

Mammoth Lakes Town Council Agenda Action Sheet

Title: Comment and discussion on Ormat plowing and related NEPA requirements in Shady Rest.

Council Meeting Date: 2/2/2022

Prepared by: Daniel C. Holler, Town Manager

Recommended Motion: Provide staff direction on response to ORMAT plowing activities in the Shady Rest area.

Summary:

ORMAT has initiated road plowing in the Shady Rest area to provide access to facilities and other uses. The operations have impacted recreational activities in the area by limiting groomed routes for snowmobiling and other activities. The grooming of roadways also creates potential challenges by creating unknown hazards with groomed roadway segments. The activity raised questions regarding the NEPA documentation requiring coordination and planning such activities with local agencies. While limited notice was provided, there was no coordination outreach to ensure recreational activities would not be negatively impacted and for necessary measures to be in place to provide safe recreational activities.

There are clear and specific mitigation measure published in the "Casa Diablo IV Geothermal Development Project Final Joint Environmental Impact Statement and Environmental Impact Report" to anticipate these types of construction activities from happening without adequate public notice and without an approved "Traffic/Access/Circulation" plan, especially in an active winter recreation area:

- "Mitigation Measure TRA-1: Prior to construction and/or decommissioning, ORNI 50, LLC shall develop a Coordinated Transportation Management Plan and work with Mono County to prepare and implement a transportation management plan for roadways adjacent to and directly affected by the planned CD-IV Project facilities, and to address the transportation impact of the overlapping construction projects within the vicinity of the CD-IV Project in the region. The transportation management plan shall include, but not be limited to, the following requirements..."

While we can all appreciate that the BLM Central California District published a press release on Feb 10, the reality is that no local / regional communication was published until Feb 14, the day before construction activities took place and right before a busy holiday weekend. Additional background information is attached.