

APPENDIX L

Comments and Responses

This appendix contains all comments received on the Draft EIS and the FAA responses to each comment.

- L-1 Comments and Responses Report
- L-2 Coded Copies of Comment Submittals

Appendix L-1

Comments and Responses Report

This appendix includes a description of the process by which comments on the Draft EIS were reviewed, an index of the comments received, and the responses to comments prepared by the FAA. The three specific components of the appendix include:

- Comments – Response Report Introduction
- Agency Index and Public Index
- Comment – Response Report

Introduction to the MMH Horizon Air Service EIS Comment / Response Database

The MMH Horizon Air Service EIS Comment / Response Database contains an index of those parties who submitted comments to the FAA on the Draft EIS. The database also contains a summary of the comments by comment categories, the coded comment letters with summarized comment areas identified and FAA responses.

Comments were provided to the FAA by letters (provided via mail or fax), written on comment forms, and given to a court reporter as a verbal comment. For the purposes of this Comment / Response Database, all comment formats are referred to as comment "submittals".

The database includes an index of Agency Comment submittals and Public Comment submittals with the name of each party providing a comment and a unique Identifier Code to catalog the submittal. Comment Codes are also provided, which indicate the summarized comments applicable to that particular submittal. Federal, State, and Local Agency letters are listed in order alphanumerically by Identifier Code and include the area of government the individual is associated with. Public comments are also listed alphabetically by last name (with affiliation, if provided).

Each "Identifier Code" consists of six characters that represent three fields of information describing each unique comment submittal. The first character makes up the first field and serves as an "Event Code", which describes the version of the EIS document the comment was submitted.

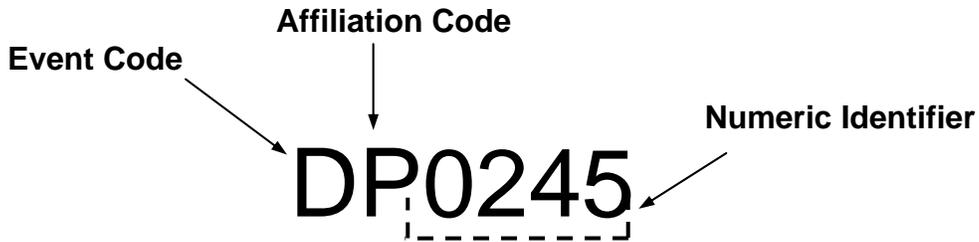
There are two Event Codes used in this database:

- D = Comment received during the Draft EIS review period.
- F = Comment received during the Final EIS review period.

The second character represents the "Affiliation Code" that places the party commenting into one of five categories:

- F = Comment from a Federal agency
- S = Comment from a State agency
- L = Comment from a Local agency
- P = Comment from the general public
- G = Comment by special interest group

The last four characters represent the third field, which identifies the specific comment submittal numerically. For example, the Identifier Code “DP0245”, describes the comment submittal as being the 245th letter or comment form received on the Draft EIS from the general public.



Each comment submittal was reviewed, and salient points were summarized and identified with a comment code. The summarized comments were organized into the following 20 categories, which include environmental resource categories addressed in the Draft EIS and other categories such as general support, general opposition, and public safety. There is also a category for comments that address additional environmental categories identified in FAA Order 1050.1E, *Environmental Impacts: Policies and Procedures*, that were not specifically addressed in the DEIS.

<u>Category Number</u>	<u>Description</u>
1	General Support
2	General Opposition
3	Purpose and Need
4	Alternatives
5	Noise
6	Compatible Land Use
7	Socioeconomic, Environmental Justice and Children’s Health
8	Historic, Archaeological and Cultural Resources
9	DOT Section 4(f)
10	Fish, Wildlife, and Plants
11	Air Quality
12	Hazardous Materials, Pollution Prevention, and Solid Waste
13	Natural Resources and Energy Supply
14	Water Quality
15	Secondary/Induced Impacts
16	Cumulative Impacts
17	Other 1050.1E Categories
18	EIS Process
19	Miscellaneous

For example, Comment Code 3-1 describes the comment was made concerning the Purpose and Need and is the first comment documented under that category.

Name(s)	Agency	Letter Code	Comment Number(s)
Nova Blazej	USEPA	DF0002	18-2, 18-3
Edward Cole	USDA - Forest Service - Sierra National Forest	DF0001	1-5, 5-14
Gene Coufal	L.A. Department of Water and Power	DL0001	10-1, 10-2, 10-3
Bill Dunkelberger	U.S. Department of Interior - Bureau of Land Management	DF0005	10-5, 10-6, 10-7, 10-8, 10-9, 10-10, 10-11, 10-12, 9-3
Mack Hakakian	California RWQCB	DS0003	14-1, 14-2, 14-3, 14-4, 14-5, 14-6, 17-2, 14-7, 14-9, 14-10, 14-11, 14-12, 14-13
Jonathan Jarvis	U.S. Department of Interior - National Park Service	DF0003	5-9, 5-10, 5-11, 5-12, 19-6, 19-5, 9-1, 5-13
Patricia Port	U.S. Department of the Interior	DF0004	18-4
Terry Roberts	California State Clearinghouse	DS0004	18-5
Gayle Rosander	Department of Transportation	DS0001	7-1
Dave Singleton	Native American Heritage Commission	DS0002	8-1
Fred Stump	Long Valley Fire Protection District	DL0002	19-14, 19-15, 19-16, 19-17, 19-18, 19-19, 19-20, 19-21, 19-22, 19-25

Name(s)	Letter Code	Comment Number(s)
Craig Albright	DP0001	1-1, 15-1, 15-2
Craig Albright	DP0007	1-1, 15-2
Denny Capp	DP0015	17-6, 17-7, 5-15, 2-1
Mark Clausen	DP0016	1-6, 1-7
Bill Cockroft	DP0010	1-1, 15-1, 1-3
Jack Copeland	DP0017	1-1, 1-8, 1-9
Kathy Copeland		
F.L. Harcourt	DP0002	4-1
Bruce Hopper	DP0004	1-1
Rick Jali	DP0005	1-2
Michael Johnson	DP0008	19-1, 19-2, 17-1
Michael Johnson	DP0014	17-3, 17-4, 17-5, 19-27
Stephen Kalish	DP0012	19-7, 19-8, 18-1, 19-9, 19-10, 19-23, 19-11, 4-1, 19-12, 19-3, 19-4, 19-24, 19-13, 4-2, 19-28
John Kelly	DP0003	3-1, 1-1, 15-3
Mike McKenna	DP0013	19-26
Stuart Need	DP0009	1-1, 15-1
Michael J. Raimondo	DP0006	1-1, 15-2, 15-4
Lorilee Schumann	DP0018	2-2, 10-4, 14-8, 15-5, 15-6, 15-7, 16-1, 17-8
Ronald Warnell	DP0011	1-1, 1-4

MMH Air Service EIS 1. General Support

- 1-1 **Comment**
As a citizen and employer in Mammoth Lakes I support the airport and the Proposed Action of the FAA.
- Response**
Comment noted.
- Letter Codes**
DP0001 DP0003 DP0004 DP0006 DP0007 DP0009 DP0010 DP0011 DP0017
- 1-2 **Comment**
Why haven't we gone ahead and started commercial service a long time ago?
- Response**
Comment noted.
- Letter Codes**
DP0005
- 1-3 **Comment**
I have reviewed the new project EA and I feel that the airport will have little to no negative environmental impacts.
- Response**
Comment noted.
- Letter Codes**
DP0010
- 1-4 **Comment**
I believe that the benefits of the proposal outweigh other considerations.
- Response**
Comment noted.
- Letter Codes**
DP0011
- 1-5 **Comment**
The FAA has adequately addressed the Sierra National Forest's concerns.
- Response**
Comment noted.
- Letter Codes**
DF0001
- 1-6 **Comment**
I feel that the reinstatement of air service to Mammoth Yosemite Airport is a critical piece in Mammoth's ability to work toward becoming a year-round destination resort. Air service is an important link in the region's overall transit system and in Mammoth's desire to become an increasingly pedestrian oriented village.

Response

Comment noted.

Letter Codes

DP0016

1-7 **Comment**

It is my understanding that the new project EA has been improved from previous alternatives and has no significant negative environmental impacts. It thoroughly analyzes all flight paths over sensitive noise receptors, listed and non-listed wildlife disturbances, meets water and air quality standards, and that all visual impacts will be consistent with existing facilities and H295's Scenic Highway designation.

Response

Comment noted.

Letter Codes

DP0016

1-8 **Comment**

We urge you to accept this EIS and to move ahead with necessary approvals to begin air service in the winter of 2008-2009.

Response

Comment noted.

Letter Codes

DP0017

1-9 **Comment**

There are lots of reasons for our support, most of them economic, but not all. We would like to be connected to the world and not have to drive 6 hours to fly to the east coast. We understand the environmental concerns. We certainly don't want to spoil our environment but if we can keep the number of flights per day to a reasonable amount, we should be fine.

Response

Comment noted.

Letter Codes

DP0017

MMH Air Service EIS 2. General Opposition

2-1 **Comment**

We can not stop the planes already in the air or keep them away from this airspace, but we do have an opportunity not to allow additional flights in the near vicinity.

Response

Comment noted.

Letter Codes

DP0015

2-2 **Comment**

My comment is simple - "no more flights." I oppose the commercial flights.

Response

Comment noted.

Letter Codes

DP0018

MMH Air Service EIS

3. Purpose and Need

3-1 **Comment**

Mammoth Lakes and the Eastern Sierra desperately need scheduled air service. We have been stranded in this area long enough and need service to survive.

Response

Comment noted.

Letter Codes

DP0003

3-2 **Comment**

Are there limitations for the number of flights if MMH should see the same kind of growth other ski resort destinations have experienced?

Response

As a result of Public Law 95-504, the Airline Deregulation Act of 1978, the FAA does not have the authority to direct or limit air carrier operations or limit airport operations. However, the FAA has reviewed and approved the Town's aviation forecasts that project activity levels until 2015. The Town estimated that no more than eight (8) flights per day could be accommodated at MMH. The size of the existing airport facilities at MMH, terminal capacity and aircraft apron area, provide limited space for conducting operations. Given the space available it is projected that no more than one flight at a time could be accommodated during daylight hours, and no aircraft would remain overnight.

Letter Codes

DG0001

MMH Air Service EIS 4. Alternatives

4-1 **Comment**

It would be better and safer for Horizon Air to use the far safer Bishop Airport with its 3 runways and instrument approach.

Response

The operations specification amendment that is the subject of this EIS is limited to a request by a single airline (Horizon Air) to provide scheduled commercial air service to a single location (MMH). The Federal government does not control where, when and how airlines provide their service. It is the individual airlines that make decisions to provide scheduled commercial air service to and from specific commercial airports (14 CFR Part 139 certified). Public use airports, such as MMH, which is a 14 CFR Part 139 certified airport, cannot deny access to an airline if the aircraft they propose to use can safely operate at that facility. Horizon Air has indicated a desire to provide service at Mammoth Yosemite Airport and not at Bishop Airport. Please see correspondence from Horizon Air to FAA contained in Appendix A.

To accept commercial service Bishop Airport would need to become a 14 CFR Part 139 certified Airport. Inyo County as the Bishop Airport sponsor would need to contact the FAA regarding any future desire to become certified under 14 CFR Part 139. The Bishop Airport Sponsor has not indicated any interest in becoming a 14 CFR Part 139 certified Airport. In addition, no Air Carrier has indicated a desire to provide service to the Bishop Airport, therefore use of the Bishop Airport or other alternative airport was considered but eliminated from further consideration in this EIS. See Section 3.2.1 of the EIS for additional detail.

Letter Codes

DP0002

4-2 **Comment**

I am once again disappointed that in evaluating the efficacy of bringing scheduled commercial air service to the Eastern Sierra the FAA has excluded from study an evaluation of the relative safety advantages (and there are many) of the Bishop airport over the Mammoth airport.

Response

See response to Comment 4-1

Letter Codes

DP0012

MMH Air Service EIS

5. Noise

5-1 **Comment**

The Mono Lake Committee is concerned that the addition of commercial flights to and from MMH and the resulting increase in flight traffic could lead to an increase in noise over Mono Lake and surrounding lands.

Response

As described in Section 5.5 and Appendices C-2 and C-3 of the EIS, both individual flights and cumulative aircraft activity over the Mono Basin National Forest Scenic Area were analyzed. Table 5.5-2 of the EIS indicates that the projected noise levels associated with the proposed Q400 aircraft are substantially lower than those associated with existing aircraft operations. As indicated in Figures C-3.5 and Table C-3.14 of Appendix C-3, the Proposed Action would result in no significant change to the future noise levels at the Mono Lake Lookout or at any other area of the Mono Basin National Forest Scenic Area located within the Area of Investigation used for the noise analyses.

Letter Codes

DG0001

5-2 **Comment**

The approximate elevation of aircraft that follow the OVF V244 designated route is not disclosed in the EIS.

Response

Aircraft radar tracks used in the preparation of the EIS indicate that the altitudes for piston and turboprop aircraft on OVF 244 ranged from approximately 13,000 feet MSL to 24,500 feet MSL. The altitudes of jet aircraft in the radar data ranged from approximately 27,000 feet MSL to 41,500 feet MSL.

Letter Codes

DG0001

5-3 **Comment**

If the Proposed Action is approved, it is appropriate that the additional flights follow an established flight path rather than creating a new route over the Sierra.

Response

The flight routes projected to be used by the Q400 aircraft are published routes currently in use by other aircraft.

Letter Codes

DG0001

5-4 **Comment**

Turboprop airplanes such as the proposed Horizon Air Q400 are noticeably noisier than jets flying at higher altitude; therefore, a minimum altitude requirement should be established for these planes that minimizes the on-the-ground noise impact in the Mono Basin.

Response

See response to Comment 5-1. There is no evidence that "turboprop airplanes ... are noticeably noisier than jet flying higher." Commercial aircraft such as the Q400 would operate with positive controlled

airspace with a minimum altitude of 18,000 ft MSL or approximately 12,000 feet above the level of Mono Lake. Figure H-4.1 of the EIS Appendix H-4 depicts the noise contours for various aircraft that are or will be operating at MMH, including the Q400.

Letter Codes

DG0001

5-5 **Comment**

The one place in the Mono Basin National Forest Scenic Area where Noise Screening Analysis was performed was the south shore of Mono Lake (Site MBNF-1) at South Tufa (called the "Mono Lake Lookout" in the DEIS). The analysis determined no change in the noise exposure due to the Proposed Action; however, with an acknowledged increase in noise at Tioga Pass and Sawmill Campground, it is likely that the South Tufa area, which falls on the same flight path, will also experience more noise. Although a steady stream of summer visitors keep South Tufa from being silent, the general prevailing quiet is an important attribute of the site.

Response

In addition to the specific analysis points identified in the DEIS, a similar analysis was performed for grid points spaced 1/2 mile apart covering the entire Initial Area of Investigation. See response to Comment 5-1. Moreover, the forecasted service to northern California would occur in the winter season and would not affect summer visitors.

Letter Codes

DG0001

5-6 **Comment**

Both wildlife and the local economy depend on the unique resources found at Mono Lake including abundant productivity, scenic views, and opportunities for quiet solitude. This is further reason that the minimum altitude for the flight path over the Mono Basin should be set to minimize noise on the ground.

Response

See response to Comments 5-1 and 5-4. Minimum altitudes are based on safety, terrain and traffic. Therefore, setting minimum altitudes is not within the scope of this EIS.

Letter Codes

DG0001

5-7 **Comment**

The MLC is concerned about a precedent being set for the future, with more air traffic introduced in the Mono Basin, diminishing the sense of solitude valued by wildlife and people alike.

Response

See response to Comment 5-1. The value of the sense of solitude is acknowledged and accepted. However there is no evidence that suggests that the sense of solitude would be infringed. As to wildlife, Section 5.6 of the EIS indicates that there are no significant impacts associated with noise from increased aircraft operations at MMH.

Letter Codes

DG0001

5-8 **Comment**

Evaluation of noise impacts in the Mono Basin must consider both the impacts of individual flights and the cumulative impact of multiple flights per day.

Response

The impact of individual flights and the cumulative impact of multiple flights per day were evaluated. Table 5.5-2 of the EIS indicates that the projected noise levels associated with the proposed Q400 aircraft are substantially lower than those associated with existing aircraft operations. As indicated in Figures C-3.5 and Table C-3.14 of Appendix C-3, the Proposed Action would result in no significant change to the future noise levels at the Mono Lake Lookout or at any other area of the Mono Basin National Forest Scenic Area located within the Area of Investigation used for the noise analyses. See response to comment 5-1. See Section 5.5.3.2 of the EIS for more information.

Letter Codes

DG0001

5-9 **Comment**

The NPS's primary concern continues to be the cumulative impact of the proposed action combined with existing noise experienced by Yosemite, Sequoia and Kings Canyon National Parks and Devils Postpile National Monument. The Draft EIS addresses future cumulative impacts associated with projects identified by the Town of Mammoth Lakes, and fails to address past and present actions that contribute to existing noise levels at Yosemite, Sequoia and Kings Canyon NPs and Devils Postpile NM.

Response

FAA is not aware of any past, present or reasonably foreseeable future actions affecting noise levels in the listed National Parks that are appropriate to be assessed as part of this EIS. Existing air traffic was taken into account in the cumulative analysis. The cumulative noise analyses reported in Section 5.5 of the EIS and in Appendix C-3 indicate that the Proposed Action will not make any significant contribution to cumulative noise levels in the listed National Parks and National Monuments.

Letter Codes

DF0003

5-10 **Comment**

Yosemite currently experiences significant noise impacts from high altitude commercial jets that use the J58-80 east-west jet route and the J5 and J7 north-south jet routes. Data collected in 2005 and 2006 shows aircraft can be heard 55% of the time at Granite Lake near Tioga Pass, 58% of the time at Tuolumne Meadows, and between 41% and 49% of the time at various locations along the Tioga Road corridor. These data indicate the Tioga Road corridor experiences significant noise impacts from aircraft. Further, the Noise Screening Assessment conducted by the FAA determined that the proposed action will create additional noise over Tioga Pass (5.8 dBA) and Lyell Canyon (2.4 dBA) areas with the departure of turboprops from MMH en route to San Francisco.

Response

The reference to J58-80 east-west jet route and the J5 and J7 north-south routes are assumed to be the routes identified in the EIS as OVF – V244 and OVF-NS, respectively.

The FAA cannot validate or comment on the 2005 and 2006 monitoring data discussed in the comment because FAA has not received such data despite both formal and informal requests. The FAA made a written request to NPS regarding the above-referenced 2005 and 2006 data on October 20, 2006.

Furthermore, this comment represents a subjective assessment by the commenter on the nature or extent of existing noise in the vicinity of Yosemite National Park. The comment concludes that there are currently "significant" impacts at the Tioga Road corridor from high altitude jets that currently traverse this area. However, there is no indication of what significance threshold the commenter is employing in reaching this conclusion. For the FAA, significant impact criteria for resources such as this are identified in FAA Order 1050.1E Change 1, Appendix A, Paragraph 6.3. Based on FAA's significance threshold, as documented in the EIS, no significant noise impacts associated with this proposed action were identified. The cumulative noise analyses reported in Section 5.5 of the DEIS and in Appendix C-3 indicate that the Proposed Action will not make any significant contribution to cumulative noise levels in Yosemite National Park. Table C-3-8 (Yosemite), C-3-18 (INF-1 Sawmill Campground) characterizes the aviation noise that would be experienced. There would be no change except time above ambient which is the only metric that would experience change and the change noted is a difference of 1.6 and 1.8 minutes, respectively. Furthermore, when such changes occur, the Q400 aircraft will have reached en route traffic altitudes of 20,000 to 24,000 feet MSL. Finally, it is interesting to note that at Grand Canyon National Park, NPS is under an obligation to substantially restore the natural quiet of the Park per Section 3 of Public Law 100-91. The standard of substantially restoring natural quiet is a more stringent standard than that employed by Section 4(f), which finds a constructive use of a Section 4(f) property only where impacts are so serious that the value of the site in terms of its prior significance and enjoyment are substantially reduced or lost. Despite the more stringent standard associated with Public Law 100-91, NPS is not considering aircraft operations at or above 18,000 feet when determining whether Grand Canyon National Park's natural quiet has been substantially restored. Regarding Grand Canyon, NPS "has considered the potential for administrative action that would make possible the achievement of substantial restoration and not interfere with the high altitude flights." See http://overflights.faa.gov/apps/GetFile.CFM?File_ID=210. Here, however, the NPS' conclusion that there is a significant impact and that Section 4(f) is invoked with respect to Yosemite National Park is based solely upon aircraft operating above 18,000 feet. These positions appear inconsistent with one another.

Letter Codes

DF0003

5-11 Comment

The noise metrics used in the Noise Screening Assessment, community noise equivalent level (CNEL) and average day/night levels (DNL), are inappropriate for areas where quiet settings are expected since these metrics are intended for use in land use planning around airports.

Response

The analysis was performed in accordance with FAA Guidance on Procedures for Evaluating Potential Noise Impacts on Airport Improvements Projects on National Parks and Other Sensitive Park Environments (FAA, June 2007). The broad range of metrics applied in the EIS and NSA provide substantial contextual information for the analysis of potential noise effects, including loudness and perception (Lmax), cumulative energy exposure (CNEL, Leq(day)), and duration (TAA natural). CNEL is one of many metrics applied to the Noise Screening Assessment and it provides useful context for

cumulative impacts. In addition, the project TAA analysis that was performed using the natural ambient sound level is more sensitive than all of the time-based TAA descriptors noted in your letter. Our TAA analysis shows little if any reason for concern about the time that aircraft will be noticed by general park visitors.

Letter Codes

DF0003

5-12 **Comment**

Using the suite of metrics [provided in the comment letter] would allow a better understanding of noise impacts of the proposed action: Lmax, Percent Time Audible, Time Above Natural Ambient (+3dBA), Time Above Natural Ambient (+10dBA), Time Above 52dBA, Time Above 60dBA.

Response

See response to Comment 5-11. We recognize the scientific differences between A-weighted TAA analysis and frequency-based time audible (TAUD) analysis. However, it is important to emphasize that FAA's growing experience with the highly sensitive TAUD descriptor, which involves "detection" by an active listener for aircraft, raises concerns about the descriptor's accuracy, particularly for high-altitude overflights and areas of high activity. Scientific validation of this experimental metric as applied to park overflights is needed. Based on the scientific problems and costs associated with this descriptor, the absence of quantified standards, and the results of the screening assessment, which show that no additional analysis is required, we have determined that no further supplemental noise analysis for this study, including TAUD analysis, is warranted.

Letter Codes

DF0003

5-13 **Comment**

FAA has considerable expertise in noise abatement, and NPS is interested in FAA's ideas for mitigating noise impacts to units of the National Park System.

Response

Given the nature of the Proposed Action and that no significant impacts are disclosed by the analysis, noise mitigation is not warranted for the Proposed Action.

Letter Codes

DF0003

5-14 **Comment**

The Draft EIS documents several locations on the Sierra National Forest where there is a concern for noise. Of particular concern are: the Ansel Adams Wilderness, the Dinkey Lakes Wilderness, and locations of substantial recreational use; Huntington Lake, Florence Lake, Edison Lake and others. The Draft EIS states "additional analyses were conducted to assess the impacts of the Proposed Action considering the noise environment associated with non-MMH aviation activity transiting the area." That analysis covered the above areas of concern on the Sierra National Forest.

Response

Comment noted.

Letter Codes

DF0001

5-15 **Comment**

I talked with a ranger who was on duty in the Yosemite backcountry on 9/11/01 when all flights were grounded, she said it was clearly noticeable how quiet it was, and that it was worth noting that she had not realized how noisy it was until there was the absence of noise.

Response

In Section 5 and Appendices C-2 and C-3 of the EIS, both individual flights and cumulative aircraft activity across the entire Initial Area of Investigation were analyzed. Table 5.5-2 of the EIS indicates that the projected noise levels associated with the proposed Q400 aircraft are substantially lower than those associated with existing aircraft operations. As indicated in Figure C-3.5 and Tables C-3.8 to C-3.34 of Appendix C-3, the Proposed Action would result in no significant change to the future cumulative noise levels at any location within the Area of Investigation used for the noise analyses.

Letter Codes

DP0015

**MMH Air Service EIS
6. Compatible Land Use**

6- **Comment**

No comments received on this category.

Response

Letter Codes

MMH Air Service EIS
7. Socioeconomic, EJ and Children's Health

7-1 **Comment**

Deplanement numbers are such that there should be no significant impact to U.S. 395. Since no airfield construction or perimeter fence changes are proposed for this commercial air service project, no Caltrans permit would be needed.

Response

Comment noted.

Letter Codes

DS0001

MMH Air Service EIS
8. Historic, Archaeological, and Cultural Resources

8-1 **Comment**

In order to respond specifically and consistent with tribal consultation recommendations under NEPA as well as Section 106 of the NHPA, we [Native American Heritage Commission] suggest that you contact the local tribes in the area of MMH to provide them an opportunity to determine if they have any concerns in the APE. I attached a list of tribes we recommend that you contact. The list has changed somewhat from our 2006 correspondence to FAA concerning this project.

Response

FAA undertook outreach to all of the tribes identified in the revised NAHC list. Based on outreach to the tribes and comments received during public meetings and the hearing, no concerns have been identified.

Letter Codes

DS0002

MMH Air Service EIS

9. DOT Section 4(f) and Section 6(f) Resources

9-1 **Comment**

National parks are Department of Transportation Act section 4(f) properties, which require FAA to "include all possible planning to minimize harm resulting from the use". In order to comply with 4(f) requirements, the EIS must identify and evaluate all feasible mitigation measures to reduce the cumulative noise impacts to Yosemite, Sequoia and Kings Canyon NPs and Devils Postpile NM. Mitigation should include a reduction in noise from jet routes J58-80 and J5/J7.

Response

The reference to J58-80 east-west jet route and the J5 and J7 north-south routes are assumed to be the routes identified in the EIS as OVF – V244 and OVF-NS, respectively.

As stated in FAA Order 1050.1E Change 1, paragraph 6.2e, "Use within the meaning of section 4(f) includes not only actual physical taking of such lands but adverse indirect impacts (constructive use) as well. When there is no physical taking, but there is the possibility of constructive use the FAA must determine if the impacts would substantially impair the 4(f) uses. If there would be no substantial impairment, the action would not constitute a constructive use and would not therefore invoke section 4(f) of the DOT Act."

The EIS evaluated the possibility of both direct and constructive use impacts on potential 4(f) sites with quiet setting attributes. Section 5.5.1 of the EIS summarizes the FAA findings of the analysis which indicated that there was no direct use. In addition, the analysis shows there will be no substantial impairment of activities, features, or attributes that contribute to the significance or enjoyment of the potential Section 4(f) resources and therefore no constructive use would occur. Thus, Section 4(f) requirements, including minimization and mitigation, do not apply here.

Letter Codes

DF0003

9-2 **Comment**

Mono Lake, surrounded by the Mono Lake Tufa State Reserve and the Mono Basin National Forest Scenic Area, is a popular tourist destination in the Eastern Sierra. All the state and federal lands in and around the Mono Basin are Department of Transportation section 4(f) resources, "where a quiet setting is a generally recognized purpose and attribute." The MLC (Mono Lake Committee) is concerned that the addition of commercial flights to and from MMH and the resulting increase in flight traffic could lead to an increase in noise over Mono Lake and surrounding lands.

Response

The comment characterizes all state and federal lands "in and around the Mono Basin" as resources "where a quiet setting is a generally recognized purpose and attribute" and eligible for protection under Section 4(f) of the Department of Transportation Act. While there are certainly numerous such resources in the general vicinity of Mono Lake, not all of the lands are eligible Section 4(f) resources. Analysis of the historic data collected in this evaluation do not indicate that the proposed action would significantly or otherwise impact the "quiet setting attribute" of the eligible Section 4(f) resources. With respect to those areas that are properly characterized as Section 4(f) resources, there will be no substantial impairment of such resources and therefore Section 4(f) would not be invoked.

Letter Codes

DG0001

9-3 **Comment**

Our concerns regarding recreation resources were identified in our letter of June 21 and we hope to see these concerns carried through to the final EIS.

Response

The recreation sites identified in your June 21 letter were included in the noise analyses for the Noise Screening Assessment summarized in Section 5.5 of the EIS, and included in its entirety as Appendix C-2 of the EIS. No changes to existing cumulative noise levels at or above the FAA criteria of 3 dBA (Lmax, Leq, or CNEL) were found at any of these locations.

Letter Codes

DF0005

MMH Air Service EIS
10. Fish, Wildlife and Plants

10-1 **Comment**

If this species [Greater Sage Grouse] is listed under the Federal Endangered Species Act, it will restrict LADWP's ability to manage City of Los Angeles lands, and therefore, we want to avoid activities that may result in its listing.

Response

As shown in Table 5.6-1 of the EIS, the maximum noise levels (Lmax) at the lek would not change, and the projected changes in average noise levels (Leq) is not significant. As shown in Appendix H-4, Table H-4.1, the projected noise levels resulting from operation of Q400 aircraft would be substantially lower than many of the existing and projected future aircraft operations at MMH.

Letter Codes

DL0001

10-2 **Comment**

LADWP, as an agency that has been working on conservation issues associated with the sage grouse, is concerned that the visual and audible disturbance described above would significantly affect the sage grouse that utilize Lek 2. The lek as well as other foraging, nesting, and breeding grounds, is located on City of Los Angeles land and, as the landowners, we are very concerned about the proximity of airport flight patterns to Lek 2. Lek 2 is the largest breeding habitat/population in Long Valley and is critical to the overall health and reproductive needs of this regional sage grouse population.

Response

See response to Comment 10-1 regarding audible effects on sage grouse. The Proposed Action would not result in a significant visual change from existing and future aviation activities experienced at the Lek. The approach and departure routes for the Proposed Action as depicted in Figure 5.6-1, are the same as the routes currently in use today.

Letter Codes

DL0001

10-3 **Comment**

At a minimum, LADWP requests that aircraft arrivals and departures during peak breeding season (approximately March 1 through April 30) be scheduled to avoid interference with breeding activity on Lek 2. On any given day during the breeding season lekking activity wanes at approximately 9:00 a.m., therefore, we recommend that arrivals and departures be scheduled after 10:00 am.

Response

See response to Comment 10-1. The scheduling of aircraft operations at MMH would be dependent on a large number of considerations for the airline and the airports involved. Factors such as availability of aircraft and flight crews, connecting flights, and scheduling priorities at the connecting airport would be considered. These factors are beyond the control and influence of FAA. Your suggestion about the scheduling is noted and has been provided to the Town and Horizon Air for their consideration.

Letter Codes

DL0001

10-4 **Comment**

Additional flights will also create less open areas for species to feed and reproduce.

Response

As indicated in Section 5.6 of the EIS, there would be no direct impact on vegetative communities or habitat since the proposed action does not involve any physical changes to the environment at MMH. The EIS also considered in Section 5.11.5 potential changes to natural resources that could occur due to the projected increase in visitors and resident population. Potential cumulative land use impacts are addressed in Section 5.12.3. The projected increases in population and visitors to the area are not expected to have a significant impact on natural resources or land available for those resources.

Letter Codes

DP0018

10-5 **Comment**

Please note that the Sage-grouse is listed by BLM as a Sensitive Species.

Response

Comment noted.

Letter Codes

DF0005

10-6 **Comment**

The paragraph regarding sage-grouse on Page 4-42 only mentions one lek; it is important to note that there are several leks in Long Valley (including those in the airport vicinity shown in Figure 4.6-2) and grouse breeding at these leks may use habitat near the airport for nesting, brood rearing, foraging, etc.

Response

The text in Section 4.6 of the EIS has been modified to reflect the presence of multiple leks in the Long Valley area surrounding MMH. Figure 4.6-2 has been modified to indicate the extent of sage-grouse habitat in the vicinity of MMH. The effects to grouse that are located primarily at other leks but which might use habitat near the airport for nesting, brood rearing, foraging, etc. are not expected to vary from grouse at Lek #2. See response to Comment 10-8.

Letter Codes

DF0005

10-7 **Comment**

BLM Bishop Field Office biologists have observed pygmy rabbits in Long Valley (identified in the DEIS as the Upper Owens River Basin) and plan to document the extent of their habitat in the near future. We have extensive documentation of numerous pygmy rabbit burrows and habitat locations in Adobe Valley, just northeast of Long Valley.

Response

The text of Section 4.6 has been modified to reflect the reported observation by BLM staff.

Letter Codes

DF0005

10-8 **Comment**
Although Figure 5.6-1 acknowledges the locations of other Greater Sage-grouse leks near the proposed flight tracks, the impacts analysis only addresses Lek #2. Potential impacts to other leks should be analyzed.

Response

Aircraft arriving or departing at MMH over the lek north of the airport in the vicinity of the general aviation traffic pattern would be at higher altitudes than at Lek #2 due the position of this lek relative to the arrival threshold or the point at which the departure roll would begin for either Runway 9 or Runway 27.

Therefore, any changes in existing noise levels associated with the Proposed Action would be less than the minimal changes demonstrated for Lek #2 in Section 5.6 and Appendix H-4 of the EIS. The potential for noise impacts at leks located still further from MMH would be even less, due to higher aircraft altitudes.

Letter Codes

DF0005

10-9 **Comment**
The potential for visual impacts as well as noise should be considered, as Greater Sage-grouse react to visual detection of avian predators overhead.

Response

See responses to Comments 10-1 and 10-2.

Letter Codes

DF0005

10-10 **Comment**
There should be discussion of the potential to disturb Sage-grouse during other crucial activities, e.g. nesting, brood rearing, winter foraging.

Response

The Proposed Action includes no construction that would disturb existing potential sage-grouse habitat. Sections 5.1 and 5.6 of the EIS, as well as Appendices C-1, C-2, C-3, and H-4 of the EIS indicate that the cumulative noise levels surrounding the airport would not change significantly. There should be no significant impact to sage-grouse use of the areas around MMH as a result of the Proposed Action.

Letter Codes

DF0005

10-11 **Comment**
The DEIS notes as a potential impact "a possible increase in premature daily departure of some grouse from the lek in response to any increase in early morning (prior to 9:00 a.m.) overflights during the lekking season..." It would be appropriate to include a mitigation measure whereby leks would be monitored for this impact and flight schedules adjusted as necessary.

Response

See responses to Comments 10-1 and 10-3. Given that the Q-400 aircraft is substantially more quiet than many other aircraft currently operating at MMH as indicated in Appendix H-4 of the EIS, FAA does not believe that a requirement for monitoring of activity at Lek #2 is appropriate as part of the Proposed Action.

Letter Codes

DF0005

10-12 **Comment**

It would be appropriate to include a plan for monitoring for all potential impacts to Greater Sage-grouse described above and to mitigate as needed, in recognition of BLM's Sensitive Species designation and of the fact that Greater Sage-grouse and/or the local populations may continue to be considered for listing under the Endangered Species Act.

Response

Table 5.5-3 of the EIS, and Table H-4.1 and Figure H-4.1 in Appendix H-4, indicate that the projected noise levels associated with the Q-400 aircraft are substantially lower than those associated with the existing aircraft operations. The visual impact of the Q-400 aircraft would be similar to that of existing aircraft operations, to which local sage grouse are habituated. The analyses conducted for the EIS have not identified a significant impact that would warrant development of a mitigation or monitoring plan.

Letter Codes

DF0005

MMH Air Service EIS
11. Air Quality

11- **Comment**

No comments received on this category.

Response

Letter Codes

MMH Air Service EIS
12. Hazardous Materials, Pollution Prevention, and Solid Waste

12- **Comment**

No comments received on this category.

Response

Letter Codes

MMH Air Service EIS
13. Natural Resources and Energy Supply

13-

Comment

No comments received on this category.

Response

Letter Codes

MMH Air Service EIS 14. Water Quality

14-1 **Comment**

The site plan for this project does not specifically identify features for the post-construction period that will control stormwater on-site or prevent pollutants from non-point sources from entering and degrading surface or ground waters.

Response

There is no construction proposed for this Proposed Action. The Proposed Action does not involve any change to existing and natural drainage features. The Proposed Action would not impact any Waters of the State and/or Waters of the U.S. MMH currently complies with the NPDES Industrial General Permit issued by the Regional Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB). The airport has prepared a SWPPP that describes the methods used at the airport to prevent impacts to water quality. Stormwater run-off from the aircraft parking apron and aircraft storage hangars would continue to be collected in inlets and conveyed via underground drainpipes to the existing infiltration trench. With the exception of the possible additional deicing operations, described in Section 5.10 of the EIS, there would be no additional sources of pollutants due to the Proposed Action. The existing on-site collection basin has sufficient holding capacity to store the spent deicing fluid until it can be collected for disposal. Spent deicing fluid would be transported off site for disposal or recycling. There would be no impact from the Proposed Action on groundwater quality or supply. In addition, the Proposed Action would have no impact on stormwater run-off or surface water quality. Identification of mitigation and best management practices in this EIS are not warranted.

Letter Codes

DS0003

14-2 **Comment**

The foremost method of reducing impacts to watersheds from urban development is "Low Impact Development" (LID), the goals of which are maintaining a landscape functionally equivalent to predevelopment hydrologic conditions and minimal generation of nonpoint source pollutants. LID results in less surface runoff and potentially less impacts to receiving waters. Principles of LID include maintaining natural drainage paths and landscape features to slow and filter runoff and maximize groundwater recharge, reducing the impervious cover created by development and the associated transportation network, and managing runoff as close to the source as possible.

We understand the LID development practices that would maintain aquatic values could also reduce local infrastructure requirements and maintenance costs, and could benefit air quality, open space, and habitat. Planning tools to implement the above principles and manuals are available to provide guidance regarding LID.

We request you require these principles be incorporated into the proposed project design.

Response

See response to Comment 14-1.

Letter Codes

DS0003

- 14-3 **Comment**
We request existing and natural drainage features and patterns be maintained to the extent feasible.
- Response**
See response to Comment 14-1.
- Letter Codes**
DS0003
- 14-4 **Comment**
The project requires the development of a Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan, a NPDES General Construction Stormwater Permit, and a NPDES General Industrial Stormwater Permit.
- Response**
See response to Comment 14-1.
- Letter Codes**
DS0003
- 14-5 **Comment**
Best Management Practices must be used to mitigate project impacts. The environmental document must describe the mitigation measures or Best Management Practices.
- Response**
See response to Comment 14-1.
- Letter Codes**
DS0003
- 14-6 **Comment**
The proposal does not provide specific information on how impacts to surface Waters of the State and/or Waters of the U.S. will be mitigated. These surface waters include, but are not limited to, drainages, streams, washes ponds, pools, or wetlands. Waters of the State or Waters of the U.S. may be permanent or intermittent. Waters of the State may include waters determined to be isolated or otherwise non-jurisdictional by the Army Corps of Engineers. The environmental document needs to quantify these impacts. Discuss purpose of project, need for surface water disturbance, and alternatives (avoidance, minimize disturbances, and mitigation). Mitigation must be identified in the environmental document including timing of construction.
- Response**
See response to Comment 14-1.
- Letter Codes**
DS0003
- 14-7 **Comment**
Please include both pre-construction and post construction stormwater management and best management practices as part of the planning process.
- Response**
See response to Comment 14-1.

Letter Codes

DS0003

14-8 **Comment**

Allowing the extra flights will increase non-point pollution by intensifying the amount of oil, road salt, sediment and pesticides that will enter nearby lakes, creeks. If not directly, harm will occur from the additional flights and the extra visitors to the area.

Response

No construction or land use changes at Mammoth Yosemite Airport are associated with the Proposed Action. See response to Comment 15-6.

Letter Codes

DP0018

14-9 **Comment**

Please consider designs that minimize impervious surface, such as permeable surface parking areas, directing runoff onto vegetated areas using curb cuts and rock swales, etc. and infiltrating runoff as close to the source as possible to avoid forming erosion channels. Design features should be incorporated to ensure that runoff is not concentrated by the proposed project. The project must incorporate to ensure that stormwater generated by the project is managed on-site both pre- and post construction. Please show on plan drawings the on-site stormwater control measures.

Response

See response to Comment 14-1.

Letter Codes

DS0003

14-10 **Comment**

If the proposed project is located in an area that contains drainages, wetlands, surface Waters of the State, Waters of the U.S. or blue-line streams, we request that measures be incorporated into the project to avoid such features and provide buffer zones where possible. Please inform project proponent to consult with Army Corps of Engineers, Department of Fish and Game, and the Water Board prior to issuing a grading permit.

Response

See response to Comment 14-1.

Letter Codes

DS0003

14-11 **Comment**

Please consider development features that span the drainage channels or allow for broad crossings. Design features of the future development should be incorporated to ensure that runoff is not concentrated by the proposed project, thereby causing downstream erosion.

Response

See response to Comment 14-1.

Letter Codes

DS0003

14-12 **Comment**

Project may impact and alter drainages. We request that the project designs maintain existing drainage features and patterns to the extent feasible. Please inform project proponent to consult with Army Corps of Engineers, Department of Fish and Game, and the Water Board prior to issuing a grading permit.

Response

See response to Comment 14-1.

Letter Codes

DS0003

14-13 **Comment**

Please note that obtaining a permit and conducting monitoring does not constitute adequate mitigation. Development and implementation of acceptable mitigation is required.

Response

See response to Comment 14-1.

Letter Codes

DS0003

MMH Air Service EIS
15. Secondary/Induced Impacts

15-1 **Comment**

The addition of daily winter air service by horizon Air will have a very positive effect on the community of Mammoth Lakes, CA. The opportunity to grow Mammoth's "destination" visitation will allow our local economy to stabilize from our current "peak" and "valley" nature of business to a more consistent visitation pattern which will support more full time employment in our service dominated economy.

Response

Comment noted.

Letter Codes

DP0001 DP0009 DP0010

15-2 **Comment**

Scheduled air service will help provide the economic foundation for a sustainable community.

Response

Comment noted.

Letter Codes

DP0001 DP0006 DP0007

15-3 **Comment**

Our community needs scheduled air service to grow to our full potential as well as to serve the needs of our local citizens.

Response

Comment noted.

Letter Codes

DP0003

15-4 **Comment**

Air service will provide visitors from additional markets into Mammoth which in turn will help our economy.

Response

Comment noted.

Letter Codes

DP0006

15-5 **Comment**

I think the airport will increase solid waste in landfills, will limit important groundwater resources and will contribute to and cause expanding urban landscape. Again, this area will see an increase in air pollution, noise pollution, light pollution, and traffic.

Response

See response to Comment 15-6.

Letter Codes

DP0018

15-6 **Comment**

The increase of population, regional air and water quality, sewage treatment facilities and traffic is not adequately addressed. An honest look at the environmental impact of rapid growth is not questioned.

Response

Section 5.11 of the EIS provides a detailed analysis of the projected potential secondary and induced impacts of the proposed air service. Using the very conservative assumption that all air passengers would represent additional visitors to the area, this analysis projects that the proposed air service would result in a 0.4 percent increase in total annual visitor days in 2009, and a 2.4 percent increase in total annual visitor days in 2015. The analysis also provides estimates of the future changes in job opportunities, population, and housing requirements within the two-count Socioeconomic Study Area that could be associated with the increased visitation resulting from the proposed air service. The additional visitation is projected to result in an increase of approximately 4 percent in all three measures in 2015. However, the ultimate levels and patterns of growth and land use in the Town of Mammoth Lakes, Mono County, and Inyo County would be controlled by patterns of land ownership and by the adopted General Plans of these jurisdictions.

Section 5.7 of the EIS indicates that the small additional air emissions associated with the proposed commercial air service would not have a significant impact on regional air quality.

Section 5.10 of the EIS indicates that the Proposed Action would not have a significant impact on regional water quality.

The Final Program EIR for the Town of Mammoth Lakes 2005 General Plan Update indicates that the existing sewage treatment plant serving the Town has the capacity to handle the projected increase in residents and visitors.

Section 5.3 of the EIS indicates that the impact of the proposed air service on local and regional traffic levels and patterns would not be significant.

The FAA does not consider the potential impacts to regional air and water quality, sewage treatment facilities, and traffic associated with the Proposed Action to be significant. See response to Comment 16-1 regarding cumulative impacts.

Letter Codes

DP0018

15-7 **Comment**

More tourists, more money doesn't justify the increase of noise pollution, light pollution, additional people and traffic that will be brought to this unique natural wonder, the Sierra Nevada Mountain Range.

Response

See response to Comment 15-6 regarding the projected increase in visitation, residents and traffic. Sections 5.1 and 5.5 of the EIS indicated that there will be no significant noise impacts associated with the Proposed Action. The Proposed Action does not involve any change to lighting at the airport, and air service will be provided only during daylight hours. Therefore, no change in light pollution will be directly associated with the Proposed Action. See response to Comment 16-1 regarding cumulative impacts.

Letter Codes

DP0018

MMH Air Service EIS 16. Cumulative Impacts

16-1 **Comment**

Additional hotel and other construction will be necessary to accommodate the increase of visitors and new employees. The FEA does not address the cumulative impact of these foreseeable future projects.

Response

The analysis of the projected cumulative impacts of the Proposed Action and other projected local development is presented in Section 5.12 of the EIS. This analysis has included all the major future development projects identified in the newly-adopted Town of Mammoth Lakes General Plan. As indicated in Section 5.12 of the EIS, the possible cumulative impact of the Proposed Action is a slight acceleration of the rate of growth in Mammoth Lakes and surrounding areas, up to the limitations established by adopted General Plans and land ownership patterns. See the response to Comment 15-6.

Letter Codes

DP0018

MMH Air Service EIS
17. Other 1050.1E Categories

17-1 **Comment**

Also the altitude of the proposed aircraft (Q400) at maximum flight level is reportedly 24,000 feet. This is currently below the level of commercial jet air traffic which has existed for many years as 30,000 feet and above. I submit to you that this type of aircraft at this altitude may have new visual effects which have never existed before.

Response

There are currently numerous existing GA and commercial operations at altitudes ranging from 18,000 – 24,000 ft by a variety of piston and turboprop aircraft, as well as jet aircraft operations at higher elevations. As a result, the additional contribution of the Proposed Action to the overall visual environment of the region would be minimal. To the extent a visual change would occur, by 2015 during the winter season, 8 flights per day would take place at MMH, only 4 of which would travel on the most frequently used flight path. In addition, the forecast for summer service in 2015 projects only two flights per day. As indicated in Figure 5-1 of the EIS, the Proposed Action would result in a forecast increase of approximately 2,000 annual operations at MMH in 2015. This would represent a small component of the total number of annual overflights projected for the area, as shown in Table C-3.1 of Appendix C-3. Therefore, there would be no significant visual change due to the Proposed Action.

Letter Codes

DP0008

17-2 **Comment**

Mitigation must replace functions and values of wetlands lost.

Response

There are no construction activities associated with the Proposed Action. The Proposed Action would not result in a physical impact on any wetland resources; therefore, wetland mitigation measures are not proposed.

Letter Codes

DS0003

17-3 **Comment**

I'd like to speak about the potential impacts of the aircraft flying over the wilderness area that we know as the John Muir Wilderness in this case and air service could probably resume in December of this year. It's a federally designated wilderness by Congress back in 1964 to be exact. The potential for that area to be impacted in the summer of 2012 in a visual way is somewhat real in this case in the fact that it could - it can be seen by a number of people that are visiting that area during the summer months from about May through October yearly. They backpack, fish, hike, camp back in that area, photograph. A lot of activity goes on back there.

Response

See response to Comment 17-1.

Letter Codes

DP0014

17-4 **Comment**

Traditionally in the past, I'd say about 50-some years now - that's a rough estimate - since jet aircraft were introduced and have flown over California in this area, aircraft fly at about 30,000 feet and above, what we call the Modesto flyway which points east in the United States and all the way to California towards the Bay Area and points in that zone. Anyway, historically aircraft have flown over there back and forth many times every day during the summer, notably when people are back there. You can see the aircraft when you're out there in the areas camping, when you're climbing on the mountain peaks you can see them quite clearly at 13,000 feet when you're standing on the rocks up there. Now we're introducing possibly the proposed air service that you're suggesting here, the Bombardier Q400, at an altitude of 24,000 feet, which is the suggested flight altitude when it passes over the wilderness area near Paiute Pass, which is just west of Bishop. This historically hasn't happened in the past. There may have been flights in that area all the time from commercial aircraft, which we know is true, but now the new aircraft will fly 6,000 feet lower and will be visible just as the aircraft are now, only lower. The sight of these aircraft to the people who are visiting that area is a very real possibility in the summer months starting in 2012, if this does happen. It's that much more that is going to impact that area, the wilderness area west of Bishop. Impact as in visual impact.

Response

See responses to Comments 5-2 and 17-1.

Letter Codes

DP0014

17-5 **Comment**

I obviously can't speak for the hundreds of backpackers that back there every summer. I happen to know they go there because I'm an employee who issues the permits for these people to go back there. They do visit the area quite frequently, especially during the summer. They disregard the commercial aircraft. We don't generally hear complaints about that. However, the new aircraft now which is about to, or could possibly take place - this is something that historically hasn't happened in the past at this - at this type of level of service during the summer. There also have been uses of other aircraft in that area, recreation aircraft, light aircraft which we call Cessnas, and military aircraft, the F-18 Hornets from China Lake, Lemoore and Fallon, which I call "the golden triangle." Those are very, very disturbing in that area but those have nothing to do with the current hearing - but this is what's occurred in the past.

But now we're introducing commercial air service during the summer months in 2012 in this area over the wilderness, the John Muir Wilderness, and possibly the Ansel Adams Wilderness just south of Yosemite, if commercial air service begins to the Bay area years down the road.

I guess what I'm saying is the possibility of impacts in the far future, five years or more down the road, as far as visual impacts - it could detract from some people's experience in the wilderness. I'm not saying it will, but there's a good possibility that seeing this aircraft at a newer altitude lower than we've seen in the past 50 years from commercial jet aircraft, at 6,000 feet lower than the 30,000 foot height - basically you're going to see aircraft that much better than you could see the current aircraft that you see nowadays. It's not necessarily a bad thing, and your studies that the URS Corporation have shown no significant impacts to wildlife or endangered species. However, I'm suggesting that the possibility of the people that are back there recreating may be impacted somewhat - not negatively but not positively either.

Response

See responses to Comments 5-2 and 17-1.

Letter Codes

DP0014

17-6 **Comment**

Planes flying into and out of Mammoth Yosemite Airport will impact my enjoyment of these secluded, peaceful, pristine, backcountry areas. Planes flying over will cause noise, will be visible and in some instances will leave contrails, all of which will alter my experience in a negative way.

Response

The aircraft to be used for the proposed scheduled air service would not operate at altitudes where contrails are normally created. See response to Comment 17-1.

Letter Codes

DP0015

17-7 **Comment**

The concern I that I have is once the planes are in the air, air traffic control in another part of the state takes over and can direct these planes over the backcountry area around Mammoth where I recreate. By not allowing commercial air service a few more planes are kept out of this remarkably beautiful area.

Response

See the responses to Comments 17-1 and 5-15. Commercial aircraft use established waypoints and routes based on land based navigation aids. See Appendix C-3 for a discussion of the patterns of existing air traffic overflying the area surrounding Mammoth Lakes. The statement that Air Traffic Control "can direct these planes over the backcountry" is correct. However, air traffic controllers do not re-direct aircraft unless there is a specific need to do so. In order to assure the highest level of safety, scheduled air carriers like the one proposed fly under Instrument Flight Rules (IFR), and are much less likely to be directed off of established routes. Air Traffic routes are established based on available navigation resources, terrain, restricted airspace, and aircraft performance capability, to promote the safe and expeditious flow of traffic.

Letter Codes

DP0015

17-8 **Comment**

In a time of increasing human population and limited natural resources, we need to save this landscape that is intensely beautiful. Instead of investing in the development we need to invest in a sustainable environment for all species to enjoy. Please protect the quantity and quality of open space. An airplane flying over allocated open space is not preserving or protecting our open space.

Response

See responses to Comments 5-1 and 17-1.

Letter Codes

DP0018

MMH Air Service EIS
18. EIS Process

18-1 **Comment**

I requested a copy of this Horizon communication ("Horizon, 2007") to the FAA for review in preparing comments, but was advised by the FAA that it was part of the administrative record, and I would have to file a Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) to obtain it. At this time I would request that the FAA seek a waiver from Horizon Air so that the document identified as "Horizon Air, 2007" can be published in the Final EIS and Responses to Comments Received on the EIS. This referenced communication is vital to any discussion of the appropriateness of amending Horizon Air's operating specification to include Mammoth-Yosemite Airport.

Response

The FAA believes that the document you are referencing is an email communication between FAA and Horizon Air. As the commenter notes, the appropriate procedure for requesting documents that are not part of the EIS is through the Freedom of Information Act. There is no issue of waiver with respect to Horizon Air, but FAA must process this request through the normal course of business. The FAA has responded to a Freedom of Information Act request and has released the requested email.

Letter Codes

DP0012

18-2 **Comment**

Based on our [USEPA] review, EPA has no objections to this project and has rated this Draft EIS as LO - Lack of Objections.

Response

Comment noted.

Letter Codes

DF0002

18-3 **Comment**

When the Final EIS is officially filed with our [USEPA] Washington, D.C. office, please send one copy to the address [on comment letter] with mail code CED-2.

Response

Comment noted.

Letter Codes

DF0002

18-4 **Comment**

The Department of the Interior has received and reviewed the subject document and has no comments to offer.

Response

Comment noted.

Letter Codes

DF0004

18-5 **Comment**

This letter acknowledges that you have complied with the State Clearinghouse review requirements for draft environmental documents, pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act.

Response

Comment noted.

Letter Codes

DS0004

MMH Air Service EIS 19. Miscellaneous

19-1 **Comment**

My concerns regarding the proposed air service at MMH is related to the take-off pattern on departure. Is there any agency or personnel monitoring the take-off patterns when actual service commences?

Response

There is a published arrival and departure route which would continue to be used. There is no agency or airport personnel that will monitor take-off and arrival routes. The responsibility for the operation of all aircraft rests with the Pilot in Command, and in the case of commercial service, with the airline.

Letter Codes

DP0008

19-2 **Comment**

It appears as if all flights will direct northwest, then east, when departing if weather conditions are severe enough (i.e., strong winds). Do any aircraft have the possibility of flying over Mammoth Lakes town limits? (Due to unforeseen circumstances)

Response

See Response 19-1. The Town of Mammoth Lakes has adopted noise reduction recommendations for operators at the airport, which ask that pilots avoid overflying the Town of Mammoth Lakes. These recommendations would apply to commercial as well as general aviation operations. There are no known weather conditions severe enough that would require the Q400 to overfly Mammoth Lakes. The elevation and location of the Mammoth Lakes town limits in relation to the airport virtually exclude the possibility of over-flight by commercial aircraft.

Letter Codes

DP0008

19-3 **Comment**

The adequacy of a single GPS instrument approach should be evaluated.

Response

The addition of alternative or additional navigation aids at MMH may be considered under separate action by the FAA if requested by Horizon Air, or by the airport sponsor, the Town of Mammoth Lakes.

Letter Codes

DP0012

19-4 **Comment**

The question should be addressed whether the capabilities of the Q400, which are reported to be very high, actually exceed the capabilities of MMH, which are very low.

Response

See response to Comment 19-7. The Q400 aircraft is noted for its ability to perform well in high altitudes with high climb rates. The performance characteristics of the Q400 are optimum for operating safely at MMH. Horizon Airlines must demonstrate to the FAA's satisfaction that the proposed action can be accomplished with the highest level of safety. Airport requirements and aircraft capabilities are at the

core of this evaluation. There are no aircraft performance issues or airport requirement issues of concern at this time.

Letter Codes

DP0012

19-5 **Comment**

We [NPS] recommend indicating Devils Postpile NM on the area of investigation base map of Figures 4.4, 5.5-1, and 5.5-2.

Response

The location of the Devils Postpile NM has been added to the suggested figures for the EIS.

Letter Codes

DF0003

19-6 **Comment**

We recommend including the 1964 Wilderness Act and the 1916 NPS Organic Act in the list of applicable Federal Laws and Statutes.

Response

The list of applicable Federal Laws and Statutes for the EIS is a compilation of the regulations, laws and guidance under which FAA has legal authorities or responsibilities. While the FAA recognizes the 1916 NPS Organic Act and the 1964 Wilderness Act are relevant to the NPS and to the National Parks that are of interest in the EIS, those statutes do not contain legal rights, authorities or responsibilities that are applicable to FAA.

Letter Codes

DF0003

19-7 **Comment**

I wonder, and I would hope everyone in the community as well as FAA would wonder, what kind of discretion Horizon Air pilots will exercise when confronted with marginal conditions at Mammoth Airport, faced as they are with scheduled service, tickets sold, passengers perhaps on board and in-flight, returning tickets sold, and with departing passengers waiting to board from a new terminal in the old snow-removal equipment storage shed.

There are days when the objective hazards of flying into Mammoth Airport are known and "routine". But there are days when visibility is limited, runways are not dry, winds are not calm, and when hazards are not clear or obvious, and even the unmoving vertical terrain may not be visible from the air. Under conditions--e.g., with crosswinds at the center of the runway, reported as 20 knots gusting to 35 knots, and assuming the minimum 3 mile visibility required for starting an IFR approach, and a runway perhaps wet or icy or frozen or snow-covered, or maybe not too bad,--what would a prudent and cautious pilot do?

Response

This EIS has been prepared pursuant to the National Environmental Policy Act, regulations promulgated by the President's Council on Environmental Quality, and FAA Order 1050.1E, Change 1, Policies and Procedures for considering Environmental Impacts, to disclose and assess the potential environmental consequences of the Proposed Action. This environmental documentation is just one of several processes required for the proposed FAA action.

Under 14 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) Part 119 the FAA Administrator may approve the Horizon Air request for an amendment to their operations specifications if the certificate holder applies for the amendment, and the Administrator determines that safety in air commerce and the public interest allows the amendment. FAA regulations published in 14 CFR Parts 61 to 137 include numerous requirements to insure the safety of aviation operations, including numerous considerations related to the impact of weather on flight operations.

In addition, individual airlines establish their own specific operations criteria to ensure safety in air commerce including such things as weather minimums, crosswinds, potential windshear, crew training requirements, and airports to use as alternates in case flights cannot be completed as planned. Horizon Air has indicated that they are aware of the weather conditions at Mammoth Yosemite Airport and has indicated that they provide scheduled air service to several other communities in mountainous areas with similar weather conditions.

Horizon Air will be required to know the current weather at Mammoth Lakes prior to their being dispatched to the airport. The dispatch is predicated on known and forecast weather at the proposed time of arrival and departure. Due to the length of the flight and the current weather minimums at Mammoth Lakes it is very unlikely that weather conditions would be significantly different from those under which the flight was dispatched. However, the flight crews are required to ensure they have the latest weather before beginning an approach, so if the weather had drastically changed no attempt to land would be made. In the event the flight was unable to complete the trip, the aircraft has sufficient fuel and range to return to its original departure point. The original departure point would be the logical alternate in this case.

Letter Codes

DP0012

19-8 **Comment**

I do not believe that the Administrator can factually determine that "safety in air commerce and the public interest require the [Horizon Air] amendment."

Response

See response to Comment 19-7. The portion of 14 CFR Part 119 quoted in this comment is applicable to operations specifications amendments that are initiated by FAA, rather than requested by the airline. The provision of 14 CFR Part 119 relevant to the proposal at issue here states, "The Administrator may amend any operations specifications issued under this part if -- (2) The certificate holder applies for the amendment, and the Administrator determines that safety in air commerce and the public interest allows the amendment."

Letter Codes

DP0012

19-9 **Comment**

The FAA asserts that "FAA's primary mission is to ensure safety in air commerce." (quote at ES-1) Yet this draft EIS skirts around questions of flight safety, despite my efforts during the scoping process to have specific issues included. I believe the public believes that if the FAA signs off on the EIS they are signing off on safety concerns, when in fact (I am now informed) it is the Flight Standards and Flight Operations divisions within the FAA that have such responsibility, and the EIS is needed if and only if a

new operations specification is adopted by Horizon Air under a separate process and set of procedures. I will now take my objections to Flight Operations, but I feel it is important to put on the record that addressing the "FAA" is not necessarily addressing all of the "FAA", and that approval of this document by FAA is not approval or even evaluation by the FAA of the safety of commercial service to Mammoth-Yosemite Airport.

Response

See response to Comment 19-7. Contrary to the commenter's belief, the FAA reviews actions under environmental and other applicable laws as an agency. It is standard business practice of FAA that no action is approved without review and approval of all relevant offices within the FAA. At the time a decision is made by FAA, concerns regarding safety will be evaluated and addressed. The Flight Standards Certificate Management Office is responsible to oversee the Air Carriers assigned to their office. Their responsibilities include evaluation and approval of training programs, maintenance programs and operational authorities including airports. Each Certificate Management Office (CMO) is staffed with a team of aviation professionals including experienced pilots, mechanics, cabin safety specialists who work under the direction of the Principal Operations Inspector (POI) and Principal Maintenance Inspector (PMI) to ensure that the highest level of safety is maintained in all operations by their assigned carrier. All operation specification modifications including this request are evaluated by the POI, PMI and their team of inspectors prior to issuing operations specification for any proposed operation. This airport will be evaluated along with any special training needed to insure that if the requested operation is authorized it can be accomplished with the highest level of safety. Once the CMO is satisfied that the highest level of safety can be assured then authorization for the operation requested is granted. The environmental evaluation of this particular airport is part of the CMO's evaluation while considering the request from Horizon Airlines to begin service into Mammoth Lakes airport. There are no immediate safety concerns at Mammoth Lakes that are more demanding than several other airports currently served by Horizon Airlines. However the CMO would be happy to review any specific information the commentator can provide about Mammoth Lakes.

Letter Codes

DP0012

19-10 **Comment**

I believe this distinction has been muddied, and I believe that the FAA should acknowledge that in no way is this EIS a judgement on the safety questions raised during the scoping process.

Response

See responses to Comments 19-7 and 19-9.

Letter Codes

DP0012

19-11 **Comment**

I asked for an evaluation of weather data at MMH and no such evaluation is included to date. I raised the issue not only of crosswinds at MMH, but the unique and potentially hazardous wind conditions at the east end of the runway and no study or evaluation has been made of these conditions.

Response

See responses to Comments 19-7 and 19-12. The FAA disagrees with the commenter's assessment of the conditions at MMH. An evaluation of weather data is conducted during the master planning of a new airport or physical changes to existing runways. Since the Proposed Action does not involve any new development, conduct of another weather analysis is not warranted. However, weather data is available from the AWOS-3 facility located at the airport and is transmitted periodically to the National Weather Service (NWS). Historical records of such data may be available from the NWS at <http://cdo.ncdc.noaa.gov/qclcd/QCLCD>. Advisories are issued by MMH for airlines and pilots consideration. The Airport Facility Directory remarks for MMH advise users of the potential conditions at MMH and the locations of lighted wind socks at the runway ends and at mid-field.

The weather and wind data are sufficiently detailed to ensure that operations at MMH are well within the operational capability of Horizon Airlines and DHC 802 (Q400) aircraft. Further, as indicated by the January 28, 2008 letter in Appendix A, Horizon Air is aware of the conditions at MMH and has indicated that they are not different than the conditions experienced at other locations to which Horizon Air provides service. As indicated in Section 1.2 of the EIS, the maximum crosswind limit for the Q400 is 32 knots on a dry paved runway.

Letter Codes

DP0012

19-12 **Comment**

I attach below, to be included in the record, a shaded-relief topographic map, showing the extreme and unique topography associated with the airport. I believe the area covered by the map merits careful review and analysis—an analysis which is noticeably absent in the draft EIS. Convict Creek flows north towards the airport between Laurel Mountain (elev. 11,812 ft.) and Mt. Morrison (elev. 12,268 ft.). Winds flow down the drainage, and are channeled by a series of glacial moraines towards the center of the airport runway, where data is collected for the automated weather reporting system. Wind also flows down slope in a northerly direction from the east side of Mt. Morrison, and is funneled, again by glacial moraines, towards the east end of runway 27, where it runs up against Doe Ridge, immediately north of the runway. Because of this extreme geologic topography, winds at the west end of the runway are often flowing in the opposite direction from winds at the east end, or even the center of the runway. And normally these winds are crosswinds of one sort or another, and often they are strong, blowing down the eastern escarpment of the Sierra Crest, and when they are strong they are usually gusting, and the gusts are often sharp, and 10 or 20 or even 30 mph greater than the prevailing wind speed. (see attached exhibit)

What does this all mean? It suggests that the automated wind reporting system picks up one set of wind conditions, but that other conditions occurring at the same time on other places along the runway are not the same, not reported, not predictable, and perhaps not nearly as good or benevolent. This presumably has a lot to do with the Jeppeson approach chart warning: "expect turbulence and possible windshear along the first 3000' of Rwy 27." (cited in my scoping letter of 19 August 2006) Horizon Air's reported response cited above that they are apparently prepared to land (or maybe only their most senior first officer is prepared to land? --clarification is needed on this point) in 32 knot crosswinds.

I would suggest several issues should be addressed here:

- 1) historic weather data is needed for the airport;

- 2) a wind study should be conducted to include sensors at both ends of the runway, as well as at its high point in the center;

Response

There was no attachment to Comment Letter DP0012 where this comment was made. See responses to Comments 19-7, 19-9, and 19-11. In 2000 the Town of Mammoth Lakes completed an engineering evaluation of MMH. That evaluation included a wind analysis. The results of a 14 month long wind study indicated that the readings of the AWOS and the readings of wind gauges placed adjacent to the runway 9 threshold and 5,000 feet north of the existing runway differed by a maximum of 5 to 6 percent for 10.5 knot winds, and 3 to 5 percent for 13 knot winds. The analysis concluded that the wind data from the AWOS and the gauge adjacent to the Runway 9 threshold were the most representative of the winds on Runway 9-27. At this time the FAA has not identified the need for an additional wind study such as is suggested.

Letter Codes

DP0012

19-13 **Comment**

A thorough analysis of the flight safety conditions at MMH should have been done prior to the EIS. I would hope that these studies would be authorized and conducted between now and any final determination on Horizon Air's application for an amendment to their operations specification.

Response

At the time a decision is made by the FAA, the required 14 CFR Part 119 safety evaluation will be complete.

Under 14 CFR Part 119 the FAA Administrator may approve the Horizon Air request for an amendment to their operations specifications if the certificate holder applies for the amendment, and the Administrator determines that safety in air commerce and the public interest allows the amendment. FAA regulations published in 14 CFR Parts 61 to 137 include numerous requirements to insure the safety of aviation operations, including numerous considerations related to the impact of weather on flight operations.

In addition, individual airlines may establish their own specific operations criteria to ensure safety in air commerce including such things as weather minimums, crosswinds, potential windshear, crew training requirements, and airports to use as alternates in case flights cannot be completed as planned. Any specific operations criteria developed or proposed by the individual airline must be submitted to the FAA Certificate Management Office for approval before they are implemented. See responses to Comments 19-7 and 19-9.

Letter Codes

DP0012

19-14 **Comment**

The common connection between the historical commercial services is that all the aircraft utilized had maximum occupancy loads of approximately 20 or less. The current proposal utilizes an aircraft with a maximum occupancy load of 78. The EIS does reference the historical commercial air service but it does not reference the historical emergency response capability that existed or an analysis of the sufficiency of that capability.

Response

MMH as a 14 CFR Part 139 airport would historically have met the FAA requirement for emergency response capabilities.

Letter Codes

DL0002

19-15 **Comment**

Over the years there have been definite improvements in the number and quality of emergency response resources available to respond to the Mammoth-Yosemite Airport. These enhanced capabilities should not be automatically considered sufficient to handle an incident involving an aircraft with a tripled occupancy capability. As air service moves from seasonal to year-round, there should be an accompanying emergency planning review utilizing the National Fire Protection Association Guide 424.

Response

Under the 14 CFR Part 139 certification, the airport must maintain an emergency response plan that meets the FAA's requirements.

Letter Codes

DL0002

19-16 **Comment**

The Long Valley Fire Protection District and the Mammoth Lakes Fire District are planning to develop an updated response plan for Airport emergencies prior to the proposed start of service in December 2008. We consider the NFPA 424 review important enough to be referenced in the Final EIS.

Response

The FAA supports the Long Valley Fire Protection District and the Mammoth Lakes Fire District plans.

Letter Codes

DL0002

19-17 **Comment**

Under the current proposal the Town of Mammoth Lakes will provide ARFF response with its own vehicle during periods of scheduled service. The Town of Mammoth Lakes crash-rescue vehicle should be integrated into the County Emergency Response System. The vehicle should be assigned an identifier, an activation page and equipped with a County/Town emergency service interoperable mobile radio system.

Response

Since the Aircraft Rescue Fire Fighting (ARFF) was purchased with the support of Airport Improvement Program (AIP) funds for use at MMH, dedicated ARFF equipment must remain at the airport.

Letter Codes

DL0002

19-18 **Comment**

During periods of scheduled carrier operations there should be a morning staffing report to confirm the operation of the emergency alert system, confirm radio system function and identify the staff assigned. The Mono County Sheriff's Department has confirmed that this morning check could be incorporated into their current EMS program morning check.

Response

Comment noted. The Town will need to prepare an updated Airport Emergency Response Plan in accordance with 14 CFR Part 139. Detailed requirements will be incorporated into that Plan.

Letter Codes

DL0002

19-19 **Comment**

The Town's crash-rescue vehicle should be first on scene of any incident involving scheduled air service and the capability of that vehicle and operator to provide accurate information will create a more efficient emergency response.

Response

Comment noted.

Letter Codes

DL0002

19-20 **Comment**

Given winter weather conditions in the Mammoth area, there should be designations of a heated hangar that could be utilized as a temporary medical treatment area and an additional hangar that could be utilized as a temporary morgue. Agreements with hangar ownership and call out lists for usage should be concluded prior to the start of scheduled service.

Response

According to 14 CFR Part 139.325(c)(5), the Airport Emergency Plan (AEP) must identify "each hangar or other building on the airport or in the communities it serves that will be used to accommodate uninjured, injured and deceased persons" as indicated in the letter from the Long Valley Fire Protection District. The Town, as the airport sponsor, is responsible for maintaining an up to date and complete AEP. The FAA shares an oversight role to verify that the AEP is complete and meets the 14 CFR Part 119 requirements.

Letter Codes

DL0002

19-21 **Comment**

The airport should be equipped with sufficient multi-causality supplies to accommodate half of the occupancy load of the aircraft providing service. These supplies should be stored in a trailer that can be moved to an incident site.

Response

Comment noted.

Letter Codes

DL0002

19-22 **Comment**

A formalized cross training program on the operation of the Town's ARFF vehicle for firefighters of the two responding Fire Districts should be developed and implemented. This would allow for the use of the vehicle during off season periods and operator relief during any long duration incident.

Response

Comment noted. The Town will need to prepare an updated Airport Emergency Response Plan in accordance with 14 CFR Part 139. Training requirements will be incorporated into that Plan. Appropriate airport staff will have to attend an ARFF certified training course and be inspected by FAA personnel prior to any commercial service operations.

Letter Codes

DL0002

19-23 **Comment**

There simply has been no public discussion of the relative safety, or lack thereof, of initiating commercial service at the Mammoth-Yosemite Airport.

Response

See responses to Comment 19-7 and 19-9.

Letter Codes

DP0012

19-24 **Comment**

I regret the fact that the FAA has spent the money on an EIS rather than first spending what would undoubtedly have been a small fraction of that amount in doing a thorough analysis of the flight safety conditions existing at the Mammoth-Yosemite Airport. I would hope that these studies would be authorized and conducted between now and any final determination on Horizon Air's application for an amendment to their operations specification to commence air service to Mammoth-Yosemite Airport.

Response

See Responses to Comments 19-7 and 19-9.

Letter Codes

DP0012

19-25 **Comment**

Year four should see the completion of the NFPA 424 review and implementation of as many recommendations as possible. The remaining recommendations to be implemented prior to the initiation of year round service.

Response

See response to Comment 19-18.

Letter Codes

DL0002

19-26 **Comment**

How much consideration has the FAA given to days like today when we've had six feet of snow and previous days we get a few more inches than today and if there's any special consideration for this? Will Bishop get more air traffic? And if that's the case, will we have issues with cancellations? Mammoth is obviously unique. I don't know how many other airports get six feet of snow over the course of a weekend.

Response

See responses to Comments 4-1 and 19-7.

Letter Codes

DP0013

19-27 **Comment**

Is anyone monitoring the takeoff patterns of Mammoth Yosemite Airport on departure if the winds were traveling the other direction and they had to fly over Mammoth, if they had to turn into the wind because the winds were that strong. These are probably rare occurrences. I've been told at the last hearing, public workshop, that the aircraft will always turn east if they had to take the flight pattern towards the Bay area in Bay area service was proposed in the future. If the aircraft were turning east it would be no problem, however, sometimes the wind will be so strong that they could not make that turn and they would have to fly over town. I don't know if anyone is monitoring that - any kind of agency or the local airport personnel are doing that. It's something to think about.

Response

See the responses to Comments 19-1 and 19-2.

Letter Codes

DP0014

19-28 **Comment**

The problem isn't all the safe landings, it's the one crash landing that wasn't avoided because commercial airlines and their pilots have schedules to fly that are established to be minimally impacted by the forces of nature or the inadequacies of a destination airport. Yes, the pilot is in charge, and yes, the airport "is as it is", but landings are not always as they are predicted to be, and winds at the Mammoth Airport have been known to have the windsocks pointing horizontally in different directions at the same time, when the minute before they were slack. Mammoth-Yosemite Airport is a disaster waiting to happen, and for that reason I would recommend the FAA adopt the No-Action Alternative.

Response

FAA disagrees that "Mammoth-Yosemite Airport is a "disaster waiting to happen." See responses to Comments 19-7 and 19-9.

Letter Codes

DP0012

Appendix L-2

Coded Comment Submittals on Draft EIS

This appendix contains scanned copies of each comment submittal received on the Draft EIS, including identification and coding of each comment contained therein that was included in the comments and responses report presented in Appendix L-1.



United States
Department of
Agriculture

Forest
Service

Sierra
National
Forest

1600 Tollhouse Rd
Clovis, CA 93611
(559) 297-0706
(559) 294-4809 FAX
(800) 735-2929 CA Relay Service

File Code: 1900-1/2320

Date: January 11, 2008

Mr. Chuck Cox
Regional Environmental Technical Specialist
Northwest Mountain Region, Flight Standards Division
1601 Lind Avenue, SW
Renton, WA 98055

Dear Mr. Cox,

The staff of the Sierra National Forest have reviewed the U.S. Department of Transportation, Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) Draft Environmental Impact Statement (EIS), Request for Operations Specifications Amendment by Horizon Air to Provide Scheduled Air Service to Mammoth Yosemite Airport, Mammoth Lakes, Mono County, California.

The Draft EIS documents several locations on the Sierra National Forest where there is a concern for noise. Of particular concern are: the Ansel Adams Wilderness, the John Muir Wilderness, the Dinkey Lakes Wilderness, and locations of substantial recreation use; Huntington Lake, Florence Lake, Edison Lake and others. The Draft EIS states "additional analyses were conducted to assess the impacts of the Proposed Action considering the noise environment associated with non-MMH aviation activity transiting the area." That analysis covered the above areas of concern on the Sierra National Forest.

From the documentation in the Draft EIS, the FAA completed an analysis of the noise concern on the Sierra National Forest and "determined that the change in noise levels as a result of the proposed Action would not substantially impair the activities, features, or attributes with the resources that contribute to their significance or enjoyment. Therefore the Proposed Action would not result in a constructive use of the Section 4(f) resources in Year 2015."

The Sierra National Forest appreciates the opportunity to review the Draft EIS and from the information provided, the FAA has adequately addressed the Sierra's concerns.

Please keep the Sierra National Forest on the Contact List for this project. If you have any questions please contact Teri Drivas, Recreation and Lands Officer; Sierra National Forest at (559) 297-0706 extension 4923.

Sincerely,

for EDWARD C. COLE
Forest Supervisor



**UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY**

REGION IX

75 Hawthorne Street

San Francisco, CA 94105-3901

January 11, 2008

Chuck Cox
Federal Aviation Administration
Northwest Mountain Region Office
1601 Lind Avenue, SW
Renton, Washington 98057

Subject: Draft Environmental Impact Statement for Horizon Air Service to
Mammoth Yosemite Airport Project, Proposed Operations Specifications
Amendment to Provide Scheduled Air Service (CEQ #20070497)

Dear Mr. Cox:

The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has reviewed the above-referenced document pursuant to the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) regulations (40 CFR Parts 1500-1508), and Section 309 of the Clean Air Act.

The Draft Environmental Impact Statement (Draft EIS) assesses the proposal for Horizon Air to begin regional air service from Los Angeles Airport (LAX) to Mammoth Yosemite Airport (MMH) in December 2008 with two flights per day during the winter ski season. Winter ski service is projected to increase to a maximum of eight flights per day by the year 2011. Summer service is projected to begin in 2012, with two flights per day for eight weeks in July and August. The establishment of scheduled commercial air service into MMH necessitates a change in the MMH Operating Certificate from Class IV to Class I to accommodate scheduled service by aircraft capable of carrying 30 or more passengers. The additional service does not require construction of new airport facilities. Based on our review, EPA has no objections to this project and has rated this Draft EIS as LO – Lack of Objections (see enclosed “Summary of Rating Definitions”).

We appreciate the opportunity to review this Draft EIS. When the Final EIS is officially filed with our Washington, D.C. office, please send one copy to the address above (mail code: CED-2). If you have any questions, please contact Connell Dunning (dunning.connell@epa.gov; 415-947-4161), the lead reviewer for this project.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Nova Blazej", written over a horizontal line.

Nova Blazej, Manager
Environmental Review Office

Enclosure: Summary of Rating Definitions

SUMMARY OF EPA RATING DEFINITIONS

This rating system was developed as a means to summarize EPA's level of concern with a proposed action. The ratings are a combination of alphabetical categories for evaluation of the environmental impacts of the proposal and numerical categories for evaluation of the adequacy of the EIS.

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT OF THE ACTION

"LO" (Lack of Objections)

The EPA review has not identified any potential environmental impacts requiring substantive changes to the proposal. The review may have disclosed opportunities for application of mitigation measures that could be accomplished with no more than minor changes to the proposal.

"EC" (Environmental Concerns)

The EPA review has identified environmental impacts that should be avoided in order to fully protect the environment. Corrective measures may require changes to the preferred alternative or application of mitigation measures that can reduce the environmental impact. EPA would like to work with the lead agency to reduce these impacts.

"EO" (Environmental Objections)

The EPA review has identified significant environmental impacts that must be avoided in order to provide adequate protection for the environment. Corrective measures may require substantial changes to the preferred alternative or consideration of some other project alternative (including the no action alternative or a new alternative). EPA intends to work with the lead agency to reduce these impacts.

"EU" (Environmentally Unsatisfactory)

The EPA review has identified adverse environmental impacts that are of sufficient magnitude that they are unsatisfactory from the standpoint of public health or welfare or environmental quality. EPA intends to work with the lead agency to reduce these impacts. If the potentially unsatisfactory impacts are not corrected at the final EIS stage, this proposal will be recommended for referral to the CEQ.

ADEQUACY OF THE IMPACT STATEMENT

Category 1" (Adequate)

EPA believes the draft EIS adequately sets forth the environmental impact(s) of the preferred alternative and those of the alternatives reasonably available to the project or action. No further analysis or data collection is necessary, but the reviewer may suggest the addition of clarifying language or information.

"Category 2" (Insufficient Information)

The draft EIS does not contain sufficient information for EPA to fully assess environmental impacts that should be avoided in order to fully protect the environment, or the EPA reviewer has identified new reasonably available alternatives that are within the spectrum of alternatives analysed in the draft EIS, which could reduce the environmental impacts of the action. The identified additional information, data, analyses, or discussion should be included in the final EIS.

"Category 3" (Inadequate)

EPA does not believe that the draft EIS adequately assesses potentially significant environmental impacts of the action, or the EPA reviewer has identified new, reasonably available alternatives that are outside of the spectrum of alternatives analysed in the draft EIS, which should be analysed in order to reduce the potentially significant environmental impacts. EPA believes that the identified additional information, data, analyses, or discussions are of such a magnitude that they should have full public review at a draft stage. EPA does not believe that the draft EIS is adequate for the purposes of the NEPA and/or Section 309 review, and thus should be formally revised and made available for public comment in a supplemental or revised draft EIS. On the basis of the potential significant impacts involved, this proposal could be a candidate for referral to the CEQ.

*From EPA Manual 1640, "Policy and Procedures for the Review of Federal Actions Impacting the Environment."



United States Department of the Interior

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE
Pacific West Region
1111 Jackson Street, Suite 700
Oakland, California 94607-4807



IN REPLY REFER TO:
N3615 (PWR-NR)

JAN 11 2008

Mr. Chuck Cox
Federal Aviation Administration
NW Mountain Region/Flight Standards Division
1601 Lind Avenue, SW
Renton, WA 98055

Dear Mr. Cox:

Thank you for the opportunity to review the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS): Request for Operations Specifications Amendment by Horizon Air to Provide Scheduled Air Service to Mammoth Yosemite Airport, Mammoth Lakes, Mono County, California.

The National Park Service's (NPS) primary concern continues to be the *cumulative impact* of the proposed action combined with existing noise experienced by Yosemite, Sequoia and Kings Canyon National Parks and Devils Postpile National Monument. The Draft EIS addresses future cumulative impacts associated with projects identified by the Town of Mammoth Lakes, and fails to address past and present actions that contribute to existing noise levels at Yosemite, Sequoia and Kings Canyon NPs and Devils Postpile NM.]

Yosemite currently experiences significant noise impacts from high altitude commercial jets that use the J58-80 east-west jet route and the J5 and J7 north-south jet routes. Data collected in 2005 and 2006 shows aircraft can be heard 55% of the time at Granite Lake near Tioga Pass, 58% of the time at Tuolumne Meadows, and between 41% and 49% of the time at various locations along the Tioga Road corridor. These data indicate the Tioga Road corridor experiences significant noise impacts from aircraft. Further, the Noise Screening Assessment conducted by FAA determined that the proposed action will create additional noise over Tioga Pass (5.8 dBA) and Lyell Canyon (2.4 dBA) areas with the departure of turboprops from the Mammoth Lakes Airport en route to San Francisco.]

The noise metrics used in the Noise Screening Assessment, community noise equivalent level (CNEL) and average day/night levels (DNL), are inappropriate for areas where quiet settings are expected since these metrics are intended for use in land use planning around airports. Using the suite of metrics below would allow a better understanding of the noise impacts of the proposed action:

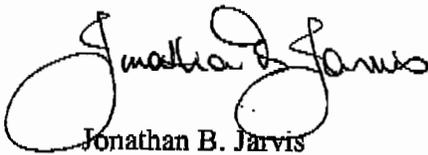
Lmax: Maximum dBA in a given period
% Time Audible
Time above natural ambient + 3 dBA
Time above natural ambient + 10 dBA
Time above 52 dBA
Time above 60 dBA

Yosemite, Sequoia and Kings Canyon and Devils Postpile include large tracts of federally designated Wilderness, and we recommend including the 1964 Wilderness Act in the list of applicable Federal Laws and Statutes on page 3-5 and in Appendix B, as well as the 1916 NPS Organic Act. We also recommend indicating Devils Postpile NM on the area of investigation base map and in the legends of Figures 4.4, 5.5-1 and 5.5-2.

National parks are Department of Transportation Act section 4(f) properties, which require FAA to "include all possible planning to minimize harm resulting from the use". In order to comply with 4(f) requirements, the EIS must identify and evaluate all feasible mitigation measures to reduce the cumulative noise impacts to Yosemite, Sequoia and Kings Canyon NPs and Devils Postpile NM. Mitigation should include a reduction in noise from jet routes J58-80 and J5/J7. FAA has considerable expertise in noise abatement, and NPS is interested in FAA's ideas for mitigating noise impacts to these units of the National Park System.

We appreciate the opportunity to provide comments on the DEIS. If you have questions please contact Judy Rocchio, Regional Natural Sounds Program Coordinator, at 510-817-1431 or Vicki McCusker, NPS Natural Sounds Program Center, at 970-267-2117.

Sincerely,



Jonathan B. Jarvis
Regional Director, Pacific West Region

cc:

Mike Tollefson, Yosemite NP Superintendent
Craig Axtell, Sequoia and Kings Canyon NP Superintendent
Deanna Dulen, Devils Postpile Superintendent



United States Department of the Interior

OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY
Office of Environmental Policy and Compliance
Pacific Southwest Region
1111 Jackson Street, Suite 520
Oakland, California 94607

IN REPLY REFER TO:
ER#07/1004

Electronically Filed

10 January 2008

Mr. Chuck Cox
Regional Environmental Technical Specialist
U.S. Department of Transportation,
Federal Aviation Administration (FAA)
Northwest Mountain Region
Flight Standards Division
1601 Lind Avenue, SW
Renton, WA 98055
Phone: (425) 227-2243
Fax: (425) 227-1200

Subject: Review of Draft Environmental Impact Statement for the Proposed Horizon Air Service to Mammoth Yosemite Airport, Mammoth Lakes; Mono County, California.

Dear Mr. Cox:

The Department of the Interior has received and reviewed the subject document and has no comments to offer.

Thank you for the opportunity to review this project.

Sincerely,

Patricia Sanderson Port

Regional Environmental Officer

cc:

Director, OEPC

FWS, CNO



United States Department of the Interior

BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT

Bishop Field Office
351 Pacu Lane, Suite 100
Bishop, CA 93514
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JAN 29 2008

1795 (CA-170.32) P

Chuck Cox
Regional Technical Specialist Operations
United States Department of Transportation
Federal Aviation Administration
Northwest Mountain Region Office
1601 Lind Avenue, SW
Renton, WA 98057

RE: DEIS - Proposed Horizon Air Scheduled Service to Mammoth Yosemite Airport

Dear Mr. Cox:

BLM Bishop Field Office would like to submit the following comments on the Draft Environmental Impact Statement for the Request for Operations Specifications Amendment by Horizon Air to provide scheduled air service to Mammoth Yosemite Airport. We have an ongoing interest in actions involving the airport due to the potential to affect resources on BLM-administered public lands in the vicinity.

Page 4-42: Please note that Greater Sage-grouse is listed by BLM as a Sensitive Species. Also, the paragraph regarding sage-grouse on this page only mentions one lek; it is important to note that there are several leks in Long Valley (including those in the airport vicinity shown in Figure 4.6-2) and grouse breeding at these leks may use habitat near the airport for nesting, brood rearing, foraging, etc.

Page 4-47: BLM Bishop Field Office biologists have observed pygmy rabbits in Long Valley (identified in the DEIS as the Upper Owens River Basin) and plan to document the extent of their habitat in the near future. We have extensive documentation of numerous pygmy rabbit burrows and habitat locations in Adobe Valley, just northeast of Long Valley.

Pages 5-44 through 5-48:

Although Figure 5.6-1 acknowledges the locations of other Greater Sage-grouse leks near the proposed flight tracks, the impacts analysis only addresses Lek #2. Potential impacts to other leks should be analyzed.

The potential for visual impacts as well as noise should be considered, as Greater Sage-grouse react to visual detection of avian predators overhead.

There should be discussion of the potential to disturb Sage-grouse during other crucial activities, e.g. nesting, brood rearing, winter foraging.

The DEIS notes as a potential impact “a possible increase in premature daily departure of some grouse from the lek in response to any increase in early morning (prior to 9:00 a.m.) overflights during the lekking season...” It would be appropriate to include a mitigation measure whereby leks would be monitored for this impact and flight schedules adjusted as necessary.

In general, it would be appropriate to include a plan for monitoring for all potential impacts to Greater Sage-grouse described above and to mitigate as needed, in recognition of BLM’s Sensitive Species designation and of the fact that Greater Sage-grouse and/or the local populations may continue to be considered for listing under the Endangered Species Act.

Our concerns regarding recreation resources were identified in our letter of June 21 and we hope to see these concerns carried through to the final EIS.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment. Please keep us informed regarding this and future proposals involving the airport. If you need additional information, please contact Terry Russi, Supervisory Wildlife Biologist at this office.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Bill Dunkelberger", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Bill Dunkelberger
Field Manager

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

District 9
500 South Main Street
Bishop, CA 93514
PHONE (760) 872-0785
FAX (760) 872-0754
TTY 711 (760) 872-0785



*Flex your power!
Be energy efficient!*

December 11, 2007

Chuck Cox
Northwest Mountain Region
Federal Aviation Administration
1601 Lind Avenue, SW
Renton, Washington 98055

File: 09-FED
DEIS
SCH #: 2007114001

Dear Mr. Cox:

Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) for Horizon Air Service to Mammoth Airport (November 2007)

The California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) appreciates the opportunity to comment on the DEIS for commercial air service to Mammoth Airport. Thank you for providing traffic analysis as requested in our August 22, 2007 letter.

Deplanement numbers are such that there should be no significant impact to US 395. Since no airfield construction or perimeter fence changes are proposed for this commercial air service project, no Caltrans permit would be needed.

Please continue to forward any information that would be relevant to Caltrans. We value a cooperative relationship with your agency regarding project affect upon State surface transportation. If you have any questions, I may be contacted at (760) 872-0785.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Gayle J. Rosander".

GAYLE J. ROSANDER
IGR/CEQA Coordinator

c: State Clearinghouse
Ron Bolyard, Caltrans Aeronautics
Steve Wisniewski, Caltrans

STATE OF CALIFORNIA

Arnold Schwarzenegger, Governor

NATIVE AMERICAN HERITAGE COMMISSION

915 CAPITOL MALL, ROOM 364
SACRAMENTO, CA 95814
(916) 653-6251
Fax (916) 657-6890
Web Site www.nahc.ca.gov
e-mail: ds_nahc@pacbell.net



October 20, 2006

Mr. Chuck Cox
U.S. Department of Transportation
Federal Aviation Administration; Northwest Mountain Region
1601 Lind Avenue, S.W.
Renton, Washington 98055

Sent by FAX to: 425-227-1200
Number of pages: 2

Dear Mr. Cox:

RE: State of California Clearinghouse No. 2007114001: draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) for Proposed Approval of Operations Specifications for an Airline to Resume Commercial Service Flight Activity into Mammoth Yosemite Airport; Mammoth Lakes; Mono County, California

[In order to respond specifically and consistent with tribal consultation recommendations under the federal National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) as well as Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act, we suggest that you contact the local tribes in the area of the Mammoth Airport to provide them an opportunity to determine if they have any concerns in the 'area of project effect (APE). I attach a list of the tribes we recommend that you contact. The list has changed somewhat from our 2006 correspondence to FAA concerning this project.]

If you have any questions concerning this please do not hesitate to contact me at (916) 653-6251.

Sincerely,


Dave Singleton
Program Analyst

Cc: State Clearinghouse

Attachment: List of Native American Tribes with Cultural Affiliation to the Project Site

**Native American Contacts
Mono County
December 14, 2007**

Benton Paiute Reservation
Mike Keller, Chairperson
Star Route 4, Box 56-A
Benton, CA 93512
numic@gnet.com
(760) 933-2321
(760)933-2412

Paiute

Big Pine Band of Owens Valley THPO
Bill Helmer, Tribal Historic Preservation Officer
P.O. Box 700
Big Pine, CA 93513
amargosa@aol.com
(760) 938-2003
(760) 938-2942 fax

Paiute

Big Pine Band of Owens Valley
David Moose, Chairperson
P. O. Box 700
Big Pine, CA 93513
bigpinetribaladmin@earthlink.
(760) 938-2003
(760) 938-2942-FAX

Owens Valley Paiute

Walker River Reservation
Genia Williams, Chairperson
P.O. Box 220
Schurz, NV 89427
chair@wrpt.us
775-773-2306
775-773-2585 - Fax

Northern Paiute

Bridgeport Paiute Indian Colony
Charlotte Baker, Chairperson
P.O. Box 37
Bridgeport, CA 93517
biggovadm@yahoo.com
(760) 932-7083
(760) 932-7846 Fax

Paiute

Bishop Paiute Tribe THPO
Theresa Stone-Yanez, Tribal Historic Preservation
50 Tu Su Lane
Bishop, CA 93514
(760) 873-3584, Ext 250
(760) 397-8146
(760) 873-4143 - FAX

Paiute-Shoshone

Mono Lake Indian Community
Charlotte Lange, Chairperson
P.O. Box 117
Big Pine, CA 93513
(760) 938-1190

Mono
Northern Paiute

KutzadikaA Indian Community Cultural Presv. Assn.
Raymond Andrews, Chairman
P.O. Box 591
Bishop, CA 93515
(760) 873-8145

Paiute

This list is current only as of the date of this document.

Distribution of this list does not relieve any person of statutory responsibility as defined in Section 7050.5 of the Health and Safety Code, Section 5097.94 of the Public Resources Code and Section 5097.98 of the Public Resources Code.

This list is only applicable for contacting local Native American with regard to cultural resources for the proposed SCH#2007114001; NEPA Notice of Completion; draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) for the Mammoth-Yosemite Airport Air Service; Lead Agency: U.S. Department of Transportation, Federal Aviation Administration (FAA); Project location is near the Town of Mammoth Lakes in Mono County, California.



**California Regional Water Quality Control Board
Lahontan Region**



Linda S. Adams
Secretary for
Environmental Protection

Victorville Office
14440 Civic Drive, Suite 200, Victorville, California 92392
(760) 241-6583 • Fax (760) 241-7308
<http://www.waterboards.ca.gov/lahontan>

Arnold Schwarzenegger
Governor

December 5, 2007

File: Environmental Doc Review
Mono County

Mr. Chuck Cox
U.S. Department of Transportation
Federal Aviation Administration
Northwest Mountain Region
Flight Standards Division
1601 Lind Avenue, S.W.
Renton, Washington 98055
Fax (425) 227-1200

COMMENTS ON THE PROPOSED HORIZON AIR SERVICE TO MAMMOTH YOSEMITE AIRPORT, MAMMOTH LAKES, MONO COUNTY

Please refer to the items checked for staff comments on the above-referenced project:

- [X] The site plan for this project does not specifically identify features for the post-construction period that will control stormwater on-site or prevent pollutants from non-point sources from entering and degrading surface or ground waters. The foremost method of reducing impacts to watersheds from urban development is "Low Impact Development" (LID), the goals of which are maintaining a landscape functionally equivalent to predevelopment hydrologic conditions and minimal generation of nonpoint source pollutants. LID results in less surface runoff and potentially less impacts to receiving waters. Principles of LID include:
- Maintaining natural drainage paths and landscape features to slow and filter runoff and maximize groundwater recharge,
 - Reducing the impervious cover created by development and the associated transportation network, and
 - Managing runoff as close to the source as possible.

We understand that LID development practices that would maintain aquatic values could also reduce local infrastructure requirements and maintenance costs, and could benefit air quality, open space, and habitat. Planning tools to implement the above principles and manuals are available to provide specific guidance regarding LID.

We request you require these principles to be incorporated into the proposed project design. We request natural drainage patterns be maintained to the extent feasible. Future development plans should consider the following items:

- [X] The project requires development of a Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan and
- a NPDES General Construction Stormwater Permit and/or
 - a NPDES General Industrial Stormwater Permit

These permits are accessible on the State Board's Homepage (www.waterboards.ca.gov) [Best Management Practices must be used to mitigate project impacts. The environmental document must describe the mitigation measures or Best Management Practices.]

- [X] [The proposal does not provide specific information on how impacts to surface Waters of the State and/or Waters of the U.S. will be mitigated. These surface waters include, but are not limited to, drainages, streams, washes, ponds, pools or wetlands. Waters of the State or Waters of the U.S. may be permanent or intermittent. Waters of the State may include waters determined to be isolated or otherwise non-jurisdictional by the Army Corps of Engineers. The Environmental Document needs to quantify these impacts. Discuss purpose of project, need for surface water disturbance, and alternatives (avoidance, minimize disturbances and mitigation). Mitigation must be identified in the environmental document including timing of construction.]

[Mitigation must replace functions and values of wetlands lost.] For more information see the Lahontan Region Basin Plan http://www.waterboards.ca.gov/lahontan/BPlan/BPlan_Index.htm.

[X] Other

- [Please include both pre-construction and post construction stormwater management and best management practices as part of planning process.]
- [Please consider designs that minimize impervious surface, such as permeable surface parking areas, directing runoff onto vegetated areas using curb cuts and rock swales, etc., and infiltrating runoff as close to the source as possible to avoid forming erosion channels. Design features should be incorporated to ensure that runoff is not concentrated by the proposed project. The project must incorporate measures to ensure that stormwater generated by the project is managed on-site both pre-and post construction. Please show on plan drawings the on-site stormwater control measures.]
- [If the proposed project is located in an area that contains drainages, wetlands, surface Waters of the State, Waters of the U.S. or blue-line streams, we request that measures be incorporated into the project to avoid such features and provide buffer zones where possible. Please inform project proponent to consult with Army Corps of Engineers, Department of Fish and Game, and the Water Board prior to issuing a grading permit.]
- [Please consider development features that span the drainage channels or allow for broad crossings. Design features of future development should be incorporated to ensure that runoff is not concentrated by the proposed project, thereby causing downstream erosion.]
- [Project may impact and alter drainages. We request that the project designs maintain existing drainage features and patterns to the extent feasible. Please inform project proponent to consult with Army Corps of Engineers, Department of Fish and Game, and the Water Board prior to issuing a grading permit.]

Please note that obtaining a permit and conducting monitoring does not constitute adequate mitigation. Development and implementation of acceptable mitigation is required.

If you have any questions, please contact me at (760) 241-7376, or e-mail me at mhakakian@waterboards.ca.gov

Sincerely,

Mack Hakakian

Mack Hakakian, PG
Engineering Geologist

MH/rc/CEQA comments/Mammoth Lakes Horizon Air Service to Mammoth



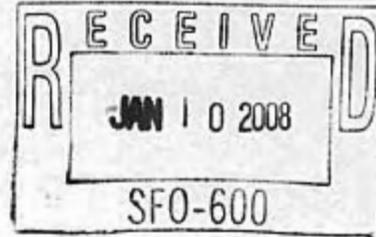
STATE OF CALIFORNIA
GOVERNOR'S OFFICE of PLANNING AND RESEARCH
 STATE CLEARINGHOUSE AND PLANNING UNIT



ARNOLD SCHWARZENEGGER
 GOVERNOR

CYNTHIA BRYANT
 DIRECTOR

January 7, 2008



Camille Garibaldi
 Federal Aviation Administration, San Francisco ADO
 831 Mitten Road, Suite 210
 Burlingame, CA 93546

Subject: Mammoth Yosemite Airport Air Service
 SCH#: 2007114001

Dear Camille Garibaldi:

The State Clearinghouse submitted the above named Draft EIS to selected state agencies for review. On the enclosed Document Details Report please note that the Clearinghouse has listed the state agencies that reviewed your document. The review period closed on January 3, 2008, and the comments from the responding agency (ies) is (are) enclosed. If this comment package is not in order, please notify the State Clearinghouse immediately. Please refer to the project's ten-digit State Clearinghouse number in future correspondence so that we may respond promptly.

Please note that Section 21104(c) of the California Public Resources Code states that:

"A responsible or other public agency shall only make substantive comments regarding those activities involved in a project which are within an area of expertise of the agency or which are required to be carried out or approved by the agency. Those comments shall be supported by specific documentation."

These comments are forwarded for use in preparing your final environmental document. Should you need more information or clarification of the enclosed comments, we recommend that you contact the commenting agency directly.

This letter acknowledges that you have complied with the State Clearinghouse review requirements for draft environmental documents, pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act. Please contact the State Clearinghouse at (916) 445-0613 if you have any questions regarding the environmental review process.

Sincerely,

Terry Roberts

Terry Roberts
 Director, State Clearinghouse

Enclosures

cc: Resources Agency

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**Document Details Report
State Clearinghouse Data Base**

SCH# 2007114001
Project Title Mammoth Yosemite Airport Air Service
Lead Agency Federal Aviation Administration

Type EIS Draft EIS
Description Horizon Air proposes to initiate scheduled commercial air service into Mammoth Yosemite Airport (MMH), which is owned and operated by the Town of Mammoth Lakes, CA. The proposed service would begin in December 2008 with two daily flights from Los Angeles International Airport (LAX) to MMH during the winter ski season (approximately December to April). FAA's Proposed Federal Action consists of: approval of the proposed amendment to operations specifications for Horizon Air to permit and schedule commercial air service to MMH using the Bombardier Q400 Dash 8 aircraft pursuant to 14 CFR Part 119.

Lead Agency Contact

Name Camille Garibaldi
Agency Federal Aviation Administration, San Francisco ADO
Phone 650-876-2927 ext. 613 **Fax**
email
Address 831 Mitten Road, Suite 210
City Burlingame **State** CA **Zip** 93546

Project Location

County Mono
City Mammoth Lakes
Region
Cross Streets Highway 395 and Airport Road
Parcel No.
Township **Range** **Section** **Base**

Proximity to:

Highways 395
Airports Located at MMH
Railways
Waterways Hot Creek and Owens River
Schools
Land Use Aviation Use. The MMH environs include open spaces used for agriculture, resource management areas USDA-FS, LADWP, and BLM, and recreation.

Project Issues Air Quality; Archaeologic-Historic; Biological Resources; Economics/Jobs; Noise; Population/Housing Balance; Public Services; Recreation/Parks; Solid Waste; Toxic/Hazardous; Traffic/Circulation; Vegetation; Water Quality; Water Supply; Growth Inducing; Cumulative Effects; Landuse

Reviewing Agencies Resources Agency; Department of Fish and Game, Region 6 (Inyo & Mono Region); Department of Parks and Recreation; Department of Water Resources; Office of Emergency Services; Caltrans, Division of Aeronautics; California Highway Patrol; Caltrans, District 9; Caltrans, Division of Transportation Planning; Air Resources Board, Airport Projects; State Water Resources Control Board, Division of Water Quality; Regional Water Quality Control Board, Region 2; Native American Heritage Commission

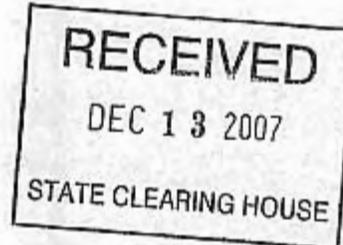
Date Received 11/20/2007 **Start of Review** 11/20/2007 **End of Review** 01/03/2008

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

District 9
 500 South Main Street
 Bishop, CA 93514
 PHONE (760) 872-0785
 FAX (760) 872-0754
 TTY 711 (760) 872-0785



*Flex your power!
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December 11, 2007

Chuck Cox
 Northwest Mountain Region
 Federal Aviation Administration
 1601 Lind Avenue, SW
 Renton, Washington 98055

File: 09-FED
 DEIS
 SCH #: 2007114001

Dear Mr. Cox:

Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) for Horizon Air Service to Mammoth Airport (November 2007)

The California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) appreciates the opportunity to comment on the DEIS for commercial air service to Mammoth Airport. Thank you for providing traffic analysis as requested in our August 22, 2007 letter.

Deplanement numbers are such that there should be no significant impact to US 395. Since no airfield construction or perimeter fence changes are proposed for this commercial air service project, no Caltrans permit would be needed.

Please continue to forward any information that would be relevant to Caltrans. We value a cooperative relationship with your agency regarding project affect upon State surface transportation. If you have any questions, I may be contacted at (760) 872-0785.

Sincerely,

GAYLE J. ROSANDER
 IGR/CEQA Coordinator

c: State Clearinghouse
 Ron Bolyard, Caltrans Aeronautics
 Steve Wisniewski, Caltrans



ANTONIO R. VILLARAIGOSA
Mayor

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RONALD F. DEATON, *General Manager*

December 7, 2007

Mr. Chuck Cox
U.S. Department of Transportation
Federal Aviation Administration
Northwest Mountain Region
Flight Standards Division
1601 Lind Avenue S.W.
Renton, Washington 98055

Dear Mr. Cox:

Subject: Comments on the Federal Aviation Administration Draft
Environmental Impact Statement - Mammoth Yosemite Airport

The Los Angeles Department of Water and Power (LADWP) has had an opportunity to review the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) identifying potential environmental impacts associated with the proposed approval of an Operations Specifications Amendment for Horizon Air to provide scheduled service into Mammoth Yosemite Airport (MMH).

The following issues were expressed in your proposed action:

- According to Section 4.6.1.3, on page 4-42:

"The Greater Sage Grouse (*Centrocercus urophasianus*) was identified by California Department of Fish and Game (CDFG) and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) as a concern due to the proximity of a sage grouse lek two miles east of the MMH airport and possible impacts on the use of the lek resulting from the proposed action. A lek is a communal arena in which males of a species perform courtship displays. The lek is considered to be the center of year-round activity for resident grouse populations."
- An ongoing study conducted by the U.S. Geological Survey (Personal Communication, 2004) has determined that sage grouse utilize the area surrounding MMH for foraging, nesting, and breeding.
- According to Appendix H-3: On April 14, 2004, URS Corporation (URS) conducted a noise assessment at the Greater Sage Grouse lekking area (known as lek 2) in Long Valley, Mono County, California, which is located in close proximity to the departure and arrival flight paths to and from the MMH. On April 14, 2004, a Westwind jet aircraft equipped with Garrett

Water and Power Conservation . . . a way of life

□ Bishop, California mailing address: 300 Mandich Street • Bishop, CA 93514-3449 • Telephone: (760) 872-1104 • Fax (760) 873-0266
 111 North Hope Street, Los Angeles, California • □ Mailing address: Box 51111 • Los Angeles, CA 90051-0100
 Telephone: (213) 367-4211 • Cable address: DEWAPOLA

TFE 731-3-1G engines (3700 lbs of static thrust) was chartered by URS to conduct departures and arrivals at MMH for the purpose of assessing the response of lekking sage grouse to the overflights. Two overflights coincided with two large groups of grouse flushing from lek 2: the arrival (from Bishop) at 7:34 a.m. and the departure (toward Bishop) at 7:45 a.m. The response was likely due to the combination of the noise and visual disturbance of the jet passing over the lek. The responses were observed by both Dr. Pat Mock, URS Senior Biologist, and Ms. Denyse Racine, CDFG Biologist.

LADWP offers the following comments and concerns on the proposed action:

- A. The Greater Sage Grouse (*Centrocercus urophasianus*) is listed by the State of California as a Species of Special Concern and has been petitioned for listing under the Federal Endangered Species Act. [If this species is listed, it will restrict LADWP's ability to manage City of Los Angeles lands, and, therefore, we want to avoid activities that may result in listing.]
- B. [LADWP, as an agency that has been working on conservation issues associated with the sage grouse, is concerned that the visual and audible disturbance described above would significantly affect the sage grouse that utilize lek 2. This lek as well as other foraging, nesting and breeding grounds, is located on City of Los Angeles land and, as the landowners, we are very concerned about the proximity of airport flight patterns to lek 2. Lek 2 is the largest breeding habitat/population in Long Valley and is critical to the overall health and reproductive needs of this regional sage grouse population.]
- C. [At a minimum, LADWP requests that aircraft arrivals and departures during peak breeding season (approximately March 1 through April 30) be scheduled to avoid interference with breeding activity on lek 2. On any given day during the breeding season, lekking activity wanes at approximately 9:00 a.m.; therefore, we recommend that arrivals and departures be scheduled after 10:00 a.m.]

We appreciate the opportunity to comment on this DEIS. If you have any questions about these comments, please feel free to contact Mrs. Debbie House, of my staff, at (760) 873-0206.

Sincerely,



Gene L. Coufal
Manager
Aqueduct Section

c: Mrs. Debbie House



Long Valley Fire Protection District

HCR 79 Box 1145 • Crowley Lake • California 93546
760.935.4545 - Fax 760. 935.4436
longvalley@qnet.com

January 9, 2008

Mr. Chuck Cox
Regional Environmental Technical Specialist
Northwest Mountain Region - Flight Standards Division
1601 Lind Avenue SW
Renton WA 98055

Re: Comments on Draft Environmental Impact Statement
Mammoth-Yosemite Airport

Dear Mr. Cox:

The Mammoth-Yosemite Airport is owned by the Town of Mammoth Lakes and is inside the Long Valley Fire Protection District. The Long Valley Fire Protection District has structural protection responsibility for the constructed improvements at the airport and has historically responded to all incidents at the airport including medical, structural, and aircraft. There is also an automatic aid agreement between the Long Valley Fire Protection District and the Mammoth Lakes Fire Protection District which allows the dispatch of their resources to airport incidents. The closest Long Valley Fire Protection District engine to the airport is stationed at the Hot Creek Fish Hatchery, approximately 1.5 miles from airport property. We offer the following comments on the current draft E.I.S.

The proposed project would reestablish regional commercial air service which, depending on the time frame, was offered by a variety of carriers utilizing several different aircraft. The new service would be confined to the winter months initially but would move to year-round service. Some of the historical service predates the Town of Mammoth Lakes ownership of the airport; indeed some of the historical service predates the existence of the Town. [The common connection between the historical commercial services is that all the aircraft utilized had maximum occupancy loads of approximately 20 or less. The current proposal utilizes an aircraft with a maximum occupancy load of 78. The E.I.S. does reference the historical commercial air service but it does not reference the historical emergency response capability that existed or an analysis of the sufficiency of that capability.] Perhaps because there was historical commercial air

Mr. Chuck Cox
January 9, 2008
Page Two

service and, to our knowledge, there were no major incidents involving those carriers, the emergency response capability that existed has been grandfathered as being sufficient. Over the years there have been definite improvements in the number and quality of emergency response resources available to respond to the Mammoth-Yosemite Airport. These enhanced capabilities should not be automatically considered sufficient to handle an incident involving an aircraft with a triple occupancy capability. As air service moves from seasonal to year round there should be an accompanying emergency planning review utilizing the National Fire Protection Association Guide 424.

Participants should include:

Long Valley Fire Protection District
Mammoth Lakes Fire Protection District
Mono County EMS Program
Mono County Sheriff Department
Town of Mammoth Lakes Police Department
Town of Mammoth Lakes Airport Staff
Town of Mammoth Lakes Risk Management
Representatives from the Carrier or Carriers

The Long Valley Fire Protection District and the Mammoth Lakes Fire District are planning to develop an updated response plan for Airport emergencies prior to the proposed start of service in December of 2008. This plan should be considered interim and not final. We consider the NFPA 424 review important enough to be referenced in the final Environmental Impact Statement.

The following steps should be required independent of the NFPA 424 review:

Year One: Under the current proposal the Town of Mammoth Lakes will provide ARFF response with its own vehicle during periods of scheduled service. The Town of Mammoth Lakes crash-rescue vehicle should be integrated into the County Emergency Response System. Currently, that vehicle cannot be dispatched from the County's 911 center. To correct this, the vehicle should be assigned an identifier, assigned an activation page which could be triggered by the Mono County 911 center, and equipped with a County/Town emergency service interoperable radio system. This system should be a mobile radio and not just a hand held. In addition, during periods of scheduled carrier operations there should be a morning staffing report to confirm the operation of the emergency alert system, confirm radio system function, and identify the staff assigned. The Mono County Sheriff's Department has confirmed that this morning check could be incorporated into their current EMS program morning check. The Town's crash-rescue vehicle should be first on scene of any incident involving scheduled air

Mr. Chuck Cox
January 9, 2008
Page Three

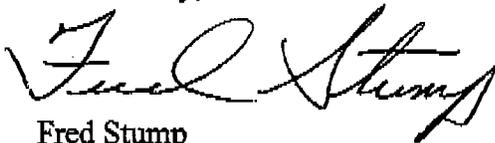
service and the capability of that vehicle and operator to provide accurate information will create a more efficient emergency response.]

[Given winter weather conditions in the Mammoth area, there should be designations of a heated hanger that could be utilized as a temporary medical treatment area and an additional hanger that could be utilized as a temporary morgue. Agreements with hanger ownership and call out lists for usage should be concluded prior to the start of scheduled service.]

Years Two and Three: [The airport should be equipped with sufficient multi-causality supplies to accommodate half of the occupancy load of the aircraft providing service. These supplies should be stored in a trailer that could be moved to an incident site.] [A formalized cross training program on the operation of the Town's ARRF vehicle for firefighters of the two responding Fire Districts should be developed and implemented. This would allow for the use of the vehicle during off season periods and operator relief during any long duration incident.]

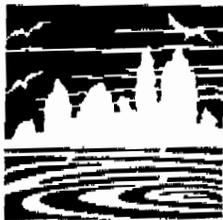
Years Four and Five: [Year four should see the completion of the NFPA 424 review and implementation of as many recommendations as possible. The remaining recommendations to be implemented prior to the initiation of year round service.]

Yours Truly,



Fred Stump
Chief, Long Valley Fire Protection District

FSvkjs



MONO LAKE COMMITTEE

P.O. Box 29
Hwy 395 and Third Street
Lee Vining, CA 93541

Phone (760) 647-6595
Fax (760) 647-6377

January 10, 2008

Board of Directors

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Martha Davis
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Executive Director

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Southern California Office

322 Culver Blvd.
Playa Del Rey, CA 90293

On the Internet

www.monolake.org
www.monobasinresearch.org

Mr. Chuck Cox
U.S. Department of Transportation
Federal Aviation Administration
Northwest Mountain Region
Flight Standards Division
1601 Lind Avenue, S.W.
Renton, WA 98055

RE: Proposed Horizon Air Service to Mammoth Yosemite Airport, Mammoth Lakes,
Mono County, California; Draft Environmental Impact Statement

Dear Mr. Cox:

The Mono Lake Committee (MLC) is providing comments on the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) for the proposed commercial air service to Mammoth Airport (MMH).

The MLC is a non-profit citizen's group dedicated to protecting and restoring the Mono Basin ecosystem, educating the public about Mono Lake and the impacts on the environment of excessive water use, and promoting cooperative solutions that protect Mono Lake and meet real water needs without transferring environmental problems to other areas. Supported by 15,000 members, the MLC has been active in the Mono Basin since 1978.

Mono Lake, surrounded by the Mono Lake Tufa State Reserve and the Mono Basin National Forest Scenic Area, is a popular tourist destination in the Eastern Sierra. All the state and federal lands in and around the Mono Basin are Department of Transportation section 4(f) resource areas, "where a quiet setting is a generally recognized purpose and attribute."

The Mono Lake Committee has the following concerns with increasing flight traffic in the Mono Basin:

Flight path and aircraft elevation over Mono Lake

First and foremost, the MLC is concerned that the addition of commercial flights to and from MMH and the resulting increase in flight traffic could lead to an increase in noise over Mono Lake and surrounding lands. Currently, jet aircraft follow the OVF V244 designated route over the south shore of Mono Lake and Tioga Pass; the map of the proposed year 2015 flight tracks follow this route, but the approximate aircraft elevation is not shown. The DEIS reports that the Noise Screening Analysis resulted in a noise increase at Tioga Pass (site YNP-4) and Inyo National Forest at Sawmill Campground (site INF-1) due to the Proposed Action. Both of these sites are located on the western edge of the Mono Basin. If this Proposed Action is approved, it is appropriate that the additional flights follow an established flight path rather than

creating a new route over the Sierra.] However, [turboprop airplanes such as the proposed Horizon Air Q400 are noticeably noisier than jets flying at higher altitudes; therefore, a minimum altitude requirement should be established for these planes that minimizes the on-the-ground noise impact in the Mono Basin.]

Noise Analysis in the Mono Basin

[The one place in the Mono Basin National Forest Scenic Area where Noise Screening Analysis was performed was at the south shore of Mono Lake (site MBNF-1) at South Tufa (called the "Mono Lake Lookout" in the DEIS). The analysis determined no change in the noise exposure due to the Proposed Action; however, with an acknowledged increase in noise at Tioga Pass and Sawmill Campground, it is likely that the South Tufa area, which falls on the same flight path, will also experience more noise. Although a steady stream of summer visitors keep South Tufa from being silent, the general prevailing quiet is an important attribute of the site.]

Noise affecting visitor experience and wildlife

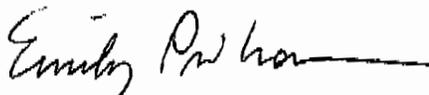
There is mounting evidence that one reason people come to natural, undeveloped, and preserved places in the country is for the natural sounds and quiet settings. The National Park System along with the National Parks and Conservation Association have been researching the increasing human-made noise in national parks nationwide, and looking for ways to mitigate the effects of excess noise. There is anecdotal evidence that aircraft noise has interfered with the communication between spadefoot toads along the eastern shore of the Mono Lake, and research elsewhere on forest-dwelling sapsuckers implies a similar disruption in communication. Mono Lake is a valuable resource for wildlife, especially migratory and nesting birds; it is also the most popular summer tourist destination in Mono County. [Both wildlife and the local economy depend on the unique resources found at Mono Lake including abundant productivity, scenic views, and opportunities for quiet solitude. This is further reason that the minimum altitude for the flight path over the Mono Basin should be set to minimize on the ground noise.]

Changes to flight paths/additional flight paths

This DEIS indicates a modest increase in flight traffic from 2009 to 2015; [are there limitations for the number of flights if MMH should see the same kind of growth other ski resort destinations have experienced?] [The MLC is concerned about a precedent being set for the future, with more air traffic introduced in the Mono Basin, diminishing the sense of solitude valued by wildlife and people alike. Evaluation of noise impacts in the Mono Basin must consider both the impacts of individual flights and the cumulative impact of multiple flights per day.]

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on this issue. MLC would like to help balance travel options and recreational uses with habitat and resource protection, including the increasingly rare state of silence in the Mono Basin.

Sincerely,



Emily Prud'homme
Eastern Sierra Policy Coordinator



Proposed Horizon Air
Scheduled Service to
Mammoth Yosemite Airport

Public Information Workshop
December 18, 2007
Mammoth Lakes Council Chambers

COMMENT FORM

This form is provided to receive your comments regarding the Environmental Impact Statement for Proposed Horizon Air Scheduled Service to Mammoth Yosemite Airport. Please use the space provided below attaching additional pages if necessary. Either deposit the form in the comment box, or mail it to the address provided. **Comments must be received by the FAA no later than 5:00 pm Pacific Daylight Time, on Friday, January 11, 2008.**

Please Print: As a citizen and employer in Mammoth Lakes, I submit my support to the proposed action of the FAA.

The addition of daily winter air service by Horizon Air will have a very positive effect on the community of Mam Lakes, CA. The opportunity to grow Mammoth's "destination" visitation (>4 day visitors) will allow our local economy to stabilize from our current "peak" and "valley" nature of business to a more consistent visitation ~~pattern~~ pattern which will support more Full Time employment in our service dominated economy.

This peak and valley business cycle each week has a detrimental effect on the ability for families to make a living in Mammoth and surrounding areas. ~~Bringing~~ Bringing destination visitation to Mammoth via ~~un~~ scheduled air service will help provide the economic foundation for a sustainable community.

Mail your comments to:
Chuck Cox
Regional Technical Specialist Operations
Federal Aviation Administration
Northwest Mountain Region Office
1601 Lind Avenue, SW
Renton, WA 98057

Please Print:
Your Name: Craig Albright
Address: Box 8142
Mammoth Lakes, CA 93546

Comments must be received by 5:00 pm Pacific Daylight Time, Friday, January 11, 2008

FAA
 Horizon Air
 RE: Mammoth Yosemite airport
 FAA office of airport
 Western-Pacific Region
 San Francisco Airport District office
 831 Mitten Road, S -210
 Burlingame, Ca 94010

Dear Sirs:

Nov 26, 2007

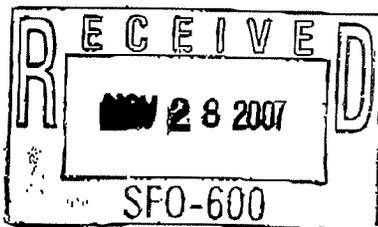
I had corresponded with you about the Mammoth airport per the enclosed copy of a letter to you 8/16/06 in which I enclosed a copy of my letter to the L.A. Times and Bishop airport.

Since we started a company Trans Western Airline on the Logan Utah Airport in the 1970's, which then merged with Horizon Airlines and then later with Alaska Airlines and with my own 50 years flying experiences regarding the Mammoth airport, I feel I should put my negative input into the present venture with the Horizon Air and know it would be better and safer for Horizon Air to use the far safer Bishop airport with its 3 runway and instrument approach

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Sincerely,


 F.L. Harcourt M.D.



TELEPHONE (562) 845-2301
FAX (562) 693-9221

HEAD, NECK, EAR, NOSE AND THROAT
FACIAL PLASTIC SURGERY

FREDERICK L. HARCOURT, M.D.
7821 PAINTER AVENUE, SUITE 2
WHITTIER, CALIFORNIA 90602

8/16/2006

Camille Garibaldi
Environmental Protection Specialist
United States Department of Transportation
Federal Aviation Administration
Western Pacific Region
San Francisco Airports District Office
831 Mitten Road, Room 210
Burlingame, CA 94010-1303

Dear Sirs:

Regarding the EIS process for the aircraft services at the Mammoth Airport. I'm enclosing a copy of the letter sent to the LA TIMES, and Inyo Register in Bishop in 2004 regarding the alternative use of Bishop Airport. It would seem that there should be serious consideration for whatever improvements are needed both for increased air traffic and safety reasons for the flying public in that area.

Sincerely,



F.L. Harcourt M.D.

Mammoth Airport

The question regarding the airport expansion and environs effect can be solved very simply. Having flown into that airport many times over the last 45 years, from the time it was only an isolated gravel strip, with an abandoned old WWII hanger, during all times of the year. The questions raised are unnecessary and superfluous. Without the usual costly, prolonged and typical government and environmental expenditures, why doesn't the FAA just upgrade the excellent old Bishop army air base with a much better and safer instrument approach and weather conditions? Many times I have had to land at Bishop when I couldn't get in to Mammoth because of bad winds or weather. Many small airlines have tried and failed to maintain service into Mammoth through the years.

Other factors that are pertinent in addition to safety, weather, utilization and a successful flight completion rate, the three existing runways at Bishop vs. the one runway at Mammoth. What difference can the additional 20-minute driving time from Bishop to Mammoth make? Typical of our governmental bureaucracy, the FAA just spent 3 to 4 million extending the Mammoth runway to the east a few years ago. It is squeezed between the high mountains just south and the small mountain adjacent to the north side of the Mammoth airport runway, which has been the "graveyard" for numerous planes through the years! It created a condition such as experienced at the Aspen, Colorado airport with one runway between the mountains where many accidents have occurred.

As far as the environmentalists question, it again raises the ever-increasing specter of more bureaucracy and begs the question of its necessity since planes have been flying into Mammoth for many years, although I am sure they can find another "snaildarter" situation if they look long enough!

Sincerely



Frederick L. Harcourt, M.D.



Proposed Horizon Air
Scheduled Service to
Mammoth Yosemite Airport

Public Information Workshop
December 18, 2007
Mammoth Lakes Council Chambers

COMMENT FORM

This form is provided to receive your comments regarding the Environmental Impact Statement for Proposed Horizon Air Scheduled Service to Mammoth Yosemite Airport. Please use the space provided below attaching additional pages if necessary. Either deposit the form in the comment box, or mail it to the address provided. **Comments must be received by the FAA no later than 5:00 pm Pacific Daylight Time, on Friday, January 11, 2008.**

Please Print: MAMMOTH LAKES AND THE EASTERN SIERRA DESPERATELY
NEEDS SCHEDULED AIR SERVICE. WE HAVE BEEN STRANDED
IN THIS AREA LONG ENOUGH AND NEED SERVICE TO SURVIVE.
I STRONGLY SUPPORT AIR SERVICE AS SOON AS
POSSIBLE.
OUR COMMUNITY NEEDS SCHEDULED AIR SERVICE TO
GROW TO OUR FULL POTENTIAL, AS WELL AS
TO SERVE THE NEEDS OF OUR LOCAL CITIZENS.

Mail your comments to:
Chuck Cox
Regional Technical Specialist Operations
Federal Aviation Administration
Northwest Mountain Region Office
1601 Lind Avenue, SW
Renton, WA 98057

Please Print:
Your Name: JOHN J KELLY
Address: 170 HOLIDAY VISTA DRIVE
PO BOX 100 PMB 393
MAMMOTH LAKES, CA 93546.

Comments must be received by 5:00 pm Pacific Daylight Time, Friday, January 11, 2008



Proposed Horizon Air
Scheduled Service to
Mammoth Yosemite Airport

Public Information Workshop
December 18, 2007
Mammoth Lakes Council Chambers

COMMENT FORM

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Please Print: Thanks, Chuck, for the engine explanation.

I am in full agreement with the proposed action
to start HORIZON Q-400 AIR SERVICE in Dec. 2008.

A lot of people did a lot of work, AND NOW
LET'S DO IT. This is very exciting to
have these aircraft Landing AT Mammoth.
I hope the air service grows out to its
full utilization with other cities.

Thanks for making this happen!

Mail your comments to:
Chuck Cox
Regional Technical Specialist Operations
Federal Aviation Administration
Northwest Mountain Region Office
1601 Lind Avenue, SW
Renton, WA 98057

Please Print:
Your Name: BRUCE HOPPER
Address: P.O. BOX 374
Mammoth Lakes, CA 93546

Comments must be received by 5:00 pm Pacific Daylight Time, Friday, January 11, 2008



Proposed Horizon Air
 Scheduled Service to
 Mammoth Yosemite Airport

Public Information Workshop
December 18, 2007
Mammoth Lakes Council Chambers

COMMENT FORM

This form is provided to receive your comments regarding the Environmental Impact Statement for Proposed Horizon Air Scheduled Service to Mammoth Yosemite Airport. Please use the space provided below attaching additional pages if necessary. Either deposit the form in the comment box, or mail it to the address provided. **Comments must be received by the FAA no later than 5:00 pm Pacific Daylight Time, on Friday, January 11, 2008.**

Please Print: IT ALL LOOKS FINE AND WONDERFUL. I DO NOT SEE
ANY PROBLEMS, ~~THE~~ ENVIRONMENTAL OR OTHERWISE.
MY ONLY QUESTION IS [WHY HAVEN'T WE GONE
AHEAD AND DONE IT (STARTED COMMERCIAL AIR
SERVICE) A LONG TIME AGO?]
P.S. WE HAD AIR SERVICE 12 YEARS AGO!

Mail your comments to:
 Chuck Cox
 Regional Technical Specialist Operations
 Federal Aviation Administration
 Northwest Mountain Region Office
 1601 Lind Avenue, SW
 Renton, WA 98057

Please Print:
 Your Name: RICK JALI
 Address: 3251 CHATEAU ROAD, #18
P.O. BOX 1717
MAMMOTH LAKES, CA 93546

Comments must be received by 5:00 pm Pacific Daylight Time, Friday, January 11, 2008



Proposed Horizon Air
Scheduled Service to
Mammoth Yosemite Airport

Public Hearing
January 8, 2008
Mammoth Lakes Council Chambers

COMMENT FORM

This form is provided to receive your comments regarding the Environmental Impact Statement for Proposed Horizon Air Scheduled Service to Mammoth Yosemite Airport. Please use the space provided below attaching additional pages if necessary. Either deposit the form in the comment box, or mail it to the address provided. **Comments must be received by the FAA no later than 5:00 pm Pacific Daylight Time, on January 11, 2008.**

Please Print: MICHAEL J. RAIMONDO

[I am 100% Behind Commercial Air Service into Mammoth.] AS A FULL TIME Resident & Business OWNER IN TOWN, [I Feel We Need Air Service To & Have A Sustainable Local Economy.] [Air Service into Mammoth will provide visitors from additional markets, into Mammoth which in turn will help our Economy.]
Thank You!

Mail your comments to:
Chuck Cox
Regional Technical Specialist Operations
Federal Aviation Administration
Northwest Mountain Region Office
1601 Lind Avenue, SW
Renton, WA 98057

Please Print:
Your Name: MICHAEL J. RAIMONDO
Address: 301 Twin Lakes Ln / P.O. Box 645
MAMMOTH LAKES, CA 93546

Comments must be received by 5:00 pm Pacific Daylight Time, January 11, 2008.



Proposed Horizon Air
Scheduled Service to
Mammoth Yosemite Airport

**Public Hearing
January 8, 2008
Mammoth Lakes Council Chambers**

COMMENT FORM

This form is provided to receive your comments regarding the Environmental Impact Statement for Proposed Horizon Air Scheduled Service to Mammoth Yosemite Airport. Please use the space provided below attaching additional pages if necessary. Either deposit the form in the comment box, or mail it to the address provided. Comments must be received by the FAA no later than 5:00 pm Pacific Daylight Time, on January 11, 2008.

Please Print: support the proposed Horizon Air Scheduled Service to Mammoth Yosemite Airport I am particularly supportive of secondary impacts that will ~~help~~ help strengthen our local economy because of the increased accessibility that will be afforded our community thru this proposal

Mail your comments to:

Chuck Cox
Regional Technical Specialist Operations
Federal Aviation Administration
Northwest Mountain Region Office
1601 Lind Avenue, SW
Renton, WA 98057

Please Print:

Your Name: Craig Albright
Address: Box 8142 Mam Lks, CA 93546
170 Sierra Park Rd. #11 Mammoth Lakes,
CA 93546

Comments must be received by 5:00 pm Pacific Daylight Time, January 11, 2008.



Proposed Horizon Air
Scheduled Service to
Mammoth Yosemite Airport

Public Hearing
January 8, 2008
Mammoth Lakes Council Chambers

COMMENT FORM

This form is provided to receive your comments regarding the Environmental Impact Statement for Proposed Horizon Air Scheduled Service to Mammoth Yosemite Airport. Please use the space provided below attaching additional pages if necessary. Either deposit the form in the comment box, or mail it to the address provided. Comments must be received by the FAA no later than 5:00 pm Pacific Daylight Time, on January 11, 2008.

Please Print: Mr. Cox: [My concerns regarding the proposed air service at Mammoth/Yosemite Airport is related to the take-off pattern on departure. Is there any agency or personell monitoring the take off patterns when actual service commences.] [It appears as if all flights will direct Northwest, then east when departing if weather conditions are severe enough (ie: strong winds) Do any aircraft have the possibility of flying over Mammoth Lakes town limits? (Due to unforeseen circumstances)] [Also the altitude of the proposed aircraft (Q400) at maximum flight level is reportedly 24,000 feet. This is currently below the level of comercial jet air traffic which has exsited for many years as 30,000 Feet and above. I submit to you that this type of aircraft at this altitude may have new visual effects which have never exsited before]

Mail your comments to:

Chuck Cox
Regional Technical Specialist Operations
Federal Aviation Administration
Northwest Mountain Region Office
1601 Lind Avenue, SW
Renton, WA 98057

Please Print:

Your Name: Michael Johnson
Address: P.O. Box 1592
Mammoth Lakes, CA 93546

Comments must be received by 5:00 pm Pacific Daylight Time, January 11, 2008.



Proposed Horizon Air
Scheduled Service to
Mammoth Yosemite Airport

Public Hearing
January 8, 2008

Mammoth Lakes Council Chambers

COMMENT FORM

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Please Print: As a local Business Owner
here in Mammoth [I'AM IN FULL
Support of the Airport]. [Bringing Air
Service to Mammoth will help small
Business to sustaine our mid week
Business]. GREAT JOB and thank you
Alced

Mail your comments to:
Chuck Cox
Regional Technical Specialist Operations
Federal Aviation Administration
Northwest Mountain Region Office
1601 Lind Avenue, SW
Renton, WA 98057

Please Print:
Your Name: STUART Need
Address: P.O. Box 1603
MAMMOTH Lakes

Comments must be received by 5:00 pm Pacific Daylight Time, January 11, 2008.

Bill Cockroft
PO Box 8403
Mammoth Lakes, CA 93546

January 7, 2008

Mr. Chuck Cox,
Regional Environmental Technician Specialist
Northwest Mountain Region
Flight Standards Division
Federal Aviation Administration
1601 Lind Avenue, SW
Renton, WA 98055
Fax: 425.227.2243

Dear Mr. Cox:

[This letter is to voice my support for the reinstatement of air service to the Mammoth Yosemite Airport EA of which you are currently soliciting comments]

[I support the reinstatement of air service to Mammoth Yosemite Airport primarily because it will help the town of Mammoth Lakes to become a year-round destination resort. Easy airport access to Mammoth will allow for visitors from around the world to visit to Mammoth. Destination visitors will spend more time in Mammoth, especially midweek periods when our restaurants, hotels, and retail establishments suffer.]

In addition, [I have reviewed the new project EA and I feel that the airport will have little to no negative environmental impacts.]

Thank you for your time and consideration and I hope that you too will support this important project.

Sincerely,


Bill Cockroft

January 7, 2008

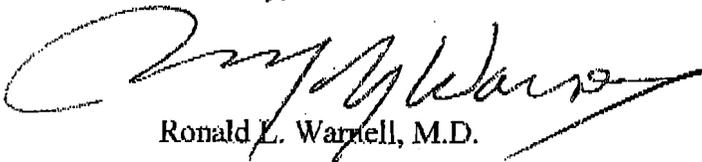
Mr. Chuck Cox
Regional Environmental Technical Specialist
Federal Aviation Administration

RE: Request for Operations Specifications Amendment by Horizon Air to Provide
Scheduled Air Service to Mammoth Yosemite Airport.

Dear Mr. Cox,

I am communicating to you in support of the proposal by Horizon Air. I am a property
owner in Mammoth Lakes and frequent visitor to the region. I believe that the benefits of
the proposal outweigh other considerations.

Sincerely,



Ronald L. Warrell, M.D.



Department of Psychiatry
11374 Mt. View Avenue · Loma Linda · CA 92354

FACSIMILE TRANSMISSION COVER SHEET

TO: Mr. Chuck Coz FROM: RONALD WARREN
DEPT: _____ DEPT: _____
FAX #: 425-227-1200 FAX #: 909/558-6090
PHONE #: _____ PHONE #: _____
DATE: 4/2/08 TOTAL NO. OF PAGES INCLUDING COVER: 2

URGENT PER YOUR REQUEST NYL PLEASE REPLY PLEASE RECYCLE

NOTES/COMMENTS

Confidentially Notice: The information contained in this facsimile document may contain information that is privileged, confidential, and exempt from disclosure under applicable law, and is intended only for the use of the individual or entity named above. If the recipient or reader of this document is not the intended recipient, of the employee or agent responsible for delivering the message to the intended recipient, you are hereby notified that any dissemination, distribution, or copying of this communication is strictly prohibited. If you have received this communication in error, please notify us immediately by telephone, and return the original message to us at the above address. Thank you.

Stephen Kalish
892 Rimrock Drive
Bishop, CA 93514
760.387.2782
kaljar@qnet.com

11 January 2008

Mr. Chuck Cox
Regional Environmental Technical Specialist
Northwest Mountain Region
Flight Standards Division
1601 Lind Avenue, SW
Renton, WA 98055
Sent via Fax to: (425) 227-1200

Re: Mammoth-Yosemite Airport Draft EIS

Dear Mr. Cox:

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the most recent Draft EIS for the Mammoth-Yosemite Airport.

I regret not having attended the presentation workshops and public hearing (Dec. 16, 2007; Jan. 8, 2008), but inclement weather and bad road conditions kept me at home in Swall Meadows. Fortunately, although your meetings were scheduled, my transportation was not, and I exercised what I considered good judgment in not challenging the weather and local ground conditions to try to get to your workshops and hearing in Mammoth Lakes.

I wonder, and I would hope everyone in the community as well the FAA would wonder, what kind of discretion Horizon Airlines pilots will exercise when confronted with marginal conditions at the Mammoth Airport, faced as they are with scheduled service, tickets sold, passengers perhaps on board and in-flight, returning tickets sold, and with departing passengers waiting to board from a new terminal in the old snow-removal equipment storage shed.

There are days when the objective hazards of flying into Mammoth Airport are known and “routine”. But there are days when visibility is limited, runways are not dry, winds are not calm, and when the hazards are not clear or obvious, and even the unmoving vertical terrain may not be visible from the air. Under such conditions—e.g., with crosswinds at the center of the runway reported as 20 knots gusting to 35 knots, and assuming the minimum 3 mile visibility required for starting an IFR approach, and a runway perhaps wet or icy or frozen or snow-covered, or maybe not too bad,—what would a prudent and cautious pilot do?

Any pilot I know would not try to land under such conditions at the Mammoth Airport. Either they'd be waiting for a better flying day, or timing their arrival before the weather deteriorated, or landing at the Bishop Airport, happy to be safe on the ground, even if their car was 45 minutes away at the Mammoth Airport.

But Horizon Airlines might try to land, and they'd probably get away with it 9 times out of 10, or 99 times out of a hundred, or 999 times out of a thousand. After all, as reported in the Draft EIS, in an obvious attempt to respond to my scoping testimony and letter, "Horizon Air has indicated that the maximum crosswind limit for the Q400 aircraft is 32 knots on a dry paved runway." (Draft EIS at 1-5, referencing "Horizon Air, 2007")

[The problem isn't all the safe landings, it's the one crash landing that wasn't avoided because commercial airlines and their pilots have schedules to fly that are established to be minimally impacted by the forces of nature or the inadequacies of a destination airport. Yes, the pilot is in charge, and yes, the airport "is as it is", but landings are not always as they are predicted to be, and winds at the Mammoth Airport have been known to have the windsocks pointing horizontally in different directions at the same time, when the minute before they were slack. Mammoth-Yosemite Airport is a disaster waiting to happen, and for that reason I would recommend the the FAA adopt the No-Action Alternative.]

I will restrict my comments and objections to issues relating to the decision of the Administrator about whether or not to grant Horizon Air an amendment to their operations specifications to fly commercial flights into Mammoth-Yosemite Airport. [I do not believe that the Administrator can factually determine that "safety in air commerce and the public interest require the amendment." (quoting from Draft EIS at 1-1)]

I admit to having been naive about what this environmental impact statement would address. My scoping issue was safety, and as best I can determine my concerns were addressed in this draft EIS only at 1-5, in three short sentences which I will quote here in full, so that I can cite them later.

The airport intermittently experiences crosswind conditions that limit arrivals by light general aviation (GA) aircraft or require avoidance of a part of the runway. However, these conditions are not projected to substantially affect the operation of heavier aircraft such as the Q400. Horizon Air has indicated that the maximum crosswind limit for the Q400 aircraft is 32 knots on a dry paved runway (Horizon Air, 2007).

[I requested a copy of this Horizon communication to the FAA for review in preparing these comments, but was advised by the FAA that it was part of the administrative record, and I would have to file a Freedom of Information Act ("FOIA") request to obtain it. At this time, I would request that the FAA seek a waiver from Horizon Air so that the document identified as "Horizon Air, 2007" can be published in the Final EIS and Responses to Comments Received on the EIS. This referenced communication is vital to any discussion of the appropriateness of amending Horizon Air's operating specifications to include service to the Mammoth-Yosemite Airport.]

Before continuing, I would like to expand on the question of the public's perception of the probable adoption by the FAA of the Preferred Action Alternative. [The FAA asserts that "FAA's primary mission is to ensure safety in air commerce." (quote at ES-1) Yet

this draft EIS skirts around questions of flight safety, despite my efforts during the scoping process to have specific issues included. I believe the public believes that if the FAA signs off on the EIS they are signing off on safety concerns, when in fact (I am now informed) it is the Flight Specifications and Flight Operations divisions within the FAA that have such responsibility, and the EIS is needed *if and only if* a new operations specification is adopted for Horizon Air under a separate process and set of procedures. I will now take my objections to Flight Operations, but I feel it is important to put on the record that addressing the FAA is not necessarily addressing all of the FAA, and that approval of this document by the FAA is not approval or even evaluation by the FAA of the safety of commercial service to Mammoth-Yosemite Airport. I believe this distinction has been muddled, and I believe that the FAA should acknowledge that in no way is this EIS a judgment on the safety questions raised during the scoping process. There simply has been no public discussion of the relative safety, or lack thereof, of initiating commercial service at the Mammoth-Yosemite Airport.

That said, I am severely disappointed that specific (safety related) questions I raised at the scoping hearing have not been dealt with in the draft EIS. (Aside from the notable three sentences quoted above, which at least invite discussion, for which I am grateful.) I asked for an evaluation of weather data at the airport, and no such evaluation is included to date. I raised the issue not only of crosswinds at the airport, but of unique and potentially hazardous wind conditions at the east end of the runway, and no study or evaluation has been made of these conditions either. And of course I am once again disappointed that in evaluating the efficacy of bringing scheduled commercial air service to the Eastern Sierra the FAA has excluded from study an evaluation of the relative safety advantages (and there are many) of the Bishop airport over the Mammoth airport (this is a constant thread running through the various FAA environmental studies of the airport over the past decade).

I attach below, to be included in the record, a shaded-relief topographic map, showing the extreme and unique topography associated with the airport. I believe the area covered by the map merits careful review and analysis—an analysis which is noticeably absent in the draft EIS. Convict Creek flows north towards the airport between Laurel Mountain (elev. 11,812 ft.) and Mt. Morrison (elev. 12,268 ft.). Winds flow down the drainage, and are channeled by a series of glacial moraines towards the center of the airport runway, where data is collected for the automated weather reporting system. Wind also flows down slope in a northerly direction from the east side of Mt. Morrison, and is funneled, again by glacial moraines, towards the east end of runway 27, where it runs up against Doe Ridge, immediately north of the runway. Because of this extreme geologic topography, winds at the west end of the runway are often flowing in the opposite direction from winds at the east end, or even the center of the runway. And normally these winds are crosswinds of one sort or another, and often they are strong, blowing down the eastern escarpment of the Sierra Crest, and when they are strong they are usually gusting, and the gusts are often sharp, and 10 or 20 or even 30 mph greater than the prevailing wind speed. (see attached exhibit)

What does this all mean? It suggests that the automated wind reporting system picks up one set of wind conditions, but that other conditions occurring at the same time on other places along the runway are not the same, not reported, not predictable, and perhaps not nearly as good or benevolent. This presumably has a lot to do with the Jeppesen approach chart warning: “expect turbulence and possible windshear along the first 3000’ of Rwy 27.” (cited in my scoping letter of 19 August 2006) Horizon Air’s reported response cited above that they are apparently prepared to land (or maybe only

their most senior first officer is prepared to land? --clarification is needed on this point) in 32 knot crosswinds.

I would suggest several issues should be addressed here:

- 1) historic weather data is needed for the airport;
- 2) a wind study should be conducted to include sensors at both ends of the runway, as well as at its high point in the center;
- 3) the adequacy of a single GPS instrument approach should be evaluated;
- 4) the question should be addressed whether the capabilities of the Q400, which are reported to be very high, actually exceed the capabilities of the airport, which are very low.

This last issue begs the question of whether or not the pilot-in-charge is really in charge, or merely playing Russian-roulette with the vagaries of Mother Nature.

As a taxpayer, I regret the fact that the FAA has spent the money on an EIS rather than first spending what would undoubtedly have been a small fraction of that amount in doing a thorough analysis of the flight safety conditions existing at the Mammoth-Yosemite Airport. I would hope that these studies would be authorized and conducted between now and any final determination on Horizon Air's application for an amendment to their operations specification to commence air service to Mammoth-Yosemite Airport.

Sincerely,

Stephen Kalish

Attachment: Map Exhibit



Camille.Garibaldi@faa.gov

01/14/2008 11:43 AM

To bill_fehring@urscorp.com

cc Chuck.Cox@faa.gov

bcc

Subject Fw: DEIS Comment

DEIS Comment from S. Kalish

Camille Garibaldi
Environmental Protection Specialist
Federal Aviation Administration
Western-Pacific Region
San Francisco Airports District Office
831 Mitten Road, Suite 210
Burlingame, CA 94010

Phone (650) 876-2778 extension 613

Fax (650) 876-2733

----- Forwarded by Camille Garibaldi/AWP/FAA on 01/14/2008 08:42 AM -----

Stephen Kalish &
Rosemary Jarrett
<kaljar@qnet.com>

01/11/2008 03:50
PM

Camille Garibaldi/AWP/FAA@FAA

To

cc

Subject

Re: Request for document

Camille,

Thanks for your help. As you will see in the attached comment letter, per your request. I whipped it out today, your input can be seen therein, too. (I didn't attach the topo map; you'll see it soon enough.) Comment letter faxed in by scanning fax machine and digitally, so they are bound to have one good copy.

Stephen

(See attached file: Airport DEIS .pdf)

--Stephen Kalish
892 Rimrock Drive
Bishop, CA 93514
760.387.2782
kaljar@qnet.com

On Jan 11, 2008, at 12:30 PM, Camille.Garibaldi@faa.gov wrote:

Hello Stephen,

As we discussed the Freedom of Information Act request will need to be submitted to the Western Pacific Region FOIA Officer. From the FAA's internet site (<http://www.faa.gov/foia/>) select Regional, Aeronautical Center and Headquarters Service Centers from there you are able to select the regional location.

Please let me know if you have difficulty with the website.

Sincerely,

Camille Garibaldi

Camille Garibaldi
Environmental Protection Specialist
Federal Aviation Administration
Western-Pacific Region
San Francisco Airports District Office
831 Mitten Road, Suite 210
Burlingame, CA 94010

Phone (650) 876-2778 extension 613
Fax (650) 876-2733

& Stephen Kalish
Jarrett Rosemary
<kaljar@qnet.com

> Garibaldi/AWP/FAA@FAA
01/10/2008

10:50

To
Camille

cc

AM

Subject
document

Request for

Camille:

Thank you for your time on the phone this morning.

This email is to officially request a copy of a document, referenced in the Draft Mammoth Yosemite Airport Air Service EIS at 1-5 as "(Horizon Air, 2007)". The requested document appears to be a response to concerns I raised during the scoping process about specific and general flight safety issues at the Mammoth Yosemite Airport.

I would like, if possible, to review Horizon's response to those concerns prior to submitting a written comment to the FAA on the Draft EIS, the deadline for submission being tomorrow afternoon.

I appreciate that you may or may not be able to deliver me a copy of the requested document this week, but that will make an effort to do so. If the document cannot be made available this week, please accept this email as a formal request under the Freedom of Information Act for a copy of the above referenced document at the earliest possible date.

Respectfully,

/s/ Stephen Kalish

--Stephen Kalish
892 Rimrock Drive
Bishop, CA 93514
760.387.2782
kaljar@qnet.com



Airport DEIS .pdf

1 MR. McKENNA: Hi. My name is Mike McKenna. I'm
2 a Mammoth resident and I'm a local writer for a paper
3 called THE SHEET and my question is just weather related.
4 [How much consideration has the FAA given to days
5 like today when we've had six feet of snow and previous
6 days we get a few more inches than today and if there's
7 any special considerations for this? Will Bishop get more
8 air traffic? And if that's the case, will we have issues
9 with cancellations? Mammoth is obviously unique. I don't
10 know how many other airports get six feet of snow over the
11 course of a weekend.] Thank you.

12 MS. GARIBALDI: Thank you very much.

13 MR. COX: Can we get your name and address?

14 MR. McKENNA: Do you want me to write it down?

15 MS. GARIBALDI: Yes, that would be great.

16 MR. COX: Seeing how there is no one here to make
17 a comment, we are going to recess the public hearing
18 portion of this until we have somebody who wants to make a
19 comment and that way we can go off the record for a little
20 while.

21 MS. GARIBALDI: So we will continue with the
22 public workshop type format.

23 MR. COX: I've got 4:20 using that clock and we
24 are recessed.

25 (Off the record awaiting interested parties.)

1 MR. COX: We would like to go back on the record
2 here and resume the hearing. We have a speaker,
3 Mr. Michael Johnson.

4 If you could come up and make your comments.

5 MR. JOHNSON: Okay. Can I have a quick minute
6 here?

7 MS. GARIBALDI: Sure.

8 MR. COX: Sure.

9 MR. JOHNSON: Okay?

10 MR. COX: Absolutely.

11 State your name.

12 MS. GARIBALDI: If you could provide your name
13 and address, that would be helpful.

14 MR. JOHNSON: Okay. My name is Michael Johnson.
15 I have a mailing address of P.O. Box 1592, Mammoth Lakes,
16 93546 of course.

17 I'd like to -- Is this Mr. Cox I'm addressing,
18 first of all?

19 MR. COX: Yes, I'm Mr. Cox.

20 MR. JOHNSON: Okay. And you're a representative
21 of the FAA?

22 MR. COX: Yes.

23 MR. JOHNSON: Okay. I just want to make sure who
24 I was addressing here.

25 MR. COX: Okay.

1 MR. JOHNSON: I'd like to speak about the
2 potential impacts of the aircraft flying over the
3 wilderness area that we know as the John Muir Wilderness
4 in this case and air service could probably resume in
5 December of this year.

6 MR. COX: The John Muir?

7 MR. JOHNSON: Correct.

8 MR. COX: Okay.

9 MR. JOHNSON: It's a federally designated
10 wilderness by Congress back in 1964 to be exact.

11 The potential for that area to be impacted in the
12 summer of 2012 in a visual way is somewhat real in this
13 case in the fact that it could -- it can be seen by a
14 number of people that are visiting that area during the
15 summer months from about May through October yearly.

16 They -- They backpack, fish, hike, camp back in that area,
17 photograph. A lot of activity goes on back there. And

18 traditionally in the past I'd say about 50-some years
19 now -- That's a rough estimate -- since jet aircraft were
20 introduced and have flown over California in this area,
21 aircraft fly at about 30,000 feet and above, what we call
22 the Modesto Fly Away which points east in the United
23 States and all the way to California towards the Bay Area
24 and points in that zone.

25 Anyway, historically aircraft have flown over

1 there back and forth many times every day during the
2 summer notably when people are back there. You can see
3 the aircraft when you're out there in the areas camping,
4 when you're climbing on the mountain peaks you can see
5 them quite clearly at 13,000 feet when you're standing on
6 the rocks up there. Now we're introducing possibly the
7 proposed air service that you're suggesting here, the
8 Bombardier Q400, at an altitude of 24,000 feet, okay,
9 which is the suggested flight altitude when it passes over
10 the wilderness area near Paiute Pass which is just east
11 of -- Excuse me -- just west of Bishop. This historically
12 hasn't happened in the past. There may have been flights
13 in that area all the time from commercial aircraft, which
14 we know is true, but now the new aircraft will fly 6,000
15 feet lower and will be visible just as the aircraft are
16 now only closer.

17 The noise of which I don't know the impacts of
18 that. I don't have facts and figures of that. However,
19 the sight of these aircraft to the people who are visiting
20 that area is a very real possibility in the summer months
21 starting 2012, if this does happen. It's that much more
22 that is going to impact that area, the wilderness area
23 east of Bishop -- Excuse me -- west of Bishop.

24 MR. COX: You're talking impact as --

25 MR. JOHNSON: Impact as in visual impact.

1 MR. COX: -- in detracting from the appreciation
2 of the natural beauty of the area?

3 MR. JOHNSON: Correct. Correct.

4 Now, I obviously can't speak for the hundreds of
5 backpackers that are back there every summer. I happen to
6 know they go there because I'm an employee who issues the
7 permits for these people to go back there. They do visit
8 the area quite frequently, especially during the summer.
9 They disregard the commercial aircraft. We don't
10 generally hear complaints about that. However, the new
11 aircraft now which is about to -- well, could possibly
12 take place, of course, this is something that historically
13 hasn't happened in the past at this -- at this type of
14 level of service during the summer. There also have been
15 uses of other aircraft in that area, recreation aircraft,
16 light aircraft which we call Cessnas, and military
17 aircraft, the F-18 Hornets from China Lake, Lemoore and
18 Fallon, which I call "the golden triangle." Those are
19 very, very disturbing in that area but those have nothing
20 to do with the current hearing, I understand --

21 MR. COX: Yes.

22 MR. JOHNSON: -- but this is what's occurred in
23 the past.

24 But now we're introducing commercial air service
25 during the summer months in 2012 in this area over the

1 wilderness, the John Muir Wilderness, and possibly the --
2 the Ansel Adams Wilderness just south of Yosemite if
3 commercial air service begins in the Bay Area years down
4 the road.

5 I guess what I'm saying is the possibility of
6 impacts in the far future, five years or more down the
7 road, as far as visual impacts, it could -- it could
8 detract from some people's experience in the wilderness,
9 it could. I'm not saying that it will, but there's a good
10 possibility that seeing this aircraft at a newer altitude
11 lower than what we've seen in the past 50 years from
12 commercial jet aircraft, at 6,000 feet lower than 30,000
13 foot height, it's -- basically you're going to see
14 aircraft that much better than you could see the current
15 aircraft that you see nowadays. So it's not necessarily a
16 bad thing. And, of course, your studies that the URS
17 Corporation have shown no significant impacts to wildlife
18 or endangered species. However, I'm suggesting that the
19 possibility of the people that are back there recreating
20 may be impacted somewhat, somewhat, not negatively but not
21 positively, either.]

22 And the other thing I wanted to say -- I'm not
23 sure if I have a time limit here [-- is anybody monitoring
24 the -- the takeoff patterns from Mammoth Yosemite Airport
25 on departure if the winds were traveling the other

1 direction and they had to fly over Mammoth, if they had to
2 turn into the wind because the winds were that strong?
3 These are probably rare occurrences. I've been told at
4 the last hearing, public workshop, that the aircraft will
5 always turn east if they had to take the flight pattern
6 towards the Bay Area if Bay Area service was proposed in
7 the future. If the aircraft were turning east, it would
8 be no problem, however sometimes the wind will be so
9 strong that they couldn't make that turn and they would
10 have to fly over town. I don't know if anybody is
11 monitoring that, any kind of agency or the local airport
12 personnel are doing that. It's something to think about.

13 So --

14 MR. COX: Okay.

15 MR. JOHNSON: -- that's basically all I had to
16 say. Thank you for your time.

17 MR. COX: Okay. Very good. Thank you.

18 MS. GARIBALDI: Thank you very much.

19 MR. JOHNSON: Oh, I had a question about the
20 comments. Do they go out directly -- Does anybody
21 know? -- the written comments?

22 MS. GARIBALDI: What does that mean?

23 MR. JOHNSON: If I submit them in the box?

24 MS. GARIBALDI: That's perfect. As I mentioned
25 earlier, written comments are treated as the same as

1 verbal comments --

2 MR. JOHNSON: Okay.

3 MS. GARIBALDI: -- so the FAA's process is when
4 the hearing closes today, the end of the comment period is
5 Friday, January 11, we will then take the comments and
6 consider all of them thoroughly. We will write responses
7 to those comments and they'll be found in the Final EIS
8 when it's issued --

9 MR. JOHNSON: Okay.

10 MS. GARIBALDI: -- so you'll see the comments and
11 the responses with the final document.

12 MR. JOHNSON: Thank you.

13 MS. GARIBALDI: You're welcome.

14 MR. COX: Thank you for your comments.

15 Is there anyone else that has a comment?

16 Okay. Let's go back into recess. I have 5:50 --
17 4:50. I'm sorry. 4:50.

18 (Off the record awaiting interested parties.)

19 MS. GARIBALDI: The public hearing portion is
20 complete and no one here chose to make any additional
21 comments. The time is 6:41 p.m.

22 ///

23 ///

24

25

Mr. Chuck Cox
Regional Technical Specialist Operations
USDT FAA
Northwest Mountain Region Office
1601 Lind Ave, SW
Renton, WA 98057

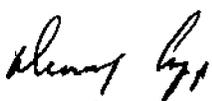
Subject: Mammoth Yosemite Airport

Mr. Cox,

I am a resident of Bishop, Ca, if the Mammoth Yosemite Airport was just about Mammoth I would not say anything, however Mammoth's location to the John Muir and Golden Trout Wildernesses and the Yosemite National Park prompts me to comment. I am an avid hiker and mountaineer and spend much of my time in the back country.

Planes flying into and out of Mammoth Yosemite Airport will impact my enjoyment of these secluded, peaceful, pristine, backcountry areas. Planes flying over will cause noise, will be visible and in some instances will leave con trails, all of which will alter my experience in a negative way. I have read the EIS and see that the approach and takeoff patterns were accounted for the concern that I have is once the planes are in the air airtraffic control in another part of the state takes over and can direct these planes over the backcountry area around Mammoth were I recreate. By not allowing commercial air service a few more planes are kept out of this remarkably beautiful area. I talked with a ranger who was on duty in the Yosemite backcountry on 9/11/01 when all flights were grounded, she said it was clearly noticeable how quiet it was, and that its worth noting that she had not realized how noisy it was until there was the absence of noise. We can not stop the planes already in the air or keep them away from this airspace, but we do have an opportunity not to allow additional flights in the near vicinity.

Thank You for your consideration of these issues.


Denny Capp
2680 Highland Dr
Bishop, Ca 93514

Mark R. Clausen
P.O. Box 1536
Mammoth Lakes, CA 93546
(760) 914-0360

January 2, 2008

Mr. Chuck Cox,
Regional Environmental Technician Specialist
Northwest Mountain Region
Flight Standards Division
Federal Aviation Administration
1601 Lind Avenue, SW
Renton, WA 98055
Fax: 425.227.2243

Dear Mr. Cox:

This letter is to voice my support for the reinstatement of air service to the Mammoth Yosemite Airport EA of which you are currently soliciting comments.

I feel that the reinstatement of air service to Mammoth Yosemite Airport is a critical piece in Mammoth's ability to work toward becoming a year-round destination resort. Air service is an important link in the regions overall transit system and in Mammoth's desire to become an increasing pedestrian oriented village.

In addition, it is my understanding that the new project EA has been improved from previous alternatives and has no significant negative environmental impacts. It thoroughly analyzes all flight paths over sensitive noise receptors, listed and non-listed wildlife disturbances, meets water and air quality standards, and that all visual impacts will be consistent with existing facilities and H295's Scenic Highway designation.

Thank you for your time and consideration and I hope that you too will support this important project.

Sincerely,



Mark R. Clausen

January 4, 2008

Mr. Chuck Cox
Regional Environmental Technical Specialist
Northwest Mountain Region
Flight Standards Division
1601 Lind Avenue, SW
Renton, WA 98055

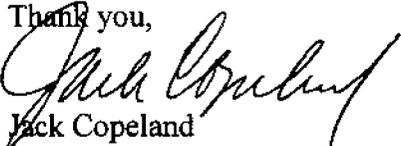
Re. Draft EIS Horizon Air service to Mammoth Yosemite Airport

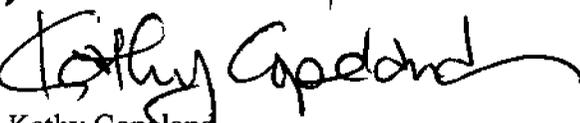
Dear Mr. Cox:

I am a 35 year resident of Mammoth Lakes, California. I work at the ski area as the Human Resources Director. My wife is the Executive Director of Disabled Sports Eastern Sierra. We both strongly support the proposed air service to and from Mammoth. We urge you to accept this EIS and to move ahead with necessary approvals to begin air service in the winter of 2008-2009. There are lots of reasons for our support most of them are economic but not all. Selfishly, we would like to be connected to the world and not have to drive 6 hours to fly to the east coast. We understand the environmental concerns. We certainly don't want to spoil our environment but if we can keep the number of flights per day to a reasonable amount, we should be fine.

Please consider this a letter in favor of the EIS and reestablishing regular air service to Mammoth lakes.

Thank you,


Jack Copeland


Kathy Copeland

January 7, 2008

Chuck Cox, Regional Techn. Special Operations
U.S. Dept. of Transportation, Fed Aviation Admin
Northwest Mt Region Office
1601 Lind Ave, SW
Renton, WA 98057

Subject: Mammoth Yosemite Airport

Dear Mr. Cox,

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the proposed Mammoth Yosemite Airport. My comment is simple - "NO MORE FLIGHTS".

I oppose the commercial flights. Sustainability is defined by Webster's Dictionary as an activity that supports a given condition, such as economic growth, without destroying or depleting natural resources or polluting the environment. Allowing the extra flights will increase non-point pollution by intensifying the amount of oil, road salt, sediment and pesticides that will enter nearby lakes, creeks. If not directly, harm will occur from the additional flights and the extra visitors to the area.

I think, the airport will increase solid waste in the landfills, will limit important groundwater sources and will contribute to and cause expanding urban landscape. Again this area will see an increase in air pollution, noise pollution, light pollution and traffic. Additional flights will also create less open areas for species to feed and reproduce.

Additional hotel and other construction will be necessary to accommodate the increase of visitors and new employees. The FEA does not address the cumulative impact of these foreseeable future projects. The increase of population, regional air and water quality, sewage treatment facilities and traffic is not adequately addressed. An honest look at the environmental impact of rapid growth is not questioned.

More tourists, more money doesn't justify the increase of noise pollution, light pollution, additional people and traffic that will be brought to this unique natural wonder, the Sierra Nevada Mountain Range.

In a time of increasing human population and limited natural resources, we need to save this landscape that is intensely beautiful. Instead of investing in the development we need to invest in a sustainable environment for all species to enjoy. Please protect the quantity and quality of open space. An airplane flying over allocated open space is not preserving or protecting our open space.

Sincerely,



Lorilee Schumann
2680 Highland Drive

Bishop, CA 93514