

Mammoth Lakes Town Council Agenda Action Sheet

Title: Authorize the Mayor to sign a letter to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) requesting that Mammoth Yosemite Airport be withdrawn from the Bi-State Distinct Population Segment of Greater Sage Grouse critical habitat designation.

Council Meeting Date: 7/3/2024

Prepared by: Sierra Waugh, Deputy Airport Manager

Recommended Motion: Authorize the Mayor to sign a letter to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) requesting that Mammoth Yosemite Airport be withdrawn from the Bi-State Distinct Population Segment of Greater Sage Grouse critical habitat designation.

Summary: The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service is proposing a critical habitat designation for Bi-State Distinct Population Segment of Greater Sage Grouse on and around Mammoth Yosemite Airport (263-acres), located in Mono County. The attached letter requests that FWS withdraw Mammoth Yosemite Airport from the proposed critical habitat designation.

To maintain and operate the Airport in compliance with Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) airport design and operation standards, the Airport must be allowed to ensure that safety is maintained. This includes mowing, fencing, Foreign Object Debris (FOD) prevention, bird strike mitigation, and mitigation of terrestrial wildlife hazards. A designation as critical habitat would constrain the ability of the Airport to operate safely and increase the financial burden associated with routine maintenance. The Town and FAA will continue to cooperate with FWS to protect the Greater Sage Grouse in a way that meets the requirements of the Endangered Species Act and provides for the continued safe operations of the Airport.