

4 REVISIONS TO THE DRAFT EIR

Changes to the text of the DEIR are shown in this chapter, in page order, with a line through the text that has been deleted (~~strikeout~~) or underlining where new text has been added.

4.1 REVISIONS TO CHAPTER 1.0, INTRODUCTION

PAGE 1-5

In response to comment Friends 1-2, Section 1.5.1, “Project Background,” on page 1-5 of the DEIR is revised as follows:

~~The proposed project is based, in part, on the proposed *North Fork American River Trail, Trail Plan* (Placer County 2003a), which was prepared by North Fork Associates on behalf of the County, in conjunction with State Parks. The trail plan has provided the County with a working document that has been used to determine a proposed trail alignment, identify the obstacles and challenges of implementation, and provide guidelines for successful implementation.~~

The 2003 *North Fork American River Trail Plan* (Trail Plan) (Placer County 2003a), which was prepared by North Fork Associates on behalf of the County, in conjunction with State Parks, was vacated along with the MND for the North Fork American River Trail Project. A new Trail Plan will be prepared to reflect the project described in Chapter 3.0, “Project Description,” of this DEIR. The new Trail Plan will be an implementation/construction document that will guide the County with implementation of the proposed project. Because this DEIR has been prepared to address the impacts of implementing the proposed project, which will be the subject of the new Trail Plan, no additional CEQA analysis would be required for the implementation of the Trail Plan.

4.2 REVISIONS TO CHAPTER 3.0, PROJECT DESCRIPTION

PAGE 3-5

In response to further refinement of the number of stream crossings that would require bridges, the number of bridges that would be constructed as part of the proposed project on page 3-5 has been revised as follows:

- ▶ However, ~~five~~ of the stream crossings would require the construction of bridges because of the size of the streams in these locations
- ▶ However, four of the stream crossings would require the construction of bridges because of the size of the streams in these locations

4.3 REVISIONS TO CHAPTER 5.0, BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES

PAGE 5-13

In response to further refinement of the project’s impacts on drainages, the number of drainages that will be affected by the proposed project on pages 5-13 and 5-14 of the DEIR are revised as follows:

- ▶ Construction of the trail would entail the installation of stream crossings and bridges across ~~46~~ drainages that cross the proposed trail alignment
- ▶ Construction of the trail would entail the installation of stream crossings and bridges across 43 drainages that cross the proposed trail alignment

PAGE 5-14

- ▶ Construction of the proposed trail would require crossing ~~46~~ drainages.
- ▶ Construction of the proposed trail would require crossing ~~43~~ drainages.
and
- ▶ However, the proposed trail alignment would cross ~~46~~ drainages
- ▶ However, the proposed trail alignment would cross ~~43~~ drainages

4.4 REVISIONS TO CHAPTER 8.0, TRANSPORTATION AND CIRCULATION

PAGE 8-4

In response to comment NFARA-3, the first threshold of significance for transportation and circulation on page 8-4 of the DEIR is revised as follows:

- ~~▶ increased vehicle trips or traffic congestion, hazards to safety from design features (e.g., sharp curves or dangerous intersections), or incompatible uses (e.g., farm equipment);~~
- ▶ cause an increase in traffic which is substantial in relation to the existing traffic load and capacity of the street system (i.e., result in a substantial increase in either the number of vehicle trips, the volume to capacity ratio on roads, or congestion at intersections);

4.5 REVISIONS TO CHAPTER 14.0, RECREATION

PAGES 14-8 THROUGH 14-9

In response to comment Gibbs-3 and in order to clarify the explanation of the significance conclusion for Impact 14-4, pages 14-8 through 14-9 of the DEIR have been revised as follows.

- ~~▶ However, because no safety issues related to user conflicts along existing trails have been reported (Hendricks, pers. comm., 2006), and because user conflicts do not constitute an effect on the physical environment, under CEQA this is considered a less than significant impact on the environment.~~
- ▶ Because of the educational and safety features incorporated into this project, as described in the DEIR and in Master Response 3, impact 14-4 is considered a less-than-significant impact on the environment.

4.6 REVISIONS TO CHAPTER 16.0, OTHER CEQA-REQUIRED SECTIONS

PAGES 16-2 THROUGH 16-4

In response to comment Garabedian-1, the Bifurcation Alternative on pages 16-2 through 16-4 of the DEIR have been revised as follows. In addition, Exhibit 16-1 has been removed from page 16-3 the DEIR.

BIFURCATION ALTERNATIVE

~~The Bifurcation Alternative was proposed by the advocacy group, Friends of the North Fork, during the settlement hearing for the Initial Study/Environmental Assessment (IS/EA). This alternative is characterized by~~

separated user segments and describes a trail alignment moving from the North Fork to the Middle Fork American River near the Ruck A Chucky Rapids and along sections of Driver's Flat, McKeon Ponderosa, and Foresthill Roads. In addition, the Bifurcation Alternative contains gaps in the alignment between staging termini. For ease of comparison, the Bifurcation Alternative alignment described below and as depicted on Exhibit 16-1 is split into three segments that cover roughly the same areas as the five proposed project trail segments.

The first segment of trail under the Bifurcation Alternative would stretch from the confluence to Lake Clementine Road (approximately 1.9 miles). This area roughly corresponds with Segment 5 of the trail under the proposed project and is an existing trail. This trail segment of the Bifurcation Alternative would generally follow the trail alignment for the proposed project. Except at the extreme downstream end of the trail (from the confluence to just upstream of the Foresthill Bridge), the trail would serve multiple uses as under the proposed project. At the downstream end of the trail, equestrians would proceed down the steep hill from the Foresthill Bridge Staging Terminus while hikers and mountain bikers would follow the existing riverside trail from the confluence parking area to the bridge.

The second segment of trail under the Bifurcation Alternative would cover the area between Lake Clementine Road and Upper Lake Clementine Road (represented in the proposed project by Segments 3 and 4). In the downstream portion of this segment (between Lake Clementine Road and the Lake Clementine Access Trail at the lake's midpoint), the different trail uses would likely split onto different routes. Hikers could follow Lake Clementine Road downhill roughly 0.5 mile to connect to an existing, minimally maintained lakeside trail between the boat launch parking lot and the bottom of the Lake Clementine Access Trail. This 1.6 mile long lakeside trail would also be evaluated for possible equestrian use. Mountain bikers would follow Lake Clementine Road uphill approximately 1.3 miles to connect to the existing Connector Trail then would follow the Connector Trail approximately 0.8 mile to the Lake Clementine Access Trail.

In the upstream part of this trail segment (between the Lake Clementine Access Trail and Upper Lake Clementine Road), all trail users would continue uphill for approximately 0.5 mile along the Lake Clementine Access Trail, which has a locked gate and no traffic. It then would connect to and follow an abandoned road up the canyon to a former bridge site. In the area upstream of the bridge site, either hikers would continue along an existing narrow hiking trail near the lake and equestrians and mountain bikers would use a connecting trail (if one can be located) (roughly 2.5 miles), or a yet to be proposed route would be established to connect the former bridge site to Upper Lake Clementine Road via a waterfall road (2.2 miles).

The third segment of trail under the Bifurcation Alternative would stretch from Upper Lake Clementine Road to McKeon Ponderosa Road (represented in the proposed project by Segments 1 and 2). As in the previous trail segment, different trail uses would split onto different routes, as described below.

Hikers would follow Upper Lake Clementine Road roughly 0.1 mile to the old "Switchback Road" that goes upstream from the last switchback above the parking lot and beach. Hikers would then follow existing hiking trails and gravel bars to McKeon Ponderosa Road, a distance of roughly 4.5 miles. Measures would be taken to regulate present use of four wheel drive vehicles in the riverbed to protect the trail and assure that the trail does not worsen the problems caused by these vehicles.

Equestrians and mountain bikers would follow Upper Lake Clementine Road uphill roughly 1.2 miles to the existing Foresthill Divide Loop Trail, and then follow this trail to the Long Point Fuel Break Trail. They would then continue on the Long Point Fuel Break Trail to the canyon rim. From there, they would take Driver's Flat Road to McKeon Ponderosa Road.

This alternative does not meet the purpose and objectives of the proposed project to provide a multiple use trail that reduces overcrowding on existing trails. This alternative relies on extensive use of existing trails, which would cause continued overcrowding, user conflicts, and overuse of these trails. Some of the "existing trails" were not located during site investigations conducted for this project and are assumed to be overgrown with

~~vegetation. This alternative would not discourage informal connections between trails, would not allow for multiple uses along a proposed trail, and would not connect to any termini to facilitate user access. The segments of the Bifurcation Alternative alignment near the river/lake would be within the floodplain of the river and would be extremely difficult to maintain because of regular flooding of this area. These segments of trail would also be more visible from the river/lake and could create potential user conflicts with water recreation users. Additionally, the riparian areas adjoining the river are considered sensitive habitat types, and TAG recommended against siting a trail near the river. For these reasons this alternative was eliminated from further consideration.~~

4.7 REVISIONS TO CHAPTER 18.0, REFERENCES AND PERSONS CONSULTED

PAGE 18-10

In response to comment Gibbs-3 and in order to clarify the explanation of the significance conclusion for Impact 14-4, page 18-10 of the DEIR has been revised as follows.

- ~~▶ Hendricks, Phil. Trails specialist. EDAW, Inc., Fort Collins, CO. May 11, 2006 personal communication with Debra Bishop of EDAW regarding trail user conflicts.~~