with construction worker trips and delivery truck trips, has the potential to generate criteria air pollutants that could exceed applicable air quality standards and contribute to the nonattainment status of the region. Although emissions of the scale associated with the proposed project would normally not be considered sufficient to result in a cumulatively considerable net increase in criteria air pollutants, Placer County is currently designated as a nonattainment area and the amount of criteria air pollutants generated by project construction is not yet known. Therefore, this issue will be analyzed further in the EIR to confirm whether or not a significant impact might occur.

Long-Term Operational-Related Increase of any Criteria Pollutant

Potentially Significant Impact. As described in items a) and b), above, long-term operation of the proposed project would result in additional sources of criteria air pollutants. Therefore, the proposed project could potentially contribute to the nonattainment status of the region, and the proposed project could possibly contribute substantially to an existing or projected air quality violation. Although emissions of the scale associated with the proposed project would normally not be considered sufficient to result in a cumulatively considerable net increase in criteria air pollutants, Placer County is currently designated as a nonattainment area and the amount of criteria air pollutants generated by project operation is not yet known. Therefore, this issue will be analyzed further in the EIR to confirm whether or not a significant impact might occur.

d) Expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations?

Short-Term Construction Related Criteria Air Pollutants and Precursors

Potentially Significant Impact. The closest sensitive receptors to project facilities are residences, condominiums, and lodging facilities to the southwest, south, and southeast of the proposed Squaw Valley base terminal and residences near Alpine Meadows. Other surrounding land uses consist of light commercial land uses and lodging facilities. Construction-related ground-disturbance, in combination with construction worker trips and delivery truck trips, has the potential to generate criteria air pollutants that exceed applicable air quality standards and adversely affect sensitive receptors in the vicinity. Although emissions of the scale associated with the proposed project would normally not be considered sufficient to result in substantial exposure to nearby sensitive receptors, Placer County is currently designated as a nonattainment area and the amount of criteria air pollutants generated by project is not yet known. Therefore, this issue will be analyzed further in the EIR to confirm whether or not a significant impact might occur.

Long-Term Operational Related Criteria Air Pollutants and Precursors

Potentially Significant Impact. As discussed in item b) above, project implementation could result in regional (e.g., NO_X, PM_{10}) emissions of criteria air pollutants or precursors from operational-related activities that could exceed applicable PCAPCD thresholds of significance. Thus, project-generated criteria air pollutant and precursor emissions would have the potential to expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations. Although emissions of the scale associated with the proposed project would normally not be considered sufficient to result in substantial exposure to nearby sensitive receptors, this issue will be analyzed further in the EIR to confirm whether or not a significant impact might occur.

Toxic Air Contaminants

Short-Term Construction-Related Emissions of Toxic Air Contaminants

Less-than-Significant Impact. Project-related construction activities would result in short-term emissions of diesel particulate matter exhaust (diesel PM) from on-site construction equipment and on-road trucks delivering/hauling equipment and materials to/from the project area. Particulate exhaust emissions from diesel-fueled engines (diesel PM) were identified as a toxic air contaminant (TAC) by ARB in 1998. Diesel PM is the focus of this discussion because, according to ARB, the potential cancer risk from the inhalation of diesel PM outweighs the potential for all other (non-cancer) health impacts (ARB 2003, 2013a). Thus, nearby sensitive receptors could be exposed to increased levels of diesel PM, which would consist of residences, condominiums, and lodging facilities to the southwest, south, and southeast of the proposed Squaw Valley base terminal. Diesel PM emissions disperse quickly with distance, and there are no sensitive receptors near enough to the Alpine Meadows base terminal to result in a health risk. In addition, generation of TACs would be short-term. Therefore, this impact would be less than significant.

Long-Term Operational Related Emissions of Toxic Air Contaminants

Less-than-Significant Impact. Project operation would result in TAC emissions from testing and operation of diesel backup generators. However, the generators would be operated infrequently and for limited periods (only during testing or during a power outage). These are not conditions that could generate substantial exposure to diesel PM, even at nearby receptors. As a result, this impact is less than significant and TAC exposure from project operations would not be evaluated further in the EIR.

e) Create objectionable odors affecting a substantial number of people?

Less-than-Significant Impact. The occurrence and severity of odor impacts depend on numerous factors, including the nature, frequency, and intensity of the source; wind speed and direction; and the presence of sensitive receptors. Although offensive odors rarely cause any physical harm, they still can be unpleasant, leading to considerable distress and often generating citizen complaints to local governments and regulatory agencies. Odors could be generated from the use of on-site equipment during construction activities (equipment exhaust), but would be intermittent and temporary, and would dissipate rapidly from the source

with an increase in distance. During project operation, use of emergency backup generators could generate odors similar to construction equipment, but use of the generators would also be intermittent and temporary. Project construction and operation would not generate objectionable odors that would affect a substantial number of people. As a result, this impact is less than significant and would not be further analyzed in the EIR.

2.4 BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES

ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
IV. Biological Resources. Would the project:				
a) Have a substantial adverse effect, either directly or through habitat modifications, on any species identified as a candidate, sensitive, or special-status species in local or regional plans, policies, or regulations, or by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife or the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service?	☒	☐	☐	☐
b) Have a substantial adverse effect on any riparian habitat or other sensitive natural community identified in local or regional plans, policies, or regulations or by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife or the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service?	☒	☐	☐	☐
c) Have a substantial adverse effect on federally protected wetlands as defined by Section 404 of the Clean Water Act (including, but not limited to, marsh, vernal pool, coastal, etc.) through direct removal, filling, hydrological interruption, or other means?	☒	☐	☐	☐
d) Interfere substantially with the movement of any native resident or migratory fish or wildlife species or with established native resident or migratory wildlife corridors, or impede the use of native wildlife nursery sites?	☒	☐	☐	☐
e) Conflict with any local policies or ordinances protecting biological resources, such as a tree preservation policy or ordinance?	☒	☐	☐	☐
f) Conflict with the provisions of an adopted Habitat Conservation Plan, Natural Community Conservation Plan, or other approved local, regional, or state habitat conservation plan?	☐	☐	☐	☒

2.4.1 Environmental Setting

Regional Setting

The project is located in the northeastern Sierra Nevada, where the natural landscape in the region is composed of coniferous forests; mountain brush; and barren, rocky, or disturbed areas. In addition to the existing natural landscape, the project area is surrounded by developed areas. Development in the project vicinity includes ski resorts, ski runs, parking lots, mountain cabins, commercial business, and residences.

Local Setting

Lands within and surrounding the Squaw Valley portion of the project area are dominated by red fir forest, grassland, talus fields, and a constructed pond. Lands in the project area between Squaw Valley Ski Area and Alpine Meadows Ski Area are dominated by granitic formations and red fir forest with small ponds in the vicinity forming in granite depressions. Lands in the Alpine Meadows portion of the project area are dominated by

granitic formations, red fir forest, huckleberry oak chaparral, aspen grove, and a pond. These habitat types are described below.

Biological Communities and Habitat Types

Biological communities and habitat types in the project area consist of the following:

Red fir forest is typically dominated by even-aged, monotypic stands of mature red fir. In the project area, this habitat also includes white fir and sugar pine. Generally, mature red fir stands are monotypic, with very few other plant species in any layer. Heavy shade and a thick layer of duff tends to inhibit understory vegetation, especially in dense stands. Within the project area, the canopy and the understory is open. The primary understory shrub species is pinemat manzanita. Common forbs include mountain pennyroyal, groundsmoke, and white-veined wintergreen. This is the third most abundant community in the project area and is primarily present at elevations above 7,500 feet.

Granitic formations have little vegetation because of the lack of soil; however, they still can provide important wildlife habitat for small mammals, birds and reptiles. Several high elevation plant species have adapted to life in the extreme conditions presented by the rugged granite outcrops in the Sierra Nevada such as huckleberry oak, lodgepole pine, Watson's spike moss, and ferns.

Grassland within the project area is characterized by dense growth of perennial herbs and graminoids (grasses, sedges and rushes) such as common bluegrasses, yarrow, and dryland rushes. Dry meadows form in areas where water is concentrated near the soil surface early in the growing season only, and is not retained long enough to allow perennial herbs to reproduce. In the project area, dry meadow occurs primarily along the ski runs.

Talus fields are mostly devoid of vegetation and consist of broken granitic rock fragments at the base of cliffs and other very steep areas within the project area. Although this community does not support vegetation, it can provide important habitat for many species of wildlife including bats, reptiles, and small mammals.

Huckleberry oak chaparral is the most abundant habitat type in the project area. Huckleberry oak thickets are well adapted to ridges and slopes in high altitudes and with poor soil conditions. Commonly associated shrubs observed in this habitat type include manzanita, ceanothus, and bitter cherry. Understory vegetation is sparse to absent. Vegetation observed in openings within huckleberry oak chaparral consists of buckwheat species, cheatgrass, native bottlebrush squirreltail, needle grass, and wooly mule ears.

Aspen grove is considered a special-status natural community and ranked as "vulnerable" in California by California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW). A small young grove occurs in the Alpine Meadows portion of the project area in the steep terrain below The Buttress formation, just upslope from the Alpine Meadows detention pond. This grove is associated with an ephemeral drainage and alder, conifers, and huckleberry oak are also present in the area. Mature aspen groves provide important wildlife habitat; the leaves, twigs, and bark are highly nutritious and deer use them for cover; similarly, black bear, cottontail, porcupine, and snowshoe hare feed on bark, buds, and foliage, and grouse and quail eat the winter buds.

Two types of ponds occur in the project area; human constructed ponds and naturally occurring ponds. The constructed ponds include Cushing Pond (or Lake Cushing) and a snowmaking pond near the base of Alpine Meadows ski area. The naturally occurring ponds include a snowmelt-fed pond by The Buttress, and two seasonal ponds within the granite shelf that are fed by snowmelt or ponding after rain events. Wetland vegetation such as rushes, sedges, willows and alders are present. Aquatic insects such as boatmen, common water striders, and dragonflies are present within this habitat type.

Waters of the U.S.

A wetland delineation was prepared in 2016 by HydroRestoration for the proposed project. The delineation concluded that there are currently 3.34 acres of aquatic resources within the project area, consisting of 0.06 acre of natural lacustrine habitat, 0.66 acre of man-made lacustrine, 2.3 acres of palustrine, and 0.32 acre

of riverine habitat. It is expected that at least a portion of these habitats would be considered jurisdictional by U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) and the Regional Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB) under Section 404 of the Clean Water Act (CWA) and the Porter-Cologne Water Quality Control Act, and subject to regulation by CDFW under Fish and Game Code Section 1602.

Wildlife

The project area could support a wide diversity of wildlife due to the availability of important habitat features, including nesting sites, escape and thermal cover, and food sources. Forest communities, such as those located mostly along the fringe of the project area, can be important for cover, and provide roosting and nesting opportunities for songbirds and shelter for various mammal species. Snags located within and adjacent to forested areas can provide nesting cavities for birds. Taller trees located on hillsides overlooking foraging areas may provide good nesting habitat for raptors.

Special-Status Species

Special-status species are plant and wildlife species that are provided a level of legal protection, or are of special interest to either the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS), CDFW, or the USFS. Based on the types, extent, and quality of habitats in the project area determined during field surveys; the proximity of the project area to known occurrences of each species; and the regional distribution and abundance of the species, 25 special-status animal species were determined to have some level of potential to occur on the project site or immediate vicinity (i.e., the "project area"). Eleven special-status animal species known to occur in the project area based either on past recorded sightings or direct observations during field surveys: western bumble bee (*Bombus occidentalis*), Sierra Nevada yellow-legged frog (*Rana sierrae*), golden eagle (*Aquila chrysaetos*), Cassin's finch (*Carpodacus cassinii*), olive-sided flycatcher (*Contopus cooperi*), American peregrine falcon (*Falco peregrinus anatum*), fox sparrow (*Passarella iliaca*), white-headed woodpecker (*Picoides albolarvatus*), green-tailed towhee (*Pipilo chlorurus*), Williamson's sapsucker (*Sphyrapicus thyroideus*), and Calliope hummingbird (*Stellula calliope*). Four species have a moderate potential for occurrence: bald eagle (*Haliaeetus leucocephalus*), Lewis's woodpecker (*Melanerpes lewis*), flammulated owl (*Otus flammeolus*) and pallid bat (*Antrozous pallidus*). Ten species that have a low or very low potential to be present in the project area: Great Basin rams-horn (*Helisoma newberry*), northern goshawk (*Accipiter gentilis*), willow flycatcher (*Empidonax trailii*), brewer's sparrow (*Spizella breweri*), California spotted owl (*Strix occidentalis occidentalis*), California wolverine (*Gulo gulo*), Sierra Nevada snowshoe hare (*Lepus americanus tahoensis*), western white-tailed jackrabbit (*Lepus townsendii townsendii*), Pacific marten (*Martes caurina*), fringed myotis (*Myotis thysanodes*).

The project area was surveyed for special-status plant species in early fall 2015 by EcoSynthesis. No special-status species was observed on the site during surveys; however, habitat that is potentially suitable for several special-status species is present. Special-status plant species that have the potential to occur include Bolander's bruchia (*Bruchia bolanderi*), Davy's sedge (*Carex davyi*), Woolly-fruited sedge (*Carex lasiocarpa*), Santa Lucia dwarf rush (*Juncus luciensis*), Hiroshi's flapwort (*Nardia hiroshii*), Alder buckthorn (*Rhamnus alnifolia*), Munro's desert mallow (*Sphaeralcea munroana*) (EcoSynthesis 2016).

2.4.2 Discussion

a) Have a substantial adverse effect, either directly or through habitat modifications, on any species identified as a candidate, sensitive, or special-status species in local or regional plans, policies, or regulations, or by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife or the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service?

Potentially Significant Impact. Special-status plant or wildlife species could potentially occur in the project area. Ephemeral streams and ponds in project area and could provide natural habitat for various special-status plant and wildlife species. Mountain yellow-legged frog is known to occur in a natural pond near the Alpine Meadows mid-station. Additionally, the forested mountain areas—while disturbed due to development and ski use—could also provide habitat to special-status plant and wildlife species, and could be indirectly

affected by project implementation (e.g., disturbance of nesting birds during construction). Because implementation of the proposed project could result in disturbance or take of special-status species or disturbance or removal of suitable habitat for these species, this impact is considered potentially significant and this issue will be analyzed further in the EIR.

b) Have a substantial adverse effect on any riparian habitat or other sensitive natural community identified in local or regional plans, policies, or regulations or by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife or the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service?

Potentially Significant Impact. Natural ponds, other aquatic/wetland habitats, and aspen groves are all considered sensitive natural communities. If the project would disturb or remove these habitats, a significant impact could result. This issue will be further analyzed in the EIR.

c) Have a substantial adverse effect on federally protected wetlands as defined by Section 404 of the Clean Water Act (including, but not limited to, marsh, vernal pool, coastal, etc.) through direct removal, filling, hydrological interruption, or other means?

Potentially Significant Impact. Although the wetland delineation prepared for the project in 2016 has not yet been verified by USACE, the delineation identified 3.34 acres of aquatic resources within the project area, consisting of 0.06 acre of natural lacustrine habitat, 0.66 acre of man-made lacustrine, 2.3 acres of palustrine, and 0.32 acre of riverine habitat that have the potential to be considered federally protected wetlands under Section 404 of the CWA. If the project would remove, fill, or hydrologically interrupt any wetlands identified in the project area, a significant impact would result. This impact is considered potentially significant, and this issue will be further analyzed in the EIR.

d) Interfere substantially with the movement of any native resident or migratory fish or wildlife species or with established native resident or migratory wildlife corridors, or impede the use of native wildlife nursery sites?

Potentially Significant Impact. . Wildlife corridors are features that provide connections between two or more areas of habitat that would otherwise be isolated and unusable. Often drainages, creeks, or riparian areas are used by wildlife as movement corridors as these features can provide cover and access across a landscape. Although the project area is dominated by steep slopes, marten and red fox habitat is present in the project area and the proposed project could affect movement patterns of these species. This impact is considered potentially significant, and this issue will be further analyzed in the EIR.

e) Conflict with any local policies or ordinances protecting biological resources, such as a tree preservation policy or ordinance?

Potentially Significant Impact. Placer County's tree ordinance (Placer County Code, Article 12.16) exists "to preserve and protect the remaining native oak and other species of trees within Placer County." The ordinance is applicable to all native, landmark trees, riparian zone trees, and certain commercial firewood operations, except as exempted in cases of public safety, designated commercial lots (e.g., Christmas tree farms), and active agricultural uses. In accordance with the Tree Preservation Ordinance, a discretionary project shall evaluate the potential impacts to all protected tress sized 6-inches diameter at breast height or larger as part of the development review process. If the project would include removal of trees protected under the tree ordinance, this impact is considered potentially significant and this issue will be further analyzed in the EIR.

f) Conflict with the provisions of an adopted Habitat Conservation Plan, Natural Community Conservation Plan, or other approved local, regional, or state habitat conservation plan?

No Impact. Placer County has applied to receive approval from the federal wildlife agencies for a comprehensive natural community conservation plan known as the *Placer County Conservation Plan* (PCCP). When approved and implemented, the PCCP would establish an interconnected open-space preserve system in western Placer County that is designed specifically to offset impacts to special-status species and

protected habitats that are anticipated to occur as a result of the planned growth of Placer County and the City of Lincoln. The project area is not located within the boundary of the PCCP (Placer County 2015b); therefore, the project would not conflict with this plan. No other habitat conservation plans, NCCPs, or similar plans are being considered in the project area. No impact would occur.

2.5 CULTURAL RESOURCES

ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
V. Cultural Resources. Would the project:				
a) Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource as defined in Section 15064.5?	☐	☐	☒	☐
b) Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of an archaeological resource pursuant to Section 15064.5?	☐	☐	☒	☐
c) Directly or indirectly destroy a unique paleontological resource or site or unique geologic feature?	☐	☐	☒	☐
d) Disturb any human remains, including those interred outside of formal cemeteries?	☐	☐	☒	☐

2.5.1 Environmental Setting

Portions of the Squaw Valley/Alpine Meadows region are considered archaeologically sensitive, and at least one recorded prehistoric site exists within Olympic Valley (Olympic Valley is the larger overall valley beginning at SR 89 in the east that extends to, and contains the Squaw Valley ski area in the west). However, a cultural resources survey of the project area has been conducted and no evidence of archeological or other cultural resources were found (Lindstrom 2016). In addition, the Tribal Historic Preservation Office of the Washoe Tribe of Nevada and California has been contacted regarding the project and they have indicated that they are not aware of cultural resources that may be affected by the project (Cruz 2016). There are no historic buildings or structures within the project area, and there have been no recent discoveries of paleontological resources in the project region or evidence identifying any sensitivity for paleontological resources in the project area. Geologic and soil conditions in the region were created by geologic uplift resulting in deep granitic bedrock with typically shallow surface soils. The project area is not underlain with sedimentary rock formations of a type that could contain fossils. Much of the project site consists of exposed granite with little to no soil on the surface and no sedimentary rock formations. In addition, past glacial movement in the area has resulted in significant movement and disturbance of rock and soil, further minimizing the potential for fossils to be present. Significant paleontological resources are not expected to occur in the project area.

Although there is no evidence that cultural or paleontological resources occur on the project site, the following Placer County standard condition will be included as part of the project that addresses the potential for the unearthing of previously unrecorded resources during project construction:

> *"If any archeological artifacts, exotic rock (non-native) or unusual amounts of shell or bone are uncovered during any on-site construction activities, all work must stop immediately in the area and a certified archeologist retained to evaluate the deposit in consultation with the Washoe Tribe. The Placer County Planning Department and Department of Museums must also be contacted for review of the archeological find(s). If the discovery consists of human remains, the Placer County Coroner, Native American Heritage Commission, and the Washoe Tribe must also be contacted. Work in the area may only proceed after authorization is granted by the Placer County Planning Department. A note to this effect shall be provided on the Improvement Plans for the project.*

Following a review of the new find and consultation with appropriate experts, if necessary, the authority to proceed may be accompanied by the addition of development requirements, which provide protection of the site, and/or additional mitigation measures necessary to address the unique or sensitive nature of the site."

2.5.2 Discussion

a) Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource as defined in Section 15064.5?

Less-than-Significant Impact. Although portions of the project region are considered archaeologically sensitive, searches of available records, pedestrian archeological surveys, and contacts with the local tribal representative have indicated that there are no archeological resources on the project site. Similarly, there is no evidence of historic resources (e.g., historic buildings, foundations) on the project site. It is highly unlikely that currently unknown subsurface cultural resources could be located in the project area given the steepness of much of the project site, preponderance of exposed granite, and previous ground disturbance in the locations of the base terminals. If evidence of any resources were to be found, the standard Condition of Approval would apply and significant resources would be protected. Given the extremely low probability of encountering or discovering historic resources during project implementation, and the protection provided by the standard Condition of Approval, this impact is considered less than significant and will not be evaluated further in the EIR.

b) Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of an archaeological resource pursuant to Section 15064.5?

Less-than-Significant Impact. See item a). There is no evidence that significant archeological resources occur on the project site. If evidence of any resources were to be found, the standard Condition of Approval would apply and significant resources would be protected. Given the extremely low probability of encountering or discovering archeological resources during project implementation, and the protection provided by the standard Condition of Approval, this impact is considered less than significant and will not be evaluated further in the EIR.

c) Directly or indirectly destroy a unique paleontological resource or site or unique geologic feature?

Less-than-Significant Impact. As stated above, no significant paleontological resources are expected to occur in the project area. Given the extremely low probability of encountering or discovering paleontological resources during project implementation, and the protections provided by the standard Condition of Approval, which would stop work in locations where unusual amounts of shell or bone are uncovered (discovery of fossilized shell or bone would be expected to trigger the measure), this impact is considered less than significant and will not be evaluated further in the EIR.

d) Disturb any human remains, including those interred outside of formal cemeteries?

Less-than-Significant Impact. No human remains have been found previously within the project area and given the conditions on the project site, none are anticipated to be present. If evidence of any human remains were to be found, the standard Condition of Approval would apply and any potential human remains would be protected until evaluated further. Given the extremely low probability of encountering or discovering human remains during project implementation, and the protection provided by the standard Condition of Approval, this impact is considered less than significant and will not be evaluated further in the EIR.

2.6 GEOLOGY AND SOILS

ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
VI. Geology and Soils. Would the project:				
a) Expose people or structures to potential substantial adverse effects, including the risk of loss, injury, or death involving:				
i) Rupture of a known earthquake fault, as delineated on the most recent Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zoning Map issued by the State Geologist for the area or based on other substantial evidence of a known fault? (Refer to California Geological Survey Special Publication 42.)	☐	☐	☒	☐
ii) Strong seismic ground shaking?	☐	☐	☒	☐
iii) Seismic-related ground failure, including liquefaction?	☐	☐	☒	☐
iv) Landslides?	☒	☐	☐	☐
b) Result in substantial soil erosion or the loss of topsoil?	☒	☐	☐	☐
c) Be located on a geologic unit or soil that is unstable, or that would become unstable as a result of the project, and potentially result in on- or off-site landslide, lateral spreading, subsidence, liquefaction, or collapse?	☐	☐	☒	☐
d) Be located on expansive soil, as defined in Table 18-1-B of the Uniform Building Code (1994, as updated), creating substantial risks to life or property?	☐	☐	☒	☐
e) Have soils incapable of adequately supporting the use of septic tanks or alternative waste water disposal systems where sewers are not available for the disposal of waste water?	☐	☐	☐	☒

2.6.1 Environmental Setting

Geology

The geology of the eastern Sierra Nevada, including the project area, is composed primarily of Cretaceous age intrusive granitic rocks and Late Tertiary age (Pliocene) basaltic andesite and pyroclastic volcanic rocks. The project vicinity was largely shaped by alpine glaciers that resulted in classic U-shaped valleys with steep side walls and a flat valley floor. Quaternary age geologic units include abundant glacial deposits (outwash and moraine deposits), and colluvial and alluvial fan deposits at the junction of the valley side slopes and valley floors.

Several different stratigraphic units underlie the project area, including alluvial fan deposits, glacial till, volcanic rock, and granitic rock. Glacial till deposits are mapped along the sloping terrain within the project area. The glacial till deposits generally consist of silt, sand, gravel, cobbles, and boulders. Miocene aged volcanic rock primarily composed of andesite is mapped above the glacial till on the slopes in the project area.

Soil Conditions

Several different soil types are mapped across the project area, including units from the Tallac and Ledford Series. Tallac-Cryumbrepts, Rock outcrop-volcanic, and Rock outcrop-granitic are the dominant soil types mapped by the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) for the Squaw Valley portion of the project area. The Tallac-Cryumbrepts soils derive from glaciofluvial deposits in origin and are generally moderately well-drained. The Rock outcrop-volcanic and Rock outcrop-granitic soil types are not rated (NRCS 2015). Rock outcrop-granitic, and Ledford variant-Rock outcrop complex are the dominant soil types mapped by the NRCS for the mid-portion of the project area. The Ledford variant-Rock outcrop complex soil types are derived from residuum weathered from granite and is excessively drained (NRCS 2015). Ledford variant-Rock outcrop complex, Tallac very gravelly sandy loam, and Tinker-Rock outcrop-granitic-Cryumbrepts-wet complex are the dominant soil types mapped by the NRCS for the Alpine Meadows portion of the project area. The Tallac very gravelly sandy loam and the Tinker-Rock outcrop-granitic Cryumbrepts-wet complex formations are derived from glaciofluvial deposits and are moderately well-drained and well-drained, respectively (NRCS 2015).

Slope Stability and Debris Flow Hazards

Slope instability includes landslides, debris flows, and rock fall. The project area is located on the steep slopes of Squaw Valley and Alpine Meadows ski areas, which have potential for landslides, debris flows, and rock fall. Debris flows occurred within the south fork of Squaw Creek during the 1997 New Year storm event. The debris flow carried a significant amount of sand and cobbles that caused damage to structures. Although storms as large as the 1997 event are uncommon, there is the potential for similar debris flow events could occur in the project area during large storms or seismic events.

Avalanche Hazard

As noted above, Squaw Valley and Alpine Meadows are in a steep mountainous area that is subject to high energy mass movements including snow avalanches. Portions of the project area are within potential avalanche run out zones. Snow instability and avalanches in the Sierra Nevada predominately occur during or immediately after heavy precipitation. The concept of active avalanche mitigation involves frequently triggering small slides to help reduce the potential buildup of enough snow to result in large avalanches. Passive avalanche mitigation or protection involves avoidance of avalanche areas or construction of snow stabilizing, resisting, or deflecting structures. Because of the potential for avalanches, the Squaw Valley and Alpine Meadows Ski Patrols routinely perform avalanche control operations including clearing the area of avalanche hazard. The primary methods of active avalanche control are detonation of “hand charges” places by ski patrol staff and triggering of avalanches by firing artillery at Alpine Meadows. There is also one Gazex exploder (the same device included as part of the proposed project) used at Squaw Valley.

Seismicity

Similar to nearly all of California, the project area is located in a potentially active seismic area. The project area has experienced moderate ground shaking due to historic earthquakes. The California Geological Survey (CGS) categorizes faults as Type A, B, or C. Type A faults are capable of producing large magnitude events, and have a high rate of slip. Type C faults are not capable of producing large magnitude earthquakes, and have a relatively low slip rate. Type B faults are all other type faults. Type B and C faults are within 100 kilometers of the project area.

The project area is located within the Western Nevada Seismic Zone, which is composed of a poorly defined system of strike slip and dip slip faults within the eastern portion of the Sierra Nevada and the western portion of Nevada. CGS categorizes the Western Nevada Zone as an approximately 150-mile long shear zone with the hazard derived from multiple sources, rather than from a single fault. The fault system is designated as Type C, with a low rate of slip and low rate of recurrence.

Other potential regional seismic sources that could result in ground shaking felt in the project area include the Mohawk Valley fault zone, Genoa fault, Antelope Valley fault zone, Honey Lake fault zone, Dog Valley fault, West Tahoe-Dollar Point fault, and Polaris fault.

Faulting

Geologic maps show several active and potentially active faults located near the project area, including the Dog Valley fault (active, approximately 4.6 miles northeast), a group of unnamed faults southeast of Truckee (active to potentially active, approximately 6.5 to 8 miles northeast, respectively), the Polaris fault (active, approximately 10 miles northeast), the West Tahoe-Dollar Point fault (active, approximately 10 miles southeast), and the North Tahoe Fault (active, approximately 10.5 miles southeast). The Genoa fault trends in a north-south direction approximately 30 miles southeast of the project area and is capable of very large earthquakes. Earthquakes associated with these faults may cause strong ground shaking in the project area.

The potential hazard associated with active earthquake faults involves strong ground motion and surface rupture. The project area is not located within an Alquist-Priolo active fault zone. However, several unnamed faults are mapped as trending through Squaw Valley. The alignments of these faults have not been fully determined, although current evidence indicates that none traverse the project site. If an active fault does exist within the immediate vicinity of the project site, it could potentially rupture, causing damage to structures in the immediate area. There are also faults located throughout the Lake Tahoe region. If an earthquake of sufficient force occurred on one of these faults, it could expose people or structures to potential substantial adverse effects, including ground shaking, ground failure, and liquefaction.

2.6.2 Discussion

a) Expose people or structures to potential substantial adverse effects, including the risk of loss, injury, or death involving:

i) Rupture of a known earthquake fault, as delineated on the most recent Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zoning Map issued by the State Geologist for the area or based on other substantial evidence of a known fault? (Refer to California Geological Survey Special Publication 42.)

Less-than-Significant Impact. Several unnamed fault traces are mapped in the project vicinity, and the exact location and nature of these faults has not been determined. However, the project area is not located within an Alquist-Priolo active fault zone. The gondola would be designed to withstand high winds and ice loads, and the flexibility inherent in the gondola line would readily tolerate horizontal and vertical displacements in excess of the magnitudes anticipated from a fault rupture (Holdrege & Kull 2015a). In addition, the proposed project would not involve construction of habitable structures. Therefore, this impact is considered less than significant and will not be evaluated further in the EIR.

ii) Strong seismic ground shaking?

Less-than-Significant Impact. As described above, several active and potentially active faults are located near the project area. Earthquakes associated with these faults may cause strong ground shaking in the project area. The extent of damage would depend on soil characteristics, groundwater depth, and duration and intensity of the earthquake. However, the Preliminary Geotechnical Engineering and Geologic Review (Holdrege & Kull 2015a) conducted for the project determined that the majority of the project area is underlain by granite rock which has a low potential for strong ground shaking. In addition, as discussed above, the gondola would be designed flexibility that would readily tolerate ground shaking. The project design and construction would also conform to the standards contained within California Building Code (CBC) Title 24, which identifies specific design requirements to reduce damage from strong seismic ground shaking, ground failure, landslides, soil erosion, and expansive soils. Therefore, this impact is considered less than significant and will not be evaluated further in the EIR.

iii) Seismic-related ground failure, including liquefaction?

Less-than-Significant Impact. Liquefaction is the sudden temporary loss of strength in saturated, loose to medium dense, granular sediments subjected to ground shaking. Liquefaction can cause structure failure due to the reduction of foundation bearing strength. During a seismic event, the extent of damage from ground failure including liquefaction would depend on the soil characteristics, groundwater depth, and duration and intensity of the earthquake.

The project site is primarily underlain by granite, with many locations having no overlying soil, and other areas having overlying soil of varying depth. The Preliminary Geotechnical Engineering and Geologic Review (Holdrege & Kull 2015a) conducted for the project determined that the soils found within the project area have a low potential for liquefaction or lateral spreading because the project area is generally underlain by little to no soil overlying near surface rock. Although the Squaw Valley base terminal would be built in the current site of Cushing Pond, this is a constructed water body and the presence of the pond is not indicative of saturated soils.

As mentioned in item ii) above, project design and construction would conform to CBC Title 24, which identifies specific design requirements to further reduce damage from seismic-related ground failure, including liquefaction. Therefore, this impact is considered less than significant and will not be evaluated further in the EIR.

iv) Landslides?

Potentially Significant Impact. Mass wasting of terraces formed during glacial events has resulted in talus slopes south of the project area; however, they are not considered landslide features. No active or potentially active landslide areas have been mapped within or adjacent to the project area.

As noted above, portions of the project area are located within avalanche paths. In general, the sloping portions of these areas are mapped as high avalanche hazard zones. Additionally, potential avalanche hazard zones are mapped near the project area. The proposed project would include installation and operation of up to eight Gazex exploders near *The Buttress* and the Alpine Meadows mid-station. The exploders utilize cached propane and oxygen gas to ignite a controlled volume explosion within a tube, creating a concussive blast above the snow surface in key avalanche trigger locations. The ignition is controlled remotely. Although this substantially increases options for avalanche control procedures in proximity to where the Gazex exploders are installed, the gondola alignment as a whole is still in an area of high potential for avalanches. This impact is considered potentially significant, and this issue will be evaluated further in the EIR.

b) Result in substantial soil erosion or the loss of topsoil?

Potentially Significant Impact. Depending on wind and rain conditions, grading activities and improvements could result in the potential for erosion and sedimentation of site soils. During construction activities, graded, excavated, and stockpiled soil could be exposed to erosion via wind and surface water runoff, which ultimately could flow into and degrade nearby water bodies, and eventually flow into Bear Creek or Squaw Creek. The applicant would be required to submit project grading/improvement plans to the County for review. Additionally, the applicant would be required to develop and implement a stormwater pollution prevention plan (SWPPP) as part of its National Pollution Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permit for construction activities administered by the State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB). The SWPPP would include a description of construction activities and would identify the best management practices (BMPs) that that would be employed to prevent soil erosion and discharge of other construction-related pollutants (e.g., petroleum products, solvents, paints, cement) that could contaminate nearby water resources. A monitoring program is required to ensure that BMPs are implemented according to the SWPPP and are effective at controlling discharges of stormwater-related pollutants. Although these standard measures would be implemented, the overall construction disturbance area is relatively small, and portions of the construction effort would be undertaken on exposed rock where there is not erosion potential, due to the steep topography in much of the project area and the sensitivity of Squaw Creek and other nearby water

bodies, at this time potential hazards associated with soil erosion or the loss of top soil are identified as potentially significant, and this issue will be evaluated further in the EIR.

c) Be located on a geologic unit or soil that is unstable, or that would become unstable as a result of the project, and potentially result in on- or off-site landslide, lateral spreading, subsidence, liquefaction, or collapse?

Less-than-Significant Impact. As described in items iii) and iv) above, significant adverse effects associated with landslide and liquefaction are considered unlikely. In addition, all new facilities would be designed to meet all applicable CBC engineering requirements to ensure that the facilities would not be affected by potential landslide, lateral spreading, subsidence, liquefaction, or collapse. Therefore, this impact is considered less than significant and will not be evaluated further in the EIR.

d) Be located on expansive soil, as defined in Table 18-1-B of the Uniform Building Code (1994, as updated), creating substantial risks to life or property?

Less-than-Significant Impact. Expansive soils are soils that are high in expansive clays or silts and that swell and shrink with wetting and drying, respectively. This shrinking and swelling can result in differential ground movement, which can cause damage to foundations. However, proper fill selection, moisture control, and compaction during construction can prevent these types of soils from causing significant damage.

The Preliminary Geotechnical Engineering and Geologic Review (Holdrege & Kull 2015a) conducted for the project determined that the project area is generally underlain by little to no soil overlying near surface rock. Granitic rock is not considered an expansive soil. In addition, all construction and design would comply with the CBC, which has specific site development and construction standards by soil type to prevent expansive soil hazards. Therefore, this impact is considered less than significant and will not be evaluated further in the EIR.

e) Have soils incapable of adequately supporting the use of septic tanks or alternative waste water disposal systems where sewers are not available for the disposal of waste water?

No Impact. The proposed project would not involve the use of septic tanks or alternative wastewater disposal systems that could be affected by poor soils. Therefore, no impact would occur related to the adequate support of such facilities.

2.7 GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS

ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
VII. Greenhouse Gas Emissions. Would the project:				
a) Generate greenhouse gas emissions, either directly or indirectly, that may have a significant impact on the environment?	☒	☐	☐	☐
b) Conflict with an applicable plan, policy or regulation adopted for the purpose of reducing the emissions of greenhouse gases?	☒	☐	☐	☐

2.7.1 Environmental Setting

Certain gases in the earth's atmosphere, classified as greenhouse gases (GHGs), play a critical role in determining the earth's surface temperature. GHGs are responsible for "trapping" solar radiation in the earth's atmosphere, a phenomenon known as the greenhouse effect. Prominent GHGs contributing to the greenhouse effect are carbon dioxide (CO_2), methane, nitrous oxide, hydrofluorocarbons, perfluorocarbons, and sulfur hexafluoride.

Human-caused emissions of these GHGs in excess of natural ambient concentrations are responsible for intensifying the greenhouse effect and have led to a trend of unnatural warming of the earth's climate, known as global climate change or global warming. It is extremely unlikely that global climate change of the past 50 years can be explained without the contribution from human activities (Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change 2007). By adoption of Assembly Bill (AB) 32, the California Global Warming Solutions Act of 2006, and Senate Bill (SB) 97, the state of California has acknowledged that the effects of GHG emissions cause adverse environmental impacts. AB 32 mandates that emissions of GHGs must be capped at 1990 levels by the year 2020 (Health and Safety Code Section 38530).

Emissions of GHGs have the potential to adversely affect the environment because such emissions contribute, on a cumulative basis, to global climate change. Although the emissions of one single project will not cause global climate change, GHG emissions from multiple projects throughout the world could result in a cumulative impact with respect to global climate change.

Legislation and California Governor executive orders on the subject of climate change in California have established a statewide context and a process for developing an enforceable statewide cap on GHG emissions. Given the nature of environmental consequences from GHGs and global climate change, CEQA requires that lead agencies evaluate the cumulative impacts of GHGs. Small contributions to this cumulative impact (from which significant effects are occurring and are expected to worsen over time) may be potentially considerable and therefore significant.

The project would be located in Placer County. According to the Legislature, in AB 32, global warming will "have detrimental effects on some of California's largest industries, including agriculture, wine, tourism, skiing, recreational and commercial fishing, and forestry" (Health and Safety Code Section 38501[b]). Placer County's economy relies heavily on agriculture, tourism, and recreational skiing.

2.7.2 Discussion

a) Generate greenhouse gas emissions, either directly or indirectly, that may have a significant impact on the environment?

Short-Term Construction Related Greenhouse Gas Emissions

Potentially Significant Impact. GHG emissions generated by the proposed project during construction would predominantly be in the form of CO_2. Emissions would be associated with mobile-source exhaust from construction worker commute trips, truck haul trips, and equipment used in the project area (e.g., excavators, graders, helicopters). Construction GHG emissions will be determined and evaluated in comparison to GHG thresholds to determine if a significant impact might occur. This issue will be evaluated further in the EIR.

Long-Term Operational Related Greenhouse Gas Emissions

Potentially Significant Impact. The proposed project would result in GHG emissions from the generation of electricity to operate the project, from stationary equipment such as operating internal combustion engine powered emergency generators, and from vehicle trips attributable to project operation. Operational GHG emissions will be determined and evaluated in comparison to GHG thresholds to determine if a significant impact might occur. This issue will be evaluated further in the EIR.

b) Conflict with an applicable plan, policy or regulation adopted for the purpose of reducing the emissions of greenhouse gases?

Potentially Significant Impact. See item a). The construction and operation of the project will be evaluated to determine if it would conflict with applicable plans, policies, or regulations adopted for the purpose of reducing GHG emissions. This issue will be analyzed further in the EIR to confirm whether or not a significant impact might occur.

2.8 HAZARDS AND HAZARDOUS MATERIALS

ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
VIII. Hazards and Hazardous Materials. Would the project:				
a) Create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through the routine transport, use, or disposal of hazardous materials?	☐	☐	☒	☐
b) Create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through reasonably foreseeable upset and/or accident conditions involving the release of hazardous materials into the environment?	☐	☐	☒	☐
c) Emit hazardous emissions or handle hazardous or acutely hazardous materials, substances, or waste within one-quarter mile of an existing or proposed school?	☐	☐	☐	☒
d) Be located on a site which is included on a list of hazardous materials sites compiled pursuant to Government Code Section 65962.5 and, as a result, would it create a significant hazard to the public or the environment?	☐	☐	☒	☐
e) For a project located within an airport land use plan or, where such a plan has not been adopted, within two miles of a public airport or public use airport, would the project result in a safety hazard for people residing or working in the project area?	☐	☐	☐	☒
f) For a project within the vicinity of a private airstrip, would the project result in a safety hazard for people residing or working in the project area?	☐	☐	☐	☒
g) Impair implementation of or physically interfere with an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan?	☐	☐	☒	☐
h) Expose people or structures to a significant risk of loss, injury, or death involving wildland fires, including where wildlands are adjacent to urbanized areas or where residences are intermixed with wildlands?	☐	☐	☒	☐

2.8.1 Environmental Setting

HAZARDOUS MATERIALS

The project area has been used almost exclusively for recreational purposes. The entire project area is within or between the developed ski areas of Squaw Valley and Alpine Meadows Ski Areas. A Phase I Environmental Site Assessment (ESA) was prepared for the project in 2015 (Holdrege & Kull 2015b). The ESA found that Alpine Meadows was included in several databases listing hazardous waste and substance sites for having underground and aboveground storage tanks and one reported incident of a leaking underground storage

tank in 1995. This site underwent remediation and verification monitoring and was closed by the Lahontan RWQCB in 2010 (Holdrege & Kull 2015b).

WILDLAND FIRE HAZARDS

In Placer County, the wildfire hazard extends from early spring to late fall. Fire conditions arise from a combination of hot weather, an accumulation of vegetation, and low moisture content in air and fuel. Wildfire risk is predominately associated with the wildland-urban interface (where development is interspersed or adjacent to landscapes that support wildfire) (Placer County 2010:4.97).

The State Board of Forestry identifies those lands where the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CAL FIRE) has the primary duty for wildland fire prevention and suppression; these lands are commonly known as State Responsibility Areas (SRAs). Lands are mapped by county in two categories: (1) wildland areas that may contain substantial forest fire risks and hazards (wildland areas or SRAs); and (2) very high fire hazard severity zones. NFS lands are not included in SRAs and the USFS has responsibility for wildfire management on NFS lands. Most of the SRA lands in project area and vicinity are designated as very high fire hazard severity zone, with smaller portions of the project area are designated as moderate fire hazard severity zone.

EMERGENCY ACCESS

Access to Squaw Valley is limited by the configuration of the Valley and the Truckee River canyon; there is only one means of ingress and egress, and a single road (SR 89) connects Squaw Valley to adjoining communities. Evacuating residents or getting emergency equipment into the Valley must be accomplished within these parameters (Placer County 2010, Annex M.9). An emergency helipad is delineated within one of the existing surface parking lots.

The Squaw Valley Fire District has an established *Wildland Fire Evacuation Plan* (Squaw Valley Public Services District [SVPSD] 2014) that includes an evacuation protocol, guidance for preparing homes for evacuation, and evacuation routes. The plan calls for evacuating via Squaw Valley Road to SR 89; or, if it is not possible to leave the Valley, driving to the Squaw Valley Ski Area parking lot as a community gathering area.

There is also only one primary access point which is means of ingress and egress to Alpine Meadows, Alpine Meadows Road. Alpine Meadows has a *Community Wildfire Protection Plan* that includes an evacuation protocol. The plan designates the parking area of Alpine meadows as a community gathering area (Geoarch Sciences, Inc. & C.G. Celio & Sons Co. 2005).

2.8.2 Discussion

a) Create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through the routine transport, use, or disposal of hazardous materials?

Less-than-Significant Impact. Hazardous materials would be stored, used, and transported in varying amounts during construction and long-term operation of the proposed project. Construction activities would primarily involve the storage, use, and transport of various household products such as paints, solvents, glues, and cements. Petroleum hydrocarbon products such as gasoline, diesel, and lubricants would be used in heavy equipment and construction vehicles. Long-term use of the proposed project would include operation of the proposed gondola between Squaw Valley and Alpine Meadows and operation of the Gazex exploders for routine avalanche control. Hazardous materials that would be stored, used, and transported to the project area to support those long-term uses would include oxygen and propane for avalanche control and petroleum products for operation of the gondola including emergency generators.

Transportation of hazardous materials on area roadways is regulated by the California Highway Patrol (CHP) and the Caltrans. The project applicant, contractors, and others would be required to use, store, and transport hazardous materials in accordance with local, state, and federal regulations, including the California Occupational Health and Safety Administration and the California Department of Toxic Substances Control requirements and manufacturer's instructions, during project construction and operation. Facilities that would use hazardous materials on-site would be required to obtain permits and comply with appropriate regulatory agency standards designed to avoid hazardous waste releases. Because the proposed project would be required to implement and comply with existing hazardous material regulations, impacts related to the creation of significant hazards to the public or environment through the routine transport, use, and disposal of hazardous materials would be unlikely. This impact is considered less than significant and will not be evaluated further in the EIR.

b) Create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through reasonably foreseeable upset and/or accident conditions involving the release of hazardous materials into the environment?

Less-than-Significant Impact. Hazardous materials can present a risk to people or the environment through improper handling or use of hazardous materials or hazardous wastes, particularly by untrained personnel; environmentally unsound disposal methods; or fire, explosion, or other emergencies. Implementation of applicable local, state, and federal regulations and standards would help ensure that potential public health and environmental hazards would be minimized. In addition, the proposed project would not involve the transport or handling of large volumes of hazardous materials or acutely toxic materials. In almost all cases, hazardous materials used for project implementation would the same as those currently used for other nearby construction projects (fuels, lubricants) and ski lift/gondola/resort operations (e.g., lubricants, fuel for backup generators, liquefied propane). The only new potential hazard would be the use of tanks of compressed oxygen for the Gazes system; however, transport, storage, and use of these tanks would be subject to the same suite of applicable laws, regulations, and standards as other hazardous materials. Therefore, the risk of hazard to the public from reasonably foreseeable or accidental releases of hazardous materials is considered minimal. This impact is less than significant and will not be analyzed further in the EIR.

c) Emit hazardous emissions or handle hazardous or acutely hazardous materials, substances, or waste within one-quarter mile of an existing or proposed school?

No Impact. See item a). Construction and operation of the proposed project would include the use of hazardous materials, such as petroleum products and propane. These materials would be handled consistent with local, state, and federal regulations and standards. There are no existing or proposed schools located within 0.25-mile of the project. The nearest schools to the project area are Creekside Charter School (1916 Chamonix Place) and Squaw Valley Preparatory (1901 Chamonix Place). Both are slightly over 0.25 miles from the nearest project feature, the Squaw Valley base terminal. Squaw Valley Academy (235 Squaw Valley Road), is located approximately 1.8 miles to the east proposed Squaw Valley base terminal. No handling of hazardous materials would occur within 0.25-mile of an existing or proposed school. Therefore, no impact would occur.

d) Be located on a site which is included on a list of hazardous materials sites compiled pursuant to Government Code §65962.5 and, as a result, would it create a significant hazard to the public or the environment?

Less-than-Significant Impact. Squaw Valley and Alpine Meadows are identified by EPA as small generators of hazardous waste. Past operations in the project area could have resulted in elevated concentrations of hazardous constituents, such as petroleum hydrocarbons, in the project vicinity. The ESA prepared for the project found that Alpine Meadows was included in several databases listing hazardous waste and substance sites for having underground and aboveground storage tanks and one reported incident of a leaking underground storage tank in 1995. This site underwent remediation and verification monitoring and

was closed by the Regional Water Quality Control Board Lahontan Region (Lahontan) in 2010 (Holdrege & Kull 2015b).

Project construction would involve site grading, excavation, and construction of a gondola and up to eight Gazex exploders. During construction activities, construction workers could come in contact with and be exposed to hazards materials present in on-site soils and groundwater. However, all past sources of contamination have been remediated and no longer pose a threat to people or the environment. This impact is less than significant and will not be analyzed further in the EIR.

e) For a project located within an airport land use plan or, where such a plan has not been adopted, within two miles of a public airport or public use airport, would the project result in a safety hazard for people residing or working in the project area?

No Impact. The nearest public airports include Homewood Seaplane Base (located 8 miles southeast of the project area), the Truckee-Tahoe Airport (located 9.5 miles northeast of the project area), and the Lake Tahoe Airport (located 24.5 miles southeast of the project area). The project area is not located within an airport land use plan. Therefore, the proposed project would not create safety hazards for people living or working in the project area as a result of being in close proximity to an airport. No impact would occur.

f) For a project within the vicinity of a private airstrip, would the project result in a safety hazard for people residing or working in the project area?

No Impact. The project area is not located within the vicinity of a private airstrip. As such, no impacts related to safety hazards at private airstrips would occur.

g) Impair implementation of or physically interfere with an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan?

Less-than-Significant Impact. There are adopted emergency evacuation plans for the project vicinity. The project would generate some traffic during construction, but it would be temporary, is expected to be minimal, and would not involve road or lane closures. Therefore, construction activity would not impede emergency response in the project area or implementation of evacuation plans. The proposed project might generate an increase in skier visitation at Squaw Valley and Alpine Meadows; however, on a day-to-day basis, any increases would not be sufficient to substantially interfere with implementation of an emergency response or evacuation plan. Emergency response and evacuation plans are designed to address peak occupancy conditions, and peak occupancy is limited by parking availability, mountain capacity, and other factors. The proposed project would not alter maximum occupancy/use in the project area. When the proposed gondola is operational during the winter months, it can provide an additional mechanism to move people out of Squaw Valley or Alpine Meadows if only one ski area needed to be evacuated. During the summer months, the proposed gondola would not be in operation and would not affect potential emergency response or evacuation. The Gazex system would be located on the mountain slopes away from structures and high concentrations of human activity and would not affect emergency response or evacuation, and could limit the need for emergency response and evacuation by limiting avalanche risk. Therefore, the proposed project would not interfere with an adopted emergency response plan or evacuation plan. As a result, this impact is considered less than significant and will not be evaluated further in the EIR.

h) Expose people or structures to a significant risk of loss, injury, or death involving wildland fires, including where wildlands are adjacent to urbanized areas or where residences are intermixed with wildlands?

Less-than-Significant Impact. Although much of the project area is designated as a very high fire hazard severity zone, the proposed project would not result in the placement of housing and other structures that would contain substantial numbers of people in a wildland area. The project would be operational, and carrying people and holding gas for the Gazex system, only when snow is present and therefore when there is little to no wildlife fire risk. During the summer months, the gondola would not be operational, the cabins would be removed, and the Gazex system tanks would be vacated of propane and oxygen. The gondola

towers, cables, and Gazex tubes are made primarily of metal and are resistant to fire and do not provide an additional source of fuel to a wildlife fire. The Gazex tank storage structures are relatively small, are not occupied by humans, and provide a minimal fire risk. Also, as stated above, the tanks in the storage structures would be vacated of gas prior to the beginning of the fire season and only be refilled after fire season has ended. Therefore, impacts associated with wildlife fire risk are less than significant and this issue will not be analyzed further in the EIR.

2.9 HYDROLOGY AND WATER QUALITY

ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
IX. Hydrology and Water Quality. Would the project:				
a) Violate any water quality standards or waste discharge requirements?	☒	☐	☐	☐
b) Substantially deplete groundwater supplies or interfere substantially with groundwater recharge such that there would be a net deficit in aquifer volume or a lowering of the local groundwater table level (e.g., the production rate of pre-existing nearby wells would drop to a level that would not support existing land uses or planned uses for which permits have been granted)?	☒	☐	☐	☐
c) Substantially alter the existing drainage pattern of the site or area, including through the alteration of the course of a stream or river, in a manner which would result in substantial on- or offsite erosion or siltation?	☒	☐	☐	☐
d) Substantially alter the existing drainage pattern of the site or area, including through the alteration of the course of a stream or river, or substantially increase the rate or amount of surface runoff in a manner which would result in on- or offsite flooding?	☒	☐	☐	☐
e) Create or contribute runoff water which would exceed the capacity of existing or planned stormwater drainage systems or provide substantial additional sources of polluted runoff?	☒	☐	☐	☐
f) Otherwise substantially degrade water quality?	☒	☐	☐	☐
g) Place housing within a 100-year flood hazard area as mapped on a federal Flood Hazard Boundary or Flood Insurance Rate Map or other flood hazard delineation map?	☐	☐	☐	☒
h) Place within a 100-year flood hazard area structures that would impede or redirect flood flows?	☐	☐	☐	☒
i) Expose people or structures to a significant risk of loss, injury, or death involving flooding, including flooding as a result of the failure of a levee or dam?	☐	☐	☐	☒
j) Result in inundation by seiche, tsunami, or mudflow?	☐	☐	☐	☒

2.9.1 Environmental Setting

SURFACE WATER RESOURCES

The project area is located in the 6,100-square-mile North Lahontan Basin. The basin extends from the California-Oregon border on the north, south to Mono County, and is bordered to the west by the Sierra Nevada, Cascade Range, and Warner Mountains, and to the east by the California-Nevada border. The North Lahontan Basin includes the Madeline Plains, Surprise Valley, and the California portions of the Susan, Truckee, Carson, and Walker rivers. These streams have no outlets to the sea and terminate in lakes or playas that are remnants of ancient Lake Lahontan.

The project area is wholly contained within the middle Truckee River watershed. The Squaw Creek and Bear Creek watersheds both drain to the Truckee River. Truckee River flows from Lake Tahoe, past the project area, and ultimately drains to Pyramid Lake in Nevada.

Water resources within the project area include an unnamed tributary to Squaw Creek, two human constructed ponds that receive snowmelt, an unnamed ephemeral drainage that drains the northern portion of the project area downslope towards the Caldwell pond and eventually into Bear Creek, an ephemeral pond within the middle granite formation, and an unnamed snowmelt-fed pond that drains into one of the Five Lakes.

Due to excessive sediment load, Squaw Creek is listed by the Lahontan RWQCB as an impaired water body in accordance with Clean Water Act Section 303(d). Bear Creek and the Truckee River are also listed as impaired waterways on the 303(d) list. However, Lahontan RWQCB is in the process of considering delisting Bear Creek.

Flooding

The project area is not located within a 100-year floodplain as defined on the Federal Emergency Management Agency Flood Insurance Rate Map (FIRM).

Drainage

The majority of the 5,350-acre Squaw Creek drainage area, including the Squaw Valley portion of the project area, drains directly into Squaw Creek, which in turn drains into the Truckee River 2 miles to the east of the project area. The Alpine Meadows portion of the project area drains into Bear Creek, which also drains into the Truckee River.

GROUNDWATER RESOURCES

The Squaw Valley aquifer provides domestic and irrigation water supply for three primary users: SVPSD, the Squaw Valley Mutual Water Company (a private water company), and the Resort at Squaw Creek (which draws water for snow making and golf course irrigation). In the Squaw Valley area, groundwater recharge primarily occurs as a result of precipitation, snow melt, and stream flow loss.

Water service for Alpine Meadows is provided by Alpine Springs County Water District, and water for this portion of the project area is supplied via groundwater (Placer County 1994b).

2.9.2 Discussion

a) Violate any water quality standards or waste discharge requirements?

Potentially Significant Impact. Project-related construction activities would involve grading, earth moving, excavation, infrastructure development, and building construction. During project construction, disturbed portions of the project area could be subject to wind erosion, rainfall, and stormwater runoff events. Runoff

could contain oils, grease, fuel, sediments, brake dust, and other potential water pollutants. Runoff water quality is regulated by the NPDES Program (established through the federal CWA). The NPDES program objective is to control and reduce pollutant discharges to surface water bodies. Compliance with NPDES permits is mandated by state and federal statutes and regulations. Locally, the NPDES Program is administered by the Lahontan RWQCB. According to the water quality control plans of the Lahontan RWQCB, any construction activities, including grading, that would result in the disturbance of 1 acre or more would require compliance with the General Permit for Stormwater Discharges Associated with Construction and Land Disturbance Activity (Construction General Permit). The project would require a total disturbance area of approximately 3.5 acres and would be subject to compliance with the Construction General Permit.

Although the footprint of the project would be small, the project would also include new impervious surfaces that could increase the volume of runoff coming from the project area. Runoff could contain oils, grease, fuel, sediments, brake dust, and other potential water pollutants. During storm events, these pollutants could be carried to downstream receiving waters of Squaw Creek, Bear Creek, and the Truckee River (all of which are impaired water bodies). Therefore, this would be considered a potentially significant impact and will be analyzed further in the EIR.

b) Substantially deplete groundwater supplies or interfere substantially with groundwater recharge such that there would be a net deficit in aquifer volume or a lowering of the local groundwater table level (e.g., the production rate of preexisting nearby wells would drop to a level that would not support existing land uses or planned uses for which permits have been granted)?

Potentially Significant Impact. The proposed project itself, the gondola and Gazex system, would require minimal use of water for construction and operation and little to no groundwater would be required to supply water to the project. In addition, the amount new impervious surfaces would be small and would not interfere with infiltration such that groundwater recharge would be affected by the project. However, it is expected that the proposed gondola will result in some increase in annual skier visitation in Squaw Valley and Alpine Meadows. An increase in the annual number of “skier days” could result in an increased demand for water (e.g., for drinking and sanitation) from groundwater sources. This impact is considered potentially significant and this issue will be evaluated further in the EIR.

c) Substantially alter the existing drainage pattern of the site or area, including through the alteration of the course of a stream or river, in a manner which would result in substantial on- or offsite erosion or siltation?

Potentially Significant Impact. The proposed project would not alter the course of a stream or river. Construction of the proposed project could alter surface flows by regrading contours within the project area and/or increasing the amount of impervious surfaces in the project area. Although the footprint of the project would be small, it could alter the drainage pattern of the project area sufficiently to result in increased erosion or siltation. Therefore, this would be a potentially significant impact and will be analyzed further in the EIR.

d) Substantially alter the existing drainage pattern of the site or area, including through the alteration of the course of a stream or river, or substantially increase the rate or amount of surface runoff in a manner which would result in on- or offsite flooding?

Potentially Significant Impact. The proposed project would not alter the course of a stream or river. Construction of the proposed project could alter surface flows by regrading contours within the project area and/or increasing the amount of impervious surfaces in the project area. As stated above in Item c), the footprint of the project would be small; however, the exact location and footprint of the cabin storage facilities is not yet known, there is the potential for the project to alter the drainage pattern of the project area sufficiently to result in increased erosion or siltation. In addition, changes in impervious surface and

drainage patterns (i.e., from individual towers and buildings) could result in localized flooding. Therefore, this would be a potentially significant impact and will be analyzed further in the EIR.

e) Create or contribute runoff water which would exceed the capacity of existing or planned stormwater drainage systems or provide substantial additional sources of polluted runoff?

Potentially Significant Impact. See item a), above. Because the project would increase the impervious surfaces in the project area and has the potential for on-site soil erosion, the proposed project could potentially provide additional sources of polluted runoff, including those resulting from runoff from impervious surfaces that could affect the existing stormwater drainage systems. Thus, this impact would be considered potentially significant and this issue will be analyzed further in the EIR.

f) Otherwise substantially degrade water quality?

Potentially Significant Impact. See item a), above. This would be considered a potentially significant impact and will be analyzed further in the EIR.

g) Place housing within a 100-year flood hazard area as mapped on a federal Flood Hazard Boundary or Flood Insurance Rate Map or other flood hazard delineation map?

No Impact. No housing would be constructed as part of the proposed project. In addition, the project area is not within a 100-year floodplain. Therefore, the project would have no impact on placing housing within a floodplain. This issue will not be evaluated further in the EIR.

h) Place within a 100-year flood hazard area structures that would impede or redirect flood flows?

No Impact. See item g), above. No part of the project area is within a 100-year floodplain. Therefore, the project would not impede or redirect flood flows. There would be no impact and this issue will not be evaluated further in the EIR.

i) Expose people or structures to a significant risk of loss, injury, or death involving flooding, including flooding as a result of the failure of a levee or dam?

No Impact. See items g) and h), above. The project would include construction of a gondola, which would be a new structure in the project area. However, the project area is not within a 100-year floodplain. Therefore, the project would not expose people or structures to flooding. There would be no impact and this issue will not be evaluated further in the EIR.

j) Result in inundation by seiche, tsunami, or mudflow?

No Impact. Because of the distance from the nearest large body of water—Lake Tahoe (approximately 7 miles to the east) and the elevation of the project—the proposed project would not be affected by inundation as a result of seiche or tsunami. Soils capable of generating damaging mudflows are not present in the project area. There would be no impact and this issue will not be evaluated further in the EIR.

2.10 LAND USE AND PLANNING

ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
X. Land Use and Planning. Would the project:				
a) Physically divide an established community?	☐	☐	☐	☒
b) Conflict with any applicable land use plan, policy, or regulation of an agency with jurisdiction over the project (including, but not limited to, a general plan, specific plan, local coastal program, or zoning ordinance) adopted for the purpose of avoiding or mitigating an environmental effect?	☒	☐	☐	☐
c) Conflict with any applicable habitat conservation plan or natural community conservation plan?	☐	☐	☐	☒

2.10.1 Environmental Setting

The existing land use designations for the Squaw Valley portion of the project area, as designated by the *Squaw Valley General Plan and Land Use Ordinance* (SVGPLUO), is Forest Recreation (FR) (Placer County 1983). The FR designation is intended to retain the general character of the forest environment while also permitting active recreation development. Land under this designation is primarily considered too steep or contains serious development constraints that prohibit residential or commercial development. The intent of this designation is to establish areas where public or private recreation facilities can be developed to meet the year-round recreation needs of both the residents and tourists. Uses could include picnic areas, hiking trails, ski trails, parks, and outdoor amphitheaters, as well as parking for ski facilities. Land within the Alpine Meadows portion of the project area is primarily designated by the Placer County General Plan as Open Space (O) with some areas designated as Neighborhood Commercial (C1-D). Areas designated as O are to protect important open space lands within the county by limiting allowable land uses to low intensity agricultural and public recreational uses, with structural development being restricted to accessory structures necessary to support the primary allowed uses, and critical public facilities (Placer County 1994a). Allowable uses within the C1-D areas are intended to provide areas for small-scale, day-to-day convenience shopping and services for residents of the immediate neighborhood, which encourages pedestrian and bicycle access, and which is planned and designed to be compatible with surrounding residential areas.

2.10.2 Discussion

a) Physically divide an established community?

No Impact. The site is within and between the Squaw Valley Ski Area and Alpine Meadows Ski Area. The proposed project has no facilities that are located between homes, other development, or an established community. Development of the project would not physically divide any existing communities. The proposed gondola would be available to the public, including the neighboring residents, and would provide improved connectivity between the two existing ski areas and surrounding communities. The proposed project would not result in any road closures and would not otherwise create barriers preventing access to other currently accessible parts of the project area. There would be no impact and this issue will not be evaluated further in the EIR.

b) Conflict with any applicable land use plan, policy, or regulation of an agency with jurisdiction over the project (including, but not limited to, a general plan, specific plan, local coastal program, or zoning ordinance) adopted for the purpose of avoiding or mitigating an environmental effect?

Potentially Significant Impact. The land use and zoning designations for the project area are FR, O, and C1-D. The FR designation establishes areas where public or private recreation facilities can be developed to meet the year-round recreation. The O designation allows for public recreational uses, with structural development being restricted to accessory structures necessary to support the primary allowed uses, and the C1-D areas are intended to provide small-scale commercial uses to serve the adjacent neighborhoods. The project would be consistent with these land use designations. In addition, the project would be designed to be consistent with the policies in the *Placer County General Plan* and SVGPLUO. However, the SVGPLUO contains text indicating that new ski lifts would be limited to those shown on maps included in the SVGPLUO (i.e., Squaw Valley General Plan Map and the Future Potential Ski Lifts Map). These maps do not include the proposed gondola; therefore, the gondola may be considered in conflict with the SVGPLUO and an amendment to the SVGPLUO may be required.

Further, portions of the project area are located on the Tahoe National Forest (TNF) and the project will need to be evaluated for consistency with the Forest's Land and Resource Management Plan (Forest Plan) as well as any other applicable TNF planning documents. A portion of the proposed project on private property would cross through the congressionally designated boundary of the GCW. However, the Wilderness Act does not apply to private property and this private property is not managed, maintained, or considered part of the GCW. Nonetheless, compatibility with the GCW will need to be evaluated.

These issues may result in potentially significant impacts and will be evaluated further in the EIR.

c) Conflict with any applicable habitat conservation plan or natural community conservation plan?

No Impact. As described in Section 2.4, "Biological Resources," the project area is not located within an adopted habitat conservation plan or natural community conservation plan; therefore, the project would not conflict with such plans. No impact would occur and this issue will not be evaluated further in the EIR.

2.11 MINERAL RESOURCES

ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
XI. Mineral Resources. Would the project:				
a) Result in the loss of availability of a known mineral resource that would be of value to the region and the residents of the state?	☐	☐	☐	☒
b) Result in the loss of availability of a locally important mineral resource recovery site delineated on a local general plan, specific plan, or other land use plan?	☐	☐	☐	☒

2.11.1 Environmental Setting

Potential mineral resources in project vicinity include sand and gravel deposits that form the stream-deposited alluvium; these deposits can be considered a source of construction aggregates. The *Placer County General Plan Background Report* (Placer County 1994b) indicates that the project area does not contain any natural economic mineral resources.

2.11.2 Discussion

a) Result in the loss of availability of a known mineral resource that would be of value to the region and the residents of the state?

No Impact. The project area is not located within a mapped mineral resource zone. No loss of availability of a known mineral resource that would be of value to the region and the residents of the state would occur. Therefore, no impacts would occur and this issue will not be evaluated further in the EIR.

b) Result in the loss of availability of a locally important mineral resource recovery site delineated on a local general plan, specific plan, or other land use plan?

No Impact. There are no locally important mineral resource recovery sites delineated on a local general plan, specific plan, or other land use plan that include the project area. Therefore, no impacts would occur and this issue will not be evaluated further in the EIR.

2.12 NOISE

ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
XII. Noise. Would the project result in:				
a) Exposure of persons to or generation of noise levels in excess of standards established in the local general plan or noise ordinance, or in other applicable local, state, or federal standards?	☒	☐	☐	☐
b) Exposure of persons to or generation of excessive groundborne vibration or groundborne noise levels?	☒	☐	☐	☐
c) A substantial permanent increase in ambient noise levels in the project vicinity above levels existing without the project?	☒	☐	☐	☐
d) A substantial temporary or periodic increase in ambient noise levels in the project vicinity above levels existing without the project?	☒	☐	☐	☐
e) For a project located within an airport land use plan or, where such a plan has not been adopted, within two miles of a public airport or public use airport, would the project expose people residing or working in the project area to excessive noise levels?	☐	☐	☐	☒
f) For a project within the vicinity of a private airstrip, would the project expose people residing or working in the project area to excessive noise levels?	☐	☐	☐	☒

2.12.1 Environmental Setting

Noise levels in California are typically measured in dBA, which is the A-weighted sound level of decibels (dB). This scale gives greater weight to the frequencies of sound to which the human ear is most sensitive. Decibels are a unit of measurement indicating the relative amplitude or intensity of a sound. Sound levels are typically regulated by a maximum sound level (L_{max}) and/or a percentile-exceeded sound level (L_{xx}). L_{xx} represents the sound level exceeded “x” percent of a specific time period (e.g., L50 is the sound level exceeded 50% of the time).

The intensity of a sound and the subjective noisiness or loudness is related as is the intensity of a sound and a sensitive receptor’s distance to that sound. Noise from construction activities and stationary sources is considered a “point source” of noise. Sound from this type of source radiates uniformly outward in a spherical pattern. The rate at which noise typically dissipates from a point source is 6 to 7.5 dBA for each doubling of the distance, depending on the ground absorption, atmospheric conditions, and other shielding factors. Traffic noise appears to be from a line rather than a point as the vehicles are moving and the noise spreads cylindrically rather than spherically. The rate at which traffic noise generally dissipates is 3 to 4.5 dBA for each doubling of the distance, depending on other shielding factors.

NOISE-SENSITIVE LAND USES

Noise-sensitive land uses generally include those uses where noise exposure could result in health-related risks to individuals, as well as places where a quiet setting is an essential element of the intended purpose (e.g., schools and libraries). Residential dwellings are of primary concern because of the potential for increased and prolonged exposure of individuals to both interior and exterior noise levels.

Noise-sensitive land uses in the vicinity of the project area include lodging and residential units in the vicinity of the Squaw Valley base terminal and some open space/recreation areas including the GCW.

EXISTING NOISE SOURCES

Existing noise sources in the project vicinity include those associated with the maintenance of Squaw Valley and Alpine Meadows resorts and ski areas and with general activity at the resort, as well as motor vehicle traffic along Squaw Valley Road and Alpine Meadows Road.

Noise-generating ski area maintenance activities include snowmaking, avalanche control, and snow grooming on the ski slopes; and snow removal in parking areas and near ski structures. These activities are generally performed during nighttime and early morning hours, when the ski slopes are not in use and activity within the parking lots and along access roads is minimal, and when conditions are most favorable for snowmaking. Sources of sounds associated with activities that regularly occur during skiing hours include equipment associated ski lifts, gondolas, and miscellaneous resort activities.

Various private and public agencies have established noise guidelines and standards to protect citizens from potential hearing damage and other adverse physiological and social effects associated with noise. Applicable regulations are contained in Chapter 9 of the Placer County Code (Article 9.36 Noise) and are shown below.

ARTICLE 9.36 NOISE OF THE PLACER COUNTY MUNICIPAL CODE

A. It is unlawful for any person at any location to create any sound, or to allow the creation of any sound, on property owned, leased, occupied or otherwise controlled by such person that:

   1. Causes the exterior sound level when measured at the property line of any affected sensitive receptor to exceed the ambient sound level by five dBA; or

   2. Exceeds the sound level standards as set forth in Table 2.12-1, whichever is the greater

Table 2.12-1 Sound Level Standards for Sensitive Receptors

Noise Level Descriptor	Daytime (7 a.m. to 10 p.m.)	Nighttime (10 p.m. to 7 a.m.)
Hourly $L_{eq, dB}$	55	45
Maximum level, dB	70	65

Notes: Each of the sound level standards specified in Table 2 shall be reduced by five dB for simple tone noises, consisting of speech and music. However, in no case shall the sound level standard be lower than the ambient sound level plus five dB. If the intruding sound source is continuous and cannot reasonably be discontinued or stopped for a time period whereby the ambient sound level can be measured, the sound level measured while the source is in operation shall be compared directly to the sound level standards of Table 2.

Source: Chapter 17, Zoning, of the Placer County Municipal Code

9.36.030 Exemptions

A. Sound or noise emanating from the following sources and activities are exempt from the provisions of this title:

7. Construction (e.g., construction, alteration or repair activities) between the hours of six a.m. and eight p.m. Monday through Friday, and between the hours of eight a.m. and eight p.m. Saturday and Sunday Provided, however, that all construction equipment shall be fitted with factory installed muffling devices and that all construction equipment shall be maintained in good working order.

2.12.2 Discussion

a) Exposure of persons to or generation of noise levels in excess of standards established in the local general plan or noise ordinance, or in other applicable local, state, or federal standards?

c) A substantial permanent increase in ambient noise levels in the project vicinity above levels existing without the project?

d) A substantial temporary or periodic increase in ambient noise levels in the project vicinity above levels existing without the project?

The following discussion addresses items a), c), and d):

Short-Term Construction Source Noise

Potentially Significant Impact. Construction-related noise sources would include both mobile and stationary on-site equipment (e.g., ATVs, helicopters, spider excavator, generators), as well as impact tools. Blasting may also be used during construction. Construction would also generate truck trips associated with the delivery of building supplies and hauling away of excess fill and construction debris. Article 9.36 of the County Code establishes a maximum daytime hourly average sound level standard of 55 dBA (L_{eq}) and a maximum single event noise level of 70 dBA (L_{max}) as measured at the receiving property line. Because of increased noise sensitivity at night, maximum sound levels are decreased to 45 dBA and 65dBA, respectively, during the hours of 10:00 p.m. to 7:00 a.m. However, the proposed project does not include any construction during these periods.

Article 9.36 of the County Code exempts construction-related noise, provided that construction activities do not take place before 6:00 a.m. or after 8:00 p.m. on Monday through Friday, and before 8:00 a.m. and after 8:00 p.m. on Saturday and Sunday. Although construction activities are anticipated to be limited to these days and times, short-term on-site construction noise could result in the exposure of persons to, or generation of, excessive noise and could result in a substantial temporary increase in ambient noise levels in the project vicinity above levels existing without the project. This impact would be potentially significant and this issue will be analyzed further in the EIR.

Long-Term Operational Source Noise

Potentially Significant Impact. The proposed project would include installation of additional noise-generating sources similar and adjacent to existing sources. Operation of the proposed project would include operation of a new gondola and operation of Gazex exploders for avalanche control. While noise levels associated with operation of the Gazex exploders would be similar to noise levels for existing avalanche control, the blasts would be controlled remotely and the timing may be different that with existing avalanche control practices. Therefore, the project's long-term operations could result in the exposure of people to additional long-term operational noise sources, and additional noise could potentially exceed the applicable County noise standards. Therefore, this impact is considered potentially significant, and this issue will be analyzed further in the EIR.

b) Exposure of persons to or generation of excessive groundborne vibration or groundborne noise levels?

Potentially Significant Impact. Construction of the proposed project may result in varying degrees of temporary groundborne vibration and groundborne noise, depending on the specific construction equipment used, activities involved, and location relative to sensitive receptors. Implementation of the proposed project could potentially result in the exposure of existing offsite sensitive receptors to excessive groundborne vibration levels related to construction activities, including blasting. Therefore, this impact would be potentially significant, and this issue will be analyzed further in the EIR.

e) For a project located within an airport land use plan or, where such a plan has not been adopted, within two miles of a public airport or public use airport, would the project expose people residing or working in the project area to excessive noise levels?

f) For a project within the vicinity of a private airstrip, would the project expose people residing or working in the project area to excessive noise levels?

The following discussion addresses items e) and f):

No Impact. As noted in Section 2.8, “Hazards and Hazardous Materials,” the project area is not located within an airport land use plan, nor is it located within two miles of a public airport or airstrip. Therefore, the project would not result in noise impacts for people residing or working in close proximity to an airport or airstrip. No impact would occur and this issue will not be evaluated further in the EIR.

2.13 POPULATION AND HOUSING

ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
XIII. Population and Housing. Would the project:				
a) Induce substantial population growth in an area, either directly (for example, by proposing new homes and businesses) or indirectly (for example, through extension of roads or other infrastructure)?	☐	☐	☒	☐
b) Displace substantial numbers of existing homes, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere?	☐	☐	☐	☒
c) Displace substantial numbers of people, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere?	☐	☐	☐	☒

2.13.1 Environmental Setting

POPULATION

The U.S. Census Bureau collects and estimates demographic data for the entire United States. Table 2.13-1 shows the population data for Placer County from 1980 to 2014. The county's 2030 population is projected to be 442,505 (California Department of Finance 2013), a growth of nearly 25 percent from 2014.

Table 2.13-1 Placer County Population 1980 to 2014

1980	1990	2000	2014
117,247	172,796	248,399	357,463

Sources: U.S. Census Bureau 1995, California Department of Finance 2013

According to the U.S. Census Bureau, the project vicinity including the Squaw Valley and Alpine Meadows areas, had a population 1,366 in 2010. This data indicates an increase of approximately 440 people from 2000 to 2010 (U.S. Census Bureau 2000). Within this area, there is a mixture of single-family and multi-family homes, vacation homes, condominiums, timeshares, and resort-oriented temporary lodging including hotels and condo hotels. As a result, the full-time resident population of the area is only a portion of the overall daytime and overnight population. Visitors are not accounted for in the Census.

EMPLOYMENT

According to the American Community Survey 2008-2012 5-year estimates, the project vicinity contained 107 establishments that provided 4,132 employee positions in 2012. Approximately 97 percent of workers lived within California and 76 percent lived within Placer County as of 2012 (U.S. Census Bureau 2012). However, anecdotal evidence would indicate that a higher percentage of seasonal employees are from locations outside California and the U.S.

HOUSING

Housing units increased at a rate of 3.88 percent between 2000 and 2010 in the project vicinity. This is a higher rate of growth than that experienced in the unincorporated county area overall (1.30 percent) during that same period, but less than the growth rate of the incorporated county areas (5.10 percent). The growth rate of households, or occupied housing units, followed a similar trend with an average annual growth rate of 3.80 percent. Although this rate was more than experienced in the unincorporated areas of the county (1.9 percent), it was less than reported for cities in Placer County (5.4 percent).

In 2000, 64 percent of housing units in the project vicinity were specifically intended for seasonal, recreational, or occasional use. In 2010, this figure was reduced to 61 percent of the housing units.

2.13.2 Discussion

a) Induce substantial population growth in an area, either directly (for example, by proposing new homes and businesses) or indirectly (for example, through extension of roads or other infrastructure)?

Less-than-Significant Impact. The proposed project would not include construction of new housing or commercial business. Therefore, no direct population growth would result from implementation of the proposed project. The proposed project does not extend roads or other infrastructure to new areas that would induce growth in new locations. The project's construction effort would be relatively modest and short-term, and is not expected to result in employees relocating to the project area. Approximately 10 net new employees (8 seasonal and 2 year-round) would be needed for operation of the proposed project. This increase in employees would be minimal compared to the seasonal and year-round employee pool available. The proposed project would have a less-than-significant impact on population growth and this issue will not be evaluated further in the EIR.

b) Displace substantial numbers of existing homes, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere?

c) Displace substantial numbers of people, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere?

The following discussion addresses items b) and c):

No Impact. The project area is within developed ski areas and the proposed project would not include removal of any homes or structures. Therefore, no people or existing residences would be displaced, and there would be no impact. This issue will not be evaluated further in the EIR.

2.14 PUBLIC SERVICES

ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
XIV. Public Services. Would the project:				
a) Result in substantial adverse physical impacts associated with the provision of new or physically altered governmental facilities, or the need for new or physically altered governmental facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental impacts, in order to maintain acceptable service ratios, response times, or other performance objectives for any of the public services:				
Fire protection?	☐	☐	☒	☐
Police protection?	☐	☐	☒	☐
Schools?	☐	☐	☒	☐
Parks?	☐	☐	☒	☐
Other public facilities?	☐	☐	☒	☐

2.14.1 Environmental Setting

Fire Protection

Fire protection for Squaw Valley is currently provided by the Squaw Valley Fire District (SVFD). Alpine Meadows is served by the North Tahoe Fire Protection District (NTFPD), and SVFD through agreement with the NTFPD.

The SVFD currently provides fire protection services to a 14-square-mile area that includes Squaw Valley and the Truckee River Corridor between Alpine Meadows Road and Cabin Creek Road (approximately 2.5 miles south of Truckee). The closest SVFD station is Station 21, located at 305 Squaw Valley Road, about 0.25-mile west of the Squaw Valley Road and SR 89 intersection, and 1.5 miles east of the project area. Currently, a total of 13 firefighters are staffed at this station, with a minimum staffing of three firefighters at any given time. In addition to the full-time staff, part-time paid firefighters augment staffing during busy periods (SVFD 2014).

The NTFPD protects an area of 31 square miles on the North and West Shores of Lake Tahoe. There are six fire stations within the District, which are located in Alpine Meadows, Tahoe City, Homewood, Dollar Hill, Carnelian Bay, and Kings Beach that are staffed by 50 uniformed and support personnel (NTFPD 2016). The closest NTFPD fire station to the project area is located at 270 Alpine Meadows Road, Alpine Meadows.

The Eastern Placer County Joint Powers Authority (JPA), which includes SVPD, NTFPD, Alpine Springs Community Service District, Tahoe City Public Utility District, Placer County Service Area 16, Placer County Service Area 21, Meeks Bay Fire Protection District, and Donner Summit Public Utility District, provides mutual aid, as well as a shared radio repeater and equipment purchases, between other member districts. In addition, the project area and various surrounding forested areas are classified as a SRA and receive fire protection assistance from CAL FIRE. The USFS also provides fire protection on NFS lands and participates in mutual aid agreements with local fire protection agencies.

Police Protection

Law enforcement for the project area is currently provided by the Placer County Sheriff's Department (general law enforcement services) and the CHP (traffic-related enforcement services). The Tahoe Substation in Tahoe City is the closest Placer County Sheriff's substation, and is located at 2501 N. Lake Boulevard in Tahoe City, approximately 7 miles from the project area. Current staffing at this station includes 1 field operations lieutenant, 18 patrol deputy positions, 6 patrol sergeants, 4 detectives, 1 detective sergeant, 1 problem-oriented deputy (neighborhood disputes and Placer County code violations), 1 administrative sergeant, 2 jail deputies, 1 evidence technician, 2 community services officers, and 5 professional staff (Placer County Sheriff's Department 2014).

Schools

The project area is within the Tahoe-Truckee Unified School District (TTUSD). The TTUSD has a total of 11 schools, four of which serve the project vicinity (see Table 2.14-1).

Table 2.14-1 Schools that Serve Squaw Valley

School	Address	Grades Served
Cold Stream Alternative School (independent study program)	740 Timberland Lane Tahoe City, CA 96145	9–12
Tahoe Lake Elementary School	375 Grove Street Tahoe City, CA 96145	K–4
North Tahoe School	2945 Polaris Road Tahoe City, CA 96145	5–8
North Tahoe High School	2945 Polaris Road Tahoe City, CA 96145	9–12

Sources: Tahoe-Truckee Unified School District 2016

In addition to these public schools, the Squaw Education Foundation operates two schools within the Squaw Village area, the K-6 Creekside Charter School (1916 Chamonix Place) and Squaw Valley Preparatory (1901 Chamonix Place) for middle school and high school students. These schools have been provided temporary use of land owned by Squaw Valley Real Estate, LLC and school facilities are in temporary structures. Approximately 1.8 miles east of the project area at 235 Squaw Valley Road is Squaw Valley Academy, a private boarding school for grades 9 through 12.

Parks

The Placer County Parks and Ground Division operates and maintains several local and community parks, trails, and some open space areas in unincorporated Placer County. Squaw Valley Park is located at 101 Squaw Valley Road, approximately 1.5 miles from the project area. Park facilities include a soccer field, tot lot, pickle ball, restrooms, picnic areas, bike and hiking trails, and trail staging area (Placer County 2014). The project area is also adjacent to USFS lands and the GCW.

2.14.2 Discussion

a) Result in substantial adverse physical impacts associated with the provision of new or physically altered governmental facilities, or the need for new or physically altered governmental facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental impacts, in order to maintain acceptable service ratios, response times, or other performance objectives for any of the public services:

Fire protection?

Less-than-Significant Impact. Although construction and operation of a new structure within the project area has the potential to require fire protection services, the gondola and Gazex system would be in an area that is currently developed with ski facilities. There may be an increase in the number of skiers in the project area; however, the new gondola and Gazex system would not increase the number of businesses or residents in the project vicinity. Propane and oxygen used for the Gazex system would be transported and stored consistent with existing laws and regulations minimizing risk associated with the use of these materials, and storage tanks would be emptied prior to the beginning of fire season and not refilled until fire season is completed. Therefore, the gondola and Gazex system are expected to have a minimal increase in the demand for fire protection services, and the existing fire stations and other available fire protection resources in the region (e.g., USFS, CDF) are adequately staffed and equipped to provide the level of service needed for the proposed project. Operation of the project would not require the construction of new, or alteration of existing on-site or off-site fire protection facilities or services. The project would have a less-than-significant impact on fire protection services and this issue will not be evaluated further in the EIR.

Police protection?

Less-than-Significant Impact. The proposed project would be in an area that is currently served by the Placer County Sheriff's Department and CHP. Although, there may be an increase in the number of skiers in the project area, the new gondola would not increase the number of residents or businesses in the project vicinity. Therefore, the project is not expected to result in a substantial increase the demand for police protection services, and the existing police services would be adequate to serve the project. Operation of the project would not require the construction of new or alteration of existing on-site or off-site police protection facilities or services. The project would have a less-than-significant impact on police protection services and this issue will not be evaluated further in the EIR.

Schools?

Less-than-Significant Impact. The nearest school is 1.5 miles from the project area and the proposed project would not directly affect any schools. In addition, the proposed project does not include development of new residences and therefore would not result in a substantial effect on the permanent population in the area that would increase the demand for educational services. Operation of the proposed project is currently estimated to generate two new year-round jobs, which is not sufficient to generate substantial demand for school facilities. Further, schools throughout the region has available capacity. Implementation of the proposed project would have a less than significant impact on schools and this issue will not be evaluated further in the EIR.

Parks?

Less-than-Significant Impact. The proposed project does not include development of new residences or creation of substantial numbers of new jobs that would increase population, and therefore demand for new recreational facilities. The proposed project does not result in the removal or alteration of public recreational facilities. Project implementation would therefore not result in the need for additional recreation facilities that could cause a significant effect on the environment. This impact is considered less than significant and will not be evaluated further in the EIR. Recreation resources are considered further below in Section 2.15, "Recreation."

Other public facilities?

Less-than-Significant Impact. The proposed project may increase the ease of winter access to, and the use of adjacent USFS lands; however, this increase in use is not expected to result in the need for additional facilities that could cause a significant effect on the environment. Therefore, this impact is considered less than significant and will not be evaluated further in the EIR. Recreation resources and USFS lands are considered further below in Section 2.15, "Recreation."

2.15 RECREATION

ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
XV. Recreation. Would the project:				
a) Increase the use of existing neighborhood and regional parks or other recreational facilities such that substantial physical deterioration of the facility would occur or be accelerated?	☒	☐	☐	☐
b) Include recreational facilities or require the construction or expansion of recreational facilities that might have an adverse physical effect on the environment?	☐	☐	☒	☐

2.15.1 Environmental Setting

The Squaw Valley and Alpine Meadows areas are known for the snow-related activities such as skiing, snowboarding, and sledding. Both the Squaw and Alpine Meadows facilities are privately-run business operations. In addition, eastern Olympic Valley is developed with facilities for golfing, swimming, tennis, hiking, bicycling, ice skating, and other recreational activities. Alpine Meadows is located within the Scott Management Area of the TNF. This Management Area also includes the trailhead for the Five Lakes access trail (one of the most popular day hikes in TNF), as well as the corrals for Alpine Stables. A campground is also proposed in this area (U.S. Department Agriculture, Forest Service 2015). The project area is also adjacent to TNF lands and the GCW.

The Placer County Parks and Ground Division operates and maintains several local and community parks, trails, and some open space areas in unincorporated Placer County. Squaw Valley Park is located at 101 Squaw Valley Road, approximately 1.5 miles from the Squaw Valley Ski Resort area. Park facilities include a soccer field, tot lot, pickle ball, restrooms, picnic areas, bike and hiking trails, and trail staging area (Placer County 2014). In addition, the Squaw Valley Bike Trail is an asphalt-paved trail that is located parallel to Squaw Valley Road and extends through Squaw Valley, providing access to Lake Tahoe and Truckee.

2.15.2 Discussion

a) Increase the use of existing neighborhood and regional parks or other recreational facilities such that substantial physical deterioration of the facility would occur or be accelerated?

Potentially Significant Impact. The proposed project may result in some increase in use of the Squaw Valley and Alpine Meadows ski areas by providing a connection between the two areas that makes visitation more attractive. However, this increase in use would occur on privately-operated ski areas.

A portion of the project would be located along the edge, although outside of, the GCW. Although a segment of the gondola, located on private property in this area, would cross through the congressionally designated boundary of the GCW, the Wilderness Act does not apply to private property and this private property is not managed, maintained, or considered part of the GCW. Therefore, the proposed project alignment remains outside the GCW. Ultimately, both mid-stations would provide winter access to areas adjacent to the wilderness, and it is conceivable that increased use of the wilderness in the winter could result from skiers who exit at the mid-stations. The project would also provide far easier access to the Estelle Bowl area of Alpine Meadows (which is on USFS land), although access is already provided, albeit through a long ski

traverse, from other existing Alpine lifts. Although these potential increases in use are not expected to result in the need for additional facilities that could cause a significant effect on the environment, it could result in the deterioration of existing facilities. Therefore, this impact would be potentially significant, and this issue will be analyzed further in the EIR.

b) Include recreational facilities or require the construction or expansion of recreational facilities that might have an adverse physical effect on the environment?

Less-than-Significant Impact. The proposed project would include construction of a new gondola within existing ski areas. The physical effects of the proposed project are the subject of this IS and would also be evaluated in an EIR. The project would not result in the construction or expansion of any other recreational facilities that could result in an adverse physical effect on the environment. Therefore, this impact is considered less than significant.

2.16 TRANSPORTATION/TRAFFIC

ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
XVI. Transportation/Traffic. Would the project:				
a) Conflict with an applicable plan, ordinance or policy establishing measures of effectiveness for the performance of the circulation system, taking into account all modes of transportation including mass transit and non-motorized travel and relevant components of the circulation system, including but not limited to intersections, streets, highways and freeways, pedestrian and bicycle paths, and mass transit?	☒	☐	☐	☐
b) Conflict with an applicable congestion management program, including, but not limited to level of service standards and travel demand measures, or other standards established by the county congestion management agency for designated roads or highways?	☒	☐	☐	☐
c) Result in a change in air traffic patterns, including either an increase in traffic levels or a change in location that results in substantial safety risks?	☐	☐	☐	☒
d) Substantially increase hazards due to a design feature (e.g., sharp curves or dangerous intersections) or incompatible uses (e.g., farm equipment)?	☐	☐	☐	☒
e) Result in inadequate emergency access?	☐	☐	☒	☐
f) Conflict with adopted policies, plans, or programs regarding public transit, bicycle, or pedestrian facilities, or otherwise decrease the performance or safety of such facilities?	☐	☐	☒	☐

2.16.1 Environmental Setting

Access to the project area is provided by Squaw Valley Road and Alpine Meadows Road, which both connect to SR 89 approximately 2 miles from the project area. Truckee is located approximately 9 miles to the north and Tahoe City is located approximately 7 miles southeast of the project area.

Other major roadways in the project vicinity include I-80 and SR 28. Employees and guests of the ski resorts rely almost exclusively on these roadways and private vehicles for travel to and from the resorts. Public transit services (e.g., Tahoe Area Regional Transit [TART], Truckee Trolley, Truckee Dial-A-Ride, Amtrak), resort operated shuttles, and bikeway and pedestrian facilities are also available in the project area.

Other nearby roadways, such as Deerfield Drive, Donner Pass Road, and West River Street, would not be directly used by project-related traffic, but could be affected because they intersect with SR 89.

The project area is heavily congested during peak winter (holidays, weekends with adequate snow coverage for skiing) and occasional summer weekends, and state and local agencies have developed traffic

management plans for Squaw Valley, Alpine Meadows, Truckee (Donner Pass Road), and Tahoe City (SR 89 and SR 28).

2.16.2 Discussion

a) Conflict with an applicable plan, ordinance or policy establishing measures of effectiveness for the performance of the circulation system, taking into account all modes of transportation including mass transit and non-motorized travel and relevant components of the circulation system, including but not limited to intersections, streets, highways and freeways, pedestrian and bicycle paths, and mass transit?

Potentially Significant Impact. The *Placer County General Plan* contains goals and policies that establish the minimum level of services on roadway segments and intersections. It also establishes requirements for various modes of transportation and circulation, including pedestrian and bicycle paths.

Project construction would result in construction worker commute trips and haul truck trips (for delivery and transport of materials and equipment) to and from the project area, resulting in increased traffic levels on local roadways. Construction would occur during the non-ski season, so would not conflict with winter ski traffic. However, construction would add traffic during the summer and could result in increased congestion during already congested periods. This will be evaluated in the EIR.

Operation of the project is expected to result in very few additional employee trips. It would reduce intra-resort vehicle travel, as skiers would be able to access either resort from one or the other resort by the project's new gondola. However, because the project has the potential to increase the overall attraction of both ski areas, it may increase resort visitation. The EIR will study this issue, including whether the project increases or decreases overall traffic, and the resulting effects on congestion.

b) Conflict with an applicable congestion management program, including, but not limited to level of service standards and travel demand measures, or other standards established by the county congestion management agency for designated roads or highways?

Potentially Significant Impact. As described in item a) above, the project could increase or reduce traffic, depending on whether it attracts additional trips and if those trips exceed the trip reduction associated with the gondola project. The EIR will study this issue, including whether the project alters level of service at key intersections.

c) Result in a change in air traffic patterns, including either an increase in traffic levels or a change in location that results in substantial safety risks?

No Impact. The nearest public airports include Homewood Seaplane Base (located 8 miles southeast of the project area), the Truckee-Tahoe Airport (located 9.5 miles northeast of the project area), and the Lake Tahoe Airport (located 24.5 miles southeast of the project area). The proposed project would not affect air traffic patterns associated with these facilities. Therefore, no impact would occur and this issue will not be evaluated further in the EIR.

d) Substantially increase hazards due to a design feature (e.g., sharp curves or dangerous intersections) or incompatible uses (e.g., farm equipment)?

No Impact. Access to and within the project area would be provided via current roadways. The project would not alter any roadways, or result in adverse roadway conditions, including an increase in traffic hazards due to a design feature. This issue will not be evaluated further in the EIR.

e) Result in inadequate emergency access?

Less-than-Significant Impact. Traffic management plans exist for Squaw Valley and Alpine Meadows that also address emergency access. The project would generate some traffic during construction, but it would be temporary, is expected to be minimal, and would not involve road or lane closures. Therefore, construction activity would not impede emergency access in the project area. The proposed project is expected to generate some increase in annual skier visitation at Squaw Valley and Alpine Meadows; however, on a day-to day-basis, any increases would not substantially alter traffic patterns relative to existing conditions, and therefore would not substantially interfere with emergency access relative to existing conditions. Traffic management plans, and associated emergency access components, are designed to address peak occupancy conditions, and peak occupancy is limited by parking availability, mountain capacity, and other factors. The proposed project would not alter maximum occupancy/use in the project area and therefore would not contribute vehicles beyond what is already accounted for in traffic management/emergency access plans. When the proposed gondola is operational during the winter months, it can provide an additional mechanism to move emergency responders between Squaw Valley and Alpine Meadows. During the summer months, the proposed gondola would not be in operation and would not affect emergency access. The Gazex system would be located on the mountain slopes away from developed areas and would not affect emergency access. The proposed project would not result in inadequate emergency access. As a result, this impact is considered less than significant and will not be evaluated further in the EIR.

f) Conflict with adopted policies, plans, or programs regarding public transit, bicycle, or pedestrian facilities, or otherwise decrease the performance or safety of such facilities?

Less-than-Significant Impact. The potential construction-related and long-term project operations-related impacts to the roadway system described above would not be expected to substantially alter demand on TART, as it would primarily serve as a connection provided between the Squaw Valley and Alpine Meadows ski areas, which could reduce TART demand. Although there may be an increase in skiers travelling to and from the ski areas on TART, this increase is not expected to substantially affect TART. The project would not be expected to affect bicycle or pedestrian facilities. This impact is considered less than significant and will not be evaluated further in the EIR.

2.17 UTILITIES AND SERVICE SYSTEMS

	ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
XVII.	**Utilities and Service Systems. Would the project:**				
a)	Exceed wastewater treatment requirements of the applicable Regional Water Quality Control Board?	☐	☐	☐	☒
b)	Require or result in the construction of new water or wastewater treatment facilities or expansion of existing facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental effects?	☒	☐	☐	☐
c)	Require or result in the construction of new storm water drainage facilities or expansion of existing facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental effects?	☐	☐	☒	☐
d)	Have sufficient water supplies available to serve the project from existing entitlements and resources, or are new or expanded entitlements needed?	☒	☐	☐	☐
e)	Result in a determination by the wastewater treatment provider that serves or may serve the project that it has adequate capacity to serve the project's projected demand, in addition to the provider's existing commitments?	☐	☐	☐	☒
f)	Be served by a landfill with sufficient permitted capacity to accommodate the project's solid waste disposal needs?	☐	☐	☒	☐
g)	Comply with federal, state, and local statutes and regulations related to solid waste?	☐	☐	☒	☐
h)	Result in inefficient and wasteful consumption of energy during construction or operations or require new or expanded energy facilities that could cause significant environmental effects?	☒	☐	☐	☐

2.17.1 Environmental Setting

SVPSD owns and operates the wastewater collection system and provides potable and irrigation water that serves Squaw Valley. Water is provided from the groundwater basin in the Valley. Water service for Alpine Meadows is provided by Alpine Springs County Water District, and water is also supplied via groundwater (Placer County 1994b).

The Tahoe Truckee Sierra Disposal Company (TTSD) provides solid waste collection and removal for the Squaw Valley area. Solid waste is transported to Placer County's Eastern Regional Transfer Station, and then to the Lockwood Regional Landfill in Nevada. The Eastern Regional Transfer Station is located west of SR 89, approximately 5 miles north of the intersection of SR 89 and Squaw Valley Road. Solid waste is sorted at this facility to recover recyclable materials. After the garbage has been sorted, materials that cannot be recycled would be taken to Lockwood Regional Landfill, which is a municipal solid waste facility located in

Storey County, off I-80, east of Sparks, Nevada. Based on projected volumes, Lockwood Regional Landfill has a remaining capacity of 24.3 years; however, over 2,000 acres at the facility are already zoned and have the necessary permits for future expansion of the landfill (Carr, pers. comm., 2011).

The California Pacific Electric Company, LLC, (CalPeco) an element of Liberty Utilities, provides electrical service to Squaw Valley and Alpine Meadows. The project vicinity is served by the North Lake Tahoe Transmission System, one element of CalPeco's total electric utility holdings. CalPeco procures its electricity for the North Lake Tahoe Transmission System from NV Energy (CalPeco 2013).

Electrical service to the project area is provided via the Squaw Valley Substation, located near the northwest corner of Squaw Valley Road and SR 89. The Squaw Valley Substation is a 50 megavolt amperes (a megavolt ampere is a unit of energy similar to a megawatt) substation that is fed by both a 60 kilovolt (kV) power line and a 120 kV power line from substations in Truckee, and from Tahoe City in the south by a 120 kV line that is currently operating at 60 kV.

Propane is provided to the project vicinity by AmeriGas. AmeriGas is a national propane supplier, operating in all 50 states and with a customer base of over 2 million (AmeriGas 2016). According to the U.S. Department of Energy, propane is a clean burning, high-energy alternative fuel. It is produced from liquid components recovered during natural gas processing, and is a produced domestically. The expansion in natural gas production has led to an expanded availability of propane gas, and the United States is a net exporter of propane (U.S. Department of Energy 2015).

2.17.2 Discussion

a) Exceed wastewater treatment requirements of the applicable Regional Water Quality Control Board?

No Impact. No septic systems or restrooms exist within the project site and none would be constructed for the project. Patrons of the project would utilize existing facilities at Squaw Valley or Alpine Meadows ski areas. Additional wastewater generation may be attributed to the project due to increased annual visitation to the ski areas, but there would be no increase in peak wastewater generations (which is the basis for capacity considerations) because the project would not alter capacity of either ski area. The proposed project would result in no impact related to wastewater treatment requirements and this issue will not be evaluated further in the EIR.

b) Require or result in the construction of new water or wastewater treatment facilities or expansion of existing facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental effects?

Potentially Significant Impact. As described in a) above, the project would not require expanded wastewater treatment infrastructure as treatment capacity is tied to peak flows. The demand for additional water supply, and potential effects, is tied to potential increased use of the ski areas. While increased water demand is expected to be minor, it will be evaluated in the EIR.

c) Require or result in the construction of new storm water drainage facilities or expansion of existing facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental effects?

Less-than-Significant Impact. Construction of the proposed project could result in a slight increase in the amount of stormwater runoff generated in the project area; however, it is expected that existing stormwater drainage facilities would have adequate capacity to accommodate this increase. Therefore, the project would not require construction of new stormwater drainage facilities or expansion of existing facilities. This impact is considered less than significant.

d) Have sufficient water supplies available to serve the project from existing entitlements and resources, or are new or expanded entitlements needed?

Potentially Significant Impact. As described in b) above, the project has the potential to increase demand for water through increased annual resort visitation. The potential for the project to increase demand and the ability to meet this increase will be evaluated in the EIR.

e) Result in a determination by the wastewater treatment provider that serves or may serve the project that it has adequate capacity to serve the project's projected demand, in addition to the provider's existing commitments?

No Impact. As described in a), the proposed project would not result in additional peak wastewater generation and therefore, would not exceed the capacity of any wastewater treatment facilities (which are sized and operated to accommodate peak flows). The project would have no impact on wastewater treatment providers serving the project area and this issue will not be evaluated further in the EIR.

f) Be served by a landfill with sufficient permitted capacity to accommodate the project's solid waste disposal needs?

Less-than-Significant Impact. Project construction activities, although temporary, would generate solid waste including excess construction materials and material removed during site clearing. Operation of the project is not expected to generate substantial solid waste or increase the demand for solid waste disposal. It is not anticipated that the project would exceed the capacity of local landfills. Because of this, this impact is considered less than significant and this issue will not be evaluated further in the EIR.

g) Comply with federal, state, and local statutes and regulations related to solid waste?

Less-than-Significant Impact. See item f). The project would comply with all applicable federal, state, and local statutes and regulations as they relate to solid waste. Therefore, this impact would be less than significant and this issue will not be evaluated further in the EIR.

h) Result in inefficient and wasteful consumption of energy during construction or operations or require new or expanded energy facilities that could cause significant environmental effects?

Potentially Significant Impact. The proposed project would require consumption of energy and fuels during construction and would increase the long-term demand for electricity for operation of the project. The use of electricity would primarily be limited to the winter months when the gondola is in operation, although some power would be needed to support intermittent maintenance and testing during the summer. Because the project would increase the long-term demand for electricity and the amount of needed to serve the project is not known at this time, this impact is considered potentially significant. This issue will be analyzed further in the EIR.

2.18 MANDATORY FINDINGS OF SIGNIFICANCE

	ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
XVIII.	**Mandatory Findings of Significance.**				
a)	Does the project have the potential to substantially degrade the quality of the environment, substantially reduce the habitat of a fish or wildlife species, cause a fish or wildlife population to drop below self-sustaining levels, threaten to eliminate a plant or animal community, reduce the number or restrict the range of an endangered, rare, or threatened species, or eliminate important examples of the major periods of California history or prehistory?	☒	☐	☐	☐
b)	Does the project have impacts that are individually limited, but cumulatively considerable? ("Cumulatively considerable" means that the incremental effects of a project are considerable when viewed in connection with the effects of past projects, the effects of other current projects, and the effects of probable future projects.)	☒	☐	☐	☐
c)	Does the project have environmental effects that will cause substantial adverse effects on human beings, either directly or indirectly?	☒	☐	☐	☐

Authority: Public Resources Code Sections 21083, 21083.5.

Reference: Government Code Sections 65088.4.
Public Resources Code Sections 21080, 21083.5, 21095; *Eureka Citizens for Responsible Govt. v. City of Eureka* (2007) 147 Cal.App.4th 357; *Protect the Historic Amador Waterways v. Amador Water Agency* (2004) 116 Cal.App.4th at 1109; *San Franciscans Upholding the Downtown Plan v. City and County of San Francisco* (2002) 102 Cal.App.4th 656.

2.18.1 Discussion

a) Does the project have the potential to substantially degrade the quality of the environment, substantially reduce the habitat of a fish or wildlife species, cause a fish or wildlife population to drop below self-sustaining levels, threaten to eliminate a plant or animal community, reduce the number or restrict the range of an endangered, rare, or threatened species, or eliminate important examples of the major periods of California history or prehistory?

Potentially Significant Impact. The proposed project has the potential to cause mortality to (i.e., reduce the number) of an endangered, rare, or threatened species. Therefore, this is a potentially significant impact and this issue will be analyzed further in the EIR.

b) Does the project have impacts that are individually limited, but cumulatively considerable? ("Cumulatively considerable" means that the incremental effects of a project are considerable when viewed in connection with the effects of past projects, the effects of other current projects, and the effects of probable future projects.)

Potentially Significant Impact. As described in this Initial Study, implementation of the proposed project could potentially result in significant impacts to the following resources: aesthetics; air quality; biological resources; geology and soils; GHG emissions; hydrology and water quality; land use and planning; noise; recreation; transportation and traffic; and utilities and service systems. When taken together with the effects of past projects, other current projects, and probable future projects, the project's potential impacts could be cumulatively considerable. This issue will be evaluated further in the EIR.

c) Does the project have environmental effects that will cause substantial adverse effects on human beings, either directly or indirectly?

Potentially Significant Impact. The EIR will evaluate environmental effects that could cause substantial adverse effects on human beings, including degradation of scenic views, exposure to air pollutants, increased noise, traffic congestion, and water supply. Aside from these issue areas, the proposed project would not result in substantial adverse effects on human beings. However, the project could result in potentially significant impacts within the issue areas described above. These issue areas will be evaluated further in the EIR.

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4 REPORT PREPARERS

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A3

Notice of Intent (April 29, 2016)

mechanical, and other collection technologies; *e.g.,* permitting electronic submission of responses.

Estimate of burden: The public reporting burden for this collection of information is estimated to average 1.19 hours per response.

Respondents: Flock owners; market owners, operators, or managers; dealers; slaughter plant owners, operators, or managers; feedlot owners, operators, or managers; tag manufacturers; managers of producer organizations; accredited veterinarians; and State animal health authorities.

Estimated annual number of respondents: 166,000.

Estimated annual number of responses per respondent: 5.

Estimated annual number of responses: 854,694.

Estimated total annual burden on respondents: 1,021,526 hours. (Due to averaging, the total annual burden hours may not equal the product of the annual number of responses multiplied by the reporting burden per response. Responses and respondents include recordkeeping and record keepers, respectively.)

All responses to this notice will be summarized and included in the request for OMB approval. All comments will also become a matter of public record.

Done in Washington, DC, this 25th day of April 2016.

Jere L. Dick,

Acting Administrator, Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service.

[FR Doc. 2016–10122 Filed 4–28–16; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3410–34–P

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Forest Service

Notice of New Fee Site; Federal Lands Recreation Enhancement Act (Title VIII, Pub. L. 108–447)

AGENCY: Carson National Forest, USDA Forest Service.

ACTION: Notice of new fee site.

SUMMARY: The Carson National Forest is proposing to charge a $175 fee for the overnight rental of the Aldo Leopold House and a $50 fee for the overnight rental of the Lagunitas Guard Station. Neither facility has been available for recreation use prior to this date. Rentals of other cabins in the Southwestern Region have shown that people appreciate and enjoy the availability of historic rental cabins. Funds from both the rentals will be used for the continued operation and maintenance of each of the facilities. These fees are only proposed and will be determined upon further analysis and public comment.

DATES: Send any comments about these fee proposals by August 2016 so comments can be compiled, analyzed and shared with a Recreation Resource Advisory Committee. Should the fee proposal move forward, both rentals will likely be available May 2017.

ADDRESSES: Forest Supervisor, Carson National Forest, 208 Cruz Alta Road, Taos, NM 87557.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Sharon Cuevas, Recreation Fee Coordinator, (505) 842–3235.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The Federal Recreation Lands Enhancement Act (Title VII, Pub. L. 108–447) directed the Secretary of Agriculture to publish a six month advance notice in the **Federal Register** whenever new recreation fee areas are established.

This new fee will be reviewed by a Recreation Resource Advisory Committee prior to a final decision and implementation.

Currently no Federal or State agencies in the state of New Mexico offer over-night rentals of this type. Arizona, the neighboring state in Region 3, provides several historic properties for public rental and that program has become very successful.

The house consists of a 4 bedroom Craftsman Style Bungalow home that was built by Aldo Leopold in 1912 when he was the new Forest Supervisor on the Carson National Forest for himself and his new wife Estella Luna Ortero Bergere. The Leopold House is located in the small village of Tres Piedras New Mexico and is a one and a half story home with a large front porch. The interior of the first floor has four rooms that include a dining room, kitchen, library and bedroom. A large stone fireplace is the focal point of the home. The upstairs of the home includes 3 bunk style bedrooms. The home was restored by volunteers and the Forest Service in 2005 and has running water, electricity, propane heat and is fully furnished.

The Lagunitas Guard Station is a small single room cabin located in a remote setting approximately 20 miles west of Tres Piedras New Mexico. It is a simple facility, with no electricity, trash service or running water. The Guard Station is located adjacent to the small primitive Lagunitas Campground and the Lagunitas Lakes. For those visitors willing to make the long drive, the setting will not disappoint.

A business analysis of the Aldo Leopold House and Lagunitas Guard Station has shown that people desire having this sort of recreation experience on the Carson National Forest. A market analysis indicates that the $175/per night fee for the Leopold House and $50/per night for the Lagunitas Guard Station is both reasonable and acceptable for this sort of unique recreation experience.

People wanting to rent either facility will need to do so through the National Recreation Reservation Service, at *www.recreation.gov* or by calling 1–877–444–6777. The National Recreation Reservation Service charges a $9 fee for reservations.

Dated: April 19, 2016.

James Duran,

Carson National Forest Supervisor.

[FR Doc. 2016–10039 Filed 4–28–16; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3411–15–P

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Forest Service

Tahoe National Forest; Placer County, California; Squaw Valley to Alpine Meadows Base-to-Base Gondola Project

AGENCY: Forest Service, USDA.

ACTION: Notice of intent to prepare an environmental impact statement.

SUMMARY: In September 2015, the Tahoe National Forest (TNF) accepted an application from Squaw Valley Ski Holdings, LLC which proposes to install, operate, and maintain an aerial ropeway system connecting the Squaw Valley and Alpine Meadows ski areas. This proposal also included an alteration to current avalanche mitigation techniques including the installation of Gazex® exploders. Implementation of the proposal would require an amendment to an existing Special Use Permit (SUP) issued for the operation and maintenance of Alpine Meadows Ski Area (Alpine Meadows). The proposal is consistent with Alpine Meadows' current Master Development Plan (MDP) and passed the screening criteria for consideration to use National Forest System (NFS) lands and amend the existing permit consistent with Forest Service land use regulations.

DATES: Comments concerning the scope of the analysis must be received by May 31, 2016. The draft environmental impact statement is expected in winter 2016 and the final environmental impact statement is expected in summer 2017.

ADDRESSES: Send written comments to: Eli Ilano, Tahoe National Forest Supervisor, c/o NEPA Contractor, P.O. Box 2729, Frisco, CO 80443. Comments may also be submitted on the project

Web site: *http://squawalpinegondola-eis.com/comment/*, or sent via email to *scoping_comment@squawalpinegondola-eis.com*. Two public meetings will be held on May 9, 2016 at the Resort at Squaw Creek, Monument Peak Room, 400 Squaw Creek Road, Olympic Valley, California. Additional information regarding the meetings is provided below in the ''Scoping Process'' section.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Additional information related to the proposed project can be obtained from the project Web site, *http://squawalpinegondola-eis.com/*, or by contacting Joe Flannery, Winter Sports Specialist. Mr. Flannery can be reached by phone at (530) 587–3558 extension 243 or by email at *jflannery@fs.fed.us*.

Individuals who use telecommunication devices for the deaf (TDD) may call the Federal Information Relay Service (FIRS) at 1–800–877–8339 between 8 a.m. and 8 p.m., Eastern Time, Monday through Friday.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Purpose and Need for Action

The TNF's purpose for the project is to improve developed winter recreation opportunities in the Scott Management Area, consistent with the 1990 Tahoe National Forest Land and Resource Management Plan as amended (Forest Plan). SUPs, and amendments to SUPs, are issued by the Forest Service and are required by law to be consistent with the Forest Plan. Desired future conditions for recreation management in the Forest Plan relevant to the project direct the Forest to ''provide a variety of opportunities for developed and dispersed recreation experiences'' (Forest Plan, p. V–5). The Alpine Meadows SUP is located in the Scott Management Area which allows for development of additional winter sports facilities and support services as part of the desired future condition of the management area (Forest Plan, p. V–446–449).

The TNF needs to respond to Squaw Valley Ski Holdings, LLC's land use application which proposes amendment of their SUP to improve connectivity between Alpine Meadows and Squaw Valley ski areas. The need for improved connectivity between the ski areas is based on a number of factors. The developed trail network at Squaw Valley has limited terrain suitable for beginners and teaching; Alpine Meadows has additional intermediate and beginner terrain. Squaw Valley has the majority of resort amenities (*e.g.,* accommodations, restaurants, shopping, entertainment, etc.); Alpine Meadows, in contrast, has limited amenities. While guests can currently access both ski areas on the same lift ticket, they must drive or shuttle between the two areas in order to access all the different terrain variety and/or amenities offered at both locations.

Proposed Action

The Proposed Action includes amendment of the Alpine Meadows Special Use Permit to authorize construction, operation and maintenance of the following proposed infrastructure and improvements: (1) Construction of a gondola connecting the ski and base areas of Alpine Meadows and Squaw Valley, and (2) installation of eight Gazex avalanche mitigation exploders (seven on NFS lands, one on private lands). Additional information and maps of this proposal can be found at: *http://squawalpinegondola-eis.com/*.

Responsible Official

The Responsible Official is the Tahoe National Forest Supervisor.

Nature of Decision To Be Made

The decision to be made is whether to authorize the Proposed Action as described above, to modify the project to meet the purpose and need while addressing issues raised in public scoping, or to take no action at this time.

Permits or Licenses Required

The project would require an amendment to the Alpine Meadows Special Use Permit, issued by the United States Forest Service.

In addition to analysis under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), Placer County will prepare an Environmental Impact Report to analyze environmental impacts of the proposal pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). The Forest Service and Placer County will coordinate the NEPA and CEQA analyses for consistency.

Scoping Process

This notice of intent initiates the scoping process, which guides the development of the environmental impact statement. The Forest Service is soliciting comments from Federal, State and local agencies and other individuals or organizations that may be interested in or affected by implementation of the proposed project. Two public meetings will be held on May 9, 2016 to gather comments on the scope of the project. Both meetings will be held at the Resort at Squaw Creek, Monument Peak Room, 400 Squaw Creek Road, Olympic Valley, California. The first meeting will be held from 2:00–4:00 p.m. and the second will be held from 6:00–8:00 p.m. These meetings will be held jointly with Placer County regarding their analysis of the project under California Environmental Quality Act. Representatives from the TNF, Squaw Valley Ski Holdings, LLC, and Placer County will be present to answer questions and provide additional information on this project.

This project will be subject to 36 CFR 218 Project-level Predecisional Administrative Review Process (Parts A and B). Individuals and entities who have submitted timely, specific written comments regarding a proposed project or activity during public comment periods, including this 30-day public scoping period, may file an objection (36 CFR 218.5(a)). Written comments received, including the names and addresses of those who comment, will be considered part of the public record on this proposal and will be available for public inspection (36 CFR 218.25(b)(2)). For purposes of meeting the 36 CFR 218.5 eligibility requirements, the public scoping period will end 30 days from the date the Notice of Intent is published in the **Federal Register**.

It is important that reviewers provide their comments at such times and in such manner that they are useful to the agency's preparation of the environmental impact statement. Therefore, comments should be provided prior to the close of the comment period and should clearly articulate the reviewer's concerns and contentions.

Comments received in response to this solicitation, including names and addresses of those who comment, will be part of the public record for this proposed action. Comments submitted anonymously will be accepted and considered, however.

Dated: April 19, 2016.

Eli Ilano,

Forest Supervisor, Tahoe National Forest.

[FR Doc. 2016–09672 Filed 4–28–16; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3410–11–P

DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

Bureau of the Census

National Advisory Committee

AGENCY: Bureau of the Census, Department of Commerce.

ACTION: Notice of public meeting.

SUMMARY: The Bureau of the Census (Census Bureau) is giving notice of a meeting of the National Advisory

A4

Updated Notice of Preparation
(September 2, 2016)

UPDATED NOTICE OF PREPARATION OF A DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT/ ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT

(STATE CLEARINGHOUSE NO. 2016042066)

Date:	September 2, 2016
To:	Agencies and Interested Parties
From:	Placer County
Subject:	**Updated Notice of Preparation of a Draft Environmental Impact Statement/Environmental Impact Report for the Proposed Squaw Valley-Alpine Meadows Base-to-Base Gondola Project**
Review Period:	September 2, 2016 to October 3, 2016 (additional 30-day period)

Squaw Valley Ski Holdings, LLC (project applicant) is proposing the Squaw Valley-Alpine Meadows Base-to-Base Gondola Project (project or B2B), which would include installation, operation, and maintenance of a winter operations only gondola connecting the Squaw Valley and Alpine Meadows ski areas. The project would also include installation, operation, and maintenance of an avalanche control system within proximity to the Alpine Meadows portion of the gondola alignment. The project requires analysis pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA).

PREVIOUS NOTICES

On April 22, 2016, Placer County (County) issued the original Notice of Preparation (NOP) for the proposed B2B project. The NOP was issued in accordance with the State CEQA Guidelines (14 California Code of Regulations [CCR] Section 15082) with the intent of informing agencies and interested parties that an environmental impact report (EIR) would be prepared for the above-referenced project.

Concurrent with posting of the original NOP in support of the EIR, the U.S. Forest Service (USFS) published a separate Notice of Intent (NOI) to prepare an environmental impact statement (EIS) pursuant NEPA to evaluate the environmental effects resulting from the USFS amending the existing Special Use Permit issued for the operation and maintenance of Alpine Meadows to allow construction and operation of the proposed B2B project.

The NOP and NOI indicated that the EIR and EIS would each be prepared and considered for approval separately by Placer County and the USFS, respectively.

SCOPING PROCESS

The NOP was issued on April 22, 2016 and comments were accepted through May 23, 2016. The NOI was issued on April 29, 2016 and comments were accepted through May 31, 2016. Two public scoping meetings were held on May 9, 2016 (2:00-4:00 p.m. and 6:00-8:00 p.m.) to inform interested parties about the project, and to provide agencies and the public with an opportunity to provide comments on the scope and content of the environmental documents. During the scoping meeting it was explained that the County and USFS intended to prepare separate environmental review documents, an EIR for the County and an EIS for the USFS.

In part, as a response to public and agency comments received during the scoping process, as well as other factors, the County and USFS have decided to prepare a single joint EIS/EIR rather than two separate documents as originally indicated. As such, the County and the USFS have prepared this updated NOP to

inform the public of the joint EIS/EIR and to invite further input on the scope and content of the environmental analysis in the context of the single joint EIS/EIR.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

No elements of the project description have changed. Please refer to the project description in the original NOP, which is available for public review on Placer County's website: http://www.placer.ca.gov/Departments/CommunityDevelopment/EnvCoordSvcs/EIR.aspx.

PROVIDING COMMENTS

An additional 30-day period is being provided during which agencies and interested parties may submit additional comments on topics to be addressed in the EIS/EIR. All comments previously submitted to the County and the USFS during the original scoping process will be considered in the EIS/EIR and there is no need to resubmit those comments.

Comments should be provided no later than 5:00 p.m. on **October 3, 2016** to: Shirlee Herrington, Environmental Coordination Services, Community Development Resource Agency, 3091 County Center Drive, Suite 190, Auburn, CA 95603 or cdraecs@placer.ca.gov.

All comments on environmental issues received during the public comment period will be considered and addressed in the Draft EIS/EIR, which is anticipated to be available for public review in summer 2017.

A5

Scoping Comment Summary

SCOPING COMMENT SUMMARY

Squaw Valley | Alpine Meadows Base-to-Base Gondola Project

A. SCOPING PROCESS OVERVIEW

Scoping was conducted by both the Forest Service – Tahoe National Forest (TNF), according to National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) regulations, and Placer County, per California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) regulations. As required by NEPA and CEQA regulations, public involvement will occur throughout the Environmental Impact Statement (EIS)/Environmental Impact Report (EIR) process.

As per NEPA regulations (40 CFR § 1508.22), the Forest Service initiated their scoping comment period by publishing a Notice of Intent (NOI) in the Federal Register on April 29, 2016, with a period ending May 31, 2016. Simultaneously, in accordance with CEQA (14 CCR § 15082), Placer County posted a Notice of Preparation (NOP) to the California State Clearinghouse on April 22, 2016, with a review period ending on May 23, 2016.

SE Group, the Forest Service NEPA contractor, prepared a NEPA scoping package that was subsequently approved for distribution by the Forest Service and sent to 51 individuals and organizations. The scoping package provided a brief description of the Proposed Action, the purpose and need for action, and two illustrative maps. Ascent Environmental, the CEQA contractor, prepared the CEQA Initial Study Checklist for the project; the checklist included a brief description of the project and project objectives. The Initial Study Checklist and NOP was posted on the Placer County project website (https://placer.ca.gov/departments/communitydevelopment/envcoordsvcs/eir/squawvalleygondolaproject) and mailed to a separate list of interested individuals and organizations.

Two joint Forest Service and Placer County public scoping meetings were held on May 9, 2016. Both meetings were held at the Resort at Squaw Creek, Monument Peak Room, 400 Squaw Creek Road, Olympic Valley, California. The first meeting was held from 2:00 to 4:00 p.m. and the second was held from 6:00 to 8:00 p.m. Individuals were able to obtain information and submit comments at this public scoping meeting. Scoping comments were also accepted through mail, fax, telephone, or email; or through the Forest Service project website (http://squawalpinegondola-eis.com/). On the Forest Service project website, an e-mail address and comment form was provided for submitting electronic comments.

On September 2, 2016, Placer County and the Forest Service announced that they will prepare a combined EIS/EIR. Placer County issued an updated NOP and additional comments were accepted until October 3, 2016.

In total, 152 comment submissions (including email, website submissions, meeting transcripts, and hard copy letters transmitted to either the Forest Service or Placer County) were received during scoping. SE Group reviewed these letters and extracted substantive comments, ultimately categorizing them into

major themes that were expressed. SE Group used comment themes to identify issues with the Proposed Action in response to public and agency concerns. These themes, issues, and the need for additional alternatives to the Proposed Action were reviewed by the Interdisciplinary Team (ID Team), including Placer County, on July 6, 2016. Comments received following the announcement of the joint EIS/EIR have been processed and incorporated into all reports.

APPROACH

The Forest Service and Placer County provided multiple ways to submit comments in order to encourage maximum participation. The public was invited to submit comments through the following mechanisms:

- Public scoping meetings
- Traditional mail delivery
- Facsimile transmission (fax)
- Telephone
- Email
- The project website (www.squawalpinegondola-eis.com/)

PUBLIC SCOPING MEETINGS

Two public scoping meetings were held on May 9, 2016 to gather comments on the scope of the project. Both meetings were held at the Resort at Squaw Creek, Monument Peak Room, 400 Squaw Creek Road, Olympic Valley, California. The first meeting was held from 2:00 to 4:00 p.m. and the second was held from 6:00 to 8:00 p.m. Representatives from the TNF, Squaw Valley Ski Holdings, LLC, and Placer County were present to answer questions and provide additional information on this project. A stenographer was present to capture comments submitted verbally at the meetings.

SCOPING PARTICIPATION

The comment period was open between April 29, 2016 and May 31, 2016, and again between September 2, 2016 and October 3, 2016 during which time approximately 152 comment submittals were received. Comments were accepted via electronic submission on the Forest Service project website (www.squawalpinegondola-eis.com/), email, in person at public scoping meetings, and letter.

Of the 152 comment submittals received during the scoping process, most (114 submittals or 75 percent) included the commenter's address. Of the 114 comments with address information, 93 percent were submitted by commenters with California addresses, the other 7 percent were from out-of-state commenters. The comments from California were distributed as follows (presented as percent of total comments received): 13 percent from Olympic Valley residents, 11 percent from Truckee residents, 9 percent from Saratoga residents, 9 percent from Tahoe City residents, and 58 percent from other California locations.

B. OVERVIEW OF COMMENTS

In order to process the comments received thus far on the proposed project, comments were entered into a database to be categorized and analyzed. First, comments were extracted by reading and interpreting each individual comment document. A total of 569 substantive comments were extracted from the letters across 21 broad categories. Substantive comments are comments that are generally relevant to the proposed decision and present information and rationale that is beyond conjecture and opinion. Substantive comments were not extracted from every comment submission, and multiple substantive comments were extracted from some comment submissions. Comments were grouped further by subcategory and theme in order to facilitate the recording and response process.

The table below displays the relative distribution of substantive comments among resource categories:

Resource Category	# of Substantive Comments	% of Total
Federal and Local Planning Documents	88	15%
Alternatives	87	15%
Recreation	61	11%
Cumulative Effects	57	10%
Wildlife and Aquatics	43	8%
Scenery	33	6%
NEPA/CEQA Process	30	5%
Traffic/Parking	30	5%
Air Quality	29	5%
Avalanche Hazards	21	4%
Purpose and Need	17	3%
Water/Wetlands	16	3%
Health & Safety	15	3%
Other	10	2%
Socio-Economics	9	2%
Forest Health	5	<1%
Cultural	5	<1%
Noise	4	<1%
Design Criteria/Mitigation Measures	4	<1%
Botany	4	<1%
Soils	1	0%
Total	**569**	**100%**

C. SUMMARY OF COMMENTS BY RESOURCE

Below is a brief synopsis of comments submitted in the ten most commonly mentioned categories. Statistics presented below are specific to substantive comments.

FEDERAL AND LOCAL PLANNING DOCUMENTS (88 COMMENTS, 15 PERCENT OF TOTAL)

Issues about planning documents comprised the highest percentage of total comments. In particular, 77 comments were received relating to the Granite Chief Wilderness and related Wilderness policy and management direction. In general these comments expressed concern for impacts within the Granite Chief Wilderness area and referred to a Congressional intent to obtain private lands as Wilderness in this area. Comments discussed the status of Wilderness lands as Public Trust Resources and emphasized the agencies' obligation to protect the resource. Specific concerns were raised regarding impacts from the Alpine Meadows mid-station and associated activities, including potential cumulative impacts resulting from the planned Rollers lift. Other comments in this category mentioned other required permits, questioned the consistency of the project with the TNF Forest Plan, and questioned consistency with the Squaw Valley General Plan.

ALTERNATIVES (87 COMMENTS, 15 PERCENT OF TOTAL)

Many commenters requested the development of additional alternatives for analysis in the EIS. In particular, many commenters (21 comments) requested an alternative that would locate the project further away from the Granite Chief Wilderness area to avoid impacts to Wilderness values, visual quality, recreation, and Sierra Nevada yellow-legged frogs. Commenters suggested alternative routes for the project, including realigning the project closer to the White Wolf property and KT-22. Additional technologies were also suggested, such as a tunnel or chairlift. Other commenters suggested ground transportation alternatives, such as additional shuttles or modified shuttle schedules. Questions were also raised about the Proposed Action, and whether the gondola would operate during the summer.

RECREATION (61 COMMENTS, 11 PERCENT OF TOTAL)

While some comments were received regarding impacts to the recreational experience at the ski areas, most comments were related to impacts on nearby dispersed recreation and trail users. A total of 38 comments related to impacts on adjacent trails, specifically the Five Lakes Trail and Pacific Crest Trail, and recreation in the Granite Chief Wilderness area. In general these comments discussed the change in the recreational experience on the Five Lakes Trail resulting from visual impacts and access restrictions associated with the project. A trail management plan for the Five Lakes Trail was requested as part of this project. Comments related to the recreation experience at the ski areas generally noted that the project would take away from the unique culture of both Squaw Valley and Alpine Meadows, remove the availability of some hike-to terrain at Alpine Meadows, and generally reduce the quality of the ski experience.

CUMULATIVE EFFECTS (57 COMMENTS, 10 PERCENT OF TOTAL)

Comments were received from the public suggesting a number of projects that could contribute to cumulative effects and should be considered in the EIS. In particular, many commenters mentioned the

White Wolf Development, Rollers chairlift, and Squaw Valley Village project. Commenters identified resources to be considered in the cumulative effects analysis, including traffic, visuals, water resources, and others. The White Wolf Development and Rollers chairlift were mentioned frequently by commenters and numerous concerns were raised about the role of the Alpine Meadows mid-station in relation to access to the planned Rollers chairlift. Commenters expressed concern about cumulative impacts resulting from the planned Rollers chairlift including additional impacts to Wilderness values and the Sierra Nevada yellow-legged frog.

WILDLIFE AND AQUATICS (43 COMMENTS, 8 PERCENT OF TOTAL)

The majority of comments received on wildlife and aquatics (27 comments) related to Threatened and Endangered species, particularly impacts to the Sierra Nevada yellow-legged frog. Commenters note that individuals of this endangered species have been identified near the project, and cite potential impacts resulting from construction and operation of the project (including primarily human presence and pollution from vehicles). Information was requested regarding consultation with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and commenters requested that consultation information be included in the EIS/EIR. Other comments requested analysis of noise impacts, potential impacts from the Gazex avalanche control operations, nesting birds, and bear dens.

SCENERY (33 COMMENTS, 6 PERCENT OF TOTAL)

Commenters expressed concern about the visibility of the proposed gondola and requested a thorough visual analysis including numerous visual simulations. Comments suggested methods for visual analysis including the installation of “tent poles” and identified a number of locations for visual simulations. Commenters were particularly concerned about visibility from the Granite Chief Wilderness area.

NEPA/CEQA PROCESS (30 COMMENTS, 5 PERCENT OF TOTAL)

Comments received in this category generally related to the EIS/EIR and the requirements for thorough analysis. Commenters suggested that the proposed gondola should be analyzed in the same process as the Squaw Valley Village project, a development proposal in the Squaw Valley base area which has recently undergone CEQA review. Comments also include requirements of the Lahontan Water Board and questioned the objectivity and abilities of the NEPA/CEQA consultants involved in preparation of the analysis.

TRAFFIC AND PARKING (30 COMMENTS, 5 PERCENT OF TOTAL)

Over half of the comments received on these topics were related to increased traffic volumes resulting from the project. Commenters state that traffic in the area is currently an issue, and suggest that the project would result in increased visitation to Squaw Valley | Alpine Meadows, therefore increasing traffic volumes and demand for parking. Some commenters requested that traffic impacts from the gondola be considered cumulatively with impacts from the Squaw Valley Village project.

AIR QUALITY (29 COMMENTS, 5 PERCENT OF TOTAL)

The majority of comments in this category (26 comments) requested analysis of greenhouse gas emissions and climate change in relation to the project. Commenters requested an analysis of both the project's impact on climate change (primarily related to vehicular emissions and potential traffic increases) and climate change's impact on the utility of the project. Other comments related to ambient air quality and construction/operation emissions.

AVALANCHE HAZARDS (21 COMMENTS, 4 PERCENT OF TOTAL)

Comments were received regarding avalanche hazards in the project area. Comments asserted that the project would increase avalanche risks in the area which could impact the Five Lakes Trail and residential areas of the Alpine Meadows valley. Commenters note that the project includes proposed Gazex infrastructure, but question the accuracy of Avalanche Zone Maps considered in the project design. Updated Avalanche Zone Maps and avalanche studies were requested to reflect climate modeling.

A6

Scoping Comment Report

Squaw Valley | Alpine Meadows Base-to-Base Gondola Project

Scoping Comment Report

Resources

Table of Contents

Resource	Page
1 – Purpose and Need	1
2 – Alternatives	3
3 – NEPA/CEQA Process	9
4 – Federal and Local Planning Documents	12
6 – Botany	18
7 – Forest Health	19
8 – Wildlife and Aquatics	20
9 – Water/Wetlands	24
10 – Soils	26
12 – Recreation	26
13 – Avalanche Hazards	32
15 – Socio-Econ	34
16 – Traffic/Parking	35
17 – Health & Safety	38
18 – Scenery	40
19 – Cultural	42
20 – Air Quality	45
21 – Noise	48
22 – Cumulative Effects	48
23 – Design Criteria/Mitigation Measures	53
24 – Other	54

Resource Report

Resource ID: *1* Resource Description *Purpose and Need*

SubResource ID: *1.1* SubResource Description: *General*

CID: 203 Last Name: Heagerty Organization: Granite Chief Wilderness Protection League Representative: True

Substantive Comment: The information available to the public has not as yet presented compelling information for the need of this proposed action. Given that the proposal could have significant and irreversible impacts to the Granite Chief Wilderness Area and the adjacent Designated Wilderness Area, the public deserves a thorough evaluation of the public benefits versus public losses.

Theme ID: 1.1 Theme Name: Justification for P&N Description: Comment requests additional justification for the project

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SubResource ID: *1.3* SubResource Description: *USFS Purpose and Need*

CID: 55 Last Name: Higgins Jr Organization: Representative: True

Substantive Comment: The biggest issue in the Tahoe Basin is traffic. I originally considered this proposed development as a benefit toward traffic reduction, but then I considered the number of trips the existing shuttle takes and the number of riders I have experienced while riding the shuttle. I have never seen it full, and I don't think the number of trips that service generates impacts traffic in the basin. I would like to see supporting data that justifies a need to service 1,400 persons per hour.

Theme ID: 3.2 Theme Name: Disagrees with purpose and need to improve connectivity Description: Does not agree with need to improve connectivity to beginner terrain

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CID: 104 Last Name: Bruner Organization: Representative: True

Substantive Comment: As a user of the winter (and summer) recreation opportunities in the Scott Management Area for the past 20 years, there is no need for this gondola project to improve the winter recreation opportunities. There is ample terrain at both the Squaw Valley ski resort and the Alpine Meadows ski resort for a full day of skiing. There is no need to waste time during a day of skiing riding a gondola between the resorts. There is no drawback to skiing one resort one day and the other resort another day. Of course Squaw Valley Ski Holdings, LLC (SVSH) argues that there is a need for improved connectivity between the ski areas. SVSH cites that Squaw Valley has limited terrain suitable for beginners and teaching, and that Alpine Meadows has additional intermediate and beginner terrain. That is in fact why families with young children often focus on Alpine Meadows. As the children develop into better skiers, many choose to spend the day at Squaw Valley. SVSH also cites limited amenities at the Alpine Meadows resort, suggesting that purchasers of lift tickets want to take the gondola to Squaw for a better choice of food and shopping. The limited amenities and limited commercialization is in fact why a large percentage of Alpine Meadows visitors choose to ski there. They choose Alpine Meadows in order to ski and enjoy the great outdoors in a peaceful and family oriented resort. Let there be no mistake about why SVSH wants to build a gondola between the two resorts. SVSH views this as another money-making opportunity. Even if there is no real need for the gondola, visitors will pay for tickets to try it out. SVSH plans for high volume transportation given the design capacity of approximately 1,400 persons per hour in each direction.

Theme ID: 3.2 Theme Name: Disagrees with purpose and need to improve connectivity Description: Does not agree with need to improve connectivity to beginner terrain

---

CID: 171 Last Name: Gordon Organization: Environmental Protection Agency Representative: True

Substantive Comment: Purpose and Need The DEIS for the proposed project should clearly identify the underlying purpose and need that is the basis for proposing the range of alternatives (40 CFR 1502.13). The purpose of the proposed action is typically the specific objectives of the activity, while the need for the proposed action may be to eliminate a broader underlying problem or take advantage of an opportunity. The purpose and need should be a clear, objective statement of the rationale for the proposed project, as it provides the framework for identifying project alternatives. The DEIS should concisely identify why the project is being proposed, why it is being proposed now, and should focus on the specific desired outcomes of the project (e.g. developing opportunities for recreation, protecting sensitive resources) rather than prescribing a predetermined resolution. The purpose and need should also clearly describe Tahoe National Forest's role in the project, including any additional permits or consistency reviews that may be needed.

Theme ID: 3.3 Theme Name: Narrow Purpose and Need Description: Purpose and Need is narrow and preclude necessity of project and project alternatives

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CID: 17 Last Name: H Organization: Representative: True

Substantive Comment: The current shuttle system between Alpine Meadows and Squaw Valley does a perfectly adequate job of shuffling skiers and riders between the two mountains (for free, every fifteen minutes or sooner) so I find it incredibly hard to believe that KSL sees it necessary to spend this kind of money, invest this much time, and dip its toxic, metal paws into a wilderness area that is otherwise somewhat pristine and wild for the simple reason of connecting the two resorts to maximize convenience for skiers and riders.

Theme ID: 3.4 Theme Name: Existing Shuttle Service meets demand Description: Existing shuttle service meets demand

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CID: 58 Last Name: Hatch Organization: Representative: True

Substantive Comment: The available project documents fail to adequately document and address the supposed demand for the Interconnect Gondola the supposed Purpose and Need for the Project. The EIS should provide real and adequate data on skier demand, specifically for the Interconnect Gondola, to support the Need for the Project. Survey data should include local and non-locals skiers, including Squaw and Alpine users and non-users, as well as former users, and be of sufficient number of respondents to adequately assess the demand in a statistically meaningful way.

Theme ID: 3.6 Theme Name: No need for project Description: Forest Service does not demonstrate a need for the project

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SubResource ID: *1.4* **SubResource Description: *Project Objectives***

CID: 63 Last Name: Bruner Organization: Representative: True

Substantive Comment: As a user of the winter (and summer) recreation opportunities in the Scott Management Area for the past 20 years, there is no need for this gondola project to "improve" the winter recreation opportunities. There is ample terrain at both the Squaw Valley ski resort and the Alpine Meadows ski resort for a full day of skiing. There is no need to waste time during a day of skiing riding a gondola between the resorts. There is no drawback to skiing one resort one day and the other resort another day.

Theme ID: 4.1 Theme Name: No need for project Description: Comment stating that there is no need for new terrain

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CID: 83 Last Name: Heagerty Organization: Representative: True

Substantive Comment: As I stated earlier, the concept that we're going to have no additional induced visitor increase because of the gondola is just not credible. So we expect a credible review of that. This gondola is inextricably tied to the village and that is a huge increase in visitor users.

Theme ID: 4.3 Theme Name: Visitation Description: Need to justify that increased visitation is not an objective

---

CID: 5 Last Name: Pressnall Organization: Representative: True

Substantive Comment: They claim the lift is needed so skiers at Alpine can take advantage of the services at Squaw. There is already a bus that takes about thirteen minutes to ride. The estimated travel time for the gondola is thirteen minutes.

Theme ID: 4.4 Theme Name: Amenities Description: Question objective of improved access to resort amenities

---

CID: 63 Last Name: Bruner Organization: Representative: True

Substantive Comment: SVSH also cites limited amenities at the Alpine Meadows resort, suggesting that purchasers of lift tickets want to take the gondola to Squaw for a better choice offood and shopping. The limited amenities and limited commercialization is in fact why a large percentage of Alpine Meadows visitors choose to ski there. They choose Alpine Meadows in order to ski and enjoy the great outdoors in a peaceful and family oriented resort.

Theme ID: 4.4 Theme Name: Amenities Description: Question objective of improved access to resort amenities

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CID: 79 Last Name: Backhus Organization: Representative: True

Substantive Comment: It doesn't make any sense to do all these other locations and impact the wilderness for a gondola that's not going to access or provide any other ski or terrain than we have now.

Theme ID: 4.5 Theme Name: Terrain Description: Question objective of improved terrain variety

---

CID: 5 Last Name: Pressnall Organization: Representative: True

Substantive Comment: They claim they need the lift to allow access to Alpine Meadows beginner terrain. Squaw also claims that they have 4000 acres of terrain and 25% of that is suitable for beginners. I found this information on their website. 1000 acres is plenty of terrain for beginners, so no great need to ship skiers over to Alpine, unless that is where they wanted to ski in the first place. If the upper mountain at Squaw is closed because of wind, then the gondola will probably be closed also, so people will have to use the bus anyway.

Theme ID: 4.5 Theme Name: Terrain Description: Question objective of improved terrain variety

---

CID: 63 Last Name: Bruner Organization: Representative: True

Substantive Comment: Of course Squaw Valley Ski Holdings, LLC ("SVSH") argues that there is a need for improved connectivity between the ski areas. SVSH cites that Squaw Valley has limited terrain suitable for beginners and teaching, and that Alpine Meadows has additional intermediate and beginner terrain. That is in fact why families with young children often focus on Alpine Meadows. As the children develop into better skiers, many choose to spend the day at Squaw Valley.

Theme ID: 4.5 Theme Name: Terrain Description: Question objective of improved terrain variety

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CID: 179 Last Name: Pressnall Organization: Representative: True

Substantive Comment: Squaw Valley claims the lift is needed so beginner skiers at Squaw can access more terrain at Alpine Meadows. There is actually more beginner terrain at Squaw, but strong winds can shut down lifts on the upper mountain where most of the beginner terrain is located. If the winds are strong enough to close the upper mountain, then the gondola would most likely be closed also, because of the strong SW winds that blow up the exposed backside of KT-22. In that case the gondola would serve no purpose and the shuttle bus would have to be used anyway.

Theme ID: 4.5 Theme Name: Terrain Description: Question objective of improved terrain variety

CID: 178 Last Name: Organization: Representative: True

Substantive Comment: The applicant may suggest that while there is no additional terrain, that there is a benefit because of additional access provided by the mid-stations. However, current operations suggest otherwise. On the Squaw Valley side, the mid-station will be somewhere on the KT22 ridge essentially adding an additional access point to the terrain serviced by KT22. However, there is already a second chair that accesses this terrain called Olympic Lady. Yet, KSL only operates this chair minimally. Olympic Lady operates less than 20% of the ski season and that is a generous estimate. If the applicant cannot rationalize operating this chair, why would they add a third access point to the same ski terrain?

Theme ID: 4.5 Theme Name: Terrain Description: Question objective of improved terrain variety

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Resource ID: *2* Resource Description *Alternatives*

SubResource ID: *2.1* **SubResource Description: *General***

CID: 171 Last Name: Gordon Organization: Environmental Protection Agency Representative: True

Substantive Comment: Scope of Analysis The EIS should identify all supporting facilities to ensure potentially connected actions are included in the environmental impact analyses (40 CFR 1508.25). The project description should identify needed parking facilities, transportation andlor service road improvements, drinking water andlor wastewater treatment facilities, and other utilities upgrades that would be associated with the project.

Theme ID: 6.1 Theme Name: Scope of Analysis Description: Supporting projects should be included in project description and analysis

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SubResource ID: *2.2* **SubResource Description: *Alternatives to consider***

CID: 206 Last Name: Bruner Organization: Representative: True

Substantive Comment: It is my understanding that the County and USFS are planning to evaluate an alternative route from Squaw Valley to Alpine Meadows, different from the route shown at the May 9, 2016 public scoping meeting. Relative to any proposed route, I respectively request that the County ensure the following: a. No impact to the existing Granite Chief Wilderness (GCW) area or to the area within the designated Granite Chief Wilderness boundary, which still has the potential to become federal wilderness, from: i. Sound related to the construction or operation of the gondola, maintenance vehicles, or avalanche control methods; ii. Visual Impairment; iii. Chemicals used in the operation or maintenance of the gondola or avalanche control methods. b. No impact to the Five Lakes Trail, which is one of the most widely used trails in California. c. No impact to the endangered Sierra yellow-legged frog known to live in the area of the previously proposed Alpine mid-station

Theme ID: 7.1 Theme Name: Alternative not crossing into Granite Chief Wilderness Area Description: Alternative must be developed which does not cross the legislatively designated land

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CID: 89 Last Name: Moore Organization: Sierra Club; Mother Lode Chapter Representative: True

Substantive Comment: The Forest Service should consider whether the proposed action and route(s) not crossing the legislatively designated land constitute a reasonable range of alternatives. If they do not, the EIS must also propose and analyze intermediate alternative routes that incompletely mitigate the significant adverse effects of the proposed action to Forest Service land in the Granite Chief Wilderness.

Theme ID: 7.1 Theme Name: Alternative not crossing into Granite Chief Wilderness Area Description: Alternative must be developed which does not cross the legislatively designated land

---

CID: 89 Last Name: Moore Organization: Sierra Club; Mother Lode Chapter Representative: True

Substantive Comment: Only ropeway routes that do not cross the legislatively designated land satisfy the intent of the 1984 California Wilderness Bill designating the Granite Chief Wilderness. The Forest Service must include an analysis of alternative routes that do not cross the legislatively designated land. This analysis must include justifications of the near-optimality of the alternative routes chosen for detailed analysis from among the many possible alternative routes. Environmental criteria must be included among the criteria for optimality.

Theme ID: 7.1 Theme Name: Alternative not crossing into Granite Chief Wilderness Area Description: Alternative must be developed which does not cross the legislatively designated land

CID: 102 Last Name: Lozeau Organization: Lozeau Drury LLP Representative: True

Substantive Comment: Relatedly, the EIS must explore alternative alignments for the Gondola Project. An alternative must be considered moving the Gondola Project away from the Wilderness Area's federal lands. An additional alternative also should consider impacts of an alignment that is located outside of the Wilderness Area boundary, including outside of the private lands. An alternative also should include managing the privately held areas within the wilderness boundary as wilderness. FOWS is concerned that proceeding with the project would preclude this portion of the designated wilderness area from ever being managed as true wilderness. The EIS should also explore an alternative of the Forest Service purchasing the private lands (the White Wolf property) or a conservation easement for the property within the Granite Chief Wilderness Area boundary. TNF's 1990 Management Plan states that, for the Granite Chief Wilderness Area, TNF shall "[a]cquire private in-holdings as the opportunities arise." 080 Granite Chief Management Area - Page V – 418. Accordingly, a purchase alternative should be fully explored in the EIS. Likewise, because the Gondola Project proposes to use federal lands, the EIS also should explore other alternatives that leverage purchase of some of the private land holdings within the Wilderness Area. TNF cannot, consistent with the Management Plan, approve a project that lops off or encourages development of all of the private land within the Wilderness Area boundary between Squaw and Alpine Meadows that TNF should be positioning itself to purchase. The EIS should carefully lay out the purpose, need, and objectives of the proposed Gondola Project. The objectives should not be written so as to improperly limit TNF's consideration of a reasonable range of alternatives intended to reduce or eliminate the Project's impacts.

Theme ID: 7.1 Theme Name: Alternative not crossing into Granite Chief Wilderness Area Description: Alternative must be developed which does not cross the legislatively designated land

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CID: 95 Last Name: Bruner Organization: Representative: True

Substantive Comment: 3. Permanent destruction of Congressionally designated Wilderness Area and alternative routes away from the wilderness area: Constructing the Gondola as currently proposed would forever eliminate the ability to complete the land consolidation of the Granite Chief Wilderness that was intended by Congress and the State of California in the 1984 California Wilderness Act. As indicated at the public scoping meeting held on May 9, 2016, there are alternative routes for the gondola which would reduce impact to the Tahoe National Forest and the Granite Chief Wilderness. Should this project continue, the public deserves a thorough analysis by the Forest Service of alternate routes that would minimize impact to these public lands and enable the ability to complete the consolidation of the Granite Chief Wilderness Area in the future.

Theme ID: 7.1 Theme Name: Alternative not crossing into Granite Chief Wilderness Area Description: Alternative must be developed which does not cross the legislatively designated land

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CID: 98 Last Name: Heagerty Organization: Representative: True

Substantive Comment: No Action- A rigorous description of the potential impacts of the No Action alternative will be particularly helpful to the public. The potential harm of a No Action to the applicant should be quantified. Scenarios of different futures for the two resorts, without the gondola, should be developed (such as a range of climate changes to ski seasons in 10, 20 and 30 year and how that might impact winter visitor populations). In addition, since the gondola is never to operate outside the ski season, using current climate models what could be the anticipated weeks of operation at years 2025, and 2045? What would the environmental, social and economic impacts be under the No Action alternative? Compared to the proposed action?

Theme ID: 7.13 Theme Name: Analysis of No Action Alternative Description: Through analysis of no action alternative including impacts from climate change, environmental, social, economic, etc.

CID: 171 Last Name: Gordon Organization: Environmental Protection Agency Representative: True

Substantive Comment: Range of Alternatives All reasonable alternatives that fulfill the project's purpose and need should be evaluated in detail, including alternatives outside the legal jurisdiction of the Forest Service (40 CFR Section 1502.14(c)). The DEIS should provide a clear discussion of the reasons for the elimination of alternatives which are not evaluated in detail. A robust range of alternatives will include options for avoiding significant environmental impacts. The DEIS should clearly describe the rationale used to determine whether impacts of an alternative are significant or not. Thresholds of significance should be determined by considering the context and intensity of an action and its effects (40 CFR 1508.27). The environmental impacts of the proposal and alternatives should be presented in comparative form, thus sharply defining the issues and providing a clear basis for choice among options by the decision maker and the public (40 CFR 1502.14). The potential environmental impacts of each alternative should be quantified to the greatest extent possible (e.g. acres of wetlands impacted; additional car trips taken). The No Action Alternative should clearly describe the existing conditions in the project area, including current recreational opportunities available in Tahoe National Forest and within the surrounding areas. These recreational opportunities should be described seasonally, as well as geographically.

Theme ID: 7.2 Theme Name: Range of Alternatives Description: Ranging from meeting purpose and need without a gondola, alternative route that doesn't cross Wilderness Area, minimal impact to recreational trails

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CID: 206 Last Name: Bruner Organization: Representative: True

Substantive Comment: I request that the County fully evaluate, with the help of a qualified and objective 3rd party, the establishment of alternate land transportation from Squaw to Alpine, such as low or no emission shuttles on a more frequent and flexible schedule than provided today. The 3rd party should fully and objectively compare the proposed gondola with a well thought out land transportation alternative, comparing the degree of impact to the visual scenery, air and water environment, noise and air pollution. This comparison should give particular attention to the potential impacts on the Granite Chief Wilderness, Five Lakes trail, and Lake Tahoe. This analysis should include preparing an objective analysis of how many skiers actually want to spend time moving between the two resorts on the same day. All analysis should be made available to the public for review.

Theme ID: 7.3 Theme Name: Improved Ground Transportation Description: Develop an alternative which increases/enhances the ground transportation system

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CID: 98 Last Name: Heagerty Organization: Representative: True

Substantive Comment: Enhanced Ground Transportation as an Alternative- The applicant's stated need for the project is to address the "long waits" and "slow traffic" that currently exists with the Squaw-to- Alpine shuttle bus service. What we understand from the current users is that the shuttle service has several opportunities for improvement. Enhancing the fleet of vehicles (types, sizes, fuel sources, user amenities); the timing and scheduling for optimum user satisfaction (Uber-model service); and other actions that could be employed to meet the needs and desires of the skiers should be fully described and evaluated. These alternatives deserve serious and equal analyses (to the proposed project) because they present the opportunity for the USFS to avoid numerous and significant impacts to the Granite Chief Wilderness, the Five Lakes, the Five Lakes Trail and the other Public Trust Resources directly or indirectly affected by the proposed action.

Theme ID: 7.3 Theme Name: Improved Ground Transportation Description: Develop an alternative which increases/enhances the ground transportation system

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CID: 29 Last Name: MacDonald Organization: Representative: True

Substantive Comment: The existing method of shuttling via bus is perfectly functional and would be easily improved by adding more environmentally friendly coaches that run at increased intervals. The travel time between resorts would be nearly identical to the proposed gondola and would save huge amounts of money, cause no additional impacts to the existing natural environment including the protected national wilderness that exists between the mountains, and would help preserve the culture of the two separate ski mountains.

Theme ID: 7.3 Theme Name: Improved Ground Transportation Description: Develop an alternative which increases/enhances the ground transportation system

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CID: 49 Last Name: Heagerty Organization: Granite Chief Wilderness Protection League Representative: True

Substantive Comment: Project alternatives need to consider at least 1/2 to 1 mile buffer zones surrounding the Designated Wilderness to help minimize direct and indirect impacts, and to accommodate the likely biological and physical needs of future ecosystem resiliency.

Theme ID: 7.4 Theme Name: Alternative with buffer zone around Wilderness Area Description: Develop Alternative which include buffer zone around Wilderness Area

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CID: 109 Last Name: Brew Organization: Representative: True

Substantive Comment: The first alternative is actually a set of alternatives. Each would cross the KT- 22 ridge at one of these points,(or elsewhere): Saddle, Near the KT upper lift terminal, top of Olympic Lady, or somewhere west of Red Dog. After crossing the ridge, the lift would descend almost to the Alpine Meadows Road and then parallel the road on its west side up to the base area. Any of these would be all on private land except perhaps for some parcels along the road and the Forest Service parcel that holds the Alpine Meadows base area. Any one of these would have lesser monetary costs because of there being a lesser need for infrastructure .. The environmental costs would also be lower because of most of he transects would be on readily accessible private land. It might even be possible to construct it with only one, or no, mid-station(s).

Theme ID: 7.5 Theme Name: Route Alternatives Description: Various alternative alignments for the ropeway

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CID: 180 Last Name: Scanlan Organization: Bear Creek Association Representative: True

Substantive Comment: Alternative Routes for a Gondola- Based on geological and biological conditions there appear to be at least two alternative alignments for the gondola that would meet the constructability and operational criteria required for a winter gondola. We request a thorough and objective technical evaluation be undertaken to map and describe two alternative routes from the Squaw Valley base area to the Alpine Meadows base area. The public and our public agencies deserve a thorough and rigorous analyses of these alternatives.

Theme ID: 7.5 Theme Name: Route Alternatives Description: Various alternative alignments for the ropeway

CID: 62 Last Name: Stepner Organization: Representative: True

Substantive Comment: 1. What alternative connections were considered as offered to base to bases (eg like Park City - Canyons, it is left) as alternative base stations locations (sherwood - granite?) & why were they rejected.

Theme ID: 7.5 Theme Name: Route Alternatives Description: Various alternative alignments for the ropeway

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CID: 208 Last Name: Fielding Organization: Representative: True

Substantive Comment: A more acceptable alignment would be to follow a lower contour through Mr. Caldwell's property, such that the gondola is not visible from the lakes except where it crosses the KT-22 saddle. The least offensive alignment would generally follow the lift towers already in place on Mr. Caldwell's property, with the Alpine Meadows mid station down near the Alpine Meadows road. While this would not achieve the ski area's objective of providing lift-served skiing to The Buttress and Bernie's Run areas, it would serve as an alternate loading station and improve pedestrian circulation in the Alpine parking lot. Lift-served skiing in the outer Alpine bowls is a worthwhile but separate objective that should be achieved with separate lifts that do not mar the wilderness experience

Theme ID: 7.5 Theme Name: Route Alternatives Description: Various alternative alignments for the ropeway

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CID: 78 Last Name: Brew Organization: Representative: True

Substantive Comment: ...I'm going to leave you with an alternative that I have not heard discussed fully, and that is take it all on private land except for right near the base….And, finally, the alternative. Come up over KT-22 over Troy Caldwell's land, across the flats and you hit the Forest Service land before you get to the base area, but you're not up on the side of the hill where the forest and the wilderness is.

Theme ID: 7.5 Theme Name: Route Alternatives Description: Various alternative alignments for the ropeway

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CID: 71 Last Name: McMurchie Organization: Alpine Electric, Alpine Integration Representative: True

Substantive Comment: So here's our proposal. We would like to see the gondola realigned to drop down into the White Wolf base area for the mid station rather than across the Five Lakes Escarpment. It could then follow Alpine Meadows Rd. to the Alpine Meadows base area.

Theme ID: 7.5 Theme Name: Route Alternatives Description: Various alternative alignments for the ropeway

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CID: 55 Last Name: Higgins Jr Organization: Representative: True

Substantive Comment: Secondarily, the current layout makes no sense. If KSL's investors want to connect the two resorts, why not situate the base station closer to the bottom of kangaroo chair or the maintenance sheds and not ruin the view from the deck at Alpine Meadows. Why ruin the solitude of the five lakes trail to satisfy their profitability goals? If they really feel the need to connect the two resorts, use Troy Caldwell's property and run it to the top of KT-22, and allow downloading of the KT-22 lift. Please carefully study all alignment options and alternative configurations.

Theme ID: 7.5 Theme Name: Route Alternatives Description: Various alternative alignments for the ropeway

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CID: 66 Last Name: Drake Organization: Representative: True

Substantive Comment: I think connecting Alpine & Squaw could have been done more cheaply and 2) efficiently and environmentally friendly by just using a chairlift to connect the tops of the two ridges between the resorts.

Theme ID: 7.6 Theme Name: Alternative Technologies Description: Chairlifts, tunnels, etc.

CID: 62 Last Name: Stepner Organization: Representative: True

Substantive Comment: 3. Once the correct trajectory was decided upon, what alternative conveyance were considered (pulse, fewer layer cars, etc.)

Theme ID: 7.6 Theme Name: Alternative Technologies Description: Chairlifts, tunnels, etc.

CID: 195 Last Name: Markel Organization: Windermere Farms Representative: True

Substantive Comment: Many suggestions have been offered from relocation of the Squaw side base location. Redesign of the storage area of the lift transportation modules ... be the modules tram cars or gondola units. None of these suggestions seem to be incorporated in the current design.

Theme ID: 7.6 Theme Name: Alternative Technologies Description: Chairlifts, tunnels, etc.

CID: 109 Last Name: Brew Organization: Representative: True

Substantive Comment: The second alternative is-gasp-a tunnel with a light-rail system. The Squaw terminal could be almost anywhere near the Far East, and the tunnel could be excavated so as to emerge almost anywhere on the White Wolf property. From there to the Alpine base would then parallel the road on its west side up to the base area, as described above. No mid-stations would be needed, and the system could operate much faster than any gondola. The tunneling should not be difficult in that it would likely be in fractured volcanic rock. I suggest that the spoil from the tunneling could be used to reconstruct the lower hillside of Red Dog and Far East and that all of Squaw's heavy commercial operations be underground beneath the new slope. I judge that the overall cost of construction and operation of such a system would be appreciably less than that of any gondola system, but it, like all the rest would require careful analysis. The environmental costs would be less than those associated with the alternatives described above.

Theme ID: 7.6 Theme Name: Alternative Technologies Description: Chairlifts, tunnels, etc.

CID: 205 Last Name: Tumas Organization: Representative: True

Substantive Comment: An alternative is needed that has no impact to any Sierra yellow-legged frog populations.

Theme ID: 7.7 Theme Name: SNYLF Avoidance Description: Alternative to avoid impacts to SNYLF

SubResource ID: *2.4* **SubResource Description: *Alternative 2 - Summer Operation***

CID: 177 Last Name: Heagerty Organization: Granite Chief Wilderness Protection League Representative: True

Substantive Comment: Binding Limitation on Operations The applicant states regularly and unequivocally that the gondola would only operate during ski season. These assertions may incline the County to omit any evaluation of summer operations of the gondola. Omitting the full evaluation of potential future summer operations of the gondola would only be credible and justifiable if the applicant and landowner commit to a permanent and irrevocable deed restriction limiting gondola operations. Too often applicants apply for a scaled down project to lessen an environmental review, only to come back at a later time for a simple expansion of a facility already in place. Given the financial backing of this project, the County and the public should expect a different gondola owner in the future who will inevitably ask why can't this operate in the summer? If the County can not secure an enforceable deed restriction concerning ski season-only operations, then the County must evaluate all the potential impacts of a year-round gondola operation. The private equity firm investing in this gondola typically holds these types of properties for short (3-5 year) periods. The County and the public need permit conditions, no crawl-back provisions and other legally binding instruments to address different owners and operators and their potential expectations.

Theme ID: 9.1 Theme Name: Potential Summer operation of Gondola Description: Analysis of year-round operation of Gondola is necessary as Squaw would eventually operate year-round

CID: 177 Last Name: Heagerty Organization: Granite Chief Wilderness Protection League Representative: True

Substantive Comment: Cumulative Impacts To Be Addressed The likelihood of the expansion of gondola operations to year-round is real and substantial, given the capital costs of the project ($35 million) and the anticipated shorter and shorter ski seasons. Additionally, the County should anticipate in the EIR the prospect of the gondola being sold off in the future and the new owner requesting authorization to move into year-round operations. These potential cumulative impacts need to be fully evaluated unless the applicant provides a Binding Limitation on Use (see section below). Year-round impacts could be farreaching and substantial, deserving the full disclosure of impacts resulting from the offloading of riders/pedestrians adjacent to the Five Lakes, the Granite Chief Wilderness, the Five Lakes Trail, and near the Pacific Crest Trail (a gondola with a projected capacity of 1400 persons per hour). What impact would 1400 persons/hour have on the native species, water quality, quietness and visual quality of the Five Lakes and Wilderness Area? Additionally, how would year-round operations impact traffic at Alpine, Squaw and Highway 89 from Truckee to Tahoe City?

Theme ID: 9.1 Theme Name: Potential Summer operation of Gondola Description: Analysis of year-round operation of Gondola is necessary as Squaw would eventually operate year-round

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CID: 202 Last Name: Heagerty Organization: Granite Chief Wilderness Protection League Representative: True

Substantive Comment: The applicant has asserted that gondola operations will occur only during ski seasons. However, the science is clear that winters will become shorter, warmer, and with less snow. These future conditions would pose substantial economic and other burdens on this $35 million capital investment. Understandably, we remain skeptical that in the future Special Use Permit and county permit amendments wouldn't be requested for year-round operations. These seemingly "small" amendments put the public at considerable risk of agency failures to credibly evaluate full project impacts versus a contrived piecemealing of the proposed action. NEPA and CEQA case law is rich with these types of problems and point to the need for lead agencies to be diligent in pursuing the public's interest for full disclosure and evaluation. In this particular situation we the public hold a great risk of project piecemealing, because the developer, as a private equity firm, is singular in it's purpose and will remain committed to value maximization. A costly gondola operating for shorter and shorter seasons would not be financially sustainable. The prospect of the gondola asset being sold off to another investor should be understood, including the likely "revised" owner expectations. Such a scenario is more certain than the widening of SR 89. We therefore ask that legally binding deed restrictions or equally enforceable instruments be included in the project definitions and the regulatory approval documents, in order to relieve these CEQA and NEPA processes from the burden of fully describing and evaluating all aspects of year-round gondola operations. As we all know, year-round gondola operations would put these public trust assets (wilderness areas,endangered species, public trails, national forests and the other natural resources) at considerable and to date uncontemplated risks. Without substantiated certainty of no summer operations then we call on the Forest Service and Placer County to fully address year-round operations in this EIR/ EIS.

Theme ID: 9.1 Theme Name: Potential Summer operation of Gondola Description: Analysis of year-round operation of Gondola is necessary as Squaw would eventually operate year-round

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Resource ID: *3* Resource Description *NEPA/CEQA Process*

SubResource ID: *3.1* SubResource Description: *General*

CID: 202 Last Name: Heagerty Organization: Granite Chief Wilderness Protection League Representative: True

Substantive Comment: Compliance with CEQA and NEPA- Placer County is being strongly criticized for it's shortfalls in meeting the legal standards of CEQA regarding two (current) large Tahoe development proposals. Reviews of the Martis West and Squaw Village EIR documents by the Attorney General's Office and the Shute-Mihaly Law Offices should be carefully studied by county staff and project consultants so the public is not subjected to another substandard EIR. We hope there are rigorous 3rd party and outside legal reviews to insure document adequacy and CEQA compliance before issuing the Draft EIR/EIS to the public. The time and costs imposed on the public to review substandard documents is irresponsible.

Theme ID: 11.1 Theme Name: Analysis to fully comply with CEQA process Description: Compliance with CEQA regulations and analysis requirements

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CID: 180 Last Name: Scanlan Organization: Bear Creek Association Representative: True

Substantive Comment: Based on past and current experiences with Placer County regarding CEQA we hold deep concern as to the County's interest or ability in acting on the legitimate requests for substantive environmental reviews. The Squaw Village DEIR generated 350 letters from the public and local, state and federal agencies, yet the County has to date failed to take any substantive actions to address most of the significant concerns articulated by many citizens and agencies. We ask the County leadership to demonstrate more clearly your commitment to meeting the intent of CEQA in the context of the Base-toBase Gondola project. We hope to see clear evidence of the county striving to meet public concerns in a few key areas: that the Ascent Consultants scope of work for preparing the DEIR reflect the substantive issues found here and in other scoping letters; the development of specific technical work products that address substantive issues (as articulated below) to be made available for third-party technical reviews that provide in-depth technical information that the DEIR would not contain; and the demonstration by the County of the thoroughness and objectivity of your impacts analyses. (The Squaw Village EIR has generated a great deal of paper but has failed to provide substantive reporting and analyses of over 15 major issue areas, as evidenced in the 350 comment letters submitted on the DEIR and largely ignored in the FEIR). Another cursorial review of the substantive environmental and social issues related to the gondola proposal would be a failing of the County's CEQA obligations and a failing of our representative government.

Theme ID: 11.2 Theme Name: USFS and County Responsibilities Description: Public comments need to be properly addressed and remaining present throughout the projects analysis

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CID: 98 Last Name: Heagerty Organization: Representative: True

Substantive Comment: USFS Responsibilities to the Public We ask the USFS to undertake all that you can to meet the public's interest in disclosing and acting on the public and agency requests for substantive environmental review of the proposed action. We ask the USFS to address the public concerns and help the public review efforts for this project by: ensuring that the Project consultants' scope of work for preparing the DEIR clearly reflect the substantive issues found here and in other scoping letters; preparing specific standalone technical work products that address substantive issues (as articulated below) to be made available for third-party technical reviews that the DEIS would not necessarily contain; and a demonstration in all EIS-related work products of thoroughness and objectivity. We request the opportunity to review the contractor's scope of work for undertaking the technical work required to prepare and produce the DEIS, once it is finalized by the USFS. The financial and other non-technical aspects of the contractor scope of work are not requested.

Theme ID: 11.2 Theme Name: USFS and County Responsibilities Description: Public comments need to be properly addressed and remaining present throughout the projects analysis

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CID: 80 Last Name: Bennett Organization: Representative: True

Substantive Comment: I also want to request more scoping meetings and notifications for all homeowners.

Theme ID: 11.3 Theme Name: Scoping meetings and notifications for all homeowners Description: Scoping meetings and notifications for all homeowners

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SubResource ID: *3.3* **SubResource Description: *Accessibility***

CID: 101 Last Name: Bennett Organization: Representative: True

Substantive Comment: Scoping Meeting: One has to ask why the County would conduct one Scoping Meeting for this B2B project without adequate notification to the general public, and then hold the meeting on a Monday during the early afternoon hours and then another in the early afternoon. This date/time is completely inappropriate for residents that work, and second homeowners who live in Alpine Meadows that are generally not in the area. Additionally, residents that actually live in Alpine Meadows were not notified, nor were they made aware of this project. However, this project would directly affect their properties and lives. I am requesting that additional notification of residents be conducted by the County, and that more scoping meetings are held so that people can actually participate in this project.

Theme ID: 13.1 Theme Name: Inappropriate scoping meeting times and poor notifications of meetings information Description: Scoping meetings were held at inappropriate times and days of the week and poor notifications of meetings information

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SubResource ID: *3.4* **SubResource Description: *EIS and EIR Documents***

CID: 92 Last Name: Beaton Organization: Shute, Mihaly & Weinberger LLP Representative: True

Substantive Comment: II. The EIR and EIS Must Thoroughly Analyze and Mitigate for the Project's Potential Significant Environmental Impacts. An EIR must provide a degree of analysis and detail about environmental impacts that will enable decision-makers to make intelligent judgments in light of the environmental consequences of their decisions. CEQA Guidelines § 15151; Kings County Farm Bureau v. City of Hanford (1990) 221 Cal.App.3d 692. To this end, the lead agency must make a good faith effort at full disclosure of environmental impacts. In order to accomplish this requirement, it is essential that the Project is adequately described and that existing setting information is complete. See County of Inyo v. City of Los Angeles (1977) 71 Cal.App.3d 185, 199. Both the public and decision-makers need to fully understand the implications of the choices that are presented related to the Project, mitigation measures, and alternatives. Laurel Heights Improvement Ass'n v. Regents of University of California (1988) 6 Cal.4th 1112, 1123. Similarly, NEPA requires that an EIS fully assess and disclose the full range of environmental consequences of its approval of the project, including "ecological (such as the effects on natural resources and on the components, structures, and functioning of affected ecosystems), aesthetic, historic, [and] cultural" impacts, "whether direct, indirect, or cumulative." 40 C.F.R. §§ 1502.16(a), (b); 1508.8. Indirect effects are those impacts that are caused by the action, but occur "later in time or farther removed in distance, but are still reasonably foreseeable," and may include "growth inducing effects and other effects related to induced changes in the pattern of land use, population density or growth rate, and related effects on air and water and other natural systems, including ecosystems." 40 C.F.R. § 1508.8.

Theme ID: 14.1 Theme Name: NEPA/CEQA Requirements Description: Analysis must fully analyze resource and propose mitigation measure for all potentially impacted resources

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CID: 214 Last Name: Tolby Organization: Representative: True

Substantive Comment: I am concerned that these two separate environmental review processes are being joined into one review. Will this combination of environmental reviews by the United States Forest Service and Placer County improve the review process and help protect the environment or will it just make it easier for Placer County to rubber stamp another major development project in the Sierra.

Theme ID: 14.2 Theme Name: Joint Document Description: Concerns about joint EIS/EIR

CID: 91 Last Name: Schifferle Organization: Representative: True

Substantive Comment: The proposed amendment to the US Forest Service Special Use Permit is a necessary part of the project and the associated impacts along with any impacts to the surrounding wilderness area, wetlands, watershed and the fish and wildlife along with recreational values supported must be disclosed and analyzed.

Theme ID: 14.3 Theme Name: SUP Amendment Description: Impacts to resources resulting from SUP amendment

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CID: 101 Last Name: Bennett Organization: Representative: True

Substantive Comment: The B2B Project is clearly an attempt by Placer County to segment one project from another. The B2B project would not proceed on its own merit without the development projects being proposed within the context of the Squaw Valley Specific Plan. Clearly, there is a nexus between the two projects that either the consultants don't understand or the County is burying it head in the snow about. Therefore, this component the B2B project should have been discussed within the context of the overall Squaw Valley Specific Plan EIR project. Both are highly inter-related, and dependent upon one another. I am requesting that the EIR for the Squaw Valley Specific Plan and EIR be set-aside, and then recirculated to include any, and all discussions being planned for the B2B project, so that the general public can fully grasp the ULTIMATE planned buildout of the Squaw Valley Specific Plan project, including this gondola project between two locations. Does the County really believe that one project would proceed without the other? If so, then the full burden of proof in on the County – a clear economic assessment needs to be developed, as part of this project that demonstrates to the general public that one project is not necessary for the other to move forward. The timing of both projects is high suspect – and, generally creates another NEXUS for the gondola project being tied to the planned development that could potentially occur as part of the Squaw Valley Specific Plan. One has to ponder who would rationally develop a project of this magnitude (in terms of project costs and eventual operation) to have a gondola that connects Squaw Valley to Alpine Meadows if there is not adequate skiers to ride it. If the plan for Squaw Valley does not proceed forward will the gondola proceed forward? Clearly, the Project Applicant needs to clearly demonstrate to the general public that point (economics and ridership).

Theme ID: 14.4 Theme Name: NEPA should analyze Gondola and Squaw Base Area as one project Description: Impacts of Squaw Base Area project will multiple the impacts of the preceding Gondola project

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CID: 93 Last Name: Judge Organization: California Water Boards: Nonpoint Source Pollution Control U Representative: True

Substantive Comment: III. California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) The Lahontan Water Board must comply with the CEQA process whenever it carries out a discretionary action, such as issuing a CWA Section 401 WQC or granting an exemption to a prohibition contained in the Water Quality Control Plan for the Lahontan Region (Basin Plan). Where required, the CEQA scoping, document development, noticing, and public review should occur simultaneously with your NEPA process. The regulations that guide the Water Board's compliance with CEQA direct us to work with federal agencies to streamline the environmental review process by preparing a combined environmental document (a NEPA/CEQA-compliant document). We will work with your agency to supplement your NEPA document to fully comply with CEQA, which would be circulated to meet the public notice and involvement requirements of CEQA. The Lahontan Water Board would certify the joint environmental document at a public hearing. However, please be aware that the Lahontan Water Board does not have the staff, funding, or knowledge of your specific project details to write the CEQA document in a timely fashion. Lahontan Water Board staff therefore recommends that, if a CEQA Checklist is required for this project, you complete this work in-house, with a partner agency, or hire a consultant to initiate development of this documentation, prior to Water Board staff review and coordination.

Theme ID: 14.6 Theme Name: CEQA/Lahontan Water Board Description: Lahontan Water Board comment

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CID: 171 Last Name: Gordon Organization: Environmental Protection Agency Representative: True

Substantive Comment: CEOA/NEPA Coordination A joint review process can avoid redundancy, improve efficiency and interagency cooperation, and be easier for citizens and applicants. EPA recommends consulting the 2014 Handbook: NEPA and CEQA: Integrating Federal and State Environmental Reviews (2014).

Theme ID: 14.8 Theme Name: Joint NEPA & CEQA Description: Recommendation to combine NEPA and CEQA reviews

CID: 177 Last Name: Heagerty Organization: Granite Chief Wilderness Protection League Representative: True

Substantive Comment: Because the County will not develop a joint EIR/EIS document with the US Forest Service (USFS) the public and other agencies will have to review and assess two separate documents prepared by different consultants. Thus the public and agencies will be faced with reviewing different documents with different authors, with variations in levels of detail, potentially different technical conclusions, determinations of significance, etc. It is therefore appropriate for the County to direct the project technical consultants to prepare stand-alone Reports, Technical Memoranda or comparable products that citizens, agencies and 3rd-parties can review and assess without having to reconcile differences between the EIR and the EIS, or their respective summaries of the source technical work.

Theme ID: 14.9 Theme Name: Two documents requires the novice public to read two documents Description: Requiring the novice public to read two documents increases the burden/confusion and suppresses the understanding

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SubResource ID: *3.5* **SubResource Description: *NEPA Consultant***

CID: 96 Last Name: Moore Organization: Sierra Club Representative: True

Substantive Comment: Forest Service choice of EIS contractor The Forest Service has contracted with the SE Group, which designed the ropeway project for Squaw Valley Ski Holdings, to prepare the EIS for the project. We have very serious concerns about whether the firm that designed the project can possibly ignore its previous work on the project, take an entirely fresh look at the project, and perform a thorough and objective assessment of the project's environmental impacts. We are especially concerned about the objectivity of the assessment of the proposed route of the ropeway and alternative routes. The Forest Service or another contractor should prepare the EIS for the project.

Theme ID: 15.1 Theme Name: Conflict of Interest Description: SE Group conflict of interest

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CID: 101 Last Name: Bennett Organization: Representative: True

Substantive Comment: Use of the Same Environmental Consultants – From Sacramento Area: Is there some reason that Placer County continues to use the same consultants from Sacramento? It is very apparent, that most of these technical writers know relatively nothing about the local Tahoe area or region. Additionally, it seems highly inappropriate and very suspicious to the public that the same firm is being used over and over again to craft these EIRs for the County. The Squaw Valley Specific Plan EIR was a terrible representation of professional technical skills, based on the significant amount of comments received and generally comments received in the same subject matters. I would suggest that the County save taxpayers time and money, and use other consultants that have a far better understanding and technical gasp of the subject matter for these projects.

Theme ID: 15.2 Theme Name: Use local consultants Description: Placer County projects should use Placer County Consultants, not consultants from Sacramento

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Resource ID: *4* Resource Description *Federal and Local Planning Documents*

SubResource ID: *4.1* SubResource Description: *General*

CID: 93 Last Name: Judge Organization: California Water Boards: Nonpoint Source Pollution Control U Representative: True

Substantive Comment: IV. National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) The National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) stormwater program regulates stormwater discharges from construction activities that disturb one or more acres of soil. The Proposed Action describes soil disturbing activities greater than one acre and will require an NPDES General Permit for Discharges of Storm Water Associated with Construction Activity. The permit application may be downloaded from the following webpage: http://www.waterboards.ca.gov/water issues/programs/stormwater/docs/constpermits/wgo20090009complete.pdf. A completed application should be submitted through the State Water Board's Storm Water Multi-Application and Report Tracking System (SMARTS) at: https://smarts.waterboards.ca.gov/

Theme ID: 16.2 Theme Name: Other Required Permits Description: Acquire all permits necessary prior to construction

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SubResource ID: *4.2* SubResource Description: *Granite Chief Wilderness*

CID: 85 Last Name: Lutkemuller Organization: Representative: True

Substantive Comment: And then I guess the precedent that could be set in the Tahoe area with allowing the gondola to come so close to the wilderness area, as Tom noted, and just in general opening up an area like this to an industrial project could set the precedent for other ski resorts to try to do the same thing on their adjacent national forest and private lands, and I think we should be concerned about that as well.

Theme ID: 17.1 Theme Name: Precedent for Projects Near Wilderness Description: Allowing this project changes the precedents of Wilderness areas. What are the long term effects on all Wilderness Areas and developments

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CID: 104 Last Name: Bruner Organization: Representative: True

Substantive Comment: Conflict with the Wilderness Act: The GCW has been designated under the Wilderness Act of 1964 (The Act). The Act defines a wilderness area as: ... an area where the earth and its community of life are untrammeled by man, where man himself is a visitor who does not remain. An area of wilderness is further defined to mean in this Act an area of undeveloped Federal land retaining its primeval character and influence, without permanent improvements or human habitation, which is protected and managed so as to preserve its natural conditions and which (1) generally appears to have been affected primarily by the forces of nature, with the imprint of man's work substantially unnoticeable; ... The installation of towers, mid-stations, cables, shelters, platforms and piping on NFS land adjacent to and over a federally designated wilderness area is in direct conflict with the intent of The Act. Furthermore, the use of helicopters to install the towers and mid-stations in areas adjacent to GCW, and the use of ATVs to service and supply the propane and oxygen tank shelters on land adjacent to GCW, is in conflict with prohibitions under The Act, which include: Motorized equipment and equipment used for mechanical transport is generally prohibited on all federal lands designated as wilderness. This includes the use of motor vehicles, motorboats, motorized equipment, bicycles, hang gliders, wagons, carts, portage wheels, and the landing of aircraft including helicopters, unless provided for in specific legislation. The Act goes on to say: 2 The Wilderness Act requires management of human-caused impacts and protection of the area's wilderness character to insure that it is unimpaired for the future use and enjoyment as wilderness. Use of the equipment listed as prohibited in wilderness is inconsistent with the provision in the Wilderness Act which mandates opportunities for solitude or primitive recreation and that wilderness is a place that is in contrast with areas where people and their works are dominant.

Theme ID: 17.2 Theme Name: Impact on Current Wilderness Area Description: Impacts on GCW as currently designated Wilderness

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CID: 180 Last Name: Scanlan Organization: Bear Creek Association Representative: True

Substantive Comment: Why was the Wilderness Boundary drawn as we see it today on the USFS maps? What was the intent of Congress to include the Granite Wall east of Five Lakes and is so prominent along the Five Lakes Trail? What species would be best protected with that natural buffer?

Theme ID: 17.3 Theme Name: Impacts on Wilderness Values Description: EIS must analyze effects on Wilderness values and resources

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CID: 49 Last Name: Heagerty Organization: Granite Chief Wilderness Protection League Representative: True

Substantive Comment: The EIS needs to describe the baseline conditions of the Granite Chief Wilderness Area, to meaningfully assess the impacts from a gondola and the associated infrastructure encroaching on this wilderness. Scientists are finding that buffer zones are essential to protecting wilderness areas (University of Georgia, June 26, 2016). To what degree will the project disrupt these important values and the protections sought when the lands adjacent to the project were designated as Wilderness? The potential impacts to these values need to be clearly highlighted, including the impacts to endangered species, wildlife corridors, drainage, water quality, noise, aesthetics, recreation and the other intrinsic values found in this wilderness.

Theme ID: 17.3 Theme Name: Impacts on Wilderness Values Description: EIS must analyze effects on Wilderness values and resources

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CID: 35 Last Name: Buffington Organization: Representative: True

Substantive Comment: The Five Lakes portion of the GCW is the closest and most accessible wilderness to the North Tahoe/Truckee region, and is extremely popular for recreation by both locals and visitors. The path of the gondola would be directly adjacent to a considerable distance along the Granite Chief Wilderness Area boundary that lies on US Forest Service land, and it would run directly over a portion of GCW that lies on private land. We are grateful for the public access that is granted through private land to allow access to the Granite Chief Wilderness, but we find this proposed infringement on the wilderness area unacceptable. The portion of the wilderness area along the eastern border of the GCW (directly adjacent to the proposed gondola route), offers some of the most magnificent views and most dramatic alpine scenery in the Granite Chief Wilderness Area. It is hard to imagine that the USFS would consider compromising this gorgeous wilderness area.

Theme ID: 17.3 Theme Name: Impacts on Wilderness Values Description: EIS must analyze effects on Wilderness values and resources

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CID: 208 Last Name: Fielding Organization: Representative: True

Substantive Comment: However, the proposed alignment through the edge of the Five Lakes area is offensive and unnecessary. As shown in the project EIS documents (http://media.squawalpinegondolaeis.com/documents/Fig2_Base_Map_160412.pdf), the gondola clearly goes through the congressionally designated boundary of the Granite Chief Wilderness. While this section of land is private, it goes against the intent of the wilderness area. The edge of the plateau that the proposed gondola traverses is a stunning setting, right on the Sierra Pacific/Tahoe watershed. The Five Lakes are a very popular family hike, and while the trail is surrounded by ski areas and development, the lakes themselves are a pristine escape. The gondola, as proposed, would indelibly alter and degrade this essence of wilderness.

Theme ID: 17.3 Theme Name: Impacts on Wilderness Values Description: EIS must analyze effects on Wilderness values and resources

CID: 98 Last Name: Heagerty Organization: Representative: True

Substantive Comment: Wilderness areas have been set aside because they provide core zone values where all mechanical human activity is intentionally restricted. These areas typically contain important resources that are to be used for scientific research and environmental education. How would the proposed project impact or interfere with these activities?

Theme ID: 17.3 Theme Name: Impacts on Wilderness Values Description: EIS must analyze effects on Wilderness values and resources

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CID: 58 Last Name: Hatch Organization: Representative: True

Substantive Comment: 1) Impacts on Wilderness Character of the Granite Chief Wilderness; The Project documents state numerous times that although a portion of the project is within the area designated as Granite Chief Wilderness, wilderness laws and regulations do not apply to private property. The greater issue is the the Interconnect Gondola is proposed to be built and operated 80 ft. from the federal boundary of the Granite Chief Wilderness. The EIS must address the impacts of the Project on the adjacent wilderness including its wilderness character as defined in the Wilderness Act of 1964 and the California Wilderness Act of 1984 that designated the Granite Chief Wilderness. The issues that need to be addressed are highlighted in red below. It is difficult to understand how the USFS could approve a project that destroyed the existing character of adjacent wilderness lands. Although not explicitly mentioned in the wilderness definitions, the impact of construction, operation, avalanche mitigation, and increased numbers of users on the natural soundscape also needs to be evaluated. DEFINITION OF WILDERNESS (Wilderness Act of 1964) (c) A wilderness, in contrast with those areas where man and his own works dominate the landscape, is hereby recognized as an area where the earth and its community of life are untrammeled by man, where man himself is a visitor who does not remain. An area of wilderness is further defined to mean in this Act an area of undeveloped Federal land retaining its primeval character and influence, without permanent improvements or human habitation, which is protected and managed so as to preserve its natural conditions and which (1) generally appears to have been affected primarily by the forces of nature, with the imprint of man's work substantially unnoticeable; (2) has outstanding opportunities for solitude or a primitive and unconfined type of recreation; (3) has at least five thousand acres of land or is of sufficient size as to make practicable its preservation and use in an unimpaired condition; and (4) may also contain ecological, geological, or other features of scientific, educational, scenic, or historical value. California Wilderness Act of 1984 (3) as provided in section 4(b) of the Wilderness Act, the Secretary concerned shall administer such areas so as to preserve their wilderness character and to devote them to the public purposes of recreational, scenic, scientific, educational, conservation, and historical use.

Theme ID: 17.3 Theme Name: Impacts on Wilderness Values Description: EIS must analyze effects on Wilderness values and resources

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CID: 170 Last Name: Macfarlane Organization: Wilderness Watch Representative: True

Substantive Comment: Wilderness The scoping materials state: While only one quarter of the proposed lift would be located on NFS lands, a segment of the lift, located on private property, would cross through the congressionally designated boundary of the Granite Chief Wilderness (GCW). However, the Wilderness Act does not apply to private property and this private property is not managed, maintained, or considered part of the GCW. This is misleading, given the language of the 1984 California Wilderness Act and the fact the official wilderness website for the agencies—wildernerss.net—shows the area within the wilderness boundary. Congressional intent in the California Wilderness Act is clear: Within sixty days of the date of enactment of this title, the Secretary of Agriculture shall enter into negotiations to acquire by exchange all or part of any privately owned lands within the national forest wilderness areas designated by this title. Such exchange shall to the maximum extent practicable be completed within three years after the date of enactment of this title. The Secretary is authorized to acquire such lands by means other than exchange, beginning three years after the date of enactment of this title. Acquisition shall be only with the concurrence of the owner. Values shall be determined without reference to any restrictions on access or use which arise out of designation as a wilderness area. (Emphasis added.) For whatever reasons, that area has not yet been acquired. However, that is clearly the intent of Congress. The impacts to the Wilderness must not only be assessed but also given deference in the decision-making process. The California Wilderness Act of 1984 contains no buffer zone language. As such, the agency has an affirmative duty to protect the Granite Chief Wilderness. Installation of this structure, which is only 80 feet from the boundary of the national forest land designated Wilderness, would have a profound negative impact on the Wilderness. Installation of the Gondola where it is proposed would also permanently preclude adding this land to the Wilderness, which Congress intended would occur. Such a structure is incompatible with Wilderness.

Theme ID: 17.4 Theme Name: Congressional Intent for Wilderness Designation Description: Inconsistent with Congressional intent to incorporate additional land into GCW

CID: 203 Last Name: Heagerty Organization: Granite Chief Wilderness Protection League Representative: True

Substantive Comment: The EIR/EIS should describe the public opportunity to acquire those lands that have been designated by Congress and the State of California to be fully protected Wilderness, but have not yet been acquired for those protections. Has our national interest and our state interest diminished? If so, why? If not, what can be done to fulfill our public interest? What is the process for achieving the will of our Congress and our State? The EIR/EIS should describe the potential public losses that would occur if the privately held Wilderness lands were allowed to be harmed and thus forever lost as a Wilderness and a Public Trust Asset.

Theme ID: 17.4 Theme Name: Congressional Intent for Wilderness Designation Description: Inconsistent with Congressional intent to incorporate additional land into GCW

CID: 96 Last Name: Moore Organization: Sierra Club Representative: True

Substantive Comment: The proposed ropeway crosses private land within the legislatively designated boundary of the Granite Chief Wilderness (hereafter “legislatively designated land”), land which the Forest Service has never succeeded in acquiring, despite clear congressional direction. Installation of the ropeway towers on private land very close to the eastern edge of Forest Service lands in the wilderness would permanently preclude adding all the legislatively designated land in section 5 to the Wilderness.

Theme ID: 17.4 Theme Name: Congressional Intent for Wilderness Designation Description: Inconsistent with Congressional intent to incorporate additional land into GCW

CID: 205 Last Name: Tumas Organization: Representative: True

Substantive Comment: The EIR/EIS should describe the geologic, biologic, cultural and/or other reasons why the Granite Chief Wilderness was established and why the boundaries were established in the project area. What was the national interest and the state interest? What is the obligation of the US Forest Service to protect not only the federal lands but also the private lands that fall within the Designated Wilderness Boundary? The EIR/EIS should clearly explain what the public loss may be if the privately held Wilderness lands are allowed to be developed and thus forever lost to the public?

Theme ID: 17.4 Theme Name: Congressional Intent for Wilderness Designation Description: Inconsistent with Congressional intent to incorporate additional land into GCW

CID: 24 Last Name: Johnson Organization: Representative: True

Substantive Comment: Another issue that should be thoroughly examined, is the issue of private lands owned within the Granite Chief Wilderness boundary. The two areas of significant concern for this project are the area the Gondola crosses to the east of Five Lakes on the White Wolf property, and the previously mentioned section of land to the northeast of Estelle Peak. A thorough EIS should provide clarification and transparency on the US Forest Service’s previous efforts and future goals in acquiring these areas of privately held land within the Wilderness boundary. As well, the EIS should examine how development on these lands, both directly and indirectly caused by the applicant’s proposal, will impact future efforts to acquire these areas and future efforts to restore these areas to Wilderness standards after development has occurred.

Theme ID: 17.4 Theme Name: Congressional Intent for Wilderness Designation Description: Inconsistent with Congressional intent to incorporate additional land into GCW

CID: 94 Last Name: Moore Organization: Alpine Meadows Estates Representative: True

Substantive Comment: The first issue we would like to raise is the proximity of this project to Designated Wilderness - Granite Chief Wilderness (GCW). In particular, the Alpine midway station is being proposed 80 feet from the boundary of GCW. During construction, how would you ensure rock blasting and helicopter use would not impact the GCW? fter construction, how do you justify the visual blight and auditory noises that the chair lift will bring to the GCW? In addition, the hiking trail that leads to the Granite Chief Wilderness (which does cross private property) will be overshadowed by the gondola. Do we really want one of the premier entryways to GCW to be blighted by a gondola?

Theme ID: 17.5 Theme Name: Impacts of construction on GCW Area Description: Analysis and mitigation of construction practices on GCW Area

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CID: 203 Last Name: Heagerty Organization: Granite Chief Wilderness Protection League Representative: True

Substantive Comment: The Granite Chief Wilderness, the Five Lakes Basin, the Five Lakes Trail, at-risk-species and associated natural resources that are Public Trust Assets are to be protected by our government agencies for the use and enjoyment of present and future generations. Public Trust Assets hold particular legal protections under the Public Trust Doctrine. The EIR/EIS must disclose the respective fiduciary responsibilities of the government agencies that have Public Trust responsibilities concerning the decisions associated with this proposal.

Theme ID: 17.6 Theme Name: Public Trust Resource Description: Obligation to project public trust resource for future generations

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CID: 180 Last Name: Scanlan Organization: Bear Creek Association Representative: True

Substantive Comment: The gondola project would impact a Public Trust Resource, the Granite Chief Wilderness Area. Public Trust Resources are those natural assets that belong to all people and to our future generations and "…any governmental conduct which is calculated either to reallocate that resource to more restricted uses or to subject public uses to the self-interest of private parties" is acting country to he public interest (Sax, Michigan Law Review, 1969). Our elected government acts as our Trustees in protecting these trust resources, with the same fiduciary obligations as in other property trusts (Wood, Nature's Trust, 2014). The Granite Chief Wilderness would be impacted by this proposed project and we ask that you describe your trustee responsibilities, particularly to future generations, in your pending project decisions. We ask that the County be transparent in your efforts to fulfill your trustee obligations to protect the Public Trust Assets and the inherent public interests for protection, those assets being the Granite Chief Wilderness Designated Area, the Five Lakes Basin and lakes, and the Five Lakes Trail.

Theme ID: 17.6 Theme Name: Public Trust Resource Description: Obligation to project public trust resource for future generations

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CID: 98 Last Name: Heagerty Organization: Representative: True

Substantive Comment: The Nation's Wilderness Areas are part of the Public Trust Resource. These natural resources are integral to our legacy as a nation and must be protected for the benefit of all people and our future generations. The EIS must describe the Public Trust values of the Granite Chief, Five Lakes and Five Lakes Trail and the inherent responsibilities of the USFS, as our Trustees in this particular regard, to protect these resources from degradation.

Theme ID: 17.6 Theme Name: Public Trust Resource Description: Obligation to project public trust resource for future generations

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CID: 91 Last Name: Schifferle Organization: Representative: True

Substantive Comment: It is not clear from the limited information provided to the public in the NOI and NOP and the limited maps, where exactly this Gondola project would traverse the designated Granite Chief Wilderness area. Again insufficient information is provided, but it appears, some of the impacts would occur within the Congressionally designated wilderness boundaries on a private in - holding.

Theme ID: 17.7 Theme Name: Proximity to Wilderness Description: Comment about the proximity of the project to the GCW Area

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CID: 2 Last Name: Kashtan Organization: Representative: True

Substantive Comment: If the gondola is approved I would urge the Forest Service to not allow unloading at the Alpine Meadows mid station. Allowing unloading at this mid-station would allow easy access to Estelle and Bernie's Bowl. Currently these areas are reached by a fairly arduous hike which limits skier and snowboarder traffic within the bowls, creating a near-wilderness backcountry experience in an area that is controlled for avalanches. Allowing direct lift access to these areas will significantly degrade the nature and character of these relatively remote areas. Midstation unloading is not necessary to the avowed purpose of the gondola, which is to allow easy travel between Squaw Valley and Alpine Meadows. Also, the terrain accessed is advanced and expert, which is contrary to Squaw Valley's stated purpose of allowing easy access to Alpine Meadows for the availability of more beginner and intermediate terrain. If the gondola is approved it should be soley for the purpose of improving transportation between the resorts and not as a backdoor way to expand lift served terrain within the ski areas' boundaries.

Theme ID: 17.8 Theme Name: Alpine Meadows Mid-Station Description: Impacts to Wilderness values from activity at Alpine Meadows Mid-Station

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SubResource ID: ***4.3*** **SubResource Description:** ***Forest Plan***

CID: 104 Last Name: Bruner Organization: Representative: True

Substantive Comment: Conflict with the Forest Plan and Cumulative Impact: The Project Overview says that The Alpine Meadows SUP is located in the Scott Management Area which allows for development of additional winter sports facilities and support services as part of the desired future condition of the management area (Forest Plan, p. V-446-449). However, the Forest Plan p. V-449 says with respect to the Scott Management Area (MA): Consider visual quality in any land management activity in this MA, including the continued use by Alpine Stables (a site currently In conflict with visual standards) and ski area expansion. Continue to place all utility lines underground due to visual and avalanche considerations. Clearly the above-ground piping, platforms and shelters are not in accord with maintaining the visual quality ofthe Scott Management Area. In addition, one cannot look at the Gondola in isolation. This is part of a grand plan by SVSH to expand the Squaw Valley Resort, adding over 1,500 bedrooms as well as an indoor theme park, and use the Gondola as a further (year-round?) attraction. Page V-446 of the Forecast Plan says: Ski industry expansion represents the primary opportunity and raises the principal issues. Expansions are a concern in relation to traffic, community services and utility capacities, and provide secondary impacts to the Lake Tahoe Basin. Expansion in or near the Lake Tahoe Basin is dependent upon access via Highway 89 and is likely to face difficult obstacles. The planned SVSH expansion of the Squaw Valley Resort and installation of the gondola, which is meant to further increase attendance at the ski resort, would result in exactly the type of traffic concerns contemplated by the Forest Plan. The EIS must evaluate the potential increased traffic caused by the gondola as well as the traffic caused by the related Squaw Village expansion. Further, the approval of this Gondola will result in additional development as the owner of the private property (known as White Wolf) will then utilize the funding as well as the access provided by the Gondola to develop two further ski chair lifts (Caldwell Chair KT and Caldwell Chair Estelle) as well as the development of numerous homes, roads and parking structures. The proposed Estelle chair is dependent and interrelated with the gondola project. The overall White Wolf development should be fully addressed as a cumulative impact in the EIS. This project and the related projects will forever destroy the current visual quality in the Scott Management Area.

Theme ID: 18.1 Theme Name: Inconsistency with Forest Plan Description: Inconsistency with visual direction for Scott MA

SubResource ID: *4.4* **SubResource Description: *Clean Water Act***

CID: 93 Last Name: Judge Organization: California Water Boards: Nonpoint Source Pollution Control U Representative: True

Substantive Comment: II. Clean Water Act Section 401 Water Quality Certification Details in the proposed EIS should be specific enough to determine if work needing a 401 Water Quality Certification is proposed When a project involves excavation or fill in a wetland, a Clean Water Act (CWA) section 404 permit from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USAGE) may be required. When the USAGE issues a 404 permit, the Lahontan Regional Water Quality Control Board (Water Board) is required to certify that the project will not violate state water quality standards by issuing a CWA section 401 Water Quality Certification (WQC). Information on our 401 WQC program may be viewed at the following webpage: http://www.waterboards.ca.gov/lahontan/water issues/programs/clean water act 401/i ndex.shtml. The USACE Sacramento Main Office can be contacted at (916) 557-5250 for information on CWA section 404 permitting requirements. Lahontan Water Board staff encourages you contact USACE early in the project planning process to determine if they will require a CWA section 404 permit. If so, then the Lahontan Water Board will need to issue a 401 WQC, which would require compliance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), discussed below.

Theme ID: 19.1 Theme Name: EIS should verify if Section 404 permit is required Description:

SubResource ID: *4.5* **SubResource Description: *Squaw Valley & Alpine Meadows Plans***

CID: 80 Last Name: Bennett Organization: Representative: True

Substantive Comment: I would like to have Placer County address our 1960 General Plan for Alpine Meadows. I would like to get it updated with the current Climate Action Plan…

Theme ID: 20.1 Theme Name: Alpine Meadows 1960 General Plan revision Description: Revise the 1960 General Plan's Climate Action Plan

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CID: 101 Last Name: Bennett Organization: Representative: True

Substantive Comment: County Continues to Utilize an Outdated General Plan for Squaw Valley and Alpine Meadows As I've mentioned to the County previously, the Squaw Valley General Plan was prepared by Placer County in 1983, or over 33-YEARS AGO. The changes that have occurred within both the Squaw Valley and Alpine Meadows Valley have been dramatic over the last 33 years. I am again respectfully requesting that this required Plan and Land Use Ordinances be updated first, under the full scrutiny of public review; then, projects like the Squaw Valley Specific Plan and the B2B (which should be part of the Squaw Valley Specific Plan EIR) can then proceed forward by the Project Applicant(s). Placer County continues to utilize outdate and antiquated documents, and a Land Use Ordinance to "the shoe-horn" in a new Specific Plan for Squaw Valley area, along with a manufactured DEIR. Procedurally, and legally this is not the correct way to proceed, and given the fact that the general public had limited access into that Specific Plan that will affect their lives and potentially their livelihoods. It should also be noted, the Specific Plan itself further divorces itself away from addressing the fact that the Squaw Valley General Plan and Land Use Ordinance was prepared in 1983, for example: "The Plan Area lies within the Squaw Valley General Plan and Land Use Ordinance (SVGPLUO) area. This Specific Plan builds upon the goals and policies set out in the SVGPLUO as well as the 1994 Placer County General Plan (General Plan) to provide a coherent road map and an implementation strategy to direct growth within the Plan Area consistent with environmental, physical, social, and economic constraints." It's very difficult to build upon the SVGPLO, when the Squaw Valley General Plan is 33 years old, and is inherently out of date guidance document for the Squaw Valley community. Alternatively, since project implementation will necessitate adoption of General Plan Amendments and Zone Changes, the document as currently drafted fails to fulfill the stated intent of a specific plan, as defined in the CGC.

Theme ID: 20.2 Theme Name: Necessary amendments to the Squaw Valley General plan & Land Use Ordinance Description: EIR should identify the land-use, general and forest plan

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CID: 49 Last Name: Heagerty Organization: Granite Chief Wilderness Protection League Representative: True

Substantive Comment: Land Use The EIS needs to describe the relevant land-use plans, including the Tahoe National Forest Plan, and provide a detailed assessment of the Project's consistencies or inconsistencies with these plans. The County Initial Study acknowledges that the Squaw Valley General Plan and Land Use Ordinance limits new ski lifts to only those shown on the plan and ordinance maps, yet the gondola is not shown on those maps. Is the project inconsistent with the Plan and Ordinance, and therefore an amendment would be necessary? We ask that the EIS identify the inconsistencies with the current land-use and forest plans, analyze their environmental implications, and detail the mitigation measures or Project alternatives necessary to remedy these inconsistencies.

Theme ID: 20.3 Theme Name: EIS/EIR should identify all land use plans and establish consistency with the ordinance Description: EIS/EIR should identify all relevant land-use plans and establish consistency with those plan

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Resource ID: *6* Resource Description *Botany*

SubResource ID: *6.1* SubResource Description: *General*

CID: 207 Last Name: Huntsinger Organization: Placer County Agriculture/Weights and Measures Representative: True

Substantive Comment: The proposed Squaw Valley-Alpine Meadows Base-to-Base Gondola Project includes lands where infestations of State-listed noxious weed species are known to occur. Spotted knapweed, diffuse knapweed, hoary alyssum, and perennial pepperweed are noxious weeds listed in 3 CCR § 4500 that are present in the project area. The properties on which infestations of these weeds exist are considered public nuisances per California Food and Agricultural Code § 5401. As such, all legal remedies to prevent and abate these pests are applicable.

Theme ID: 26.1 Theme Name: Noxious Weeds Description: Comments about noxious weeds in project area

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SubResource ID: *6.4* SubResource Description: *Vegetated Habitats*

CID: 99 Last Name: Wallace Organization: Truckee River Watershed Council Representative: True

Substantive Comment: Biological Environmental Resources: Although the surrounding areas are disturbed due to residential development and ski use, they still provide significant biological resources. The Granite Chief Wilderness Area designation reflects the environmental significance. To address in the EIS: How will construction and operation of the project impact habitat and migration of special-status plant and wildlife species? What will be the effect on both well functioning and previously impacted riparian corridors from each of the measures/alternatives? What measures are proposed to protect native vegetation and prevent invasive weeds?

Theme ID: 29.1 Theme Name: Impacts and mitigation to species in the GCW Description:

CID: 57 Last Name: york Organization: Representative: True

Substantive Comment: I have a number of concerns about how this development project will impact the flora and fauna that live in Alpine Meadows, especially on the forest service lands and in the congressionally-designated Granite Chief Wilderness. Alpine Meadows is a special place where a variety of living things thrive because of the relative lack of development. I would like the EIS to focus more specifically on just how sensitive the valley's ecosystem is and how many animals and plants depend on the undeveloped and underdeveloped spaces for their survival. As development continues in both Squaw Valley and Alpine Meadows, wildlife is pushed further and further into the undeveloped areas and more specifically, the forest service lands and in the congressionally-designated Granite Chief Wilderness that are a part of this development proposal.

Theme ID: 29.1 Theme Name: Impacts and mitigation to species in the GCW Description:

CID: 58 Last Name: Hatch Organization: Representative: True

Substantive Comment: 5) Impacts of tree removal on visual quality, slope stability, wildlife habitat, and carbon storage. An inventory of trees to be removed needs to be provided.

Theme ID: 29.2 Theme Name: Impacts of tree removal Description:

Resource ID: *7* Resource Description *Forest Health*

SubResource ID: *7.1* SubResource Description: *General*

CID: 94 Last Name: Moore Organization: Alpine Meadows Estates Representative: True

Substantive Comment: In addition, the 11 towers ranging in height from 30 – 60 feet high on Forest Service land is TOO many more than what already exists in this area. And taking of 150 trees on Forest Service land and an additional 350 trees on private property to “make way” for the gondola is TOO MANY. The general area that the gondola is being proposed does not have that many trees to begin with. This would be a huge disruption to a portion of the forest that has unusual rock formations and a unique ecosystem which makes it difficult for trees to grow. It will change the character of the GCW Boundary entrance area.

Theme ID: 31.1 Theme Name: Impacts and mitigation of tree removal Description:

CID: 92 Last Name: Beaton Organization: Shute, Mihaly & Weinberger LLP Representative: True

Substantive Comment: B. Agriculture and Forest Resources In the Initial Study, the County concludes that the Project would not have a significant impact on forest land by conversion of land to non-forest use. Initial Study (“IS”) at 2-9. The Initial Study makes no mention of the fact that the Project would involve construction of four gondola stations, including two mid-stations in areas away from existing development, and require clearing of land to make way for the towers and ropeways. The Project would almost certainly impact forest resources, including removal of at least 500 trees in the Project area and at least another 150 trees on Tahoe National Forest land—including at the edge of the Granite Chief Wilderness Area. Accordingly, the EIR and EIS must fully describe and quantify the forest land that would be impacted, describe those impacts, and provide for sufficient mitigation. The Initial Study also concludes that the Project would not induce growth in the area that could impact agricultural or forest land. IS at 2-9. Specifically, the Initial Study states that the Project does not “provide infrastructure that would induce further development in the project vicinity.” Id. But this is exactly what the Project would do. By providing fast and easy access from Alpine Meadows to Squaw Valley’s existing and planned amenities and vast ski terrain, the Project would almost certainly serve and therefore spur more development around Alpine Meadows, on both private and public National Forest land. Likewise, the Project would likely incite development at White Wolf, a portion of which is within the Granite Chief Wilderness Area’s congressionally designated boundaries. Indeed, development is already being considered at White Wolf that would be integrated with the gondola via a ski-lift connection to the proposed mid-station above Alpine Meadows. See Exhibit A at 9 (White Wolf Pre- Development Meeting Project Description). The EIR and EIS must analyze these impacts.

Theme ID: 31.1 Theme Name: Impacts and mitigation of tree removal Description:

SubResource ID: *7.2* SubResource Description: *Timber Removal*

CID: 93 Last Name: Judge Organization: California Water Boards: Nonpoint Source Pollution Control U Representative: True

Substantive Comment: 1) Please ensure that your Project environmental documents and permit/exemption applications contain all of the accurate disturbance area and volume details required to obtain your Lahontan Water Board 2014 Timber Waiver, and/or 401 WQC or Basin Plan prohibition exemption if required.

Theme ID: 32.1 Theme Name: Lahontan Timber Waiver Description: Consider need for Lahontan Timber Waiver

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CID: 93 Last Name: Judge Organization: California Water Boards: Nonpoint Source Pollution Control U Representative: True

Substantive Comment: I. Lahontan 2014 Timber Waiver More specific details should be included in the EIS regarding timber removal activity in order to determine if it may be permitted through the use of the Lahontan 2014 Timber Waiver. If the timber removal elements of the project do not meet the eligibility criteria of the timber waiver an alternate permit may be required. On April10, 2014, the Lahontan Water Board adopted Board Order No. R6T-2014-0030 (the 2014 Timber Waiver), which regulates waste discharges from timber harvest and vegetation management activities within the Lahontan region. That portion of the Project within the Lahontan Water Board's jurisdiction will require coverage under the 2014 Timber Waiver or an alternate permit. The 2014 Timber Waiver and all attachments may be found on our website at http://www. waterboards.ca.gov/lahontan/water issues/programs/waste discharge requi rements/timber harvest/timberwaiver.shtml. Please review the 2014 Timber Waiver criteria and conditions while developing specific resource protection measures and design features for the proposed Project. By understanding the 2014 Timber Waiver's criteria and conditions, you can tailor your project design features and environmental analyses to incorporate those requirements, which will streamline your 2014 Timber Waiver application process and avoid project delays. Please note that the 2014 Timber Waiver uses a watercourse classification system which categorizes watercourses according to their biologic habitat and ability to transport sediment, as defined by the California Code of Regulations, title 14 (2013 Forest Practice Rules), rather than just by flow regime. This watercourse classification determines the necessary buffer zone width for that watercourse (see Attachment B of the 2014 Timber Waiver). To expedite review of your Timber Waiver application, please clearly indicate in your waiver application maps the classification of all watercourses in the project area, and the location of proposed operations and pile burning (if proposed) within Waterbody Buffer Zones (WBBZs). Be sure to clearly state the mitigation measures you will employ in buffer zones where equipment operations are proposed. Examples of design features for pile burning in WBBZs are listed in Attachment Q of the 2014 Timber Waiver; reviewing the Timber Waiver's Category 6 and Attachment N will help you understand certain conditions which must be met to work in WBBZs. Please submit your application and all required information for the timber waiver once a decision on this project is made.

Theme ID: 32.1 Theme Name: Lahontan Timber Waiver Description: Consider need for Lahontan Timber Waiver

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Resource ID: *8* Resource Description *Wildlife and Aquatics*

SubResource ID: *8.1* SubResource Description: *General*

CID: 95 Last Name: Bruner Organization: Representative: True

Substantive Comment: c. Interference with bear dens – there are known to be bears living in the area. The gasex exploders, the shelters for gasex supplies, and the use of helicopters and ATVs are sure to disturb hibernation habits and the ability of bears to care for their cubs. The helicopters and ATVs are to be used during construction, and at a minimum ATVs will continue to be used for maintenance and stocking of supplies.

Theme ID: 36.1 Theme Name: Bears Description: Comment about potential impacts to bear dens

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CID: 11 Last Name: Switzky Organization: Representative: True

Substantive Comment: 3) the potential disturbances to winter wildlife from the visual (incl movement of gondola cars), noise, and increased skier traffic between alpine and squaw

Theme ID: 36.2 Theme Name: Impacts of operating(movement/noise) of gondola on wildlife Description:

CID: 87 Last Name: Bruner Organization: Representative: True

Substantive Comment: In addition, the explosions and the noise will result in injury to wildlife in the area, and this must be carefully analzed in the EIR.

Theme ID: 36.2 Theme Name: Impacts of operating(movement/noise) of gondola on wildlife Description:

CID: 98 Last Name: Heagerty Organization: Representative: True

Substantive Comment: The Gasex exploders, fuel storage, pipelines and winter re-fueling and maintenance will all impact wildlife in the area. Which wildlife species will be most impacted? Will there be “take” of species or habitats? What species will be most vulnerable to disturbances? What will be the scientifically-based mitigation measures? What species will be vulnerable to harm because of avalanche triggering?

Theme ID: 36.3 Theme Name: Impacts of Gazex operation and maintenance Description:

CID: 95 Last Name: Bruner Organization: Representative: True

Substantive Comment: b. Nesting bird surveys for all species of concern are necessary, to determine the appropriate construction periods unless no construction is to occur until after all potential nesting activities are complete. Given that the project has been in planning for over 3 years (per the applicant), we assume the scientifically appropriate bird surveys have been occurring throughout the project area. The limited fall bird survey of 2015, mentioned in the County Initial Study, was conducted after four years of drought, in the fall, thus not representative of breeding and nesting species occurrence. That survey will not provide sufficient information for determining potential project impacts to avian species, particularly the several species of concern that may be utilizing these habitats. (Pre-nesting passerine bird behavior was observed along the gondola alignment, May, 2016).

Theme ID: 36.4 Theme Name: Nesting Bird Survey Description: Comment about bird surveys

CID: 205 Last Name: Tumas Organization: Representative: True

Substantive Comment: The gondola would cause the discharge of waxes, lubricants, paints, creosotes, fine metals, human waste, fuels and other pollutants and exotic materials that would migrate into Frog Pond and the Five Lakes, known habitats and designated Critical Habitats for the endangered Sierra yellow-legged frog as well as for several other amphibians and invertebrates. These animals in these high mountain water bodies are extremely sensitive to toxic and foreign materials, typically having very low thresholds of tolerance.. Please provide thorough risk analyses of potential project impacts to the resident aquatic species.

Theme ID: 36.5 Theme Name: Aquatic Species and Pollutants Description: Potential impacts to aquatic species

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CID: 202 Last Name: Heagerty Organization: Granite Chief Wilderness Protection League Representative: True

Substantive Comment: Ornithological observations over the past few years indicate certain sensitive species are nesting along or near the Public Notice gondola route. Breeding and nesting impact-avoidance measures should be clearly evaluated in the EIR/EIS. Given the planning and engineering that has been accomplished for the gondola route we will look forward to seeing the data and analyses developed during the biological surveys of the project areas. Breeding and nesting species are particularly sensitive to human-induced disturbances in these higher-elevation ecological systems, as the habitats are limited in size and resilience in part because of the past losses of similar habitats throughout Squaw and Alpine. Construction equipment, construction scheduling, tower locations, cable heights, drainage controls, maintenance access and other aspects of the project should reflect the biological setting, seasonal conditions and species protections.

Theme ID: 36.6 Theme Name: Birds Description: General impacts to birds

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SubResource ID: *8.2* **SubResource Description: *Federally- and State-listed Wildlife Species***

CID: 180 Last Name: Scanlan Organization: Bear Creek Association Representative: True

Substantive Comment: The Sierra Mountain Yellow-legged frog (Rana sierra) has been observed during recent biological surveys conducted at the “Frog Pond” (aka Meditation Pond) location (Placer County, 2016) that lies within 100 yards of the Alpine Mid-station. Yellow-legged frog vocalizations were observed approximately 120 yards east of the Five Lakes eastern-most lake on May 13, 2016 (Heagerty, 2016). These locations are in the designated Critical Habitat Areas per the Endangered Species Act (US Fish and Wildlife Service, May 4, 2016). This endangered species travels across snow and therefore is in a “take” situation during gondola operations, avalanche infrastructure servicing and fueling, avalanche management and skier presence. The operations at the Alpine mid-station will pose direct threats to frog populations. How will the gondola operations avoid “take” activities? How will the mid-station protect frog populations from skiers and boarders? How will Gasex and related facilities avoid frog impacts during construction, maintenance, refueling, etc? What alternatives are available to avoid potential harm to this species?

Theme ID: 37.1 Theme Name: Impacts to Sierra Nevada yellow-legged frog Description:

CID: 202 Last Name: Heagerty Organization: Granite Chief Wilderness Protection League Representative: True

Substantive Comment: A proposed route for the gondola would cross through known populations of the endangered Sierra yellow-legged frog. The Alpine Mid-station would be placed inside the Critical Habitat for this species where existing populations have been confirmed. Buildings and support facilities would be placed in/on frog habitat. Skiing activities associated with both mid-stations would likely cause skiers to directly “take” some number of frogs each spring when the frogs travel across snow. Human activity, from skiers to lift personnel to noises associated with gondola operations and maintenance, would cause harm to the local frog populations. Pollution from cables, gears, generators, skis, persons, maintenance equipment, lubricants, fuels, avalanche control equipment, avalanche control activities and any other human-related activities may cause direct and/or indirect harm to frog populations and adversely impact or destroy frog habitat. (Pollution includes metals, lubricants, fuels, emissions, plastics, waxes, paints, enamels, litter, noise, etc.). We will look to the DEIS/DEIR to describe the types of potential harm to the species and its habitat, any potential harassment of the species, and the quantification of any potential “take” or harassment resulting from the proposed action and related activities (construction, maintenance, operations, future facility abandonment, etc).

Theme ID: 37.1 Theme Name: Impacts to Sierra Nevada yellow-legged frog Description:

CID: 202 Last Name: Heagerty Organization: Granite Chief Wilderness Protection League Representative: True

Substantive Comment: The county “checklist” seems to dismiss the need to meaningfully address potential water quality impacts from the gondola project, stating that the NPDES permit and the Corps Sec. 404 General Permit will adequately address water quality issues because of the limited water bodies involved. We believe the potential impacts could be significant and would not be adequately address through standard Best Management Practices. The discharge of waxes, lubricants, paints, creosotes, fine metals, human waste, fuels and other pollutants and exotic materials would accumulate and migrate into Frog Pond and the Five Lakes, known habitats and designated Critical Habitats for the Sierra yellow-legged frog as well as for several other amphibians and invertebrates. The taxa of these high mountain water bodies are extremely sensitive to toxic and foreign materials, typically having very low thresholds of tolerance. The NPDES and General Permit guidelines are insufficient proxies for credibly evaluating the potential risks to these sensitive species, located in unique and irreplaceable habitats, from a myriad of industry and equipment-related pollutants. Please provide thorough risk analyses of potential project impacts to the resident aquatic species.

Theme ID: 37.1 Theme Name: Impacts to Sierra Nevada yellow-legged frog Description:

CID: 57 Last Name: york Organization: Representative: True

Substantive Comment: In addition to the other species named in the report that will be impacted by disturbances to the study area, I am especially concerned about potential impacts on the Sierra Nevada Yellow-legged frog that is protected under the Federal Endangered Species Act. There is a pond located next to the Alpine Meadows mid-station is known for certain to contain these frogs. In the FWS report that I read, it stated that the Five Lakes area, or Subunit 2D, has been deemed part of the critical habitat area for this amphibian and will be protected as such. Yet there is little, if any mention, of the need to afford high levels of protection to this species and this pond as part of its critical habitat. I fear that the importance of this habitat and of protecting it has been grossly undervalued and that it needs to be preserved in an unaltered form. I also have concerns about whether this frog species is limited to just that area or if it in fact also lives, at least occasionally if not more permanently, in Bear Creek and some of the other seasonal ponds, creeks, drainages, and water supplies in the upper Alpine Meadows area that may be negatively impacted by disturbances to, among other things, the top soil and groundwater as well as the loss of forest as some of these areas are converted to non-forest space for the gondola structures. I would ask that more thorough consideration of the potential negative impacts to the Frog be conducted, especially in light of the federal protection the species is being given and the designation of this habitat as being critical to its survival.

Theme ID: 37.1 Theme Name: Impacts to Sierra Nevada yellow-legged frog Description:

CID: 98 Last Name: Heagerty Organization: Representative: True

Substantive Comment: The presence of the endangered species Rana sierra in the project area and particularly where construction and the use of fuels and lubricants would occur, where habitat alterations and on-going human disturbance and harm would occur, clearly suggest at least a “may affect” and potentially a “likely to adversely affect” determination under ESA law. We look forward to the Informal Consultation and Biological Assessment to be undertaken with the US Fish and Wildlife, per Section 7 of the ESA. We also believe a Formal Consultation will be necessary, as there will be at least an Incidental Take finding, if not a jeopardy finding. A “Take” finding will require a full evaluation of reasonable and prudent alternatives of the proposed action, which should be summarized in the EIS. We anticipate a Biological Opinion to be prepared by the US Fish and Wildlife for this project, addressing it’s associated interdependent and cumulative actions, as well as all “indirect effects” per ESA guidelines.

Theme ID: 37.1 Theme Name: Impacts to Sierra Nevada yellow-legged frog Description:

CID: 98 Last Name: Heagerty Organization: Representative: True

Substantive Comment: The yellow-legged frog is experiencing severe population declines throughout its range, existing populations now estimated at 7% of its historical numbers (Center for Biological Diversity, 2010). The populations around the Five Lakes Basin are exceptionally rare. We ask that the “Precautionary Principle” be considered and articulated in the DEIS for the protection of this species, given the very limited habitat, the geographic isolation of this population, it’s vulnerability to fire or other stochastic events, and the unique biological integrity of this particular habitat. Thus a “Best Management Practices” consideration would not be credible or acceptable. Any and all measures that would provide habitat protections must be thoroughly explored. The risks posed by potential toxics (oils, lubricants, metals, equipment coatings, etc.) pose a real threat to amphibians in a relatively closed environment where toxics would not flush out but would likely accumulate over time.

Theme ID: 37.1 Theme Name: Impacts to Sierra Nevada yellow-legged frog Description:

CID: 54 Last Name: Heagerty Organization: Representative: True

Substantive Comment: The Sierra Mountain Yellow-legged frog (Rana sierra) has been observed during recent biological surveys conducted at the “Frog Pond” (aka Meditation Pond) location, which is within 100-150 yards of the Alpine Mid-station. Yellow-legged frog vocalizations were also observed approximately 120 yards east of the Five Lakes eastern-most lake on May 13, 2016, close to the gondola alignment. The project will be required to undertake Section 7 Consultations with the US Fish and Wildlife Service. The project is within designated Critical Habitat Areas, per the Endangered Species Act (US Fish and Wildlife Service, May 4, 2016).As this species travels across snow it appears likely to be in a “take” situation from gondola operations, avalanche infrastructure servicing and fueling, avalanche management and skier presence. The operations at the Alpine mid-station could pose direct threats to frog populations.The proposed action “may affect” or potentially cause a “likely to adversely affect” determination under ESA law. USFS and USFWS consultations should occur before the DEIS is finalized so the public has the benefit of understanding the potential for harm to this species. The full evaluation of reasonable and prudent alternatives, per ESA, should be include in the Draft EIS. A Biological Opinion, if prepared by the US Fish and Wildlife for this project, should be summarized in the Final EIS and made available as part of the EIS public documents.

Theme ID: 37.1 Theme Name: Impacts to Sierra Nevada yellow-legged frog Description:

CID: 202 Last Name: Heagerty Organization: Granite Chief Wilderness Protection League Representative: True

Substantive Comment: We ask to be notified of the date of initiation of the Section 7 Consultation between the US Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) and the US Forest Service, to presumably occur when the Forest Service delivers your consultation “package” to the USFWS. If the Biological Assessment or the Biological Opinion determines there would likely be jeopardy to the population, or adverse modifications to Critical Habitat, then we ask that any Reasonable and Prudent Alternatives be incorporated and evaluated in the EIR/EIS.

Theme ID: 37.2 Theme Name: Section 7 Consultation Description: Comments about USFWS wildlife consultation

CID: 98 Last Name: Heagerty Organization: Representative: True

Substantive Comment: The DEIS needs to address the project’s likely Incidental Take, both for construction and for operations and maintenance. The DEIS should include at least the Biological Assessment and the preliminary determinations of the US Fish and Wildlife Service regarding the resident populations at the Five Lakes and at the Alpine mid-station. Likely “take” opportunities should be described, the potential losses to these populations, as well as the alternatives for avoidance. For the FEIS or the Record of Decisions we hope to see summaries of the Biological Opinion and the Consultation Report, available for public review.

Theme ID: 37.3 Theme Name: Analysis of incidental "take" opportunities Description:

CID: 171 Last Name: Gordon Organization: Environmental Protection Agency Representative: True

Substantive Comment: Biological Resources, Habitat and Wildlife The NEPA document should identify all petitioned and listed threatened and endangered species and critical habitat that might occur within the project area. The document should identify and quantify which species or critical habitat might be directly, indirectly, or cumulatively affected by each alternative and mitigate impacts to these species; emphasis should be placed on the protection and recovery of species due to their status or potential status under the federal or state Endangered Species Act.

Theme ID: 37.4 Theme Name: Identify all petitioned and listed TES and critical habitat Description: EIS/EIR should ID and quantify TES habitat that might be directly, indirect and cumulative affected

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CID: 74 Last Name: Organization: Representative: True

Substantive Comment: Impacts from a Gondola at Granite Chief: A mid-station facility would impact an endangered species population

Theme ID: 37.6 Theme Name: Impacts of mid-station to TES Description:

Resource ID: *9* Resource Description *Water/Wetlands*

SubResource ID: *9.1* SubResource Description: *General*

CID: 181 Last Name: Cindy Organization: Tahoe Area Sierra Club Representative: True

Substantive Comment: The expected increase in visitors to both Squaw Valley and Alpine will also cause in increase in water demand. Due to climate change, the annual snowfall in the Sierra Nevada Mountains is expected to decrease. The impacts on water sources should be carefully considered.

Theme ID: 41.01 Theme Name: Water Demand Description: Comment requesting analysis of changes to water demand

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CID: 35 Last Name: Buffington Organization: Representative: True

Substantive Comment: Just south of the proposed Squaw Valley Mid-Station is the proposed temporary access route for construction of the project. The project proposal states that the access route "would be restored to its previously existing condition after construction is complete". It is hard to imagine that this beautiful watershed would be considered for construction access and that the area could possibly be returned to its natural condition if made into a construction access road. We urge you to hike the Five Lakes trail from Alpine Meadows and imagine the devastating impacts of a construction access road through this watershed.

Theme ID: 41.1 Theme Name: Construction of roads adjacent to wetlands Description: Roads along granite cliffs and would impact wetlands adjacent to proposed roads

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CID: 92 Last Name: Beaton Organization: Shute, Mihaly & Weinberger LLP Representative: True

Substantive Comment: G. Hydrology, Water Quality, and Water Supply The EIR and EIS must determine whether development of the proposed Project would result in the violation of any water-quality standards, result in substantial new amounts of polluted runoff, deplete groundwater supplies or interfere with groundwater recharge, alter the existing drainage pattern of the site, or place within a 100-year flood zone structures that would impede or redirect flood flows. Impacts to water quality are especially likely to occur from construction activities. The Initial Study downplays the Project's potential impacts on water supply, commenting that the "proposed gondola will result in some increase in annual skier visitation in Squaw Valley and Alpine Meadows," which could result in a minor increase in water consumption. IS at 2-36. But the Initial Study nowhere mentions the fact that the gondola is but a piece of Squaw Valley Ski Holdings' grander plan for a massive, Squaw Valley/Alpine Meadows super-resort. By piecemealing the gondola project from the project to expand the Village at Squaw Valley, the County prevents the public and decision-makers from fully appreciating the truly single project's environmental impacts. Failing to consider the Project's impacts on stormwater drainage systems along with the impacts of the proposed Village at Squaw Valley also precludes adequate environmental review of both projects. The Initial Study discloses that the increased runoff from the increase in impervious surfaces brought by the gondola Project may affect existing stormwater systems. IS at 2-37. The Village at Squaw Valley Specific Plan EIR explained that that project, too, would impact stormwater drainage. These impacts must be considered in a single EIR. To comply with CEQA, the EIR must consider the water-quality and water-supply impacts for both the proposed Village at Squaw Valley expansion and the gondola together— they are both part of the same plan by Squaw Valley Ski Holdings.

Theme ID: 41.2 Theme Name: Impacts to any water quality standards Description: Including polluted runoff, deplete groundwater supplies, groundwater recharge

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CID: 93 Last Name: Judge Organization: California Water Boards: Nonpoint Source Pollution Control U Representative: True

Substantive Comment: The EIS should contain sufficient detail for Lahontan Water Board staff to determine the amount of disturbance proposed within our region, intended amount of fill or soil removal or soil disturbance, the locations or drainage patterns of all wetlands, riparian areas, and waterbodies within the Project areas, or other information necessary to provide comments.

Theme ID: 41.3 Theme Name: Standards and analysis necessary for Lahontan Water Board Description:

CID: 171 Last Name: Gordon Organization: Environmental Protection Agency Representative: True

Substantive Comment: Water Ouality Each of the Action Alternatives should include a robust discussion of impacts to water quality. This should include identifying the applicable water quality standards and beneficial uses of receiving waters that receive discharges from the proposed project. This may include any proposed new roads that will be built or otherwise maintained to service the gondola or avalanche exploders. Further, the analysis should include a description of the Waters of the U.S. that may receive (or cease to receive) project water and how any discharges to Waters of the U.S. will impact water quality in these locations.

Theme ID: 41.3 Theme Name: Standards and analysis necessary for Lahontan Water Board Description:

CID: 103 Last Name: Elliot Organization: North Fork Association Representative: True

Substantive Comment: Water Quality and Supply The EIR and EIS must determine whether development of the proposed Project would result in the violation of any water-quality standards, result in substantial new amounts of polluted runoff, deplete groundwater supplies or interfere with groundwater recharge, alter the existing drainage pattern of the site, or place within a 100-year flood zone structures that would impede or redirect flood flows. Impacts to water quality are especially likely to occur from construction activities, including downstream, since this project is proposed near the headwaters of the Middle and North Fork American Rivers.

Theme ID: 41.3 Theme Name: Standards and analysis necessary for Lahontan Water Board Description:

CID: 93 Last Name: Judge Organization: California Water Boards: Nonpoint Source Pollution Control U Representative: True

Substantive Comment: 2) Please ensure your final environmental document accurately discusses the surface and groundwater hydrology in the Lahontan region, including identifying the higher order waterbodies into which the existing and planned channels drain.

Theme ID: 41.4 Theme Name: Identify which waterbodies the existing and planned channels drain into Description:

CID: 93 Last Name: Judge Organization: California Water Boards: Nonpoint Source Pollution Control U Representative: True

Substantive Comment: 3) In preparing the documentation and application materials, please ensure the Project maps indicate all wetlands, meadows, springs, riparian areas, and waterbodies within the Lahontan region which could be impacted by Project activities, and provide approximate locations of access routes. When applying for Project permitting include labeled topographic Project area maps of sufficient scale to discern details of the following: • Watercourses, seasonally wet areas, wetlands, and springs • WBBZs • Areas of disturbance • Hand treatment units vs. heavy equipment treatment units • Existing roads, trails, and stream crossings within the Project area • Proposed temporary and permanent access roads, proposed skid trails within WBBZs, and stream crossings • The location(s) for equipment staging, stockpiling areas, landings (where adjacent to or in WBBZs), and borrow pits.

Theme ID: 41.5 Theme Name: Lahontan region project permit application requests Description: Map and analysis specifics for Lahontan region permit

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CID: 99 Last Name: Wallace Organization: Truckee River Watershed Council Representative: True

Substantive Comment: Physical Environmental Resources There are ongoing efforts to conserve and restore natural corridors along the Sierra Crest to maintain upstream water quality, improve forest health, increase carbon storage, enhance wildlife movement, and provide a refuge for species as climate changes. To address in the EIS: How will the project measures/alternatives impact these corridors?

Theme ID: 41.6 Theme Name: Method for measuring project impacts Description:

CID: 99 Last Name: Wallace Organization: Truckee River Watershed Council Representative: True

Substantive Comment: Freshwater ponds, bogs, ephemeral streams, and drainages have already been identified by the Initial Study conducted by the County. To address in the EIS: How will the project measures/alternatives affect jurisdictional waters and hydrologically connected features?

Theme ID: 41.7 Theme Name: Method for measures/alternatives affect jurisdictional waters and hydrologically connect Description:

CID: 99 Last Name: Wallace Organization: Truckee River Watershed Council Representative: True

Substantive Comment: Hydrology and Water Quality: Squaw Creek and the Truckee River are listed as impaired from excessive sediment by the U.S. EPA and California Lahontan Regional Water Quality Control Board. Ski area BMP Implementation and Maintenance are noted as one of four Target Implementation Areas (Total MAXIMUM DAILY LOAD FOR SEDIMENT MIDDLE TRUCKEE RIVER WATERSHED PLACER, NEVADA AND SIERRA COUNTIES, California Regional Water Quality Control Board, Lahontan Region, May 2008) To address in the EIS: How will each of the measures/alternatives minimize erosion from both bases and mid-stations? How will the runoff management plan improve the quality of stormwater during construction and operation?

Theme ID: 41.8 Theme Name: Impaired Waterbodies Description: Comment about impacts to impaired waterbodies

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CID: 192 Last Name: Wallace Organization: Truckee River Watershed Council Representative: True

Substantive Comment: Squaw Creek, Bear Creek, and the Truckee River are all listed as impaired from excessive sediment by the Lahontan Regional Water Quality Control Board. How will each of the measures/alternatives minimize erosion from both bases and mid-stations? How will the runoff management plan improve the quality of stormwater during construction and operation?

Theme ID: 41.8 Theme Name: Impaired Waterbodies Description: Comment about impacts to impaired waterbodies

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CID: 58 Last Name: Hatch Organization: Representative: True

Substantive Comment: 4) Impacts both short and long-term from construction, operation and access on natural hydrologic function and slope stability, as well as water quality in the adjacent wilderness and Alpine Meadows watershed.

Theme ID: 41.9 Theme Name: Impacts of construction, access route and operation to Alpine Meadows watershed Description: hydrologic function and slope stability analysis

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SubResource ID: *9.3* **SubResource Description: *Wetlands***

CID: 103 Last Name: Elliot Organization: North Fork Association Representative: True

Substantive Comment: The EIR and EIS must pay particular attention to the wetlands impacted by the Project, such as Cushing Pond, and include an Army Corps of Engineers wetlands delineation.

Theme ID: 43.1 Theme Name: Cushing Pond Description: Impacts to Cushing Pond

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Resource ID: *10* Resource Description *Soils*

SubResource ID: *10.1* **SubResource Description: *General***

CID: 99 Last Name: Wallace Organization: Truckee River Watershed Council Representative: True

Substantive Comment: Geology, Soils, and Seismicity: Grading and imported fill are proposed at the Alpine Meadows base area, disturbance is estimated at both the Alpine Meadows Mid-Station and the Squaw Valley Mid-Station, plus temporary access routes. Approximately 500 trees will be cleared from the area, primarily through skidding. To address in the EIS: What will be the erosion and sedimentation from each of these sites be for each of the proposed measures/alternatives? Will these impacts be exacerbated by avalanche hazards?

Theme ID: 46.1 Theme Name: Erosion/Grading Impacts Description:

Resource ID: *12* Resource Description *Recreation*

SubResource ID: *12.1* **SubResource Description: *General***

CID: 55 Last Name: Higgins Jr Organization: Representative: True

Substantive Comment: Historically the two resorts have catered to different clientele and have had a different basis of operations. Alpine is a daily resort catering to locals and visitors staying offsite since there is no lodging in that vicinity. Squaw is much larger and has continuously evolved into a destination resort. Having worked at Squaw in the early 1980's I experienced first hand the issues of guests being disoriented during heavy snowfall and ending up in terrain they weren't able to navigate. Connecting these two different types of resorts could be problematic from the standpoint of end of day logistics. During periods of inclement weather, guests new to the resorts or otherwise unfamiliar with the terrain could end up far from where they need to be. If guests end up in the wrong resort after closing, how will they get back to their rooms or vehicles? This needs to be carefully studied and clearly documented how this potential issue will be mitigated.

Theme ID: 56.1 Theme Name: Skier Safety Risk Description:

SubResource ID: *12.3* **SubResource Description: *Impacts to Recreation Experience***

CID: 92 Last Name: Beaton Organization: Shute, Mihaly & Weinberger LLP Representative: True

Substantive Comment: L. Recreation The EIR and EIS must analyze the Project's recreational and wilderness impacts to the Granite Chief Wilderness Area, the Pacific Crest Trail, the Five Lakes Trail, and the Tahoe Basin. The Initial Study downplays the Project's impacts, especially in light of the fact that the Project has been improperly piecemealed from CEQA review with the Village at Squaw Valley Specific Plan. For example, the Initial Study claims there may be "some increase in use of Squaw Valley and Alpine Meadows ski areas by providing a connection between the two areas." IS at 2-51. The Initial Study ignores other recreational impacts, such as those caused by the massive influx of visitors to the area that would come along with the expansion of Squaw Valley. The EIR and EIS must analyze these impacts. Further, the EIR and EIS should consider the Project's indirect impacts that could stem from inducing further construction of recreation facilities—as has already been made clear by the proposal of new ski lifts in Alpine Meadows that would depend on the gondola to connect to the Alpine Meadows base. By linking Squaw Valley and Alpine Meadows, the gondola would allow more people to visit Alpine Meadows while based at Squaw Valley. This increase in visitors, in turn, would lead to an increase in demand for recreational activities and resources at Alpine Meadows beyond what currently exists there. The EIR and EIS must analyze the environmental impacts of such likely recreational expansion at Alpine Meadows.

Theme ID: 58.1 Theme Name: Analysis of recreational impacts to adjacent trails/areas Description: Trails including: GCW area, Pacific Crest Trail, Five Lakes trail and headwaters basin of the north fork American river

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CID: 94 Last Name: Moore Organization: Alpine Meadows Estates Representative: True

Substantive Comment: The second issue we would like to raise is the base operations for the proposed gondola at Alpine Meadows Ski Area. The base station would be situated on National Forest Service lands. The congestion, blight and general land disruption will decrease the safety and experience of skiers on Forest Service lands. We utilize the ski area and are huge advocates of skiing but there is a limit to the "development" needed to provide a safe and enjoyable skiing experience. This does not add to people's skiing experience – rather is provides a way for the permittee to transport people to buy things in their mall in Squaw Valley. The terrain at the midway stations is not for the average skier. The really good skiers can get there now and they like the challenge!

Theme ID: 58.2 Theme Name: Dangerous Terrain Accessed by Mid-Station Description: Safety risks of terrain accessed at Alpine mid-station

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CID: 46 Last Name: Ries Organization: Representative: True

Substantive Comment: For one, I am concerned about its effect on the culture at both Squaw and Alpine. I do not agree that the gondola is necessary for improving terrain available to Squaw skiers and amenities available to Alpine skiers. The terrain at both Squaw and Alpine are plentiful and their differences are what draws certain types of skiers. Furthermore, the amenities at Squaw may be better than at Alpine, but not all skiers want these amenities. The differences in the two areas help to create a feeling/culture that is unique to each. For locals and frequent skiers in Tahoe, they can take their pick on any day or stick with the place that best suits them. For those who are vacationing and not familiar with the resorts, they have the option of trying two places and having a unique experience at each. The buses are frequent and the trip is fast and offers a nice option for those looking to mix it up during their ski holiday. As a frequent traveler and seeker of new and interesting experiences, I view the elimination of the unique character found at the two areas that would result from the gondola as a negative. Visitors will now be offered a commercial ski experience that could be found at any large US resort rather than a one-of-a-kind experience that has grown out of the culture of the Tahoe area. This is a shame. Many people will miss the ski environment that they have loved for many years and future guests will not experience a uniquely Tahoe ski holiday.

Theme ID: 58.3 Theme Name: Squaw/Alpine Ski Culture Description: Impacts to the recreational experience/culture

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CID: 209 Last Name: Serandos Organization: Representative: True

Substantive Comment: While the negative impact to the environment has been covered, I want to note that two very distinct ski areas, with very distinct characters and visitors will be homogenized, destroying the distinct character of each. Alpine skiers come to Alpine for its unique low key character while Squaw skiers are happy with the more built up environment there. Most skiers are loyal to one or the other resorts. This homogenization will destroy these individual characters and honestly speaking for what benefit? Basically to bring in more crowds from afar that don't appreciate these unique characters and these crowds will leave a major negative footprint in the local area with increased traffic and accompanying stress on limited local resources specifically water in our drought stricken state.

Theme ID: 58.3 Theme Name: Squaw/Alpine Ski Culture Description: Impacts to the recreational experience/culture

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CID: 178 Last Name: Organization: Representative: True

Substantive Comment: On the Alpine Meadows side, the location of the mid-station will be in the vicinity of the north side of Estelle bowl or in an area which provides easy access to the Buttress ski terrain. This terrain is currently accessed by skiers through hiking. The hikable ski terrain at Alpine Meadows is culturally valued by the local community and visitors. Prior tenants even viewed it as a business positive, by using it as a marketing opportunity with slogans like "Take a walk at Alpine Meadows." In fact, across North America, Sidecountry skiing has become a most popular attraction. And how fitting is it that much of this sidecountry terrain is on forest service land. This seems to be a circumstance which the forest service and the county would want to preserve. Putting a mid-station lift here will ruin this skiing. KSL uses the slogan "The Soul of Skiing" to describe how they operate the ski resorts. I would advocate that the walk to Estelle Bowl and the Buttress represents exactly the soul of skiing. By this logic, the mid-station would result in the ski community losing culturally significant ski terrain.

Theme ID: 58.4 Theme Name: Loss of hike-to-ski terrain due to increased access to terrain Description:

CID: 17 Last Name: H Organization: Representative: True

Substantive Comment: Both Squaw Valley and Alpine Meadows have their own unique culture and aspects that make them great. At Squaw, world class terrain is easily accessible by lift and by short hike, which allows it to have a great amount of visibility and fanfare. At Alpine, you can enjoy a wilderness experience by hiking for various lengths of time to access places like Estelle Bowl. This experience of (sometimes quite arduous) hiking for the reward of an off-the-beaten-path, remote feeling run is something that is close to the heart of most long time Alpine Meadows skiers and riders. By connecting these two very different, but equally incredible mountains, KSL is diluting the culture that makes each one individually special.

Theme ID: 58.4 Theme Name: Loss of hike-to-ski terrain due to increased access to terrain Description:

CID: 179 Last Name: Pressnall Organization: Representative: True

Substantive Comment: The lift would dangerously increase skier traffic on the Saddle Run on KT-22, already the most crowded run on that lift.

Theme ID: 58.5 Theme Name: Skier Traffic Description: Comment about increased skier traffic at Squaw

CID: 61 Last Name: Greenleaf Organization: Representative: True

Substantive Comment: Currently Squaw Valley and Alpine Meadows are seperated by about a 15 to 30 minute drive that severly limits accessibility and flow between the two areas. The current seperation of the two ski areas is less than ideal for a number of reason including the traffic, distance and the time it takes to travel between them, which results in a restriction on which parts of the developed resort areas I am able to recreate on and enjoy. I believe that the construction of the gondola project would greatly improve the experience of all users.

Theme ID: 58.6 Theme Name: Agrees with in the improved connectivity and recreation experience improvements Description:

CID: 178 Last Name: Organization: Representative: True

Substantive Comment: We currently have a functional avalanche management system for the Buttress area. Adding, physical buildings will be a year round eye sore at best. It may also impact the skiable terrain. Will the Buttress now have big pipes in the way of the ski lines?

Theme ID: 58.7 Theme Name: General Ski Experience Description: Comment about general impacts to the alpine recreation experience

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CID: 3 Last Name: Ernst Organization: Representative: True

Substantive Comment: I also believe that skier unloading at the Alpine Meadows mid station would benefit skiers as a practical expansion of the existing ski area. Those that would argue that this would degrade the backcountry feel of the terrain accessed by this mid station do not understand the concept of a ski resort. A ski resort is designed for LIFT served terrain, with the exception of a few in-bounds hikes. With the vast amount of sidecountry terrain available via Alpine Meadow's open boundary policy, there is no argument that the terrain accessed by the potential gondola would take away from the back/side country community, and a vast area of hike-to terrain will still be available after the gondola and entire master plan is completed, in the high traverse and beaver bowl areas.

Theme ID: 58.7 Theme Name: General Ski Experience Description: Comment about general impacts to the alpine recreation experience

CID: 178 Last Name: Organization: Representative: True

Substantive Comment: Additionally, Squaw Valley both traditionally and currently has a practice of limiting highly advanced and hazardous terrain on weekends and during busy visitor times for safety reasons. For instance, the famed Palisades at Squaw Valley is closed most weekends. Many gates accessing Silverado terrain are also closed during weekends. This terrain is comparable to the Buttress and the Cathedral of Estelle Bowl. This terrain is currently naturally limited at Alpine Meadows because it requires a skier to endeavor in a significant hike to get there. The mid-station would remove all access barriers. Therefore, if KSL applies the same standard they currently apply, they will have to more frequently close this terrain for safety. This would mean the mid-station would result in less skiing, not more.

Theme ID: 58.7 Theme Name: General Ski Experience Description: Comment about general impacts to the alpine recreation experience

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CID: 5 Last Name: Pressnall Organization: Representative: True

Substantive Comment: Although not a concern from a FS perspective, the lift corridor would cut directly across the "West Faces" of KT-22, necessitating the removal of trees, which are key to snow retention and skier visibility during storms.

Theme ID: 58.7 Theme Name: General Ski Experience Description: Comment about general impacts to the alpine recreation experience

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CID: 5 Last Name: Pressnall Organization: Representative: True

Substantive Comment: They claim the lift will improve the skier experience. The lift does not open any new ski terrain, but it will dangerously increase skier traffic on the Saddle Run on KT-22, which is already the most crowded run on KT-22. On the Alpine side, it will allow easier access to what amounts to a long traverse that usually has marginal snow conditions, so no real benefit for ski access.

Theme ID: 58.7 Theme Name: General Ski Experience Description: Comment about general impacts to the alpine recreation experience

CID: 179 Last Name: Pressnall Organization: Representative: True

Substantive Comment: The lift corridor would require tree removal on the north side of KT-22 peak, negatively affecting the environment, viewshed, and reducing skier visibility on storm days.

Theme ID: 58.7 Theme Name: General Ski Experience Description: Comment about general impacts to the alpine recreation experience

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CID: 179 Last Name: Pressnall Organization: Representative: True

Substantive Comment: I think it is a marketing gimmick so they can claim Alpine and Squaw are now one big ski area. It will not be the largest ski area in the country, as Park City and Big Sky will still be larger, so they will not be able to make that claim. The lift does not increase the size of of the currently existing terrain, and will only contribute to a degraded skier experience, with more crowded slopes and more traffic.

Theme ID: 58.7 Theme Name: General Ski Experience Description: Comment about general impacts to the alpine recreation experience

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SubResource ID: *12.4* **SubResource Description: *Construction Impacts to Recreation Experience***

CID: 63 Last Name: Bruner Organization: Representative: True

Substantive Comment: Further, the construction of these mid-stations, which will have to occur during the summer months will impair the peacefulness of hiking in the GCW. And construction is estimated to require the removal of 500 trees in the project area and another 150 trees on NFS land. Again this will create blight on land that is currently enjoyed as a natural area by many people.

Theme ID: 59.1 Theme Name: Impacts of summer construction noise on recreation resource Description:

CID: 49 Last Name: Heagerty Organization: Granite Chief Wilderness Protection League Representative: True

Substantive Comment: The EIR must address any potential limitations that may be imposed on trail use by gondola construction, operations or avalanche safety activities associated with gondola operations.

Theme ID: 59.3 Theme Name: Impact of trail limitations caused by gondola/gazex construction/operation Description:

SubResource ID: *12.5* **SubResource Description: *Impacts to adjacent Trails (Five Lake Trail, etc.)***

CID: 98 Last Name: Heagerty Organization: Representative: True

Substantive Comment: The Five Lakes Trail is on a public permanent easement and is considered one of the most popular trails in Northern California, with estimates of 30,000 hikers per year. Visual impacts along the trail must be clearly evaluated, including all 7 locations where towers, cables, Gasex facilities (tank units, pipelines, etc) might be visible along the Five Lakes Trail from AM Road into the Wilderness Area and through the Five Lakes Basin. Renderings of key visual impact locations are necessary for public and agency evaluations. Winter and summer renderings are requested.

Theme ID: 60.1 Theme Name: Visual impacts to Five Lakes Trail recreation resource Description:

CID: 89 Last Name: Moore Organization: Sierra Club; Mother Lode Chapter Representative: True

Substantive Comment: Operation of the ropeway will almost certainly eliminate access to the Five Lakes Basin by routes in the vicinity of the trail during the ski season.

Theme ID: 60.2 Theme Name: Reduction of accessible winter trials Description: Gondola will eliminate trail access to Five Lakes area

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CID: 96 Last Name: Moore Organization: Sierra Club Representative: True

Substantive Comment: Operation of the ropeway will almost certainly eliminate access to the Five Lakes Basin by routes in the vicinity of the trail during the ski season.

Theme ID: 60.3 Theme Name: Operation Impacts Description: Impacts from operation of the gondola, winter and summer

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CID: 54 Last Name: Heagerty Organization: Representative: True

Substantive Comment: What would the level of impacts to trail users be from gondola operations regarding noise, nuisance, privacy of hikers, and skier-hiker conflicts. The EIS must address the impacts to winter hikers as well as summer hikers.

Theme ID: 60.3 Theme Name: Operation Impacts Description: Impacts from operation of the gondola, winter and summer

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CID: 178 Last Name: Organization: Representative: True

Substantive Comment: This development is not just near any forest area, it will occur within a stone throw of the PCT. Further development so closely adjacent to this iconic trail is a most serious impact. Is it worth sacrificing the sanctity of these iconic trails in order to enhance an already large resort? When does it end? The mid-stations will be giant structures. No matter how much attention is put into the look and feel, they will still be large structures permanently changing the skyline of the Sierra Crest.

Theme ID: 60.4 Theme Name: PCT Impacts Description: Visual impacts to Pacific Crest Trail

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CID: 182 Last Name: York Organization: Representative: True

Substantive Comment: I have some very serious concerns about the potential permanent damage that will be caused to the scenic vistas and pristine quality of the Granite Chief Wilderness. I also would like to see the negative impacts of the altered views on the experience of hikers of the PCT be more explicitly addressed in the EIS.

Theme ID: 60.4 Theme Name: PCT Impacts Description: Visual impacts to Pacific Crest Trail

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CID: 98 Last Name: Heagerty Organization: Representative: True

Substantive Comment: Trail Management Plan- The Five Lakes Trail will require a clear and enforceable management plan, to be administered by the USFS. Through this past winter the private landowner was effectively allowed to illegally close the public trail, at his convenience, under the auspices of a County Conditional Use Permit that provides no such authority or right. Closing of the trail through any part of the winter or other season, under the auspices of avalanche safety or landowner “movie making” or other private privilege, must be fully addressed as part of the proposed action if trail closure is contemplated.

Theme ID: 60.5 Theme Name: Five Lakes Trail Management Plan Description:

CID: 54 Last Name: Heagerty Organization: Representative: True

Substantive Comment: The Five Lakes Trail will require a clear and enforceable management plan. Illegal trail closures by the private in-holdings (2015-2016) are not in the public interest and clearly need to be supervised by the USFS. Closing of the trail through any part of any season must be afforded public review and comment before any such action is allowed. Clear findings of public need should be required. Any potential limitations that may be imposed on trail use by gondola construction, operations or avalanche safety activities will need full disclosure as part of the proposed action.

Theme ID: 60.5 Theme Name: Five Lakes Trail Management Plan Description:

CID: 98 Last Name: Heagerty Organization: Representative: True

Substantive Comment: The EIR must address any potential limitations that may be imposed on trail use by gondola construction, operations or avalanche safety activities associated with gondola operations.

Theme ID: 60.6 Theme Name: Construction Impacts Description: Impacts on trail users during construction

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CID: 98 Last Name: Heagerty Organization: Representative: True

Substantive Comment: Construction interference to trail users will occur not only at the actual trail crossing, but along the entire upper half of the trail and into the Five Lakes Basin. Details of equipment types, noise and exhaust emissions, number of weeks of the presence of equipment and crews will need to be included in the EIS. If helicopters are to be used how will they impact the Wilderness Area? How often would helicopters fly in and out of the project area? What would be the distance into the Wilderness that noise would penetrate? What will the level of impacts to trail users be from gondola operations regarding noise, nuisance, privacy of hikers, and skier-hiker conflicts. The EIS must address the impacts to winter hikers from gondola operations.

Theme ID: 60.6 Theme Name: Construction Impacts Description: Impacts on trail users during construction

CID: 98 Last Name: Heagerty Organization: Representative: True

Substantive Comment: Gondola construction will cause road and equipment scarring that will be visible along most of the upper half of the Five Lakes Trail, as will the actual crossing of the trail near the Wilderness boundary. Impact assessments of these disturbance areas, with renderings, are necessary.

Theme ID: 60.6 Theme Name: Construction Impacts Description: Impacts on trail users during construction

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CID: 177 Last Name: Heagerty Organization: Granite Chief Wilderness Protection League Representative: True

Substantive Comment: The EIR must address any potential limitations that may be imposed on trail use by gondola construction, operations or avalanche safety activities associated with gondola operations or Estelle chair operations.

Theme ID: 60.7 Theme Name: Estelle Lift Impacts Description: Cumulative impacts on trail users

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Resource ID: *13* Resource Description *Avalanche Hazards*

SubResource ID: *13.2* SubResource Description: *Present and Future Avalanche Mgmt plans*

CID: 92 Last Name: Beaton Organization: Shute, Mihaly & Weinberger LLP Representative: True

Substantive Comment: K. Public Services The EIR and EIS must analyze the Project's exacerbation of avalanche risks in the area and any impacts to public safety and emergency response that may result. Special attention should be paid to the Project's potential to increase avalanche hazards for users of the public right-of-way along the Five Lakes Trail. The analysis must take into account climate change over the life of the Project, which is likely to change snowfall patterns and avalanche risk.

Theme ID: 62.1 Theme Name: Increased avalanche hazards to Five Lakes Trail right-of-way Description: How will GazEx increase impacts to public safety and emergency response and the access to avalanche areas

CID: 94 Last Name: Moore Organization: Alpine Meadows Estates Representative: True

Substantive Comment: The third issue we would like to raise is the SAFETY of people. This project is being proposed in one of the most avalanche prone locations in Alpine Meadows Valley. We understand that with it the proposal includes additional avalanche equipment – but is it enough to keep people safe? Encouraging people to ski in an area that has taken the lives of several young skiers is dangerous. In fact, this winter, this area had an avalanche during a large storm over the Christmas and New Year's holidays. It is DIRECTLY above Alpine Meadows Road and 2 Parking Area. Do you remember the avalanche tragedy of 1982/ 1983? That could happen again and by having a gondola in this area and more people encouraged to ski in this zone – will put lives in danger.

Theme ID: 62.2 Theme Name: Increased usage/access results in increased safety hazards to the general public Description:

CID: 54 Last Name: Heagerty Organization: Representative: True

Substantive Comment: Avalanche hazards would increase with the proposed action, as more of the known hazard zones would be subject to substantial increases in human activity. Hazard Zone Maps are outdated and current management practices are not successfully protecting roads, housing and humans (reference avalanche of this last winter closing Alpine Meadows Road).

Theme ID: 62.3 Theme Name: Update Avalanche Hazard Zones map and descriptions in project area Description:

CID: 98 Last Name: Heagerty Organization: Representative: True

Substantive Comment: A thorough and rigorous revision or update of the existing Avalanche Hazard Zones Map and descriptions, throughout the Project Area, is necessary. The prior avalanche study (Caldwell, 2001) lacked credible technical work, included no scientific or engineering citations and was prepared by the landowner. That management plan was reviewed by credentialed avalanche scientists who found the report lacking scientific and engineering merit. Avalanche conditions are changing each year and the current avalanche management methods need to be upgraded. In this past winter a significant avalanche occurred in the proposed project area, in spite of the existing avalanche control plan, closing Alpine Meadows Road for over 4 hours and stranding thousands of people, cutting off both evacuation opportunities and emergency service vehicle access.

Theme ID: 62.3 Theme Name: Update Avalanche Hazard Zones map and descriptions in project area Description:

CID: 98 Last Name: Heagerty Organization: Representative: True

Substantive Comment: Climate Modeling and robust future avalanche condition modeling is needed to better predict potential changes to snow pack configurations, moisture content layering and regular variations, slope failure, snow run-up and other relevant features associated with avalanches. Historical approaches to avalanche management are no longer sufficient and arguably didn't work this last winter. Risk Assessments are needed to estimate frequency and magnitude of avalanches reaching Alpine Meadows Rd and homes in Bear Creek (as occurred last winter) and the associated risks to life, community safety and traffic. What will be the potential occurrence intervals for future closures of AM Road and damages to buildings downslope of the project area? How will emergency vehicles access Alpine Meadows Resort or residents when the Alpine Meadows Road is closed by avalanche-related events? An assumption that the project avalanche management plan will successfully "manage" future avalanches will require substantive technical work and robust modeling. Cumulative impact evaluations should consider the gondola, Estelle chair and the partially built KT chair, the reach of the avalanche risks and the infrastructure and management required.

Theme ID: 62.4 Theme Name: Climate modeling, risk assessment and future avalanche condition modeling from proje Description:

CID: 177 Last Name: Heagerty Organization: Granite Chief Wilderness Protection League Representative: True

Substantive Comment: Avalanche Hazards (Licensed Engineers Report, with Engineers stamp) The applicant has incorporated hazard mitigations into the proposed project, such as Gasex exploders, fuel storage locations, pipelines and canons. However, the public will need to see the technical work that preceded the mitigation plans in order to credibly comment on the avalanche hazard technical work that led to the avalanche control facilities.

Theme ID: 62.5 Theme Name: Technical report on avalanche modeling needs to precede mitigation plans to adequate Description:

SubResource ID: ***13.3*** **SubResource Description:** ***GazEx details/impacts***

CID: 54 Last Name: Heagerty Organization: Representative: True

Substantive Comment: The Gasex exploders, fuel storage, pipelines and winter re-fueling and maintenance plans should be re-assessed according to the new avalanche and climate modeling.

Theme ID: 63.1 Theme Name: Gazex Details Description: Questions about Gazex infrastructure and avalanche risks

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Resource ID: *15* Resource Description *Socio-Econ*

SubResource ID: *15.1* SubResource Description: *General*

CID: 189 Last Name: Fountain Organization: Riverwood Partners Representative: True

Substantive Comment: And typical of all mountain ski resorts, Squaw | Alpine's prosperity, and in turn the prosperity of our community, is threatened by intense competition in a consolidating ski industry where only the strong are surviving. Strategic investments such as the Base-to-Base Gondola are essential to be competitive.

Theme ID: 71.1 Theme Name: Economic Benefits Description: Comment about benefits of project

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CID: 195 Last Name: Markel Organization: Windermere Farms Representative: True

Substantive Comment: In addition the present proposed location will most likely devalue all these units [Squaw Valley Lodge]...Possibly lowering all the unit values and tax status.

Theme ID: 71.2 Theme Name: Property Value Description: Comment about potential impacts to property values

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CID: 54 Last Name: Heagerty Organization: Representative: True

Substantive Comment: The applicant insists the gondola will not operate outside the ski season, which suggests the operations could be as short as 3 months in future years. How will the public be protected from a potentially unsustainable gondola operation that would require either an extension to all-year operations or closure (leaving the infrastructure in place, as is the case with the Caldwell KT chairlift?). The developer has stated the gondola cost would be $35-37million in capital investment, the annual operation and maintenance costs would be in addition. The DEIS should describe the applicants financial modeling, assumptions and revenue plan that demonstrates a winter-only operation.

Theme ID: 71.3 Theme Name: Season of Operation Description: Question about economics of winter-only use

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SubResource ID: *15.3* SubResource Description: *Increased Visitation*

CID: 92 Last Name: Beaton Organization: Shute, Mihaly & Weinberger LLP Representative: True

Substantive Comment: J. Population and Housing The County's Initial Study disclaims any impact by the Project on Population or Housing in the area. IS at 2-45 – 2-46. However, if the gondola Project is analyzed along with the planned development of the Village at Squaw Valley—a project of which the gondola is a key component—it is part of a very significant impact on the area's population. This is yet another example of how this Project's improper segmentation from the Village at Squaw Valley Specific Plan EIR undermines an adequate environmental review of the Project, in violation of CEQA. Further, the gondola Project may induce growth at Alpine Meadows and elsewhere in the area by increasing access to the area and raising the area's desirability as a tourist destination. Specifically, the gondola would connect Alpine Meadows to Squaw Valley's expansive ski terrain and greater amenities, which would likely draw more people to visit and live at Alpine Meadows, much of which consists of Tahoe National Forest land. The EIR and EIS should disclose and analyze this potential population impact. Further, the EIR and EIS should include mitigation measures designed to avoid unchecked growth in the area and loss of precious wilderness resources. At a minimum, this mitigation should provide for protecting the White Wolf area from any development, especially the portion of the White Wolf property that is included in the Granite Chief Wilderness Area's congressionally designated boundaries.

Theme ID: 73.1 Theme Name: Village EIR and Combined Impacts on Population/Housing Description: Project should be considered with Village EIR including impacts on population and housing

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CID: 96 Last Name: Moore Organization: Sierra Club Representative: True

Substantive Comment: Adverse environmental effects on the greater Tahoe-Truckee region: Squaw Valley Ski Holdings proposes to invest many millions in the ropeway, obviously hoping that the ropeway will enhance the skiing and resort experiences at Squaw Valley and Alpine Meadows and significantly increase the number of visitors to these resorts. This increase in visitors and the 23 different significant and unavoidable impacts of the Village at Squaw Valley project identified in the Village dEIR are obviously reasonably foreseeable impacts that the ropeway will enhance; the ropeway's enhancement of these effects should be analyzed in the EIS.

Theme ID: 73.2 Theme Name: Gondola will increase visitors to Squaw Description: Increased visitors will impact other resources

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CID: 102 Last Name: Lozeau Organization: Lozeau Drury LLP Representative: True

Substantive Comment: Growth Inducing Impacts: As for the Alpine Meadows area, the EIS must take into account the private landowner's own proposed development and additional ski lift that would link with Alpine Meadows anticipated new Roller Lift and the Gondola Project. http://mountainminds.net/future/a-light-in-the-white-wolf-tunnel/. This latter project, coupled with the access road necessary for the Gondola Project, calls into question the determination in the County's Initial Study that the Gondola Project would not have any growth–inducing impacts. On the contrary, the two related projects would appear designed to have near-term growth-inducing impacts in the Alpine Meadows area. The presence of a road would encourage additional development in that area. The Gondola Project also would induce additional development of ski trails, including tree removal and other impacts, along the west side of Alpine Meadows and within the White Wolf property. The fact that the Gondola Project is intended to bring more visitors to the ski areas heightens the concern that additional development would be more likely in the vicinity

Theme ID: 73.4 Theme Name: Cumulative Impact with White Wolf Description: Cumulative impact on visitation and development

Resource ID: *16* Resource Description *Traffic/Parking*

SubResource ID: *16.1* SubResource Description: *General*

CID: 177 Last Name: Heagerty Organization: Granite Chief Wilderness Protection League Representative: True

Substantive Comment: Visitor Increases to Squaw and to Alpine The project will bring more visitors to Squaw and Alpine, a primary reason for the projected expenditure of some $35 million to construct the gondola. The gondola is a basic component of the applicant's stated desire to make SquawAlpine a world-class resort. The gondola will increase traffic into the project area. The traffic analysis needs to address the additional vehicular traffic on Hiway 89, on Squaw Valley Road and on Alpine Meadows Rd. Applicant's statements to date projecting traffic reductions of 100 cars per day are not credible when the applicant is on the other hand touting the megaresort concept arid asking for approval to build over 1,500 more beds in Squaw. The County deserves an independent third party to evaluate the likely increase in resort visitations resulting from the gondola and related projects, then determine the likely associated vehicle trips generated on the three main roadways. Using the traffic analytics utilized for the Squaw Village project would not withstand professional scrutiny because the baseline and modeling used in that analysis produced travel time predictions that don't even reflect the existing (very poor) weekend traffic conditions.

Theme ID: 76.1 Theme Name: Increased visitation and impacts to traffic and parking Description: Increases in visitation would result in impacts to traffic and parking

CID: 201 Last Name: Bruner Organization: Representative: True

Substantive Comment: The applicant has stated that the proposed Gondola would reduce the travel time between the two ski resorts, and the applicant touts that this project will reduce traffic by 100 cars/day. This is a complete red herring presented by SVSH! The shuttle that currently runs between the Squaw and Alpine resorts is minimally used. Of course SVSH will say that is because of the wait time and transportation time. If that was the real issue, SVSH could run more shuttles for a much lower cost than the cost of a $35 million Gondola, and the additional shuttles would surely be fewer vehicles than the supposed cars that SVSH believes are traveling back and forth between the resorts today. The reality is that the plans of SVSH to add 1500 bedrooms and a theme park to Squaw Valley will create traffic that far overshadows the savings in cars and/or shuttles for skiers that may want to ski both resorts in one day. This project is not about reducing traffic. This project is about trying to "create demand" to cross the mountains and thereby attract more people, more traffic and more spending at the SVSH resorts. The county supervisors owe it to the public to do an independent study of the traffic patterns that would result from the cumulative impact of the Squaw Valley Village project and the Gondola.

Theme ID: 76.1 Theme Name: Increased visitation and impacts to traffic and parking Description: Increases in visitation would result in impacts to traffic and parking

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CID: 92 Last Name: Beaton Organization: Shute, Mihaly & Weinberger LLP Representative: True

Substantive Comment: M. Transportation and Traffic The EIR and EIS must analyze the Project's impacts on traffic and parking in the area. This is an incredibly important aspect of the environmental analysis because the area is subject to extreme traffic conditions during much of the year. Specifically, the gondola may attract more visitors, and new visitors and Alpine Meadows users may choose to park at Squaw Valley instead of Alpine, further increasing the traffic and parking problems at Squaw. Indeed, as we mentioned above, a recent survey conducted by Squaw Valley Ski Holdings found that 36% of respondents would "begin their day by parking at Squaw to access Alpine." And again, that the gondola Project's traffic impacts are so intertwined with the traffic impacts from the proposed Squaw Valley Specific Plan highlights the fact that these two projects must be analyzed together in a single EIR.

Theme ID: 76.2 Theme Name: Cumulative Impacts with Village Description: Cumulative traffic/parking impacts with the Village due to increased visitation

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CID: 195 Last Name: Markel Organization: Windermere Farms Representative: True

Substantive Comment: It will also provide vast traffic problems with skiers coming from the primary parking areas trying to access this lift location.

Theme ID: 76.3 Theme Name: Squaw Access Description: Comment about skier access through Squaw Village to gondola

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CID: 198 Last Name: Stonebraker Organization: Department of California Highway Patrol Representative: True

Substantive Comment: In the last few years, Truckee experienced a multitude of special events, year round road construction, and snow conditions which required both internal and external staffing from other CHP Areas. The geography, location, and elevation of the Truckee area provide some of the most treacherous roadway conditions in the entire country. Due to these treacherous conditions on I-80, the Department of Transportation has stationed more equipment and personnel assigned to the Truckee region than in any other portion of the state. During the winter of 2015/2016 the Truckee Area experienced significant weather related incidents including a Gold Run Area officer being killed within the Truckee Area during a snow storm traffic collision, a 41 vehicle traffic collision and over 11 weather related traffic collisions into CHP patrol vehicles between the Gold Run and Truckee Areas on Interstate 80.

Theme ID: 76.4 Theme Name: Caltrans Comments Description:

CID: 198 Last Name: Stonebraker Organization: Department of California Highway Patrol Representative: True

Substantive Comment: The North Tahoe/Truckee area is the host to more large scale events than any other area in the region. Much of these large scale events are directly involved with the Squaw Valley community. Many of these events begin or culminate in Squaw Valley. In the winter months, there are numerous snow-related events conducted at one of the eight world class ski resorts. Truckee and the Tahoe Basin have more ski resorts than anywhere else in the country. In the summer months, there is an average of three large events affecting traffic each and every week. Truckee has recently hosted the USA Cycling Championships, Amgen Tour of California, Ironman Lake Tahoe, two Tough Mudder events, and the Spartan Race, as well as many other bicycle races, triathlons and running events. The Ironman alone required a yearlong planning process. These special events absorb a tremendous amount of state resources, as well as simultaneously affecting the Squaw Valley area.

Theme ID: 76.4 Theme Name: Caltrans Comments Description:

CID: 198 Last Name: Stonebraker Organization: Department of California Highway Patrol Representative: True

Substantive Comment: The Truckee Area has one of the highest year-round influxes of tourism in the entire nation. In 2014, the North Tahoe area (not to include Truckee) had over four million visitors; more than had ever been recorded. In addition to being the recreation center of northern California, the Truckee Area provides safety and service to the main traffic artery between California and the rest of the United States. The CHP takes pride in assisting 38,000 vehicles per day (transporting 113 million dollars in assets) reach their destination along Interstate (I) 80.

Theme ID: 76.4 Theme Name: Caltrans Comments Description:

CID: 198 Last Name: Stonebraker Organization: Department of California Highway Patrol Representative: True

Substantive Comment: The Truckee and North Tahoe communities (including Squaw Valley, an unincorporated portion of Placer County) has experienced an incredible amount of growth within the last few years, as well as fluctuating population increases. This particular project will increase tourism, congestion, and indirectly increase the frequency of special events. The North Tahoe area has limited roadway infrastructure for State Route (SR) 89 and SR 28. The Tahoe Basin is a protected environment making increases to the state highway system challenging. The CHP Truckee Area is comprised of 24 field officers and a communications center which services four distinctly different offices. These impacts and an increase to congestion increase emergency response times for first responders including CHP Truckee Area personnel.

Theme ID: 76.4 Theme Name: Caltrans Comments Description:

SubResource ID: *16.4* **SubResource Description: *Traffic Volumes***

CID: 178 Last Name: Organization: Representative: True

Substantive Comment: Traffic is both a social and environmental impact that must be considered. Even if we consider more development, why not put it on a 10 year hold to evaluate how we can handle the transportation problems? Highway 89 is unusable on winter mornings often particularly during the weekends because of traffic to the ski resort. This project would undoubtedly attract more visitors and thereby more transportation needs. Clearly the current transportation system is overwhelmed by the tourist traffic. How can we in our right mind expand the resort further when it puts a load on the infrastructure system which we all use, whether we like to ski or not?

Theme ID: 79.1 Theme Name: Increased Traffic Description: Study of traffic patterns, indirect/direct/cumulative effects on Squaw Valley rd., Alpine Meadows rd., Hwy 89, Truckee and Tahoe City

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CID: 58 Last Name: Hatch Organization: Representative: True

Substantive Comment: 6) Impacts of the Project on traffic both within Alpine Meadows and Squaw Valley, and the travel corridors to Truckee and Tahoe City, and how the project will offset personal vehicle and shuttle trips between Alpine and Squaw as claimed, or not.

Theme ID: 79.1 Theme Name: Increased Traffic Description: Study of traffic patterns, indirect/direct/cumulative effects on Squaw Valley rd., Alpine Meadows rd., Hwy 89, Truckee and Tahoe City

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CID: 179 Last Name: Pressnall Organization: Representative: True

Substantive Comment: One of the claims made by Squaw Valley is that the gondola will decrease traffic on local roads. Squaw Valley would not be spending millions of dollars on this lift if it didn't expect substantial increases in customers because of it. In the long run, I think the gondola would cause Increased traffic, not less traffic. Troy Caldwell is counting on this lift so he can build a private resort on his land, thereby increasing traffic and impacts even further. Are there any plans to make highway 89 a freeway?

Theme ID: 79.1 Theme Name: Increased Traffic Description: Study of traffic patterns, indirect/direct/cumulative effects on Squaw Valley rd., Alpine Meadows rd., Hwy 89, Truckee and Tahoe City

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CID: 177 Last Name: Heagerty Organization: Granite Chief Wilderness Protection League Representative: True

Substantive Comment: Of particular concern regarding these cumulative impacts that deserve disclosure and are now ripe for evaluation include: Combined traffic on Alpine Meadows Road, Squaw Valley Road and Highway 89 from Truckee to Tahoe City.

Theme ID: 79.2 Theme Name: Cumulative Traffic with Village Description: Consider cumulative traffic impacts with the Squaw Village project

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CID: 87 Last Name: Bruner Organization: Representative: True

Substantive Comment: 5. Traffic impacts and enhanced transportation between Squaw and Alpine: The applicant has stated that the proposed Gondola would reduce the travel time between the two ski resorts, and the applicant touts that this project will reduce traffic by 100 cars/day. This is a complete red herring presented by SVSH! The shuttle that currently runs between the Squaw and Alpine resorts is minimally used. Of course SVSH will say that is because of the wait time and transportation time. If that was the real issue, SVSH could run more shuttles for a much lower cost than the cost of a $35 million Gondola, and the additional shuttles would surely be fewer vehicles than the supposed cars that SVSH believes are traveling back and forth between the resorts today. The reality is that the plans of SVSH to add 1500 bedrooms and a theme park to Squaw Valley will create traffic that far overshadows the savings in cars and/or shuttles for skiers that may want to ski both resorts in one day. This project is not about reducing traffic. This project is about trying to “create demand” to cross the mountains and thereby attract more people, more traffic and more spending at the SVSH resorts. The county supervisors owe it to the public to do an independent study of the traffic patterns that would result from the cumulative impact of the Squaw Valley Village project and the Gondola.

Theme ID: 79.2 Theme Name: Cumulative Traffic with Village Description: Consider cumulative traffic impacts with the Squaw Village project

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CID: 22 Last Name: Moise Organization: Representative: True

Substantive Comment: The goal of the project is to dramatically increase the number of visitors to the Squaw valley area which will add to the dangerous traffic congestion along highway 89 during the weekends. The congestion already interferes dangerously with emergency vehicles and diminishes public safety…

Theme ID: 79.3 Theme Name: Safety Impacts Description: Impacts to emergency vehicles and public safety cause by increased traffic volumes

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CID: 214 Last Name: Tolby Organization: Representative: True

Substantive Comment: The environmental benefits of a few less cars travelling between Squaw Valley and Alpine Meadows each day pale in comparison to the the long lasting environmental impacts of this project on a wilderness area and the surrounding environment.

Theme ID: 79.4 Theme Name: Reduced Traffic Description: Comment about potential reduction in traffic

Resource ID: *17* Resource Description *Health & Safety*

SubResource ID: *17.1* SubResource Description: *General*

CID: 102 Last Name: Lozeau Organization: Lozeau Drury LLP Representative: True

Substantive Comment: Emergency Access: The EIS must evaluate the Project’s effects on emergency access to the Project area. This is obvious on a cumulative impact level, given the large amount of development currently being proposed or anticipated for Squaw Valley and the Alpine Meadows area. The EIS should conduct a thorough review of the sufficiency of the Squaw Valley Fire District’s Wildland Fire Evacuation Plan and the Alpine Meadows’ Community Wildfire Protection Plan to address the need to evacuate large numbers of additional residents and users that would be expected from anticipated new development, including additional development induced by the Gondola Project and the possible use of the Project outside of the ski season during times of fire risk. Likewise, evacuation risks posed by additional construction equipment should be evaluated.

Theme ID: 81.1 Theme Name: Emergency Access Description: Need for emergency management plans

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CID: 202 Last Name: Heagerty Organization: Granite Chief Wilderness Protection League Representative: True

Substantive Comment: The county Environmental Checklist appears to prematurely conclude that wildfire issues are less than significant. This preliminary conclusion is based in part on the Alpine Meadows Community Wildfire Protection Plan. Unfortunately that plan (as cited by the county) was prepared in 2005. The science of forest fires, climate change, fuel loads and other aspects of fire risks will need to be fully evaluated in this EIR/EIS. The gondola would bring more people into both valleys. More vehicles will be parked at both base locations. More persons, reflective materials, volatile fuels and spark-inducing activities (activities that increase the risk of fire) would be placed in remote and/or difficult to reach locations as a result of this project. The catastrophic fire potential that is increasing across the forests to the west of Squaw and Alpine will need to be thoroughly evaluated, given that the Sierra's are experiencing the largest tree die-offs in our history. The Forest Service needs to evaluate and disclose how this project may impact your fire fighting capacities, fire management capabilities, and the increases in fire risk and control. The EIR for the Squaw Village project estimates a 10.7 hour evacuation timeframe for vehicles to leave Squaw Valley in an emergency. That document, alarmingly, provides no remedy for protecting the public. In an emergency evacuation (at a peak visitor population event, both valleys) what will be the estimated evacuation times for Alpine Meadows; Squaw Valley with the gondola and the proposed Squaw Village; SR 89 to Tahoe City; SR 89 to Truckee; and distances both east and west on I-80 before that traffic reaches "posted speed limits?" These fire hazards, potential varieties of fire behaviors and characteristics, the potential evacuation timeframes, and specific risks to human losses caught in these fires will need to be further assessed and evaluated in the cumulative impacts sections of the EIR/EIS. There are several known and pending development proposals such as Alpine Sierra, White Wolf, Alpine Meadows Master Plan, Tahoe City Lodge, etc. Each project will contribute more vehicles, more property protection efforts, more human risk opportunities and other public interest considerations. The proposed gondola can not be honestly or credibly evaluated as a stand alone, given the publicly-expressed interconnectedness it would have with other developments.

Theme ID: 81.2 Theme Name: Wildfire Description: Comment about wildfire risk

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SubResource ID: *17.2* **SubResource Description: *Impacts of GazEx expolders***

CID: 95 Last Name: Bruner Organization: Representative: True

Substantive Comment: 2. Danger of Gasex exploders to hikers, skiers and wildlife: The Gasex exploders are not only an eyesore, they are a physical hazard for hikers and skiers. The Environmental Impact Statement ("EIS") must carefully analyze the impact of danger to skiers and hikers, including winter hikers, from this obstructive equipment and the volatile gases used in the equipment. In addition, the explosions and the noise will result in injury to wildlife in the area, and this must be carefully analzed in the EIS.

Theme ID: 82.2 Theme Name: GazEx equipment is obstructive to hikers and skiers Description:

SubResource ID: *17.3* **SubResource Description: *Hazardous Materials***

CID: 92 Last Name: Beaton Organization: Shute, Mihaly & Weinberger LLP Representative: True

Substantive Comment: F. Hazards and Hazardous Materials The EIR and EIS must analyze the impacts of the dangers posed by the hazardous materials the Project would bring to, store, and transport within the area. Specifically, the Gazex Exploders would require over 3,000 feet of above-ground HDPE pipe to carry pressure-fed combustible gas to the Exploders, and the attendant risks must be analyzed. However, the County's Initial Study dismisses all hazard and hazardous-materials impacts as less than significant. For example, the Initial Study claims that because the Project would be required to comply with existing regulations regarding transport, use, storage, and disposal of hazardous materials, risk would be "unlikely" and "minimal." IS at 2-31. That the Project would comply with laws does not mean that there is not a risk of accidents—which may be very serious when hazardous or flammable materials are involved. The EIR and EIS must fully describe the risks— even unlikely but possible ones—of using these hazardous materials to the Project Area.

Theme ID: 83.1 Theme Name: GazEx Safety Concerns Description: Impacts and mitigation of volatile gas, fire risk

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CID: 57 Last Name: york Organization: Representative: True

Substantive Comment: I have some concerns regarding increased fire danger in the proposed gondola development area and the Gasex system that will be placed on USFS land. I understand that this system is supposed to operate only in the winter when there is less significant potential impact in relation to fire concerns and that precautions will be taken to minimize fire risks by removing any flammable contents of the tanks in the summer. I would like to see further consideration given to this matter. In light of recent dry winters and the continued drought that we find ourselves in, fire season is lasting longer and extending into months it never used to. In the recent past, there was also a serious fire in Reno in January, which is a time of year that is not known to have a serious fire risk associated with it. I have some concerns about what might happen if the Gasex system is loaded in anticipation of winter snow and then we have a dry winter with little snow accumulation and there are the increased fire hazards of propane and oxygen tanks in this steep, dry, forest area. The area that the Gasex system is proposed for is also one where the snow pack tends to melt sooner and so it might be drier for longer than the typical winter months assumed for ski season projections.

Theme ID: 83.1 Theme Name: GazEx Safety Concerns Description: Impacts and mitigation of volatile gas, fire risk

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CID: 177 Last Name: Heagerty Organization: Granite Chief Wilderness Protection League Representative: True

Substantive Comment: Hazardous Materials/Explosives Risk Assessment (Engineers Report): An Engineers Report is requested that addresses the volatility of the gases, the risks of equipment failure, and possible human-caused failures that could result in explosions or fire events. Risk of vandalism, avalanche and/or slopes failures, and risks to winter recreationists should be described and evaluated.

Theme ID: 83.1 Theme Name: GazEx Safety Concerns Description: Impacts and mitigation of volatile gas, fire risk

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Resource ID: *18* Resource Description *Scenery*

SubResource ID: *18.1* SubResource Description: *General*

CID: 179 Last Name: Pressnall Organization: Representative: True

Substantive Comment: The gondola and eight Gazex Exploders would negatively impact the viewsheds of Alpine Meadows, Squaw Valley, Granite Chief Wilderness, and the Five Lakes Trail.

Theme ID: 86.1 Theme Name: Impacts to visual resource Description: Analysis of impacts and mitigation measures to visual resources

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CID: 195 Last Name: Markel Organization: Windermere Farms Representative: True

Substantive Comment: I am a long time owner and resident at the Squaw Valley Lodge. My building and unit faces the proposed Base to Base Project. I have attended several meetings regarding the current proposed location and construction of this lift system. Presently the proposed location and design destroys the visual and esthetic environment of my building. The entire mountain facing side of this three story building consisting of many privately owned units. The current proposal also destroys the visual esthetics of adjoining building to the west.

Theme ID: 86.2 Theme Name: Squaw Village Impacts Description: Comments about visual impacts in the Squaw Village

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CID: 57 Last Name: york Organization: Representative: True

Substantive Comment: Aesthetics I have some very serious concerns about the potential permanent damage that will be caused to the scenic vistas and pristine quality of the Granite Chief Wilderness. I also would like to see the negative impacts of the altered views on the experience of hikers of the PCT be more explicitly addressed in the EIS. I have serious concerns regarding light pollution and adverse affects of light on nighttime views in the area. I would ask that this area of concern be reevaluated to include a deeper consideration of this matter. In a presentation given to Alpine Meadows homeowners by Squaw Valley's Andy Wirth, he stated on more than one occasion that he was hoping the gondola would run into the evening hours so as to allow people to travel to and from the village for dinner, etc. If this is true, there would certainly be a newly introduced light pollution impact on the Alpine Meadows side, where no lights currently exist along the ridge lines and down to the parking lot. There would be light from any lights on the mid-station that would be on during operation and then also light coming from the lights in the gondola cabins themselves.

Theme ID: 86.3 Theme Name: Impacts of ambient light from Gondola on visual resource Description:

CID: 71 Last Name: McMurchie Organization: Alpine Electric, Alpine Integration Representative: True

Substantive Comment: We do however have a big problem with the proposed alignment of the lift. First, there is a very special lake that we visit often which as been called Frog Lake, Pussy Lake, among other names depending upon who you ask. It exists within about 100 feet of the proposed Alpine mid station. It would obviously suffer from the impact of a major piece of machinery that close by and that incredible view down the valley would no longer exist.

Theme ID: 86.4 Theme Name: Barstool Lake Impacts Description: Comment about visual impacts at Barstool Lake

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SubResource ID: *18.5* SubResource Description: *Viewpoint Assessment*

CID: 98 Last Name: Heagerty Organization: Representative: True

Substantive Comment: “Tent Poles,” flagging and other on-the-ground methods for illustrating the potential future visual conditions of towers, cables, Gasex bunkers, pipelines and other infrastructure is requested, as a means to give the residents of the valley and the hiking community a clear understanding of the potential future condition. (The property owner has offered to erect balloons and other means along the gondola route for the Bear Creek Association and Alpine Meadows Estates homeowners). The proposed project represents potentially the most dramatic visual change in Alpine’s history. More specifically the assessment should include: Actual on-the-ground placement of tent poles depicting locations and heights of the two mid-way stations and those gondola towers that are near the Five Lakes Trail, are in the viewshed of Five Lakes Basin, and examples of towers descending the granite ridgeline into the Alpine Meadows base station. Structures, poles and ribbons could be put in place for the July 4th weekend when the homeowner associations of Bear Creek, Alpine Estates and Juniper Ridge hold their annual meetings in the valley. Visualizations (summer and winter) from Impact Areas within Granite Chief Wilderness (slopes west and north of Five Lakes); Visualizations (summer and winter) from sitelines around the different Five Lakes shorelines (particularly the eastern-most three lakes where direct lines of sight are likely); Visualizations (summer and winter) from Five Lakes Trail (4-5 sights along trail). Visualizations (summer and winter) from Bear Creek Association (BCA) Properties; BCA Pond; Alpine Meadows Estates; Juniper Ridge Properties; and Viewpoints Along Alpine Meadows Road

Theme ID: 90.1 Theme Name: Visual modeling of terrain, tree removal, gondola, etc from KOPs Description:

CID: 98 Last Name: Heagerty Organization: Representative: True

Substantive Comment: Aesthetics/Viewshed Impacts (Formal Report): State of the Art Modeling/Terrain/Satellite imaging is necessary for full public disclosure of the potential impacts to the view-sheds and aesthetic conditions caused by this project. View-sheds must include Alpine Meadows (AM Road, 8 several points; Juniper Ridge, several points; Alpine Meadows Estates, several points; Bear Creek Association, several points including from the beach at the BCA pond; Alpine Sierra; Stanford Chalet; and Alpine Meadows lodge and surroundings. Renderings (summer and winter) are needed from at least 15 different points in the AM valley.

Theme ID: 90.1 Theme Name: Visual modeling of terrain, tree removal, gondola, etc from KOPs Description:

CID: 84 Last Name: Mooers Organization: Sierra Watch Representative: True

Substantive Comment: Secondly, I think you've already started to make some progress in pointing out how important the visual issues will be. And it's important to really take a look from both directions, from the wilderness, from Alpine Meadows Road. Because I think what's proposed here -- the word "gondola" sounds really nice to a lot of us. A lot of us grew up riding the Squaw gondola and those were good times. But what's proposed here is really a major permanent mechanized industrial transportation commercial installation on literally the crest of the Sierra.

Theme ID: 90.1 Theme Name: Visual modeling of terrain, tree removal, gondola, etc from KOPs Description:

CID: 44 Last Name: Fisher Organization: UnofficialAlpine.com Representative: True

Substantive Comment: The EIS must include a more complete assessment of the visual blight caused by the proposal. Suggestions would include: 1) Visual from the Sun Deck of the Alpine Meadows lodge 2) Visual from the front of the Alpine Meadows lodge with the gondola built overhead 3) Visual of the Buttress area of the gondola and associated Gazex installation 4) Visual of the Alpine Meadows mid-station with gondola cars on the lines 5) Visual of the project in total as viewed from various residential view points in AM 5) Cumulative devlopment pictures that show the total effect of all proposals together

Theme ID: 90.1 Theme Name: Visual modeling of terrain, tree removal, gondola, etc from KOPs Description:

CID: 67 Last Name: Stepner Organization: Representative: True

Substantive Comment: Sometimes a gate is opened in the winter to be able to ski/hike from below KT lift to Alpine. Could someone assess the views that will be impacted by the proposed gondola project in both the summer and winter.

Theme ID: 90.1 Theme Name: Visual modeling of terrain, tree removal, gondola, etc from KOPs Description:

CID: 64 Last Name: IlFeld Organization: Squaw Valley Resident Representative: True

Substantive Comment: I would like to see the visual impact at each base area of the terminal and the sections out of that terminal. This impact should be gondola shown from multiple perspectives for both Squaw and Alpine base terminals.

Theme ID: 90.1 Theme Name: Visual modeling of terrain, tree removal, gondola, etc from KOPs Description:

CID: 92 Last Name: Beaton Organization: Shute, Mihaly & Weinberger LLP Representative: True

Substantive Comment: A. Aesthetics The EIR and EIS must include detailed visual-impact simulations of how the gondola would look on its own and in conjunction with additional lifts planned for the area, during both winter and summer. These simulations must be made from key vantage points, such as points at which the gondola, including its towers and ropeways, would be visible from the Granite Chief Wilderness Area, the Pacific Crest Trail, the Five Lakes shorelines, the Five Lakes Trail, the deck of the Alpine Meadows main lodge, Bear Creek Association Neighborhood, Alpine Meadows Estates, Juniper Mountain Road, and Alpine Meadows Road. The EIR and EIS should also evaluate the Project's nighttime light and glare impacts, using the Dark Sky Coalition's methodology by taking into account three aspects of lighting: (1) shielding of fixtures, (2) spectrum of light sources, and (3) amount of light.

Theme ID: 90.1 Theme Name: Visual modeling of terrain, tree removal, gondola, etc from KOPs Description:

CID: 46 Last Name: Ries Organization: Representative: True

Substantive Comment: The Granite Chief Wilderness is a precious place that I have seen negatively impacted by increased traffic on the Five Lakes Trailhead over the years. As I see it, the solitude that one used to be able to find at Five Lakes is gone. With the addition of the gondola, the pristine natural beauty and beautiful ridge views will also be gone. This is a huge loss for Tahoe as visitors will not experience the natural beauty that has made this area a desirable destination. This also applies to the views in Alpine Meadows. I was somewhat at peace with the idea of the gondola until I saw KSL's rendering of it from Alpine Meadows Road. I have driven this road for years and know the ridge well. It is a stunning ridge and I never fail to pause and enjoy its grandeur. To see the huge towers and the covered area (possibly a mid-station?) was very upsetting. It appears that little has been done to design this in a way that minimizes the impact on the beautiful ridge line.

Theme ID: 90.2 Theme Name: View from Alpine Meadows and Wilderness Description:

CID: 103 Last Name: Elliot Organization: North Fork Association Representative: True

Substantive Comment: Aesthetics The EIR and EIS must include detailed visual-impact simulations of how the gondola would look on its own and in conjunction with additional lifts planned for the area, during both winter and summer. These simulations must be made from key vantage points such as points at which the gondola, including its towers and ropeways, would be visible from the Granite Chief Wilderness Area, the Pacific Crest Trail, the Five Lakes shorelines, and the Five Lakes Trail.

Theme ID: 90.3 Theme Name: Cumulative Visual Simulations Description: Cumulative simulations with other planned lifts

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Resource ID: *19* Resource Description *Cultural*

SubResource ID: *19.1* SubResource Description: *General*

CID: 88 Last Name: Jensen Organization: National Trails Intermountain Region Representative: True

Substantive Comment: I am writing to notify you that the proposed Squaw Valley to Alpine Meadows Base-to-Base Gondola Project intercepts the Placer County Emigrant Road at the northern end of the project area. The Placer County Emigrant Road is included in the Four Trails Feasibility Study (more information can be found here https://www.nps.gov/cali/learn/management/feasibility-study.htm) . While this route is currently under study for inclusion into the California National Historic Trail, the potential for impact to the trail should be considered in the EIS analysis. Please note that the trail is more appropriately analyzed in terms of a centerline for a trail corridor, as emigrant trails rarely constitute a single path. Attributes to consider include whether the proposed undertaking will: · Alter the current setting and/or feeling of the trail segment · Alter the current cultural landscape of the trail segment · Prevent or further restrict public access to the trail segment · Degrade the interpretive potential of the trail segment · Impact any archaeological features associated with the trail segment · Potential to physically degrade the trail segment

Theme ID: 91.1 Theme Name: Proposed route crosses Emigrant Road Description: Emigrant Road is under study for inclusion into the California National Historic Trail

CID: 49 Last Name: Heagerty Organization: Granite Chief Wilderness Protection League Representative: True

Substantive Comment: An accurate Cultural and Historical investigation needs to be completed, including the research and findings utilized for the state and federal Wilderness Designations, to provide the managers and decision makers sufficient knowledge to make the appropriate decisions regarding public interest protections. Additionally, this information would provide the necessary background to guide any project-induced Wilderness protections and its perimeters.

Theme ID: 91.2 Theme Name: Analysis of Cultural and Historical resources Description:

CID: 200 Last Name: Souza Organization: State of California: Native American Heritage Commission Representative: True

Substantive Comment: AB 52 has added to CEQA the additional requirements listed below, along with many other requirements: 1. Fourteen Day Period to Provide Notice of Completion of an Application/Decision to Undertake a Pro ject: Within fourteen (14) days of determining that an application for a project is complete or of a decision by a public agency to undertake a project, a lead agency shall provide formal notification to a designated contact of, or tribal representative of, traditionally and cu lturally affiliated California Native American tribes that have requested notice, to be accomplished by at least one written notice that includes: a. A brief description of the project. b. The lead agency contact information. c. Notification that the California Native American tribe has 30 days to request consultation. (Pub. Resources Code§ 21080.3.1 (d)). d. A "California Native American tribe" is defined as a Native American tribe located in California that is on the contact list maintained by the NAHC for the purposes of Chapter 905 of Statutes of 2004 (SB 18). (Pub. Resources Code§ 21073). 2. Begin Consultation Within 30 Days of Receiving a Tribe's Request for Consultation and Before Releasing a Negative Declaration. Mitigated Negative Declaration. or Environmental Impact Report: A lead agency shall begin the consultation process within 30 days of receiving a request for consultation from a California Native American tribe that is traditionally and culturally affiliated with the geographic area of the proposed project. (Pub. Resources Code§ 21 080.3.1, subds. (d) and (e)) and prior to the release of a negative declaration, mitigated negative declaration or environmental impact report. (Pub. Resources Code§ 21080.3.1 (b)). a. For purposes of AB 52, "consultation shall have the same meaning as provided in Gov. Code§ 65352.4 (SB 18). (Pub. Resources Code§ 21080.3.1 (b)). 3. Mandatory Topics of Consultation If Requested by a Tribe: The following topics of consultation, if a tribe requests to discuss them, are mandatory topics of consultation: a. Alternatives to the project. b. Recommended mitigation measures. c. Significant effects. (Pub. Resources Code§ 21080.3.2 (a)). 4. Discretionary Topics of Consultation: The following topics are discretionary topics of consultation: a. Type of environmental review necessary. b. Significance of the tribal cultural resources. c. Significance of the project's impacts on tribal cultural resources. d. If necessary, project alternatives or appropriate measures for preservation or mitigation that the tribe may recommend to the lead agency. (Pub. Resources Code§ 21080.3.2 (a)). 5. Confidentiality of Information Submitted by a Tribe During the Environmental Review Process: With some exceptions, any information, including but not limited to, the location, description, and use of tribal cultural resources submitted by a California Native American tribe during the environmental review process shall not be included in the environmental document or otherwise disclosed by the lead agency or any other public agency to the public, consistent with Government Code sections 6254 (r) and 6254.10. Any information submitted by a California Native American tribe during the consultation or environmental review process shall be published in a confidential appendix to the environmental document unless the tribe that provided the information consents, in writing, to the disclosure of some or all of the information to the public. (Pub. Resources Code§ 21082.3 (c)(1)). 6. Discussion of Impacts to Tribal Cultural Resources in the Environmental Document: If a project may have a significant impact on a tribal cultural resource, the lead agency's environmental document shall discuss both of the following: a. Whether the proposed project has a significant impact on an identified tribal cultural resource. b. Whether feasible alternatives or mitigation measures, including those measures that may be agreed to pursuant to Public Resources Code section 21082.3, subdivision (a), avoid or substantially lessen the impact on the identified tribal cultural resource. (Pub. Resources Code§ 21082.3 (b)). 7. Conclusion of Consultation: Consultation with a tribe shall be considered concluded when either of the following occurs: a. The parties agree to measures to mitigate or avoid a significant effect, if a significant effect exists, on a tribal cultural resource; or b. A party, acting in good faith and after reasonable effort, concludes that mutual agreement cannot be reached. (Pub. Resources Code§ 21080.3.2 (b)). 8. Recommending Mitigation Measures Agreed Upon in Consultation in the Environmental Document: Any mitigation measures agreed upon in the consultation conducted pursuant to Public Resources Code section 21080.3.2 shall be recommended for inclusion in the environmental document and in an adopted mitigation monitoring and reporting program, if determined to avoid or lessen the impact pursuant to Public Resources Code section 21082.3, subdivision (b), paragraph 2, and shall be fully enforceable. (Pub. Resources Code§ 21082.3 (a)). 9. Required Consideration of Feasible Mitigation: If mitigation measures recommended by the staff of the lead agency as a result of the consultation process are not included in the environmental document or if there are no agreed upon mitigation measures at the conclusion of consultation, or if consultation does not occur, and if substantial evidence demonstrates that a project will cause a significant effect to a tribal cultural resource, the lead agency shall consider feasible mitigation pursuant to Public Resources Code section 21084.3 (b). (Pub. Resources Code§ 21082.3 (e)). 10. Examples of Mitigation Measures That. If Feasible, May Be Considered to Avoid or Minimize Significant Adverse Impacts to Tribal Cultural Resources: a. Avoidance and preservation of the resources in place, including, but not lim ited to: L Planning and construction to avoid the resources and protect the cultural and natural context. ii. Planning greenspace, parks, or other open space, to incorporate the resources with culturally appropriate protection and management criteria. b. Treating the resource with culturally appropriate dignity, taking into account the tribal cultural values and meaning of the resource, including, but not lim ited to, the following: i. Protecting the cultural character and integrity of the resource. ii. Protecting the traditional use of the resource. 111. Protecting the confidentiality of the resource. c. Permanent conservation easements or other interests in real property, with culturally appropriate management criteria for the purposes of preserving or utilizing the resources or places. d. Protecting the resource. (Pub. Resource Code§ 21084.3 (b)). e. Please note that a federally recognized California Native American tribe or a nonfederally recognized California Native American tribe that is on the contact list maintained by the NAHC to protect a California prehistoric, archaeological, cultural, spiritual, or ceremonial place may acquire and hold conservation easements if the conservation easement is voluntarily conveyed. (Civ. Code§ 815.3 (c)). f. Please note that it is the policy of the state that Native American remains and associated grave artifacts shall be repatriated. (Pub. Resources Code§ 5097.991). 11 . Prerequisites for Certifying an Environmental Impact Report or Adopting a Mitigated Negative Declaration or Negative Declaration with a Significant Impact on an Identified Tribal Cultural Resource: An environmental impact report may not be certified, nor may a mitigated negative declaration or a negative declaration be adopted unless one of the following occurs: a. The consultation process between the tribes and the lead agency has occurred as provided in Public Resources Code sections 21080.3.1 and 21080.3.2 and concluded pursuant to Public Resources Code section 21080.3.2. b. The tribe that requested consultation failed to provide comments to the lead agency or otherwise failed to engage in the consultation process. c. The lead agency provided notice of the project to the tribe in compliance with Public Resources Code section 21080.3.1 (d) and the tribe failed to request consultation within 30 days. (Pub. Resources Code§ 21082.3 (d)). The NAHC's PowerPoint presentation titled, "Tribal Consultation Under AB 52: Requirements and Best Practices" may be found online at http://nahc.ca.gov/wp-content! uploads/2015/10/AB52TribaiConsultation_CaiEPAPDF.pdf SB 18 applies to local governments and requires local governments to contact, provide notice to, refer plans to, and consult with tribes prior to the adoption or amendment of a general plan or a specific plan, or the designation of open space. (Gov. Code § 65352.3). Local governments should consult the Governor's Office of Planning and Research's "Tribal Consultation Guidelines," which can be found online at: https://www.opr.ca.gov/docs/09_1 4_05_Updated_Guidelines_922.pdf Some of SB 18's provisions include: 1. Tribal Consultation: If a local government considers a proposal to adopt or amend a general plan or a specific plan, or to designate open space it is required to contact the appropriate tribes identified by the NAHC by requesting a "Tribal Consultation List." If a tribe, once contacted, requests consultation the local government must consult with the tribe on the plan proposal. A tribe has 90 days from the date of receipt of notification to request consultation unless a shorter timeframe has been agreed to by the tribe. (Gov. Code§ 65352.3 (a)(2)). 2. No Statutory Time Limit on SB 18 Tribal Consultation. There is no statutory time limit on SB 18 tribal consultation. 3. Confidentiality: Consistent with the guidelines developed and adopted by the Office of Planning and Research pursuant to Gov. Code section 65040.2, the city or county shall protect the confidentiality of the information concerning the specific identity, location, character, and use of places, features and objects described in Public Resources Code sections 5097.9 and 5097.993 that are within the city's or county's jurisdiction. (Gov. Code § 65352.3 (b)). 4. Conclusion of SB 18 Tribal Consultation: Consultation should be concluded at the point in which: a. The parties to the consultation come to a mutual agreement concerning the appropriate measures for preservation or mitigation; or b. Either the local government or the tribe, acting in good faith and after reasonable effort, concludes that mutual agreement cannot be reached concerning the appropriate measures of preservation or mitigation. (Tribal Consultation Guidelines, Governor's Office of Planning and Research (2005) at p. 18). Agencies should be aware that neither AB 52 nor SB 18 precludes agencies from initiating tribal consultation with tribes that are traditionally and cultu rally affiliated with their jurisdictions before the timeframes provided in AB 52 and SB 18. For that reason, we urge you to continue to request Native American Tribal Contact Lists and "Sacred Lands File" searches from the NAHC. The request forms can be found online at: http://nahc.ca.gov/resources/forms/ NAHC Recommendations for Cultural Resources Assessments To adequately assess the existence and significance of tribal cultural resources and plan for avoidance, preservation in place, or barring both, mitigation of project-related impacts to tribal cultural resources, the NAHC recommends the following actions: 1. Contact the appropriate regional California Historical Research Information System (CHRIS) Center (http://ohp.parks.ca.gov/?page_id=1 068) for an archaeological records search. The records search will determine: a. If part or all of the APE has been previously surveyed for cultural resources. b. If any known cultural resources have been already been recorded on or adjacent to the APE. c. If the probability is low, moderate, or high that cultural resources are located in the APE. d. If a survey is required to determine whether previously unrecorded cultural resources are present. 2. If an archaeological inventory survey is required, the final stage is the preparation of a professional report detailing the findings and recommendations of the records search and field survey. a. The final report containing site forms, site significance, and mitigation measures should be submitted immediately to the planning department. All information regarding site locations, Native American human remains, and associated funerary objects should be in a separate confidential addendum and not be made available for public disclosure. b. The final written report should be submitted within 3 months after work has been completed to the appropriate regional CHRIS center. 3. Contact the NAHC for: a. A Sacred Lands File search. Remember that tribes do not always record their sacred sites in the Sacred Lands File, nor are they required to do so. A Sacred Lands File search is not a substitute for consultation with tribes that are traditionally and culturally affiliated with the geographic area of the project's APE. b. A Native American Tribal Consultation List of appropriate tribes for consultation concerning the project site and to assist in planning for avoidance, preservation in place, or, failing both, mitigation measures. 4. Remember that the lack of surface evidence of archaeological resources (including tribal cultural resources) does not preclude their subsurface existence. a. Lead agencies should include in their mitigation and monitoring reporting program plan provisions for the identification and evaluation of inadvertently

discovered archaeological resources per Cal. Code Regs., tit. 14, section 15064.5(f) (CEQA Guidelines section 15064.5(f)). In areas of identified archaeological sensitivity, a certified archaeologist and a culturally affiliated Native American with knowledge of cultural resources should monitor all ground-disturbing activities. b. Lead agencies should include in their mitigation and monitoring reporting program plans provisions for the disposition of recovered cultural items that are not burial associated In consultation with culturally affiliated Native Americans. c. Lead agencies should include in their mitigation and monitoring reporting program plans provisions for the treatment and disposition of inadvertently discovered Native American human remains. Health and Safety Code section 7050.5, Public Resources Code section 5097.98, and Cal. Code Regs., tit. 14, section 15064.5, subdivisions (d) and (e) (CEQA Guidelines section 15064.5, subds. (d) and (e)) address the processes to be followed in the event of an inadvertent discovery of any Native American human remains and associated grave goods in a location other than a dedicated cemetery.

Theme ID: 91.3 Theme Name: Native Hertitage Commission Code Description: Requests from Native Hertitage Commission for correspondance, analysis, contact, etc

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Resource ID: *20* Resource Description *Air Quality*

SubResource ID: *20.1* SubResource Description: *General*

CID: 92 Last Name: Beaton Organization: Shute, Mihaly & Weinberger LLP Representative: True

Substantive Comment: C. Air Quality The Initial Study acknowledges that Placer County is designated as a nonattainment area for the state and national ambient air quality ozone standards, and the state PM10 standards. IS at 2-10 – 2-11. For this reason, it will be important that the EIR and EIS contain thorough analyses of Project-related and cumulative impacts to air quality. Particular attention must be paid to comprehensively identifying each source of emissions that would be generated by the Project, including from motor-vehicle traffic, operation of the gondola, and maintenance equipment. The EIR must also carefully identify and analyze construction-related increases in toxic air contaminants and criteria air pollutant emissions. The County's Initial Study claims that the Project would potentially reduce traffic in the area—despite the fact that the purpose of the gondola is to attract more visitors. See IS at 2-12. And, the Initial Study goes on, even if there is an increase in traffic volumes affecting air quality, this increase would be insignificant. Id. The Initial Study does not contain evidence in support of its counter-intuitive conclusion that building expanded attractions that are intended to draw people to the mega-resort would somehow bring no increase in traffic and the attendant airquality impacts. Regardless of whether the visitors use the gondola to go between Squaw and Alpine, they would still have to drive to one of the two valleys in the first place. The EIR and EIS must fully analyze the air-quality impacts, including health impacts, of increased emissions from increased vehicle trips to the area.

Theme ID: 96.1 Theme Name: Ambient Air Quality Standards Description: Placer County, State and federal air quality standards (ozone and PM10 standards)

SubResource ID: *20.2* SubResource Description: *Construction/Operation Emissions*

CID: 58 Last Name: Hatch Organization: Representative: True

Substantive Comment: 7) Impacts of the Project construction and operation on air quality (e.g. from generators, power supply, emissions) within Granite Chief Wilderness and within the watersheds and the Tahoe-Truckee region.

Theme ID: 97.1 Theme Name: General Air Quality Impacts Description: From generators, power supply, emissions

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SubResource ID: *20.4* SubResource Description: *Climate Change/GHG Emissions*

CID: 171 Last Name: Gordon Organization: Environmental Protection Agency Representative: True

Substantive Comment: Include in the "Affected Environment" section of the DEIS a summary discussion of climate change and ongoing and reasonably foreseeable climate change impacts relevant to the project, based on U.S. Global Change Research Program assessments, to assist with identification of potential project impacts that may be exacerbated by climate change and to inform consideration of measures to adapt to climate change impacts. (Among other things, this will assist in identifying resilience-related changes to the proposal that should be considered).

Theme ID: 99.1 Theme Name: Climate Change Impacts Description: Climate change could exacerbate impacts from the project

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CID: 178 Last Name: Organization: Representative: True

Substantive Comment: You must weigh the impact of not just building the gondola, but also operating it. Access and operations are dependent on snow machine access. Maybe the Gondola will be quiet, but this equipment is not. The equipment also operates on fuel. This must be considered in the environmental impact study. There are no snow machines currently allowed on much of this terrain. I have heard arguments that the Gondola will be better on the environment because it uses cleaner energy than the buses and it will be quiet. This argument could be mitigated by investing in clean vehicle technology, but even outside of that, we must now consider that not only are we operating a Gondola in this terrain, but also noisy fuel guzzling snow machines including both groomers and snowmobiles.

Theme ID: 99.1 Theme Name: Climate Change Impacts Description: Climate change could exacerbate impacts from the project

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CID: 181 Last Name: Cindy Organization: Tahoe Area Sierra Club Representative: True

Substantive Comment: The Greenhouse Gas Emissions generated from both cars and the generation of electricity to operate the project may be significant. Nitrogen and Phosphorus from automobile emissions are also one of the causes of the decline in Lake Tahoe clarity. The amount of emissions and their impacts to Lake Tahoe must be studied in depth.

Theme ID: 99.1 Theme Name: Climate Change Impacts Description: Climate change could exacerbate impacts from the project

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CID: 177 Last Name: Heagerty Organization: Granite Chief Wilderness Protection League Representative: True

Substantive Comment: Climate Change: The project description is silent on Climate Change. Climate models indicate ski seasons will be shortening by several weeks within the next 1-2 decades. What are the predictions for gondola operations in year 5, year 10, year 25 and year 40? The applicant insists. the gondola will not operate outside the ski season, which suggests the operations could be as short as 3 months in future years. How will the operation sustain itself, given the $35 million capital investment and the annual operations and maintenance costs? Will the gondola owner remove the towers, cables, Gasex equipment, fuel bunkers and related roads if and when the gondola can no longer operate? As our climate moves increasingly to wetter winter conditions (more rains on snow) and earlier spring snow melts how will this impact operations?

Theme ID: 99.2 Theme Name: Impacts of climate change on life-span of gondola utility Description: Climate change could impact ski season and utility of gondola in the future

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CID: 103 Last Name: Elliot Organization: North Fork Association Representative: True

Substantive Comment: Climate Change The EIR and EIS must address climate-change impacts and specifically analyze how the Project would comply with the State's long-term goals for greenhouse gas emissions reductions, including those set forth in AB 32, the Global Warming Solutions Act of 2006, and Executive Orders S-3-05 and B-30-15. The EIR and EIS must also analyze whether the Project would be inconsistent with a sustainable communities strategy adopted for the region pursuant to SB 375. Additionally, the EIR and EIS must accurately identify the Project's contribution to increasing regional greenhouse gas emissions, including from new vehicle trips generated by the Project, and adequately analyze how the increase in emissions would contribute to climate change and to provide specific mitigation measures to ensure that the Project's greenhouse gas emissions are reduced to less-than-significant levels.

Theme ID: 99.3 Theme Name: Climate Change Policies Description: Compliance with AB 32, Global Warming Solutions Act of 2006, Executive Orders S-3-05 and B-30-15

CID: 171 Last Name: Gordon Organization: Environmental Protection Agency Representative: True

Substantive Comment: Climate Change We recommend that climate change issues be analyzed consistent with the Council on Environmental Quality's (CEQ) December 2014 revised draft guidance for Federal agencies' consideration of GHG emissions and climate change impacts when conducting environmental reviews under NEPA. Accordingly, we recommend the DEIS include an estimate of the GHG emissions associated with the project, qualitatively describe relevant climate change impacts, and analyze reasonable alternatives and/or practicable mitigation measures to reduce project-related GHG emissions. More specifics on those elements are provided below. In addition, we recommend that the NEPA analysis address the appropriateness of considering changes to the design of the proposal to incorporate GHG reduction measures and resilience to foreseeable climate change. The Draft and Final EIS should make clear whether commitments have been made to ensure implementation of design or other measures to reduce GHG emissions or to adapt to climate change impacts.

Theme ID: 99.3 Theme Name: Climate Change Policies Description: Compliance with AB 32, Global Warming Solutions Act of 2006, Executive Orders S-3-05 and B-30-15

CID: 58 Last Name: Hatch Organization: Representative: True

Substantive Comment: 7) Impacts of the Project on Climate Change, both short-term and long-term including on emissions, carbon storage, water use (e.g. for snow-making if anticipated in the future as snow levels and precipitation patterns change).

Theme ID: 99.4 Theme Name: Impacts of Proposed Action on Climate Change Description:

CID: 171 Last Name: Gordon Organization: Environmental Protection Agency Representative: True

Substantive Comment: Estimate the GHG emissions associated with the proposal and its alternatives. Example tools for estimating and quantifying GHG emissions can be found on CEQ's NEPA.gov website. For actions which are likely to have less than 25,000 metric tons of CO2-e emissions/year, provide a qualitative estimate unless quantification is easily accomplished. In most cases quantification of GHG emissions involves a relatively straightforward calculation. In addition to estimating emissions caused by the proposal itself, we recommend estimating the reasonably foreseeable emissions from "upstream" and "downstream" activities indirectly caused by the proposal.

Theme ID: 99.4 Theme Name: Impacts of Proposed Action on Climate Change Description:

CID: 171 Last Name: Gordon Organization: Environmental Protection Agency Representative: True

Substantive Comment: Describe measures to reduce GHG emissions associated with the project, including reasonable alternatives or other practicable mitigation opportunities and disclose the estimated GHG reductions associated with such measures. The DEIS alternatives analysis should, as appropriate, consider practicable changes to the proposal to make it more resilient to anticipated climate change. EPA further recommends that the Record of Decision commits to implementation of reasonable mitigation measures that would reduce or eliminate project-related GHG emissions.

Theme ID: 99.4 Theme Name: Impacts of Proposed Action on Climate Change Description:

CID: 11 Last Name: Switzky Organization: Representative: True

Substantive Comment: 2) the growth-inducing effects of increased uphill skier capacity, including demand for affordable (below market rate) housing, increased GHGs and VMT due to increased highway and air travel to visit the Tahoe area

Theme ID: 99.5 Theme Name: Traffic and GHGs Description: GHG emissions from increased traffic

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CID: 177 Last Name: Heagerty Organization: Granite Chief Wilderness Protection League Representative: True

Substantive Comment: Air Quality and GHG's: The work prepared for the Squaw Village project missed accurate predictions of increased traffic and travel delay times that will drive air quality and GHG levels. The 2-hour drive times experienced just this winter between Alpine and Truckee are evidence of the increasing auto emissions and GHG's related to winter sports. The County should require the applicant to more honestly evaluate the project-related emissions for future conditions from Truckee to Tahoe City, as well as the larger trip cycle GHG contributions of the out-of-area visitor trips to Squaw and Alpine. How will the project address future GHG management and emissions reductions to be required by state and federal mandates (to meet global climate accords), necessitating management of total trip-cycle emissions of the visitors (ie carbon footprints of the complete home-to-Squaw trip)?

Theme ID: 99.5 Theme Name: Traffic and GHGs Description: GHG emissions from increased traffic

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CID: 49 Last Name: Heagerty Organization: Granite Chief Wilderness Protection League Representative: True

Substantive Comment: Ecosystem resiliency is a well known land management need, to address the growing effects of climate change and the growing threats of major wildfires, insect infestations and non-native plant communities in the areas surrounding the project. How would the project impact the future resiliency of the Wilderness?

Theme ID: 99.6 Theme Name: Resiliency Description: Comment about impacts to ecosystem resiliency

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Resource ID: *21* Resource Description *Noise*

SubResource ID: *21.1* **SubResource Description: *General***

CID: 92 Last Name: Beaton Organization: Shute, Mihaly & Weinberger LLP Representative: True

Substantive Comment: I. Noise The EIR and EIS must also thoroughly analyze and provide mitigation for the noise that would be caused by the Project. Construction would, of course, bring substantial noise to the area, which must be analyzed. But also, the EIR and EIS must analyze the noise from operation of the gondola, including noise generated at the main terminals, midway stations, and the sound of the gondola cars moving on the ropeways. The noise analysis should specifically discuss the noise impacts on the Granite Chief Wilderness Area, which is prized for its quiet, and provide for adequate mitigation. The addition of the whirrs and squeaks and squeals of gondola operation could detract from the solitude in wilderness, which is particularly impacted by changes in noise level. Similarly, the EIR and EIS must analyze the noise impacts of the Gazex Exploders. These exploders are a completely different kind of avalanche control than currently exists and would have different noise levels and be used at different times, which must be considered in the environmental-review documents.

Theme ID: 101.1 Theme Name: General noise analysis associated with Proposed Action Description: Construction, operation (gondola and GazEx), impacts to GCW

CID: 76 Last Name: Bruner Organization: Representative: True

Substantive Comment: And we would also like you to look at the noise pollution that will be created by the helicopters to both install all of the gondola requirements as well as service them and the noise pollution from the ATVs that will be used to service the bunkers.

Theme ID: 101.2 Theme Name: Noise pollution created by helicopters and ATVs Description: Analysis of machinery and equipment used during construction and operation

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CID: 75 Last Name: Fountain Organization: Riverwood Partners Representative: True

Substantive Comment: Our concerns about ambient noise are being explored including a consideration of the state-of-the-art direct drive lower decibel motor

Theme ID: 101.3 Theme Name: Lift Noise Description:

CID: 74 Last Name: Organization: Representative: True

Substantive Comment: Impacts from a Gondola at Granite Chief: Industrial noise would be heard in the Wilderness

Theme ID: 101.5 Theme Name: Impacts of Gondola operations (industrial noise) on GCW Description:

Resource ID: *22* Resource Description *Cumulative Effects*

SubResource ID: *22.1* **SubResource Description: *General***

CID: 92 Last Name: Beaton Organization: Shute, Mihaly & Weinberger LLP Representative: True

Substantive Comment: Q. Cumulative Impacts Both CEQA and NEPA require a cumulative impacts analysis. The EIR and EIS must discuss the cumulative impacts of a project when the incremental effects of a project are considerable when viewed in connection with the effects of other past, current, and probable future projects. CEQA Guidelines §§ 15130(a), 15065(c); 40 C.F.R. § 1508.7. The analysis of cumulative impacts is particularly important in the context of long-range planning documents because the growth allowed under such plans is often substantial and because they set forth the policies that will guide the development of future, individual projects for many years. A legally adequate cumulative impacts analysis must consider the impacts of the Project combined with other past, present, and probable future projects. CEQA Guidelines § 15130(b)(1); 40 C.F.R. § 1508.7. Projects currently under environmental review clearly qualify as reasonably probable future projects to be considered in a cumulative impacts analysis. See San Franciscans for Reasonable Growth v. City & County of San Francisco (1984) 151 Cal.App.3d 61, 74 fn.13. In addition, projects anticipated beyond the near future should be analyzed for their cumulative effect if they are reasonably foreseeable. See Bozung, 13 Cal.3d at 284 (1975). The Tahoe area and the Project Area are experiencing rapid growth and development of many residential and resort projects. The EIR and EIS must analyze the cumulative and growth-inducing impacts of constructing the gondola in light of ongoing and planned lift construction, and the potential resort developments at Squaw Valley, Alpine Meadows, and White Wolf, as well as other projects planned for the region.

Theme ID: 106.1 Theme Name: General Cumulative Effects Description: Need for cumulative effects analysis

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CID: 24 Last Name: Johnson Organization: Representative: True

Substantive Comment: Of significant interest will be the impacts in this regard to the west and southwest of the proposed Alpine Meadows Mid-Station, in the northeastern quarter of Section 7 of Township 15N Range 16E. Though this section of land is privately owned by Alpine Sierra Ventures LLC, a portion of the northeastern quarter is in the watershed of the Five Lakes Basin, and within the Congressionallydesignated Granite Chief Wilderness. Due to the pattern of land ownership in this area, any previous efforts to build lifts from the Alpine Meadows base area to this privately held area of land would require the crossing of publicly held US Forest Service lands, thus likely necessitating an environmental review under the NEPA process. However, by placing the Alpine Meadows Mid-Station at its location in the applicant's proposal, lifts can be built fully on the private land in this section, with access from the base area provided by the gondola. Through this pattern of development, NEPA review could possibly be avoided. Thus, it is especially important that the Environmental Impact Statement for this project examine how this section of land will be impacted by the construction and existence of the Gondola.

Theme ID: 106.2 Theme Name: Alpine Meadows Projects Description: Comment about other projects in Alpine Meadows MDP

CID: 83 Last Name: Heagerty Organization: Representative: True

Substantive Comment: And then the problem that we're having is the issue of segmentation. We have now not only the Squaw Village but we have White Wolf coming in and the gondola Alpine Sierra and those cumulative impacts are going to pose tremendous impacts to Highway 89 as well as Squaw Valley Road and Alpine Meadows Road. So help us with that segmentation.

Theme ID: 106.3 Theme Name: White Wolf/Estelle/Rollers Description:

CID: 98 Last Name: Heagerty Organization: Representative: True

Substantive Comment: Project Segmentation and Related Pending Project Proposals A key purpose of the Project is to stimulate more visitor occurrences at Squaw and Alpine. The Project is intended to serve and therefore spur greater development around Alpine Meadows. Likewise, the Project would likely spur the development opportunities for the White Wolf Resort development, which is on the same land parcel as the project and includes planned resort facilities adjacent and encroaching on the Granite Chief Wilderness Area's congressionally designated boundaries. Placer County has on file a preliminary proposal for the White Wolf Resort Development which includes housing, tennis facilities, pool swimming pool, horse riding stables and other resort facilities, including a new chairlift to Estelle Bowl. Thus White Wolf Resort appears to be a known and interrelated pending action. All these resort facilities would impact the Wilderness Area and the surrounding Forest Service lands. 4 The Estelle chairlift purpose and design is to integrate operationally with the gondola's "Alpine Mid-station." The mid-station sits on USFS land. The "Estelle" chair would have direct projectrelated impacts as it would require expanded chair-gondola landing areas, greater groundclearing and permanent land disturbance, more structures, additional on-site equipment, more staff facilities, etc. This mid-station would sit within about 100 yards of a known pristine habitat that is populated by a Federally Listed Endangered Species (Rana sierra). Can we expect that all activities associated with this mid-station (starting with pre-project surveys) will require formal consultation with the US Fish and Wildlife Service? And the DEIS will include details of all Alpine Mid-station activities, physical facilities, worker activities, skier/boarder use area and exclusion areas, and maintenance plans, for public and agency review? In addition to the landing on USFS land, Estelle chair would also cross over USFS lands. The chair would be visible from Granite Chief Wilderness, Five Lakes Basin and Five Lakes Trail. Noise from the chair would penetrate into the Wilderness. Will the chair require additional avalanche control infrastructure (exploders, gas lines, fuel storage facilities, etc)? The DEIS must provide the details of the total gondola-chairlift potential impacts, from construction requirements, additional towers, more avalanche control features and the long-term operational requirements. The Estelle chair and the White Wolf Resort are known development plans that are interdependent (the chair) and related (both indirectly and cumulatively). The potential impacts of these projects to the Granite Chief and Trail natural resources (visual, aesthetics, noise, habitat, habitat corridor, night sky, water quality, watershed protection, fire management, avalanche management and user conflicts need to be disclosed in the EIS.

Theme ID: 106.3 Theme Name: White Wolf/Estelle/Rollers Description:

CID: 72 Last Name: Sheffield Organization: Representative: True

Substantive Comment: This project does not address the cumulative effects of what else will develop nearly simultaneously - a larger village at Squaw, Troy's private resort with more empty homes that add nothing to community. Possibly a village at Alpine soon too? Population growth forces us to draw boundaries, please enfore them.

Theme ID: 106.3 Theme Name: White Wolf/Estelle/Rollers Description:

CID: 24 Last Name: Johnson Organization: Representative: True

Substantive Comment: Details from the 2015 Alpine Meadows Ski Area Master Plan clearly illustrate how the Gondola project is essential to future development on the aforementioned section of land. Specifically, the Master Plan's proposed Rollers Lift is feasible only with the Gondola on its current proposed alignment. Though it is unclear from the maps in the Master Plan, a portion of the Rollers Lift may be developed on private lands within the Granite Chief Wilderness boundary. It is certainly clear, however, that new proposed trails to the northeast of Estelle Peak would be within the Wilderness boundary, and within the Five Lakes watershed. Thus, by enabling the development of the Rollers Lift and its associated trails, the Gondola would be causing significant future impacts on the watershed, viewshed and wilderness nature of the Five Lakes Basin and the Granite Chief Wilderness, as well as impacts to the endangered Sierra Nevada Yellow-Legged Frog which inhabits this area. Though the Rollers Lift is not currently under consideration for pending construction, the significant impacts it would have are an illustration of why the Gondola's EIS must consider cascading development impacts on adjacent land that are reliant on the Gondola's construction. Even if the Rollers Lift is not built as proposed in the Master Plan, other similar projects with similar impacts could be developed and accessed through the Gondola under its proposed alignment. Through a thorough EIS that considers these impacts, the interested parties may be able to identify alternatives that avoid some of these issues.

Theme ID: 106.3 Theme Name: White Wolf/Estelle/Rollers Description:

CID: 203 Last Name: Heagerty Organization: Granite Chief Wilderness Protection League Representative: True

Substantive Comment: The EIR/EIS should explain the financial and operational relationships of this gondola with the Squaw Village proposal and the White Wolf proposal. To describe and evaluate this project in isolation of those two projects is misleading and inappropriate. The piecemealing of the interdependent proposals should not be carried into this EIR/EIS. Squaw Village is designed to accommodate the users of the gondola, would be providing the financing for the gondola, has provided the engineering and related technical work, will provide the operational support, the marketing and the other aspects of project implementation. The county EIR for the Squaw Village failed to address the gondola. White Wolf intends to connect two private chairlifts to the gondola, both directly and indirectly. More avalanche hazard issues, forest management issues, public lands issues, federal easements, winter use conflicts, endangered species threats and other public concerns will be raised with the White Wolf recreational plans associated with the gondola. These issues need to be disclosed and evaluated in this EIR/EIS.

Theme ID: 106.3 Theme Name: White Wolf/Estelle/Rollers Description:

CID: 177 Last Name: Heagerty Organization: Granite Chief Wilderness Protection League Representative: True

Substantive Comment: The Estelle chairlift purpose and design is to integrate operationally with the gondola's Alpine Mid-station. The Estelle chair would have direct project-related impacts as it would require expanded chair-gondola landing areas, greater ground-clearing and permanent land disturbance, more structures, additional on-site equipment, more staff facilities, etc. Details of all these Alpine Mid-station facilities need to be in the DEIR for public and agency reviews. Would Estelle chair require additional avalanche control infrastructure (exploders, gas lines, fuel storage facilities, etc)? The DEIR must provide the details of the total gondola-chairlift footprint, from construction requirements, additional towers, more avalanche control features and the long-term operational requirements. For the County to address the chairlift separately, in a subsequent CEQA process, would be a clear and inappropriate segmentation of the project and associated impacts. (Per the California Supreme Court: ... an EIR must include an analysis of future expansion or other actions if: ... the future expansion or action will be significant in that it will likely change the scope or nature of the initial project or its environmental effects. Laurel Heights, 1986.)

Theme ID: 106.3 Theme Name: White Wolf/Estelle/Rollers Description:

CID: 44 Last Name: Fisher Organization: UnofficialAlpine.com Representative: True

Substantive Comment: The cumulative effect of several related projects must be studied. The current NOP only looks at the gondola and Gaxez installation as an individual project. There are several other projects that are related to this one that all need to be considered as one: 1) The Village At Squaw Valley 2) The Rollers Chair as proposed in the Alpine Meadows master plan 3) The White Wolf real estate development project 4) The proposed Estelle chairlift to be built at White Wolf 5) The completion of the KT lift at WhiteWolf It is not okay to segment each of these projects and look at them individually as if they were the only thing that were about to happen. It's the cumulative impact of all of these projects together that is the real concern for locals and visitors alike.

Theme ID: 106.3 Theme Name: White Wolf/Estelle/Rollers Description:

CID: 58 Last Name: Hatch Organization: Representative: True

Substantive Comment: 8) The cumulative effects of the Rollers Chair and Interconnect Gondola, mid-stations, increased user access to the project area, as well development of the White Wolf property all need to be assessed in relation to each of the topics identified above: wilderness character, SNYLF, visual quality, natural hydrologic function and slope stability, water quality, tree removal, traffic, air quality, and climate change

Theme ID: 106.4 Theme Name: Resources/Impacts to Consider Description: Analysis of traffic, water use, noise, GHG's habitat losses, night sky pollution, avalanche hazards, social and environmental impacts on GCW

CID: 171 Last Name: Gordon Organization: Environmental Protection Agency Representative: True

Substantive Comment: Induced Growth and Cumulative Impacts Cumulative impacts analyses are of increasing importance to EPA as they describe the impacts to resources as a whole. Understanding these cumulative impacts can help identify opportunities for minimizing pressure on sensitive resources. We recommend the Forest Service focus on resources that are impacted by the proposed project, before mitigation. The DEIS should identify which resources are analyzed for cumulative impacts, which ones are not, and why. The DEIS should define the geographic boundary for each resource to be addressed in the cumulative impact analysis and describe its current health and historic context. The DEIS should identify other on-going, planned, and reasonably foreseeable projects in the study area that may contribute to cumulative impacts. Where studies exist on the environmental impacts of these other projects, use these studies as a source for quantifying cumulative impacts. We suggest the methodology developed by Federal Highways Administration and Caltrans, with assistance by EPA, for use in assessing cumulative impacts and growth-related indirect impacts, available at: http://www.dot.ca.gov/ser/cumulativeguidance/purpose.htm. While this guidance was prepared for transportation projects in California, the principles and the 8-step process outlined therein can be applied to other types of projects. Cumulative traffic impacts should be assessed. Related to traffic, the Forest Service should consider what possibilities may become available for expanded recreation (due to increasing need or increasing accessibility) that may be triggered by the implementation of the gondola anclJor avalanche exploders such as increased terrain for skiing andlor summer activities. When cumulative impacts are identified, mitigation should be proposed. The DETS should clearly state the Forest Service's mitigation responsibilities, the mitigation responsibilities of Placer County and other entities, and the mechanism to be used for implementation.

Theme ID: 106.4 Theme Name: Resources/Impacts to Consider Description: Analysis of traffic, water use, noise, GHG's habitat losses, night sky pollution, avalanche hazards, social and environmental impacts on GCW

CID: 54 Last Name: Heagerty Organization: Representative: True

Substantive Comment: The County is processing an application for the Squaw Village expansion, the largest development ever considered at Squaw. That project would have cumulative impacts on gondola operations, Wilderness use, trail use and general Forest Lands use. Impacts to water resources, noise, GHG's, habitats, night sky conditions, avalanche hazards, and several other social and environmental impacts that would reach into the Wilderness Areas and National Forest Lands deserve disclosure in this EIS.

Theme ID: 106.4 Theme Name: Resources/Impacts to Consider Description: Analysis of traffic, water use, noise, GHG's habitat losses, night sky pollution, avalanche hazards, social and environmental impacts on GCW

CID: 102 Last Name: Lozeau Organization: Lozeau Drury LLP Representative: True

Substantive Comment: Cumulative Impacts in Tahoe Basin: The EIS must take into account the likely cumulative impacts that will result to the Lake Tahoe Basin from the Gondola Project and the numerous other projects proposed for Squaw Valley and Alpine Meadows. FOWS requests that the EIS carefully evaluate the Project's cumulative impacts on the significance thresholds applicable to the Lake Tahoe basin. In particular, the concentration of development currently proposed and anticipated in Squaw Valley and the Alpine Meadows area may significantly increase vehicle miles traveled within the Tahoe Basin. This in turn, may affect air, water quality, emergency access and other issues within the Basin.

Theme ID: 106.4 Theme Name: Resources/Impacts to Consider Description: Analysis of traffic, water use, noise, GHG's habitat losses, night sky pollution, avalanche hazards, social and environmental impacts on GCW

CID: 98 Last Name: Heagerty Organization: Representative: True

Substantive Comment: The County is currently processing the Squaw Village development proposal, the Alpine Sierra development and now the White Wolf Resort development. Combined these projects represent dramatic increases in traffic, water use, noise, GHG's, habitat losses, night sky pollution, avalanche hazards, and several other social and environmental impacts that will reach the Wilderness Areas and National Forest Lands. These cumulative impacts deserve disclosure in this EIS, providing a timely opportunity for the public to understand the cumulative impacts of these combined projects.

Theme ID: 106.4 Theme Name: Resources/Impacts to Consider Description: Analysis of traffic, water use, noise, GHG's habitat losses, night sky pollution, avalanche hazards, social and environmental impacts on GCW

CID: 95 Last Name: Bruner Organization: Representative: True

Substantive Comment: The cumulative impact of these projects must be considered with respect to: • Visual quality – visual quality must be assessed from the Alpine ski resort, The Five Lakes Trail, the Granite Chief Wilderness, the Bear Creek Association and Alpine Meadows Estates. The visual quality must be assessed from several vantage points for each of these areas. • Water quality and water supply • Air quality • Trail management (in particular with regard to The Five Lakes Trail and The Pacific Crest Trail) o If the TNF believes there is no impact to trails since the gondola is intended only for winter use, then any approval of the Gondola must include a permanent and irrevocable restriction on use of the Gondola outside of the ski season. • Traffic congestion and impact on public safety, particularly during the winter months • Noise and light pollution in the TNF and in the Granite Chief Wilderness o Both during the construction phase and thereafter o The construction analysis must include the impact of the use of helicopters and other equipment • Impact to threatened, endangered or sensitive wildlife

Theme ID: 106.4 Theme Name: Resources/Impacts to Consider Description: Analysis of traffic, water use, noise, GHG's habitat losses, night sky pollution, avalanche hazards, social and environmental impacts on GCW

CID: 92 Last Name: Beaton Organization: Shute, Mihaly & Weinberger LLP Representative: True

Substantive Comment: O. Impacts to the Tahoe Basin. The EIR and EIS must analyze the impacts from the Project on the Tahoe Basin, including increased traffic and vehicle miles traveled ("VMT") from increased visitation to the area, along with attendant air and water quality impacts. In addition to general growth in Tahoe Basin VMT from increased skier visits, the analysis must include a finer-grained study of impacts to the Basin from increased traffic, recreational use, and new construction in Alpine Meadows and associated residential communities, such as Alpine Peaks, Ward Creek, and Twin Peaks estates.

Theme ID: 106.4 Theme Name: Resources/Impacts to Consider Description: Analysis of traffic, water use, noise, GHG's habitat losses, night sky pollution, avalanche hazards, social and environmental impacts on GCW

CID: 98 Last Name: Heagerty Organization: Representative: True

Substantive Comment: Detailed Avalanche Management, Fire Management and Skier Safety Management Plans will be required across multiple jurisdictions and will include very different property managers with very different land management objectives and capabilities. Vague statements in the EIS about how the "stakeholders" will get together at a future time to develop the management plans, responsibilities, funding and enforcement will not be acceptable, as these important issues deserve public review and comment within the CEQA process.

Theme ID: 106.5 Theme Name: Management plans for multiple disciplines with public review and comment Description: Management plans for avalanche, fire and skier safety requested

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SubResource ID: *22.5* **SubResource Description: *Squaw Valley Village***

CID: 91 Last Name: Schifferle Organization: Representative: True

Substantive Comment: The project also needs to include an extensive analysis of the cumulative impacts or likely development that will be spawned in the sensitive Squaw Valley watershed and Alpine Meadows' watershed. This includes theme park types of developments where urban activities are imported along with their associated impacts--noise, air and water pollution, paving and traffic. For example the cumulative impacts that need to be disclosed and explored in the EIR are likely the recently solicited types of theme park efforts broached by Squaw Valley. Here are some of the descriptions of the various development proposals that are being considered if the two ski areas are merged and a Gondola is erected within a Congressionally designated Granite Chief Wilderness Area-- Downsizing and redesigning Mountain Adventure Camp, formerly called Grand Camp, that will bring both family fun and ski training into a controlled indoor and outdoor environment. Formerly the description was: Welcome to Grand Camp – a family-friendly indoor/outdoor adventure center at the world-famous Squaw Valley. Designed to be a Sierra mountain experience unlike any other, Grand Camp brings Tahoe activities together, offering unmatched accessibility and new options for families and guests. Grand Camp could include outdoor water amenities like lagoons connected by streams and waterfalls, hot tubs, and mineral spas – and indoor activities such as a wave pool for surfing and swimming, rope swings, ziplines, slacklines and river rapids for kayaking. And, for the truly adventurous, Grand Camp could even offer experiences such as indoor skydiving or a freestyle ski jump where athletes could plunge into a deep bubble pool for a soft landing. If you don't feel like getting wet, there could also be a dry entertainment center which could include bowling, mini golf, an interactive 3D theater and/or video games. And, if you are looking to get out and explore the Tahoe region, Grand Camp could offer catered camping trips, boating excursions, mountain biking trips, guided hikes, and summer camps. While not clearly part of the proposed project, they are predictable outcomes and the cumulative impacts need to fully examine these types of projects that clearly would not be consistent with the Governor of California's Water Plan, the Placer County General Plan and the Congressionally mandated designated protections of the Granite Chief Wilderness Area.

Theme ID: 110.1 Theme Name: Squaw Valley Grand Camp Description: Cumulative impacts of Squaw Grand Camp

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CID: 103 Last Name: Elliot Organization: North Fork Association Representative: True

Substantive Comment: A critical preliminary issue is that the County plans to conduct separate California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) reviews for the gondola Project and the Village at Squaw Valley Specific Plan violate CEQA. These projects are clearly linked and must be analyzed as a "single project" in terms of both their direct, indirect, and cumulative effects on the natural environment. The proposed Project is intended to be an integral part of the combined Squaw Valley/Alpine Meadows "super-resort" that the ski areas' common owner and this Project's applicant, Squaw Valley Ski Holdings, LLC, envisions. Squaw Valley Ski Holdings seeks to develop the gondola to serve—and to attract people to—the expanded Village at Squaw Valley development by providing visitors to the resort convenient access to additional ski terrain at Alpine Meadows. CEQA prohibits piecemealing because such an approach could be used to obscure a full project's true environmental impacts by breaking the project into smaller pieces that, individually, appear not to have significant environmental impacts. When viewed as a whole, however, the piecemealed projects' impacts would be highly significant. 2 Numerous impacts identified in the County's Initial Study are identified as "less than significant," but would clearly be significant direct, indirect, and cumulative impacts when considered together with the Village at Squaw Valley Specific Plan. These include but are not limited to impacts to water quality and water supply, population and housing, transportation and traffic, air quality, noise, visual resources, and biological resources, as discussed in more detail below. Similarly, the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) requires that an EIS fully assess and disclose the full range of environmental consequences of its approval of the project, including ecological (such as the effects on natural resources and on the components, structures, and functioning of affected ecosystems), aesthetic, historic, cultural impacts, whether direct, indirect, or cumulative. Indirect effects are those impacts that are caused by the action, but occur later in time or farther removed in distance, but are still reasonably foreseeable, and may include growth-inducing effects and other effects related to induced changes in the pattern of land use, population density or growth rate, and related effects on air and water and other natural systems, including ecosystems.

Theme ID: 110.2 Theme Name: Combined Gondola/Village Analysis Description: Impacts of Proposed Action and Squaw Base Area development should be reviewed as one project

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CID: 92 Last Name: Beaton Organization: Shute, Mihaly & Weinberger LLP Representative: True

Substantive Comment: I. Reviewing the Gondola's Impacts Separate From the Village at Squaw Valley is Improper Piecemealing of a Single Project. A critical preliminary issue is that the County's plan to conduct separate CEQA reviews for the gondola Project and the Village at Squaw Valley Specific Plan violates CEQA. As we explained to the County in our comments on the EIR for the Village at Squaw Valley Specific Plan, well-established CEQA law holds that where two projects are linked, they must be analyzed together. See Bozung v. Local Agency Formation Comm'n (1975) 13 Cal.3d 263, 279, 282; Tuolumne County Citizens for Responsible Growth, Inc. v. City of Sonora 2007) 155 Cal.App.4th 1214, 1231 (construction of a Lowe's home improvement center must be analyzed in same EIR as adjacent City roadway improvements). Here, the Project is intended to be an integral part of the combined Squaw Valley/Alpine Meadows super-resort that the ski areas' common owner and this Project's applicant, Squaw Valley Ski Holdings, LLC, envisions. Squaw Valley Ski Holdings seeks to develop the gondola to serve—and to attract people to—the expanded Village at Squaw Valley development by providing visitors to the resort convenient access to additional ski terrain at Alpine Meadows. Indeed, in its gondola project proposal, Squaw Valley Ski Holdings stated the purpose of the gondola is to allow lodging guests and visitors at the Village at Squaw Valley "to have lift-served access to Alpine adding tremendous depth and adventure to their skiing day." SVSH Letter to Tahoe National Forest at 3 (July 29, 2015). The proposal even cites a survey where "36 percent of respondents said they were likely to begin their day by parking at Squaw to access Alpine during their day." Id. Conversely, visitors to Alpine "would have ready access to the terrain and amenities at Squaw." Id. CEQA prohibits piecemealing because such an approach could be used to obscure a full project's true environmental impacts by breaking the project into pieces that, individually, appear not to have significant environmental impacts. But when viewed as a whole, the piecemealed projects' impacts would be significant. Here, that is exactly what is happening. Numerous impacts identified in the County's Initial Study are labelled as "less than significant," but would clearly be significant when considered together with the Village at Squaw Valley Specific Plan. These include, but are not limited to, impacts to water quality and water supply, population and housing, and transportation and traffic, as discussed in more detail below.

Theme ID: 110.2 Theme Name: Combined Gondola/Village Analysis Description: Impacts of Proposed Action and Squaw Base Area development should be reviewed as one project

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CID: 63 Last Name: Bruner Organization: Representative: True

Substantive Comment: In addition, one cannot look at the Gondola in isolation. This is part of a grand plan by SVSH to expand the Squaw Valley Resort, adding over 1,500 bedrooms as well as an indoor theme park, and use the Gondola as a further (year-round?) attraction. Page V-446 of the Forecast Plan says: "Ski industry expansion represents the primary opportunity and raises the principal issues. Expansions are a concern in relation to traffic, community services and utility capacities, and provide secondary impacts to the Lake Tahoe Basin. Expansion in or near the Lake Tahoe Basin is dependent upon access via Highway 89 and is likely to face difficult obstacles." The planned SVSH expansion of the Squaw Valley Resort and installation of the gondola, which is meant to further increase attendance at the ski resort, would result in exactly the type of traffic concerns contemplated by the Forest Plan.

Theme ID: 110.3 Theme Name: General Squaw Developments Description: Cumulative impacts of general developments at Squaw

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Resource ID: *23* Resource Description *Design Criteria/Mitigation Measures*

SubResource ID: ***23.1*** **SubResource Description:** ***General***

CID: 73 Last Name: Caldwell Organization: White Wolf Property Owner Representative: True

Substantive Comment: I would like to take this opportunity to share with the committee the solutions that resulted from this feedback: 1. Low profile to maximize operation and minimize visual 2. Colors of non-reflective qualities versus earth tones 3. Leaving the cabins off the line and in storage facilities for the summer season reduces visual 4. Screening with landscaping and vegetation of the terminals helps the project visibility 5. Over the snow construction reduces the impact on the disturbed locations The Base to Base Gondola is a positive project for the people of this community and has the local support of many individuals.

Theme ID: 111.2 Theme Name: BMPs Description: Recommended and requested BMPs

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CID: 93 Last Name: Judge Organization: California Water Boards: Nonpoint Source Pollution Control U Representative: True

Substantive Comment: 4) Please ensure your EIS and permit applications include detailed Best Management . Practices (BMPs), Resource Protection Measures, and Design Features which adequately detail restrictions and mitigation measures so that it is easily understood how resources will be protected during and after project activities. The BMPs, mitigation measures, and monitoring plans must include sufficient detail to ensure that your crews and contractors, regulatory agency personnel, and the public are all able to interpret your proposed actions in the same way, while adequately protecting resources.

Theme ID: 111.2 Theme Name: BMPs Description: Recommended and requested BMPs

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CID: 207 Last Name: Huntsinger Organization: Placer County Agriculture/Weights and Measures Representative: True

Substantive Comment: The specific weeds identified in the project area occur in very limited distribution in California, spread aggressively, limit recreation opportunities, exclude native plants and animals, disrupt forest and ecological functions, use more water than native vegetation, and increase fuel loads and wildfire potential. The occurrences and impacts of noxious weeds are notably not identified in the Initial Study. The joint USFS-County EIS/EIR should identify noxious weeds as a significant project concern, thoroughly evaluate associated impacts, and address necessary mitigation measures including: Development of a noxious weed management plan for construction and maintenance of gondola and avalanche control systems. Document known sites of 3 CCR § 4500 noxious weed species. Implement routine surveillance, control treatments, and monitoring for noxious weeds. Use of certified weed free erosion control materials and aggregate. Consideration for where construction equipment and materials are staged and moved. Implement additional best management practices and controls to prevent the introduction of other noxious weeds and the spread of existing infestations.

Theme ID: 111.2 Theme Name: BMPs Description: Recommended and requested BMPs

Resource ID: *24* Resource Description *Other*

SubResource ID: *24.1* SubResource Description: *General*

CID: 86 Last Name: Thompson-Bourrie Organization: Representative: True

Substantive Comment: I'm sure this will be addressed, but I just want to make sure this is the form for it -- the actual energy impact, high speed -- or the gondola, the aerial tramway versus the shuttle service at its height, whatever it could possibly be. The shuttle service at its lowest and highest and how it would use less or more energy to run buses versus an aerial tramway. I think that's important especially moving to the future if we're going to build something that's going to last for lots and lots and lots of years it be very efficient and much more efficient than anything else, another alternative.

Theme ID: 116.1 Theme Name: Energy Use Description: Analyze energy use of gondola

CID: 178 Last Name: Organization: Representative: True

Substantive Comment: 1. Require proper use of the public lands. If KSL is confident it can afford an investment and ongoing expense of a new Gondola, then make the approval and any lease of public lands contingent on them properly using the public lands. The public is allowing this lease for a ski resort to operate. So, require just that. This can be done by requiring them to initially open and keep the ski resorts, both Alpine Meadows and Squaw Valley, open for skiing when possible. There are very simply litmus tests that can be applied to enforce this such as snow pack measurements.

Theme ID: 116.2 Theme Name: Lease Requirements Description: Lease requirements for Squaw related to operation

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CID: 178 Last Name: Organization: Representative: True

Substantive Comment: 2. Non-Transferable Condition. KSL is a developer. Developers are often essentially house flippers on a much larger scale. If you look at their business historically, they frequently invest in property, attempt to improve it and then sell it. For instance, shortly after they invested into Squaw Valley and Alpine Meadows, they sold five previously acquired resorts to Omni Hotels for nearly a billion dollars. This Gondola project may simply be KSL improving the property in order to prepare it to be sold for a profit. In order to insure stability, I believe if you approve this project, you need to put a non-transferable condition on the lease so if they sell the business, the public can approve of the new owner.

Theme ID: 116.2 Theme Name: Lease Requirements Description: Lease requirements for Squaw related to operation

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CID: 102 Last Name: Lozeau Organization: Lozeau Drury LLP Representative: True

Substantive Comment: Lack of Clear Description of Access Roads: A shortcoming of the County's Initial Study is the lack of information regarding access roads that are planned for constructing the Gondola Project and subsequently maintaining the towers. Although no mention of an access road is mentioned in the Initial Study, the Forest Service's documents depict a lengthy access road that would appear to be well over a mile in length. This is inconsistent with the Initial Study's assertion that "[t]he proposed project does not extend roads." Initial Study, p. 2-46. Presumably, such a road would not be paved. The inclusion of this road has significant repercussions on the Gondola Project's water quality, erosion, slope stability, habitat, migratory corridors, and potential growth inducements, among other impacts, all of which should be thoroughly considered in the EIS.

Theme ID: 116.3 Theme Name: Analysis of temporary access routes for construction purposes Description:

CID: 89 Last Name: Moore Organization: Sierra Club; Mother Lode Chapter Representative: True

Substantive Comment: Temporary access route The Proposed Action states that "The temporary access route would be restored to its previously existing condition after construction is complete." Considering the topography and soils on the temporary access route, this appears to be a very bold and confident promise, especially for the segment of the route descending parallel to the ropeway from the Squaw Valley mid-station. The adverse environmental effects of the temporary access route and the feasibility of restoring previously existing conditions must be thoroughly analyzed.

Theme ID: 116.3 Theme Name: Analysis of temporary access routes for construction purposes Description:

CID: 92 Last Name: Beaton Organization: Shute, Mihaly & Weinberger LLP Representative: True

Substantive Comment: N. Utilities and Service Systems CEQA requires that an EIR consider the energy-efficiency impacts of a project. CEQA Guidelines, Appx. F. Here, the Initial Study admits that the Project would increase the long-term demand for electricity. IS at 2-58. Because the gondola would run on electricity all day, every day, all winter, its power demands are likely to be considerable. The EIR and EIS must disclose these demands and identify mitigation measures that would minimize the Project's energy impacts. Specifically, the EIR should require that the gondola be constructed using the latest energy-efficient equipment and mandate use of renewable resources.

Theme ID: 116.4 Theme Name: Utilities and Services Description: Incorporation of latest energy-efficient equipment and mandate use of renewable resources

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CID: 25 Last Name: Toledo Organization: Representative: True

Substantive Comment: The gondola cars themselves would most likely require ventilation (openings) which would make it easy for those less than environmentally friendly to discard debris from the cars. The debris, as seen from every lift/gondola line I have seen would show cans, paper i.e. trash that would eventually work it's way to the surrounding areas. Some of those areas are not accessible for policing (granite cliffs etc). Seeing discarded cans of Red Bull and PBR's along the rocky cliffs is not my idea of preservation. The required service roads/trails to service both the gondola and avalanche equipment are an unacceptable eye sore especially since they are within the viewing area (and in) a dedicated wilderness area.

Theme ID: 116.5 Theme Name: Potential littering from gondola cars along the proposed route Description:

CID: 54 Last Name: Heagerty Organization: Representative: True

Substantive Comment: Will the USFS require removal of the towers, cables, Gasex equipment, fuel bunkers and related roads if and when the gondola can no longer operate?

Theme ID: 116.6 Theme Name: Decommissioning Description: Comment about a decommissioning plan