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Comments: I appreciate this opportunity to submit scoping comments.

My parents previously ran a motel in Bishop and so I am very familiar with this specific area and the general region. Over the past five decades, I have seen enormous changes in this area in terms of increased human use and development. This may be "progress" to some, but it is very sad to me.

I think that this once largely pristine area has been transformed by the human development version of "death by a thousand cuts." It is a local example of why the worldwide climate and extinction crises are rapidly getting worse. Money is the driver; not sustainability or biosphere health.

In terms of scoping, the NEPA and CEQ analysis should objectively evaluate a reasonable range of alternatives from maintaining the status quo, removing some existing development, building minimal new development, to the proposed action. In my view, the proposed action is excessive and would cause many significant direct, indirect, and cumulative adverse impacts. These impacts would affect many natural and cultural resources, as well as some more passive public recreational uses.

I am especially concerned about potential impacts on bighorn sheep, deer, and other wildlife species. The proposed action is likely to destroy, degrade, and fragment wildlife habitats, and may block or impede necessary wildlife movements. Human development brings more roads and road kills, and more noise and nighttime light that disturbs wildlife. The NEPA should make better use of landscape ecology and conservation biology methods and data. This is necessary to evaluate potential impacts at various relevant spatial and temporal scales.

During this 1,200 year drought, water is also increasing scarce and this has stressed ecological systems and native species. New development generally means more human demands on increasingly limited water supplies. Would the proposed action require more diversion of surface waters and/or groundwater pumping? Has the Forest Service properly asserted federal reserved water rights to maintain stream flows in the public interest?

I believe that all planning and NEPA analysis must now factor in how proposed actions may help solve or worsen the climate and extinction crises. How would any new development require increased use of harmful fossil fuels? What role could clean, renewable energy sources like solar, wind, and geothermal play? Would public transportation be encouraged to minimize driving? Would there be ample charging stations for electric vehicles? Would mitigation funds be provided so that key wildlife habitats on private lands could be acquired and protected to mitigate for habitat losses? Could mitigation include the buyout of active grazing permits and the retirement of those grazing allotments to benefit wildlife and water quality?

I hope that my scoping input is helpful. I also hope that the attachments may be of interest.

Thank you very much for your consideration.