

3.16 NATIVE AMERICAN CONSULTATION

According to the available documented evidence, the Native American peoples known to have traditionally occupied or used the area encompassed by the WFO District include the Northern Paiutes and Western Shoshones. For this project, the present-day tribes listed in Table 3.16-1 represent these groups. Representatives from these tribes and organizations were contacted for comment and input into this project. At its request, the Washoe tribe was also included in the tribes contacted.

**TABLE 3.16-1
NATIVE AMERICAN TRIBES CONTACTED
FOR THE WINNEMUCCA GEOTHERMAL PROJECT**

Alturas Indian Rancheria	Klamath Tribe
Battle Mountain Band	Lovelock Paiute Tribe
Burns Paiute Tribe	Pit River Tribe
Cedarville Rancheria	Pyramid Lake Paiute
Confederated Tribes of the Warm Springs Reservation	Shoshone-Bannock Tribes
Duck Valley Shoshone-Paiute Tribe	Summit Lake Paiute Tribe
Fallon Paiute-Shoshone Tribe	Susanville Indian Rancheria
Fort Bidwell Indian Community	Walker River Paiute Tribe
Fort McDermitt Tribe	Washoe Tribe
Inter-Tribal Council of Nevada	Winnemucca Tribe

3.16.1 Affected Environment

Geothermal resources (seeps, hot springs, and ponds) have long been an integral part of Native American medicinal, social, and spiritual activities within northern Nevada. As part of this assessment, the BLM entered into government-to-government consultation with 19 Native American tribes and 1 tribal organization to address their concerns with potential commercial geothermal resources research and development leasing. Consultation actions and results of this consultation are published in a separate report, developed in direct support of this PEA: *Summary Report of Native American Consultation Efforts for the Winnemucca Geothermal Project, August 2002.*

Seven of the consulted tribes (Lovelock Paiute, Pyramid Lake Paiute, Walker River Paiute, Washoe, and Fort McDermitt tribes, and the Alturas and Susanville Indian rancherias) and the Intertribal Council of Nevada (ITCN) responded to the BLM's request for information. Four of the tribes (Lovelock Paiute, Pyramid Lake Paiute, Walker River Paiute, and Washoe tribes) offered comments and concerns regarding the project. Three tribes (Alturas Indian rancheria, Susanville Indian rancheria, and Fort McDermitt tribe) and the ITCN responded that they have

no further concerns regarding the project. The remaining 11 tribes did not respond to the BLM’s request for information. The Lovelock and Pyramid Lake Paiute tribes both expressed concerns about natural hot springs within the assessment area. The Lovelock Paiute tribe’s concerns also involve protection or treatment of artifacts and burials in the immediate vicinity of the hot springs areas.

An archival and literature review of ethnographic and ethnohistoric studies pertinent to the study area revealed 13 Native American culturally significant areas in or near the assessment area (see Table 3.16-2). As a result of BLM’s consultation with affected Native American tribes and organization, one of the tribes identified Kyle Hot Springs (also listed in Table 3.16-2) as a culturally sensitive area within the assessment area. In general, other consultation efforts and ethnographies document the importance of hot springs to the Native American tribes in this area (ITS/Charis, 2002).

The Stillwater Range has also been identified as a culturally significant area by the Lovelock Paiute tribe, the Fallon Paiute tribe, and other Paiute tribes (McGuckian, 1996) because of traditional pine-nutting uses. The Lovelock Paiute trail to the pine nut area in the Stillwater Range is within the assessment area. In consultation with the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO), the BLM is currently in the process of evaluating several areas in the vicinity of the Stillwater Range for National Register eligibility as Traditional Cultural Properties (TCPs). Although not yet formally determined, the following areas are considered eligible to the National Register of Historic Places: Cornish Canyon, New York Canyon, Hughes Canyon, Sheep Canyon, Fencemaker Pass, Table Mountain, and Red Hill. The trail to the pine nut area from Lovelock to the Stillwater Range also could be eligible. The Lovelock Paiute tribe, as well as other tribes, has traditionally used these areas for pine nut harvesting and they regard them as having great cultural and sacred importance. Integrity of setting is an important component of the eligibility of these areas.

**TABLE 3.16-2
CULTURALLY SIGNIFICANT AREAS IDENTIFIED DURING
ARCHIVAL/LITERATURE REVIEW**

Name	Description
Burial Site of Joe Paul	Gravesite of the first white man to be buried in Nevada. Purportedly a landmark for the Northern Paiutes (Scott, 1966:8).
Chocolate Butte	Source of specularite, a mineral used for medicinal purposes by the Northern Paiutes (McGuckian, 1996:151).
Cinnabar Hill (Red Hill)	Called <i>Tatóiya</i> (translation unknown) by the Northern Paiutes. Area was utilized for pine-nutting. It was avoided at night possibly because of its association with an incident involving Western Shoshones who tried to use the cinnabar as ochre, decorating their bodies in Northern Paiutes fashion. Some of these people died as a result, possibly due to mercury poisoning from the cinnabar (McGuckian, 1996:108-9; Scott, 1966:137).

Name	Description
Dixie Hot Springs	Called <i>Paumag^waitu</i> by the Northern Paiute. Important to the Fallon Paiute-Shoshone tribe for spiritual and medicinal purposes, particularly because of the curative properties of the hot water and mud. (Facilitators, Inc., 1980:2.67; Fowler, 1992:178).
Granite Point	Called <i>Tohatekatupogi</i> (white rock sticking out cave) by the Northern Paiutes. Small cave (Site 26Pe9) located in a rock formation known as Granite Point (Grosscup, 1974:16).
Kyle Hot Springs	Important to the Lovelock Paiutes for medicinal, social, and spiritual purposes (Facilitators Inc., 1980:2.9; Smith et al., 1983:169).
Limerick Canyon Springs	Important to Lovelock Paiutes for medicinal, social, and spiritual purposes (Facilitators Inc., 1980:2.9-10, 2.17; Smith et al., :169).
Squaw Butte	May have been used for vision questing and may also be an eagle nesting area (Woods Cultural Research. Inc., 1997:46).
Stillwater Range	Important to the Northern Paiutes as a major pine-nutting area, as well as an important area for collecting plants and hunting (Facilitators 1980:2.66; Fowler, 1992:39; Hopkins, 1994:64; Loud and Harrington, 1929:152, 158; McGuckian, 1996:99; Scott, 1966:7; Shimkin and Reid, 1970).
Trail – Stillwater Range	Trail used by the Lovelock Paiute Tribe to access pine-nutting areas in the Stillwater Range (McGuckian, 2002).
Two Tips	Called <i>waha-kutakwa</i> (two tips). Favored woodchuck-hunting area to the Northern Paiutes (Loud and Harrington, 1929:154).
Where the Animals Were Kept	Cave called <i>Tu-wi'-hu ta-wa'-gun</i> or <i>Ta-vu-to-o</i> (translation unknown) by the Northern Paiutes. Associated with Northern Paiute story about Wolf and Coyote (Fowler and Fowler, 1971:225-6, 241-2, 249, 288; Kelly, 1938:378; Stewart, 1943:298).
Winnemucca Lake	Called <i>izikuyuipanünöd</i> (translation unknown) by the Northern Paiutes. At one time, was known to be the home of a mean water baby and a great green snake (Fowler, 1989:9; Fowler and Fowler, 1971: 286; Stewart, 1941:444).

3.16.2 Environmental Impacts

3.16.2.1 Proposed Action

Direct Impacts – There are no direct impacts to issuing leases for future geothermal exploration, development, and production activities.

Indirect Impacts – The following are the potential environmental impacts on Native American consultation when analyzing the “reasonably foreseeable development scenario.”

Exploration. Geothermal exploration in the New York Canyon KGRA, PVA 12, and the north and south leases in PVA 12 could impact TCPs in the Stillwater Range. The setting of these TCPs could also be impacted. Similarly, other areas that have been identified as culturally significant to Native Americans in the affected environment (see Table 3.16-2), or that are identified through subsequent consultation efforts, could be impacted if they are in or near assessment areas. Access road and well construction could destroy all or portions of TCPs and other culturally significant areas and/or impair their setting. Access roads or roads created from repeated off-road travel along seismic lines could lead to increased use and impairment or destruction of culturally significant areas by non-Native Americans.

If the flow or temperature of hot springs is affected by geothermal drilling, hot springs, which are considered sacred by Native Americans, could be impacted. The springs could dry up or become cooler in temperature. Since the thermal water in these springs is considered sacred, this would result in a loss of these sacred sites, and the healing energy and power they provide to the Native Americans who value them.

Prior to approving a lease for geothermal energy exploration on any lands within the WFO boundaries, the BLM would require the commercial entity to produce a site-specific EA, part of which would address Native American concerns for the specific lease area. At that time, affected Native American tribes would have another opportunity to express concerns and offer alternatives and/or mitigating measures to the proposed exploration. To ensure Native American concerns are addressed and impacts avoided, stipulations have been developed (see [Appendix G](#)).

Development. Impacts to areas of Native American concern during the developmental phase would be more extensive, long lasting, and severe. Geothermal development in the New York Canyon KGRA, PVA 12, and the north and south leases in PVA 12 could impact TCPs in the Stillwater Range. The setting of these TCPs could also be impacted. Similarly, other areas that have been identified as culturally significant to Native Americans could be impacted if they are in or near assessment areas. Construction of roads, drill site development, pipelines, power plants, and electric transmission lines could destroy all or portions of TCRs and other culturally significant areas and/or impair their setting. This could result in a permanent loss of areas that are considered sacred and/or important to Native American heritage and the maintenance of their culture.

If the flow or temperature of hot springs is affected by geothermal drill site development and/or production, hot springs, which are considered sacred by Native Americans, could be impacted. The springs could dry up or become cooler in temperature. Since the thermal water in these springs is considered sacred, this would result in a loss of these sacred sites, and the healing energy and power they provide to the Native Americans who value them.

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concerns are addressed and impacts avoided, stipulations have been developed (see [Appendix G](#)).

Production. Assuming that Native American concerns were mitigated during the development phase of geothermal energy leasing, there should be no additional impacts that would affect the production phase.

Close-Out. During the close-out phase for geothermal energy development, the commercial entity would be required to remove all production, transmission, and support facilities and return the affected area to its natural condition. If Native American consultations are deemed necessary, the BLM would again enter into government-to-government consultations to ensure Native American interest and concerns are addressed.

3.16.2.2 No Action Alternative

Direct Impacts – There are no direct impacts to issuing leases for future geothermal exploration, development, and production activities.

Indirect Impacts – Indirect impacts from the No Action Alternative would be similar to those described in the Proposed Action; however, updated mitigation measures and stipulations would not apply using the 1982 Geothermal EA.

²⁵ U.S. Department of the Interior, Bureau of Land Management. Sonoma-Gerlach and Paradise-Denio Management Framework Revised Plan Amendment and Draft EIS. August 2000 (unpublished).