

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

DIVISION OF AERONAUTICS – M.S. #40
1120 N STREET
P. O. BOX 942874
SACRAMENTO, CA 94274-0001
PHONE (916) 654-4959
FAX (916) 653-9531
TTY 711
www.dot.ca.gov

4/6/2020 late

Governor's Office of Planning & Research

APR 10 2020**STATE CLEARINGHOUSE**

Making Conservation
a California Way of Life.

March 30, 2020

Mr. Scott DeLeon
County of Lake
255 N. Forbes Street
Lakeport, CA 95453

Re: Draft Environmental Impact Report for the Guenoc Valley Development;
SCH#2019049134

Dear Mr. DeLeon:

The California Department of Transportation, Division of Aeronautics (Division), reviewed the above-referenced document with respect to airport-related noise and safety impacts and regional aviation land use planning issues pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). The Division has technical expertise in the areas of airport operations safety and airport land use compatibility. We are a funding agency for airport projects and we have permit authority for public-use and special-use airports and heliports. The following comments are offered for your consideration.

The proposed project consists of a master planned, mixed-use resort and residential community within the 16,000 acre Guenoc Valley Ranch property in southeast Lake County. The project also proposes some smaller scale new development on two nearby sites. The project also includes three separate aviation facilities including two heliports and a seaplane base.

Each of the heliports, if constructed, might require a State Heliport Permit issued by the Division in accordance with Public Utilities Code (PUC) Section 21663. Heliports that are required by building code as an Emergency Use Facility (i.e. to be used only for emergency medical or evacuation purposes) however, are exempt from the State's heliport permit requirements. The California Code of Regulations (Airports and Heliports), Title 21, Section 3527 defines an Emergency Use Facility to be, "An area for accommodating helicopters in support of emergency public safety operations, but is not used as a heliport for any other purpose."

Among the Division's checklist of items required to be submitted prior to issuing a heliport permit, is an approved heliport plan of construction from the local jurisdiction such as the City Council or County Board of Supervisors as appropriate, in accordance with PUC section 21661.5.

The applicant should also be advised to contact the Division's Aviation Safety Officer for Lake County, Christopher Brooks, at (916) 654-5450, for assistance with the State permit requirements. Information regarding the heliport permit process is available on-line at <https://dot.ca.gov/programs/aeronautics>

Prior to issuing a State heliport permit, the Division, as a responsible agency, must be assured that the proposal is in full compliance with CEQA. The issues of primary concern to us include heliport-related noise and safety impacts on the surrounding community. In order to determine the potential environmental impacts regarding aircraft noise and safety, the environmental documentation for the proposed heliports should at least include:

- the anticipated number of operations
- breakdown of anticipated daytime and/or nighttime use
- a noise study with heliport noise contours (55, 60, and 65dB CNEL)
- diagrams showing the proposed landing site and the approach/departure flight paths

The diagrams should also depict the proximity of the proposed flight paths to any existing or proposed noise sensitive or people intensive land uses. Since the draft environmental impact report for this project does not contain this basic heliport environmental analysis and documentation, it is recommended that a separate environmental document be prepared for the heliports.

Consideration given to the issue of compatible land uses in the vicinity of the proposed heliports and seaplane base should help to relieve future conflicts between these aviation facilities and their neighbors. To ensure that the community will not be adversely impacted by aircraft operations, flight paths should avoid noise-sensitive and people intensive uses. The California Airport Land Use Planning Handbook is a resource that can be used in the preparation of environmental and permitting documents for airports and heliports. The Handbook is available on-line at:

<http://dot.ca.gov/hq/planning/aeronaut/documents/alucp/AirportLandUsePlanningHandbook.pdf>

These comments reflect the areas of concern to the Division with respect to aviation-related noise, safety, and regional land use planning issues. Thank you for the opportunity to review and comment on this proposal. If you have any questions, please contact me at (916) 654-6223, or by email at philip.crimmins@dot.ca.gov.

Sincerely,

Original Signed by

PHILIP CRIMMINS
Aviation Environmental Specialist

c: State Clearinghouse, Lake County ALUC