

SECTION 8.0 PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT

8.1 SCOPING

A Notice of Intent to prepare a Draft Environment Impact Statement for a proposed highway between Bush, LA and I-12, in St. Tammany Parish was posted in the Federal Register (volume 73, number 224) on November 19, 2008. Scoping for this project was initiated on December 22, 2008, through placing advertisements and public notices with local media. A public scoping meeting was held at the Abita Springs Town Hall on January 22, 2009. All interested agencies, tribes, non-governmental organizations, and individuals were invited to attend to provide input into the scoping process, after which a 30-day scoping period was open for public comment submission. After the scoping period ended, a Scoping Report was prepared to summarize the comments provided by the public and agencies. The Scoping Report is provided in Appendix L.

8.2 PUBLIC COMMENTS ON THE DRAFT EIS

The Draft EIS was distributed for a 45-day public review and comment period from September 9, 2011 to October 24, 2011. A public hearing specific to the proposed action was held on September 28, 2011 at the Abita Springs Town Hall. All comments received during the 45-day public review period were considered part of the official record.

A total of 149 comments were received regarding the proposed action during the 45-day public comment period (see Section 5.4). At the public hearing, 14 written comment forms were turned in, 9 oral comments were taken by the court reporter prior to the hearing, and 32 oral comments were taken during the hearing (two of those persons also spoke to the reporter prior to the hearing). There were also 45 emails and 49 letters received from the public within the comment period.

8.3 PUBLIC COMMENTS ON THE FINAL EIS

This Final EIS will be distributed for a 30-day public review and comment period. Any comments received during this review period will be considered as part of the official record. After the 30-day comment period, the CEMVN District Commander will review all comments received during the review period and make a determination if they rise to the level of being substantive in nature and provide responses when substantive issues are raised which have not been addressed in the Final EIS. A Record of Decision will not be signed no less than 30 days after the notice of availability of the Final EIS is published in the Federal Register.

8.4 PROJECT WEBSITE

At any time during the EIS process, the public can access information regarding the I-12 to Bush EIS via the project website www.i12tobush.com. Information on this website includes the Scoping Report, an electronic version of the Draft EIS, and an electronic version of the Final EIS.

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