

California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Initial Study/Mitigated Negative Declaration

- ▶ Project analyzed for environmental impacts
- ▶ Draft Initial Study/Mitigated Negative Declaration (IS/MND) prepared
- ▶ Potentially significant impacts identified
 - ▶ Aesthetics
 - ▶ Air Quality
 - ▶ Biological Resources
 - ▶ Cultural Resources
 - ▶ Geology and Soils
 - ▶ Hazards/Hazardous Materials
 - ▶ Hydrology and Water Quality
 - ▶ Noise
 - ▶ Transportation
 - ▶ Tribal Cultural Resources
 - ▶ Wildfire
- ▶ All impacts can be reduced to less-than-significant levels

- Good evening
- I'm Geoff Reilly, a Senior Environmental Planner with WRA
- Also with me here tonight is Mr. Nick Brinton, a Wildlife and Fisheries Biologist from WRA
- WRA was hired by the Town to prepare an Initial Study pursuant to CEQA for the project
- to address any significant impacts of the project and to determine if the project would qualify for a Mitigated Negative Declaration (MND) or require an Environmental Impact Report (EIR)
- Initial Study addresses 20 environmental topics required by Appendix G of the CEQA Guidelines
- Here is a list of all of the potentially significant environmental impacts identified in the Initial Study
- With mitigation measures included in the Initial Study all impacts can be reduced to less-than-significant levels
- And therefore it was determined the project qualifies for a MND and that an EIR is not required

Draft Initial Study/Mitigated Negative Declaration

- ▶ 37-day public review period from December 16, 2019 to January 22, 2020
- ▶ Notice of Availability and Intent to Adopt a MND
- ▶ Notice of Completion (NOC)

- The Draft IS/MND was published for public review for 37 days starting on December 16, 2019 and ending on January 22, 2020
- A Notice of Availability and Intent to Adopt an IS/MND was circulated to interested parties and posted on the Town's website along with the Draft IS/MND and its Technical Appendices.
- The Draft IS/MND was also made available at the Town Hall lobby
- A Notice of Completion (NOC) form along with copies of the Draft IS/MND were sent to the State Clearinghouse soliciting review and comment by relevant State agencies.

Comments on the Draft Initial Study/Mitigated Negative Declaration

- ▶ State Clearinghouse Letter (January 24, 2020)
- ▶ One comment letter received on Draft IS/MND from Mr. Frank Egger
 - ▶ Public Review Notice
 - ▶ Biological Resources
 - ▶ Hydrology
 - ▶ Greenhouse Gas Emissions
 - ▶ Aesthetics
 - ▶ Recreation
 - ▶ Utilities

- The State Clearinghouse acknowledged that no State agencies provided comments on the Draft IS/MND
- and that the Town had complied with State Clearinghouse Review requirements for draft environmental documents pursuant to CEQA.
- During the 37-day public review period, one comment letter on the Draft IS/MND was submitted to the Town by Mr. Frank Egger.
- The comments focused mainly on the topics listed on the screen: Public Review Notice, Biological Resources, Hydrology, Greenhouse Gas Emissions, Aesthetics, Recreation and Utilities
- The majority of the comments focused on Biological Resources, including the following species: Northern Spotted Owl, fish (steelhead and coho salmon), foothill yellow-legged frog, tree removal, and wildlife movement

Final Initial Study/Mitigated Negative Declaration

- ▶ Final IS/MND prepared
 - ▶ Draft IS/MND
 - ▶ Responses to Comments
 - ▶ Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program (MMRP)

- A Final IS/MND was prepared to address comments provided on the Draft IS/MND
- In addition to the responses to comments, the Final IS/MND includes the Draft IS/MND and a Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program (MMRP)
- No edits to the Draft IS/MND were required based on the responses to comments
- The Final IS/MND does not describe a project having any new or substantially more severe impacts than those identified and analyzed in the Draft IS/MND
- Therefore, in accordance with CEQA Guidelines Section 15073.5, recirculation of a Draft IS/MND is not required nor is the preparation of an EIR
- The Final IS/MND was circulated to Mr. Egger and other interested parties on the Town's mailing list in advance of this meeting

Final Initial Study/Mitigated Negative Declaration

- ▶ Next Steps
 - ▶ Adoption of IS/MND
 - ▶ Project approval
 - ▶ Notice of Determination (NOD)

- So the next steps in terms of CEQA include:
 - The Town, as the CEQA Lead Agency, consideration of adopting the Final IS/MND as adequate under CEQA
 - Considering whether to approve the project after adopting the IS/MND
 - Submitting a CEQA Notice of Determination (NOD) form with the County Clerk within 5 working days of project approval
 - And then sending a copy of the NOD to the State Clearinghouse

National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA)

- ▶ Caltrans Local Assistance
- ▶ Preliminary Environmental Study (PES) Form and Field Review
- ▶ NEPA Categorical Exclusion
 - ▶ Technical Reports and Memorandums
- ▶ Public Outreach
- ▶ NEPA Compliance Completed October 1, 2019

- Lastly, I want to give a quick overview of the NEPA process for the project
- Compliance with NEPA was required because the project is federally funded
- Caltrans Local Assistance served as the NEPA Lead Agency for the project
- preparation of a PES form and field review to determine what level of NEPA analysis would be required for the project
- It was ultimately determined that the project would qualify for a NEPA Categorical Exclusion
- That is supported by various technical reports and memorandums, such as a Natural Environment Study and Biological Assessment
- This process included several public outreach meetings with the public
- Ultimately in a letter dated October 1, 2019, Caltrans confirmed that the CE had been reviewed and approved in conformance with NEPA