

3.14 SOCIOECONOMICS

The Heavenly Ski Resort Master Plan Environmental Impact Report/Environmental Impact Statement (95 Draft EIR/EIS/EIS) was certified in 1996 (96 Final EIR/EIS/EIS). The socioeconomic and population and housing sections of the 95 Draft EIR/EIS/EIS included a detailed analysis of the potential economic and population and housing effects associated with the projects included in the adopted 1996 Master Plan (MP 96). Heavenly Mountain Resort has since proposed changes to the MP 96 in the Heavenly Mountain Resort Draft Master Plan Amendment (MPA 07). The Heavenly Mountain Resort Master Plan Amendment Final EIR/EIS/EIS was certified in 2007.

As discussed in Chapter 1, socioeconomic impacts are addressed by the previous EIR/EIS/EIS documents listed above and require no additional analysis for the Epic Discovery Project EIR/EIS/EIS. No new socioeconomic (e.g., population, employment and housing) impacts are anticipated because summer employment and housing demand will not exceed winter employment and housing demand levels previously studied in the past documents. Currently, Heavenly supports 125 year-round positions with approximately 250 full- and part-time employees for summer operations and approximately 1,750 full- and part-time employees for winter operations. Implementation of the Proposed Action would potentially increase Heavenly's summer employment by 75 FTEs (full-time equivalents) for year one and 250 FTEs at full implementation. For winter operations, Heavenly anticipates employment to increase by approximately 25 FTEs for year one activities and up to 50 FTEs at full implementation.

As documented in the Scoping Summary Report (Appendix 1-A), Heavenly will attempt to utilize the local workforce to the extent practical for construction and operations of the proposed projects. Because many of the proposed activities require specialized systems, vendors must oversee and install projects, assisted by Heavenly summer employees for support and basic labor tasks. With the intent to support local employment, Heavenly intends to hold a spring job fair each season to recruit and hire summer season employees. The job fair will be open to the public; however, existing Heavenly winter employees familiar with Heavenly training, culture, service standards and related employee programs and policies will be encouraged to apply. Retaining seasonal employees can provide a number of benefits to the employee, the employer, the guests and the local economy. The proposed projects are not anticipated to significantly impact the local job market in the South Lake Tahoe region.

Heavenly employee housing is a complex consisting of 96 beds in 16 suite style units, owned and operated by Heavenly and located near the California base lodge. The units serve seasonal employees during the winter and are frequently leased to Forest Service personnel for summer fieldwork. During construction of the proposed projects, there is a potential for Heavenly to lease part of the employee housing complex for construction crews. Due to the surplus of available beds at Heavenly employee complexes during the summer, housing for new employees is not anticipated to be an issue or to impact the local rental market.

In summary, construction and operational employment generated from the proposed projects at Heavenly will have no significant impact due to the availability of a local workforce and housing.