

6 CONSULTATION AND COORDINATION

This chapter summarizes public and agency involvement activities undertaken by the Forest Service and Placer County that have been conducted to date for this project, and which satisfy NEPA and CEQA requirements for public scoping and agency consultation and coordination.

6.1 PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT STRATEGY

This section first summarizes the public scoping effort conducted for the proposed Squaw Valley | Alpine Meadows Base-to-Base Gondola Project and then follows with a description of the public review process for the Draft EIS/EIR.

Scoping is required by Council on Environmental Quality regulations for preparation of an EIS and by CEQA statutes and guidelines for preparation of an EIR. Scoping is an integral part of the environmental review process. It involves refining the proposed action, identifying preliminary issues, and identifying interested and affected persons. The results of scoping are used to clarify public involvement methods, refine issues, establish analysis criteria, and explore possible alternatives and their probable environmental effects.

The environmental review process for the project began with a public scoping period. A notice of preparation (NOP) and notice of intent (NOI) were issued to inform agencies and the public that an EIS/EIR would be prepared for the project and to solicit views of agencies and the public as to the scope and content of the EIS/EIR. Scoping meetings were held to allow oral expression of those views.

In accordance with NEPA regulations (40 CFR Section 1508.22), the Forest Service initiated the scoping comment period by publishing an NOI in the *Federal Register* on April 29, 2016, with a designated scoping period ending on May 31, 2016. In accordance with CEQA (14 CCR Section 15082), Placer County posted an NOP with the California State Clearinghouse on April 22, 2016, with a 30-day review period ending on May 23, 2016.

The Forest Service prepared a scoping package that was sent to 51 individuals and organizations. The scoping package, including the NOI and public notice of the beginning of the scoping comment period, provided a brief description of the Proposed Action, description of the purpose of and need for the action, and two illustrative maps. The scoping package also directed interested parties to the Forest Service project website where the project information was available. Placer County prepared the CEQA Initial Study Checklist for the project, which included a brief description of the project and project objectives and an initial evaluation of potential environmental effects. The Initial Study Checklist and NOP were posted on the Placer County project website (<https://placer.ca.gov/departments/communitydevelopment/envcoordsvcs/eir/squawvalleygondolaproject> at the time of scoping and now available at <https://www.placer.ca.gov/2680/Squaw-Valley-Alpine-Meadows-Base-to-Base>) and mailed to individuals and organizations on the mailing list. Additionally, public notices were placed in both the *Sierra Sun* and *Sacramento Bee* on April 22, 2016.

Two public scoping meetings were held by the Forest Service and Placer County on May 9, 2016, and are described further below.

At the time of the scoping meetings, the Forest Service and Placer County intended to prepare an EIS and an EIR as two separate documents. However, On September 2, 2016, Placer County and the Forest Service announced that they would prepare a combined EIS/EIR. Placer County issued an updated NOP to all previous NOP recipients and others who expressed interest in the project during the scoping process, posted the updated NOP on the County website, and provided a news release to local press outlets. Additional scoping comments were accepted until October 3, 2016.

Copies of these notices and a scoping summary report are provided in Appendix A.

6.1.1 Public Input Mechanisms

The Forest Service and Placer County provided multiple ways to submit comments in order to encourage maximum participation and input into preparation of this EIS/EIR. The public was invited to submit comments through the following mechanisms:

- ▲ public scoping meetings,
- ▲ traditional mail delivery,
- ▲ facsimile transmission (fax),
- ▲ telephone,
- ▲ email, and
- ▲ project website (www.squawalpinegondola-eis.com/).

6.1.2 Public Scoping Meetings

Two joint Forest Service and Placer County public scoping meetings were held on May 9, 2016, to gather comments on the scope of the EIS/EIR. Both meetings were held at the Resort at Squaw Creek, Monument Peak Room, 400 Squaw Creek Road, Olympic Valley, California. The first meeting was held from 2:00 to 4:00 p.m., and the second was held from 6:00 to 8:00 p.m. Representatives from the Tahoe National Forest, Placer County, and Squaw Valley Ski Holdings, LLC, were present to answer questions and provide additional information on this project. A stenographer was present to capture comments submitted orally at the meetings.

6.1.3 Scoping Participation

The initial scoping comment period for the Forest Service was open between April 29, 2016, and May 31, 2016, and for Placer County was open between April 22, 2016, and May 23, 2016. The comment period was reopened when the preparation of a joint EIS/EIR was announced, extending from September 2, 2016, through October 3, 2016. During the scoping periods, a total of 152 comment submissions (including email, website submissions, meeting transcripts, and hard copy letters) were transmitted to either the Forest Service or Placer County.

Of the 152 comment submittals received during the scoping period, most (114 submittals, or 75 percent) included the commenter's address. Of the 114 comments with address information, 93 percent were submitted by commenters with California addresses, and the remaining 7 percent were from out-of-state commenters. The comments from California were distributed as follows (presented as percent of total comments received): 13 percent from Olympic Valley residents, 11 percent from Truckee residents, 9 percent from city of Saratoga residents, 9 percent from Tahoe City residents, and 58 percent from other California locations.

In addition to the 152 commenters who submitted comments during the formal scoping period, 25 commenters submitted comments after the formal 30-day scoping period. While 36 CFR 218.5(a) indicates that commenters failing to submit timely comments are not eligible to object to the project, these commenters have been added to the official list of interested parties and their comments were considered in the preparation of the Draft EIS/EIR. None of these interested parties raised any issues that had not already been considered.

A total of 569 substantive comments were identified in the 152 scoping comment submittals across 21 broad categories. Substantive comments are comments that are generally relevant to the proposed decision and present information and rationale that is beyond conjecture and opinion. Comments were grouped further by subcategory and theme to facilitate the recording. The key issues identified in the comments were:

- ▲ scenic values,
- ▲ Granite Chief Wilderness,
- ▲ wildlife and aquatic resources,
- ▲ relationship with federal and local planning documents,
- ▲ cumulative effects,
- ▲ recreation,
- ▲ alternatives,
- ▲ traffic and parking,
- ▲ air quality,
- ▲ avalanche hazards,
- ▲ project purpose and need,
- ▲ water and wetlands, and
- ▲ health and safety.

A more detailed description of the comments received is provided in Appendix A.

6.1.4 Draft EIS/EIR Participation

The Draft EIS/EIR was distributed to interested agencies, stakeholder organizations, and individuals for a comment period of 45 days, from **April 27, 2018, to June 11, 2018**. This distribution ensured that interested parties had an opportunity to express their views regarding the environmental effects of the project and that information pertinent to permits and approvals was provided to decision makers.

During the comment period, the Draft EIS/EIR was available for review by the public during normal business hours at the Tahoe City Library, Truckee Library, Placer County administrative buildings in Auburn, CA and Tahoe City, CA, Tahoe National Forest Supervisor's Office, and Tahoe National Forest Truckee Ranger District. The Draft EIS/EIR was also available online on the project website and on Placer County's website.

Written comments were accepted at the Tahoe National Forest Truckee Ranger District and at the Placer County Community Development Resources Agency. Electronic comments were accepted on the Forest Service project website, and via email at comments@squawalpinegondola-eis.com and cdraecs@placer.ca.gov.

A public hearing on the Draft EIS/EIR was conducted during the comment period on May 24, 2018 at a Placer County Planning Commission Meeting, held at the North Tahoe Events Center.

Pursuant to 36 CFR 218.25, comments on the Squaw Valley | Alpine Meadows Base-to-Base Gondola Project Draft EIS/EIR were accepted for 45 days beginning on the first day after the date of publication of the Notice of Availability (NOA) of the Draft EIS/EIR in the Federal Register, which was April 27, 2018. Only individuals or entities (as defined by 36 CFR 218.2) who submitted timely and specific written comments about the proposed project during the official public comment period are eligible to file an objection.

In summary, one letter was received from a federal agency, two letters were received from state agencies, 13 letters were received from organizations, 174 letters were received from individuals, various commenters provided verbal comments at the public hearing, and eight letters were received after the close of the public comment period, but within 2 weeks after the close. An additional letter was received on December 2018, more than 6 months after the end of the comment period, and is not responded to in this Final EIS/EIR.

Revisions to the Draft EIS/EIR were made in response to public comments, or to amplify, clarify or make minor modifications or corrections. This Final EIS/EIR is reflective of these revisions.

6.2 CONSULTATION

This EIS/EIR has been prepared by the Forest Service, Tahoe National Forest, which is the lead federal agency for preparation of this EIS/EIR in compliance with NEPA and all other applicable laws, executive orders, regulations, and direction; and by Placer County, which is the lead State of California agency in compliance with CEQA and all other applicable laws and regulations.

The following representatives from these agencies have contributed to the preparation and/or review of this EIS/EIR:

- ▲ Forest Service
 - Eli Ilano, Forest Supervisor
 - Joanne Robique, Truckee District Ranger
 - Tim Cardoza, Land Use Program Manager
 - Mike Cartmill, Forester
 - Sharon Falvey, Hydrologist and Soil Scientist
 - Joe Flannery, Public Affairs Officer
 - Tina Mark, Forest Biologist
 - Roy Bridgman, Acting Forest Biologist
 - Kevin McCombe, Recreation Program Manager
 - Laurie Perrot, Forest Environmental Coordinator
 - Jared Pierce, Landscape Architect
 - Carol Purchase, Watershed and Invasive Species Program Manager
 - Todd Rawlinson, Terrestrial Biologist
 - Temoc Rios, Public Services Staff Officer
 - Deborah Urich, Aquatics Biologist
 - Susan Urie, Botanist
 - Brad Seaberg, Timber Sale Contracting Officer
 - Carrie Smith, Heritage Program Manager
 - Karie Wiltshire, NEPA Planner

- ▲ Placer County
 - Heather Beckman, Senior Planner
 - Stacy Wydra, Senior Planner
 - Angel Green, Senior Planner
 - Ed Staniforth, P.E. Senior Civil Engineer
 - Sarah Gillmore, P.E., Associate Civil Engineer
 - Stephanie Holloway, P.E., T.E., Senior Civil Engineer
 - Leigh Chavez, Environmental Coordinator
 - Shirlee Herrington, Senior Community Development Resource Agency Technician

In addition to the individuals identified above, the following entities were consulted during the development of this EIS/EIR:

- ▲ U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service,
- ▲ Washoe Tribal Historic Preservation Officer,
- ▲ Washoe Tribe of California and Nevada,
- ▲ United Auburn Indian Community of the Auburn Rancheria,
- ▲ Shingle Springs Band of Miwok Indians,
- ▲ T'Si-Akim Maidu,

- ▲ California Department of Fish and Wildlife,
- ▲ California Department of Transportation,
- ▲ Lahontan Regional Water Quality Control Board,
- ▲ Town of Truckee,
- ▲ Alpine Springs County Water District,
- ▲ Squaw Valley Public Services District,
- ▲ The California Pacific Electric Company, and
- ▲ Placer County Air Pollution Control District.

6.3 DOCUMENT DISTRIBUTION

6.3.1 Agencies and Community Notifications

The following agencies and their representatives have been provided copies of this Final EIS/EIR and/or information about how to obtain digital copies of the document.

- ▲ Federal government
 - U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
 - U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
 - U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
- ▲ Tribal government
 - Washoe Tribe of Nevada and California
 - United Auburn Indian Community
 - Shingle Springs Rancheria Band of Miwok Indians
- ▲ State government
 - California Air Resources Board
 - California Department of Boating and Waterways
 - California Department of Conservation
 - California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection
 - California Department of Fish and Wildlife
 - California Department of Parks and Recreation
 - California Department of Toxic Substances Control
 - California Department of Transportation
 - California Department of Water Resources
 - California Highway Patrol
 - California Office of Historic Preservation
 - California Resources Agency
 - California Tahoe Conservancy
 - Lahontan Regional Water Quality Control Board
 - Native American Heritage Commission
 - Tahoe Regional Planning Agency
- ▲ Local government
 - Town of Truckee
 - Placer County Sheriff
 - Tahoe Truckee Sanitation Agency
 - Truckee Sanitary District
 - Lake Tahoe Transit
 - Local Agency Formation Commission
 - Alpine Springs County Water District

- North Tahoe Fire Protection District
- Squaw Valley Fire District
- Squaw Valley Public Service District
- Tahoe Truckee Unified School District
- all neighboring cities and counties

- ▲ Other organizations
 - Truckee River Watershed Council
 - North Tahoe Municipal Advisory Council
 - Liberty Energy
 - Southwest Gas
 - Mountain Area Preservation Foundation
 - Sierra Watch
 - North Tahoe Municipal Advisory Council
 - Sierra Club, Tahoe Group
 - Sierra Club, Motherlode
 - Sierra Nevada Alliance
 - League to Save Lake Tahoe
 - Sierra Business Council
 - Ski Area Citizen's Coalition
 - Western States Trail Foundation
 - Tahoe Metropolitan Planning Organization
 - Sierra Planning Organization
 - North Tahoe Preservation Alliance
 - Alpine Meadows Estate Association
 - Alpine Place
 - First Ascent Home Owners Association
 - Intrawest Home Owners Association
 - North Fork of the American River Association
 - Bear Creek Association
 - North Tahoe Preservation Alliance
 - Granite Chief Wilderness Protection League
 - Alpine Meadows and Squaw Valley Home Owners Associations
 - Alpine Meadows Condo Association

- ▲ All individuals who received the NOI, NOP, or updated NOP; who signed in at the scoping meetings; who provided scoping comments; or who requested in writing to receive project notifications