



COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT AGENCY

LONG RANGE PLANNING

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Date: August 11, 2016

To: El Dorado County Planning Commission

From: Shawna Purvines, Principal Planner

Subject: Draft Environmental Impact Report (DEIR) for the General Plan Biological Resources Policy Update and Oak Resources Management Plan

PURPOSE

The California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) requires an analysis of the proposed General Plan Biological Resources Policy Update and Oak Resources Management Plan (proposed Project). CEQA is a state required process (Public Resources Code Sections 21000 et seq. and the CEQA Guidelines (14 California Code of Regulations Sections 15000 et seq.)). In accordance with CEQA, the County released a Draft Environmental Impact Report (DEIR) on June 30, 2016 for a 45-day public review period (CEQA Guidelines, Section 15105). The DEIR contains the project description, impact analyses by affected resource, project alternatives, and mitigation measures for identified impacts.

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT

The DEIR for the General Plan Biological Resources Policy Update and Oak Resources Management Plan project analyzed possible environmental impacts to Aesthetics; Forestry Resources; Biological Resources; Greenhouse Gas Emission (focused on the loss of carbon sequestration); and Land Use and Planning (including agricultural resources). The Draft EIR lists proposed environmental mitigation measures for any impacts that are considered “significant”. The report also lists alternatives to the project, and other CEQA considerations.

Projects such as the General Plan Biological Resources Policy Update and Oak Resources Management Plan inherently raise policy issues. It is the task of the decision makers, consistent with State law, to weigh the benefits and consequences of the proposed changes and strive to achieve a balance of competing economic, social, and environmental interests. The Final EIR assists decision makers by providing them with information about the proposed Project’s environmental impacts. The EIR prepared for the General Plan Biological Resources Policy Update and Oak Resources Management Plan neither approves nor denies this project.

PUBLIC AND AGENCY COMMENT PERIOD

The DEIR public comment period closes on Monday, August 15, 2016 at 5:00 pm. Written comments are being accepted by email, fax, mail or hand-delivery to the Community Development Agency, Long Range Planning (Attention: Shawna Purvines, Principal Planner).

Written comments received during the 45-day public comment period on the DEIR will be responded to and included in the Final Environmental Impact Report (FEIR). All persons interested in providing comments are encouraged to submit written comments on or before the deadline. Comments received on the DEIR after August 15, 2016 will be considered by the Planning Commission and Board during their deliberations, but may not receive written responses as part of the FEIR.

PUBLIC HEARINGS

All persons interested in the DEIR have the opportunity to provide comments at the Planning Commission meeting on August 11, 2016. The Planning Commission meeting will be recorded. The purpose of this public hearing is to provide opportunity for the public to submit comments on the DEIR. The DEIR simply analyzes the potential environmental impacts of the proposed Project. It does not “approve” the proposed Project, nor does the Planning Commission intend to consider or take action on the proposed Project at this meeting. Therefore, this public hearing is not a forum to debate the contents of the proposed Project.

Subsequent public hearings will be scheduled with the Planning Commission and the Board of Supervisors to discuss the proposed Project and contents of the Final EIR. These hearings are the appropriate forum to discuss the merits of the proposed changes embodied in the General Plan Biological Resources Policy Update and Oak Resources Management Plan. Written comments on the merits of the proposed Project may be submitted at any time, including prior to or during upcoming Planning Commission and Board hearings on the proposed Project. Ultimately, adoption of any of the proposed changes contained in the General Plan Biological Resources Policy Update and Oak Resources Management Plan is a policy decision that will be informed by the FEIR, public testimony, and other factors.

PUBLIC NOTIFICATION

Public notification of the release of the DEIR and the Planning Commission public hearing included the following:

- Legal ads published in the Mountain Democrat and Tahoe Tribune on June 29, 2016, and in the Georgetown Gazette on June 30, 2016;
- Notice of Completion of the DEIR filed with the State Clearinghouse with copies of the DEIR to be distributed to the following agencies: Air Resources Board, Fish and Wildlife (Region 2), State Department of Forestry and Fire Protection, Regional Water Quality Control Board;

- Notice of Availability (NOA) filed and posted in the County Recorder's Office; and posted in County Buildings A, B and C;
- NOA, DEIR and other related documents posted on the dedicated project webpage on the County website:
<http://www.edcgov.us/Government/LongRangePlanning/Environmental/BioPolicyUpdate.aspx>
- NOA posted on the County's website home page under News and Hot Topics;
- Press Release distributed to the County's media list and posted on the County website;
- Copies of the NOA and DEIR provided to all the County public libraries for public viewing, and available at the Planning Services Public Counter in Building C;
- NOA mailed to Long Range Planning's mail list (including tribal consultation and military contacts);
- Email notifications sent to Long Range Planning's email subscription list (over 1,300 subscribers)

Shawna Purvines, Principal Planner
Community Development Agency, Long Range Planning Division
August 11, 2016