PLACER COUNTY PLANNING DEPARTMENT

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Reserved for Date Stamp

INITIAL PROJECT APPLICATION

(For Office Use Only)

G.P. Designation _____ Posters _____ File #'s PLN15-00398

_____ Affordable Housing _____ _____

General Plan/Community Plan _____ Taxes _____ Accepted by MWK

West Shore Area Tax Rate Area _____ Date filed 10/15/15

Zoning RS PD-8

Major Project: Yes ✓ No ___ Geographic Team: Tahoe Hearing Body PC/BOS

Pre-Development Meeting Date 9/10/15 **Acceptable for EQ Filing** MWK for Heather

PLN15-00329 **Planner Signature**

-- TO BE COMPLETED BY THE APPLICANT --

1. Project Name Alpine Meadows/Squaw Valley Base to Base Gondola
2. Property Owner Squaw Valley Resort, LLC

   Mailing Address 1960 Squaw Valley Road, P.O. Box 2007, Olympic Valley, CA 96146

   Telephone 720-201-5363 Fax 530-452-4151 E-Mail jamesspenst@comcast.net
3. Applicant Jim Spenst

   Mailing Address 1960 Squaw Valley Road, P.O. Box 2007, Olympic Valley, CA 96146

   Telephone 720-201-5363 Fax 530-452-4151 E-Mail jamesspenst@comcast.net
4. Size of Property (acreage or square footage) n/a

Assessor's Parcel Number(s)) 095-190-005-000; 095-280-030-000; 095-290-022-000; 095-290-024-000; 095-290-025-000; 096-010-026-000; 096-020-027-000

Project Location 2600 Alpine Meadows Road, Tahoe City; 1960 Squaw Valley Road; Olympic Valley

(Be specific: cross streets, distance and direction from nearest intersection, etc.)

5. What actions, approvals, or permits by Placer County does the proposed project require?

____ Additional Building Site
____ Administrative Approval
____ Administrative Review Permit
____ Certificate of Compliance
x Conditional Use Permit
____ Design Review
x Environmental Questionnaire
____ Extension of Time
____ General Plan Amendment
____ Major Subdivision (5+ parcels)
____ Minor Boundary Adjustment
____ Minor Subdivision (4 and under parcels)
____ Minor Use Permit
____ Project undertaken by County
____ Rezoning
____ Variance
____ Other (Explain) _____

Does the proposed project need approval by other governmental agencies? x Yes _____ No. If so, which

agencies? US Forest Service

6. Which agencies, utility companies provide the following services? **This information must be ACCURATE!**

Electricity Liberty Energy	Fire Protection SVFD; NTFPD	Sewer n/a
Telephone ATT	Natural Gas n/a	Water n/a
High School n/a	Elementary School n/a	Other

7. Describe the project in detail so that a person unfamiliar with the project would understand the purpose, size, phasing, duration and construction activities associated with the project. In response to this question, please attach additional pages, if necessary.

   The proposed Project would install an aerial ropeway system connecting the Squaw and Alpine base areas. The project would include base terminals at Squaw Valley and Alpine Meadows ski areas, towers connecting the two, and two mid-point stations. The proposed Project also includes the installation of eight Gazex exploders for avalanche control.

8. I hereby authorize the above-listed applicant to make application for project approvals by Placer County, to act as my agent regarding the above-described project, and to receive all notices, correspondence, etc. from Placer County regarding this project, or
9. As owner I will be acting as applicant. In addition, as owner, I will defend, indemnify, and hold Placer County harmless from any defense costs, including attorneys' fees or other loss connected with any legal challenge, brought as a result of an approval concerning this entitlement. I also agree to execute a formal agreement to this effect on a form provided by the County and available for my inspection.
10. The signature below authorizes any member of the Placer County Development Review Committee (DRC), and other County personnel as necessary, to enter the property/structure(s) that is (are) the subject of this application.

Signature(s) of Owner(s):	Please Print
T Caldwell	TROY CALDWELL
Monty Waugh	Monty Waugh

If application is for a Boundary Line Adjustment, signature of both the transferring and acquiring property owners are required. Boundary Line Adjustments shall not be used to create new parcels.

Signature of Transferring Property Owner	Please Print
Signature of Acquiring Property Owner	Please Print

The Planning Department is prohibited from accepting applications on tax delinquent properties pursuant to

Board of Supervisors direction.

Prior to the commencement of any grading and/or construction activities on the property in question, that are based upon the entitlements conferred by Placer County permit approval(s), the applicant should consult with the California Department of Fish & Game (DFG) to determine whether or not a Streambed Alteration Agreement [§1603, CA Fish & Game Code] is required. The applicant should also consult with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers to determine whether or not a permit is required for these activities pursuant to Section 404 of the Clean Water Act. Fees may be required to be paid to the Department of Fish and Game for their participation in the environmental review process as required by State law. **The applicant's signature on this application form signifies an acknowledgement that this statement has been read and understood.**

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

Project Description

Introduction

Squaw Valley Ski Holdings, LLC, proposes to install, operate and maintain the Alpine Meadows/Squaw Valley Base-to-Base Gondola (Project), an aerial ropeway system connecting the Squaw and Alpine base areas. The proposed Project also includes the installation of eight Gazex exploders for avalanche control.

Project Location

The Project site is located in the Sierra Nevada, in Placer County. As shown in Figure 1, the Gondola would extend from the base of Alpine Meadows Ski Area to the base of Squaw Valley Resort. The portion of the Project within Alpine Meadows would be located on National Forest System Lands (NFSL) leased by the Alpine Meadows Ski Area and subject to a special use permit from the US Forest System. The portion of the Gondola on the Squaw Valley side would be located on private lands owned or leased by Squaw Valley Ski Holdings.

Project Purpose

The Gondola is intended to provide a connection between the two ski areas, Alpine Meadows and Squaw Valley, so that skiers can take advantage of the offerings at both resorts without traveling by vehicle between the two areas.

The proposed Gondola would provide an exciting new dimension for guests of both resorts. Lodging guests at Squaw will have lift-served access to Alpine adding tremendous depth and adventure to their skiing day. Additionally, the developed trail network at Squaw is currently 59 percent advanced/expert. The proposed Project would provide easy access to the intermediate terrain available at Alpine adding variety to the skiing experience for the majority of Squaw guests. This aspect will be of particular benefit during mid-week periods when Squaw tends to be busier with lodging guests and Alpine is less utilized. Similarly, Squaw has fairly limited terrain suitable for beginners and teaching. The proposed Project would allow the ski and snowboard school to access additional suitable terrain at Alpine to provide adventure and variation for their guests. Serving both directions similarly, visitors to Alpine and residents of the valley would have ready access to the terrain and amenities at Squaw.

In addition to improving skier experience, the Gondola could benefit traffic conditions by providing an alternative to vehicle travel between the two ski areas. In a recent survey by LSC Transportation Consultants, Inc., which asked guests at Squaw Valley and Alpine Meadows how likely they were to use the proposed Gondola to connect and ski between the two resorts on a single day, 43 percent said that they would use it; "all the time" or "most of the time." In the same survey, 37 percent of respondents said they were likely to begin their day by parking at Squaw to access Alpine during their day. Based on this, and other data, it is estimated that the proposed Gondola could reduce daily traffic volumes by approximately 100 vehicles along Highway 89 (between Squaw and Alpine) as well as on Squaw Valley Road.

Project Description

The proposed Project would be a ski lift configured as an eight-passenger gondola with a design capacity of approximately 1400 persons per hour in both directions. 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 NSFL including one mid-station and the Alpine base terminal (see Table 1).

Table 1
Alpine Meadows|Squaw Valley Base-to-Base Gondola
Facilities on Private and National Forest System Land

Component	Private Land	NFS Land	Total
Linear Feet	9,700 feet	3,300 feet	13,000 feet
Towers	24	13	37
Terminals	1 Base 1 Mid-Station	1 Base 1 Mid-Station	2 Base 2 Mid-Station
Gazex Exploders	1	7	8

Project Design and Construction

The Alpine base terminal would be located on NFSL and situated to the southeast of the Alpine base lodge between the Roundhouse Express and the Hot Wheels Chair. The Squaw base terminal would be located on private lands between the bottom terminals of the KT-22 and Squaw One express 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 north mid-station on private lands), the other would be about 650 feet north-northwest of *The Buttress* in the northern portion of the Alpine special use permit area (the south mid-station on NFSL).

In total, it is estimated that the proposed Project would disturb approximately 3.5 acres. Overall ground disturbance for each base terminal would be approximately one acre. Ground disturbance for each mid-station would be approximately 22,000, or 0.5 acres each. Placement of tower footings would disturb approximately 600 feet each. Assuming 37 towers, a total of 0.5 acres would be disturbed during installation of the towers.

Construction access to the base terminals would be via existing roads within the ski resorts. Access to the south (Alpine) mid-stations would be primarily via helicopter or by transporting equipment and materials to the site over-the-snow in the spring prior to construction. While permanent access roads to the Alpine mid-station is not proposed, it may be possible to take tracked vehicles to the site or to use small ATVs for limited access. An excavator would be flown to the mid-station site to assist with construction. Installation of an electric power line to the south mid-station is not planned. Instead, necessary operating current would be supplied via a "line generator" which uses the moving lift to generate the necessary power and an internal combustion engine powered generator to supply the mid-station equipment electricity.

The north (Squaw) mid-station would be accessed via an existing road that extends from

the Squaw Valley floor to the upper KT-22 terminal.

A "spider excavator" would be used to excavate tower foundations along the line.[1]

While only one quarter of the proposed lift would be located on NFSL, a segment of the lift would be located on private property running parallel to the Granite Chef Wilderness Area. Extensive effort has been put into the design of the lift to ensure that its location would be as far away from the Wilderness boundary as possible and that no portion of the proposed Project would directly affect the Wilderness area.

Blasting will be required for the mid-station and may be required for some of the tower foundations.

Gazex Avalanche Mitigation System

Installation of the proposed Project would necessitate changes to Alpine's current snow safety and avalanche hazard mitigation program. Specifically, eight current artillery targets and many of the current hand shot placements would no longer be practical due to the location of the proposed Gondola equipment. There would be the risk of direct artillery, and indirect shrapnel, impact to the Gondola and lift towers. Therefore, as part of the Project, Squaw Valley Ski Holdings proposes the installation, operation and maintenance of up to eight Gazex exploders (seven on NFSL) in the vicinity of The Buttress, Bernie's Chute, Bernie's Bowl, North Poma Rocks Gully, Pond Slide, and Poma Rocks (see Figure 2). Gazex exploders use cached propane and oxygen gas to ignite in a controlled volume explosion within the Gazex tube, creating a concussive blast above the snow surface in key avalanche trigger locations. The ignition is controlled remotely.

Installation of the Gazex exploders would require two concrete footers (approximately 4 feet x 4 feet x 4 feet) for anchoring of each. 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 location of four shelters that would house propane and oxygen tanks. From the shelter, a 1-2 inch diameter high-density polyethylene (HDPE) pipe would transmit the combustible gases (pressure fed) to the exploder. Each shelter would be approximately 7 feet high by 7 feet wide/long and would be set on a small aboveground platform that is anchored for stability.

In total, approximately 3,000 feet of 1-2 inch HDPE pipe would be installed aboveground to connect the four shelters with the planned eight exploders. The pipe would be of a dark color and may be sheathed to protect it from rodents, rock fall and snow creep. Alpine Meadows would ensure that all combustible gasses are depleted or removed from each shelter at the end of the ski season to diminish wildfire concerns. Resupply would be conducted over-the-snow or via helicopter.

Project Components Common to all Construction Activities

The following components would be common to all construction activities undertaken for

1. Geotechnical review is presently being undertaken. It is anticipated that several of the lift towers will be secured directly to the extensive rock along the line and would therefore not require foundations or excavations in these locations.

the proposed Project:

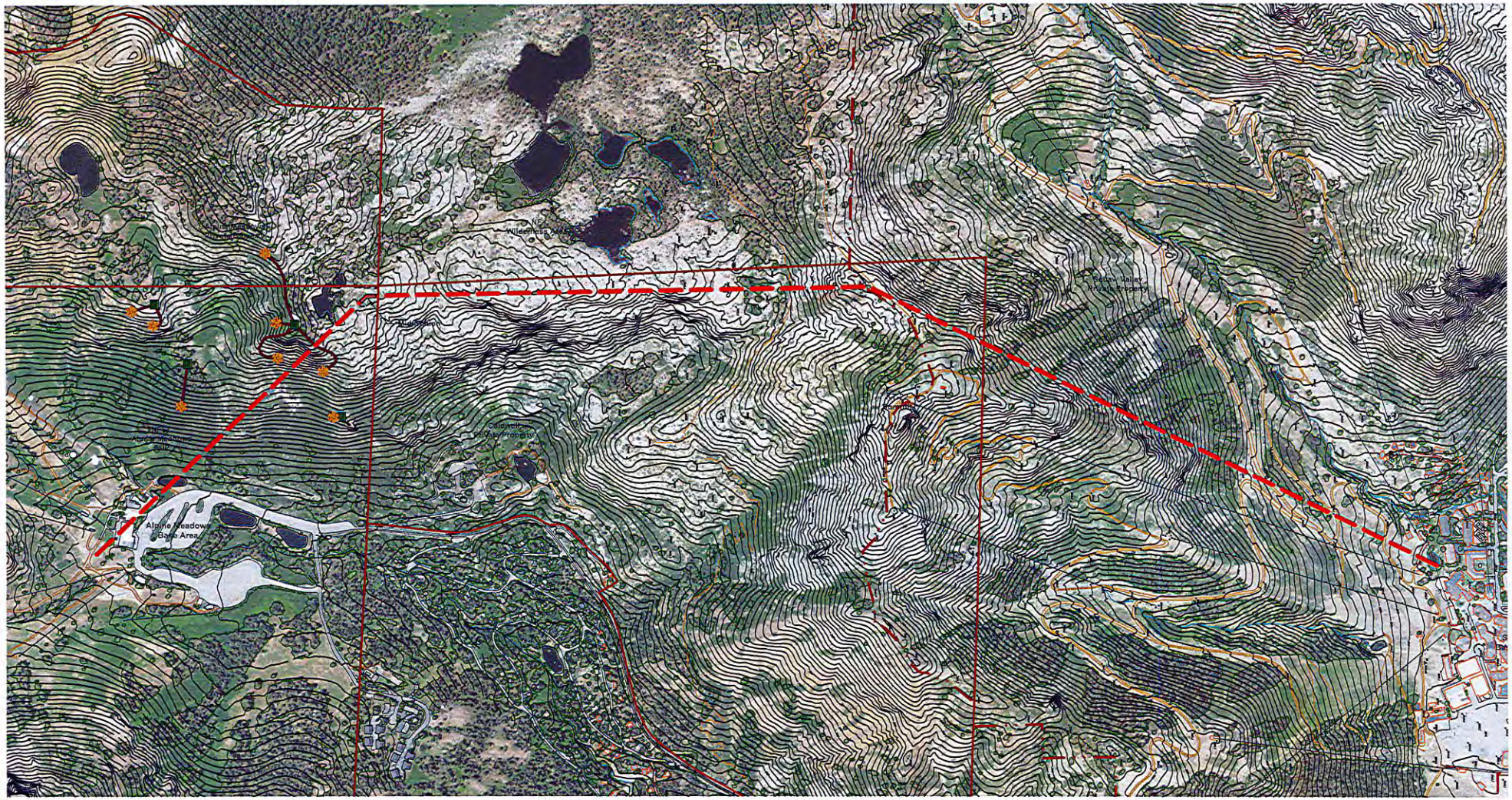
- BMPs would be installed and maintained prior to, during, and after construction activities.
- Disturbed areas would be revegetated immediately following construction activities (BMP, Erosion, Sediment and Revegetation plan to be prepared).
- Final Construction Documents will be prepared that address all mitigation measures.
- Most equipment storage would be in a previously disturbed area and stabilized after construction activities. In areas where no previously disturbed areas exist (e.g., Alpine mid-station), equipment will be stored on exposed granite pads where there is little or no vegetation.
- A SWPPP will be prepared and implemented with protocols outlined within the document for project activities.
- Prior to grading, where practical, existing topsoil resources will be removed, either by machine or by hand, and stockpiled in an area where soils storage will not cause a long-term resource impact. Also piles will be covered for wind erosion protection.
- Subsequent to approved grading activities, cleared topsoil will be re-spread on the disturbed site, mulched, and re-seeded.
- Where ground disturbance occurs, areas will be revegetated and mulch or matting will be applied.
- 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 rain or wet soils.
- Erosion control blankets (e.g., coir or jute netting) or heavy mulch comprised of organic materials will be used may be required to aid in vegetation establishment within the project areas on slopes greater than 10 percent.
- Re-seeding efforts related to the Project will utilize a native or naturalized seed-mix favoring cold tolerant plants to improve establishment and survival in the alpine climate. (Seed mix to be included with BMPs.)

Operation

The proposed Gondola would transport guests at full capacity in both directions providing a ready transportation connection between the two resorts. During the winter season, guest would embark or disembark at both base stations and/or either of the mid-terminals.

The proposed Project would typically operate from shortly before the regular lifts open until shortly after the regular lifts close to enable skiers to return to the ski area they started at.

The proposed Project would operate only during the ski season. The Gondola would be designed so that during the off-season, all of the gondola cabins could be removed from the line and stored during the summer months. This will have the added benefit of reducing the visible infrastructure from all viewing angles. Similarly, it is possible that the cabins may be stored off the line at night during the winter, particularly during storm or wind events.



SQUAW VALLEY
ALPINE MEADOWS

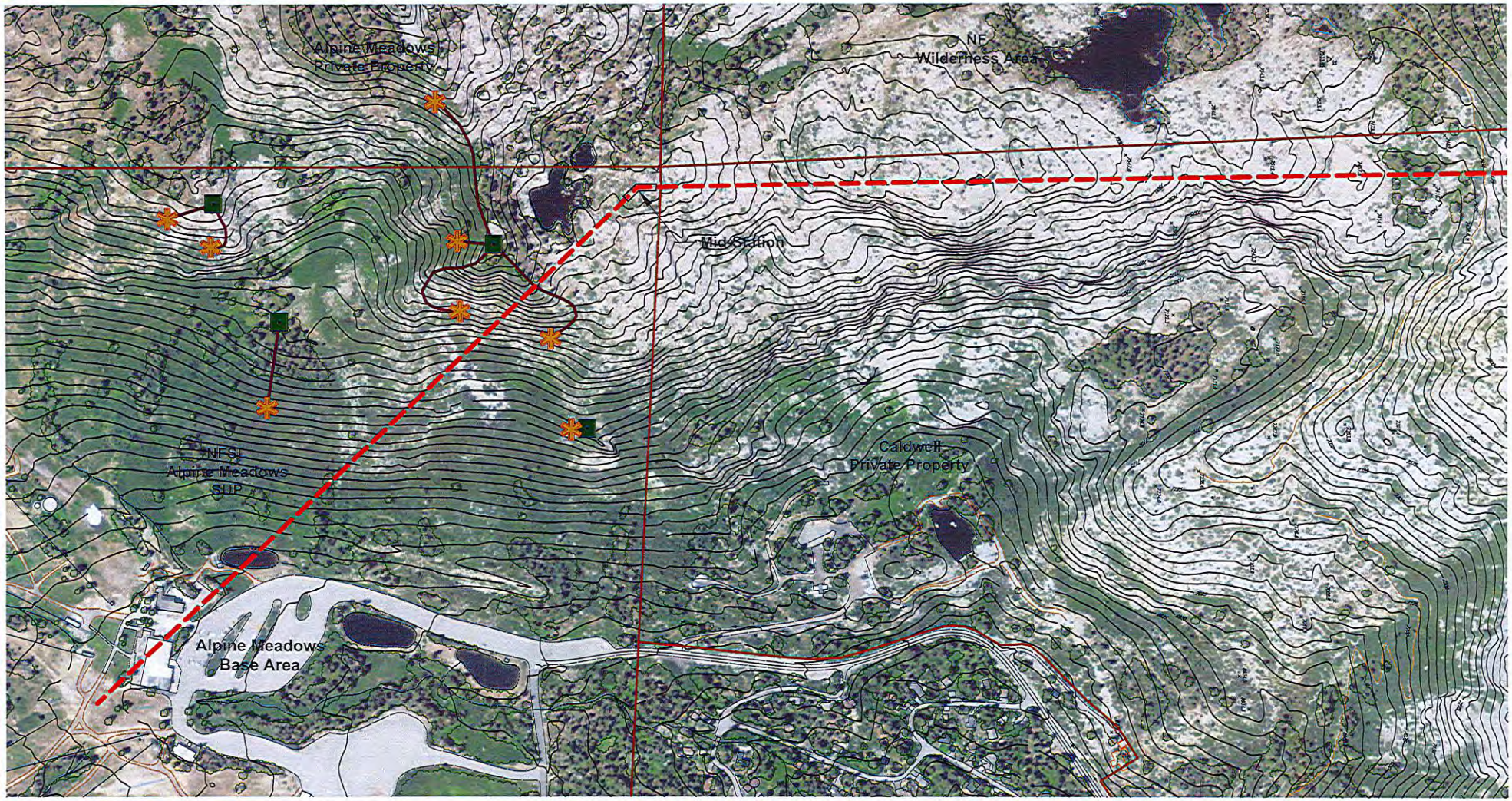
Base-To-Base
Overall Gondola Proposal

- Proposed Gasex Shelter
- Proposed Gasex Exploder
- Proposed Base to Base Gondola
- HDPE Pipe

Figure 1

July, 2015
Contour Interval: 25'
0 100 200 400

SE GROUP



SQUAW VALLEY
ALPINE MEADOWS

Base-To-Base Gondola Proposal

- Proposed Gasex Shelter
- Proposed Gasex Exploder
- Proposed Base to Base Gondola
- HDPE Pipe

Figure 2

July, 2015
Contour Interval: 25'
0 100 200 400

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