

# 7 Consultation and Coordination

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## INTERNAL AND PUBLIC SCOPING

A Scoping Notice was placed in the Federal Register on February 24, 1999 and press releases regarding the planning effort were sent to media outlets in the region at the outset of the planning process. Two internal scoping meetings were held for all park and concession employees, and five additional public scoping sessions were conducted throughout California. Several presentations were made to special interest groups at their request to solicit comments. These groups included the Mineral King Cabin Owners Association and Friends of the South Fork Kings River. A community-wide survey was conducted in the greater Three Rivers area to further assess issues of concern.

## INTERAGENCY SCOPING

Adjacent land managers were consulted both through the public notification process and through a separate scoping session held in Fresno in May 1999. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) was contacted at the onset of the planning process to ensure proper Section 7 consultation. A list of species to consider was received from the USFWS and used to prepare this document. Prior consultation with USFWS on the effects of prescribed burns on the threatened valley elderberry longhorn beetle is incorporated in this plan (correspondence attached at end of this chapter). The San Joaquin Valley Unified Air Pollution Control District received a separate scoping presentation and a formal written request for comment was sent to the District. No comments were received from the District during the scoping process.

## CULTURAL RESOURCES AND NATIVE AMERICAN CONSULTATION

The National Park Service conducted consultation meetings in July of 1999 with a variety of Native American (American Indian) tribal groups and individuals. These meetings were held on both sides of the Sierra Nevada in areas from which Native American groups historically accessed and used lands now subsumed by Sequoia and Kings Canyon National Parks. Information was received from eight separate groups regarding their past and present uses of the parks, with a total of 33 individuals being interviewed. In very general terms, the eastside meetings included Paiute and Eastern Mono groups of the Owens Valley while the westside meetings focused on Yokuts and Western Mono (Monache) groups that traditionally occupied portions of the Great Central Valley and western foothills and slopes of the Sierran range (Van Horn and Burge).

Input was solicited on a number of ongoing park planning efforts, including *the General Management Plan*, *the Wilderness Plan*, and *the Fire and Fuels Management Plan*. Of direct interest here, several individuals shared concerns regarding aspects of the parks' fire program.

Marie Dominguez Riley, as Tribal Chairperson for the Sierra Foothills Wuksachi Tribe, expressed clear interest in working closely with park planners in helping to identify park areas for possible access, use, and gathering activities relative to the role of fire and planning for fire suppression activities. She noted that her group's interest could include such things as protecting or encouraging the growth of sedges or acorns, the health of which are of traditional concern. A member of the Big Pine Paiute community (Richard Stewart) supported the use of prescribed fires as a management tool. He noted too that prescribed fires could be an avenue for assistance, employment, or interpretation opportunities for tribal members. Several members of the Tule River Indian Tribe voiced interest in pursuing opportunities with the National Park Service for creating training partnerships in a variety of areas, including fire management and fire suppression. Attendees from the North Fork Mono Rancheria also expressed similar interests, voicing a willingness to share tribal expertise with the park service (e.g., regarding plant health and use) and receiving advice on instituting a tribal prescribed fire program.

Overall, those groups that shared concerns or comments regarding the parks' fire program were interested in continuing to receive information and in being consulted regarding the planning and implementation of prescribed fires, in particular. A clear interest in recognizing the effects of fire on any number of natural resources was expressed, as these resources hold ongoing importance to tribal members.

## **INTERDISCIPLINARY PLANNING TEAM MEMBERS**

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