

Alpine Meadows Ski Resort Master Development Plan Update

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The changes to the organization of the lift system improve the skier circulation within the existing area by increasing capacity to Scott Peak with the Scott Wheels chair, reducing lift line times on the existing Scott Chair. The Scott Wheels chair also provides better access to the skiing on Scott Peak for intermediates and advanced skiers.

The replacement of the Subway Chair improves the beginner experience by increasing the length of the ski lift and run, providing easier loading and unloading due to slower load and unload speed of detachable lifts. The new Subway Chair improves access to the other lifts in the system for guests parked in the Subway lots. Removing the Meadow Chair reduces skier congestion and increases the amount of beginner terrain that will be served by the shortened Hot Wheels Chair and extended Subway Chairs. Upon completion the lift system will be comprised of the following equipment.

- 1 high speed 6 passenger chair (D6)
- 6 high speed 4 passenger chairs (D4)
- 3 fixed grip triple chairs (F3)
- 1 fixed grip double chair (F2)
- 1 Poma surface lift
- 1 surface conveyor lift


6.5.2 Skier Density

The original master plan (1973) calculated the Skier At One Time capacity at build out to be approximately 9,700 skiers. The original calculation used much higher theoretical skier per acre densities than currently exist at Alpine Meadows and could not take into account the skier density rates required by current standards. The 1982 plan assumed lift lines of up to 20 minutes in capacity planning. Current, lower skier densities are the result of different space requirements of snowboarders, the change in turning style for skiers with newer technology skis, and the effects of terrain parks and features.

The lift system improvements increase in capacity will reduce skier density from current levels in most areas by distributing the skiers more efficiently over the mountain. The removal of Meadow and shortening Hot Wheels reduces the perception of crowding by eliminating g lift towers and unload areas.

6.5.3 Snowmaking Expansion

The snowmaking system would be remodeled and expanded to increase coverage on the runs served by the Hot Wheels chair and the Meadows chair (approximately 20 acres), improving the early season opening potential for these areas. This will also improve the ability to groom these areas for beginners and teaching operations. Snowmaking would be expanded to the "East Creek" area to allow for better snow conditions in this heavy traffic area. The "East Creek" snowmaking area would be approximately 15 acres. Ray's

Rut provides access to the Sherwood Bowl lift. Snowmaking on Ray's Rut will be studied and considered for installation. Additional water storage may be required to maximize the snowmaking capabilities in these areas. A potential pond site will be considered in the Lower-Lower 40 area. Automation of the snowmaking system will be completed over time. Automation will have economic benefits and produce water savings. 

6.6 BASE AREA IMPROVEMENTS

6.6.1 Base Lodge Food Service Improvements and Remodeling

This project consists of reorganizing and remodeling the main food service operation within the existing base lodge. The main floor of the Base Lodge was remodeled in 2005. This remodeling updated the food service facilities and provided additional seating area, with improved table seating. The lodge will continued to be remodeled over the next 5 years designed to improve service levels, increase visibility of rental, retail and ski school products and services and generally modernize the appearance and function of the existing building.

The main entry to the building is unattractive and uninviting, lacking distinct characteristics identifying the arrival at the resort. Ticket lines are unprotected from the weather and interfere with circulation into the building. To correct these deficiencies, a covered entrance, transit waiting area and meeting place would be constructed.

The Base Lodge was constructed in phases, originally as two separate buildings, eventually joined together with a large breezeway between the lower floors of the structure. The area is dark, cold and windy during winter weather conditions. Services and retail activities are hidden in the breezeway walls. This portion of the re-development of the building would consist on enclosing the breezeway with automatic operating doors at either end, removing the steps and creating a ramp. The building facades facing the new ramp, inside the breezeway, would be remodeled to replicate a walking/ski street. Additional guest services would be presented in this area as well as additional food service.

The existing stair access to the deck level at the south end of the Base Area building is directly in the path of skiers passing through the breezeway. The stairs would be relocated to the sides of the access way. Additional deck space would result for the stair relocation as well as creating clearer, more attractive path to the ski terrain. Remodeling will also include expansion of the deck and deck service areas. It will also include reprogramming and remodeling the other lodge interior spaces such as the bar area, ticket and retail areas and office spaces

**USFS Comments
to the
Proposed Alpine Meadows Master Development Plan
April 2007**

This document includes both general comments and a chart showing what level of NEPA the Forest Service expects will be necessary for approval of each of the identified projects. Should the projects become controversial or should new issues surface the level of NEPA is likely to increase. Projects with "connected actions" will need to be considered in the same NEPA document. Additionally, if any State agency is required to make a decision, issue permits or to make findings, CEQA is likely to be required, as well. We prefer that when both are required, one document will be prepared that meets the needs of both Federal and State decision making.

Entry Signing

The resort has identified and we agree that the feeling of entry/arrival at the resort can be improved. We would welcome a design that both telegraphs the feeling of entering the ski resort as well as the partnership with the Forest Service. We understand that the Resort would like to erect that sign on Alpine Meadows Road, near the intersection with Highway 89.

It has been proposed that the logical place to put a "modern" sign is across from Deer Park and that the resort would like to modernize the highway signs, and signs along Alpine Meadows Road. The sign near Deer Park will require NEPA analysis and modification of the special use permit to include that use.

Stronger visual recognition of the partnership with the Forest Service is an important element of all signing for all resorts on National Forest. This is an important topic for our Regional Forester and we are pleased that you are building that into your design.

Base Area Improvements

Your proposal to improve the impression that the main building creates makes good sense to the Forest Service, as does the idea of creating a sense of welcome and arrival. Design changes to the outside of the building will need to be presented to us in a separate document so that we can review them. This will require a review by our landscape architects to ensure compatibility with the Forest Service "Built Environment Image Guidelines."

You note that "Remodeling will also include expansion of the deck and deck service areas." The Forest Service will need more design and engineering

Parking north of Chalet Rd. – This proposal will require an air quality and traffic mitigation analysis of the proposed parking to identify any new impacts that may not have previously identified.


It seems appropriate for the Resort to show acknowledgement that through Lahontan Discharge Orders, Alpine was able to capitalize on parking lot improvements that have led to additional spaces.

If you are able to graphically display the number of cars turned away on “sell out” days, that should strengthen the document. Bus transportation is an important component of your current operation as well as of the overall traffic management for the North Tahoe region. You should display how this works and will work in the future.

A discussion of the movement of your clients from the lower parking lots to the lodge area by walkways over the islands or other means has surfaced as a topic that might improve the visitor experience. If this is a consideration, it should be addressed in your plan.

Snowmaking Improvements

Snowmaking is necessary to provide a satisfactory early season experience most years. Snowmaking is also a large consumer of energy. A more detailed discussion needs to be included that demonstrates that Alpine is reducing energy consumption. The market place offers more efficient and automated snowmaking implements (fan guns). At this time we can consider normal maintenance, emergency repairs and upgrades. Any proposed upgrades will be required to show energy conservation.



The areas of proposed expansion of the snowmaking system, along with the areas already served make sense. Taking advantage of newer technology which may offer greater coverage with higher efficiencies is also important and logical.

Additional pond for water storage for the snowmaking system, is expected to be complicated and potentially controversial. Therefore it is likely to result in an EIS being required. We would expect the need to address impacts on wetlands and riparian areas and the species dependent on them, water rights concerns, and other possible cumulative effects.

Sherwood Access

Alpine Meadows has, over time, offered several different proposals to provide better access to and use of Sherwood. The last proposal we considered was in 1998 to add snowmaking and “fix” the Ray’s Rut trail. This project included working with TRPA and Lahontan to find a satisfactory balance of what was