

Section 106 coordination process as concurring parties are identified in the PA. Issues raised during the meeting were addressed in revisions to the PA.

5.6 Natural Resources Agency Field Meeting (October 19, 2004)

A natural resources agency field meeting was held on October 19, 2004. It began at the Fontana Village Hotel Conference Room in Fontana Village, North Carolina, and concluded in the field at the western end of the Northern Shore Corridor. Representatives from FHWA, NPS, USFWS, NCDWQ, NCWRC, ARCADIS, TVA, and Swain County were present at the meeting. This meeting focused on the studies that had been conducted on the natural environment as part of the analysis of the alternatives. ARCADIS described methodology for determinations of streams and wetlands, sampling sites, vegetation plots, and species surveys.

5.7 Section 106 Consulting Parties Meeting No. 2 (February 8, 2005)

A second consulting parties meeting was held on February 8, 2005, at the Comfort Suites Hotel in Cherokee, North Carolina. Representatives from the North Shore Cemetery Association, North Shore Historical Association, the North Shore Road Association, the Sierra Club, TVA, Graham County, Swain County, Smoky Mountain Hiking Club, Citizens for the Economic Future of Swain County, National Parks Conservation Association, EBCI-THPO, U.S. Rep. Charles H. Taylor's office, USACE, NPS, FHWA, ARCADIS, and TRC Garrow were present at the meeting. The purpose of the meeting was to discuss the 2004 archaeological investigations, interviews and research regarding Traditional Cultural Properties, potential impacts to cultural resources, and the status of the draft PA.

5.8 Interagency Meeting No. 4: Impact Analysis (February 23, 2005)

The fourth interagency meeting was held on February 23, 2005, at the Renaissance Hotel in Asheville, North Carolina. Representatives from FHWA, NPS, USACE, NCDWQ, NCWRC, NCDENR, NCDOT, NCSHPO, TVA, USFWS, ARCADIS, Sammons/Dutton LLC, and TRC Garrow were present.

The purpose of the meeting was to provide an update on the final study alternatives, the 2004 field work investigations, and the current summary of impacts. Participants had an opportunity to review the public workshop displays and ask questions individually of study team members. Comments were solicited on the impact analysis phase of the EIS.

5.9 Endangered Species Act Coordination

Potential impacts to 15 federally protected species were evaluated for the purposes of this investigation. The summary of impacts for this project has concluded that the bald eagle may be affected by the Partial-Build Alternative to Bushnell or the Northern Shore Corridor and that the Indiana bat may be affected by the any of the partial-build or build alternatives. It is likely that these impacts could be reduced through minimization, avoidance, and mitigation techniques.

The proposed project would have no effects on the Carolina northern flying squirrel, noonday globe, spruce-fur moss spider, and rock gnome lichen due to the absence of habitat for these species in the project corridors. Habitat for the red-cockaded woodpecker, bog turtle, spotfin chub, Appalachian elktoe, littlewing