

2. PROJECT SUMMARY: Mammoth Lakes Trails and Public Access Concept and Master Planning (MLTPA CAMP)

The Town of Mammoth Lakes has been described as “a town within a park,” as its Urban Growth Boundary defines the town within Inyo National Forest, effectively containing a 4.5-square-mile urban environment within hundreds of square miles of public lands. Residents and tourists alike come to Mammoth for its abundant and spectacular natural beauty, peaceful seclusion, and, most notably, the numerous outdoor recreation activities this landscape affords, from fishing, mountain biking, and camping, to skiing, snowmobiling, and snowshoeing. Mammoth serves as a premier portal to the Eastern Sierra, hosting approximately 2.8 million visitors annually, and is a top recreation destination for Southern California.

MLTPA CAMP’s overarching goal is to connect people to nature easily, safely, and enjoyably, and to help preserve the beauty and health of Inyo National Forest and its resources by keeping the Urban Growth Boundary porous, yet well planned. This will be accomplished by a multi-agency partnership in which the Town of Mammoth Lakes, Mammoth Mountain Ski Area, the USFS, and MLTPA, among others, cooperatively engage two teams of planning consultants (natural surface and urban specialists) to work with the jurisdictional entities and the public to evaluate current trails and public access systems, then make recommendations to improve their internal flow as well as their connectivity to one another. The result of this effort will be an actionable trails and public access master plan for the Town of Mammoth Lakes and the land within its Urban Growth Boundary that will seek to guarantee access to public lands in anticipation of the town’s impending build-out. Though master plans for bikeways and Class 1 pathways within the urban limit exist, these documents date from the early 1990s and have not been revised to match Mammoth’s explosive growth in the last decade; furthermore, these plans reflect little if any attention paid to how people actually move from the urban setting of the town to the natural settings of the forest. When completed, CAMP’s proposed master plan will seek to enhance the visitor experience, promote “feet first” mobility as identified in the Town’s recently revised and adopted General Plan (August 2007), promote the stewardship and sustainability of trails and recreation areas on public lands, and reduce or eliminate adverse impacts on water, land, and other natural resources.

MLTPA is responsible for initiating the CAMP process and for bringing local agencies, private-sector interests, and jurisdictions into the partnerships necessary to turn the idea of CAMP into a reality. Initially budgeted at \$475,133 (see the MLTPA Planning Proposal, attached), the CAMP project was focused through MLTPA’s work with Jurisdictional, Funding, and Planning Partners. Determining that the Town of Mammoth Lakes should hold and administer the consultant contracts, and coming to consensus with Jurisdictional Partners as to the desired scope of work, the CAMP budget was revised to \$356,898. Through its Funding Partners MLTPA has been able to secure cash commitments of \$225,000, leaving a project balance of \$131,898. After deducting budgeted contingencies per SNC guidelines, MLTPA is submitting this application for \$120,099, which represents the balance of the revised CAMP budget and the funds necessary to deliver to the Town of Mammoth Lakes a trails and public access master plan for consideration and adoption, and the ultimate fulfillment and completion of the MLTPA CAMP project.