

F. Public Participation and Notification

Public involvement provides an opportunity to involve concerned citizens, agencies, organizations, and other stakeholders in the environmental review process. The public participation and notification processes for the proposed Project focus on two areas of CEQA: (1) public scoping and (2) Draft EIR public review. This section presents the basic legal and procedural requirements for public involvement in the CEQA environmental review process, which is also summarized in Table F-1 below, and then describes the specific outreach methods that were used for this EIR in order to comply with these basic requirements.

Table F-1. Legal/Procedural Requirements for Public Participation in the EIR Process

Public Participation Phase in the EIR/EIS Process	Section Where Requirements are Addressed
Notice of Preparation	
CEQA Requirements <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prepare and file NOP with SCH, responsible and trustee agencies, and federal agencies, others requesting it in writing (CCR §15082(a); PRC §21080.4(a); §21092.2). • Send NOP by method of transmittal that provides a record of receipt [CCR §15082(a)(3)]. CPUC Requirement <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make any public environmental documents available to members of the public [CPUC Rule 17.1(f)(4)]. 	Section F.1
Scoping Process	
CEQA Requirements <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 30-day public scoping period begins with issuance of NOP [CCR §15082(b)]. • Formal scoping meetings are optional [CCR §15083], unless the project is of statewide, regional, or areawide significance (CCR §15206), and then lead agency conducts one scoping meeting [CCR §15082(c)(1); PRC §21083.9(a)]. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Provide notice of meeting to affected county/city, responsible agency, public agency with jurisdiction, and organization or individual that provided written request [CCR §15082(c)(1)]. • Joint EIR/EIS requires scoping [CCR §15083]. 	Section F.2
Notices of Completion and Availability	
CEQA Requirements <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Publish NOA of Draft EIR [CCR §15087(a)]; send NOC to SCH [CCR §15085(a)]. • Distribute NOA to organizations and individuals that requested notice in writing, and through <i>at least one</i> of the following; publish in general circulation newspaper, post on/off project site, mail to owners/occupants of property contiguous to project [CCR §15087(a)]. • Post NOA at county clerk for 30 days and distribute to other agencies with jurisdiction over the project or locations [CCR §15087(d) and (h)]. CPUC Requirements <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Send NOA to: affected county and municipal planning commissions and legislative bodies; State highway engineer; organizations and individuals previously requesting notice; owners of land that would be on or adjacent to project [CPUC Rule 17.1(2)(b)]. • Publish NOA ad in general circulation newspaper(s) at least once a week for two successive weeks [CPUC Rule 17.1(2)(b)]. 	Section F.3

Table F-1. Legal/Procedural Requirements for Public Participation in the EIR Process

Draft EIR Review and Public Hearings	
<p>CEQA Requirements</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Submit Draft EIR to SCH for review [CCR §15205(b)]. • Normal review period is 45 days for EIR [CCR §15087(e); §15105(a); §15205(d)]. • Consult with and request comments from responsible and trustee agencies; other agencies with jurisdiction; affected cities or counties; and affected transportation agencies [CCR §15086(a)]. • Lead agency may consult directly with any person with special expertise with the project, any person who has filed a written request for notice, and any person identified by the applicant [CCR §15086(b)]. • Formal public hearings are encouraged, but not required [CCR §15087(i); §15202(a)]. Public comments may be restricted to written communication [CCR §15202(a)]. <p>CPUC Requirements</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make Draft EIRs available to public; may charge actual reproduction and handling costs [CPUC Rule 17.1(4)]. • Hold public hearing for Draft EIR for which a protest or motion is received, unless the CPUC, presiding officer or ALJ indicates otherwise [CPUC Rule 17.1(g)]. 	Section F.4
Final EIR	
<p>CEQA Requirements</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lead agency <i>may</i> provide public review period for Final EIR, but it is not required [CCR §15089(b)]. • Provide copy of responses to any public agency that submitted comments at least 10 days prior to certification of the Final EIR [PRC §21092.5(a)]. • File NOD with SCH [CCR §15094(c); §15094 (d)] • NOD includes: project description and location, lead agency name, approval date, significant environmental effects, statement that EIR was prepared and certified pursuant to CEQA, mitigation measures and adoption of mitigation monitoring plan/program or statement of overriding considerations, findings, address of Final EIR, record of project approval [CCR §15091; §15094(b)]. • File NOD with SCH for public inspection and posting for at least 30 days [CCR §15094(f)]. • Filing of the NOD with the SCH starts a 30-day statute of limitations on court challenges to the project's approval [CCR §15094(g)]. <p>CPUC Requirements</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Copies of the Final EIR should be served upon all parties to the proceeding [CPUC Rule 17.1(3)(b)]. • Make Final EIR available to public; may charge for actual reproduction and handling costs [CPUC Rule 17.1(4)]. 	Section F.5
Repository Sites	
<p>CEQA Requirements</p> <p>Make EIR and project documents available at designated repository sites [CCR §15087(c)(5) and §15087(g)].</p>	Section F.6

F.1 Notices of Preparation

CEQA requires State lead agencies to prepare and distribute a Notice of Preparation (NOP), a notice informing interested parties that the lead agency will be preparing an EIR. The purpose of an NOP is to notify interested parties of the project or action and to solicit their participation in determining the scope of the EIR.

CEQA Guidelines state that immediately after deciding that an EIR is necessary, the State lead agency must prepare and send the NOP to the State Clearinghouse (Office of Planning and Research), responsible and trustee agencies, and involved federal agencies [CEQA Guidelines, CCR §15082(a)]. The California Public Resources Code further indicates that the NOP must be sent to those requesting it in writing [PRC §21092.2]

The NOP must include sufficient information that describes the project, including project location, and the project's potential environmental effects [CEQA Guidelines, CCR §15082(a)(1)]. The review period during which interested parties may submit comments on the NOP is 30 days from when the State Clearinghouse and responsible and trustee agencies receive it [CEQA Guidelines, CCR §15082(b)].

In addition to the CEQA requirements regarding NOP distribution described above, the CPUC also requires that all environmental documents, including the NOP, be generally available to members of the public [CPUC Rule 17.1(f)(4)], who may be charged for the cost of reproduction and handling (consistent with PRC §21092.2).

Based upon the above State requirements, a NOP was prepared and distributed for the proposed Project. The details of the Project's NOP are described below.

The CPUC issued a NOP for the proposed Project on April 27, 2006. Consistent with CEQA Guidelines §15082, the NOP summarized the proposed Project, stated the CPUC's intention to prepare an EIR, and requested comments from interested parties. The NOP additionally described the EIR process, the proposed scope of the EIR, listed and described possible alternatives, identified public repository sites and other information sources (Project website, phone/fax hotline, and e-mail address) where Project information and documents were posted; and described the proposed Project's scoping process and details of the scoping meetings.

The NOP was filed with the State Clearinghouse, Office of Planning and Research, on April 27, 2006 (SCH# 2006041160), which began a 30-day comment period. The review period for the NOP ended on May 26, 2006. Over 450 copies of the NOP were distributed to federal, State, regional, and local agencies, elected officials, and other interested parties. Approximately 130 copies of the NOP were distributed to federal, State, regional, and local agencies, Native American tribal representatives, and elected officials, while the remainder were mailed to local organizations and property owners in the vicinity of the proposed Project. Five additional copies of the NOP were delivered to the local repository sites. The NOP was mailed via certified mail to federal, State, and local agencies. The NOP can be found in Appendix 1 of this EIR.

F.2 Scoping Process

Scoping, or the process of involving the public and agencies in determining the scope and content of an EIR, is encouraged and utilized under CEQA. However, the scoping process is optional and differs according to the lead agency. Scoping is an effective way to solicit and address the environmental concerns of the public, affected agencies, and other interested parties. In addition to the purpose of informing the public about the proposed Project, the scoping process is also meant to achieve the following: (1) identify potentially significant environmental impacts for consideration in the EIR; (2) identify possible mitigation measures for consideration in the EIR; (3) identify alternatives to the proposed Project for evaluation in the EIR; and (4) compile a notification list of public agencies and individuals interested in future Project meetings and notices. Scoping can take many different forms, including public and agency consultation, scoping meetings, scoping report, and notices such as the NOP. The following sections describe some of these scoping methods in more detail.

Under CEQA, the State lead agency is authorized and encouraged to consult with interested agencies, organizations, or members of the public either before or during preparation of an EIR, but it is not a required process [CEQA Guidelines §15083]. However, when the State lead agency is preparing a joint EIR/EIS with a federal agency, scoping would be required in order to meet the federal NEPA requirements discussed below.

CEQA also states that in addition to complying with other noticing requirements, the lead agency should, when possible, make environmental information available on the internet [CEQA Guidelines §15201].

The scoping process for the Antelope Transmission Project Segments 2 and 3 EIR consisted of four main elements, which are listed below and described in more detail above and in the following sections.

- Publish a Notice of Preparation (NOP) of an EIR, which marks the beginning of the 30-day scoping period (Section F.1), announces public scoping meetings, and solicits comments from affected public agencies and members of the public.
- Conduct public scoping meetings.
- Summarize scoping comments in a Scoping Report.
- Establish an Internet web site, electronic mail address, a telephone hotline, and local EIR information repositories.

As is encouraged by CEQA, the scoping process was intended and developed to inform the public and allow interested parties to express their concerns regarding the proposed Project, thereby ensuring that relevant opinions and comments are considered in the environmental analysis for the EIR. Scoping is an effective way to solicit and address the environmental concerns of the public, affected agencies, and other interested parties. Members of the public, relevant federal, State, regional and local agencies, interests groups, community organizations, and other interested parties were given the opportunity to participate in the scoping process through attendance at scoping meetings and by providing comments or recommendations regarding issues to be investigated in the EIR.

In addition to the purpose of informing the public about the proposed Project, the scoping process is also meant to achieve the following: (1) identify potentially significant environmental impacts for consideration in the EIR; (2) identify possible mitigation measures for consideration in the EIR; (3) identify alternatives to the proposed Project for evaluation in the EIR; and (4) compile a mailing/notification list of public agencies and individuals interested in future Project meetings and notices.

F.2.1 Scoping Meetings

Generally, formal scoping meetings are optional under CEQA unless requested by the lead agency, responsible or trustee agencies, the State Clearinghouse, or the project applicant [CEQA Guidelines, CCR §15082(c)]. However, the State lead agency is required to conduct at least one scoping meeting if the project has been determined to be of statewide, regional, or areawide significance, as defined by CEQA Guidelines §15206 [CEQA Guidelines, CCR §15082(c)(1)]. Further, as stated above in Section F.2, CEQA encourages consultation with any organization or person believed to be interested in the project, but it is not required [CEQA Guidelines, CCR §15083].

As stated below, CEQA [CEQA Guidelines, CCR §15082(c)] states that notices of the scoping meeting must be sent to the county or cities where the proposed project would occur, responsible agencies, other public agencies with jurisdiction over the project, and any organization or member of the public that submitted a written request for the notice.

“(1) For projects of statewide, regional or areawide significance pursuant to Section 15206, the lead agency shall conduct at least one scoping meeting. The lead agency shall provide notice of the scoping meeting to all of the following: (A) any county or city that borders on a county or city within which the project is located, unless otherwise designated annually by agreement between the lead agency and the

county or city; (B) any responsible agency; (C) any public agency that has jurisdiction by law with respect to the project; (D) any organization or individual who has filed a written request for the notice.”

Public scoping meeting notices were prepared and advertised in five local newspapers. The advertisements provided a brief description of the Project, information on the meeting locations, information on where to send comments, contact information, and the duration of the public comment period. The meeting advertisements were posted on the Project website, and placed in the following newspapers:

- *Tehachapi News* on April 26, 2006
- *Antelope Valley Press* on April 27, 2006
- *Mojave Desert News* on April 27, 2006
- *Los Angeles Times, Valley Edition* on April 30, 2006
- *Acton/Agua Dulce News* on May 1, 2006

As part of the public scoping process, two public scoping meetings were held to present information to the public on the Project and to take public comments on the scope and content of this EIR, as well as alternatives and mitigation measures to be considered. The following public scoping meetings were held prior to selection of alternatives to be analyzed in this EIR:

- May 9, 2006, at 6:30 p.m. at the Wanda Kirk Branch, Kern County Library, Rosamond, California
- May 10, 2006, at 7:00 p.m. at Highland High School, Palmdale, California

The basic format of the meeting included a presentation of the proposed Project, including background, project description, location using maps, and potential environmental impacts. After the presentation, the meeting attendees were allowed to present verbal comments or submit prepared written comments.

F.2.2 Scoping Report Summary

There are no CEQA or State requirements regarding the preparation of a scoping report. However, in July 2006, a comprehensive Scoping Report was prepared, summarizing issues and concerns received from the public and various agencies. A total of 24 written comments were submitted and ten individuals presented verbal comments during the public scoping meetings.

The specific issues raised during the public scoping process are summarized below according to the following major themes:

- Human Environment Issues and Concerns
- Physical Environment Issues and Concerns
- Alternatives
- Cumulative Projects
- Environmental Review and Decision-Making Process

Human Environment Issues and Concerns

The public expressed strong concerns with the potential impacts of the proposed Project on the human environment. These concerns focused on the potential loss of property and homes, disturbance of neighborhoods, and decrease in property values, but also included concerns about electric and magnetic fields (EMFs) on nearby residents, aesthetic impacts to private property, and increased noise.

- **Loss of Property.** Members of the general public, particularly those from Leona Valley and Rosamond, expressed concern that the proposed Project and Alternative A (eliminated from consideration in the PEA), respectively,

would require the condemnation of their homes and properties through the eminent domain process. Many residents indicated their discontent with the eminent domain process and the potential that they may have to move from their existing residences and neighborhoods.

- **Impacts to Property Values.** Various commenters expressed concern that existence of the proposed Project would decrease the value of their property due to the adverse aesthetic or health/safety impacts, safety or operational restrictions placed on the property limiting current and future uses or activities.
- **EMFs.** Several commenters, including a representative from the Antelope Valley Union High School District (AVUHSD), expressed concern about the potential health and safety impacts of EMFs from the proposed Project. Commenters were concerned about residents, students and faculty, as well as livestock and pets that would be exposed to EMFs.
- **Aesthetics.** A commenter from Leona Valley expressed concern regarding the aesthetic impacts that would result from the proposed Project.
- **Noise.** A few residents expressed concerns with the crackling noise (corona noise) caused by the existing transmission lines, and are concerned about the increase of noise that would result from the proposed Project.
- **Health and Safety.** A number of residents expressed concern about non-EMF related health and safety issues that may result from the proposed Project being located close to residences. Some of these issues include the potential fire hazard, the danger of children playing on or around the tower structures, and the standing current/charge of 750 to 1250 kV that exists on transmission line wires.
- **Conflicts with Existing or Planned Land Uses.** The majority of comments regarding existing or planned land uses dealt with the impacts to properties and residences in Leona Valley and Rosamond. Several residents expressed concern that the proposed Project would be located close to their homes, disturb the existing neighborhoods, and ruin the rural atmosphere of the area. A few commenters stated that it would be improper to remove existing homes when there are Project alternatives that would not affect existing residences. Other land use comments were focused on the impacts to non-residential uses. Commenters stated that the proposed Project may affect a future AVUHSD school site, as well as the school district's funding, and the mining operations and wind development on property of California Portland Cement Company.

Physical Environment Issues and Concerns

Public agencies and residents expressed concerns with the potential impacts that the Project may have on the physical environment, particularly to air quality, biological, geological, hydrological, and traffic and transportation.

- **Air Quality.** Most comments received focused on compliance with local and State air quality regulations. Two California air districts, the South Coast Air Quality Management District (SCAQMD) and the Kern County Air Pollution Control District (KCAPCD) provided guidance for preparing localized significance thresholds, air quality analyses, and mobile source health risk assessments; developing mitigation measures; applicability of regulations; use of air district resources; and permitting issues.
- **Biological Resources Issues.** The Department of Fish and Game recommended the inclusion of the following data in the Draft EIR: assessment of flora/fauna, discussion of impacts, development of a range of alternatives, California Endangered Species Act permit, and also expressed its opposition to the elimination of watercourses as part of the proposed Project. Another commenter expressed concerns about project area maintenance, vegetation management, and noxious weed mitigation. His concerns included the potential increase and invasion of noxious and exotic plant species as a result of the proposed Project. It was requested that SCE not use herbicides in their attempt to manage noxious and exotic plants, as this would impact biological resources, and instead suggested that non-chemical vegetation maintenance be utilized.
- **Geology and Soils.** One comment raised concerns regarding the potential of the Project construction to cause soil erosion and exacerbate the occurrence of landslides.
- **Hydrology and Water Quality.** The Department of Water Resources (DWR) stated that the proposed Project would traverse the East Branch of the California Aqueduct (a DWR facility), which would require an encroachment permit from DWR. The Lahontan Region of the California Regional Water Quality Control Board (CRWQCB) indicated that the Draft EIR must provide information on impacts due to changes in groundwater

recharge, use its Water Quality Control Plan, identify best management practices (BMPs) and mitigation, and secure a General Construction Permit from the State Water Board. The State Water Resources Control Board (State Water Board) requested a complete evaluation of the potential impacts to water quality and riparian movement corridors, including alternatives, specifically the need for the Project to comply with the appropriate permits and regulations, including State Water Board; and Section 401 and 404(b)(1) of the Clean Water Act.

- **Transportation and Traffic.** Several State and local government transportation agencies submitted comments on the proposed Project. The California Department of Transportation (Caltrans), District 9 stated that a Utility Permit would be required in order for the proposed Project to cross State Route (SR) 58. Caltrans, District 7 expressed concern about the potential for the proposed Project to affect the development of existing or future right-of-way transportation facilities, particularly in the western Antelope Valley, and requested a provision to accommodate the widening of SR 14 in the vicinity of Soledad Pass. The Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority (Metro) stated that a Traffic Impact Analysis (TIA) with highway, freeway, and transit components is required under the State of California Congestion Management Program (CMP).

There were also comments received regarding aviation transportation issues. Caltrans, Division of Aeronautics stated that the proposed Project would be in the vicinity of several airports in Kern and Los Angeles Counties, and indicated that the Caltrans Airport Land Use Planning Handbook may need to be used in preparation of the Draft EIR. In addition, this agency stated that structural hazards near airports are prohibited according to the Public Utilities Code, and a Notice of Proposed Construction or Alteration may be required by the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA). Another commenter indicated that military flight training routes exist in the area, and was concerned that widening the corridor/ROW for the proposed Project would increase the hazards from and to these flights.

- **Utilities and Public Service Systems.** One commenter expressed concern about the impacts resulting from the proposed Project on the quality of electrical transmission and delivery service.

Alternatives

Some comments focused on suggesting alternatives to the proposed Project, specifically the possibility of utilizing other routes for the proposed transmission line that would avoid impacts to existing residences, neighborhoods, and land uses.

- **Different Route Options.** Various alternative route options were suggested, including one that would not impact AVUHSD property, the use of the largest possible setback near the AVUHSD property, the use of existing transmission lines and existing utility corridors (particularly in Leona Valley and Rosamond), locating the Project on the farthest side of the corridor from the established residences, and making the utility corridor narrower.
- **Support/Opposition for Existing Alternatives.** Many commenters from the Leona Valley expressed strong opposition for the proposed Project, which would require the removal of three homes and create other impacts, such as decreased property values, disturbance of their neighborhood, health/safety concerns, and visual impacts. These commenters expressed support for SCE Alternative AV1, which would eliminate impacts to Leona Valley residents. A commenter from Rosamond expressed opposition to SCE Alternative A in Segment 3, which was eliminated from consideration in the PEA, due to the impacts it would have on her property and residence. Palmdale Hills Property, LLC, the developer of Ritter Ranch master plan community, is opposed to SCE Alternative AV2 because it would traverse Ritter Ranch development and a proposed school site. In addition, a commenter suggested speaking with Ritter Ranch developers about using Ritter Ranch property that is located east of existing transmission lines as an alternative.

Cumulative Projects

One commenter expressed concern that the proposed Project would create cumulative impacts with the planned expansion of Elizabeth Lake Road from two lanes to a four-lane divided road with frontage roads, thus, reducing the property sizes.

Environmental Review and Decision-Making Process

One commenter requested that Segment 3 of the proposed Project be studied further so as to avoid potential impacts to residents and property owners in Rosamond. The Lahontan Region of the California Regional Water Quality Control Board (CRWQCB) requested that the Draft EIR include detailed mitigation measures and complete evaluation of cumulative impacts.

F.3 Notice of Completion and Availability

CEQA requires that lead agencies notify the public of the availability of environmental documents through the preparation and distribution a Notice of Availability (NOA) indicating that the lead agency has prepared a Draft EIR, and it is available for public review. In addition to a NOA, CEQA also requires that a State lead agency file a Notice of Completion (NOC) with the State Clearinghouse¹.

CEQA indicates that the NOA should include a project description, including location; dates of the comment period; notice of public meetings or hearings; significant environmental effects of the project; repository sites for project information and documents, and if the project site is a listed toxic site [CEQA Guidelines §15087(c)]. During distribution the NOA should be mailed to the last known name and address of organizations or persons who have previously requested the notice in writing, and by one of the following three methods:

- (1) publication at least one time in a newspaper of general circulation in the affected area, or when more than one area is affected, publication in the newspaper of largest circulation among the newspapers of general circulation in the areas;
- (2) posting on and off the project site; and
- (3) direct mailing to the owners and occupants of property contiguous to the parcels on which the project is located [CEQA Guidelines §15087(a)].

Property owners should be identified through the most current equalized assessment roll. Other entities that should receive the NOA according to CEQA include the county clerk of each county in which the project would be located [CEQA Guidelines §15087(d)], and other agencies that have jurisdiction by law and/or special experience with respect to the project [CEQA Guidelines §15087(h)]. In order to facilitate public review of the Draft EIR, the lead agency should provide copies of the Draft EIR to public libraries in the project area, and copies should also be available in offices of the lead agency [CEQA Guidelines §15087(g)]. In addition to the above CEQA requirements, the CPUC further requires that the NOA be sent by direct mail to the county and municipal planning commissions and legislative bodies for each county or city affected by the project, the State highway engineer, and owners of land under or on which the project would be located [CPUC Rule 17.1(2)(b)]. CPUC also requires that notice of availability of the Draft EIR be provided to the public through newspaper advertisements at least once a week for two successive weeks in newspaper(s) of general circulation in the areas affected by the project [CPUC Rule 17.1(2)(b)].

Per State CEQA Guidelines Section 15085, the Notice of Completion (NOC) is a document that must be filed with the State Clearinghouse, Office of Planning and Research, as soon as the Draft EIR is completed. The NOC was filed, along with 15 hard-copies of the Draft EIR, with the State Clearinghouse on August 24, 2006. The NOC included: a description of the proposed Project, including location; the addresses where copies of the Draft EIR are available for review; the state agencies that should receive a copy of the Draft EIR; and the review period during which public comments may be received. The CEQA Lead Agency (CPUC) shall also

¹ See CEQA Guidelines §15085(a) for more information on the State Clearinghouse Notice of Completion form, which is filed “as soon as the draft EIR is completed.”

provide public notice of the availability of the Draft EIR at the same time it sends the NOC to the State Clearinghouse (State CEQA Guidelines §15087). In addition to the information disclosed in the NOC, The Notice of Availability (NOA) included a description of the proposed Project including a map, details for the scheduled public meetings (date, time, and place); dates of the comment period; and other sources for Project information a list of significant environmental effects; and whether the project site is listed under Section 65962.5 of the Government Code (hazardous waste facilities). The NOA was mailed to over 500 interested parties, and posted in the Los Angeles County Clerk's Office from September 1, 2006 through October 2, 2006, and in the Kern County Clerk's Office from September 5, 2006 through October 4, 2006. In addition, the NOA was published in the following five newspapers:

- Antelope Valley Press on August 25, 2006
- Los Angeles Times, Valley Edition on August 25, 2006
- Acton/Agua Dulce News on August 28, 2006
- Tehachapi News on August 30, 2006
- Mojave Desert News on August 31, 2006

F.4 Draft EIR Review and Public Meetings/Hearings

CEQA requires each lead agency to make efforts to involve the public in the environmental review process, particularly during review of the Draft EIR. CEQA states that the public review, or comment, period for a Draft EIR should be between 30 to 60 days, except when the Draft EIR has been submitted to the State Clearinghouse, in which case the review period is not less than and is normally 45 days [CEQA Guidelines, CCR §15087(e); §15105(a); §15205(d)]. The State lead agency must request comments on the Draft EIR from responsible and trustee agencies; other federal, State, or local agencies that have jurisdiction with respect to the project; cities or counties bordering the affected cities and counties; and transportation planning agencies [CEQA Guidelines, CCR §15086(a)], and may consult with persons with special expertise, members of the public that filed a written request for notice, and persons identified by the applicant [CEQA Guidelines, CCR §15086(b)].

The lead agency may conduct public hearings on the Draft EIR, but formal hearings are not required under CEQA [CEQA Guidelines, CCR §15087(i) and §15202(a)]. Further, the State lead agency can also implement its own public hearing procedures as part of the hearing process [CEQA Guidelines, CCR §15202(f)]. The CPUC requires that public hearings be held for each Draft EIR for which motions have been made, unless the CPUC, presiding officer, or Administrative Law Judge (ALJ) determines otherwise [CPUC Rule 17.1(g)]. Notices of public hearings should be timely, and may be formatted in the same manner as other notices prepared by the Lead Agency [CEQA Guidelines, CCR §15202(e)]. In addition, if a project website is available, notice of public hearings should be included on the website.

The Draft EIR for the proposed Project was filed at the State Clearinghouse on August 24, 2006, with the NOC, as discussed in Section F.3. Thirty-eight (38) copies of the bound Draft EIR were distributed to State and local agencies and elected officials, as well as organizations and other interested parties. An additional 22 electronic copies of the Draft EIR on compact disc (CD) were mailed to interested parties. In addition, as stated above in Section F.3, the NOA notifying the public of the availability of the Draft EIR was mailed or e-mailed to over 500 people.

There was a 60-day public review period scheduled for the Draft EIR, which began on August 24, 2006, originally ended on October 9, 2006, and was extended seven days to October 16, 2006. The notice of

extension of the public comment period was mailed to over 800 interested parties, and was posted in the Los Angeles and Kern County Clerk’s Offices. In addition, this notice was published in the *Antelope Valley Press* and *Los Angeles Times, Valley Edition* on October 9, 2006.

Public meetings for the Draft EIR were originally scheduled for September 26 and September 27, 2006. However, in order to schedule informational workshops and formal Public Participation Hearings that were lead by the CPUC Administrative Law Judge (ALJ), these public meetings were cancelled. The informational workshops were informal gatherings in which information materials are provided and interested parties are given the opportunity to speak with specialists who wrote the Draft EIR and ask questions. The public participation hearings were formal hearings conducted by the CPUC to receive oral and written comments on the Draft EIR or any other matters related to the CPUC proceedings on SCE’s application. Informational workshops and Public Participation Hearings for the Draft EIR were re-scheduled for October 11 and October 12 at the following locations and times. These workshops and hearings provided other forums for gathering information and providing comments on the Draft EIR.

Location	Palmdale, CA	Rosamond, CA
Date	Wednesday, October 11, 2006	Thursday, October 12, 2006
Time	6:00 to 7:00 p.m. Informational Workshop 7:00 to 8:30 p.m. Public Participation Hearings	6:00 to 7:00 p.m. Informational Workshop 7:00 to 8:30 p.m. Public Participation Hearings
Address	Holiday Inn - Palmdale Palmdale Room/Ballroom 38630 5th Street West Palmdale, CA 93551	Wanda Kirk Branch, Kern County Library Community Room 3611 Rosamond Boulevard Rosamond, CA 93560

A separate notice of cancellation of public meetings and scheduling of public participation hearings was mailed to over 800 interested parties. In addition, the re-scheduled hearings were also noticed in the notice of extension and in the following six newspapers:

- *Antelope Valley Press* on September 22, 2006
- *Los Angeles Times, Valley Edition* on September 22, 2006
- *Acton/Agua Dulce News* on September 25, 2006
- *Rosamond News* on September 25, 2006
- *Tehachapi News* on September 27, 2006
- *Mojave Desert News* on September 28, 2006

Various materials were distributed at each informational workshop and public hearing, including a brief meeting agenda; 17 fact sheets describing the proposed Project and alternatives, the CPUC decision-making process, and the 13 issue areas analyzed in the Draft EIR, comment cards, NOAs, and copies of the Draft EIR on CD.

There will be a 45-day public review period for the Draft EIR. During the public review period, public meetings will be held at the dates and times indicated in the Notice of Availability. For more information on the public meetings, you may contact the Public Advisor at (866) 849-8390 or public.advisor@cpuc.ca.gov.

F.5 Final EIR

CEQA does not require any direct public outreach or review periods after completion of the Draft EIR public review period. The State lead agency is not required to provide a public review period for members of the

public or commenting agencies for the Final EIR [CEQA Guidelines, CCR §15089(b)], nor is it required to respond to comments that are not received within the specific comment period [California Public Resources Code §21092.5(c)]. The lead agency must provide a written response to any public agency that submitted comments on the Draft EIR at least ten days prior to certifying the Final EIR [California Public Resources Code §21092.5(a)]. However, the CPUC requires that the Final EIR be distributed to all parties to the proceeding [CPUC Rule 17.1(3)(b)], and be made available to members of the general public for a fee [CPUC Rule 17.1(4)].

CEQA also requires the State lead agency to file a notice of determination (NOD) with the State Clearinghouse within five working days of approval of the project [CEQA Guidelines, CCR §15094(a)]. The NOD will be available for public inspection at the State Clearinghouse for 30 days [CEQA Guidelines, CCR §15094(d)]. In addition, the filing of the NOD start a 30-day statute of limitations on court challenges to the approval of the project under CEQA [CEQA Guidelines, CCR §15094(g)].

F.6 Document Repository Sites

CEQA requires that the Draft EIR and other project-related documents be made available for public review by placing them at repository sites [CCR §15087(c)(5) and §15087(g)]. Placing documents in repository sites is an effective way of providing ongoing information about the project to a large number of people. The CEQA documents prepared as part of the proposed Project, which include the NOP, NOA, Draft EIR, and other notices including the notice of cancellation of public meetings and scheduling of public participation hearings and notice of extension of the public review period were made available at the following public repository sites:

Repository Site	Address
Tehachapi Branch, Kern County Library	1001 W. Tehachapi Blvd., Suite A-400, Tehachapi, CA 93561
Wanda Kirk Branch, Kern County Library	3611 Rosamond Blvd., Rosamond, CA 93560
Lancaster Regional Library	601 W. Lancaster Blvd., Lancaster, CA 93534
Quartz Hill Library	42018 N. 50th St. West, Quartz Hill, CA 93536
Palmdale City Library	700 E. Palmdale Blvd., Palmdale, CA 93550

A telephone hotline for project information was established [(661) 449-3069]. This number received voice messages and faxes. The Project hotline also included an introductory message that was changed with each key Project milestone in order to provide the most current Project information. In addition to using the Project hotline as a method to communicate information to the general public, interested parties were able to fax comment letters and leave voice messages identifying specific questions, inquires, or requests to the EIR team.

EIR information, including proposed Project information, the environmental review process, and the Draft EIR were posted on the Internet at the following website:

<http://www.cpuc.ca.gov/environment/info/aspen/atp2-3/atp2-3.htm>

This website was used to post public documents during the environmental review process and to announce upcoming public meetings. The Project website was updated after each key milestone in the EIR process in order to provide the most current information, including Project Background and Description, Other Information, Proponent’s Environmental Assessment (PEA), Notice of Preparation and Scoping, Public Meetings, release of the Draft EIR, and Extension of the Public Review Period. The Project website provided links to notices, including the NOP, NOA, and notice of cancellation of public meetings and rescheduling of

public participation hearings, and notice of extension of the public review period. In addition, environmental documents, including the PEA and the Draft EIR; other Project materials and information, including maps; and Project contact information were posted on the Project website.

F.7 Project Notification List/Draft EIR Distribution List

The Project notification list was developed from the agency service lists; applicable government officials and interest groups; applicable responsible and trustee agencies, and the property owner list provided by SCE in Appendix G of the Antelope Transmission Project, Segments 2 and 3 Amended PEA². However, the Project notification list was updated throughout the environmental review process to reflect changes or additions to interested parties. All parties who signed-in at the scoping meetings and/or the public hearings for the Draft EIR, and those who submitted verbal or written comments during the scoping period or the Draft EIR public review period were added to the notification list using the mailing address information that was provided. Other parties added to the Project notification list include any person or agency that requested to be added to the list, or those suggested by the CPUC. Currently, the notification list includes over 1,100 names of individuals, interest groups, and agencies. Property owners make up approximately 75 percent of the notification list.

The Project notification list was used to distribute the NOP, NOA, notice of cancellation of public meetings and rescheduling of public participation hearings, and the Draft EIR public comment period extension notice. In addition, the Project distribution list, which is a subset of the larger notification list, was used to mail hardcopy and electronic versions (on CD) of the Draft EIR, as described below.

- **Notice of Preparation (NOP).** Approximately 450 copies of the NOP were distributed to federal, State, regional, and local agencies, and elected officials, as well as Native American representatives, community organizations, and other interested parties;
- **Notice of Availability (NOA) of the Draft EIR.** The NOA of the Draft EIR was mailed over 500 addresses, including community organizations, interest groups, and property owners in the vicinity of the proposed Project route;
- **Draft EIR.** Copies of the full Draft EIR were sent to 38 interested parties and agencies, and to the five information repositories, which include area libraries. In addition, 23 CDs with an electronic pdf version of the Draft EIR, including the NOA, were also sent out; and
- **Notice of Cancellation of Public Meetings/Rescheduling of Public Participation Hearings and Extension Notice.** A notice cancelling the originally scheduled public meetings and rescheduling public participation hearings, and an extension notice announcing that the public comment period for the Draft EIR was extended from October 9 to October 16, 2006 were distributed to everyone on the Project notification list, which included over 800 individuals.

Newspaper Notices. Notices were also published in local and regional newspapers to announce the public scoping meetings, the release of the Draft EIR, the Draft EIR public hearings, and the extension of the public comment period. The newspaper advertisements included information on the Project website address, phone

² SCE was required to provide notice of its filing of a CPCN application for the Antelope Transmission Project, Segments 2 and 3 pursuant to Section XI of CPUC General Order No. 131-D. Section XI requires that electric public utilities provide notice of their filing of a CPCN application or Permit to Construct within ten days via the following methods: (1) by direct mail to planning commission and legislative body of affected counties or cities, various State and federal agencies, those who request it, and property owners where the project would be located and those within 300 feet of the right-of-way based upon the most recent local assessor's parcel roll available; (2) by newspaper advertisement at least once per week for two successive weeks in newspapers of general circulation; and (3) posting on and off the project site [CPUC General Order No. 131-D, Section XI(A)]. The list provided in the PEA and included as part of the environmental review process was developed and based on these requirements.

information line, email address, and when applicable, the dates, locations and times of the public meetings/hearings. The notices were published as noted below.

<u>Newspapers</u>	<u>Publication Dates and Events</u>			
	<u>Public Scoping</u>	<u>Release of Draft EIR (NOA)</u>	<u>Cancel Public Meetings/Schedule Public Hearings</u>	<u>Comment Period Extension¹</u>
<u>Tehachapi News</u>	<u>April 26, 2006</u>	<u>August 30, 2006</u>	<u>September 27, 2006</u>	
<u>Antelope Valley Press</u>	<u>April 27, 2006</u>	<u>August 25, 2006</u>	<u>September 22, 2006</u>	<u>October 9, 2006</u>
<u>Mojave Desert News</u>	<u>April 27, 2006</u>	<u>August 31, 2006</u>	<u>September 28, 2006</u>	<u>October 9, 2006</u>
<u>Los Angeles Times, Valley Edition</u>	<u>April 30, 2006</u>	<u>August 25, 2006</u>	<u>September 22, 2006</u>	
<u>Acton/Aqua Dulce News</u>	<u>May 1, 2006</u>	<u>August 28, 2006</u>	<u>September 25, 2006</u>	
<u>Rosamond News</u>			<u>September 25, 2006</u>	

Note: (1) Due to filing deadlines with the newspapers there was insufficient time to place advertisements in more than two newspapers. However, as noted above and in Section F.4, approximately 800 notices were also sent to residents and interested parties.

~~Notices regarding the availability of environmental documents, such as the NOP, NOA, and Draft EIR, were mailed to approximately 500 addresses. The notices were mailed to approximately 170 community organizations and interest groups, 130 persons from government agencies, and 200 property owners within 300 feet of the proposed Project and alternate routes identified in SCE's Proponent's Environmental Assessment (PEA).~~