

Introduction

This chapter describes the consultation and public outreach associated with the proposed Program, including public and agency involvement and tribal consultation.

Public Involvement

DFG and USFWS developed a mailing list of relevant agencies and stakeholders in California and invited them to attend the meetings to provide comments on the scope of the EIR/EIS or to provide comments via mail before the deadline. Nearly 600 contacts were notified about the scoping public meetings in 2008 by postcard.

Public Scoping

Scoping is a process to gather input from the general public, agencies, and tribes. Along with technical input and agency considerations, the issues and concerns raised in the scoping process define the significant issues to be addressed in the environmental document. NEPA regulations (40 CFR 1500 et seq.) encourage scoping and associated scoping activities.

The primary objectives of the scoping process are to:

- provide the public and potentially affected agencies and tribes with adequate information and time to review and provide oral and written comments about a project or program,
- help ensure that issues related to a proposed project or program are identified early and properly studied,
- ensure that proposed alternatives meet the identified agency purpose and need and are balanced and thorough, and
- prepare the appropriate environmental documentation.

The formal scoping period for the public began on August 1, 2008, with the publication of the notice of intent (NOI) and ended October 1, 2008. The NOI notified the public of DFG's and USFWS's intent to start the EIR/EIS process, provided dates for the public scoping meetings, and described the purpose of and need for the document.

DFG held two public scoping meetings, one in Carson, California, and the other in Sacramento, California. The meetings were scheduled as follows:

- September 8, 2008 (4–6:30 p.m.)—Tsakopoulos Library Galleria, 828 I Street, Sacramento, California; and
- September 11, 2008 (5:30–7:30 p.m.)—Carson Community Center, 3 Civic Plaza Drive, Carson, California.

During these meetings, the public was given information about the Program, including the purpose of and need for the Program objectives, authorizing legislation, the EIR/EIS process, and the Program team. In addition, written comments were solicited and received from the public at these meetings and afterward.

The document *Hatchery and Stocking Program Environmental Impact Report/Environmental Impact Statement Scoping Report* (ICF Jones & Stokes 2009) provides an overview of the scoping efforts associated with the Program's EIR/EIS. The report describes the role of public scoping; discusses the public scoping meetings; lists issues raised by the public; describes the process of evaluating issues in development of the project alternatives; identifies cooperating agencies and their expertise; discusses tribal consultation; and contains comments received throughout the scoping process.

Public Review of the Draft EIR/EIS

The draft EIR/EIS was made available for public review on September 29, 2009. DFG and USFWS held four public meetings to solicit input on the draft. The draft EIR/EIS was available for review and comment for 45 days. This final EIR/EIS includes responses to public and agency comments on the draft EIR/EIS (Appendix M). In addition, responses to public agency comments were sent to public agencies on December 28, 2009 for receipt on the 29th, per the California State CEQA Guidelines section 15088(b).

Tribal Consultation

Tribal consultation is required by NEPA when a federally recognized tribe may be affected by a proposed action. ICF Jones & Stokes contacted the NAHC on December 5, 2008, requesting a search of its sacred-lands database and a list of contact information for local Native American representatives. The NAHC provided three response letters, on December 11, 18, and 23, 2008, respectively. The Native American contact information for all of the hatchery areas was provided within these three letters, all of which stated that no resources were identified within the hatchery areas in the sacred-lands file. The NAHC identified a total of 111 Native American individuals or organizations that might have information pertinent to or concerns about the Program.

On December 15, 19, and 30, 2008, a letter was sent to the 111 Native American representatives on the lists provided by the NAHC, along with maps depicting the hatchery areas and a 0.25-mile search radius around them. The letter included a brief Program description and a request to respond with any information or concerns about the Program. The representatives only received the maps and information for the hatchery areas within their county. The letter sent to these 111 contacts is in Appendix B of the scoping report along with a list of the contacts to whom the letter was sent and a summary of the correspondence that occurred as a result of the letters.

Indian Trust Assets

No Indian Trust Assets were identified for the Hatchery and Stocking Program, either during research for this EIR/EIS or during correspondence with Native American tribes during preparation of Chapter 6, "Cultural Resources."