

### **3.9 Socioeconomics, Population, and Housing**

This section presents information on regional and local socioeconomic conditions, population, and housing and the potential impacts of the Proposed Action on these resources. A detailed discussion of poverty rates and population by race and ethnicity is included in Section 3.13, Environmental Justice. Much of this section has been taken directly from *Trinity County 2004: Economic and Demographic Profile* (Center for Economic Development 2004).

Under CEQA, the “[e]conomic or social impacts of a project shall not be treated as significant impacts on the environment” (*CEQA Guidelines* Section 15131). Consequently, this section addresses CEQA issues only to the extent that potential social or economic impacts of the Proposed Action would have either a direct impact or would result in reasonably foreseeable indirect impacts on the physical environment.

#### **3.9.1 AFFECTED ENVIRONMENT/ENVIRONMENTAL SETTING**

##### **Regional Labor Market**

Trinity County is a rural region with substantial amounts of public land. As a result, the region is largely dependent on natural resources and tourism for its economic base.

Data for labor force, employment, and unemployment were obtained from the California Employment Development Department (EDD), which estimates labor force and employment statistics for all counties in the state. Data for employment by industry were collected from the U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of Economic Analysis (BEA) through the Regional Economic Information System (REIS). Differences in calculation methods and differences regarding what is considered employment may account for differences in EDD and REIS employment data (Center for Economic Development 2001).

##### *Labor Force*

Labor force refers to the total civilian labor force and is the number of non-institutionalized people age 16 and older who are working or looking for work and who are not in the military. Total labor force includes wage and salary workers, proprietors, and household workers. Annual average labor force is the 12-month average labor force for a given year. In general, the average total labor force trend in Trinity County between 1991 and 2002 was upwards, having increased from 5,130 in 1991 to 5,300 in 2002, an overall 3 percent increase (Center for Economic Development 2004). The majority of the total labor force is concentrated in Weaverville and Hayfork. The primary communities within Trinity County are shown in Figure 3.9-1.

##### *Employment*

Employment refers to total civilian employment as calculated by the EDD. Total civilian employment is the number of people employed in both the private sector and the non-military public sector. Employment includes wage and salary workers, proprietors, and household workers.

Employment rates in Trinity County between 1990 and 2001 showed a significant decline, dropping by approximately 20 percent (a loss of 1,090 jobs). A decline in the timber industry and associated jobs

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**3.9-1 Trinity County Communities**

accounted for this drop. However, between 2001 and 2002, total employment rates increased by 3.9 percent (Center for Economic Development 2004) as opportunities arose for increased tourism- and transportation-related job growth. Despite mill closures in both Weaverville and Hayfork, these two communities continue to be the county's largest employment centers.

### *Unemployment*

Unemployment refers to the annual average civilian unemployment rate and represents the percentage of the total civilian labor force that is not employed. According to the California EDD, unemployment in the county declined slightly between 1990 and 2004. The annual average unemployment rate in the county generally remains far above the unemployment rate for California as a whole. Since 1990, unemployment within the county has been high, averaging 13.9 percent compared to the statewide average of 7.5 percent.

The county's labor market depends on such factors as distance to SR 299 and distance to Weaverville, the county's business center and largest labor market. Ruth/Mad River, Hayfork, Zenia/Kettenpom, and Hyampom are rural communities that do not have ready access to SR 299 or Weaverville. Subsequently, these communities have fewer job opportunities and a larger unemployment rate. In contrast, communities located on SR 299, such as Helena, Junction City, and Douglas City, from which Weaverville can be accessed directly, have smaller unemployment rates.

### *Employment by Industry*

In this section, industries are defined using the *Standard Industrial Classification Manual*, published by the Executive Office of the President, U.S. Office of Management and Budget (1987). The measurement of employment by industry is based on the type of industry and the annual average number of full-time and part-time jobs for a given industry in a particular year.

The industrial employment trend in Trinity County is a function of the county's ample recreational opportunities and tourism. Consequently, service industries, including hotels and lodging, recreation services, museums, auto repair, and engineering and management services, continue to experience growth.

### *Income*

When compared to the state as a whole, Trinity County has a much lower per capita income, a much lower median household income, and higher poverty rates. The industry with the highest earnings is government and public administration.

### *Per Capita Income*

Data from the U.S. Bureau of the Census (Census) and the BEA show that per capita income levels in Trinity County tend to be significantly below state levels. Per capita income is the average income computed for every man, woman, and child in a particular group. The Census derives per capita income by dividing the total income of a particular group by the total population in that group (excluding patients

or inmates in institutional quarters). Per capita income data for Trinity County and California are depicted in Table 3.9-1.

**TABLE 3.9-1.**  
 PER CAPITA INCOME, TRINITY COUNTY AND CALIFORNIA

Year	Trinity County	California
1990	\$14,469	\$21,882
1991	\$14,824	\$21,983
1992	\$15,605	\$22,650
1993	\$15,842	\$22,833
1994	\$15,863	\$23,348
1995	\$16,445	\$24,339
1996	\$16,999	\$25,373
1997	\$17,693	\$26,521
1998	\$18,208	\$28,240
1999	\$19,084	\$29,698
2000	\$19,995	\$32,334
2001	\$21,223	\$32,877

Source: Adapted from Center for Economic Development 2004

The data in Table 3.9-1, compiled by the CED using the Census and the California Department of Finance databases, show that while the per capita income of Trinity County and the state are both increasing, Trinity County continues to lag far behind the state, with its per capita income as much as 36 percent below that of the state in 2001.

*Median Household Income*

Median household income is the midpoint of the distribution of household incomes. Half of all households have incomes above this level, and half have incomes below this level. Median household income in Trinity County, though increasing, is lower than the state median household income. From 1989 to 1999, median household income in the county increased by 26 percent, which is comparable to the 25 percent increase in median household income for the state, measured over the same period (Center for Economic Development 2004). However, median household income in Trinity County continues to lag behind the state median by approximately 42 percent (based on 1999 data). This represents an average of \$19,782 less money available for each household in the county than for each household in the rest of the state.

*Regional Population*

The population of Trinity County is generally characterized by stagnant growth, with higher proportions of white and retirement-age persons and lower proportions of Hispanic and young working-age persons. The county’s demographics are influenced by the fact that approximately 75 percent of its land is federally owned and 10 percent is in private industrial timber production, much of which is restricted from development by Timber Production Zone zoning. Thus, only 15 percent of the county is private

land usable for development purposes. The county's rugged terrain and remote location also influence its demographics by limiting the developable area. Education levels of residents are typical of most of rural northern California, with a greater proportion of high school graduates and a smaller proportion of college graduates.

#### *Total Population/Population Density*

Population estimates are based on the number of people who were residing within the county boundaries, either permanently or temporarily, on January 1 of the given year. Total population includes foreign and domestic migrant workers. Trinity County's population continues to grow at a considerably lower rate than California on average, and was projected by the U.S. Census Bureau in 2000 to be ranked 54th in total population out of 58 California counties by 2004 (U.S. Census Bureau). Between 1990 and 2003, the county experienced only a 3 percent increase in population compared to an estimated 16 percent increase in California's population during the same period (U.S. Census Bureau 2005). A decline in the timber industry and an attendant loss of jobs have had a significant effect on the county's population.

Trinity County has a population density well below the population density of California as a whole. The population density of the county in 2003 was estimated at 4.2 persons per square mile, while the population density of California was estimated at approximately 230 persons per square mile (Center for Economic Development 2004). Most of the population of Trinity County is concentrated in Weaverville, Hayfork, and Lewiston (Figure 3.9-1). The communities with the lowest population concentrations, Coffee Creek and Zenia/Kettenpom, are in some of the most remote areas of the county (Figure 3.9-1).

Demographics related to Trinity County's racial and ethnic composition are discussed in detail in Section 3.13, Environmental Justice.

#### *Housing*

Each year, the California Department of Finance, Demographic Research Unit estimates the number of housing units located in each county and incorporated place, as well as California as a whole. Housing units are estimated by adding new construction and units included in annexations and subtracting demolitions from the Census benchmark.

#### **Local Setting**

Junction City offers limited services, including several commercial enterprises, a Forest Service work station, a U.S. Post Office, and Junction City Elementary School. It also includes several commercial sand and gravel operations, as well as a few recreation-based businesses such as RV parks, lodges, and rafting and fishing guides that operate along the Trinity River between Junction City and Helena. These businesses provide economic benefits to the local community and the county; however, the Junction City community is primarily residential and does not provide significant socioeconomic benefit to Trinity County beyond property tax revenues and revenues from mining operations.

Existing land uses in the area of the rehabilitation sites are primarily rural residential. There are no dwellings or structures within the site boundary. Homes in the upland areas adjacent to the site boundary would not be directly affected by the Proposed Action.

There is little likelihood that any parcels in the project vicinity will be further subdivided in the future; therefore, there is little potential for increased development densities. In addition, many of the existing parcels fall into Flood Hazard, Scenic Conservation Overlay, or Open Space zoning districts, making further development difficult. The private timberland located on the slopes above Red Hill Road is zoned for Timberland Production. Additional information on land use is provided in Section 3.2.

#### *Planned Developments in Canyon Creek Vicinity*

Because of the zoning restrictions within the site boundary, the primary development that could occur would be an expansion of sand and gravel extraction and processing operations, similar to that which occurs upstream at Hocker Flat. Some residential development could eventually occur on parcels along the west side of the Conner Creek site boundary, but not in the foreseeable future.

### 3.9.2 RELEVANT PLANS AND POLICIES

#### **Uniform Relocation Assistance and Real Property Acquisition Policies Act of 1970**

Persons and businesses displaced as a result of construction and/or operation of the Proposed Action are protected under the Uniform Relocation Assistance and Real Property Acquisition Policies Act of 1970, as amended April 2, 1987. This law was designed to mitigate adverse impacts experienced by private property owners in the public taking of land. Under this Act, persons or businesses displaced would receive compensation from the public entity that funds the project. Listed below are some of the major costs a public entity must compensate a displaced person for as part of the cost of acquisition of real property for a public use. A public entity is required by law to provide these and other compensation as outlined in the relocation assistance guidelines:

- actual and reasonable expense in moving him/herself, a family, a business, or a farm operation, including expense in moving personal property;
- actual direct losses of tangible personal property as a result of moving or discontinuing a business or farm operation;
- actual and reasonable expenses in searching for a replacement business or farm; and
- a fixed or in-lieu payment to compensate eligible displaced businesses for a substantial loss of existing patronage.

The Act also stipulates that a public entity shall not participate in a project that will displace individuals from their homes unless comparable replacement dwellings will be available within a reasonable period before displacement.

A comparable replacement is defined as one that is

- decent, safe, and sanitary;
- functionally equivalent to the displaced dwelling;
- an adequate size to accommodate the family being relocated;
- in an area not subject to unreasonable adverse environmental conditions;
- generally not less desirable than the location of the displacement dwelling with respect to accessibility to public utilities, commercial and public facilities, and place of employment; and
- on a site that is typical in size for residential development with normal size improvements.

Implementation of the Proposed Action would not result in the displacement of any individual from his or her home or business.

### **Trinity County General Plan Goals**

The following General Plan goals have been established by the County:

1. To provide more diverse sources of income and stabilize the economy.
2. To provide a higher average in income levels.

### *Land Use Element Goals and Objectives*

#### *Cultural*

**Goal:** Retain the rural character of Trinity County by:

- Limiting dwelling density based on retention of rural character and conservation of important resources, including historic sites and structures, and wildlife.
- Considering the “rights” of the individual when making decisions as well as the “rights” of the community.

**Goal:** Encourage adequate housing and residential space to keep pace with a moderate population growth by:

- Clearly designating those areas in which additional housing is necessary and desirable.
- Minimizing the “bureaucratic machinery” a landowner faces when attempting to develop housing that is consistent with this plan.
- Avoiding the need for increased public services.
- Keeping density, and thus demand, as low as possible in the most rural areas.

- Determining “threshold” densities that require expensive public services.
- Exploring outside funding possibilities available to the County when new or improved services must be provided.

*Economic*

**Goal:** Maintain and enhance a viable economic base for Trinity County by:

- Maintaining as many privately owned prime timber, agricultural, mineral, sport and commercial fishery, and animal-producing lands as possible.
- Encouraging tourism.
- Implementing the General Plan so that it is applied fairly and consistently and by stabilizing land-use regulations.

**Junction City Community Plan Goals**

*Economic Development*

**Goal:** To recognize and encourage, as a priority, the small business activities found in the Plan area.

- Encourage the development of a single County development permit-processing center.
- Insure that State, Federal, or County projects provide every opportunity for small local contractors to favorably compete with large contractors.

**Goal:** To ensure that resource production lands continue to be utilized for such purposes.

- Protect resource areas from encroachment of incompatible uses.

*Trinity County Housing Policies*

In order to provide an adequate supply of housing, the County has established the following policies:

1. Encourage the overall production of housing.
2. Encourage the production of housing opportunities for all income groups.
3. Work towards improving infrastructure capacity.
4. Encourage the production of housing for persons with special housing needs.
5. Encourage the repair and rehabilitation of existing housing stock.
6. Ensure that there are adequate sites available to support future housing needs.
7. Prevent discrimination in housing.
8. Encourage citizen participation during the preparation of the housing element and other general and community plan documents.

### *Project Consistency with the Trinity County General Plan and Community Plans*

The goals and objectives described in Chapter 1 are generally compatible with the applicable General Plan goals and policies summarized above. The overall goal of the Proposed Action is to rehabilitate the sites so that they function in a manner that is closer to historic conditions (i.e., pre-Lewiston Dam).

Enhancement of river recreation and tourism opportunities associated with the Trinity River would contribute to the local economy by creating new job and business opportunities, increasing the business volume of existing businesses, and adding to the current tax base. The County's General Plan and the Junction City Community Plan have set goals aimed at moderate increases in population growth, encouraging area tourism, improving the condition of existing homes, and encouraging housing production. Implementation of the Proposed Action would provide a basis for economic growth and is thus consistent with local and county planning goals and objectives.

### **3.9.3 ENVIRONMENTAL CONSEQUENCES/IMPACTS AND MITIGATION MEASURES**

#### **Methodology**

The following section provides a brief overview of the analytic methods used to assess the potential socioeconomic impacts of the Proposed Action. These methods included qualitative assessments of potential impacts associated with employment, income, conflicts with county and local plans, population growth, displacement of persons and businesses, and community disruption. For the purpose of this assessment, Trinity County is considered to be the area of potential socioeconomic impact.

The generation of employment results in social benefits, even if the employment is short-lived. Implementation of the Proposed Action would generate new, temporary employment opportunities for Trinity County residents. Income generation is one measure of economic activity in a community. Income growth spurs secondary economic impacts that ultimately result in increased employment activities. The Proposed Action could directly generate income growth through the payment of wages and salaries. The duration of income growth, however, is an important consideration in determining the significance of an income change. Little increased long-term economic activity may result from short-term income growth unless such growth is substantial.

Significant increases in population concentration or growth can produce negative socioeconomic impacts, such as a lack of affordable housing, or can result in socioeconomic benefits, such as increased local revenues. The potential for the Proposed Action to result in an increase in population concentration or an increase in population growth has been qualitatively assessed as a potential impact associated with the Proposed Action.

The displacement of people (through loss of residences or places of employment) generally results in negative socioeconomic impacts, such as a decrease in the local work force and loss of employment opportunities, in addition to the direct impact to the people concerned. The potential of the Proposed Action to result in the displacement of people has been qualitatively assessed as a potential impact associated with the project.

### Significance Criteria

For NEPA purposes, changes in employment and incomes rates are considered significant only if the change is equal to or greater than a minimum threshold of 10 percent. This is the minimum threshold at which there may be a regional impact. Other criteria used in the analysis and relevant under NEPA include:

- The project would result in the displacement of an existing business;
- The project would induce substantial growth or concentration of population; or
- The project would displace a large number of people.

For purposes of CEQA, under which “[e]conomic or social impacts of a project shall not be treated as significant impacts on the environment,” project impacts on population and housing are relevant only if they either (i) directly relate to an impact on the physical environment, in which case a lead agency may, but need not, consider economic or social impacts in determining whether such physical impacts are significant, or (ii) would result in a reasonably foreseeable indirect impact on the physical environment (See *CEQA Guidelines*, § 15131). Under CEQA, a proposed project would have a significant impact on population and housing if it

- induces substantial growth in an area, either directly or indirectly;
- displaces substantial numbers of existing housing, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere; and/or
- displaces substantial numbers of people, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere.

### Impacts and Mitigation Measures

Table 3.9-2 summarizes the potential socioeconomic impacts resulting from construction and operation of the project.

**TABLE 3.9-2.**  
 SUMMARY OF SOCIOECONOMIC IMPACTS OF THE PROPOSED ACTION AND ALTERNATIVES

Impact	Project site	No-Action Alternative	Proposed Action	Alternative 1	Proposed Action with Mitigation	Alternative 1 with Mitigation
1. Construction of the project would provide temporary employment opportunities for construction workers in Trinity County.	All sites	NI	B	B	B	B
2. Implementation of the project could result in the disruption or displacement of local businesses.	All sites	NI	NI	NI	N/A <sup>1</sup>	N/A <sup>1</sup>

**TABLE 3.9-2.**  
 SUMMARY OF SOCIOECONOMIC IMPACTS OF THE PROPOSED ACTION AND ALTERNATIVES

Impact	Project site	No-Action Alternative	Proposed Action	Alternative 1	Proposed Action with Mitigation	Alternative 1 with Mitigation
3. Implementation of the project would result in an increased demand for housing during construction.	All sites	NI	LS	LS	N/A <sup>1</sup>	N/A <sup>1</sup>
4. Implementation of the project would result in concentrated population growth.	All sites	NI	LS	LS	N/A <sup>1</sup>	N/A <sup>1</sup>

Notes:

LS = Less than Significant    S = Significant    SU = Significant Unavoidable  
 NI = No Impact    B = Beneficial    N/A = Not Applicable

<sup>1</sup>Because this potential impact is less than significant, no mitigation is required.

*All Sites (Conner Creek, Valdor Gulch, Elkhorn, and Pear Tree Gulch)*

**Impact 3.9-1:** Construction of the project would provide temporary employment opportunities for construction workers in Trinity County. ***No Impact for No-Action Alternative; Beneficial Impact for Proposed Action and Alternative 1***

*No-Action Alternative*

Under the no-action alternative, no employment opportunities would be created because the project would not occur.

*Proposed Action*

Project implementation would generate temporary construction-related employment in Trinity County. The number of design, construction, and clerical positions required to complete the Proposed Action is undetermined, but it is expected to add a small percentage to existing local jobs. However, the duration of employment would be dependent on the length of the contracting and construction period (anticipated to be approximately 6 months). In addition, the Proposed Action would provide direct local employment opportunities only if workers are hired from the local labor force.

*Alternative 1*

Impacts associated with temporary employment opportunities under Alternative 1 would be similar to those of Proposed Action; however the construction period would be reduced to some degree since there would be fewer restoration activities occurring at the Conner Creek and Elkhorn sites.

### **Mitigation Measures**

#### *No-Action Alternative, Proposed Action, and Alternative 1*

Since no significant impact was identified, no mitigation is required.

*Significance after Mitigation: N/A.*

**Impact 3.9-2:** Implementation of the project could result in the disruption or displacement of local businesses. ***No Impact for No-Action Alternative, Proposed Action, and Alternative 1***

#### *No-Action Alternative*

Under the No-Action Alternative, no disruption or displacement of local businesses would take place because the project would not occur.

#### *Proposed Action*

Local businesses would not be disrupted or displaced by the project. Although there may be some short-term, localized activities occurring along the banks of the river, businesses that depend on the river for their livelihood (e.g., rafting companies, river guides) would not be affected. The river channel and the majority of its banks would remain accessible throughout the period of project implementation.

#### *Alternative 1*

Similar to the Proposed Action, Alternative 1 would not disrupt or displace local businesses.

### **Mitigation Measures**

#### *No-Action Alternative, Proposed Action, and Alternative 1*

Since no significant impact was identified, no mitigation is required.

*Significance after Mitigation: N/A*

**Impact 3.9-3:** Implementation of the project would result in an increased demand for housing during construction. ***No Impact for No-Action Alternative; Less-than-Significant Impact for Proposed Action and Alternative 1***

#### *No-Action Alternative*

Under the No-Action Alternative, no increased demand for housing during construction would take place because the Proposed Action would not occur.

#### *Proposed Action*

The area surrounding the community of Junction City is a rural residential area. Few rental opportunities exist within the Junction City Community Plan area. What rental property does occur in adjacent rural residential areas is typically seasonal rental property available for recreational pursuits. More affordable and more readily available short-term rentals are concentrated in the nearby community of Weaverville.

A short-term increase in the demand for housing in Weaverville could occur as a result of construction workers seeking lodging during the construction period. This would be a less-than-significant impact because of the short time during which the housing demand would potentially be increased.

*Alternative 1*

Temporary increases in the demand for housing during construction associated with Alternative 1 would be less than or similar to those of Proposed Action.

**Mitigation Measures**

*No-Action Alternative, Proposed Action, and Alternative 1*

Since no significant impact was identified, no mitigation is required.

*Significance after Mitigation:* N/A

**Impact 3.9-4:** Implementation of the project would result in concentrated population growth. *No Impact for No-Action Alternative; Less-than-Significant Impact for Proposed Action and Alternative 1*

*No-Action Alternative*

Under the No-Action Alternative, there would be no population increases during or after construction because the Proposed Action would not occur.

*Proposed Action*

Implementation of the Proposed Action would have a less-than-significant effect on the population numbers of any Trinity County community either during or after construction. Since the majority of workers employed by the project would be drawn from the local work force and because the work is anticipated to be completed in a relatively short period of time, there would be no concentrated population increases associated with the Proposed Action.

*Alternative 1*

Temporary increases in population concentrations associated with Alternative 1, particularly in the Junction City and Weaverville communities, would be less than or similar to those of the Proposed Action.

**Mitigation Measures**

*No-Action Alternative, Proposed Action, and Alternative 1*

Since no significant impact was identified, no mitigation is required.

*Significance after Mitigation:* N/A