

Chapter 6 Summary of Public Involvement Process/Tribal Coordination

6.1 Public Involvement Process

The County has encouraged general public and agency review of the proposed project through the release on a Notice of Preparation (NOP), public meetings, and a project newsletter. The NOP was released on July 16, 2001 for a 30-day public comment period ending on August 14, 2001. The NOP was distributed in accordance with Section 15082 of the State CEQA Guidelines. The NOP and NOP comments are contained in Appendix D of this joint document.

A public scoping meeting was held on March 21, 2001 from 5:00–8:00 p.m. at the Best Western Placerville Inn. The purpose of the meeting was to provide an opportunity for local residents and businesses, agencies, and other interested groups and individuals to obtain information about the project and to provide input to the project team regarding the project and environmental review process. Appendix E contains a copy of the mailer, a handout that was distributed at the meeting, and a summary of comments received during and after the meeting.

A project newsletter was mailed to over 5,000 individuals in February 2002. The newsletter, contained in Appendix E, provided a description of the project; public involvement process; coordination with local, state, and federal agencies; coordination with the County's general plan update; environmental studies being completed for the project; and project alternatives.

A second public meeting was held on June 5, 2002 from 5:00–8:00 p.m. at the Herbert Green Middle School. The purpose of this meeting was to obtain input on the project alternatives, project schedule, and environmental review process. Appendix E contains a copy of the mailer, a handout that was distributed at the meeting, and a summary of comments received during and after the meeting.

A public hearing will be held on the draft EA/EIR in early 2004.

In reviewing the draft EA/EIR, individuals should focus on the sufficiency of the document in identifying and analyzing potential impacts on the environment and determining ways in which the adverse environmental effects of the project can be avoided or mitigated. Comments are most helpful when they suggest specific mitigation measures that would provide better ways to avoid or mitigate the environmental impacts of the project.

6.2 Tribal Coordination

Section 106 regulations require that the agency official shall make a reasonable and good faith effort to identify any Indian tribes that might attach religious and cultural significance to historic properties in the area of potential effects and invite them to be consulting parties. Such Indian tribes that request in writing to be a consulting party shall be one (Sec. 800.3).

It is also the responsibility of the agency official to gather information from any Indian tribe identified pursuant to Sec. 800.3(f) to assist in identifying properties, including those located off tribal lands, which may be of religious or cultural significance to them and maybe eligible for the NRHP, recognizing that an Indian tribe maybe reluctant to divulge specific information regarding the location, nature, and activities associated with such sites. The agency official should address concerns raised about confidentiality pursuant to Sec. 800.11(c). (Sec 800.3).

Native American consultation was conducted by letters (dated July 12, 2001) and telephone (on July 18, 2001 and August 6, 2001). Documentation of the consultation process is included in the project HPSR (Jones & Stokes 2002j). To date, no written or verbal comments have been received from these organizations. No Native American cultural resources were identified.