

# Bodie Hills RV Park

Specific Plan &  
Final Environmental Impact Report

Volume I

**Bodie Hills RV Park  
Revised Specific Plan &  
Final Environmental Impact Report (FEIR)**

**Volume I--Specific Plan & FEIR**

**January 2000**

**Bodie Hills RV Park  
Revised Specific Plan and Final EIR**

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**PREPARED BY:**

**Mono County Community Development Department  
P.O. Box 347  
Mammoth Lakes, CA 93546**

## **NOTE**

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The Bodie Hills RV Park Revised Specific Plan and Final Environmental Impact Report (FEIR) is in three volumes:

|            |                                                                  |
|------------|------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Volume I   | Revised Specific Plan & Final Environmental Impact Report (FEIR) |
| Volume II  | Technical Appendices                                             |
| Volume III | Comments & Responses, Revised Specific Plan/EIR                  |

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## SUMMARY--BODIE HILLS RV PARK REVISED SPECIFIC PLAN/FEIR

### ● Summary of Revisions to FEIR

Several minor corrections were made to the Final Environmental Impact Report (FEIR) in response to comments received on the Revised Specific Plan/Draft EIR. In addition, some existing Specific Plan policies and EIR mitigation measures were modified and enhanced in response to comments on the Revised Draft SP/EIR. Revisions in the FEIR are summarized in Chapter VIII, EIR Comments--Revised Draft EIR (**bound separately as Volume III of the Specific Plan/EIR**). Revisions in the text of the FEIR are indicated by ~~striketrough print~~ for deletions and ***bold and italicized print*** for additions.

Revisions to Specific Plan policies and EIR mitigation measures include the following (see Chapter VIII for a comprehensive list and explanation of the following items):

- a. Livestock grazing requires approval of a Grazing Management and Sage Grouse Enhancement Plan.
- b. The Design Guidelines have been amended to delete references to compatibility with Bodie State Historic Park and to focus on a rustic modern design which blends into the surrounding environment to the greatest extent possible.
- c. Requirements for the Streambank Protection component of the Grading Plan have been amended to focus on stream restoration and enhancement measures which will also avoid or minimize channel and streambank erosion. Engineered methods of streambank stabilization shall be used only where required (e.g. bridge abutments).
- d. The permitted uses for the Rural Resort/Resource Conservation Passive Recreation (RU/RCPR) land use designation have been amended to permit no other uses than those specified in the policy in order to clarify that the remainder of the parcel not identified for development in the Specific Plan will remain as open space and will provide a buffer between the development and surrounding public lands.
- e. To further reduce impacts to songbirds/migratory birds and to the riparian habitat, the Specific Plan has been amended to require a 30 foot setback from the top of the bank for the riparian buffer zone along Clearwater Creek , instead of a 10 foot setback.
- f. The permitted uses for the Open Space/Natural Habitat Protection (OS/NHP) corridor along Clearwater Creek have been amended to prohibit recreational use of the Clearwater Creek corridor within the project area. Signs shall be posted on the fence along the 30 foot setback stating the fragile nature of the area and prohibiting use of the stream corridor.

### ● Recirculation of Revised Specific Plan/DEIR

The Revised Specific Plan/Draft Environmental Impact Report (DEIR) was recirculated in compliance with Section 15088.5 (a) of the CEQA Guidelines which requires recirculation of an EIR "... when significant new information is added to the EIR after .... public review ... but before certification". Information from additional technical studies concerning hydrology, traffic, and vegetation was added to the DEIR following the initial comment period.

The DEIR was initially circulated for public comment in August--October, 1997. The Mono County Planning Commission considered the project at a public hearing on December 11, 1997. The Commission approved the Specific Plan with modifications and adopted a

statement of overriding considerations upon finding that the project would result in significant unmitigatable effects. The Mono County Board of Supervisors considered the project at a public hearing on February 11, 1998, but took no action on the project.

### ● **Summary of Revisions to Specific Plan/DEIR**

The Bodie Hills RV Park Specific Plan was revised in direct response to concerns raised in the initial draft. Additional mitigation measures were incorporated into the project to address traffic, visual impacts, and erosion impacts. The project was redesigned to conform to the Reduced Project Alternative identified as the Environmentally Superior Alternative in the initial draft; eleven proposed RV spaces located between Clearwater Creek and the Bodie Road were eliminated, and the proposed improvements adjacent to each RV space were sited outside a 30 foot setback from the top of the bank of Clearwater Creek.

The following sections of the Draft EIR were revised:

#### **Summary**

Added as required by CEQA Guidelines and to increase the usability of the document.

#### **I. Introduction**

The following sections were added as required by the CEQA Guidelines but in themselves do not constitute significant changes to the DEIR;

Recirculation of Draft Specific Plan/EIR

Summary of Revisions to Draft EIR

Required Contents of an EIR

Intended Uses of the EIR

#### **II. Revised Project Description**

The total number of RV spaces was reduced from 39 to 32. There are now no spaces located between Clearwater Creek and the Bodie Road; there are 32 spaces, instead of 27 spaces, located south of Clearwater Creek. A maintenance building in the RV Park area was deleted from the project. The size of the back-in RV spaces (previously 20' x 40') now varies from a minimum of 12' x 25' to a maximum of 20' x 40' depending on location; the size of the pull through RV spaces (previously 20' x 60') now varies from a minimum of 15' x 50' to a maximum of 20' x 70' depending on location.

#### **III. Specific Plan Goals, Policies, Implementation Measures**

Pertinent policies and implementation measures were revised in response to new information added to the environmental analysis section. These revisions focus on policies and implementation measures which address natural resource conservation (erosion, streambanks, water resources, vegetation), traffic, and visual impacts.

#### **IV. Environmental Analysis**

The following sections were revised to include additional information from the hydrology, traffic, and vegetation studies prepared for the project:

Earth

Water Resources

Transportation/Traffic

Exposure to Risk (Erosion hazards)

Visual Analysis

Plant Life

#### **V. Impact Summary**

This chapter was added to provide a summary of potential impacts and to increase the usability of the alternatives analysis.

**VI. Mitigation Measures**

This chapter was added to include a mitigation monitoring program.

**VII. EIR Comments & Responses-- Draft EIR**

This chapter contains comments received when the Draft Bodie Hills RV Park Specific Plan/EIR was circulated in 1997 and responses to those comments.

**VIII. EIR Comments & Responses--Revised DEIR**

This chapter contains comments on the Revised DEIR and responses to those comments.

**● Revised Project Description**

The proposed Bodie Hills RV Park is located on approximately 13 acres adjacent to Hwy. 270 (the Bodie Road) in Clearwater Creek Canyon. The project site is part of a larger 155 acre private parcel. The project will include the following components:

- a. General Store/Motel Complex (General Store, Office, Restrooms, 10 Motel Units);
- b. Old West Museum (600 sf);
- c. Recreational Vehicle Park (32 spaces total; 21 back-in spaces, 11 pull through spaces. Reduced from a previous total of 39 spaces. The size of the back-in RV spaces [previously 20' x 40'] now varies from a minimum of 12' x 25' to a maximum of 20' x 40' depending on location; the size of the pull through RV spaces [previously 20' x 60'] now varies from a minimum of 15' x 50' to a maximum of 20' x 70' depending on location.);
- d. Recreational Vehicle Park Restroom/Laundromat/Shower Building (800 sf);
- e. Camping Cabins (8 units, each 300 sf, no electricity or indoor plumbing);
- f. Camping Cabins Restroom/Laundromat/Shower Building (800 sf);
- g. Tent Camping Area (14 primitive camping spaces);
- h. Tent Camping Restroom Building with Water Spigot (300 sf);
- i. Two Single Family Employee Residences on the north bluff (2,050 sf each).

All of the RV spaces and tent camping spaces will be located on the south side of Clearwater Creek. The camping cabins will be located on the north side of Hwy. 270. On-site roads and parking areas will be gravel (except for handicapped spaces). Three roadway bridges and one pedestrian bridge will cross Clearwater Creek. Landscaping and fencing will be used to screen project components from view.

The resort will operate seasonally, from one week prior to the opening of the fishing season in Mono County (i.e. one week before the last weekend in April) to one week after the end of the fishing season (i.e. one week after Oct. 31).

The project site will be designated Rural Resort (RU); the remaining portion of the parcel will be designated Rural Resort/Resource Conservation Passive Recreation (RU/RCPR). The project is consistent with the existing Resource Management (RM) designation for the parcel and the proposed Rural Resort (RU) designation. The project site is also designated Rural Resort (RU) in the Draft Cooperative Management Plan for the Bodie Hills Planning Area, prepared by the Bodie Area Planning Advisory Committee, a group consisting of representatives from the Bureau of Land Management, Mono County Planning Staff, land owners and interested individuals.

A 150-foot wide Wildlife Movement Corridor (WMC) will be designated through the middle of the project and the Clearwater Creek Channel will be designated Open Space/Natural Habitat Protection (OS/NHP). Specific Plan policies limit uses in those designations to bridges and roadways.

- **Public Concerns Regarding the Project**

During the scoping process for the project, concerns were raised regarding the following topics:

- a. The aesthetic impact of the project.
- b. Traffic impacts relating to pedestrian and vehicle safety along Hwy. 270.
- c. Flood hazards to people and property resulting from the project location adjacent to Clearwater Creek.
- d. Impacts to wildlife, particularly the mule deer herd, resulting from project development.
- e. Impacts to the "Bodie Experience" resulting from the project.

Concerns raised during the scoping process were addressed in the project design and by the environmental analysis in the draft EIR.

- **Issues to Be Resolved**

During the decisionmaking process on the SP/EIR, the Board of Supervisors will need to determine the preferred alternative for the powerline placement and will need to adopt, reject, or modify proposed alternatives and mitigation measures.

- **Significant Effects and Proposed Mitigation Measures**

CEQA requires an EIR to identify significant environmental effects of a proposed project (CEQA Guidelines Section 15126.2 a) and mitigation measures which could minimize those potential impacts (CEQA Guidelines Section 15126.4). The Environmental Analysis in Chapter IV determined that the following potential environmental effects of the Bodie Hills RV Park could be significant; proposed mitigation measures would reduce the potential effects to a less than significant level. A summary of the proposed mitigation measures for each of these impacts is contained in the Mitigation Monitoring Program (Chapter VI).

- a. Erosion and sedimentation impacts, onsite from cut and fill.
- b. Erosion impacts to persons and property in the project area resulting from channel bank erosion.
- c. Impacts to groundwater and streamflows and associated indirect impacts to wildlife (water quantity impacts).
- d. Impacts to plant life.
- e. Impacts to animal life.
- f. Impacts to cultural resources.

- **Significant Unmitigatable Effects**

The following unavoidable significant environmental effects would occur as a result of implementing the Bodie Hills RV Park Specific Plan:

1. Visual impacts (see "Aesthetics" in Chapter IV).

Although the project has been designed to avoid or minimize potential visual impacts, any new development on the floor of the existing canyon, the proposed overhead powerline, and/or the single family residences, will result in visual impacts. A number of policies and design features have been incorporated into the Specific Plan to avoid potential visual impacts and to mitigate potential impacts to a less than significant level; however, the project will still result in significant visual impacts. Visual impacts will be significant and unavoidable because any development in the currently undeveloped project area will have some visual consequences.

The proposed development complies with Mono County General Plan policies and Mono County Code requirements concerning visual resources, site disturbance, structural design and materials, landscaping, outdoor lighting, utility lines, and signs.

- **Project Alternatives**

The draft EIR describes a reasonable range of three project alternatives, including a No Project Alternative, a Reconfigured Project on the Same Site, and a Relocated Project on an Alternative Site, and compares them to the Revised Project described in the Bodie Hills RV Park Specific Plan. The alternatives developed for the proposed Bodie Hills RV Park were evaluated based on their potential to eliminate significant adverse environmental effects or reduce them to a level of insignificance, as well as to attain the project objective to:

"... provide a mix of over-night accommodations and services for the Bodie visitor in a rustic environment that complements the historic character of Bodie State Historic Park and the setting and natural resources in the area."

- **Environmentally Superior Alternative**

The Environmentally Superior Alternative is the No Project Alternative since it would not create any environmental impacts. The No Project Alternative would not fulfill the project objective of developing "a mix of over-night accommodations and services for the Bodie visitor in a rustic environment that complements the historic character of Bodie State Historic Park and the setting and natural resources in the area" and is therefore not an acceptable alternative.

When the No Project Alternative is the environmentally superior alternative, CEQA Guidelines Section 15126.d.4 requires the identification of an environmentally superior alternative from the remaining alternatives. The Bodie Hills RV Park, the Revised Project, would be the environmentally superior alternative since it reduces potential impacts on wildlife habitat, vegetation removal, visual resources, indirect impacts on cultural resources, and sedimentation and erosion impacts on Clearwater Creek.

### **I. INTRODUCTION**

#### **INTRODUCTION**

The Draft Bodie Hills RV Park Specific Plan/Environmental Impact Report addresses State planning law requirements for a Specific Plan and CEQA requirements for an EIR in one integrated document, as allowed by Section 15120 (b) of the CEQA Guidelines.

The project utilizes a prior EIR (Mono County General Plan EIR, SCH #91032012), as allowed by Section 21083.3 of the Public Resources Code, which provides for the use of a certified EIR for subsequent development when the proposed development is consistent with an adopted community plan. For such projects, subsequent environmental review need only address effects on the environment that are peculiar to the project. Use of the prior EIR is fully addressed in Chapter IV, Environmental Analysis.

#### **RECIRCULATION OF DRAFT EIR**

The DEIR was recirculated in compliance with Section 15088.5 (a) of the CEQA Guidelines which requires recirculation of an EIR "... when significant new information is added to the EIR after .... public review ... but before certification". Significant information concerning hydrology, traffic, and vegetation was added to the DEIR following the previous comment period.

The Draft EIR was initially circulated for public comment in August--October, 1997. The Mono County Planning Commission considered the project at a public hearing on December 11, 1997. The Commission approved the Specific Plan with modifications and adopted a statement of overriding considerations upon finding that the project would result in significant unmitigatable effects. The Mono County Board of Supervisors considered the project at a public hearing on February 11, 1998, but took no action on the project.

#### **SUMMARY OF REVISIONS TO PREVIOUSLY CIRCULATED DRAFT EIR**

The Bodie Hills RV Park Specific Plan was revised in direct response to concerns raised in the initial draft. Additional mitigation measures were incorporated into the project to address traffic, visual impacts, and erosion impacts. The project was redesigned to conform to the Reduced Project Alternative identified as the Environmentally Superior Alternative in the initial draft; eleven proposed RV spaces located between Clearwater Creek and the Bodie Road were eliminated, and the proposed improvements adjacent to each RV space were sited outside a 30 foot setback from the top of the bank of Clearwater Creek.

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##### **Summary**

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**IV. Environmental Analysis**

The following sections were revised to include additional information from the hydrology, traffic, and vegetation studies prepared for the project:

|                 |                                    |                 |
|-----------------|------------------------------------|-----------------|
| Earth           | Transportation/Traffic             | Visual Analysis |
| Water Resources | Exposure to Risk (Erosion hazards) | Plant Life      |

**V. Impact Summary**

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**VII. EIR Comments & Responses-- Draft EIR**

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**VIII. EIR Comments & Responses--Revised DEIR**

This chapter contains comments on the Revised DEIR and responses to those comments.

**SPECIFIC PLAN REQUIREMENTS**

The Bodie Hills RV Park Specific Plan contains the following requirements as specified in Section 65451 of the California Government Code:

- a. Text and a diagram or diagrams which specify all of the following in detail:
  1. The distribution, location, and extent of the uses of land, including open space, within the area covered by the plan.
  2. The proposed distribution, location and extent and intensity of major components of public and private transportation, sewage, water, drainage, solid waste disposal, energy and other essential facilities proposed to be located within the area covered by the plan and needed to support the land uses described in the plan.
  3. Standards and criteria by which development will proceed, and standards for the conservation, development and utilization of natural resources, where applicable.
  4. A program of implementation measures including regulations, programs, public works projects, and financing measures necessary to carry out paragraphs 1, 2 and 3.
- b. A statement of the relationship of the specific plan to the general plan.

### **RELATIONSHIP OF SPECIFIC PLAN TO EIR**

The development standards and implementation measures required in a Specific Plan (see Chapter III, Specific Plan Goals, Policies, & Implementation Measures) serve as the mitigation measures for potential impacts identified in the environmental analysis portion of this document (Chapter IV).). A Mitigation Monitoring Program, as required by the CEQA (PRC Section 21081.6) and the Mono County Environmental Handbook, is included in Chapter VI.

### **RELATIONSHIP OF SPECIFIC PLAN TO MONO COUNTY GENERAL PLAN**

The Mono County General Plan and its associated Area Plans contain general land use policies for the unincorporated areas of the county. The Bodie Hills RV Park Specific Plan provides detailed direction for implementation of General Plan policies for a specific area of the Bodie Hills.

Section 65454 of the Government Code requires a proposed specific plan to be consistent with the General Plan, including any applicable Area Plan. The Bodie Hills RV Park Specific Plan has been designed to be consistent with all provisions of the Mono County General Plan. The Mono County General Plan designates the proposed Bodie Hills RV Park as Resource Management (RM). The intent of this designation is to recognize and maintain a wide variety of values in the land outside existing communities, including recreation, cultural resources, visual rescues, and wildlife habitat. The designation allows higher intensity uses, such as large-scale resort development, subject to the Specific Plan process if the proposed development conforms to General Plan policies.

The General Plan allows for higher intensity uses outside of existing community areas if it can be demonstrated that the use cannot be accommodated in existing community areas, that the use is incompatible with existing community uses, or that the use directly relies on the availability of unique on-site resources (Mono County Land Use Element, Objective A, Policy 3). The project depends on its unique location on the primary access road to Bodie State Park, near its junction with Hwy. 395, where it is strategically located to provide services to the Bodie visitor and travelers on Hwys. 395 and 270.

The General Plan requires the preparation of a Specific Plan for higher intensity uses outside of existing community areas (Mono County Land Use Element, Objective A, Policy 3, Action 3.1) and for making the following minimum findings through the Specific Plan process:

1. Permanent open space preservation is provided;
2. The development would not adversely affect existing or potential farming, ranching, or recreational operations;
3. Development is clustered, concentrated or located to avoid adverse impacts to cultural resources;
4. Development is clustered, concentrated or located to maintain the visual quality of the area;
5. Adequate public services and infrastructure for the proposed development are available or will be made available;
6. The development protects and is compatible with the surrounding natural environment and rural character of the area;
7. Housing is limited to that necessary to maintain the development; and
8. The development avoids or mitigates potential significant environmental impacts as required by Mono County General Plan policies and the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA).

The project has been designed to comply with the above findings.

There is no applicable adopted Area Plan although there is a Draft Cooperative Management Plan for the Bodie Hills Planning Area. That plan -- which was prepared by the Bodie Area Planning Advisory Committee, a group consisting of representatives from the Bureau of Land Management, Mono County Planning Staff, land owners and interested individuals -- would allow rural resort uses on private lands within the Bodie Hills Planning Area as long as the use did not detract from the Bodie Experience. The project site is designated Rural Resort (RU) in the Draft Cooperative Management Plan for the Bodie Hills Planning Area.

The provisions of the Mono County General Plan apply except where other policies and implementation measures are detailed in this Specific Plan.

### REQUIRED CONTENTS OF AN EIR

CEQA requires lead agencies to prepare an EIR in cases where a project may have a significant effect on the environment. As defined by CEQA (Guidelines Section 15121), the purpose of an EIR is to:

- Inform public agency decision-makers and the public generally of the significant environmental effects of a project;
- Identify possible ways to minimize the significant effects; and
- Describe reasonable alternatives to the project.

The CEQA Guidelines require that EIRs contain specific elements (Guidelines Sections 15122-15132). The location of each required element is noted below:

| <u>EIR ELEMENT</u>                                                         | <u>LOCATION IN EIR</u> |
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### INTENDED USES OF THE EIR

#### Public Agencies Using the EIR

The following agencies are expected to use the EIR in their regulatory and approval programs:

##### Federal

U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. Placement of fill material into "waters of the United States" (404 permit process) (if necessary).

## **Bodie Hills RV Park SP/EIR**

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U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. Oversight of 404 permit program implemented by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (if necessary).

U.S. Bureau of Land Management. Approval of right-of-way placement for powerline (if necessary).

### **State**

Department of Transportation. Right-of-way review and approval. Encroachment permit.

Department of Fish and Game. Stream alteration permit.

Lahontan Regional Water Quality Control Board. 401 permit (Water Quality Certification if wetlands or stream crossings are involved) and NPDES permit (if necessary).

### **Local**

Mono County Health Department. Well permit approval. Septic system approval.

Mono County Planning Department. Building permits, ongoing compliance review, Use Permit for single-family residences (employee housing), amendments to Specific Plan.

Mono County Public Works Department. Grading permits and construction approvals (building permits). Road design and right-of-way approvals. Solid waste design approval.

### **Permits and Approvals Required to Implement the Project**

The following additional permits and approvals may be required to implement the project:

Mono County Public Works Department Grading Permit.

Mono County Health Department Well Permit.

Mono County Health Department Septic System Approval.

Mono County Use Permit for construction of single-family residences (employee housing) (if necessary).

Caltrans Encroachment Permit.

BLM Right-of-way dedication for powerline (if necessary).

DFG Stream Alteration Permit (if necessary).

Army Corps of Engineers 404 Permit (if necessary).

Lahontan 401 Permit (if necessary).

Lahontan NPDES permit (if necessary).

California Department of Housing and Community Development RV Park permit (if necessary).

### **Related Environmental Review and Consultation Requirements**

Additional environmental review may be required to implement the project depending on the alternative chosen for the powerline placement. If it crosses public lands managed by the BLM, environmental review of the powerline placement will be required.

The area may also qualify as wetlands under the narrowly defined EPA and Army Corps of Engineers Section 404 permit program; such a determination would require additional study.

## II. PROJECT DESCRIPTION

### PROJECT SETTING

The proposed Bodie Hills RV Park is located on approximately 13 acres adjacent to Hwy. 270 (the Bodie Road) in Clearwater Creek Canyon. The project site is part of a larger 155 acre private parcel which is nearly surrounded by public lands administered by the Bureau of Land Management as part of the Bridgeport Valley Management Area. The BLM has designated the area north of the project's northern boundary as a Wilderness Study Area. A 29 acre private parcel touches the northwest corner of the subject property but does not lie adjacent to the subject parcel. The project site extends easterly along Hwy. 270 approximately 0.8 miles from the junction of Hwy. 270 with Hwy. 395. The project site is approximately 9 miles south of Bridgeport along Hwy. 395, 20 miles north of Lee Vining along Hwy. 395, and 12 miles west of Bodie State Historic Park along Hwy. 270 [see Figure 1, Location Map, and Figures 2A & 2B, Vicinity Maps--Bodie Hills (in Chapter VIII, EIR Comments & Responses--Revised Draft EIR)].

The project site includes fairly flat terrain located in a narrow (100-400 feet wide) canyon bottom. Steep, rocky slopes rise rapidly from the canyon floor to the north and south of the project site to heights of approximately 100 to 200 feet. Clearwater Creek flows through the entire project site, roughly parallel to Hwy. 270, in a four to ten foot deep channel that varies in width from 30 to 60 feet. The site is currently undeveloped and ungrazed but shows signs of past human disturbance (fire rings, litter, etc.).

Vegetation in the project vicinity is predominantly Big Sagebrush Scrub (sagebrush, bitterbrush, rabbitbrush), with riparian scrub (willow, wild rose) dominating the vegetation along Clearwater Creek, and pinyon-juniper woodland (single-needle pinyon, Utah juniper) dominating the rocky slopes and flats north and south of the project site.

### PROJECT OBJECTIVE

The project objective is to provide a mix of over-night accommodations and services for the Bodie visitor in a rustic environment that complements the historic character of Bodie State Historic Park and the setting and natural resources in the area.

### PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The Bodie Hills RV Park will consist of the following facilities (see Figure 2, Vicinity Map):

**a. General Store/Motel Complex**

|               |          |                  |          |
|---------------|----------|------------------|----------|
| General Store | 1,600 sf | Restrooms        | 300 sf   |
| Office        | 300 sf   | Motel (10 units) | 2,600 sf |

**b. Old West Museum**      600 sf

**c. Recreational Vehicle Park (32 spaces total; reduced from 39 spaces in the previous draft)**

21 Spaces--Varying from a minimum of 12' x 25' to a maximum of 20' x 40' depending on location (previously all 20' x 40'), back-in gravel access, elevated grills, utility hookups (sewer, water, electricity) in a 4' x 4' space as required by the California Department of Housing and Community Development, and a 6' x 8' concrete pad adjacent to the gravel area. ~~Utility hookups and the concrete pad~~ **The spaces** shall be a minimum of 30' from the top of the bank of Clearwater Creek. Two spaces (#s 1 and 2) are designated for seasonal employee use .

11 Spaces--Varying from a minimum of 15' x 50' to a maximum of 20' x 70' depending on location (previously all 20' x 60'), pull through gravel access, grills, utility hookups (sewer, water, electricity) in a 4' x 6' space as required by the California Department of Housing and Community Development, and a 6' x 8' concrete pad adjacent to the gravel area. ~~Utility hookups and the concrete pad~~ *The spaces* shall be a minimum of 30' from the top of the bank of Clearwater Creek.

- d. **Recreational Vehicle Park Restroom/Laundromat/Shower Building** 800 sf
- e. **Camping Cabins**  
8 units with outdoor water spigots and elevated grills, no electricity or indoor plumbing, 300 sf per cabin (see Figure 3--Camping Cabins, Typical Layout & Elevation)
- f. **Camping Cabins Restroom/Laundromat/Shower Building** 800 sf
- g. **Tent Camping Area**  
14 primitive camping spaces (approximately 30' x 30' each) with elevated grills, no improvements, brush cleared only enough for camping
- h. **Tent Camping Restroom Building with Water Spigot** 300 sf
- i. **Two Single Family Employee Residences on the north bluff** 2,050 sf each

The resort will operate seasonally, from one week prior to the opening of the fishing season in Mono County (i.e. one week before the last weekend in April) to one week after the end of the fishing season (i.e. one week after Oct. 31). Specific Plan policies allow the Planning Director to extend the season through the Director Review Process.

#### **Infrastructure/Utilities**

**Water:** Water will be provided from an on-site well and distributed utilizing a 20,000 +/- gallon storage tank and an underground distribution system (see Figures 3 and 4). The distribution system will be constructed to serve the general store/motel/museum complex, the single-family residences, the RV spaces, the RV restroom/laundromat/shower building, the camping cabin restroom/laundromat/shower building, and the tent camping restroom building. The water storage tank will be approximately 14 feet in diameter and 20 feet in height and will be screened from view by topography, existing trees, additional trees planted by the project proponent, and paint color.

**Sewer:** Sewage disposal will be provided by on-site collection systems utilizing septic tanks emptying into leach fields (see Figures 3 and 4 for location of leach fields and septic tanks). All septic tanks and the sewer lift station will be placed underground.

**General Store/Motel/Museum Complex:** Sewage from this project component will flow directly to a 3,000 gallon septic tank located to the west of the proposed Museum. It will flow to a leach field disposal system located directly southwest of the complex.

**Single Family Residences:** Septic lines will flow down the proposed access road alignment to the General Store's septic tank and system.

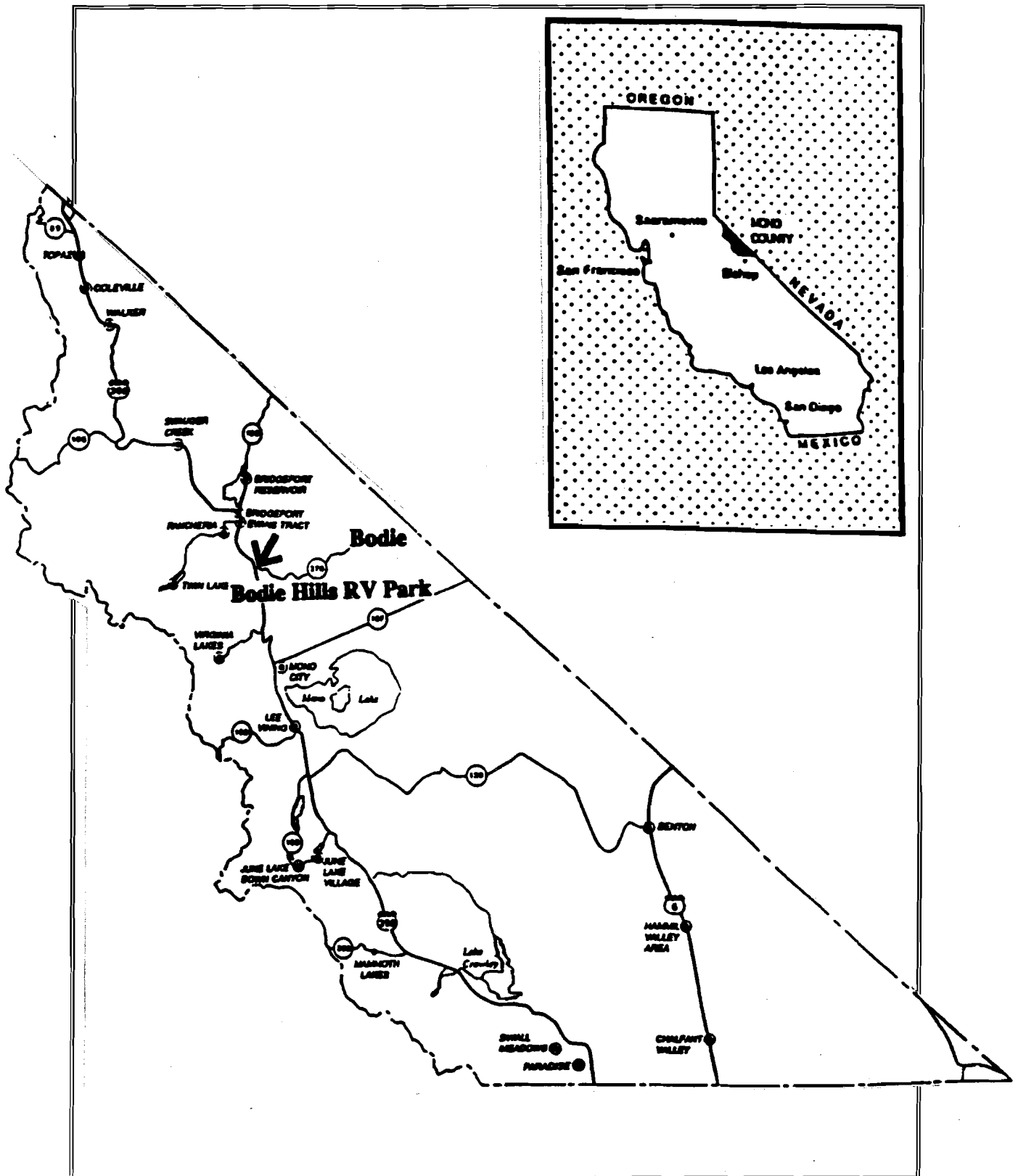


Figure 1 -- Location Map

## **Bodie Hills RV Park SP/EIR**

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**RV Spaces:** All RV spaces will be provided with a sewage hook-up. Sewage from this project component will be transported through a collection system to a 5,000 gallon septic tank located at the west end of the complex. Effluent from the septic tank will flow to a sewer lift station and will then be pumped to a leach field located southwest of the complex.

**RV Spaces Restroom/Laundromat/Shower Building:** Sewage from the restroom/laundromat/shower building will flow to the 5,000 gallon septic tank located at the west end of the complex. Effluent from the septic tank will flow to a sewer lift station and will then be pumped to a leach field located southwest of the complex.

**Camping Cabin Restroom/Laundromat/Shower Building:** Sewage from the restroom/laundromat/shower building will flow to a 3,000 gallon septic tank and leach field, both located adjacent to the restroom building.

**Tent Camping Restroom Building:** Sewage from the restroom building will flow to a 1,000 gallon septic tank and leach field, both located adjacent to the restroom building.

**Gas:** Propane gas service will be provided for the general store/motel complex, the single-family residences, and for the two restroom/laundromat/shower buildings located in the RV spaces and camping cabin areas. A 500 gallon propane storage tank will be located near the store/motel building. A 200 gallon propane storage tank will be located near each of the restroom/shower buildings. All tanks will be screened from the highway and parking areas using rustic looking wood fencing.

**Electric:** Electricity will be provided by Southern California Edison. The project proponent is proposing an overhead transmission line to the site. Two overhead line alternatives are proposed. Alternative 1 would construct an overhead power line from the existing SCE power line located on the east side of Hwy. 395. The overhead line would run northeasterly from the existing SCE line to the ridge on which the leach field for the RV spaces will be located. This line crosses public lands managed by the BLM and would require right-of-way clearance from the BLM, a visual contrast analysis, cultural resource clearance, etc., to ensure that the proposed line conforms with BLM regulations and policies. Alternative 2 for the overhead utility line would run from the existing SCE line across the subject property parallel to the southern property line.

With the exception of the overhead lines described above, all power lines will be installed underground in conformance with the Mono County Code (MCZDC 19.030.07). Power will be extended to the general store/motel complex, all RV spaces, the maintenance building, the two restroom/laundromat/shower buildings, and the single-family residences.

**Phone:** Telephone lines will be provided overhead and underground along the same route used for electric service. Telephone service will be provided to the general store/motel complex, the single-family homes, the two restroom/laundromat/shower buildings in the RV Park and Cabin Camping areas, and the single-family residences.

**Solid Waste Disposal:** A screened dumpster area will be provided near the general store. Fourteen garbage cans with lids will be placed throughout the RV and

camping areas. All trash facilities will be designed to resist wildlife access, *including bears*.

**Lighting:** Nineteen lampposts with lights will be installed within the project at sites shown on the plot plan. ~~The lampposts will be replicas of 1890's lampposts (see Figure 6, Sign and Lighting Plan).~~ Exterior lighting will be installed as necessary for the respective uses of each building.

**Drainage:** Proposed drainage facilities include the extension of an existing 24-inch culvert under the parking area in the general store area, the extension of an existing 18-inch culvert under the access road and parking area for the camping cabins, and the installation of an 18-inch CMP drain under the tent camping parking area. Two retention basins will be installed to collect runoff from the large parking area adjacent to the General Store complex and the camping cabins. In addition, runoff from parking areas will be pretreated using oil/water separators to remove oil and gas residue, in conformance with Lahontan Water Quality Control Board requirements. Drainage improvements will conform with the provisions of the Mono County Department of Public Works and the Lahontan Water Quality Control Board. Specific Plan policies specify that the drainage component of the Grading Plan shall also consider diversion channels or armored berms around the proposed improvements in the areas affected by the tributary drainages and shall provide methods of preventing clogging in any proposed pipe storm drains.

### Access

Access to the project site will be via Hwy. 270, the Bodie Road, which bisects the project site. Hwy. 270 is a 22-foot wide paved State Highway which traverses Clearwater Canyon throughout the project site. The State of California currently claims ownership of the road by prescription. The project proponent and Caltrans have reached an agreement that gives the State a 40-foot right-of-way (highway easement) throughout the project area, as well as sign easements and drainage easements to cover features that extend outside the 40-foot limits.

Access to all elements of the resort will be directly off Hwy. 270 onto paved areas leading to gravel surfaced roadways and parking areas (see Figures 3 and 4). Access to the motel/store/office will be directly off Hwy. 270. A roadway leading from the store and motel parking area up the hill will be improved and extended to serve the proposed employee housing (single family residences) on the north bluff.

Access to the RV Park spaces will be from a 16 foot, one-way gravel loop road. Two roadway bridges will cross Clearwater Creek, one at the entrance to the loop road and one at the exit. The bridges will be constructed with concrete abutments located outside of the Clearwater Creek channel and floodplain and steel or wood components finished in a manner that is unobtrusive and complementary to the surrounding area. Pedestrian access to the General Store from the RV Park will be provided by a footbridge, constructed in a similar manner.

Access to the camping cabins will be provided by a 20 foot wide, two-way gravel access road. Access to the tent camping area will be from a 20 foot wide, two-way gravel road. One roadway bridge will be constructed across Clearwater Creek to the tent camping area in the same manner as the bridges in the RV Park area.

### Parking

Parking spaces will be provided for all elements of the project in conformance with the Mono County Code (Chapter 19.29). Parking spaces will be 10' x 20'; handicapped spaces will be 14' x 20'. All regular parking spaces will be gravel surfaced. Handicapped spaces will be surfaced with concrete.

## **Bodie Hills RV Park SP/EIR**

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A total of 77 parking spaces will be provided for the project; 6 of those spaces will be handicapped spaces. Parking spaces will be provided as follows:

|                                             |                                        |
|---------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------|
| <b>General Store/Motel/<br/>Museum Area</b> | 30 regular spaces/3 handicapped spaces |
| <b>Camping Cabin Area:</b>                  | 14 regular spaces/1 handicapped space  |
| <b>Tent Camping Area:</b>                   | 18 regular spaces/1 handicapped space  |
| <b>RV Restroom/Shower Area:</b>             | 5 regular spaces/1 handicapped space   |
| <b>Single Family Residences:</b>            | 4 regular spaces                       |

### **Employee Housing**

The project proponent estimates that the resort will require eleven full-time seasonal employees. *Phase I of the project is estimated to require 7 employees total; Phase II is estimated to require 1 additional employee for a total of 8 employees; Phase III is estimated to require 3 additional employees for a total of 11 employees.* Two spaces in the RV Park (#'s 1 and 2) and the two single-family residences will be reserved for employee housing.

### **Design**

Design guidelines in the Specific Plan are intended to ensure that development of the project minimizes potential impacts to wildlife, the visual environment, water quality and air quality. Even though the project will require a substantial amount of cut (1,000 cubic yards) and fill (600 cubic yards), the amount of earth work will be lessened by project design measures which follow the land's natural contours. Disturbed areas other than roadway and parking areas (i.e. cut and fill slopes, utility trenches, etc.) will be revegetated with native vegetation where possible. The Specific Plan requires the use of specific building and fencing materials in order to ensure that development blends harmoniously with the surrounding natural environment and protects natural resources (see Figures 7 and 8, Building Elevations).

Buildings will be constructed primarily of wood and other materials compatible with the ~~character of Bodie~~ *surrounding environment*. Buildings ~~may shall~~ be designed and constructed to have a rustic ~~nineteenth century appearance in harmony with the nearby Bodie State Historic Park; the final building and landscaping plans may be reviewed with State Parks~~ *modern appearance and to blend into the surrounding environment to the greatest extent possible*. The wood will be stained, painted or otherwise finished to ~~have a weathered aged appearance~~ *blend into the surrounding environment*. Roofing will be Class A rated wood shingles, fiberglass shingles, or metal in colors compatible with the area (e.g. sage, rust or similar colors). Bright colors or reflective materials will not be used.

Wood fencing will be used sparingly to screen certain elements such as the propane tanks and to direct patrons away from environmentally sensitive areas such as the riparian vegetation and the streambanks. Fencing will be stained, painted or otherwise finished to ~~have a weathered aged appearance~~ *be unobtrusive and blend into the surrounding environment*.

Figure 2 -- Vicinity Map

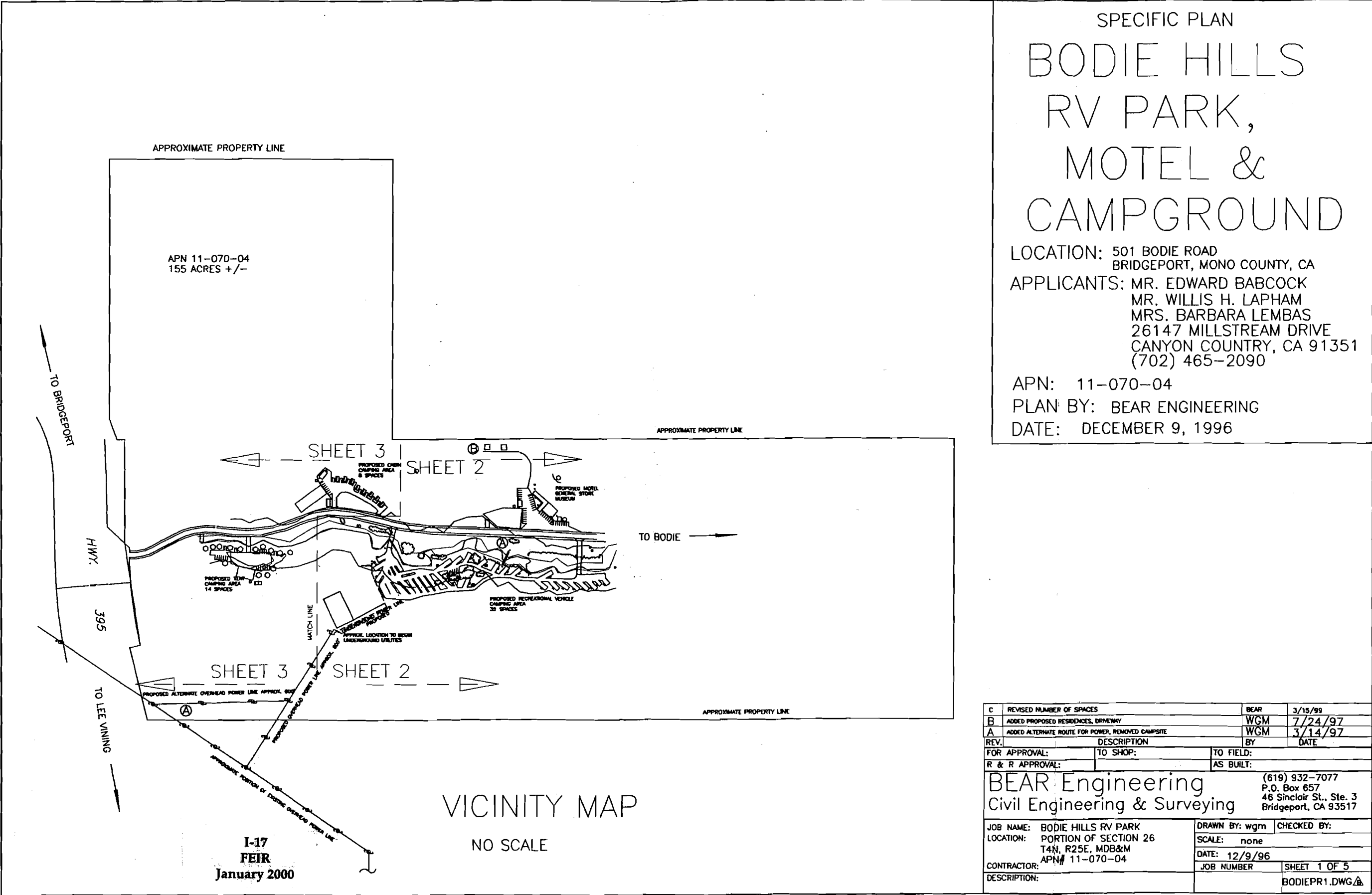


**Figure 3 -- Tent Camping Area and Cabin Camping Area**

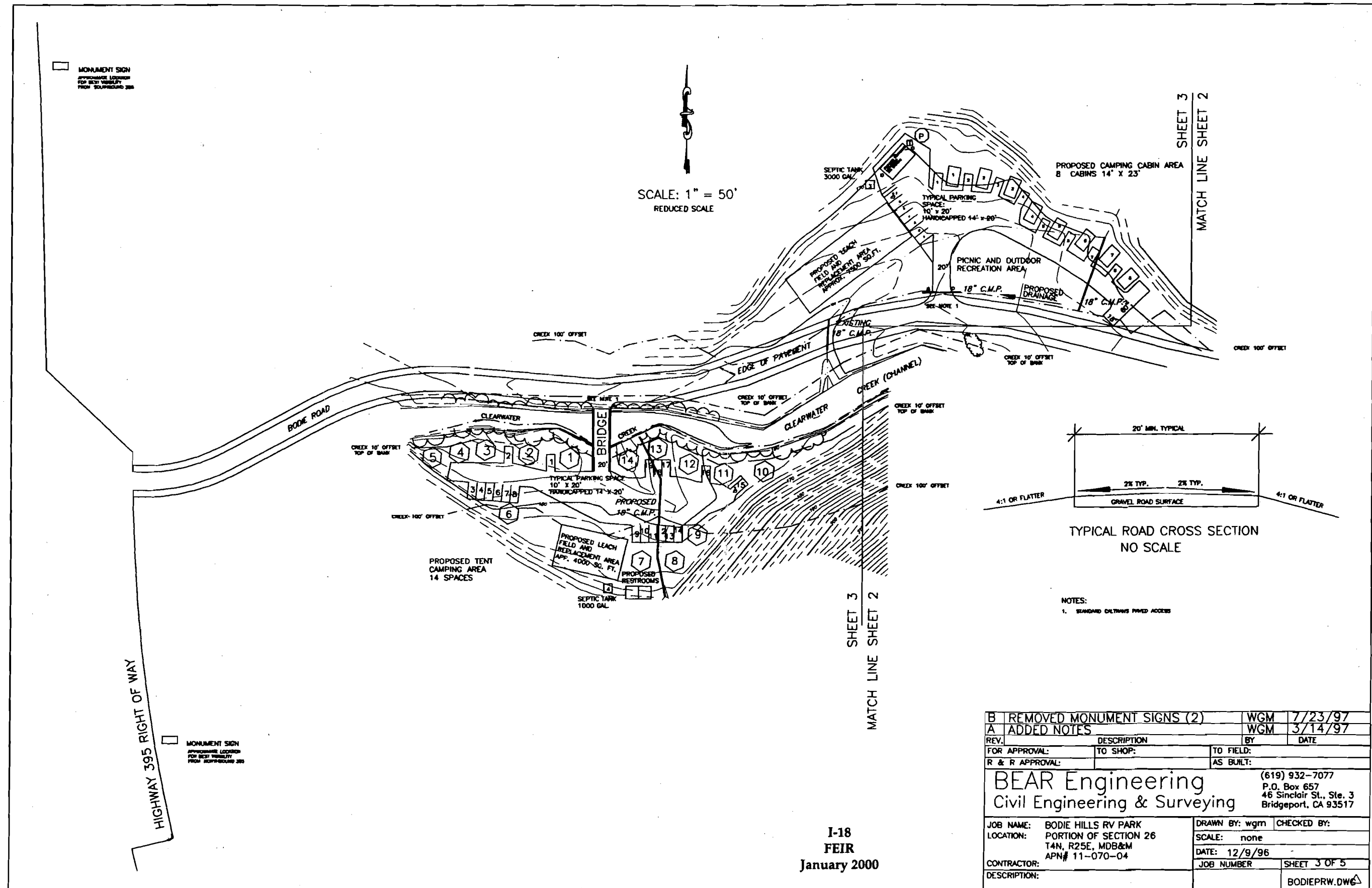


Figure 4 -- RV Park and Motel/General Store/Rental Office

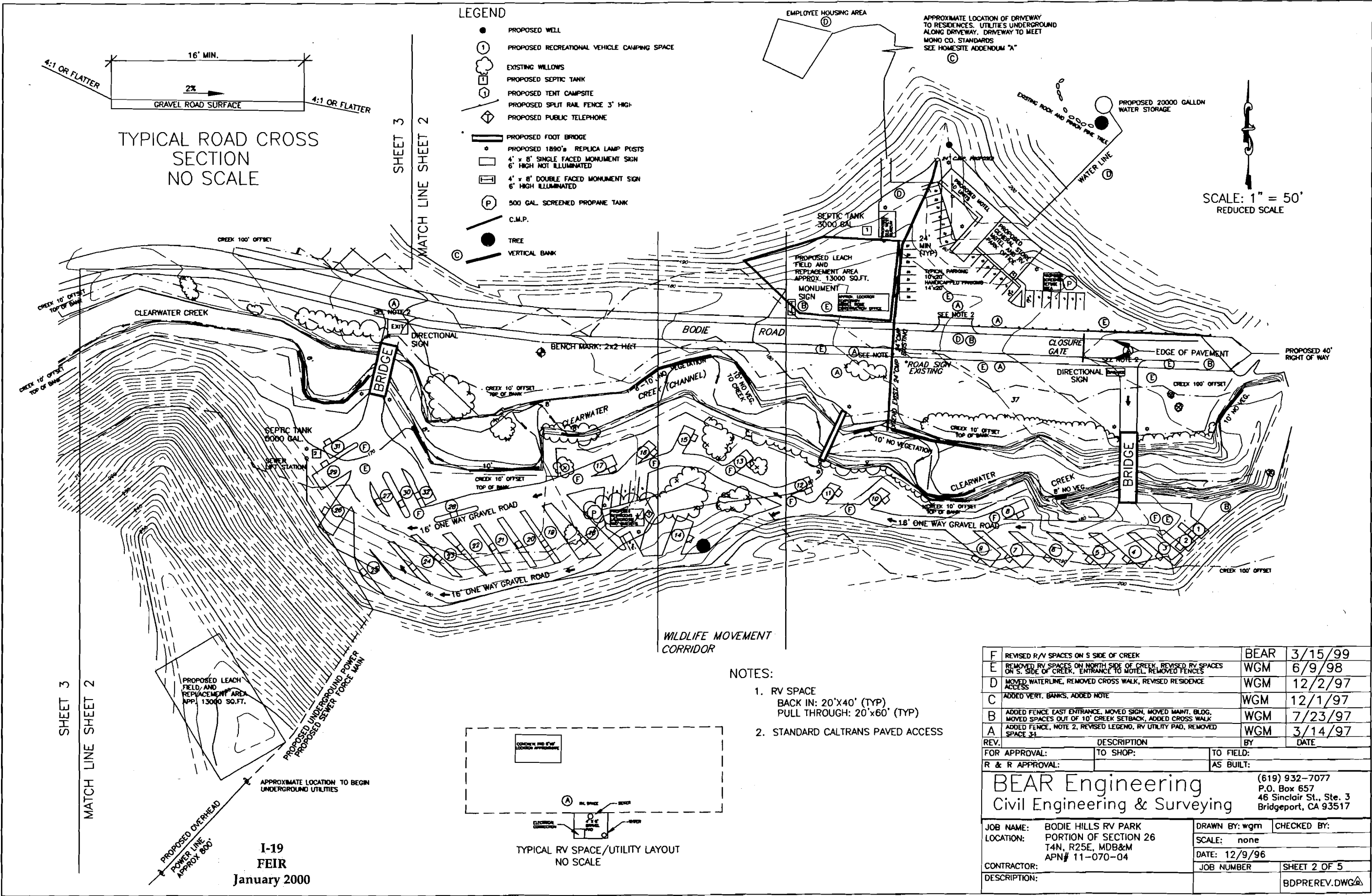
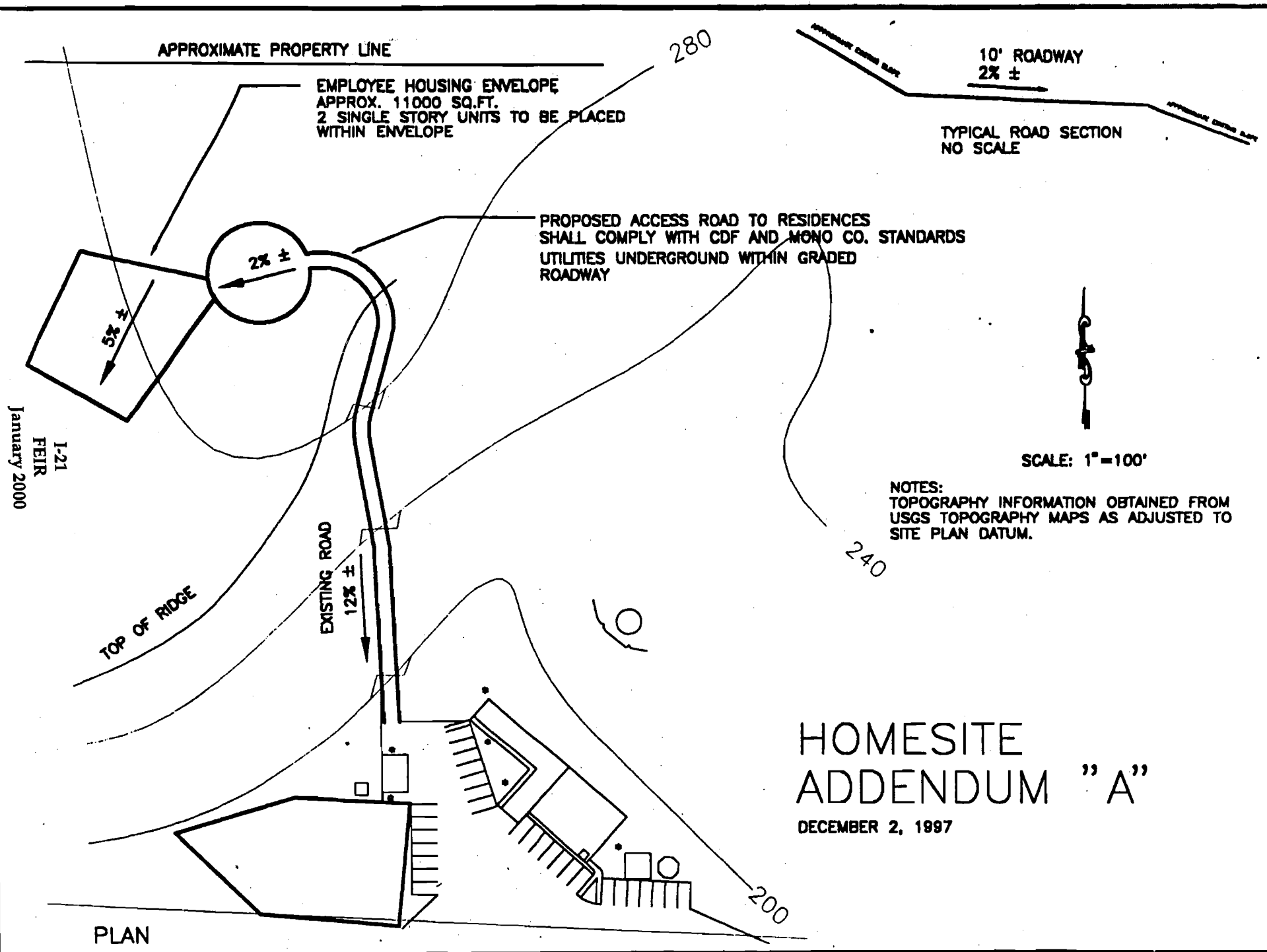


Figure 4 A - Addendum A, Employee Housing Units



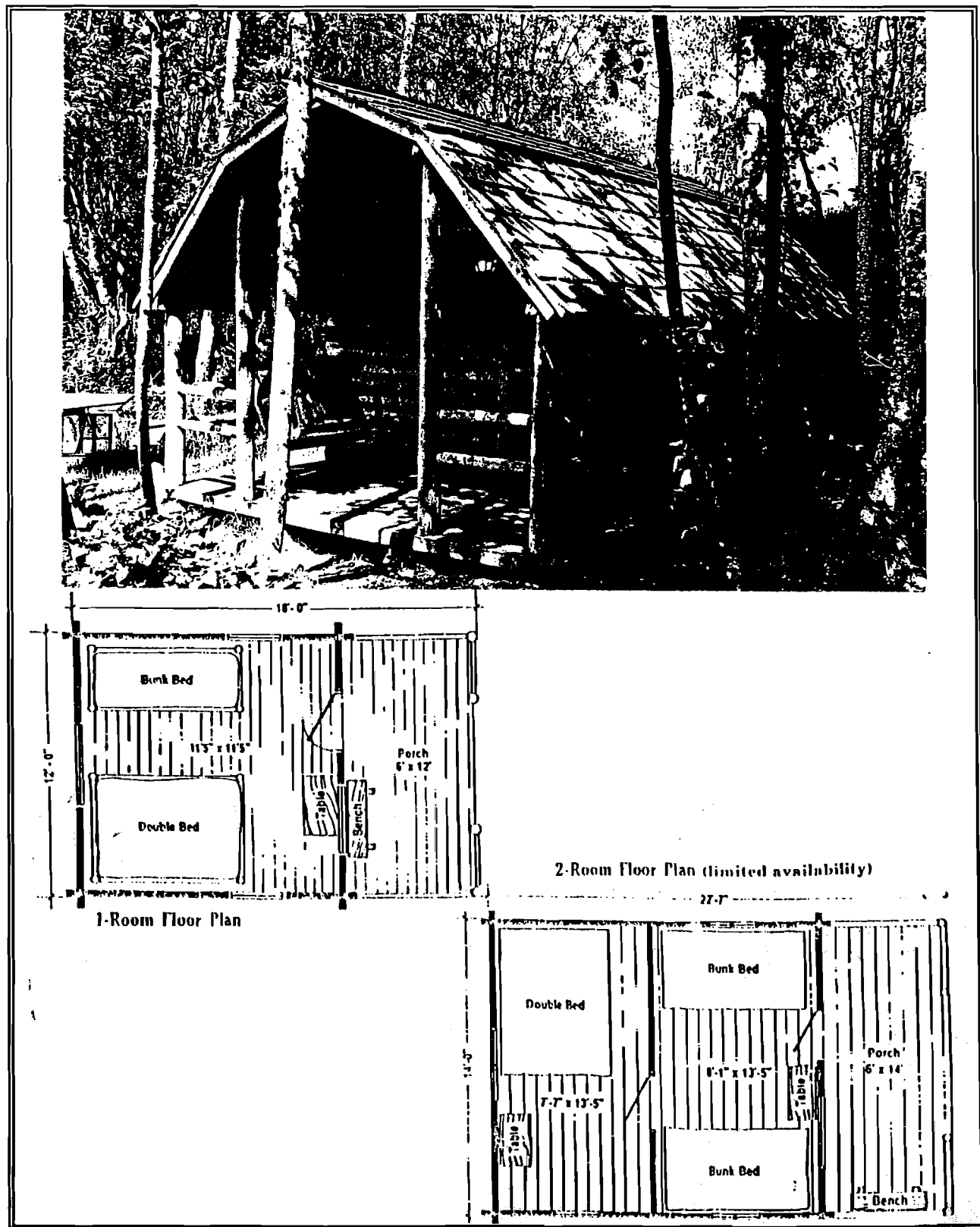


Figure 5 -- Camping Cabins--Typical Layout and Elevation

### Landscaping

The project involves minimal landscaping. Fencing and landscaping will be used to minimize impacts to the visual environment. The Specific Plan requires the use of native landscaping materials to ensure that landscaping blends harmoniously with the surrounding natural environment and protects natural resources. In addition to using landscaping to screen parts of the project and to restabilize disturbed soils after construction, a limited amount of decorative landscaping is proposed in the following three areas (see Figures 3 and 4):

**a. General Store/Motel Area**

The triangular area in front of the motel units will be landscaped with lawn. A 30-inch high two-rail wood fence will be installed along the frontage of Hwy. 270.

**b. Camping Cabin Area--Proposed Picnic and Recreation Area**

This area will be landscaped with lawn, picnic tables, a fire pit, and playground equipment.

**c. RV Park Area and Tent Camping Area**

A wildlife friendly two-rail wood fence will be constructed along the line delineating the 10 foot setback from the top of the streambank in these areas. The fence is intended to channel foot traffic away from the riparian zone adjacent to the streambank in order to protect the riparian habitat and to reduce the potential for streambank erosion. Landscaping will also be planted along the split rail fence and near the RV spaces located closest to the creek. That fencing and landscaping is intended to enhance the visual character of the park by visually screening RV spaces located close to the creek.

### Signs

The project proponent is proposing to install two illuminated monument signs along Hwy. 270; three non-illuminated monument signs, two along Hwy. 395, and one along Hwy. 270; two free-standing directional signs at the RV Park entrance and exit; signs discouraging use of the Clearwater Creek corridor; and wall signs on individual buildings (see Figure 6, Sign and Lighting Plan, and Figures 7 and 8, Building Elevations).

The sign face on the monument signs will measure 32 square feet and the signs will be a maximum of six feet in height. The free standing signs at the entrance and exit of the RV Park will feature a sign face of 3 square feet and will not exceed a height of eight feet.

Wall signs in the project area will include a 32 sf (4' x 8') sign on the front of the Motel and Store building, a 25 sf (2.5' x 10') sign on the face of the Museum and a 22 sf (1' x 22') sign on the front of the two shower and laundromat buildings located in the camping cabin area and the RV park. The directional signs will feature a sign face of three square feet and will not exceed a height of six feet. The Clearwater Creek signs will read "Fragile Environment--Keep Out," and will be posted on the fence located ~~near the Clearwater Creek channel bank~~ *along the 30' setback from Clearwater Creek*. ~~Additional signs on the fence may also direct patrons of the park to use established access routes to Clearwater Creek.~~

The signs will be constructed of wood and painted in rustic colors. The illuminated monument sign will feature indirect lighting from incandescent lamps located under a rustic wood shake roof. The Motel and Store wall sign also will feature indirect lighting. Illumination is not proposed for the remaining signs. The signs have been designed to match the project's ~~historic~~ rustic theme. The proposed signs conform to requirements of the Mono County Sign Ordinance (MCZDC 19.35).

# BODIE HILLS RV PARK, MOTEL & CAMPGROUND SIGN & LIGHTING PLAN SHEET 1

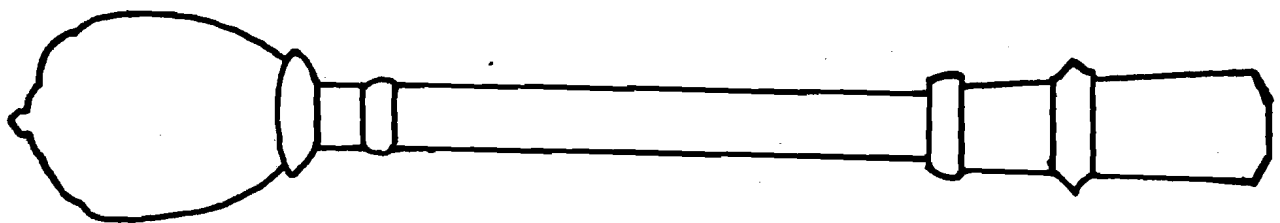
Figure 6 - Sign and Lighting Plan

## NOTES:

- 2 ILLUMINATED SIGNS TO BE PLACED BY BODIE ROAD;
- 3 NON-ILLUMINATED SIGNS TO BE PLACED AS FOLLOWS:

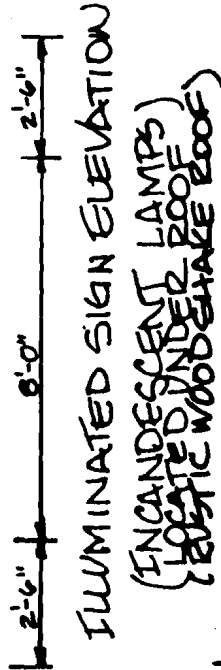
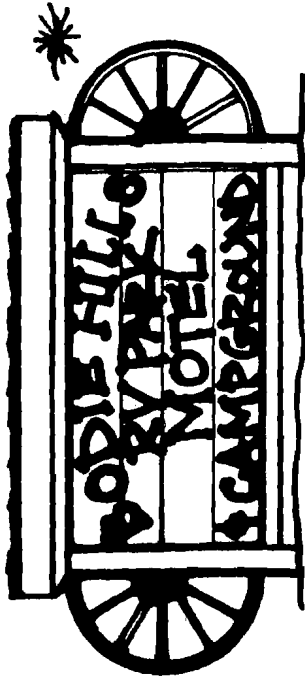
- 2 BY HIGHWAY 395 & 1 BY BODIE ROAD;
- WALL SIGNS ON ALL BUILDINGS ARE INDICATED ON-SCALED BUILDING ELEVATIONS;
- 2 FREE-STANDING DIRECTIONAL SIGNS TO BE PLACED AT

- RV PARK ENTRANCE & EXIT; SIGNS WILL BE SAME CONSTRUCTION AS MONUMENT SIGNS, EXCEPT 1'X3' SIGNFACE & 4' OVERALL WIDTH.



REPLICA 1890'S LAMPPOST ELEVATION

## MONUMENT:

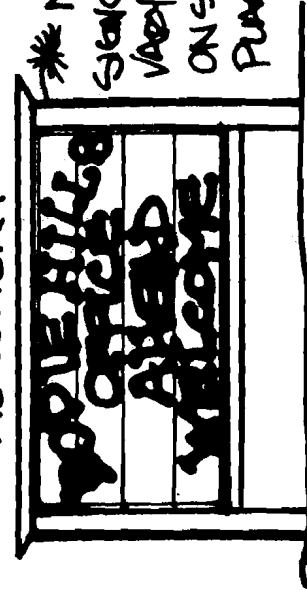


ILLUMINATED SIGN ELEVATION  
(INCANDESCENT LAMPS)  
(LOCATED UNDER ROOF)  
(RUSTIC WOOD SHAKE ROOF)

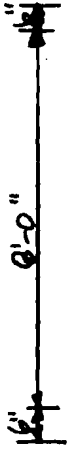
## ALL SIGNS:

COLOR & MATERIALS: RUSTIC COLORS  
PAINTED ON RUSTIC WOOD FACES  
MOUNTED ON A WOOD FRAME.

## MONUMENT:



NOTE:  
SIGN COPY WILL  
VARY DEPENDING  
ON SIGN  
PLACEMENT.



NON-ILLUMINATED SIGN ELEVATION

Figure 7 -- Motel and General Store Elevations

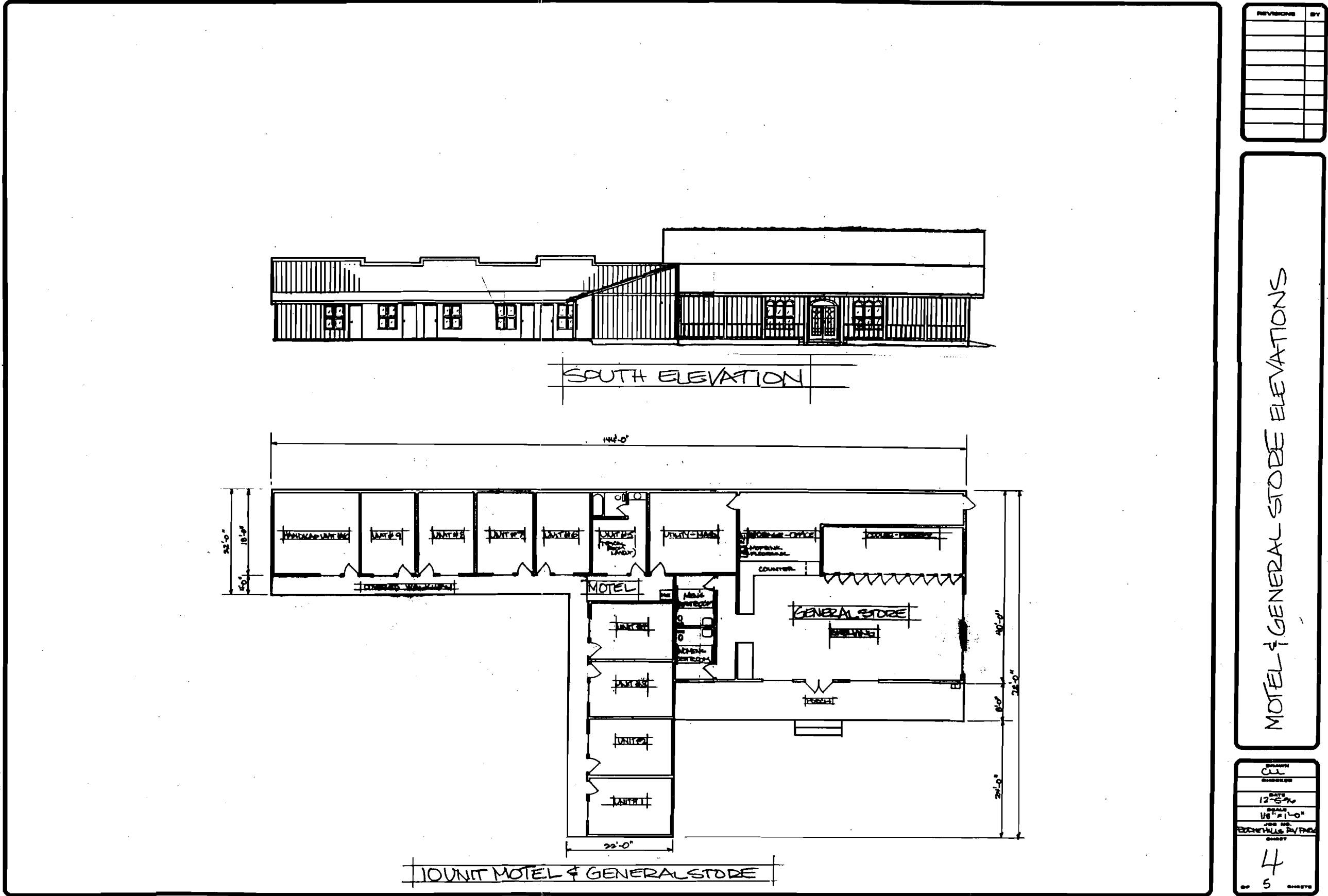
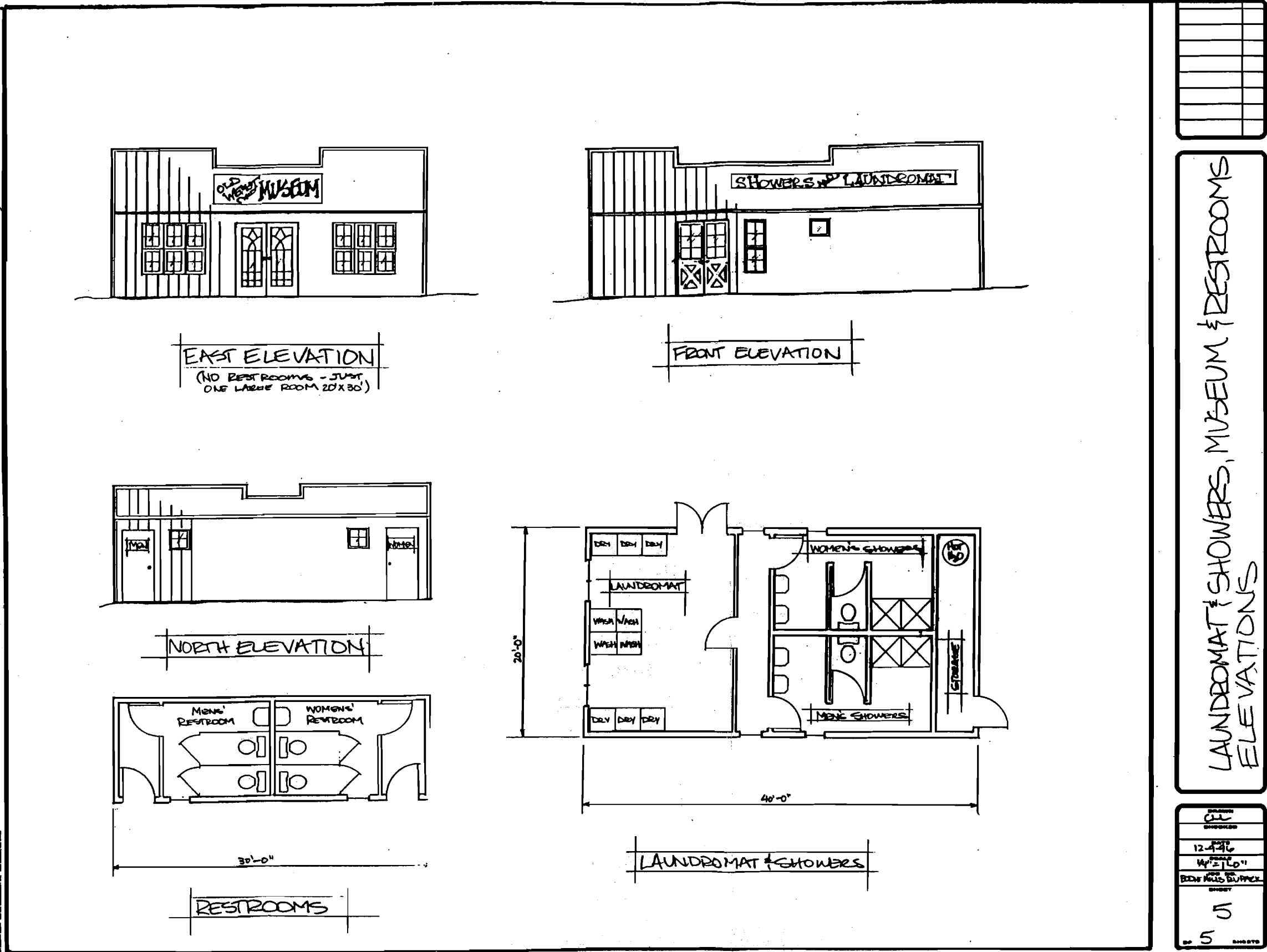


Figure 8 -- Laundromat and Showers, Museum and Restrooms Elevations



### PROJECT PHASING

The project proponent proposes to construct the project in the following phases:

- Phase I: Construct buildings and support structures for the General Store area, including a General store (1,900 sf maximum), 10 unit motel (2,600 sf maximum), 300 sf RV Park office, and 600 sf museum. Construct access roads and parking areas. Construct the access road and two single-family residences located on the north bluff.
- Phase II: Construct a RV Park, with up to thirty-two (32) spaces, and an 800 sf restroom/laundromat/shower building. Construct access roads and bridges.
- Phase III: Construct up to 8 camping cabins with an 800 sf restroom/laundromat/shower building and up to 14 tent camping sites with a 300 sf restroom building.

Infrastructure (utilities, roadways, and parking) and associated landscaping and revegetation will be developed concurrently with each project phase. The project proponent intends to complete each phase of construction in the same year in which it begins, if possible.

### PROJECT FINANCING

The project will be financed entirely through private sources. According to the project engineer, the project proponents have the capability to finance the project.

### **III. SPECIFIC PLAN GOALS, POLICIES & IMPLEMENTATION MEASURES**

#### **PROJECT GOAL**

The project goal is to provide a mix of over-night accommodations and services for the Bodie visitor in a rustic environment that complements the historic character of Bodie State Historic Park and the setting and natural resources in the area.

#### **LAND USE**

**Objective:** Define permitted land uses and criteria for a development program which provides over-night accommodations and services consistent with the overall goal of the project.

**Policy 1:** Designate the project site (approximately 13 acres of Assessor's Parcel No. 11-070-04) as Rural Resort (RU) (see Figure 9, Land Use Map).

**Policy 2:** Permitted uses and maximum development intensities (i.e. building square footages and the number of RV, cabin or camping sites) for the Rural Resort (RU) designation include the following:

a. General Store/Motel Complex

|               |          |                  |          |
|---------------|----------|------------------|----------|
| General Store | 1,600 sf | Restrooms        | 300 sf   |
| Office        | 300 sf   | Motel (10 units) | 2,600 sf |

b. Old West Museum 600 sf

c. Recreational Vehicle Park (total of 32 spaces)

21 Spaces--Varying from 12' x 25' to 20' x 40' depending on location, back-in gravel access, elevated grills, utility hookups (sewer, water, electricity) in a 4' x 4' space as required by the California Department of Housing and Community Development, and a 6' x 8' concrete pad adjacent to the gravel area. ~~Utility hookups and the concrete pad~~ The spaces shall be a minimum of 30' from the top of the bank of Clearwater Creek. Two spaces (#s 1 and 2) are designated for seasonal employee housing.

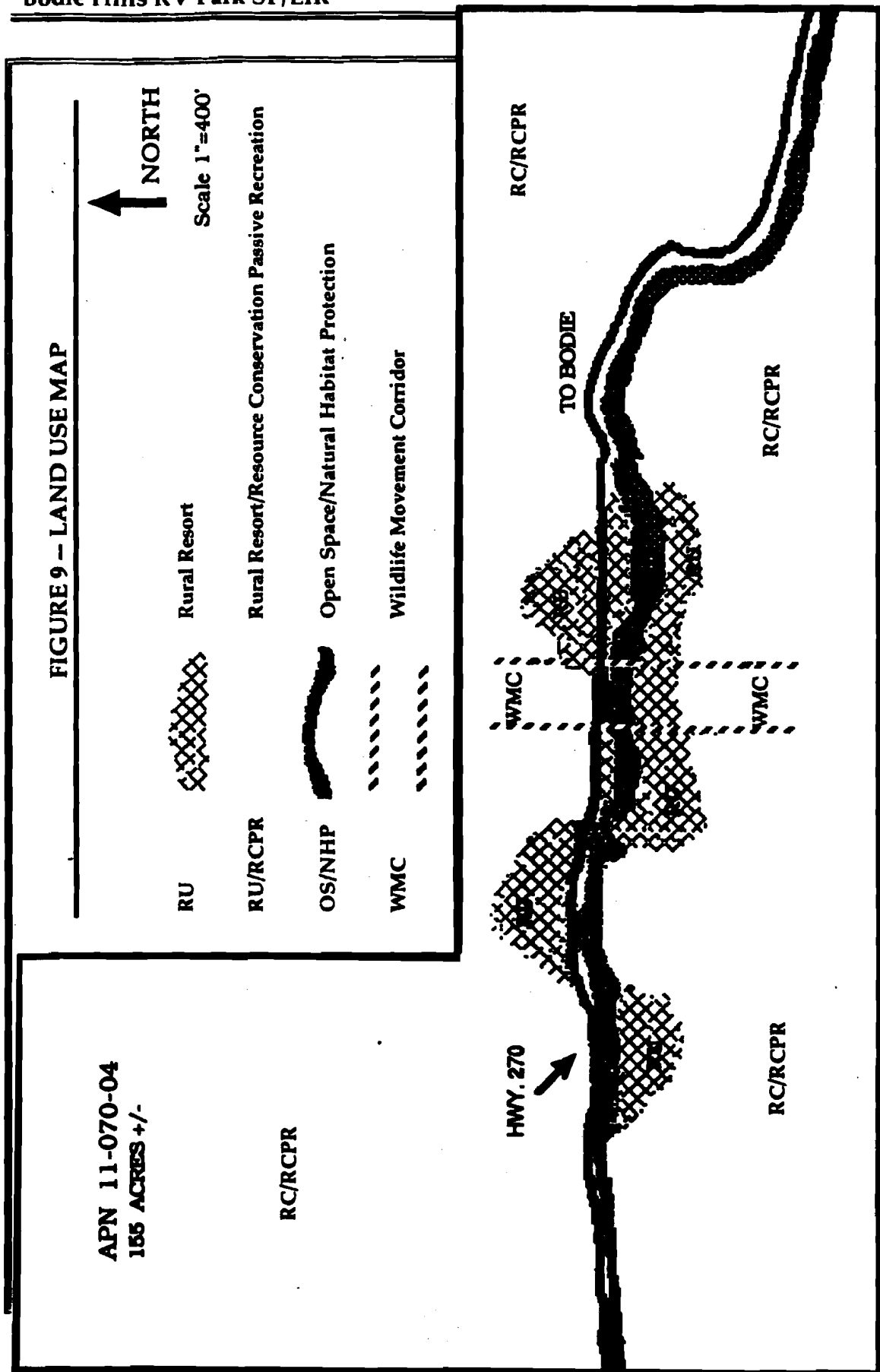
11 Spaces--Varying from 15' x 50' to 20' x 70' depending on location, pull through gravel access, grills, utility hookups (sewer, water, electricity) in a 4' x 6' space as required by the California Department of Housing and Community Development, and a 6' x 8' concrete pad adjacent to the gravel area. ~~Utility hookups and the concrete pad~~ The spaces shall be a minimum of 30' from the top of the bank of Clearwater Creek.

d. Recreational Vehicle Park Restroom/Laundromat/Shower Building 800 sf

e. Camping Cabins

8 units with outdoor water spigots and elevated grills  
(no electricity or indoor plumbing), 300 sf per cabin

f. Camping Cabins Restroom/Laundromat/Shower Building 800 sf



- g. Tent Camping Area  
14 primitive camping spaces (approximately 30' x 30' each) with elevated grills, no improvements, brush cleared only enough for camping
  - h. Tent Camping Restroom Building with Water Spigot      300 sf
  - i. Accessory uses as indicated on the Plot Plan, including a water storage tank, parking areas, signs as specified in this plan (DG Policy 12), leach fields, access bridges (3), pedestrian bridge, two-rail split rail fencing, and a picnic/recreation area when constructed simultaneously with or subsequent to the main development.
  - j. Small animals (e.g. dogs, cats), subject to Specific Plan policies which require containment of such animals (NRC Policy 8).
  - k. Horses owned by patrons of the project shall be confined to existing roads, trails and other existing developed areas. *The project proponent shall refer patrons with horses to more appropriate off-site locations for equestrian activities.*
  - l. The applicant shall comply with all requirements of the State of California concerning RV parks and shall obtain any required RV park permits from the State.
  - m. A mobile home construction office may be located temporarily on the project site. The office shall be removed following completion of the final phase of the project. If a building season passes with no construction activity, prior to completion of the final phase of the project, the office shall be removed at that time.
- Policy 3: Designate the remainder of Assessor's Parcel No. 11-070-04 as Rural Resort/Resource Conservation Passive Recreation (RU/RCPR) (see Figure 9, Land Use Map).
- Policy 4: Permitted uses for the Rural Resort/Resource Conservation Passive Recreation (RU/RCPR) designation shall include the following:
- a. A leachfield for the RV Park and overhead utility lines on the southern bluff.
  - b. Two non-illuminated freestanding signs along U.S. 395.
  - c. Two (2) single family residences subject to approval of a Use Permit. The single family residences shall comply with the following minimum development standards. Additional development standards may be imposed as conditions of the Use Permit approval:
    - 1. Each residence shall be a maximum of 2,050 sf;
    - 2. The residences shall be located within the 11,000 sf building envelope identified in Figure 4A. That building envelope shall be clearly delineated on the site plan for the required Use Permit;
    - 3. The residences shall be sited to minimize their visibility from Hwy. 270;
    - 4. The residences shall be single-story;
    - 5. The residences shall use colors and materials as described in Policy 1a-d of the Design Guidelines in this Specific Plan;
    - 6. Accessory structures for the residences (e.g. corrals, stables, garages) shall be located near the residences, within the 11,000 sf building envelope, and shall

- not be located in cultural resource sites or in areas occupied by sensitive plants.
7. Landscaping and revegetation in the vicinity of the residences shall comply with the landscaping and revegetation requirements in this Specific Plan.
  8. Exterior lighting at the residences shall comply with the exterior lighting requirements in this Specific Plan.
  9. Utility lines shall be installed underground in conformance with the Mono County Code (MCZDC 19.030.07).
  10. The access road to the site shall comply with CDF and County Road Standards. The road shall utilize existing roads and grades where possible and shall be designed and constructed to minimize cut and fill. Existing trees shall be retained, where possible, to shield the road. Additional trees (e.g. pinyon pine and/or juniper) may be planted to further soften the road's appearance. Graded or disturbed cut slopes shall be revegetated in compliance with the revegetation standards in this Specific Plan.
  11. The residences shall be reserved for employee housing.
- d. Livestock grazing *shall require approval of a Grazing Management and Sage Grouse Habitat Enhancement Plan (as specified in Natural Resource Conservation Policy 17) by Mono County prior to the commencement of any grazing activity.*
  - e. Passive recreation such as hiking, photography, wildlife observation, etc.
  - f. Other similar uses, as determined by the Planning Director in accordance with Mono County Zoning and Development Code Section 19.02.040, Interpretation of Similar Uses.
  - g. The areas immediately north and south of the proposed development shall be maintained as natural buffer zones between the development and surrounding public lands.
  - h. No more than 10 percent of the entire parcel may be disturbed; the remainder of the parcel shall remain in its natural undisturbed state.
  - i. *No other uses shall be permitted beyond those specified in this policy. The permitted uses may be modified in the future following established County procedures for amendments of Specific Plans.*
- Policy 5: Designate the Clearwater Creek Channel as Open Space/Natural Habitat Protection (OS/NHP) (see Figure 9, Land Use Map). The designation establishes a riparian buffer zone area along the entire length of Clearwater Creek through the project site, including the entire channel area from ~~ten (10)~~ *thirty (30)* feet north of the top of the north bank to ~~ten (10)~~ *thirty (30)* feet south of the top of the south bank.

The ~~ten~~ *thirty* foot setback from the top of the streambank shall be maintained in perpetuity. In the future, if the streambank erodes and an existing use is no longer at least ~~ten~~ *thirty* feet from the top of the bank, that use shall be discontinued or moved to the minimum ~~10~~ *30* foot setback.

The ~~10~~ *30* foot setback shall be monitored annually, in the spring prior to the resort's opening. The setback for all existing uses shall be measured; if the setback varies from the required ~~10~~ *30* foot setback by ~~twelve (12) inches~~ *2 feet* or more, the

existing use shall be discontinued or moved prior to the resort's opening. Monitoring requirements are included in the Mitigation Monitoring Plan (see Chapter VI).

Policy 6: Permitted uses for the Open Space/Natural Habitat Protection (OS/NHP) designation along Clearwater Creek shall include the following:

- a. Three (3) roadway bridges and one pedestrian bridge as indicated on the Plot Plans (see Figure 3 and 4). Bridge supports shall be located outside of the stream channel and the floodplain but may be within the 10 foot stream setback.
- b. Two temporary crossings of the Clearwater Creek channel, not to exceed 15 feet in width, for construction purposes. The temporary crossings shall be reclaimed as soon as the bridges are operable.
- c. Recreational use of *the* Clearwater Creek *corridor within the project area shall not be permitted* (e.g. fishing). ~~To minimize impacts to the streambanks, a limited number of access routes to the creek from the top of the bank shall be established and maintained. Signs encouraging their use shall be posted on the fence along the 40 30 foot setback stating the fragile nature of the area and prohibiting use of the stream corridor.~~
- d. No other uses shall be permitted.

Policy 7: Designate a Wildlife Movement Corridor (WMC) (see Figure 9, Land Use Map). The corridor shall be a minimum of 150 feet wide at all points (see Figure 4, Plot Plan).

Policy 8: Permitted uses for the Wildlife Movement Corridor (WMC) shall include the following:

- ~~a. Three (3) recreational vehicle spaces as indicated on the Plot Plan and portions of two (2) other spaces (see Figure 4). The recreational vehicle spaces shall not be occupied during the months of April, May, October, and November.~~
- b. Roadway as indicated on the Plot Plan (see Figure 4).
- c. Existing vegetation shall be retained in the corridor to provide concealment cover for mule deer and other wildlife species.
- d. No other uses shall be permitted.

Policy 9: Equestrian use and OHV use, including bicycles, shall be limited to roadways and trails within the developed area of the project.

Policy 10: Minor changes to the permitted uses may be allowed subject to Director Review Permit and the following conditions: the type of use shall not change, the intensity of the use shall not increase, the overall square footage shall not increase, the overall impervious surface shall not increase, and additional site disturbance shall not occur. Changes that are not minor in nature, or that do not comply with the previous conditions, shall require approval of the Planning Commission or a Specific Plan amendment.

Policy 11: The resort shall operate seasonally, from one week prior to the opening of the fishing season in Mono County (i.e. the second to last weekend in April) to the first week in November (i.e. one week after fishing season closes). Should warm weather occur

before or after the anticipated season, the operator may petition the Director to increase the length of the operating season. Through the Director Review Permit process, the Director may lengthen the season consistent with the Specific Plan and if a qualified deer biologist determines that the additional time will not impact migrating deer.

### INFRASTRUCTURE (UTILITIES AND SERVICES)

**Objective:** Provide for the development of adequate facilities and services to serve the proposed development in a timely manner.

- Policy 1: Each phase of the project shall be connected to the water supply system.
- Policy 2: Prior to development of each phase, the project proponent shall comply with all requirements of the Mono County Health Department concerning water quality and small water systems.
- Policy 3: Each phase of the project shall be connected to the sanitary sewer system.
- Policy 4: The project shall comply with all requirements of the Mono County Health Department concerning leach fields and septic systems prior to the start of construction.
- Policy 5: All utility lines on the project site (electricity, telephone), except the overhead transmission line from the SCE transmission line to the south bluff, shall be installed underground in compliance with the Mono County Code (MCZDC 19.03.070).
- Policy 6: The transmission line connecting the site to existing power sources may be installed overhead as described in the project description, subject to approval of a Zone Variance for overhead powerlines located in a scenic highway corridor. The overhead powerline shall be sited in the least intrusive manner possible (see DG Policy 11). Prior to initiation of Phase I, the project proponent shall obtain right-of-way clearance from the BLM for the overhead powerline installation, if necessary.
- Policy 7: Prior to initiation of Phase I, the project proponent shall provide the County with a copy of the service contract between the project proponent and the Bridgeport Fire Protection District (BPFDP).
- Policy 8: The project shall provide dumpsters and trash cans designed to resist wildlife access as specified in the project description. All solid waste disposal facilities shall be maintained regularly.
- Policy 9: Service hookups in the RV spaces shall be constructed in accordance with State of California requirements for RV parks.
- Policy 10: Prior to the initiation of any grading activity, the applicant shall obtain an approved grading permit. The grading permit shall be consistent with the Conceptual Grading Plan (see Figures 10 and 11), which estimates 1,000 cubic yards of cut and 600 cubic yards of fill.
- a. The drainage component of the Grading Plan shall also address the following:

1. The extension of an existing 24-inch culvert under the parking area in the general store area, the extension of an existing 18-inch culvert under the access road and parking area for the camping cabins, and the installation of an 18-inch CMP drain under the tent camping parking area.
  2. The installation of two retention basins to collect runoff from the large parking area adjacent to the General Store complex and the camping cabins.
  3. The pretreatment of runoff from parking areas using oil/water separators to remove oil and gas residue, in conformance with Lahontan Water Quality Control Board requirements.
  4. Drainage improvements shall conform with applicable provisions of the Mono County Grading Ordinance, including the provisions for adequate surety, and the Lahontan Water Quality Control Board.
  5. Diversion channels or armored berms around the proposed improvements in the areas affected by the tributary drainages and shall provide methods of preventing clogging in any proposed pipe storm drains.
- b. The Grading Plan shall also contain a Streambank Protection component as outlined in Natural Resource Conservation Policy 16.

Policy 11: The Lahontan Regional Water Quality Control Board (LRWQCB) shall review the grading and drainage plan for consistency with the Basin Plan and with NPDES permit requirements.

#### **DESIGN GUIDELINES**

**Objective:** Minimize the project's potential visual impact to travelers on Highways 270 and 395.

Policy 1: Buildings shall be designed and constructed to have a rustic *modern* appearance, *and to blend into the surrounding environment to the greatest extent possible, and to appear in harmony with Bodie State Historic Park, i.e.:*

- a. Buildings shall be constructed primarily of wood and other materials compatible with the ~~character of Bodie State Historic Park~~ *surrounding environment*.
- b. Wood shall be stained, painted or otherwise finished to ~~have a weathered aged appearance~~ *be unobtrusive and blend into the surrounding environment*.
- c. Roofing shall be firesafe wood shingles, fiberglass shingles or metal in colors compatible with the area (e.g. sage, rust or similar colors).
- d. Bright colors or reflective materials shall not be used for any component of any structure.

SCALE: 1" = 50'  
REDUCED SCALE

SHEET 2  
MATCH LINE SHEET 1

SHEET 2  
MATCH LINE SHEET 1

LEGEND:

- PROPOSED RETENTION BASIN  
SIZED PER CROWDS AND APPLICABLE MONO CO. CODE REQUIREMENTS  
FOR RUNOFF RESULTING FROM ROADS AND PARKING AREAS
- FINAL GRADING SLOPES ARE APPROXIMATE

PRELIMINARY GRADING PLAN  
(WEST END)

Typical Road Cross Section  
NO SCALE

20' MIN. TYPICAL

4:1 OR FLATTER

2% TYP.

2% TYP.

4:1 OR FLATTER

GRAVEL ROAD SURFACE

EXISTING 18" C.M.P.

PROPOSED 18" C.M.P.

CREEK (CHANNEL)

CLEARWATER

CREEK

BODIE ROAD

HIGHWAY 395 RIGHT OF WAY

|                 |                                         |           |         |
|-----------------|-----------------------------------------|-----------|---------|
| A               | ADDED SLOPES AND NOTES IN PARKING AREAS | WGM       | 3/11/97 |
| REV.            | DESCRIPTION                             | BY        | DATE    |
| FOR APPROVAL:   | TO SHOP:                                | TO FIELD: |         |
| R & R APPROVAL: | AS BUILT:                               |           |         |

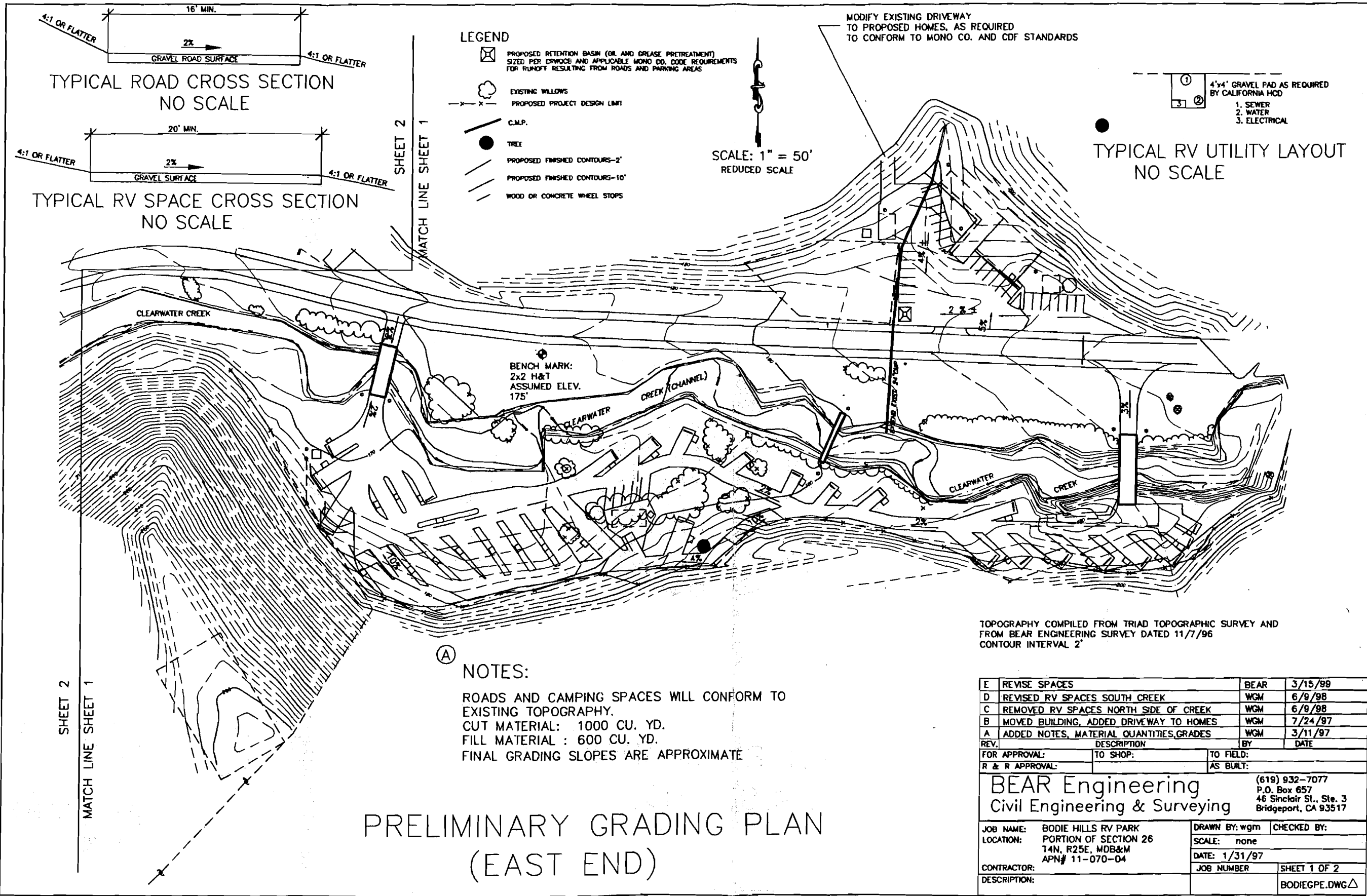
**BEAR Engineering**  
Civil Engineering & Surveying

(619) 932-7077  
P.O. Box 657  
46 Sinclair St., Ste. 3  
Bridgeport, CA 93517

|              |                                                             |            |         |              |  |
|--------------|-------------------------------------------------------------|------------|---------|--------------|--|
| JOB NAME:    | BODIE HILLS RV PARK                                         | DRAWN BY:  | wgm     | CHECKED BY:  |  |
| LOCATION:    | PORTION OF SECTION 26<br>T4N, R25E, MDB&M<br>APN# 11-070-04 | SCALE:     | none    |              |  |
| CONTRACTOR:  |                                                             | DATE:      | 1/31/97 |              |  |
| DESCRIPTION: |                                                             | JOB NUMBER |         | SHEET 2 OF 2 |  |

BODIEGPW.DWG

Figure 11 -- Conceptual Grading Plan, East End



~~e. Final building and landscaping plans may be reviewed with State Parks. State Parks recommendations shall be taken into consideration in the design of structures and landscaping."~~

*e. Signs and lampposts shall also be designed to reflect an unobtrusive modern rustic design.*

Policy 2: Solid wood fencing shall be used to screen the propane tanks and dumpsters. A wildlife friendly two-rail fence shall be installed along Clearwater Creek to delineate the ~~40 30~~ foot setback from the top of the streambank. Fencing shall be stained, painted or otherwise finished to ~~have a weathered aged appearance~~ *blend into the surrounding environment.*

Policy 3: Bridges shall be constructed with concrete abutments located outside of the Clearwater Creek channel and with steel or wood components finished in a manner that is unobtrusive and blends in with the surrounding area.

Policy 4: Trash cans placed throughout the camping and RV areas shall be painted with a non-reflective color that blends in with the surrounding environment.

Policy 5: Exterior lighting shall be designed and maintained to minimize the effects of lighting on the surrounding environment. Exterior lighting shall be limited to that necessary for health and safety purposes. High intensity outdoor lighting shall be avoided or shielded.

Policy 6: The nineteen lampposts proposed for installation on the project shall be painted a non-reflective color that blends in with the surrounding environment. Lamps shall feature low intensity lighting.

Policy 7: The water storage tank shall be shielded from view to the greatest extent possible, using the following measures:

- a. It shall be placed to take maximum advantage of the topography and existing vegetation to help shield it from view from Highway 270.
- b. It shall be painted a non-reflective color that blends in with the surrounding environment.
- c. Additional junipers may be planted to help shield it, if determined to be necessary.

Policy 8: Cut and fill shall be limited to the areas shown on the Conceptual Grading Plan to reduce visual impacts and to minimize potential impacts to air and water quality from erosion and sedimentation. Areas not committed to development, where cut and fill is required, shall be revegetated as soon as possible with native, indigenous species in accordance with the Preliminary Landscaping Plan (see Figures 12 and 13).

Policy 9: All revegetation on the project site shall comply with the revegetation performance standards found in the Natural Resource Conservation section of the Specific Plan and the Preliminary Landscaping Plan.

Policy 10: Non-native landscaping for the project shall be limited to the following areas:

- a. General Store/Motel Area

The triangular area in front of the motel units shall be landscaped with lawn.

b. Camping Cabin Area--Proposed Picnic and Recreation Area

This area shall be landscaped with lawn, picnic tables, a fire pit, and playground equipment.

Policy 11: The overhead powerline shall be sited in a manner that minimizes its potential impacts to natural and visual resources. Where possible, the placement of the overhead powerline shall avoid ridge lines and shall use natural features to screen the line from view. The overhead powerline shall be constructed in a manner that minimizes site disturbance and that avoids identified populations of special status plant species.

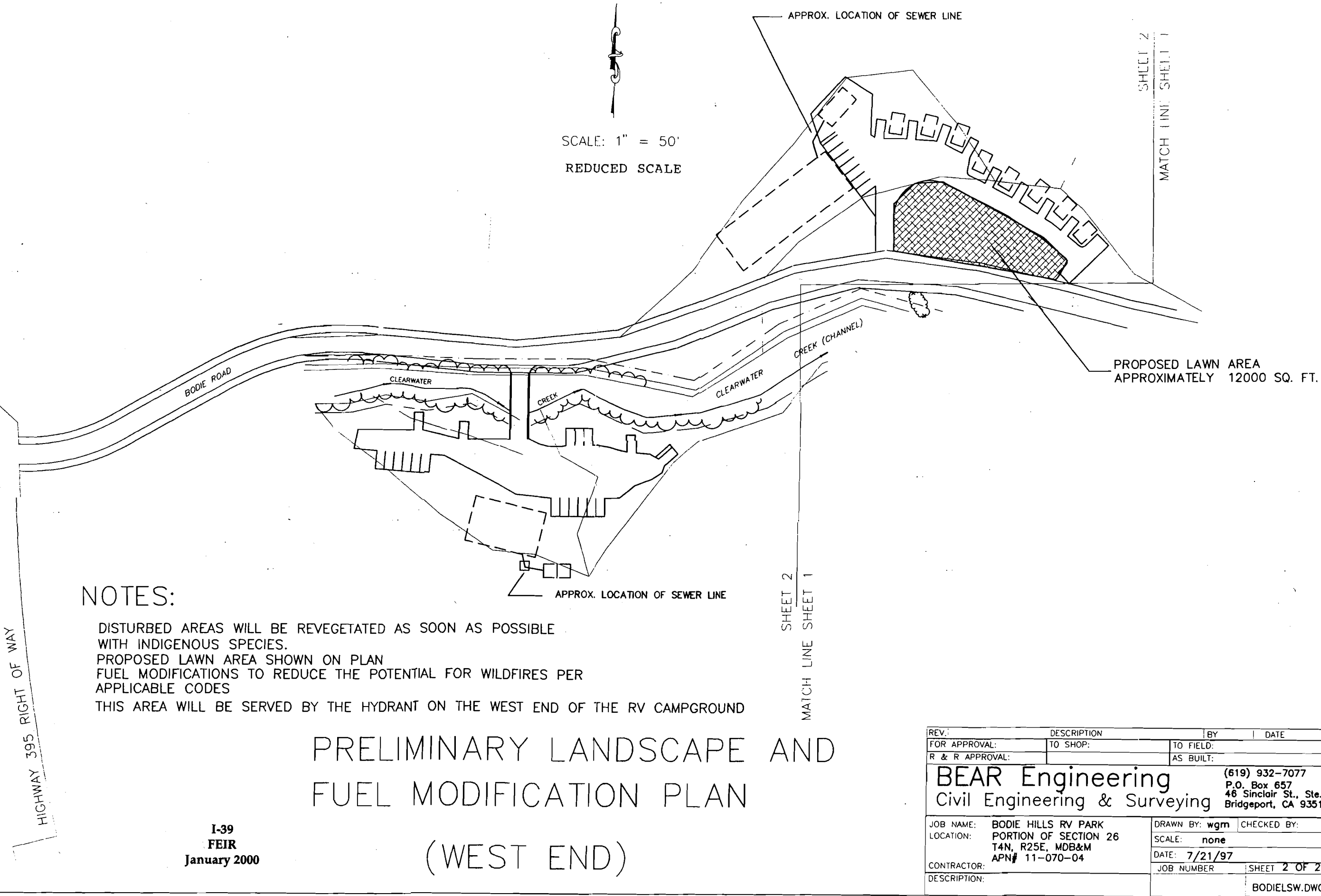
Policy 12: The following shall serve at the Master Sign Plan for the project. Signs shall be unobtrusive in color, material and design. Signs shall comply with the following performance standards:

- a. The project shall include up to two illuminated monument signs along Hwy. 270; three non-illuminated monument signs, two along Hwy. 395, and one along Hwy. 270; two free-standing directional signs at the RV Park entrance and exit; signs ~~discouraging~~ **prohibiting** use of the Clearwater Creek corridor ~~other than on established paths~~ (see LU Policy 6); and wall signs on individual buildings as indicated on building elevations.
- b. Signs shall be the sizes and styles indicated on the Sign and Lighting Plan (see Figure 6) and the building elevations (see Figure 7 and 8).
- c. The applicant shall request that Caltrans and State Parks coordinate their existing signs along Highway 270 with the proposed signage of the project.
- d. The applicant may request that Caltrans place international symbols for services on existing signs along U.S. 395.

Policy 13: The following shall serve as the Fire Protection Plan required by the Mono County General Plan:

- a. Roadways shall be constructed with a minimum width of two nine-foot travel lanes providing for two-way travel. One-way roads shall provide a minimum of one ten-foot travel lane and shall connect to a two-lane roadway at both ends. A turnout shall be placed and constructed at the approximate mid-point of each one-way road.
- b. Roadway surfaces shall provide unobstructed access to conventional drive vehicles and be capable of supporting a forty thousand pound load.
- c. If necessary for controlling winter access, gates shall be at least two feet wider than the width of the traffic lanes serving the gate. All gates providing access from a road to a driveway shall be located at least 30 feet from the roadway and shall open to allow a vehicle to stop without obstructing traffic on that road. Where a one-way road with single traffic lane provides access to a gated entrance, a forty-foot turning radius shall be used.

Figure 12 -- Preliminary Landscaping and Fuel Modification Plan, West End



NOTES:

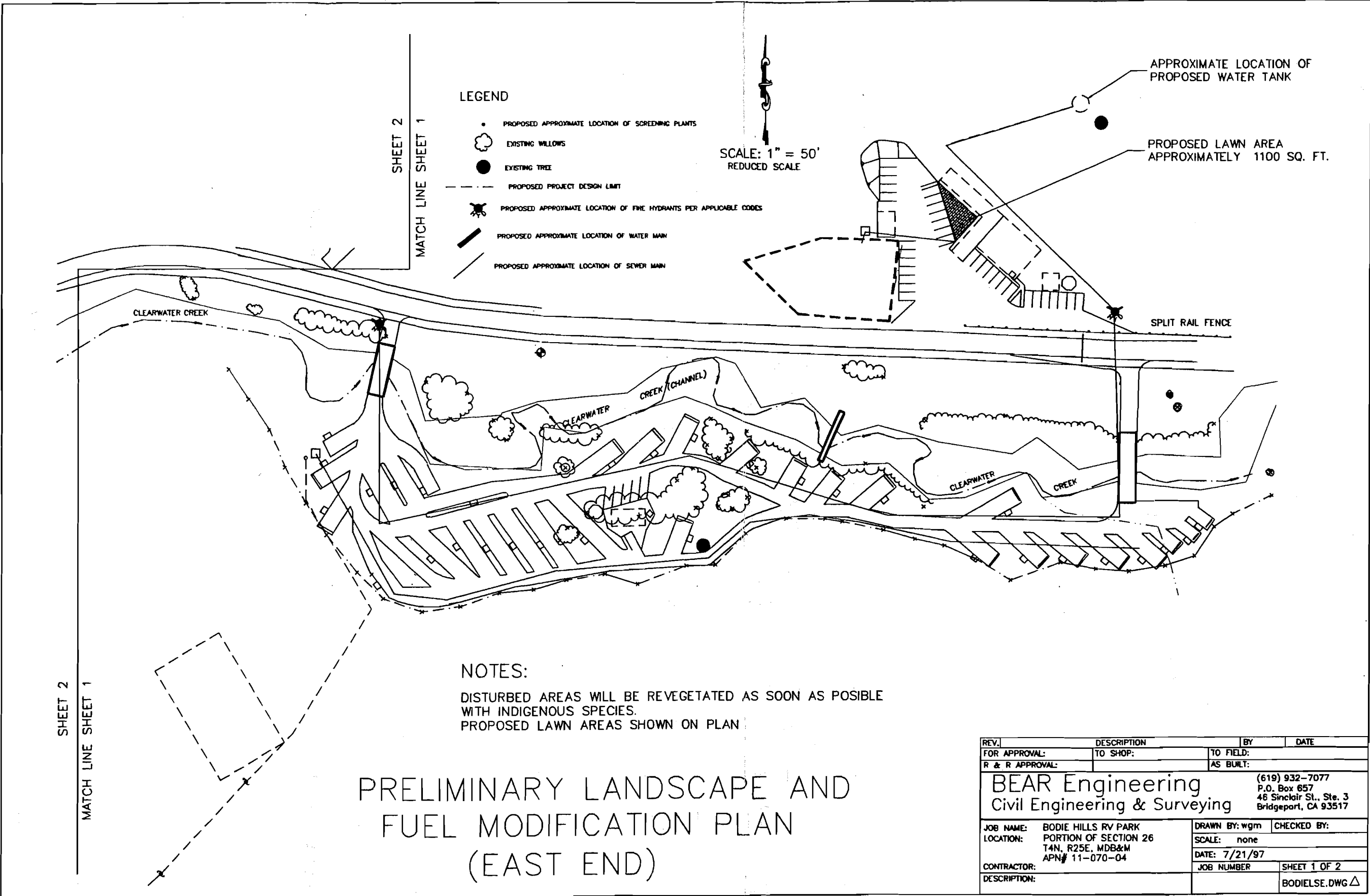
- DISTURBED AREAS WILL BE REVEGETATED AS SOON AS POSSIBLE WITH INDIGENOUS SPECIES.
- PROPOSED LAWN AREA SHOWN ON PLAN
- FUEL MODIFICATIONS TO REDUCE THE POTENTIAL FOR WILDFIRES PER APPLICABLE CODES
- THIS AREA WILL BE SERVED BY THE HYDRANT ON THE WEST END OF THE RV CAMPGROUND

PRELIMINARY LANDSCAPE AND  
FUEL MODIFICATION PLAN  
(WEST END)

I-39  
FEIR  
January 2000

| REV.                          | DESCRIPTION           | BY                      | DATE         |
|-------------------------------|-----------------------|-------------------------|--------------|
| FOR APPROVAL:                 | TO SHOP:              | TO FIELD:               |              |
| R & R APPROVAL:               |                       | AS BUILT:               |              |
| BEAR Engineering              |                       | (619) 932-7077          |              |
| Civil Engineering & Surveying |                       | P.O. Box 657            |              |
|                               |                       | 46 Sinclair St., Ste. 3 |              |
|                               |                       | Bridgeport, CA 93517    |              |
| JOB NAME:                     | BODIE HILLS RV PARK   | DRAWN BY:               | wgm          |
| LOCATION:                     | PORTION OF SECTION 26 | CHECKED BY:             |              |
|                               | T4N, R25E, MDB&M      | SCALE:                  | none         |
|                               | APN# 11-070-04        | DATE:                   | 7/21/97      |
| CONTRACTOR:                   |                       | JOB NUMBER              |              |
| DESCRIPTION:                  |                       | SHEET                   | 2 OF 2       |
|                               |                       |                         | BODIELSW.DWG |

Figure 13 -- Preliminary Landscaping and Fuel Modification Plan, East End



- d. No roadway shall have a horizontal inside radius of curvature of less than 50 feet and an additional surface width of four feet shall be added to curves of fifty to one hundred feet in radius.
- e. Signs shall reflect the capability of each bridge, e.g. weight limits, vertical clearance and one-way restrictions.
- f. One-way bridges shall provide unobstructed visibility from one end to the other and turnouts at both ends.
- g. Addressing, signing and building numbering shall have at least three inch high letters, three-eighths inch stroke, be reflectorized, and contrast with the background color of the sign.
- h. All buildings shall have a permanently posted address, which shall be placed at each driveway entrance and visible from both directions of travel along the road. The addresses shall be posted at the beginning of each phase and shall be maintained thereafter, and the address shall be visible and legible from the road on which the address is located.
- i. Emergency water for wildfire protection shall be available and accessible prior to the completion of construction for each phase of the project. The system shall be constructed to State standards for fire protection water delivery systems. Fire hydrants for the system shall be located eighteen inches above grade, eight feet from flammable vegetation, no closer than four feet nor farther than twelve feet from a roadway, and located where fire apparatus using it will not block the roadway. Each hydrant shall be clearly marked with a reflectorized blue marker, with a minimum dimension of three inches, mounted on a fire retardant post or as specified in the State Fire Marshal's Guidelines for Fire Hydrant Markings Along State Highways. Figures 12 and 13 show the hydrants and water mains.
- j. The applicant's fuel modification plan would reduce the volume and density of flammable vegetation around all structures, RV spaces, and tent camping spaces, RVs and RV spaces, by clearing 20' wide x 40' long RV spaces, clearing 16' wide roadways, clearing areas for parking, and clearing 30' x 30' areas for tent camping. Native materials will be replaced by decorative landscaping in front of the motel and the camping cabins.
- k. All flammable material resulting from future development shall be disposed of prior to the issuance of a certificate of occupancy for each phase of the project.
- l. Class A roof coverings, as defined in the Uniform Building Code, shall be used for the project's permanent structures.
- m. Requests for exemptions from the above standards may be processed through CDF, when proposed mitigation practices provide the same overall practical effect as the above requirements.
- n. An approved service contract with the Bridgeport Fire Protection District to provide contractual fire protection services.

### **NATURAL RESOURCE CONSERVATION**

**Objective:** Conserve natural resources on-site to the greatest extent possible.

Policy 1: Potential impacts to the stream channel and associated riparian vegetation shall be avoided.

Policy 2: No development is permitted within the area designated Open Space/Natural Habitat Protection (OS/NHP) along Clearwater Creek. The designation establishes a riparian buffer zone area along the entire length of Clearwater Creek through the project site, including the entire channel area from ~~ten (10)~~ *thirty (30)* feet north of the top of the north bank to ~~ten (10)~~ *thirty (30)* feet south of the top of the south bank (see Land Use Policy 5).

The purpose of the district is to avoid any potential impacts to the Clearwater Creek riparian corridor. Final development plans shall comply with the following performance standards:

- a. Bridge supports shall avoid the stream channel and floodplain but may be located in the ~~10 30~~ foot setback.
- b. All RV spaces, *and all improvements associated with those spaces, adjacent to the stream shall be placed outside of the area designated OS/NHP, i.e. outside of the 10 foot setback. All improvements associated with the RV spaces, e.g. utility hookups and concrete pads proposed for each RV space, shall be located a minimum of 30 feet from the top of the bank of Clearwater Creek.*
- c. Fencing installed between RV spaces and the area designated OS/NHP shall be wildlife friendly two-rail fence and shall be placed along the line delineating the ~~10 30~~ foot setback from the top of the streambank.
- d. The ~~10 30~~ foot setback from the top of the streambank shall be maintained in perpetuity. In the future, if the streambank erodes and an existing use is no longer at least ~~10 30~~ feet from the top of the bank, that use shall be discontinued or moved to the minimum ~~10 30~~ foot setback (see Land Use Policy 5 regarding monitoring of this setback).

Policy 3: Temporary impacts to the stream channel and associated riparian vegetation resulting from construction of the proposed bridges shall be minimized by implementing the following performance standards:

- a. Prior to construction of any bridge, the applicant shall obtain a Stream Alteration Permit from the California Department of Fish and Game.
- b. Prior to construction of the bridges, two temporary stream crossings, not to exceed 15 feet in width, shall be identified, one in the RV Park area and one in the tent camping area. During construction of the bridges, all vehicles shall be required to cross only at those specified locations. These crossings shall be located to minimize the impacts on vegetation and bank stability.
- c. During construction, heavy equipment shall be parked and stored on the south side of the Creek to limit the number of times vehicles drive across the channel in order to minimize the severity of impacts to plant roots and soils.

- d. Once the bridges are operational, the temporary stream crossings shall be restored to natural conditions as soon as possible. Streambanks shall be stabilized and native plant species shall be replanted where necessary. Revegetated areas shall be replanted as necessary to assure success.

Policy 4: Bridges shall be designed to convey the 100 year flow, in conformance with the following performance standards:

- a. The soffit of the bridge shall be above the 100 year water surface elevation to avoid creating a backwater condition that would raise the upstream water surface, as well as avoiding washout of the bridge.
- b. Slope protection shall be placed around the bridge abutments and approaches (as described in Denio, Hydrology and Flood Plain Study for Bodie Hills RV Park) to protect against washout.
- c. Bridges shall be designed and constructed to convey the following 100 year flows:

|                           |         |
|---------------------------|---------|
| Bridge--Tent Camping Area | 849 cfs |
| Bridge--RV Park Exit)     | 747 cfs |
| Pedestrian Bridge         | 747 cfs |
| Bridge--RV Park Entrance  | 700 cfs |
| (cfs = cubic feet/second) |         |

Policy 5: All disturbed areas on the project site (i.e. cut and fill slopes, utility trenches, etc.) except areas dedicated to development (i.e. building footprints, RV and tent camping spaces, roadways and parking areas) shall be revegetated.

Policy 6: All revegetation on the project site shall comply with the following revegetation performance standards:

- a. Use of native, indigenous species grown from seeds or seedlings obtained from local native stock shall be required.
- b. Revegetation shall occur as soon as possible following construction to prevent erosion.
- c. *No* soil amendments shall be used within native revegetation areas, *except for natural mulch as specified in section 'e'*.
- d. Revegetated areas shall be irrigated as necessary to establish the plants.
- e. Weed-free mulches or mulch made by "chipping" native vegetation shall be used where necessary.
- f. Stockpiled topsoil shall be covered to prevent the spread of weeds. Stockpiled material which contains a viable native seed bank shall be used within one year and evenly distributed over the areas proposed for revegetation.
- g. Prior to topsoil application, open areas shall be ripped to decrease soil compaction and increase water infiltration which will greatly enhance seedling establishment.

- h. Revegetated areas shall be replanted as necessary to assure success. Prior to starting construction, a qualified botanist, under contract to the County, funded by the project proponent, shall assess vegetative cover and species mix in the areas identified for revegetation and shall identify appropriate planting techniques and seed mixes. *Implementation and monitoring of the revegetation plans shall be conducted by the project proponent and overseen by the County.* Revegetation in disturbed areas shall occur so that the species mix is the same as the existing species mix and the vegetative cover density is similar to the surrounding undisturbed area and sufficient to stabilize the surface against the effects of long-term erosion. *After five years, the species mix (diversity of species) in revegetated areas shall be 50-60 percent of that in surrounding undisturbed areas; after five years the vegetative cover density shall be 60-70 percent of that in surrounding undisturbed areas.*
- i. Revegetated areas shall be monitored on an annual basis for a period of five years from initial planting to ensure the success of the project. The cost of monitoring shall not exceed \$500 per year. Revegetation to the level specified for each phase shall be complete or remedial action shall be initiated, prior to starting construction for the subsequent phases.

Policy 7: Disturbance of known populations of rare and endangered plants shall be avoided. The project shall comply with the following performance standards:

- a. To avoid potential impacts to rare and endangered plants, there shall be no cut and fill outside of areas specified for cut and fill on the Conceptual Grading Plans.
- b. The proposed overhead powerline shall avoid the identified population of Bodie Hills cusickiella located southeast of the junction of Hwys. 395 and 270 (see Paulus, 1998) by locating powerline poles outside of the area where the cusickiella has been identified. Prior to construction, existing flags showing the location of the Bodie Hills cusickiella population shall be located and a buffer zone flagged off.
- c. The proposed leach field for the RV Park shall be located to the north of the identified population of Bodie Hills cusickiella located near the southern property boundary (see Bagley, 1997). This identified population of Bodie Hills cusickiella occurred a few hundred feet south of the proposed leach field, at a slightly higher elevation, near the top of a low ridgeline (see Bagley, 1997).
- d. *The project shall be designed and constructed to avoid identified populations of Masonic rack cress.*

Policy 8: The project shall comply with the following performance standards to avoid and/or minimize potential impacts to wildlife habitat and wildlife use of the site and surrounding areas:

- a. Domestic animals shall be restrained at all times, either through the use of leashes or other means, *in compliance with Mono County Code requirements (MCC Chapter 9, Animals).*
- b. Dogs shall be prohibited in the project area during construction activities.

- c. Construction shall be scheduled to minimize disturbance to wildlife during peak use periods. Construction shall be limited to daylight hours in accordance with the County's Noise Ordinance (Mono County Code 10.16), in order to minimize impacts to nocturnal wildlife. Construction shall not occur during the spring and fall mule deer migration periods (i.e. March 15 to May 15 and October 15 to December 15).
- d. Dust generated during construction shall be controlled through watering or other standard acceptable measures.
- e. Construction operations shall be in accordance with standard erosion/sedimentation prevention practices to minimize sediment transport downstream.
- f. Noise levels during construction shall be kept to a minimum by equipping all on-site equipment with noise attenuation equipment and by compliance with all requirements of the County's Noise Ordinance (Mono County Code 10.16).
- g. Except as necessary for fuel modification purposes, native vegetation shall be retained, to the maximum extent possible, around the RV spaces, cabins and other structures to provide visual screening barriers for wildlife, to reduce visual impacts of the project, and to minimize the potential for erosion impacts.
- h. Where possible, valuable wildlife features such as existing trees, downed logs, snags, rock piles, and water sources, shall be protected.

Policy 9: To minimize potential noise impacts, use of RV generators shall be prohibited after 10 p.m. *and before 8 a.m. and shall be discouraged at other times. Generator use shall be allowed in the case of emergencies.*

Policy 10: The project shall avoid impacts to identified archaeological sites by avoiding development in those areas. Where development causes direct (sites BHRV 4, 8, 9, 10) or indirect impacts (site CA-MNO-265), limited testing and surface collection *by a qualified archaeologist* is required prior to development. If limited testing confirms that BHRV 4, 8, 9, and 10 and CA-MNO-265 are ~~important~~ *significant* archaeological resources, then the project proponent shall fund and the County will hire a qualified archaeologist, to prepare an excavation plan and mitigation plan in conformance with CEQA. Mitigation fees paid by the applicant shall not exceed one half of one percent of the projected cost of the entire project.

Policy 11: The project proponent shall stop work and notify appropriate agencies and officials if archaeological evidence is encountered during earthwork activities. No disturbance of an archaeological site shall be permitted until such time as the project proponent funds a qualified consultant, under contract with the County and an appropriate report is filed with the County Planning Department which identifies acceptable site mitigation measures to avoid significant archaeological impacts. Any further construction activities must comply with the archaeological resource mitigation plan.

Policy 12: Potential impacts to ground and surface waters resulting from pumping of groundwater shall be avoided.

- a. A well permit shall be obtained from the Mono County Health Department prior to on-site water development. The proposed well shall be constructed to conform to California Well Standards Bulletin 74-90 and water well permit

requirements established in conformance with applicable provisions of the Mono County Code. The project engineer shall develop an appropriate plan for the disposal of well drilling wastes in conformance with the requirements of the Lahontan Regional Water Quality Control Board Basin Plan which prohibits the discharge of wastes to surface waters. That plan shall be approved by the Mono County Health Department prior to any well drilling activities.

- b. Prior to the development of Phase I, the Health Department shall make a finding that an adequate groundwater supply of sufficient quality and quantity is available for Phase I and issue a well permit. If determined to be necessary by the Health Department, the applicant's engineer shall submit a technical report at that time containing detailed plans and specifications, and water quality and water quantity information including production rates, static water levels and water level draw down rates.
- c. Prior to the development of Phases II and III, the Health Department shall make a finding that an adequate groundwater supply of sufficient quality and quantity is available for future phases. This finding shall be based upon the contents of a technical report containing information similar to that required for Phase I.
- d. As soon as the well is drilled for Phase I, the project proponent shall implement a monitoring program to ensure that groundwater pumping is not adversely impacting existing groundwater levels, streamflows, or water quality. Construction of Phase II or III shall not occur unless the monitoring program can prove that Phase I is not impacting existing groundwater levels, stream flows or water quality. The monitoring program shall be designed and overseen by a qualified expert in the field funded by the project proponent.

Policy 13: The project shall comply with all applicable water quality standards and water quality control measures of the Lahontan Regional Water Quality Control Plan.

Policy 14: The project shall obtain a National Pollution Discharge Elimination System permit (NPDES) if more than five acres of site disturbance will take place.

Policy 15: Disturbance of natural habitat shall be kept to a minimum. Only areas indicated for development on the final plot plan and the preliminary grading plan shall be disturbed. The amount of cut and fill on the project shall not exceed 1,000 cubic yards and 600 cubic yards, respectively, as specified on the Preliminary Grading Plan (Figures 10 and 11). Bonding to ensure site remediation shall be required, prior to starting construction on each project phase.

Policy 16: The project shall comply with the following performance standard to avoid and/or minimize channel and streambank erosion impacts:

- a. The Grading Plan required in Infrastructure Policy 10 shall include a Streambank Protection component which provides a specific design for implementing Streambank Mitigation Alternative 2 from the Hydrology and Flood Plain Study (Denio, 1999) and the site specific recommendations contained in the NRCS letter of May 19, 1999, ~~including the recommendation to develop a vegetation management plan as outlined in the letter.~~ *The focus of the Streambank Protection component shall be on stream restoration and enhancement measures which will also avoid or minimize channel and streambank erosion. Engineered methods of streambank stabilization shall be used only where required (e.g. bridge abutments)*

**Policy 17:** *"As specified in Land use Policy 4 (d), livestock grazing onsite shall require approval of a Grazing Management and Sage Grouse Habitat Enhancement Plan (Plan). The Plan shall describe actions and measures to improve sage grouse foraging and cover habitat onsite and shall identify and focus on enhancement opportunities which would provide the maximum benefit to known lek sites in the project vicinity. The plan shall include, but not be limited to, an active grazing management plan which would reduce non-native and noxious weed species and promote native grass and shrub (sage brush) growth with a goal of restoring over-grazed sage-scrub habitats to maximum habitat suitability. The plan shall also recommend revegetation actions which would accelerate recovery of the sage-scrub habitat. The plan shall include clear, measurable performance standards and remedial actions which will be undertaken if performance standards are not collectively met. The project proponent shall ensure implementation of the Plan by providing an implementation timeline and budget and evidence of financial capability for implementation."*

### TRAFFIC AND CIRCULATION

**Objective:** Provide safe and efficient access to all components of the project.

- Policy 1:** All access routes within the project shall comply with Mono County Fire Safe Standards and the project's Fire Protection Plan (see Design Guidelines Policy 13) .
- Policy 2:** All access routes and parking areas in the project, except for handicapped parking areas, shall be gravel surfaced. Paving of parking areas may be permitted through the Director Review permit process, if adequate drainage facilities and landscaping are provided to minimize potential erosion and sedimentation impacts.
- Policy 3:** Handicapped parking spaces and access ways shall be concrete surfaced.
- Policy 4:** Parking spaces shall be provided in conformance with the approved site plan contained in this Plan.
- Policy 5:** Access to the various components of the project shall be blocked during the off-season to ensure public safety.
- Policy 6:** Tapers shall be constructed into and out of all driveways. The tapers shall be, at a minimum, 100 feet by 10 feet and shall be of asphaltic concrete or graded shoulders, provided sufficient lateral clearance exists to allow their construction.
- Policy 7:** The driveway for the tent camping area shall be relocated approximately 50 feet east of its current proposed location to increase sight distance and safety at that intersection. If it not possible to relocate it 50 feet, it shall be relocated as far east as possible within that 50 foot range.
- Policy 8:** All weather shoulder material or paving may be required along Hwy. 270.
- Policy 9:** The Caltrans Encroachment Permit shall require that fences be constructed at least one foot outside the Caltrans right-of-way.
- Policy 10:** Throughout the project area, the State shall receive a 40-foot right-of-way (highway easement) as well as sign easements and drainage easements to cover features that extend outside the 40-foot limits.

From the easterly project boundary to the east boundary of APN 11-070-09, the State shall be granted a right-of-way (highway easement) that generally covers an area 10 to 15 feet outside of the tops of cuts or toes of fills.

All of the right-of-way shall be conveyed to the State at no cost. The State shall do the surveying and office work necessary to calculate the right-of-way and prepare the deed.

## **PHASING**

**Objective:** Develop the project in a manner that addresses market demand and infrastructure availability, and minimizes environmental impacts.

**Policy 1:** The Bodie Hills RV Park Specific Plan shall be developed in the following phases:

Phase I: Construct buildings and support structures for the General Store area, including a General store (1,900 sf maximum), 10 unit motel (2,600 sf maximum), 300 sf RV Park office, and 600 sf museum. Construct access roads and parking areas. Construct the access road and two single-family homes located on the north bluff.

Phase II: Construct a RV Park, with up to thirty-two (32) spaces, and an 800 sf restroom/laundromat/shower building. Construct access roads and bridges.

Phase III: Construct up to 8 camping cabins with an 800 sf restroom/laundromat/shower building and up to 14 tent camping sites with a 300 sf restroom building.

The project proponent intends to complete each phase of construction in the same year in which it begins, if possible. Changes to this Phasing Plan may be approved by the Planning Commission.

**Policy 2:** Infrastructure (utilities, roadways, and parking) and associated landscaping and revegetation shall be developed concurrently with each project phase.

**Policy 3:** Prior to the development of each project phase, the Bodie Hills RV Park Specific Plan shall be reviewed to ensure that the development is consistent with the Specific Plan. If necessary, the Plan shall be amended.

**Policy 4:** The Plan shall be reviewed annually. Unless otherwise specified, the Planning Commission shall have the authority to make minor modifications consistent with the Specific Plan and shall resolve any ambiguity concerning the content and application of this Specific Plan. Major modifications shall require a Specific Plan amendment.

**Policy 5:** The following permits and/or clearances shall be completed prior to the development of Phase I of the project:

Mono County Public Works Department Grading Permit.

Mono County Health Department Well Permit.

Mono County Health Department Septic System Approval.

Mono County Use Permit for single family residences (employee housing) (if necessary).

Caltrans Encroachment Permit.  
BLM Right-of-way dedication for powerline (if necessary).  
DFG Stream Alteration Permit (if necessary).  
Army Corps of Engineers 404 Permit (if necessary).  
Lahontan 401 Permit (Water Quality Certification if wetlands or stream crossing are involved) (if necessary).  
Lahontan NPDES permit (if necessary).  
California Department of Housing and Community Development RV Park permit (if necessary).

Policy 6: Prior to the Initiation of Phase I of the project, the project proponent shall post a bond to:

- a. Ensure that revegetation occurs successfully to the levels described in the Specific Plan and the Preliminary Landscape Plan. Bonding for the revegetation shall be released for each individual phase of the project after the five year period has elapsed and the area has been successfully revegetated (see NRC Policy 6).

Policy 7: In order to ensure that project mitigation measures are fully complied with and that project site reclamation (revegetation) is carried out the following are *required*:

- a. *The proponent shall provide the County Planning Director with written reports detailing the project's compliance with the approved Mitigation Monitoring Program, at not less than one (1) year intervals commencing with the issuance of any Mono County permit. This shall be in addition to ongoing project review by appropriate County staff.*
- b. *The posting of security (e.g. "bonding") to ensure project site reclamation (revegetation) shall be required prior to the commencement of Phase I of the project, in the form of performance bonds or other means available by law and approved by the Mono County Counsel.*

## **IV. ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS**

### **TIERING**

The California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) provides for tiering of environmental documents. Section 21083.3 of the Public Resources Code provides for the use of a certified EIR for subsequent development when the proposed development is consistent with an adopted community plan. For such projects, subsequent environmental review need only address effects on the environment that are peculiar to the project, which were not addressed as significant impacts in the prior EIR or are susceptible to substantial reduction or avoidance by specific revisions in the project. The lead agency must make a finding that mitigation measures specified in the prior EIR relevant to potential significant effects from the proposed project have been adopted.

The intent of the tiering process is to focus environmental review on the environmental issues which are relevant to the approval being considered. Effects are not considered peculiar to the project if uniformly applied development standards have been adopted which will substantially mitigate environmental effects when applied to future projects.

The Bodie Hills RV Park Specific Plan is consistent with the Mono County General Plan; tiering off the Mono County General Plan EIR (SCH #91032012) is proposed.

### **PRIOR ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW**

The Mono County General Plan EIR (SCH #91032012) was certified in 1993 by the Mono County Board of Supervisors. The Plan establishes land use designations and building densities for all private property in the unincorporated areas of the county. The EIR analyzes the potential impacts of that planned development at the maximum buildout allowed by the Plan and includes mitigation measures to address those impacts. General Plan policies were designed as mitigation measures and are identified in the EIR as mitigation measures.

Copies of the Mono County General Plan and General Plan EIR are available for review at the Mono County Planning Offices in Bridgeport (Courthouse Annex I) and Mammoth Lakes (Minaret Village Mall, Suite P), and at the following community libraries: Coleville (Learning Center), Bridgeport (Courthouse Complex), Lee Vining (High School), June Lake (Community Building), Mammoth Lakes (Community Center), and Benton (Edna Beaman Elementary School).

### **PROJECT SCOPING**

A Notice of Preparation was circulated in January, 1997. Comments were received from the following entities and individuals:

- Bureau of Land Management, Bishop
- California Department of Fish and Game, Bishop
- California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection, San Bernardino
- California Department of Parks and Recreation, Sacramento
- California Department of Transportation, Bishop
- Lahontan Regional Water Quality Control Board, South Lake Tahoe
- Elizabeth Davidson
- Paul Greenland
- Stan Haye
- Emilie Strauss

Copies of the scoping comment letters are attached in Appendix A. Concerns raised in those letters have been addressed by the environmental analysis in this document.

In addition, a public scoping meeting was held in Bridgeport on February 6, 1997. Concerns raised at that meeting have been addressed by the environmental analysis in this document.

### INITIAL STUDY

The following environmental analysis serves as the required initial study to determine the scope of additional project-specific review, if any, required for the Bodie Hills RV Park Specific Plan. The Bodie Hills RV Park Specific Plan has been designed to avoid or minimize potential environmental impacts to a less than significant level with the exception of impacts related to visual resources and erosion hazards. Specific plan goals, policies and implementation measures serve as mitigation measures for the project. Where necessary, additional project-specific review is provided and mitigation measures are proposed for identified potential environmental impacts associated with the proposed project.

There is no substantial new information to show that previously identified effects will be more significant than previously described. The county, in adopting the General Plan, adopted all feasible mitigation measures. These mitigation measures are included in the General Plan as policies and implementation measures.

The following environmental issues discuss the topics listed below, where applicable:

1. Existing setting.
2. Potential impacts from the project described in the Bodie Hills RV Park Specific Plan.
3. Applicable General Plan Policies/Mitigation Measures (GP).
4. Assessment of whether the project will have effects on the environment that are peculiar to the project, which were not addressed as significant impacts in the prior General Plan EIR or are susceptible to substantial reduction or avoidance by specific revisions in the project.
5. Proposed mitigation measures, if applicable. Specific Plan (SP) policies (see Chapter III) serve as mitigation measures for the project and are identified as follows:

LU = Land Use Policies

I = Infrastructure Policies

DG = Design Guidelines Policies

NRC = Natural Resource Conservation Policies

TC = Traffic and Circulation Policies

P = Phasing Policies

### EARTH

#### *Site Geology*

There are several minor potentially active faults in the area, but not on the project site. The project site is also not in a fault-rupture hazard zone or in an area at high risk for ground failure.

#### *Soils*

Soil surveys indicate that the soils throughout the canyon bottom are mixed alluvium, primarily silty and sandy clay loams. Permeability of these soils is generally moderate to moderately slow. Runoff is slow and the erosion hazard is slight. Soils higher up on the slopes of the canyon are primarily stony and cobbly loams. Permeability of these soils is moderately slow; runoff is medium to rapid and the erosion hazard is moderate to severe. These soils are "moderately to well drained, and may be locally high in either alkali or organics" (Denio, p. 6).

Streambank soils are deep alluvial soils with a large percentage of fine materials (a silty clay loam) and are very susceptible to erosion by water. Parent material is volcanic in origin (NRCS,

5/99). Clearwater Creek is deeply gullied; its banks appear to be unstable, highly erodible and subject to collapse. After the heavy storms of the winter of 1996-97 the banks showed obvious points of erosion in the project site. The Hydrology Study notes that "in the area of the proposed development there has been significant bank erosion" (Denio, p. 7).

Streambank erosion and associated mitigation measures are discussed in detail in the "Exposure to Risk" section of this chapter.

### ***Potential Impacts and Mitigation***

**1. The project will disturb existing vegetation creating the potential to increase soil erosion and downstream sedimentation.**

The project has been designed to minimize cut and fill and surface disturbance resulting from the construction of new structures, the creation of RV and tent spaces and the installation of roads and utilities. SP policies limit cut and fill and surface disturbance resulting from future development (LU Policies 3, 4; I Policy 10; DG Policy 8; NRC Policy 15) and require revegetation of disturbed areas with native, indigenous species (NRC Policies 5, 6). The SP limits development to areas specifically designated for development in the adopted site plan by designating approximately 140 acres for Rural Resort/Resource Conservation Passive Recreation (RU/RCPR) and by minimizing development in the Clearwater Creek channel (LU Policies 3, 4, 5, 6).

**2. Without mitigation, the project will impact air and water quality during excavation/construction.**

The SP contains policies requiring compliance with the County's Grading Ordinance and with Lahontan Regional Water Quality Control Board standards for erosion control and NPDES permit requirements (I Policies 10, 11; NRC Policies 13, 14). SP policies also require compliance with performance standards which address dust control and erosion control practices (NRC Policy 8).

**3. The Clearwater Creek Channel banks are highly erodible. Potential impacts to streambanks and riparian vegetation could result from development occurring too close to the bank.**

SP policies do not permit development within an area delineated by a ~~ten~~ **thirty** foot setback from the top of the streambank and require restoration of areas temporarily disturbed for construction of the proposed bridges (LU Policies 5, 6; NRC Policies 2, 3, 5, 6). ~~Improvements for The RV sites (concrete pads, utility hookups)~~ will be a minimum of 30 feet from the top of the bank (LU Policy 2).

**4. The Clearwater Creek Channel banks are highly erodible. Potential impacts to persons and project components could result from high flows and associated bank erosion.**

Streambank mitigation measures are discussed in detail under "Exposure to Risk".

The project has been designed and uniformly applied development standards will be adopted into the Specific Plan to substantially mitigate potential environmental effects. No additional mitigation is required.

## **AIR QUALITY**

The Bodie Hills are characterized by good to very good air quality although long-term quantitative data for most air quality pollutants are lacking for the area. Air pollution is virtually non-existent except for dust suspended by vehicular traffic on dirt roads in the Bodie Hills, and emissions from the vehicles themselves. The project's anticipated traffic volumes will not add a significant amount of vehicle emissions or particulate matter.

The Great Basin Unified Air Pollution Control District monitors air quality in Mono County communities for compliance with federal and state air quality requirements. Except when temperature inversions are present, primarily in winter, most areas of Mono County comply with the standards. During inversions, emissions from wood burning devices may cause a temporary air quality disturbance.

The tent cabins, motel, store and museum will not have any wood burning devices. Fires in the RV park area, the tent camping area and the cabin camping area will be limited to grills and one campfire ring and will occur only during the summer months when inversions are generally not a problem.

### *Potential Impacts and Mitigation*

1. **By disturbing the existing vegetative cover, the project may introduce additional particulate matter into the air. Soil information for the site indicates that construction activities may expose material that is highly susceptible to erosion which may impact air quality.**

The SP contains policies requiring compliance with the County's Grading Ordinance and Lahontan Standards for erosion control (I Policies 10, 11; NRC Policy 13). SP policies limit cut and fill and surface disturbance resulting from future development (LU Policies 3, 4; I Policy 10; DG Policy 8; NRC Policy 15) and require revegetation of disturbed areas with native, indigenous species (NRC Policies 5, 6). SP policies also require compliance with performance standards which address dust control and erosion control practices (NRC Policy 8).

No significant impacts are anticipated from this project. No additional mitigation is required.

## **WATER**

### *Supply*

Water for the project will be supplied by an on-site well and distribution system including a 20,000 gallon water tank. Water will be supplied to the store/motel/office building, the museum, all the RV spaces, the restroom buildings, and to common faucets in the cabin camping and tent camping areas.

Not much information exists on the groundwater resources of the Bodie Hills since there has been little demand on the resource. Information collected from an investigation of geothermal resources in the area indicates that the Bodie Hills are composed of fractured volcanic material which allows surface precipitation to percolate down to great depths. Depending on the area, groundwater depths range from a few to several kilometers from the surface. Analysis of thermal and non-thermal springs indicates that thermal waters contain unsuitably high levels of dissolved solids while non-thermal springs appear to have good water quality.

### *Demand*

~~The project engineer prepared a water demand estimate for the project based on sewage disposal estimates in the Uniform Plumbing Code. Annual project demand is estimated to be 3.99 acre-feet (325,815 gallons). Annual demand for Phase I, Phase II and Phase III is estimated to be .64 acre-feet, 1.56 acre-feet and 1.80 acre-feet respectively. One acre-foot of water supplies a family of 5 for a year. Based upon the project engineer's estimates, the project will use about the same amount of water as four households of five people.~~

## Bodie Hills RV Park SP/EIR

| <b>Table 1 A-- REVISED Estimated Daily Water Demand</b> |                              |                  |                                  |
|---------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------|------------------|----------------------------------|
| <b>Land Use</b>                                         | <b>Generation Factor</b>     | <b>Generator</b> | <b>Total Demand (in gallons)</b> |
| <b>Phase I</b>                                          |                              |                  |                                  |
| Motel                                                   | 60 gallons/bed               | 10 beds          | 600                              |
| Store                                                   | .16 gallon/square foot (sf)  | 1,600 sf         | 256                              |
| Restrooms                                               | 400 gallons/toilet           | 2 toilets        | 800                              |
| 5/8" water hydrant                                      | 3 gallons/minute             | 120 minutes      | 360                              |
| Landscaping                                             | .33 gallons/square foot (sf) | 1,100            | 330                              |
| Residences                                              | 400/residence                | 2 residences     | <u>800</u>                       |
|                                                         | <b>Subtotal Phase I</b>      |                  | <b>3,146</b>                     |
| <b>Phase II</b>                                         |                              |                  |                                  |
| RV Park                                                 | 90 gallons/space             | 32 spaces        | 2,880                            |
| Laundromat                                              | 50 gallons/customer          | 32 customers     | 1,600                            |
| Restrooms                                               | 400 gallons/toilet           | 2 toilets        | 800                              |
| 5/8" water hydrant                                      | 3 gallons/minute             | 60 minutes       | 180                              |
| Showers                                                 | 10 gallons/customer          | 64 customers     | <u>640</u>                       |
|                                                         | <b>Subtotal Phase II</b>     |                  | <b>6,100</b>                     |
| <b>Phase III</b>                                        |                              |                  |                                  |
| Laundromat                                              | 50 gallons/customer          | 22 customers     | 1,100                            |
| Restrooms                                               | 400 gallons/toilet           | 4 toilets        | 1,600                            |
| 5/8" water hydrant                                      | 3 gallons/minute             | 120 minutes      | 360                              |
| Showers                                                 | 10 gallons/customer          | 44 customers     | 440                              |
| Landscaping                                             | .33 gal/square foot (sf)     | 4,000 sf         | <u>1,000</u>                     |
|                                                         | <b>Subtotal Phase III</b>    |                  | <b>4,500</b>                     |
| <b>Total All Phases</b>                                 |                              |                  | <b>13,746</b>                    |

| <b>Table 1 B- REVISED Estimated Water Usage (Based on figures from Table 1 A)</b> |                                                                                                                 |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Peak Daily Flow                                                                   | 16,500 gallons (13,746 x 120%)                                                                                  |
| Average Daily Flow-Peak Month                                                     | 11,000 gallons (13,746 x 80%)                                                                                   |
| Average Daily Flow-Season                                                         | 8,000 gallons (2 months at peak flows + 2 months at 50% of peak flows + 2 months at 25% of peak flows/180 days) |
| Total Annual Demand                                                               | 1,400,000 gallons (~180 days x 8,000 gallons/day)                                                               |
| Total Annual Demand, Phase I                                                      | 322,000 gallons (23% of total)                                                                                  |
| Total Annual Demand, Phase II                                                     | 630,000 gallons (45% of total)                                                                                  |
| Total Annual Demand Phase III                                                     | 448,000 gallons (32% of total)                                                                                  |

### *Demand*

*Table 1A--Estimated Daily Water Demand and Table 1B--Estimated Water Usage have been amended in the FEIR by the project engineer to correct the usage figures for the RV Park, to include the 2 employee residences, and to clarify the figures for all uses. The result of the revised water usage figures is an increase in the total estimated daily water demand from 12,430 gallons to 13,746 gallons, an increase in the estimated total annual demand from 1,300,000 gallons to 1,400,000 gallons, and an increase in the estimated peak daily flow from 15,000 gallons to 16,500 gallons.*

*The information in the revised estimates of water usage is based on information in Small Water Systems Serving the Public (Conference of State Sanitary Engineers) and engineering judgement. Water usage varies significantly and is dependent on a variety of factors. The water usage estimates below assume 100 % daily usage of the facilities by park users for laundry and shower facilities. Laundry customers are estimated at one customer per space; shower customers are estimated at two customers per space.*

*The figures in Table 1-A represent the estimated daily water demand for the facility when operating at full capacity. Peak daily flow is an estimated adjustment for days of high use (e.g. July 4) when the facility is at capacity and above average usage from highway traffic is anticipated. The percentages used to calculate Average Daily Flows for the Peak-Month and Season are based on interviews with business operators in Bridgeport. Percentages used for the annual demand of each phase are based on the relative water estimates for each phase as shown in Table 1-A.*

*The project engineer has also calculated probable peak water demand using the fixture demand method. Utilizing that method, the probable peak water demand for Phase I is 30 gallons per minute (gpm), for Phases I and II 58 gpm, and for Phases I, II, and III 60 gpm.*

### *Surface water*

Clearwater Creek, a perennial stream, flows throughout the entire project site, roughly parallel to Hwy. 270, in a four to ten foot deep channel that varies in width from 30 to 60 feet. The stream supports a small population of trout but has little significance as a fishery due to the small population and the proximity of other well-stocked fishing areas. The stream provides water for resident and migratory wildlife populations, such as mule deer. The stream has a fairly large amount of sediment, probably due to past disturbances of adjacent land, such as road building and grazing.

Clearwater Creek is fed by springs year-round; higher flows come from snowmelt and summer thunderstorms (Denio, p. 6). The Clearwater Creek drainage basin that flows to the project site is approximately 35 square miles in area. Terrain in the basin drainage is generally rolling with some steep areas in the drainage courses; average gradient of the basin drainage is approximately 5 percent (Denio, p. 6). Mean annual precipitation in the Clearwater drainage basin is estimated to be 20 inches per year (Denio, p. 6). Most of the precipitation falls as snow between November and April; summer thunderstorms, which may be of locally high intensity, typically occur between May and September (Denio, p. 7).

There are four smaller tributaries that flow into the project site: a) "Southwest Basin C" which flows into the westerly portion of the south side, b) "Basin B" which flows into the easterly portion of the south side, c) "Basin D" which flows into the easterly portion of the north side, and d) "Basin E" which flows into the westerly portion of the north side.

During the scoping process, concerns were expressed about the potential of the proposed project to a) increase sedimentation and pollution in the stream (primarily from oil and gas residue) as a result of increased runoff, b) increase channel erosion, and c) subject people and structures to

flood hazards. Channel erosion is discussed under "Earth"; flood hazards are discussed under "Exposure to Risk".

Table 2 shows the projected surface disturbance resulting from the proposed project. Specific Plan policies require the project to comply with all requirements of the Lahontan Regional Water Quality Control Plan and all applicable water quality standards and water quality control measures (NRC Policy 13). The project will require a NPDES permit if there is more than five acres of soil disturbance (NRC Policy 14).

The project has been designed so that drainage from the store and motel and the camping cabins will be retained on-site with retention basins. The retention basins will be sized according to the requirements of the Lahontan Regional Water Quality Control Board. Runoff will be pre-treated to remove oil and gas residue (I Policy 10). Specific Plan policies also require the drainage plan to consider diversion channels or armored berms around the proposed improvements in the areas affected by the tributary drainages and to provide methods of preventing clogging in any proposed pipe storm drains (I Policy 10). This mitigation measure was recommended by the Hydrology and Flood Plain Study.

| <b>Table 2 -- Projected Surface Disturbance</b>                                                       |                    |              |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------|--------------|
|                                                                                                       | <b>Square Feet</b> | <b>Acres</b> |
| <b>Phase I</b>                                                                                        |                    |              |
| Motel/Store/Office and Water tank                                                                     | 48,906             | 1.12         |
| Two Houses,Parking Areas and Access Road                                                              | 11,000             | .25          |
| <b>Phase II</b>                                                                                       |                    |              |
| RV Park                                                                                               | 124,822            | 2.87         |
| <b>Phase III</b>                                                                                      |                    |              |
| Tent Sites and Camping Cabins                                                                         | 96,274             | 2.21         |
| <b>TOTALS</b>                                                                                         | <b>281,002</b>     | <b>6.45</b>  |
| <b>Note:</b><br>The surface disturbance estimates exclude leachfield areas which will be revegetated. |                    |              |

#### ***Potential Impacts and Mitigation***

**1. The project has the potential to degrade water quality by increasing sedimentation into Clearwater Creek.**

The project has been designed to minimize cut and fill and surface disturbance resulting from the construction of new structures, the creation of RV and tent spaces and the installation of roads and utilities. SP policies limit cut and fill and surface disturbance resulting from future development (LU Policies 3, 4; I Policy 10; DG Policy 8; NRC Policy 15) and require revegetation of disturbed areas with native, indigenous species (NRC Policies 5, 6).

The SP contains policies requiring compliance with the County's Grading Ordinance and with Lahontan Regional Water Quality Control Board standards for erosion control and NPDES permit requirements (I Policies 10, 11; NRC Policies 13, 14). SP policies also require compliance with performance standards which address dust control and erosion control practices (NRC Policy 8).

The project has been designed with a ~~ten~~ *thirty* foot wide buffer around the steep banks of Clearwater Creek and all proposed development would be constructed outside of the established stream corridor (LU Policies 5, 6). Outside of the developable areas shown on the plot plan, the balance of property will be designated for Rural Resort/Resource Conservation Passive Recreation (LU Policies 3, 4) which limits the intensity of development to two single-family homes and to passive recreational uses.

SP policies also require the implementation of slope protection measures to avoid and/or minimize channel erosion and associated sedimentation (NRC Policy 16).

The project has been designed to retain drainage on-site. Where the project has the potential to increase drainage (i.e., motel/store and camping cabins areas), retention basins will be installed to conform to Lahontan Regional Water Quality Control Board requirements (I Policy 10). The project will be designed and maintained to comply with all water quality standards and water quality control measures in the Lahontan Regional Water Quality Control Plan (I Policy 11; NRC Policies 13, 14).

**2. The project has the potential to impact groundwater reserves and stream flows and to indirectly impact wildlife who depend on those water sources by increasing the use of subsurface water for the project.**

The Specific Plan requires a well permit from the Mono County Health Department prior to on-site water development (NRC Policy 12). The well permit application process requires the Health Department to make a finding that a groundwater supply of sufficient quality and quantity is available prior to issuing the well permit. The Health Department may also require the applicant's engineer to submit a technical report containing detailed plans and specifications, and water quality and water quantity information including production rates, static water levels and water level draw down rates.

As soon as the well is drilled for Phase I, NRC Policy 12 requires the implementation of a monitoring program to ensure that groundwater pumping is not adversely impacting existing groundwater levels, streamflows, or water quality. Construction of Phase II or III shall not occur unless the monitoring program can prove that Phase I is not impacting existing groundwater levels, stream flows or water quality. Prior to the development of Phases II and III, the Health Department shall make a finding that an adequate groundwater supply of sufficient quality and quantity is available for future phases. This finding shall be based upon the contents of a technical report containing information similar to Phase I.

*The Specific Plan also requires approval of the septic system and leachfields from the Mono County Health Department prior to development of on-site waste disposal systems and requires the project to comply with all County requirements concerning sanitary waste disposal (Infrastructure Policy 4).*

With the project design measures and mitigation measures described above, no significant impacts are anticipated. Uniformly applied development standards will be adopted into the Specific Plan which will substantially mitigate potential environmental effects. No additional mitigation is required.

### PLANT LIFE

Two botanical surveys prepared for the proposed project provide site specific information concerning on-site habitat types and plant species (see Appendix B). The Botanical Survey (Bagley, 1997) covers the majority of the area proposed for development, i.e.: the area proposed for development on the canyon floor and adjacent slopes (tent camping site, cabin camping site,

RV Park site, store, and water tank); the leach field on the south slope; the underground utility line from the leach field to the RV Park; and the proposed access road and single family residence site on the north slope. The Supplemental Botanical Survey (Paulus, 1998) resurveyed some area covered by the Botanical Survey and in addition surveys areas added to the project after the initial Botanical Survey was completed, i.e.: an additional area surrounding the water tank; an additional area surrounding the leach field to the west of the store; an additional area on the cut slope at the eastern end of the RV Park; and the proposed overhead powerline alternative which runs across the subject property.

Both assessments included literature reviews for plant species of concern that may potentially occur on-site, and field surveys conducted in June, 1996 (Bagley, 1997), and June/July, 1998 (Paulus, 1998), to record plant species found on-site. The literature searches were prepared utilizing information on file with the Bishop office of the Bureau of Land Management, data from the California Natural Diversity Data Base (CNDDDB), the BLM field guide to Special Status plants, consultation with BLM Botanist Anne Halford, and local and regional floras. The database results (CNDDDB) were updated in 1998 in the Supplemental Botanical Survey. Plant species were considered sensitive if they have current State or Federal status as rare, threatened, or endangered, are listed in the CNDDDB list of special plants, or are listed by the California Native Plant Society in their inventory of sensitive California plants.

Seven plant species of concern were determined to have some potential to occur in the study area (see Table 3). Field surveys were planned and conducted to focus on those seven species. Field surveys occurred in early June, 1996, and mid-late June/mid July, 1998, during periods when herbaceous plants were flowering. In 1998, "spring wildflowers were present in great abundance ... due to a favorably wet climate" (Paulus, 1998). Paulus notes that "when a favorable spring pattern occurs, potential diversity is realized to a greater degree than in drought years, while sufficient evidence in flowering and fruiting structures is more likely to be made available" (Paulus, 1998).

### ***Vegetation Community Types***

Three natural vegetation community types occur on the project site: Big Sagebrush Scrub, Great Basin Pinyon-Juniper Woodland, and Modoc-Great Basin Riparian Scrub (Bagley, 1997).

#### ***Big Sagebrush Scrub***

Big Sagebrush Scrub is widely distributed in the Eastern Sierra from northern Owens Valley north to the Modoc Plateau, and eastward throughout the Great Basin (Bagley, 1997; Paulus, 1998). It is not considered a sensitive vegetation type. It is an open, shrub dominated vegetation type, typically dominated by big sagebrush (*Artemisia tridentata*) with scattered grasses and herbs, and often with other associated herbs.

Vegetation on-site is dominated by big sagebrush scrub, which covers the entire area except the creek channel, small parts of the single family residence area, and the upper slope around the water storage tank area. On the canyon flats, the dominant plant in this habitat type is big sagebrush (*Artemisia tridentata*) with rubber rabbitbrush (*Chrysothamnus nauseosus*) and scattered ashy wildrye (*Leymus cinereus*). Other common associated species include Douglas sedge (*Carex douglasii*), creeping wildrye (*Leymus triticoides*), wheatgrass (*Agropyron* sp.), mat muhly (*Muhlenbergia richardsonis*), and diffuse gayophytum (*Gayophytum diffusum*). Scattered narrow-leaf willow (*Salix exigua*) and golden currant (*Ribes aureum*) occur in many areas near the creek in a transitional zone with the riparian scrub in the creek channel. Many of the willows on the flat were dead or had many dead branches, probably indicating water stress that may be due to the deep down cutting of the channel (Bagley, 1997).

**TABLE 3 SENSITIVE PLANT SPECIES POTENTIALLY OCCURRING ONSITE**

| Scientific/Common Name<br>Life Form                                                               | Rank or Status <sup>1</sup> |     |                |      | Habitat                                                            | Flowering<br>Period |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------|-----|----------------|------|--------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------|
|                                                                                                   | FWS                         | DFG | NDDB           | CNPS |                                                                    |                     |
| <i>Arabis bodiensis</i><br>Bodie Hills rock cress<br>perennial herb                               | SC                          | --- | S1.3           | 1B   | sagebrush scrub,<br>pinyon juniper woodland                        | June-<br>August     |
| <i>Arabis cobrensis</i><br>Masonic rock cress<br>perennial herb                                   | ---                         | --- | S1...<br>S2... | 2    | sagebrush scrub,<br>pinyon juniper woodland,<br>sandy soils        | June-July           |
| <i>Arabis microphylla</i><br>var. <i>microphylla</i><br>small leaved rock cress<br>perennial herb | ---                         | --- | S3.3           | 4    | rocky outcrops, pinyon<br>juniper woodland                         | June-July           |
| <i>Cusickiella quadricostata</i><br>Bodie Hills cusickiella<br>perennial herb                     | SC                          | --- | S2.2           | 1B   | sagebrush scrub, pinyon<br>juniper woodland, ridges,<br>clay soils | May-July            |
| <i>Eriogonum beatleyae</i><br>Beatley's buckwheat<br>perennial herb                               | ---                         | --- | ---            | 2    | sagebrush scrub                                                    | May-<br>August      |
| <i>Phacelia monoensis</i><br>Mono County phacelia<br>annual herb                                  | SC                          | --- | S2.1           | 1B   | sagebrush scrub, pinyon<br>juniper woodland, red<br>clay soils     | June-July           |
| <i>Streptanthus oliganthus</i><br>Masonic Mountain jewelflower<br>perennial herb                  | SC                          | --- | S2.2           | 1B   | pinyon juniper woodland                                            | June-July           |

Sources: Bagley, 1997; Paulus, 1998.

Notes: 1. Rank or status by agency:

FWS = US Fish and Wildlife Service. SC = Species of Concern.

DFG = California Department of Fish and Game listings under the Native Plant Protection Act and the California Endangered Species Act (none currently listed).

NDDB = California Natural Diversity Database rankings by the CDFG.

S1 is < 6 occurrences or < 1000 inds or < 1000 ac; S2 is 6-20 occ or 1000-3000 inds or 2000-10000 ac;

S3 is 21-100 occ or 3000-10000 inds or 10000-50000 ac; ranking uncertain is shown by "..."

"threat numbers" follow decimal: .1 = very threatened, .2 = threatened, .3 = no threat currently known.

CNPS = California Native Plant Society listings.

1B = rare and endangered in California and elsewhere.

2 = rare, threatened, or endangered in California, but more common elsewhere.

4 = plants of limited distribution, a watch list.

Big sagebrush scrub in the rocky soils along the base of the canyon walls, in the leach field survey area, and on the slopes (including the road to the single family residential area and the pipeline corridors for the leach field and the water storage tank) has more shrub diversity and fewer grasses and herbs than the big sagebrush scrub on the flats. Common associates with big sagebrush in these areas include bitterbrush (*Purshia tridentata*) and curl leaf rabbitbrush (*Chrysothamnus viscidiflorus*), with occasional green ephedra (*Ephedra viridis*), plateau gooseberry (*Ribes velutinum*), snowberry (*Symphoricarpos rotundifolius*), mountain pennyroyal (*Monardella glauca*), prickly phlox (*Leptodactylon pungens*), sulfur buckwheat (*Eriogonum umbellatum*), desert peach (*Prunus andersonii*), ricegrass (*Achnatherum hymenoides*), big squirreltail (*Elymus elymoides*), and a few scattered single-needle pinyon (*Pinus monophylla*). Scrub cover in the big sagebrush community ranges between 10 percent and 48 percent, depending on historical disturbance (Pacific Consultants, 1993).

On the single family residence site, in thin, rocky soils, big sagebrush scrub is dominated by big sagebrush and bitterbrush with big squirreltail, cheat grass (*Bromus tectorum*), and occasional ashy wildrye, curl leaf rabbitbrush, green ephedra, and broom sagebrush (*Artemisia nova*).

Vegetation throughout the areas surveyed for the Supplemental Botanical Survey was found to consist of one vegetation community, Big Sagebrush Scrub. The density of living perennial cover, expressed as a percentage of the soil surface covered, ranged from < 5 % at the westernmost ridge top in the powerline area to about 60 % at the foot of the cut slope area (Paulus, 1998). The median cover value for the surveyed areas (for the Supplemental Survey) was 30 % by Big Sagebrush Scrub (Paulus, 1998).

Big Sagebrush Scrub and occasional wild iris (*Iris missouriensis*) dominated all ephemeral drainages in the survey areas for the Supplemental Survey. Searches of the small drainages at the western edge of the water tank area, at the cut slope area at the eastern edge of the RV Park, and at about the midpoint of the powerline corridor, found evidence of only seasonal flows. No populations of riparian forest or riparian scrub species were found in these drainages (Paulus, 1998).

The project will result in the loss of fewer than 22 acres of big sagebrush scrub. This would affect only a very small portion of the thousands of acres of this vegetation type **big sagebrush scrub** that occur in the project vicinity. Project impacts to big sagebrush scrub would be considered less than significant (Bagley, 1997).

### **Great Basin Pinyon-Juniper Woodland**

Great Basin Pinyon-Juniper Woodland is found on desert mountains east of the Sierra Nevada from Alpine County south to Kern County and east through the Basin ranges of Nevada. It is a common and widespread plant community and is not considered a sensitive vegetation type (Bagley, 1997; Paulus, 1998). It is typically an open woodland dominated by single-needle pinyon (*Pinus monophylla*) and Utah juniper (*Juniperus osteosperma*), with an understory dominated by big sagebrush (Bagley, 1997).

On the project site, Great Basin pinyon-juniper woodland occurs on the eastern and northern edges of the residence area, on a rocky ridge near the top of the access road to the residence area, and on the upper slope around the water tank area. These areas are all at the margin of pinyon-juniper woodland where it makes the transition to big sagebrush scrub. Single-needle pinyon (*Pinus monophylla*) dominates this open woodland with occasional Utah junipers (*Juniperus osteosperma*) and an understory of big sagebrush scrub dominated by big sagebrush and bitterbrush. To the west, over the residence area, there are only a few scattered pinyons and two junipers. Great Basin pinyon-juniper woodland occurs upslope of the areas identified above, on generally steeper, rockier slopes.

Great Basin pinyon-juniper woodland covers no more than 3 or 4 acres in the survey area and only a small portion of that is likely to be impacted by the proposed project. Project impacts to Great Basin pinyon-juniper woodland would be considered less than significant (Bagley, 1997).

#### ***Modoc-Great Basin Riparian Scrub***

Modoc-Great Basin Riparian scrub is found along perennial or intermittent streams in the Modoc Plateau and Great Basin deserts. It typically forms open to dense thickets dominated by shrubby willows (*Salix* species), often with wild rose (*Rosa woodsii*), big sagebrush (*Artemisia tridentata*), rubber rabbitbrush (*Chrysothamnus nauseosus*), and herbs such as sedges (*Carex* species), rushes (*Juncus* species), and grasses (Bagley, 1997).

Modoc-Great Basin riparian scrub occurs throughout the Clearwater Creek channel and on the streambanks. Thickets dominated by narrow-leaf and yellow willows (*Salix exigua* and *S. lutea*) are interspersed with more open areas along the creek. Common associated species include golden currant (*Ribes aureum*), wild rose (*Rosa woodsii*), hoary sage (*Artemisia cana*), tarragon (*Artemisia dracunculoides*), sedges (*Carex* species), wire-rush (*Juncus balticus*), and creeping wildrye (*Leymus triticoides*). Other species found in this community include mint (*Mentha arvensis* ssp. *haplocalyx*), willow herb (*Epilobium* sp.), water buttercup (*Ranunculus aquatilis*), stinging nettle (*Urtica dioica* ssp. *holosericea*), spike-rush (*Eleocharis* sp.), small-fruited bulrush (*Scirpus microcarpus*), three-stamened rush (*Juncus saximontanus*), and false Salomon's-seal (*Smilacina stellata*).

#### ***Wetlands/Riparian Vegetation***

Modoc-Great Basin riparian scrub, which occurs in the Clearwater Creek corridor and along the banks in the project area, is dominated by wetland plant species and appears to qualify as wetland vegetation under the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and California Department of Fish and Game criteria (Bagley, 1996). Wetlands are considered sensitive vegetation. The California Fish and Game commission has adopted the Fish and Wildlife wetland definition for Department of Fish and Game use in conjunction with the Commission's Wetlands Resources Policy which requires Fish and Game to object to development proposals that will result in net loss of either wetland habitat values or acreage.

Wetlands protected under the EPA and Corps of Engineers Section 404 permit program are defined more narrowly than the U.S. Fish and Wildlife definition. For the 404 permit program, in addition to the criteria for hydrophytic vegetation, two other criteria must be met independently for an area to qualify as jurisdictional wetlands; these criteria are hydric soils and wetland hydrology. Analysis of these parameters was beyond the scope of the Botanical Survey, "... but it appears that the channel would meet these criteria" (Bagley, 1997).

#### ***Flora***

A species list of all plants encountered within the survey areas was compiled and is included in the survey reports (see Appendix B). A total of 127 taxa, occurring in 31 plant families, were included in the Botanical Survey (Bagley, 1997). A total of 91 species from 27 plant families were found during the surveys for the Supplemental Survey (Paulus, 1998). The Supplemental Survey (Paulus, 1998) added eleven additional species to the project area species list developed by Bagley. Most of the added species were restricted to two ridgetop clay lense habitats in the area of the overhead powerline corridor.

#### ***Special Status Species***

Two plant species of concern, Bodie Hills cusickiella (*Cusickiella quadricostata*) and Masonic rock cress (*Arabis cobrensis*) were found to occur in the study area. No other plant species of concern were found to occur within the project survey area. By avoiding the locations where the Bodie Hills Cusickiella and the Masonic rock cress were found to occur, the project will not affect rare,

threatened, or endangered plant species, or other species of concern in the project survey area (Bagley, 1997).

### ***Bodie Hills Cusickiella***

Bodie Hills cusickiella is a BLM Special Status plant and a CNPS List 1B species (rare and endangered in California and elsewhere). One population of Bodie Hills cusickiella occurred within the project survey area at the south end of the proposed RV Park leach field survey area, at a slightly higher level and a few hundred feet south of the proposed leach field, at a location which appeared to be near the southern boundary of the property (Bagley, 1997). The plants occurred in a fairly open area with clayey soil, near the top of a low ridgeline, but slightly on the west side. Vegetation in the area was big sagebrush scrub with big sagebrush (*Artemisia tridentata*), bitterbrush (*Purshia tridentata*), curl leaf rabbitbrush (*Chrysothamnus viscidiflorus*), and big squirreltail (*Elymus elymoides*) the most common species. Approximately 50 to 100 plants were observed, but the full extent of the population further to the south was not determined. This population can easily be avoided by following the proposed plan to locate the leach field to the north and to access the leach field site via the proposed pipeline corridor (Bagley, 1997).

A large population of Bodie Hills cusickiella was also encountered during survey work in the powerline area (Paulus, 1998). Bodie Hills cusickiella, numbering in the hundreds of individuals, occurred on red clay soil bands exposed along the eastern side (near the top) of the first ridge to the east of Hwy. 39, south of the junction with Hwy. 270. This population stretched from approximately 250 feet to the north of the proposed powerline corridor to approximately 200 feet to the south of the corridor. The location and extent of this population was easily distinguishable from the surrounding typical Big Sagebrush Scrub. The maximum width of the population was 55 feet, at a point about 100 feet to the north of the proposed powerline corridor. The proposed powerline would appear to pass over this population, in a direction that is perpendicular to the overall shape of the population, for a distance of about 15 feet (Paulus, 1998). This population could be avoided by locating powerline poles outside of the area where the Bodie Hills cusickiella has been identified.

### ***Masonic Rock Cress***

Masonic rock cress is a CNPS List 2 species (rare and endangered in California, but more common elsewhere). During field surveys in June, 1996, Bagley identified one small population of Masonic rock cress located at the base of the north-facing canyon wall, on the south edge of the survey area approximately 15 feet west of the proposed RV space number 9. Two plants were growing close together on the rocky slope several feet up from the canyon bottom. Vegetation in the area was big sagebrush scrub with big sagebrush, bitterbrush, curl leaf rabbitbrush, and occasional green ephedra (*Ephedra viridis*), plateau gooseberry (*Ribes velutinum*), prickly phlox (*Leptodactylon pungens*), and sulfur buckwheat (*Eriogonum umbellatum*). The base of the slopes were looked at but no additional upslope portions were surveyed to determine the possible extent of the population; no other Masonic rock cress was observed on the slopes at that time.

Bagley notes that the identification of this rock cress is somewhat uncertain because of the immature condition of the fruit at the time of the survey. Based on the identification keys and the characteristics of the specimen collected (leaves, flowers, seeds in one row, and many stems from the base of the plant), he notes that it appears to be *Arabis cobrensis* or *Arabis bodiensis*. Both are species of concern (see Table 3). They are closely related and separated based on the position of the mature fruits, mature pedicels, and mature seed characteristics. The project area specimen was compared to a specimen of *A. bodiensis* at the BLM Bishop office, and based on the leaf lobes and the indications of the immature fruit it was determined to most probably be *A. cobrensis* (Bagley, 1997).

During field surveys in June and July, 1998, the area where Bagley located the Masonic rock cress was resurveyed and additional upslope portions of the north-facing canyon wall were included in

the survey area. The Supplemental Survey (Paulus, 1998) notes that "No occurrences of state or federally listed plants were found in 1998 surveys" at the proposed site of the RV Park (he did find Bodie Hill cusickiella in the area of the overhead powerline, see above discussion). Paulus also notes that 1998 was a generally favorable year for the accuracy of sensitive species survey work due to the wet weather; "when a favorable spring pattern occurs, potential diversity is realized to a greater degree than in drought years, while sufficient evidence in flowering and fruiting structures is more likely to be made available".

~~Since~~ *Although* evidence of the Masonic rock cress, identified by Bagley as potentially occurring on the north-facing canyon wall above the southeastern RV spaces, was not found during more extensive surveys of that area in 1998, a year which favored the growth of herbaceous plants, ~~it may be assumed that that population no longer exists and is not of concern for the proposed development~~ *the project has been designed to avoid the identified location of the rock cress.*

### *Potential Impacts and Mitigation*

#### **1. The project will result in the removal of native vegetation.**

Specific Plan policies minimize site disturbance, including cut and fill, require revegetation of disturbed areas (other than roadways and parking areas), and require the use of native/indigenous species for revegetation (DG Policy 8; NRC Policies 5, 6, 15). In addition, the removal of native vegetation (i.e. big sagebrush scrub and pinyon-juniper woodland) is not a significant impact because the habitat types on-site are abundant on a local and regional scale.

#### **2. The project has the potential to impact stream and riparian vegetation including potential wetlands.**

The project has been designed to avoid potential impacts to the riparian habitat along Clearwater Creek by restricting land uses in the stream corridor and establishing a ~~ten~~ *thirty* foot setback from the top of the streambank (LU Policies 5,6; NRC Policy 2). Short-term impacts of driving construction equipment across the creek will be minimized by requiring a Fish and Game Stream Alteration Permit, restricting crossings to a designated spot, minimizing the number of stream crossings, and restoring the stream banks as soon as the bridges are operational (NRC Policy 3).

#### **3. The project could impact rare and endangered species.**

The project has been designed to avoid potential impacts to rare and endangered plant species, specifically Bodie Hills cusickiella *and Masonic rock cress*, by avoiding development in and adjacent to areas with identified populations of ~~that those~~ species. The SP calls for flagging of identified populations and the establishment of a buffer zone from construction activities (NRC Policy 7).

No significant impacts are anticipated from this project. The project has been designed to avoid sensitive plant habitats and uniformly applied development standards will be adopted into the Specific Plan to substantially mitigate potential environmental effects. No additional mitigation is required.

## **ANIMAL LIFE**

A wildlife assessment study prepared for the proposed project provides site specific information concerning the presence, relative abundance and habitats of mule deer and threatened, endangered or sensitive wildlife species on-site (see Appendix B). **The Wildlife Assessment and the Wildlife Assessment Addendum should be reviewed to ensure a complete understanding of wildlife habitat and wildlife use on-site.** The assessment included a literature review for sensitive wildlife species or special status species that could occur on-site, and a field survey

performed during the months of November and December, 1995, to record wildlife on-site, indicators of wildlife, and habitat types. A field survey was performed in October, 1996, to look for the presence of the band-thigh beetle (*Hygrotus fontinellis*) in Clearwater Creek.

The wildlife assessment study recommends mitigation measures to avoid or minimize impacts to deer from the Mono Lake deer herd, in conformance with the California Department of Fish and Game's Mono Lake Deer Herd Management Plan.

### ***Special Status Species***

The literature review identified seventeen special-status wildlife species with the potential to occur in the project area, including mule deer, sage grouse, Sierra Nevada mountain beaver, Sierra Nevada red fox, California wolverine, pygmy rabbit, golden eagle, prairie falcon, cooper's hawk, northern harrier, bank swallow, willow flycatcher, loggerhead shrike, mountain quail, and band-thigh diving beetle. During the field surveys, no sign of any of these species other than mule deer was observed. In addition, it was determined that the project site does not provide suitable habitat for most of these species. It does provide marginally suitable habitat for Sierra Nevada red fox, although the level of human disturbance in the area probably precludes their presence.

No other federal or state-listed rare, threatened or endangered birds or mammals were found in the project area during the field surveys. The project area provides suitable transition and summer range for migratory mule deer. The project area provides breeding, nesting and foraging habitat for a variety of birds and mammals including the pinyon jay, mountain quail, California ground squirrel, coyote, and mountain lion.

### ***Mule Deer***

Mule deer in the area are from the Mono Lake herd, a group which winters in Hawthorne, Nevada. In early April, the herd migrates to its summer range located primarily along the east slope of the Sierra Nevada, from Lundy Canyon north to Sonora Pass. The migration corridor used by the Mono Lake herd encompasses the entire width of the Bodie Hills, from the north shore of Mono Lake to the East Walker River drainage. Past studies of the herd indicate that the project area and vicinity provide important transition range for a portion of the herd, primarily during the spring and fall migrations. These studies have indicated that 24 percent of the herd moves through the project vicinity.

Over the last ten years, the Mono Lake herd has declined in population due to poor forage conditions on seasonal ranges resulting from drought induced changes in habitat quality. Intensive livestock grazing, plant succession, predation, road kills and residential development on portions of the summer range and in the migration corridor may also have adversely affected the population.

The project area and surrounding vicinity contain the four habitat components essential to deer and provide high quality mule deer habitat. The project area supports a number of plant communities that provide cover and forage species; e.g. optimal fawning and fawn rearing habitat occurs adjacent to Clearwater Creek.

No mule deer were observed on-site during the field surveys in November and December, 1995. Sign of mule deer (tracks, droppings, beds) was observed throughout much of the project area and surrounding vicinity. During the first three surveys in November, most of the tracks were oriented in a north-south direction on either side of Clearwater Creek, indicating that they were made by summer resident deer moving between watering areas on Clearwater Creek and bedding sites in adjacent upland areas. During a field survey conducted in December, following the first snow of the winter, tracks were observed crossing the project area in a northerly direction along seven well-defined trails that crossed the entire width of Clearwater Canyon. These trails

were made by Mono Lake deer migrating from summer ranges west of the project site in response to the snow. Six of the trails were within an approximately 560 foot wide corridor located in the central portion of the project area. Vegetative and topographic features within this corridor facilitate deer movement.

Specific Plan policies have been designed to avoid or minimize potential impacts to wildlife by implementing the mitigation measures recommended by the project's wildlife consultant. Implementation of the suggested mitigation measures will minimize potential impacts to wildlife to a less than significant level.

### *Potential Impacts and Mitigation*

**1. The project will result in the loss of wildlife habitat.**

SP policies minimize site disturbance, require revegetation of disturbed areas, and require the use of native/indigenous species for revegetation (LU Policies 4, 5, 6, 7, 8; DG Policy 8; NRC Policies 5, 6, 15). The removal of native vegetation/habitat is not a significant impact because habitat types on-site are abundant on a local and regional scale.

**2. By increasing the human activity level in the area, the project may disrupt wildlife movement and reproduction.**

SP policies minimize potential impacts to wildlife by establishing restrictions on domestic animals, fencing, outdoor lighting, and construction activities (NRC Policies 8, 9, 15). The project has been designed to retain a deer movement corridor through the central portion of the project (LU Policy 7). The purpose of the corridor is to maintain connectivity among contiguous wildlands on either side of the project area. The Specific Plan limits development within this corridor to ensure that it remains useful to wildlife, particularly mule deer (LU Policy 8). The SP also designates a large proportion of the property outside of the areas proposed for development for permanent open space and natural habitat protection. These three land use designations limit the type and intensity of future development in order to retain natural site conditions (LU Policies 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8).

No significant impacts are anticipated from this project. The project has been designed to avoid sensitive wildlife habitats and uniformly applied development standards will be adopted into the Specific Plan to substantially mitigate potential environmental effects. No additional mitigation is required.

### **NOISE**

The ambient noise levels in the project area are anticipated to be consistent with levels associated with the natural environment and occasional vehicular traffic along Hwys. 270 and 395. Noise surveys conducted at Bodie State Historic Park during the summer of 1990 resulted in average noise levels ranging from 26.5 dBA to 40.6 dBA on a busy tourist day. When wind speeds increased to 19 mph, noise levels ranged from 50.7 dBA to 62.8 dBA; at wind speeds of 15 mph and greater, noise measurement begins to be dominated by the wind itself. Average noise levels during a weekend sampling period later in the summer ranged from 31 dBA to 51 dBA, while average noise levels for weekday sampling ranged from 24 dBA to 47 dBA. Evening noise levels measured in November ranged from 26 dBA to 35 dBA.

Existing noise levels at the proposed RV Park are anticipated to be lower than noise levels at Bodie State Park. Once the project is developed, it is anticipated to generate additional noise at levels similar to those recorded in Bodie State Park, as a result of increased numbers of people in the area and increased levels of vehicular traffic. Since the proposed use is anticipated to generate noise levels that are consistent with levels at Bodie State Park, the increase in noise levels are not considered to be significant.

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Construction related noise impacts may cause some temporary disturbance. Specific plan policies direct that noise levels during construction be kept to a minimum by equipping all on-site equipment with noise attenuation equipment and by compliance with all requirements of the County's Noise Ordinance (NRC Policy 8). All RV spaces will be equipped with electrical hookups, eliminating the need for RV users to run their generators and eliminating potential noise from that source. NRC Policy 9 prohibits the use of RV generators after 10 p.m. to minimize potential impacts to the existing noise environment.

With the proposed mitigation measures, no significant impacts are anticipated.

### **LIGHT AND GLARE**

The proposed project includes the installation of nineteen lighted lampposts in the RV Park area and exterior lighting on various buildings. The lampposts will be replicas of 1890's lampposts. Specific Plan policies limit additional outdoor lighting to that necessary for health and safety reasons and require that the lighting be designed and maintained to be indirect and non-intrusive and to minimize the effects of lighting on surrounding uses (DG Policy 5). Low intensity lighting is required for the lampposts (DG Policy 6). Specific Plan policies also require that windows and other building materials be non-reflective (DG Policy 1).

No significant impacts are anticipated. No mitigation is required.

### **LAND USE**

The project site is currently undeveloped but shows signs of past use (e.g. campfire ring, litter). Development of the entire project will result in the permanent transformation of approximately 13 acres of Sagebrush Scrub habitat to a rural resort environment. The loss of the Sagebrush Scrub habitat on-site is less than significant because this habitat type is abundant on a local and regional scale. A Wildlife Movement Corridor will be established to facilitate mule deer use of the site during spring and fall migration periods (LU Policies 7, 8) ; the resort will be closed during most of the spring and fall migration periods to avoid potential impacts to the deer herd (LU Policy 11).

The proposed rural resort land use is consistent with the Mono County General Plan Resource Management (RM) designation for the site. The intent of this designation is to recognize and maintain a wide variety of values in the land outside existing communities, including recreation, cultural resources, visual resources, and wildlife habitat. The Resource Management designation allows higher intensity uses, such as large-scale resort development, subject to the Specific Plan process, if the proposed development conforms to General Plan policies, i.e. if it can be demonstrated that the use cannot be accommodated in existing community areas, that the use is incompatible with existing community uses, or that the use directly relies on the availability of unique on-site resources (Mono County General Plan, Land Use Element, Objective A, Policy 3). The proposed project depends on its unique location on the primary access road to Bodie State Park.

The proposed rural resort land use is also consistent with the General Plan's Rural Resort (RU) designation proposed for the site. The Rural Resort land use designation limits site disturbance to a maximum of 10 percent. The proposed project will encompass approximately 13 acres of a 155 acre parcel, resulting in approximately 8 percent site disturbance. Future development on the remaining 142 acres, designated Rural Resort/Resource Conservation Passive Recreation (RU/RCPR) in the Specific Plan, will be limited to an additional 2 percent site disturbance (LU Policy 4 h).

The proposed project is also consistent with the Draft Cooperative Management Plan for the Bodie Hills Planning Area. That plan -- which was prepared by the Bodie Area Planning Advisory Committee, a group consisting of representatives from the Bureau of Land Management, Mono County Planning Staff, land owners and interested individuals -- would allow rural resort uses on private lands within the Bodie Hills Planning Area as long as the use did not detract from the Bodie Experience. The project site is designated Rural Resort (RU) in the Draft Cooperative Management Plan for the Bodie Hills Planning Area.

The proposed use is consistent with surrounding land uses which include undeveloped land and a variety of resort uses at Willow Springs including a RV Park, motel and restaurant. During the scoping process, concerns were expressed about the incompatibility of the project with additional surrounding land uses, including Bodie State Historic Park and Wilderness Study Areas on adjacent public lands managed by the BLM. Concerns were also expressed about the appropriateness of such a use on the access road to Bodie, particularly at what is referred to as "the Gateway to Bodie" (the junction of Hwys. 270 and 395).

The project has been designed to complement the "Bodie Experience" visually and to provide services, including a museum, which will enhance a visit to Bodie State Historic Park. The provision of additional visitor services conforms to the planning direction provided by various planning documents for the Bodie Hills and Bodie State Historic Park. A Wilderness Study Area adjoins the property to the north but will not be impacted by the development because Specific Plan policies require "... the areas immediately north and south of the proposed development ... (to) be maintained as natural buffer zones between the development and surrounding public lands" (LU Policy 4 g). The portion of the parcel not proposed for development (approximately 142 acres) is designated Rural Resort/Resource Conservation Passive Recreation (RU/RCPR); limitations on land use within that designation result in the remainder of the parcel being designated as permanent open space (LU Policy 4).

A major part of the "Bodie Experience" is the sense of isolation and remoteness visitors experience as they approach the park on its access roads. There is concern that any development on the access roads will impair that sense of isolation. The proposed project is located near the Bodie Road and Hwy. 395 junction, at the beginning of one of the access roads; after passing the project, a visitor will still have approximately 12 miles of undeveloped roadway to travel to Bodie State Historic Park. The project site is contained within canyon walls; it will not impact the sweeping and desolate views found higher on the access roads. The proposed project is also located along the paved portion of the Bodie Road, not along the gravel portion which contributes to the sense of remoteness and "going back in time" on the approach to Bodie State Historic Park. Visitors approaching the Bodie Road from Bridgeport will have just passed similar existing development at Willow Springs (RV Park, motel, and restaurant).

No significant impacts are anticipated. No additional mitigation is required.

### NATURAL RESOURCES

See the appropriate sections on Plant Life, Animal Life, Water Quality, Air Quality, and Aesthetics. No other impacts are anticipated. The site does not contain mineral deposits or other natural resources not identified elsewhere in this analysis.

No significant impacts are anticipated. No additional mitigation is required.

### **EXPOSURE TO RISK**

The County's Master Environmental Assessment does not indicate that the site is subject to seismic hazards, rockslides, landslides, avalanche hazards, or flood hazards. The rural resort development will not result in the use or storage of hazardous materials or waste on-site, other than standard household materials. During the scoping process, there was concern that the project would increase the potential for flooding, particularly along Hwy. 270. Concerns were also expressed about the potential of the project to subject people and structures to flood hazards.

#### ***Flood Hazard Assessment***

In response to the concerns about flooding, a Hydrology and Flood Plain Study (Denio and Associates, 1999) was completed to "... investigate the existence and severity of flood hazards in and near (the project area) ..." (Denio, p. 3) and to evaluate the flood hazards associated with the proposed RV Park. The study complies with the Mono County General Plan requirement for "future development projects with the potential to cause substantial flooding, erosion or siltation to provide an analysis of the potential impacts prior to project approval" (Mono County General Plan, Safety Element, Goal II, Objective A, Action 1.4).

#### ***Clearwater Creek Floodplain Boundaries***

The Hydrology and Flood Plain Study determined flows for floods with recurrence intervals of 10, 25, 50 and 100 years and determined the 100 year flood plain boundaries using flood elevations calculated at a series of cross-sections on Clearwater Creek. The analysis was based on existing conditions at the time of study; "changes to the streambed such as re-channelization, diversions, additional flow control structures or flood plain encroachments may invalidate all or portions of the study" (Denio, p. 7).

The results of the flood plain boundary calculations were checked against historical information and physical evidence. There is little historic flood data for Clearwater Creek; the Federal Emergency Management Agency flood hazard maps do not cover the area because it is not developed. Recent data from January of 1997 show that the creek stayed in its banks through the project area during periods of heavy flow. Farther west, close to Highway 395, the creek overflowed its banks and overran the highway. Caltrans has also experienced roadway washout in areas east of the RV Park area due to impinging flow against the highway embankment (Denio, p. 7).

The Study determined that the 100 year flood would stay within the main channel banks of Clearwater Creek; the main impact from high flow events would not be overtopping of the banks into the existing floodplain area, but hazards resulting from channel erosion and streambank instability.

The Hydrology and Flood Plain Study concludes the following concerning the floodplain and the 100 year flow:

- a. "The flood boundary [calculations] show overtopping of the channel to the north on Bodie Road near SR 395 which matches historical reports of what occurs during high flows" (Denio, p. 11).
- b. "The model shows the 100 year flow to stay within the main channel banks considering the superelevation<sup>1</sup>" (Denio, p. 11).

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<sup>1</sup>"Superelevation" refers to the height of the water surface during extreme flows; "the channel meander will result in significant superelevation of the water surface in the event of extreme flows" (Denio, p. 10).

- c. "Improvements that could have an effect on the streambed and floodplain are channel slope stabilization treatments and bridge crossings" (Denio, p. 14).
- d. "The bridge crossings designed to convey the 100 year [flow] as recommended herein will not cause a significant increase in the floodplain limits and water surface elevations. If bridge piers and/or abutments are placed within the floodplain, the effect on the backwater surface elevations should be evaluated" (Denio, p. 14).
- e. "The recommended slope treatment described herein would not cause a significant increase in the floodplain limits and water surface elevations as there would not be encroachment into the floodplain. The erosion protection would decrease the sediment load that would be transported downstream" (Denio, p. 14).

Development near the Creek is anticipated to have minimal impact on the flood elevations, since the project is not proposing large amounts of impervious surfaces. The temporary nature of the RV park would lessen the potential impact of flooding on people and property. Most major flooding episodes have occurred in the winter when warm rainfall melts the existing snow pack. During the winter, the RV park would be closed, minimizing the risks to people and property. The short-term use of the RV area would also minimize potential impacts to flooding. During a major summertime flash flooding event, RV park users would have the ability to vacate the premises in a relatively short time.

### *Additional Onsite Drainages*

In addition to the main Clearwater Creek drainage, there are four small tributary drainages onsite which affect the project area; "Southwest Basin C" flows into the westerly portion of the south side, "Basin B" flows into the easterly portion of the south side, "Basin D" flows into the easterly portion of the north side, and "Basin E" flows into the westerly portion of the north side. Southwest Basin C is a significant drainage with a 100 year estimated flow of 91 cubic feet per second (cfs) (Denio, p. 14). The Hydrology Study recommends a diversion channel or armored berm around the proposed improvements in the areas affected by the tributary drainages. The Study also notes that pipe storm drains have a high potential for clogging, especially when there are horizontal and vertical angle points. These additional mitigation measures are included as Specific Plan policies.

### *Compliance with General Plan Safety Policies*

The Safety Element of the Mono County General Plan addresses development in flood hazard areas: "Regulate development in flood hazard areas in a manner that protects people and property from unreasonable risks of damage due to flooding" (Mono County General Plan, Safety Element, Goal II, Objective A). General Plan policies also state: "In accordance with the stream setback requirements of the Mono County Zoning and Development Code, require new development to set back adequately from surface waters for flood protection purposes" (Mono County General Plan, Safety Element, Goal II, Objective A, Action 1.3) and "Limit the intensity of development within the 100 year floodplain" (Mono County General Plan, Safety Element, Goal II, Objective A, Action 1.5).

The Hydrology and Flood Plain Study determined that the proposed development is not within the floodplain and no unreasonable risks of flood damage to people and property would result from the project. General Plan requirements concerning development in flood hazard areas are therefore not applicable to this project.

The Mono County Zoning and Development Code [MCZDC 19.03.130 (7) (b)] contains a 30 foot setback requirement for new development; the project provides for a 10 foot setback from the top of the bank of Clearwater Creek. The proposed 10 foot setback is consistent with the MCZDC

requirements for stream setbacks since those requirements only restrict structures and impervious surfaces within a 30 foot setback from the stream. No structures or impervious surfaces are proposed within 30 feet of Clearwater Creek; the proposed improvements adjacent to each RV space would all be sited outside the 30 foot setback as the project is now designed. In addition, the MCZDC notes the following concerning stream setback requirements: "specific plans or area general plans may be more restrictive or less restrictive, and shall take precedence" [MCZDC 19.03.130 (7)].

### ***Channel Erosion and Streambank Instability***

Since the Hydrology and Flood Plain Study determined that the main impact from high flow events on Clearwater Creek would not be overtopping of the banks into the existing floodplain area, but impacts resulting from channel erosion and streambank instability, proposed mitigation measures recommended in the Study focus on stabilizing the banks of Clearwater Creek in areas identified as unstable and/or currently eroding. Staff from the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) also provided recommendations on how and where to improve streambank stability on the project site (NRCS letter, 1999). NRCS staff reviewed the study prepared by Denio and vice versa; the reports agree on the potential erosion issues occurring onsite and include complementary mitigation measures to address those issues.

### ***Existing Streambank Conditions***

Clearwater Creek has downcut 4 to 10 feet from the original elevation of the valley bottom in this stream segment (NRCS, 5/99). The stream is cutting down through deep alluvial soils, colloidal in nature, and easily eroded by water at mean flow velocities greater than approximately 3 ft/sec. The main channel banks are vertical in places indicating toe erosion and bank undercutting and caving. Large flow events, such as a 100 year flood, could cause rapid bank erosion. Smaller flows will erode the toe of unstable vertical banks and cause significant erosion over time. There is less potential for erosion in areas where the channel bank is already sloped 2:1 or flatter and is heavily vegetated. Heavily vegetated banks withstand higher velocity flows. NRCS staff estimated that 10% of the streambank in the project area was unstable; "...90% streambank stability on this stream type with volcanic parent material is in the range of what would be expected to be found under natural conditions in the absence of major human disturbance" (NRCS, 5/99). Clearwater Creek throughout the project area "exhibits a high degree of stability, certainly within the normal range expected for this stream type in these soils under natural conditions" (NRCS, 5/99). In the 10% of the stream where erosion is actively occurring, "the erosional process common to all sites is toe erosion and bank cutting" (NRCS, 5/99).

Both the Hydrology and Flood Plain Study and the NRCS letter note that erosion is occurring mostly in the eastern portion of the project site, primarily at several sites (approximately 120 feet of streambank) where impacts from toe erosion and vertical banks could affect the proposed development south of Clearwater Creek. The stream in the western portion of the project area is:

"... farther along in the process of evolving into a stable system; a new floodplain has been developed within the gully area and the stream is meandering within this floodplain. Vegetation has already naturally restabilized most of the area and the banks are not threatened with toe erosion and undercutting" (NRCS, 5/99).

Both reports note that construction of the RV Park would not affect "... the potential for erosion in the stream channel as it naturally exists" (Denio, p. 14).

### ***Streambank Mitigation Alternatives***

The Hydrology and Flood Plain Study provides three streambank mitigation alternatives. Alternative 1 includes sloping the banks back to about 2:1 in the area of proposed development; rock slope protection to the superelevated level of a 100 year flow in areas of impingement flow against curved banks with thicker rock protection extending under the water surface at the toe of the bank; and rock slope protection at the toe in non-impinging bank sections. Erosion control blankets are recommended above the rock slope protection until the slopes can revegetate.

Sloping the banks will enhance revegetation; vegetation cannot become established on the existing unstable vertical banks. This alternative would provide the "best protection for the RV Park improvements and the highest degree of life safety in the event of a major storm event" (Denio, p. 12).

Alternative 2 is a modified version of Alternative 1 which reduces the height of the rock slope protection on the outer curved banks to the superelevated level of a 25 year flow. Erosion control blankets and revegetation are recommended for the area of the bank above the 25 year water surface. In the area of the bridge crossings, the maximum slope protection outlined in Alternative 1 should be provided. This alternative would provide a level of protection equal to Alternative 1 once the vegetation is established; prior to that, some erosion could occur on the higher banks if a greater than 25 year flow occurred (Denio, p. 13). Future repair of the slope protection could be necessary if damage occurs prior to the vegetation becoming established (Denio, p. 13).

Alternative 3 recommends a system of tree trunk/root ball material revetment along the banks to provide bank protection and stability. This method provides less assurance of protection than the other alternatives (Denio, p. 13).

The NRCS letter of May 19, 1999, contains general recommendations concerning streambank stabilization methods and more site specific recommendations. The streambank erosion recommendations in the NRCS letter are complementary to those in the Hydrology Study; "... combined [they] provide valuable resources for creek bed design and slope stabilization" (Denio, 6/99). The NRCS recommendations are similar to the recommendations of Alternative 2 in the Hydrology Study in that they focus on rock slope protection at the toe of streambanks in areas of active toe erosion, on reshaping vertical streambanks (sloping them back) to allow vegetation to become established, and on revegetating upper bank areas. The NRCS letter notes that:

"... over-engineered solutions to streambank instability are, in the long-term, just as detrimental as under-engineered designs; in these types of stream systems vegetation is ultimately still the best protection during high flows. Any streambank treatment which would impede the flow of water in the bankfull flow zone<sup>2</sup> (overhanging limbs, roots, rocks) should be avoided as they would trap sediment and then cause a shift in the deepest part of the channel (thalweg). This would re-route water flows and the stream would respond with bank-cutting at new sites.... The velocity of water increases as it moves along a rock curve on a streambank, and vegetation does a better job of slowing the flow and dissipating energy. Therefore, while the use of rock at key areas to control erosional forces is vital, its use must be carefully planned, and vegetation should be included as a major component of any streambank stabilization work."

Denio, in reviewing the NRCS letter, notes that:

"Although plant based approaches may be appropriate for other areas of the stream, rock based erosion protection remains appropriate in areas immediately upstream and adjacent to the bridge abutments. Inclusion of plants as part of the rock based protection systems may be possible to achieve a better appearance and a reduction in flow velocity in these areas".

(Denio, 6/99)

Based on the above comments, Alternative 2 from the Hydrology Study was chosen as the streambank mitigation for the project, along with site specific recommendations from the NRCS letter. Alternative 2 provides a high level of protection from erosion hazards and minimizes potential additional impacts to the stream system created by the streambank protection itself.

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<sup>2</sup>"Bankfull flow zone" refers to the height of the water surface during the predicted 1.5 to 2 year runoff event, not to the top of the present streambank.

Additional mitigation measures from the Hydrology Study concerning bridges, storm drains, and tributary drainages were included in the Specific Plan. These mitigation measures ensure that the bridges are designed and constructed to convey the 100 year flow, that storm drains do not become clogged, and that proposed improvements in the areas affected by tributary drainages onsite are protected from drainage flows.

Additional recommendations from the NRCS letter were also included as Specific Plan policies. These recommendations address establishing limited access routes to Clearwater Creek to minimize future erosion impacts from people using the creek for recreational purposes, and developing a vegetation management plan to remove buildups of vegetation from the stream channel which are impeding streamflows.

### ***Potential Impacts and Mitigation***

- 1. The Clearwater Creek Channel banks are highly erodible. Potential impacts to persons and property could result from high flows and associated bank erosion and streambank instability.**

The following mitigation measures, incorporated as policies and design features in the Specific Plan, will mitigate these potential impacts to a less than significant level:

- a. Specific Plan policies require the implementation of slope protection measures to avoid and/or minimize channel and streambank erosion (NRC Policy 16). NRC Policy 16 requires the Final Grading Plan to include a Streambank Protection component which provides a specific design for implementing Streambank Mitigation Alternative 2 from the Hydrology Study and site specific recommendations from the NRCS letter, ~~including a vegetation management plan.~~
- b. SP policies designate the Clearwater Creek channel as Open Space/Natural Habitat Protection. That designation establishes a ~~40~~ 30 foot setback from the top of the banks of Clearwater Creek, restricts uses within that setback in order to reduce erosion, requires access routes to the creek to be established and maintained, and requires signs to be posted along the ~~40~~ 30 foot setback encouraging the use of the established access routes (LU Policies 5, 6). The ~~40~~ 30 foot setback is to be maintained in perpetuity. It will be monitored on an annual basis, and uses will be discontinued or moved to the minimum ~~40~~ 30 foot setback (LU Policy 5).
- c. ~~Improvements for~~ The RV sites (concrete pads, utility hookups) will be a minimum of 30 feet from the top of the bank (LU Policy 2).
- d. The resort will operate seasonally, in the summer months, when high flows are less likely to occur and erosion due to saturated banks is less likely to occur (LU Policy 11).
- e. Bridges will be constructed with concrete abutments located outside of the creek channel (DG Policy 3). Bridge supports may be located in the ~~40~~ 30 foot setback (NRC Policy 2).
- f. Temporary impacts to the stream channel and riparian vegetation resulting from construction of the bridges will be minimized by a) identifying two temporary stream crossings sited to minimize impacts on vegetation and bank stability, b) parking heavy equipment on the south side of the creek to minimize impacts to soils and vegetation, and c) restoring the temporary stream crossings as soon as possible once the bridges are operational (streambanks will be stabilized and revegetated) (NRC Policy 3).
- g. All revegetation on the site will comply with revegetation performance standards in the Specific Plan which require native , indigenous species and replanting as necessary to assure success (NRC Policy 6).
- h. SP policies require bridges to be designed and constructed to convey the 100 year flow and the installation of slope protection around bridge abutments and approaches (NRC Policies 2, 4).
- i. Disturbance of natural habitat shall be kept to a minimum (NRC Policy 15).

No significant impacts are anticipated from this project. The project has been designed and uniformly applied development standards will be adopted into the Specific Plan to mitigate potential environmental effects to a less than significant level. No additional mitigation is required.

### POPULATION AND HOUSING

The project proponent estimates that the resort will require ~~seven~~ *eleven* full-time seasonal employees. Two spaces (#'s 1 and 2) in the RV Park and the two single-family residences will be reserved for employee housing (LU Policies 2c, 4c), in compliance with Mono County General Plan policies (Mono County General Plan, Housing Element, Policy B, Objective 3 and Program 3.1). The remaining employees are expected to commute from Bridgeport or Lee Vining. No significant impacts are anticipated. No additional mitigation is required.

### TRANSPORTATION/TRAFFIC

Access to the project site will be via Hwy. 395 and the Bodie Road (Hwy. 270). Access to all elements of the resort will be directly off Hwy. 270 onto paved areas leading to gravel surfaced roadways and parking areas. There will be three driveways off the eastbound lane of Hwy. 270 (tent camping area driveway, RV Park entrance and exit) and two driveways off the westbound lane (cabin camping area driveway, motel/store/museum driveway).

Hwy. 270 is a 22 foot wide, two lane paved State Highway which traverses Clearwater Canyon throughout the project site. The project proponent and Caltrans have reached an agreement that gives the State a 40-foot right-of-way (highway easement) throughout the project area, as well as sign easements and drainage easements to cover features that extend outside the 40-foot limits.

Hwy. 270 has numerous curves and is marked for speeds of 25 mph to 35 mph in the project vicinity. Recent (1995) Caltrans traffic volumes for the Bodie Road at a point 9.8 miles east of the Hwy. 270/Hwy. 395 junction were the following:

|                                  |                       |
|----------------------------------|-----------------------|
| Peak Hour Traffic                | 130 vehicles per hour |
| Average Daily Traffic-Peak Month | 720 vehicles per day  |
| Average Daily Traffic-Annual     | 540 vehicles per day  |

Traffic counts taken by Crenshaw Engineering at the project site on August 17, 1998, during the evening peak period, counted 104 eastbound vehicles and 26 westbound vehicles. Speed checks conducted at that time showed the majority of eastbound traffic traveling at 35 mph and the majority of westbound traffic traveling at 40 mph.

During the scoping process, several issues emerged concerning safety along Hwy. 270:

- a. There are concerns about pedestrian access from the cabin camping and tenting camping areas to the general store area, especially if pedestrians have to walk alongside Hwy. 270.
- b. There are concerns about the several access points for the various components of the project, all located within a short distance along a narrow two-lane highway. These concerns focused on sight distances, traffic speeds, and pedestrian safety.

To address these concerns and other traffic-related issues, Crenshaw Engineering completed a Traffic Impact Study for the project (see Appendix B).

The following summarizes the information in the Traffic Impact Study prepared by Crenshaw Engineering:

**a. Traffic Generation and Distribution**

The Traffic Impact Study estimates that the proposed project will generate approximately 570 vehicular trip ends per day; 257 of those trip ends will be bypass trips already within the traffic stream, 313 trip ends will be generated by the project. Bypass trips are defined as trips that are already within the traffic stream and are not generated by a specific project.

The Study also estimates that during the PM peak hour, 21 inbound vehicles and 22 outbound vehicles will be using the driveways to the project. Nine inbound and seven outbound vehicles will not already be in the traffic stream.

The Study concludes that this increase in vehicles and trips is an insignificant amount.

**b. Traffic Analysis and Impact**

The traffic analysis assumed the following;

1. The project will be completed by 1999 and traffic patterns will be established at that time.
2. Traffic will access the project from the driveways shown on the Plot Plan.
3. Actual PM peak hour traffic conditions are appropriate for this analysis.
4. Ambient growth factors are appropriate for this analysis.
5. 45 percent of the generated volume of the project will be bypass traffic. Forty percent of the volume will patronize more than one of the project components (e.g. store and RV Park areas, museum and tent camping areas).

**c. Intersection Analysis**

The capacity and Level of Service (LOS) for the intersection of all the driveways with Hwy. 270 was determined for 1999 and 2020. The LOS for all intersections in 1999 and 2020 was level "A" which indicates excellent conditions with free flowing traffic.

The need for traffic signals at the intersection of all the driveways with Hwy. 270 was analyzed. None of the intersections warrants a traffic signal under conditions in 1999 and 2020.

**d. Street Segment Analysis**

The Traffic Impact Study analyzed the existing Level of Service on Hwy. 270 and the projected LOS on the highway with the proposed development. Highway 270 currently operates at LOS "A" and will continue to operate at LOS "A" with the additional traffic volumes that may be generated by the project.

**e. Speed Survey**

A speed survey was conducted using a radar gun at two locations in the project area. Average eastbound speed in the vicinity of the tent camping and cabin camping areas was 35 mph. Average westbound speed in the vicinity of the RV Park and motel/store/museum areas was 40 mph.

**f. Sight Distance**

The driveway for the tent camping area has the most critical sight distance. If that driveway was moved easterly approximately 50 feet, the sight distance would be greater than 300 feet, well above the minimum stopping distance for the average speed at that

location. Sight distances at the remainder of the access driveways are well above minimum requirements.

**g. Conclusions and Proposed Mitigation Measures**

The overall traffic volumes expected to be generated from the proposed development will not be a significant impact and will require no mitigation. Interior circulation was examined and found to be adequate for turning movements of vehicles. There is no existing pedestrian traffic in the area. Pedestrian traffic should not be a problem once the project is completed, due to the low volume and speed of traffic in the project vicinity.

Safety could be improved by implementing the following design features:

1. Tapers into and out of driveways would benefit turning vehicles as well as through vehicles. A minimum 100 feet by 10 feet taper is suggested at all driveways for the project. These tapers may be asphaltic concrete or graded shoulders, provided sufficient lateral clearance exists to allow such construction (see TC Policy 6).
2. The driveway for the tent camping area should be relocated approximately 50 feet easterly, if possible, to increase sight distance at that location (see TC Policy 7).

No significant impacts are anticipated. No mitigation is required.

### **PUBLIC SERVICE**

***Fire Protection.***

The Mono County General Plan requires new development to provide adequate structural fire protection. New development outside of an existing fire district sphere of influence is required to provide a fire protection plan (Mono County Safety Element, Objective B, Policy 1, Action 1.1). The fire protection plan must identify the nature of the local fire hazard, assess the risk of wildland and structural fires presented by the project, and specify measures to detect and respond to fires on the project site through out all phases of the development. Action 1.2 of the same section of the Safety Element requires a finding that adequate structural fire protection is or will be available prior to project approval. The Bodie RV Park Fire Protection plan is included in the Specific Plan's policies regarding fire protection (DG Policy 13, Figures 12 and 13).

The proposed project is not within the district boundaries or the sphere of influence boundaries for the Bridgeport Fire Protection District (BPPFD). It is within the General Planning Concern Area for the district. The BPPFD currently serves the nearby Willow Springs area on an informal basis and has indicated that it would be willing to serve the proposed project subject to signing an annual service contract (I Policy 7).

According to the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CDF), the project is located in a very high fire hazard zone. The project has the potential to increase the risk of fire hazards by attracting additional visitors into the area, especially campers using the proposed grills or open fire pits. The potential for wildland fires will be mitigated by compliance with the Mono County Fire Safe Standards and the project's Fire Protection Plan (DG Policy 13 and TC Policy 1).

***Medical and Health Care.***

The nearest medical facility is the Medical Clinic in Bridgeport, located approximately 9 miles to the north of the project site. Emergency medical services are also available in Mammoth Lakes,

## **Bodie Hills RV Park SP/EIR**

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approximately 45 miles south of the project. These facilities have sufficient capacity to provide services for the proposed project.

### ***Schools.***

The proposed project will not impact schools since it is estimated to employ only seven seasonal employees, some of whom are expected to live in the area already.

No significant impacts are anticipated. No additional mitigation is required.

## **ENERGY**

Development of a rural resort will not use substantial amounts of energy or fuels. New sources of energy will not be required as a result of this project. No significant impacts are anticipated. No additional mitigation is required.

## **UTILITIES**

All utilities on the project site will be funded by the developer. Utilities for the project will be phased and constructed to accommodate project phasing.

Water: Discussed above in the section on Water.

Sewer: Sewage disposal will be provided by on-site collection systems utilizing septic tanks emptying into leach fields. All septic tanks and the sewer lift station will be placed underground. Separate systems will be constructed for the General Store/Motel/Museum Complex, the RV Park area, the Camping Cabins area, and the Tent Camping area. The single family residences will be connected to the General Store system. Leach fields have been sized and sited to avoid impacts to surface and groundwaters.

Gas: Propane gas service will be provided for the general store/motel complex, the single family residences, and the two restroom/laundromat/shower buildings located in the RV spaces and camping cabin areas. A 500 gallon propane storage tank will be located near the store/motel building. A 200 gallon propane storage tank will be located near each of the restroom/shower buildings. All tanks will be screened from the highway and parking areas using rustic looking wood fencing.

Electric: Electricity will be provided by Southern California Edison. The project proponent is proposing an overhead transmission line to the site. Two overhead line alternatives are proposed. Alternative 1 would construct an overhead power line from the existing SCE power line located on the east side of Hwy. 395. The overhead line would run northeasterly from the existing SCE line to the ridge on which the leach field for the RV spaces will be located. This line crosses public lands managed by the BLM and would require right-of-way clearance from the BLM, a visual contrast analysis, cultural resource clearance, etc., to ensure that the proposed line conforms with BLM regulations and policies. Alternative 2 for the overhead utility line would run from the existing SCE line across the subject property parallel to the southern property line.

With the exception of the overhead lines described above, all power lines will be installed underground in conformance with the Mono County Code (MCZDC 19.030.07). Power will be extended to the general store/motel complex, all RV

spaces, the single family residences, and the restroom/laundromat/shower buildings.

Phone: Telephone lines will be provided overhead and underground along the same route used for electric service. Telephone service will be provided to the general store/motel complex, the single family residences, and the restroom/laundromat/shower buildings.

Solid Waste Disposal: A screened dumpster area will be provided near the general store. Fourteen garbage cans with lids will be placed throughout the RV and camping areas. All trash facilities will be designed to resist wildlife access, including bears.

Lighting: Nineteen lampposts with lights will be installed within the project at sites shown on the plot plan. ~~The lampposts will be replicas of 1890's lampposts (see Figure 6, Sign and Lighting Plan).~~ Exterior lighting will be installed as necessary for the respective uses of each building.

Drainage: Proposed drainage facilities include the extension of an existing 24-inch culvert under the parking area in the general store area, the extension of an existing 18-inch culvert under the access road and parking area for the camping cabins, and the installation of an 18-inch CMP drain under the tent camping parking area. Two retention basins will be installed to collect runoff from the large parking area adjacent to the General Store complex and the camping cabins. In addition, runoff from parking areas will be pretreated using oil/water separators to remove oil and gas residue, in conformance with Lahontan Water Quality Control Board requirements. Drainage improvements will conform with the provisions of the Mono County Department of Public Works and the Lahontan Water Quality Control Board. Specific Plan policies specify that the drainage component of the Grading Plan shall also consider diversion channels or armored berms around the proposed improvements in the areas affected by the tributary drainages and shall provide methods of preventing clogging in any proposed pipe storm drains.

With the exception of the overhead utility lines which will be addressed in the Aesthetics Section below, the construction of utilities for the project will not result in significant impacts. No additional mitigation is required.

### HUMAN HEALTH

The proposed subdivision is not expected to create or expose people to potential health hazards (see the previous section "Exposure to Risk"). No significant impacts are anticipated. No additional mitigation is required.

### AESTHETICS

The project site is currently in its natural condition, although some evidence of human use is visible (fire rings, bulldozed areas). Development will permanently transform the visual impression of the area from sagebrush scrub to a developed rural resort.

Project components will be visible along short stretches of Hwy. 270 and Hwy. 395. The Camping Cabin area and the Motel/Store/Museum area are located immediately adjacent to Hwy. 270 in front of steep canyon walls; opportunities to relocate the proposed development outside of the

area visible from Hwy. 270 are limited. The lack of tall vegetation between the proposed structures and the highway provides little opportunity to screen the development. The RV spaces and the tent camping spaces are located on the south side of Clearwater Creek and will be partially shielded from view by the thick vegetation along the Clearwater Creek riparian corridor. One illuminated sign will be visible along Hwy. 270; two non-illuminated monument signs and portions of the proposed overhead powerline will be visible from Hwy. 395.

### ***Project Compliance with Mono County General Plan Visual Resource Policies***

Highways 270 and 395 are county designated scenic highways that are protected by policies contained in the Mono County General Plan's Visual Resources Section in the Conservation/Open Space Element. Pertinent policies from that section are summarized here to establish a policy framework to help analyze potential visual impacts resulting from this project.

Visual Resource policies focus on concentrating development in established community areas by limiting development intensities outside of communities (Mono County General Plan, Conservation/Open Space Element, Visual Resource Policies, Objective A, Policy 3, Actions 3.1 and 3.2). These policies also permit higher intensity uses outside of community areas through the Specific Plan process and provide opportunities for additional development in scenic areas in exchange for permanent open space preservation. The proposed project complies with the requirement for a Specific Plan. Future development will be limited on approximately 142 acres by designating that acreage Rural Resort/Resource Conservation Passive Recreation (LU Policies 3, 4). Development within the Clearwater Creek Channel will be limited by designating that acreage as Open Space/Natural Habitat Protection (LU Policies 5, 6).

Visual Resource policies also focus on ensuring "... that development is visually compatible with ... adjacent cultural resources, and/or the natural environment" (Mono County General Plan, Conservation/Open Space Element, Visual Resource Policies, Objective C). Specific Plan policies direct that structures, lighting, signs, and other development components be designed and constructed to blend in with the surrounding environment and to appear in harmony with Bodie State Historic Park (DG Policy 1).

Visual Resource policies require projects to avoid potential significant visual impacts or to mitigate those impacts to a level of non-significance. Visual Resource policies (Mono County General Plan, Conservation/Open Space Element, Visual Resource Policies, Objective C, Policy 1, Action 1.1) identify the following examples of negative visual impacts:

- a. Reflective materials;
- b. Excessive height and/or bulk;
- c. Standardized designs which are utilized to promote specific commercial activities and which are not in harmony with the community atmosphere;
- d. Architectural designs and features which are incongruous to the community or area and/or which significantly detract from the natural attractiveness of the community or its surroundings;
- e. Dust and steam plumes; and
- f. Excessive night lighting.

The project has been designed to avoid these impacts (see DG Policies).

Visual Resource policies also require future development to "... be sited and designed to be in scale and compatible with the surrounding community and/or the natural environment" (Mono County General Plan, Conservation/Open Space Element, Visual Resource Policies, Objective C, Policy 2). Visual Resource policies require compliance with the following minimum development standards (Mono County General Plan, Conservation/Open Space Element, Visual Resource Policies, Objective C, Policy 2, Action 2.1):

- a. Projects should not dominate the natural environment, and should complement existing community character; the scale, design, and siting of a project should be appropriate for the setting.
- b. Building mass should be varied and should be appropriate for the surrounding community or area.
- c. Project siting and structural design should be sensitive to the climate, topography, and lighting of the surrounding environment.
- d. The design, color, and building materials for structures, fences, and signs shall be compatible with the natural environment and/or the surrounding community;
- e. Visually offensive land uses shall be adequately screened through the use of landscaping, fencing, contour grading, or other appropriate measures.
- f. The visual impacts of parking areas shall be minimized through the use of landscaping, covered parking, siting which screens the parking from view, or other appropriate measures.
- g. Signs shall comply with the County Sign Ordinance.
- h. Standardized commercial structures, design, and materials shall not be allowed (e.g. a "McDonalds" shall be designed with materials and finishes that harmonize with the surrounding area).
- i. Exterior lighting shall be shielded and indirect and shall be minimized to that necessary for security and safety.
- j. All new utilities shall be installed underground, in conformance with applicable provisions of the Mono County Zoning and Development Code (MCZDC).
- k. Existing roads shall be utilized whenever possible. Construction of new roads should be avoided except where essential for health and safety.
- l. Earthwork, grading and vegetative removals shall be minimized.
- m. All site disturbances shall be revegetated with a mix of indigenous species native to the site (based upon pre-project species survey). A landscaping plan shall be submitted and approved for all projects.

The Bodie RV Park Specific Plan complies with the above guidelines either through inclusion as Specific Plan policies or through the project design phase.

### ***Visual Impact Assessment--Developed Area***

The following series of photographs shows the project areas proposed for development. Figures 14 and 15 show the location from which each photograph was taken.

#### **View 1 US 395 and Bodie Road Intersection (see Figure 16)**

View 1 was taken from the west side of Hwy. 395, near the Clearwater Creek Bridge, looking north. Two of the project's monument signs, one in the foreground and one in the background, would be visible on the west facing rocky slopes.

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- View 2      Tent Camping Area (see Figure 16)**  
View 2 was taken from the south side of Hwy. 270 looking south across the tent camping area. A 20-foot wide bridge, 14 tent camping sites, parking areas and a restroom would be visible.
- View 3      Cabin Camping Area, Northeast Angle (see Figure 17)**  
View 3 was taken from the north side of Hwy. 270 looking northeast across the cabin camping area. Eight cabins, a restroom facility, parking areas and a landscaped lawn area would be visible.
- View 4      Cabin Camping Area, Northwest Angle (see Figure 17)**  
View 4 was taken from the south side of Hwy. 270 looking north toward the cabin camping area. Eight cabins would be scattered along the base of the hill in the middle of this photo.
- View 5      RV Park and Store/Motel/Office (see Figure 18)**  
View 5 was taken from the south side of Hwy. 270 looking east over the eastern section of the project. RV sites would be located in the center foreground of the picture and the motel/store complex would be visible on the left side of the photo.
- View 6      RV Park, Eastern Angle (see Figure 18)**  
View 6 was taken from the south side of Hwy. 270 looking southeast over the eastern section of the project. RV sites would be located in the center foreground of the photo.
- View 7      RV Park, Central and Western Angle (see Figure 19)**  
View 7 was taken from the south side of Hwy. 270 overlooking the central and western portions of the RV park area. RV sites would be located between the base of the hill and Clearwater Creek and visible through the full range of this photo.
- View 8      RV Park, Eastern Angle (see Figure 19)**  
View 8 was taken from the south side of Hwy. 270 along the northern bank of Clearwater Creek. RV sites would be located between the base of the hill and Clearwater Creek and visible through the full range of this photo.
- View 9      Motel/Store/Rental Office Area (see Figure 20)**  
View 9 was taken from the north side of Hwy. 270 looking northwest over the proposed motel/store/museum area. From this angle, the museum and the parking area for the store and motel would be visible.

### ***Visual Impact Assessment--Utility Lines***

On-site distribution lines to individual project components will be installed underground, in conformance with Mono County General Plan policies (Conservation/Open Space Element, Visual Resource Policies, Objective C, Policy 3, Actions 3.1-3.7) and the Mono County Zoning and Development Code (MCZDC 19.03.070).

Three utility line alignments (one underground and two overhead) were considered to provide power to the project from the existing SCE transmission line which runs along the east side of Hwy. 395. The underground alignment would run from the existing SCE line north along the eastside of U.S. 395 then east along the south side of Highway 270. Alternative 1 for the overhead utility line would run from the existing SCE power line located on the east side of Hwy. 395 northeasterly to the ridge on which the leach field for the RV spaces will be located. This

alignment crosses public lands managed by the BLM and would require right-of-way clearance from the BLM, a visual contrast analysis, cultural resource clearance, etc., to ensure that the proposed line conforms with BLM regulations and policies. Alternative 2 for the overhead utility line would run from the existing SCE line across the subject property parallel to the southern property line.

Overhead Alternative 1 would be visible from Hwy. 395 for approximately 100 feet prior to crossing a ridge into a drainage. Once in the drainage, the line would not be visible from Highway 395. View 10 (see Figure 22), which was taken from the east side of Hwy. 395 approximately one quarter mile south of the Bodie Road and Hwy. 395 junction, shows the existing SCE powerline running in a southeasterly direction away from the proposed project. The overhead line proposed in Alternative 1 would start at the transmission line pole located in the middle of the picture (next to the pinyon pine) and would then drop away from the viewer into a shallow drainage where it would not be visible from Hwy. 395. This alternative would be the shortest, with the least visual impact, but would require BLM approval and further environmental analysis.

Overhead Alternative 2, the proposed alignment across private land, would be fully visible from Hwy. 395, particularly from the northbound travel lane. View 11 (see Figure 22) was taken from the east side of Hwy. 395 looking north over part of the Bodie RV Park parcel. The existing SCE transmission line runs in a southeasterly direction away from the private parcel. Alternative 2 for the powerline placement proposes to install an overhead line that would run in a west-to-east direction parallel with the parcel's southern property line. The line would connect with the transmission line at the pole shown in View 12 (see Figure 22) and proceed up the hill. In View 12, the line would be visible across the entire picture until it reaches the top of the ridge and drops into the next drainage. This alternative crosses a small area with an identified population of Bodie Hills cusickiella, a species of special concern; that population could be avoided by siting powerline poles outside of the identified population.

All of the proposed utility line alignments would be partially located in scenic highway corridors. The Mono County General Plan specifies that "... transmission and distribution lines shall be designed and sited to minimize impacts to natural and visual resources" (Mono County General Plan, Conservation/Open Space Element, Visual Resource Policies, Objective C, Policy 3), requires a variance for overhead utility lines located in a scenic highway corridor (Mono County General Plan, Conservation/Open Space Element, Visual Resource Policies, Objective C, Action 3.3), and requires that "overhead utility lines proposed within a scenic highway corridor be located in the least conspicuous manner possible" (Mono County General Plan, Conservation/Open Space Element, Visual Resource Policies, Objective C, Action 3.6). The Mono County Zoning and Development Code (MCZDC Section 19.39.010) allows the Planning Commission to grant a variance only when all of the following findings can be made:

- A. Because of special circumstances (other than monetary hardship) applicable to the property, including its size, shape, topography, location or surroundings, the strict application of the provision of this title deprives such property of privileges (not including the privilege of maintaining a nonconforming use or status) enjoyed by other property in the vicinity and in an identical zoning district; and
- B. The grant of variance will not constitute a special privilege inconsistent with the limitations upon other properties in the vicinity and in the zoning district in which the property is situated; and
- C. The grant of variance will not be detrimental to the public welfare or injurious to property or improvements in the area in which the property is situated; and
- D. The grant of variance will not be in conflict with established map and text of the general and specific plans and policies of the county.

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There are special circumstances applicable to this property, including its large size, the rugged terrain, and the need to trench in a narrow canyon floor between Hwy. 270 and Clearwater Creek, which would make the approval of a variance for overhead lines appropriate. All the required findings for a variance can be made for the project.

The MCZDC also requires utility lines to individual developments to be installed underground unless a use permit is approved for overhead installation (MCZDC Section 19.030.D). In approving the use permit, the Planning Commission must make one of the following findings:

1. The overhead line placement will not significantly disrupt the visual character of the area.
2. The placement of utility lines above ground is environmentally preferable to underground placement.
3. The installation of underground utilities would create an unreasonable financial hardship on the applicant due to the unique physical characteristics of the property.
4. The exclusive purpose of the overhead line is to serve an agricultural operation.

Although overhead installation of utility lines for the Bodie RV Park will require a variance since a portion of the proposed line will be in a scenic highway corridor, it is useful to analyze the proposed project in respect to the use permit findings specifically required for overhead installation of utility lines. The MCZDC contains criteria for each of the required use permit findings to determine whether they are applicable to a particular project; the following discussion addresses these criteria:

1. The overhead line placement could significantly disrupt the visual character of the area, depending on the alignment chosen. There are no existing lines in the area, other than the existing SCE transmission line parallel to Hwy. 395. The BLM alignment would have less visual impact than the private alignment. Although both would be visible from Hwy. 395, topography would screen the BLM alignment for a greater distance. Vegetation in the area will do little to shield either alignment. Specific Plan policies require the overhead line to be sited in a manner that minimizes its impacts to natural and visual resources and to be constructed in a manner that minimizes site disturbance (DG Policy 11) in compliance with Mono County General Plan policies.

Figure 14 -- Visual Impact Assessment Map

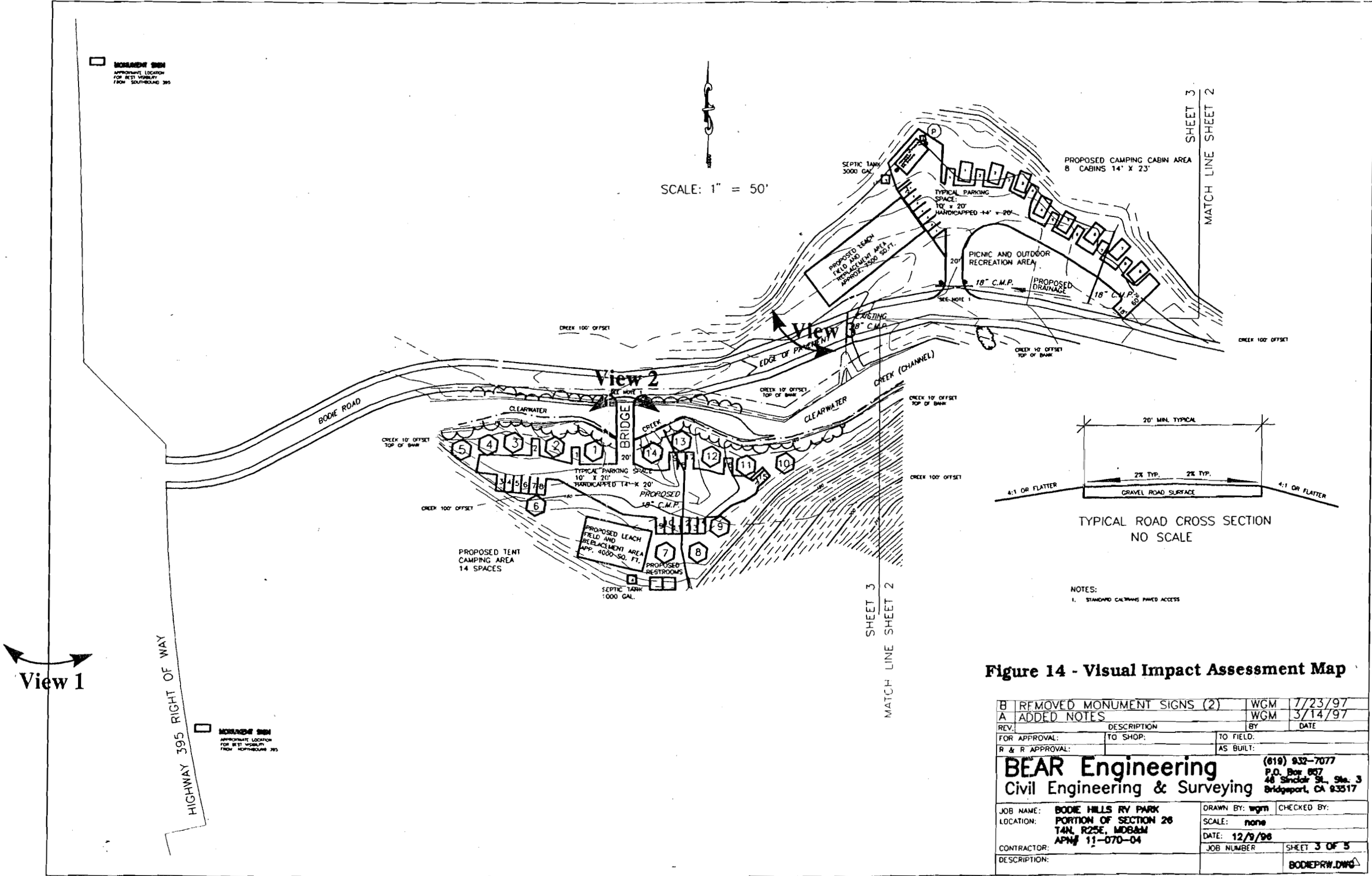
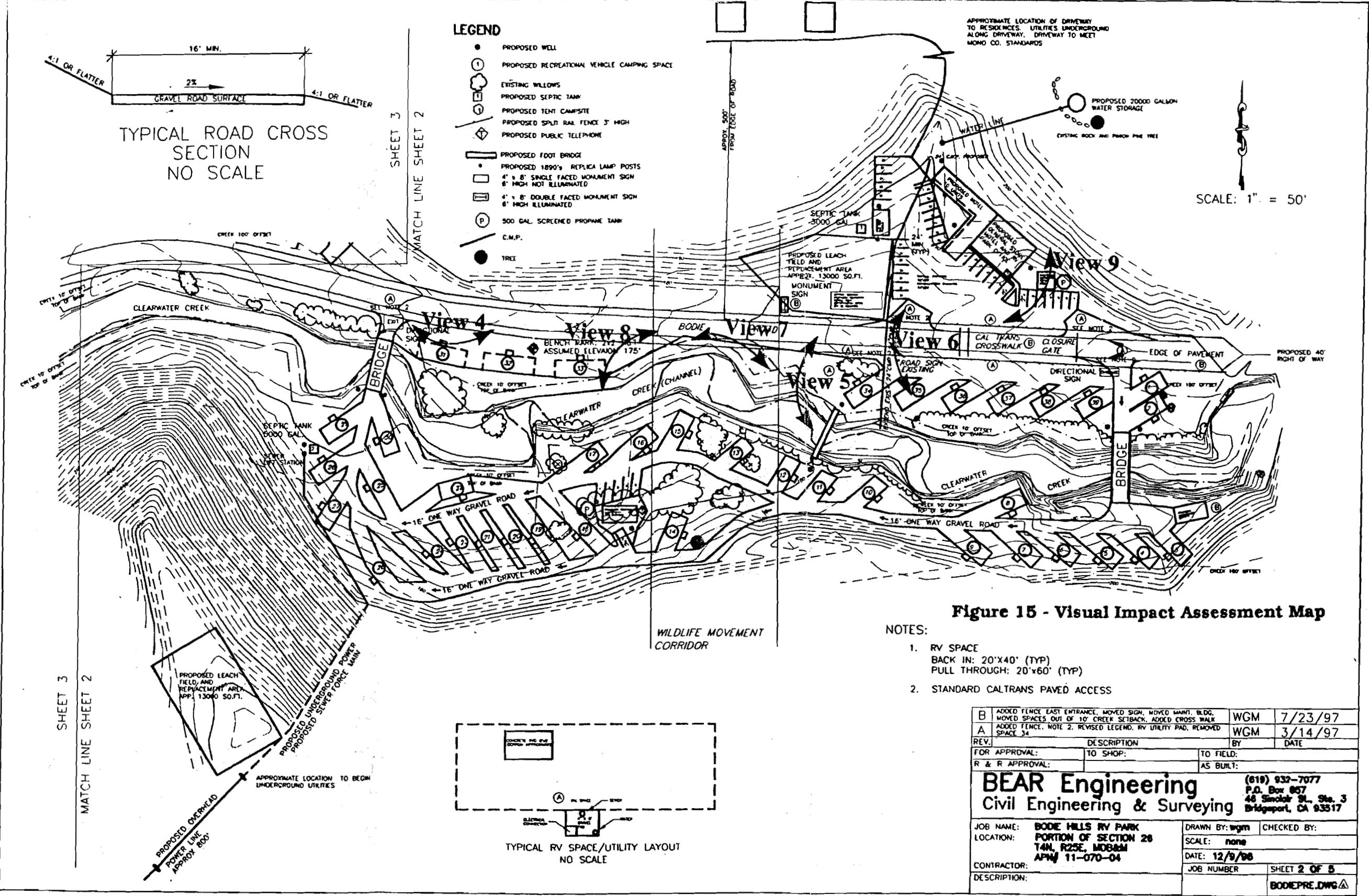


Figure 15 -- Visual Impact Assessment Map



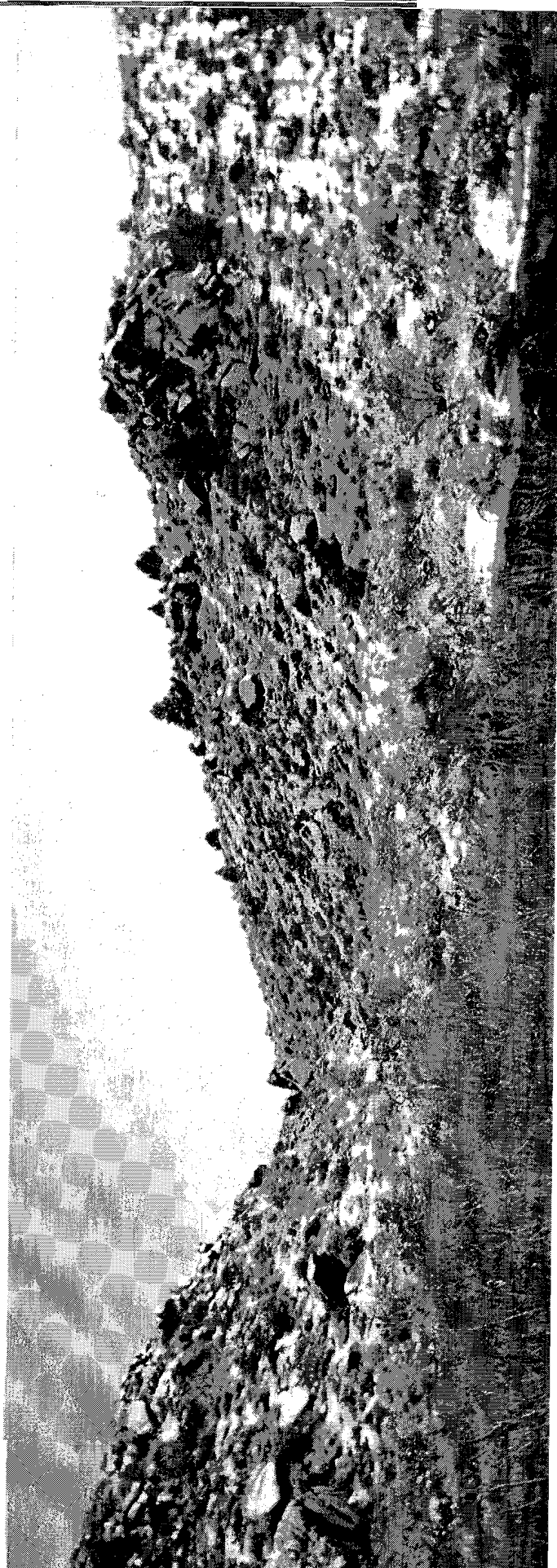


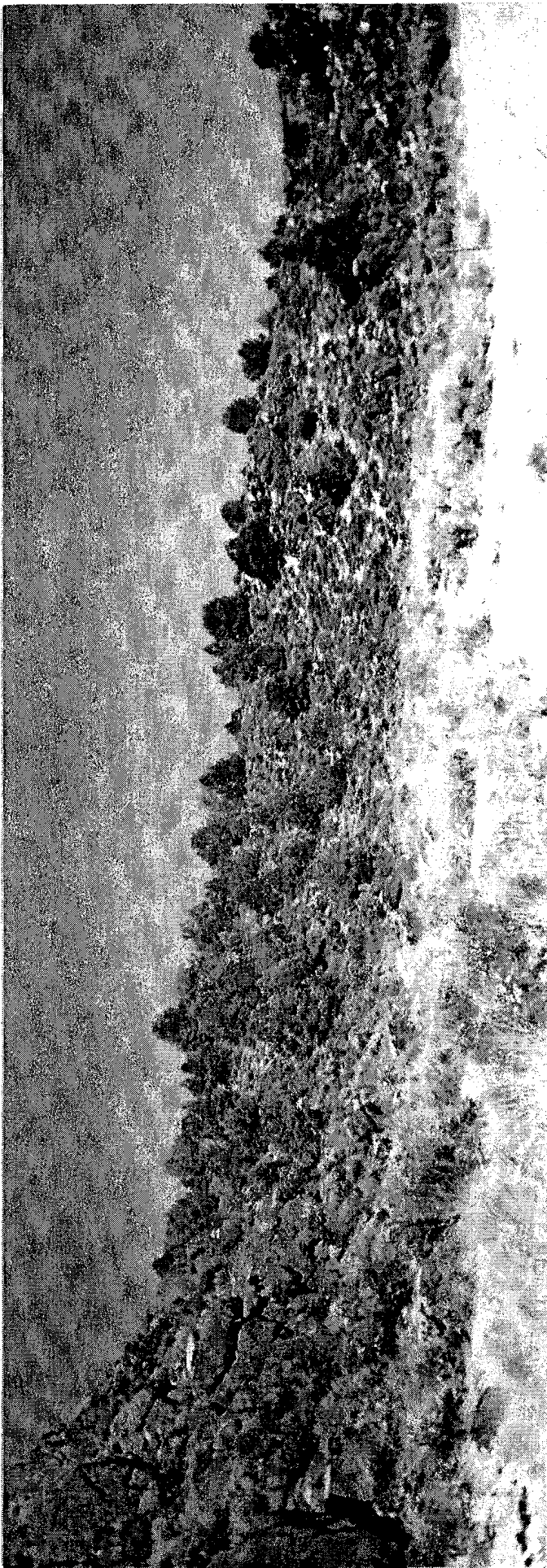
View 1 -- US 395 and Bodie Road Intersection

View 2--Tent Camping Area

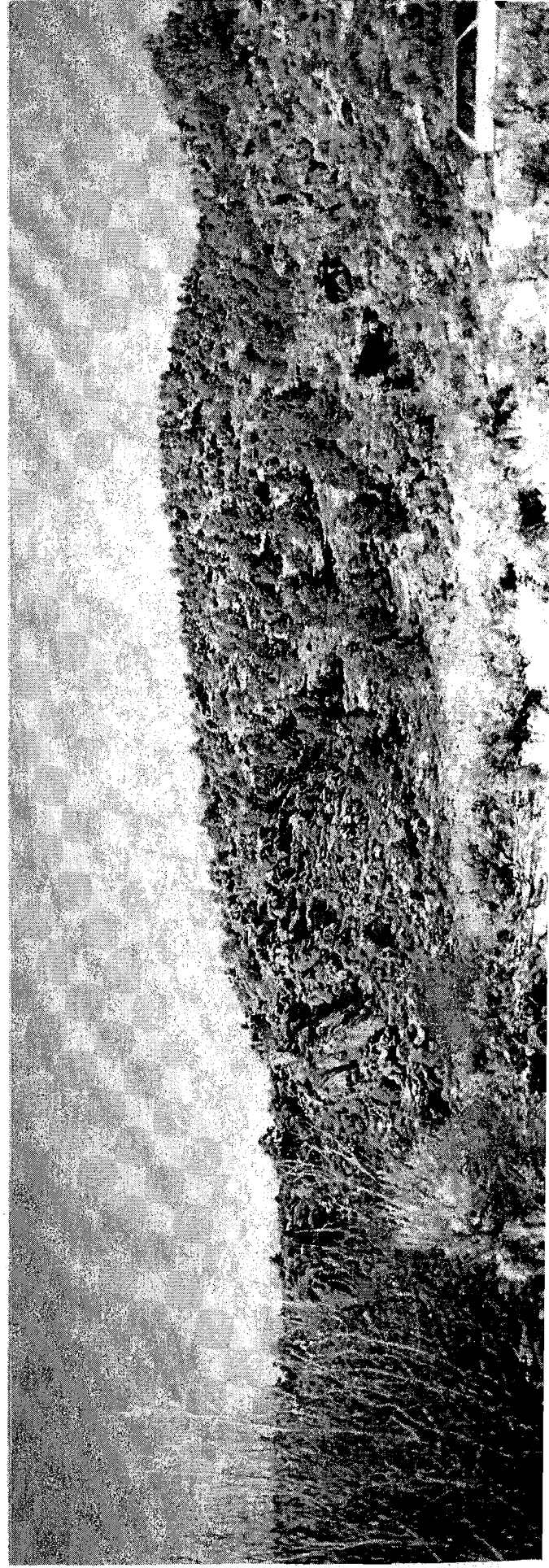
Figure 16 -- View 1 and 2

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View 3—Cabin Camping Area, Northeast Angle



View 4 -- Cabin Camping Area, Northwest Angle

Figure 17 -- View 3 and 4

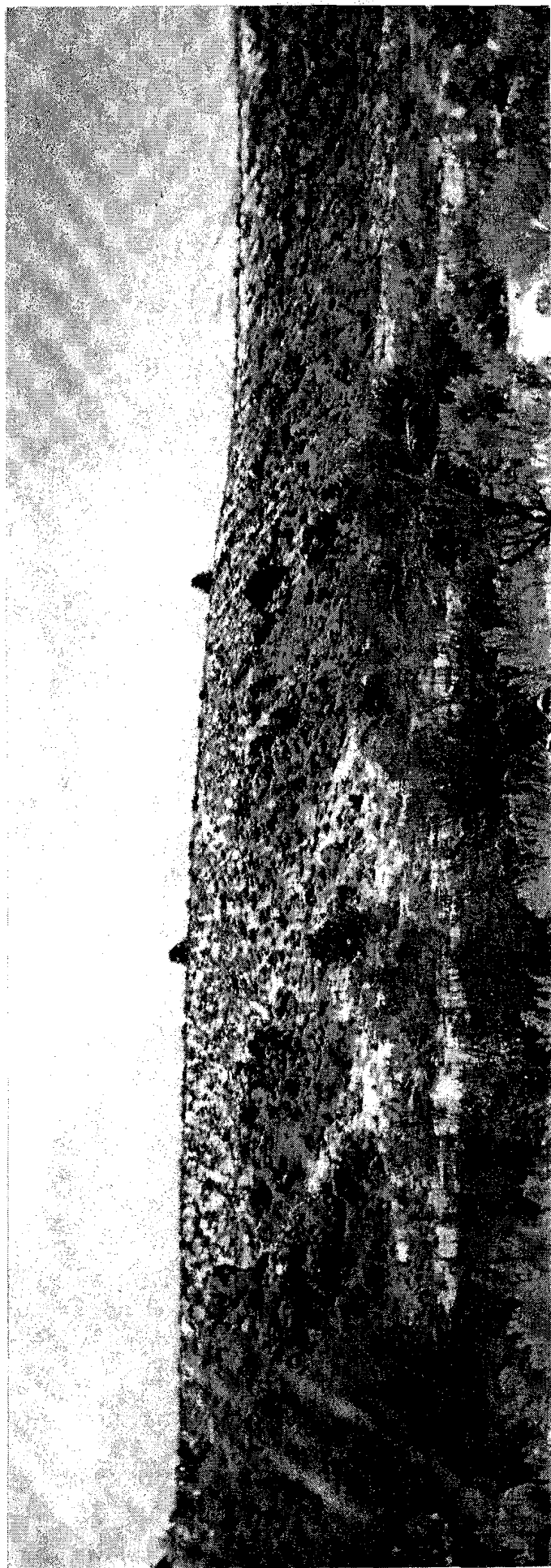


View 5 – RV Park and Store/Motel/Office

View 6 – RV Park, Eastern Angle

Figure 18 – View 5 and 6





View 7 - RV Park, Central and Western Angle

View 8 - RV Park, Eastern Angle



Figure 19 - View 7 and 8

Figure 20 -- View 9



Figure 20 -- View 9

Figure 21 -- Overhead Powerline Alternatives

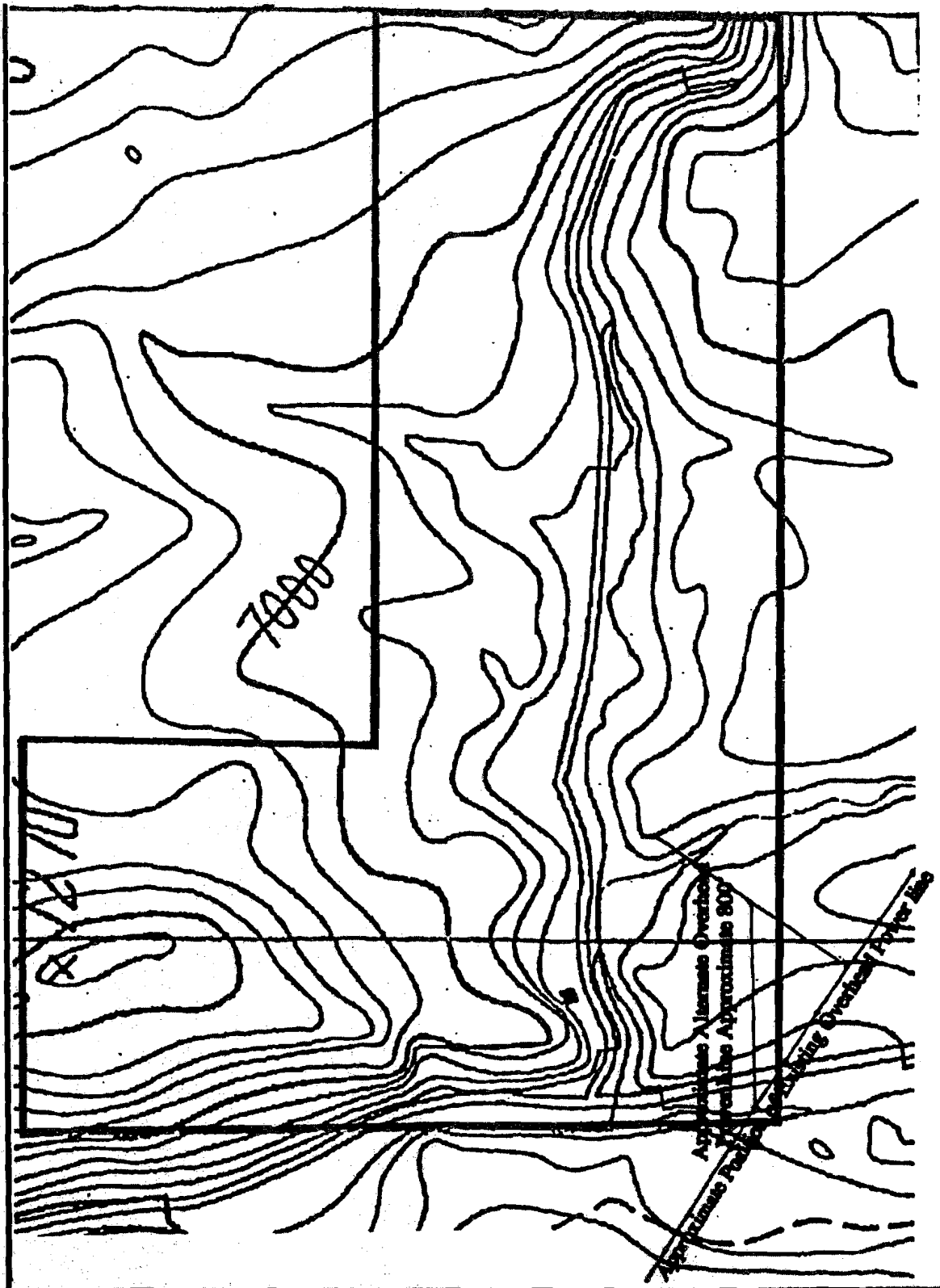
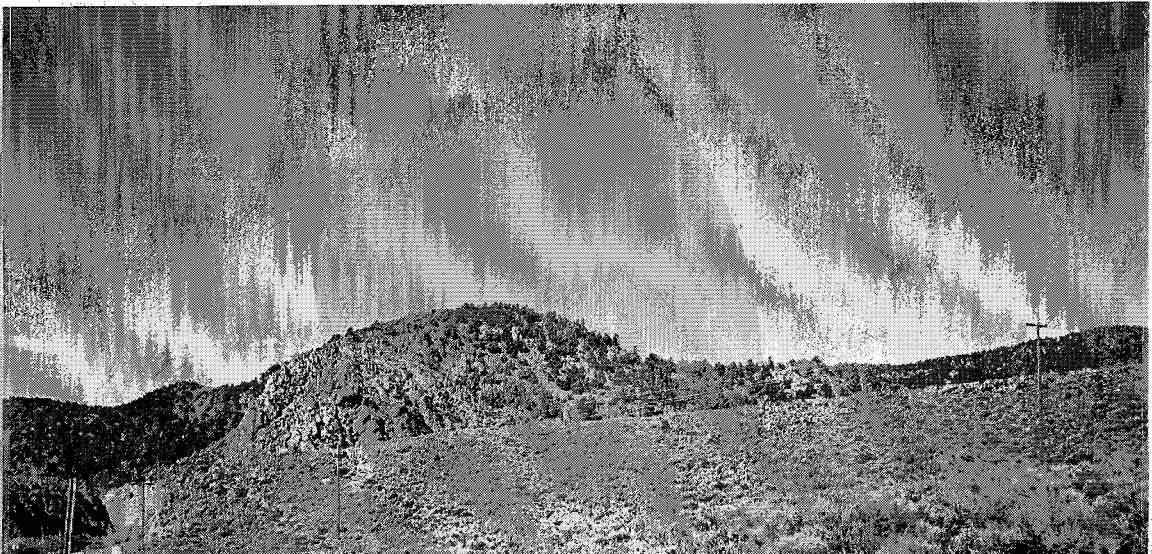
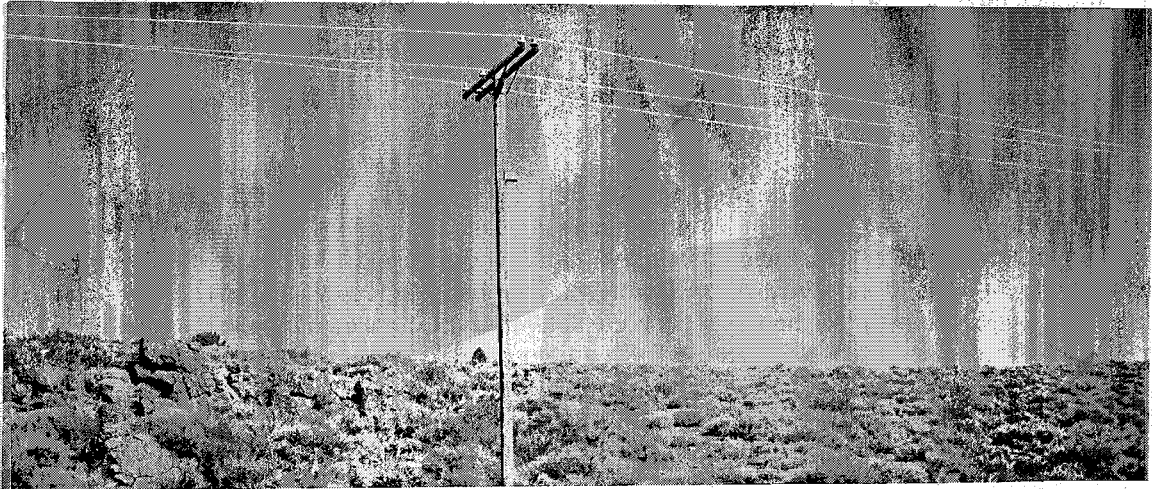
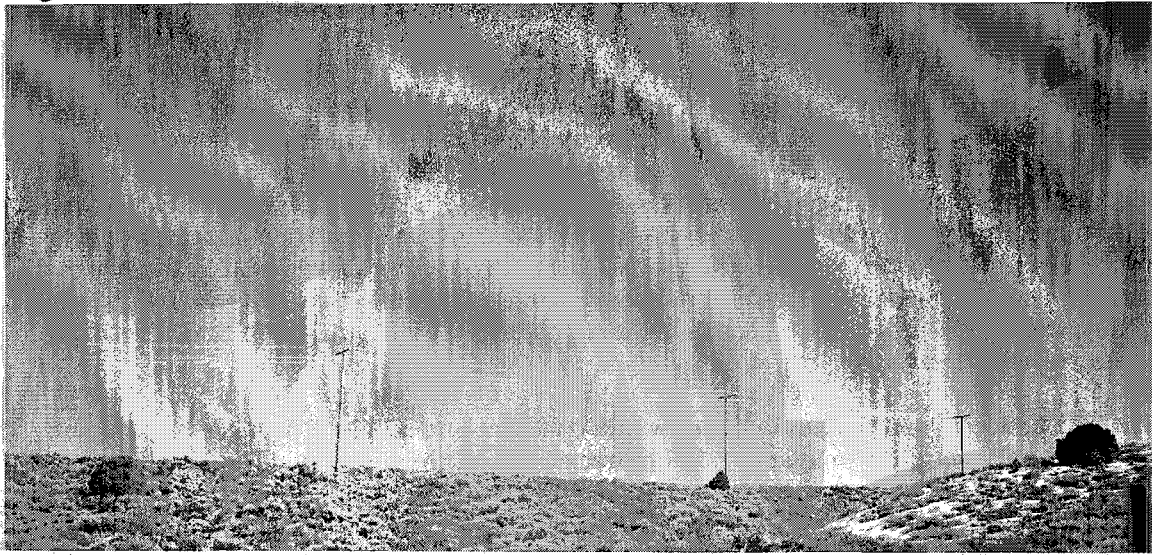


Figure 22 -- View 10, 11 and 12, Overhead Line Alternatives



It is unlikely that an overhead line would create the potential for a significant cumulative visual impact in the area since there are no adjacent private lands and private lands in the Bodie Hills are extremely dispersed.

2. The placement of utility lines above ground is environmentally preferable to underground placement. The proposed underground alignment would require trenching along Clearwater Creek and Hwy. 270 and crossing of Clearwater Creek. While specific impacts of this alignment are unknown, it can be assumed that trenching would disturb riparian vegetation and streambank stability and could contribute to erosion and sedimentation impacts resulting from streambank instability. In some places, there may be insufficient area in the narrow canyon floor to trench and install an underground utility line between Hwy. 270 and Clearwater Creek. In addition, short-term, and potentially long-term, visual impacts would result from the trenching.
3. The installation of underground utilities would create an unreasonable financial hardship on the applicant due to the unique physical characteristics of the property. The installation of the proposed underground alignment would require trenching close to a streambed and, due to the rugged terrain in the area, would probably require trenching or blasting through rocks. The proposed overhead alignments would lessen the financial hardship. It should be noted that financial hardship is specifically excluded from consideration in the required findings for a variance.
4. The exclusive purpose of the overhead line is not to serve an agricultural operation.

Analysis of the proposed utility line alignments determined that: 1) special circumstances applicable to the project site would make underground installation of the utility line infeasible (i.e. the rugged terrain in the area, the undeveloped nature of the area, the large size of the subject parcel, and the need to trench in a narrow canyon floor between Hwy. 270 and Clearwater Creek); 2) the overhead line placement could significantly disrupt the visual character of the area, depending on the alignment chosen, because there are no existing lines in the area except for the SCE transmission line along Hwy. 395 and topography and vegetation will not shield all of the proposed alignments; and 3) the proposed overhead utility line placement complies with Mono County General Plan policies and Mono County Code requirements (I Policy 6 allows overhead placement subject to approval of a variance; DG Policy 11 requires the line to be sited and constructed in a manner that minimizes its impacts to natural and visual resources).

***Visual Impact Assessment--Signs***

The project proponent is proposing to install two illuminated monument signs along Hwy. 270; three non-illuminated monument signs, two along Hwy. 395, and one along Hwy. 270; two free-standing directional signs at the RV Park entrance and exit; signs discouraging use of the Clearwater Creek corridor; and wall signs on individual buildings as indicated on building elevations.

The sign face on the monument signs will measure 32 square feet and the signs will be a maximum of six feet in height. The free standing signs at the entrance and exit of the RV Park will feature a sign face of 3 square feet and will not exceed a height of eight feet.

Wall signs in the project area will include a 32 sf (4' x 8') sign on the front of the Motel and Store building, a 25 sf (2.5' x 10') sign on the face of the Museum and a 22 sf (1' x 22') sign on the front of the two shower and laundromat buildings located in the camping cabin area and the RV park. The directional signs will feature a sign face of three square feet and will not exceed a height of six feet. The Clearwater Creek signs will read "Fragile Environment--Please Keep Out," and will be posted on the fence located near the Clearwater Creek channel bank.

The potential visual impacts of the signs will be minimized by using wood and rustic colors. The illuminated monument signs will feature incandescent lamps located under a rustic wood shake roof and will be located in the developed areas of the project along Hwy. 270. The proposed signs conform to requirements of the Mono County Sign Ordinance (MCZDC 19.35).

### ***Visual Impact Assessment--Single Family Residences***

During the comment period on the previous draft EIR, there was concern about the potential visual impacts of the single family residences and the access road to the residences. The designated building envelope has been chosen in order to minimize the visibility of the residences from Hwy. 270. In response to identified concerns, Specific Plan policies require the residences and the access road to comply with a number of design guidelines intended to avoid or minimize potential visual impacts. The residences are limited to a single-story; colors and materials must comply with the Design Guidelines in the Specific Plan. Landscaping, revegetation, and exterior lighting must also comply with the Design Guidelines in the Specific Plan. The access road shall:

"... utilize existing roads and grades where possible and shall be designed and constructed to minimize cut and fill. Existing trees shall be retained, where possible, to shield the road. Additional trees (e.g. pinyon pine and/or juniper) may be planted to further soften the road's appearance. Graded or disturbed cut slopes shall be revegetated in compliance with the revegetation standards in this Specific Plan." (LU Policy 4 c, Item 10).

### ***Potential Impacts and Mitigation***

#### **1. The project is anticipated to have significant unmitigatable and unavoidable visual impacts resulting from development activities.**

Although the project has been designed to avoid or minimize potential visual impacts, any new development on the floor of the existing canyon, the proposed overhead powerline, and/or the single family residences will result in visual impacts. A number of policies and design features have been incorporated into the Specific Plan to avoid potential visual impacts and to mitigate potential impacts to a less than significant level; however, the project will still result in significant visual impacts. Visual impacts will be significant and unavoidable because any development in the currently undeveloped project area will have some visual consequences.

The proposed development complies with Mono County General Plan policies and Mono County Code requirements concerning visual resources, site disturbance, structural design and materials, landscaping, outdoor lighting, utility lines, and signs.

The following mitigation measures, incorporated as policies and design features in the Specific Plan, will lessen potential impacts, but not to a less than significant level.

- a. RV spaces between Clearwater Creek and Hwy. 270 have been eliminated to reduce visual impacts of RVs parked close to the road and creek.
- b. No more than 10 % of the entire parcel may be disturbed; the remainder of the parcel must remain in its existing natural state (LU Policy 4h).
- c. Disturbed areas will be minimized and will be revegetated as soon as possible (DG Policy 8; NRC Policies 5, 6).
- d. No development will be allowed within the Clearwater Creek corridor area designated Open Space/Natural Habitat Protection (OS/NHP). The riparian scrub vegetation will be retained (NRC Policy 2). *The setback from the creek has been increased to 30 feet from 10 feet.*
- e. Bright colors or reflective materials, including windows, will not be allowed (DG Policy 1).

- f. Buildings will be designed and constructed to have a rustic appearance; materials and colors will blend in with the surrounding area (DG Policy 1).
- g. Wood fencing will be used to screen visually intrusive elements such as the propane tanks and dumpster and will be finished to ~~have a weathered, aged appearance~~ *blend into the surrounding environment* (DG Policy 2).
- h. Landscaping will be used to shield some project components (Figures 12 & 13, Preliminary Landscaping Plan).
- i. ~~Final building and landscaping plans may be reviewed with State Parks; State Parks recommendations shall be taken into consideration in the design of structures and landscaping (DG Policy 1e).~~
- i. Exterior lighting will be limited to that necessary for health and safety and will be shielded. Low intensity lighting will be used (DG Policy 5).
- j. Visually intrusive elements such as trash cans and lampposts will be painted a non-reflective color that blends in with the surrounding environment (DG Policies 4 & 6).
- k. The water storage tank will be shielded from view with trees and painted a non-reflective color that blends in with the surrounding environment (DG Policy 7).
- l. The overhead powerline will be sited and constructed in a manner to minimize impacts to natural and visual resources (DG Policy 11).
- m. Signs will be unobtrusive in color, material and design. The Specific Plan requires the project proponent to integrate existing and proposed signs along Hwy. 270, including Caltrans signs, State Parks signs, and the proposed Bodie RV Park signs (DG Policy 12).
- n. The single family residences on the north bluff shall be sited to minimize their visibility from Hwy. 270 and shall be single-story (LU Policy 4c). The access road to the houses will be designed and constructed to minimize cut and fill; existing trees will be retained to shield it from view and additional trees may be planted to soften the road's appearance (LU Policy 4c).

## RECREATION

It is anticipated that customers of the Bodie Hills RV Park will utilize the many recreational destinations in the surrounding areas, such as Bodie State Historic Park, Twin Lakes, Bridgeport Reservoir, the East Walker River, Green Creek, Virginia Lakes, and Mono Lake. Recreational facilities on-site will be limited to the proposed picnic and recreation area located in front of the camping cabin area which will include a lawn, picnic tables, a fire pit and playground equipment.

During the scoping process, there was some concern about potential spillover recreation impacts, particularly on wilderness values in adjacent Wilderness Study Areas on BLM lands. In response to those concerns, Specific Plan policies limit equestrian and OHV use, including bicycle, to "... roadways and trails within the developed area of the project" (LU Policy 9). In addition, the remainder of the parcel not proposed for development as part of the Bodie Hills RV Park (approximately 142 acres out of the total 155 acres of Assessor's Parcel No. 11-070-04) is designated as Rural Resort/Resource Conservation Passive Recreation (LU Policy 3). Future development within that designation is limited to two single family residences on the north bluff, a leachfield and utility lines on the southern bluff, and two freestanding signs along Hwy. 395 (LU Policy 4). LU Policy 4 creates a large area of permanent open space by requiring the areas immediately north and south of the proposed development to "... be maintained as natural buffer zones between the development and surrounding public lands" and restricting site disturbance to no more than 10 percent of the entire parcel.

Specific Plan policies designate the Clearwater Creek channel as Open Space/Natural Habitat Protection (LU Policy 5). ~~This designation allows recreational use of Clearwater Creek, e.g. fishing (LU Policy 6).~~

No significant impacts are anticipated. No additional mitigation is required.

### CULTURAL RESOURCES

An archaeological survey was conducted for the proposed project. Although the proposed development is limited to approximately 13 acres along Clearwater Creek, most of the 155 acre parcel was surveyed in order to allow project modifications without requiring additional survey work. Seventeen archaeological sites and 43 isolates were located and recorded during the survey. Records for five previously recorded sites on the parcel were updated during the survey.

Of the 22 sites identified, five of the sites do not meet the CEQA criteria for a significant cultural resource. Out the remaining 17 sites, 15 sites would require additional testing to determine their significance, while two previously recorded significant sites would not be impacted by the project. The project was redesigned to avoid potential impacts on all but five of the remaining 15 identified cultural resource sites. One of the directly impacted sites does not meet the criteria for a significant site under CEQA. The Specific Plan requires limited testing and surface collection at the four remaining sites (NRC Policy 10). Specific Plan policies also require the proponent to stop work and conduct an archaeological study should cultural resources be discovered during earthwork activities (NRC Policy 11).

*Possible impacts from increased human presence in the area (e.g. vandalism) have been addressed by incorporating the following policies from the Bodie Hills Recommended Cooperative Management Plan (Draft, 1994) and the 1999 Draft Mono County General Plan Land Use Element Amendments into the Bodie Hills RV Park SP/EIR:*

**Mono County Land Use Element--Bodie Hills Policies**

**Objective C:** *Reduce vandalism within the Bodie Hills Planning Area.*

**Policy 1:** *Recognize and support visitor education as the primary deterrent to vandalism. To help reduce vandalism, the BLM, State Parks, and the County should continue to educate the public about the cultural, historic, and natural values of Bodie SHP and the Bodie Hills.*

**Action 1.1:** *The BLM shall work with State Parks to develop interpretive kiosks or panels along the roads into Bodie to foster a better appreciation of the cultural, historic, and natural values of the Bodie Hills. The verbiage shall be positive and include references to respecting private lands within the area.*

**Action 1.2:** *Appropriate agencies shall patrol the Bodie Hills during special permitted events and times of high visitor use, such as hunting season, making visitor contacts and establishing a presence in the area.*

The mitigation measures contained in the Specific Plan will minimize the project's potential to directly or indirectly impact cultural resources to a less than significant level. No additional mitigation is required.

## **V. IMPACT SUMMARY**

### **EFFECTS NOT FOUND TO BE SIGNIFICANT**

CEQA requires an EIR to state briefly why various potential significant effects of a project were determined not to be significant and were therefore not discussed in detail in the EIR (CEQA Guidelines Section 15128).

The following potential significant effects of the Bodie Hills RV Park were determined not to be significant:

- a. Impacts related to noise.
- b. Impacts related to light and glare.
- c. Impacts related to land use.
- d. Impacts related to population and housing.
- e. Impacts related to traffic.
- f. Impacts related to public services.
- g. Impacts related to energy resources.
- h. Impacts related to the provision of utilities for the project.
- i. Impacts related to human health.
- j. Impacts related to recreational resources.

The reasons for this determination are discussed in Chapter IV, Environmental Analysis. The project has been designed to avoid or mitigate impacts to these areas. Uniformly applied development standards will be adopted into the Specific Plan to mitigate potential environmental effects to a less than significant level.

### **SIGNIFICANT ENVIRONMENTAL EFFECTS AND PROPOSED MITIGATION MEASURES**

CEQA requires an EIR to identify significant environmental effects of a proposed project (CEQA Guidelines Section 15126.2 a) and mitigation measures which could minimize those potential impacts (CEQA Guidelines Section 15126.4). The Environmental Analysis in Chapter IV determined that the following potential environmental effects of the Bodie Hills RV Park could be significant; proposed mitigation measures would reduce the potential effects to a less than significant level. A summary of the proposed mitigation measures for each of these impacts is contained in the Mitigation Monitoring Program (Chapter VI).

- a. Erosion and sedimentation impacts, both onsite from cut and fill and from channel erosion.
- b. Impacts to groundwater and streamflows and associated indirect impacts to wildlife (water quantity impacts).
- c. Impacts to plant life.
- d. Impacts to animal life.
- e. Impacts to cultural resources.

### **SIGNIFICANT UNAVOIDABLE ENVIRONMENTAL EFFECTS**

CEQA requires an EIR to describe any unavoidable significant impacts, "... including those which can be mitigated but not reduced to a level of insignificance" (CEQA Guidelines Section 15126.2

b). The following unavoidable significant environmental effects would occur as a result of implementing the Bodie Hills RV Park Specific Plan:

1. Visual impacts (see "Aesthetics" in Chapter IV).

Although the project has been designed to avoid or minimize potential visual impacts, any new development on the floor of the existing canyon, the proposed overhead powerline, and/or the single family residences will result in visual impacts. A number of policies and design features have been incorporated into the Specific Plan to avoid potential visual impacts and to mitigate potential impacts to a less than significant level; however, the project will still result in significant visual impacts. Visual impacts will be significant and unavoidable because any development in the currently undeveloped project area will have some visual consequences.

The proposed development complies with Mono County General Plan policies and Mono County Code requirements concerning visual resources, site disturbance, structural design and materials, landscaping, outdoor lighting, utility lines, and signs.

### **SIGNIFICANT IRREVERSIBLE ENVIRONMENTAL CHANGES**

CEQA requires an EIR to describe any irreversible uses of nonrenewable resources (CEQA Guidelines Section 15126.2 c). The Bodie Hills RV Park Specific Plan will not result in any irreversible uses of nonrenewable resources; this requirement is not applicable to this project.

### **GROWTH INDUCING IMPACTS**

An EIR must "discuss the ways in which the proposed project could foster economic or population growth, or the construction of additional housing, either directly or indirectly, in the surrounding environment" (CEQA Guidelines Section 15126.2 d).

The project is a self-contained seasonal recreational use, with a limited number of employees. The project will develop approximately 13 acres out of the 155 acre parcel; the remaining 142 acres will be designated Rural Resort/Resource Conservation Passive Recreation (RU/RCPR) in the Specific Plan. The only permitted uses will be passive recreation and two single family residences for employee housing. Since the development cannot expand, it will not require additional employees beyond the projected total of seven. The project provides four housing units (two RV spaces and two single family residences) for employees (in compliance with the Mono County General Plan, Housing Element, Policy B, Objective 3 and Program 3.1). The remainder of the employees are expected to live in surrounding communities. The type of use -- seasonal, recreational -- and the self-contained nature of the project will not create growth inducing impacts, either directly or indirectly, in the surrounding environment.

Additional growth in the area is also limited by the lack of private land in the Bodie Hills. The project site is surrounded by public lands on which land use is limited to non-developed uses such as recreation and grazing. Additional private lands in the Bodie Hills are widely dispersed and are designated Resource Management (RM) in the Mono County General Plan which limits their use to non-developed uses unless a Specific Plan is approved.

The southeast corner of a 29-acre private parcel does touch the northwest corner of the subject property. That parcel, which is currently vacant, straddles Hwy. 395 approximately 1 mile north of the junction of Hwy. 395 and the Bodie Road. Virginia Creek runs through the parcel, roughly parallel to Hwy. 395. Although the parcel currently has access and available electricity, development on the parcel would be constrained by the steep topography on site.

The project will bring utility lines to an area which previously had none available. This could contribute to additional incremental growth by making it easier and less costly to provide those services to other private lands in the area. Since private lands in the Bodie Hills are widely dispersed and are intermixed with public lands managed by the BLM, the extension of utility lines would require right-of-way clearance from the BLM and would be extremely costly due to the distances involved. The provision of utility lines to the project site is therefore not a compelling growth inducing impact.

### **CUMULATIVE IMPACTS**

"Cumulative impacts refers to two or more individual effects which, when considered together, are considerable or which compound or increase other environmental impacts."  
(CEQA Guidelines Section 15355)

There are no other known projects proposed for the Bodie Hills at this time and little existing development in the vicinity. Bodie State Historic Park is twelve miles east of the project site; no development is planned for the Park. Existing development on Hwy. 395 at Willow Springs, approximately 2 miles northwest of the project site, is limited; expansion there is constrained by the topography and the lack of additional privately owned land. The relatively small number of privately owned parcels in the Bodie Hills limits the potential for future projects and limits the potential for additional cumulative impacts not previously addressed. The project will not contribute to cumulative impacts.

### **PROJECT ALTERNATIVES**

"An EIR shall describe a range of reasonable alternatives to the project, or to the location of the project, which would feasibly attain most of the basic objectives of the project but would avoid or substantially lessen any of the significant effects of the project, and evaluate the comparative merits of the alternatives."  
(CEQA Guidelines Section 15126.6)

CEQA requires the analysis of a No Project alternative as well as other reasonable alternatives, and an evaluation of the comparative merits of the proposed alternatives. The alternatives developed for the proposed Bodie Hills RV Park were evaluated based on their potential to eliminate significant adverse environmental effects or reduce them to a level of insignificance, as well as to attain the project objective to:

"... provide a mix of over-night accommodations and services for the Bodie visitor in a rustic environment that complements the historic character of Bodie State Historic Park and the setting and natural resources in the area."

The Bodie Hills RV Park Specific Plan, the "Revised Project", describes one development scenario. The Revised Project, which was revised in direct response to concerns raised in the previous draft, avoids or mitigates all potential environmental impacts to a less than significant level, except for visual impacts. Visual impacts are considered significant and unavoidable because any development in the currently undeveloped project area will have some visual consequences.

The Alternatives Analysis describes three alternatives to the Revised Project, including the No Project Alternative. The analysis for each alternative includes the following:

1. An alternative project description;

2. Analysis of the alternative's potential to avoid or reduce significant environmental impacts to a less than significant level, particularly visual impacts;
3. The comparative merits of the alternative relative to the Revised Project (Table 4); and
4. The alternative's ability to meet the overall project objective.

### **Alternative 1 -- No Project**

The site would remain in its current natural state. Limited impacts resulting from casual day use of the area such as littering, casual collecting of cultural resources, limited erosion at road edges from parking and roadway drainage, would continue. This alternative would have far fewer potential environmental impacts compared to the Revised Project described in the Specific Plan, particularly on wildlife, vegetation, sedimentation and erosion, cultural resources, land uses, and visual resources. This alternative would not fulfill the project objective of providing a mix of over-night accommodations and services for the Bodie visitor.

### **Alternative 2 -- Reconfigured Project on the Same Site**

A reconfigured project could occur in two ways: 1) by eliminating one or more of the project components, and 2) by relocating one or more project component(s) to another site on the same parcel.

Eliminating one or more of the project components would reduce environmental impacts from the project since no development would occur at one or more sites on the parcel. This alternative would not fulfill the project objective of providing a mix of over-night accommodations and services for the Bodie visitor.

Relocating one or more project component(s) to another site on the same parcel would create additional potential environmental impacts. Due to the parcel's topography, the alternative location would have to be on the hillsides or on top of the bluffs overlooking Hwy. 270. Gaining access to these areas would require large amounts of earthwork. Significant visual impacts would occur both from the cut and fill required for the access and from the fact that the project would no longer be contained in a canyon but would be more visible on the upslope and plateau portions of the parcel. Depending on the site chosen, additional cultural resource sites could be impacted and additional habitat could be disturbed. Although development would no longer occur in areas adjacent to Clearwater Creek, the additional grading and earthwork necessary to access the steeper portions of the property would increase erosion and sedimentation and significantly impact the stream.

This alternative would not reduce visual impacts to a less than significant level because any development in the currently undeveloped project area will have some visual consequences. The severity of those impacts could increase if project components are located on the more visible portions of the property and if larger amounts of cut and fill were required for access. This alternative would fulfill the project objective of providing a mix of over-night accommodations and services for the Bodie visitor.

### **Alternative 3 -- Relocated Project on an Alternative Site**

The entire project would be relocated to an alternative site in the Bodie Hills. While there are several private parcels in the Bodie Hills proposed for designation as Rural Resort (RU) in the Draft Bodie Hills Management Plan, the project proponent does not own any of those parcels.

The environmental impacts from this alternative are unknown but could be expected to be of a similar type to those encountered on the proposed site; a more detailed analysis on alternative project sites was not completed because any project of a scale similar to the proposed project would result in similar impacts. If the project was located further east towards Bodie, the "Bodie Experience", which is related to the isolation and remoteness of Bodie State Park, would be compromised. Private parcels located further east on Hwy. 270 are in much more visible

## **Bodie Hills RV Park SP/EIR**

locations, where the road overlooks vast, undeveloped areas which are critical to the "Bodie Experience". Significant and unavoidable visual impacts would occur in these more visible locations.

This alternative would not reduce visual impacts to a less than significant level because any development in the currently undeveloped portions of the Bodie Hills will have some visual consequences. The severity of those impacts could increase if project components are located in more visible areas closer to Bodie State Park. This alternative would fulfill the project objective of providing a mix of over-night accommodations and services for the Bodie visitor.

### **Environmentally Superior Alternative**

The Environmentally Superior Alternative is the No Project Alternative since it would not create any environmental impacts. The No Project Alternative would not fulfill the project objective of developing "a mix of over-night accommodations and services for the Bodie visitor in a rustic environment that complements the historic character of Bodie State Historic Park and the setting and natural resources in the area" and is therefore not an acceptable alternative.

When the No Project Alternative is the environmentally superior alternative, CEQA Guidelines Section 15126.d.4 requires the identification of an environmentally superior alternative from the remaining alternatives. The Bodie Hills RV Park Specific Plan, the Revised Project, would be the environmentally superior alternative since it reduces potential impacts on wildlife habitat, vegetation removal, visual resources, indirect impacts on cultural resources, and sedimentation and erosion impacts on Clearwater Creek.

| TABLE 4 -- RELATIVE IMPACTS OF ALTERNATIVES                                               |                                                                         |                                  |                                                    |                                                        |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------|
| Impacts                                                                                   | Revised Project<br>Bodie Hills RV<br>Park SP                            | Alternative 1<br>No Project      | Alternative 2<br>Reconfigured<br>Project-Same Site | Alternative 3<br>Relocated Project<br>Alternative Site |
| Animal Life                                                                               | Baseline.                                                               | Significantly<br>reduce impacts. | Potential to<br>increase impacts.                  | No change.                                             |
| Plant Life                                                                                | All alternatives<br>compared to the<br>proposed project<br>description. | Significantly<br>reduce impacts. | Potential to<br>increase impacts.                  | No change.                                             |
| Cultural<br>Resources                                                                     |                                                                         | Reduce impacts.                  | Potential to<br>increase impacts.                  | Unknown.                                               |
| Erosion/<br>Sedimentation                                                                 |                                                                         | Significantly<br>reduce impacts. | Potential to<br>increase impacts.                  | No change.                                             |
| Water<br>Resources                                                                        |                                                                         | Significantly<br>reduce impacts. | No change. <sup>1</sup>                            | No change. <sup>1</sup>                                |
| Visual<br>Resources                                                                       |                                                                         | Significantly<br>reduce impacts. | Potential to<br>increase impacts.                  | Increase impacts. <sup>2</sup>                         |
| Notes:                                                                                    |                                                                         |                                  |                                                    |                                                        |
| 1. Assuming that new development occurs in an area not adjacent to surface waters.        |                                                                         |                                  |                                                    |                                                        |
| 2. Assuming that new development occurs adjacent to Hwy. 270, closer to Bodie State Park. |                                                                         |                                  |                                                    |                                                        |

## VI. MITIGATION MONITORING PROGRAM

The CEQA (PRC Section 21081.6) and the Mono County Environmental Handbook require the County to adopt, or make a condition of approval, a reporting and monitoring program to ensure compliance with project mitigation measures or conditions. A complete Mitigation Monitoring Program is included here.

The Mitigation Monitoring Program summarizes impacts, summarizes applicable Specific Plan policies which mitigate those impacts, and identifies the type of mitigation measure, the monitoring entity, implementing entity, and compliance schedule. For a complete discussion of impacts, see the Environmental Analysis (Chapter IV). For the complete text of Specific Plan policies, see Chapter III, Specific Plan Goals, Policies, and Implementation Measures.

Mitigation measures are identified as "Design" measures or "Ongoing" measures. "Design" measures or conditions are incorporated into the project to prevent environmental impacts, e.g. project designs, drainage retention basins, etc.. "Ongoing" measures or conditions are associated with the project over time, e.g. landscape maintenance, preservation of open space, etc.. The designated compliance officer for this Mitigation Monitoring Program is the Mono County Code Enforcement Officer (CEO). The CEO is responsible for coordinating all monitoring efforts and ensuring that all mitigation measures are being enforced. The Mitigation Monitoring Program also identifies specific monitoring entities for each mitigation measure, e.g. Planning Department, Public Works Department.

### BODIE HILLS RV PARK MITIGATION MONITORING PROGRAM

#### EARTH IMPACTS

(Erosion and sedimentation, channel erosion impacts to riparian vegetation)

DG Pol. 8      *Minimize site disturbance and cut and fill.*

NRC Pol. 15

|                      |                                                                      |
|----------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Mitigation Type:     | Design, Ongoing                                                      |
| Monitoring Process:  | Grading permit process, building permit process, ongoing inspections |
| Monitoring Entity:   | Planning Department, Public Works Department                         |
| Implementing Entity: | Developer                                                            |
| Compliance Schedule: | Grading permit approval, building permit approval                    |

NRC Pols. 5, 6      *Revegetate disturbed areas with native, indigenous species in conformance with revegetation performance standards in the Specific Plan.*

|                      |                                                   |
|----------------------|---------------------------------------------------|
| Mitigation Type:     | Design, Ongoing                                   |
| Monitoring Process:  | Specific plan implementation, ongoing inspections |
| Monitoring Entity:   | Planning Department, Public Works Department      |
| Implementing Entity: | Developer, Operator                               |
| Compliance Schedule: | Ongoing compliance review                         |

NRC Pol. 16      *Implementation of slope protection measures along Clearwater Creek to mitigate channel erosion impacts.*

|                     |                                              |
|---------------------|----------------------------------------------|
| Mitigation Type:    | Design                                       |
| Monitoring Process: | Specific Plan implementation                 |
| Monitoring Entity:  | Planning Department, Public Works Department |

## **Bodie Hills RV Park SP/EIR**

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Implementing Entity: Developer  
Compliance Schedule: Prior to construction of Phase II

*LU Pols 3,4,5, 6: 30 foot setback from top of bank of Clearwater Creek and restrictions on uses within that setback to reduce erosion. The RV sites will be a minimum of 30 feet from the top of the bank (LU Policy 2).*

Mitigation Type: Design, Ongoing  
Monitoring Process: Building permit process, ongoing inspections  
Monitoring Entity: Mono County Planning Department, Code Enforcement Officer  
Implementing Entity: Developer, Operator  
Compliance Schedule: Ongoing compliance review

*NRC Pols. 2, 3, 5, 6 Areas temporarily disturbed for bridge construction shall be restored as soon as possible.*

Mitigation Type: Ongoing during construction of bridges  
Monitoring Process: Ongoing inspections  
Monitoring Entity: Public Works Department, Code Enforcement Officer  
Implementing Entity: Developer  
Compliance Schedule: Following bridge completion, ongoing compliance review

*NRC Pols. 13, 14  
1 Policy 10 Requires compliance with the County's Grading Ordinance and with Lahontan Regional Water Quality Control Board standards for erosion control and NPDES permit requirements*

Mitigation Type: Ongoing  
Monitoring Process: Ongoing inspections  
Monitoring Entity: Public Works Department, Code Enforcement Officer  
Implementing Entity: Developer  
Compliance Schedule: Ongoing compliance review

*NRC Pols. 8 Requires compliance with performance standards which address dust control and erosion control practices.*

Mitigation Type: Ongoing  
Monitoring Process: Ongoing inspections  
Monitoring Entity: Public Works Department, Code Enforcement Officer  
Implementing Entity: Developer  
Compliance Schedule: Ongoing compliance review

### **AIR QUALITY IMPACTS**

**(Removal of vegetation and construction activities may impact air quality)**

*1 Pols. 10, 11 Require compliance with erosion control standards of County Grading Ordinance and Lahontan Regional Water Control Board.*

Mitigation Type: Design, Ongoing  
Monitoring Process: Grading permit process, ongoing inspections  
Monitoring Entity: Public Works Department  
Implementing Entity: Developer  
Compliance Schedule: Grading permit approval, ongoing compliance review

## Mitigation Monitoring Program

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DG Pol. 8      *Minimize site disturbance.*

NRC Pol. 15

Mitigation Type:      Design, Ongoing  
Monitoring Process:      Grading permit process, building permit process, ongoing inspections  
Monitoring Entity:      Planning Department, Public Works Department  
Implementing Entity:      Developer  
Compliance Schedule:      Grading permit approval, building permit approval

NRC Pols. 5, 6      *Revegetate disturbed areas with native, indigenous species in conformance with revegetation performance standards in the Specific Plan.*

Mitigation Type:      Design, Ongoing  
Monitoring Process:      Specific plan implementation, ongoing inspections  
Monitoring Entity:      Planning Department, Public Works Department  
Implementing Entity:      Developer, Operator  
Compliance Schedule:      Ongoing compliance review

### **WATER IMPACTS**

**(Sedimentation impacts on water quality, impacts on groundwater reserves and stream flows and associated indirect impacts to wildlife)**

LU Pols. 3, 4      *Remainder of parcel outside of developed area designated Rural Resort/Resource Conservation Passive Recreation and preserved as permanent open space to reduce intensity of development.*

Mitigation Type:      Design  
Monitoring Process:      Specific Plan implementation, ongoing inspections  
Monitoring Entity:      Planning Department  
Implementing Entity:      Developer , Operator  
Compliance Schedule:      Ongoing compliance review

LU Pols. 5, 6      *All development constructed outside of 30 foot buffer from tops of streambanks.*

Mitigation Type:      Design, Ongoing  
Monitoring Process:      Building permit process, onsite inspections  
Monitoring Entity:      Building Department  
Implementing Entity:      Developer  
Compliance Schedule:      Building permit approval, ongoing compliance review

NRC Policy 16      *Implementation of slope protection measures for streambanks.*

Mitigation Type:      Design, Ongoing  
Monitoring Process:      Specific plan implementation, ongoing inspections  
Monitoring Entity:      Planning Department, Public Works Department  
Implementing Entity:      Developer  
Compliance Schedule:      Prior to implementation of Phase II

I Policy 10      *Project has been designed to retain drainage onsite.*

NRC Pols. 13, 14      *Project will be designed and maintained to comply with all water quality standards and requirements of the Lahontan Regional Water Quality Control Board.*

Mitigation Type:      Design, Ongoing  
Monitoring Process:      Grading permit process, ongoing inspections  
Monitoring Entity:      Public Works Department, Code Enforcement Officer

## **Bodie Hills RV Park SP/EIR**

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Implementing Entity: Developer , Operator  
Compliance Schedule: Grading permit approval, ongoing compliance review

*NRC Policy 12 Well permit process requires finding of adequate groundwater supply and monitoring program to ensure groundwater pumping is not adversely impacting existing groundwater levels, streamflows or water quality.*

Mitigation Type: Ongoing  
Monitoring Process: Well permit approval process  
Monitoring Entity: Mono County Health Department  
Implementing Entity: Developer  
Compliance Schedule: Prior to initiation of Phases I, II and III

*I Policy 4 Septic permit process requires compliance with County Health Dept. and Lahontan RWQCB standards for waste disposal systems.*

Mitigation Type: Ongoing  
Monitoring Process: Septic permit approval process  
Monitoring Entity: Mono County Health Department  
Implementing Entity: Developer  
Compliance Schedule: Prior to initiation of Phases I, II and III

### **PLANT LIFE IMPACTS**

**(Removal of native vegetation, impacts to stream/riparian vegetation including potential wetlands, impacts to rare and endangered species)**

*DG Pol. 8 Minimize site disturbance.*

*NRC Pol. 15*

Mitigation Type: Design, Ongoing  
Monitoring Process: Grading permit process, building permit process, ongoing inspections  
Monitoring Entity: Planning Department, Public Works Department  
Implementing Entity: Developer  
Compliance Schedule: Grading permit approval, building permit approval

*NRC Pols. 5, 6 Revegetate disturbed areas with native, indigenous species in conformance with revegetation performance standards in the Specific Plan.*

Mitigation Type: Design, Ongoing  
Monitoring Process: Specific plan implementation, ongoing inspections  
Monitoring Entity: Planning Department, Public Works Department  
Implementing Entity: Developer, Operator  
Compliance Schedule: Ongoing compliance review

*LU Pols. 5, 6 Designate an Open Space/Natural Habitat Protection corridor along Clearwater Creek and restrict uses within that designation to avoid potential impacts to riparian habitat.*

Mitigation Type: Design, Ongoing  
Monitoring Process: Building permit process, ongoing inspections  
Monitoring Entity: Planning Department, Code Enforcement Officer  
Implementing Entity: Developer, Operator  
Compliance Schedule: Building permit approval, ongoing compliance review

## Mitigation Monitoring Program

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NRC Pol. 3      *Areas temporarily disturbed for bridge construction shall be restored as soon as possible.*

Mitigation Type:      Ongoing  
Monitoring Process:      Ongoing inspections  
Monitoring Entity:      Public Works Department, Code Enforcement Officer  
Implementing Entity:      Developer  
Compliance Schedule:      Following bridge completion, ongoing compliance review

NRC Pol. 7      *Avoid development in and adjacent to areas with identified rare and endangered species.*

Mitigation Type:      Design, Ongoing  
Monitoring Process:      Building permit process, ongoing inspections  
Monitoring Entity:      Planning Department  
Implementing Entity:      Developer  
Compliance Schedule:      Building permit approval, ongoing compliance review

### ANIMAL LIFE IMPACTS

**(Loss of wildlife habitat, disruption of wildlife movement and reproduction)**

DG Pol. 8      *Minimize site disturbance.*

NRC Pol. 15

Mitigation Type:      Design, Ongoing  
Monitoring Process:      Grading permit process, building permit process, ongoing inspections  
Monitoring Entity:      Planning Department, Public Works Department  
Implementing Entity:      Developer  
Compliance Schedule:      Grading permit approval, building permit approval

NRC Pols. 5, 6      *Revegetate disturbed areas with native, indigenous species in conformance with revegetation performance standards in the Specific Plan.*

Mitigation Type:      Design, Ongoing  
Monitoring Process:      Specific plan implementation, ongoing inspections  
Monitoring Entity:      Planning Department, Public Works Department  
Implementing Entity:      Developer, Operator  
Compliance Schedule:      Ongoing compliance review

LU Pols. 5, 6      *Designate an Open Space/Natural Habitat Protection corridor along Clearwater Creek and restrict uses within that designation to ensure that the corridor remains useful to wildlife, particularly mule deer.*

Mitigation Type:      Design, Ongoing  
Monitoring Process:      Building permit process, ongoing inspections  
Monitoring Entity:      Planning Department, Code Enforcement Officer  
Implementing Entity:      Developer, Operator  
Compliance Schedule:      Building permit approval, ongoing compliance review

LU Pols. 7, 8      *Designate a Wildlife Movement Corridor and restrict uses within that designation to ensure that the corridor remains useful to wildlife, particularly mule deer.*

Mitigation Type:      Design, Ongoing  
Monitoring Process:      Building permit process, ongoing inspections  
Monitoring Entity:      Planning Department, Code Enforcement Officer  
Implementing Entity:      Developer, Operator  
Compliance Schedule:      Building permit approval, ongoing compliance review

## **Bodie Hills RV Park SP/EIR**

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*NRC Pols. 8, 9      Minimize impacts to wildlife by establishing restrictions on domestic animals, fencing, outdoor lighting, and construction activities.*

Mitigation Type:      Design, Ongoing  
Monitoring Process:      Building permit process, ongoing inspections  
Monitoring Entity:      Planning Department, Public Works Dept., Code Enforcement Officer  
Implementing Entity:      Developer, Operator  
Compliance Schedule:      Building permit approval, ongoing compliance review

### **NOISE IMPACTS**

**(Construction related impacts, impacts from RV generators)**

*NRC Pol. 8      Minimize noise levels during construction by compliance with County's Noise Ordinance.*

Mitigation Type:      Ongoing  
Monitoring Process:      Ongoing inspections  
Monitoring Entity:      Public Works Department  
Implementing Entity:      Developer  
Compliance Schedule:      Ongoing compliance review

*NRC Pol. 9      Use of RV generators is prohibited after 10 p.m. and before 8 a.m..*

Mitigation Type:      Design, Ongoing  
Monitoring Process:      Ongoing inspections  
Monitoring Entity:      Code Enforcement Officer  
Implementing Entity:      Operator  
Compliance Schedule:      Ongoing compliance review

### **LIGHT & GLARE IMPACTS**

**(Impacts from outdoor lights, impacts from building materials)**

*DG Pol. 1      Windows and other building materials shall be non-reflective.*

Mitigation Type:      Design, Ongoing  
Monitoring Process:      Building permit process, onsite inspections  
Monitoring Entity:      Planning Department, Building Department  
Implementing Entity:      Developer, Operator  
Compliance Schedule:      Building permit approval, ongoing compliance review

*DG Pols. 5, 6      Outdoor lighting shall be limited to 19 lampposts and other lighting necessary for health and safety reasons. Lighting shall be designed and maintained to be indirect, non-intrusive and low intensity.*

Mitigation Type:      Design, Ongoing  
Monitoring Process:      Building permit process, onsite inspections  
Monitoring Entity:      Planning Department, Building Department  
Implementing Entity:      Developer, Operator  
Compliance Schedule:      Building permit approval, ongoing compliance review

### LAND USE IMPACTS

#### (Impacts to adjoining Wilderness Study Areas)

LU Pol. 4     *The Rural Resort/Resource Conservation Passive Recreation designation on the portion of the parcel not used for the development preserves a buffer zone of permanent open space between the development and surrounding uses.*

Mitigation Type:     Design  
Monitoring Process:     Ongoing inspections  
Monitoring Entity:     Planning Department, Code Enforcement Officer  
Implementing Entity:     Developer, Operator  
Compliance Schedule:     Ongoing compliance review

### NATURAL RESOURCE IMPACTS

#### (None not identified elsewhere in the analysis)

### RISK IMPACTS

#### (Erosion hazards resulting from high flows and channel erosion on Clearwater Creek)

NRC Pols. 4     *Bridges shall be designed and constructed to convey the 100 year flow. Slope protection shall be installed about bridge abutments and approaches.*

Mitigation Type:     Design  
Monitoring Process:     Building permit process  
Monitoring Entity:     Planning Department, Public Works Department  
Implementing Entity:     Developer  
Compliance Schedule:     Building permit approval

NRC Pol. 16     *Implementation of slope protection measures along Clearwater Creek.*

Mitigation Type:     Design  
Monitoring Process:     Specific Plan implementation  
Monitoring Entity:     Planning Department, Public Works Department  
Implementing Entity:     Developer  
Compliance Schedule:     Prior to construction of Phase II

LU Pols 5, 6:     *30foot setback from top of bank of Clearwater Creek and restrictions on uses within that setback to reduce erosion.*

Mitigation Type:     Design, Ongoing  
Monitoring Process:     Building permit process, ongoing inspections  
Monitoring Entity:     Mono County Planning Department, Code Enforcement Officer  
Implementing Entity:     Developer, Operator  
Compliance Schedule:     Ongoing compliance review

NRC Pols. 3     *Areas temporarily disturbed for bridge construction shall be restored as soon as possible.*

Mitigation Type:     Ongoing  
Monitoring Process:     Ongoing inspections  
Monitoring Entity:     Public Works Department, Code Enforcement Officer  
Implementing Entity:     Developer  
Compliance Schedule:     Following bridge completion, ongoing compliance review

## **Bodie Hills RV Park SP/EIR**

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### **POPULATION/HOUSING IMPACTS**

(None, the project provides employee housing)

### **TRANSPORTATION/TRAFFIC IMPACTS**

(No impacts, although the Specific Plan contains policies to increase pedestrian and traffic safety)

*TC Pol. 6 Tapers shall be constructed into and out of driveways.*

Mitigation Type: Design  
Monitoring Process: Grading permit process  
Monitoring Entity: Public Works Department  
Implementing Entity: Developer, Operator  
Compliance Schedule: Grading permit approval

*TC Pol. 7 Driveway for tent camping area shall be located farther east.*

Mitigation Type: Design  
Monitoring Process: Grading permit process  
Monitoring Entity: Public Works Department  
Implementing Entity: Developer  
Compliance Schedule: Grading permit approval

### **PUBLIC SERVICE IMPACTS**

(None, project compliance with Mono County Fire Safe Standards)

*DG Pol. 13 Require compliance with the Mono County Fire Safe Standards.*

*TC Pol. 1*

Mitigation Type: Design, Ongoing in the construction phase  
Monitoring Process: Building permit process, onsite inspections  
Monitoring Entity: Planning Department, Building and Public Works Departments  
Implementing Entity: Developer  
Compliance Schedule: Building permit approval

*I Pol. 7 Requires developer to provide a copy of the service contract with the Bridgeport Fire Protection District (BFFPD).*

Mitigation Type: Design  
Monitoring Process: Building permit process  
Monitoring Entity: Planning Department  
Implementing Entity: Developer  
Compliance Schedule: Prior to initiation of Phase I

### **ENERGY IMPACTS**

(None)

### **UTILITIES IMPACTS**

(None)

### **HUMAN HEALTH IMPACTS**

(None)

### AESTHETIC IMPACTS

(Significant unmitigatable impacts anticipated. The following mitigation measures lessen potential impacts, but not to a less than significant level)

DG Pol. 8      *Minimize site disturbance.*

NRC Pol. 15

Mitigation Type:      Design, Ongoing  
Monitoring Process:      Grading permit process, building permit process, ongoing inspections  
Monitoring Entity:      Planning Department, Public Works Department  
Implementing Entity:      Developer  
Compliance Schedule:      Grading permit approval, building permit approval

LU Pols. 5, 6      *Designate an Open Space/Natural Habitat Protection corridor along*

NRC Pol. 2      *Clearwater Creek and restrict uses within that designation to retain riparian vegetation.*

Mitigation Type:      Design, Ongoing  
Monitoring Process:      Building permit process, ongoing inspections  
Monitoring Entity:      Planning Department, Code Enforcement Officer  
Implementing Entity:      Developer, Operator  
Compliance Schedule:      Building permit approval, ongoing compliance review

DG Pol. 1      *Buildings will be designed and constructed to have a rustic modern appearance; materials and colors will blend with the surrounding area.*

Mitigation Type:      Design, Ongoing  
Monitoring Process:      Building permit process, onsite inspections  
Monitoring Entity:      Planning Department, Building Department  
Implementing Entity:      Developer, Operator  
Compliance Schedule:      Building permit approval, ongoing compliance review

DG Pol. 2      *Wood fencing will be used to screen visually intrusive elements such as propane tanks and the dumpster.*

Mitigation Type:      Design, Ongoing  
Monitoring Process:      Building permit process, onsite inspections  
Monitoring Entity:      Planning Department, Building Department  
Implementing Entity:      Developer, Operator  
Compliance Schedule:      Building permit approval, ongoing compliance review

DG Pols. 5, 6      *Outdoor lighting shall be limited to 19 lampposts and other lighting necessary for health and safety reasons. Lighting shall be designed and maintained to be indirect, non-intrusive and low intensity.*

Mitigation Type:      Design, Ongoing  
Monitoring Process:      Building permit process, onsite inspections  
Monitoring Entity:      Planning Department, Building Department  
Implementing Entity:      Developer, Operator  
Compliance Schedule:      Building permit approval, ongoing compliance review

DG Pols. 4, 6      *Visually intrusive elements such as trashcans and lampposts will be painted a non-reflective color that blends in with the surrounding area.*

Mitigation Type:      Design, Ongoing  
Monitoring Process:      Building permit process, onsite inspections

## **Bodie Hills RV Park SP/EIR**

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Monitoring Entity: Planning Department, Building Department  
Implementing Entity: Developer, Operator  
Compliance Schedule: Building permit approval, ongoing compliance review

*DG Pol. 7 The water storage tank will be shielded from view with trees and painted a non-reflective color that blends in with the surrounding environment.*

Mitigation Type: Design, Ongoing  
Monitoring Process: Building permit process, onsite inspections  
Monitoring Entity: Planning Department, Building Department  
Implementing Entity: Developer, Operator  
Compliance Schedule: Building permit approval, ongoing compliance review

*DG Pol. 12 Signs will be unobtrusive in color, material and design.*

Mitigation Type: Design, Ongoing  
Monitoring Process: Building permit process, onsite inspections  
Monitoring Entity: Planning Department, Building Department  
Implementing Entity: Developer, Operator  
Compliance Schedule: Building permit approval, ongoing compliance review

*LU Pol. 4 The single family residences on the north bluff shall be sited to minimize visibility from Hwy. 270 and are limited to a single story. The access road to the houses will be designed and constructed to minimize cut and fill and will be shielded from view with existing trees to minimize visual impacts.*

Mitigation Type: Design, ongoing construction  
Monitoring Process: Building permit process, Grading Permit approval  
Monitoring Entity: Planning Department, Public Works Department  
Implementing Entity: Developer  
Compliance Schedule: Building permit approval, Grading Permit approval

### **RECREATIONAL IMPACTS**

#### **(Spillover effects on adjacent public lands)**

*LU Pol. 9 Limits equestrian and OHV uses to existing roads and trails within the proposed developed area.*

*LU Pol. 4 The Rural Resort/Resource Conservation Passive Recreation designation on the portion of the parcel not used for the development allows passive recreation such as hiking and photography.*

*LU Pol. 6 The Open Space/Natural Habitat Protection designation along Clearwater Creek allows recreational use of the creek, e.g. fishing.*

Mitigation Type: Design, Ongoing  
Monitoring Process: Ongoing inspections  
Monitoring Entity: Planning Department, Code Enforcement Officer  
Implementing Entity: Developer, Operator  
Compliance Schedule: Ongoing compliance review

### CULTURAL RESOURCE IMPACTS

(Construction impacts, impacts to identified cultural resources sites)

*NRC Pol. 10      Avoid development in areas with identified cultural resource sites. Limited additional testing and surface collection at four identified sites to avoid potential impacts.*

Mitigation Type:      Design, Ongoing during construction phases  
Monitoring Process:      Specific Plan implementation, Building permit process  
Monitoring Entity:      Planning Department  
Implementing Entity:      Developer  
Compliance Schedule:      Prior to Building Permit approvals

*NRC Pol. 11      Stop work and conduct archaeological study if cultural resources are discovered during earthwork activities.*

Mitigation Type:      Ongoing during construction phases  
Monitoring Process:      Ongoing inspections  
Monitoring Entity:      Building and Public Works Departments  
Implementing Entity:      Developer  
Compliance Schedule:      Ongoing inspections and compliance review

## **VII. EIR COMMENTS & RESPONSE TO COMMENTS--DRAFT EIR**

This chapter contains comments received when the Draft Bodie Hills RV Park Specific Plan/EIR was circulated in 1997 and responses to those comments.

The content of the comment letters has been duplicated in this chapter. Comments are identified and responses to those comments follow in *bold and italicized print*. It is important to note that the responses to the comments may not be applicable to the Revised Draft Specific Plan/EIR since the DEIR was revised since the comments were prepared.

### **PUBLIC REVIEW**

The Draft Environmental Impact Report (DEIR) and Specific Plan were circulated for both agency and public review in August--October, 1997. The original comment period was 53 days. The comment period was extended an additional 12 days for a total of 65 days (the standard comment period is 45 days). Notices announcing the availability of the documents were placed in the local newspapers (Mammoth Times and Review Herald) and posted at various locations throughout the county. Local and Federal agencies and organizations were provided documents, as were individuals or organizations requesting copies; the State Clearinghouse distributed copies to State agencies. Copies were available for review or purchase (at the cost of reproduction) at the Planning Department offices in Bridgeport and Mammoth Lakes. Copies were also available for review at all branches of the county library system.

### **RESPONSE TO COMMENTS**

Section 15088 of the CEQA Guidelines requires the lead agency to evaluate comments on environmental issues received from persons reviewing the Draft EIR. The lead agency is required to identify individual comments and to respond to specific comments and suggestions. Responses to comments may modify the analysis in the Draft EIR, address new alternatives, correct factual information, or explain why no response is warranted.

Comments were received from the following entities:

#### **Federal Agencies**

Bureau of Land Management, Bishop, CA.

#### **State and Local Agencies**

California Department of Fish and Game, Long Beach, CA.

California Department of Parks and Recreation, Sacramento.

California Department of Transportation, Bishop.

Cal/EPA Lahontan Regional Water Quality Control Board, South Lake Tahoe, CA.

#### **Organizations**

Desert Survivors (several of the individuals listed below belong to this organization). Formal comments from the group written by Emilie Strauss, Chair, Bodie Task Force.

Sierra Club, San Francisco Bay Chapter.

**Individuals**

ALLEN, Harriet: Spring Valley, CA.  
BAGLEY, Mark: Bishop, CA.  
BEALS, Cassie: Oakland, CA.  
BELLIS, Tony D.: Danville, CA (2 responses).  
CANNESTRA, Tony: San Jose, CA.  
CARLE, Janet: Lee Vining, CA.  
CHAMPE, Christine: Berkeley, CA.  
CHARRON, David: Berkeley, CA.  
COUSTAN, Charles: San Francisco, CA.  
DEGEORGE, John: Monterey Park, CA.  
ECONOMOU, Constantina: Berkeley, CA.  
FAULK, Tom: Novato, CA.  
FELDMAN, Elisabeth: Oakland, CA.  
FERRER, Mary: Loleta, CA.  
FLAIG, Bryan: Berkeley, CA.  
GRUBER, Don: Seaside, CA.  
HARMON, Dana: Berkeley, CA.  
HAYE, Stan: Independence, CA.  
HENDERSON, Connie: Lee Vining, CA.  
INGRAM, Stephen: Swall Meadows, CA.  
INOUYE, Lynn: Livermore, CA.  
KEITH, Anthony.  
LANGNER, MJ: Bridgeport, CA.  
LIBKIND, Marcus: Livermore, CA.  
MARQUART, Dave: Lee Vining, CA.  
MASLENIKOV, Lorna: Lafayette, CA.  
MENKES, Paul: Sacramento, CA.  
MILLER, Bartshe: Lee Vining, CA.  
MONTAGU, Dominic: Hanoi, Vietnam.  
MOORE, Barbara: Lee Vining, CA.  
NIELSEN, Katherine: Bozeman, MT.  
PEDERSEN, Marialyce: Ventura, CA.  
PIERCE, Sonnet: Eldridge, MO.  
PIRRONE, Annette: San Francisco, CA.  
RIVERS, Walter: Larkspur, CA.  
ROGERS, Clint: San Francisco, CA.  
ROSE, Catherine M.: Santa Barbara & Tom's Place, CA.  
SAGUE, Shawn.  
SCHNEIDER, Dr. David: Berkeley, CA.  
SLATER, R. Giuseppe Slater: Salinas, CA.  
SMITH, Mrs. Catherine P.: Reno, NV.  
STALEY, Scott: Atlanta, GA.  
STINE, Anne: San Rafael, CA (2 responses).  
  
STRAUSS, Emilie: Berkeley, CA.  
STRAUSS, George: Berkeley, CA.  
TAKEMOTO, Mary: Alameda, CA.

TAYLOR, Paul B.: Key West, FL.  
THAW, Steve: Moraga, CA.  
THOMAS, Eric: San Francisco, CA.  
VAHEY, Lynn M.: San Leandro, CA.  
VALDEZ, Samuel: San Francisco, CA.  
WALTERS, Sally: Oakland, CA (2 responses).  
WHITAKER, Howard J.: Gold River, CA.  
YOUNG, Ryan R.: Oakland, CA.

## **Bodie Hills RV Park SP/FEIR**

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State of California-Business, Transportation and Housing Agency

Pete Wilson Governor

### **DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION**

500 SOUTH MAIN STREET  
BISHOP, CA 93514

(760) 872-0658  
dmanning@trmx3.dot.ca.com

October 6, 1997

File - Mono - 270 - 0.1  
SCH 97012031

Mr. Stephan Higa  
Mono County Planning Department  
P.O. Box 347  
Mammoth Lakes, California 93526

### **DRAFT SPECIFIC PLAN AND ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT**

Thank you for the opportunity to review and comment on the proposed Bodie Hills Recreational Vehicle Park, Motel and Campground on SR270. We have several concerns. An Encroachment Permit will require that fences be constructed at least one foot outside of Caltrans right of way. All-weather shoulder material or paving may be required. No marking of crosswalks will be allowed. See "Cross Walk" shown on Plan Sheet 9 Specific Plan and Draft EIR.

*The Specific Plan has been amended to note that no marking of crosswalks shall be allowed, all-weather shoulder material or paving may be required, and that the Encroachment Permit shall require that fences be constructed at least one foot outside of the Caltrans right of way.*

We agree with Page 14 of the Specific Plan and Draft EIR that talks of a 40-foot wide offer of right of way to the State. On 11/13/96 Chuck Andrus of our Right of Way Department met with Bill Lapham (one of the project proponents) and John Langford (Bear Engineering) on the project site. At that time it was agreed that through the project area the State would receive a 40-foot right of way (highway easement) as well as sign easements and drainage easements to cover features that extend outside the 40-foot limits. Additionally, it was agreed that from the easterly project boundary to the east boundary of Assessor's Parcel 11-070-09 the State would be granted a right of way (highway easement) that would generally cover an area to 10 feet to 15 feet outside of the tops of cuts or toes of fills. All of the right of way is to be conveyed to the State at no cost to the State. The State will do the surveying and office work necessary to calculate the right of way and prepare the deed. If you have questions on these matters please contact me via email at dmanning@trmx3.dot.ca.gov or phone at (760) 872-0658.

*The Specific Plan has been amended to note that the project proponents will grant a right of way that will generally cover an area to 10 feet to 15 feet outside of the tops of cuts or toes of fills, that all of the right of way is to be conveyed to the State at no cost to the State, and that the State will do the surveying and office work necessary to calculate the right of way and prepare the deed.*

Sincerely,  
Dennis Manning  
Chief, Branch of IGR/CEQA Reviews

DM:mam      cc: SCH - Chris Belskey

**Cal/EPA Lahontan Regional Water Quality Control Board**

South Lake Tahoe Office  
2501 Lake Tahoe Blvd.  
South Lake Tahoe, CA 96150  
(916) 542-5400 FAX (916) 544-2271

October 6, 1997  
Stephen Higa, Senior Planner  
Mono County Planning Department  
PO Box 347  
Mammoth Lakes, CA 93546

Dear Mr. Higa:

**COMMENTS BODIE HILLS RV PARK DRAFT SPECIFIC PLAN AND EIR, SCH #97012031,  
MONO COUNTY**

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comments on draft Specific Plan and EIR (DEIR) for the above-referenced project. Based on the information contained in the DEIR, we understand that the proposed project includes construction of a recreational vehicle park, motel and campground located on a portion of 155 acre parcel at the southeast intersection of U.S. 395 and State Route 270.

The Lahontan Regional Board will be a responsible agency under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) for the Project and will need an adequate CEQA document as the basis for Clean Water Act Section 401 Water Quality Certification (if wetlands or stream crossings are involved) and issuing or waiving waste discharge requirements. Our comments on the scope and content of the EIR are as follows:

1. Wetland Impact -Section IV, **Environmental Analysis**, contains a short section on wetlands. Based on the project location, there may be adverse impacts to wetlands. If potential impacts to wetlands are identified, including a reduction in wetland functions and values, then the project proponent will be required to demonstrate to the Regional Board through a thorough analysis of project alternatives that such impacts are unavoidable. If it is shown that wetlands impacts cannot be avoided, then the project proponent will be required to demonstrate that the project has been modified to minimize the impacts to wetlands to the maximum extent possible. When wetland disturbance is unavoidable and has been minimized, the Regional Board requires mitigation so that there will be no net loss of wetland acreage and no net loss of wetland functions and values (currently the Regional Board typically requires a minimum restoration or creation of an area 1.5 times the area of wetland disturbance).

Full justification and mitigation for any wetland disturbance must be provided and discussed in the EIR. It is incumbent upon the County to provide an environmental document that clearly assesses potential impacts to wetlands. It must be demonstrated that construction in wetlands has been avoided to every extent, and that measures will be taken to mitigate the impact of construction to the maximum extent practical. We recommend that all wetland areas be identified in the area by persons with experience in delineating wetlands (using the Corps of Engineers Wetlands Delineation Manual).

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers should be contacted for information on obtaining Federal permits for projects in floodplain and wetland areas. If Federal permits are necessary for work in

## **Bodie Hills RV Park SP/FEIR**

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floodplains and wetlands, you will need to apply to the Lahontan Regional Board for Clean Water Act Section 401 Water Quality Certification.

*The project area has the potential to contain wetlands in the riparian corridor. Potential impacts to wetlands have been avoided by siting development away from the riparian corridor. Bridge pilings will be placed outside of the riparian corridor in the stream setback. Use of a 30 foot stream setback (as proposed in Alternative 2, Reduced Project), instead of the proposed 10 foot setback, would further avoid potential impacts to the riparian corridor and potential associated wetlands. Potential indirect impacts resulting from human intrusion into the riparian corridor will be minimized by the site topography (steep banks, thick vegetation) which discourages use of the area, and fencing along the top of the stream banks. In addition, the DEIR /SP has been amended to require signs along the top of the streambank noting that the riparian corridor is a fragile environment and directing visitors to keep out of that area.*

2. Well Test Water Disposal - The Basin Plan prohibits the discharge of wastes to surface water in the Lahontan Region. Wastes include the spoils from well drilling activities, and development and test waters from newly drilled wells. Please include in the environmental document the disposal location and methods of disposal for the wastes generated by well drilling activities.

*The DEIR /SP has been amended to note that the Basin Plan prohibits the discharge of wastes to surface water in the Lahontan Region and to require the project engineer to develop an appropriate plan for the disposal of well drilling wastes . This plan must be approved by the Mono County Health Department prior to the commencement of any well drilling activities.*

3. Risk of Spills - The EIR should assess the potential of spills, leaks, and accidental discharges of materials during construction and operation of the new facility. Impacts from such discharges should be discussed with appropriate cleanup responses.

*Appropriate cleanup responses will be required by the Mono County Health Department.*

We look forward to receiving a copy of the final environmental document. Please contact Chris Adair at (916) 542-5433, or me at (916) 542-5434, if you have any questions regarding these comments.

Sincerely,

John Short, P.E.  
Senior Water Resource Control Engineer  
cc: State Clearing House

CWA/shT:Bodie2.cqa  
[26/New/Bodie Hills RV Park, Motel & Campground]

Subject:  
stop Mono Hwy 395/270 development  
Date:  
Mon, 20 Oct 1997 13:06:32 -0400  
From:  
TONY.CANNESTRA@EY.COM  
To:  
" - (052)monocounty (a) qnet.com" <monocounty@qnet.com>

Dear Mono County Planning Dept.,

I am writing to ask Mono County to support the "No Project Alternative" regarding the proposed development at the junction of Highways 270 and 395 along Clearwater Creek.

I do not support any development of this scenic and natural area which lies in the Mono Lake deer herd migration pattern.

Thank you for your consideration of my opinion.

Very sincerely,

Tony Cannestra  
1487 Triborough Lane  
San Jose, CA 95126  
(408)947-5480

*Comments noted.*

## **Bodie Hills RV Park SP/FEIR**

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Mono Co Planning Dept.  
PO Box 347  
Mammoth Lakes, CA 93546

Dear Planning Dept.:

I am writing in response to the EIR for the Bodie RV park proposal. I feel that the proposal is not appropriate for the site. It is right on a creek with important riparian habitat. It is also impacting an important migration corridor for deer. Also, part of the Bodie experience is the drive in, and a project of this scope, immediately impacting the viewshed as you turn off Hwy. 395, is grossly inappropriate. Please do not allow such a large development in such a beautiful canyon.

Thank you,

Janet Carle  
PO Box 39  
Lee Vining, CA 93541

*Comments noted.*

Subject:  
Date:  
Fri, 17 Oct 1997 21:05:51 -0800  
From:  
charron@worldnet.att.net (David Charron)  
To:  
monocounty@qnet.com

Dear Mono County Planning Dept.,

I am writing to ask Mono County to support the "No Project Alternative" regarding the proposed development at the junction of Highways 270 and 395 along Clearwater Creek.

I do not support any development of this scenic and natural area which lies in the Mono Lake deer herd migration pattern.

Thank you for your consideration of my opinion.

Very sincerely,

David Charron  
40 Eucalyptus Road  
Berkeley, CA 94705

*Comments noted.*

## **Bodie Hills RV Park SP/FEIR**

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Subject:

Save Mono Lake!

Date:

Wed, 15 Oct 1997 11:26:55 -0700

From:

Charles Coustan <charles@homeshark.com>

To:

monocounty@qnet.com

Dear Mono County Planning Dept.,

I am writing to ask Mono County to support the "No Project Alternative" regarding the proposed development at the junction of Highways 270 and 395 along Clearwater Creek.

I do not support any development of this scenic and natural area which lies in the Mono Lake deer herd migration pattern.

Thank you for your consideration of my opinion.

Very sincerely,

Charles Coustan  
519 Lincoln Way#4  
San Francisco, CA 94122

*Comments noted.*

Subject:  
Proposed development along 395  
Date:  
Wed, 15 Oct 1997 14:48:26 -0700  
From:  
John DeGeorge@us.mw.com  
To:  
monocounty@qnet.com

REGARDING Proposed development along 395

I am writing to ask Mono County to support the "No Project Alternative" regarding the proposed development at the junction of Highways 270 and 395 along Clearwater Creek.

I do not support any development of this scenic and natural area which lies in the Mono Lake deer herd migration pattern.

Thank you for your consideration of my opinion.

Very sincerely,

John DeGeorge  
769 Ridgecrest Street  
Monterey Park, CA 91754

*Comments noted.*

## **Bodie Hills RV Park SP/FEIR**

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10 Panoramic Way  
Berkeley, CA 94704  
October 18, 1997

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

Dear Mono County Planning Department:

I am writing to ask you to support the No Alternative clause in the Bodie Hills RV Park Draft Specific Plan and Environmental Impact Report.

Development at the junction of Highway 395 and SR 270 would be near Clearwater Creek. It is inappropriate to put RV's within the riparian zone of this creek. I understand that 25% of the Mono Lake deer herd migrate directly through the project parcel during the spring and fall. The Bodie Hills are some of the wildest Great Basin ranges in the part of California east of the Sierra Nevada. This area is one of my favorite areas in the State. There is no development for miles in either direction on Highway 395.

*The RV park will not be sited within the riparian corridor. The project proposes a 10 foot setback from the streambank (and in Alternative 2, a 30 foot setback). The proposed 10 foot setback is a minimum setback throughout the project site. In areas where the bank has been identified as being less stable, the setback is greater than 10 feet. Although the project site is a part of a very large area used by the Mono Lake deer herd during its migrations, most of the herd migrates to the south of the project site.*

Please do not allow this pristine area to be developed. Perhaps the BLM could pursue a land exchange with the parcel owners for a less environmentally sensitive piece of land. Bridgeport is already developed, perhaps a site could be found near there.

Sincerely,

Constantina Economou

*Comments noted. The applicant approached the BLM about the possibility of a land exchange in the late 1980s and was told that the BLM was not accepting additional lands for potential exchange. Also, the BLM's 1993 Bishop Area Resource Management Plan does not identify the property for acquisition.*

Subject:  
RV park at Bodie  
Date:  
Sun, 05 Oct 1997 11:47:06 -0700  
From:  
Tom Faulk <tomgf@microweb.com>  
To:  
monocounty@qnet.com

Dear Mono County Planning Department,                      October 5, 1997

I am an RV'er. Two years ago I took my mother to Mono Lake to see the turning Aspens and Bodie. We went in my 27' RV and had a wonderful time.

I understand that there are plans to develop an RV park at the 395 and 270 junction. This is a beautiful area and a visual gateway to Bodie. Clearwater Creek runs through this area and it would be a shame to disturb it with extensive grading. The sight of stores, motels, and campgrounds would not enhance this area at all.

I would be in favor of the landowners doing a land exchange with the BLM for a less environmentally sensitive site, possible near Bridgeport or other towns. We did not mind staying at RV parks away from Bodie and driving the beautiful drive to get there. I see a need for RV parks and camping areas, but closer to the existing towns along the way. This area does not need a spreading sprawl of building along highway 395.

I encourage the county to support the No Project Alternative. And look for other sites more accommodating.

Most Sincerely,

Tom Faulk  
7060 Redwood Blvd. #6  
Novato, CA 94945  
415-898-4668

*Comments noted. The applicant approached the BLM about the possibility of a land exchange in the late 1980s and was told that the BLM was not accepting additional lands for potential exchange. Also, the BLM's 1993 Bishop Area Resource Management Plan does not identify the property for acquisition.*

## **Bodie Hills RV Park SP/FEIR.**

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Subject:

Development at junction SR 270 and Highway 395

Date:

Sun, 05 Oct 1997 13:34:33 EDT

From:

mllibkind@juno.com (Marcus A Libkind)

To:

monocounty@qnet.com

Dear Mono County Planning Department,

Having lived in Lee Vining for 6 months and visited Bodie in both the winter (by skis) and summer (by car) I have a great love for the East Side of the Sierra which includes the beauty and history of the area.

The proposed development at the junction of SR 270 and Highway 395 should be rejected because it will be an eye-sore at the gateway to Bodie, will be within feet of Clearwater Creek, will require extensive grading of an otherwise natural area, and because it represents a hop-scotch type development with no other development nearby.

I urge the county to promote a land exchange between the owners and the BLM for lands more appropriate for development. By this I mean lands near to an already developed area.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Marcus Libkind  
1391 Moselle Court  
Livermore, CA 94550  
mllibkind@juno.com

*Comments noted. The applicant approached the BLM about the possibility of a land exchange in the late 1980s and was told that the BLM was not accepting additional lands for potential exchange. Also, the BLM's 1993 Bishop Area Resource Management Plan does not identify the property for acquisition.*

902 Carl Rd.  
Lafayette, CA 94549  
October 7, 1997

Mono County Planning Department  
P.O. Box 347  
Mammoth Lakes, CA 93546

Dear Sirs:

I am writing in regards to the proposed RV park at the junction of SR 270 and Highway 395. This project would be at the edge of beautiful Clearwater Creek and is in a narrow site which would require extensive grading. Twenty-five percent of the Mono Lake deer herd pass through this area twice a year. I urge the county to support the No Project Alternative. A possible solution would be a land exchange with the BLM for a less environmentally sensitive site.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Lorna Maslenikov

*The applicant approached the BLM about the possibility of a land exchange in the late 1980s and was told that the BLM was not accepting additional lands for potential exchange. Also, the BLM's 1993 Bishop Area Resource Management Plan does not identify the property for acquisition.*

## **Bodie Hills RV Park SP/FEIR**

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Subject:

mono lake area development

Date:

16 Oct 1997 10:17:26 EDT

From:

hanoi!DomDiep@netnam.org.vn@postbox.anu.edu.au

To:

monocounty@qnet.com

Dear Mono County Planning Dept.,

I am writing to ask Mono County to support the "No Project Alternative" regarding the proposed development at the junction of Highways 270 and 395 along Clearwater Creek.

I do not support any development of this scenic and natural area which lies in the Mono Lake deer herd migration pattern. Although far from Mono Lake, it remains close to my heart and keeps me sane when I think of home.

Thank you for your consideration of my opinion.

Very sincerely,

Dominic Montagu  
Country Advisor  
The Population Council  
37A Van Mieu St.  
Hanoi, Vietnam

\*\*\*\*\*

!Please use the email address below when responding. Do not just 'reply'. Mail from VN is routed through Australia and address suffixes are often added which do not work for incoming mail!

Dominic Montagu, Country Advisor  
The Population Council - 37A Van Mieu St, Hanoi, Vietnam  
fax: (84-4) 733-0588 tel: (84-4) 733-0577  
email: domdiep@netnam.org.vn

\*\*\*\*\*

*Comments noted.*

Walter Rivers  
227 Monte Vista  
Larkspur, CA 94939

October 11, 1997

Dear Planning Dept.:

The road to Bodie, SR 270, as you know is a narrow two lane road along Clearwater Creek before climbing into the hills. A large development at the junction of SR 270 and Highway 395 (a visual gateway to Bodie) would mean extensive grading at the edge of beautiful Clearwater Creek. RV sites would be 10 feet from the creek. Other matters would also be concerned, deer migration for example. Potential BLM lands near Bridgeport might accommodate the project without sprawling down Highway 395.

Please consider supporting the No Project Alternative.

Sincerely,

Walter Rivers

*Comments noted.*

## **Bodie Hills RV Park SP/FEIR**

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Subject:  
270/395 development  
Date:  
Thu, 9 Oct 1997 12:10:03 -0800  
From:  
"Clint Rogers" <crogers@gene.COM>  
To:  
monocounty@qnet.com

Dear Mono County Planning Dept.,

I am writing to ask Mono County to support the "No Project Alternative" regarding the proposed development at the junction of Highways 270 and 395 along Clearwater Creek.

I do not support any development of this scenic and natural area which lies in the Mono Lake deer herd migration pattern.

Thank you for your consideration of my opinion.

Very sincerely,

Clint Rogers  
101 Cervantes Blvd. #108  
San Francisco, CA 94123  
(415) 673-4596

*Comments noted.*

DR. DAVID L. SCHNEIDER  
OPTOMETRIST  
ph./fax (510) 848-6733  
1730 HEARST AVENUE  
BERKELEY, CA 94703

---

10/9/97

Dear MCPD-

I encourage the county to support the NO PROJECT alternative re: the development of SR 270 and 395.

Sincerely

Dr. David Schneider

*Comments noted.*

## **Bodie Hills RV Park SP/FEIR**

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R. Giuseppi Slater, M.D., FAAFP

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Post Office Box 1129  
Salinas, CA 93902

(408) 728-0844  
FAX (408) 763-9901  
E-Mail: 74170.2601@Compuserve.com

September 19, 1997

Mono County Planning Department  
POB 347  
Mammoth Lakes, CA 93546

Dear People:

I am writing this letter to urge you to reject the proposed Bodie RV Park now under consideration. This project, if realized, would cause significant environmental degradation. In addition, it would markedly detract from the unique and marvelous scenic quality of the area. I have been visiting your area, summer and winter, for almost 30 years, and I feel that it would be a great mistake, which would be regretted in the future, to allow this development to occur.

Thanks for your consideration of these opinions.

Sincerely,

R. Giuseppi Slater, M.D., FAAFP

*Comments noted.*

*Director, Emergency Department, Hazel Hawkins Memorial Hospital, Hollister, CA  
Attending Physician, Emergency Department, Santa Clara Valley Medical Center, San Jose, CA  
Assistant Clinical Professor, Stanford University School of Medicine*

September 6, 1997

Mono County Planning Department  
POB 347  
Mammoth Lakes, CA 93546

Re: Proposed Bodie RV Park

This will register my protest against this project.

I have lived in Reno for nearly three decades. In that time, I've driven Highway 395 many times, taking advantage of numerous recreation sites in Mono County along the Sierran Front, certainly including Bodie and the Bodie Hills. Even when Bodie is not my destination, I've always taken delight in the intimate beauty of the red cliffs and the lovely stream that enters from the east side of the highway, with its willows and wildflowers. It's important to be very cautious about developing this area for two reasons. I value this drive along 395 both because it leads to so many beauties in Mono and Inyo Counties, but because the drive through relatively undisturbed countryside such as this spot offers is a reward in itself. I'm sure many others treasure this wonderful drive as much as I and would be reluctant to see unnecessary development spoil a part of it. Moreover, it's important to consider the indirect effects. I'm sure that hunting is a revenue-producing activity in your wonderful area. To allow construction in a major deer migration path puts an important part (the Mono Lake deer herd, that is) of an existing tourist asset at risk.

So, please turn this project down, and preserve your gorgeous highway from further strip development.

Very truly yours,

Mrs. Catherine P. Smith  
3565 Rosalinda Dr.  
Reno, NV 89503

*Comments noted.*

**Bodie Hills RV Park SP/FEIR**

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Subject:

Save Mono Lake

Date:

Mon, 20 Oct 1997 13:53:19 -0400

From:

"Staley,Scott" <sstaley@ptc.com>

Organization:

Parametric Technology Corp.

To:

monocounty@qnet.com

Please count my vote to stop any development of the area around Mono Lake such as the planned RV park on Hwy 270 and 395 along Clearwater Creek.

Please help to ensure this area is free of development so our children can enjoy the natural beauty of the area.

Best Regards

Scott Staley

2896 North Hills Drive

Atlanta, GA 30305

*Comments noted.*

**\* Wilderness Rites \***  
*Ecopsychology      Vision Quests   Nature Therapy*

I completely oppose any development on the Bodie Road including store, motel, RV park, cabins, etc., etc. It is time we placed the value of other life forms above our own. I am a native Californian, 3<sup>rd</sup> generation, have spent my life in the ([A] desert & Eastern Sierra). Please do something unique--listen to the voice of the earth, not just the human one.

Thank you.

Anne Stine

Anne Stine, M.A., MFCC 20 Spring Grove Avenue, San Rafael, CA 94901 415-457-3691

*Comments noted.*

## **Bodie Hills RV Park SP/FEIR**

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September 25, 1997

Mono County Planning Department  
POB 347  
Mammoth Lakes, CA 93546  
Attn: Mr. Stephen Higa

Dear Mr. Higa-

I wanted to thank you and your staff for providing me with a copy of the "Bodie Hills RV Park Draft Specific Plan and EIR" via email, and for sending a copy to the Berkeley Public Library. I have taken a peripheral look at the document and wanted to request an additional 45-day public comment period. The current deadline is October 27, 1997.

There are several reasons for the need for the extension. Due to technical difficulties in the Planning Department, I did not receive my copy until 15 Sept. 1997 which allows me 42 days rather than 45 days to prepare comments. In addition, the document is complex and deals with a wide range of considered alternatives. Additional time would greatly increase the ability of myself and other interested parties to review the document and prepare thoughtful comments. Although the EIR is available from the county at cost, many interested Bay Area residents find the cost prohibitive and do not have access to email. Extra time would be helpful so more people can peruse or copy the document at the library.

Also, I have been in touch with a number of Eastern Sierra residents who were not aware of the proposed project and were interested in commenting. As prior public scoping seems to have been limited, it would be in the best interest of the public (as per guidelines and intent of the California Environmental Quality Act) to allow for an extension.

Sincerely,

Emilie Strauss  
1606 Hearst Ave.  
Berkeley, CA 94703

F:\EMILIE\BODIE\EXTENSIO LET  
September 25, 1997 (3:28pm)

*The original comment period was 53 days. The comment period was extended an additional 12 days for a total of 65 days. The standard comment period is 45 days.*

1468 Grizzly Peak  
Berkeley, California 94708

October 2, 1997

Mono County Planning Department  
PO Box 347  
Mammoth Lakes, CVA 93546

As a frequent visitor to Mono County let me express my opposition to the RV Park proposed for the Bodie Road just east of Highway 395.

The undeveloped Bodie Road is part of what might be called the Bodie experience. 395 is fairly wild itself, but once one turns off on the Bodie Road the experience of being away from late 20th century pressures is increased. A RV park or any other development would mar this experience. And Bodie is one of Mono County's most important tourist attractions. Indirectly it adds to employment.

Beyond this the site of the proposed RV park would spoil a narrow, beautiful creek and disturb a mule deer migration corridor.

There are numerous locations for RVs camps which would be less harmful both to the environment and Mono County's tourist industry.

Sincerely,

George Strauss

*Comments noted.*

## **Bodie Hills RV Park SP/FEIR**

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October 6, 1997

Mono County Planning Department  
P.O. Box 347  
Mammoth Lakes, CA 93546

Dear Planning Department,

I am writing you this letter because I want to express my concerns regarding the proposed Bodie Hills RV Park. Last year I had the pleasure of visiting Bodie, Mono Lake, Convict Lake, and many of the other natural scenic wonders along Highway 395. One of the things that impressed me about Bodie, besides its great beauty, was its fragility. I feel that an RV Park placed at the junction of SR 270 and Highway 395 may threaten this part of California's heritage. The need to share such a heritage should also be heavily offset by the desire to protect it. I cannot help but think that an RV Park so close to Bodie will encourage the sort of invasive traffic that has had such a negative impact on parks such as Yosemite and Zion in Utah.

I am also concerned about the impact this development will have on Clearwater Creek and on the deer which migrate through the proposed parcel. If past experience is to be our teacher, then we should know that the effect will not be salutary. There are communities both north and south of the proposed park near which such a development might be a welcome addition and where the impact on nature would be lessened.

We are the caretakers of this earth. It is not ours to do with as we please. Whatever we do may not have an immediately discernible impact, but in the future we will know what we have lost - fresh air, clean water, nature's beauty.

Sincerely Yours,

Mary Takemoto  
1401 Saint Charles  
Alameda, CA 94501

*Comments noted.*

Subject:  
no development along Clearwater Creek  
Date:  
Wed, 15 Oct 97 10:23:51 PST  
From:  
ethomas@gateway.austin-hayne.com  
To:  
monocounty@qnet.com

Dear Mono County Planning Dept.,

I am writing to ask Mono County to support the "No Project Alternative" regarding the proposed development at the junction of Highways 270 and 395 along Clearwater Creek.

As someone who visits and encourages others to visit Mono Lake, I would be concerned about any development which would interfere with the stark natural beauty and sense of silence and calm that is unique to that area.

Thank you for your consideration of my opinion.

Very sincerely,

Eric Thomas  
269 Filbert  
SF, CA 94133

*Comments noted.*

**Bodie Hills RV Park SP/FEIR**

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Subject:

\*No\* to Clearwater Creek Development

Date:

20 Oct 97 15:02:07 -0700

From:

"SVALDEZ.US.ORACLE.COM" <SVALDEZ@us.oracle.com>

To:

monocounty@qnet.com

Dear Mono County Planning Department,

I am writing to ask Mono County to support the "No Project Alternative" regarding the proposed development at the junction of Highways 270 and 395 along Clearwater Creek. I do not support any development of this scenic and natural area which lies in the Mono Lake deer herd migration pattern.

Thanks for doing your part to limit the amount of development so as to preserve this special area's natural beauty.

Sam

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Samuel Valdez  
2060 Leavenworth Street  
Apartment 9  
San Francisco CA 94133-2550

*Comments noted.*

Bodie Hills RV Park

mailto:/C%7C/Program%20Files/Netscape/Us...4472897e8a@%5B205.162.21.208%5D&number 33

Subject: Bodie Hills RV Park

Date: Tue, 16 Sep 97 17:00:08 PDT

From: smwalters@batnet.com (Sally M. Walters)

To: monocounty@qnet.com

Attention: Mike Higgins

Please send me the EIR by email on the Bodie Hills RV Park.

I am extremely concerned and opposed to the development of any kind within 1,000 feet of any riparian habitat or wetland habitat, and any groundwater pumping that affects the creek, stream or river.

There are other alternatives for an RV park that will not affect riparian wetland habitat or groundwater.

The alternatives analysis should include a land trade with a state, federal or local agency for an area outside of the riparian zone.

My address is:

Sally Walters

551 Jean St #301

Oakland Ca 94610

email: smwalters@batnet.com

*Comments noted. The applicant approached the BLM about the possibility of a land exchange in the late 1980s and was told that the BLM was not accepting additional lands for potential exchange. Also, the BLM's 1993 Bishop Area Resource Management Plan does not identify the property for acquisition.*

## **Bodie Hills RV Park SP/FEIR**

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Sally M. Walters  
551 Jean Street #301  
Oakland, California 94610  
smwalters@batnet.com 510-654-9708

Mr. Steve Higa  
Mono County Planning Department  
P. O. Box 347  
Mammoth, CA 93546

October 7, 1997

Dear Mr. Higa:

I have reviewed the "Bodie Hills RV Park Draft Specific Plan and EIR" (DEIR) dated August 1997. My comments follow and address the inadequacy of the document, the inappropriateness of the site, and an alternative to destroying floodplain riparian habitat.

As stated in the DEIR the special studies (flora and fauna) do not reflect the latest RV Park Plan. Plant surveys are needed in seven other areas because of the changes to the DEIR, and resurveys of the entire site were needed to complete the timing of the 1996 season surveys. Because each year is different, and the plan is now changed, the entire cycle of surveys should be repeated. In addition, the wildlife surveys were only conducted in winter. What about wildlife use during other seasons?

*The DEIR /SP has been amended to require additional plant surveys in all previously unsurveyed areas prior to the initiation of each phase of the project. Additionally, Phase I has been redesigned to avoid any unsurveyed areas so that construction in unsurveyed areas will not be required prior to construction.*

*One of the primary purposes of the wildlife survey was to determine if the project site contained suitable habitat for any sensitive wildlife species. Based upon the project's habitat types, the wildlife biologist found that the project would not impact any sensitive wildlife species.*

Typically the California Natural Diversity Data Base (CNDDB) species searches include the surrounding adjacent quadrangles, not just the one quadrangle where the proposed project occurs. A more thorough data base search would require additional literature reviews and possibly site surveys to rule out the occurrence of other sensitive species. Fish and invertebrate surveys are needed and were not included in the DEIR.

*Comment noted. The DFG in responding to the Notice of Preparation for the project did not recommend the completion of specific fish and invertebrate surveys prior to the preparation of the DEIR.*

The DEIR does not discuss the floodplain, seasonal flooding, sources of water, water rights, or water use for the proposed park. Methods to conserve water (to collect rain water, use composting toilets, etc.) should be discussed thoroughly. I am also concerned the owners wish to plant a grassy lawn while proposing to use native plants (a species list was not included). Lawns require an unnatural amount of water and fertilizers that would run off into the creek. Will imported or borrow soil be used for the lawn?

*The project is not in a FEMA flood hazard zone, the RV park is a seasonal use with a minimal number of permanent structures, and the required setback from the stream is intended to minimize hazards from flooding. In addition, the proposed 10 foot setback is a minimum setback*

*throughout the project site. In areas where the bank has been identified as being less stable, the setback is greater than 10 feet. The DEIR has been amended to include additional mapping of the bank stability and its relationship to proposed setbacks. Alternative 2, which requires a 30 foot setback from the top of the streambank, instead of the proposed 10 foot setback, further minimizes potential hazards related to flooding.*

*The proposed 10 foot setback is consistent with the Mono County Zoning and Development Code (MCZDC) requirements for stream setbacks since those requirements only restrict structures and impervious surfaces within a 30 foot setback from the stream. No structures or impervious surfaces are proposed within 30 feet of Clearwater Creek. In addition, the MCZDC notes the following concerning stream setback requirements: "specific plans or area general plans may be more restrictive or less restrictive, and shall take precedence".*

*The Specific Plan contains a policy (Policy 12, p. 43) to avoid potential impacts to ground and surface waters from groundwater pumping. That policy requires the applicant's engineer to submit water quality and quantity information, including production rates, static water levels and drawdown rates, prior to issuance of a well permit.*

The extent of impacts to the natural environment is not shown on a map or quantified. There is a description of 1,000 cubic yards of cut and 600 cubic yards of fill but it is either not represented or not legible on any of the maps included in the DEIR. There is no vegetation map or wetland delineation which shows the existing site conditions.

*Comments noted. Existing vegetation is described in the text and shown in the photos of the site.*

The discussions of setbacks for the creek are confusing. Three different times set backs are mentioned with different widths using inconsistent terms (bank, canyon, creek and stream). No cross-sections of the creek relative to the position of the development are included. The maps have writing on them and elevations which are not legible. The maps either have "no scale" or they say "not to scale" but have a scale. Legible accurate maps and cross-sections need not be expensive or in color. However, color photographs are reasonable to expect in such a document and are relatively inexpensive.

*In addition, the proposed 10 foot setback is a minimum setback throughout the project site. In areas where the bank has been identified as being less stable, the setback is greater than 10 feet. The DEIR has been amended to include additional mapping of the bank stability and its relationship to proposed setbacks.*

*Your comments on the maps and color photographs are noted.*

Reasonable alternatives that avoid all impacts to riparian wetlands have not been sufficiently explored. Before the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (ACOE) can consider issuing a permit to place fill in a wetland, all feasible and prudent alternatives must be explored. One alternative is a land trade with the adjacent government land holders. I suggest that the land owners approach the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) or other government land holder to discuss a land exchange. A suitable site for an RV park would be in an area that has been previously used by RV's or other development but that does not have sensitive species, wetlands, or cultural value. Such a site should also require methods of water conservation, and limit or have no groundwater pumping or dewatering of wetlands.

*The project area has the potential to contain wetlands in the riparian corridor. Potential impacts to wetlands have been avoided by siting development away from the riparian corridor. Bridge pilings will be placed outside of the riparian corridor in the stream setback. Use of a 30 foot stream setback (as proposed in Alternative 2, Reduced Project), instead of the proposed 10*

## **Bodie Hills RV Park SP/FEIR**

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*foot setback, would further avoid potential impacts to the riparian corridor and potential associated wetlands. Potential indirect impacts resulting from human intrusion into the riparian corridor will be minimized by the site topography (steep banks, thick vegetation) which discourages use of the area, and fencing along the top of the stream banks. In addition, the SP/DEIR has been amended to require signs along the top of the streambank noting that the riparian corridor is a fragile environment and directing visitors to keep out of that area.*

*The applicant approached the BLM about the possibility of a land exchange in the late 1980s and was told that the BLM was not accepting additional lands for potential exchange. Also, the BLM's 1993 Bishop Area Resource Management Plan does not identify the property for acquisition.*

If the land owners wish to pursue developing the site they should be advised that considerably more work and financial commitment will be required. The DEIR is inadequate without the updated plant and missing survey information to review. A Supplemental DEIR should be issued and a wetland mitigation and monitoring plan. I do not believe this site will receive the required ACOE permit or the 1603 DFG Streambed Alteration Agreement, as there are reasonable alternatives to impacting wetlands.

*Comments noted.*

While there may be a need for an RV park facility and I appreciate the effort that went into designing a rustic western theme RV Park, I am opposed to locating the park in a floodplain riparian wetland along a desert creek. I recommend that the land owners approach the BLM to discuss a land exchange. Wetlands are important critical habitat to many species of wildlife and serve many other ecological functions such as groundwater recharge and should be preserved. Clear Creek should be protected from all development through a land trust, conservation easement or other means.

*Comments noted, see responses above.*

I appreciate the opportunity to comment on the Draft Bodie RV Park EIR and hope that my comments have been useful to the land owners and Mono County Planning Department.

Sincerely,

Sally M. Walters

cc: BLM, DFG, ACOE

HOWARD J. WHITAKER  
2041 Campton Circle  
Gold River, CA 95670-8301

29 September 1997

Mono County Planning Department  
P.O. Box 347  
Mammoth Lakes, CA 93546

Dear Sirs,

RE: Bodie RV Park

I oppose the proposed location of the Bodie RV Park.

I am a frequent visitor to Mono County, both as a destination and in transiting, but even when transiting I tend to linger for at least a day. I do this, because Mono County is not yet cluttered and disfigured by the kind of developments represented by the proposed Bodie RV Park.

I understand that the County wants to facilitate visitation and tourism, and that the proposed RV park is seen as helping to accomplish such, but in fact, it will accomplish just the opposite, as it could not be in a more inappropriate place than along the road to Bodie, arguably Mono County's premiere attraction. Allowing the RV park to be located along the road to Bodie would shatter the superb mind-set into which one slips when starting up the road to Bodie, a mind-set which culminates with actual arrival at Bodie; inducement of that mind-set is what causes people to keep returning to Mono County to visit Bodie. Siting this proposed RV park along the Bodie road will only serve to degrade one of Mono County's most valuable visitor attractions.

Please contemplate why visitors such as me come to Mono County; not to partake of facilities such as that proposed, but because Mono County has to date been careful NOT to allow such clutter and disfigurement of its magnificent landscapes. If more facilities such as the proposed are needed to accommodate visitation, then by all means allow such development, but only in places where they will not be as blatantly intrusive and off-putting as this one would be.

Sincerely,

Howard J. Whitaker

*Comments noted.*

## **Bodie Hills RV Park SP/FEIR**

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Subject:

Bodie Hills RV Park Draft Plan & EIR

Date:

Sun, 5 Oct 1997 01:42:46 -0400 (EDT)

From:

bredt19-2@idt.net (Ryan Young)

To:

monocounty@qnet.com

I urge the county to support the No Project Alternative.

I feel the impacts of the proposed project on Clearwater Creek would be severe, with no mitigation economically possible.

Ryan R Young  
Oakland, California

*Comments noted.*

Lynn M. Vahey  
645 Daniels Drive  
San Leandro, CA 94577

October 20, 1997

Mono County Planning Department/Steve Higa  
P.O. Box 347  
Mammoth Lakes, CA 94536

RE: BODIE HILLS RV PARK DRAFT EIR/SP #97012031

Dear Mono County Planning Department:

This letter serves to express my opposition to the proposed Bodie Hills RV Park Development.

The intense impact to the existing natural state of the land that would be created by this development would be disastrous. Construction of an RV Park, motel, cabins, and additional ancillary services near the junction of Highways 395 and 270 will radically disfigure the open land, causing destruction to our natural resources. Wildlife migrations would be disrupted, a riparian area would be ruined, the quest for wilderness and the scenic, natural experience which draws us to the area will be destroyed.

This development will increase traffic to the area, causing increased vehicle emissions and pollution. It will increase the likelihood of accidents and personal injuries, delays in traffic flow can become common. Noise levels will increase and storm water run-off tainted with additional traffic and development related toxins will impinge upon the land.

To design the development to look like an "Old Western Town" will not lessen the negative environmental impact of this development. Regardless of the building facades, the project remains disharmonious with the surrounding natural and cultural values of the area.

To deny this development and retain the existing natural beauty of the area does not mean the absence of accommodations to visitors seeking more "creature comforts". Campsites and services are available in nearby Bridgeport and Lee Vining.

I urge the Mono County Planning Department to deny the Bodie Hills RV Park Development and support the "NO PROJECT ALTERNATIVE". To support this project is to place greater value on the possible monetary gains to be made by the County than on the value of the essence for which this area is so deeply loved. Once scarred by development, the land is forever damaged. It is imperative that this land remain as open, natural space providing this and future generations with the beauty and natural experience for which this area is renown.

Sincerely,

Lynn M. Vahey

*Comments noted.*

**\* Wilderness Rites \***  
*Ecopsychology      Vision Quests Nature Therapy*

I have written you several times before concerning the plans to permanently change the unspoiled beauty of the area around Bodie Hills, once again placing the desires of human above that of other communities. I am so disappointed that you are persisting in this endeavor. I keep wondering when decisions will be made that truly care for the environment rather than 'always', and it does seem as though it is 'always', deciding in favor of development rather than leaving areas as they are. It is also very nearsighted to think that we can continue to make these decisions and not have the continual sacrifice of undeveloped areas not ultimately affect us as well. This is another plea to leave an area in its natural condition and to offer us humans the opportunity to experience a natural area on its own terms rather than ruining it to suit our needs. I suppose that if you go ahead with it, it will be a political move and one that involves money, benefiting someone's pocket, or reputation, or some such reward. The rewards of natural beauty can never be replaced by anything else without it ultimately backfiring.

I have lived almost all of my 55 years in California and am a native to the mountains and deserts of this state. The eastern Sierra is one of few relatively unspoiled areas we have left. May it be kept that way, for our children and for the generations to come. Do something unique and very courageous, change the course of the direction you are headed in.

With appreciation,

Anne Stine

*Comments noted.*

24 October 1997

P.O. Box 194  
Lee Vining, CA 93541

760-647-6434

To: Stephen Higa  
Mono County Planning Department  
From: Barbara Moore  
Re: Bodie Hills RV Park Specific Plan & EIR

I have reviewed the recent updated plans and have no objection to the project taken as a whole. However I note the following that concerns me:

1. A crosswalk from the south development to the north side has been added and indicated. I don't think this is an adequate safety feature in view of the volume of traffic on Highway 270 and the curves of the road as it approaches the project from both directions. I see a tragic accident waiting to happen that only could be avoided by either an overpass, or underpass.

*Comment noted.*

2. I feel the RV parking along the highway, #'s 31 through 39, should be eliminated. RV's aren't very pretty and would be a distraction from the rustic nature of the area and the proposed design of the buildings; nor would they be compatible in this remote area. The 2 rail wood fence proposed could not provide adequate screening. Parking them would be an additional hazard along the highway.

*Comment noted.*

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on this project.

Barbara Moore

10/27/97

Annette Pirrone  
219 23rd Ave.  
San Francisco, CA 94121

415/752-0147

Dear Planning Dept.

As a Central California native who spent every summer of my childhood in the threatened area near Bodie and Mono Lake, I strongly encourage the county to support the No Project Alternative.

My first choice would be that this type of development not take place at all. However, if it is being considered I would request that it be placed in another location. Please help to prevent the mindless sprawl overtaking our State and take this request into consideration.

Thank you,

Annette Pirrone

*Comments noted.*

Steve Higa  
Mono County Planning Dept  
POB 347  
Mammoth Lakes, CA 93546

Dear Steve Higa,

10/26/97

Thanks for the chance to comment on the proposed Bodie RV Park EIR. As a former resident of Mono County and as someone who spends part of each year vacationing in the beautiful eastern Sierra Nevada, I strongly oppose the proposed Bodie RV Park. After reviewing the EIR, my reasons for opposing the planned development are as follows.

I ) Development Detracts from the "Bodie Experience." Development along the Bodie Road (Hwy 270) greatly detracts from the experience of visiting the historic Bodie ghost town. Currently, once you leave Hwy 395 and enter the winding, twisting canyon at the beginning of Hwy 270, you are immediately transported back into time. You feel what it was like to travel out to this isolated silver mining town on a sagebrush plateau, far away from the lights and congestion of town. Hwy 270 is a rough and rugged road, some of it paved, some not. A sprawling mini-mall development, with its faux rustic exterior and turn-of-the-century lamps scattered like invasive Russian thistle along this beautiful road, would greatly cheapen the Bodie Experience for visitors to the ghost town. It gives the corridor of Hwy 270 a theme park quality. Is that what we want in Mono County? I can just imagine visitors wondering if Bodie itself wasn't constructed recently and made to look old, just like that sprawling RV park they saw on the way to the ghost town. We should have greater respect for our historic areas and for the people who visit them.

*The project has been designed to minimize potential impacts to the "Bodie Experience". The "Bodie Experience" depends on the isolation and remoteness of Bodie. The proposed project is located at the beginning of the Bodie Road, contained in a canyon, along the paved portion of the Bodie Road. It is not located on much more visible parcels further east on the Bodie Road which overlook vast, undeveloped areas critical to the sense of isolation and remoteness which defines the "Bodie Experience". Nor is it located on the unpaved portion of the Bodie Road, which contributes to the sense of going back in time, also a part of the "Bodie Experience".*

2) Lack of Hvdrologic Data. Where's the flood frequency analysis data for Clearwater Creek? Since the development will be so close to the creek the EIR should provide information on flood events and their frequency in the area. Tax payers will have to cough up big bucks through the Federal Emergency Management Agency if and when they have to bail out this development as structures and facilities are

destroyed by a flood. It would be prudent if the public had the flood frequency data before the project began.

*The project is not in a FEMA flood hazard zone, the RV park is a seasonal use with a minimal number of permanent structures, and the required setback from the stream is intended to minimize hazards from flooding. In addition, the proposed 10 foot setback is a minimum setback throughout the project site. In areas where the bank has been identified as being less stable, the setback is greater than 10 feet. The DEIR has been amended to include additional mapping of the bank stability and its relationship to proposed setbacks. Alternative 2, which requires a 30 foot setback from the top of the streambank, instead of the proposed 10 foot setback, further minimizes potential hazards related to flooding.*

*The proposed 10 foot setback is consistent with the Mono County Zoning and Development Code (MCZDC) requirements for stream setbacks since those requirements only restrict structures and impervious surfaces within a 30 foot setback from the stream. No structures or impervious surfaces are proposed within 30 feet of Clearwater Creek. In addition, the MCZDC notes the following concerning stream setback requirements: "specific plans or area general plans may be more restrictive or less restrictive, and shall take precedence".*

3) Negative Impacts to wildlife. You state in the EIR that the RV park will have detrimental effects on wildlife in the Bodie Hills. I agree with your assessment, but I would add that the wildlife surveys did not do enough to paint a clear picture of the use of wildlife habitat throughout the year. Animal studies were only performed during November and December of 1995. How can you judge the usage of the riparian corridor along Clearwater Creek during a two month study at the beginning of winter? What about the migrating bird species that utilize the willow thickets along the creek in spring and fall? What about the sage grouse leks used in the late winter/early spring? But what I am most concerned about is the effects this development will have on the mule deer herd that migrates through this corridor each year. As you state, the herd is already "stressed" from the drought in the late 80's and early 90's, and from other developments in the herd's existing range. The RV park will only increase traffic to and from the ghost town, and therefore, it will increase the chances of deer being killed by vehicles. Additionally, the lights from cars at night and the RV park itself with all its campsites, cabins, RV spaces, stores, and facilities will have the effect of driving the herd away from the traditional migration route adding to the stress you already discussed in the EIR. I think this is unacceptable since it constitutes a significant impact to wildlife in the Bodie Hills.

*One of the primary purposes of the wildlife survey was to determine if the project site contained suitable habitat for any sensitive wildlife species. Based upon the project's habitat types, the wildlife biologist found that the project would not impact any sensitive wildlife species.*

*To the extent feasible, the project has been designed to mitigate potential impacts to deer and other wildlife. The project analyzes all of the applicable potential impacts and proposes either design changes or mitigation to reduce impacts.*

My other wildlife comments concern the location of the development along Clearwater Creek. The development basically surrounds the creek with asphalt and structures. Riparian habitat in the eastern Sierra Nevada and throughout the Great Basin is a rare commodity. Why are you allowing a development to chop up this fragile habitat and surround it with cars, campers, RVs and buildings? I think this is a bad idea. Also, asphalt RV pads will be constructed within 10 ft of Clearwater Creek. This is not enough room to provide suitable habitat for wildlife. The EIR says that domestic animals will be allowed but must remain on leashes. You won't be able to enforce this. People will let their dogs run through the creek, through the campgrounds, and let them chase after wildlife. It is inevitable. With the people, the automobiles, the pavement, and the dogs, the riparian corridor strip within the development will become a dead zone for wildlife.

*Roads, RV pads, and parking spaces will be gravel, not asphalt. Required handicapped parking spaces will be concrete, as will small (6' x 8') pads at each RV space. Comments on domestic animals are noted.*

In conclusion, I would like to point out two items I did not find in the EIR. I would like to know if the developers have taken out a bond to insure that if the project is stopped half-way through the construction that there is ample money to pull out the mess they may have created. I would also like to see an alternative provided by Mono County that supports a land exchange for property outside the primitive/undeveloped area of the Bodie Hills. Mono County could find a more suitable site for this and other mini-mall developments closer to the Bridgeport urban area along Hwy. 395, and at the same time, the county could preserve the wild, rugged beauty of the Bodie Hills.

*The DEIR /SP has been amended to require bonding for restoration of the project site.*

Sincerely,

Bryan Flaig  
P.O. Box 9201  
Berkeley, CA 94709

**Bodie Hills RV Park SP/FEIR**

---

Ms. Cassie Beals  
2544 Ivy Dr.  
Oakland, CA 94606

To whom it may concern,

I am writing a letter of opposition to the Bodie RV Park. Beside the destruction to the spirit and essence of Bodie, the project would destroy willows/riparian habitat as well as cutting directly through critical mule deer migration corridor.

When I first saw Bodie it was only after traveling on a dirt road untouched by modern life which led to and introduced the ghost town Bodie. The dirt road is part of Bodie you might as well put a hotel Hilton inside the middle of Bodie to have the same effect.

Thank you,

Cassie Beals.

*Comments noted.*

Steve Thaw  
30 Woodside Drive  
Moraga, CA 94556-1219

October 27, 1997

Dear Sirs,

I strongly oppose the "Idea" of the Bodie RV Park ! Clearwater Creek would be destroyed! Critical Mule Deer Migration Corridor would be affected disastrously!

Please turn down and turn away this slop (RV Park)!

Thank you.

Sincerely,

Steve Thaw

*Comments noted.*

## **Bodie Hills RV Park SP/FEIR**

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Mono County Planning Department  
P.O. Box 347  
Mammoth Lakes, CA 93546

Dear Planning Department,

This letter is to express my concerns regarding the proposed Bodie Hills RV Park. Last year I had the pleasure of visiting Bodie, Mono Lake, Convict Lake, and many of the other natural scenic wonders along Highway 395. One of the things that impressed me about Bodie, besides its great beauty, was its fragility. I feel that an RV Park placed at the junction of SR 270 and Highway 395 may threaten this part of California's heritage. The need to share such a heritage should also be heavily offset by the desire to protect it. I cannot help but think that an RV Park so close to Bodie will encourage the sort of invasive traffic and added development that has had such a negative impact on parks such as Yosemite and Zion in Utah.

I am also concerned about the impact this development will have on Clearwater Creek and on the deer which migrate through the proposed parcel. If past experience is to be our teacher, then we should know that the effect will not be salutary. There are communities both north and south of the proposed park near which such a development might be a welcome addition and where the impact on nature would be lessened.

Please preserve the unspoiled areas of your county and decide against this potential eyesore.

Sincerely Yours,

Shawn Sague

*Comments noted.*

Don Gruber  
765 Palm Ave  
Seaside, CA 93955

Mono County Planning Dept.  
Attn.: Steve Higa  
PO Box 347  
Mammoth Lakes, CA 93546

RE: Bodie Hills RV Park  
10-22-97

Dear Hr. Higa:

As an occasional visitor to the Bodie area, I am concerned with the plan for the Bodie Hills RV Park. The reason persons such as myself, from urban areas, come to Bodie and the environs of Mono County is to experience remote and "uncivilized" life. That is the prime attraction of Mono County to visitors. The RV Park will definitely harm that experience. Traffic, disruption to wildlife will result, and obviously much more.

If tourism is important to Mono County, please do not attempt to accommodate it in this crude manner. It's that old story of killing the goose that lays the golden egg. The RV park, in attempting to accommodate visitors, will in fact reduce the desire for visitors such as myself to even go to the Bodie area. I recommend the "NO PROJECT ALTERNATIVE."

Thank you very much.

Sincerely,

Don Gruber

*Comments noted.*

## **Bodie Hills RV Park SP/FEIR**

---

November 1, 1997

Mono County Planning Dept.  
P.O. Box 347  
Mammoth Lake, CA 93546

Attn: Steve Higa:

Dear Mono County Planning Department:

Thank you for the chance to comment on the Bodie Hills R.V. Park. I represent Desert Survivors, a hiking and environmental group of almost 1000 people centered in the San Francisco Bay Area. Desert Survivors have had a long term interest in the Bodie Hills and have committed to approximately two service trips per year over a four year period to aid the BLM exclude livestock from springs and creeks and mitigate erosion from overgrazed areas.

The following concerns address issues by page number of the Draft Specific Plan and EIR of August 1997.

Page 2

The EIR does not conform to the Mono County General Plan... the General Plan allows for higher intensity uses outside of existing community area if it can be demonstrated that the use is compatible with existing community areas.

*The Mono County General Plan allows for higher intensity uses outside of existing communities "if it can be demonstrated that the use cannot be accommodated in existing community areas, that the use is incompatible with existing community uses, or that the use directly relies on the availability of unique on-site resources." As the DEIR states "The proposed project is unique in that it is located on the primary access road to Bodie State Park, near the intersection with US 395, strategically located to provide services to the Bodie visitor and the Highway 395 and 270 traveler."*

This project should be located close to Bridgeport. Other resorts such as the Settlement, Willow Springs and the Virginia Creek Pack Station provide R.V. parking, dump stations, motel services, etc. In addition, under Action 3.1 in Policy 3, #7, "Housing is to be limited to that necessary to maintain the development" including two 2,000 sf permanent residences in an R.V. Park which would only be open half of the year is clearly a violation of Policy 3.

*The housing provided on-site is for employees of the project and, as such, is allowed by the General Plan.*

Page 3

Project Setting is incomplete since no mention is made of the proposed wilderness study area on the northern perimeter of the parcel.

*The DEIR /SP has been amended to reference the proposed Wilderness Study Area on adjacent lands managed by the BLM.*

Page 16

Project Financing. According to the project engineer, "the project proponents have the capability to finance the project." The history of the Bodie area is rife with boom and bust. It is imperative that the project proponents post a large enough bond to insure the project is completed and to ensure remediation if and when environmental impacts occur.

*The DEIR /SP has been amended to require bonding for restoration of the project site.*

Page 24

Mention is made that...

. horses owned by "patrons" of the project, shall be confined to existing roads, trails and other existing developed areas

. horse corrals and stables for the occupants of the single family residences...

. livestock grazing...

In view of the severe damage that livestock grazing has done to the Bodie Hills, I do not believe that any livestock should be permitted in this fragile desert environment.

*Comments noted.*

Page 35 and 37

The landscape plans indicate a proposed total lawn area of approximately 13,000 sf. This is a desert. Lawns are water intensive and totally incompatible.

*Comments noted.*

Page 55

The mule deer herd which migrates through this project is already in decline. Putting additional pressure on the herd by allowing this development in the herd's vital fawn rearing area is sure to endanger the herd.

*The project site is a small portion of a much larger area used by the Mono Lake deer herd for migration and fawn rearing. The project has been designed to minimize impacts to the deer herd, and other wildlife, by providing a Wildlife Movement Corridor.*

Page 59-60

In view of the narrow and twisting nature of Highway 270, and the volume of traffic now, I do not believe that putting a project of this size on both sides of Highway 270 makes safety sense. In addition, putting an R.V. park near the nexus of 270 and 395 is asking for accidents. Can you imagine these monstrous rental vehicles turning in and out of the R.V. park with unfamiliar Sunday drivers at the wheel?

*Comments noted.*

Page 90

In view of the glaring flaws in this plan, I believe that alternative 1 NO PROJECT is the correct response.

*Comments noted.*

Sincerely,

Tony d Bellis, Member  
Bodie Task Force  
Desert Survivors

Tony B. de Bellis  
231 Kuss Road  
Danville, CA 94526  
(510) 837-7086

Mono County Planning Dept  
P.O. Box 347  
Mammoth Lake CA 93546

10/29/97

Attention: Steven Higa

Dear Mono Co Planning Department:

I wish to add another comment to my letter dated Nov 1 1997. According to pages 3 and 11, the total SF for the business is 8,800 SF, the total for the single family homes is 4,000 SF ... 1/2 the business total!!!

Yet these homes are not on any map or plan, no front elevation views are presented and their exact location is unknown ... except for a vague "on the north bluff".

I believe the single family homes, along with the barns, corrals and (fenced?) grazing area should be excluded from this Draft Specific Plan and EIR for the R.V. Park.

Also, horses and grazing are incompatible with a desert biome.

Sincerely,

Tony de Bellis  
Member Bodie Task Force  
Desert Survivors

*Comments noted.*

**Bodie Hills RV Park SP/FEIR**

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Subject:

Stop Mono Hwy 395/270 development

Date:

Thu, 30 Oct 1997 14:13:03 -0800

From:

"Lisa Feldman" <lisaf@agora.csd.sgi.com>

To:

monocounty@qnet.com

Dear Mono County Planning Department,

I am writing to ask Mono County to support the "No Project Alternative" regarding the proposed development at the junction of Highways 270 and 395 along Clearwater Creek.

I do not support any development of this scenic and natural area which lies in the Mono Lake deer herd migration pattern.

Thank you for your consideration of my opinion.

Sincerely,

Elisabeth Feldman

4231 Montgomery Street #201

Oakland, CA 94611

*Comments noted.*

State of California

M e m o r a n d u m

Date: October 14, 1997

To : Projects Coordinator  
The Resources Agency  
c/o Nadell Gayou  
1020 Ninth Street, 3rd Floor  
Sacramento, California 95814

From: Department of Parks and Recreation

Subject: Bodie Hills RV Park Specific Plan and EIR Mono County Planning Department Draft Environmental Impact Report, SCH #97012031

The California Department of Parks and Recreation has received and reviewed the "Bodie Hills RV Park Draft Specific Plan and Focused EIR" for the construction of an RV park, motel, campground, camping cabins, museum, general store, ancillary and support structures, two residences, and landscaping on a 13 acre portion of a 155 acre parcel at the intersection of U.S. 395 and State Route 270 in Mono County.

This Department is a Trustee Agency for Bodie State Historic Park (SHP) and as such has historically had a strong interest in the development of the major entranceway to this key unit of California's State Park System. As we related to you in our January 29, 1997, response to the Notice of Preparation for this project:

"... the General Development and Resource Management Plan developed for Bodie SHP... emphasizes that the natural environment along the park's access routes is a critical part of the ghost town experience. The primitive natural condition and isolation that were a basic part of the history of Bodie, and that contributed to its transformation into a ghost town, are valuable scenic resources. The area along the access road, it states, 'shall be maintained in its natural state, so visitors can understand the conditions Bodie townspeople had to endure and to feel the ghost town experience on the way into the unit.'"

In the spirit of this management philosophy we offer the following comments:

Overview: We wish to complement the authors of the draft EIR on their professionalism in preparing a clear and well written environmental document which, at least as it regards this Department's response to the Notice of Preparation, we found to be refreshingly complete.

No Project Alternative: We recommend that the County of Mono adopt the no project alternative in this instance. While the 1993 Mono County General Plan provides general guidance, it acknowledges the importance of the subject area by requiring the development of a specific Area Plan for the portion of the county it defines as the Bodie Hills Planning Area. Due to the fact that the specific "area plan" called for by the Mono County General Plan for the Bodie Hills area has not been completed, or presented for public review, the proposed project may be premature until these implementation and standard setting mechanisms are in place to provide a framework against which this project can be properly measured.

*Although the Mono County General Plan calls for an Area Plan for the Bodie Hills, development may occur there prior to adoption of an Area Plan. All development in the County must follow the policies in the General Plan and may be required to follow more site specific policies in any applicable Area Plan.*

*Although there is no adopted Area Plan for the Bodie Hills Planning Area, there is a Draft Cooperative Management Plan for the area. That plan was prepared by the Bodie Area Planning Advisory Committee, which includes members from the Bureau of Land Management, Mono County Planning Staff, landowners, and interested individuals, and allows rural resort uses on private lands within the Bodie Hills Planning Area as long as the use does not detract from the Bodie Experience. The project site is designated Rural Resort (RU) in the Draft Cooperative Management Plan for the Bodie Hills Planning Area. An RV park, motel, store and ancillary uses are permitted uses within the RU designation.*

*The current General Plan land use designation for the parcel is Resource Management (RM) which allows higher intensity uses such as the proposed resort subject to the Specific Plan process. Whether the proposed resort is an appropriate higher intensity use will be decided during the decision-making process by the Mono County Planning Commission and the Board of Supervisors.*

Growth Inducing and Cumulative Impacts: We disagree with the conclusion that the acceptance of the Draft Specific Plan and EIR will not result in growth inducing or cumulative impacts. Approval of the subject project will serve as a precedent to similar types of development on private properties along Highway 270 at Mormon Springs and Murphy Meadows. While such projects are not currently pending before the County, they have been suggested for these two properties during meetings of the Bodie Area Planning Advisory Committee. By approving the subject project in advance of the necessary specific area plan, the County may be preempting a superior location, or establishing a use which may otherwise be unwise without full area review but which must be approved for these other locations due to the antecedent nature of the decision.

*Comment noted. The Draft Specific Plan and EIR considers alternative locations on other private lands located along Highway 270 but rejects those locations because location of the proposed project on any of those parcels would compromise the "Bodie Experience" by constructing the project in much more visible locations which overlook vast, undeveloped areas critical to the sense of isolation and remoteness which defines the "Bodie Experience". Development on other private parcels in the Bodie Hills will likely require a Specific Plan and will undergo public review.*

Design and Aesthetic Impacts: We urge that greater efforts be made to subordinate the character of the proposed development to its setting. The faux "rustic, nineteenth century appearance" design illustrated in the Draft Specific Plan and EIR is counter to the effect desired. Rather than blending into its surroundings as proposed, it sets itself as a discordant element attempting to replicate the eclectic temporary boom town architecture. The result will be that it will look tawdry and cheap. We respectfully suggest that a low, contemporary design making use of the natural materials and earthen tones suggested by the draft would be more effective in achieving subordination than the current proposal. In this design we suggest that artful landscaping of mature willow, where appropriate, and other larger species found on site such as juniper and pinion will serve to break up the bulk of the structures and the reflective nature of travel vehicles making use of the facilities. We are willing to offer our services to assist in this design effort. The inappropriately out-of-character use of grass in landscaping is discordant in this setting, and is unnecessarily water consumptive.

*Comments noted.*

We are surprised at the introduction of the two residences to be located above the project site. These are elements which were not presented in the Notice of Preparation and are not addressed in the Draft Specific Plan and EIR section on aesthetics. From our review of the scant information presented, they will be dominating features on the northern sidewall of Clearwater Canyon. We urge that they, and the road improvements necessary to support them, be eliminated from the final design.

*The housing provided on-site is for employees of the project and, as such, is allowed by the General Plan. The DEIR has been amended to include additional information concerning siting and design of the proposed houses.*

On page 34, the second bullet under Policy 12 suggests there be coordination of existing signing between the applicant, Caltrans and State Parks. As currently worded this policy is confusing, as it inserts "Highway 167" for "State Route 270". If retained, we suggest it be revised to clarify the intent, as described to us by the Mono County Planning Department, to reduce the perceived plethora of signs at this location.

*The second bullet under Policy 12 on page 34 has been amended to read "State Route 270" instead of "Highway 167".*

We also strongly urge that the suggested name for the project be revised to eliminate the place name Bodie. The name Bodie is so closely associated with the site within the State Historic Park as to be confusing to the visitor who first meets the proposed development on their way to the park. The proposed design then further confuses matters for the uninitiated who might actually think they were at the ghost town upon arrival at the Clearwater location. The use of the name Clearwater for the development serves as an excellent alternative, and would be very attractive to the summer traveler.

*Comments noted.*

Unlike the Notice of Preparation, this draft does not show the design for the proposed non-illuminated monument signs on U.S. Route 395. Design review should be part of this document. In this scenic location such signs are out of character and, we believe, not in conformance with the County's General Plan policies or intent. If they are to be allowed, we suggest a reduction in their size and the use of native stone in their construction to reduce their obtrusiveness.

*The Specific Plan/DEIR does show the design for the monument signs on p. 17, Figure 6, Sign and Lighting Plan. Other comments noted.*

To guarantee the prompt enforceability of Mono County's requirements, we urge that date-specific requirements be set, rather than the nebulous "as soon as possible". Obviously, there are optimum seasons for landscaping efforts for the site. These times should be identified and time-certain requirements set, along with replacement standards in the event of failure.

*Comments noted.*

Please do not hesitate to contact us if we can be of assistance or to answer any questions you may have concerning this response. Please direct your inquiry to Noah Tilghman, Resource Management Division, at (916) 653-3460, or Robert Macomber, Sierra District Superintendent, at (916) 525-9523.

Richard G. Rayburn, Chief  
Resource Management Division

I-163  
FEIR

January 2000

**Bodie Hills RV Park SP/FEIR**

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Subject:

Bodie Hills RV Park

Date:

Mon, 3 Nov 97 06:33:17 UT

From:

"Paul Menkes" <Wildschwein@classic.msn.com>

To:

monocounty@qnet.com

ATTN: Mono County Planning Department - Stephen Higa  
November 2, 1997

Dear Sir,

As a frequent recreational visitor of Mono County I wish to express my complete opposition to the proposed Bodie Hills RV Park. This is the wrong place for it in terms of planning and environmental impact. Any project like this should be in town, at Bridgeport.

Sincerely,

Paul Menkes

1769 Capital Park Drive, # 262

Sacramento, CA 95833

(916) 921-2302

email: wildschwein@msn.com

*Comments noted.*

October 28, 1997

For whom it may concern:

Please stop and think before you go ahead with your plans. Bodie's appeal is in the way it looks now. All this development will just bring in over crowding and spoil its pristine natural beauty. Don't touch Bodie. Just look around you at other developments and see have they have lost. Keep Bodie natural and wonderful.

Sincerely,

Mary Ferrer  
PO Box 325  
Loleta, CA 95551

*Comments noted.*

## **Bodie Hills RV Park SP/FEIR**

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10-29-97

Mono County Planning Department  
Re: Draft EIR, SCH96012031  
The Bodie Hills RV Park Specific Plan and EIR

Dear Mono County,

Having reviewed the Bodie Hills RV Park SP/EIR I respectfully offer the following comments:

I urge Mono County to adopt the no project alternative (Alternative 1). The proposed project (a large fenced and landscaped RV park, motel complex, tent campground, rental cabins, museum, general store, support buildings and facilities, parking areas, RV dump stations, laundry-mats and two bluff-top residences) will negatively alter wildlife and fishery viability, traffic and highway safety, watershed health, and aesthetic, cultural, and natural values.

The erosion of the "Bodie Experience", as related to Bodie State Historic Park and Bodie National History Landmark, is an issue that deserves very careful consideration. If this project is completed as designed, visitors to Bodie State Park and National Historic Landmark will be forced, as this is the only paved road into the park and landmark, to drive through the middle of an intensive area of development filing a sizable portion a narrow canyon. The "gateway to Bodie" will become a meandering trek though a commercialized Knotts Berry Farm-like re-creation of a western settlement: a western settlement packed with brash accoutrements of modern life. I find it regrettable that the place-name "Bodie" is even associated with this proposed development and hope that an alternative name be found should this project be approved.

*The project has been designed to minimize potential impacts to the "Bodie Experience". The "Bodie Experience" depends on the isolation and remoteness of Bodie. The proposed project is located at the beginning of the Bodie Road, contained in a canyon, along the paved portion of the Bodie Road. It is not located on much more visible parcels further east on the Bodie Road which overlook vast, undeveloped areas critical to the sense of isolation and remoteness which defines the "Bodie Experience". Nor is it located on the unpaved portion of the Bodie Road, which contributes to the sense of going back in time, also a part of the "Bodie Experience".*

Approval of the proposed development is premature without the completion of the Bodie Hills Planning Area Plan. PRC Section 21083.3 requires an adopted "Community Plan." I do not feel that tiering this development under the Mono County General Plan EIR (using a Specific Plan) is appropriate. The proposed development is of significant enough scope, and in a sensitive enough area, to require a separate, independent and project specific EIR. That this project will require ACE 404 and Calif. F&F Stream Alteration permits indicates its unique nature.

PRC Section 21083.3 (b) states that:

*"If a development project is consistent with the general plan of a local agency and an environmental impact report was certified with respect to that general plan, the application of this division to the approval of that development project shall be limited to effects upon the environment which are peculiar to the parcel or to the project and which were not addressed as significant effects in the prior environmental impact report, or which substantial new information shows will be more significant than described in the prior environmental impact report."*

*The DEIR for this project is a Focused EIR. Following the requirements in PRC Section 21083.3 (b), it focuses on effects peculiar to the project. The current General Plan land use designation for the parcel is Resource Management (RM) which allows higher intensity uses such as the proposed resort subject to the Specific Plan process. Whether the proposed resort is an appropriate higher intensity use will be decided during the decision-making process by the Mono County Planning Commission and the Board of Supervisors.*

Most of the problems associated with this proposed development arise from an attempt to cram too much into too little space. Comparisons between this proposed project and similar (although smaller in scope) developments at Willow Springs and Virginia Creek Settlement are inappropriate: the later developments are along a major highway and occupy only one side of a much larger canyon. By not including representational drawings of the proposed project at build-out on the site photographs, reviewers and the public were denied an accurate picture of the scope of this development.

*Comments noted. The DEIR notes that the project will result in significant visual impacts.*

I feel the proposed development EIR/SP fails to achieve several important components of Action 3.1, policy 3, namely:

\*The development would adversely affect existing or potential recreational activities. The "Bodie Experience" of millions of visitors from around the globe will be degraded.

*Comment noted. See response above concerning the "Bodie Experience".*

\*The proposed development is not clustered, concentrated or located to maintain the visual quality of the area. It is proposed along the entire length of the properties run with Route 270. It is designed to fill the canyon bottom, will require grading of the canyon walls, and develops portions of the bluff top. The visual quality of the area will be manifestly damaged.

*The DEIR notes that there will be significant visual impacts.*

\*The proposed development does not protect and is not compatible with the surrounding natural environment and rural character of the area. The proposed "old west" style facilities are designed to contrast with the surrounding natural area. A development of this ambitious scale does not protect this area's rural character.

*Comment noted.*

\*Housing (at 2 hours and 2 RV pads for a maximum of 7 employees) is not limited to that necessary to maintain the development. With several communities within commute driving distance there is no need for this number of residential units/spaces.

*The housing provided on-site is for employees of the project and, as such, is allowed by the General Plan. The DEIR has been amended to include additional information concerning siting and design of the proposed houses.*

\*The proposed development does not avoid or mitigate potential significant environmental impacts as required by the Mono County General Plan and CEQA.

*Comment noted.*

The two bluff-top houses described in the EIR were not addressed in the draft EIR/SP. These houses and access road are a significant introduction to this project. Houses on the bluff, if visible anywhere from 270 or 395, create an indisputable impact on the view shed and aesthetics of the

area. I disagree that the residences and access road impacts are satisfactorily addressed and that the impacts are adequately mitigated.

*Comment noted.*

Creek, riparian and watershed impacts:

I believe that the EIR/SP does not adequately address the potential negative environmental and economic impacts that could result from the degradation of water quality through erosion, contamination and diversion related to this proposed development. The EIR did not examine the impact of the planned 500,000 gallon/6 month water use on creek draw-down or the impact of waste water toxins, nutrients, temperature variations, fertilizer/pesticide runoff on stream and fishery health. The effect of parked vehicles on gravel beds (i.e., RV parking/camping sites) where water and soil could potentially be contaminated by leaking automotive fluids should be examined.

*The Specific Plan contains a policy (Policy 12, p. 43) to avoid potential impacts to ground and surface waters from groundwater pumping. That policy requires the applicant's engineer to submit water quality and quantity information, including production rates, static water levels and drawdown rates, prior to issuance of a well permit.*

The designation of only a ten foot riparian zone Open Space buffer from the bank top of Clearwater Creek is most certainly inadequate to provide for stream bank and riparian ecosystem protection and erosion setback. A standard setback of thirty feet, minimum, should be applied. Access to the stream should be restricted to designated access paths to provide stream bank protection. The impact of possible project related downstream erosion was not addressed. I respectfully, but strongly, disagree that riparian issues are adequately addressed and resulting impacts are satisfactorily mitigated.

*The DEIR contains an alternative (Alternative 2, Reduced Project) which includes a 30 foot stream setback. Potential indirect impacts resulting from human intrusion into the riparian corridor will be minimized by the site topography (steep banks, thick vegetation) which discourages use of the area, and fencing along the top of the stream banks. In addition, the SP/DEIR has been amended to require signs along the top of the streambank noting that the riparian corridor is a fragile environment and directing visitors to keep out of that area.*

*The project is not in a FEMA flood hazard zone, the RV park is a seasonal use with a minimal number of permanent structures, and the required setback from the stream is intended to minimize hazards from flooding. In addition, the proposed 10 foot setback is a minimum setback throughout the project site. In areas where the bank has been identified as being less stable, the setback is greater than 10 feet. The DEIR has been amended to include additional mapping of the bank stability and its relationship to proposed setbacks. Alternative 2, which requires a 30 foot setback from the top of the streambank, instead of the proposed 10 foot setback, further minimizes potential hazards related to flooding.*

*The proposed 10 foot setback is consistent with the Mono County Zoning and Development Code (MCZDC) requirements for stream setbacks since those requirements only restrict structures and impervious surfaces within a 30 foot setback from the stream. No structures or impervious surfaces are proposed within 30 feet of Clearwater Creek. In addition, the MCZDC notes the following concerning stream setback requirements: "specific plans or area general plans may be more restrictive or less restrictive, and shall take precedence".*

Camping and RV use impacts:

Fifty-seven sites in the proposed plan are devoted to RV parking, motel units or cabins while only 14 sites are provided for tent camping. This ratio of RV to tent sites might act to exclude family

oriented clientele. A reversal of the ratio, 57 tent sites and 14 RV sites would allow this development to better blend into the natural setting. Occupancy time limits need be established to prevent the RV "camp" from becoming a semi-permanent residential mobile home park. The impact of campfire smoke in the localized Clearwater Creek Canyon area has not been addressed; smoke, if held in an inversion layer here could pose health and traffic hazards. The impact of public harvest of campfire wood from nearby BLM lands should be examined.

*Comments noted. The proposed RV Park will only be open in summer when inversion layers are typically not a problem. All the RV and camping sites will have elevated grills which typically utilize charcoal, not campfire wood.*

Wildlife impacts:

The value of the Wildlife Movement Corridor is considerably lessened by allowing development of RV parking sites in this location. The WMC should be reserved strictly for wildlife habitat and cover; no development should be allowed within the WMC. I disagree that wildlife migratory routes are adequately addressed and the impacts are mitigated (please see Traffic concerns). The Resource Conservation designation of the undeveloped portion of the property would be meaningful if grazing and other consumptive uses were prohibited and the land was managed for habitat conservation.

The use of non-native landscaping is inappropriate at this location. Non-native landscaping is water intensive and presents both a visual distraction to the natural environment and a possible risk of exotic plant invasion in native ecosystems. Bare soil is an effective alternative fire control barrier.

*Comments noted.*

Growth Inducing and Cumulative Impacts:

This projects approval may set precedence for future development along Route 270. The County should proceed with great care (and an approved area plan) if it is to maintain the integrity of the Bodie corridor. Growth Inducing and Cumulative Impacts were not addressed, as required, in the EIR/SP.

*Comments noted. Growth inducing and cumulative impacts were addressed in the Specific Plan EIR.*

Design and Aesthetic Impacts:

The proposed design of this project, a re-creation of a western town, will severely detract from the cultural, recreational and aesthetic value of the Bodie area. Modern day re-creations are typically phony-looking at best (for example the June Lake Junction store and gas station), and a gaudy commercial cheapening of history at worse. The County should be encouraging a project design that successfully blends in with the natural surroundings; low buildings constructed of stone and shielded by native vegetation.

The use of any "billboards" along Highway 395 is an aesthetic abomination that should not be allowed. Any signs permitted along Route 270 should be as unobtrusive as possible.

All utilities should be underground to maintain the natural ambiance. BLM should be encouraged not to issue utility right-of-way permits for utilities over public lands where the development will degrade the value of those lands.

*Comments noted.*

Traffic Impacts:

Sharp turns, across both lanes of traffic, are required to enter and exit the site of the proposed development. This curving portion of Route 270 is an area of restricted views of the roadway. The combination of large RVs, a challenging roadway, numerous entry and exit portals, and

## **Bodie Hills RV Park SP/FEIR**

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visiting (often foreign) drivers unfamiliar with the road presents a situation that can pose a significant concern for public safety.

I recommend that access to the site of the proposed development be limited to one location for each side of the road. Any hazards that might be presented by locating a camping area immediately adjacent to Highway 270 should be examined. The possibility of this development channeling deer onto Highway 395 and channeling and trapping deer on Route 270 was not examined. I feel that traffic concerns were not adequately addressed or mitigated in the EIR/SP.

*Comments noted.*

Public involvement should be elemental to the approval of any proposed changes in permitted uses (Policy 10).

*Any proposed changes in permitted uses will require review by the Planning Commission in a public hearing or a Specific Plan Amendment. Policy 10 refers only to minor changes in the project which are identified as changes which do not alter the permitted uses or intensity of use.*

The stated project goal is providing a "mix of over-night accommodations and services for the Bodie visitor in a rustic environment that complements the historic character of Bodie State Park and the setting and natural resources of the area." The proposed project does provide a mix of accommodations and services (although they are designed for the wealthier crowd). The proposed project fails, in a big way, to compliment either the historic or natural character of the area. Abundant camping opportunities exist locally; this project is not needed. Any public good that this project may provide is dwarfed by its negative environmental and public recreation impacts. Approval of the proposed project would be an injustice to the sound use and preservation of the Bodie Hills.

*Comments noted.*

Again, I the adoption of Alternative 1, the NO PROJECT alternative.

Sincerely,

MJ Langner  
POBx 581  
Bridgeport CA 93517

cc:  
Mono County Board of Supervisors  
Sierra Club, Toiyabe Chapter  
Erickson and Meyers

October 29, 1 997

Mono County Planning Department  
Mammoth Lakes, CA 93346  
RE: Bodie Hills RV Park EIR/SP

Dear Mono County Planning Department:

After learning of "The Bodie Hills RV Park Draft EIR/SP", I write you today to urge you support Alternative 1: Rejection of the proposed project.

I feel that this project would have several significant negative impacts to the area. I am concerned about the possible pollution, erosion, and water usage of the Clearwater and Virginia Creeks; about the destruction of riparian habitat along Clearwater Creek; about the cutting through of a critical mule deer migration corridor; about the increase in traffic affecting highway safety; and about the decrease in aesthetic and natural values of the area.

I hope that you will decide to adopt Alternative 1: No project.

Sincerely,

Lynn Inouye  
4270 Amherst Way  
Livermore, CA 94550

*Comments noted.*

**Bodie Hills RV Park SP/FEIR**

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Sonnet Pierce  
36001 Nathan Lane  
Eldridge, Missouri 65463

Re. Bodie Hills RV Park Draft EIR/SP #97012031

Steve Higa Mono County Planning Department  
P.O.B. 347, Mammoth Lakes, California 93546

Dear Mr. Steve Higa,

I am writing to you concerning the proposed development near Bodie State Historic Park. I want to urge you to choose the "No project alternative". I believe that there are too many reasons that this development is not a good idea.

There are already a number of campgrounds and motels located nearby, and increasing traffic on 270 would cause congestion and traffic hazards. As a past volunteer and employee at Bodie I have driven 270 many times and the thought of added traffic on a road with numerous blind curves is quite worrisome.

I also feel that the 13 miles of empty road before reaching Bodie gives visitors a chance to leave the modern world and begin to think about what life was like for the past residents. If instead visitors were barraged with a development made to look like a old western town and large amounts of traffic their "Bodie experience" would not be as genuine as it is now.

Working at Bodie I have had numerous visitors tell me how pleased they are that Bodie has escaped the commercialism that plagues so many historic places all around the world. I think this development would sadden many of the visitors who are glad to escape to a "real ghost town". There are so few places left in this country where commercialism has not diluted the historical value of an area. I would be sad to see visitor's first impression of Bodie be a modern development made to look like a fake old west town.

Thank you for you time.

Sincerely,

Sonnet Pierce

*Comments noted.*

Subject:  
no rv park please  
Date:  
Wed, 5 Nov 1997 12:02:32 -0800 (PST)  
From:  
Dana Harmon <lesswood@igc.org>  
To:  
monocounty@qnet.com

Dear Mono County Planning Dept.,

I am writing to ask Mono County to support the "No Project Alternative" regarding the proposed development at the junction of Highways 270 and 395 along Clearwater Creek.

I do not support any development of this scenic and natural area which lies in the Mono Lake deer herd migration pattern.

Thank you for your consideration of my opinion.

Very sincerely,

Dana Harmon  
40 Eucalyptus Rd.  
Berkeley, CA 94705  
Dana Harmon (lesswood@igc.org)  
Director, WoodWise Consumer Initiative, Co-op America  
415-896-1580 \* 415-882-4571 (fax) \* 202-872-5326 (vm)  
116 New Montgomery St. #800, San Francisco, CA 94705

*Comments noted.*

## **Bodie Hills RV Park SP/FEIR**

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Subject:

Bodie RV Park

Date:

Fri, 7 Nov 1997 12:11:02 -0800 (PST)

From:

"A.J." <aj@stillwatersci.com>

To:

"Mono Co. Planning Dept." <monocounty@qnet.com>

Dear Mono County Planning Department,

I am writing to express my concern over the proposed development known as the Bodie Hills RV Park. I am a trained ecologist and I have been directly involved in environmental impact analysis and resource management in California and the west for over 10 years. As a frequent visitor to the eastern Sierra and the Bodie area in particular, there are several reasons that I believe the proposed development would have significant detrimental impacts to the resources in the area. I speak not only from a position of professional and technical knowledge, but I am also greatly concerned about the degradation of the natural aesthetic experience sought by visitors to Bodie and surrounding areas.

*Comments noted.*

A primary concern is the effect that the development will have on the ecology of the area. The site is located in a crucial deer migration corridor, and the proposed development would unacceptably interfere with migration of the Mono Basin deer herd. The proposed mitigation for this problem is not acceptable, and I believe the only solution is no development at the proposed site.

*The project site is a small portion of the large area used by the Mono Lake deer herd during its migrations. The herd actually migrates in an area to the south of the project site. The Wildlife Migration Corridor will enable the deer herd, and other wildlife, to continue to use the area.*

The site is also located in close proximity to Clearwater Creek, and this will undoubtedly cause significant problems which have not been adequately addressed in the EIR. The flood frequency of the creek can and should be determined, and no development should be allowed within the 100-year floodplain. This is common sense, and would actually benefit potential developers and users of such a facility. The proximity of the proposed RV park to Clearwater Creek also presents serious pollution problems which would impact not only Clearwater Creek but also Virginia Creek and Bridgeport Reservoir, both of which provide important recreational opportunities. Recreation, especially fishing, in these waterbodies is too economically important to the area to put at risk with an RV Park. A development such as this, with a high risk of pollution from raw sewage as well as other non point-source pollutants that are associated with motor vehicles and human habitation, is absolutely inappropriate for a riparian corridor.

*The project is not in a FEMA flood hazard zone, the RV park is a seasonal use with a minimal number of permanent structures, and the required setback from the stream is intended to minimize hazards from flooding. In addition, the proposed 10 foot setback is a minimum setback throughout the project site. In areas where the bank has been identified as being less stable, the setback is greater than 10 feet. The DEIR has been amended to include additional mapping of the bank stability and its relationship to proposed setbacks. Alternative 2, which requires a 30 foot setback from the top of the streambank, instead of the proposed 10 foot setback, further minimizes potential hazards related to flooding.*

*The proposed 10 foot setback is consistent with the Mono County Zoning and Development Code (MCZDC) requirements for stream setbacks since those requirements only restrict structures and impervious surfaces within a 30 foot setback from the stream. No structures or impervious surfaces are proposed within 30 feet of Clearwater Creek. In addition, the MCZDC notes the following concerning stream setback requirements: "specific plans or area general plans may be more restrictive or less restrictive, and shall take precedence".*

*The project has been designed to avoid or minimize potential impacts to the riparian corridor by siting development away from the riparian corridor. Bridge pilings will be placed outside of the riparian corridor in the stream setback. Use of a 30 foot stream setback (as proposed in Alternative 2, Reduced Project), instead of the proposed 10 foot setback, would further avoid potential impacts to the riparian corridor. Potential indirect impacts resulting from human intrusion into the riparian corridor will be minimized by the site topography (steep banks, thick vegetation) which discourages use of the area, and fencing along the top of the stream banks. In addition, the SP/DEIR has been amended to require signs along the top of the streambank noting that the riparian corridor is a fragile environment and directing visitors to keep out of that area.*

Cultural and aesthetic resources would also be unacceptably impacted by the proposed development. The project site is located in the midst of at least 22 known archeological sites. For this reason alone, no development should be permitted here. Certainly no disturbance whatsoever should be undertaken without the prior express permission of the ancestors of the former inhabitants. As a result of development these resources could be lost forever. This is simply not an acceptable tradeoff.

*Specific Plan policies require avoidance of archaeological sites and additional study of any archaeological evidence discovered during construction.*

The aesthetics of this area are unique, and provide a highly sought-after experience that is associated with Bodie itself. Turning from Highway 395 onto to Bodie Road I would be very disappointed to see an RV park spread before me as I start the drive up to one of the most rustic and historically rich settings in the west. In short, the proposed development would thoroughly ruin the "Bodie experience".

*The project has been designed to minimize potential impacts to the "Bodie Experience". The "Bodie Experience" depends on the isolation and remoteness of Bodie. The proposed project is located at the beginning of the Bodie Road, contained in a canyon, along the paved portion of the Bodie Road. It is not located on much more visible parcels further east on the Bodie Road which overlook vast, undeveloped areas critical to the sense of isolation and remoteness which defines the "Bodie Experience". Nor is it located on the unpaved portion of the Bodie Road, which contributes to the sense of going back in time, also a part of the "Bodie Experience".*

Please address these concerns when considering the plan for approval. Due to many factors, the only reasonable solution for the proposed site is no project. An alternative solution would be to locate such a facility adjacent to an urban area with existing development. Of course, any such project should be accompanied by an assessment of resource impacts much more detailed and thorough than the one submitted for the Bodie RV Park.

*The applicant approached the BLM about the possibility of a land exchange in the late 1980s and was told that the BLM was not accepting additional lands for potential exchange. Also, the BLM's 1993 Bishop Area Resource Management Plan does not identify the property for acquisition.*

Sincerely,

## **Bodie Hills RV Park SP/FEIR**

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Anthony Keith, M.S.  
Watershed ecologist

## **Bodie Hills RV Park SP/FEIR**

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*associated wetlands. Potential indirect impacts resulting from human intrusion into the riparian corridor will be minimized by the site topography (steep banks, thick vegetation) which discourages use of the area, and fencing along the top of the stream banks. In addition, the SP/DEIR has been amended to require signs along the top of the streambank noting that the riparian corridor is a fragile environment and directing visitors to keep out of that area.*

The Clearwater Creek area, site of the proposed RV park, is optimal mule deer habitat, and is sited in the middle of a well-used deer movement area. I question the adequacy of the proposed deer movement corridor through the center of the project site. If the corridor is unoccupied, deer will probably get used to it and use it, but the corridor includes two gravel roads, the Bodie Road and parts of five RV sites. The deer are likely to be pushed around the RV park and close to Hwy 395, where approximately 1,000 Mono County deer fatalities already occur each year.

*Although the project site is part of a large area used by the Mono Lake deer herd, most of the herd migrates to the south of the project site.*

If there is the potential for the occurrence of sensitive plants in unsurveyed portions of the project, why haven't they been surveyed? Masonic rock cress occurs very close to RV site 9 and a gravel road, yet only a ten-foot buffer zone is planned as mitigation. Is this what is meant by "avoiding development in and adjacent to areas with identified populations of [rare] species"? It seems as if this species could potentially occur in unsurveyed areas other than the rocky southern slopes of the proposed park. The overhead powerline route should also be surveyed because three sensitive plant species could occur there.

*The SP/DEIR has been amended to require additional plant surveys in all previously unsurveyed areas prior to the initiation of Phase I of the project.*

In summary, the proposed Bodie Hills RV Park produces negative visual impacts along Hwy 395 as well as along the Bodie Road, significant negative impacts on the Mono Lake deer herd, and is situated in a riparian area that is highly prone to erosion. The EIR inadequately addresses rare plant issues, loss of wetland vegetation, and a setback from Clearwater Creek. I hope you will take my comments into consideration when determining whether to approve the proposal for the RV park. Thank you.

Sincerely,

Stephen Ingram

Stephen Ingram  
Nature Photography  
Rt. 2 Box 352  
Swall Meadows  
Bishop, CA 93514  
tel: (760) 387-2913  
fax: (760) 387-2961  
ingram@telis.org

11/5/97

Mono County Planning Department  
Box 347  
Mammoth Lakes, CA 93546

Dear Sir:

These comments are in regard to the Bodie Hills RV Park Specific Plan and EIR.

As a member of the Bodie ACEC Advisory Committee, I was there when the Bodie Experience was discussed and formulated. Although it is true that the intention was to allow development of privately owned land in an appropriate manner, ie, consistent with the Bodie Experience, I believe that this proposed development meets neither the letter nor the spirit of the Bodie Experience.

*Comments noted.*

Firstly, the development is too large and the density of development too high. Although a wider setback from the creek as contained in the MCZDC (Alt. 2, the Reduced Project) is certainly environmentally superior and would partially alleviate this, it seems to me that there would still too much man made intrusion packed into a too small area. The development would degrade the visual quality of the area, changing from open space to a small very visible community of RV's (Action 3.1.4). The proposed development is also incompatible with the surrounding natural environment and rural character of the area (Action 3.1.6), and does not conform to the Draft Cooperative Management Plan for the Bodie Area (BLM) which says that projects shall not detract from the Bodie Experience.

*The project has been designed to minimize potential impacts to the "Bodie Experience". The "Bodie Experience" depends on the isolation and remoteness of Bodie. The proposed project is located at the beginning of the Bodie Road, contained in a canyon, along the paved portion of the Bodie Road. It is not located on much more visible parcels further east on the Bodie Road which overlook vast, undeveloped areas critical to the sense of isolation and remoteness which defines the "Bodie Experience". Nor is it located on the unpaved portion of the Bodie Road, which contributes to the sense of going back in time, also a part of the "Bodie Experience".*

Secondly, the EIR is incomplete even by Mono County's own stated standards. To begin with, it fails to state that a proposed Wilderness Study Area is directly adjacent to the project to the north. Also, the effects of the proposed development are inadequately described. Although the photos of the area before development are adequate, there should be simulations of the appearance of the area after development so public officials and the general public could see what is really proposed.

*The SP/DEIR has been amended to reference the proposed Wilderness Study Area on adjacent lands managed by the BLM. The DEIR states that there will be significant visual impacts from the project.*

There is also very little mention of the two residences that are proposed for the bluffs north of the RV park. There needs to be much more extensive discussion of these, both as to their necessity for the viability of the project and their visual impacts. Since these residence will be higher than the rest of the development, it would seem that the visual impact would be greater. There are no plans or locations shown for the horse corrals and stables.

## **Bodie Hills RV Park SP/FEIR**

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*The housing provided on-site is for employees of the project and, as such, is allowed by the General Plan. The DEIR has been amended to include additional information concerning siting and design of the proposed houses. The DEIR states that the project will result in significant visual impacts.*

All portions of the parcel that are not developed should be restricted to open space by a recorded deed restriction. All utilities, including from Highway 395 to the development, must be underground so as not to detract from visual quality. Just as in mining, a bond should be required to guarantee that disturbed areas will be revegetated -- mere promises are not enough.

*The proponent can only develop 10 percent of the parcel. The proposed development covers approximately 8 percent of the parcel, leaving another 2 percent developable. The remainder of the parcel will remain undeveloped natural open space. Underground utilities are an alternative in the Specific Plan. The SP/DEIR has been amended to require bonding for restoration of the project site.*

There also should be a study by a qualified hydrologist regarding water resources, flow of Clearwater Creek, potential erosion, and potential flooding. There is certainly a possibility of flash floods in the summer as well as flooding in the winter in an El Nino year such as this.

*The project is not in a FEMA flood hazard zone, the RV park is a seasonal use with a minimal number of permanent structures, and the required setback from the stream is intended to minimize hazards from flooding. In addition, the proposed 10 foot setback is a minimum setback throughout the project site. In areas where the bank has been identified as being less stable, the setback is greater than 10 feet. The DEIR has been amended to include additional mapping of the bank stability and its relationship to proposed setbacks. Alternative 2, which requires a 30 foot setback from the top of the streambank, instead of the proposed 10 foot setback, further minimizes potential hazards related to flooding.*

*The proposed 10 foot setback is consistent with the Mono County Zoning and Development Code (MCZDC) requirements for stream setbacks since those requirements only restrict structures and impervious surfaces within a 30 foot setback from the stream. No structures or impervious surfaces are proposed within 30 feet of Clearwater Creek. In addition, the MCZDC notes the following concerning stream setback requirements: "specific plans or area general plans may be more restrictive or less restrictive, and shall take precedence".*

In short, to protect the Bodie Experience, the EIR should evaluate the possibility of a land trade so that this project can be located near developed areas, such as Bridgeport.

Please keep me informed as to the disposition of this project.

*The applicant approached the BLM about the possibility of a land exchange in the late 1980s and was told that the BLM was not accepting additional lands for potential exchange. Also, the BLM's 1993 Bishop Area Resource Management Plan does not identify the property for acquisition.*

Sincerely,

Stan Haye  
P. O. Drawer W  
Independence, CA 93526

November 6, 1997•

Mono County Planning Department  
POB 347  
Mammoth Lakes, CA 93546  
Attn. Stephen Higa

Dear Mono County Planning Department,

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comments on the Bodie RV Park Draft Specific Plan and EIR. We appreciate receiving the document via e-mail, and also being able to use the hard copy on file at the Berkeley Public Library.

I represent Desert Survivors, a hiking and environmental group with almost 1,000 members headquartered in Oakland, CA. The Desert Survivors have conducted a half-dozen excursions to the Bodie Hills. These have included two hiking trips, and three to four "service trips" to assist BLM with fencing projects to exclude livestock from springs, constructing check dams to minimize erosion, etc. (Please note that this letter represents the formal comments of Desert Survivors; I mention this to avoid confusion since you may receive other copies which refer to this group).

I am a former Mono County resident, and currently spend most of my vacation time in the County. I have hiked extensively in the Bodie Hills. In addition, I have been employed for over a dozen years as a wildlife biologist and environmental planner (four of these years in the eastern Sierra).

Below I have outlined some concerns organized in the order in which they appear in the draft EIR:

1. Comments on draft EIR and Specific Plan organized by page number

Conformance with Mono Co. General Plan (GP)

The EIR does not conform with the Mono County GP.

(The document states that ) "The GP allows for higher intensity uses...if it can be demonstrated that the use cannot be accommodated in existing community areas"--EIR, p. ii

This project could and should be accommodated somewhere near the town of Bridgeport if an environmentally-sound parcel could be located. The roadway to Bodie is not "unique" as stated in the draft EIR. Other resorts (Willow Springs Motel and Trailer Park, the Virginia Creek Settlement, etc.) already provide services (public showers, RV park and dump stations, laundry facilities, motel, restaurant) to the Bodie visitor. Interesting museums already exist in the towns of Bridgeport, Bodie, and Lee Vining (two: Forest Service Visitor Center and Lee Vining Historical Society Museum).

*The Mono County General Plan allows for higher intensity uses outside of existing communities "if it can be demonstrated that the use cannot be accommodated in existing community areas, that the use is incompatible with existing community uses, or that the use directly relies on the availability of unique on-site resources." As the DEIR states "The proposed project is unique in that it is located on the primary access road to Bodie State Park, near the intersection with US 395, strategically located to provide services to the Bodie visitor and the Highway 395 and 270 traveler."*

## **Bodie Hills RV Park SP/FEIR**

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The GP states that "development would not adversely affect existing or potential ... recreational operations".

Adverse impacts from this development to recreation must be acknowledged. Water quality problems caused by increased erosion, livestock, construction, leach fields, potential sewage leaks from tank sites and sewage connection (RV hook-ups), and vehicle operation and parking will degrade Clearwater Creek, Virginia Creek, and Bridgeport Reservoir.

The GP states that "development protects and is compatible with the surrounding natural environment and rural character..." (p. ii) and "should not dominate the natural environment".

It is completely incompatible to put an RV Park and mini-mall in a completely undeveloped area of which the northern border is a proposed Wilderness Area. Due to the enormous size of this project, it will visually dominate the natural viewshed, and produce less obvious negative impacts from reduction in the Mono Basin deer herd and other wildlife resources.

*Comments noted.*

### **Conformance with the Draft BLM Cooperative Management Plan for the Bodie Hills Planning Area (MP)**

The EIR does not conform with the MP. The MP calls for projects to "not detract" from the Bodie Experience (p. ii). This project cumulatively impacts wildlife, viewshed, and water quality on a previously undeveloped and near-pristine parcel.

*The project has been designed to minimize potential impacts to the "Bodie Experience". The "Bodie Experience" depends on the isolation and remoteness of Bodie. The proposed project is located at the beginning of the Bodie Road, contained in a canyon, along the paved portion of the Bodie Road. It is not located on much more visible parcels further east on the Bodie Road which overlook vast, undeveloped areas critical to the sense of isolation and remoteness which defines the "Bodie Experience". Nor is it located on the unpaved portion of the Bodie Road, which contributes to the sense of going back in time, also a part of the "Bodie Experience".*

### **Project Setting (p. 3)**

The Project Setting is incomplete because it does not mention that a proposed BLM Wilderness Study Area (WSA) is present on most of the northern perimeter of the parcel. The Bodie Mountain WSA consists of 25,944 acres and is considered to have moderate to high wilderness values. The EIR must contain a full analysis of all cumulative impacts to surrounding public lands.

*The SP/DEIR has been amended to reference the proposed Wilderness Study Area on adjacent lands managed by the BLM.*

### **Single Family Homes (pp. 3, 11)**

According to the draft EIR, the total square footage for the ENTIRE business (RV Park, motel, etc.) is 8,100 square feet (SF) and the two single family homes will require 4,000 SF. Are these going to be mansions? There is no elevations, plan views or cross-sections provided in the document for the reader to get any information on evaluating the visual impact of these dwellings; nor is there ANY information on the barns and corrals also mentioned. The single family homes are not represented on any maps except for a small sketch that they will appear somewhere on the north bluff (the driveway is indicated but are the unlabeled squares the proposed residences?(Fig. 11)). Is this project truly planning to be a business, or is it an expensive

(for the county) ploy to get tax write-offs for large summer homes for the owners? Fig. 11 implies that the single family homes will be on top of the hills. If so, they will have a significant impact on the viewshed from adjoining peaks in the Bodie Hills. The visual analysis is incomplete because it does not indicate any photographs of this area. All of the photos/analysis (Fig. 13 and 14 plus photos) focus on the viewshed from within the canyon, not from any vantage points above the site. Both the Bodie Hills and the Sierra could have impacts to the viewshed.

*The housing provided on-site is for employees of the project and, as such, is allowed by the General Plan. The DEIR has been amended to include additional information concerning siting and design of the proposed houses.*

Parking (p. 15--116 parking spaces)

The parking section is very misleading. It neglects to include all of the RV parking spaces. It only lists spaces for tent cabins, RV shower facilities, and camping cabins but not for the RV park itself. Additionally, all cumulative impacts should be revealed by totaling all parking spaces (RV spaces = 27 + 12; other spaces listed on p. 15 = 77 for grand total of 116 spaces).

*The Specific Plan notes that there will be 77 parking spaces and 39 RV spaces, and that all of these spaces will be gravel except for the required handicapped parking spaces which will be concrete.*

Project financing p. 17

"According to the project engineer, the project proponents have the capability to finance the project".

Any engineer hired to work on a large project such as this would have a tremendous conflict of interest and is an inappropriate source for information on the proponents' financial resources. If the developers have adequate funds to pursue a large project such as this one, then they can afford to post a remediation bond if the project does not go through or if environmental impacts occur.

*The SP/DEIR has been amended to require bonding for restoration of the project.*

Policy 2 (p. 24)/ Policy 9 (p. 25)

"Horses..shall be confined to existing roads, trails and other existing developed areas".

As there are no existing trails directly adjacent to the site, and roads will be narrow and congested, NO riding should be allowed on the parcel. Horses will have to be trailered off-site to an appropriate road or trail.

*Comments noted.*

Policy 4 (p. 24)

"Horse corrals and stables..."

The document is incomplete because it does not include any further plans or figures for these structures. The document does not function as an informational document because it does not provide details on the size, design and location of barns and corrals. For all we know, the proponents could be planning a 20-stall barn with 20 pipe corrals. Although it is mentioned that

the corrals/barns will not impact plants and cultural resources, it does not indicate that these structures will be located away from the deer migration corridor.

*Comments noted.*

"Livestock grazing."

In the Project Setting section (p. 3), it is stated that the parcel is currently ungrazed. There is no way that the reader can analyze the effect of the proposed grazing since no information is given on numbers or type of livestock. There is no information provided on fencing required for livestock, which could have a significant impact on migrating deer. The wildlife assessment (Taylor 1997) clearly states that "no solid or wire fences of any kind will be constructed along project area boundaries" (p. 23).

Although the plan indicates that the creek area is designated as a rural resort and thus will not be grazed, it is imperative that livestock be kept away from the creek. Livestock hooves chisel banks, trample and compact the soil, and browse seedlings. These effects lead to increased peak runoff and erosion downstream, channel incision, channel widening, and higher water temperatures (Kondolf et al. 1996). The impacts of grazing will reduce forage and cover for deer and other species, increase sedimentation in the creek, and potentially escalate an already serious problem with erosion and incision of the creekbed, and negatively impact fisheries downstream from the project (ie. Virginia Creek).

Grazing also would potentially impact rare and endangered plant species, since only a small portion of the project was surveyed for these.

Grazing will lead to an increase of the brown-headed cowbird, a species closely associated with livestock. Cowbirds lay their eggs in other species' nests, which usually causes a decline in the host species ability to raise their own young (De Groot 1997). In Texas, removal of cattle resulted in a reduction of the parasitism rate from 90% in 1987 to 22% in 1996 (Eckrich and Koloszar 1997), which resulted in higher nesting success for native species.

*Comments on grazing noted.*

"The areas immediately north and south of the proposed development shall be maintained as natural buffer zones..."

What is the definition of "natural buffer zone"? These areas should be designated as permanent open space.

*The Mono County General Plan land use designation for the project site allows 10 percent of the site to be developed. The proposed project encompasses approximately 8 percent of the site, leaving approximately 2 percent developable. The remainder of the site will remain as undeveloped natural open space.*

Policy 5--Open Space/10' setback (pp. 24-25)

This is an extremely weak designation of open space. The remainder of the undeveloped portion of the 155-acre parcel should be designated as open space. The creek corridor area proposed as open space is undevelopable due to flooding and Section 404 regulations.

The placement of the development within ten feet of the creek is an extremely poor decision due to impacts to wildlife, riparian vegetation, and potential for flooding. For rural development,

Contra Costa Co. requires a fifty-foot setback on either side of the creek, and Sacramento Co. requires a one-hundred foot setback (Ed Pancoast, Director, Urban Creeks Council, pers. comm.).

There is no justification anywhere in the document regarding the rationale for designating the setback as 10 feet. The RV pads are unsupported (i.e. have no piles), and will have to support heavy vehicles on highly erodible soils(p. 46). It is up to the County to provide complete data on why 10 feet was designated and why this small setback will not have a significant impact.

Figure 4 indicates that RV space 8 and a maintenance building to the east (labeled B) are both intruding into the 10' setback. Also, a number of the RV spaces (10 to 17) (using a scale of 1" = 100' derived by measuring the Bodie Rd.) are NOT 20' x 40' as indicated in the text. In earlier project maps the spaces were indeed 20x40. Will the project ultimately be constructed so that the sites are 20x40, thereby intruding into the no development zone? Or will some sites be smaller than others?

*Figure 4 will be amended to correct the inconsistencies noted above. The DEIR contains an alternative (Alternative 2, Reduced Project) which requires a 30 foot setback and which reduces potential impacts.*

*The proposed 10 foot setback is a minimum setback throughout the project site. In areas where the bank has been identified as being less stable, the setback is greater than 10 feet. The DEIR has been amended to include additional mapping of the bank stability and its relationship to proposed setbacks.*

*The proposed 10 foot setback is consistent with the Mono County Zoning and Development Code (MCZDC) requirements for stream setbacks since those requirements only restrict structures and impervious surfaces within a 30 foot setback from the stream. No structures or impervious surfaces are proposed within 30 feet of Clearwater Creek. In addition, the MCZDC notes the following concerning stream setback requirements: "specific plans or area general plans may be more restrictive or less restrictive, and shall take precedence".*

Policy 6--fishing (p. 25)

Fishing should not be allowed on the parcel. Fishing clearly contradicts plans to fence portions of the creek to "protect the riparian habitat and to reduce the potential for streambank erosion" (p. 16). Not only should fishing be prohibited, but the entire reach of Clearwater Creek in the parcel should be clearly posted as an "Ecologically Sensitive--Do Not Enter" zone. As stated above, some sections of the creek are deeply incised. Any entrance by humans will greatly escalate the erosion. In addition, the property owners would be liable for any injury occurred as a result of attempts to descend the 15-foot dropoff to the creek channel unless the area is clearly posted as off-limits. Areas of the creek with shallow banks will be subject to degradation because of trampling effects on vegetation.

*Potential indirect impacts resulting from human intrusion into the riparian corridor will be minimized by the site topography (steep banks, thick vegetation) which discourages use of the area, and fencing along the top of the stream banks. In addition, the SP/DEIR has been amended to require signs along the top of the streambank noting that the riparian corridor is a fragile environment and directing visitors to keep out of that area.*

"No other uses shall be permitted"..

## **Bodie Hills RV Park SP/FEIR**

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What about gold panning? The draft EIR is incomplete because it does not address this important and environmentally destructive issue. Closing the stream corridor to human entry, as described above, would solve this problem.

*The Specific Plan states that no other uses shall be permitted.*

### Policy 7--wildlife movement corridor (p. 25)

Desert Survivors supports establishment of this. However, on Figure 4 it appears to be 50' wide rather than the designated 150'.

This must be changed to 150' in the final EIR.

*The Wildlife Movement Corridor is 150 feet wide.*

### Policy 8 (p. 25)

"Three RV vehicle spaces..."

This is not enough to mitigate impacts. All development should be routed away from the deer migration corridor.

According to Figure 4, the wildlife movement corridor encompasses all of sites 13, 14 and 15, and bisects portions of 12 and 16. Five RV vehicles spaces should be closed during migration, not three.

There will be significant impacts resulting from this project to the Mono Basin deer herd. Policy 7 (p. 30) should have been included.

*Comments noted.*

"Existing vegetation shall be retained..."

This statement is not true in light of pressures from increased bank trampling from fisherpersons.

*Comments noted.*

### Policy 13 (p. 43)

Re: fuel modification plan ("reduce volume and density of flammable vegetation"). This could result in significant impacts if riparian vegetation is reduced. This section should be modified to provide protections to riparian vegetation. All fuel modification plans should be reviewed by a qualified wildlife biologist and botanist.

*Comments noted.*

### Natural Resource Conservation

#### Policy 1 (p. 44)

"Potential impacts to the stream channel..."

Impacts from trampling will be significant. This even contradicts the draft EIR, which states that the banks are "deeply gullied; its banks appear to be unstable, highly erodible and subject to collapse" (p. 51-52).

*Comments noted.*

Policy 2 (p. 44)

Provisions for no fishing, no construction within 100' of the creek, and no grazing should be added to clarify the fact that this area is designated as "rural resort".

*Comments noted.*

Policy 3 (p. 44)

"During construction.. number of times vehicles will drive across the creek will be limited".

The document is incomplete because it does not fully address alternative temporary creek crossing methods, not does it designate where temporary creek crossing will occur or what mitigation will be required. Some sections of the creek are impassable due to extreme downcutting and erosion. Either a crane or a temporary bridge (or both) could eliminate need for vehicles to cross the creek.

*The Specific Plan requires the crossings to be located to minimize impacts on vegetation and bank stability and requires restoration of the crossings as soon as the bridges are completed.*

Policy 5 (p. 45)

A planting performance plan (i.e. 85% of plants be alive after three years or something similar) for native plants must be developed to ensure that the developer carries through with the conceptual planting design. Native plants can be difficult to establish and it may take several rounds of replantings to ensure success.

*The Specific Plan requires revegetated areas to be replanted as necessary to assure success. Revegetated areas will be monitored for 5 years and replanted to the level specified for each phase of the project.*

"A bond shall be posted to ensure that revegetation takes place".

This provision (which was typeset with strike-through font) should be reinserted. If the proponent truly has adequate financial resources to carry through with this project, then there should be a good-faith effort to provide bonds and performance plans.

*The SP/DEIR has been amended to require bonding for restoration of the site, which would include revegetation.*

Policy 8 (p. 46)

"domestic animals shall be restrained..."

Dogs and cats should not be allowed on the site, either before, during or after construction because of impacts to wildlife.

"...valuable wildlife features...shall be protected"

These should be mapped and identified to ensure that this takes place. This section should also be included under the fuel modification policy.

## **Bodie Hills RV Park SP/FEIR**

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*Comments noted.*

### Policy 9 (p. 46)

Generators should not be allowed because they disrupt wildlife, especially migrating deer. Outside electricity will be available on-site, so RVs should be mandated to use the power hookups.

*The Specific Plan does not allow the use of generators past 10 p.m..*

### Policy 11 (p. 47)

An archeologist should be present during all phases of construction to identify any critical sites, artifacts or burials.

*The Specific Plan requires the development to avoid impacts to identified archaeological sites by avoiding those sites and requires additional archaeological studies if archaeological evidence is discovered during construction.*

### Policy 12 (p. 47)

"Potential impacts to ground and surface waters resulting from pumping of groundwater..."

The hydrological section of the draft EIR is extremely incomplete. No detailed information on surface water and groundwater hydrology is provided, therefore prohibiting a public reviewer from making an informed decision about impacts from groundwater removal. The document acknowledges this weakness. "Not much information exists on the groundwater resources of the Bodie Hills" (p. 53).

*The Specific Plan contains a policy (Policy 12, p. 43) to avoid potential impacts to ground and surface waters from groundwater pumping. That policy requires the applicant's engineer to submit water quality and quantity information, including production rates, static water levels and drawdown rates, prior to issuance of a well permit.*

There was no watershed management plan completed, as suggested in my scoping letter. As you know, Virginia Creek is an important fishing area. Destruction or reduction of the Virginia Creek fishery would impact existing development at several motels located between the Bodie Road and Bridgeport. Incorporated in the final EIR or as a stand-alone document should be a watershed management plan which would include basic background data such as current turbidity loads in Clearwater Creek and Virginia Creek, current fish populations and associated invertebrates, expected impacts of the proposed development on fish populations, and expected impact of sewage leachate from the proposed project on fish populations. It should also include post-construction monitoring as outlined in the letter from David Herbst (dated November 12, 1996).

*Comments noted.*

### Earth (p. 51)

"..erosion hazard is slight".

If so, then why is creek so deeply incised in some reaches? Shallow landslide potential is based in part on runoff projections, for which no information is provided. The statement in the document

is later contradicted in the next paragraph which mentions that Clearwater Creek is "deeply gullied; its banks appear to be unstable, highly erodible and subject to collapse" (pp. 51-52). Based on this fact, 10 ft setbacks for RV pads seems completely unacceptable.

*As noted previously, the DEIR identifies the environmentally superior alternative as Alternative 2, Reduced Project, which requires a 30 foot setback.*

Water (p. 53)

The hydrology section of the draft EIR is extremely incomplete, as acknowledged by the statement that "not much information exists on the groundwater resources of the Bodie Hills" (p. 53). A complete hydrology study is critical if this project is to take place. It should analyze water quality, especially since upstream of the proposed project there are several old mines, including Little Bodie Mine, and a prospect in Cinnabar Canyon, which might have contaminated the groundwater with mercury or other mining by-products that would make the water unsafe for public use. Additionally, it must provide stream gauging data on Clearwater Creek across both wet and dry years and a complete study of groundwater resources across a similarly varied series of hydrological events. How much groundwater would be extracted at the proposed well? How much water would be lost to instream use from evapotranspiration from landscaping, and evapotranspiration from the leach field?

*See response above under Policy 12, p. 47.*

Surface water (p. 55)

"...supports a small population of trout but has little significance as a fishery..."

The draft EIR is incomplete because it does not contain a complete fisheries study. There is no citations to indicate the source of this sentence. It is also difficult to assess the reliability of this statement because there is no information on flow in Clearwater Creek. The final EIR should include a complete fisheries study.

*Comment noted.*

Plant life (p. 58)

Para. 4--"This population can be avoided..."

Para. 5--"can be avoided by routing development away from the area..."

The language in this section is ambiguous. Were these action items carried out?

*The project has been designed to avoid areas with identified sensitive plant populations.*

The project description indicates that rare plants have been identified, but that direct impacts to these populations will be avoided. However, many times rare plant populations are destroyed by indirect impacts such as changes in runoff patterns from poorly planned development, trampling by humans, etc.

*Comment noted.*

Wetlands (p. 60)

## **Bodie Hills RV Park SP/FEIR**

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Para. 1--no wetland delineation conducted, as discussed in my scoping letter. The document is extremely incomplete. With most other construction projects, the wetland delineation is conducted first rather than last. Without this critical piece of information, there is no way to assess if there are impacts to 404 lands, and if so if mitigation measures are suitable. The Army Corps of Engineers requires that all feasible and prudent alternatives must be explored if wetlands fill is to occur, but there is no way to analyze this without a delineation.

The Specific Plan Project Description (1996, p. 6) states that there will be impacts to a specific clump of willows. This information is not present in the draft EIR, again leaving it up to speculation regarding the extent of impacts to wetlands. It is obvious from the enclosed figures, as well as personal knowledge of the site, that impacts fall in lands jurisdictional to the Army Corps of Engineers are extremely likely. The final EIR must contain a wetland delineation approved by the Army Corps of Engineers, as well as a complete mitigation and long-term monitoring plan if impacts are unavoidable.

*The project area has the potential to contain wetlands in the riparian corridor. Potential impacts to wetlands have been avoided by siting development away from the riparian corridor. Bridge pilings will be placed outside of the riparian corridor in the stream setback. Use of a 30 foot stream setback (as proposed in Alternative 2, Reduced Project), instead of the proposed 10 foot setback, would further avoid potential impacts to the riparian corridor and potential associated wetlands. Potential indirect impacts resulting from human intrusion into the riparian corridor will be minimized by the site topography (steep banks, thick vegetation) which discourages use of the area, and fencing along the top of the stream banks. In addition, the SP/DEIR has been amended to require signs along the top of the streambank noting that the riparian corridor is a fragile environment and directing visitors to keep out of that area.*

### Plant surveys (p. 60)

Two rare plant populations were discovered: Bodie Hills cusickiella (*Cusickiella quadricostata*) and Masonic rock cress (*Arabis cobrensis*). Both are former federal candidate (C2) species, which are now considered to be federal species of concern. The site may support appropriate edaphic conditions for the Mono County phacelia and further surveys are needed for this species due to changes in project design.

The botanical surveys (Bagley 1997) are incomplete because the project boundaries were changed after the botanical surveys were conducted, and the water tank and pipeline location were relocated. Also, the driveway to the single family homes was relocated, no surveys were done in the area (as yet undesignated) where the barns and corrals will occur, no surveys were done across any of the three powerline alternatives, or in the altered RV spaces (3,4,7, and 9, which now extend beyond the original survey area).

"further surveys to powerline...not proposed"(pp. 60-61)

There is no basis for this. It directly contradicts Appendix B, p. 15.

The EIR states that impacts to the cusickiella could be avoided if the current plans are adhered to and the population is flagged and fenced to prevent accidental damage by equipment. The rock cress, however, would likely be destroyed unless construction crews are extremely careful.

*Comments noted. The DEIR /SP has been amended to require additional plant surveys in all previously unsurveyed areas prior to the initiation of Phase I of the project.*

### Animal life (p. 61-64)/ Comments on "Wildlife Assessment Survey at the Bodie Hills RV Park"

The draft EIR is inadequate because it does not address cumulative impacts to deer, threatened, endangered, and sensitive wildlife and plant species, acknowledge increased impacts to wildlife from additional presence of humans and their pets, or recognize impacts to local songbird populations due to use of bird feeders and livestock grazing (both factors encourage brown-headed cowbird populations). Furthermore, it was based on incomplete and inadequate wildlife surveys.

The importance of riparian corridors to wildlife, especially those in the Great Basin, is not acknowledged. In the nearby Inyo National Forest, for instance, riparian areas constitute less than 0.4% of the land area but are essential for at least one phase of life for about 75% of local wildlife species (Kondolf et al., 1996).

*Your comment regarding the importance of riparian corridors to wildlife on a regional basis is noted. The wildlife report (Taylor, 1996) provided a detailed discussion of the importance of willow riparian habitat to local wildlife at the project site and surrounding vicinity. On page 6, the report acknowledged willow riparian habitat as providing the highest quality wildlife habitat on the site, offering breeding, nesting, brood rearing, hiding and escape cover, foraging areas, and travel corridors for a variety of local wildlife. It also provided both common and scientific names of many of the more common wildlife species that could inhabit the riparian corridor during some portion of their life cycles. The report (pages 6-7) also discussed the importance of the riparian corridor as a travel corridor, which enables a variety of wildlife to move safely up and down the Clearwater Creek drainage. On page 19, the wildlife report further emphasized the importance of the riparian corridor to local wildlife and discussed potential impacts to wildlife resulting from loss and fragmentation of this important habitat type.*

The wildlife report (Taylor 1997) was incomplete and also inaccurate in some sections. Some key wildlife species were excluded (yellow warbler, northern harrier and loggerhead shrike (all are California Species of Special Concern)). On page 16, the report states that project area provides habitat for mountain quail, yet it neglects to list this species as a California species of special concern in Table 1. Surveys should also have been conducted for the Owens valley vole (*Microtus californicus vallicola*) (California species of special concern) because it is (a) a wetlands-associated species for which habitat may be present on the project site, and (b) it has recently been reported from the Mono Basin and evidently can be found much farther north than originally expected (p. 30, USFWS 1996). Surveys should also be conducted for the western white-tailed hare (*Lepus townsendii*) and pygmy rabbit (*Brachylagus idahoensis*) (California species of special concern).

*Your comments are noted. The wildlife study identified wildlife species having potential to occur in the project area based on the presence of suitable habitat. Even though the project site is located within the range of the northern harrier and loggerhead shrike, it was the opinion of the wildlife biologist that the project area did not contain suitable habitat for these species. Likewise, the lack of wet meadow habitat in the project area would preclude the occurrence of the Owens Valley vole. We acknowledge, however, that these species, along with the mountain quail, yellow warbler, western white-tailed hare, and pygmy rabbit should be included in the list of potential species presented in Table 1 of the Taylor (1996) report. The wildlife report (Taylor, 1997) has been revised to provide information on the status and distribution, habitat requirements, and occurrence in the project area of these additional special status species.*

On p. 12 of Taylor (1997), there is no explanation regarding why the author believed that suitable habitat is not present for mountain beaver, which is a species associated with streams. *The wildlife report has been revised to include explanations as to why suitable habitat for mountain beaver does not occur in the project area.*

Some of the surveys for threatened, endangered and sensitive (TES) species listed in Taylor (1997) Table 1 were conducted at the wrong time of year. Surveys were conducted in November and December (Taylor 1997, p. 3), which was an inappropriate time to survey for willow flycatchers, bank swallows, and other neotropical species which reside in Mono County from April to September. Therefore, it is inappropriate to state that no bank swallows and no willow flycatchers were observed (Taylor 1997, pp. 13 and 15). Both of these species are neotropical migrants and have never been recorded in Mono County during November and December. In addition, I disagree that the project area "does not support suitable habitat for the willow flycatcher" (p. 15). It supports marginal habitat, especially during migration. Although some efforts were made to look for sage grouse, which indeed present in the Bodie Hills during winter months, the surveys were not conducted from late February to mid-April when this species forms leks (a display grounds used for attracting mates). If a lek were present at this site then impacts to sage grouse would be significant. The same lek location is faithfully used year after year. Presence of leks is much more important than presence of individual birds.

We acknowledge that wildlife surveys for neotropical migrants (e.g. willow flycatcher and bank swallow) were conducted too late in the year to detect the presence of individual birds. The wildlife report has been revised to include this as a potential reason why these species were not observed in the project area. However, as indicated in the "Introduction" and "Methods" sections of the wildlife report, the primary purpose of the wildlife surveys was not to determine if the project site contained suitable habitat for these species. A search of the CNDDB revealed no records of willow flycatchers and/or bank swallows in the project area or vicinity, indicating that the chance of detecting either of these species at the project site was rather remote, even during migration. Furthermore, it was the opinion of CDFG wildlife biologist Ron Thomas (pers. comm.) that the project area provided poor quality habitat for both bank swallow, willow flycatcher, and mountain beaver. As a result, a habitat suitability survey for these species was deemed adequate by the contract biologist for the study, Timothy Taylor. Your opinion regarding the project area supporting marginal habitat for the willow flycatcher is noted.

As stated in the wildlife report (pages 9-10), sage grouse breed on strutting grounds called mating leks, which are generally isolated areas in open sagebrush. Moreover, the "Results" section of the wildlife report (Taylor 1997, pages 5-6) revealed that no such areas occur at the project site or surrounding vicinity. The wildlife report (page 10) also stated that the nearest known sage grouse lek to the project site is located some 4 miles to the southeast in Bridgeport Canyon (Terri Russi, BLM, pers. comm.). The presence of this lek as the closest one to the project area was confirmed by CDFG biologist Ron Thomas (pers. comm.). We acknowledge that the presence of a mating lek is more important than the presence of individual birds when determining sage grouse abundance. However, during fall, big sagebrush scrub vegetation can provide important foraging and roosting areas for sage grouse. Use of these foraging areas can only be determined through the presence or absence of individual birds, which usually occur in family groups. Therefore, the surveys conducted for sage grouse in the project area were appropriate for that time of year. The timing and intensity of these surveys were also determined adequate by CDFG biologist Ron Thomas (pers. comm.).

Presence of a dusky flycatcher (Taylor, p. 5) would be unprecedented in late fall/early winter. The late record for the Mono Basin area is Sept. 27, 1970 (Gaines 1995), and most have departed by mid-August.

*A single dusky flycatcher was observed by Timothy Taylor, Consulting Biologist, on September 15, during a brief site visit (10-15 minutes) to the project area. The site visit was conducted for the purpose of formulating a cost estimate for the wildlife assessment. The wildlife report has been revised to clarify the timing of this observation.*

Additionally, the project is located directly on a Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) breeding bird survey route which is conducted annually by Bishop residents. No efforts were made to contact the local Audubon group to solicit this information, which would have greatly strengthened the report.

*Your comments are noted. We will attempt to contact the local chapter of the Audubon Society and to provide any relevant survey information in the wildlife report.*

Relevant results from this FWS survey should be included in the final EIR, and additional surveys targeting TES neotropical migrants (May and June) and sage grouse leks (February and March) should be conducted by a qualified expert at the appropriate time of year. The need for more thorough and relevant surveys was also expressed by the California Dept. of Fish and Game (CDFG) scoping letter dated January 31, 1997.

*Your comments are noted. As mentioned earlier, the wildlife surveys were sufficient to determine if the project area contained suitable habitat for TES neotropical migrants, sage grouse and other sensitive species. The project area was evaluated by Taylor (1997) and Thomas (pers. comm.) as providing poor quality habitat for bank swallow and willow flycatcher, thus eliminating the need for further survey. Additionally, because no suitable lekking habitat was located on the site and the nearest known lek is located some 4 miles from the project area (Terry Russi, BLM, pers. comm., Ron Thomas, CDFG, pers. comm.), surveys conducted in February and March to locate leks are, in the opinion of Timothy Taylor, Consulting Biologist, unwarranted.*

Mule deer (main document, p. 63)

This section has significant omissions. It does not fully summarize one of the most important facts regarding on-site biological resources. According to Appendix B (3), 24% of the Mono Lake deer herd (about 720 animals) moves directly through the project corridor (Taylor 1997, p. 8). The main document discusses the deer migratory corridor, but neglects to mention the highly concentrated use of this site by a large segment of a population. The average citizen does not have time or money to order and read the appendices; it is an egregiously flagrant oversight to not include the above-mentioned information in this section of the EIR. As the EIR mentions, this herd has experienced a population decline during the last decade, which is attributed to road kills and residential development, as well as drought-induced changes in habitat quality. The project area "contains the four habitat components essential to deer"...providing "high quality mule deer habitat" (Taylor, p. 8).

*Your comments are noted. The wildlife section in the EIR has been revised to include relevant information regarding the importance of the migration corridor to the Mono Lake deer herd. However, it is important to clarify that the Taylor (1997) report did not state that "24 % of the Mono Lake deer herd (about 720 animals) moves directly through the project corridor". Instead, the Taylor (1997) report (page 8) states that the project area and vicinity provided important transition range for the Mono Lake deer herd and that about 24 % of the Mono Lake deer population, or some 720 animals, moved through the project vicinity during the Taylor (1991) study. The report identified the Mono Lake deer herd migration corridor as encompassing the entire width of the Bodie Hills, from the north shore of Mono Lake, north to the East Walker River drainage.*

"No significant impacts are anticipated from this project. The project has been designed to avoid sensitive wildlife habitats..." (main document, p. 64).

As described above, there are a number of cumulative impacts and a great deal of missing information regarding impacts to TES plant and wildlife species. There is no way to conclude that there are no significant impacts. The project had done almost nothing to avoid sensitive

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wildlife habitats, since it is not only clustered directly along the stream but also perpendicular to the deer migration corridor.

*To the extent feasible, the project has been designed to mitigate potential impacts to deer and other wildlife. The project analyzes all of the applicable potential impacts and proposes either design changes or mitigation to reduce impacts.*

The deer herd is an interstate resource because they migrate between California and Nevada. If impacts are not mitigated to a level of non-significance, then a federal document that conforms to NEPA (ie. an environmental impact statement) will be required.

*Comment noted.*

The draft EIR does not include language to limit construction activity to May 15 to October 15 (Taylor 1997 p. 24). This restriction should be included in the final EIR. The CDFG stream alteration agreement will likely call for similar timelines.

*NRC Policy 8 contains language to limit construction activity to between May 15 and October 15 (p. 42). Comment noted.*

Exposure to risk (p. 67)

"There is no historic flood data for Clearwater Creek" (p. 67)

This does not address my scoping letter. A flood frequency analysis must be prepared by a qualified hydrologist. Caltrans undoubtedly has some information on flood damage. The EIR completely ignores the fact that Clearwater Creek overran its banks in 1983 and destroyed a section of SR 270 just upstream of the proposed development (Terri Russi, BLM biologist, pers. comm., 11/7/97). Development in the flood zone is completely irresponsible, especially because of the recent (1997) catastrophic floods on the Walker River. The public must be fully informed about flood potential because it is us (federal) taxpayers who will have to bail out Federal Emergency Management Agency funds should the project be destroyed by flooding. The Bodie Hills are susceptible to summer flash flooding, as well as large pulses of runoff during early spring.

"temporary nature...would lessen this impact"

Yes, maybe to human lives but not to the taxpayer who may end up bailing out this development if it ends up in Virginia Creek.

In addition to the above-mentioned points, there is absolutely no information on the seismic activity at the project site and to what engineering standards the structures will be constructed to prevent massive mortality during a major earthquake.

To avert a potential catastrophe, complete information on flood potential is critical so that responsible decision-making can occur!

*The project is not in a FEMA flood hazard zone, the RV park is a seasonal use with a minimal number of permanent structures, and the required setback from the stream is intended to minimize hazards from flooding. In addition, the proposed 10 foot setback is a minimum setback throughout the project site. In areas where the bank has been identified as being less stable, the setback is greater than 10 feet. The DEIR has been amended to include additional mapping of the bank stability and its relationship to proposed setbacks. Alternative 2, which requires a 30*

*foot setback from the top of the streambank, instead of the proposed 10 foot setback, further minimizes potential hazards related to flooding.*

*The project is not in an Alquist-Priolo zone, indicating that it is not in a seismic hazard area.*

Aesthetics (p. 72)

As mentioned in the scoping letter, I have probably visited Bodie at least 50 times from approximately age seven onwards. The Desert Survivors frequently hike and provide volunteer support to projects in the Bodie Hills. One of my family's most cherished memories is a set of photographs my parents took at Bodie before it was designated as a State Park. Currently, the "gateway" to Bodie (junction of Bodie Road/ Highway 395) and the Bodie Road itself is extremely wild and scenic. It provides a critical setting in which to visit the Park: that you are approaching an extremely wild, remote place. Because it is a narrow, two-lane road that has a relatively low traffic volume. This atmosphere allows the harried east-side visitor (one day to visit Yosemite, three hours to visit Mono Lake, etc.) a chance to relax and unwind. The proposed R.V. Park will irreparably impact the "gate", and destroy the isolated spirit which brings visitors back year after year to Bodie.

*The project has been designed to minimize potential impacts to the "Bodie Experience". The "Bodie Experience" depends on the isolation and remoteness of Bodie. The proposed project is located at the beginning of the Bodie Road, contained in a canyon, along the paved portion of the Bodie Road. It is not located on much more visible parcels further east on the Bodie Road which overlook vast, undeveloped areas critical to the sense of isolation and remoteness which defines the "Bodie Experience". Nor is it located on the unpaved portion of the Bodie Road, which contributes to the sense of going back in time, also a part of the "Bodie Experience".*

No acknowledgment is made of the impact to the viewshed from overhead telephone and electrical lines (p. 71). These lines should all be placed underground.

The project proponent should definitely develop a Master Sign Plan to integrate existing and proposed signs along Hwy. 270 and 395 (p. 95). Additionally, the proponent should work with BLM and fund complete signage of the section of the Bodie Mountain WSA adjacent to the inholding.

*The Specific Plan calls for a coordinated approach to signage along Hwy. 270. Other comments noted.*

Utility lines (p. 75)

The draft document is once again flawed because no alternative was chosen for the powerline corridor (three provided)!

*An alternative for the power line placement will be chosen during the decisionmaking process concerning the project.*

Cumulative impacts (p. 87)

This section is very incomplete. Please see the rest of my letter for cumulative impacts. CEQA requires a full and adequate discussion of cumulative impacts. Referring to the rest of the document is not an adequate discussion. Also, new projects are slated for the Bodie Hills (Paramount Mine; contact BLM), and a train ride has been proposed from Bodie to the Mono Basin.

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*Cumulative impacts were addressed in the General Plan EIR. This project contains no cumulative impacts peculiar to the project.*

"no significant impacts" (p. 97)

The document does not address significant impacts to the viewshed. The elevations provided in the document clearly indicate that the project will resemble a "rustic" mini-mall. It will irreparably alter the appearance of the Gateway to the Bodie Hills, and because the project is spread out across a long distance the impacts will be even more noticeable. Additionally, the visual impacts of two single family residences on top of the north bluffs is not addressed. These homes will have a significant impact on the viewshed from adjoining peaks in the Bodie Hills.

*Comments noted.*

Cultural resources (p. 97)

It is clear from the cultural resources report that the parcel is an extremely rich archeological site (22 identified sites; 17 which meet CEQA criteria). As acknowledged in the Specific Plan Project Description provided by Mono County Planning Dept., increased human presence will greatly reduce lithic scatter. The draft EIR is incomplete because none of this language was included in the draft EIR.

Due to changes in project design after baseline studies were conducted, the cultural resources section is incomplete and additional surveys will have to be conducted (see discussion regarding plant surveys above).

*Comments noted.*

Alternatives (p. 98-100)

This section is incomplete because it does not include an option to relocate the project away from the Bodie Hills. The BLM has considerable acreage near Bridgeport, and a land exchange should be arranged at an environmentally appropriate site near existing development. Desert Survivors urges the proponent to contact the BLM to investigate this option.

"The Resource Management Plan identifies 9,000 acres of BLM land (in the eastern Sierra) that might be better suited in private ownership...having large acreages of both disposals and acquisitions on the table will enable us to have a flexible land exchange program that can take advantage of exchange opportunities as they arise...We cannot force a landowner into an exchange. ...Mono Co,...and the public will have the opportunity to review all land exchange proposals, and will plan an important role in deciding whether or not we proceed with specific exchanges. A site-specific Environmental Assessment will be required for each exchange...We desire a win/win situation: we can free up isolated tracts for private use, while acquiring key inholdings for public protection under BLM stewardship" (BLM 1991, pp. 5-9 to 5-10).

The Dept. of Parks and Recreation in a scoping letter dated January 29, 1997 also states the opinion that "alternative project sites should be identified and evaluated" (p. 3).

*The applicant approached the BLM about the possibility of a land exchange in the late 1980s and was told that the BLM was not accepting additional lands for potential exchange. Also, the BLM's 1993 Bishop Area Resource Management Plan does not identify the property for acquisition.*

Alternatives analysis (p. 100)

The alternatives analysis is very incomplete. There was not sufficient information provided on the various alternatives. The final EIR should include full architectural renditions of the various alternatives. Where else in the Bodie Hills is that "Relocated Project alternative" referring to?

*Comments noted.*

#### Preferred Alternative

Desert Survivors agrees that the environmentally superior alternative is the No Project Alternative.

Desert Survivors urges the County to adopt the No Project Alternative, or insist that proponents pursue a land exchange to move the project to a less environmentally damaging and flood-prone site near Bridgeport.

*Comments noted.*

#### 2. Miscellaneous topics not addressed in draft EIR

##### Strike-through font

The physical appearance of the draft EIR was rather disconcerting, as there was a significant amount of text that was blocked off with strike-through font. There was no explanation about why it was typeset in this fashion. Was I really reviewing a public draft, or was this an in-house copy subject to future revisions?

*Comment noted.*

##### Grading

The maps and figures were confusing and difficult to read. Although they describe approximately 1,000 cubic yards of cut and 600 cubic yards of fill it is almost impossible to determine where these impacts will occur. The maps were also very difficult to decipher because they either have "no scale" or "not to scale" but have a scale. Legible and accurate maps are critical for the public to make an informed decision. Also see my comments on map problems regarding Policy 5/setbacks.

*Comment noted. The figures provided in the DEIR are reductions. The scales were altered in the reduction process.*

##### Public input

The public scoping phase was incomplete. I never saw any description of this project in the Mammoth Times, for which I had a subscription (until June 1997) in part to learn about proposed local development nor, to the best of my knowledge, had any local environmental groups received public notice. (I contacted representatives from several local groups, including Eastern Sierra Audubon and the Bristlecone Chapter of the California Native Plant Society and they were not aware of the project).

*The availability of the DEIR was noticed in the Mammoth Times and the Review-Herald, as well as being posted in various locations throughout the county.*

##### Growth-inducing impacts

The topic of sprawl, which was brought up in my scoping letter, was not addressed in the draft EIR. This project is incompatible with the surrounding undeveloped lands. High impact projects such as this one should be clumped in other already-developed areas. "Sprawl" developments such as this will eventually make Mono County less desirable as a tourist attraction, and greatly escalate impacts to wildlife, wetlands, cultural resources, etc. The rationale given for this development (e.g. that some development already exists several miles away) will only lead to continued piecemeal development of other inholdings in the Bodie Hills or along the 395 corridor.

Additionally, because there is no commitment to open space on the parcel it is unclear if this project is intended to be the first stage of an even larger project. This must be addressed in the final EIR. (The document states that the stream corridor will be designated as open space, but this is (a) undevelopable, and (b) already has de-facto designation as open space by virtue of the Public Trust Act and regulations of the State Lands Commission).

*Growth inducing impacts were addressed in the DEIR.*

*The Mono County General Plan land use designation for the project site allows 10 percent of the site to be developed. The proposed project encompasses approximately 8 percent of the site, leaving approximately 2 percent developable. The remainder of the site will remain as undeveloped natural open space.*

### Cumulative impacts

Cumulative impacts to the viewshed, cultural and wildlife resources, and water quality are not adequately addressed in the draft EIR.

*Cumulative impacts were addressed in the DEIR. T*

### Bonds

Nowhere in the draft EIR are bonds discussed (except in sections with "strike-through" font). Bonds should be standard operating procedures in large projects such as this. The final EIR should contain complete information on bonds to ensure remediation if all environmental protections in the draft EIR are not fulfilled, but also to compensate the county for impacts if the project is not completed.

*The SP/DEIR has been amended to require bonding for restoration of the project site.*

### Impacts to Adjacent Public Lands

The draft EIR does not address spillover effects from increased visitation to adjacent public lands. Additional cultural resource and wildlife surveys should be conducted on adjacent BLM lands and impacts to sites from arrowhead and obsidian chip gathering must be recognized, as well as increased disturbance to wildlife. The BLM also supports this view (scoping letter dated Feb. 1997).

Recreational impacts to sportsfisherpersons and hunters on adjacent public trust lands on Virginia Creek must be addressed in the final EIR.

*Comments noted.*

### **3. Summary statement**

The draft EIR is incomplete and does not fully recognize cumulative impacts, especially from flooding, potential and undisclosed impacts to wildlife, potential and undisclosed impacts to wetlands, and impacts to surrounding wilderness study areas.

Sincerely,

Emilie Strauss  
Chair, Bodie Task Force  
Desert Survivors

Literature cited

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## **Bodie Hills RV Park SP/FEIR**

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November 6, 1997

Steve Higa  
Mono County Planning Dept.  
Mammoth Lakes, CA 93546

Dear Mr. Higa

I am writing in response to the proposed Bodie RV park/motel development near the junction of 395 and 270. I cannot imagine a more tasteless introduction to America's best preserved, authentic, and totally uncommercialized ghost town than this development, were it built. Having worked part-time at Bodie State Park continuously for 15 years I can honestly say, having talked to hundreds of park visitors over the years, that the only part of this project that there is actually somewhat of a demand for is a campground. Even though I would hate to see this at the gateway to the State Park, it is the only part of the project that makes any sense. There is not a demand for a privately run museum, general store, motel and additional structures as the EIR lists. Existing motels and markets (including mini-markets) abound in adjacent Lee Vining and Bridgeport.

*Comments noted.*

Could a business like this actually survive on only 6 months of income? What if it fails? Are we left with a modern day ghost town?

*Comments noted.*

A preliminary report says the entire project has been designed to "maintain and protect the existing vegetation." Why then are they proposing to develop green lawns within the development? Is this the kind of environment we want to prepare visitors for the real Bodie experience?

*Comments noted.*

Part of Bodie's success as a State Historic Park is its distance from other developments such as the proposed project. Let's keep Bodie's entrances in a natural state by preventing projects such as these.

*Comments noted.*

Sincerely,

Dave Marquart  
P.O. Box 274  
Lee Vining, CA 93541

Mono County Planning Department  
93546

November 7, 1997 PO Box 347 Mammoth Lakes, CA

Dear Mono County Planning Department,

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the Bodie Hills Project Draft EIR. This project seems like it will significantly impact the surrounding environment in all realms from archaeology to wildlife. I would like to specifically address the subject of sprawl that this project will create.

Bodie is certainly part of the open space landscape, and its appeal lies with its remote and undeveloped surroundings. A hotel, RV park, and campground at the turn-off to the Bodie Road will permanently lessen that appeal. Developed recreational sites certainly have their place, but so do undeveloped recreational areas, which ultimately draw people to Mono County. Do we want to continue to chip away at the open space in Mono County? Will this project eventually grow beyond its present projected development level? If this project is approved, perhaps it should be done so with boundaries on future development. My preference would be for no development of this area, but at the worst, this project should be down-sized to minimize the impacts on the surrounding environment and to minimize sprawl. In addition to the proposed use of native vegetation and nineteenth century architecture to reduce the visual impact, I would suggest using shielded lighting and appropriate low-level lights to reduce light pollution. An increasing number of people come to Mono County specifically to enjoy stargazing.

*Alternatives which lessen the size and impacts of the project are included in the DEIR and will be considered during the decisionmaking process. The applicant approached the BLM about the possibility of a land exchange in the late 1980s and was told that the BLM was not accepting additional lands for potential exchange. Also, the BLM's 1993 Bishop Area Resource Management Plan does not identify the property for acquisition.*

*The Specific Plan contains policies which limit lighting to that necessary for health and safety, require low intensity lights throughout the RV Park and camping areas, and require shielding of high intensity lights used around buildings.*

As you know, open space is one of Mono County's greatest resources (if not the greatest). It is an increasingly valuable commodity that positively draws people to this region. It seems that new developments should be concentrated in areas that are already impacted. Recent renovations of the Tioga Lodge and the Mono Inn are good examples of how Mono County might allow for sustainable development. By concentrating projects in developed communities/areas we will preserve what will ultimately maintain a healthy, sustainable future for Mono County.

*Comments noted. The Mono County General Plan focuses development in developed areas but allows projects outside of developed areas if those uses cannot be accommodated in developed areas, or the use directly relies on unique on-site resources.*

I presume that copies of the Draft EIR and the future Final EIR will be made available to local libraries. Not everyone in Mono County can visit county offices as conveniently as their local library. Again, thank you for your consideration.

*Comments noted.*

Sincerely,  
Bartshe Miller  
647.6691

Box 205  
Lee Vining, CA 93541

## **Bodie Hills RV Park SP/FEIR**

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### DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND GAME

Region 5

Environmental Services Division

330 Golden Shore, Suite 50

Long Beach, California 90802

(562) 590-5113

November 3, 1997

*via facsimile (760) 924-5458 & mail*

Mr. Stephen Higa, Senior Planner

Mono County Planning Department

P.O. 347

Mammoth Lakes, CA 93546

Dear Mr. Higa:

#### Bodie Hills RV Park Specific Plan and Draft Environmental Impact Report Mono County

Thank you for providing the Department of Fish and Game (Department) with the opportunity to comment on the Bodie Hills RV Park Specific Plan and Draft Environmental Impact Report (DEIR), which includes the construction of an RV Park Motel and Campground located on a portion of a 155 acre parcel at the southeast intersection of U.S. 395 and S.R. 270. Development is proposed on 13 acres of the 155 acres. The Department's general and specific comments regarding the DEIR are as follows.

The Department believes that due to the limited streamside space available for development at the proposed site, the known flood damage which has occurred in the recent past, the potential for additional flood events and associated damage in the future, and the likelihood that streambank stabilization will be necessary to protect project developments, the preferred alternative which meets project objectives is an alternative which eliminates the interaction between the development and Clearwater Creek and its associated natural resources (e.g. Alternative 3). The Department supports the Mono County 30 foot setback from the creek for all development structures as a minimum requirement for this project, inclusive of all site improvements, such as RV pads and associated support facilities. Therefore, if the project is to remain at the proposed site, the reduced project as identified in Alternative 2 would be the preferred alternative for fish and wildlife resources.

#### ***Comments noted.***

The Department is concerned that without an adequate flood protection buffer zone, it may be inevitable that the project proponent will request to channelize and armor the banks of Clearwater Creek through the project area to prevent future erosion and flood damage to project developments. Even with Mono County's recommended 30 foot setback for structures, a flood event such as occurred in January of this year could significantly damage developments associated with this project. Since there is very little flood plain information or FEMA recommendations available for Clearwater Creek, the Department would suggest that the 30 foot setback may need to be viewed as an absolute minimum for both riparian resources and potential flood concerns. This 30 foot minimum setback should be inclusive of all types of proposed site improvements once these improvements are completed, such as but not necessarily limited to RV and/or camping pads and associated features, they will represent a permanent change in the landscape.

*The project is not in a FEMA flood hazard zone, the RV park is a seasonal use with a minimal number of permanent structures, and the required setback from the stream is intended to minimize hazards from flooding. In addition, the proposed 10 foot setback is a minimum setback throughout the project site. In areas where the bank has been identified as being less stable, the setback is greater than 10 feet. The DEIR has been amended to include additional mapping of the bank stability and its relationship to proposed setbacks. Alternative 2, which requires a 30 foot setback from the top of the streambank, instead of the proposed 10 foot setback, further minimizes potential hazards related to flooding.*

*The proposed 10 foot setback is consistent with the Mono County Zoning and Development Code (MCZDC) requirements for stream setbacks since those requirements only restrict structures and impervious surfaces within a 30 foot setback from the stream. No structures or impervious surfaces are proposed within 30 feet of Clearwater Creek. In addition, the MCZDC notes the following concerning stream setback requirements: "specific plans or area general plans may be more restrictive or less restrictive, and shall take precedence".*

The Department supports the opinion presented in the Botanical Survey (page 12) that the riparian vegetation on Clearwater Creek "appears to qualify as wetland vegetation under the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and California Department of Fish and Game criteria". As such, we must oppose the proposed project due to its potential negative impacts to riparian/wetland habitat and failure to provide an adequate buffer to minimize potential degradation of Clearwater Creek. Although the 10 foot setback is an attempt to minimize impacts, the Department does not believe sufficient information or mitigation is presented in the DEIR to support any waiver of the required 30 foot minimum setback. The proposed 10 foot setback will likely result in degradation of both wetland habitat quality and quantity. Therefore, the DEIR should also evaluate the need for project wetland delineation and compliance with the Army Corps of Engineers inclusive of the need for a Section 401 Permit(s).

*The project area has the potential to contain wetlands in the riparian corridor. Potential impacts to wetlands have been avoided by siting development away from the riparian corridor. Bridge pilings will be placed outside of the riparian corridor in the stream setback. Use of a 30 foot stream setback (as proposed in Alternative 2, Reduced Project), instead of the proposed 10 foot setback, would further avoid potential impacts to the riparian corridor and potential associated wetlands. Potential indirect impacts resulting from human intrusion into the riparian corridor will be minimized by the site topography (steep banks, thick vegetation) which discourages use of the area, and fencing along the top of the stream banks. In addition, the SP/DEIR has been amended to require signs along the top of the streambank noting that the riparian corridor is a fragile environment and directing visitors to keep out of that area.*

The Mono County General Plan "allows for higher intensity uses outside of existing community areas if it can be demonstrated that the use cannot be accommodated in existing community areas" (DEIR page 2). There has been no demonstration that the proposed project could not be built closer to the community of Bridgeport to achieve greater compliance with the General Plan. We believe that for the DEIR to be complete in its range of alternatives analysis, an alternative describing the project near existing communities and development, such as Bridgeport, must be included. This should be a reasonable alternative and would likely represent a substantially superior or preferred environmental alternative.

*The applicant approached the BLM about the possibility of a land exchange in the late 1980s and was told that the BLM was not accepting additional lands for potential exchange. Also, the BLM's 1993 Bishop Area Resource Management Plan does not identify the property for acquisition.*

Two of the proposed leach fields are within approximately 50' of Clearwater Creek. This close proximity should be fully addressed in the Final EIR (FEIR) and an assessment made to preclude the pollution of the creek with leach field products.

*The leach fields are 100 feet from Clearwater Creek.*

We concur with the designation of the Clearwater Creek Channel as Open Space, however the designation of a ten foot riparian buffer zone area along the length of the creek through the project site is insufficient to maintain riparian and associated resources (re: page 24, Policy 5) We concur that a designated buffer zone should be maintained in perpetuity, and that existing uses be discontinued or moved to the minimum setback when the streambank meanders in the future. The soils and site geology description in the Environmental Analysis (page 47) states that the Clearwater Creek Channel streambanks are highly erodible. During episodic flow events the channel will migrate and significantly modify the project site. The maintenance of only a ten foot setback will help to promote instability of the stream channel and result in relatively frequent modifications of the project site to maintain the proposed ten foot minimum setback. Furthermore, the promotion of streambank instability will likely compel the project proponent to pursue the stabilization of the erodible streambanks to prevent stream meandering in the future. This will severely compromise the purposes of the riparian buffer and the natural functioning of stream processes. It appears that there may be no laws or regulations which would prevent the developer from rip-rapping, or otherwise stabilizing, the streambanks to protect life or property from natural flow events. If this is the case, then the requirement to maintain a narrow buffer, may over the long term be detrimental to natural resources.

*Comments noted. The DEIR contains an alternative which requires a 30 foot setback (Alternative 2, Reduced Project) which is identified as the environmentally superior alternative since it minimizes potential impacts while meeting the project objective.*

It is stated that Clearwater Creek is a perennial stream (re:: page 49, Surface Water). It has been our observation that during dry periods the reach of stream within the project area can be intermittent. At such times, aquatic biota are maintained in the pools which persist. The watershed is also subject to extremely high flows resulting from episodic thunderstorms.

*Comments noted.*

The location of the proposed well is not described. However, if located at streambank floodplain grade, given the 14 foot distance to the active stream channel, the well will only be sealed to a depth of 36 feet below stream groundwater given the well permit requirements to only seal the well to a depth of 50 feet below the ground's surface. The extraction of approximately 4 acre feet of water from the subsurface flow of an already intermittent stream during the driest part of the year could result in a cone of depression which could completely dewater portions of the stream channel. This could eliminate the pool habitat which maintains aquatic biota during dry periods. The well location should be determined and the water resource, including depth to water, identified. Then, based upon pump tests, an appropriate sealing depth should be determined which would not result in impacts to surface flow, even during dry periods.

*The location of the well is shown on Figure 4. The Specific Plan contains a policy (Policy 12, p. 43) to avoid potential impacts to ground and surface waters from groundwater pumping. That policy requires the applicant's engineer to submit water quality and quantity information, including production rates, static water levels and drawdown rates, prior to issuance of a well permit.*

The project has the potential to substantially affect sensitive plants. Grazing, pets, people, and other disturbances will occur and detrimental effects should be expected. The DEIR fails to

discuss these aspects of the proposed project. The Department supports the statement on page 53 of the DEIR that "It appears that there is a good possibility that it [Masonic or Bodie Hills rock cress] could also occur in unsurveyed areas". Therefore, sensitive plant surveys of yet unsurveyed areas should be completed prior to project approval and included in the FEIR for full disclosure of potential impacts.

*The SP/DEIR has been amended to require additional botanical surveys along the overhead powerline not previously surveyed. Phase I of the project has been revised so that construction will not occur outside of previously surveyed areas.*

The letter from Dr. David Herbst regarding a Band-thigh diving beetle survey (1996) was not included in Appendix B, although it is referenced in the draft Specific Plan (re. page 55, Special Status Species). The Wildlife Assessment Survey conducted by Mr. Tim Taylor, however, references information obtained from Mr. Terri Russi of U.S. Bureau of Land Management which indicates that the Band-thigh diving beetle exists in Clearwater Creek. This inconsistency should be resolved, and the presence or absence of the band-thigh diving beetle within the project site confirmed.

*The letter from Dr. David Herbst, which confirms the absence of the Band-thigh diving beetle in Clearwater Creek, was included in Appendix B.*

The project will cause unavoidable increases in uses and impacts to adjacent public lands. The DEIR has failed to provide recognition or a specific description of such effects. Such effects to public resources may be mitigated with a permanent open space designation for all undeveloped portions of the property.

*The General Plan designation for the parcel, Resource Management (RM), allows 10 percent of the parcel to be developed. The proposed project will encompass approximately 8 percent of the parcel, leaving approximately 2 percent developable. The remainder of the parcel will remain natural undeveloped open space.*

The unavoidable disturbance of wildlife by people, livestock, pets, vehicles, noise, lights, and similar effects associated with this development is largely ignored in the DEIR. These impacts should be adequately recognized and described in the document. Specifically, the DEIR reveals that the resort will be open during mule deer migration periods and during the sage grouse strutting season. Impacts to these species will unavoidably increase as a result of the increase in human disturbance due to the presence of this resort development. Although the concept of a wildlife corridor has merit, the value of this measure for wildlife is diminished by the inclusion of RV spaces which will require alteration of existing habitat and other disturbances.

*Comments noted.*

The Department respectfully requests copies of the Notice of Determination for the proposed project be provided directly to the Department's Bishop Field Office, Attention Mr. Bruce Kinney, 407 W. Line Street, Bishop, California 93514.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comment on The Bodie Hills RV Park Specific Plan and Environmental Impact Report. If you have any questions or concerns regarding this letter, please contact Mr. Kinney at our Bishop Office or by telephone at (760) 872-1129; Facsimile (760) 872-1284

Sincerely  
Patricia Wolf

## **Bodie Hills RV Park SP/FEIR**

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Regional Manager

cc      Mr. Alan Pickard                      Mr. Bruce Kinney  
         Department of Fish and Game      Department of Fish and Game  
         Bishop, California                  Bishop, California

         Mr. Darrell Wong  
         Department of Fish and Game  
         Bishop, California

         Mr. Ron Thomas  
         Department of Fish and Game  
         Bishop, California

Botanical Studies • Environmental Surveys & Analysis

November 7, 1997

Mr. Stephen Higa  
Mono County Planning Department  
P.O. Box 347  
Mammoth Lakes, CA 93546

Subject: Comments on the Bodie Hills RV Park Specific Plan and Draft EIR

Dear Stephen;

I am concerned to read in the Bodie Hills RV Park Specific Plan and Draft EIR that further botanical surveys are not proposed for portions of the project area that were not included in my botanical survey (Appendix B of the EIR). My report (p. 15) and the DEIR (p. 53) list seven project areas that were not surveyed for sensitive plants. Further surveys for the last two of these areas are included in the plan and DEIR and the need for surveys in another was eliminated by avoiding that area. However, for the other four unsurveyed project areas the DEIR (p. 53) states, "Further surveys on the areas around the proposed overhead powerline alignment and in and around the motel are not proposed, since the habitat types are consistent with the areas previously surveyed and found not to contain sensitive plants."

The reason for no further surveys given in this statement is not supported by any evidence in the DEIR and in fact is contradicted by the previous paragraph (DEIR p. 53) and by statements in my report (Appendix B, p. 15). The previous paragraph in the DEIR clearly states, "In the unsurveyed portions of the site there is the potential for the occurrence of sensitive plant species" and "It appears there is a good possibility that it (Masonic rock cress) could also occur in unsurveyed areas." My report points out that soils in the unsurveyed areas, EXCEPT in the overhead power line corridor which is unknown, "are not of the type expected to support Bodie Hills cusickella or Mono County phacelia" but that they are similar to the site where Masonic rock cress occurred in the project area. The proper conclusion here is that the unsurveyed areas in and around the motel, as well as those on the slope near RV spaces 3 through 9, do have potentially suitable habitat for Masonic rock cress and should be surveyed for sensitive plant species prior to development.

Additionally, the proper conclusion regarding the unsurveyed power line corridors is that further surveys for sensitive plant species should be conducted prior to development of any of the three options presented in the DEIR. Sensitive plant populations do occur in the vicinity of the power line corridors and I found no evidence presented in the DEIR of what the soils or habitat types are in any of the corridors. In addition to no description of the affected environment in the proposed power line corridors, the DEIR is silent on potential impacts of the construction or maintenance of a power line in any of the corridors.

*The SP/DEIR has been amended to require additional botanical surveys along the overhead powerline not previously surveyed. Phase I of the project has been revised so that construction will not occur outside of previously surveyed areas.*

## **Bodie Hills RV Park SP/FEIR**

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I noticed also some inconsistencies on DEIS Figure 4 with the text of the document. Figure 4 shows RV space 8 and the maintenance building to the east located right up to the edge of the creek bank, inside the 10 foot setback space in violation of Specific Plan Policy 5 (p. 24). In addition to RV spaces 13,14 and 15, portions of spaces 12 and 16 are located on Figure 4 within the Wildlife Movement Corridor in violation of Specific Plan Policy 8 (p. 25). And finally, Figure 4, along with all the other figures using the same basemap, has the wrong scale noted on the map. As I pointed out to you in a letter last Feb. 10th and as I showed on the figures in my report (Appendix B), the correct scale is not 1" = 50', but rather 1" = approximately 100'.

*Figure 4 of the DEIR is a reduction of a 1" = 50' map; the scale is distorted in the reduction process.*

Sincerely,

Mark Bagley

3750 El Canto Drive  
Spring Valley, CA 91977  
November 1, 1997

COMMENTS ON BODIE HILLS RV PARK, DRAFT SPECIFIC PLAN/EIR  
SCH# 97012031

The opportunity to comment on the Bodie Hills project is deeply appreciated. Even though I live near San Diego, I have been interested in Bodie since long before it became a State Historic Park. I have spent many hiking, skiing and camping along the Sierra Nevada's eastern side from the Walker River area to the Tehachapis. Comments are submitted under CEQA, Section 21000(e).

I support the environmentally superior "No Action" alternative.

*Comment noted.*

COMMENTS ON THE DOCUMENT Apparently, the Document was prepared by County Staff. If so, was it prepared at taxpayers' expense? It appears to have been prepared to dignify a project for which there is no overriding public benefit or need. See CEQA Sections 15091, 15092, 15093. Even the Chamber of Commerce has no comment page 45 & App. AL.

*Following standard procedure, costs for the DEIR and Specific Plan were funded by the project proponent.*

The document is inadequate, internally conflicting and incomplete. A few examples are listed below.

- Wildlife surveys, specifically for the Mono Lake Deer Herd, were conducted in Nov/Dec, 1995 and October, 1996, a time period when the Mono Lake Deer Herd is in winter quarters near Hawthorne (Nevada) and environs. The lack of direct sightings conflicts with the statement on page 55 that "optimal fawning and fawn rearing habitat occurs adjacent to Clearwater Creek." See Figure 4.
- the lack of information on nocturnal and dawn/dusk inventories is abysmal.
- information on geothermal resources - and the project's potential impacts is lacking in spite of documents indicating such resources. See BLM CALIFORNIA STATEWIDE WILDERNESS STUDY REPORT, 1990, part 4, volume 1: CA-010-099 and CA-010-100.
- another example of internally conflicting statements is the material presented on the narrow Clearwater CREEK CHANNEL (100-150 feet wide), its soil composition and the potential for erosion and flooding. See Earth, pg. 46-7 and Exposure to Risk, pg. 58-9.

*A complete Wildlife Assessment was completed for the project. The study's purpose was to establish baseline conditions and to assess potential impacts on mule deer and any sensitive status species and to identify mitigation measures.*

COMMENTS ON THE SPECIFIC PLAN and DEIR.

1. There is a lack of specific economic analysis, such as costs to county, to CalTrans for processing, hearings, monitoring, mitigation, enforcement, et al. There is only the word of the project engineer that the project is financially sound. see page 16.

*Economic analysis of the type mentioned above is not required in a Specific Plan or DEIR.*

2. The plan places full responsibility upon Caltrans for any and all mishaps on highway 270. See page 60.

## **Bodie Hills RV Park SP/FEIR**

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*Comment noted.*

3. The plan graciously grants a 150 foot strip to the Mono Lake Deer herd to use in migrating from winter to summer feeding grounds and return instead of the 560 foot corridor identified by project survey/inventories. There appear to be no conditions/stipulations for addressing the fawn adjacent to Clearwater Creek. See pages 54, 55. There is no protection for deer in corridor (Fig. 4).

*The project site is part of a much larger area used by the Mono Lake deer herd during its migrations. Policies in the Specific Plan restrict uses in the Wildlife Movement Corridor in order to provide optimal habitat for deer.*

4. The project is a bulldozer/engineers' dream of cutting and filling to within 10 feet of the Clearwater Creek's edge.

*Comment noted.*

5. The plan reveals the proponent's goal of being the "firstest with the mostest" of all resorts in Bodie Hills. See page 88, alternative 4.

*Comment noted.*

6. The plan fails to address domestic animals in the project; in the 150' migration corridor, in the balance of the 560' original corridor, in the "open space" or balance of the parcel and along highway 270.

*The Specific Plan requires domestic animals to be contained on site.*

7. The Plan does not address the impacts of unshielded night lights on owls, bats and migrating birds from nearby Mono Lake, an internationally designated waterfowl unit.

*The Specific Plan limits lighting and requires shielding of high intensity lights.*

8. The Plan authorizes the County Planning Director, without public review or oversight, to change and/or expand the project. See Land Use, Policy 10, pg. 25. There is no definition of "minor."

*Policy 10 does define the type of changes considered minor. An expansion of the project or a change of use would require review by the Planning Commission in a public hearing or a Specific Plan Amendment.*

9. The Plan includes a 600 square foot museum to "prepare" clients for the "Bodie experience" (pg. 3). But, the project provides 800 square feet for the recreation vehicle and campout client OUTHOUSES, 200 more square feet than the museum.

*Comment noted.*

10. The Plan does not state that the water tower will deliver the pressure required by the Fire Insurance Underwriters. This is important in case the proponents and/or successors do not sign the Annual Service contract with the Bridgeport Fire Protection District. See pg 60.

*Comment noted.*

11. The Plans manipulation of the Visual Resources policies give the proponents a clean bill of health (pg. 62-3) in spite of photographs on pg. 71-83 and maps on pg. 67-69. There is no visual image of the pedestrian crossway over H.270 or vehicles lumbering between units of the project.

*The Specific Plan and DEIR state that there will be a significant visual impact from the project.*

12. The Plan does not admit to its contribution to "highway squalor" along two state Scenic highways (#395 & #270) with its signs and advertisements. See pg. 62.

*Comment noted.*

13. The leapfrog nature of the project is not justified in the EIR.

*Comment noted.*

14. The traffic hazards of the four entrance/exit openings onto H270 is not analyzed, nor, can the reviewer estimate the problems space-wise because applicable drawings have no scale. Some recreational vehicles/trailers require wide turns and slow start-up speeds. These vehicles could present great hazards to the hundreds of other motor vehicles driving down-canyon or obstacles to other recreational vehicles traveling up-canyon.

*Comment noted.*

15. The Plan could create hazards for its clients walking from unit to unit, especially if CalTrans cannot provide a foot bridge over #270.

*Comment noted.*

16. The foot and vehicle traffic in the vicinity of the Project could diminish the true "Bodie experience", the anticipation of a remote, 1800s town.

*Comment noted.*

17. The problems of clients and guests tossing objects onto or across H270 is not addressed, especially if a foot bridge is authorized.

*Comment noted.*

18. The Plan's legerdermain in replacing the environmentally, NO ACTION alternative with Alternate 2 (pg. 89) sets an unacceptable precedent for the Integrity of Mono County. Reference should be made to the entire CEQA Section 15126, not just 15126.d.a.4. as quoted.

*Comment noted.*

19. The Plan appears to indirectly offer at least two opportunities for "blackmail": (a) the proponents offer of a 40' right-of-way strip to Caltrans (b) the distinct reference to a BLM land exchange for a less sensitive area in the Bridgeport area.

*Comments noted.*

And, finally, the Plan disparages the efforts of hundreds of citizens, who at great personal sacrifices, obtained protection for Bodie as a State Historic Park, as a National Historic landmark (1961) and under the Bodie Protection Act of 1994. Congress continues to Protect Bodie. See att. A.

## **Bodie Hills RV Park SP/FEIR**

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### **SUMMARY**

The "NO ACTION" Alternative is the only defensible decision.

The project, as proposed, defies CEQA as well as the principles of up-to-date planning. It exploits Bodie Historic State Park, its mentors, supporters and visitors.

The accompanying DEIR is incomplete, inadequate and internally conflicting.

If, however, the county of Mono insists on approving the DEIR and project, the Final EIR must include:

- Figures and drawings to scale.
- Responses to all comments submitted on the DEIR.
- Written and signed approvals from all applicable agencies (See CEQA, Appendix A)
- A statement from CalTrans approving the four (a;) entrance/exits and the pedestrian bridge with stipulations and/or mitigation measures. - A statement from Housing assuming responsibility.
- A cost/benefit analysis including preparation of DEIR and FEIR for this six-month-a-year project.
- Bonding requirements to cover grading, drainage, flood, water, sewer and fire protection systems as well as over-all completion and restoration bonds.
- Provisions for public review and participation in monitoring changes in the Plan, mitigation and/or sanctions.

*Comments noted. The Specific Plan has been amended to require bonding for restoration of the project site. The Specific Plan currently contains provisions for public participation in monitoring the Plan.*

Thank you for the opportunity to comment. Please keep my name on all mailing lists for material on Bodie Hills RV Park.

Respectfully submitted,  
Harriet Allen

cc: State Park Director  
Director, BLM California Desert District  
Director, BLM Bakersfield District

November 4, 1997

Steve Higa  
Mono County Planning Department  
PO Box 347  
Mammoth Lakes, CA 93546

Dear Mr. Higa,

I am writing to oppose the approval of the Bodie RV Park. One of the unique qualities of Bodie State Historical Park is that from the time a visitor turns onto the Bodie Road, they can clearly visualize what life was like in the Bodie Hills in the 1800's - the stark beauty and isolation. The location of the Bodie RV Park on the Bodie Rd. would change this. Bodie State Park has always been different from other ghost towns in the west in that it isn't surrounded by garish commercialism. The Bodie RV Park would begin the trend of this type of development.

Besides being a visual blight on an untouched landscape, it would have far -reaching environmental impacts on the riparian habitat along Clearwater Creek, as well as, interfere with the migratory route of the Mono Lake mule deer herd.

I urge the planning department to deny approval of this development.

Thank you for your time in considering my letter.

Sincerely,

Connie Henderson  
PO Box 284  
Lee Vining, CA 93541  
(760) 647-7845

*Comments noted.*

## **Bodie Hills RV Park SP/FEIR**

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**UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT**

Bishop Resource Area  
785 North Main Street, Suite E  
Bishop, California 93514-2471  
Phone (760) 872-4881 Fax (760) 872-2498

Bodie Hills RV Park draft EIR  
790 (P)  
CA-017.32

November 7, 1997

Stephen Higa, Project Planner  
Mono County Planning Department  
P.O. Box 347  
Mammoth Lakes, CA 93546

Dear Steve,

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the draft environmental impact report (DEIR) for the proposed Bodie Hills RV Park. Because the private parcel is surrounded on all sides by public lands administered by the Bureau of Land Management, Bishop Resource Area (BLM), we are concerned about the potential effects of the project on public lands. The following comments address our concerns regarding specific portions of the document.

**SOLID WASTE DISPOSAL, p. 13** The garbage cans with lids will allow wildlife access to waste. Wildlife from surrounding public lands may become habituated to feed in areas of human use, which is detrimental to their own health and may cause them to become "problem animals" which must then be destroyed. This is not addressed in the "Animal Life" section of the DEIR. We recommend the use of trash containers specifically designed to resist wildlife access.

*The SP/DEIR has been amended to require the use of trash containers specifically designed to resist wildlife access.*

**LANDSCAPING, p. 15**

Landscaping procedures on the site have the potential to affect the surrounding public land by introducing invasive weeds, via soil disturbance which may create conditions conducive to invasion. This is not addressed in the "Plant Life" section of the DEIR.

We recommend that the contractor remove (scrape) vegetation from the smallest useable space necessary within the project area. If small "islands" of native vegetation can be left intact within close proximity to one another and to structures, natural revegetation of the remaining open areas will be facilitated. All topsoil material that is removed should be stockpiled and covered. Stockpiled material which contains a viable native seed bank should be used within one year and evenly distributed over the open areas. Prior to topsoil application, open areas should be ripped to decrease soil compaction and increase water infiltration which will greatly enhance seedling establishment.

*The SP/DEIR has been amended to require the following:*

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January 2000**

*The contractor shall remove the smallest amount of vegetation necessary.*

*All topsoil material that is removed shall be stockpiled and covered. Stockpiled material which contains a viable native seed bank shall be used within one year and evenly distributed over the open areas.*

*Prior to topsoil application, open areas shall be ripped to decrease soil compaction and increase water infiltration which will greatly enhance seedling establishment.*

If additional revegetation is necessary, which will likely be the case, we recommend one or more of the following three alternatives:

1) Collect native grass, forb and shrub seed in late spring and into summer adjacent to the project site, direct sow these seeds to prepared sites in fall (late September - early October), and apply either a weed free straw mulch or a mulch made by "chipping" native vegetation, e.g. sagebrush, bitterbrush, etc. that has been removed from the project site. This is a preferred mulch because it is durable, resistant to wind displacement and is more aesthetic than straw mulches. Soil stabilization netting (coconut or aspen shavings, CURLEX) can also be used; however, some forb species require more light for germination, so the cover would require some perforation. Post-seeding water applications will be required weekly until sufficient winter precipitation occurs. Application of soil amendments is discouraged since elevated nitrogen levels encourage weed proliferation, especially Russian thistle (*Salsola tragus*) and cheat grass (*Bromus tectorum*).

*The SP/DEIR has been amended to require a weed-free mulch or a mulch made by "chipping" native vegetation.*

2) Purchase seed native to the Great Basin region from a specified seed company such as Comstock Seed, which also contracts to collect site specific seed. If you choose this alternative we can recommend an appropriate seed mix. Mulch and water as described above.

*The SP/DEIR requires the use of native, indigenous species grown from seeds or seedlings obtained from local native stock.*

3) Establish a contract with a local grower to grow some native plants for outplanting at the project site. These plants can supplement the seeded areas or can be used in areas where seedling establishment is adequate.

*The SP/DEIR requires the use of native, indigenous species grown from seeds or seedlings obtained from local native stock.*

Using site specific plant material enhances the long-term survival of the plants and maintains the genetic integrity of these plant communities.

Soil netting distributor: North American Green Co., (812) 867-6632 (item #C125)

Native seed distributor: Comstock Seed Co., Ed Kleinver, (702) 746-3681

#### **EARTH (Soils), pp. 46-47**

In our letter to you on the project Notice of Preparation we indicated concerns related to likely sedimentation and erosion to adjacent public lands, if specific attention were not given to the method and final outcome of development and its effects on the stream channel. Our letter stated under the Erosion and Sedimentation section, in part, "the DEIR needs to specify in detail ... how stream bank erosion would be avoided during construction; what stream bank erosion may occur as a result of increased use; and what measures may be taken to stabilize the stream banks." The DEIR does not address these concerns other than in a general manner by referencing 1) a 10 foot

set back from the channel bank edge for no development, 2) applying development standards contained in the Mono County General Plan, and 3) a final grading and drainage plan (of unknown detail).

This agency has extensive experience with the difficulties inherent in changing the conditions within or near stream channels while attempting to maintain some degree of channel stability related to sediment transport and deposition, width/depth ratio, sinuosity, lateral channel movement, vertical stability, channel materials, floodplain stability, and the annual hydrograph. A change in any one of these parameters typically initiates a cascade of change within the channel which is not readily predictable. A future equilibrium of stream channel conditions may or may not occur.

The project segment of Clearwater Creek is defined under the Rosgen (1996) geomorphic characterization for stream type as type G. Type G streams are typically unstable with grade control problems and high bank erosion rates (recognized in the DEIR at page 47). At a minimum, the grading/drainage activity, bridge support structures within 10 feet of the bank to and the two temporary stream crossings are likely contributors to change in the channel dynamics within the project area, leading, over time, to changes in the equilibrium of stream processes on public lands above and below the site.

Due to this document's nonspecificity regarding the grading and drainage activity (i.e. line drawings), location of the stream crossings, and the location (line drawing only) and degree of bank cutting for bridge construction, we are unable to provide more specific comment. We request the opportunity to provide comment on the final development plans prior to a determination of acceptance or denial by your office.

*The proposed 10 foot setback is a minimum setback throughout the project site. In areas where the bank has been identified as being less stable, the setback is greater than 10 feet. The DEIR has been amended to include additional mapping of the bank stability and its relationship to proposed setbacks.*

**WATER, pp. 48-51**

**Groundwater:** We request that a copy of the engineer's well permit technical report be provided to this office at the time of filing with the Mono County Health Department. We request the opportunity to provide comment on the report specifications prior to a determination of acceptance or denial by your office.

*Comments noted.*

**Surface water:** The sediment carried by the stream is due, in part, to the depositional soils (usually a silty clay loam) found in various locations throughout the main drainages and watershed which are naturally carried through the system. Other main contributors to sediment transport in the stream are the presence of Route 270 along the stream channel, and channelization of stream segments; these changes have permanently altered flow dynamics. Effects of livestock grazing on stream condition do not contribute to sediment for transport except on private land at Warm Spring, the point of initial flow for Clearwater Creek.

*Comments noted.*

**Potential Impacts and Mitigation:** Our experience with many types of uses (livestock grazing, culverts, road crossings, campgrounds, etc.) along stream channels composed of various soil types and vegetation communities indicates that the 10 foot buffer for no development along the bank edge will be inadequate, and will lead to substantive changes in the location and dynamics

of the stream channel over time. Discernible erosion of the stream banks within the project area (as recognized, the banks are currently unstable) will likely be the first indicator of channel disequilibrium. Due to a number of factors including soil type, channel incision and lack of an adjoining floodplain, attempts to engineer for channel stability by incorporating developments within or near the channel will only contribute to other instabilities.

The design to retain drainage on-site does not account for precipitation events greater than a 20-year storm event (equivalent to 11/hr. rainfall according to the LRWQCB definition for the Lake Tahoe/Truckee area, Scott Ferguson, LRWQCB, pers. comm.), which may occur with some frequency in this area. As an example, incomplete weather information in our files for the previous 10 years from the Bodie State Park indicates 1) single day precipitation events of 11 or greater (1.0-1.6") have occurred on at least 9 occasions, and 2) two or more consecutive day precipitation events of 1" or greater (1.0-2.3" have occurred on at least 16 other occasions. The State Park weather records are not specific as to the precipitation time span on a given day.

In combination with factors mentioned under comments above, we consider the design plan for a 20-year storm event is inadequate to control erosive processes from runoff and corresponding affects to public lands. Over time, significant impacts from rainfall, snowmelt or a combination of both will likely occur onsite and to public lands.

*The project is not in a FEMA flood hazard zone, the RV park is a seasonal use with a minimal number of permanent structures, and the required setback from the stream is intended to minimize hazards from flooding. In addition, the proposed 10 foot setback is a minimum setback throughout the project site. In areas where the bank has been identified as being less stable, the setback is greater than 10 feet. The DEIR has been amended to include additional mapping of the bank stability and its relationship to proposed setbacks. Alternative 2, which requires a 30 foot setback from the top of the streambank, instead of the proposed 10 foot setback, further minimizes potential hazards related to flooding.*

*The proposed 10 foot setback is consistent with the Mono County Zoning and Development Code (MCZDC) requirements for stream setbacks since those requirements only restrict structures and impervious surfaces within a 30 foot setback from the stream. No structures or impervious surfaces are proposed within 30 feet of Clearwater Creek. In addition, the MCZDC notes the following concerning stream setback requirements: "specific plans or area general plans may be more restrictive or less restrictive, and shall take precedence".*

#### **PLANT LIFE, p. 51-54**

The DEIR (p. 53) states that "further surveys [for sensitive plants] on the areas around the overhead power line alignment and in and around the motel are not proposed, since the habitat types are consistent with the areas previously surveyed and found not to contain sensitive plants.' It is unclear whether the power line corridor referenced in this section is the corridor proposed for public lands. The DEIR acknowledges elsewhere (p. 61) that if this option is chosen, a right-of-way clearance will be required, including resource analysis. This analysis must include a sensitive plant survey.

*The SP/DEIR has been amended to require additional plant surveys in all previously unsurveyed areas, including the proposed power line corridors, prior to the initiation of Phase 1 of the project.*

#### **ANIMAL LIFE, pp. 54-56**

This is to notify you that the Bishop Resource Management Plan (RMP) Record of Decision recognizes the occurrence of 2 sage grouse strutting grounds with 2 miles of the project area. The

## **Bodie Hills RV Park SP/FEIR**

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RMP recognizes the importance of the sites to the species and to the quality of their habitat. If necessary, discretionary actions which have the potential to impact the species or its habitat would be prohibited on public land. A utility line proposal is one such action which would be reviewed for its potential impacts on sage grouse.

*Comments noted.*

### **EXPOSURE TO RISK, pp. 58-59**

In our letter concerning the Notice of Preparation we raised the issue of the potential public safety risk due to the "bottleneck" location of this site at the bottom ("pour point") of an extensive watershed. Within the context of our letter, we also feel there should be substantive scrutiny, currently absent in the DEIR, given to the basic concept of locating this development next to an active and eroding stream channel. We have used our Geographic Information System (GIS) capability to depict the watershed boundary and a watershed size of 20,473 acres (31.99 mi<sup>2</sup>) draining into the project area stream channel (see Figure 1).

The DEIR at page 58 seems to use several points as reasons to not explore the flooding potential of the site: "no historic flood data" for Clearwater Creek, lack of map coverage by the Federal Emergency Management Agency, proposing to not use "large amounts of impervious surfaces", the "temporary nature of the RV Park," and "most major flooding episodes have occurred in the winter." However, in the same paragraph at page 58, the recognition of stream bank overflow occurring just downstream from the project site in January 1997 (our staff witnessed the location of overflow) should be of concern. Weather records from Bodie State Park for January 1997 indicate the following precipitation events: January 2, 0.67"; January 3, 0.56"; January 6, 0.50"; and January 25, 0.98". Our historic knowledge of significant floods in this parcel area indicates a loss of a substantial segment of Route 270 in 1983 at the location T.4N., R.25E., Section 26, NE1/4NW1/4SE1/4, MDBM. We submit that consideration of available information should be applied to an adequate analysis of the flooding potential for the project site. We recommend that you consult available reference sources on "small watershed hydrology" with an emphasis toward use of macroscopic or microscopic empirical formulas to calculate peak flow based, at a minimum, on knowledge or runoff coefficients, rainfall intensity, time of concentration and drainage size (given above).

*See comments above concerning flooding.*

### **Visual Impacts - Utility Line Construction, p. 65**

The short utility line (approximately 800 feet) proposed for construction on Bureau land appears to lie near the boundary between Visual Resource Management (VRM) Class 11 and 111 areas. If the Bureau location is selected as an alternative, the exact location would be established and a visual contrast analysis would be conducted to determine conformance with the appropriate Bishop Resource Management Plan (RMP) VRM class. The analysis of visual impacts to Bureau lands would be conducted from two key viewpoints, Highway 395 and Highway 270. The Bureau is obligated to conform with its RMP visual standards at these locations. In the absence of a current proposal and contrast analysis to determine conformance with the RMP, we recommend that the proponent continue to consider alternative utility locations as well as an underground line.

*Comments noted.*

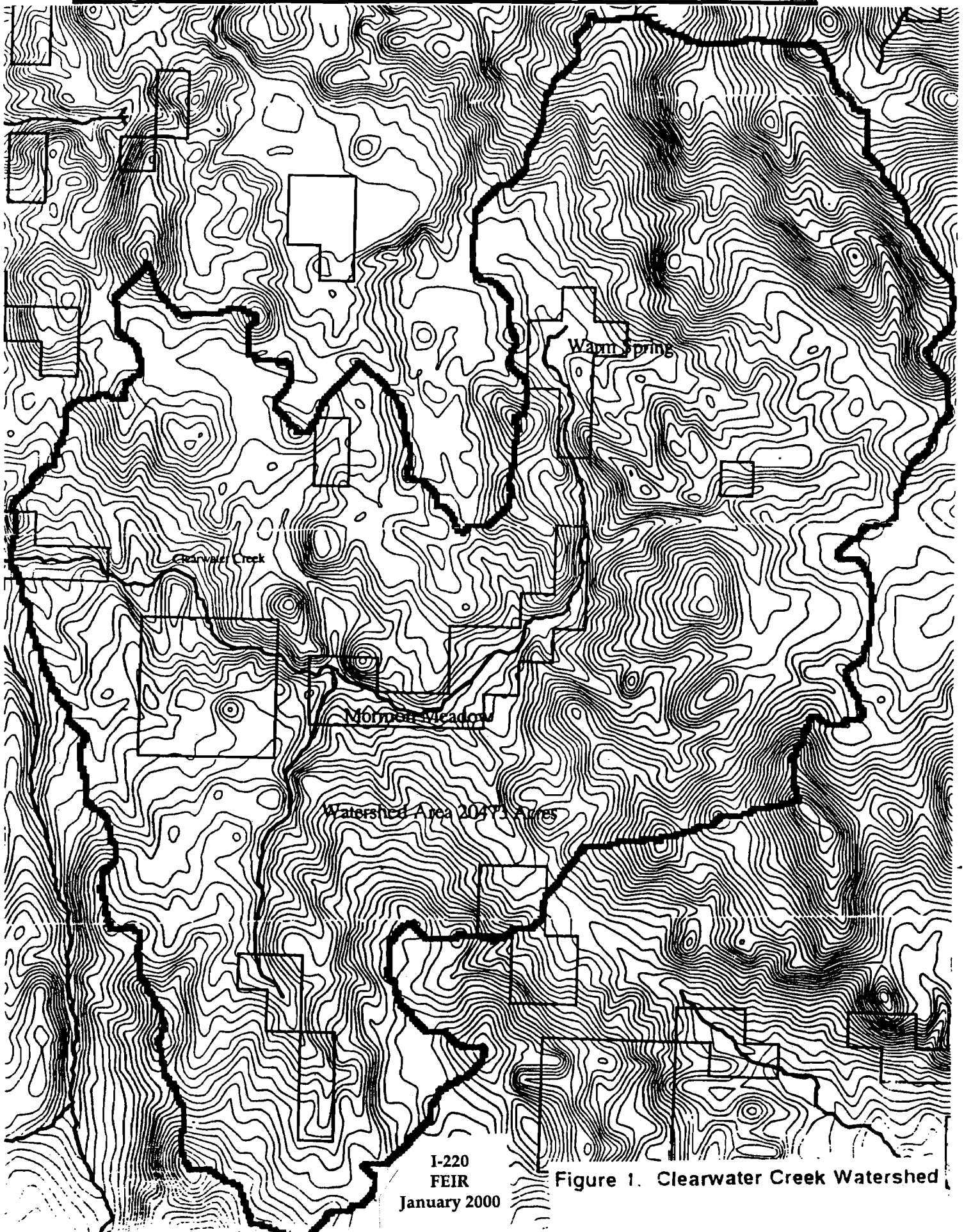
Again, thank you for the opportunity to comment. We look forward to receiving information requested above. Please continue to keep us informed of the status of this project.

Sincerely,

Genevieve D. Rasmussen  
for Area Manager

Attached: Figure 1. Clearwater Creek Watershed (GIS Map)

**Bodie Hills RV Park SP/EIR**



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January 2000

**Figure 1. Clearwater Creek Watershed**

October 31, 1997

Dear Mono County Planning Department,

I want you to register my strong opposition to the development proposed for the Bodie Road just east of Highway 395. I understand that this project would consist of a store, motel, cabins, tent camping spaces, & a large (40 unit) RV park.

Presumably this development would benefit those who visit Bodie. It seems to me that part of Bodie's charm is that it is "out of the way," that it is not as convenient as your local K-Mart. It would be a hideous defacement of a peaceful landscape - now an appropriate approach to a town which is a part of America's past - to place any development there, especially ones that include plans for that ugliest of automotive creations, an RV park.

Please come to your senses & stop this idea from becoming a reality. Mono County & the Eastern Sierra are valued as last outposts of calm & beauty. Please do not bring the destruction of California to the Bodie Road.

Thanks for your attention to this matter.

Sincerely yours,

Catherine M. Rose\*  
1642 Loma Street  
Santa Barbara 93103

\*resident, Pine Glade  
near Tom's Place, June - Nov.

*Comments noted.*

## **Bodie Hills RV Park SP/FEIR**

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November 2, 1997

Steve Higa  
Mono County Planning Department  
Attn: Bodie Hills RV Park Draft EIR/SP #97012031  
P.O. Box 347  
Mammoth Lakes, CA 93546

Dear Mr. Higa:

I am writing to voice my deep opposition to the proposed development near the junction of Highways 395 and 270, the Bodie Hills RV Park. In my opinion, this project has no redeeming values and would lead to many negative consequences. For example, it will greatly impact the Clearwater Creek area, disrupting wildlife migrations and harming fisheries. In addition to the impacts on the ecosystem, it will also create many traffic hazards. Finally, there is no need for such a development as there are already plenty of campsites in the area.

I urge you to follow the "No project alternative".

Sincerely,

Katherine Nielsen  
530 East Davis St.  
Bozeman, MT 59715

*Comments noted.*

## SIERRA CLUB San Francisco Bay Chapter

Alameda County • Contra Costa • Marin • San Francisco  
Conservation Offices 5237 College Avenue, Oakland, CA 94618 (510) 653-6127  
Bookstore 6014 College Avenue, Oakland, CA 94618 (510) 658-7470

November 7, 1997

Mono County Planning Department  
P.O. Box 347  
Mammoth Lakes, CA 93546  
fax: (760) 924-5458

Re: EIR for proposed Bodie RV Park

The Wilderness Committee of the Sierra Club's San Francisco Bay Chapter represents wilderness and public lands advocates among the 38,000 members of our Chapter, many of whom are frequent visitors to and recreational users of the East side of the Sierra. We wish to register our concerns about the proposed project, which would place a store/motel/RV park/campground virtually adjacent to the junction of the Bodie side road with U.S. 395, south of Bridgeport.

We have the following principal objections to the proposed project:

- 1] It would set an inadvisable precedent for commercial development in a remote, undeveloped, rural part of the state.

*Comment noted.*

- 2] It would damage the wild qualities of adjacent inventoried Wilderness Study Areas.

*Comment noted.*

- 3] It would diminish the usability of a critical mule deer migration corridor that serves as much as a quarter of the Mono Lake deer herd.

*Although the project site is part of a large area used by the Mono Lake deer herd, most of the deer migrate to the south of the project site.*

- 4] It would destroy fragile riparian vegetation and habitat, particularly many willows, in and around Clearwater Creek.

*The project area has been designed to avoid impacts to the riparian vegetation by siting development away from the riparian corridor. Bridge pilings will be placed outside of the riparian corridor in the stream setback. Use of a 30 foot stream setback (as proposed in Alternative 2, Reduced Project), instead of the proposed 10 foot setback, would further avoid potential impacts to the riparian corridor. Potential indirect impacts resulting from human intrusion into the riparian corridor will be minimized by the site topography (steep banks, thick vegetation) which discourages use of the area, and fencing along the top of the stream banks. In addition, the DEIR has been amended to require signs along the top of the streambank noting that the riparian corridor is a fragile environment and directing visitors to keep out of that area.*

- 5] It would improperly and harmfully impact at least two rare plants, the Bodie Hills

## Bodie Hills RV Park SP/FEIR

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cusikiella and the masonic rock cress, special features found in the area.

*The project has been designed to avoid development in areas identified as having sensitive plant species. In addition, the DEIR has been amended to require additional plant surveys in all previously unsurveyed areas prior to the initiation of Phase I of the project.*

The EIR does not provide adequate mitigation for any of the above serious impacts.

For these reasons we recommend against permitting the proposed project in this location, and recommend no action. We sincerely urge you to take into account the long-range impact of such a project on the extraordinary natural values that make Mono County such a great attraction.

Thank you for considering these views toward helping maintain the unique scenic and biodiversity qualities of the eastern Sierra Nevada.

Sincerely,

Vicky Hoover, chair  
Wilderness Committee

Christine Champe

2710 Le Conte Ave. #4  
Berkeley, CA 94709

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November 7, 1997

Mono County Planning Department  
POB 347  
Mammoth Lakes, CA 93546  
Attn: Stephen Higa

Dear Mono County Planning Department:

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the Bodie RV Park Draft Specific Plan and EIR. As a frequent visitor to the Eastern Sierra and resident of Lee Vining several years ago, I am particularly interested in proposed developments in the Bridgeport/Mono Basin area.

I oppose the proposed RV Park development. First, as a visitor who loves the unique visual and historical aspects of the Bodie Hills, I would find it an insult to come upon an RV park on my way up to the Bodie ghost town. I believe that such a development would degrade the experience for nearly all visitors to Bodie, as well as local residents (I mean of nearby towns, not the ghosts!). The Bodie Hills are special and draw people for that reason. They are beautiful in their simplicity and remoteness. Creating an RV park would make the area like so many other spoiled places. Once development of this sort is started, there is no reversing it. Why set a course that will inevitably reduce the aesthetic, environmental, and ultimately, economic values of the place?

*Comments noted.*

Second, as a wildlife biologist, I find it unacceptable that the development is proposed in a known mule deer migration corridor. Losing the herd because of further disruption of its habitat and traditional migration routes would have great ecological and economic impacts to the area. Also, the proximity of the proposed development to Clearwater Creek is very ill-advised. Stream and riparian habitat is probably the single-most productive and endangered habitat in the Eastern Sierra. Stream corridors support a diverse community of birds, mammals, amphibians, invertebrates, and plants that can be very sensitive to disruption. There is simply not a lot of riparian habitat available in this arid area, and nowhere else for disturbed or displaced riparian species to go. In addition, it appears that adequate analysis of the flood history and potential of the creek has not been conducted. Creeks are very dynamic systems and their propensity to flood and shift should not be underestimated.

*Although the project site is part of a large area used by the Mono Lake deer herd, most of the deer migrate to the south of the project site.*

*The project area has been designed to avoid impacts to the riparian vegetation by siting development away from the riparian corridor. Bridge pilings will be placed outside of the riparian corridor in the stream setback. Use of a 30 foot stream setback (as proposed in Alternative 2, Reduced Project), instead of the proposed 10 foot setback, would further avoid potential impacts to the riparian corridor. Potential indirect impacts resulting from human intrusion into the riparian corridor will be minimized by the site topography (steep banks, thick vegetation) which discourages use of the area, and fencing along the top of the stream banks. In*

## **Bodie Hills RV Park SP/FEIR**

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*addition, the SP/DEIR has been amended to require signs along the top of the streambank noting that the riparian corridor is a fragile environment and directing visitors to keep out of that area.*

*The project is not in a FEMA flood hazard zone, the RV park is a seasonal use with a minimal number of permanent structures, and the required setback from the stream is intended to minimize hazards from flooding. In addition, the proposed 10 foot setback is a minimum setback throughout the project site. In areas where the bank has been identified as being less stable, the setback is greater than 10 feet. The DEIR has been amended to include additional mapping of the bank stability and its relationship to proposed setbacks. Alternative 2, which requires a 30 foot setback from the top of the streambank, instead of the proposed 10 foot setback, further minimizes potential hazards related to flooding.*

*The proposed 10 foot setback is consistent with the Mono County Zoning and Development Code (MCZDC) requirements for stream setbacks since those requirements only restrict structures and impervious surfaces within a 30 foot setback from the stream. No structures or impervious surfaces are proposed within 30 feet of Clearwater Creek. In addition, the MCZDC notes the following concerning stream setback requirements: "specific plans or area general plans may be more restrictive or less restrictive, and shall take precedence".*

I appreciate your consideration of these issue.

Sincerely,

Christine Champe

**Taylor**

Taylor

Dry Tortugas NP

Phone (305) 293-0152

PO Box 6208

Key West, FL 33041

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Tuesday, November 04, 1997

Mono County Planning Dept/Steve  
Attention: Bodie Hills RV Park Draft EIR/SP #97012031  
POB 347 Mammoth Lakes CA 93546

Dear Mr. Higa:

I'm writing to encourage selection of the "No Project" alternative for the Bodie Hill RV Park Specific Plan and EIR.

First, let me say that the Bodie area has for many years been one of my favorite vacation destinations. The source of its charm and compelling attraction continues to be its quiet, uncluttered and relatively undegraded condition. It's a place people go to recharge, to enjoy well preserved wild country, to appreciate high quality wildlife and habitat, and to explore enormously important California history in an undegraded and uncompromised condition.

As you well know, with each passing year California's natural and historic areas come under more and more development pressure. Ironically, "more" often makes "less" until one by one, communities fall prey to ill conceived schemes. And then one day, locals and visitors alike look back wistfully and say "I remember when ...". A few people prosper. But the land is diminished and folks are forced to look elsewhere for what the area used to offer. Ultimately, the tired litany of "more jobs, broadened tax base, and stimulated economy" gives way to more blight, more crime, stressed community services, and the frustrating sense that good planning and sensible decisions could have produced better solutions.

In light of this, I find it highly disturbing to discover that Mono County is considering a development which will significantly contribute to a fundamental change in the character of the Bodie area. RV Parks, motels, museums, campgrounds and all the infrastructure needed to support them may have a place somewhere in the county ... but surely not here! If it happens, you will trade habitat and history for pavement and powerlines ... a short-sighted and self defeating decision.

The primary attraction of the Bodie area is Bodie State Park. What a jewel! But the Bodie experience does not begin and end at the State Park entrance. It extends throughout the Bodie area. Nearby clutter in its proposed form will be entirely incompatible, inappropriate and unnecessary. If the intent is to stimulate visitation, it is more likely to drive away people who appreciate the area's history.

In closing, I submit that intelligent planning of the Bodie area should promote only development which compliments its history and natural landscape. This project will severely disrupt the area's fabric without any compelling need. I hope that over the long haul you will look for more appropriate ways to improve the area. But until better ideas come forward, please support the "No Project" alternative.

## **Bodie Hills RV Park SP/FEIR**

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Thank you for your consideration of this issue.

Sincerely,  
Paul B. Taylor

*Comments noted.*

November 10, 1997

Steve Higa  
Mono County Planning Department  
P.O. Box 347  
Mammoth Lakes, CA 93546

RE: Bodie Hills RV Park Draft EIR/SP #97012031

Dear Mr. Higa:

I am writing to express my opposition to the proposed Bodie Hills RV Park, and to recommend a "No Project Alternative." This type of commercial exploitation of a natural area seems extremely unnecessary and very intrusive to the rich and diverse wildlife habitat in the Clearwater Creek riparian area.

In a state like California where so many acres of open space are continually being paved over for human habitation, it is so incredibly important that the natural areas remaining in our rural hinterlands remain natural. This RV Park would set a bad land-use precedent, and would ruin the very atmosphere which has made the Bodie area an attraction for visitors trying to "get away from it all."

Responsible County planners and supervisors need to recognize that their duty, on behalf of the public they serve, is to conserve the natural features in their jurisdiction, not cave in to development pressures. Approving of yet more motels, houses, stores and other man-made structures would be irresponsible and completely incompatible with the public's desire to retain open space whenever possible.

There is adequate camping space in and around Bodie. If people want to enjoy this area, they need to adapt themselves to it. Visitors requiring all the amenities of a mini-city to stay in like the Bodie RV Park would be should either make Bodie a day trip or choose an alternate vacation desiting - commercial developments are not what Bodie is about.

Thank you for your attention to my comments.

Sincerely,

Marialyce Pedersen  
Ventura County Solid Waste Management Department

*Comments noted.*

**VIII. EIR COMMENTS & RESPONSES--REVISED DRAFT EIR**

This chapter contains comments received when the Revised Draft Bodie Hills RV Park Specific Plan/EIR was circulated in 1999 and responses to those comments. This chapter is bound separately as Volume III of the Bodie Hills RV Park Revised Specific Plan and Final EIR.

IX. REFERENCES AND PERSONS CONSULTED

List of Preparers

Mono County Planning Staff

Scott Burns, Planning Director  
Keith Hartstrom, Senior Planner  
Stephen Higa, Senior Planner  
Larry Johnston, Senior Planner

EIR Consultant

Laurie Mitchel, Principal

Project Engineer

John Langford, RCE

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Taylor, Tim. **Letter and Wildlife Assessment Addendum A.** Nov. 25, 1997.

Taylor, Tim. **Wildlife Assessment Survey at the Bodie Hills RV Park.** Jan. 6, 1997.

### **Persons Consulted**

Bridgeport Fire Protection District.

Caltrans. Jerry Gabriel. Traffic Engineer.

California Department of Housing and Community Development. Robert Ruiz.

McDonough, Holland, Allen. Paul C. Anderson. Attorney.

*Mono County Environmental Health Department. Dennis Lampson. Environmental Specialist IV.*

Mono County Public Works Department. John Beck. Assistant Director.

*North State Resources. Kevin Hunting. Senior Biologist.*

Taylor, Tim. Wildlife biologist.