

RECORD OF ENVIRONMENTAL CONSIDERATION

Multi-tiered Pilot Fence Project--Phase I
U.S.-Mexican Border
San Diego County, California

Prepared by:

U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
Los Angeles District
Los Angeles, California

Prepared for:

Immigration and Naturalization Service
San Diego County, California

October, 1996

PROJECT DESCRIPTION:

The proposed project consists of constructing a section of concrete bollard (column) style fence that extends east from the South Bay Waste Water Treatment Plant (SBWWTP or Treatment Plant) atop the south flood control levee and adjacent to the existing Border fence. The project area is in the San Ysidro area of San Diego at approximately 4.5 miles from the Pacific coast (Figure 1).

Fence alignment would be parallel to and on the north side of the existing south levee (Figure 2). Although a similar section of bollard fence is proposed in Figure 2 to extend west of the treatment plant, construction of this section would occur at a later date. These fences are part of a multi-tiered fence system planned to deter passage of illegal aliens at this location. Total length of the fence proposed for this project is 1.3 miles.

Bollards would be 12-foot high reinforced concrete columns spaced 5 inches apart and topped with barbed wire outriggers (Figure 3). The spacing between columns allows the passage of small wildlife and provides some view. Consequently, the bollard style fencing is less obtrusive than other designs and may be more readily accepted in areas where community sensitivity is an issue. Pedestrian and vehicle gates would be installed at appropriate locations along the alignment. The fence's "keyed" footing design provides stability and discourages tunneling. Construction would occur from an existing road on top of the levee. This configuration would minimize project-related environmental impacts and facilitate subsequent inspection and maintenance of the fence.

PURPOSE AND NEED FOR THE PROJECT:

The purpose of constructing additional Border fencing at this location is to apprehend illegal aliens in an area that is susceptible to successful entry. This situation poses significant operational challenges to the Border Patrol and requires concentrated agent deployment throughout the area. Much of the current control is attained by placing human resources directly along the Border. By constructing bollard style fencing north of the existing landing mat fence in the project area, the drain on human resources would be reduced and thus enhance the

operational efficiency of this line station. In addition, the multi-tiered system of fencing poses a psychological deterrent to entry.

FENCE ALIGNMENT:

The proposed fence would initiate approximately 1 mile east from the Treatment Plant on the south levee where it intersects the existing Border fence. This occurs where the Border traverses the Tijuana River channel from the south. A pedestrian gate would be placed at this point to allow passage of Border Patrol agents. Proceeding roughly 0.5 mile west, a road that crosses the Tijuana River channel intersects the road on top of the south levee. A vehicle gate would be installed at the junction between the proposed fence alignment and the cross-over road. Installation of the vehicle gate may require expansion of the existing turn-around area on the south side of the south levee by importing fill. However, this action would not result in any significant environmental impacts because the turn-around area is already disturbed. The proposed fence alignment would be approximately 150 feet from the existing Border fence except where the contours of the south levee deviate from the existing Border fence alignment.

Further west near Stewart's Bridge, two options are proposed (Figure 4). Option A has the bollard fence constructed across a box culvert that would be installed at the outlet of the retention basin, which receives episodic sewage flows from across the Border. A pedestrian gate would be installed in the fence on the west side of the culvert for access purposes if Option A were selected. From there, the fence proceeds north and terminates at the southeast corner of the Treatment Plant.

For Option B, the fence turns south from the levee where it abuts the retention basin and proceeds to Stewart's Bridge. The fence would cross the north side of the bridge and turn north and curve around the existing rip-rap to proceed to the southeast corner of the Treatment Plant.

Should review of either Option result in the delay of proposed construction, fence construction would occur only on the south levee and terminate at the edge of the retention basin until further determination was made.

FENCE CONSTRUCTION:

The fence construction would consist of laying a 4 x 4 foot inverted "L" shaped footing on top of the north side of the south levee (Figure 5), except in the area of Stewart's Bridge. The details of construction in this area would be essentially the same as on the levee, but would vary depending on the particular Option selected. Communication and electrical conduits would be installed beneath the fence's footing for future utilization. Pre-cast reinforced concrete bollards are placed in staggered 12-inch diameter holes placed 5 inches apart in the poured footing (Figure 3). The final height of the bollards is 12 feet. Forty-eight inch barbed-wire outriggers would be placed atop the bollards. Pedestrian gates would be of metal tube construction topped with outriggers. The vehicle gate would be a metal swinging type.

The construction staging area would be about 1 acre in size and probably located, for security reasons, on the premises of the International Boundary and Water Commission (IBWC) lot, which is about 1 mile north of the project area along Dairy Mart Road. Another potential staging area would be approximately 0.5 mile south of IBWC on Dairy Mart Road adjacent to an existing construction site. Some grading of this already disturbed area would be necessary to utilize the site. A staging area 0.5 mile west of the proposed alignment in the Nelson Sloan gravel pit along Old Monument Road is also a possibility.

Construction equipment would consist of a backhoe, dump truck, cement truck, flatbed truck with crane assembly, and support vehicles. Work crews would number between 10 to 15 individuals and would be local contractors. Contractors would be expected to provide or arrange for sanitation facilities, such as porta-johns.

Construction is scheduled to begin October, 1996, and last approximately 6 months.

ENVIRONMENTAL SETTING/IMPACTS:

The project area encompasses the proposed fence alignment and existing Border fence. It adjoins the Treatment Plant at its western boundary and is limited by the Tijuana River channel in

the east. The channel is approximately 0.25 mile wide and proceeds west for approximately 1 mile and turns northwest past the Treatment Plant. The area in the River channel is open space functioning as a flood control basin. Most of the channel bottom east of the Treatment Plant consists of natural cover but is heavily disturbed by Border Patrol and illegal alien traffic. The section of channel near the Border crossing is concrete.

The portion of the south levee that faces the channel is either rip-rap or concrete. The top of the Levee is about 16 feet wide and consists of a dirt road and additional right-of-way. The outer portion of the Levee is earthen and covered in patches by tumbleweed and other vegetation characteristic of disturbed areas in the region. An electrical utility line and accompanying dirt road was recently constructed in the area between the south levee and existing Border fence.

Because the project area is already disturbed and recently developed, construction would not result in any significant impacts to sensitive biological or cultural resources. Additionally, there would not be any significant project-related ground disturbing activities. Therefore, the proposed project as planned would not involve National Register listed or eligible properties. A letter will be sent to the State Historic Preservation Officer requesting their concurrence with the Corps' determination that the proposed project would not involve properties that are listed in or are eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places.

The aesthetic character and visual resources of the project area are limited by the existing Border fence and south levee. Placement of the proposed fence would be in an area that is already developed in a similar manner and therefore would not detract from the area's aesthetic quality.

COORDINATION:

San Diego County Planning Department. On Aug 15, 1996, Ms. Joan Vocak stated in a phone conversation upon being informed of the nature of the proposed project that Planning Department would perceive no significant environmental concerns relating to the project.

California Coastal Commission. Initiated coordination on required coastal zone consistency requirements (ND) with Mark Delaplaine on September 10, 1996.

IBWC. Forwarded a copy of draft REC to Douglas Echlin on September 16, 1996.

U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Regulatory, San Diego field office. Spoke on phone on September 18, 1996 with David Zoutendyk, who stated that alterations to the inter-border channel outlet in the vicinity of the proposed sewage treatment plant is covered by an existing permit.

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. Spoke on phone with and faxed project description and figures to Susan Wynn on October 2, 1996 for internal routing and referral. Followed up by phone. No response ensued.

RECORD OF ENVIRONMENTAL CONSIDERATION (REC)

To: _____

From: Immigration and Naturalization Service

Project Title: Multi-tiered Pilot Fence Project--Phase I

Brief Description:

The proposed project consists of constructing a section of 12-foot high concrete bollard (column) style fence that extends east from the South Bay Waste Water Treatment Plant atop an existing flood control levee and adjacent to the existing Border fence. The project area is in the San Ysidro area of San Diego at approximately 4.5 miles from the Pacific coast. Total length of the proposed fence is 1.3 miles. Construction would occur from an existing road on top of the levee.

Anticipated start date and duration (months) of construction:

October, 1996 (6 months)

Proposed project is Categorically Excluded under provisions of AR 200-2, Appendix A, Section I, A-7 because:

The proposed project would not alter existing landuse and construction would not result in any significant impacts to sensitive biological or cultural resources.

Date

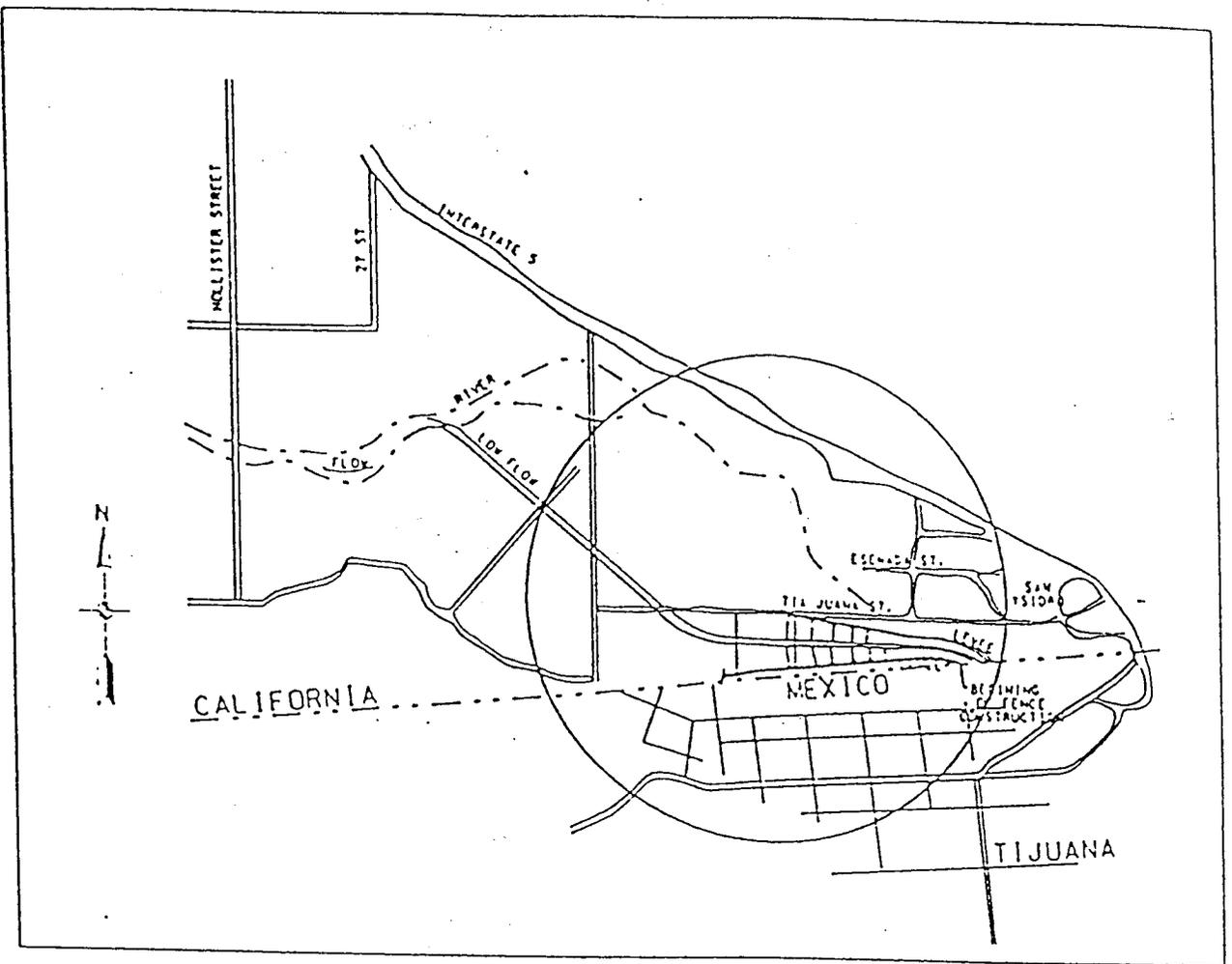
10-16-96

Date

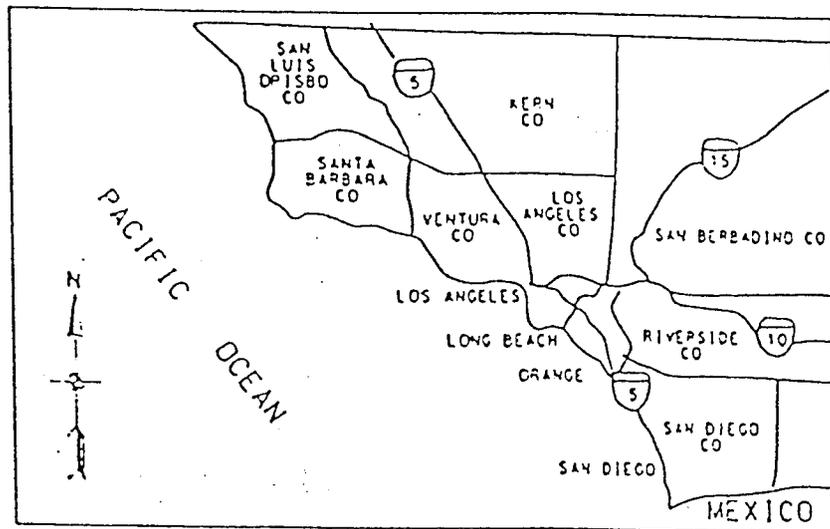
Robert Boatright
SBPA
Imperial Beach Station

[Signature]

Charles Rairdan
Environmental Manager
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers



LOCATION MAP
NOT TO SCALE

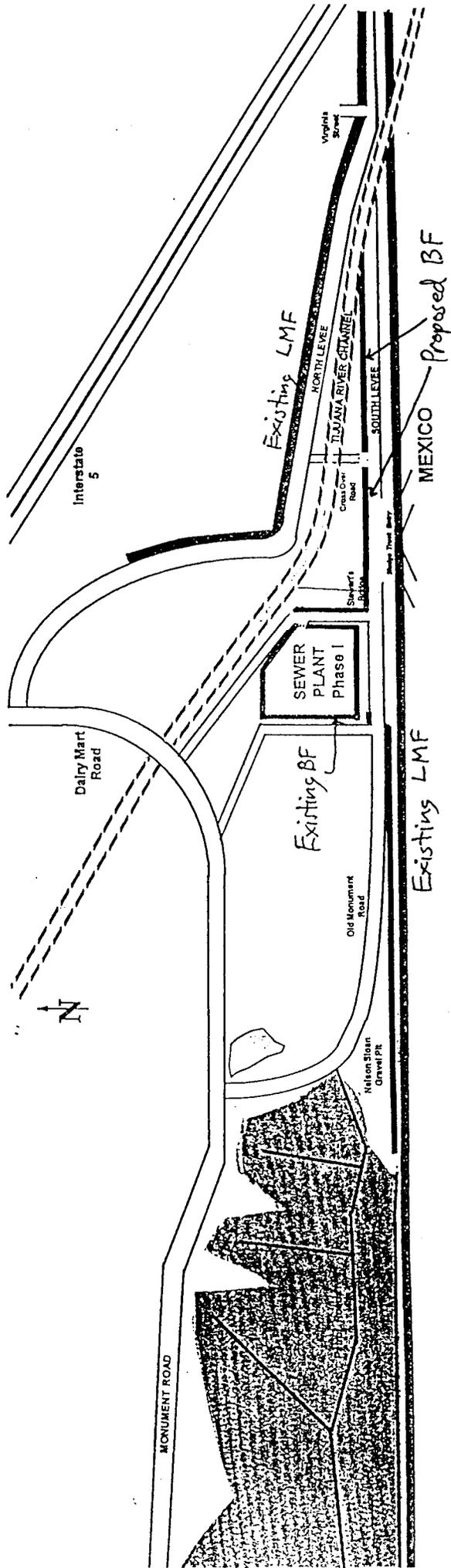


VICINITY MAP
NOT TO SCALE

Figure 1

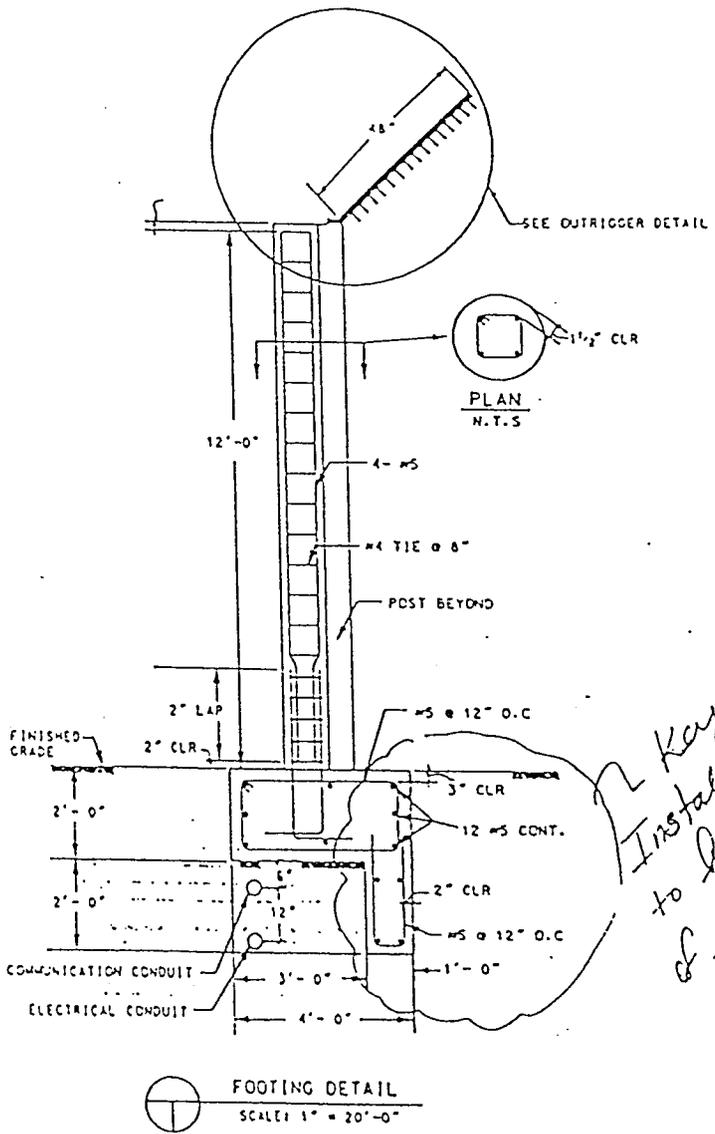
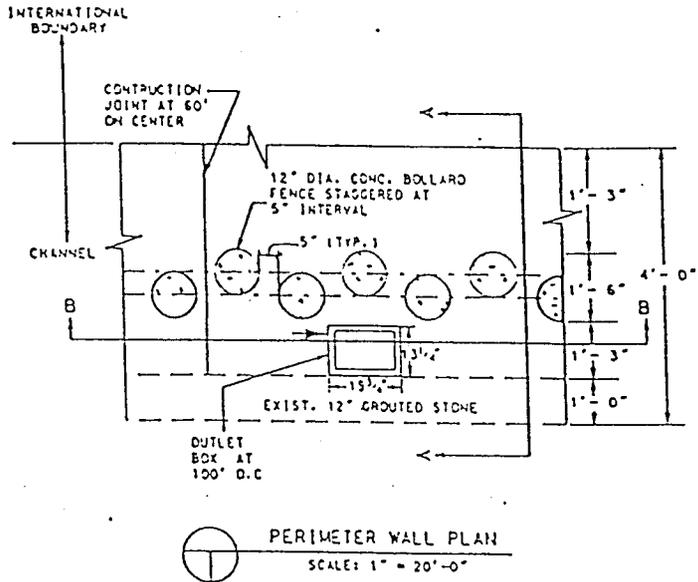
UNITED STATES BORDER PATROL

- (LMF)
- Existing Landing Mat Fence
- Existing Bollard Fence (BF)
- Proposed Bollard Fence



IMPERIAL BEACH STATION

Figure 2: Fence alignment



2 Keys Installed to help stability of wire.

Figure 3: Details of fence design and construction

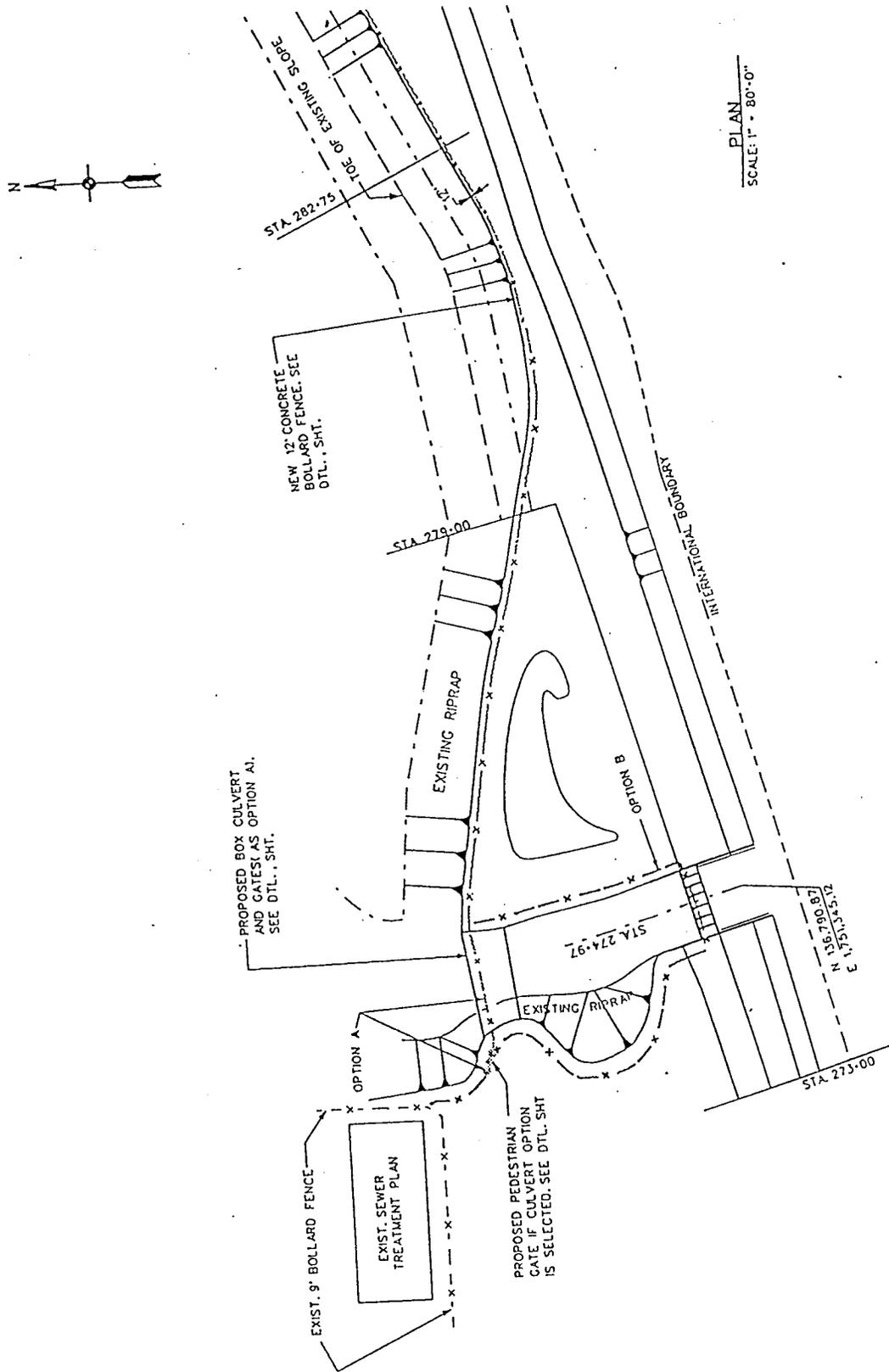
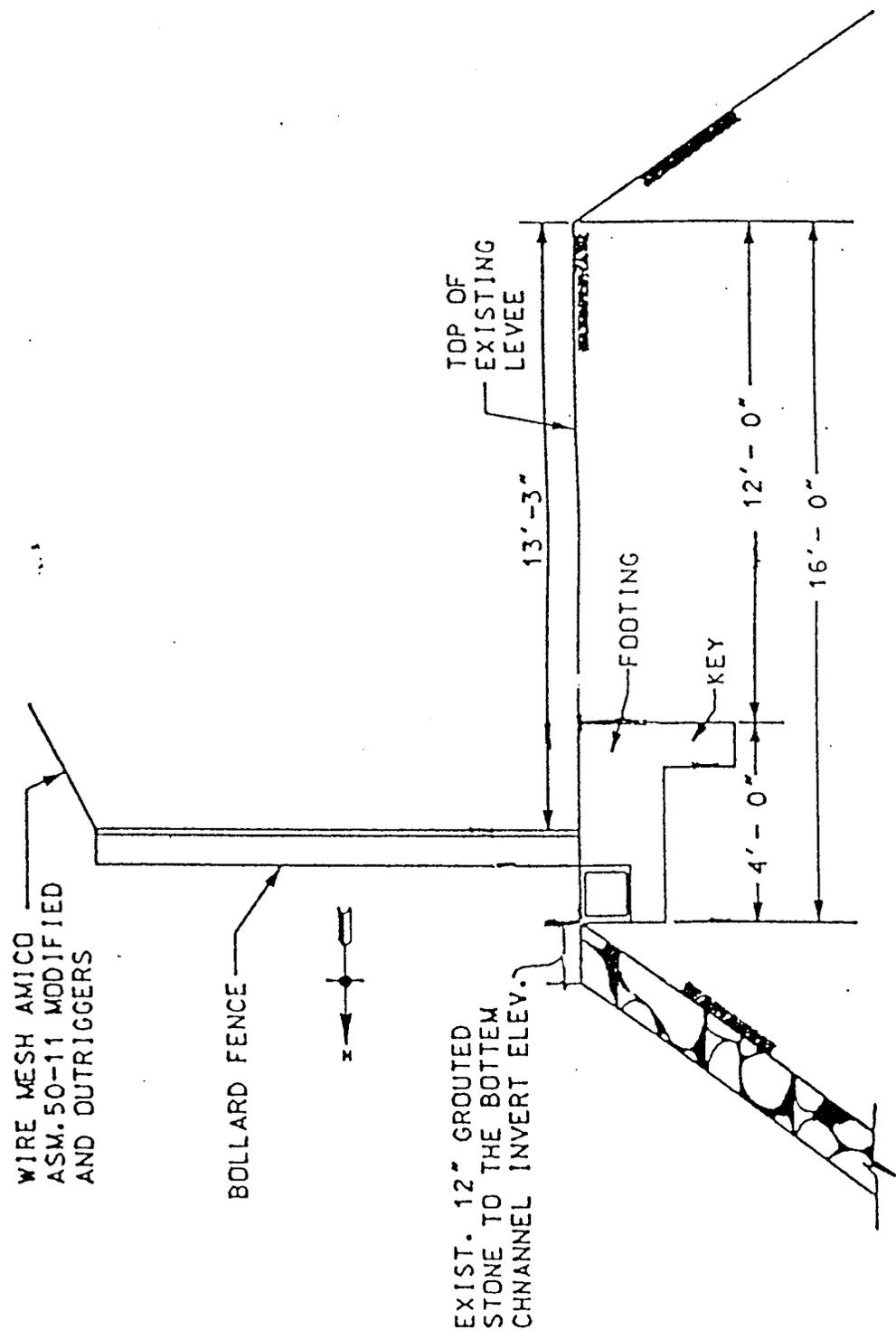


Figure 4: Construction options in vicinity of Stewart's Bridge



SECTION A-A

N.T.S.

Figure 5: Detail of fence construction



DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
LOS ANGELES DISTRICT, CORPS OF ENGINEERS
P.O. BOX 2711
LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA 90053-2325

September 27, 1996

REPLY TO
ATTENTION OF:

Office of the Chief
Environmental Resources Branch

Ms. Cherilyn Widell
State Historic Preservation Officer
Office of Historic Preservation
P.O. Box 942896
Sacramento, California 94296-0001

Dear Ms. Widell:

We are writing concerning a Statement of Negative Determination (SND) that we are preparing for the proposed Immigration and Naturalization Service's Multi-tiered Pilot Fence Project (MPF) in San Ysidro, San Diego County (Enclosure 1, Figure 1). The SND is being prepared to satisfy requirements to comply with the Federal Coastal Zone Management Act of 1972. The purpose of the MFP is to provide additional fencing on the International Border as part of the Border protection effort. The MPF involves the installation of 1.3 miles of concrete bollard (column style) fencing on top of the south levee on the Tijuana River (Enclosure 1, Figure 3). The complete project description is in the enclosed SND (Enclosure 1). We are initiating consultation to insure that we are in compliance with Section 106 prior to commencing with fence construction. In 1992, we consulted with Mr. Nicholas Del Cioppo for a related project on the JTF-6 Levee North Fence Project. Your file number for that project is COE 921023A.

The entire project, including the finished fence and the requisite construction activities will take place within the levee right-of-way. The proposed project's area of potential effects (APE) also includes two possible options, A and B (Enclosure 1, Figure 4). Option A, involves constructing the bollard fence across a box culvert that would be installed at the retention basin outlet. For Option B, the fence will turn south from the levee where it butts into the retention basin and then advances toward Stewart's Bridge. Both options are within the existing levee footprint.

Our staff archeologist, Mr. Richard Perry, visited the project site in September 1992 while on the Levee North Fence project. The levee is constructed of an earthen berm with a concrete face on the interior side facing the Tijuana River. The levee was built in 1977 and thus, is not considered a cultural resource. The specifics of the 1992 visit are recounted in the

enclosed memorandum (Enclosure 2). In addition to the levee being built too recently for National Register eligibility consideration, there is no evidence of cultural activity in or near the APE.

After reviewing the proposed project's construction design and the visiting the levee, we have concluded that there are no cultural resources within the APE. Therefore, we have determined that the Immigration and Naturalization Service's Multi-tiered Pilot Fence Project as planned will not involve National Register eligible or listed properties.

Correspondence may be sent to:

Mr. Robert S. Joe
Chief, Planning Division
Attn.: Mr. Richard Perry (CESPL-PD-RN)
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
P.O. Box 2711
Los Angeles, California 90053-2325

We request that you review the enclosed information. If you agree with this determination, we would appreciate your concurrence. We understand that you have 30 days in which to respond to this request. Otherwise, we will proceed according to the provisions stated in 36 CFR 800.4(c)(5) and 36 CFR 800.4(d) and consider that we have satisfied our obligations toward Section 106 compliance. If you have any questions concerning this project or the determination, please contact project archeologist, Mr. Richard Perry, at (213) 452-3855.

Sincerely,


Robert S. Joe
Chief, Planning Division

Enclosures

OFFICE OF HISTORIC PRESERVATION
DEPARTMENT OF PARKS AND RECREATION
P.O. BOX 942896
SACRAMENTO 94296-0001
(916) 653-6624
FAX: (916) 653-9824



October 25, 1996

Reply to: COE961004B

Robert S. Joe
Chief, Planning Division
Attn: Richard Perry (CESPL-PD-RN)
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
P.O. Box 2711
LOS ANGELES CA 90053-2325

Subject: Multi-Tiered Pilot Fence Project, San Ysidro, San Diego
County

Dear Mr. Joe.

In accordance with Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA) the Corps of Engineers has requested that I comment on a finding of no historic properties. Thank you for consulting me.

It is evident that the Corps of Engineers efforts to identify historic properties were adequate and resulted in a no property finding. Accordingly, the Corps of Engineers has satisfied its Section 106 responsibilities for the subject undertaking. Be advised that under certain circumstances outlined in 36 CFR 800 the Corps of Engineers may have additional Section 106 responsibilities.

Thank you for considering historic properties during project planning. If you have questions, please contact staff archaeologist Steven Grantham at (916) 653-8920.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Cherilyn E. Widell".

Ms. Cherilyn E. Widell
State Historic Preservation Officer

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Date

10-16-96

Date

Robert Boatright

SBPA

Imperial Beach Station

[Signature]

Charles Rairdan

Environmental Manager

U.S. Army Corps of Engineers