

F. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

This section summarizes the CPUC's program of public notice and participation to maximize agency and public input for the Los Banos-Gates 500 kV Transmission Project environmental review process.

F.1 EIR SCOPING PROCESS

The scoping process for the Los Banos-Gates 500 kV Transmission Project EIR consisted of four elements:

- (1) Publication of a Notice of Preparation (NOP) of an EIR and Notice of Public Scoping Meetings soliciting comments from affected public agencies, as required by CEQA, as well as from the public;
- (2) Public scoping meetings;
- (3) Review of scoping comments; and
- (4) Establishment of an Internet web site, electronic mail address, a telephone hotline, and local Information Repositories.

Each of these elements is described below.

F.1.1 NOTICE OF PREPARATION

The CPUC issued the NOP on July 10, 2001 and distributed it to the State Clearinghouse and city, county, state and federal agencies, affected state and federal legislators, and local elected officials. There were approximately 200 copies of the NOP mailed out. A 30-day period for interested parties to submit comments regarding the content of the EIR ended on August 9, 2001.

F.1.2 SCOPING MEETINGS

Two public scoping meetings were conducted as part of the EIR scoping process to receive input regarding the scope and content of this EIR, as well as alternatives and mitigation measures which should be considered. The following scoping meetings were held:

- July 24, 2001 at 1:30 pm at the Los Banos Council Chambers in Los Banos City Hall
- July 24, 2001 at 7:00 pm at the Harris Ranch on Interstate 5 in Fresno County

F.1.3 SUMMARY OF SCOPING COMMENTS

Table F-1 summarizes the scoping letters received.

Table F-1 Summary of Scoping Letters

#	Commenter	Summary of Comment Letter
AGENCIES		
1	California Department of Transportation, District 6 Office of Transportation Planning, Moses Stites	An encroachment permit must be obtained for any work within the State right-of-way. The permit application must include engineering drawings of all work and documentation of Cultural, biological, and hazardous waste surveys. CalTrans must be provided with the final environmental document and Biological Opinion from U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service prior to issuance of the encroachment permit.
2	California Regional Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB), Central Valley Region, Douglas K. Patteson	The State Agency requests proper description of solid and/or liquid waste disposal associated with the project in the EIR and that all permits and notices under RWQCB's jurisdiction are submitted and complied with prior to and during project construction.
3	San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District, Thomas E. Jordan	The project will contribute to the overall decline in air quality due to operation of construction equipment and movement of earth during grading activities. The route selected does not impact the level of emissions. The District's staff is available to provide additional information regarding mitigation measures to reduce oxides of nitrogen and PM-10 emissions.
4	Westlands Water District, Dave Ciapponi	Westlands Water District (Westlands) supports construction of the 500 kV transmission lines and prefers the proposed project. Westlands requests consultation during design to ensure that their facilities and systems are identified and protected during construction.
5	Department of Conservation, Division of Oil, Gas and Geothermal Resources	The transmission line route may cross through several oil fields east of Coalinga. Adequate clearance must be maintained between existing wells and transmission towers and conductors.
PRIVATE PARTIES		
6	William J. Mouren Farming & Livestock, Leland T. Hauln	The landowner is concerned with their property rights and potential loss of beneficial use to land that the transmission lines would traverse.

F.2 PUBLIC NOTIFICATION

F.2.1 NOTIFICATION FOR SCOPING MEETINGS

The dates, times and locations of the two scoping meetings were included in the NOP mailed to affected agencies and other parties interested in the CPUC's General Proceeding for PG&E's application, about two weeks in advance of the meetings. This information was also posted on the CPUC's project website and announced on the recording of the project hotline.

Scoping meeting notices were published on July 18, 2001 in three newspapers in the project area: Hanford Sentinel, Fresno Bee, and Merced Sun Star.

F.2.2 NOTICE OF RELEASE OF DRAFT EIR AND PROPERTY OWNER NOTIFICATION

A Notice of Release of the Draft Supplemental EIR will be sent to property owners and occupants on or adjacent to PG&E's Proposed Project and the alternative routes in October 2001, including information on how to review or obtain copies of the Draft Supplemental EIR.

F.3 SEIR INFORMATION AND REPOSITORY SITES

Placing documents in "repository" sites can be an effective way of providing ongoing information about the project to a large number of people. Therefore, five repository sites in the Proposed Project area

were established, and documents are also available at the CPUC in San Francisco. EIR-related documents, including the NOP and the Draft Supplemental EIR have been made available upon their release to the public at the locations listed below.

Coalinga District Library
305 North Fourth Street
Coalinga, CA
(559) 935-1676

Huron Public Library
26050 "O" Street
Huron, CA
(559) 945-2284

Hanford Public Library
401 N. Douty Street
Hanford, CA
(559) 582-0261

Los Banos Public Library
1312 Seventh Street
Los Banos, CA
(209) 826-5254

Fresno Free Library
2420 Mariposa Street
Fresno, CA
(559) 488-3195

CPUC Central Files
505 Van Ness Avenue
San Francisco, CA
(415) 703-2045

A telephone hotline for project information has been established at (559) 272-2107. This number receives both voice messages and faxes. EIR information is also available on the Internet at the following address: <http://www.cpuc.ca.gov/Environment/info/aspen/path15/path15.html>.

F.4 PUBLIC REVIEW PERIOD

In compliance with CEQA Guidelines, the CPUC provides a public review period of 45 days for the Draft Supplemental EIR. This public review period commences upon release of the Draft Supplemental EIR, on October 5, 2001, and goes through November 19, 2001. Comments on the Draft Supplemental EIR may be submitted via facsimile transmission on the EIR Hotline at (559) 272-2107, e-mail at the EIR e-mail address (Path15@aspeneg.com), or postal mail at:

Billie Blanchard
California Public Utilities Commission
c/o Aspen Environmental Group
235 Montgomery Street, Suite 800
San Francisco, CA 94104

Written comments must be received or postmarked by November 19, 2001. Please remember to include your name and return address with your written comments.