

# 17 ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE

Information provided in this chapter identifies potential groups within the region of influence of the proposed project and who could potentially be adversely affected as a result of project development and operation. While CEQA does not require the evaluation of environmental justice issues associated with a project, Placer County may secure federal funding from the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) for the project. Prior to authorization of funding by DOE, DOE would be required to comply with the requirements of the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (42 U.S.C. 4332(2)), the Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) regulations for implementing the procedural provisions of NEPA (40 Code of Federal Regulations [CFR] parts 1500-1508) and Part 10 CFR 1021 which establishes DOE's procedures for complying with NEPA.

## 17.1 REGULATORY SETTING

Executive Order 12898, *Federal Actions to Address Environmental Justice in Minority Populations and Low-Income Populations*, signed in February 1994, requires federal agencies to identify and to address any disproportionately adverse effects on human health or the human environment of minority and/or low-income populations resulting from federal programs, policies, and activities.

The EPA's Office of Environmental Justice defines environmental justice as "the fair treatment and meaningful involvement of all people regardless of race, color, national origin, or income with respect to the development, implementation, and enforcement of environmental laws, regulations, and policies." Fair treatment means that "no group of people, including racial, ethnic, or socioeconomic group shall bear a disproportionate share of negative environmental consequences resulting from industrial, municipal, and commercial operations or the execution of federal, state, local, and tribal programs and policies." Meaningful involvement requires federal agencies to provide opportunities for significant community input in the NEPA process, and to ensure that meetings and notices are accessible to minority and low-income communities potentially affected by a proposed project. The intent is not to shift risks among populations, but to identify and address disproportionately high and adverse environmental effects of proposed federal actions on minority and low-income communities.

## 17.2 ENVIRONMENTAL SETTING

Zip Code Tabulation Area (ZCTA) 96161 incorporates the project site and surrounding area including the Town of Truckee, Martis Valley, Northstar, and the Donner Pass Area (Exhibit 17-1). In the following tables 17-1 and 17-2, data is further broken out to show demographic characteristics of the Town of Truckee in Nevada County and the Census Tracts in Placer County. The proposed project is in Census Tract (CT) 220.14, located west of SR 89 and the Truckee River, and CT 220.11 covers the area to the east of the Truckee River and SR 89 including the Northstar and the Martis Valley Community Plan areas. CTs 12.03 through 12.06 cover the Truckee area in Nevada County.

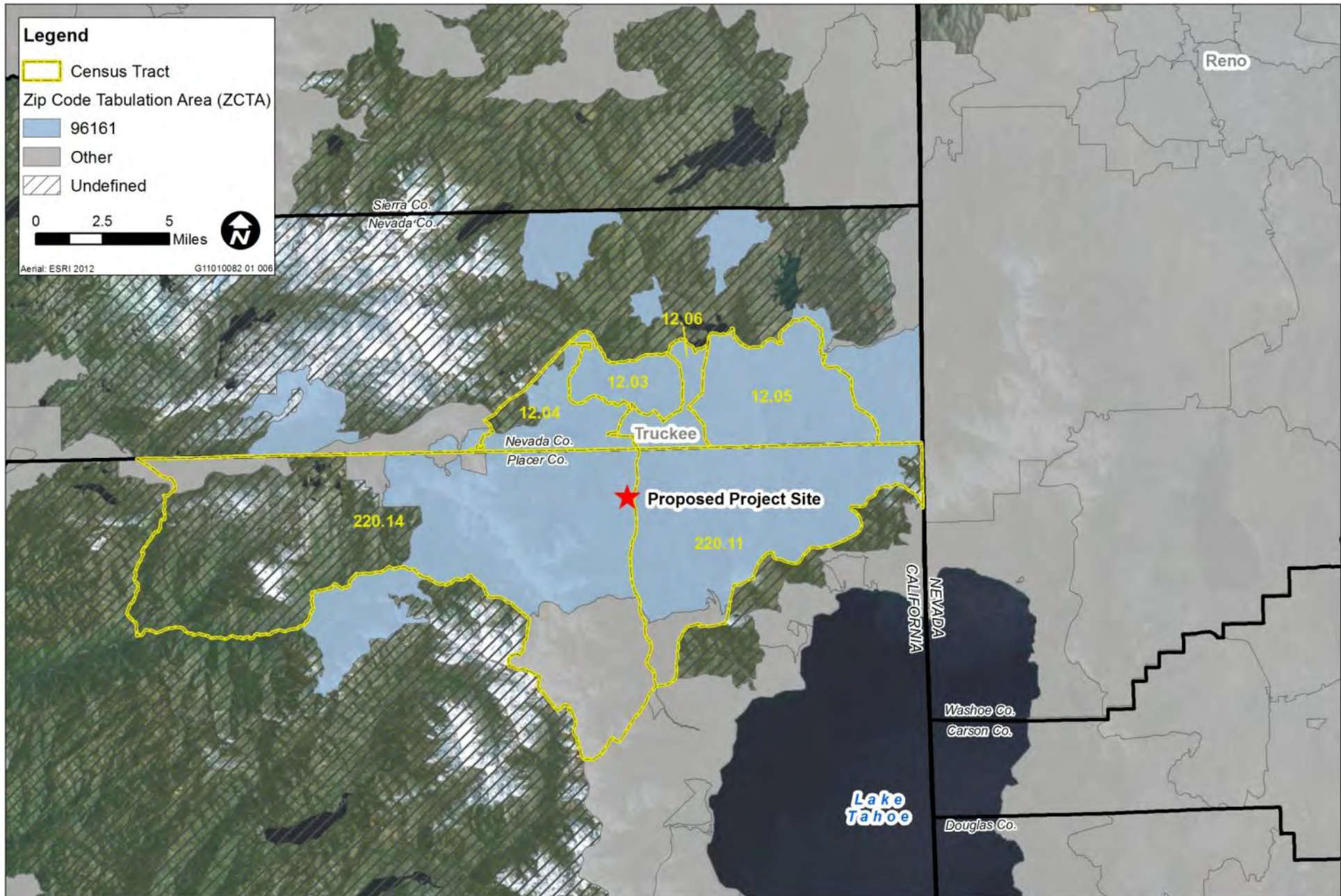


Exhibit 17-1

Zip Code Tabulation Area 96161



**Table 17-1 Population, Ethnicity, and Race in the Area of Project Effect**

Locality	Population	Percent Hispanic or Latino	Percent White	Percent Black or African American	Percent Asian	Percent American Indian and Alaska Native	Percent Two or More Races
ZCTA 96161	18,451	17.4	78.8	0.3	1.4	0.3	1.5
Town of Truckee*	16,180	18.6	86.5	0.4	1.5	0.6	2.1
Truckee CT 12.03	2,927	7.6	95.1	0.1	2.0	0.2	1.6
Truckee CT 12.04	2,832	7.5	92.1	0.6	2.1	0.6	2.6
Truckee CT 12.05	4,537	5.1	94.9	0.2	1.1	0.6	2.3
Truckee CT 12.06	6,090	38.7	73.7	0.5	1.2	0.7	2.1
Placer County CT 220.14	1,736	2.9	91.4	0.3	4.4	0.5	2.4
Placer County CT 220.11	1,686	10.6	98.0	0.4	2.1	0.3	2.0

Source: U.S. Census Bureau 2012; \*DOF 2011.

**Table 17-2 Percent Persons Below Poverty Level in the Area of Project Effect (2006-2010)**

Locality	Percent Population Below Poverty Level
ZCTA 96161	Not Available
Town of Truckee*	8.6
Census Tract 220.14	12.1
Truckee CT 12.03	9.4
Truckee CT 12.04	3.0
Truckee CT 12.05	5.3
Truckee CT 12.06	13.7
Census Tract 220.14	12.1
Census Tract 220.11	15.6

Source: U.S. Census Bureau 2012; \*DOF 2011.

## 17.3 IMPACTS

### 17.3.1 SIGNIFICANCE CRITERIA

The project could potentially have significant impacts related to environmental justice if its area of potential effect includes:

- ▲ A minority group that has a population of greater than 50 percent of the affected area's general population; or
- ▲ A community whose general population is comprised of 50 percent or more of people living under the poverty threshold.

## 17.3.2 METHODS AND ASSUMPTIONS

The area of the project's potential effect is primarily the Lower Truckee River Canyon, the Truckee Basin, including the Town of Truckee, Martis Valley, and adjacent areas. This area is sparsely populated with the main concentration of population in the Town of Truckee. For purposes of this analysis demographic data for the ZCTA, which takes in the area of potential effect, and the individual Census Tracts within the area of potential effect were used to screen for minority and low income populations.

## 17.3.3 EVALUATION OF ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE IMPACTS

The population density of the region is low, and the most populated areas are in and around the City of Truckee. The population in the vicinity of the project site is low, and the potential for the project to adversely affect people in general is low. As shown in Tables 16-1 and 16-2 above, there is no concentration of minority populations or low income populations in the area of potential effect or region of influence for the project. For the entire region defined by ZCTA 96161, minority populations make up less than 25 percent of the population. For the Town of Truckee Census Tracts, and Census Tracts in Placer County minority populations make up between 4.9 and 26.9 percent of the population. Low-income populations for the Town of Truckee Census Tracts range from 3 to 13.7 percent of the population, and for the Placer County Census Tracts low-income populations range from 12.1 and 15.6 percent of the overall population. The minority population and low-income population 50-percent criteria defined for the thresholds of significance listed above are not approached or exceeded within the project area of potential effect. Therefore, there is no potential for the proposed project to have any disproportionately adverse effect on human health or the human environment of minority and/or low-income populations. Impacts associated with environmental justice concerns would be **less than significant**.

## 17.4 MITIGATION MEASURES

*No mitigation measures are necessary.*