



Figure 7. Mono Lake Evening
Photo: Eric Haley 2012



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Overview

This is an independent, academic project completed for a capstone experience to satisfy the Master of Landscape Architecture degree requirements at California State Polytechnic University, Pomona. This document is intended to serve as a toolkit to help guide land use planning for the future of the Eastern Sierra region. The resources provided herein are intended to not only assist with planning decisions in the region, but also stimulate discussions that will increase interagency cooperation and account for all of the systems acting within the particular planning area. As an objective academic project, the recommendations offer land use management strategies and suggestions for policies and guidelines that would help improve overall function in the area through implementation of specific interventions that facilitate the proposed land management strategies.

For ease of navigation, this document is organized to take the reader or user from background and inventory information, to

program development and analysis of the inventory, to planning strategies suggested for future action in the Eastern Sierra. It is not entirely necessary to follow the document from beginning to end. However, doing so would provide a comprehensive understanding of the work completed, and the justification for the suggestions made in the latter sections of the document.

Decision makers in the Eastern Sierra must have a comprehensive understanding of history, existing conditions, and processes in action that are critical to how the area functions. This type of information can be found in the Setting the Stage, Characters, and Act I sections of this document. The land management strategies and associated intervention implementation guidelines are the result of significant interaction with local residents and experts, as well as analysis of much of the inventory presented in the early sections of this document. Community outreach and analysis that lead up to the recommendations are presented in the

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Act II and Act III sections of this document.

Geospatial Information Systems (GIS) served as the critical tool in compiling inventory data and subsequent analysis of that information. A complex model of inventory data, analysis processes, and outputs is described in the Landscape Units, Program Feasibility Categories, and Program Conflict subsections within Act III. This model and all the input datasets can be downloaded from (www.aqueductfutures.com) so that updated datasets can be entered into the model as they are published.

Most critical to informing future planning activities are the Guidelines and The Future sections. The Guidelines section outlines strategies for resolving land management conflict as well as guidelines and policies that could assist with future planning activities in the Eastern Sierra. Specific interventions for implementing change in the region are provided as “Sample Implementations” in this section. Acknowledging again the limited authority of the project, this report provides suggestions for future studies, interagency cooperation, or other actions that were addressed during the project research, but were determined to be beyond the scope of the project or the project team’s authority. These recommendations for future action can be found in the The Future section. Planners interested in using this document may choose to skip first to the Guidelines and The Future sections, and refer back to the previous sections that discuss how the suggestions in the latter sections were generated. As is clarified several times within, neither this document nor the authors have authority to make policy or planning laws or regulations that have any legal authority in Mono County, Inyo County, the Eastern Sierra region or anywhere else.

Using the Toolkit

Local planners or project leads will find the online resources to be comprehensive and easy to use. Individuals or groups seeking to enact change using the tools in this document should proceed with the following steps:

1. Define your project area. If not restricted by property lines, identify the project boundary with care. Consider the project motivations, anticipated outcomes, tasks needed to complete the project, and access to the site when defining boundaries. Make sure that adjacent areas and their interactions with the project area are understood when defining the project area.
2. Download the provided Google Earth™ overlays (from aqueductfutures.com). If access to GIS software is available, the shapefile named “OutputForGoogleEarth,” located in “Model Output.gdb,” available at the same website, may be used where Google Earth is referenced below.
3. Zoom into your project area in Google Earth.
4. Explore site conditions by clicking on overlays within your project area. This is an iterative step in the process, the conditions found in this stage can contribute to the understanding of the project area and its physical conditions, thus helping to justify or adjust the project boundary if necessary. It may be helpful to also explore conditions immediately surrounding the project area simply by clicking on adjacent landscape units.
5. Identify the parcel number and managing agency. The parcel number is listed for every area, making a project area easily cross-referenced with county planning records to identify extant land use designations and zoning codes. The property owner is listed to help project managers contact the individual or managing agency to begin the planning process. If the managing agency is not listed, it can be assumed that the land is under either private ownership or owned by the local township.

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6. The project intent may be beyond the scope of the land use or zoning codes, or the owner may have other plans for the site. Steps 7-9 will help guide the project planning to a stage where it can be discussed with county planning offices or property owners as to why the new strategy ought to be carried through.
7. Identify the recommended program category. This information is available by clicking on the overlay within the project boundary in Google Earth. This information will be used to begin step 9.
8. Identify the program conflict level. The potential for planning conflict is identifiable through shades of green to red. Use this information to understand the program category overlaps that exist on the site as defined by this project.
9. Refer to the appropriate sections of the document for guidance. Guidelines are provided for each program category, as well as for each category in combination with every other category. This information can be found in the **Guidelines** section of the document. This section can also be downloaded as a standalone file (from aqueductfutures.com). The guidelines will help the project planning process to identify everything from planning priorities to spatial restrictions and arrangement of different types of land uses.
10. To develop more detailed plans, the sample implementation section presents examples of specific activities and implementations with varying degrees of compatibility with every category. For best results, identify sample implementations most compatible with the program category (or categories) that exist within the project area.