

Alta Master Development Plan Revision

Environmental Assessment

**Salt Lake Ranger District
Wasatch-Cache National Forest
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Alta 3

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Vegetation within the disturbance polygons shown in Figures 2 – 4 would be impacted by a combination of surface grading, excavation, and construction. A relatively small portion of this impact would constitute a long-term loss of vegetation due to the construction of buildings, totaling approximately 0.5 acres. The rest of the disturbed areas not occupied by structures would be revegetated after final site grading. As noted previously under Plant Communities, Seeded Grass, Alta has developed a revegetation program that emphasizes the use of native species, some of which they collect at the ski area. Over a period of several years, a plant community similar to the existing plant community would develop on the disturbed sites reseeded with those species. In the case of the parking lot regrading, the area would be repaved and would maintain the same mapping unit (i.e., Developed).

In addition to the construction disturbance that would occur at the base, mid-mountain, and Germania Pass sites, construction of the lift tower bases for the new bottom-to-top chairlift would result in additional small disturbance areas in the new lift corridor. Each lift tower would disturb approximately 80 square feet, and 25 towers would be required, totaling approximately 0.05 acres of disturbance. From the mid-station to the top terminal, these impacts would occur in the existing Germania lift corridor, and it may be possible to reuse the existing lift towers. The lower segment of the lift would primarily be located in open habitat. Minimal tree removal would be required.

TEPS

Potential habitat for Garrett's bladderpod, *rockcress draba*, alpine pepperplant, Utah bladderpod, and *Utah ivesia* occurs within the disturbance polygon for Germania Pass. In order to address the possible impact to these species, a mitigation measure requiring preconstruction surveys has been included. This measure would require that the site be surveyed during the appropriate season prior to disturbance to determine if these plants are present. If these plants were found to be growing on the site, consultation with the WCNF botanist would be required to determine the appropriate course of action, including possible modification of the disturbance footprint to avoid impacting the community. The potential habitat for these species occurs on the east side of the disturbance footprint, so modifying the site plan may be possible if necessary. Based on the implementation of the above referenced mitigation measure, there would be no impact to the viability of the populations of these species.

As stated in previously (p. 3-52), analysis of TEPS impacts was based on the defined disturbance polygons. This assumed that the new lift in the Germania alignment would use the existing tower base, thereby avoiding any potential impacts to TEPS plants that might occur in the corridor. Since tower placement could change during final design, a mitigation measure would require that any new tower locations on the upper portion of the lift alignment be surveyed for species of concern. Surveys are not required for new towers on the lower portion of the new lift because they occur in seeded grass communities.

The mid-mountain and base area disturbance polygons do not include potentially suitable habitat for the TEPS species addressed in this analysis, so no impacts are anticipated.

Noxious Weeds

Newly disturbed areas would be at risk for noxious weed establishment. However, Alta would continue to implement the revegetation and noxious weed management practices described previously in the Affected