

Parks and Recreation River Management Plan



El Dorado County River Management Plan Update DRAFT - Environmental Impact Report

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1.1 PURPOSE OF THIS ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT

The California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) requires that an Environmental Impact Report (EIR) be prepared for any project to be undertaken or approved by a State or local

agency that may have a significant effect on the environment (Public Resources Code (PRC) Section 21002.1). This report, together with its appendices, and documents incorporated by reference in Section 1.2, constitutes a Draft EIR (DEIR) regarding the proposed El Dorado County River Management Plan Update (Project) located in located in western El Dorado County, within the South Fork of the American River (South Fork) corridor, between Chili Bar Dam and Salmon Falls Road. Figure 1-1 shows the regional location of the South Fork. Figure 1-2 is an index of detailed aerial photos of the project area presented in Figures 1-3, 1-4, 1-5, 1-6, 1-7, and 1-8. The El Dorado County Board of Supervisors (County) is updating the El Dorado County River Management Plan (RMP), which focuses on whitewater recreation on the South Fork of the American River. This update process is authorized by County Ordinance 4365. This ordinance and subsequent Board actions also directed that the update process focus on whitewater recreation. A copy of Ordinance 4365 is provided in Appendix A. The County has been designated as the Lead Agency for the purpose of CEQA compliance activities associated with the Project.

This DEIR is intended to evaluate the potentially significant effects of the proposed Project, and provide sufficient environmental documentation to allow the County to make an informed decision on the proposed Project.

The specific purposes of this DEIR are to:

- _ Identify potential significant environmental impacts associated with the adoption and implementation of the proposed Project;
- _ Identify mitigation measures that would reduce or avoid significant adverse impacts;
- _ Identify any potential adverse impacts of the proposed Project that are unmitigable;
- _ Present feasible alternatives to the proposed Project and to assess their potential impacts relative to those of the proposed Project; and
- _ Suggest a mitigation monitoring/reporting system for the mitigation measures recommended in the DEIR (to be prepared separately).

Overall, the function of this DEIR is to inform the County, resource and permitting agencies, and the public of the environmental consequences of approving and implementing the proposed Project.

1.2 INCORPORATION BY REFERENCE

This DEIR incorporates information, data and evaluations from documents prepared in recent years. In accordance with Section 15150 of the State CEQA Guidelines, the following documents are incorporated herein by reference and are available for review at the following location:

El Dorado County, Department of General Services

3000 Fairlane Court, Suite 1

Placerville, CA 95667.

_ El Dorado County River Management Plan Phase I Report, April 1996. (Phase I Report)

_ El Dorado County River Management Plan Phase II Report, April 1997. (Phase II Report)

1.3 DEIR REVIEW AND CONSIDERATION PROCESS

The DEIR for the Project will be subject to a 45-day public review period. Interested individuals, organizations, and agencies can provide written comments on the document during this same review period. During the public review period, the DEIR will be circulated for review by trustee and responsible agencies. Responsible agencies are those agencies, other than the lead agency, which have discretionary approval over the Project. Trustee agencies are those agencies which have jurisdiction by law over natural resources affected by the Project which are held in trust for the people of the State of California. Prior to the preparation of this DEIR, a Notice of Preparation (NOP) was prepared and distributed to trustee and responsible agencies and the public for their comment. A copy of the NOP is included in Appendix B. Appendix C contains written comments submitted in response to the NOP. Copies of the DEIR will be made available to the public at the County office listed below:

El Dorado County, Department of General Services	El Dorado County Planning Department
3000 Fairlane Court, Suite 1	2850 Fairlane Court
Placerville, CA 95667	Placerville, CA 95667
El Dorado County Board of Supervisors	Cameron Park Library
330 Fair Lane	2500 Country Club Drive
Placerville, CA 95667	Cameron Park, CA 95682
Georgetown Library	El Dorado County Main Library
P.O. Box 55	345 Fair Lane
Georgetown, CA 95634	Placerville, CA 95667.

The federal, State, and local responsible and trustee agencies for the Project include:

Federal

_ Bureau of Land Management

State

_ Office of Historic Preservation

_ Department of Fish and Game

_ Department of Forestry and Fire Protection

_ Department of Parks and Recreation

_ State Water Resources Control Board

_ Regional Water Quality Control Board - Central Valley Region

Local

_ El Dorado County

 ï Department of Transportation

 ï Planning Department

 ï Fire Department

 ï Sheriffs' Department

 ï Air Pollution Control District

 ï Environmental Health Services.

Comments and questions on the DEIR received during the review period will be compiled in a Response to Comments Document. The DEIR and the Response to Comments Document will constitute the Final EIR (FEIR) for the Project.

After examining the FEIR, the County will determine whether or not to certify that the FEIR has been completed in compliance with CEQA, that the FEIR was presented to the decision-making body of the County (i.e., Board of Supervisors), and that the decision-making body reviewed and considered the information contained in the FEIR prior to approving, modifying, or rejecting the Project.

In order for a lead agency to approve a project (after certifying the FEIR), it must prepare written findings for each significant adverse environmental effect identified in the DEIR. Findings must be accompanied by a brief explanation of the rationale for each finding and should indicate that either: (1) changes or alterations have been required in, or incorporated into the project which mitigate or avoid the significant effects on the environment; (2) those changes or alterations are the responsibility and jurisdiction of another public agency and have been, or can and should be, adopted by that agency; or (3) specific economic, legal, social, technological, or other considerations, including the consideration for the provision of employment opportunities for highly trained workers, make infeasible the mitigation measures or alternatives identified in the DEIR.

1.4 ORGANIZATION OF THIS DEIR

Following this Introduction is Section 2 (Executive Summary), which briefly summarizes the Project, lists impacts identified and elaborated on in the environmental issue sections, identifies areas of controversy and issues to be resolved, and provides a summary of alternatives. Section 3 provides a description of the proposed Project.

Sections 4 through 15 contain the topical analysis of potential impacts that could result from implementing the proposed Project. Each of these sections is organized into the following:

- _ An introduction on the environmental issue under consideration;
- _ The setting with respect to that environmental issue;
- _ Specification of significance criteria (significance criteria were based on CEQA Guidelines Section 15382 and CEQA Guidelines Appendix G: Significant Effects);
- _ A discussion of the impacts and recommended mitigation measures; and
- _ A discussion of effects found not to be significant.

Section 16 contains discussions of cumulative impacts, growth inducing impacts, and other discussions required by CEQA.

Section 17 describes the alternatives to the proposed Project and compares their relative impacts to those of the Project. This section also provides a brief description of alternatives considered but not addressed in detail.

Section 18 identifies the agencies, organizations, and individuals consulted in preparing the DEIR.

The authors of this document are listed in Section 19, and Section 20 lists the references cited. The appendices to this document are included at the end of this document; see the Table of Contents for a complete list of appendices. The key topics covered in this EIR to the appropriate CEQA regulatory sections are cross-referenced in Table 1-1.

1.5 POTENTIAL PERMITS AND APPROVALS REQUIRED

Table 1-2 presents a list of potential federal, State, and local agencies that may use this EIR in the adoption or implementation of the proposed Project and the permits and approvals for which it may be used.

TABLE 1-1 KEY EIR SECTIONS CROSS-REFERENCED TO CEQA REGULATORY GUIDELINES		
Key EIR Section	Applicable CEQA Guideline	Topic Location Within the EIR Document
Table of Contents or Index	§15122 - "An EIR shall contain at least a table of contents or an index to assist readers in finding the analysis of different subjects and issues..."	The Table of Contents is at the beginning of the EIR document
Executive Summary	§15123 - "An EIR shall contain a brief summary of the proposed actions and its consequences..."	Section 2
Project Description: A. Location B. Objective C. Technical Characteristics D. EIR use	§15124 - "The description of the project shall contain information needed for evaluation and review of the environmental impact..."	A., B., and C. - Section 3 D. - Sections 1.3 and 1.5
Environmental Setting	§15125 - "An EIR must include a description of the environment in the vicinity of the project, as it existed before the commencement of the project, from both a local and regional perspective..."	Sections 4 - 15
Environmental Impacts: A. Significant Effects	§15126 - "All phases of a project must be considered when evaluating its impact on the environment: planning, acquisition, development, and operation..."	A. - Sections 4 - 15 B. - Section 16.1

<p>B. Significant Effects Which Cannot Be Avoided</p> <p>C. Mitigation Measures</p> <p>D. Alternatives</p> <p>E. Relationship Between Local Short-term Uses of Man's Environment and the Maintenance and Enhancement of Long-term Productivity</p> <p>F. Significant Irreversible Environmental Changes</p> <p>G. Growth Inducing Impacts</p>		<p>C. - Sections 4 - 15</p> <p>D. - Section 17</p> <p>E. - Repealed 1994</p> <p>F. - Section 16.5</p> <p>G. - Section 16.2</p>
<p>Insignificant Environmental Effects</p>	<p>§15128 - "An EIR shall contain a statement briefly indicating the reasons that various possible significant effects of a project were determined not to be significant and were therefore not discussed in detail in the EIR..."</p>	<p>Sections 4 - 15 and Section 16.3</p>
<p>Organizations and People Consulted</p>	<p>§15129 - "The EIR shall identify all federal, state, or local agencies, other organizations, and private individuals consulted in preparing the draft EIR, and the persons, firm, or agency preparing the draft EIR..."</p>	<p>Section 18 and 19</p>
<p>Cumulative Impacts</p>	<p>§15130 - "The discussion of cumulative impacts shall reflect the severity of the impacts and their likelihood of occurrence..."</p>	<p>Section 16.4</p>
<p>TABLE 1-2</p> <p>POTENTIAL PERMITS AND APPROVALS FOR THE</p> <p>EL DORADO COUNTY RIVER MANAGEMENT PLAN UPDATE</p>		
<p>Agency/Department</p>	<p>Permit/Approval</p>	<p>Required For</p>
<p>FEDERAL AGENCIES</p>		
<p>Army Corps of Engineers</p>	<p>Individual/Nationwide Section 404 Permit (Clean Water Act, 33 USC 1341)</p>	<p>_ Discharge of dredge/fill into Waters of the United States, including wetlands</p>

Bureau of Land Management (BLM)	Commercial Outfitters Special Use Permit	_ Commercial rafting on the river.	
STATE AGENCIES			
State Water Resources Control Board	General Construction Activity Stormwater Permit	_ Stormwater discharges associated with construction activity	
Regional Water Quality Control Board	401 Certification (Clean Water Act, 33 USC 1341. If the project requires Army Corps of Engineers 404 permit)	_ Discharge into waters and wetlands (see U.S. Army Corps Section 404 Permit)	
Department of Parks and Recreation	Commercial Whitewater Boating Special Use Permit	_ Commercial rafting on the river.	
Public Utilities Commission	Class C Certificate for Shuttle Bus Operations	_ Shuttle bus operation	
State Department of Fish and Game	Lake/Streambed Alteration Agreement (California Fish and Game Code Section 1601)	_ Change in natural state of river, stream, lake (includes road or land construction across a natural streambed)	
LOCAL AGENCIES			
El Dorado County	Road encroachment	_ Activities within county rights-of-way	
Department of Transportation	No Parking Ordinance	_ Restricting parking	
	Grading permit	_ Excavation and fill activities	
El Dorado County Building Department	Building permit	_ Constructing structures	
El Dorado County Planning Commission	River Use Permit for Commercial River Use	_ Commercial rafting on the river.	
	Special Use Permits	_ Change to camps, accesses, parking areas, picnic sites on private property	
El Dorado County Planning Department	Special Use Permits	_ Minor revisions to special use permits	
El Dorado County Board of Supervisors	Ordinances/Resolutions	_ Regulations regarding commercial outfitter operations, safety, special use zones, sanitation and pollution control.	

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SECTION 2 - SUMMARY

2.1 PROJECT DESCRIPTION SUMMARY

This document is an Environmental Impact Report (EIR) on the Project, prepared in compliance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). It provides analysis of the potential environmental effects which would be associated with the implementation of the proposed Project.

As described previously, the El Dorado County Board of Supervisors is updating the El Dorado County River Management Plan (RMP), which focuses on whitewater recreation on the South Fork of the American River.

2.2 IMPACT SUMMARY

This DEIR addresses in detail each of the potential impacts identified in the Revised Initial Study prepared for the Project (see Appendix N). No project specific significant unavoidable impacts have been identified. Significant unavoidable cumulative impacts have been identified for vegetation/wildlife and social impact/land use, these impacts are described below in Table 2-1. All other impacts would be less than significant or could be mitigated to a less-than-significant level. Table 2.1 provides a summary of environmental impacts of the Project.

2.3 AREAS OF CONTROVERSY KNOWN TO THE COUNTY AND ISSUES TO BE RESOLVED

Section 15123(b) of the CEQA Guidelines requires identification of areas of controversy known to the Lead Agency and issues to be resolved.

The proposed Project has generated some controversy. The issues most often raised are:

- _ Potential environmental effects related to increased river use (e.g., water quality, noise, and transportation and circulation).

Table 2-1			
Summary of Potentially Significant Environmental Effects			
Impact	Significance Before Mitigation ¹	Mitigation Measures	Significance After Mitigation ¹
SECTION 4 - LAND USE			

RMAC Alternative (Proposed Project)			
<p>Impact 4.3.2-1</p> <p>The proposed Project would be inconsistent with Program 10.2.2.2.1 of the El Dorado County General Plan.</p>	<p>S</p>	<p>Mitigation Measure 4.3.2-1</p> <p>No mitigation is proposed. This impact would remain significant and unavoidable.</p>	<p>S</p>
<p>Impact 4.3.2-2</p> <p><i>Increased river use could result in an increased occurrence of trespass on private lands within the river corridor.</i></p>	<p>S</p>	<p>Mitigation Measure 4.3.2-2</p> <p>To reduce the occurrence of trespass the County shall:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Increase prosecution of trespass violations; b) Increase on-river and roadway signage to indicate private property boundaries and to warn trespassers of prosecution; c) Increase towing of vehicles parked in unauthorized areas; and d) Provide immediate response, towing and substantial fines and/or prosecution when property owners report vehicles blocking access to driveways. 	<p>LS</p>
<p>RMAC Alternative With Citizen's Committee Use Management Actions and Threshold Levels (Alternative 12)</p>			
<p>Impacts and mitigation measures for Alternative 12 are similar to those identified for the proposed Project. However, Impact 4.3.2-2 could be lessened if use levels were to reach thresholds which would require management actions to reduce river use.</p>			
<p>Planning Commission Alternative (Alternative 13)</p>			
<p>Impacts and mitigation measures for the Planning Commission Alternative are similar to those identified for the proposed Project. However, Impact 4.3.2-2 would be somewhat less due to a slightly lower expected annual growth rate under this Alternative. Use levels could also be restricted based on property owner complaints, further reducing the potential for trespass occurrence under this alternative. In addition, this alternative would result in the collection of funds for private boaters and campground surcharge fees which would be used to provide additional Parks and Recreation and Planning Department staff, thereby reducing Impact 4.3.2-1.</p>			
<p>Planning Commission Alternative With Citizen's Committee Use Management Actions and Threshold Levels (Alternative 14)</p>			

Impacts and mitigation measures for Alternative 14 are similar to those identified for the proposed Project. However, Impact 4.3.2-2 could be lessened if use levels were to reach thresholds which would require management actions to reduce river use. In addition, this alternative would result in the collection of funds for private boaters and campground surcharge fees which would be used to provide additional Parks and Recreation and Planning Department staff, thereby reducing Impact 4.3.2-1.

SECTION 5 - GEOLOGY AND SOILS

RMAC Alternative (Proposed Project)

Impact 5.3.2-1	S	<i>Mitigation Measure 5.3.2-1</i>	LS
<p>The construction of new facilities could result in temporary increases in wind and water erosion.</p>		<p>(a) The County shall ensure that contracts for grading and other activities resulting in ground disturbance require the contractor to implement airborne dust suppression strategies. The contractor shall:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (1) Submit a construction emission/dust control plan for approval by the County prior to ground disturbance activities; (2) Water all disturbed areas in late morning and at the end of each day during clearing, grading, earth-moving, and other site preparation activities; (3) Increase the watering frequency whenever winds at the Project site exceed 15 mph; (4) Water all dirt stockpile areas; (5) Use tarpaulins or other effective covers for haul trucks that travel on public streets and roadways; (6) Sweep streets adjacent to the construction entrance at the end of each day; and (7) Control construction and other vehicle speeds on-site to no more than 15 mph. <p>(b) Mitigation measures 6.3.2-1 (see Section 6, Hydrology and Water Quality) will mitigate soil erosion caused by water runoff.</p>	