

8. Coordination and Consultation

A Public Involvement Strategy was developed for this project. The strategy was prepared following interviews with 10 key stakeholders to assess information needs and appropriate tools for communicating information about the project and receiving input from the public. The stakeholders interviewed are listed below.

- Duncan McCoy, Boulder City Library
- Kevin Hill, City of Henderson
- John Sullard, City of Boulder City
- Cheryl Ferrence, Boulder City Chamber of Commerce
- Jolene Baurain, Assistant to Clark County Commissioner Bruce Woodbury
- Bill Ferrence, Boulder Dam Credit Union
- Kris Mills, Reclamation
- Chuck McEndree, WAPA
- Lieutenant Malloy, Nevada Highway Patrol
- Verna Tracy, Business Owner

A total of six project newsletters were distributed for public information. Public participation and comment on environmental and social concerns were encouraged through these newsletters, a speaker's bureau presentation for the community, two public open houses, a public hearing for the DEIS, and by providing project-dedicated voicemail and a project web site. A Community Working Group (CWG) made up of 10 community representatives was convened in August 2001 by NDOT and the Mayor of Boulder City to provide another method of community involvement in project planning and the development of the alternatives and the preferred alternative.

8.1 Public and Agency Scoping

Following publication of an NOI, which appeared in the *Federal Register* on February 2, 2000, NDOT initiated the EIS and began the scoping process. An agency scoping meeting was held on February 22, 2000, in Las Vegas, Nevada. Attendees were given an overview of the project and asked to present their agency's concerns, special requirements, and information pertinent to the corridor study EIS. Agencies were also encouraged to prepare written responses to NDOT and FHWA. A meeting summary was prepared and is included as Appendix B of this FEIS. Subsequent interviews with other community members and several meetings with interested members of the public, the Boulder City Chamber of Commerce, members of the Boulder City and Henderson City Councils, and other organizations also occurred during this scoping period.

8.1.1 Public Comment Meetings

NDOT conducted two public open houses to receive comments on the project and input to the alternatives development and analysis process. The public open houses were noticed in the first and second newsletter and in the following newspapers: *Boulder City News*,

Las Vegas Review Journal, Las Vegas Sun, El Mundo (Local Spanish Newspaper) and Henderson Home News. A public hearing was conducted to receive public comment on the DEIS. The announcement of public release of the DEIS appeared in the Federal Register on March 15, 2002, and public notice was provided in the following newspapers: *Boulder City News, Las Vegas Review Journal, Las Vegas Sun, El Mundo (Local Spanish Newspaper), and Henderson Home News.* A subsequent announcement was run in the *Boulder City and Henderson Home News* and the *Las Vegas Review Journal* indicating availability of additional copies of the DEIS document at the Boulder City Public Library and Community College of Southern Nevada – Boulder City Campus.

January 26, 2000, Public Informational Meeting

A public meeting was held on January 26, 2000, at the Community College of Southern Nevada-Boulder City Campus, Boulder City, Nevada, to provide information to the public and receive their comments on the Boulder City/U.S. 93 Corridor Study. An open house format was used at the meeting allowing members of the public to learn more about the study goals and process, and to provide feedback on the study information provided. Attendees were encouraged to submit comments on the study using one of the following methods: completing a comment sheet, providing oral comments to a court reporter, mailing written comments, or sending comments via the project web site. Approximately 226 people attended the meeting.

The following presentation boards were on display at the open house:

- Meeting purpose
- Project objectives
- Aerial photograph of study area
- Southern bypass alignment review based on the June 1999 ballot initiative
- Project schedule
- Web site display

The intent of this meeting, and other public scoping efforts, was to communicate to the public the purpose and need of the project, solicit input on alternatives and present alternatives for the project, and receive other input from the public regarding the proposed action and alternatives. Strong opinions were expressed regarding the potential impacts to local businesses and employment resulting from the implementation of Alternative D in particular. Others stated that truck traffic through Boulder City has become a major safety concern and a source of noise and environmental hazard, and it must be addressed. Substantial input was also received regarding environmental impacts and hazards in the developed portions of Boulder City resulting from the implementation of Alternatives A, B or C, and concerns regarding impacts to the natural environment resulting from the implementation of Alternative D were also received.

February 29, 2000, Public and Agency Scoping Meeting

A scoping meeting with federal, state, and local agencies, including Native American Tribal governments, was conducted early in the project. This meeting was to discuss with these agencies their role as part of the PMT, and to develop a cooperative agreement on how the purpose and need for the project would be developed and the process for identified potential solutions. The meeting also resulted in a list of project issues for each agency

involved and was the basis for the evaluation criteria that would be used to evaluate potential alternatives once developed.

April 26, 2000, Public Open House

The second public open house was held on April 26, 2000, at the Community College of Southern Nevada-Boulder City Campus, Boulder City, Nevada, regarding the Boulder City/U.S. 93 Corridor Study EIS. NDOT conducted this meeting in the same open house format to allow members of the public to learn more about the development of the project alternatives and provide feedback on the progress of the study. Attendees were encouraged to submit comments on the study using one of the following methods: completing a comment sheet, providing oral comments to a court reporter, mailing written comments, or sending comments via the project web site. Approximately 80 people attended the meeting. The following presentation boards were on display at the open house:

- Welcome
- Purpose and need for the project
- The study process
- Initial alternatives map
- Profile grade - Boulder City to Kingman via Hoover Dam Route and Laughlin Route
- Traffic profiles
- How the public input drives the process
- Business survey responses

Those in attendance provided detailed comments and concerns regarding the project alternatives. Several commented that an Adams Boulevard alignment alternative would not be acceptable. Additionally, there was continued concern expressed over truck traffic through town and through Hemenway Valley.

April 4, 2002, Public Hearing for the DEIS

A public hearing to formally introduce the Boulder City/U.S. 93 Corridor Study DEIS was held on April 4, 2002, at the Boulder City Parks and Recreation Center in Boulder City, Nevada. Members of the media were invited to attend 1 hour prior to the start of the public hearing to discuss the project with staff and to take photographs and video. A media briefing packet was provided to each media representative, which included an aerial map with the four alternatives, a copy of the project purpose and need, the Spring 2002 newsletter, and the summary of environmental considerations for each alternative.

Attendees were encouraged to submit comments on the study using one of the following methods: completing a comment sheet, providing oral comments to a court reporter, mailing written comments, or sending comments via e-mail through the project website. A total of 278 citizens attended the hearing staffed by members of the project team from every discipline. Representative comments received from the public at the hearing are included in this summary.

The following graphic displays were developed to summarize the content presented in the DEIS at the hearing:

- Project schedule and an overview of the study process.
- Federal environmental review process.

- Purpose of and need for the project.
- Summary of the environmental considerations to existing U.S. 93 through Boulder City for each of the environmental categories.
- Summary of the traffic analysis for existing and future traffic.
- Summary of the noise study.
- Map of the waterways and parks/open space affected by each build alignment.
- Map of the areas for wildlife habitat.
- Summary of impacts to bicycle and pedestrian trails/pathways.
- Posters of each of the build alignments. These plots indicate new roadway footprint, geometry, and the right-of-way needs with an aerial map as the base.
- Computer datashow station to show engineering files of the alignments.
- Computer datashow station displaying video animation of several alignment drive-throughs.
- Document station providing copies for review of the DEIS and all of the technical studies and appendixes.

The comments received covered a wide variety of issues related to the project. All four alternatives received positive support and negative comments; however, the majority of attendees expressed support for the southern alignment.

8.1.2 Cooperating Agencies

On February 11, 2000, FHWA, in cooperation with NDOT, mailed written invitations to key government agencies with a direct stake in the Boulder City/U.S. 93 Corridor Study EIS to participate as “cooperating agencies” in accordance with CEQ regulations (40 CFR 1501.6 and 1506.3). Participation of the cooperating agencies was sought throughout all stages of the EIS for technical information, resolution of issues, and identification of specific review and approval requirements. The coordination aided in defining the project’s purpose and need and in identifying reasonable project alternatives, environmental impacts, and measures to mitigate adverse effects. An overriding goal of this interagency coordination was to preclude subsequent and duplicative efforts and to gain consensus. The agencies were also invited to participate on the interagency PMT and were requested to designate a staff representative as the project point of contact. The following agencies agreed to participate in development of the EIS as cooperating agencies (see Appendix A) and have been involved throughout the project development process:

- Reclamation
- NPS
- WAPA
- Clark County
- BLM
- RTC of Southern Nevada

- City of Boulder City
- City of Henderson

8.1.3 PMT Meetings

The PMT has been meeting once a month since initiation of the corridor study through to the selection of the preferred alternative to discuss the project, review interim work products, and provide guidance and direction for preparing the DEIS. The PMT has also provided input on the public outreach strategy and worked to develop cooperative agreement with each other as significant project issues surfaced and policy direction was required. PMT members consist of:

- Ted Bendure, FHWA
- Tom Greco, NDOT
- Daryl James, NDOT
- Daniel Nollsch, NDOT
- Joe Peltier, NDOT
- Kent Cooper, NDOT
- Phil Henry, Boulder City
- Kevin Hill, City of Henderson
- Dave Curtis, Reclamation
- Jim Holland, NPS
- Gary Johnson, RTC
- Robert Herr, Clark County Department of Public Works
- Chuck McEndree, WAPA
- CH2M HILL project team

In 2002, two PMT members left, Tom Greco/NDOT and Kevin Hill/City of Henderson, and were replaced with individuals from their respective agencies. The new members are:

- Scott Rawlins, NDOT
- Joe Damiani, City of Henderson

The PMT has continued to remain active through completion of the FEIS and meets when on-going agency consultations require PMT updates and further consultations. The PMT last met on January 5, 2005 to review the results of December 2004 consultations with the EPA, NDOW, and the ACOE . The PMT will meet as necessary through the approval of the ROD.

8.1.4 Public Outreach

A project presentation was developed to inform and educate stakeholders and members of the general public about the goals of the project and potential solutions. Presentations were made to local agencies and local community organizations. Approximately 45 organizations were contacted to schedule a presentation. Approximately 800 individuals were present at these presentations during the months of January through May 2001. Comments on the refined set of alternatives were recorded from each meeting and discussed at the PMT meetings. A summary of each meeting is included as Appendix C of this document.

Four tapings with the Boulder City Cable Television Program have been conducted. These tapings have included the Boulder City Manager, Public Information Officer, and various members of the PMT to discuss relevant issues surrounding the project.

A project web page was developed to provide project information, including a description of the project development process, details on alternatives, the EIS process, a project schedule, project newsletters, open house display material, and an interactive map of the project study limits. An e-mail address was also established for users to provide feedback and/or submit questions or requests for more information. The complete DEIS document and all of the appendixes were made available on the project website.

8.1.5 Community Working Group

A CWG was formed in August 2001 to serve as a venue to discuss the project. The intent of this CWG is to:

1. Provide improved public and community access to the project as it progresses through the environmental documentation process. The purpose for improved public access is to build support for the project development process and the alternatives under consideration.
2. Educate stakeholders about the problem definition, planning process, and the proposed alternatives defined to date. The goal is to help avoid any backtracking on project development progress.

The CWG will serve as a mechanism for collaborative problem solving among interest groups most likely to be affected by the project. The CWG is tasked to provide guidance on aspects of the alternatives and make recommendations to the PMT at each project milestone and to provide feedback to homeowner, business, and civic groups they represent in the community. This group will hear presentations and receive information from the PMT.

The make-up of this group includes 10 individuals that were selected to represent a broad spectrum of community interests and concerns, and assembled at the request of NDOT Director and under the guidance of the Mayor of Boulder City. The CWG met on a monthly basis through the release of the DEIS. Together, the CWG and the PMT decided that this group will meet on an as-needed basis during the FEIS and ROD process. E-mail updates will continue to be provided as necessary for CWG members to apprise them of any changes to schedule or to notify them of additional meeting needs.

8.2 Consultations Since Release of the DEIS

Since the release of the DEIS there have been consultations with a number of agencies and other groups regarding a range of issues and potential impacts from implementation of the alternatives presented in this EIS. These include the following:

- The Boulder City Rifle and Pistol Club and The National Rifle Association- On possible conflicts with the use of the Boulder City Rifle and Pistol Club range, and mitigation measures.

- Clark County Department of Public Works and the Regional Transportation Commission- On design and planning aspects of the alternatives.
- State Historic Preservation Office- On final determination of National Register eligibility of historic properties within the Area of Potential Effect of the project.
- National Park Service Lake Mead National Recreation Area- Consideration of the impacts of Alternative D on the purpose and function of the LMNRA, and on measures for the protection and conservation of bighorn sheep and cultural resources.
- Nevada Department of Wildlife- On desert bighorn sheep habitat, the potential impacts from implementation of Alternative D on bighorn sheep, and on avoidance and mitigation measures.
- Environmental Protection Agency- Selection of the Least Environmentally Damaging Practicable Alternative (LEDPA), environmental impacts to Boulder City as well as the natural environment, impacts to jurisdictional waters of the U.S., measures for avoidance, minimization, and mitigation, and review of prior alternative screening procedures and results.
- U.S. Army Corps of Engineers St. George Regulatory Office- Selection of the Least Environmentally Damaging Practicable Alternative, impacts to jurisdictional waters of the U.S.
- Federal Highway Administration- On the identification of Section 4(f) resources and the assessment of impacts resulting from the alternatives.

These consultations have led to the refinement and clarification of resource issues and impacts, and further understanding of agency concerns, and are described chiefly in Chapters 3 through 7.

8.2.1 Ongoing Agency Consultations

As noted above, consultations with resource and land management agencies have taken place since the release of the DEIS, and some continue to the present. Appendix A provides the correspondence that has been received on this study from local as well as federal agencies. In particular, since 2002 discussions and field reviews have continued with NDOW and the EPA regarding identification of the LEDPA. Evaluations of the effects of the four alternatives considered in detail shows that the most deleterious impacts to the human environment (chiefly within the limits of Boulder City) would result from Alternatives A, B, and C. These include segmentation of the city, noise, visual and air quality impacts, impacts to traffic and recreation lands, and impacts to cultural resources. In contrast, impacts from Alternative D would be greatest to elements of the natural environment (biological resources, waters of the U.S.). In weighing these factors together, FHWA in cooperation with NDOT determined Alternative D to be the LEDPA. This is also consistent with expressions of public concern received during scoping and the DEIS comment period.

Through February 2005 the EPA has withheld its concurrence on the determination of Alternative D as the LEDPA, citing concerns regarding impacts to bighorn sheep, as well as direct and indirect impacts to waters of the U.S. and aquatic ecosystems (Appendix A). Consultations on the determination of the LEDPA and appropriate avoidance,

minimization, and mitigation measures, as well as on the Conceptual Mitigation Plan for its implementation, were carried into a field review by FHWA, NDOT, EPA, NDOW, and the ACOE on December 20, 2004. At a subsequent meeting NDOT and NDOW reached further agreement on the steps to address impacts to bighorn sheep, in particular. These measures are described in greater detail in Sections 4.4.3 and 6.6.1. Subsequent to additional consultations during early 2005, FHWA submitted to EPA an updated request for concurrence on the LEDPA (Appendix A). NDOT and FHWA anticipate continued coordination with NPS and NDOW, as well as EPA through to the completion of this project as described in greater detail in Sections 6.6.1 and 6.6.8 of this FEIS.

8.2.2 Consultation with Native American Groups

During the initial stages of project development, the HRC at the University of Nevada Las Vegas developed a plan for Native American Consultation on the project for implementation by FHWA and NDOT (Blair and Lawrence, November 2000). Based on that plan, FHWA initiated formal Government-to-Government consultation with Native American groups with history in the Eldorado Valley. FHWA started the consultation process by sending letters to representatives of seven tribes or groups on June 19, 2001, informing them of the project and the results of cultural resource studies, and requesting their response relative to any concerns about cultural resources, traditional religious or cultural properties, or about the overall project (see Appendix A).

As a result, four Native American tribes/groups had no response to FHWA's request for consultation, and three requested additional work and/or information. After review, FHWA is addressing these requests through the PA process.