



**US Army Corps
of Engineers®**

Supplement II
to the Environmental Assessment for the
Bosque Wildfire Project, Bernalillo and Sandoval Counties, New Mexico

Prepared
by

U.S. ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS
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November 6, 2006

**U.S. ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS
ALBUQUERQUE DISTRICT**

**FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT
to the
SUPPLEMENT II to the ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT
for the
BOSQUE WILDFIRE PROJECT, BERNALILLO AND SANDOVAL
COUNTIES, NEW MEXICO**

This proposed action is to construct additional emergency access bridges, remove additional jetty jacks, and perform woody fuel reduction, exotic vegetation thinning and revegetation of native species at additional locations not discussed in the Environmental Assessment for the Bosque Wildfire Project, Bernalillo and Sandoval Counties, New Mexico dated September 2004 (EA). The proposed action would aid in access by emergency equipment to perform fire prevention activities and fire suppression if a fire were to occur in the bosque, as well as reduce the risk of fire. These activities were discussed and analyzed in the EA. This Supplement II to the Environmental Assessment for the Bosque Wildfire Project (SEA) includes additional locations for emergency access at Salida Sandia on the east side of the river and at Interstate 40 (I-40) on the west side of the river; an additional location for jetty jack removal at Bridge NE; and additional locations to receive woody fuel reduction, exotic vegetation thinning, jetty jack removal and revegetation of native plants on the Pueblo of Isleta.

If emergency access bridges were not installed at these locations, prevention and suppression of fires in the bosque would continue to be hard to access. If jetty jacks were not removed at the Bridge NE location, emergency access would continue to be impeded. If fuel reduction, exotic thinning and revegetation with native species did not occur on the Pueblo of Isleta lands, these areas would continue to be at risk for a fire to occur.

Cultural resources surveys of the project areas have been conducted. Several historic archaeological sites occur in the project areas on Isleta Pueblo including the existing, historic Atchison, Topeka and Santa Fe Railroad bridge. These historic sites would not be affected by the proposed project. If traditional use areas on Isleta Pueblo occur in the vicinity of the project areas, they will be avoided. The project is being coordinated with Isleta Tribal officials. No significant cultural resources or historic properties would be affected.

Conditions to be adhered to during the implementation of these activities includes: 1) project activities within the bosque will occur only between September and March of any given year, 2) the attached river bar at the Pueblo of Isleta which is utilized by Southwestern Willow Flycatcher will not be treated in the first year and known territories will be given a 300 foot buffer around them in which project activity will not occur, 3) all traditional and cultural properties on the Pueblo of Isleta will be avoided, and 4) all conditions listed in the EA will continue to be adhered to.

The Clean Water Act (CWA) provides for protection of waters of the United States from impacts associated with discharges of dredged or fill material in aquatic habitats, including wetlands, as defined under Section 404 of the CWA. Since all work associated with the proposed action would be accomplished outside of aquatic areas regulated by this law, a Department of the Army (DA) permit under Section 404 would not be needed for the work. Because a DA permit is not necessary, neither is a state water quality certification permit needed under Section 401 of the CWA.

The planned action would result in only minor and temporary impacts on air quality, water quality, and noise levels during implementation. The following elements have been analyzed and would not be significantly affected by the planned action: socioeconomic environment, air quality, water quality, noise levels, flood plains, riparian areas, wetlands, waters of the United States, biological resources, endangered and threatened species, prime and unique farmland, and cultural resources. These elements were analyzed in the EA.

The planned action has been fully coordinated with Federal, tribal, and local governments with jurisdiction over the ecological, cultural, and hydrologic resources of the project area. Based upon these factors and others discussed in the EA and this SEA, the planned action would not have a significant effect on the human environment. Therefore, an Environmental Impact Statement will not be prepared for this project.

6 NOV 06
Date


B.A. Estok
Lieutenant Colonel, U.S. Army
District Commander

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	<u>Page</u>
Background	1
Purpose and Need	1
Proposed Action and Locations	1
Existing Conditions	3
Foreseeable Effects and Cumulative Impacts	8
Cultural Resources	9
Hazardous, Toxic and Radioactive Waste	10
Endangered and Protected Species	10
Jetty Jack Removal	12
No Action	12
Preparers	13
Consultation and Coordination	13
References	14

Figures

Figure 1. June 2003 Fires	2
Figure 2. Proposed Action	4
Figure 3. Emergency access bridge at Arenal Rd. (under construction)	5
Figure 4. Proposed crossing at Salida Sandia	5
Figure 5. Proposed crossing at I-40 location	6
Figure 6. Proposed jetty jack removal at Bridge NE	7

Tables

Table 1. Summary of Effects	8
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Appendices

Appendix A. Figures 3A-3C. Proposed Action from EA	16
Appendix B. USFWS Coordination	17
Appendix C. Jetty Jack removal authorization letters and maps	20
Appendix D. Agency and Public Comments and Responses	21

**SUPPLEMENT II to the ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT
for the
Bosque Wildfire Project, Bernalillo and Sandoval Counties, New Mexico**

Background

In the summer of 2003, two fires occurred in the riparian woodland bordering the Rio Grande (bosque) in Albuquerque, New Mexico. The Atrisco Fire took place on June 24, 2003 near the I-40 Bridge and burned approximately 150 acres. The Montaña Fire took place on June 26, 2003 near the Montaña Road Bridge and burned approximately 113 acres. A total of approximately 263 acres of bosque were destroyed (see Figure 1).

In September 2004, the Corps completed a Environmental Assessment and Finding of No Significant Impact for the Bosque Wildfire Project, Bernalillo and Sandoval Counties, New Mexico (EA) addressing the potential effects of woody fuel reduction, exotic tree and shrub thinning, jetty jack removal, debris removal, levee bank protection, access improvements, and installation of drain crossings. This EA is available on the Corps web site at <http://www.spa.usace.army.mil>. The recommended plan from the EA called for implementation of these activities at various locations within Bernalillo and Sandoval Counties (Appendix A). A Supplemental I to this EA was completed in March of 2006 in order to extend the timeframe of work that was discussed in the EA for another 5 years, as funding allows.

Purpose and Need

Authorization for the previous and proposed action is contained in Public Law 108-137, Operations and Maintenance, Section 116, "...the Secretary of the Army, acting through the Chief of Engineers, is authorized to undertake appropriate planning, design and construction measures for wildfire prevention and restoration in the Middle Rio Grande bosque in and around the City of Albuquerque. Work shall be directed toward those portions of the bosque which have been damaged by wildfire or are in imminent danger of damage from wildfire due to heavy fuel loads and impediments to emergency vehicle access."

Proposed Action and Locations

The proposed action is to construct additional emergency access bridges, remove additional jetty jacks, perform woody fuel reduction, exotic vegetation thinning and revegetation of native species at additional locations not discussed in the EA. The proposed action would aid in access by emergency equipment to perform fire prevention activities and fire suppression if a fire were to occur in the bosque, as well as reduce the risk of fire. These activities were discussed and analyzed in the EA. This Supplemental II to the EA (SEA) is written to include additional locations for emergency access at Salida Sandia Road on the east side of the river and at Interstate 40 (I-40) on the west side of the river; an additional location for jetty jack removal north of Bridge Blvd. on the east side of the river (ranging over approximately 20 acres); and additional locations to receive woody fuel reduction, exotic vegetation thinning, jetty jack removal and revegetation of native plants on the Pueblo of Isleta

Figure 1 - Bosque Wildfire June 2003 Fires



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Base aerial photography:
Flown March 2004
New Mexico State Plane (Central)
NAD 83, Feet (U.S.)
Courtesy of the Middle Rio Grande
Council of Governments in partnership
with the US Army Corps of Engineers,
Middle Rio Grande Conservancy District
and City of Albuquerque

Legend

- Montaña Fire = 113 Acres
- Atrisco Fire = 150 Acres

Note: Acreages are approximate



(approximately 100 acres) (Figure 2). As stated in the EA, no fuel reduction or exotic thinning would occur during the nesting season, April 1 through August 30, of any given year.

The Salida Sandia location is at the south end of the Price's Dairy property on the east side of the river and an easement has been obtained by Mr. Price to allow emergency access only across the proposed bridge. The bridge would be similar in design to other emergency access crossings installed at Arenal Blvd., Louise Blvd. and Gabaldon Rd. (Figure 3). Currently, there are no crossings between the South Diversion Channel and the Pueblo of Isleta (approximately 6 miles). Access in this area was originally proposed in the EA at the end of Clark Rd. but there was neighborhood opposition to this location. Therefore, the proposed action is to change the location to the end of Salida Sandia Rd.

Gates would be located at the interface between the public and private road (where there is an existing gate), at the fence line between the private road and the Riverside Drain, and at the bridge entrance. These gates would be standard farm gates (and would be five feet high) made of steel pipe and would be locked at all times. A 'No Parking' sign will be placed on each gate. A map showing a close up of this location is in Figure 4.

Access at the I-40 location was requested by the City of Albuquerque in order to cross the storm drain outfall that runs directly to the river (Figure 5). Currently, access across the drain to the bosque to the north is prohibited.

Jetty jack removal is proposed to take place at the Bridge NE location (Figure 6) and with a portion of the work area at the Pueblo of Isleta (Appendix C). Removal of the jetty jacks would be completed in conjunction with fuel reduction and thinning of non-native vegetation where not already complete in order to minimize disturbance. Where tieback lines are removed, new anchors would be installed to insure remaining bank lines would not migrate from their current position. Jetty jacks to be salvaged would be stockpiled on site during construction and removed prior to the completion of construction.

Existing Conditions

The sites proposed for installation of emergency access crossings, jetty jack removal and woody fuel reduction, exotic vegetation thinning and native plant revegetation are depicted on Figure 2.

The locations proposed to receive emergency access crossings (Salida Sandia and south of I-40 on the west side of the river) are already disturbed. The site at the end of Salida Sandia Road is along the riverside drain which receives maintenance activities annually. The location at I-40 is along a storm drain outfall which receives inputs during storm events and creates erosion along the banks of the river.

In the bosque at Bridge Blvd., there is an existing cottonwood (*Populus deltoides* var. *wislizenii*) canopy and much of the non-native understory vegetation has been thinned by



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Background:
Quickbird Imagery
June, 2005
State Plane Central FIPS, NAD83,
U.S. Survey Feet



Figure 2. Proposed Action

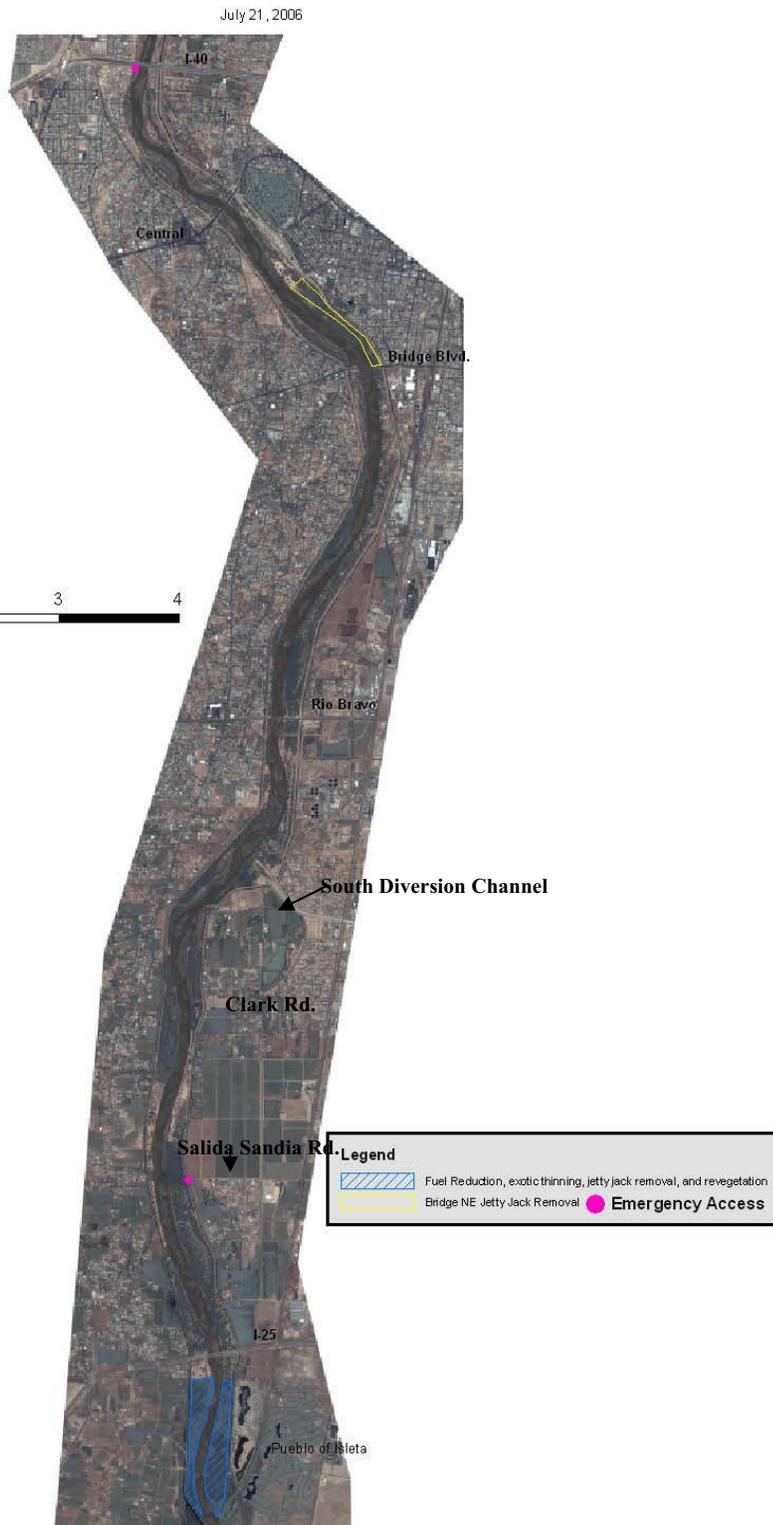




Figure 3. Emergency access bridge at Arenal Rd. (under construction)



Figure 4. Proposed crossing at Salida Sandia



Figure 5. Proposed crossing at I-40 location



Figure 6. Proposed jetty jack removal at Bridge NE

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July 5, 2006



the City of Albuquerque Open Space. There are numerous jetty jacks at this location which are currently prohibiting access. At the Pueblo of Isleta, the locations proposed to be worked in consist of a cottonwood canopy with dense understory vegetation (both native and non-native).

Foreseeable Effects and Cumulative Impacts

Consistent with analysis in the 2004 EA, the following Foreseeable Effects and Cumulative Impacts are anticipated.

Table 1. Summary of Effects

<i>Existing Environment</i>	<i>Foreseeable Effects</i>
Physiography, Geology, Soils	Short-term adverse effect on soils
Hydrology and Hydraulics	No effect
Water Quality	No effect
Air Quality and Noise	Negligible, short-term adverse effects during construction
Aesthetics	Short-term negative effects during construction with long-term positive effects
Vegetation Communities	Short-term negative effects during construction with long-term positive effects
Floodplains and Wetlands	No effect
Wildlife	Short-term negative effects during construction with long-term positive effects
Human Health and Safety/HTRW	Long-term positive effects to safety. No adverse HTRW impacts.
Endangered and Protected Species	May affect but not likely to adversely effect: Southwester Willow Flycatcher, Bald Eagle, Yellow-Billed Cuckoo, Rio Grande silvery minnow, Rio Grande silvery minnow critical habitat, Yuma myotis, Occult little brown bat; No effect to: Neotropic Cormorant, Common Black-Hawk, Whooping Crane, Black Tern, Bell’s Vireo, Flathead chub, Pecos River muskrat, New Mexico jumping mouse
Cultural Resources	No adverse effect to Historic Properties
Socioeconomic Considerations	No adverse effect
Land Use and Recreational Resources	Short-term negative effects during construction with long-term positive effects
Indian Trust Assets	No adverse effect
Environmental Justice	No adverse effect
Cumulative Effects	Positive effect of this project and others in the area

In addition to these general effects and impacts, a discussion of site specific foreseeable impacts follows.

Cultural Resources

Cultural resources surveys of the current Bosque Wildfire project areas have been conducted and are documented in Marshall and Walt (2006, in press), Marshall (2003), and Everhart (2006). In and immediately adjacent to the project areas on the Pueblo of Isleta Reservation, existing flood control earth works and the historic Atchison, Topeka and Santa Fe Railroad bridge (still in use today) are being recorded under four archaeological site numbers. These historic structures would not be affected by the proposed project. Traditional use areas are known to occur in some areas of the bosque on the Pueblo of Isleta Reservation, if such use areas occur in the vicinity of the project areas, they will be avoided. The Corps is coordinating the proposed work with Isleta Pueblo Tribal officials. No other significant cultural resources were observed in the project areas during the cultural surveys. Prior to the cultural surveys, literature searches as well as searches of the New Mexico Historic Preservation Division, Archaeological Records Management Section's database were conducted; no prehistoric or historic archaeological sites are known to occur within or adjacent to the proposed project areas. A search of the State Register of Cultural Properties and of the National Register of Historic Places found that no historic properties are known to occur in the vicinity of the project areas.

The proposed project includes plans to remove Kellner jetty-jacks and other historic flood control features. Jetty-jacks and several historic post and cable flood control structures that date from the 1930s to 1960s are known to occur in the project areas and are to be removed. This type of flood control structures have been previously documented by Berry and Lewis (1997). The jetty-jacks and the historic flood control structures are considered to have served their purpose and have been determined to be no longer necessary for flood control protection; and they are not considered to be culturally significant (Everhart 2004b:2, 23, 30-31). The New Mexico State Historic Preservation Officer has concurred with this determination.

Other recent cultural survey reports for bosque habitat restoration projects include Everhart (2004a) and M. Marshall (2003) and one report for the Corrales flood control levee rehabilitation and an addendum were prepared by Kneebone (1993) and Kneebone and Everhart (1997), respectively. Cultural resources reports covering survey work and other cultural resources documentation for Bosque Wildfire project areas include, in chronological order:

Everhart 2004b (Corps' Report No. COE-2004-002; NMCRIS No. 87583),
Everhart 2004c (Corps' Report No. COE-2004-004; NMCRIS No. 88363),
Everhart 2004d (Corps' Report No. COE-2004-005; NMCRIS No. 88531),
Everhart 2004e (Corps' Report No. COE-2004-009; NMCRIS No. 89604),
Walt *et al.* 2005 (Cibola Research Consultants Report No. 378; NMCRIS No.91077),
and Estes 2005 (UNM-OCA Report No. 185-839, NMCRIS No.89833).

Over the course of the last several years, for the Bosque Wildfire Project as well as other similar bosque-habitat restoration projects, the Corps has coordinated with Santa Ana Pueblo, Sandia Pueblo, and Isleta Pueblo, and have contacted other American Indian Tribes that have cultural resources concerns in Bernalillo and Sandoval Counties. For the project areas no cultural resources concerns have been brought to the attention of the Corps and no traditional cultural properties are known to occur in the immediate vicinity of the project areas. Based on the above information as documented in the cultural resources survey reports, the Corps is of the opinion that there will be "No Historic Properties Affected" by the proposed project.

Hazardous, Toxic and Radioactive Waste (HTRW)

On March 21, 2006, Corps' staff from the Geotechnical and HTRW Branch visually inspected the proposed location for a new bridge crossing location at Salida Sandia Road SW. No solid or hazardous wastes were observed. No staining or discoloration of the ground at any of these locations was observed. No samples for waste characterization were collected, as none were deemed necessary to this effort.

On July 19, 2006, Corps' staff from the Geotechnical and HTRW Branch visually inspected the proposed location for a new bridge crossing location at I-40 and Iliff in the bosque area. There was a significant amount of solid waste (trash) present at the location such as plastic bottles, plastic shopping bags, aluminum cans, etc. This trash appears to be deposited at the site by stormwater runoff as a storm drain is located adjacent to this site. Evidence of an outdoor homeless shelter was also observed. No hazardous wastes were observed. No staining or discoloration of the ground at any of these locations was observed. No samples for waste characterization were collected, as none were deemed necessary to this effort. As a result of this project, no direct, indirect or cumulative effects from HTRW are expected.

Endangered and Protected Species

The Southwestern Willow Flycatcher (*Empidonax traillii extimus*) is known to use the Rio Grande in the project area as a migratory pathway. The proposed work areas on the Pueblo of Isleta are within the bosque and in habitat that is suitable for breeding Southwestern Willow Flycatchers. Fires have occurred within this area twice during the last ten years due to high fuel loads. The proposed action would reduce the risk of fire in this area. When the fire-prone characteristics of non-native vegetation (such as salt cedar) are coupled with conditions brought about by flood suppression, fires become inevitable in these low elevation riparian areas. Fires within dense salt cedar stands are often intense and fast moving. Moreover, fires at any time of the year can affect breeding success of flycatchers by causing changes in vegetation structure and composition. Although some short-term insignificant impacts to potential flycatcher habitat are anticipated, this project will also provide long-term benefits to the flycatcher by reducing the risk of catastrophic wildfire within the treated areas.

Surveys have been conducted at the locations proposed to receive fuel reduction in 2002, 2004 and 2005 by the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA). In 2002, 12 Willow Flycatchers

(WIFLs) were detected. Four were determined to be Southwestern Willow Flycatcher (Abeita, 2004). One of these four did nest but at a location approximately 1 mile south of the proposed project area. In 2004, flycatchers were detected and nested successfully in two locations on the west side of the river within the proposed project area. In 2005, surveys were attempted but were inhibited by high river flows. Territories and nests were detected which were successful. Surveys were conducted in 2006 in the same area and a flycatcher was detected during the last two survey periods. Nests were found but did not appear to be inhabited.

These areas where flycatchers have previously been detected and nested within the proposed project area will be treated sensitively. The area being used by SWFL is on an attached bar that is mainly coyote willow (*Salix exigua*) with Russian olive (*Elaeagnus angustifolia*) along the edge. This bar area would not be treated in the first year (Fall/Winter 2006-2007). A 300 foot buffer would be left around the areas where SWFL have been detected. Work zones for the first year would be outside of these areas and then they would be revegetated. During the second year (Fall/Winter 2007-2008) the bar area would be treated by hand to further reduce fuels and remove some non-natives. Russian olive and salt cedar (*Tamarix ramosissima*) that appear to be utilized by SWFL would be left. Treatment of this area in the second year is dependent upon results of surveying during the 2007 season and continued coordination with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

The remainder of the habitat outside of the 300 foot buffer is a mix of cottonwood, salt cedar, Russian olive, Siberian elm (*Ulmus pumila*) and Tree of Heaven (*Ailanthus altissima*) with some other natives mixed in (coyote willow, *Amorpha fruticosa*, and Gooding's willow (*Salix gooddingii*)). These areas where native habitat exists will be treated by hand crews in order to protect the native vegetation. These areas will also be replanted with supplemental coyote willow and other native shrub species. Work will only take place outside of the nesting season (between September and March) and is proposed to begin in September 2006.

Numerous surveys have been conducted under the Bosque Wildfire Project, and no nesting pairs have been detected in the Albuquerque Reach of the bosque. Migrants have been detected in the Albuquerque Reach (north of Isleta Pueblo) in May of the years that surveys were conducted (2003, 2004, 2005 and 2006) but not at the locations proposed for installation of the bridges or jetty jack removal. Based on the specialized treatment proposed at the Pueblo of Isleta and the lack of potential habitat in the Albuquerque Reach, the proposed work may affect but is not likely to adversely affect, the Southwestern Willow Flycatcher. It is proposed that fuel reduction efforts would provide long-term benefits to the species by protecting habitat that they currently use (such as Isleta) and providing suitable habitat with native vegetation after fuel reduction is performed.

The proposed work would not take place in the Rio Grande channel nor would work result in erosion or other inputs directly into the river. Portions of the proposed action are within designated Critical Habitat of the Rio Grande silvery minnow (*Hybognathus*

amarus). This work is within the bosque and no change to the landform is proposed. Primary constituent elements of Rio Grande silvery minnow Critical Habitat is insignificant and discountable. Therefore, the proposed action may affect, but is not likely to adversely affect designated Critical Habitat of the Rio Grande silvery minnow. Since no work would take place within the river channel, the proposed action will not affect the Rio Grande silvery minnow.

The Bald Eagle (*Haliaeetus leucocephalus*) is listed as Threatened by the USFWS and the New Mexico Department of Game and Fish. Bald Eagles occur regularly in winter within the Albuquerque reach and have been observed by Corps Biologists flying over the burn area at Montañito on the east side of the river. Portions of the proposed action would occur during the winter, which is when Bald Eagles may be in or near the project area. In order to minimize the potential for disturbing Bald Eagles utilizing adjacent habitat, the following guidelines would be employed. If a Bald Eagle is present within 0.25 mile of the project area in the morning before activity starts, or arrives during breaks in project activity, the contractor would be required to suspend all activity until the bird leaves of its own volition, or a Corps biologist, in consultation with the USFWS, determines that the potential for harassment is minimal. However, if an eagle arrives once activity is underway, or if an eagle were beyond 0.25 mile of the site, activity would not be interrupted.

Implementation of these measures would preserve undisturbed Bald Eagle use of roost, foraging and perching sites in the riparian area adjacent to the burn sites. For these reasons, the proposed work may affect but is not likely to adversely affect the Bald Eagle.

Concurrence on these determinations has been requested from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) (Appendix B).

Jetty Jack Removal

It has been determined by the Corps that the jetty jacks identified for removal in this proposed action can be removed with a low impact based on the proposed revegetation. The Authorization for Removal of Jetty Jacks form (see Appendix C) has been signed by all pertinent parties to approve removal of these jetty jacks. At the Bridge NE location, additional protection of the storm water pump station outfall, bridge abutment and levee would be required. Approximately 500 feet of riprap would be installed as part of the jetty jack removal in order to protect these facilities. For the reasons stated in the 2004 EA, only the overbank or floodway jetty jacks are being considered for removal. All bankline jetty jacks are to remain in place for this proposed work. The construction activities would not impact existing floodway infrastructure other than the jetty-jacks that have been identified for removal. As discussed above, all areas would be revegetated with native seed, shrubs and trees.

No-Action Alternative

The No Action alternative has not changed from the original EA. If fuel reduction, exotic thinning, jetty jack removal, debris removal, levee bank protection, access improvements,

and construction of drain crossings did not occur, the fire hazard level would remain the same, if not increase, and the potential to fight imminent fires would not be improved.

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Bruce Jordan - Geotechnical Unit
Lynette Giesen – Plan Formulation
Louie Gurule – Real Estate

Consultation and Coordination

The following entities were consulted and/or coordinated with regarding this project:

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
USEPA, Region 6
U.S. Bureau of Reclamation
Hopi Tribal Council
Cultural Preservation Office
Navajo Nation
Navajo Nation Historic Preservation
White Mountain Apache Tribe
Historic Preservation-White Mountain Apache Tribe
Pueblo of Isleta
Pueblo of Sandia
Language & Cultural Resources-Pueblo of Sandia
Pueblo of Laguna
NAGPRA Chairman-Pueblo of Laguna
Ysleta del Sur Pueblo
Environmental Management-Ysleta del Sur Pueblo
New Mexico Forestry and Resources Conservation Division
New Mexico Department of Game and Fish
New Mexico Department of Game and Fish
New Mexico Interstate Stream Commission
New Mexico Environmental Department
Bernalillo County Public Works
Bernalillo County Public Works
City of Albuquerque Open Space
City of Albuquerque Environmental Health
Albuquerque Fire Department
City of Albuquerque Public Works
Village of Corrales
Rio Grande Nature Center
Middle Rio Grande Conservancy District
Albuquerque Metropolitan Arroyo Flood Control Authority
Ms. Amy Jaeger

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2006. Cultural Resources Documentation and an Inventory of 6.2 Acres for Five Emergency Access Bridges and Dry Hydrant Locations, Bosque Wildfire Project, in Sandoval and Bernalillo Counties, New Mexico. Report No. COE-2006-002; NMCRIS No. 98996). U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Albuquerque District, Albuquerque.
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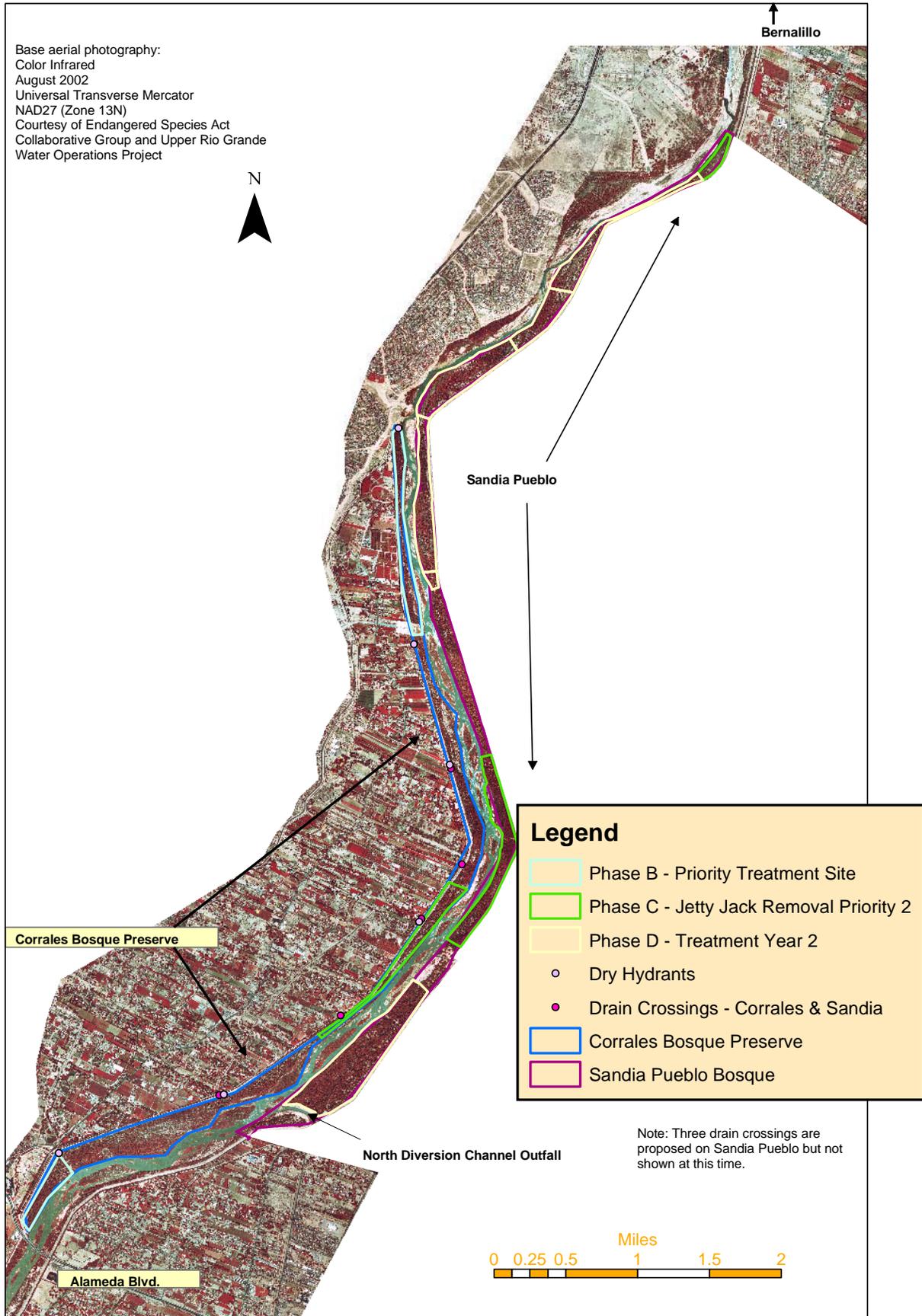
Appendix A. Figures 3A-3C, original maps from EA



**US Army Corps
of Engineers**
Albuquerque District
Environmental Resources Section

September 2, 2004

Figure 3A - Bosque Wildfire Corrales Bosque Preserve and Sandia Pueblo





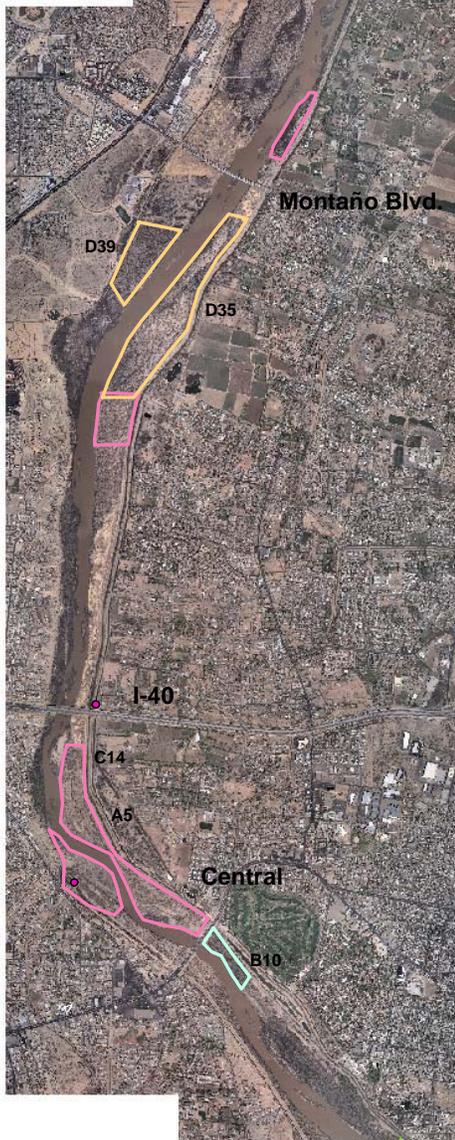
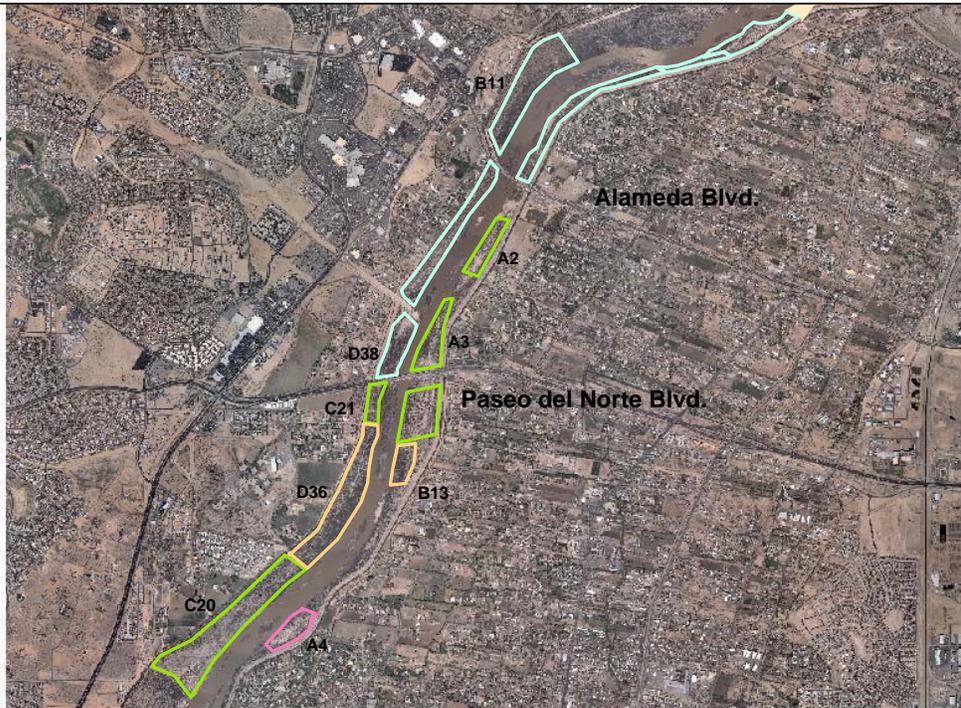
US Army Corps
of Engineers
Albuquerque District

Environmental Resources Section

Figure 3B - Bosque Wildfire Albuquerque Reach

September 2, 2004

Base aerial photography:
Flown March 2004
New Mexico State Plane (Central)
NAD 83, Feet (U.S.)
Aerial photography provided courtesy
of the Middle Rio Grande Council of
Governments, Middle Rio Grande Conservancy
District and the City of Albuquerque



Legend

- Phase A - Jetty Jack Removal and Revegetation
- Phase B - Priority Treatment Site
- Phase C - Jetty Jack Removal and Revegetation
- Phase D - Treatment Year 2

ACCESS_TYP

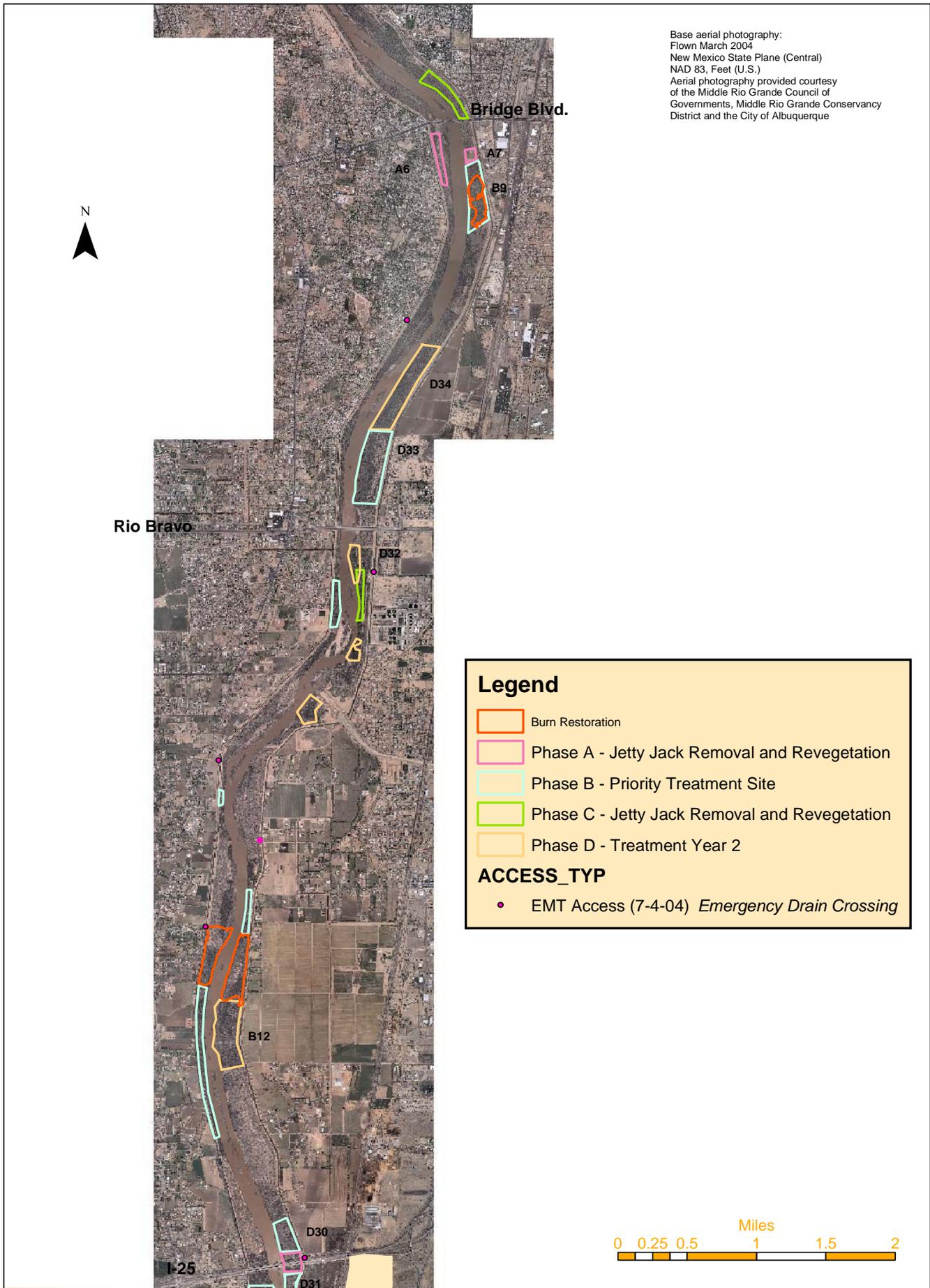
- EMT Access (7-4-04) *Emergency Drain Crossing*





Figure 3C - Bosque Wildfire Albuquerque Reach

September 2, 2004



Appendix B. USFWS Coordination

July 24, 2006

Planning, Projects and Program Management Division
Planning Branch
Environmental Resources Section

Mr. Wally Murphy
Acting Field Supervisor
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
Ecological Services Field Office
2105 Osuna NE
Albuquerque, NM 87113

Dear Mr. Murphy:

Please find enclosed a copy of the Draft Supplement II to the Environmental Assessment (DSEA) for the Bosque Wildfire Project, Bernalillo and Sandoval Counties, New Mexico. The proposed action is to construct Emergency Access bridges at additional locations, remove jetty jacks at additional locations, and perform fuel reduction, exotic thinning and revegetation of native species at additional locations not discussed in the September 2004 EA. The proposed action would aid in access by emergency equipment to perform fire prevention activities and fire suppression if a fire were to occur in the bosque, as well as reduce the risk of fire. This action was originally planned and discussed in the 2004 EA. This DSEA is written to include additional locations for emergency access at Salida Sandia Road on the east side of the river and at Interstate 40 (I-40) on the west side of the river; an additional location for jetty jack removal north of Bridge Blvd. on the east side (ranging over approximately 20 acres); and additional locations to receive fuel reduction, exotic thinning, jetty jack removal and revegetation on the Pueblo of Isleta (approximately 100 acres).

The Corps has made a final determination that the proposed project may affect, but would not likely adversely affect the Southwestern Willow Flycatcher, the Rio Grande silvery minnow, Critical Habitat of the Rio Grande silvery minnow, and the Bald Eagle (see pages 7-9). The Corps

respectfully requests the Service's concurrence with these determinations.

A hard copy of the DSEA is enclosed. The DSEA is also electronically available for viewing and copying at the Albuquerque District website (under "FONSI/ Environmental Assessments") at: <http://www.spa.usace.army.mil> . Additional hard copies may also be obtained upon request.

Public review of the DSEA will occur for 15 days from August 7-22, 2006. Please provide comments by August 22, 2006. Please forward your comments to Ms. Ondrea Hummel, Biologist, Environmental Resources Section, at the above address, phone (505) 342-3375, fax (505)342-3668, or email to Ondrea.C.Hummel@usace.army.mil.

Sincerely,

Julie A. Hall
Chief, Environmental

Resources

Section

Enclosure

cc: Eric Hein, USFWS ES



United States Department of the Interior

FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE
New Mexico Ecological Services Field Office
2105 Osuna NE
Albuquerque, New Mexico 87113
Phone: (505) 346-2525 Fax: (505) 346-2542

July 28, 2006

Cons. #2-22-04-I-480c

Julie Hall, Chief, Environmental Resources
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
Albuquerque District
4101 Jefferson Plaza NE
Albuquerque, New Mexico 87109

Dear Ms. Hall:

This responds to your July 24, 2006, letter seeking review of the draft supplement II environmental assessment (DSEA) and concurrence on your Bosque Wildfire Project, Bernalillo and Sandoval Counties, New Mexico (Bosque Wildfire Project) (U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (Corps) 2006). Your proposed action is to continue activities originally planned and discussed in the September 2004 EA but at locations not previously discussed. In this DSEA you propose to: 1) construct emergency access at Salida Sandia Road on the east side of the river and at Interstate 40 (I-40) on the west side of the river; 2) remove jetty jacks north of Bridge Blvd. on the east side (ranging over approximately 20 acres); and 3) reduce fuel, thin exotic vegetation, remove jetty jacks, and revegetate on the Pueblo of Isleta (approximately 100 acres).

You have made a final determination that the proposed action “may affect, is not likely to adversely affect” the southwestern willow flycatcher (*Empidonax traillii extimus*) (flycatcher), the Rio Grande silvery minnow (*Hybognathus amarus*) (silvery minnow) and its designated critical habitat, and the bald eagle (*Haliaeetus leucocephalus*). You requested concurrence with these determinations.

The Service concurs with your determination that the proposed action “may affect, is not likely to adversely affect” the flycatcher for the following reasons:

- The sites at Salida Sandia Road, the river at I-40, and Bridge Blvd. are already disturbed and/or receive annual maintenance activity and/or have already been treated for non-native vegetation management and thus do not have flycatcher habitat.
- Project activity will occur between September and March, outside of migration and nesting season

At the Pueblo of Isleta flycatcher surveys have been conducted at the project site since 2002. The attached river bar utilized by flycatchers will not be treated the first year

Julie Hall, Chief, Environmental Resources

(Fall/Winter 2006-2007) and territory sites will have a 300 foot buffer around them in which project activity will not occur.

- The treatment sites will be restored with native riparian vegetation.
- Treatment of the river bar in Fall/Winter 2007-2008 will be by hand and non-natives utilized by the flycatcher will be left untreated.
- Treatment of the river bar area is dependent upon results of surveying during the 2007 season and continued coordination with the service.
- The project activity will provide long-term benefits to the flycatcher by protecting habitat that is currently used by reducing fire risk and enhancing the native plant species.

The Service concurs with your determination that the proposed action “may affect, is not likely to adversely affect” the silvery minnow and its designated critical habitat for the following reasons:

- The proposed work will not take place in the Rio Grande channel nor will work result in erosion or other inputs into the river.
There will be no affect to silvery minnow critical habitat primary constituent elements.

The Service concurs with your determination that the proposed action “may affect, is not likely to adversely affect” the bald eagle for the following reasons:

- If a bald eagle is present within 0.25 mile of the project area in the morning before project activity starts, or following breaks in project activity, the contractor will be required to suspend all activity until the bird leaves of its own volition, or a Corps biologist, in consultation with the Service, determines that the potential for harassment is minimal. If an eagle enters the project area during work activity the work activity can continue.
No potential roost trees will be removed.

We encourage efforts such as this project to reduce the risk of wildfire in the wildland urban interface, while conducting restoration activities. Protecting human life and property is the highest priority. In addition, threats of wide-scale habitat loss due to fire are real and immediate on many private and public lands. We appreciate your continued efforts to coordinate activities associated with the Bosque Wildfire Project with our office.

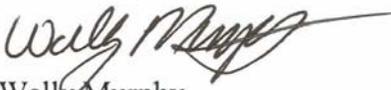
This concludes section 7 consultation with the Service for the Bosque Wildfire Project. If monitoring or other information results in additional modification of the project, consultation with the Service should be reinitiated. Please contact the Service to verify that the above determinations and concurrence are still valid if: 1) future surveys find proposed, threatened or endangered species in areas where they have not been previously observed; 2) the

Julie Hall, Chief, Environmental Resources

proposed project is changed or new information reveals effects of the actions to the listed species or their habitat to an extent not considered in these evaluations; or 3) a new species is listed that may be affected by the proposed activities.

Please let us know if we can be of further assistance. If you have any questions, please contact Nancy Baczek at the letterhead address or at (505) 761-4711.

Sincerely,


Wally Murphy
Acting Field Supervisor

cc:

Director, New Mexico Department of Game and Fish, Santa Fe, New Mexico
Director, New Mexico Energy, Minerals, and Natural Resources Department, Forestry
Division, Santa Fe, New Mexico
Superintendent, City of Albuquerque Open Space Division, Albuquerque, New Mexico
Chief Engineer, Middle Rio Grande Conservancy District, Albuquerque, New Mexico
Manager, Rio Grande Nature Center State Park, Albuquerque, New Mexico
Governor, Isleta Pueblo

Literature Cited

U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. July 2006. Draft Supplement II to the Environmental Assessment for the Bosque Wildfire Project, Bernalillo and Sandoval Counties, New Mexico. Albuquerque District.

Appendix C. Jetty Jack removal authorization letters and maps

AUTHORIZATION FOR REMOVAL OF JETTY JACKS

SITE: North Diversion Channel to the Pueblo of Isleta Northern Boundary –
Authorization for Removal of Jetty Jacks on both sides of the Rio Grande

The jetty jacks through this reach are either owned or under the authority of the US Army Corps of Engineers, The Bureau of Reclamation or the Middle Rio Grande Conservancy District. In a cooperative effort the three agencies have reviewed this reach to evaluate whether jetty jack removal would conflict with flood control and erosion management. The reach where jetty jack removals have been approved is shown on the enclosed maps with exceptions identified where jetty jacks are to remain. Exceptions identified are typically in areas where the active river channel has migrated very close to the levee and a narrow overbank buffer exists between the active river flow and the levee toe.

Jetty jack removal within this reach is approved with the following conditions:

Removal of jetty jacks is acceptable throughout this reach with the exception of the bank line jetty jacks as well as the other exceptions noted on the attached maps. The Contractor will be responsible for safe disposal of all jetty jack materials after they are removed from the work site. The MRGCD has first option to receive removed jetty jacks. The contractor shall stockpile the removed jetty jacks on site for 14 calendar days for MRGCD to claim.

All jetty jacks that are not removed, typically the bank line jetty jacks, must remain fully intact. Any broken cable or snapped/cut wires resulting from this work or the recent activity of others should be repaired. Additionally, where tieback lines are removed, new anchors are to be installed as needed to insure that the remaining lines of jetty jacks cannot migrate from their current position.

If only one or two jetty jacks within a continuous line are removed, the contractor will be required to reconnect the remaining jacks with a buried steel cable. The Contractor may not remove tieback lines (roughly perpendicular to the river) without also placing a buried anchor (known as a "deadman") to replace the tieback line.

Ongoing inspections as well as a final inspection will be conducted to insure that the terms and requirements as described above are followed.

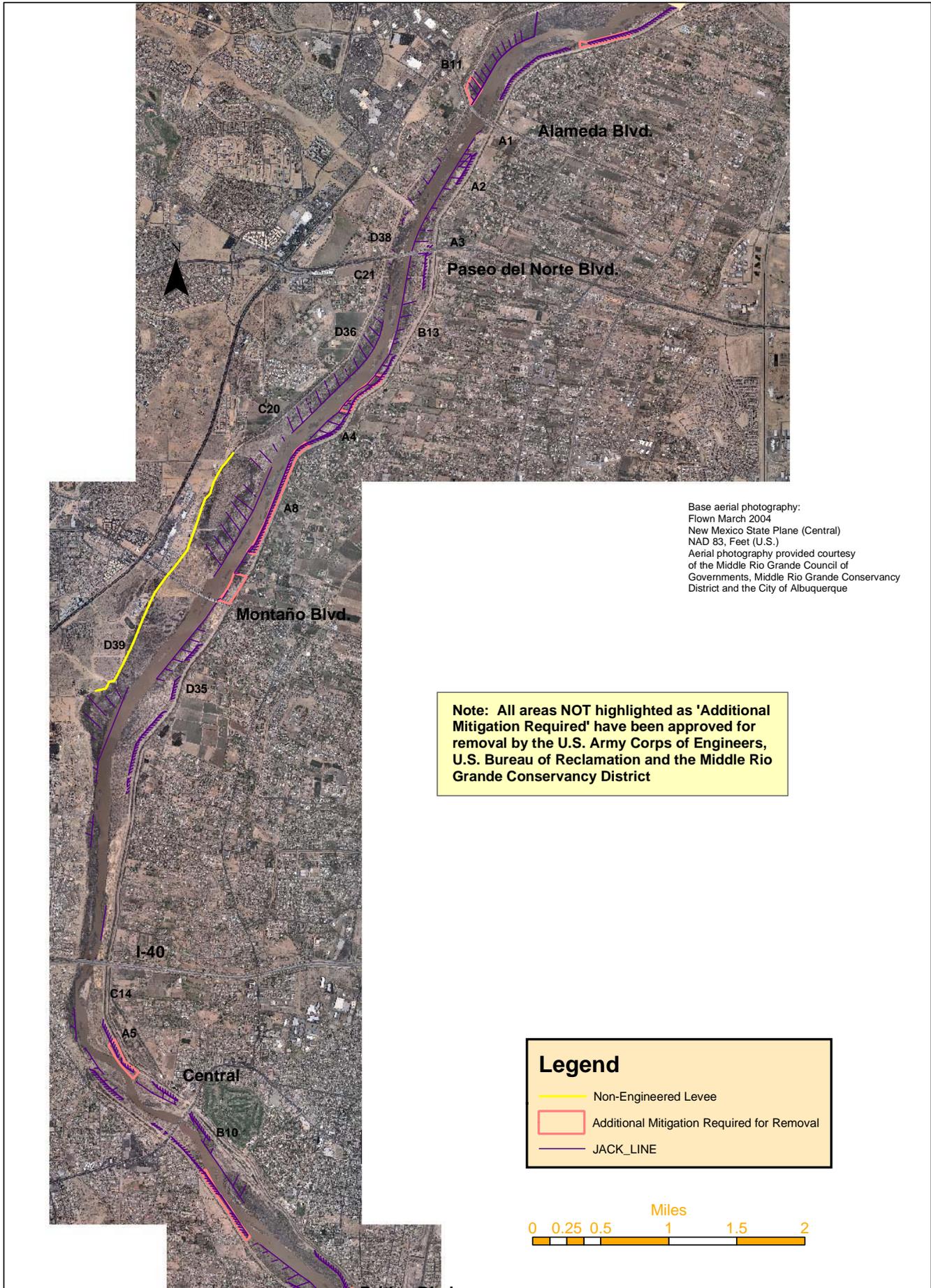
This authorization expires on December 31, 2007; removal of jetty jacks after that date would require a re-consultation with all signatory agencies.

	8/23/04
U. S. BUREAU OF RECLAMATION	DATE
	8/27/04
MIDDLE RIO GRANDE CONSERVANCY DISTRICT	DATE
	8/18/04
U. S. ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS	DATE
	17 August 2004
U. S. ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS	DATE



Proposal 1 - Bosque Wildfire Authorization for Removal of Jetty Jacks Albuquerque Reach

August 11, 2004



Base aerial photography:
Flown March 2004
New Mexico State Plane (Central)
NAD 83, Feet (U.S.)
Aerial photography provided courtesy
of the Middle Rio Grande Council of
Governments, Middle Rio Grande Conservancy
District and the City of Albuquerque

Note: All areas NOT highlighted as 'Additional Mitigation Required' have been approved for removal by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, U.S. Bureau of Reclamation and the Middle Rio Grande Conservancy District

Legend

- Non-Engineered Levee
- Additional Mitigation Required for Removal
- JACK_LINE

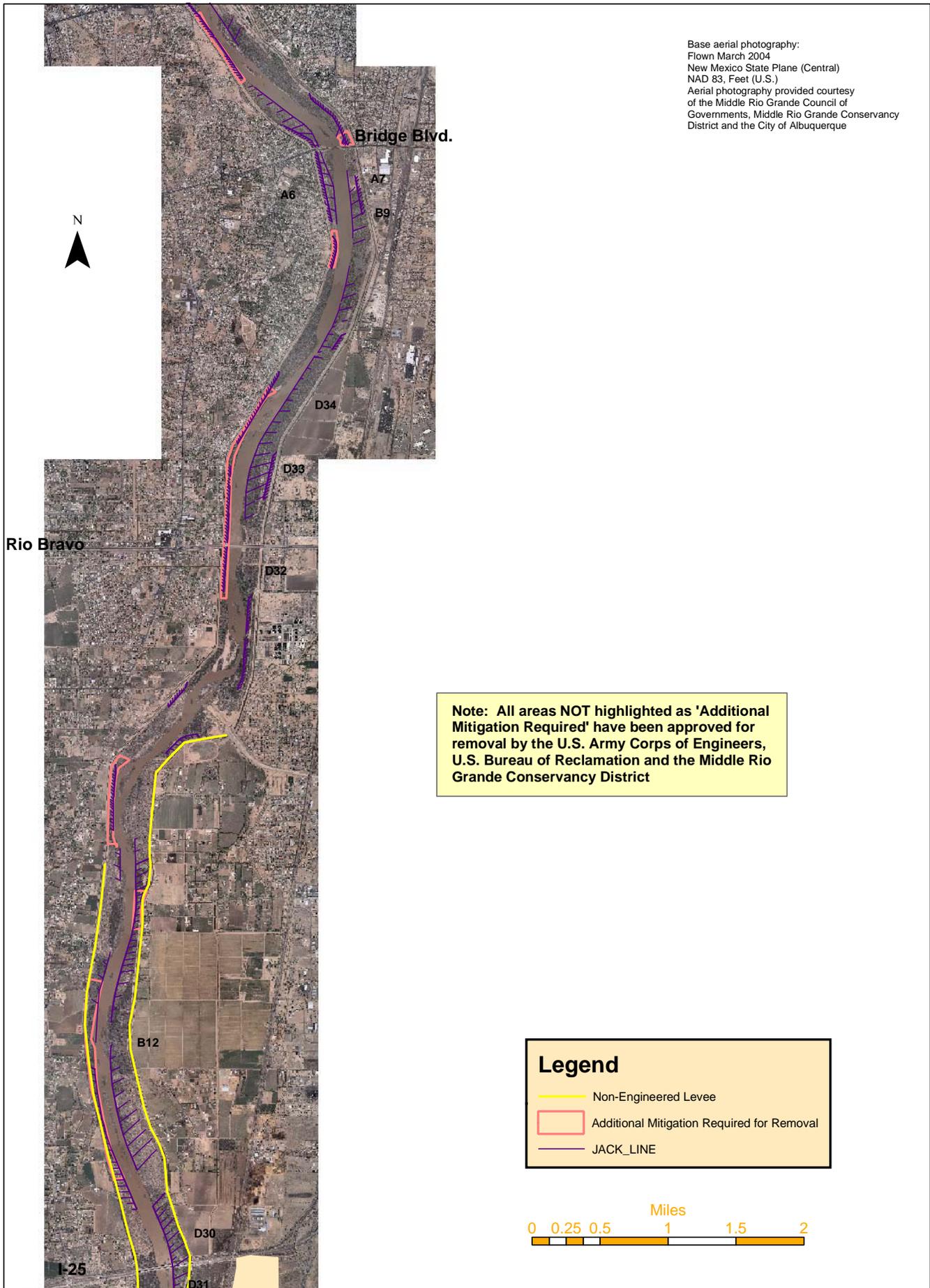




Proposal 2 - Bosque Wildfire Authorization for Removal of Jetty Jacks Albuquerque Reach

August 11, 2004

Base aerial photography:
Flown March 2004
New Mexico State Plane (Central)
NAD 83, Feet (U.S.)
Aerial photography provided courtesy
of the Middle Rio Grande Council of
Governments, Middle Rio Grande Conservancy
District and the City of Albuquerque



Note: All areas NOT highlighted as 'Additional Mitigation Required' have been approved for removal by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, U.S. Bureau of Reclamation and the Middle Rio Grande Conservancy District

Legend

- Non-Engineered Levee
- Additional Mitigation Required for Removal
- JACK_LINE



AUTHORIZATION FOR REMOVAL OF JETTY JACKS
Isleta Pueblo – North end of Isleta Pueblo from I-25 to Railroad Crossing

The jetty jacks at these sites are either owned or under the authority of the US Army Corps of Engineers, the Bureau of Reclamation or the Middle Rio Grande Conservancy District (MRGCD). In a cooperative effort the three agencies have reviewed these sites to evaluate whether jetty jack removal would conflict with flood control and erosion management. The sites where jetty jack removals have been approved are noted on the attached map.

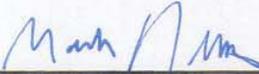
Jetty jack removals at these sites are approved with the following conditions:

Removals of jetty jacks are acceptable at this site with the exception of the bank line jetty jacks, and the jetty jacks upstream of the Railroad Crossing on the west bank (as shown on attached map). This is due to its location on the outside of a bend and the narrow buffer between the active river channel and the non-engineered levee. The Contractor will be responsible for the safe disposal of all jetty jack materials after they are removed from the work site. The Isleta Pueblo and the MRGCD will have first priority to receive removed jetty jacks. The contractor shall stockpile the removed jacks on site for 14 calendar days for Isleta Pueblo or the MRGCD to claim as determined by mutual agreement.

All jetty jacks that are not removed, typically the bank line jetty jacks, must remain fully intact with the following exception. If jetty jacks are mostly buried with only the top portion exposed above the "belt" (the location where the three angle iron pieces intersect), then the exposed portion of the jetty jacks may be cut off just below the ground surface. This will facilitate the clearing operation and will remove what could become a safety hazard if a partially exposed metal angle iron remains just above ground. Any broken cable or snapped/cut wires resulting from this work or the recent activity of others should be repaired. Additionally, where tieback lines are removed, new anchors are to be installed as needed to insure that the remaining lines of jetty jacks cannot migrate from their current position.

If only one or two jetty jacks within a continuous line are removed, the contractor will be required to reconnect the remaining jacks with a buried steel cable. The Contractor may not remove tieback lines (roughly perpendicular to the river) without also placing a cable with buried anchor (known as a "deadman") to replace the tieback line. At a minimum, tieback lines are necessary at the upstream and downstream end points of a line of jetty jacks as well as any existing intermediate tieback locations.

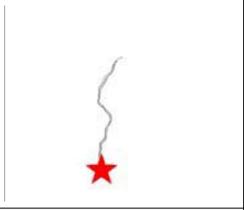
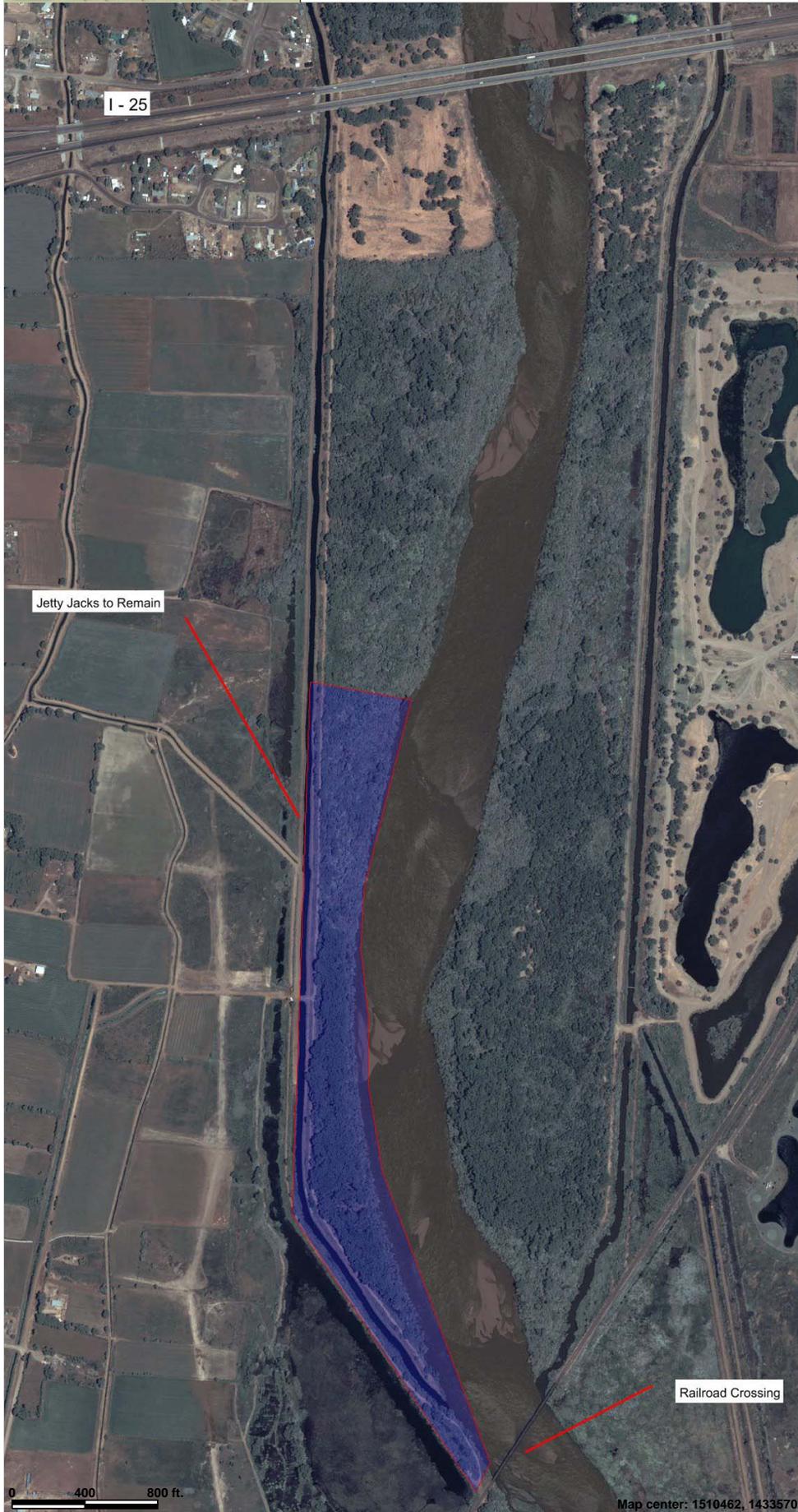
Ongoing inspections as well as a final inspection will be conducted to insure that the terms and requirements as described above are followed.

	3/7/06
U. S. BUREAU OF RECLAMATION	DATE
	3/10/06
MIDDLE RIO GRANDE CONSERVANCY DISTRICT	DATE
	6 March 06
U. S. ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS	DATE
	6 March 2006
U. S. ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS	DATE

JETTY JACK REMOVAL - RIO GRANDE BOSQUE FIRE PROJECT

RIVER LOCATION FOR PROPOSED ACTION: Selected Locations within Isleta Pueblo:
Northern Site - I-25 to RR Crossing

River Characteristic and/or Bosque/overbank Characteristics	Level of Concern			
	High	Medium	Low	N/A
1 Plan Form Characteristics				
Straight River Section			x	
Inside of Bend			x	
Outside of Bend	x			
2 Bridge Characteristics				
Upstream of Bridge	x			
Downstream of Bridge			x	
Impinging on flow	x			
3 Hydraulic-influencing structures/features				
Tributary Confluence				x
Culvert/Channel Outfall to River			x	
Sill/Hard point (GRF)				x
4 Overbank Extent Characteristics				
Wide "Buffer" between active chan. & levee > 700 ft			x	
Average "Buffer" between active chan. & levee			x	
Narrow "Buffer" between active chan. & levee < 200 ft	x - North (upstream) of RR Crossing on west bank			
Health of Overbank Vegetation				
Healthy Mature Dense Cottonwoods			x	
Severely Burned Area				x
Dense vegetation w/ large fuel load	x			
Sparse vegetation, predominately open				x
5 Levee Characteristics				
Engineered levee				x
Side slope on river side				x
Vegetative growth in levee				x
Levee top width				x
Levee height				x
Secondary flow path against levee				x
Non Engineered/Unstable levee				
Side slope on river side			x	
Vegetative growth in levee		x		
Levee top width			x	
Levee height		x		
Secondary flow path against levee	x - when overbanking occurs			
6 Active Channel Characteristics				
Top width variability				
Wide, > 700 feet				x
Narrow, < 300 feet				x
Average, 300 to 700 feet			x	
Depth variability				
Incised & Defined			x	
Shallow & Active (meander potential)				x
Bank condition				
Deep vertical unstable slope			x	
Shallow stable slope			x	
Reinforced by Bosque Vegetation			x	
Reinforced by Jetty Jacks			x	
Jetty Jacks Flanked				x
Jetty Jacks Absent				x
Channel Slope				
Steep/high velocity				x
Mild/low velocity			x	
Middle bar presence				
Bars Established & Heavily Vegetated				x
Bars Forming & Lightly Vegetated			x	
Obstructing or Diverting Flow			x	
Extent of Monitoring & Site Accessibility	Site being Monitored by Isleta Pueblo			
Impact of Jetty Jack Removal at this site	Impact Low if revegetated & jacks left in place north of RR Crossing on west bank			



Legend
Major Streets

0 400 800 ft.

Map center: 1510462, 1433570

Scale: 1:6,692

This map is a user generated static output from an Internet mapping site and is for general reference only. Data layers that appear on this map may or may not be accurate, current, or otherwise reliable. THIS MAP IS NOT TO BE USED FOR NAVIGATION.



Appendix D. Agency and Public Comments and Responses

The following comments on pages 28-33 are all related to Salida Sandia Road and have been addressed in the table below.

Commenter	Comment	Corps Response
Cleveland-1	Install and maintain locked gates to prevent the unauthorized non emergency use of the road and bridge.	Gates will be provided and locked as discussed on page 3 under the Proposed Action, 3 rd paragraph.
Cleveland-2	Provide signage to articulate the emergency use of this structure to deter unauthorized use of the road and bridge.	A “No Parking” sign will be provided on the gate between the public road and where the private road begins (as discussed on page 3 under the Proposed Action, 3 rd paragraph.) The agencies that will be utilizing this access are aware that it is for emergency access only and is discussed on page 1 under the Proposed Action.
Cleveland-3	Maintain access for local horseback and pedestrian traffic.	The access will not be changed by this project. Gates will eliminate vehicular access. Pedestrian access on the bridge is allowed when accessing from the east side of the drain. Access via Salida Sandia Rd. is not encouraged and No Parking is allowed at the gates.
Cleveland-4	The paving of Salida Sandia to accommodate the heavier emergency vehicle traffic and minimize the fugitive dust.	The Corps has coordinated with the local Fire Departments and had them evaluate the road. They have stated that their vehicles can easily use the road in its current condition. This project will not increase fugitive dust as access to the bridge will only occur during an emergency (not on a regular basis).
Cleveland-5	The installation of speed humps to keep traffic speeds at a safe level in consideration of pedestrian and horseback riders in the area.	Again, the use of the road would not increase from the implementation of this project since it is for emergency access only. Installation of speed humps on the road is not part of this project.

D. Kettwich - 1	I would advise 6 foot high gates to prevent people from lifting their motorcycles over the gates.	As discussed on page 3, 3 rd paragraph under the Proposed Action, the gates will be standard farm gates and would be 5 feet high.
D. Kettwich – 2	I would like to see the gates locked at all times.	The gates will be locked at all times. See page 3, 3 rd paragraph under the Proposed Action.
D. Kettwich – 3	I would advise multiple "No Trespassing" and "No Parking" signs at the west end of Salida Sandia road by the first gate.	See Corps response to Cleveland-2.
D. Kettwich - 4	I would like to see the west end of Salida Sandia road paved with speed bumps (approximately 3/8 of a mile) to prevent dust pollution and speeding from the increased traffic.	See Corps response to Cleveland-4 and Cleveland-5.
Gurule-1	We are fully supportive of this access for emergency fire fighting activities only and have some concerns that we wish to express.	Thank you for your comment.
Gurule-2	How is the US Army Corps of Engineers planning on restricting access to emergency vehicles and crews only?	See Corps response to Cleveland-1 and Cleveland-2.
Gurule-3	We have had a few problems in the past with off road vehicles, dirt bikes, and all terrain vehicles racing up and down the Bosque access road. Our concern is that if a more accessible road is available to them, this will turn into a major problem with dirt bikes and ATV's screaming up and down the Bosque all the time. With increased access comes increased pollution (dust, noise, trash, and illegal hazardous waste dumping), which may cause more harm to the Bosque and the	See Corps response to Cleveland-1, Cleveland-2, and Cleveland-4.

	surrounding neighborhoods than the positive effects of providing a more convenient access road for fire fighting equipment and crews.	
Gurule-4	Our biggest fear and concern is that by providing and allowing more human traffic in this area it will increase the risk of a human-caused Bosque fire.	The current access would not be changed. See Corps response to Cleveland-3.
Gurule-5	Gates that will not allow ATV's, motorcycles, or other motorized vehicle access to the Bosque.	See Corps response to Cleveland-1.
Gurule-6	Signage that prohibits trespassing, parking, or loitering around the access points.	See Corps response to Cleveland-2.
Gurule-7	Signage along the access roads prohibiting motorized vehicles of any kind along the Bosque or adjacent access roads. The exception being official vehicles such as Fire Crews, MRGC, and Law Enforcement.	The purpose of the bridge is stated as emergency access and only those agencies that you have listed (and a few others) have permission to use it. See Corps response to Cleveland-2.
Gurule-8	Law Enforcement patrols to monitor and restrict access of unauthorized personnel and/or vehicles to the Bosque.	Law Enforcement is the responsibility of the City of Albuquerque Police Department (for the Rio Grande Valley State Park) and the County Sherriff Department.
Gurule-9	Installing speed bumps and Paving of the west end of Salida Sandia to help reduce the dust pollution.	See Corps response to Cleveland-5.
S. Kettwich-1	I feel more than a simple gate will be needed to prevent public entrance and congestion in this area. No parking signage is needed for the gravel turning circle and most likely a fence to prevent people from parking on the northwest end of our property and then climbing through the fence to access the ditch	See Corps response to Cleveland-1, Cleveland-2 and Cleveland-3.

	<p>access. I feel a gate needs to be at least 6 feet high and strong enough to deter some force. Also the fencing in the area contiguous to the gate needs to also be of sufficient deterrent in height and strength to dissuade entrance by people on foot or motorized travel of all kinds.</p>	
S. Kettwich-2	<p>Obviously the rebuilding of our irrigation turnout which will apparently be impacted or in fact destroyed by the construction needs to be addressed and adequately planned for so that we are able to irrigate as soon as needed and as well or better than we have in the past.</p>	<p>Any damage to the irrigation turnout due to the construction of the bridge would be reconstructed.</p>
S. Kettwich-3	<p>The construction needs to be carried out in a manner to minimize the stress on our breeding animals who border the construction both in terms of noise, dust, and other unforeseen problems to the animals.</p>	<p>The contractor's work zone will be limited to the area around the drain where the bridge would be constructed. They are required to implement Best Management Practice's to minimize dust and noise.</p>
S. Kettwich-4	<p>If the road becomes in fact a route of access for the public which is not foreseen and not predictable at this time, I would like to see a plan which includes a wall sufficient to prevent passage of the public from this road onto our property for example similar to freeway barriers so a problem of people interacting with animals can be avoided.</p>	<p>Access is restricted via the gates as described on page 3 but also would not be changed by this project (see Cleveland-3). Access to the bridge is via an easement through private property. Access to individual private property is the responsibility of the property owner.</p>
S. Kettwich-5	<p>Some and in fact many are concerned about dust from the road use as well and would like paving of Salida Sandia to the entrance of RR9 completed as well , but only with the inclusion of speedbumps to mitigate speeding which is already a problem.</p>	<p>See Corps response to Cleveland-4 and Cleveland-5.</p>

	The speed barriers of course to be of a type negotiable by firetrucks and equipment which needs the access for which the road is to be built.	
S. Kettwich-6	Lastly, I would like to see a review in 6 months and again in a year to see what in fact the impacts on our lives, health, and other important issues is and modifications made if necessary to control access or other problems that have in fact become evident.	The Corps would be happy to receive your input on the project and it's use after construction.
T. Sibbitt-2	The standard livestock/vehicle gate in the area is 5 feet tall. The proposed 3 or 4 foot gates for the emergency access only fire truck road through the dairy where it enters from Salida Sandia and on the other side at the irrigation ditch are simply not sufficient to keep out ATV's, motorcycles and other recreational motorized vehicles which are prohibited from the bosque and from the Conservancy District ditch roads.	See Corps response to Cleveland-1.
T. Sibbitt-3	As pedestrian/ equestrian access to the bosque is stated and promised to be available only to those who are already on the ditch (i.e., NOT from Salida Sandia), consideration should be given to adding barriers and signs to the gate block access from Sandia Sandia which state NO TRESPASSING --- NO PUBLIC ACCESS TO DITCH --- NO PARKING --- NO ENTRY. Public parking and public access to any aspect of the fire access road at the Salida Sandia entry gate should be discouraged and prohibited both through signs and through physical barriers.	See Corps response to Cleveland-2.

T. Sibbitt-4	Further comments should be allowed when the text of the proposed easement through the dairy becomes available.	The Corps will follow its standard procedures in acquiring this easement. If you have specific concerns, please submit for consideration.
T. Sibbitt-5	A formal review of the impact of the fire access road and its accompanying structures should be set for 6 months or 1 year past the initial construction to assess actual impact of public traffic, trespassing on foot, horse, or by vehicle, and any other impacts or effects. Of course, public comments and requests should be solicited and reviewed.	See Corps response to S. Kettwich-6.
T. Sibbitt-6	A formal contact person should be established for emergencies, comments and requests during and after construction and at least up until the first review period.	A project engineer will be on site during construction and can accept comments. Also, you may continue to contact Ondrea Hummel, Biologist, 342-3375 with questions. She will provide updates regarding construction via an e-mail list.
J. Payne-1	Pave the west end of Salida Sandia road and include speed bumps. This would help in fugitive dust abatement as this is an increasing problem on this stretch of road.	See Corps response to Cleveland-4 and Cleveland-5.
J. Payne-2	Post “No Parking” and “No Trespassing” signs at the cul-de-sac at the west end of Salida Sandia.	See Corps response to Cleveland-2.
J. Payne-3	Construct 6’ high gates to help keep out any trespassers trying to use the area for recreational activities including, those bringing in ATV’s and Motorcycles.	See Corps response to Cleveland-1.
J. Payne-4	Make sure the gates constructed are locked at all times except when needed for wildfire prevention and the maintaining of the Bosque.	See Corps response to Cleveland-1.

From: Tclevelandpwrlgt@aol.com
Sent: Tuesday, August 22, 2006 10:31 AM
To: Hummel, Ondrea C SPA
Subject: Emergency Access @ Salida Sandia

Ms.Hummel

My wife and I are home owners just south of the proposed emergency bridge location on Salida Sandia. Salida Sandia is the only road available to gain access our property and we use it several times each day. We understand and appreciate the need for an emergency access and bridge to aid in the fighting of wild fires in the bosque and other possible accidents or disasters. However due to the remote nature of the area we have major concerns about unauthorized non emergency use of this road and bridge.

My wife and I have horses and we have spent many enjoyable hours riding along the many miles of ditches and drains in the area. During these rides we have witnessed way too many inexcusable actions by ignorant individuals such as illegal dumping of household appliances, construction materials, and truck loads of old tires. On one occasion someone discarded what appeared to be used motor oil in 5 gallon buckets within 15 feet of the clear ditch.

Because our home is less than 1000 feet from the clear ditch we have observed several other illegal activities including the poaching of ducks from the back of a truck, the capture of fish from the clear ditch by the use two large nets, camp fires, and the discharging of firearms within 500 feet of an occupied building. Even more common is the use of motorcycles and four wheelers ridden at high rates of speed. If crashed into any of the ditches that have water in them, possible spills of fuel and or oil could contaminate the life blood of the wild life and the area farmers.

In conclusion we are for this beneficial project if the following items must be incorporated into the final design and construction and maintenance.

1. Install and maintain locked gates to prevent the unauthorized non emergency use of the road and bridge.
2. Provide signage to articulate the emergency use of this structure to deter unauthorized use of the road and bridge.
3. Maintain access for local horseback and pedestrian traffic.
4. The paving of Salida Sandia to accommodate the heavier emergency vehicle traffic and minimize the fugitive dust.
5. The installation of speed humps to keep traffic speeds at a safe level in consideration of pedestrian and horseback riders in the area.

Thank You in advance for helping preserve our little South Valley paradise.

Sincerely,

Todd & Dottie Cleveland, 505-463-7230

From: Donald L. Kettwich M.D. [dlk@swcp.com]
Sent: Monday, August 21, 2006 7:10 AM
To: Hummel, Ondrea C SPA
Subject: Emergency Access Road at Salida Sandia on the East side of the Rio Grande River

I am a land owner directly South of the Price dairy land and I am against this road unless the following stipulations are addressed:

1. I would advise 6 foot high gates to prevent people from lifting their motorcycles over the gates.
2. I would like to see the gates locked at all times.
3. I would advise multiple "No Trespassing" and "No Parking" signs at the west end of Salida Sandia road by the first gate.
4. I would like to see the west end of Salida Sandia road paved with speed bumps (approximately 3/8 of a mile) to prevent dust pollution and speeding from the increased traffic.

Thank you for your consideration.

Donald L. Kettwich
e-mail address-dlk@swcp.com
Work telephone-505-245-5737

From: Randall Gurule [rgurule@acme-worldwide.com]
Sent: Tuesday, August 22, 2006 2:53 PM
To: Hummel, Ondrea C SPA
Cc: Geri Gurule; 'EUGENE MOYA'; bosquebengal@yahoo.com
Subject: Emergency Access Road at Salida Sandia

Importance: High

22 August 2006

US Army Corps of Engineering

Environmental Resources Section

Att: Ms. Ondrea Hummel, Biologist

4101 Jefferson Plaza NE

Albuquerque, NM 87109

Dear Ms. Hummel,

We are land owners in the Willow Grove Estates subdivision. Willow Grove Estates is located just south of the Ansley Acres subdivision and is bordered on the west by the Williams lateral and the Rio Grande Bosque. I was notified yesterday by a neighbor that your organization is planning on constructing an emergency access bridge over the Williams Lateral and the main ditch in order to gain access to the Bosque to fight fires. Willow Grove Estates is located approximately 400 yards south of the proposed emergency access bridge. We are fully supportive of this access for emergency fire fighting activities only and have some concerns that we wish to express. In addition, we would like additional information on how the US Army Corps of Engineers is planning on addressing these concerns.

a.. How is the US Army Corps of Engineers planning on restricting access to emergency vehicles and crews only?

a.. We have had a few problems in the past with off road vehicles, dirt bikes, and all terrain vehicles racing up and down the Bosque access road. Our concern is that if a more accessible road is available to them, this will turn into a major problem with dirt bikes and ATV's screaming up and down the Bosque all the time. With increased access comes increased pollution (dust, noise, trash, and illegal hazardous waste dumping), which may cause more harm to the Bosque and the surrounding neighborhoods than the positive effects of providing a more convenient access road for fire fighting equipment and crews.

b.. Over the past two years, we have experienced two major Bosque fires--one directly North of the proposed emergency access bridge and one just a couple of hundred yards south of the Willow Grove Estates subdivision. Both of these fires were started by humans on the West side of the river. Heavy winds then carried burning embers over the river which eventually started the fires on the East side of the Bosque. My point here is that those fires were caused by humans in areas of the Bosque that are not controlled or restricted. Our biggest fear and concern is that by providing and allowing more human traffic in this area it will increase the risk of a human-caused Bosque fire. The stretch of Bosque directly west of the Willow Grove Estates on the east side of the Rio Grande is the only area of the Bosque North of I-25 for several miles that has not been effected by a Bosque fire. It would truly be a shame if this emergency access road was not limited to emergency vehicles and crews only and a human-caused fire destroys the only pristine section of the Bosque left for miles.

We respectfully request that the US Army Corps of Engineers plan and provide for extremely limited and restricted access to this emergency access bridge by providing the following:

a.. Gates that will not allow ATV's, motorcycles, or other motorized vehicle access to the Bosque.

b.. Signage that prohibits trespassing, parking, or loitering around the access points.

· Signage along the access roads prohibiting motorized vehicles of any kind along the Bosque or adjacent access roads. The exception being official vehicles such as Fire Crews, MRGC, and Law Enforcement.

a.. Law Enforcement patrols to monitor and restrict access of unauthorized personnel and/or vehicles to the Bosque.

b.. Installing speed bumps and Paving of the west end of Salida Sandia to help reduce the dust pollution.

We look forward to your response and appreciate you and the Corps time and consideration of our requests.

Sincerely,

Randall and Geri Gurulé
8901 Vidal Road SW
Albuquerque, NM 87105
rgurule@acme-worldwide.com

Eugene and Janet Moya
840 Vidal Road SW
Albuquerque, NM 87105
svmoyal@msn.com

Valen and Linda Tanner
8941 Vidal Road SW
Albuquerque, NM 87105
bosquebengal@yahoo.com

From: Sharon Kettwich [scheherezadearabians@msn.com]
Sent: Monday, August 21, 2006 8:46 PM
To: Hummel, Ondrea C SPA
Cc: sibblaw@aol.com; TheSibb2@aol.com; cassaroller@msn.com
Subject: road for fire4 access on dudley price land north of kettwichs

To whom:

I live on the southern border of the proposed emergency access road. I would like the easement and plans for the gate and fence proposed to limit access to this road to be available to the public prior to a decision to implement and build this road. I feel more than a simple gate will be needed to prevent public entrance and congestion in this area. No parking signage is needed for the gravel turning circle and most likely a fence to prevent people from parking on the northwest end of our property and then climbing through the fence to access the ditch access. I feel a gate needs to be at least 6 feet high and strong enough to deter some force. Also the fencing in the area contiguous to the gate needs to also be of sufficient deterrent in height and strength to dissuade entrance by people on foot or motorized travel of all kinds. Obviously the rebuilding of our irrigation turnout which will apparently be impacted or in fact destroyed by the construction needs to be addressed and adequately planned for so that we are able to irrigate as soon as needed and as well or better than we have in the past.

The construction needs to be carried out in a manner to minimize the stress on our breeding animals who border the construction both in terms of noise, dust, and other unforeseen problems to the animals.

If the road becomes in fact a route of access for the public which is not foreseen and not predictable at this time, I would like to see a plan which includes a wall sufficient to prevent passage of the public from this road onto our property for example similar to freeway barriers so a problem of people interacting with animals can be avoided. Some and in fact many are concerned about dust from the road use as well and would like paving of Salida Sandia to the entrance of RR9 completed as well, but only with the inclusion of speedbumps to mitigate speeding which is already a problem. The speed barriers of course to be of a type negotiable by firetrucks and equipment which needs the access for which the road is to be built.

Lastly, I would like to see a review in 6 months and again in a year to see what in fact the impacts on our lives, health, and other important issues is and modifications made if necessary to control access or other problems that have in fact become evident.

Thank you for your attention and the opportunity to respond although I feel the time to comment was inadequate especially without the wording of the easement and the actual bridge construction plans to review as I understand we would in fact not have a separate pedestrian bridge as described.

Sharon Kettwich MD

From: Tina R. Sibbitt [albdtrs@nmcourts.com]
Sent: Tuesday, August 22, 2006 6:16 PM
To: Hummel, Ondrea C SPA
Subject: Bosque Wildfire Project, Bernalillo and Sandoval Counties

Attachments: albdtrs.vcf

With respect to the above and to the proposed crossing at Salida Sandia, I submit the following comments:

1. I live at RR9, Box 823, Alb NM 87105, two houses down the private road past the red barn from the proposed crossing.
2. The standard livestock/vehicle gate in the area is 5 feet tall. The proposed 3 or 4 foot gates for the emergency access only fire truck road through the dairy where it enters from Salida Sandia and on the other side at the irrigation ditch are simply not sufficient to keep out ATV's, motorcycles and other recreational motorized vehicles which are prohibited from the bosque and from the Conservancy District ditch roads. One or two guys could lift or prop those vehicles over the proposed gates. Again, 5 foot gates are standard for the area, would fit into the area and not appear unsightly, and most important, would serve the stated and promised purpose of keeping out prohibited motorized vehicles.
3. As pedestrian/equestrian access to the bosque is stated and promised to be available only to those who are already on the ditch (i.e., NOT from Salida Sandia), consideration should be given to adding barriers and signs to the gate block access from Sandia Sandia which state NO TRESPASSING --- NO PUBLIC ACCESS TO DITCH --- NO PARKING --- NO ENTRY. Public parking and public access to any aspect of the fire access road at the Salida Sandia entry gate should be discouraged and prohibited both through signs and through physical barriers.
4. Further comments should be allowed when the text of the proposed easement through the dairy becomes available.
5. A formal review of the impact of the fire access road and its accompanying structures should be set for 6 months or 1 year past the initial construction to assess actual impact of public traffic, trespassing on foot, horse, or by vehicle, and any other impacts or effects. Of course, public comments and requests should be solicited and reviewed.
6. A formal contact person should be established for emergencies, comments and requests during and after construction and at least up until the first review period.

James W. Payne
820 Salida Sandia SW
Albuquerque, NM 87105

08/21/06

US Army Corps of Engineering
Environmental Resources Section
Attn: Ms. Ondrea Hummel, Biologist
4101 Jefferson Plaza NE
Albuquerque, NM 87109

Re: Construction of Emergency Access Bridges on Salida Sandia (East Side of Rio Grande)

Dear Ms. Hummel,

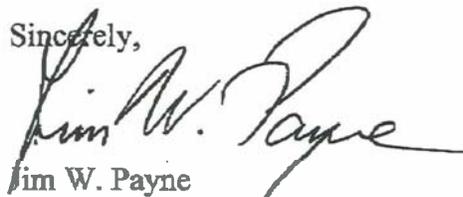
I'm writing in response to the proposed construction of Emergency Access Bridges on Salida Sandia, on the east side of the Rio Grande. I am the owner of the property at 820 Salida Sandia, which is the last property on the west end of the street.

I have concerns regarding the increased traffic and am requesting the following actions:

1. Pave the west end of Salida Sandia road and include speed bumps. This would help in the fugitive dust abatement as this is an increasing problem on this stretch of road.
2. Post "No Parking" and "No Trespassing" signs at the cul-de-sac at the west end of Salida Sandia.
3. Construct 6' high gates to help keep out any trespassers trying to use the area for recreational activities including, those bringing in ATV's and Motorcycles. Also post "No Parking" and "No Trespassing" signs on these gates.
4. Make sure the gates constructed are locked at all times except when needed for wildfire prevention and the maintaining of the Bosque.

I appreciate any and all consideration to my concerns and requests.

Sincerely,



Jim W. Payne

Email: jw@jwabq.com

Office: (505) 873-1784

Cell: (505) 328-1784

Home: (505) 877-2213

8/11/06

Dear Andrea Hammel -

Re: Access Bridge - South of I-40
West Side of Rio Grande

As you know, I live north of I-40 and our land extends into the bosque on the west side of the River. I cannot speak officially for my neighbors, but I believe everyone in the area supports the concept of having a bridge over the arroyo that now impedes vehicle access to the bosque north of I-40. Such a bridge would be wonderful for fire fighting, fuel reduction and environmental improvements. We trust such a bridge would be so designed to prevent unauthorized access to the bosque.

We appreciate your good work protecting this area.



Mr. Richard W. Kirschner
5004 Grande Vista Ct NW
Albuquerque, NM 87120

Dick Kirschner



BILL RICHARDSON
GOVERNOR

State of New Mexico
ENVIRONMENT DEPARTMENT
Office of the Secretary
Harold Runnels Building
1190 St. Francis Drive, P.O. Box 26110
Santa Fe, New Mexico 87502-6110
Telephone (505) 827-2855



RON CURRY
SECRETARY

DERRITH WATCHMAN-MOORE
DEPUTY SECRETARY

August 31, 2006

U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
Albuquerque District
Environmental Resources Section
Attn: CESP-PM-LE (Ms. Ondrea Hummel)
Albuquerque, New Mexico 87109-3435

Dear Ms. Hummel:

RE: DRAFT SUPPLEMENT II TO THE ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT FOR THE BOSQUE WILDFIRE PROJECT, BERNALILLO AND SANDOVAL COUNTIES, NEW MEXICO

This transmits New Mexico Environment Department (NMED) staff comments concerning the above-referenced project.

Surface Water Quality

The proposed project actions are categorized as an Emergency addition to provide additional location access for emergency equipment to perform fire prevention activities and fire suppression if a fire were to occur in the bosque, as well as reduce the future risk of fire. The document states that the actions were originally planned and discussed in a September 2004 EA for work in the same project area.

1)

The current Draft Supplement II EA (DSEA) is presented on the USACOE website. It provides very little discussion or detail of the project's potential or predicted impacts on water quality. The second paragraph states that "The planned action would result in only minor and temporary impacts on...water quality...during implementation." The document's text says that their analysis indicates the project would not significantly affect issues of interest to NMED's Surface Water Quality Bureau (SWQB): water quality, flood plains, riparian areas, wetlands, waters of the United States. Table 1 (Summary of Effects) maintains that position as it lists 'No Effect' for hydrology, water quality, floodplains and wetlands. Vegetation is expected to experience short-term negative effects with long-term positive effects.

2)

The DSEA did not formally present a Monitoring Plan. The only direct mention of monitoring is assigned to Isleta Pueblo - this may be specific to the proposed jetty jack structure removals on Pueblo lands. Overall, a phrase contained in an attached letter indicates 'ongoing inspection as well as final inspection will be conducted to insure that the terms and requirements...are followed'. It is further stated that these elements were analyzed in the 2004 EA for the project.

- 1) As discussed in Section 3.4 of the EA, an NPDES permit and Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan would be required for construction. All Best Management Practices discussed in the EA would be implemented under the proposed actions.
- 2) Monitoring of various project components has been implemented and will continue as funds allow. A Draft Monitoring Plan is being developed.

Searching personal computer files and the Bureau's EA files, this reviewer has not been able to retrieve previous files or correspondence to indicate that the SWQB was asked to review and comment on their referenced 2004 EA. Pertinent points supporting their current expectations of no impact could only be fully addressed by going back to that original 2004 EA (a link was provided to go back via internet documents). A more complete and detailed case was made for the no impact analysis in the previous document. Granting full consideration, we are assuming that the previous prediction of no impacts to waters was validated during the earlier implementation stages, otherwise the current proposal would be expected to contain updated practices and implementation modifications if the previous work had demonstrated any significant impacts

The document recognizes that all work associated with the proposed action would be accomplished outside of aquatic areas regulated by Clean Water Act Section 404, therefore a Section 404 permit would not be needed for the work. Because a Section 404 permit is not necessary, neither is a state water quality certification permit needed under Section 401 of the CWA.

3)

The USACOE and their respective contractors need to conduct all operations in a manner that will prevent non-point source pollution impacts (foreseen or not) on these areas. Best management practices (BMPs, perhaps most especially non-erodible hay bale or silt fence barriers) should be applied during all construction and maintenance of roads, access trails, or drainage crossings. This will assist in minimizing transport of sediment or debris from work sites to areas where Rio Grande flows can possibly access and transport these materials. Flows may impact larger zones that anticipated as they rise in response to the increased runoff and extended encroachment on portions of the floodplains which the area is experiencing due to the extent of the 2006 monsoon season. No other environmental consequences are envisioned.

Air Quality

The Bosque Wildfire Project is located in Bernalillo and Sandoval Counties with a portion of the project located on tribal land. The New Mexico Environment Department Air Quality Bureau does not have jurisdiction in Bernalillo County or on tribal lands. The appropriate air quality agencies need to be contacted in regards to these areas.

Any part of the project that is in Sandoval County and not located in the areas mentioned above does fall under the jurisdiction the Air Quality Bureau. Sandoval County is considered to be in attainment with all New Mexico and National Ambient Air Quality Standards.

4)

To further ensure air quality standards are met, applicable local or county regulations requiring noise and/or dust control must be followed; if none are in effect, controlling construction-related air quality impacts during projects should be considered to reduce the impact of fugitive dust and/or noise on community members.

Potential exists for temporary increases in dust and emissions from earthmoving, construction equipment, and other vehicles; however the increases should not result in non-attainment of air quality standards. Dust control measures should be taken to minimize the release of particulates due to vehicular traffic and construction. Areas disturbed by the construction activities, within and adjacent to the project area should be reclaimed to avoid long-term problems with erosion and fugitive dust

3) & 4) All determinations regarding water quality and air quality are the same as in the original EA. All Best Management Practices discussed in the original EA would be implemented under the proposed actions.

Ondrea Hummel
August 31, 2006
Page 3

All asphalt, concrete, quarrying, crushing and screening facilities contracted in conjunction with the proposed project must have current and proper air quality permits. For more information on air quality permitting and modeling requirements, please refer to 20.2.72 NMAC.

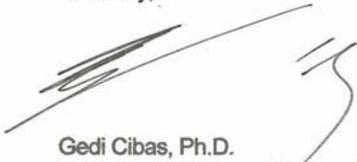
The project as proposed should have no long-term significant impacts to ambient air quality.

Air quality issues in Bernalillo County are under the jurisdiction of the Albuquerque Air Quality Division, which can be contacted at:

Environmental Health/AirQuality
11850 Sunset Gardens SW
Albuquerque, NM 87121
Phone: (505)768-1972
Fax: (505)768-1977
Email: agd@cabq.gov

We appreciate the opportunity to comment on this document.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Gedi Cibas', is written over a horizontal line. The signature is stylized and cursive.

Gedi Cibas, Ph.D.
Environmental Impact Review Coordinator

NMED File No. 2343ER