

## **Mammoth Lakes Town Council Agenda Action Sheet**

**Title:** Waive the second reading and adopt by title only the ordinance adopting the State Fire Hazard Severity Zone maps for the Town of Mammoth Lakes and finding that the ordinance is not subject to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) pursuant to CEQA Guidelines §15378 because the activity is not considered to be a project.

**Council Meeting Date:** 7/2/2025

**Prepared by:** Nolan Bobroff, Community and Economic Development Director; Ales Tomaier, Fire Chief, Mammoth Lakes Fire Protection District

**Recommended Motion:** Waive the second reading and adopt by title only the ordinance adopting the State Fire Hazard Severity Zone maps for the Town of Mammoth Lakes and finding that the ordinance is not subject to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) pursuant to CEQA Guidelines §15378 because the activity is not considered to be a project.

**Summary:** Town Council considered the adoption of the updated 2025 State recommended fire hazard severity zone (FHSZ) maps at its June 18, 2025 meeting. At the June 18<sup>th</sup> meeting, the Council introduced the ordinance for the adoption of these zones. No changes to the introduced ordinance were requested by the Council, and staff are recommending its adoption (Attachment 1).

The State has mandated the identification of FHSZs on both State and locally managed lands since the early 1990s. While initially the identification of these zones was centered around “Very High Fire Severity Zones”, more recent catastrophic fires have resulted in additional regulations including the addition of both “moderate” and “high” zones that the State Fire Marshall is required to recommend to local jurisdictions for adoption. Additional regulations associated with these zones include materials and construction methods for exterior wildfire exposure (*MLFPD previously adopted and require all structures to be built to the WUI standards regardless of the FHSZ designation, and therefore the updated map designations will not have an impact on the building code standards here in Mammoth*), natural hazard real estate disclosures, 100-foot defensible space requirements, property development standards, and consideration during future general plan developments.

**Changes to the FHSZ Maps:** The first mapping of FHSZs within the Local Responsibility Areas was completed in 2007. The hazard maps have now been significantly updated to more accurately reflect the zones in California that are susceptible to wildfire and included the areas designated as “moderate” and “high” zones. The new mapping process incorporated new science in local climate data and improved assessment modeling in determining hazard ratings. The number of acres identified as a “Very High Fire Severity Zone” increased by approximately 625% from 296 acres in the 2007 map [*largely the Bluffs and a small portion of Old Mammoth*] to 2,147 acres in the 2025 map [*covers the majority of the Town*]. Additionally, 854 acres have been identified as a “High Fire Severity Zone” and 98 acres as a “Moderate Fire Severity Zone”.

**CEQA Compliance:** The proposed ordinance amendment is not subject to the California Environmental Quality Act (“CEQA”) pursuant to CEQA Guidelines section §15378(b)(5) as it is an organizational or administrative activity of government that will not result in direct or indirect physical changes in the environment.