

TOWN COUNCIL STAFF REPORT

Title: Town Council Subpart-C Public Comment

Meeting Date: October 18, 2023

Prepared by: Lawson Reif – Outdoor Recreation Manager

RECOMMENDATION:

Approve, or revise as needed, the attached subpart-C letter that will be submitted electronically no later than October 20th, 2023.

BACKGROUND:

The Inyo National Forest recently provided their OSV Subpart-C proposed action and seeks public comment related to the proposal. On October 4, 2023 council relayed its intent to provide a public comment as part of this process and outlined some key recommendations. Staff was tasked with developing a letter on councils behalf to submit electronically using the Inyo National Forest's online public comment process located here: <https://cara.fs2c.usda.gov/Public//CommentInput?Project=61466>

ANALYSIS:

Staff attempted to succinctly capture the recommendations in which council members agreed or seemed to agree. These suggestions are contained in the attached letter and summarized in the bullet points below.

- Town Council supports the proposed staging area at the New Shady Rest Campground. However, the chosen route for the groomer shown in the proposed action is not viable. Council would propose the Forest groomer use the existing Multi-Use Path (MUP) from the new proposed staging area, cross the entry road into Shady Rest Park onto 3S289, east onto 3S288, then connecting with the 'A Trail' just north of the park. The MUP is currently groomed by TOML for non-motorized use and to ensure no net loss of non-motorized trail milage, council supports moving TOML's groomed route into the forest east of the MUP. This option would reduce the number of OSV's in Shady Rest Park minimizing congestion and reducing user conflict, while maintaining the existing non-motorized trail milage.
- Address need for a high elevation OSV staging area. The current cinder shed would be an ideal location for this use. To support the high elevation staging area improvements to the site are recommended, such as leveling, paving, and informational/educational signage.
- Address the need for OSV staging along the Mammoth Scenic Loop Road, but not immediately adjacent to the additional paved lane used currently for snow-play parking. The Council recommends the entrance to 3S22 (Inyo Craters Road) as a viable staging option. Council also recommends consideration of another staging area near the junction

of the Scenic Loop and Highway 395, allowing for staging opportunities when the Scenic Loop isn't plowed.

- Council would like to see increased safety measures implemented related to the ORMAT Pipeline. Many of these measures are spelled out in the CD IV pipeline NEPA document and the measures called for in the document should be fully implemented.
- Town Council is supportive of the Town of Mammoth Lakes previously submitted proposal for expanded grooming in both the Sherwin's and Shady Rest Areas.
- Per the Sherwin Area Recreation Plan (SHARP), adopted by town council through the Trail System Master Plan (TSMP), the Sherwin Meadow, from roughly the Tele-Bowls west to the bluffs, is recommended as non-motorized *if* a trail system is groomed in the meadow. This recommendation would be for the Meadow area only, not the Sherwin Mountains. If this motorized closure is implemented, council also recommends an access corridor be established or through Sherwin meadow beginning on April 17th to allow motorized users to access the Lakes Basin. This would take pressure off the Old Mammoth Road and Lake Mary Gate parking areas.
- If feasible, council is supportive of delineation of uses at minaret vista. This could include creating lanes along the road or 're-opening' of the original road which sits below the existing road to the North.