

## **INTRODUCTION**

### **STATUTORY REQUIREMENTS**

Government Code § 65300 requires each county to "adopt a comprehensive long-term general plan for the physical development of the county." The general plan must contain a statement of development policies, including diagrams or maps and text, setting forth objectives, principles, standards, and plan proposals. The plan must include the following elements: land use, conservation, open space, circulation, housing, noise, and safety. Section 65301 (a) allows local agencies to adopt a general plan in any format "deemed appropriate or suitable... including the combining of elements"; accordingly, the Conservation and Open Space elements have been combined in this plan. This plan also includes the Hazardous Waste Management Element required by state law.

### **Purpose of the Plan**

The 1992 Mono County General Plan is a revision of previously adopted general plan elements; it supersedes and replaces those elements. In adopting this update of the General Plan, the Board of Supervisors repealed the following elements of the prior plan: Seismic Safety, Geothermal, Public Facilities, Recreation and Scenic Highways. The policies contained in those elements were incorporated as necessary into appropriate elements of this plan.

The purpose of the Mono County General Plan is to establish policies which will guide decisions on future growth, development, and conservation of natural resources on private lands in the unincorporated area of the county through the year 2010 in the manner required by law. An effort has been made through the public review process to make the policies in this plan consistent with the desires of county residents.

### **General Plan Vision**

The following summarizes the vision of the Mono County General Plan:

The environmental and economic integrity of Mono County shall be maintained and enhanced through orderly growth, minimizing land use conflicts, supporting local tourist and agricultural based economies, and protecting the scenic, recreational, cultural, and natural resources of the area. The small-town atmosphere, rural-residential character and associated quality of life will be sustained consistent with community plans. Mono County will collaborate with applicable federal, state and local entities in pursuing this vision through citizen-based planning and efficient, coordinated permit processing.

### **Planning Area**

Mono County is located on the eastern slope of the Sierra Nevada, south of Lake Tahoe. The county is a long, narrow strip of land – 108 miles at its greatest length and 38 miles in average width – bounded to the west by the Sierra crest and to the east by the Nevada state line. Although there are several mountain ranges in and adjacent to the county, the Sierra Nevada range dominates the landscape.

Human use and development of the area has been influenced by its isolation and the difficulty of access. Access remains limited to one main transportation route, U.S. 395,

which runs through the county along the foot of the Sierra for approximately 120 miles. By car, Los Angeles is six to seven hours south on U.S. 395, Reno, Nevada, is three hours north on U.S. 395, and the San Francisco Bay Area is six to seven hours west on various routes connecting to U.S. 395. Two highways, S.R. 120 and U.S. 6, cross the state line into Nevada. Access both to the east and the west may be closed in winter due to snow – U.S. 395 then becomes the only access to and through the county.

Mono County is rural and sparsely settled, with a population in 1990 of 9,956 people. Approximately one half of the county's population (4,800 people) lives in the town of Mammoth Lakes, the only incorporated community in the county. The remainder of the population lives in a number of small communities scattered throughout the county. Approximately 94 percent of the land in the county is publicly owned; much of it is managed by the U.S. Forest Service and the Bureau of Land Management. The Los Angeles Department of Water and Power also owns large parcels of land in the southern portion of the county.

**Plan Format**

The general plan consists of seven elements and this Introduction:

Section I	Introduction
Section II	Land Use Element
Section III	Circulation Element
Section IV	Housing Element
Section V	Conservation/Open Space Element
Section VI	Safety Element
Section VII	Noise Element
Section VIII	Hazardous Waste Management Element
Section IX	Economic Development Element

Background and environmental information for these elements, including required maps, is contained in the county's **Master Environmental Assessment (MEA)**, which is a separate document. The **MEA** fulfills General Plan Guideline requirements for information on existing conditions; it also fulfills CEQA requirements for the environmental setting section of an EIR. CEQA Guidelines (§ 15169) state that public agencies may prepare MEAs for all, or a portion of, the territory subject to their control in order to provide a comprehensive database that can be referenced in future EIRs or Negative Declarations. CEQA guidelines do not contain requirements for the format, content or procedures used in preparing MEAs; MEAs are suggested solely as an approach to identify and organize environmental and other applicable background information.

Land Use Element: The Land Use Element correlates all land use issues into a set of coherent development policies. The element describes the type and intensity of development that can occur on private lands in the unincorporated area of the County. The element also contains specific policies for the community planning areas in the county; i.e., Antelope Valley, Swauger Creek/Devil's Gate, Bridgeport Valley, Mono Basin, June Lake, Mammoth Vicinity, Upper Owens, Long Valley, Wheeler Crest, Tri-Valley, Benton Hot Springs Valley and Oasis. This element also includes the land use policies from the Airport Land Use Plans for the Bridgeport, Lee Vining, and Mammoth Yosemite airports, as well as a summary of the land use policies from the Conway Ranch Specific Plan.

Circulation Element: Since 1980, the County has adopted the Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) prepared by the Local Transportation Commission as its Circulation Element. The 2008 update of the RTP has been expanded to address local circulation and land use issues in addition to circulation and transportation on the state and federal highways in the county. The updated RTP serves as the RTP and as the Circulation Element for the County and for the Town of Mammoth Lakes.

Housing Element: The Housing Element addresses the maintenance, preservation, improvement, and development of housing in the unincorporated areas of the county. The element includes policies to ensure that there are adequate sites and facilities available to support future housing needs and to ensure that there are a sufficient number of affordable housing units to meet the needs of the county's residents.

Conservation/Open Space Element: This element reserves open space for the preservation of natural resources, the managed production of resources, outdoor recreation, and public health and safety, and includes policies for the managed production and conservation of the following resource areas: biological resources; water resources and water quality; agriculture, grazing, timber; mineral resources; energy resources; scenic resources; outdoor recreation; cultural resources; and public health and safety.

Safety Element: The Safety Element addresses development in areas subject to a variety of natural hazards including seismic and other geologic hazards, flooding, wildland and structural fires, and avalanche and volcano hazards.

Noise Element: The Noise Element evaluates existing and projected future noise conditions and contains policies to assure noise compatibility in future land use decisions.

Hazardous Waste Management Element: This element evaluates existing and projected future hazardous waste production in the county and contains policies for the safe transfer, storage, and disposal of hazardous waste.

Economic Development Element: The Economic Development Element consists of countywide policies and community-specific strategies and action plans. The countywide policies are undergoing public review. The attached community-specific action plans and strategies for Bridgeport and Antelope Valley were adopted December 2002.

### **Impact Analyses**

Consistent with the requirements of state law, this plan requires future development projects which may have significant environmental effects to analyze potential impacts prior to project approval. The impact analysis must be carried out in accordance with appropriate county regulations.

### **Public Participation**

The county's Regional Planning Advisory Committees (RPACs) and community planning groups reviewed drafts of the General Plan; their comments were incorporated into a revised draft. The committees also reviewed proposed BLM land exchange proposals and discussed future land use needs in each community area. Further public participation in the planning process was obtained from the results of a broad survey published in a local newspaper. The purpose of the survey was to elicit opinions about the future of the

## **MONO COUNTY GENERAL PLAN**

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county and planning-related issues. The responses from this survey were considered during the preparation of the General Plan.

Each of the regional and community planning groups also worked closely with the Planning Division to develop land use and circulation goals and policies for their area or to update existing goals and policies.

The Mineral Resource Technical Advisory Committee worked with the Planning Division to draft the Mineral Resource Policy section of the Conservation/Open Space Element.

### **PUBLIC PARTICIPATION – LIST OF PARTICIPANTS**

#### ***ANTELOPE VALLEY REGIONAL PLANNING ADVISORY COMMITTEE***

Jerry Burt, Chairman  
John Bishop  
Lou de Bottari  
Carlie Chichester  
Bobby Sue Densmore  
Wayne Frye  
Arden Gerbig  
Richard Herrera  
Ray Johnson  
Al Lapp  
Bob Manning  
Dorothy Palmer

Bill Reid, County Supervisor, District 4

#### ***SWAUGER CREEK/DEVIL'S GATE PLANNING ADVISORY COMMITTEE***

Don and Suzanne Berinati  
Bob and Bonnie Curry  
Tim and Ann Hanley  
Robert and Frances Pickett  
Cindy and Earl Stone  
Daniel Stone  
Peter and Elaine Treadwell  
Myrna and Ramon Valdez

#### ***BRIDGEPORT REGIONAL PLANNING ADVISORY COMMITTEE***

Nancy Wells, Chairman  
John Elliott  
Bill Hartline  
Russ McJunkin  
Norm Rockel  
Rick Rockel  
Bill VanBruggen

Bill Reid, County Supervisor, District 4

#### ***MONO BASIN REGIONAL PLANNING ADVISORY COMMITTEE***

Don Banta  
Arnold Beckman  
Bill Bramlette  
Mike Ferguson

John Frederickson  
Floyd Griffin  
Kathy Hansen  
Patricia Holland-Suppa  
Ilene Mandelbaum  
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Don Rake, County Supervisor, District 3

***UPPER OWENS LANDOWNERS***

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Inaja Land Co.  
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***LONG VALLEY REGIONAL PLANNING ADVISORY COMMITTEE***

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John Rutkowski  
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Tom Strathman  
Bob Wallace  
Dan Whitmore  
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Bill Jenkins  
Bill Kelsey  
Louise Kelsey  
Linda Newbrow  
Phyllis Savage  
Bernadine Whitmore  
John Wilson  
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***TRI-VALLEY REGIONAL PLANNING ADVISORY COMMITTEE***

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Cody Beaver  
Jack Gustafson  
Dan Jelly  
Gerald Johnson  
Gene Patterson  
Mary Lou Martin  
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## **MONO COUNTY GENERAL PLAN**

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Joy Fatooh  
Tom Hardy  
Wayne Hutton  
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### ***BENTON HOT SPRINGS LANDOWNERS***

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### ***MINERAL RESOURCES TECHNICAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE***

Ron Phillips, Chairman (Former Member/Planning Commissioner)  
Jack Clark, Welsh Engineering (alternate)  
Alan Cox, Homestake Mining Company  
Robert Curry, Professor Environmental Geology, UC Santa Cruz  
Doug Dodge, Bureau of Land Management  
Wayne Frye, USFS, Toiyabe National Forest  
Floyd Griffin, U.S. Pumice Mine  
Thom Heller, USFS/Inyo National Forest  
Sergio Jaramillo, Standard Industrial Minerals (alternate)  
Bob Manning, Mono County Historical Society  
Jack Shipley, Bodie State Park  
Ron Thomas, Department of Fish and Game  
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Eric Toll, Consultant

### ***TOWN OF MAMMOTH LAKES (MAMMOTH VICINITY PLAN)***

Randy Mellinger, Planning Director  
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### **MONO COUNTY STAFF**

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