

5.0 CONSULTATION AND COORDINATION

This chapter describes the consultation and coordination activities the BLM has carried out with interested agencies, organizations, and individuals while preparing the Draft and Final EIS. The NEPA and CEQ regulations require the public's involvement in the decision-making process as well as allowing for full environmental disclosure. Guidance for implementing public involvement is outlined in Title 43 CFR, Part 1610.2.

During the early phases of the scoping process, the BLM determined that an EIS would be required to comply with the NEPA prior to taking action on LCWD's ROW application. An EIS is the most detailed and complex of NEPA documents, and it includes requirements for significant public coordination and involvement throughout its preparation and review. The NEPA and CEQ require the BLM to identify any potential environmental impacts associated with the Proposed Action so the BLM can consider them when making its final decision.

5.1 PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT PROCESS

Public involvement in the EIS process includes the steps necessary to identify and address public concerns and needs. The public involvement process assists agencies in: (1) broadening the information base for decision-making, (2) informing the public about Proposed Actions, alternatives, and potential long-term impacts that could result from implementation of the Proposed Action or alternatives, and (3) ensuring that public needs are understood by the agencies. Public participation in the EIS process is required by the NEPA at four specific points: 1) issue scoping, 2) review of the Draft EIS, 3) review of the Final EIS, and 4) receipt of the Records of Decision.

Scoping: The public was provided a 30-day scoping period to disclose potential issues and concerns associated with the Proposed Action. The BLM collected stakeholder comments at public meetings as well as comments sent via fax or mail. Six public meetings were held during the public comment period. These meetings were held in mid-April, 2006 in Caliente, Alamo, Mesquite, Las Vegas, Reno, and Baker, with a total attendance among all meetings of 70 people. The scoping period ended on May 1, 2006. Information obtained by the agencies during public scoping was combined with issues identified by the BLM and forms the scope of this EIS.

Draft EIS Review: The 60-day comment period for public review of the Draft EIS began with the publication of the Notice of Availability in the Federal Register on May 23, 2008. The BLM distributed press releases announcing the dates, locations, and times of the public meetings to local and regional print and broadcast media. The Draft EIS was distributed to individuals and agencies who requested copies (see Chapter 5.3), and posted on the BLM's website at www.blm.gov/nv/st/en/prog/planning/groundwater_projects. Four public meetings were held during the public comment period (May 23 to July 22, 2008) to receive comments on the Draft EIS. Dates and locations of these meetings, and the number of attendees, are as follows:

Las Vegas, Nevada – 10 Attendees
Date: June 23, 2008
Time: 6:00 – 8:00 p.m.
Location: Embassy Suites Hotel

Caliente, Nevada - 9 Attendees

Date: June 24, 2008
Time: 6:00 – 8:00 p.m.
Location: Caliente City Hall

Mesquite, Nevada – 12 Attendees

Date: June 25, 2008
Time: 6:00 – 8:00 p.m.
Location: Mesquite City Hall

Carson City, Nevada – 5 Attendees

Date: June 26, 2008
Time: 4:00 – 6:00 p.m.
Location: Plaza Hotel

In addition, the following meeting was held for residents and representatives of the Moapa Indian Reservation:

Moapa Valley – 4 Attendees

Date: June 24, 2008
Time: 12:00 – 2:00 p.m.
Location: Moapa Community Center

During the 60-day public comment period, the BLM received 19 comment documents (e.g. letters, emails, faxes) from individuals, private companies, and federal and state agencies commenting on the Draft EIS. A list of comment documents received, the content of each letter, and BLM's responses to comments are contained in Appendix F of the Final EIS. Each comment letter was assigned a reference number, and each comment was identified with a number. Where appropriate, changes and additions are reflected in the Final EIS to respond to comments.

Final EIS Review: This Final EIS has been distributed with the publication of the Notice of Availability in the Federal Register. Copies of this Final EIS have been distributed to those parties requesting the Draft EIS including those entities listed in Chapter 5.3. In addition, the Final EIS has been posted on the BLM website.

5.2 FORMAL CONSULTATION WITH INTERESTED AGENCIES

Federal and state agencies were contacted individually to gather input for the EIS. Other resource management agencies were consulted at the federal and state levels to identify common concerns related to the Proposed Action or Alternatives. Cooperating agencies on this EIS include the USFWS and the NDOW. In addition, the USGS has provided technical guidance related to water resources issues.

A Biological Assessment is being prepared for the Proposed Action and will be submitted to the USFWS as required by Section 7 of the ESA (1973). A species list was requested from the USFWS at the beginning of EIS development. The species list identified any plant and wildlife

species listed as threatened, endangered or candidate species within the project area. At the request of the USFWS, rare plant and desert tortoise surveys have been conducted within the project area. The BLM will continue to coordinate with the USFWS throughout the EIS process.

The BLM consulted with Native American Tribes that claim ancestral ties to, or traditional culture use of, project area lands. In March 2006, the BLM mailed copies of an “interested parties” letter under NEPA guidance, to the following Tribal groups:

- Moapa Band of Paiutes
- Paiute Indian Tribe of Utah
- Shivwits Band (Utah)
- Las Vegas Paiute Tribe
- Kaibab Paiute Tribe (Arizona)
- Yomba Shoshone Tribe
- Ely Shoshone Tribe
- Duckwater Shoshone Tribe
- Shoshone Paiute Business Council

The consultation letter briefly described the Proposed Action and requested 1) Tribal input regarding any concerns about traditional cultural practices or other issues that might be affected by the Proposed Action, 2) information on how they would like to be involved in the planning process, 3) names of other individuals or organizations that should be notified or consulted about the project, and 4) an invitation to the Tribal Coordination Meeting at the BLM Ely District Office in Ely, Nevada, on May 18, 2006. A copy of the Notice of Intent, a map of the project area, and a brief description of the preliminary issues to be considered in the plan were enclosed with each of these letters.

In general, local tribes and tribal members have concerns for landscapes, vegetation, water and archaeological sites. Archaeological sites may be eligible for the NRHP both for their information value and for their value to the traditions and cultural identities of tribes and therefore be considered TCPs. Landscapes, vegetation and water are traditional cultural values that may have sacred values, but are not cultural resource sites or properties by conventional definition. Outside of formal consultation, tribal members expressed concern that water is a cultural value that should be treated with reverence and respect.

On May 12, 2006, the Ely District Office mailed letters inviting tribes to enter into formal consultation. The BLM received responses to this request from three tribes: Las Vegas Paiute, the Paiute Tribe of Utah, and the Ely Shoshone Tribe. The Las Vegas Paiute did not provide input regarding any concerns about the Proposed Action, but wished to be kept informed of the project; the Paiute Indian Tribe of Utah had no interest in the project; and the Ely Shoshone Tribe wished to continue consultations for the Proposed Action directly with the BLM.

On May 18, 2006, representatives from the Ely Shoshone Tribe and the Duckwater Shoshone Tribe attended a Tribal Coordination Meeting at the BLM Ely Field Office, Ely, Nevada. Information about the Proposed Action was presented to tribal representatives. The Ely Shoshone Tribe and the Duckwater Shoshone Tribe expressed their concerns and interest in continued consultation with the Proposed Action.

On June 24, 2008, at the request of the Moapa Band of Paiutes, the BLM met with tribal members to present the Draft EIS and answer questions about the Proposed Action. The meeting was held from 12:00 p.m. to 2:00 p.m. at the Moapa Community Center in Moapa Valley, Nevada. Four members of the tribe attended the meeting

5.3 LIST OF AGENCIES, ORGANIZATIONS, AND PERSONS TO WHOM COPIES OF THE EIS WERE SENT

This section lists the agencies, officials, and other interested parties who received copies of the Draft and Final EIS. The BLM filed copies with the EPA, who publishes a Notice of Availability of the Draft and Final EIS in the Federal Register. The BLM also distributed paper and electronic (on CD-ROM) copies to federal agencies, key state agencies, elected officials, local libraries, and other requesting parties. The BLM will provide copies to other interested organizations or individuals on request.

5.3.1 Federal Government

U.S. Department of Agriculture – Natural Resources Conservation Service
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers – St. George Regulatory Office
U.S. Department of Energy
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
U.S. Department of the Interior – Bureau of Indian Affairs
U.S. Department of the Interior – National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior – U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
U.S. Department of the Interior – U.S. Geological Survey
Nellis Air Force Base

5.3.2 State Government

Nevada Bureau of Mines
Nevada Department of Agriculture
Nevada Department of Transportation
Nevada Division of Energy
Nevada Division of Environmental Protection
Nevada Division of State Lands
Nevada Division of State Parks
Nevada Division of Water Resources
Nevada Department of Wildlife
Nevada Office of the Governor
Nevada State Clearinghouse
Nevada State Historic Preservation Office

Nevada Department of Conservation
Nevada Natural Heritage Program
Nevada Division of Forestry

5.3.3 Local Governments

Lincoln County
Clark County
White Pine County
Nye County

5.3.4 Tribal Governments

Duckwater Shoshone Tribe
Ely Shoshone Tribe
Kaibab Paiute Tribe (Arizona)
Las Vegas Paiute Tribe
Moapa Band of Paiutes
Paiute Indian Tribe of Utah
Shivwits Band (Utah)
Shoshone Paiute Business Council
Yomba Shoshone Tribe

5.3.5 Other Organizations

Center for Biological Diversity
Friends of Nevada Wilderness
Nevada Bighorn Unlimited
Sierra Club
Southern Nevada Water Authority
The Nature Conservancy
Natural Resource Defense Council
Wild Utah Project
Western Lands Project
Desert Research Institute
Trout Unlimited
American Lands Alliance
Eastern Nevada Landscape Coalition
Audubon Society

5.3.6 Elected Government Officials

State of Nevada Governor, Jim Gibbons
Dean A. Rhoads, Nevada Senate
Dean Heller, U.S. House of Representatives
John Ensign, U.S. Senate
Harry M. Reid, U.S. Senate

5.3.7 Availability

Copies of the LCLA Groundwater Development and Utility ROW Project EIS are available for public inspection at the following public libraries and BLM offices.

Lincoln County – Alamo Branch Library
100 North 1st Street
Alamo, Nevada 89001

Lincoln County Library
93 Main Street
Pioche, Nevada 89043

Lincoln County – Caliente Branch Library
100 Depot Avenue
Caliente, Nevada 89008

Nevada State Library
100 North Steward Street
Carson City, Nevada 89701-4285

BLM, Ely District Office
702 North Industrial Way
Ely, Nevada 89301-9408

BLM, Nevada State Office
1340 Financial Blvd
Reno, Nevada 89502-7147

BLM, Las Vegas Field Office
4701 N. Torrey Pines Drive
Las Vegas, NV 89130

BLM – Caliente Field Station
U.S. Highway 93, Building #1
Caliente, NV 89008-0237

5.4 LIST OF PREPARERS

BLM CORE INTERDISPLINARY TEAM AND TECHNICAL SPECIALITY

BLM – Nevada State Office

- Ron Wenker – State Director
- Amy Lueders – Associate State Director
- Penny Woods – Nevada Groundwater Project Manager
- Dan Netcher – Deputy Project Manager
- JoLynn Worley – Public Affairs

- Jim Paugh (contractor) – Rights-of-Way
- Paul Summers – Water Resources (National Operations Center – Denver, CO)
- Kim Dow – Natural Resources
- Mel Meier - NEPA

BLM – Ely District Office

- John Ruhs –Decision-Maker
- Jared Bybee –Wild Horses
- Dave Jacobson – Wilderness, Visual Resource Management, Recreation
- Elvis Wall – Tribal Liaison
- Bonnie Waggoner – Noxious Weeds
- Kari Harrison – Soils

BLM – Caliente Field Office

- Ron Clementsen – Management Oversight
- Lynn Wulf – Archeology and Paleontology
- Troy Grooms – Range Management and Vegetation
- Alicia Styles – Wildlife Biology and Vegetation
- Rick Baxter - Wildlife Biology and Vegetation
- Joe David - NEPA

Nevada Department of Wildlife (Cooperating Agency)

- Brad Hardenbrook – Supervisory Biologist, Habitat Bureau
- Roddy Shepard – Habitat Biologist
- Craig Stevenson – Habitat Biologist

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Cooperating Agency)

- Jeri Krueger – Fish and Wildlife Biologist

Lincoln County Water District

- Ronda Hornbeck – Board Member
- Mike Baughman, PhD – President, Intertech Services Corp., Consultant to the LCWD
- Dylan Frehner – General Manager/General Counsel

Vidler Water Company

- Donald A. Pattalock – Vice President, Project Manager

- Greg Bushner – Chief Hydrologist, Water Resources
- Jim Hutchins, PhD – Project Scientist, Cultural Resources
- David Buhlig – Realty Specialist

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