

2.0 PURPOSE AND NEED

2.1 PROPOSED FEDERAL ACTION

FAA's Proposed Federal Action consists of:

- Approval of the proposed amendment to operations specifications for Horizon Air to permit scheduled commercial air service to MMH using the Bombardier Q400 Dash 8 aircraft pursuant to 14 CFR Part 119.

FAA's Associated Administrative Actions include:

- Approval of the Town of Mammoth Lakes' Application for Certificate Amendment pursuant to 14 CFR Part 139, and
- Approval of modifications to the Town of Mammoth Lakes' MMH Airport Certification Manual pursuant to 14 CFR Part 139.

2.2 PURPOSE OF AND NEED FOR THE PROPOSED FEDERAL ACTION

The purpose of FAA's Federal action is to evaluate a request from Horizon Air for the FAA to issue an operations specifications amendment to allow scheduled commercial air service to the Mammoth Yosemite Airport.

FAA's primary mission is to ensure safety and efficiency in air commerce. One of the multiple mechanisms the FAA employs in fulfilling this mission is the issuance of operations specifications to commercial air carriers. Horizon Air has requested an amendment to its operations specifications, and therefore FAA has a need to evaluate the requested operations specifications amendment to determine that safety in air commerce allows the amendment, pursuant to 14 CFR Section 119.51.

49 U.S. Code Section 40101, Paragraph (a)(11), establishes as part of FAA policy "maintaining a complete and convenient system of continuous scheduled interstate air transportation for small communities and isolated areas with direct financial assistance from the United States Government when appropriate."

MMH currently has no scheduled commercial air service. The nearest airport with scheduled commercial air service is Reno, NV, located approximately 170 miles away. The next closest airports providing scheduled commercial service are Fresno, CA (190 miles), Sacramento, CA (230 miles), the three San Francisco, CA Bay Area airports (about 250 miles), Las Vegas, NV (310 miles), and Los Angeles, CA (320 miles). The primary surface route from Mammoth Lakes north to Reno and south to Southern California is US 395. US 395 can be heavily trafficked and winter conditions occasionally require the road to be closed.

Mammoth Lakes is a tourist destination as well as a small community. The local economy is largely driven by tourism. While the Town's amenities and lodging are heavily used on the weekends, the mid-week period is often underutilized. The Town sees scheduled commercial air service as a means to attract additional tourists that would more likely stay beyond a weekend.

This combination of factors demonstrates the need for scheduled commercial air service into MMH.