FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT

FOR

PROPOSED CONSTRUCTION OR RENOVATION OF INS BORDER CHECKPOINT STATIONS

NEAR

ALAMOGORDO AND LAS CRUCES, NEW MEXICO AND EL PASO, TEXAS

I have reviewed the attached Environmental Assessment (EA) prepared for proposed new and renovated border checkpoint facilities for Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) near Alamogordo and Las Cruces, New Mexico and El Paso, Texas. The project involves construction of two facilities near Alamogordo, New Mexico, renovation of four existing facilities near Las Cruces, New Mexico, and renovation of one existing facility near El Paso, Texas. Construction and renovation would occur on land already heavily disturbed and within highway right-of-ways. The EA summarizes the affected environment, including air quality, water quality, geology and soils, biological resources, threatened and endangered species, social and economical characteristics, land uses, cultural resources, noise levels, and other aspects of human health and safety.

It is my determination that this action would not significantly affect the quality of the human or natural environment and that the preparation of an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) is not required for this project. This determinationwill be kept in the files of the Immigration and Naturalization Service and will be available for public review.

Approved by:

Director of Facilities
Immigration and Naturalization Service

3-22-99
Date

PRELIMINARY DRAFT

AMENDED

ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

CONSTRUCTION/RENOVATION OF BORDER PATROL CHECKPOINTS NEAR LAS CRUCES and ALAMOGORDO, NEW MEXICO and EL PASO, TEXAS

Prepared for

IMMIGRATION AND NATURALIZATION SERVICE

Prepared by

U.S. ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS
ALBUQUERQUE DISTRICT

February 2001

FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT

FOR

PROPOSED CONSTRUCTION OR RENOVATION OF US BORDER PATROL CHECKPOINT STATIONS

NEAR

ALAMOGORDO AND LAS CRUCES, NEW MEXICO AND EL PASO, TEXAS

I have reviewed the attached Amended Environmental Assessment (EA) prepared for proposed new and renovated U.S. Border Patrol checkpoint facilities for the Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) near Alamogordo and Las Cruces, New Mexico and El Paso, Texas. The project involves construction of two facilities near Alamogordo, New Mexico, renovation of four existing facilities near Las Cruces, New Mexico, and construction of a new facility near El Paso, Texas. Construction and renovation would occur on land already heavily disturbed and within the highway right-of-ways. The EA summarizes the existing environment, including air quality, water quality, geology and soils, biological resources, threatened and endangered species, social and economical characteristics, land uses, cultural resources, noise levels, and human health and safety, as well as any foreseeable effects the project may have on them.

The major beneficial effect of the proposed project is the long-term reduction of the flow of illegal drugs into the U.S. and the concomitant effects upon the Nation's health and economy, drug-related crimes, community cohesion, property values, and traditional family values. Secondary benefits of the program include a reduction in illegal immigration. Human health and safety and Socioeconomics would also benefit from the project. Minimal long-term impact would occur to biological resources, land use and aesthetics. Short-term impacts would occur to soils and air quality and could occur to human health and safety. No long-term impacts would occur to soils and air quality. No effects are expected from water resources, special status species, environmental justice, and cultural resources. It would not result in any moderate or significant, short or long-term, cumulative adverse effects and, therefore, is recommended. An Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) will not be generated for the proposed action.

_____ _____

Mr. Richard Defenbeck
Director of Facilities
Immigration and Naturalization Service

Date

TABLE OF CONTENTS

TABLE OF CONTENTS (CONTINUED)

APPENDICES

LIST OF FIGURES

Page

LIST OF TABLES

LIST OF ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

ARMS	(New Mexico) Archaeological Records Management Section
CEQ	Council on Environmental Quality
CFR	Code of Federal Regulations
COE	U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
EA	Environmental Assessment
EIS	Environmental Impact Statement
EO	Executive Order
FONSI	Finding of No Significant Impact
i.e.	id est, that is
IH	Interstate Highway
INS	Immigration and Naturalization Service
JTF	Joint Task Force
NAAQS	National Ambient Air Quality Standards
NEPA	National Environmental Policy Act
NMEMNRD	New Mexico Energy, Minerals, and Natural Resources Department
NMGS	New Mexico Geological Society
NMPM	New Mexico Prime Meridian
NRHP	National Register of Historic Places
ROI	Region of Influence
ROW	Right of Way
SWPPP	Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan
SHPO	State Historic Preservation Officer
TPWD	Texas Parks and Wildlife Department
U.S.	United States
USDA	United States Department of Agriculture
USFWS	United States Fish and Wildlife Service
USGS	United States Geological Society

1.0 PURPOSE AND NEED

This is an Amended Environmental Assessment (EA) of potential impacts resulting from the construction or renovation of United States (U.S.) Border Patrol checkpoint stations in the following locations: three sites located near Las Cruces, New Mexico, two sites near Alamogordo, New Mexico, and one site located near El Paso, Texas. See Figures 2.1 and 2.2 for location maps. The purpose of the Proposed Action (construction and renovation of checkpoint stations) is to improve the Border Patrol's ability to effectively regulate the flow of illegal individuals and materials (drugs) across the Mexico/U.S. border. This EA identifies environmental resources that may be affected by the Proposed Action, assesses potential impacts, and describes appropriate mitigation measures. This document has been prepared by the U. S. Army Corps of Engineers, Albuquerque District.

This EA was amended due to the relocation of the Hudspeth County, Texas Checkpoint Station #953 from the existing checkpoint site to a new site approximately 3 miles east. Transportation limitations on the existing checkpoint site required the project to be changed from renovation of the existing site to a proposed new site 3 miles east.

Chapter 2.0 presents an analysis of the Proposed Action and an alternative to the Proposed Action. Chapter 3.0 describes the existing environmental conditions and resources. Chapter 4.0 describes the cumulative direct and indirect effects of the Proposed Action. Chapter 5.0 presents a list of preparers of this document. Chapter 6.0 lists persons and agencies contacted in the preparation of this document. Chapter 7.0 lists references cited.

An EA is required pursuant to Section 102 of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) of 1969, as implemented by the regulations promulgated by the President's Council on Environmental Quality (40 Code of Federal Regulations [CFR] 1500-1508). The principal objectives of NEPA are to ensure the careful consideration of environmental aspects of proposed actions in federal decision-making processes and to make environmental information available to the public before decisions are made and actions are taken. The EA should provide sufficient evidence and analysis for determining whether to prepare an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) or a Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) (40 CFR 1508.9).

2.0 DESCRIPTION OF ALTERNATIVES

This Chapter describes the Proposed Action and the No Action Alternative. The Proposed Action is to construct or renovate checkpoint stations located in New Mexico and Texas.

2.1 PROPOSED ACTION

2.1.1 Dona Ana County Sites.

There are three Proposed Action sites in Dona Ana County, New Mexico.

2.1.1.1 Checkpoint station #702

Checkpoint Station #702 is an existing facility located approximately 20 miles north of Las Cruces on Interstate Highway (IH) 25 (Figure 2.3). The 0.70 acre site is located in T20S, R1W, Section 4, SE 1/4, New Mexico Prime

Meridian (NMPM) as depicted on Selden Canyon, New Mexico (1982), United States Geological Survey (USGS) 7.5' quadrangle map. The existing structure is an open canopy with a movable trailer office structure.

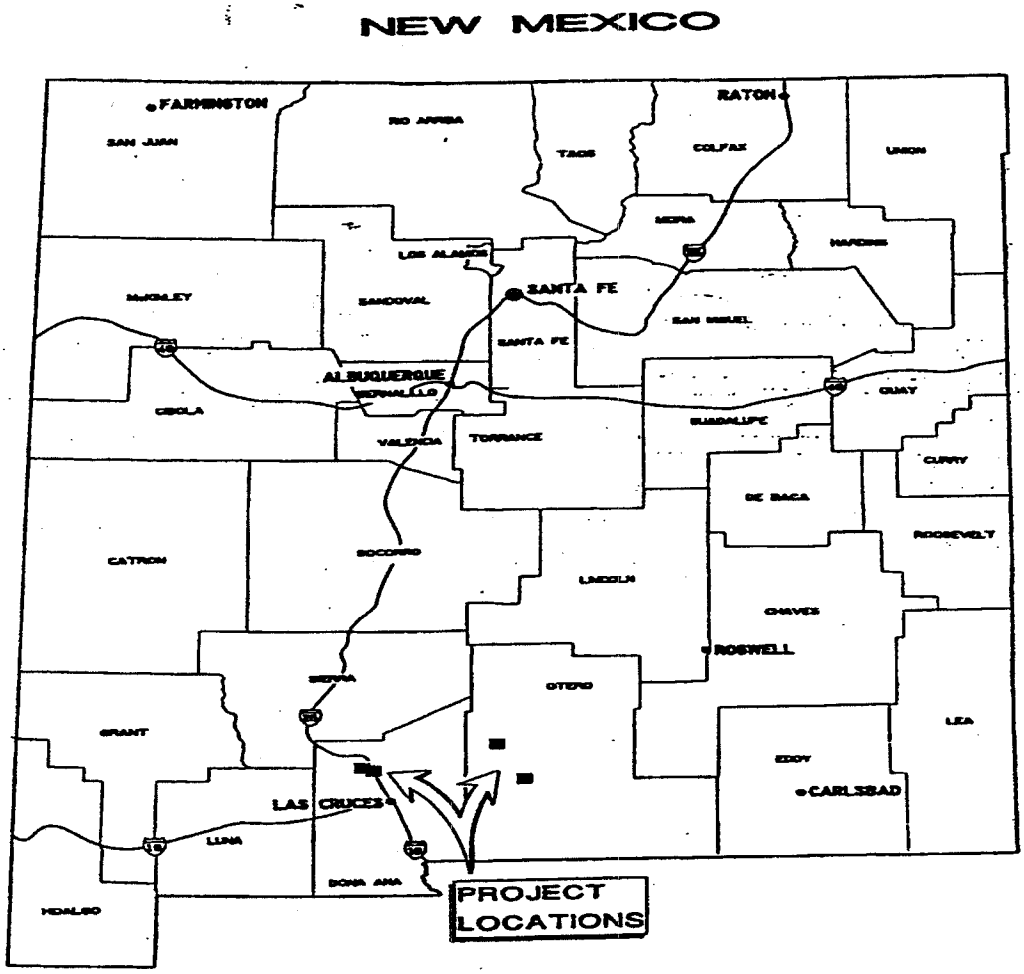

Figure 2.1. Locations of New Mexico Projects

TEXAS

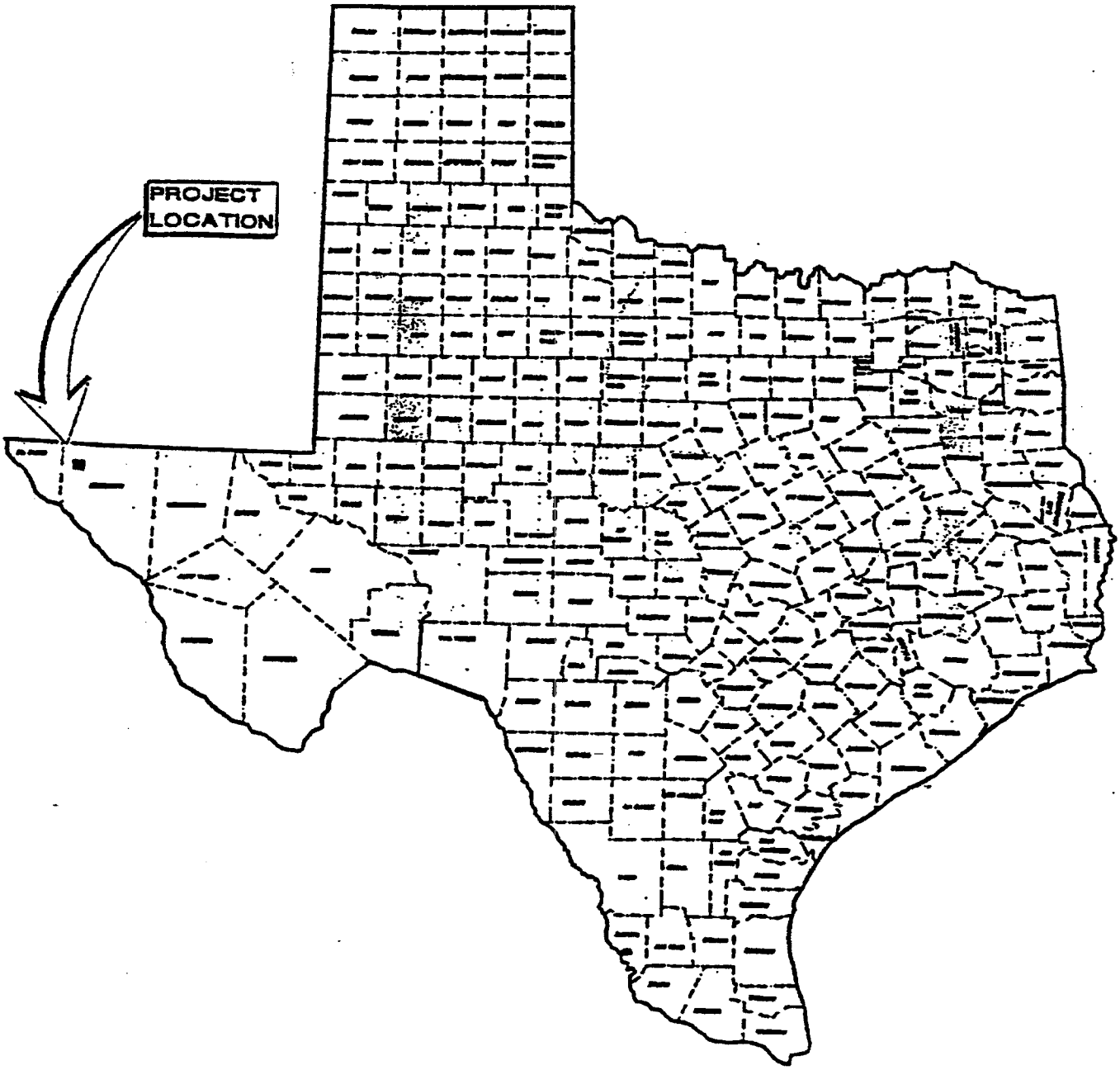

Figure 2.2 Location of Texas Project

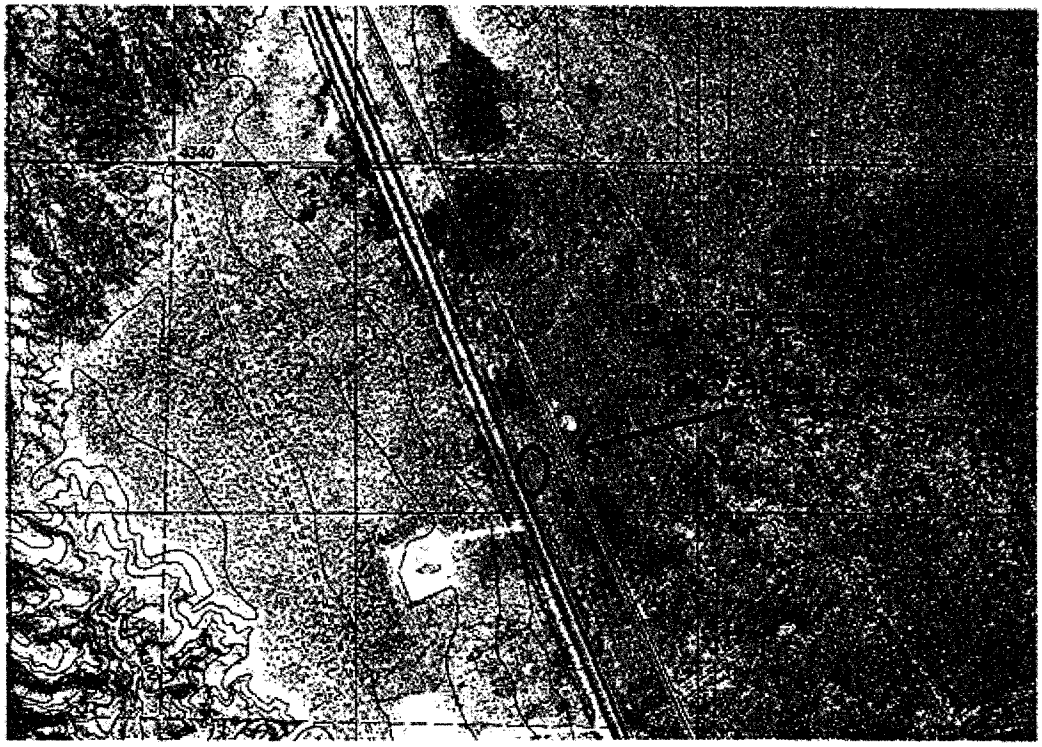

Figure 2.3. Project Location for Border Patrol Checkpoint Station #702, North of Las Cruces, New Mexico, on U.S. Highway 25 (adapted from USGS 7.5 Minute Quadrangle Selden Canyon, New Mexico [1982; 32106-E8].

The canopy structure (approximately 116' by 75') is located off the IH-25 roadway to the east by 53 feet at the south end and 58 feet at the north end. The canopy is located 10 feet from the eastern boundary. The project area is within the right-of-way (ROW) of IH 25, immediately east of the north-bound lanes of traffic. The area surrounding the checkpoint station has been generally heavily disturbed by the construction of IH 25 (I-25) and the checkpoint station and is almost entirely paved. This portion of the project involves the renovation of the existing facility by removing the existing modular building and replacing it with an updated model.

2.1.1.2 Checkpoint station #703

Checkpoint Station #703 is an existing facility located approximately 20 miles north of Las Cruces on U.S. Highway 185 (Figure 2.4). The 0.7 acre site is located in T20S, R2W, Section 2, NW 1/4, NMPM as depicted the Sierra Alta, New Mexico (1959, photorevised 1978) USGS 7.5' quadrangle map. The project area is within the ROW of Highway 185, immediately east of the north-bound lane of traffic. The area surrounding the checkpoint station has been generally heavily disturbed by the construction of the highway and the checkpoint station and is almost entirely paved. This portion of the project involves the renovation of the existing facility

by removing the existing modular building and replacing it with an updated model. Additionally, an overhanging canopy, similar to the canopy at station #702, would be installed. Dimensions and positioning of the canopy has yet to be determined.

2.1.1.3 IH 10 Checkpoint Station

The IH 10 Checkpoint Station is located approximately 12 miles west of Las Cruces, New Mexico in Dona Ana County (Figure 2.5). This checkpoint station is located on the north side of IH I0 (I-10) and has been in existence for approximately 10 years. The checkpoint station is located on Aden Hills and Sleeping Lady Hills (1985) USGS *7.5'* quadrangle maps in a pull-off on the westbound land of 1-10. Total width of the area is approximately 270 ft from the center of the divided highway island to the property fence on the north side. The station is centered on the pull-off lane and consists of a structural steel canopy (approximately 70 ft by 100 ft) covering the traffic lanes. A manufactured building situated on a concrete slab serves as the office, while a second slab next to the office supports a ramp for vehicle inspections. To the north of the canopy is a tower assembly and equipment container, both of which are mounted on concrete pads. A vehicle pull-off area (parking) is located to the northwest of the canopy. The parking area is surfaced with what appears to be recycled asphalt. This portion of the project involves the renovation of the existing facility by removing the existing modular unit and replacing it with an updated model.

2.1.2 Otero County Sites

There are two sites located in Otero county, near Alamogordo, New Mexico.

2.1.2.1 Checkpoint Station #753

The functions of the existing Orogrande Checkpoint Station #753 would be moved approximately 4 miles north from its existing location, which is approximately 27 miles south of Alamogordo on U.S. Highway 54. The proposed new site, Alamogordo Site #2, is immediately south of Paxton Crossing on the east side of U.S. Highway 54 (Figure 2.6), and approximately 23 miles south of Alamogordo. The 6.5 acre site is located in T20S, R9E, Section 33, NW 1/4, NMPM as shown on the Tres Hermanos SE (1982) USGS 7.5' quadrangle map. The project area is within the ROW of U.S. Highway 54, immediately east of the north-bound traffic lanes. The site has been generally heavily disturbed, with a railroad track bordering it on the east and a two-track road extending through the middle of the site. Military maneuvers were being conducted at the northern end of the site during a field survey on September 5, 1996. A follow up site survey was conducted on July 14, 1998.

This portion of the project involves the construction of a new facility, the extension of electrical and telephone utilities, and the installation of a potable water supply tank. Electrical power for the site would be supplied by extending an aerial line from an existing three phase line located on the west side of U.S. Highway 54, directly across from the proposed site. Telephone connections would be provided by an extension of an existing U.S. Army underground fiber optic line located 600-700 feet east of the site. Potable water would be delivered to the station by water truck and stored on site in a permanent, aboveground 10,000-gallon storage tank. Water would be delivered by the water truck on a schedule yet to be determined.

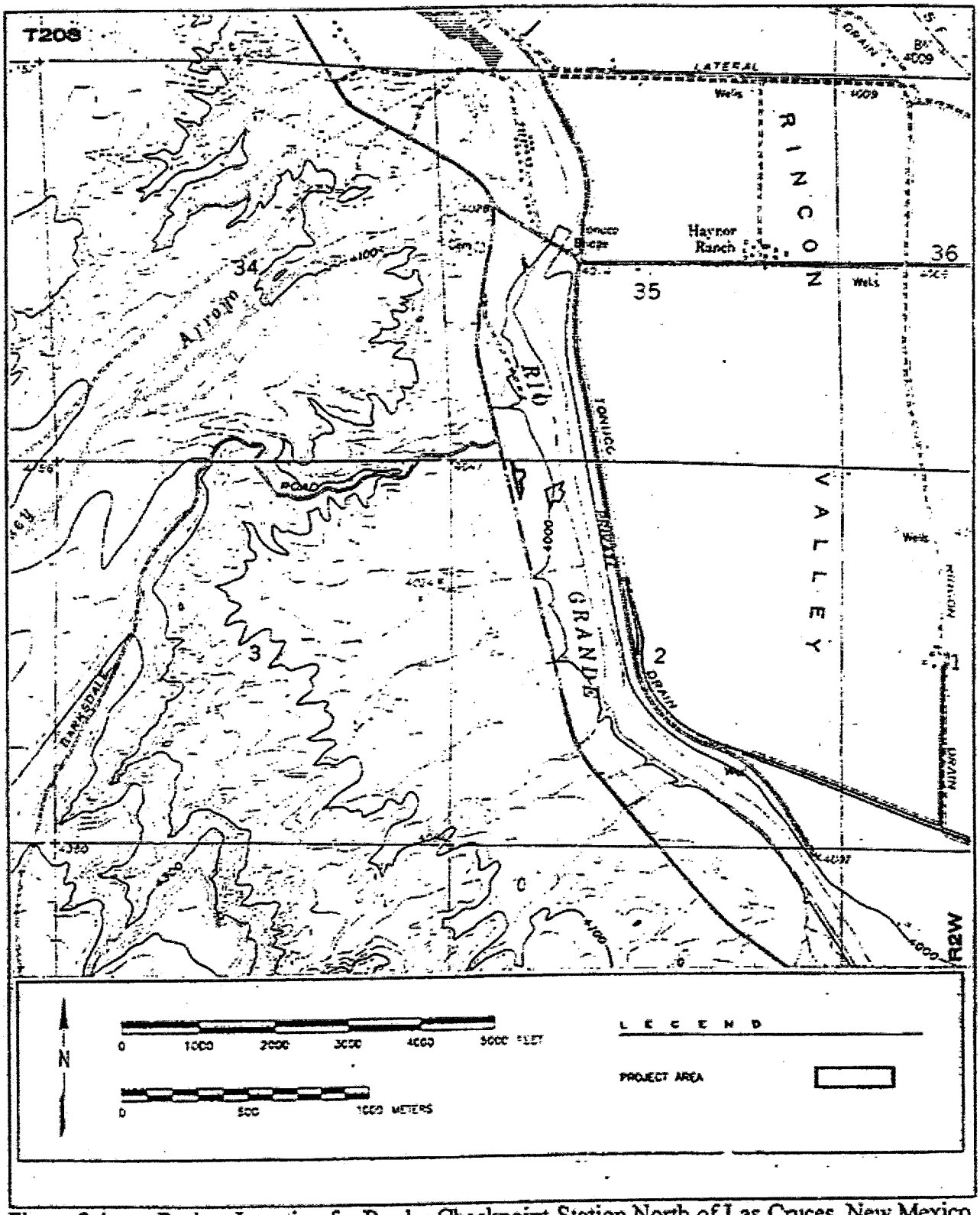

Figure 2.4 Project Location for Border Checkpoint Station North of Las Cruces, New Mexico, on Highway 185 (based on Sierra Alta, New Mexico Quadrangle [1959, photorevised 1978], USGS 7.5' series).

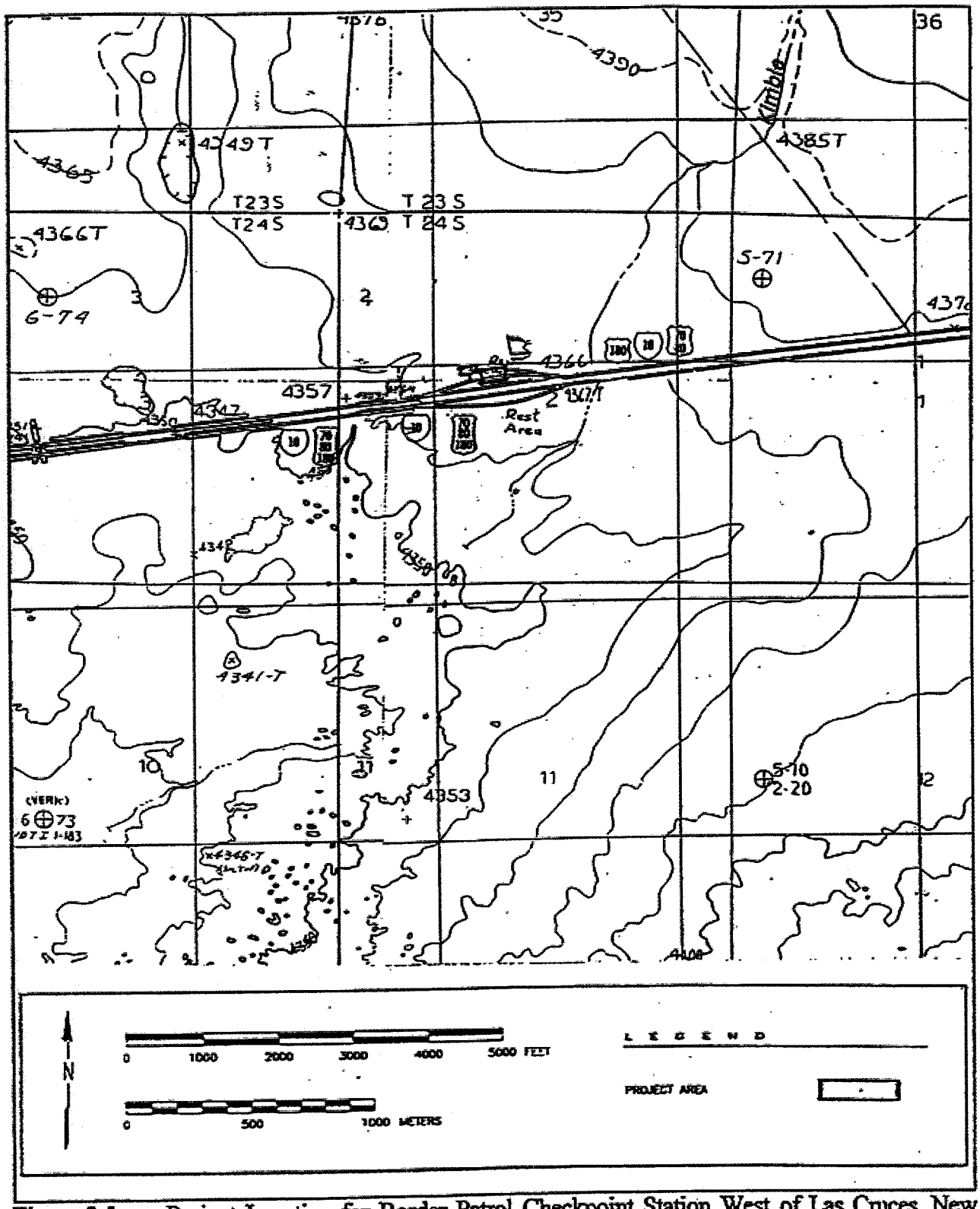

Figure 2.5 Project Location for Border Patrol Checkpoint Station West of Las Cruces, New Mexico, on IH 10 (based on Aden Hills and Sleeping Lady Hills, New Mexico Quadrangle [1985], USGS 7.5' series).

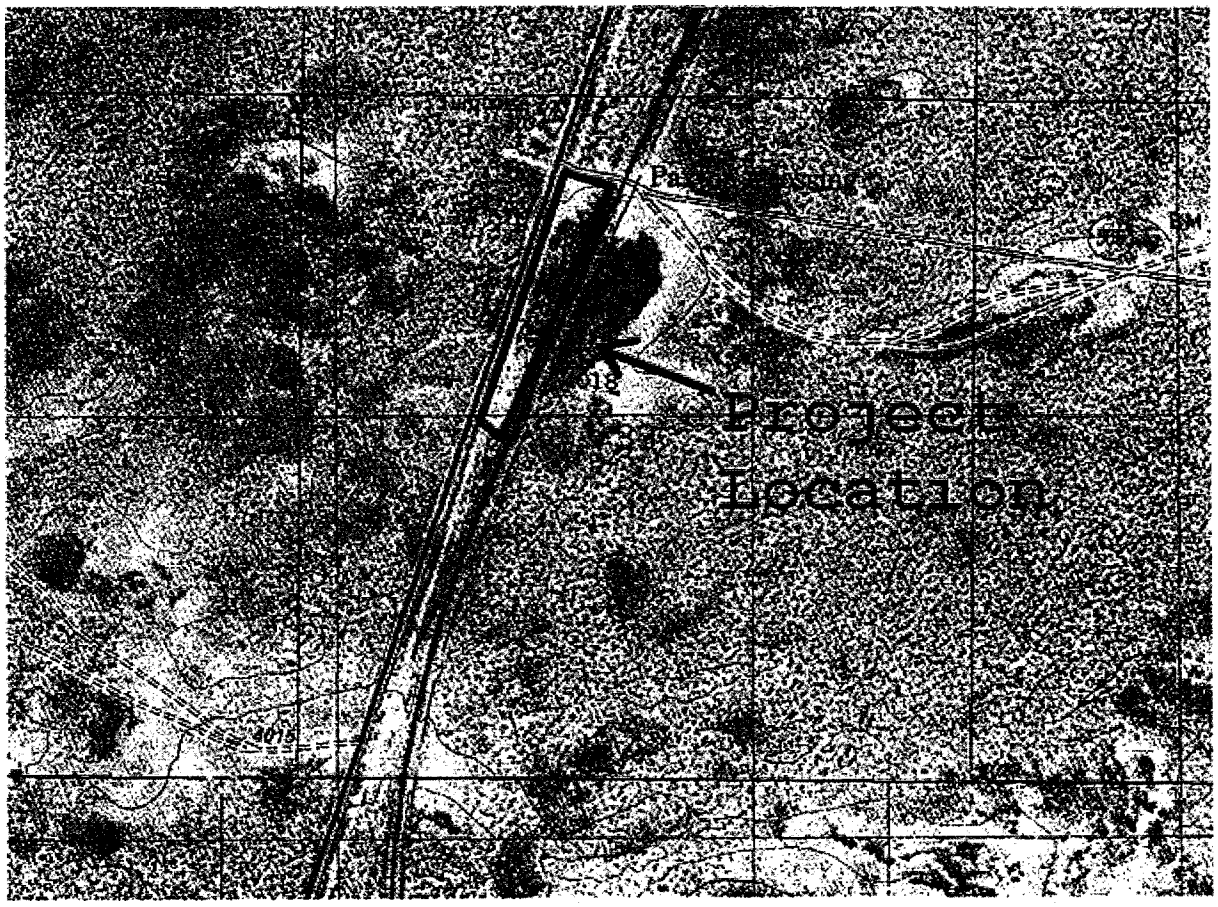

Figure 2.6. Project Location for Border Patrol Checkpoint Station #753, South of Alamogordo, New Mexico, on U.S. Highway 54 (adapted from USGS 7.5 Minute Quadrangle Tres Hermanos SE, New Mexico [1982; 32106-E8].

It has been determined that the existing facility is not suitable for efficient management and service. The existing U.S. Highway 54 checkpoint station would be abandoned once the new station is constructed at Paxton Crossing. The modular building presently existing at the site would be removed, and the asphalt would remain.

2.1.2.2 Checkpoint Station #950

The functions of the existing checkpoint station, White Sands Checkpoint Station #950, would be moved approximately 0.5 mile southwest to a new site. The proposed new station, Alamogordo Site #1, is located approximately 16 miles southwest of Alamogordo on the east side of U.S. Highway 70/82 (Figure 2.7).

Alamogordo Site #1 is located in T18S, R7E, Section 12, SW 1/4, NMPM as shown on the Garton Lake (1982) USGS 7.5' quadrangle map. The project area is within the ROW of U.S. Highway 70/82, immediately southeast of the northeast-bound lane of traffic. The 4.5-acre site has been generally heavily disturbed from activity associated with the construction and use of U.S. Highway 70/82.

This portion of the project involves the construction of a new facility and the extension of electrical, telephone, and potable water utilities. The utilities would be supplied via an underground extension of utilities from the existing White Sands Checkpoint Station #950. The 0.5-mile extensions would be laid along a recently constructed drag road and within the U.S. Highway 70/82 ROW. An EA and corresponding FONSI for construction of the drag road were developed in August 1993. (COE -1993)

It has been shown that the existing facility is not suitable for efficient management and service. The U.S. Highway 70/82 checkpoint station will remain in place in the event that it might be needed in the future.

Construction at the two sites would involve the following components: an exit/entrance lane approximately 0.25 mile long with a ROW of 15 ft, totaling approximately 0.5 acre; a modular facility for Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) activity with a concrete pad supporting it, totaling approximately 0.5 acre; a paved parking area, totaling approximately 0.5 acre; an overhanging canopy, approximately 70 ft by 100 ft, placed over the modular facility; a sanitary septic system and associated piping located within the site perimeter; and a 50 ft perimeter cleared of vegetation surrounding the proposed facility, totaling 0.5 acre. The total area of permanent disturbance for each facility would be approximately 2.0 acres.

2.1.3 Hudspeth County Site (Checkpoint Station #954)

The functions of the existing Ysletta Checkpoint Station #954 would be moved approximately 3 miles east from its existing location, which is approximately 28 miles east of El Paso, Texas on U.S. Highway 62/180. The proposed 3.1-acre site is located on the south side of U.S. Highway 62/180 in Hudspeth County (Figure 2.8). The existing station was originally proposed to be renovated, however, transportation regulations require a 500 foot buffer from roads connecting to U.S. Highway 62/180 which could not be met (Personnel Communication with Robert Cranston, Border Patrol, 1/31/01). The site is presently owned by Spike S Ranch. The proposed site and its surrounding area are used as rangeland. The new checkpoint facility would be 1800 square feet, an increase of 960 square feet from the existing facility. See Figure 2.9 for the Proposed Site Plan. Water would either be derived from an existing well located 0.5 miles from the site which would require the installation of a water line, or hauled in or a new water well would be established.

Under the Proposed Action, border checkpoint stations would be renovated or constructed at each of the above locations following the general plan shown in Figure 2.9. Additionally, a contractor's crew of 10 to 20 people would construct or renovate each checkpoint station in a 2 to 3 months span per station. Construction would take place on site with standard equipment and techniques typically used for road construction, modular building placement, canopy construction, water well installation, etc.

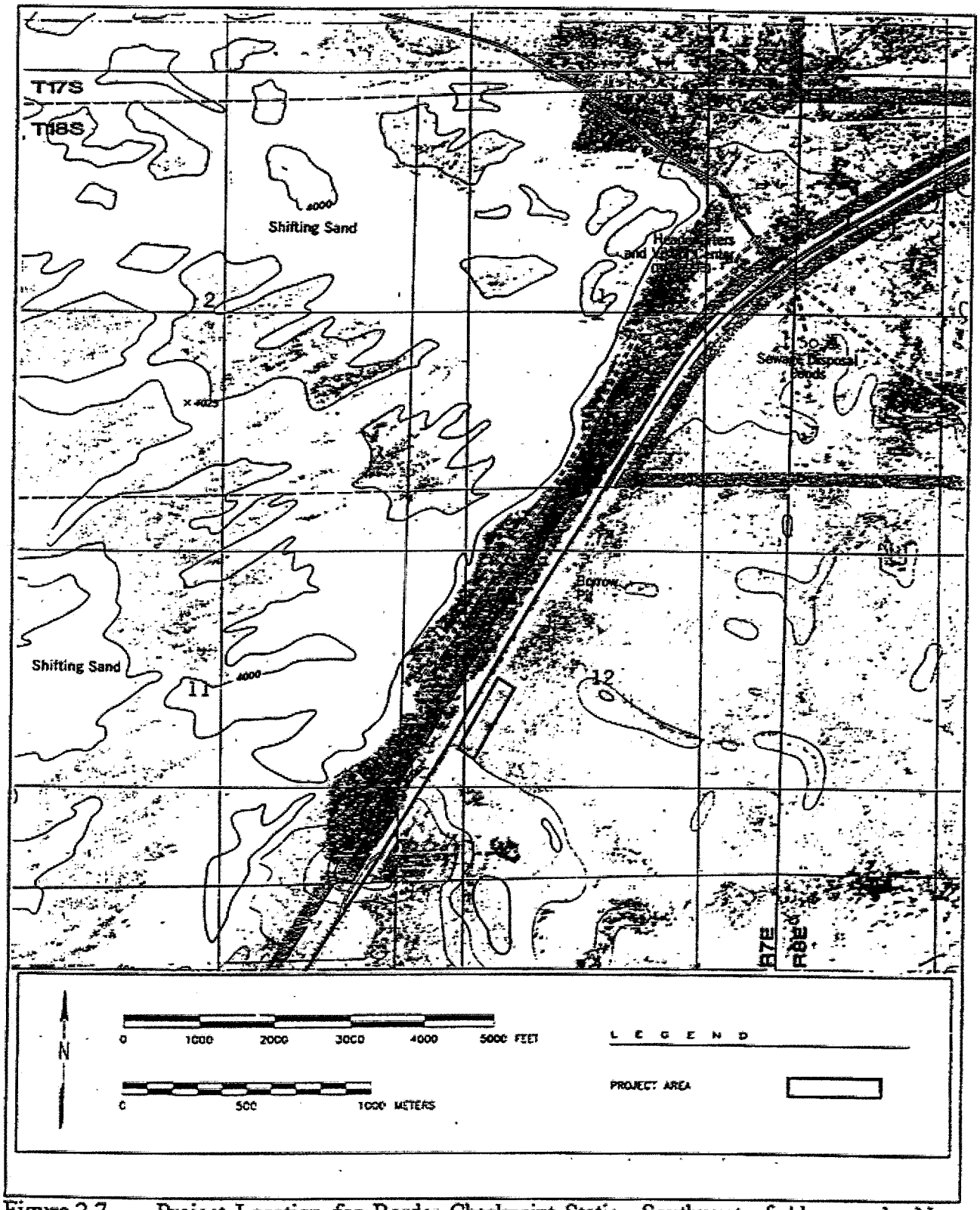

Figure 2.7 Project Location for Border Checkpoint Station Southwest of Alamagordo, New Mexico, on U.S. Highway 70/82 (based on Garton Lake, New Mexico Quadrangle [1982], USGS 7.5' series).

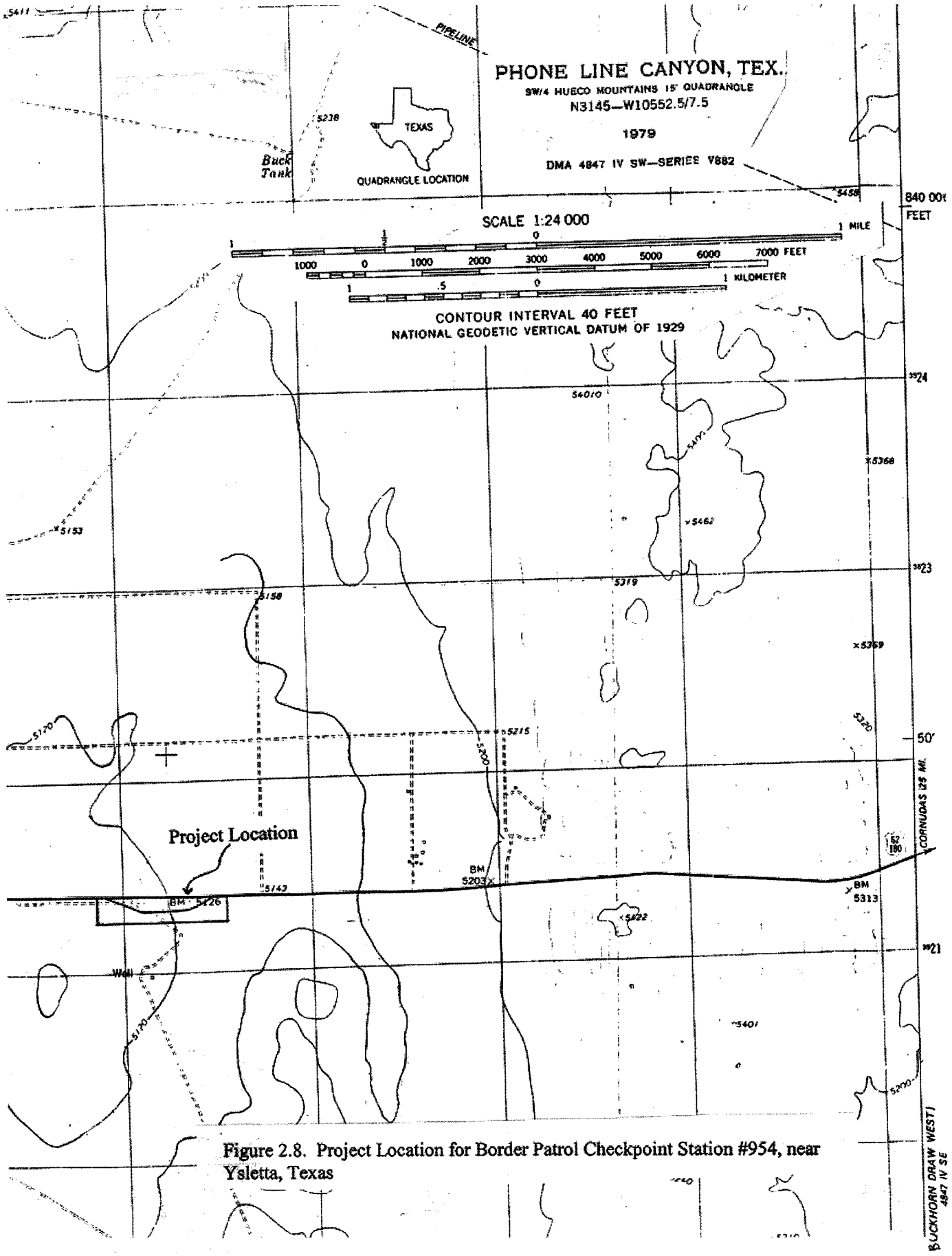

Figure 2.8. Project Location for Border Patrol Checkpoint Station #954, near Ysletta, Texas

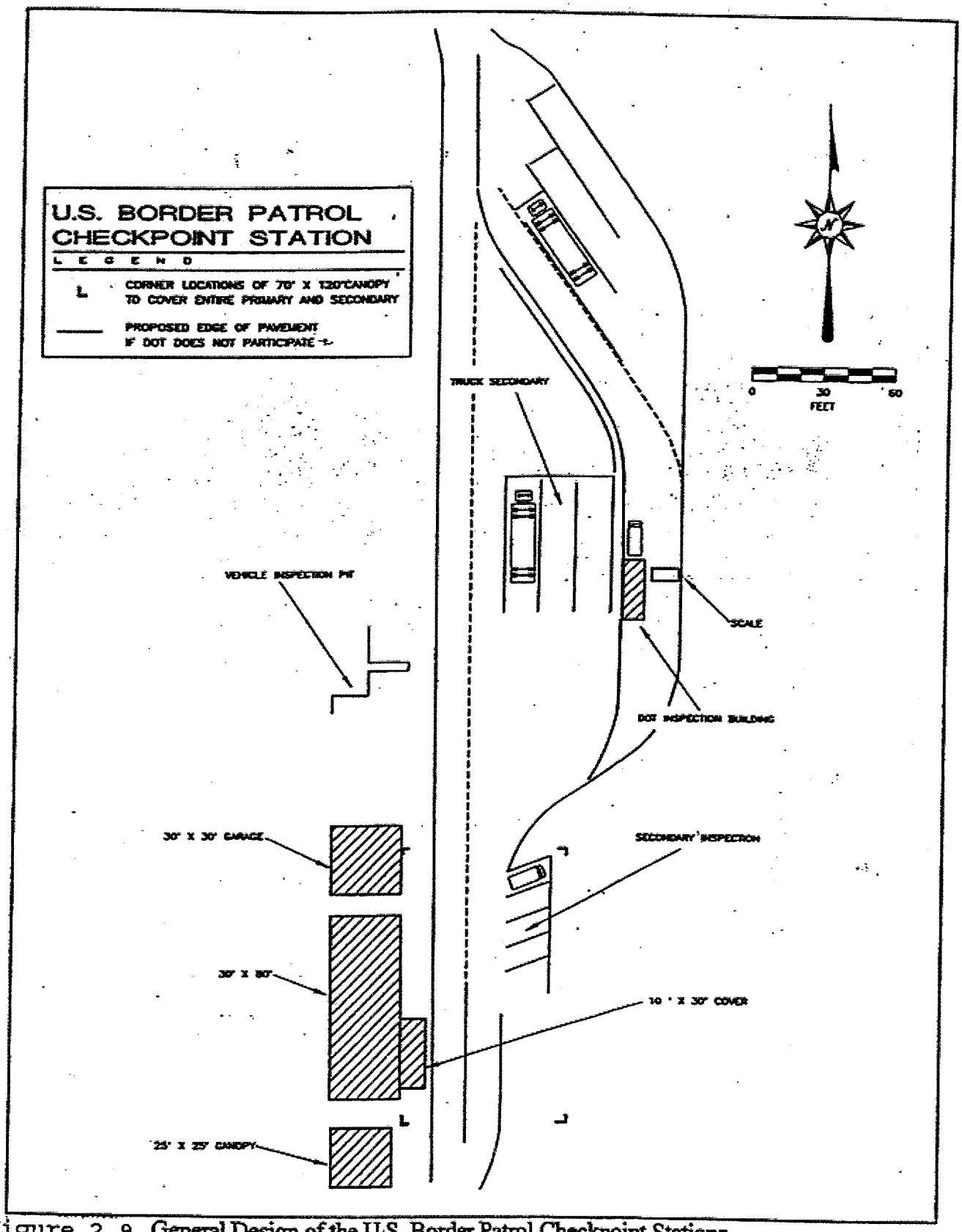

Figure 2.9 General Design of the U.S. Border Patrol Checkpoint Stations.

2.2 THE NO ACTION ALTERNATIVE

In addition to the Proposed Action, the No Action Alternative was also considered. Under the No Action Alternative, the border checkpoint stations would not be constructed or renovated. The No Action Alternative would create no impact on the physical or biological environment; resources such as soil, vegetation, and wildlife would remain unaffected. Under the No Action Alternative, upgraded border patrol services could not be offered. The continued degradation of facilities and services would result in a decline in control of illegal immigrants and drugs and a concomitant decrease in national security.

3.0 THE EXISTING ENVIRONMENT

The affected environment is the baseline against which potential impacts caused by the Proposed Action to the sites are assessed. This chapter focuses on resources specific to the region and immediate areas that have the potential to be affected by the construction/renovation of the checkpoint stations. Only those portions of the environment that could be affected by the Proposed Action are discussed here.

3.1 AIR QUALITY

Based on the National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS) under the Clean Air Act as amended (104 Statute 2399 [1990]), Dona Ana County, New Mexico, is not in attainment for ozone. Otero County, however, is in attainment status (personal communication with Vince Vigil, Acting Program Manager, New Mexico Environment Department, Air Quality Division September 12, 1996). In Texas, Hudspeth County is in attainment for air quality (personal communication with Rich Carpenter, Engineer Assistant-Air Quality, Texas Natural Resource Conservation Commission, February 20, 1997). The nonattainment status of Dona Ana County, New Mexico for ozone means that at least parts of the county have levels of ozone that exceed national and state standards. There are currently actions being taken to reduce the levels of ozone, which would result in the county being listed as a maintenance area. Should subsequent analyses reveal that the county maintains its air quality within national and state standards during the course of the next 10 years, it will regain its attainment status.

3.2 PHYSIOGRAPHY, GEOLOGY AND SOILS

3.2.1 Dona Ana County Sites

3.2.1.1 Physiography

The three checkpoint stations in Dona Ana County are situated within the Mesilla Bolson, in the Mexican Highland Section of the Basin and Range Province, a series of uplifted fault blocks (horst) and down-dropped basins (graben). The section is characterized as arid to semi-arid continental, with most drainages containing water only after heavy rains. The Rio Grande River is the area's only perennial stream. The city of Las Cruces and surrounding area lies within the Mesilla Bolson and is bounded to the east by the San Andres and Franklin Uplifts, and to the west by the Mexican Highlands (King and Hawley 1975).

3.2.1.2 Geology

The Las Cruces area is flanked by the San Andres-Organ mountain range to the east, the Dona Ana Mountains to the north, and the Robledo-Pichaco uplifts to the northwest. These mountain boundaries have Precambrian and Tertiary igneous intrusive cores and supplied the alluvial depositional material for the Mesilla bolson. The Mesilla Bolson, or basin, is located within the Rio Grande rift, an interconnected chain of structural basins. The rift basins formed during the Miocene and extend from southern Colorado to northern Mexico. Bolson deposition is represented by Miocene to middle Pleistocene sedimentary rocks of the Santa Fe Group and Quaternary alluvial fill (NMGS 1975).

3.2.1.3 Soils

Soils found in the Las Cruces area are represented by the Wink-Harrisburg association and the Bluepoint soil series (SCS 1980).

3.2.1.3.1 *Wink-Harrisburg Association*

The Wink soil series consists of deep, well-drained, light brown loamy fine sand to pink, sandy loam. The series forms in old unconsolidated alluvium that has been modified by wind. The soils are on broad piedmont fans and have slopes of 0 to 1 percent (SCS 1980).

The Harrisburg soil series consists of moderately deep, well-drained, light brown to light reddish brown loamy fine sand to fine sandy loam. The series forms in residuum sandstone and eolian material from sandstone, volcanic ash, and shale. The soils form on desert mesas and have slopes of 1 to 10 percent (SCS 1980).

3.2.1.3.2 *Bluepoint Soil Series*

The Bluepoint soil series consists of deep, somewhat excessively drained, light brown loamy sand to loamy fine sand. The series forms in alluvium modified by wind on fans, terraces, and ridges along the upper margins of the Rio Grande Valley and have slopes of 1 to 40 percent. The soil is generally calcareous throughout (SCS 1980).

3.2.2 Otero County Sites

3.2.2.1 Physiography

The two Otero county sites lie within the Mexican Highland Section of the Basin and Range Physiographic Province, a province characterized by upthrusted blocks (horsts) and down-dropped basins (graben). The Mexican Highland Section is bounded to the west by the Rio Grande Subsection, to the east by the Sacramento Section, and to the north by the Southern Rocky Mountain Province (Hawley - 1986).

3.2.2.2 Geology

The sites in Otero County are located within the Tularosa Basin and are bounded by steep escarpments of the Sacramento Mountains and Sierra Blanca on the east and the San Andreas Mountains on the west. Structurally, the Tularosa Basin is a graben capped by bolson deposits, or valley fill. The steep escarpments of the bounding mountains dip away from the valley on the east and west sides. Sedimentary rocks from the Cambrian to Recent

make up the predominance of the Basin's stratigraphy. Thick deposits of quartz and gypsum sand overlay earlier sediments. (NMGS - 1954).

3.2.2.3 Soils

The soils near Alamogordo are primarily gypsiferous Aridisols and are represented by the Yesum-Holloman association (SCS 1976).

3.2.2.3.1 *Yesum Series*

The Yesum Series is composed of deep, well-drained soils that form in medium to coarse textured gypsiferous deposits. They form on broad basin floors. Slope is 0 to 5 percent. A typical Yesum pedon is a very fine sandy loam in an area of Holloman-Gypsum land-Yesum complex. Mean annual precipitation is about 9 inches, and the mean annual air temperature is about 61 degrees F. (SCS 1976).

3.2.2.3.2 *Holloman Series*

The Holloman Series consists of deep, well-drained soils that form in gypsiferous sediment of eolian and alluvial origin. They are shallow over gypsum. Holloman soils are on nearly level to gently sloping uplands. Slope is 0 to 5 percent. A typical Holloman pedon is a very fine sandy loam. The mean annual precipitation is about 8 inches, and the mean annual air temperature is about 60 degrees F. (SCS - 1976).

3.2.3. Texas Site

3.2.3.1 Physiography

The proposed site in Hudspeth County, Texas is situated within the Basin and Range Province in west Texas (Bailey 1980). This province is primarily desert, with most drainages containing water only after heavy rains. The location is bounded to the west and north by the Hueco Mountains, to the east by the Diablo Plateau, and to the south by the Stillman Mountains. The proposed construction site is located at the eastern edge of the Hueco Bolson, near the Hueco Mountains. The bolson is a generally north-south trending structural basin bounded to the west by the Hueco Mountains, to the south by the Quitman Mountains, and to the east by the Diablo Plateau.

3.2.3.2 Geology

Hueco Bolson depositional fill consists of fine-grained clays and silts to sands to cobbled gravels. The thickest deposits are found near the down-dropped rift line at the eastern foot of the Franklin Mountains. Depositional thickness of the bolson has been estimated in excess of 5,000 feet. Bolson sediment grain size generally decreases in an easterly direction across the basin. The arid to semi-arid area conditions have contributed to the abundance of caliche, or "hard pan" soils found near ground surface. When wet, caliche may become an aquatard. However, the bolson soils are generally well-drained and allow leaching (USACE 1997).

3.2.3.3 Soils

The USDA has not surveyed soils in the project area, so only soil associations are known for the proposed site. The

soil is a Ratliff-Hodgins association. Ratliff occurs on the slopes and is classified as a loamy Rangeland site for grazing purposes. The Hodgins soil is frequently flooded, when it rains, and is classified as a draw Rangeland site for grazing purposes. Both soils are deep, with calcareous substrata. The soils are subject to wind and water erosion if denuded of vegetation. The Hodgins has a high shrink-swell characteristic that can pose problems to structures lying on top.

3.3 WATER RESOURCES

3.3.1 Dona Ana County Sites

The locations of the three New Mexico checkpoint stations in Dona Ana County feature a semi-arid climate with limited water resources. Drainage into the Mesilla basin tends to be slight except during intense rainfall. Important water users in the basin include farmers with irrigated croplands, small communities, and the city of Las Cruces. Only Checkpoint #703, along the Rio Grande River north of Las Cruces, is near a permanent surface water source. This location overlies Rio Grande Valley-fill deposits with groundwater near the surface (King *at al.* 1971). In contrast, Checkpoint #702 is an upland site located in the Jornada del Muerto that has limited surface water, with groundwater found only at greater depths. The principal aquifer for the three stations is the Santa Fe Group, an important aquifer for urban uses, with water found at depths of over 300 ft (King *et al.* 1971).

3.3.2. Otero County Sites

The locations of the two New Mexico checkpoint stations in Otero county feature a semi-arid climate with limited water resources. The two proposed stations near Alamogordo occur in the 6,540 square mile Tularosa Basin with drainage tending to be dry except during intense rainfall. Precipitation received on mountains surrounding the Tularosa Basin provides intermittent surface runoff that flows toward the center of the basin or through alluvial fans as interflows. Important water users in the Tularosa Basin include Holloman Air Force Base, White Sands Missile Range Headquarters, and the city of Alamogordo. The basin has variable well yields, with the highest yields occurring on alluvial fans next to mountain canyons. In the central part of the basin where the two checkpoint stations would be located, groundwater yields are low with high salinity levels (New Mexico Water Research Institute 1976).

3.3.3 Texas Site

The proposed checkpoint station near El Paso, Texas also occurs in a semi-arid climate with limited water resources. There are no major surface water bodies in the area. Groundwater is the sole source of potable water and is located in the Hueco Bolson. The bolson has a thickness of over 5,000 feet, with potable water found at approximately 250-300 feet below ground surface. Water extracted from the bolson has historically been of good quality although recent extensive pumping in the El Paso area has resulted in localized elevated salinity (USACE 1997).

3.4 BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES

3.4.1 Native Vegetation

3.4.1.1 Dona Ana County Sites

The Proposed Action areas in Dona Ana County are within the Chihuahuan Desert Province (Bailey 1980; Barbour and Billings 1991; Brown 1994) and are characterized by undulating plains with isolated mountains occasionally rising to 9,000 ft. Extensive dunes are characteristic of a large portion of this province. Vegetation is characterized by thickets of desert shrubs such as four-wing saltbush *(Atriplex canescens),* honey mesquite *(Prosopis glandulosa),* prickly pear *(Opuntia* spp.*),* soaptree yucca *(Yucca elata),* creosote bush *(Larrea tridentata),* and chamisa *(Chrysothamnus nauseosus)* interspersed with short and mid-grasses such as grama grasses *(Bouteloua spp.),* and dropseeds (Sporobulus spp.) (Brown 1982).

3.4.1.2 Otero County Sites

The Proposed Action sites in Otero County are situated within the Chihuahuan Desert Province (Bailey 1980; Barbour and Billings 1991; Brown 1994). Vegetation is characterized by thickets of desert shrubs such as four-wing saltbush *(Atriplex canescens),* honey mesquite *(Prosopis glandulosa),* prickly pear *(Opuntia* spp.*),* soaptree yucca *(Yucca elata),* creosote bush *(Larrea tridentata),* and chamisa *(Chrysothamnus nauseosus)* interspersed with short and mid-grasses such as grama gasses *(Bouteloua spp.),* and dropseeds *(Sporobulus spp.)* (Brown 1982*).*

3.4.1.3 Texas Site

The Proposed Action site near El Paso is within the Chihuahuan Desertscrub vegetation community type (Brown and Lowe 1977). A biological survey was performed on January 31, 2001 at the proposed site. The vegetation type dominant on the site is grass, specifically black grama (*Bouteloua eriopoda),* with scattered shrubs. No trees were observed on the site. Other grasses observed include vine mesquite (*Panicum obtusem),* burrograss (Scleropogon brevifolius), ring muhly (*Muhlenbergia torreyi)* and threeawn (*Aristida* sp.). The dominant shrub is soapweed (*Yucca elata).* Other shrubs include tree cholla (*Opuntia imbricata),* broom snakeweed *(Gutierrezia sarothrae),* javelinabush *(Condalia ericoides)* and prickly pear (*Opuntia* sp.). Herbaceous vegetation includes Russian thistle (*Salsola kali),* thistle (*Circium* sp.), and horse nettle (*Solanum carolinense).*

3.4.2 Common Wildlife Species

3.4.2.1 Dona Ana County Sites

Wildlife potentially occurring near the Proposed Action areas within Dona Ana county include mule deer *(Odocoileus hemionus),* scaled quail *(Callipepla squamata),* Gamble's quail *(Lophortyx gambeli),* black-tailed jackrabbit (*Lepus californicus),* desert cottontail *(Sylvilagus nuttalli),* kangaroo rat *(Dipodomys spp.),* wood rat *(Neotoma* spp.*),* coyote *(Canis latrans),* red-tailed hawk *(Buteo jamaicensis),* and ferruginous hawk *(Buteo regalis)* (Findley *et al.* 1975, Findley 1987*).*

3.4.2.2 Otero County Sites

Wildlife potentially inhabiting the Proposed Action areas within Otero county includes pronghorn sheep *(Antilocapra americana),* mule deer *(Odocoileus hemionus crooki),* javelina, *(Dicotyles tajacu),* scaled quail

(Callipepla squamata), Gamble's quail *(Lophortyx gambeli),* black-tailed jackrabbit (*Lepus californicus),* desert cottontail *(Sylvilagus muttalli),* kangaroo rat *(Dipodomys spp.),* wood rat *(Neotoma* spp.*),* coyote *(Canis latrans),* red-tailed hawk *(Buteo jamaicensis),* and ferruginous hawk *(Buteo regalis)* (Findley *et al.* 1975, Findley 1987*).*

3.4.2.3 Texas Site

Wildlife potentially occurring near the El Paso checkpoint in Hudspeth County, Texas includes mule deer *(Odocoileus hemionus),* javelina, *(Tayassu tajacu),* black-tailed jackrabbit (*Lepus californicus),* desert cottontail *(Sylvilagus nuttalli),* kangaroo rat *(Dipodomys spp.),* wood rat *(Neotoma* spp.*),* coyote *(Canis latrans),* and *red*-tailed hawk *(Buteo jamaicensis)* (Brown 1994).

3.4.3 Threatened and Endangered Species

3.4.3.1 New Mexico Sites

Three agencies have primary responsibility for the conservation of animal and plant species in New Mexico: the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS), under authority of the Endangered Species Act (ESA) of 1973 (as amended); the New Mexico Department of Game and Fish (NMDGF), under the authority of the Wildlife Conservation Act of 1974; and the New Mexico Energy, Minerals and Natural Resources Department (NMEMNRD), under authority of the New Mexico Endangered Plant Species Act and Rule No. NMFRCD 91-1. Each agency maintains a list of animal and/or plant species which have been classified as endangered or threatened (listed species) based on present status and potential threat to future survival or recruitment. In addition the USFWS maintains a list of animals and plants, which are candidates for listing as endangered or threatened, as well as species proposed for such listing. Of the species on these various lists, those with potential to occur near the project areas are given in Tables 3.1 and 3.2.

Consultation was conducted for the New Mexico sites with the Ecological Services Field Office of the USFWS in Albuquerque, New Mexico, and the NMDGF and the NMEMNRD in Santa Fe, New Mexico, for the proposed action areas in Otero and Dona Ana Counties (Appendix B).

TABLE 3.1. Federal and State of New Mexico listed species, candidate species and species proposed for listing that may occur in the vicinity of the Dona Ana county proposed project sites.

Species	Federal Status*	State Status*
Peregrine Falcon (*Falco peregrinus*)	E	T
Northern Aplomado Falcon (*Falco femoralis septentrionalis*)	E	E
Bald Eagle (*Haliaeetus leucocephalus*)	T	T
Common Ground-dove (*Columbia passerina pallescens*)	--	E
Bell's Vireo (*Vireo bellii*)	--	T
Night-blooming cereus (*Peniocereus greggii* var. *greggii*)	--	E

* E -- Endangered.

T -- Threatened.

C -- Candidate. A taxon for which there is enough substantial information on biological vulnerability and threats to support proposals to list it as endangered or threatened.

P -- Species currently proposed for listing by the USFWS

TABLE 3.2. Federal and State of New Mexico listed species, candidate species and species proposed for listing that may occur in the vicinity of the proposed Otero county project sites.

Species	Federal Status*	State Status*
Peregrine Falcon (*Falco peregrinus*)	E	T
Northern Aplomado Falcon (*Falco femoralis septentrionalis*)	E	E
Bald Eagle (*Haliaeetus leucocephalus*)	T	T
Common Ground-dove (*Columbia passerina pallescens*)	--	E
Bell's Vireo (*Vireo bellii*)	--	T
Sacramento Prickle-Poppy (*Argemone pleiacantha pinnatisect*)	E	E
Kuenzler's Hedgehog Cactus (*Echinocereus fendleri kuenzleri)*	E	E
Gypsum Scalebroom (*Lepidospartum burgessii)*	--	E

* E -- Endangered.

T -- Threatened.

C -- Candidate. A taxon for which there is enough substantial information on biological vulnerability and threats to support proposals to list it as endangered or threatened.

P -- Species currently proposed for listing by the USFWS

3.4.3.2 Texas Site

Two agencies have primary responsibility for the conservation of animal and plant species in Texas: the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) and the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department (TPWD). Each agency maintains a list of animal and plant species which have been classified as endangered or threatened (listed species) based on present status and potential threat to future survival or recruitment. In addition the USFWS maintains a list of animals and plants, which are candidates for listing as endangered or threatened, as well as species proposed for such listing. Of the species on these various lists, those with potential to occur near the project areas are given in Table 3.2.

TABLE 3.3. Federal and State of Texas listed species, candidate species and species proposed for listing that may occur in the vicinity of the proposed project sites.

Species	Federal Status*	State Status*
Peregrine Falcon (*Falco peregrinus*)	E	E
Northern Aplomado Falcon (*Falco femoralis septentrionalis*)	E	--

Texas Horned Lizard (*Phrynosoma cornutum*)	--	T
Texas Lyre Snake (*Trimorphodon biscutatus*)	--	T

* E -- Endangered.
T -- Threatened.
C -- Candidate. A taxon for which there is enough substantial information on biological vulnerability and threats to support proposals to list it as endangered or threatened.
P -- Species currently proposed for listing by the USFWS

Consultation was conducted with the Ecological Services Field Office of the USFWS and the TPWD in Austin, Texas, for the proposed action area in Hudspeth County (Appendix B).

3.5 CULTURAL RESOURCES

A Class I site records check of the New Mexico Archaeological Records Management Section (ARMS) and of the Texas Historical Commission was conducted to determine if any cultural resources were previously recorded near the project areas. These searches revealed no previously recorded cultural resources within 0.5 mile of the project sites. Also, site field investigations in Dona Ana County on 30 May 1995 and Otero County on 15 July 1998 failed to locate any cultural sites (Appendix A).

A Class I site records check of the Texas Archeological Research Laboratory was conducted for the new Ysletta location and no cultural resources were present. A Class III intensive archaeological survey was conducted on 31 January, 2001 and no cultural material was discovered.

3.6 AESTHETICS

Aesthetics for the Proposed Action areas are described in terms of visual appearance, sound, and sensitivity level. Visual appearance is made up of four elements: form, line, color, and texture. The Proposed Action area's principal form elements consist of uneven terrain; human-made features contribute occasional line elements to the areas' overall visual characteristics. These include electric lines, fences, telephone cables, transmission and distribution lines, residences, and roads. The areas' color varies throughout: open rangelands vary from light brown to soft yellow to pale green during the year; unpaved roads are light brown to brownish-yellow; and vegetation has a green overstory with a pale green to slightly yellow or buff understory. Sound in all the proposed sites is produced by natural sources such as wind and birds and human-made sounds associated with residences and vehicular traffic. Noise levels are relatively quiet at the sites, with little undesirable noise.

3.7 HUMAN HEALTH AND SAFETY

Police, fire protection, and hospital services would continue to be provided at the current level. The city of Las Cruces currently provides fire protection and hospital services to the Dona Ana county sites. Police services for the Dona Ana sites are provided by the Dona Ana County Sheriff's Department. The Otero County Sheriff's Department provides police services to the two existing Otero county checkpoints. Fire protection services for station #753 is provided by the Bull's Acres Volunteer Fire Department while protection services for station #950 is provided by either White Sands Range, Holloman Air Force Base, or the Alamogordo West Fire Department. Minor medical treatment is available in Alamogordo while serious medical needs are addressed in

El Paso, Texas. The city of El Paso provides fire protection and hospital services to the Texas site and police services are provided by the Hudspeth County Sheriff's Department. No change in services to any site is anticipated. Naturally occurring health and safety concerns at the existing locations include exposure to the elements and interaction with local flora and fauna. Only insignificant quantities of herbicides or insecticides have been used at any proposed site.

3.8 ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL PROFILE

3.8.1 Dona Ana County Sites

Three of the five New Mexico planned action sites are located in Dona Ana County. The population of Dona Ana County in 1995 is listed as being 158,849 individuals. The ethnic breakdown for Dona Ana county is: Hispanic (any race), 56.4%; white (non-Hispanic), 34.7%; black (non-Hispanic), 1.6%; and other (non-Hispanic), 7.3%. In 1994, the civilian workforce numbered 61,472 with an unemployment rate 8.0%. The 1993 per capita income in Dona Ana County was $13,228. Industries making major economic contributions to the county's economy include retail trade, agriculture, and mining natural resources. Federal, state, and local governments are the largest employers in the county. Las Cruces is the county seat and the largest city in Dona Ana County, with a population of 70,000 individuals (U. S. Census Bureau 1995).

3.8.2 Otero County Sites

The remaining two planned action sites in New Mexico are located in Otero County. The total population of Otero County in 1995 is listed as being 55,027 individuals. The ethnic breakdown for Otero county is: Hispanic (any race), 23.9%; white (non-Hispanic), 55.7%; black (non-Hispanic), 5.3%; and other (non-Hispanic), 15.1%. In 1994, the civilian workforce numbered 19,766 individuals with an unemployment rate 7.1%. The 1993 per capita income in Otero County was $13,698. Industries making major economic contributions to the county's economy include retail trade, agriculture, and mining natural resources (U.S. Census Bureau 1995). Federal, state, and local governments are the largest employers in the county. Carlsbad is the county seat and the largest city in Otero County, with a population of approximately 25,000 individuals (U.S. Census Bureau 1995).

3.8.3 Texas Site

The proposed Texas site is located in Hudspeth County, Texas. The 1990 total resident population of Hudspeth County is listed as 2,915 individuals. The ethnic breakdown of Hudspeth county is: Hispanic (any race), 66.4%; white (non-Hispanic), 14.1%; black (non-Hispanic), 0.5%; and other (non-Hispanic), 19.0%. The 1993 per capita income in Hudspeth County was $9,526, with an unemployment rate in 1994 of 2.5%. Industries making major economic contributions to the county's economy include agriculture and mining natural resources. The largest city in Hudspeth County is Dell City, the county seat, with a 1990 population of 915 individuals (U.S. Census Bureau 1995).

3.9 LAND USE

Principal land usage in Dona Ana and Otero counties in New Mexico and Hudspeth County, Texas are: livestock grazing on rangelands, farming in the Rio Grande Valley, mining natural resources, open area and

recreation, and military use. The current land use adjacent to the proposed project sites is highway ROW use.

4.0 CUMULATIVE DIRECT AND INDIRECT EFFECTS

Based on discussions with U.S. Border Patrol personnel, federal and state agencies, and local authorities, and on comparisons with similar construction activities, several areas of potential concern associated with the Proposed Action have been identified. An environmental consequence or impact is defined as a modification in the existing environment brought about by development activities. Impacts can be beneficial or adverse, can be a primary result of an action (direct) or a secondary result (indirect), and can be permanent or long-lasting (long-term) or temporary and of short duration (short-term). Impacts can vary in degree from a slightly discernable change to a total change in the environment. Short-term impacts occur during and immediately after the construction of the checkpoint station. Although short in duration, such impacts may be obvious and disruptive. For this project, short-term impacts are defined as those lasting 5 years or less, whereas long-term impacts are those lasting more than 5 years.
Significance criteria are presented for each affected resource. These criteria are based on existing regulatory standards, scientific and environmental documentation, and/or professional judgment. Potential impacts for this project were classified at one of four levels: significant, moderate, negligible, and no impact. Significant impacts (as defined in Council on Environmental Quality [CEQ] guidelines 40 CFR 1500-1508) are effects that are most substantial and therefore should receive the greatest attention in decision-making. Moderate impacts do not meet the criteria to be classified as significant but nevertheless result in change that is easy to detect. Negligible impacts result in little or no effect to the existing environment and cannot be easily detected. In the following discussions, impacts are considered to be adverse unless identified as beneficial.

Cumulative impacts, irreversible and irretrievable commitment of resources, and short-term use of the environment versus long-term productivity are discussed in separate sections following the discussion of each specific resource. Cumulative impacts are those, which result from the incremental impacts of an action added to other past, present, and reasonably foreseeable actions, regardless of who is responsible for such actions. Irreversible and irretrievable impacts are permanent reductions or losses of resources that, once lost, cannot be regained. In comparing short-term use of the environment with long-term productivity for this project, short-term use of the environment is that use during the short construction phase, and long-term productivity refers to the period after the project is complete.

4.1 THE NO-ACTION ALTERNATIVE

Under the No Action Alternative, none of the existing border checkpoint stations would be modified. The No Action Alternative would create no new impacts on the physical or biological environment; resources such as soil, vegetation, and wildlife would remain unaffected beyond the current effects of the existing facilities and operations on the environment.

4.2 THE PROPOSED ACTION

4.2.1 Air Quality

Impacts to air quality would be considered significant if project activities resulted in a violation of federal and/or state air quality attainment standards.

Under the Proposed Action, levels of fugitive dust at the project sites may increase, depending on wind speeds and

soil moisture content during the period of site construction. Such increases or impacts on ambient air quality during construction would be short-term and negligible. Pollutant emissions from the proposed construction activities could cause a short-term negligible impact to the air quality in the vicinity of the project site and the region. Although it has been noted that Dona Ana County is in non-attainment for ozone emissions, the Proposed Action would have no effect on ozone emissions. No long-term effects on air quality are anticipated.

4.2.2 Physiography, Geology and Soils.

Impacts to topography and physiography would be considered significant if disturbance permanently affected prominent landforms or surface drainage patterns. Impacts to mineral resources would be considered significant if access to economically recoverable resources was restricted or if attainment of maximum ultimate recovery of oil/gas resources was unnecessarily precluded from existing leases. Impacts from geologic hazards would be significant if project facilities would be damaged due to seismic events, landslides, subsidence, or flooding, and impacts to geologic hazards would be considered significant if project activities resulted in reactivation of sand dunes, landslides, subsidence, or increased flooding. Impacts to soils would be considered significant if a reduction in soil productivity and/or increased erosion would prevent successful reclamation and revegetation.

The Proposed Action would have a negligible impact to the six sites. During construction, impacts to the soil resource due to structure renovation would be negligible. To minimize soil erosion, construction activities, which disturb the soil, would be kept to a minimum. Vegetation cover would be left undisturbed wherever possible to minimize erosion. Additionally, if at any site disturbance is equal to or greater than 5 acres, a site-specific Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP) will be developed for that site.

4.2.3 Water Resources

Renovation or construction of the checkpoints, including Checkpoint #703 along the Rio Grande River in Las Cruces, would not be expected to disturb significant quantities of soil, indicating that the likelihood of sedimentation and siltation of surface water features is extremely low. Also, natural drainage patterns would not be significantly altered at any of the locations since the proposed renovations would not require additional significant paving.
The Proposed Action is not expected to significantly increase the demand on groundwater or surface water resources. Therefore, no impacts to water resources are expected.

4.2.4 Biological Resources

Impacts to vegetation resulting from the proposed project are considered significant if they result in a long-term reduction in vegetation productivity or a permanent change in species composition. Impacts to wildlife resources are considered significant if they prevent realization of specified population objectives. Any action that results in the disruption of raptor breeding activities and subsequent reproductive failure may be considered an adverse impact. Any action that would adversely affect state and federally listed or candidate species for listing, their critical habitat, or any recovery program for such species is considered an adverse and/or significant impact.

4.2.4.1 Native Vegetation

The proposed projects would have negligible impact on vegetation, especially as the project sites have already been heavily disturbed over most of their areas. Construction activities which disturb vegetation would be kept to a

minimum, and existing vegetation will be left in place wherever possible. No herbicides would be used. Temporarily disturbed areas would be allowed to revegetate naturally, with the exception of the site perimeter.

4.2.4.2 Common Wildlife Species

Construction activities would have negligible short-term effects on common wildlife. Species may temporarily be displaced while construction is occurring. However, the disturbed condition of the sites does not support adequate wildlife habitat. New construction at the Otero county sites would have negligible long-term effects on local wildlife. Species would be inhibited from utilizing the two sites. However, the lack of adequate habitat at the sites would indicate wildlife only traverse the areas and easily would be able to utilize other areas for travel. The total impact on common wildlife is considered negligible.

4.2.4.3 Threatened and Endangered Species

4.2.4.3.1 *New Mexico Sites*

Refer to Tables 3.1 and 3.2 for the following discussion. Due to the small size and disturbed nature of the proposed project areas, existing highway traffic and maintenance activities, and the lack of suitable cliffs for nesting (Peregrine falcon), it is unlikely that Peregrine and Aaplomado falcons would occur nearby except on a casual or accidental basis. Therefore the proposed action should have no effect on these species.

The Bald Eagle may occur in winter along the Rio Grande, which lies approximately 0.1 mile east of the project area for the Highway 185 site. However, it is unlikely that this is an important use area for this species due to the general lack of perching and roosting trees along this part of the river. Hubbard (1978) states that, even though this species migrates and winters almost statewide, it is found "mainly near water at lower and middle elevations in the north and southwest (part of the State)". He does not list this part of the Rio Grande as important habitat. Therefore the proposed action should have no effect on the Bald Eagle.

Because of heavy disturbance, the project sites are unlikely to contain suitable habitat for the common ground-dove, and the only potential habitat for Bell's vireo would be along the Rio Grande in the vicinity of the Highway 185 site. Also, no state or federally listed (threatened or endangered) plant species were observed during field reconnaissance conducted on September 5, 1996, and March 10, 1997. For the above reasons, it is unlikely that the proposed action would affect the common ground-dove, Bell's vireo or the night-blooming cereus.

4.2.4.3.2 *Texas site*

Refer to Table 3.3 for the following discussion. Due to the small size of the proposed project area, existing highway traffic and the lack of suitable cliffs for nesting (peregrine falcon), it is unlikely that Peregrine and Aplomado falcons would occur nearby except on a casual or accidental basis. Therefore the proposed action should have no effect on these species.

The Texas horned lizard inhabits arid and semiarid open country with sparse plant growth. The proposed site is thick with grass cover. The lyre snake prefers areas with massive rocks, which are lacking at this site. Due to the lack of preferable habitat, the proposed action should have no effect on these two species. No effect to

threatened or endangered species on the site is expected.

4.2.5 Cultural Resources

Significant impacts to cultural and/or historic resources could occur if project activities result in destruction or alteration of all or a contributing part of any National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) eligible cultural or historic site; the isolation of an eligible cultural resource from its surrounding environment; the introduction of visual, audible, or atmospheric elements that are out of character with a NRHP eligible site or would alter its setting; or disturbance of important sites of religious or cultural significance to Native Americans.

No impact would occur to cultural resources as a result of the Proposed Action. A file search resulted in finding no sites as having been reported in the areas of the Proposed Action, and further examination of the sites by qualified archaeologists revealed no cultural resources. The State Historic Preservation Officers (SHPO) for both Texas and New Mexico have concurred with the recommendation of "No Effect" to cultural resources for the proposed undertakings. A copy of this correspondence is available in Appendix A. Should any cultural resources be identified during construction, the work would cease in the vicinity of the discovery, the appropriate SHPO contacted, and appropriate measures taken.

4.2.6 Aesthetics

There would be negligible short-term and long-term impacts to local aesthetics resulting from the Proposed Action. Two structures would be erected in Otero County where no structures currently exist. The stations in Dona Ana county and Hudspeth County would be renovated. However, the locations are remote and not within recreational or inhabited areas. Operation of the proposed facilities would not create significant increases in noise levels. The overall effect to the aesthetics of the general areas would be insignificant.

4.2.7 Human Health and Safety

The Proposed Action would have negligible short-term human health and safety impacts during construction or renovation. Impacts would be limited to those encountered during normal construction activities. An approved Health and Safety Plan (HASP) would be developed prior to initiating construction activities. There would be negligible to moderate beneficial long-term, post-construction health and safety impacts for attending INS personnel. The improvements in lighting will increase personal safety for INS personnel and the overhanging canopies will provide relief from sun exposure effects. Noise generated during construction would not exceed noise levels common with ordinary construction equipment. Also, elevated noise levels would exist only during construction activities. Medical services, fire protection, and police service would not be changed from the current standards for any of the proposed sites in New Mexico or Texas. The proposed activities are not anticipated to create a burden to existing medical facilities.

4.2.8 Social and Economic Effects

The proposed construction activities would benefit local economies by creating a demand for goods and services. The Proposed Action sites are generally remote and the work force is small, not expected to exceed 20 people at any one time. The quartering of work force personnel would provide additional income to local motels in Las Cruces and Alamogordo, New Mexico and El Paso, Texas. Local purchases of food, gasoline, hardware, building materials,

and services would provide a temporary increase in income for local businesses. No temporary or permanent negative socioeconomic effect would result from the proposed activities. Since the Proposed Action involves only low-level construction and the renovation of existing facilities, no disproportionately high or adverse impacts on minority and low-income populations is expected. Under the definition of Executive Order (EO) 12898, there would be no adverse environmental justice impacts under the Proposed Action.

4.2.9 Environmental Justice

No adverse impacts on minority and low-income populations are expected. Under the definition of Executive Order 12898, there would be no adverse environmental justice impacts by the proposed action.

4.2.9 Land Use

Little impact would occur to land use as a result of the proposed action. The majority of the Proposed Action would take place within the existing highway ROW and would remove a negligible amount of land from its current use. No mitigation measures would be required.

4.3 RECOMMENDED MITIGATION MEASURES

The following are additional measures that would be performed to mitigate possible additional impacts:

- dust suppression methods to minimize airborne particulate matter, and all construction equipment and vehicles would be kept in good operating condition to minimize exhaust emissions;
- best management practices during construction or installation to minimize or prevent erosion and soil loss;
- post-construction vegetation rehabilitation (seeding) with native grasses and/or plants to minimize wind and wate
- a contingency plan for dealing with cultural resources that might be disturbed during construction activities.

If any cultural resources are encountered during construction, all activities that could further disturb the cultural resource would be suspended until a qualified archeologist could determine appropriate actions.

4.4 SHORT-TERM USE OF THE ENVIRONMENT VERSUS LONG-TERM PRODUCTIVITY

Irreversible and irretrievable impacts would include: soil lost through wind and water erosion; loss of productivity from lands devoted to project activities during the time those lands are out of production; inadvertent or accidental destruction of cultural resources during construction; and permanent loss of animal habitat due to earthmoving activities. The above impacts either would not occur or would not be significant if they did.

4.5 CUMULATIVE IMPACTS

The CEQ defines cumulative impact as the incremental impact of multiple present and future actions with individually minor but collectively significant effects. Cumulative impacts can be concisely defined as the total effect of multiple land uses and developments, including their interrelationships, on the environment.

A Programmatic EIS was prepared in 1993 to address INS and U.S. JTF-6 activities which would allow JTF-6 to

continue its program of providing operational, engineering, and general support to law enforcement agencies at the same or similar levels and intensities that JTF-6 has been providing during previous years. Cumulative impacts of such projects are discussed in that document (U.S. Army Corps of Engineers 1994). The Proposed Action is similar to those analyzed in the above EIS. As indicated in this study the major beneficial effect is the long-term reduction of flow of illegal drugs into the U.S. and the concomitant effects upon the Nation's health and economy, drug-related crimes, community cohesion, property values, and traditional family values. Secondary benefits of the program include a reduction in illegal immigration.

There would be little overall cumulative impact to the respective Regions of Influence (ROI) for the Proposed Action under this EA, as the proposed checkpoint stations are the only projects of this type planned in their respective areas. Other construction activities in the areas appear to be limited to private and individual projects. Neither the Proposed Action nor the No-Action Alternative would contribute anything but negligible additions to cumulative impacts from past, present, and future developments in the respective ROIs.

4.6 CONCLUSIONS

The No-Action Alternative would have no effect on the human environment; however, under the No-Action Alternative construction of new checkpoint stations, or renovation of existing stations, would not take place. The continued degradation of facilities and services would result in a decline in control of illegal immigrants and drugs and a concomitant decrease in national security. The Proposed Action would not result in significant direct, indirect, short-term, long-term, or cumulative effects, and, therefore, is recommended. An Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) will not be generated for the Proposed Action.

5.0 PREPARATION AND COORDINATION

5.1 LIST OF PREPARERS

Agency	Individuals	Title
Albuquerque District, USACE	Edward L. Paulsgrove	Geologist
Albuquerque District, USACE	Frank Graves	Biologist
Albuquerque District, USACE	Julie A. Hall	Ecologist
Albuquerque District, USACE	John D. Schelberg	Archeologist

5.2 AGENCIES AND PERSONS FORMALLY OR INFORMALLY CONSULTED

Agency	Individuals	Title
State of New Mexico Department of Game and Fish	Andrew Sandoval	Chief, Conservation Services Division
New Mexico Forestry and Resources Conservation Division	Robert Sivinski	Chief, Energy, Minerals, and Natural Resources Department
Texas Parks and Wildlife Department Wildlife Habitat Assessment Division	Shannon Breslin	Environmental Review Coordinator

USFWS Austin Ecologic Services Field Office	David Frederick	Field Supervisor
USFWS New Mexico Ecological Services Field Office	Brian Hanson	Acting State Supervisor

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CORPS OF ENGINEERS RESPONSE TO U.S. FISH AND WILDLIFE'S COMMENTS TO THE DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT OF PROPOSED CONSTRUCTION/RENOVATION OF BORDER PATROL CHECKPOINTS NEAR LAS CRUCES AND ALAMOGORDO, NEW MEXICO AND EL PASO, TEXAS.

Section 4.3; Recommended Mitigation Measures. Include qualifier, "...only native grasses and/or plants".

Concur. Post-construction vegetation rehabilitation is specified as only native grasses and/or plants.

Other Comments. Specify, "...any ground disturbance activities occur outside the general migratory bird nesting season which extends from March through August.".

Disagree. While the Corps agrees construction activities in undisturbed, remote locations could have adverse effects on migratory nesting species, all proposed construction sites are in heavily disturbed land and within highway right-of-ways. It is believed species of concern would already find the locations undesirable and would avoid the areas. Thus, the proposed construction would have insignificant impact to migratory nesting activities.

NO ADDITIONAL COMMENTS WERE SUBMITTED.

DRAFT

APPENDIX A

Consultation Letters, Cultural Resources

APPENDIX B

Consultation Letters, Other Agencies

DRAFT

APPENDIX C

PUBLIC NOTICE

AND

DISTRIBUTION LIST

DISTRIBUTION LIST

DRAFT

Texas Parks and Wildlife Department
Endangered Resources Branch
ATTN: Environmental Review Coordinator
4200 Smith School Road
Austin, Texas 78744

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
Ecological Services Field Office
ATTN: Supervisor
10711 Burnett Road, Suite 200
Hartland Bank Building
Austin, Texas 78758

New Mexico Department
of Game and Fish
ATTN: Chief, Conservation Services Division
P.O. Box 25112
Santa Fe, New Mexico 87504

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
New Mexico Ecological Services State Office
ATTN: State Supervisor
2105 Osuna Road, Northeast
Albuquerque, New Mexico 87113

White Sands Nat'l Monument
ATTN: Superintendent
P.O. Box 1086
Holloman AFB, NM 88330

HQ, U.S. Army Defense Artillery Center and Fort Bliss
ATTN: Directorate of Environment
Bldg 1
Ft Bliss, TX 79916

Bureau of Land Management
ATTN: Environmental Coordinator
1800 Marquess St.
Las Cruces, NM 88005

New Mexico State Highway and Transportation Dept.
ATTN: Environmental Section

P.O. Box 1149, Rm. 213
Santa Fe, NM 87504

DRAFT

New Mexico Forestry and Resources Conservation Division
ATTN: Energy, Minerals, and Natural Resources Department
P.O. Box 1948
Santa Fe, NM 87113

DRAFT

DRAFT

APPENDIX A

Consultation Letters, Cultural Resources

DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
FORT WORTH DISTRICT, CORPS OF ENGINEERS
P. O. BOX 17300
FORT WORTH, TEXAS 76102-0300

REPLY TO
ATTENTION OF:

RECEIVED
JUN 12 1995
TEXAS HISTORICAL COMMISSION

July 6, 1995

Planning Division

SUBJECT: Cultural Resources Investigations at Two Sites Identified by the U.S. Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) for Potential Construction Impacts

Mr. James Bruseth, Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer
Texas Historical Commission
P.O. Box 12276, Capitol Station
Austin, Texas 78711-2276

Dear Mr. Bruseth:

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Fort Worth District, has conducted cultural resources investigations at two sites identified by the U.S. Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) for potential construction impacts. These cultural investigations were in support of Environmental Assessment (EA) documents being prepared for the INS. The Texas Archeological Research Laboratory was contacted prior to the field investigation of the two proposed sites and no archeological sites are reported to be located in the immediate vicinity of either site. Both sites were examined on May 30, 1995, by an archeologist from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Fort Worth District.

The first site will be impacted by an approximately 1.1 mile border fence construction. The right-of-way (ROW) for the fence is located directly along the south edge of Highway 80 (Paisano Highway) which runs adjacent to the Rio Grande in El Paso, Texas (Attachment 1). The only structures present near the border fence ROW are metal shade shelters and a pumping station, neither of which will be impacted. The general area is highly industrialized and the area proposed for the construction of the fence has been built up with caliche outfilling over the original floodplain to a depth of approximately five to eight feet (for the Highway 80 construction). Vegetation in the right-of-way was essentially nonexistent. Disturbances in the form of buried utility lines and outfall drains are found all along the right-of-way. Field methodology at the site consisted of a pedestrian survey along the area of proposed impact. No artifactural material was noted during the investigation of this site.

The second site is a replacement Border Patrol roadside checkpoint station located in Hudspeth County along the south side of U.S. Highway 62/180 approximately 28 miles east of El Paso, Texas (Attachment 2). The proposed new structure will be set back further from the road so that an access road and parking pad may be constructed. The new area will occupy approximately 1.4 acres. The area proposed for construction slopes slightly to the south and will be filled to create a level site. The principal vegetation consisted of saltbush, yucca, and varieties of cacti. Field methodology at the site consisted of an intensive pedestrian survey at ten meter intervals in the area of proposed impact. No artifactural material was noted during the investigation of this site.

In consideration of the above, we have applied the criteria of effect to the two parcels and have determined that the planned actions will have No Effect on any potential historic property. We appreciate your comments on this determination. For your convenience, if you concur with our determination, you may sign the signature block below and return a copy of this letter to our office. If we do not hear from you within 15 days of receipt of this letter we will assume concurrence and proceed accordingly.

If you have any questions, please contact Mr. Stephen P. Austin at 817-885-6385 or Mr. Eric Verwers at 817-334-2370.

Sincerely,

William Fickel, Jr.
Chief, Planning Division

Attachments(2)

Concurrence:

Texas State Historic Preservation Officer

Date 8/2/95

DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
FORT WORTH DISTRICT, CORPS OF ENGINEERS
P. O. BOX 17300
FORT WORTH, TEXAS 76102-0300

MAR 17 1997

REPLY TO
ATTENTION OF:

52672

March 11, 1997

SUBJECT: Cultural Resources Assessment of Two Existing U.S. Immigration and Naturalization Service Border Patrol Stations Near Las Cruces, New Mexico

Lynn Sebastian, State Archeologist
Office of Cultural Affairs and Historic Preservation
228 East Palace Avenue
Santa Fe, New Mexico 87503

Dear Ms. Sebastian:

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Fort Worth District, has conducted cultural resources investigations at two existing Border Patrol stations located in Dona Ana County near Las Cruces, New Mexico. The investigations were undertaken by TRC Mariah Associates, Inc., of Albuquerque, New Mexico, for the Fort Worth District in support of Environmental Assessments (EAs) documents being prepared for the U.S. Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS). The two sites have previously existing temporary structures which will be replaced by modular units. A letter report of the investigation is enclosed which describes previous disturbances to the sites and reports no historic properties found. We concur with this report as it is written.

In consideration of the letter report from TRC Mariah and Associates, Inc., we have made the determination of no properties (36 CFR § 800.4(d)) within the identified parcels. We appreciate your comments on this determination. For your convenience, if you concur with our determination, you may sign the signature block and return a copy of this letter to our office. If we do not hear from you within five (5) days of receipt of this letter we will assume concurrence and proceed accordingly, subject to the provisions for addressing the discovery of unidentified historic properties at 36 CFR § 800.11.

If you have any questions, please contact Mr. Stephen P. Austin at (817) 978-6385 or Mr. Eric Verwers at (817) 978-2370.

Sincerely,

Michael G. Ensch
Chief, Environmental Division

Enclosure

Concurrence:

New Mexico State Historic Preservation Officer Date 3-18-97

DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
ALBUQUERQUE DISTRICT, CORPS OF ENGINEERS
4101 JEFFERSON PLAZA, NE
ALBUQUERQUE, NEW MEXICO 87109-3435
FAX (505) 342-3199

Reply to Attention of:

ET

August 6, 1998

55975

RECEIVED AUG 11 1998

Engineering and Technical
Services Division
Planning and Environment
Branch

Lynne Sebastian, Ph.D.
State Historic Preservation
Officer
State Historic Preservation
Bureau
228 East Palace Avenue, Room 101
Santa Fe, New Mexico 87503

Dear Dr. Sebastian:

In accordance with 36 CFR 800.5 and the Substitution Agreement between your office and the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation under 36 CAR 800.7 the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Albuquerque District(AD), is providing information concerning the survey of two areas to be impacted by construction and is seeking your concurrence in our determination of No Effect on cultural resources. The two surveys were undertaken by an archaeologist from the AD in conjunction with planning for the construction of new highway checkpoints for the Immigration and Naturalization Service, Border Patrol (INS). Previous cultural resources surveys occurred at both locations. The resurveys were requested by INS personnel due to the time elapsed since the last survey and a change in location of one check point. Other than modern road-side debris no cultural resources were found; therefore, the construction of the two INS check points will have no effect on cultural resources.

The construction consists of entrance and exit ramps totalling approximately one-quarter of a mile (402 m) in length with a width of five meters, an administrative/interview building, garage, covered inspection area, vehicle inspection pit, and parking areas. The total ground disturbance for all facilities is approximately two acres. Approximately 9.2 acres (3.7 hectares) were surveyed at the first location, near White Sands National Monument; and approximately 7.5 acres (3 hectares) were surveyed at the second project area, 23 miles south of Alamogordo.

The first location, near the entrance to White Sands National Monument, is approximately 12 miles southwest of Alamogordo, New Mexico (see Table 1 for site specific details). The current

location is changed from that outlined in the June 6, 1995, letter to your office from Ft. Worth District, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. While the check point is still immediately adjacent to U.S. Highway 70/82, it has been moved closer to the existing INS check point by approximately 305 m (3000 feet) to the northeast. However, a portion of the current location was surveyed in 1993 by personnel from Human Systems Research (HSR) in conjunction with the Joint Task Force-Six Drag Roads Project (Hart 1994). HSR surveyed a 30 m (98 foot) right-of-way. The relocation of the check point decreases the distance the utilities have to be extended. Personnel from White Sands National Monument requested underground utilities, and the drag roads corridor will be utilized. No cultural resources were discovered in the new location during the survey on July 15, 1998.

The second area, approximately 23 miles south of Alamogordo, is between U.S. Highway 54 on the west and the Southern Pacific Railroad tracks on the east (Table 2). It was surveyed by an archaeologist from the Ft. Worth District in June or July, 1995, and is also outlined in the 1995 letter from Ft. Worth District. Site-specific conditions are similar to those outlined in the Ft. Worth letter. Refinement of the project description and associated construction decreased the size of the surveyed area from 11.5 acres (1995) to 7.5 acres. The latter parcel is completely within the 11.5 acres previously surveyed, but it was resurveyed by an archaeologist from the Albuquerque District on July 14, 1998. No cultural resources were discovered.

As discussed this project will have no effect as no cultural resources were discovered. In the unlikely event that previously unrecorded cultural material is exposed during the construction, all work will cease in the vicinity of the discovery and archaeologists from this office will investigate. No work will proceed until consultations have been completed between our respective agencies.

Thank you for your attention to this matter. If you have questions or require additional information please contact Dr. John D. Schelberg at (505) 342-3359.

Sincerely,

William R. DeRogar

for Mark C. Harberg
Chief, Environmental Section

Enclosures

Copy furnished (w/o enclosures)

Mr. Don Klima, Director
Advisory Council on Historic Preservation
Office of Planning and Review
12136 W Bayaud Ave. #330
Lakewood, CO 80228-2115

I Concur for Lynne Sebastian, Ph.D. 9-16-98
New Mexico State Historic Preservation Officer

References Cited: *Archaeological Survey for U.S. Border Patrol Drag Roads near Orogrande and Alamogordo, Otero County, New Mexico.* By Jeanie Hart; 1994; White Sands Missile Range Report No.: 94-13.

Letter from William Fickel, Jr. U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Ft. Worth District; July 6, 1995; NM HPD No. 47756.

Table 1: Resurvey Location 1; U.S. Highway 70/82, 12 miles southwest of Alamogordo, New Mexico (Figure 1).

Location: Garton Lake, NM 7.5' USGS Quadrangle 1982; Township 18S; Range 7E, Section 12; NW1/4, NW1/4, NE1/4; Zone 13; 389530 E; 3626110 N (center point)

Elevation: 3990 feet above sea level

Survey dimensions: 465m (1526 feet)(northeast to southwest)
80m (263 feet)(northwest to southeast)

Area surveyed: 37,200 square meters (3.7 hectares)(401,338 square feet)(9.2 acres)

Construction area: Total ground disturbance approximately 2 acres.

Vegetation: Fourwing saltbush (*Atriplex canescens*); *Opuntia*; *Cholla*; salt cedar (*Tamarix*); grama species. Vegetation was sparse and ground visibility was greater than 90 percent.

Methodology: Parallel transects with 5 m spacing

Results: With the exception of modern highway debris, no prehistoric or historic cultural remains (sites or isolated artifacts) were discovered. There was very little highway debris, perhaps due to the proximity of the entrance to White Sands National Monument. A bladed dirt road 5 m wide parallels U.S. Highway 70/82 (see Drag Road reference above).

Table 2: Resurvey Location 2; U.S. Highway 70, 23 miles south of Alamogordo, New Mexico (Figure 2).

Location: Tres Hermanos SE, NM 7.5' USGS Quadrangle 1984
Township 20S; Range 9E, Section 33; SE1/4, NE1/4, NW1/4
Zone 13; 403550 E; 3599400 N (center point)

Elevation: 4030 feet above sea level

Survey dimensions: 402m (1320 feet)(northeast to southwest)
76m (250 feet)(northwest to southeast)

Area surveyed: 30,552 square meters (3 hectares)(330,000 square feet)(7.5 acres)

Construction area: Total ground disturbance approximately 2 acres.

Vegetation: Fourwing saltbush *(Atriplex canescens)*; creosotebush (*Larrea tridentata*), ephedra *(Ephedra)*; *Yucca*; *Opuntia*; *Cholla*; broom snakeweed (*Gutierrezia sarothrae)*; mesquite (*Prosopis glandulosa*); broom snakeweed (*Gutierrezia sarothrae*); grama grass species. Vegetation was sparse except in occasional small dense clusters of grass. Visibility varied from 75 to over 90 percent.

Methodology: Parallel transects with 5 to 10 m spacing depending on visibility; blowouts inspected individually

Results: With the exception of modern highway and railroad debris (e.g., spikes and ties), no prehistoric or historic cultural remains (sites or isolated artifacts were discovered. The amount of debris is many times greater than that observed at Location 1 adjacent to White Sands National Monument. The swale of an old road parallels U.S. Highway 54. The remains of an old fence with occasional railroad ties used as posts parallels the railroad track (marking the railroad right-of-way?).

Intensive Archaeological Survey for the Immigration and Naturalization Service United States Border Patrol Proposed Highway 62/180 Checkpoint, Hudspeth County, Texas

Prepared by:

John D. Schelberg, Ph.D.
Archaeologist
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
Albuquerque District

7 February 2001

Report COE-01-01

ABSTRACT

On 31 January 2001, an archaeologist from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Albuquerque District, conducted a cultural resources inventory survey of approximately 22.2 acres (9 ha) in anticipation of the construction of a new highway checkpoint station for the Immigration and Naturalization Service, U.S. Border Patrol. Construction of the Ysletta Checkpoint on U.S. Highway 62/180 in Hudspeth County approximately 33 miles (53.2 km) east of El Paso, Texas, will impact approximately three acres. With the exception of modern debris, no cultural resources of any category or temporal period were discovered; there are neither archaeological sites nor isolated artifacts. The Albuquerque District is of the opinion that the proposed project will have no effect on the cultural resources of Texas.

INTRODUCTION

On 31 January 2001, an archaeologist from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Albuquerque District, (COE) conducted a cultural resources inventory survey of 22.2 acres (9 ha) in anticipation of the construction of a new highway checkpoint station for the Immigration and Naturalization Service, Border Patrol (INS). In keeping with the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, the survey was undertaken in anticipation of construction. This new construction is required to replace the existing, but inadequate, highway checkpoint station that consists of a trailer within the highway right-of-way. The existing facility is dangerously close to the east-bound lane of traffic. The new location will impact approximately three acres and is approximately three miles to the east of the existing checkpoint station.

Project Description

The project location and the area surveyed are noted on the enclosed copy of the Phone Line Canyon, Texas, United States Geological Survey map, 1979. It is on the south side of U.S. Highway 62/180 at approximately 5,120 feet above sea level (Figure 1). The location is along the highway frontage road of the Spike B Ranch. The UTM coordinates are provided in Table 1.

The building and parking lot will cover an area approximately 260 by 280 feet; (79.2 by 85.3 m) the entrance and exit roads will each be about 550 feet long (176.6 m) and 40 feet (12.2 m) wide (Figure 2). The aggregate disturbance will be three acres (1.2 ha) however, approximately 22.2 (9 ha) acres were surveyed in order to provide a buffer zone, equipment staging area, and in anticipation of wandering machinery. A highway right-of-way fence is 12 meters south of the Highway 62/180 pavement. Overgrazed ranch land lies to the south of the fence. The western portion of the surveyed plot is crossed from north to south by an overhead electric line. A recently installed fiber-optic cable is located on the north side of the right-of-way fence, and an older AT&T Transcontinental fiber-optic line forms the south boundary of the surveyed plot. An old two-track dirt road crosses the western portion of the plot from northwest to southeast. It has not been used for years and is represented by an overgrown, incised, swale.

Table 1: Project Location

Phone Line Canyon U.S.G.S. Quad 1979
Elevation: 5120 feet above sea level

UTM locations of the four corners of the surveyed area:

NW Corner:	3521390 mN 412900 mE
NE Corner:	3521380 mN 413485 mE
SW Corner:	3521260 mN 412900 mE
SE Corner:	3521250 mN 413485 mE

ENVIRONMENT

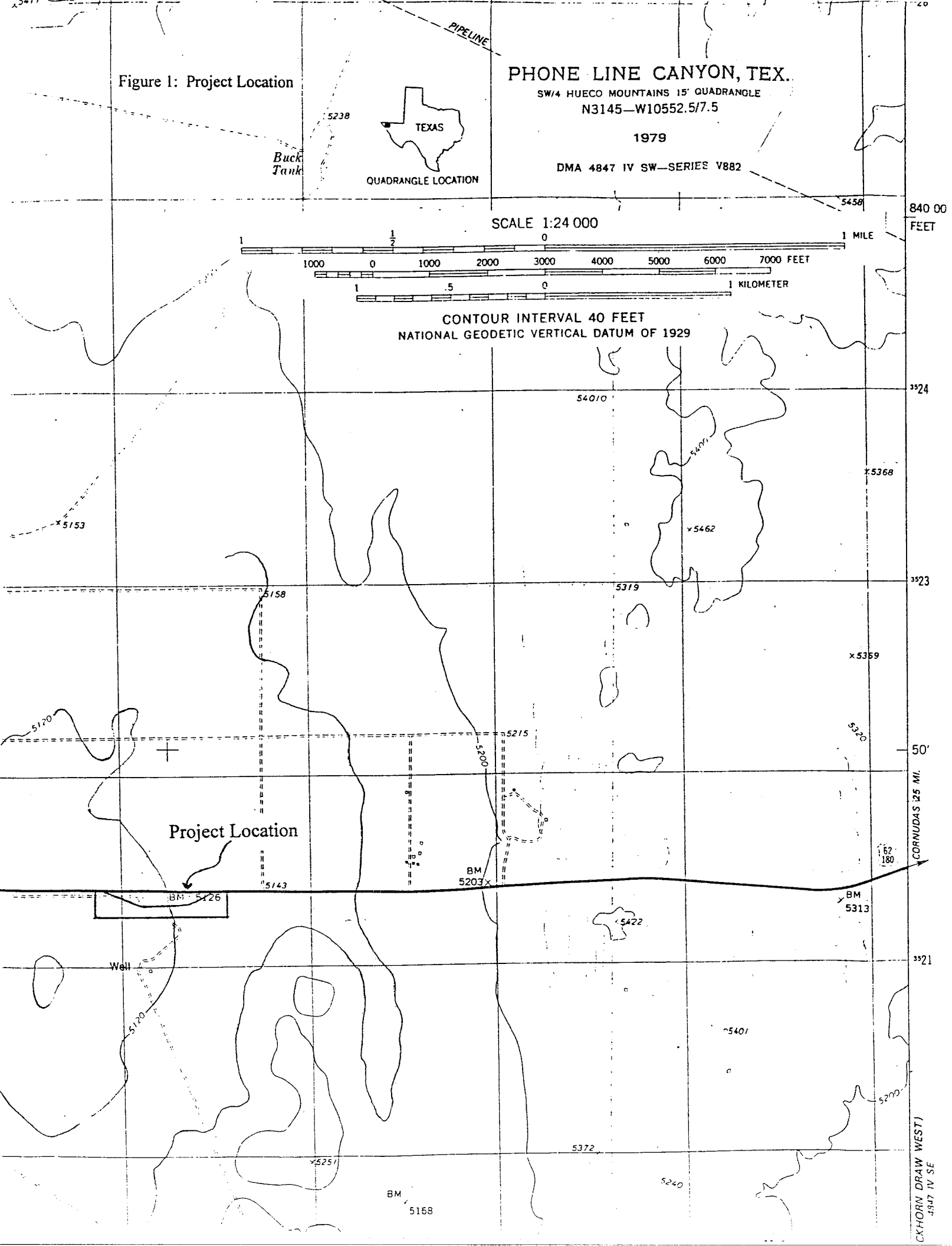
Geology

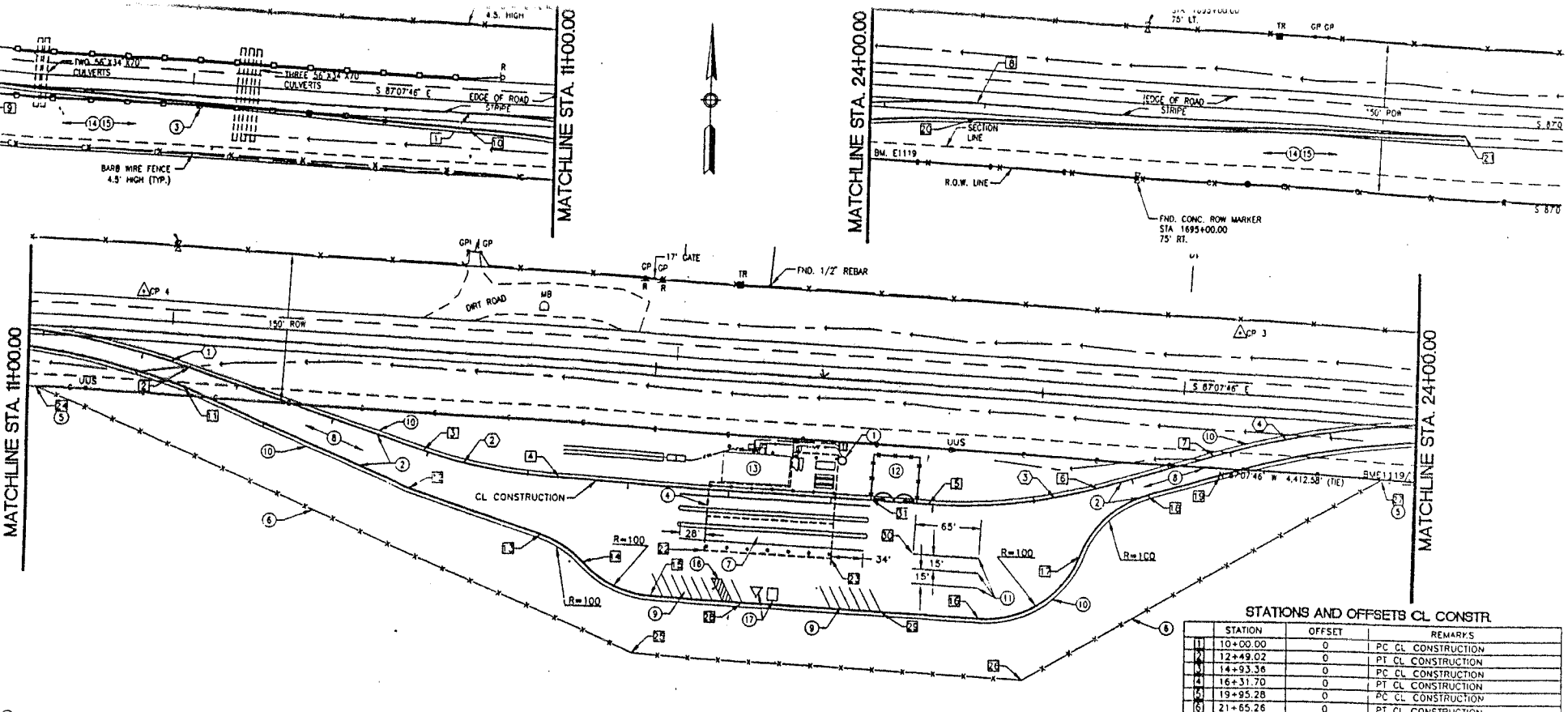
The proposed project is located within the northern limits of the Chihuahuan Desert which is characterized by a semiarid, continental climate of low humidity, hot summers, mild winters, and short fall and spring seasons. It is situated at the eastern edge of the Hueco Bolson in the Basin and Range Province; the eastern flanks of the Hueco Mountains are about three miles to the west. The Bolson is filled with sediment from ancient river and lake deposits varying in thickness from less than 30 meters to over 2,700 meters. The soils, primarily Aridisols as represented by the Augustin Association and the Lozier Soil Series, are consistent with those derived from the sedimentary limestone rock alluvium of the nearby Hueco Mountains. Both the Augustin and Lozier are well drained and have rapid runoff. No permanent surface water exists in the area, and wells must be drilled in excess of 300 feet (91.4 m) in order to produce. The Texas Water Development Board (Brune 1975) lists no known major or historical springs near this local.

Vegetation

The Chihuahuan shrub and grassland community includes cacti, creosote, mesquite, and a variety of grasses. Black grama grass (*Bouteloua eriopoda*) is the dominant vegetation type within the project location. Scattered shrubs occur but no trees are present. Other grasses include vine mesquite (*Panicum obtusem*), burrograss (*Scleropogon brevifolius*), ring muhly (*Muhlenbergia torreyi*), and threeawn (*Aristida sp*). The dominant shrub is soapweed (*Yucca elata*). Other shrubs include tree cholla (*Opuntia imbricata*), broom snakeweed (*Gutierrezia sarothrae*), javelinabush (*Condalia*

Figure 1: Project Location





LEGEND FOR C33,C34,C35

ITEM DESCRIPTION	EXISTING	NEW
SIGN		
FENCE	-X—X-	
CONTROL POINT	•CP	
PARKING STRIPES		
ROAD		
BUILDING		
FND. HIGHWAY R.O.W. MARKER		
NEW CONCRETE PAVEMENT		
DOUBLE CLEANOUT		CO
SPOT ELEVATIONS		o

ITEM DESCRIPTION	EXISTING	NEW
SANITARY SEWER		—SS—
WATER		—W—
CONTOURS	—4019—	—4019—
CULVERT PIPE		
NEW ASPHALT PAVEMENT		

TORAGE RESERVOIR SEE (4/C33.18)
ENT STRIPE
SET 250 L.F. EXISTING GUARD
E (1/C33.A4)
HAIN LINK FENCE TO EXISTING
CE.
ENCE SEE (1/C33.19)
NT CONCRETE SEE (1/C33.17) (1/C33.18)
S7 & C16
NT SEE (1/C33.15)
CES WITH BUMPERS AND STRIPING SEE (1/C33.17)
HOULDER (4/C33.16)

11. SEMI-TRUCK PARKING STRIPING.
12. 6' CHAIN LINK CAR STORAGE W/DOUBLE GATE SEE (1/C33.19)
13. NEW BUILDING & ADJACENT SITE ITEMS SEE (1/C33.A4)
14. SEE SHEETS C20 – C24 FOR CONSTRUCTION SIGNING DETAILS.
15. SEE SHEETS C25 – C28 FOR PERMANENT SIGNING DETAILS
16. SEE SHEET C17 FOR VAN HANDICAP PARKING DETAIL (6/C33.17)
17. RADIO TOWER AND SHED INSTALLED BY U.S. BORDER PATROL

CONTROL POINT TABLE

PT #	NORTH	EAST	ELEV.	DESCRIPTION
CP3	562253.71	10674490.04	5126.77	
CP4	563336.03	10674468.89	5110.98	
BME 1119	563506.66	10674324.75	5128.94	

CURVE DATA

	P.I. STATION	DELTA	TANGENT	LENGTH	RADIUS
1	11+25.31	15°51'12" RT	125.31'	249.02'	900.00'
2	15+62.98	15°51'12" LT	69.62'	138.35'	500.00'
3	[illegible]+44.10	19°28'44" LT	85.82'	169.98'	500.00'
4	24+39.30	19°28'44" RT	154.48	305.97'	900.00'

STATIONS AND OFFSETS CL CONSTR.

	STATION	OFFSET	REMARKS
1	10+00.00	0	PC CL CONSTRUCTION
2	12+49.02	0	PT CL CONSTRUCTION
3	14+93.36	0	PC CL CONSTRUCTION
4	16+31.70	0	PT CL CONSTRUCTION
5	19+95.28	0	PC CL CONSTRUCTION
6	21+65.26	0	PT CL CONSTRUCTION
7	22+84.82	0	PC CL CONSTRUCTION
8	25+90.79	0	PT CL CONSTRUCTION
9	1677+00.82	12.00' RT	BEGIN TAPER
10	10+00.00	16.00' RT	LANE STRIPE
11	12+49.02	20.00' RT	LANE STRIPE
12	14+93.36	40.00' RT	ANGLE POINT
13	16+18.78	57.45' RT	PC
14	16+59.65	81.73' RT	PRC
15	17+29.33	110.00' RT	PT
16	20+42.66	112.74' RT	PC
17	21+33.75	61.18' RT	PRC
18	22+09.96	20.00' RT	PT
19	22+84.82	20.00' RT	PC
20	25+90.79	20.00' RT	PT
21	1702+25.12	12.00' RT	END TAPER
22	17+79.33	60.00' RT	CORNER OF CANOPY
23	19+03.27	60.00' RT	CORNER OF CANOPY
24	10+97.49	57.43' RT	FENCE CORNER
25	17+30.53	167.52' RT	FENCE CORNER
26	20+84.27	177.68' RT	FENCE CORNER
27	24+62.89	54.60' RT	FENCE CORNER
28	18+21.75	109.74' RT	PARKING SPACE CORNER
29	19+56.74	110.04' RT	PARKING SPACE CORNER
30	19+84.54	49.86' RT	SEMI-TRUCK PARKING LANE
31	19+38.85	1.42' LT	CAR STORAGE ENCLOSURE

1" = 50' 50' 0 50' 100' SCALE IN FEET

IMMIGRATION AND NATURALIZATION SERVICE TEXAS, NEW MEXICO
6 TRAFFIC CHECKPOINT FACILITIES
US 62/180
SITE PLAN

U.S. ARMY ENGINEER DISTRICT
CORPS OF ENGINEERS
ALBUQUERQUE, NEW MEXICO

DESIGN BY: R.L. BELL
DRAWN BY: J. MOONT
REVIEWED BY: D. LARROW

SHEET NO. C33 OF 30

Figure 2: Checkpoint Configuration

ericoides), and prickly pear (*Opuntia sp.*). Herbaceous vegetation includes Russian thistle (*Salsola kali*), thistle (*Circium sp.*), and horse nettle (*Solanum carolinense*).

Vertebrates

With the exception of a single desert cottontail rabbit (*Sylvilagus nuttali*) and a few sparrow-sized birds, no living creatures were observed during the survey; however, signs of cow, horse, mule deer (*Odocoileus hemionus*), and coyote (*Canis latrans*) were seen. Other species potentially occurring in the area include javelina (*Tayassu tajacu*), black-tailed jackrabbit (*Lepus californicus*), and kangaroo rat (*Dipodomys spp.*). The proximity of the location to the Hueco Mountains would have provided easy access to a diverse range of wildlife in the past.

METHODOLOGY

The state survey files at The Texas Archeological Research Laboratory were consulted, and neither archaeological nor historical sites are recorded within the project location (Hughes 2001). The survey was conducted by walking transects parallel to Highway 62/180. One transect was placed between the south edge of the pavement and the right-of-way fence. All other transects were south of the fence and were separated by approximately eight meters. Visibility was excellent and varied from 100 percent across the western one-fifth of the parcel to no less than 60 percent in a few three to seven meter diameter locations of denser grass. Overall the visibility was at least 85 percent. To the south, the survey terminated at the dirt road adjacent to the AT&T Transcontinental fiber-optic line; the line was marked by frequently occurring metal signs. The survey transects were extended 50 meters beyond the east and west edges. The east was marked by a COE surveyor's lath and the west by the end of a highway guardrail.

BRIEF CULTURAL OVERVIEW

Prior to the survey, it was anticipated that cultural resources from any temporal period, including the historic, could be present. The COE has sponsored archaeological excavations and surveys in west Texas for over 20 years. The excavations occurred in El Paso and included testing at a stratified, burned, Archaic pit house site (O'Laughlin 1980) and excavations of ephemeral pit houses at two Archaic-period camp sites (Carmichael 1985). More recent surveys by the author included work for the INS in El Paso, and two each in Presidio and Alpine (1995, 1998, 2000a, 2000b). All of the reports were coordinated through the Texas State Historic Preservation Officer.

The Trans-Pecos Region has been variously divided into archaeological sub-regions by Mallouf and Hicks. The latter (1989) divided Mallouf's eastern unit into an Interior and a Plains sub-region; she referred to the area around El Paso as the Puebloan. They both recognized the Paleo-Indian and Archaic Periods and summarized the dates known for the major projectile point styles. The chronological framework is a broad approximation as there are relatively few absolute dates from the area. Many of the locations are reused through time resulting in spatially extensive sites but with little

stratigraphic depth or dates associated with diagnostic artifacts. In the Trans-Pecos region, there is a larger number of later Paleo-Indian Period sites such as Folsom than there are earlier sites. Later Paleo sites are frequently found around the margins of playa lakes and creek terraces. The smaller projectile point sizes, increases in the proportion of ground stone, and more intensely reused sites with ring middens and pit ovens suggest more reliance on such plants as prickly pear, sotol, and lechuguilla during the Archaic.

Cultigens such as maize, chili, and cotton appear to have been introduced as early as A.D. 200-500. The late Prehistoric is defined by the presence of arrow points and ceramics and, along the Rio Grande, cultigens – especially associated with the Jornada Branch of the Mogollon in the El Paso area. It has been suggested that the Jornada Mogollon were the ancestors of the Patarabueye whom the Spanish contacted in the late 16th century. The Historic Period is broken into five temporal periods including Spanish Exploration, Spanish Colonial, Mexican, Texas Republic and 19th Century American, and the American from 1900.

Sites from all temporal periods have been recorded in and around the Hueco Bolson. Given the ecological characteristics of the project area, the remains associated with rather short-term resource exploitation tools and facilities of hunting and gathering groups would be the most likely prehistoric remains to be encountered. The proximity of this location to the Hueco Mountains would have afforded a wide range of resource opportunities at differing times of the year. While ephemeral pit structures are being discovered more frequently the most commonly recorded sites are artifact scatters which include lithics with some ceramics and occasional ground stone tools; burned rock middens of varying sizes, and other resource processing facilities such as hearths and baking pits. Historic-period Indian camps and material related to Texas ranching could be expected to occur in the project location.

RESULTS OF SURVEY

Neither prehistoric nor historic cultural resources of any kind were found in the proposed project area. Even the amount of modern trash was relatively low and consisted of plastic, paper, and foam containers; several Miller's Lite beer cans, rusted cola beverage cans, and two pieces of 1.5 inch (3.8 cm) diameter, rusted, threaded pipe. There was no evidence that standing structures were ever present.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The COE is of the opinion that no historic properties will be affected by the proposed construction project due to the complete absence of cultural material; there will be no effect on the cultural resources of Texas. Immediate access to the project is provided from U.S. Highway 62/180. A sufficiently large area was surveyed to provide for all vehicle and material staging areas and also for a buffer against inadvertent damage. Nevertheless, it is possible that resources may be exposed during construction. In the unlikely event any material is exposed, all work will stop in the area of the discovery, and it will be evaluated by archaeologists from the Albuquerque District in

consultation with the Texas State Historic Preservation Office. No work will proceed until consensus has been reached concerning the eligibility of any discovery. Therefore, clearance for this construction project is recommended.

REFERENCES CITED

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O'Laughlin, Thomas

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Schelberg, John D.

1995 *A Cultural Resources Survey for the Immigration and Naturalization Service at the El Paso Service Processing Center, El Paso, Texas.* On file with the Albuquerque District and the Texas State Historic Preservation Office, Austin.

1998 *A Cultural Resources Survey for the Immigration and Naturalization Service, United States Border Patrol Proposed Housing near Presidio, Texas.* On file with the Albuquerque District and the Texas State Historic Preservation Office, Austin.

2000a *A Cultural Resources Survey for the Immigration and Naturalization Service, United States Border Patrol Additional Housing near Presidio, Texas.* On file with the Albuquerque District and the Texas State Historic Preservation Office, Austin.

2000b *A Cultural Resources Survey for the Immigration and Naturalization Service, United States Border Patrol Proposed Border Patrol Station; Alpine, Texas.* On file with the Albuquerque District and the Texas State Historic Preservation Office, Austin.

DRAFT

APPENDIX B

Consultation Letters, Other Agencies

DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
ALBUQUERQUE DISTRICT, CORPS OF ENGINEERS
4101 JEFFERSON PLAZA, NE
ALBUQUERQUE, NEW MEXICO 87109-3435
FAX (505) 342-3199

Reply to Attention of:

May 29, 1998

Engineering and Technical
Services Division
Planning and Environment
Branch

TEXAS PARKS & WILDLIFE

Currently available data and Endangered Resources Branch review of the activity as proposed indicate no anticipated negative impacts to rare species or natural communities.
Reviewed: [signature]
Date: 9-9-98

Texas Parks and Wildlife Department
Endangered Resources Branch
Attention: Ms. Shannon Breslin
Environmental Review Coordinator
4200 Smith School Road
Austin, Texas 78744

Applies to the two Texas stations to be renovated - near Comstock in Val Verde County and east of El Paso in Hudspeth County.

Dear Ms. Breslin:

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (Corps), Albuquerque District, is working with the Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS), in completing an Environmental Assessment (EA) for construction and/or renovation of one INS Border Patrol Station in Texas and five stations in New Mexico. The proposed Texas station location is indicated on site maps in the enclosed scoping document (Figures 2.2 and 2.9). The scoping document is part of a preliminary EA for which you furnished information at our contractor's request in 1997.

To update our environmental documentation, please send us a current list of animal and plant species designated as endangered or threatened by the State of Texas that may occur in the vicinity of the proposed project. Likewise, please address your specific concerns for any of these species with respect to the proposed project. Please submit the above information within 30 days from the time you receive this request.

Actual construction activities may vary from those described in the 1997 scoping document. However, all proposed actions in Texas would be conducted within the outlined property boundary. The proposed Federal Action covered by this EA would be the construction and/or renovation of the above station. The proposed site lies within Federal U.S. Highway Rights-of-Way (ROW), on property that has generally been heavily disturbed.

Also, the Corps is seeking other input for determining the scope and level of analysis for this EA. Potential difficulties confronting this action can best be identified and resolved through early exchange of information, and we encourage you to take this opportunity to identify relevant issues, concerns, and opportunities. Your comments should be specific, and along with any

supporting data or references, should be submitted no later than July 1, 1998, in order to be considered in our planning process.

Please address written comments to:

Mr. Edward L. Paulsgrove
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Albuquerque District
Environmental Section
4101 Jefferson Plaza, Northeast
Albuquerque, New Mexico 87109

If you have questions or need additional information, please contact Mr. Paulsgrove at (505) 342-3476.

Sincerely,

for Mark C. Harberg
Chief, Environmental Section

Enclosures

GOVERNOR
Gary E. Johnson

DIRECTOR AND SECRETARY
TO THE COMMISSION
Gerald A. Maracchini

STATE OF NEW MEXICO

DEPARTMENT OF GAME & FISH

Villagra Building
P.O. Box 25112
Santa Fe, NM 87504

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June 5, 1998
Tracking No. 6306

Mr. Edward L. Paulsgrove
US Army Corps of Engineers, Albuquerque Dist.
Environmental Section
4101 Jefferson Plaza, NE
Albuquerque, NM 87109

Re: Proposed Construction and/or Renovation of Five INS Border Patrol Stations

Dear Mr. Paulsgrove:

In response to your request regarding the above-cited project, we are enclosing an updated list of threatened and endangered species which occur in Dona Ana and Otero counties. Based on the information you provided and our review of the project in our letter dated 11 March 1997, there should be no significant direct impacts to wildlife or sensitive habitats.

We suggest you contact the New Mexico State Forestry Division (827-5830) regarding state-listed endangered plants and the US Fish and Wildlife Service (761-4525) regarding species of federal concern. Thank you for the opportunity to review and comment on the proposed construction and/or renovation of five INS border patrol stations.

Sincerely,

Andrew V. Sandoval, Chief
Conservation Services Division

AVS/AF/ia

xc: Steve Henry (SW Area Operations Chief, NMGF)

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

June 29, 1998

Cons. #2-22-97-I-163

Mr. Edward L. Paulsgrove
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Albuquerque District
Environmental Section
4101 Jefferson Plaza, Northeast
Albuquerque, New Mexico 87109

Dear Mr. Paulsgrove:

This is in response to your May 28, 1998, letter requesting an updated list of animal and plant species designated as endangered or threatened, proposed endangered or threatened, and candidates for listing, that may occur in the vicinity of the proposed construction sites of five Immigration Naturalization Service Border Patrol Stations in Dona Ana and Otero Counties, New Mexico.

Although a site-specific list is unavailable, we have enclosed our list of endangered, threatened, candidate species, and species of special concern that may be found in Dona Ana and Otero Counties. It is the responsibility of the Federal action agency and/or project proponent to determine whether the proposed action "may affect" or result in take of any listed or proposed species. We recommend that an adequate species-specific survey be conducted during the appropriate flowering/breeding season and within suitable habitat to address project-related impacts on these species. Although candidates are not protected under the Endangered Species Act of 1973, as amended (Act), the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service) is required to monitor their status. If any candidates or species of special concern decline precipitously, they could be listed as endangered or threatened species. Therefore, actions which may contribute to the decline of these species should be avoided. We recommend that candidates and species of special concern be included in the site surveys. If appropriate, authorization from the Service for the "take" of endangered or threatened species should be obtained prior to initiating the proposed project in order to avoid potential violations of the Act.

Regarding fish and wildlife resources, the final environmental document should assess the impact of the proposal and its alternatives on species populations and their habitats, with an emphasis on wetlands, waters of the United States, and native wildlife and plants. The environmental document should include a thorough description of the development areas that are part of the proposal. Figures accurately depicting proposed

project features in relation to natural features in the project area also should be included. The Service should be contacted for further assistance if adverse impact to these resources can not be avoided.

We suggest you contact the New Mexico Department of Game and Fish and the New Mexico Energy, Minerals, and Natural Resources Department, Forestry and Resources Conservation Division for information concerning fish, wildlife, and plants of State concern.

Thank you for your concern for endangered species and New Mexico's wildlife habitats. If we can be of further assistance, please contact Delfinia Jaramillo of my staff at the letterhead address or at 505/346-2525, extension 117.

Sincerely,

For Brian Hanson
Acting Field Supervisor

Enclosure

cc: (w/o enc)
Director, New Mexico Department of Game and Fish, Santa Fe, New Mexico
Director, New Mexico Energy, Minerals, and Natural Resources Department, Forestry and Resources Conservation Division, Santa Fe, New Mexico

Threatened, Endangered, and Candidate Species, and Species of Concern
Dona Ana and Otero Counties
June 29, 1998

Doña Ana

Big free-tailed bat, Nyctinomops macrotis (=Tadarida m., T. molossa), SC
Black-footed ferret, Mustela nigripes, E
Desert pocket gopher, Geomys bursarius arenarius, SC
Fringed myotis, Myotis thysanodes, SC
Greater western mastiff bat, Eumops perotis californicus, SC
Long-legged myotis, Myotis volans, SC
Occult little brown bat, Myotis lucifugus occultus, SC
Organ Mountains Colorado chipmunk, Eutamias quadrivittatus australis, SC
Pale Townsend's (=western) big-eared bat, Plecotus townsendii pallescens, SC
Pecos River muskrat, Ondatra zibethicus ripensis, SC
Small-footed myotis, Myotis ciliolabrum, SC
Spotted bat, Euderma maculatum, SC
White Sands woodrat, Neotoma micropus leucophaea, SC
Yuma myotis, Myotis yumanensis, SC
American peregrine falcon, Falco peregrinus anatum, E
Arctic peregrine falcon, Falco peregrinus tundrius, E (S/A)
Baird's sparrow, Ammodramus bairdii, SC
Bald eagle, Haliaeetus leucocephalus, T
Black tern, Chlidonias niger, SC
Ferruginous hawk, Buteo regalis, SC
Interior least tern, Sterna antillarum, E
Loggerhead shrike, Lanius ludovicianus, SC
Mexican spotted owl, Strix occidentalis lucida, T
Northern aplomado falcon, Falco femoralis septentrionalis, E
Southwestern willow flycatcher, Empidonax traillii extimus, E
Western burrowing owl, Athene cunicularia hypugea, SC
White-faced ibis, Plegadis chihi, SC
Whooping crane, Grus americana, XN
Texas horned lizard, Phrynosoma cornutum, SC
Anthony blister beetle, Lytta mirifica, SC
Doña Ana talussnail, Sonorella todseni, SC
Alamo beardtongue, Penstemon alamosensis, SC
Desert night-blooming cereus, Cereus greggii var. greggii, SC
Mescalero milkwort, Polygala rimulicola var. mescalerorum, SC
Nodding rock-daisy, Perityle cernua, SC
Organ Mountain evening-primrose, Oenothera organensis, SC
Organ Mountain figwort, Scrophularia laevis, SC
Sand prickly pear, Opuntia arenaria, SC
Sandhill goosefoot, Chenopodium cycloides, SC
Sneed pincushion cactus, Coryphantha sneedii var. sneedii, E
Standley whitlow-grass, Draba standleyi, SC

Otero
Arizona black-tailed prairie dog, Cynomys ludovicianus arizonensis, SC
Big free-tailed bat, Nyctinomops macrotis (=Tadarida m., T. molossa), SC
Black-footed ferret, Mustela nigripes, E
Cave myotis, Myotis velifer, SC
Desert pocket gopher, Geomys bursarius arenarius, SC
Fringed myotis, Myotis thysanodes, SC
Gray-footed chipmunk, Tamias canipes, SC
Greater western mastiff bat, Eumops perotis californicus, SC
Guadalupe southern pocket gopher, Thomomys umbrinus guadalupensis, SC
Long-legged myotis, Myotis volans, SC
New Mexican meadow jumping mouse, Zapus hudsonius luteus, SC
Occult little brown bat, Myotis lucifugus occultus, SC
Pale Townsend's (=western) big-eared bat, Plecotus townsendii pallescens, SC
Small-footed myotis, Myotis ciliolabrum, SC
White Sands woodrat, Neotoma micropus leucophaea, SC
American peregrine falcon, Falco peregrinus anatum, E
Arctic peregrine falcon, Falco peregrinus tundrius, E(S/A)
Baird's sparrow, Ammodramus bairdii, SC
Bald eagle, Haliaeetus leucocephalus, T
Black tern, Chlidonias niger, SC
Ferruginous hawk, Buteo regalis, SC
Interior least tern, Sterna antillarum athalassos, E
Loggerhead shrike, Lanius ludovicianus, SC
Mexican spotted owl, Strix occidentalis lucida, T
Northern aplomado falcon, Falco femoralis septentrionalis, E
Northern goshawk, Accipiter gentilis, SC
Southwestern willow flycatcher, Empidonax traillii extimus, E
Western burrowing owl, Athene cunicularia hypugea, SC
White-faced ibis, Plegadis chihi, SC
White Sands pupfish, Cyprinodon tularosa, SC
Sacramento mountain salamander, Aneides hardii, SC
Texas horned lizard, Phrynosoma cornutum, SC
Sacramento Mountains checkerspot butterfly, Euphydryas anicia cloudcrofti, SC
Alamo beardtongue, Penstemon alamosensis, SC
Desert night-blooming cereus, Cereus greggii var. greggii, SC
Goodding's onion, Allium gooddingii, C
Guadalupe rabbitbrush, Chrysothamnus nauseosus var. texensis, SC
Gypsum scalebroom, Lepidospartum burgessii, SC
Kuenzler hedgehog cactus, Echinocereus fendleri var. kuenzleri, E
Sacramento Mountains thistle, Cirsium vinaceum, T
Sacramento prickly poppy, Argemone pleiacantha ssp. pinnatisecta, E
Sierra Blanca cliffdaisy, Chaetopappa elegans, SC
Todsen's pennyroyal, Hedeoma todsenii, E
Villard's pincushion cactus, Escobaria villardii, SC
Wright's marsh thistle, Cirsium wrightii, SC

Index

E	=	Endangered
PE	=	Proposed Endangered
PE w/CH	=	Proposed Endangered with critical habitat
T	=	Threatened
PT	=	Proposed Threatened
PT w/CH	=	Proposed Threatened with critical habitat
PCH	=	Proposed critical habitat
C	=	Candidate Species
SC	=	Species of Concern
S/A	=	Similarity of Appearance
*	=	Introduced population
XN	=	Nonessential experimental

United States Department of the Interior

FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE
Ecological Services Field Office
10711 Burnet Road, Suite 200
Hartland Bank Bldg.
Austin, Texas 78758

JUN 30 1998

2-15-97-I-183

Edward L. Paulsgrove
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Albuquerque District
Environmental Section
4101 Jefferson Plaza, Northeast
Albuquerque, New Mexico 87109

Dear Mr. Paulsgrove:

This responds to your letter, dated May 29, 1998, requesting an updated list of federally listed threatened, endangered, and proposed species that may occur in the vicinity of the two border patrol checkpoint stations that are scheduled to undergo renovations in Val Verde and Hudspeth County, Texas. We have enclosed the information you requested. In addition, we have two concerns regarding the Environmental Assessment.

We are concerned about the statement on page 21 of the Environmental Assessment under 3.5.2 Endangered and Threatened Fauna that reads, "For the Comstock checkpoint, only the black-capped vireo *(Vireo atricapillus)* and the interior least tern *(Sterna antillarum)* are federally listed in Val Verde County." This statement is incorrect. There are a total of four federally listed endangered birds in Val Verde County. The other two are the American peregrine falcon *(Falco peregrinus anatum)* and the brown pelican *(Pelecanus occidentalis)*.

There is also a statement on page 22 that reads, "Only the peregrine falcon *(Falco peregrinus)* is federally listed in Hudspeth County." This statement is also incorrect. There are a total of three federally listed endangered birds in Hudspeth County. The other two are the northern aplomado falcon *(Falco femoralis septentrionalis)* and the southwestern willow flycatcher *(Empidonax traillii extimus)*.

We still do not anticipate any adverse impacts to federally listed species or their habitats as a result of the proposed renovations, however, we recommend that the Environmental Assessment be corrected to include all of the species mentioned above.

We appreciate your concern for endangered species. If we can be of further assistance, please contact Dianne Williams at 512/590-0057.

Sincerely,

for David C. Frederick
Supervisor

Enclosure

Enclosure

Feuerally Listed Threatened and Endangered Species

This list represents species that may be found in counties throughout the state. It is recommended that the field station responsible for a project area be contacted if additional information is needed.

DISCLAIMER

This County by County list is based on information available to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service at the time of preparation, date on page 1. This list is subject to change, without notice, as new biological information is gathered and should not be used as the sole source for identifying species that may be impacted by a project.

(Edwards Aquifer County) refers to those six counties within the Edwards Aquifer region. The Edwards Aquifer underlies portions of Kinney, Uvalde, Medina, Bexar, Hays, and Comal Counties (Texas). The Service has expressed concern that the combined current level of water withdrawal for all consumers from the Edwards Aquifer adversely affects aquifer-dependent species located at Comal and San Marcos springs during low flows. Deterioration of water quality and/or water withdrawal from the Edwards Aquifer may adversely affect five federally-listed species and three proposed to be listed species.

Migratory Species Common to many or all Counties: Species listed specifically in a county have confirmed sightings. If a species is not listed they may occur as migrants in those counties.

American peregrine falcon	(E)	*Falco peregrinus anatum*
Least tern	(E)	*Sterna antillarum*
Whooping crane	(E)	*Grus americana*
Bald eagle	(T)	*Haliaeetus leucocephalus*
Piping plover	(T)	*Charadrius melodus*
Arctic peregrine falcon	(TSA)	*Falco peregrinus tundrius*
Loggerhead shrike	(SOC)	*Lanius ludovicianus*
White-faced ibis	(SOC)	*Plegadis chihi*

Hudspeth County

American peregrine falcon	(E)	*Falco peregrinus anatum*
Northern aplomado falcon	(E)	*Falco femoralis septentrionalis*
Southwestern willow flycatcher	(E)	*Empidonax traillii extimus*
Mexican spotted owl	(T)	*Strix occidentalis lucida*
Watson's false clappia-bush	(SOC)	*Pseudoclappia watsonii*
Ferruginous hawk	(SOC)	*Buteo regalis*
Northern goshawk	(SOC)	*Accipiter gentilis*
Western burrowing owl	(SOC)	*Athene cunicularia hypugea*
White-faced ibis	(SOC)	*Plegadis chihi*
Desert pocket gopher	(SOC)	*Geomys bursarius arenarius*
Occult little brown bat	(SOC)	*Myotis lucifugus occultus*
Texas horned lizard	(SOC)	*Phrynosoma cornutum*
Barbara Ann tiger beetle	(SOC)	*Cicindela politula barbarannae*
Chisos agave	(SOC)	*Agave glomeruliflora*
Dense cory cactus	(SOC)	*Coryphantha dasyacantha dasyacantha*
Desert night-blooming cereus	(SOC)	*Cereus greggii* var. *greggii*
Gypsum scalebroom	(SOC)	*Lepidospartum burgessii*

Mat leastdaisy	(SOC)	*Chaetopappa hersheyi*
Paper-spined cactus	(SOC)	*Sclerocactus papyracanthus*
Sand prickly-pear	(SOC)	*Opuntia arenaria*
Sand sacahuista	(SOC)	*Nolina arenicola*
Smooth-stem skullcap	(SOC)	*Scutellaria laevis*
Swallow spurge	(SOC)	*Chamaesyce golondrina*
Terlingua brickelbush	(SOC)	*Brickellia brachyphylla* var. *terlinguensis*
Texas wolfberry	(SOC)	*Lycium texanum*

Val Verde County

American peregrine falcon	(E)	*Falco peregrinus anatum*
Black-capped vireo	(E)	*Vireo atricapillus*
Brown pelican	(E)	*Pelecanus occidentalis*
Least tern	(E)	*Sterna antillarum*
Texas snowbells	(E)	*Styrax texana*
Tobusch fishhook cactus	(E)	*Ancistrocactus tobuschii*
Arctic peregrine falcon	(TSA)	*Falco peregrinus tundrius*
Bald eagle	(T)	*Haliaeetus leucocephalus*
Mountain plover	(C)	*Charadrius montanus*
Devils River minnow	(C)	*Dionda diaboli*
Cave myotis (bat)	(SOC)	*Myotis velifer*
Greater western mastiff-bat	(SOC)	*Eumops perotis californicus*
Pale Townsend's big-eared bat	(SOC)	*Plecotus townsendii pallescens*
Yuma myotis (bat)	(SOC)	*Myotis yumanensis*
Audubon's oriole	(SOC)	*Icterus cucullatus audubonii*
Black tern	(SOC)	*Chlidonias niger*
Ferruginous hawk	(SOC)	*Buteo regalis*
Mexican hooded oriole	(SOC)	*Icterus cucullatus cucullatus*
Texas olive sparrow	(SOC)	*Arremonops rufivirgatus rufivirgatus*
Western burrowing owl	(SOC)	*Athene cunicularia hypugea*
White-faced ibis	(SOC)	*Plegadis chihi*
Reticulate collared lizard	(SOC)	*Crotaphytus reticulatus*
Texas horned lizard	(SOC)	*Phrynosoma cornutum*
Texas salamander	(SOC)	*Eurycea neotenes*
Blotched gambusia	(SOC)	*Gambusia senilis*
Blue sucker	(SOC)	*Cycleptus elongatus*
Chihuahua shiner	(SOC)	*Notropis chihuahua*
Conchos pupfish	(SOC)	*Cyprinodon eximius*
Proserpine shiner	(SOC)	*Cyprinella proserpina*
Rio Grande darter	(SOC)	*Etheostoma grahami*
Rio Grande shiner	(SOC)	*Notropis jemezanus*
Cliff bedstraw	(SOC)	*Galium correllii*
Correll's false dragon-head	(SOC)	*Physostegia correllii*
Perennial caltrop	(SOC)	*Kallstroemia perennans*
Rydberg's scurfpea	(SOC)	*Pediomelum humile*
Sabinal prairie-clover	(SOC)	*Dalea sabinalis*
Sonora fleabane	(SOC)	*Erigeron mimegletes*
Texas greasebush	(SOC)	*Forsellesia texensis*
Texas trumpets	(SOC)	*Acleisanthes crassifolia*
Warnock's rock-daisy	(SOC)	*Perityle warnockii*
Wright's water-willow	(SOC)	*Justicia wrightii*

Mexican fawnsfoot (mussel)	(SOC)	*Truncilla cognata*
Salina mucket (mussel)	(SOC)	*Disconaias salinasensis*
Texas hornshell (mussel)	(SOC)	*Popenaias popei*

E = Species in danger of extinction throughout all or a significant portion of its range.
T = Species which is likely to become endangered within the foreseeable future throughout all or a significant portion of its range.
C = Species for which the Service has on file enough substantial information to warrant listing as threatened or endangered.
TSA = Threatened due to similarity of appearance.
SOC = Species for which there is some information evidence of vulnerability, but not enough data to support listing at this time.

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

September 2, 1998

Cons. #2-22-97-I-163

Mr. Edward L. Paulsgrove
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
Attn: CESPA-ET-PE
4101 Jefferson Plaza, Northeast
Albuquerque, New Mexico 87109-3435

Dear Mr. Paulsgrove:

This responds to your letter dated August 13, 1998 requesting our comments on the draft environmental assessment for the renovation of existing Border Patrol facilities located along Interstate 10, Interstate 25, and Highway 185 within Doña Ana County, New Mexico. An additional site is included near El Paso for which it appears that contact has been made with our counterpart Field Office in Austin, Texas, for their review. Therefore, the following comments pertain only to the proposed activities in New Mexico.

According to the information provided, the elements of the project generally consist of the renovation or modification of existing facilities entirely within established highway right-of-ways identified as Checkpoint Stations 702, 703, and IH-10. It is our understanding that the currently proposed activities do not involve the construction of any new checkpoint stations or other ground disturbances in new areas, as previously described in an environmental assessment for the project dated February 9, 1997.

Based on the information provided, it appears that federally-listed species are not likely to be adversely affected by the activities, as proposed. In addition, it appears that impacts to other important fish and wildlife resources in these areas such as natural drainages will be minimal, provided adequate protective measures described in the document are followed. If seeding for erosion control is required, we recommend using only grasses native to the area. If project plans change, portions were not submitted, or differ from our understanding above, please notify us prior to undertaking the project. If we can be of any further assistance, please contact Chris Perez of my staff at (505) 346-2525, ext 119.

Sincerely,

Jennifer Fowler-Propst
Field Supervisor

GOVERNOR
Gary E. Johnson

DIRECTOR AND SECRETARY
TO THE COMMISSION
Gerald A. Maracchini

STATE OF NEW MEXICO

DEPARTMENT OF GAME & FISH

Villagra Building
P.O. Box 25112
Santa Fe, NM 87504

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For basic information or to order free publications: 1-800-862-9310

September 9, 1998

Mr. Edward L. Paulsgrove
U.S. Army Engineer District, Albuquerque
Attn: CESPA-ET-PE
4101 Jefferson Plaza, NE
Albuquerque, New Mexico 87109-3435

RE: Environmental Assessment for Renovation of Border Patrol Checkpoints near Las Cruces
NMGF No. 6436

Dear Mr. Paulsgrove:

The Department of Game and Fish has reviewed the above document dated 13 August 1998. From the information provided, we anticipate no significant impacts to wildlife or sensitive habitat from this renovation of checkpoints.

Thank you for the opportunity to review the document. If you have any questions, please call Bob Wilson at (505) 827-7827.

Sincerely,

Andrew V. Sandoval, Chief
Conservation Services Division

AVS/BW/af

cc: NM Ecological Services Field Supervisor (USFWS)
Amy Fisher (Assistant Chief, Conservation Services Division, NMGF)
Steve Henry (Southwest Area Operations Chief, NMGF)

DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
ALBUQUERQUE DISTRICT, CORPS OF ENGINEERS
4101 JEFFERSON PLAZA, NE
ALBUQUERQUE, NEW MEXICO 87109-3435
FAX (505) 342-3199

Reply to
Attention of:

September 28, 1998

Engineering and Technical
Services Division
Planning and Environment
Branch

Dear Sir or Madam;

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (Corps), Albuquerque District, in cooperation with the Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS), is planning the construction or renovation of six border checkpoint stations in the Las Cruces and Alamogordo, New Mexico area and one station near El Paso, Texas. Enclosed for your review is the "Draft" Environmental Assessment (DEA) entitled **Environmental Assessment for Construction and Renovation of Border Patrol Checkpoints Near Las Cruces and Alamogordo, New Mexico and El Paso, Texas.**

Due to a consolidation of construction and renovation project phases, this DEA repeats analyses presented in the 13 August 1998 DEA covering renovation of INS checkpoint stations near Las Cruces, New Mexico and El Paso, Texas. In addition, analyses of proposed construction of two INS checkpoint stations near Alamogordo, New Mexico are included for review.

The Corps is sending copies of the DEA and soliciting comments from those who have a direct interest in the project and entities who responded to the scoping letters. Each addressee may distribute copies of the DEA within their agency as they deem necessary. Please review the DEA and provide written comments to:

Mr. Edward L. Paulsgrove
U.S. Army Engineer District, Albuquerque
Attn: CESPA-ET-PE
4101 Jefferson Plaza, NE
Albuquerque, NM 87109-3435

Written comments should be submitted **no later than November 2, 1998**, so that we may make revisions, if necessary, and complete

NEPA compliance. If we do not receive comments by this date we will assume you have none. Copies of the DEA may be requested from Mr. Paulsgrove at (505) 342-3476. If you have any questions or need additional information please contact me at (505) 342-3351.

Sincerely,

Mark C. Harberg,
Chief, Environmental Section

cc w/enclosure

Texas Parks and Wildlife Department
Endangered Resources Branch
ATTN: Environmental Review Coordinator
4200 Smith School Road
Austin, Texas 78744

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
Ecological Services Field Office
ATTN: Supervisor
10711 Burnett Road, Suite 200
Hartland Bank Building
Austin, Texas 78758

New Mexico Department
of Game and Fish
ATTN: Chief, Conservation Services Division
P.O. Box 25112
Santa Fe, New Mexico 87504

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
New Mexico Ecological Services State Office
ATTN: State Supervisor
2105 Osuna Road, Northeast
Albuquerque, New Mexico 87113

White Sands Nat'l Monument
ATTN: Superintendent
P.O. Box 1086
Holloman AFB, NM 88330

HQ, U.S. Army Defense Artillery Center
And Fort Bliss
ATTN: Directorate of Environment

Bldg 1
Ft Bliss, TX 79916

Bureau of Land Management
ATTN: Environmental Coordinator
1800 Marquess St.
Las Cruces, NM 88005

New Mexico State Highway and Transportation Dept.
ATTN: Environmental Section
P.O. Box 1149, Rm. 213
Santa Fe, NM 87504

New Mexico Forestry and Resources Conservation Division
ATTN: Energy, Minerals. and Natural Resources Department
P.O. Box 1948
Sante Fe, NM 87113

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

November 4, 1998

Cons. #2-22-97-I-163b

Mr. Edward L. Paulsgrove
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
Attn: CESPA-ET-PE
4101 Jefferson Plaza, Northeast
Albuquerque, New Mexico 87109-3435

Dear Mr. Paulsgrove:

This responds to your letter dated September 28, 1998 requesting U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service) comments on the draft environmental assessment, which includes the construction of two Border Patrol checkpoint stations within Otero County, New Mexico. As you may recall, our previous response dated September 2, 1998 (Cons# 2-22-97-I-163), addressed any concerns related to the renovation of existing Border Patrol facilities within New Mexico. Therefore, the following comments and evaluations are limited to the construction of these two facilities with respect to federally-listed species and other important fish and wildlife resources.

According to the information provided, the proposed new facilities are to be constructed within existing highway rights-of-way. The first site, Alamogordo Site #1, is to be located approximately 16-miles southwest of the city of Alamogordo on the east side of U.S. Highway 70/82 on 4.5 acres of land. The second site, Alamogordo Site #2, is to be located approximately 23 miles south of Alamogordo on a 6.5-acre site on the east side of U.S. Highway 54. These sites appear to be previously disturbed and utilities connections are slated to occur within these highway right-of-ways. No other offsite impacts associated with the construction of these stations were identified.

Based on the information provided, it appears that federally-listed species are not likely to be adversely affected by the activities, as proposed. With regard to other important fish and wildlife resources, the Service recommends any ground disturbance activities occur outside the general migratory bird nesting season which extends from March through August. In addition, as indicated on page 27 in Section 4.3 (Recommended Mitigation Measures), any "post-construction vegetation rehabilitation" operations should use only native grasses and/or plants.

If project plans change, portions were not submitted, or differ from our understanding above, please notify us prior to undertaking the project. If we can be of any further assistance, please contact Chris Perez of my staff at (505) 346-2525, ext 119.

Sincerely,

Jennifer Fowler-Propst
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 and Resources Conservation Division, Santa Fe, New Mexico
Field Supervisor, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Austin Ecological Services Field Office, Austin, Texas

G:\Users\Chris\97-163b.wpd

To manage and conserve the natural and cultural resources of Texas for the use and enjoyment of present and future generations.

December 11, 1998

Mr. Mark C. Harberg, Chief
Environmental Section
Department of the Army
Albuquerque District, Corps of Engineers
4101 Jefferson Plaza, NE
Albuquerque, NM 87109-3435

Re: Environmental Assessment for Construction and Renovation of Border Patrol Checkpoints, New Mexico and Texas (Hudspeth County)

Dear Mr. Harberg:

This letter is in response to your request for review of the Environmental Assessment document referenced above. Texas Parks and Wildlife Department (TPWD) staff reviewed the document and offer the following comments concerning this project.

The proposed construction and renovation are either existing sites or sites located in existing rights-of-way, which has been heavily impacted. Therefore, the impacts to fish and wildlife resources should be minimal and there should be no impacts to listed species as a result of this project. To further minimize impacts the Department recommends limiting clearing of existing vegetation as much as is feasible. It is also recommended to incorporate site specific native species into the landscape or revegetation plans. Attached is a list of native plants that have high erosion control characteristics and are significant components to wildlife species. These plants are for the Texas location, but could possibly be used in the New Mexico sites, if the site conditions are comparable.

I appreciate the opportunity to review and comment on this project, and apologize for the lateness of our response.

Sincerely,

Kathy Boydston

Kathy Boydston
Wildlife Habitat Assessment Program
Wildlife Division

KKB:dab

Attachment

4200 SMITH SCHOOL ROAD
AUSTIN, TEXAS 78744-3291
512-389-4800
www.tpwd.state.tx.us

SELECT SPECIES WITH ECO_CODE EQ TRANS-PECOS
AND WITH TOP_CODE EQ UPLAND AND WITH EROSION_HARDINESS_CODE EQ HIGH

SPECI CODE	COMMON NAME.....	SCIENTIFIC NAME.....	WILDLIFE.. USE	EROSION... CONTROL
10	AGARITO	MAHONIA TRIFOLIOLATA	POOR	GOOD
8	ALKALI SACATON	SPOROBOLUS AIROIDES	GOOD	EXCELLENT
237	ASHE JUNIPER	JUNIPERUS ASHEI	GOOD	EXCELLENT
56	BIG BLUESTEM	ANDROPOGON GERARDII	GOOD	EXCELLENT
70	BIG SACATON	SPOROBOLUS WRIGHTII	GOOD	EXCELLENT
31	BLACK CHERRY	PRUNUS SEROTINA	GOOD	EXCELLENT
129	BLACK GRAMA	BOUTELOUA ERIOPODA	GOOD	EXCELLENT
60	BLUE GRAMA	BOUTELOUA GRACILIS	GOOD	EXCELLENT
62	BUFFALOGRASS	BUCHLOE DACTYLOIDES	GOOD	EXCELLENT
292	CAREX SPP.	SEDGES	GOOD	GOOD
140	CHINKAPIN OAK	QUERCUS MUHLENBERGII	GOOD	GOOD
7	COMMON CHOKECHERRY	PRUNUS VIRGINIANA	EXCELLENT	EXCELLENT
65	COMMON CURLYMESQUITE	HILARIA BERLANGERI	GOOD	EXCELLENT
87	COMMON REED	PHRAGMITES AUSTRALIS	GOOD	EXCELLENT
2	CROTON, SPP.	CROTON, SPP.	EXCELLENT	EXCELLENT
55	DOWNY VIBURNUM (RUST	VIBURNUM RUFIDULUM	EXCELLENT	EXCELLENT
116	FEATHER DALEA	DALEA FORMOSA	GOOD	GOOD
107	FRAGRANT SUMAC	RHUS AROMATICA	EXCELLENT	EXCELLENT
267	GAMBEL OAK	QUERCUS GAMBELII	GOOD	GOOD
66	GREEN SPRANGLETOP	LEPTOCHLOA DUBIA	GOOD	EXCELLENT
20	GUM BUMELIA (CHITTAM	BUMELIA LANUGINOSA	GOOD	GOOD
61	HAIRY GRAMA	BOUTELOUA HIRSUTA	GOOD	GOOD
126	HONEY MESQUITE	PROSOPIS GLANDULOSA VAR. GL	GOOD	EXCELLENT
95	ILLINOIS BUNDLE FLOW	DESMANTHUS ILLINOENSIS	EXCELLENT	EXCELLENT
68	LITTLE BLUESTEM	SCHIZACHYRIUM SCOPARIUM	GOOD	EXCELLENT
230	LOTEBUSH	ZIZYPHUS OBTUSIFOLIA	GOOD	GOOD
28	OSAGE ORANGE (BOIS D	MACLURA POMIFERA	GOOD	GOOD
315	PINCHOT JUNIPER (RED	JUNIPERUS PINCHOTII	GOOD	EXCELLENT
138	RIVERBANK GRAPE	VITIS RIPARIA	EXCELLENT	EXCELLENT
279	SACAHUISTA (BEARGRAS	NOLINA SPP.	FAIR	GOOD
59	SIDEOATS GRAMA	BOUTELOUA CURTIPENDULA	GOOD	EXCELLENT
284	SOTOL	DASYLIRION SPP.	FAIR	FAIR
4	SWITCHGRASS	PANICUM VIRGATUM	EXCELLENT	EXCELLENT
322	TEXAS MULBERRY	MORUS MICROPHYLLA	GOOD	EXCELLENT
25	TEXAS PERSIMMON	DIOSPYROS TEXANA	GOOD	EXCELLENT
325	TROPIC CROTON	CROTON GLANDDULOSUS	FAIR	GOOD
130	WESTERN WHEATGRASS	ELYTRIGIA SMITHII (AGROPYRO	GOOD	EXCELLENT
188	WESTERN YARROW	ACHILLEA MILLEFOLIUM	FAIR	GOOD
47	WINTERFAT	CERATOIDES LANATA	GOOD	EXCELLENT
3	YELLOW INDIANGRASS	SORGHASTRUM NUTANS	EXCELLENT	EXCELLENT

DRAFT

APPENDIX C

PUBLIC NOTICE

AND

DISTRIBUTION LIST

Affidavit of Publication

ALAMOGORDO,
STATE OF NEW MEXICO, } ss.
COUNTY OF OTERO.

Richard Coltharp, being duly sworn, on oath says that he is the Publisher of the Alamogordo Daily News, a newspaper of daily circulation, published and printed in the English language at the city of Alamogordo, Otero County, State of New Mexico. That the Alamogordo Daily News has been regularly published and issued for more than nine months prior to the date of the first publication hereinafter mentioned.

That the attached notice was published 1 times in 1 issues of said newspaper, and not in any supplement thereof, the first publication being on: 1 October, 19 98, and subsequent publications being on: _____.

That said notice was published in accordance with the laws of the State of New Mexico.

Subscribed in my presence and sworn to before me this the 1st day of October, 19 98.

Carol A. Gilliland
Notary Public.

My commission expires 6 June 2000.

Publication fees:

$ 25.06

(#0671. Published in the Alamogordo Daily News on October 1, 1998).

NOTICE OF AVAILABILITY

The Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) has completed a Draft Environmental Assessment (DEA) for the renovation of three border checkpoint stations in the Las Cruces, New Mexico area. construction of two stations near Alamogordo, New Mexico, and renovation of one station near El Paso, Texas. The DEA was expedited by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Albuquerque District. The stations are located: (1) approximately 12 miles west of Las Cruces on Interstate 10; (2) approximately 20 miles north of Las Cruces on Interstate 25; (3) approximately 20 north of Las Cruces on Highway 185; (4) approximately 13 miles southwest of Alamogordo on U.S. Highway 70/82; (5) approximately 13 miles south of Alamogordo on U.S. Highway 54; and (6) approximately 25 miles east of El Paso, on U.S. Highway 62/180. The DEA is available for review at the Branigan Memorial Library, 200 E. Picacho, Las Cruces, New Mexico 88005, the City of Alamogordo Library, 920 Oregon Ave., Alamogordo, New Mexico 88310, the main branch of the El Paso Public Library, 501 N. Oregon St., El Paso, Texas, 79901, or can be obtained from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Albuquerque District, ATTN: Edward Paulsgrove, 4101 Jefferson Plaza, Albuquerque, NM 87109-3435. Please address all comments on the proposed project to Mr. Paulsgrove at the above address. Comments must be received by November 5, 1998, to receive consideration.

PROOF OF PUBLICATION

David E. McCollum, being duly sworn, deposes and says that he is the Publisher of the Las Cruces Sun-News, a newspaper published daily in the county of Dona Ana, State of New Mexico; that the notice Legal 20410 Notice per clipping attached was published once a ~~week/~~day in regular and entire issue of said newspaper and not in any supplement thereof for 1 ~~consecutive~~ days, the first publication was in the issue dated 10-1-98 and the last publication was 10-1-98.

Deponent further states this newspaper is duly qualified to publish legal notices or advertisements within the meaning of Sec. Chapter 167, Laws of 1937.

Signed David E. McCollum

Publisher
Official Position

STATE OF NEW MEXICO
ss.
County of Dona Ana

Subscribed and sworn before me this 14th day of Oct 98.

Robyn Sullen

My Term Expires October 28, 2000.

Notary Public in and for
Dona Ana County, NM

330 LEGAL NOTICES

NOTICE OF AVAILABILITY

The Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) has completed a Draft Environmental Assessment (DEA) for the renovation of three border checkpoint stations in the Las Cruces, New Mexico area, construction of two stations near Alamogordo, New Mexico, and renovation of one station near El Paso, Texas. The DEA was expedited by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Albuquerque District. The stations are located: (1) approximately 12 miles west of Las Cruces on Interstate 10; (2) approximately 20 miles north of Las Cruces on Interstate 25; (3) approximately 28 miles north of Las Cruces on Highway 185; (4) approximately 13 miles southwest of Alamogordo on U.S. Highway 70/82; (5) approximately 13 miles south of Alamogordo on U.S. Highway 54; and (6) approximately 25 miles east of El Paso, on U.S. Highway 62/180. The DEA is available for review at the Branigan Memorial Library, 200 E. Picacho, Las Cruces, New Mexico 88005, the City of Alamogordo Library, 920 Oregon Ave., Alamogordo, New Mexico 88310, the main branch of the El Paso Public Library, 501 N. Oregon St., El Paso, TX 79901, or can be obtained from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Albuquerque District, ATTN: Edward Paulsgrove, 4101 Jefferson Plaza, Albuquerque, NM 87109-3435. Please address all comments on the proposed project to Mr. Paulsgrove at the above address. Comments must be received by November 5, 1998, to receive consideration.

Pub. No.: 20410
Publish: October 1, 1998

PUBLISHERS AFFIDAVIT

STATE OF TEXAS
COUNTY OF EL PASO

Before me, a Notary in and for El Paso County, State of Texas, on this day personally, appeared TERRIE CARTER who states upon oath that she is the CLASSIFIED SUPERVISOR of the EL PASO TIMES/HERALD POST, a daily newspaper published in the City and County of El Paso, State of Texas, which is a newspaper of general circulation and which has been continously and regularly published for the period of not less than one year in the said County of El Paso, and that he was such upon the EL PASO TIMES.

That the LEGAL copy was published in the EL PASO TIMES for the dates of such publication being as follows,

1 DAY(s) to wit 10/01/98

OFFICIAL SEAL
BEIJA DUENES
NOTARY PUBLIC
In and for the State of Texas
My commission expires 03-19-2000

Sign: Terrie Carter

Subscribed and sworn to before me, this the 5th day of Oct, 1998

Beija Duenes

NOTICE OF AVAILABILITY

The Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) has completed a Draft Environmental Assessment (DEA) for the renovation of three border checkpoint stations in the Las Cruces, New Mexico area, construction of two stations near Alamogordo, New Mexico, and renovation of one station near El Paso, Texas. The DEA was expedited by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Albuquerque District. The stations are located: (1) approximately 12 miles west of Las Cruces on Interstate 10; (2) approximately 20 miles north of Las Cruces on Interstate 25; (3) approximately 20 north of Las Cruces on Highway 185; (4) approximately 13 miles southwest of Alamogordo on U.S. Highway 70/82; (5) approximately 13 miles south of Alamogordo on U.S. Highway 54; and (6) approximately 25 miles east of El Paso on U.S. Highway 62/180. The DEA is available for review at the Branigan Memorial Library, 200 E. Picacho, Las Cruces, New Mexico 88005; the City of Alamogordo Library, 920 Oregon Ave., Alamogordo, New Mexico 88310; the main branch of the El Paso Public Library, 501 N. Oregon St., El Paso, Tx. 79901; or can be obtained from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Albuquerque District, ATTN: Edward Paulsgrove, 4101 Jefferson Plaza, Albuquerque, NM 87109-3435. Please address all comments on the proposed project to Mr. Paulsgrove at the above address. Comments must be received by November 5, 1998, to receive consideration.

T: 10/01, 1998

DISTRIBUTION LIST

DRAFT

Texas Parks and Wildlife Department
Endangered Resources Branch
ATTN: Environmental Review Coordinator
4200 Smith School Road
Austin, Texas 78744

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
Ecological Services Field Office
ATTN: Supervisor
10711 Burnett Road, Suite 200
Hartland Bank Building
Austin, Texas 78758

New Mexico Department
of Game and Fish
ATTN: Chief, Conservation Services Division
P.O. Box 25112
Santa Fe, New Mexico 87504

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
New Mexico Ecological Services State Office
ATTN: State Supervisor
2105 Osuna Road, Northeast
Albuquerque, New Mexico 87113

White Sands Nat'l Monument
ATTN: Superintendent
P.O. Box 1086
Holloman AFB, NM 88330

HQ, U.S. Army Defense Artillery Center and Fort Bliss
ATTN: Directorate of Environment
Bldg 1
Ft Bliss, TX 79916

Bureau of Land Management
ATTN: Environmental Coordinator
1800 Marquess St.
Las Cruces, NM 88005

New Mexico State Highway and Transportation Dept.
ATTN: Environmental Section

P.O. Box 1149, Rm. 213
Santa Fe, NM 87504

DRAFT

New Mexico Forestry and Resources Conservation Division
ATTN: Energy, Minerals, and Natural Resources Department
P.O. Box 1948
Sante Fe, NM 87113

TRC Mariah Associates Inc.

PRELIMINARY DRAFT ABBREVIATED ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT FOR PROPOSED CONSTRUCTION/RENOVATION OF BORDER CHECKPOINT STATIONS NEAR LAS CRUCES AND ALAMOGORDO, NEW MEXICO AND COMSTOCK AND EL PASO, TEXAS

Prepared for

U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
Fort Worth, District

Under

Contract Number DACA-63-92-D-0011
Delivery Order No. 68

Prepared by

TRC MARIAH ASSOCIATES INC.
Albuquerque, New Mexico

March 24, 1997

TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF FIGURES

Page

LIST OF TABLES

Page

1.0 PURPOSE AND NEED

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, of Fort Worth, Texas, proposes to construct or renovate six border check points: two near Las Cruces, New Mexico; two near Alamogordo, New Mexico; one near El Paso, Texas; and one near Comstock, Texas. The purpose for the checkpoint station construction and renovation is to improve the U.S. Border Patrol's ability to effectively regulate the flow of individuals and material over the Mexico-United States border. This is an abbreviated Environmental Assessment (EA) which identifies those environmental resources that may be affected by the Proposed Action, assesses potential impacts, and describes appropriate mitigation measures.

Chapter 2.0 presents an analysis of the Proposed Action and an alternative to the Proposed Action. Chapter 3.0 describes the existing environmental conditions including soils, air quality, land use, hydrology, biological resources, and cultural resources. Chapter 4.0 describes the environmental consequences of the Proposed Action, Chapter 5.0 presents a list of preparers of this document, Chapter 6.0 lists persons and agencies contacted in the preparation of this document, and Chapter 7.0 lists references cited.

An EA is required pursuant to Section 102 of the National Environmental Protection Act (NEPA) of 1969, as implemented by the regulations promulgated by the President's Council on Environmental Quality (40 CFR 1500-1508). The principal objectives of NEPA are to ensure the careful consideration of environmental aspects of proposed actions in federal decision-making processes and to make environmental information available to the public before decisions are made and actions are taken. The EA should provide sufficient evidence and analysis for determining whether to prepare an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) or a Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) (40 Code of Federal Regulations [CFR] 1508.9).

2.0 DESCRIPTION OF ALTERNATIVES

2.1 THE PROPOSED ACTION ALTERNATIVE

The Proposed Action areas are situated on six different sites in New Mexico and Texas (Figures 2.1 and 2.2). There are two Proposed Action sites in the Las Cruces area in Dona Ana County. Checkpoint station #702, is an existing facility located approximately 20 miles north of Las Cruces on Interstate 25 (I-25) (Figure 2.3). The 0.70 acre site is located in T20S, R1W, Section 4, SE¼, New Mexico Prime Meridian (NMPM) as depicted on Selden Canyon, New Mexico (1982), United States Geological Survey (USGS) 7.5′ quadrangle map. The project area is within the right-of-way (ROW) of I-25, immediately east of the north-bound lanes of traffic. The entire area surrounding the checkpoint station has been heavily disturbed due to the construction of I-25 and the checkpoint station, and is almost entirely paved. This portion of the project involves the renovation of the existing facility by removing the existing modular unit and replacing it with an updated model.

Checkpoint station #703, is an existing facility located approximately 20 miles north of Las Cruces on U.S. Highway 185 (Figure 2.4). The 0.7 acre site is located in T20S, R2W, Section 2, NW¼, NMPM as depicted on the Sierra Alta, New Mexico (1959, photorevised 1978) USGS 7.5′ quadrangle map. The project area is within the ROW of State Highway 185, immediately east of the north-bound lane of traffic. The entire area surrounding the checkpoint station has been heavily disturbed due to the construction of the highway and the checkpoint station, and is almost entirely paved. This portion of the project involves the renovation of the existing facility by removing the existing modular unit and replacing it with an updated model.

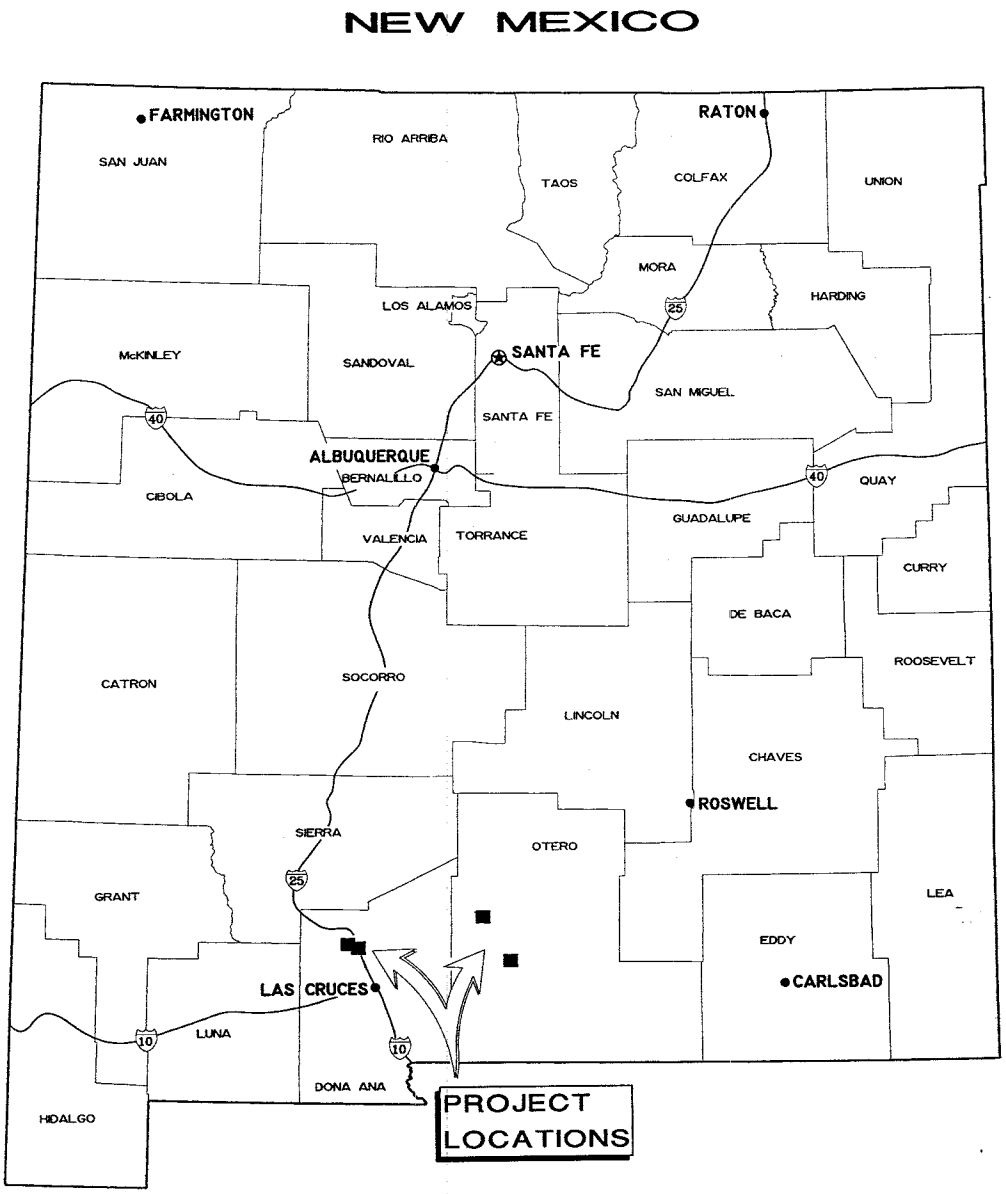

Figure 2.1 Locations of New Mexico Projects.

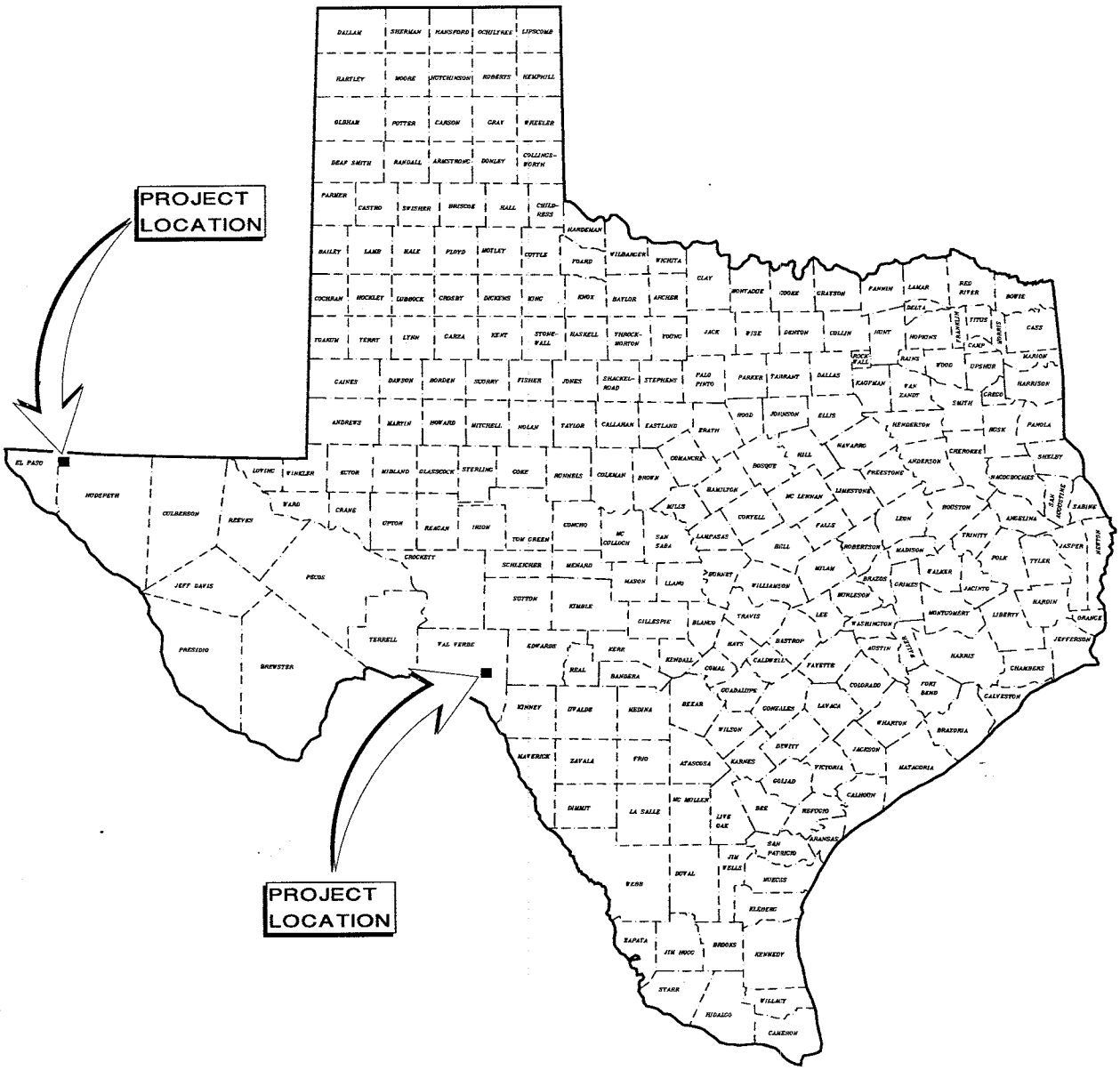

Figure 2.2 Locations of Texas Projects.

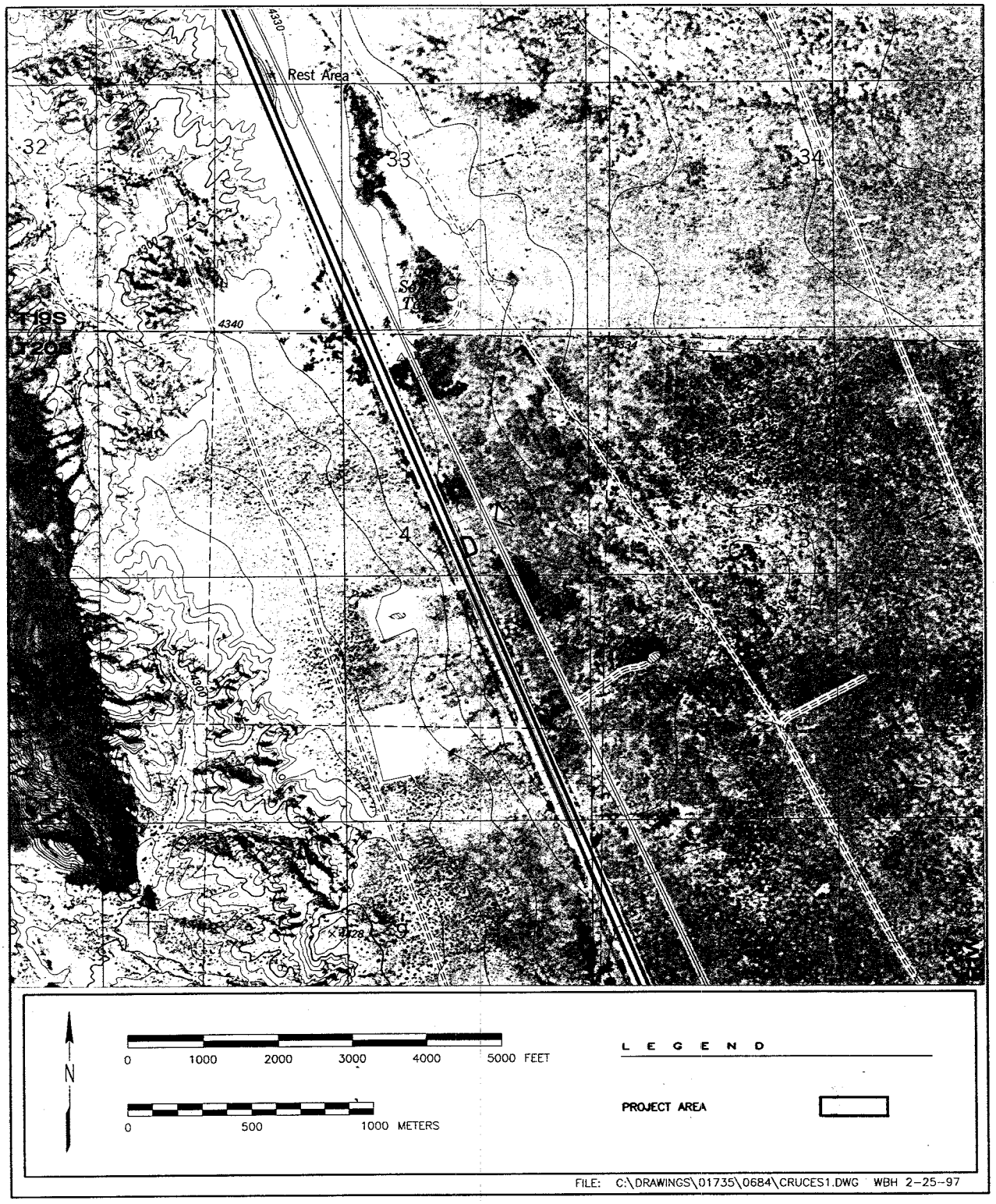

Figure 2.3 Project Location for Border Checkpoint Station North of Las Cruces, New Mexico, on Interstate 25. Based on Selden Canyon, New Mexico Quadrangle (1982), USGS 7.5′ Series, (1:24,000 Scale).

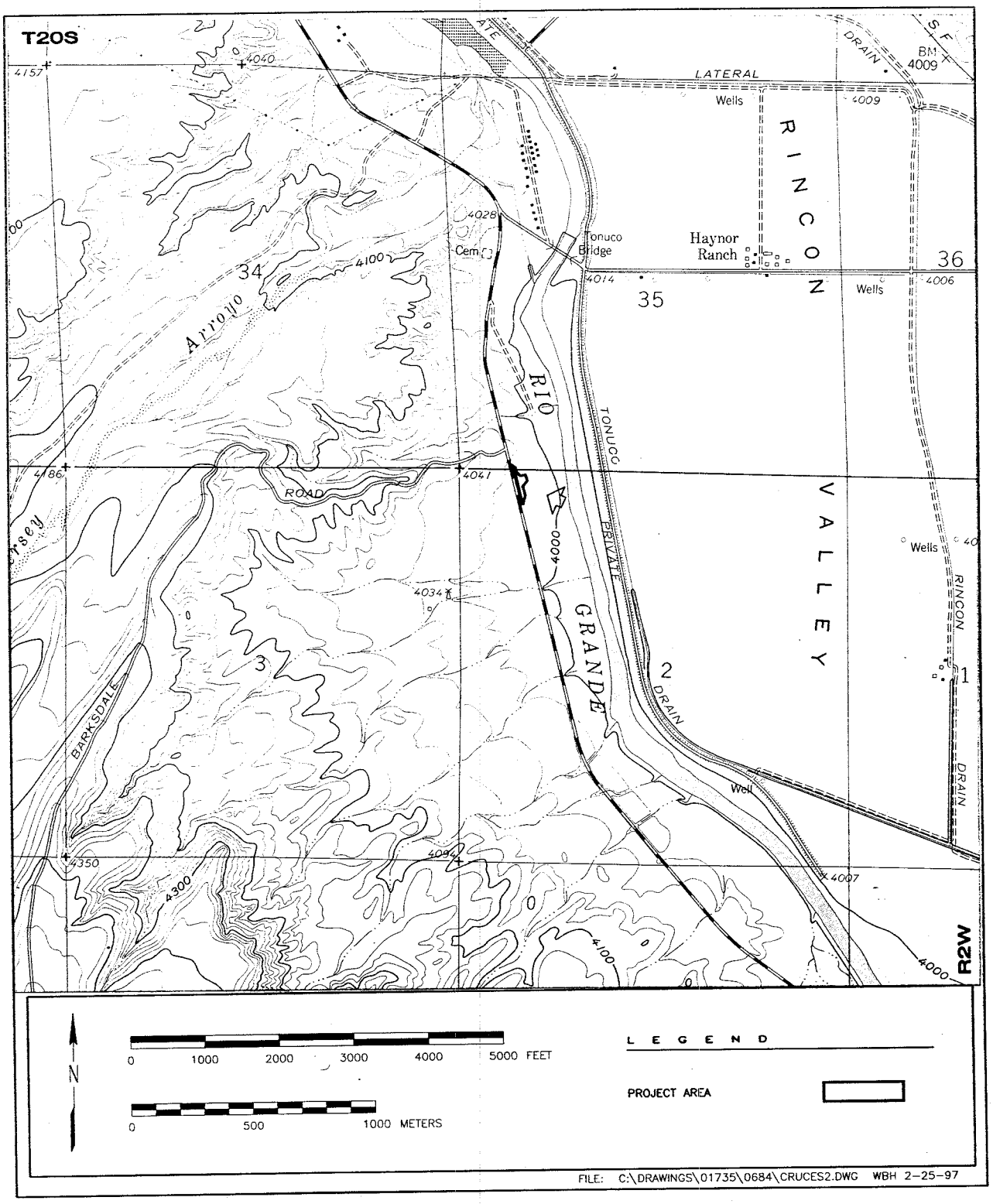

Figure 2.4 Project Location for Border Checkpoint Station North of Las Cruces, New Mexico, on U.S. Highway 185. Based on Sierra Alta, New Mexico Quadrangle (1959, Photorevised 1978), USGS 7.5′ Series, (1:24,000 Scale).

There are two Proposed Action sites in the Alamogordo area in Otero County. Both of these project sites will involve the construction of new checkpoint stations since it has been determined that the existing locations are not suitable for efficient management and service. Orogrande checkpoint station, #753, will be moved approximately 6 miles north from it's existing location which is approximately 27 miles south of Alamogordo on U.S. Highway 54. The new site, "Site 2," is immediately south of Paxton Crossing on U.S. Highway 54 (Figure 2.5), and approximately 21 miles south of Alamogordo. The 6.5 acre site is located in T20S, R9E, Section 33, NW¼, NMPM as shown on the Tres Hermanos SE (1982) USGS 7.5′ quadrangle map. The project area is within the ROW of U.S. Highway 54, immediately east of the north-bound traffic lanes. The site has been heavily disturbed, with a railroad track bordering it on the east, and a two-track road extending through the middle of the site. Military maneuvers were being conducted at the northern end of the site during the field survey on September 5, 1996. This portion of the project involves the construction of a new facility since it has been determined the existing facility is not suitable for efficient management and service. The existing U.S. Highway 54 checkpoint station will be abandoned once the new station is constructed at Paxton Crossing. The modular building presently existing at the site will be removed, and the asphalt will remain.

The White Sands checkpoint station, #950, will be moved 1.0 mile southwest from its existing location, approximately 16 miles southwest of Alamogordo on U.S. Highway 70/82 (Figure 2.6). The site, "Site 1," is located in T18S, R7E, Section 12, SW¼, NMPM as shown on the Garton Lake (1982) USGS 7.5′ quadrangle map. The project area is within the ROW of U.S. Highway 70/82, immediately southeast of the northeast-bound lane of traffic. The 4.5 acre site has been heavily disturbed from activity associated with the construction and use of U.S. Highway 70/82. This portion of the project also involves the construction of a new facility since it has been shown that the existing facility is not suitable for efficient management and service. The U.S. Highway 70/82 checkpoint station will remain as it currently is in the event that it might be needed in the future.

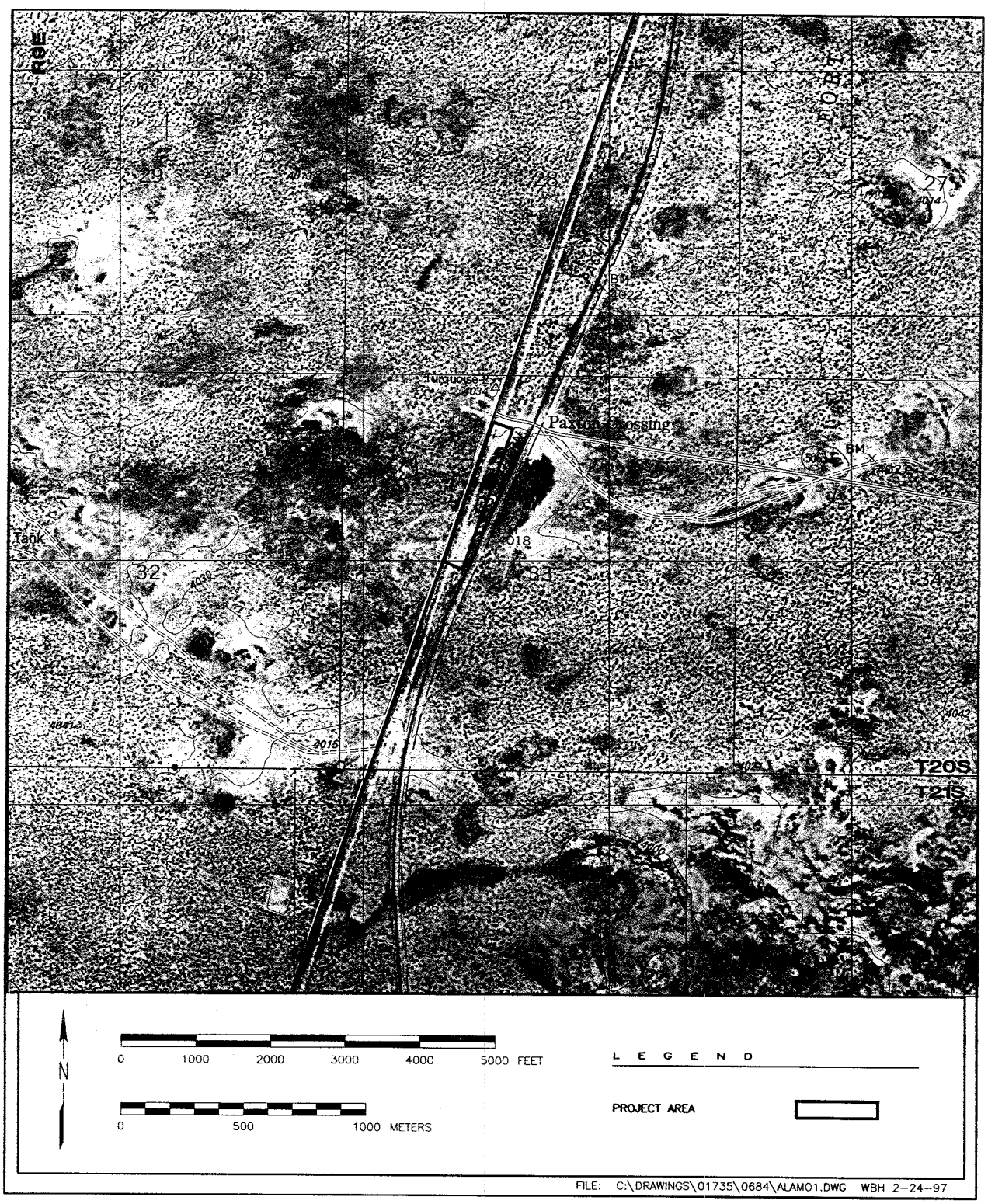

Figure 2.5 Project Location for Border Checkpoint Station South of Alamogordo, New Mexico, on U.S. Highway 54. Based on Tres Hermanos SE, New Mexico Quadrangle (1982), USGS 7.5′ Series, (1:24,000 Scale).

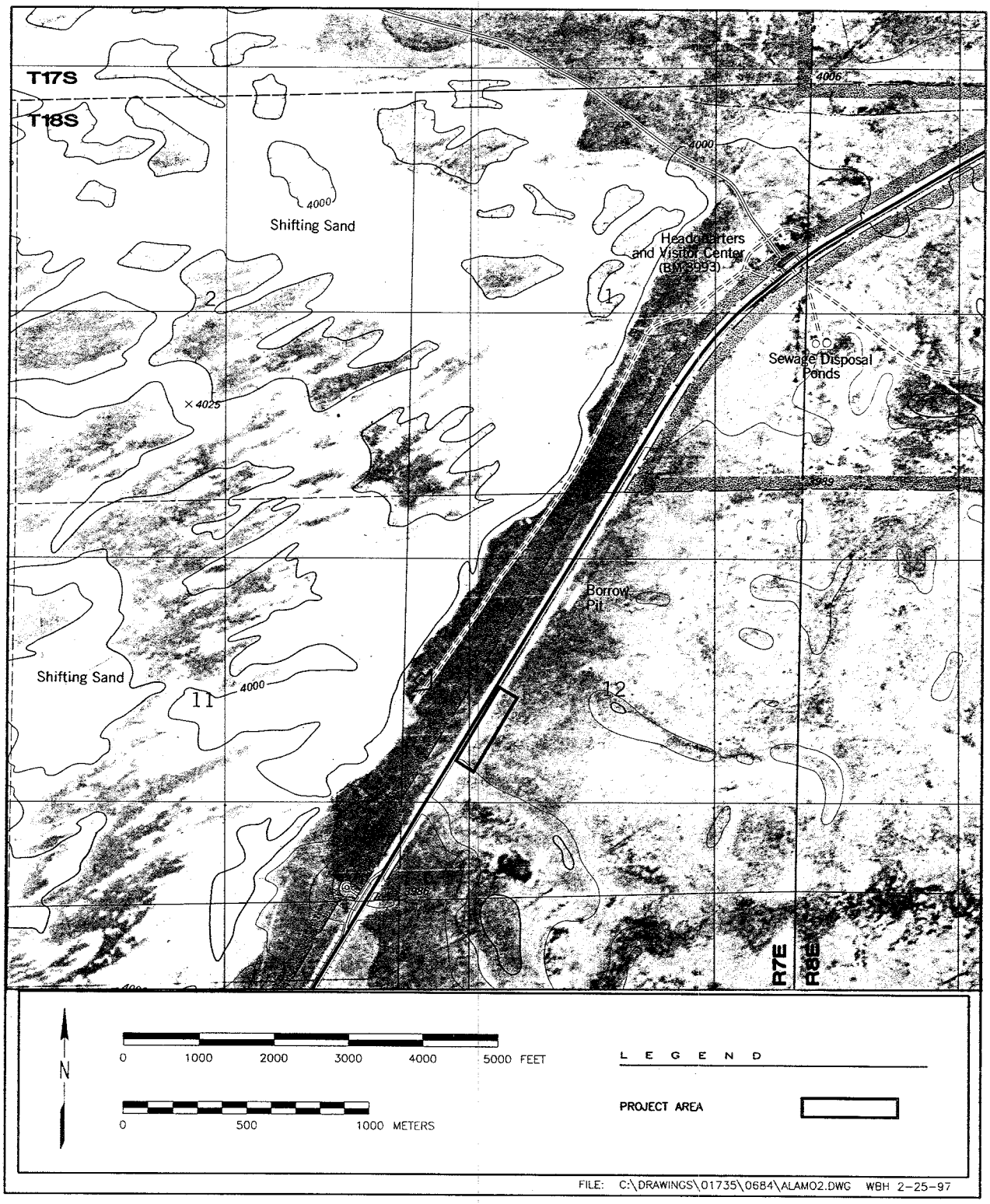

Figure 2.6 Project Location for Border Checkpoint Station Southwest of Alamogordo, New Mexico, on U.S. Highway 70/82. Based on Garton Lake, New Mexico Quadrangle (1982), USGS 7.5′ Series, (1:24,000 Scale).

The construction at the two Alamogordo sites will involve the following components: an exit/entrance lane approximately 0.25 mile long with a ROW of 15 feet, amounting to approximately 0.5 acre; a modular facility for INS activity with a concrete pad supporting it, amounting to approximately 0.5 acre; a paved parking area, amounting to approximately 0.5 acre; and a 50 foot perimeter cleared of vegetation surrounding the proposed facility, amounting in another 0.5 acre. The total area of permanent disturbance for each facility will amount to approximately 2.0 acres.

A fifth Proposed Action site is in the Comstock, Texas area in Val Verde County. The Comstock checkpoint station DRT-COM, is an existing facility located approximately 4 miles east of Comstock, Texas, on U.S. Highway 90 (Figure 2.7). The approximately 0.67 acre site is unplatted but is shown on the Comstock, Texas (1972) USGS 7.5′ quadrangle map. The project area is within the ROW of U.S. Highway 90 immediately east of the north-bound lanes of traffic. The entire area surrounding the checkpoint station has been heavily disturbed due to the construction of U.S. Highway 90 and the checkpoint station. The area is almost entirely paved. This portion of the project involves the renovation of the existing facility by removing the existing modular unit and replacing it with an updated model.

The sixth Proposed Action site is in the El Paso, Texas area within Hudspeth County. The Ysletta checkpoint station, #954, is an existing facility located approximately 28 miles east of El Paso, Texas, on U.S. Highway 62/180 (Figure 2.8). The 7.03 acre site is located on unplatted land but is shown on the Phone Line Canyon, Texas (1979) USGS 7.5′ quadrangle map. The project area is within the ROW of U.S. Highway 62/180, immediately south of the east-bound lanes of traffic. The entire area surrounding the checkpoint station has been heavily disturbed due to the construction of Highway 62/180 and the checkpoint station and is almost entirely paved. This portion of the project also involves the renovation of the existing facility by removing the existing modular unit and replacing it with an updated model.

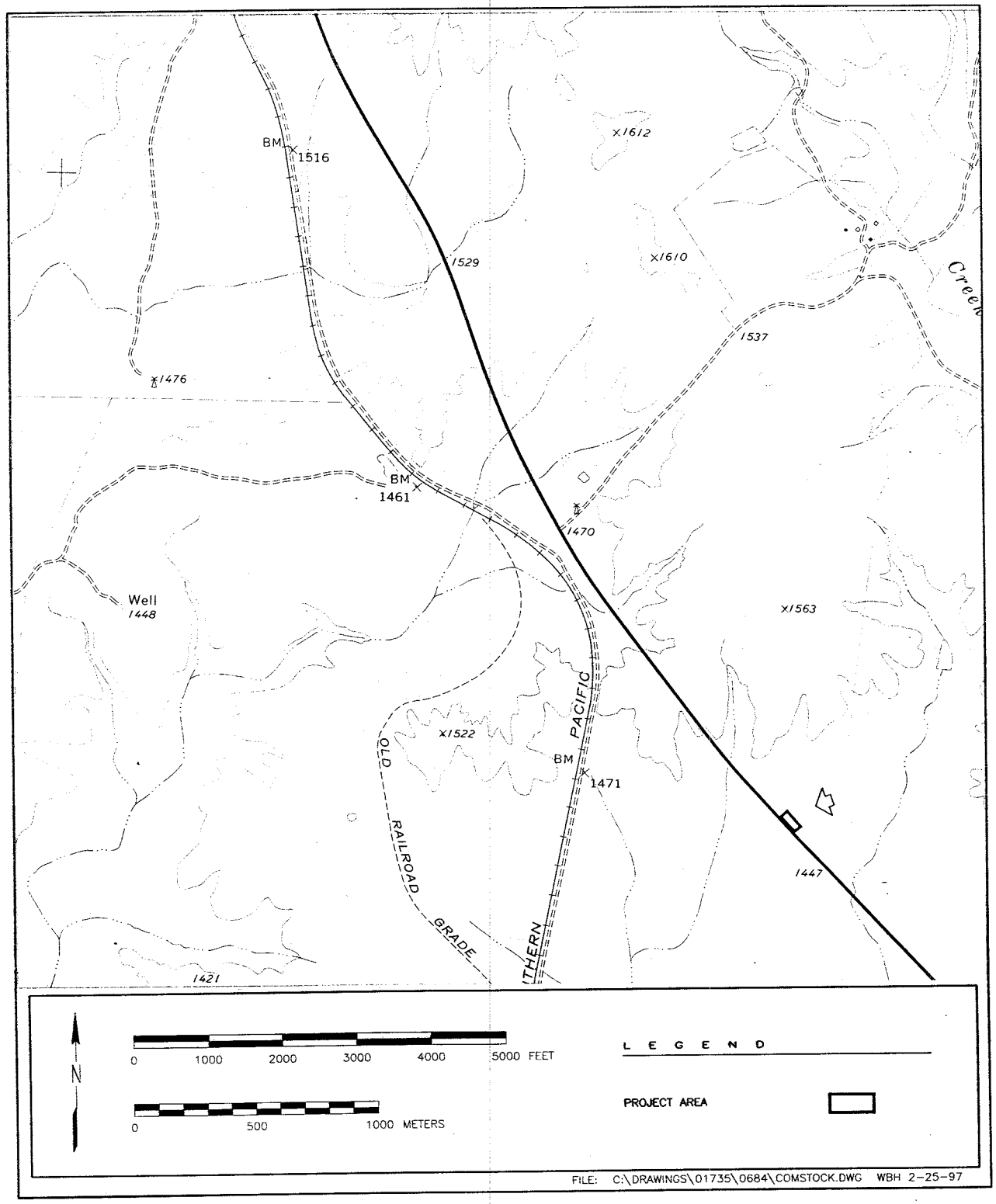

Figure 2.7 Project Location for Border Checkpoint Station near Comstock, Texas, on U.S. Highway 90. Based on Comstock, Texas Quadrangle (1972), USGS 7.5′ Series, (1:24,000 Scale).

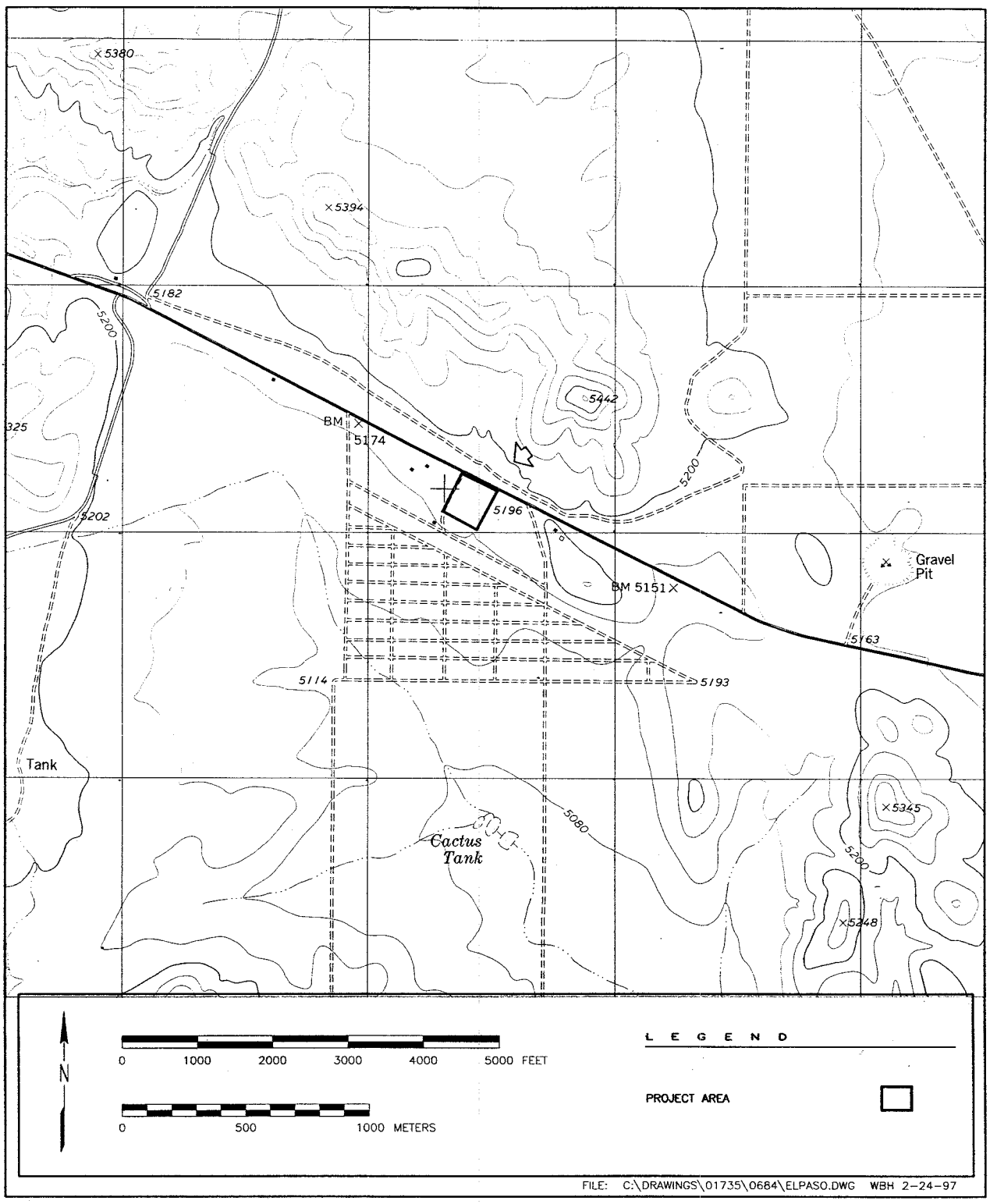

Figure 2.8 Project Location for Border Checkpoint Station East of El Paso, Texas, on U.S. Highway 62/180. Based on Phone Line Canyon, Texas Quadrangle (1979), USGS 7.5′ Series, (1:24,000 Scale).

Under the Proposed Action, border checkpoint stations would be renovated or constructed at each of these locations following the general plan shown in Figure 2.9.

A crew of approximately 10-20 will construct/renovate each check point station in approximately six and nine months. Construction will take place on site with standard equipment and techniques typically used for road construction and modular building placement.

2.2 THE NO ACTION ALTERNATIVE

In addition to the Proposed Action, a No Action alternative was also considered. Under the No Action alternative, the border checkpoint stations would not be constructed, nor renovated. The No Action alternative would create no impact on the physical or biological environment; resources such as soil, vegetation, and wildlife would remain unaffected. Under the No Action alternative, upgraded border patrol services could not be offered, and a continued degradation of facilities and services would be imminent with the resulting decline in control of illegal immigrants and concomitant decrease in national security.

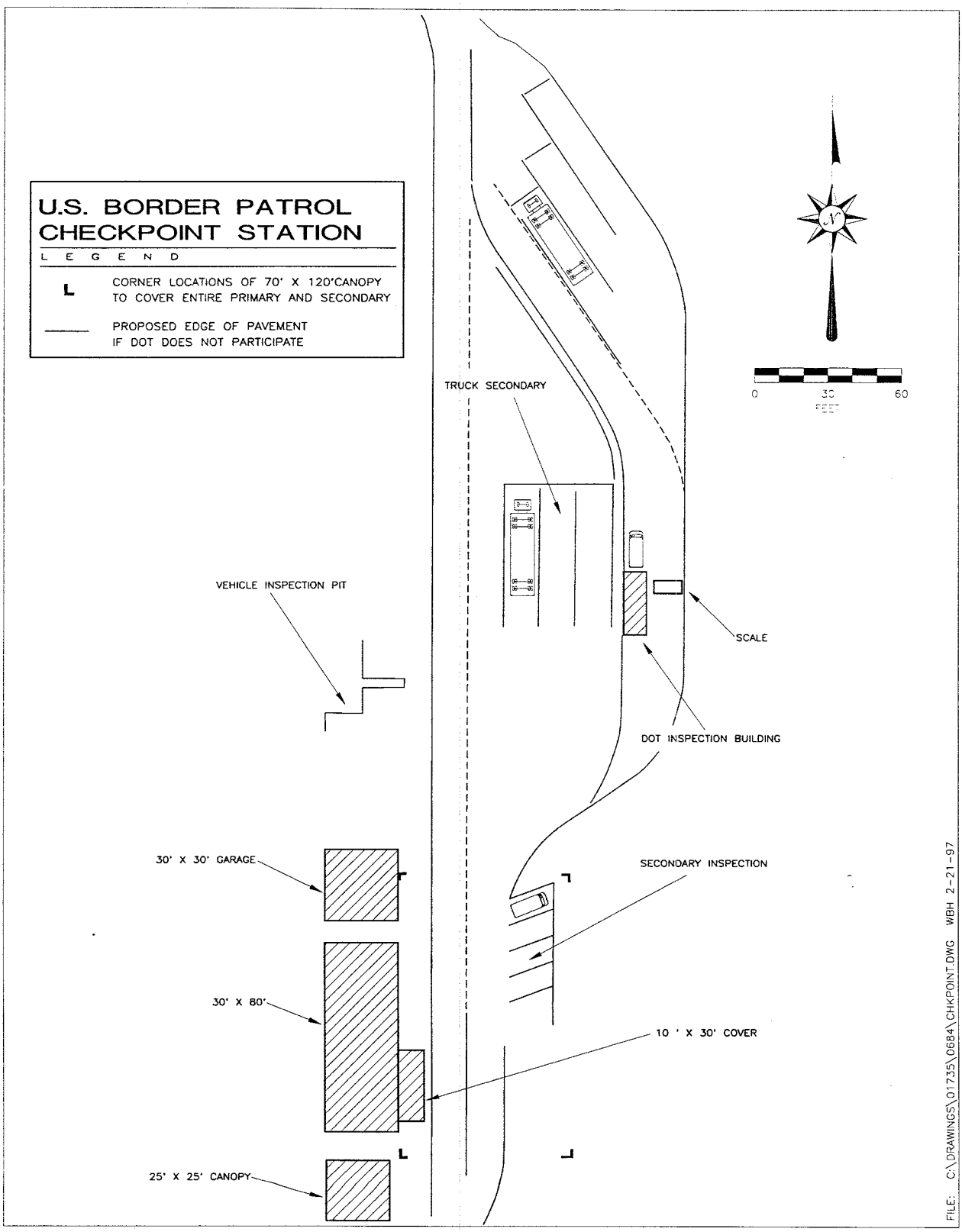

Figure 2.9 General Design of the U.S. Border Patrol Checkpoint Stations.

3.0 THE AFFECTED ENVIRONMENT

The affected environment is the baseline against which potential impacts caused by the Proposed Action at the site are assessed. This chapter focuses on those resources specific to the region and immediate area that have the potential to be affected by the construction/rennovation of the checkpoint stations. Only those portions of the environment that will be affected by the Proposed Action are discussed here.

3.1 SOILS

Both Las Cruces checkpoint stations in Dona Ana and both checkpoint stations near Alamogordo are situated within the Grama-Tobosa Section of the Chihuahuan Desert Province (Bailey 1980). This province is primarily desert, with most drainages containing water only after heavy rains. The only perennial stream in the area is the Rio Grande. The soils are primarily Aridisols, and are composed of the Yesum-Holloman association. The Yesum Series is composed of deep, well-drained soils; they are relatively coarse, wind-deposited with a high gypsum content. The Holloman Series is composed of shallow, well-drained, loam and sand alluvium that has been deposited over beds of gypsum. The Holloman Series is found in this area only in context with the Yesum Series. Both soils have a calcareous component and are moderately permeable (Soil Conservation Service 1976).

The Comstock Border Patrol Checkpoint is situated within the Mexican Highland Section of the Basin and Range Province (Bailey 1980). This province is primarily desert, with most drainages containing water only after heavy rains. The soils are primarily Aridisols and are composed of the Langtry Rock outcrop-Zorra association. This association is composed primarily of very shallow, loamy soils that are cobbly and stony. The moderately alkaline, exposed limestone bedrock is noticeable on uplands and on the sides of ridges. These soils were formed in material weathered from massive limestone bedrock. The Zorra soils are underlain by a thin layer of caliche above the limestone bedrock. This association supports little or no vegetation due to low

rainfall, very low available water capacity, and restricted rooting depth (Soil Conservation Service 1976)

The Proposed Action area near El Paso, Texas is situated within the Mexican Highland Section of the Basin and Range Province (Bailey 1980). This province is primarily desert, with most drainages containing water only after heavy rains. The soils are primarily Aridisols and are composed of the Augustin association. This association consists of gently sloping and undulating soils that occupy broad alluvial fans above the Rio Grande flood plain and at the base of the mountains. Pebbles of limestone that are coated with caliche make up about 25% of the subsoil, by volume. Lozier soils are in areas of greater slope but below the Limestone rocklands. This soil is a calcareous stony loam about 5 inches thick and is underlain by limestone bedrock (Soil Conservation Service 1976).

3.2 VEGETATION

3.2.1 Native Vegetation

The Proposed Action area in Dona Ana and Otero Counties is situated within the Chihuahuan Desert Province (Bailey 1980; Barbour and Billings 1991; Brown 1994;). Chihuahuan Desert communities, generally located at elevations between 4,000 feet and 9,000 feet are characterized by undulating plains with isolated mountains occasionally rising to 9,000 feet. Extensive dunes are characteristic of a large portion of this province. Vegetation is characterized by thickets of desert shrubs such as four-wing saltbush (*Atriplex canescens*), honey mesquite (*Prosopis glandulosa*), prickly pear (*Opuntia* spp.), soaptree yucca (*Yucca elata*), creosote bush (*Larrea tridentata*), and chamisa (*Chrysothamnus nauseosus*) interspersed with short and mid-grasses such as grama grasses (*Bouteloua* spp.), and dropseeds (*Sporobulus* spp.).

The Comstock Checkpoint Station area is located within an area of Chihuahuan Shrub and Grassland Vegetation Type. The general location surrounding the checkpoint station is a relatively level to mildly undulating upland area; however, the topography is much more incised

closer to the lake and river valley. Vegetation of the area is generally a shrub-grassland community with blackbrush (*Flourensia cernua*) dominant. The short and mid-length grasses are sideoats grama (*Bouteloua curtipentula*), plains lovegrass (*Eragrostis intermedia*), cane bluestem (*Bothriochloa barbinodis*), plains bristlegrass (*Setaria leucopila*), and green sprangletop (*Leptochloa dubia*).

The Proposed Action area near El Paso is also within an area of Chihuahuan Shrub and Grassland Vegetation Type. Vegetation of the area is generally a shrub-grassland community with creosote bush (*Larrea tridentata*) and mesquite (*Prosopis glandulosa*) dominant. The short and mid-length grasses are sideoats grama (*Bouteloua curtipentula*), Arizona cottontop (*Digitaria californica*), bush muhly (*Muhlenbergia porteri*), plains bristlegrass (*Setaria leucopila*), black grama (*Bouteloua eriopoda*), sand dropseed (*Sporobolus cryptandrus*), and perennial three-awns (*Aristida* spp.).

3.2.2 Endangered and Threatened Flora

Federally listed endangered, or threatened flora species for Otero and Dona Ana Counties include: the endangered Sacramento prickle-poppy (*Argemone pleaicantha*), Kuenzler's hedgehog cactus (*Echinocereus fendleri*), Todsens' pennyroyal (*Hedeoma todsenii*), Sneed's pincushion cactus (*Escobaria sneedii*), and the threatened Sacramento mountain thistle (*Cirsium vinaceum*) (Sivinski and Lightfoot 1995). None of these species would be found near the Proposed Action sites because the preferred habitat for each of these species is montane. No state or federally listed threatened or endangered plant species were observed during a field reconnaissance conducted by TRC Mariah on September 5, 1996.

Only two federally listed endangered, or threatened plant species have potential for occurring near the Comstock checkpoint in Val Verde County. These are Texas snowbells (*Styrax texana*) and Tobusch fishhook cactus (*Ancistrocactus tobuschii*). Neither of these species nor suitable habitat for them was observed during a field reconnaissance conducted by TRC Mariah on October 1, 1996. Because the station was constructed on an area of existing disturbance, i.e., the

previously bladed, compacted, and filled roadbed and regularly mowed ROW, it is unlikely that any Threatened or Endangered species or habitat were disturbed.

No federally listed endangered or threatened species have a potential for occurring near the El Paso checkpoint. A field reconnaissance done by the Army Corps of Engineers noted no endangered or threatened species in the location.

3.3 WILDLIFE

3.3.1 Common Wildlife

Wildlife potentially inhabiting the Otero and Dona Ana county Proposed Action areas in New Mexico includes pronghorn (*Antilocapra americana*), mule deer (*Odocoileus hemionus crooki*), javelina (*Dicotyles tajacu*) scaled quail (*Callipepla squamata*);. Gamble's quail (*Lophortyx gambeli*), black-tailed jackrabbit (*Lepus californicus)*, desert cottontail (*Sylvilagus nuttalli)*, kangaroo rat (*Dipodomys* spp.), wood rat (*Neotoma* spp.), coyote (*Canis latrans)*, red-tailed hawk (*Buteo jamaicensis)*, and ferruginous hawk (*Buteo regalis*).

Wildlife near the Comstock checkpoint in Val Verde County and also near the El Paso checkpoint in Hudspeth County, Texas might include mule deer (*Odocoileus hemionus*), javelina (*Dicotyles tajacu*), black-tailed jackrabbit (*Lepus californicus*), desert cottontail (*Sylvilagus nuttalli*), kangaroo rat (*Dipodomys* spp.), wood rat (*Neotoma* spp.), coyote (*Canis latrans*), and red-tailed hawk (*Buteo jamaicensis*).

3.3.2 Endangered and Threatened Fauna

Known endangered and threatened fauna for Otero and Dona Ana Counties is listed in Table 3.1. No federally listed species were observed during field survey conducted by TRC Mariah on September 5, 1996. Consultation was conducted with the United States Fish and Wildlife Service Albuquerque, New Mexico and the New Mexico Department of Game and Fish for the

Table 3.1 Threatened and Endangered Fauna for Otero and Dona Ana Counties.

Common Name (Scientific Name)	Status
Alpomado Falcon (*Falco femoralis septentrionalis*)	Federally Endangered
Whooping Crane (*Grus americana*)	Federally Endangered
Peregrine falcon (*Falco peregrinus*)	Federally Endangered
Interior least tern (*Sterna antillarum*)	Federally Endangered
Southwestern willow flycatcher (*Empidonax traillii extimus*)	Federally Endangered
Bald eagle (*Haliaeetus leucocephalus*)	Federally Threatened
Mexican spotted owl (*Strix occidentalis lucida*)	Federally Threatened

Source: New Mexico Department of Game and Fish (1996) U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. (1996).

Otero and Dona Ana county Proposed Action areas. (Appendix A). Due to the constantly disturbed nature of these locations from activities associated with highway construction, maintenance, and use, it is unlikely that the existing habitat is suitable for use by any of these species.

For the Comstock checkpoint, only the black-capped vireo (*Vireo atricapillus*) and the interior least tern (*Sterna antillarum*) are federally listed in Val Verde county. Neither species were observed during field survey conducted by TRC Mariah on October 1, 1996. Consultation was conducted with the United States Fish and Wildlife Service, Arlington Texas and the Wildlife Habitat Assessment Division Texas Parks and Wildlife Department for this Proposed Action area (Appendix A). Due to the constantly disturbed nature of these locations from activities associated with highway construction, maintenance, and use, it is unlikely that the existing habitat is suitable for use by either of these species.

Only the peregrine falcon (*Falco peregrinus*) is federally listed in Hudspeth county. Since peregrines are a cliff nesting species they may be in the nearby Hueco Mountains but due to the constantly disturbed nature of this location associated with highway construction, maintenance, and use, it is unlikely that the Proposed Action site is an important foraging location for this

species. The peregrine falcon was not observed during field survey. Consultation was conducted with the United States Fish and Wildlife Service, Arlington Texas and the Wildlife Habitat Assessment Division Texas Parks and Wildlife Department for this Proposed Action area (Appendix A).

3.4 CULTURAL RESOURCES

Class I site records check of the New Mexico Archaeological Records Management Section (ARMS) and of the Texas Historical Commission was conducted to determine if any cultural resources were previously recorded near the project areas. These searches revealed no previously recorded cultural resources within 0.5 mile of the project sites. Various field investigations of these locations failed to locate any cultural sites.

3.5 AIR QUALITY

Based on the National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS) under the Clean Air Act as amended (104 Stat. 2399 [1990]), Otero County, New Mexico, is in attainment for air quality; however, Dona Ana County, New Mexico, is not in attainment for ozone (personal communication with Vince Vigil, Acting Program Manager, New Mexico Environment Department, Air Quality Division September 12, 1996). In Texas, both Hudspeth and Val Verde counties are in attainment for air quality (personal communication with Rich Carpenter, Engineer Assistant-Air Quality, Texas Natural Resource Conservation Commission, February 20, 1997). The nonattainment status of Dona Ana County, New Mexico for ozone means that at least parts of the county have levels of ozone that exceed that national and state standards. There are currently actions being taken to reduce the levels of ozone which would result in the county being listed as a maintenance area. Should subsequent analyses reveal that the county maintains its air quality within the national and state standards during the course of the next ten years, it will regain its attainment status.

3.6 AESTHETICS

Aesthetics for the Proposed Action areas are described in terms of visual appearance, sound, and sensitivity level. Visual appearance is made up of four elements: form, line, color, and texture. The Proposed Action areas' principal form elements consist of uneven terrain; human-made features contribute occasional line elements to the areas' overall visual characteristics. These include electric lines, fences, telephone cables, transmission and distribution lines, residences, and roads. The areas' color varies throughout: open rangelands vary from light brown to soft yellow to pale green during the year; unpaved roads are light brown to brownish-yellow; and vegetation has a green overstory with a pale green to slightly yellow or buff understory.

Sound in all the areas are produced by natural sources such as wind and birds and human-made sounds associated with residences and vehicular traffic. In the vicinity of the Alamogordo checkpoint stations, air traffic from the nearby Holloman Air Force Base and White Sands Missile Range contribute some noise; however, these noise sources are few and widely scattered. Noise levels are relatively quiet at the Las Cruces sites, the El Paso site, and the Comstock site with little undesirable noise.

3.7 LAND USE

Principal land uses in Otero and Dona Ana Counties, New Mexico and Hudspeth County, Texas are: livestock grazing on rangelands, farming in the Rio Grande Valley and military use. In Val Verde County, the principal land use is livestock grazing on rangelands. The current land uses for the proposed project sites are highway ROWs.

4.0 ENVIRONMENTAL CONSEQUENCES

4.1 THE NO ACTION ALTERNATIVE

Under the No Action alternative, none of the existing border checkpoint stations would be modified. No new sites would be affected. The No Action alternative would create no impact on the physical or biological environment; resources such as soil, vegetation, and wildlife would remain unaffected.

4.2 THE PROPOSED ACTION ALTERNATIVE

4.2.1 Soils

The Proposed Action will have a moderate impact to soils at the two Alamogordo sites and a negligible impact to the other four sites. During construction, short-term low level impacts will occur to approximately 5.0 acre at each of the two Alamogordo sites as construction equipment maneuvers over the sites. Approximately 2.0 acres will be permanently disturbed by being paved. Impacts to the soil resource at the other four sites where renovation will occur will be negligible.

To minimize soil erosion, construction activities which disturb the soil will be kept to a minimum. Vegetation cover will be left undisturbed wherever possible to minimize erosion and, where disturbed, will be allowed to naturally revegetate within approximately two to four years, except along the perimeter where vegetation will be kept to a minimum as a security measure. All construction equipment will have rubber tires. No mitigation measures will be needed.

4.2.2 VEGETATION

4.2.2.1 Native Vegetation

The project will have low impact on vegetation. During construction of the Alamogordo sites, short-term low-level impacts to approximately 5.0 acres of vegetation will occur as construction equipment maneuvers over the sites. Approximately 2.0 acres of vegetation will be permanently removed for placement of the exit/entrance ramps, INS facilities, parking area, and perimeter of the sites.

Construction activities which disturb vegetation will be kept to a minimum, and existing vegetation will be left in place wherever possible. No herbicides will be used. Temporarily disturbed areas will be allowed to revegetate naturally, with the exception of the site perimeter. No mitigation measures will be needed.

4.2.2.2 Endangered and Threatened Flora

The project will have negligible impact to endangered or threatened flora, as no species are known to occur in the vicinity of the proposed action sites. No mitigation measures will be required.

4.2.3 WILDLIFE

4.2.3.1 Common Wildlife Species

Little impact will occur to wildlife. Some mortality of small mammals and soil micro- and macroorganisms may occur as equipment works in the Proposed Action areas. These species are usually highly productive and the construction will have little impact on their populations. No mitigation measures will be needed.

4.2.3.2 Endangered and Threatened Wildlife Species

Due to the disturbed nature of the Proposed Action sites, it is unlikely that the habitat is suitable for use by any of the listed threatened or endangered species, and no sensitive species were noted

during field reconnaissances. Because adequate habitat for the sensitive species noted as potentially occurring in the vicinity of the Proposed Action is generally lacking, it is unlikely that there will be any impact to these species. Should it be noted during the construction phase that any sensitive species are in or near the project sites, appropriate action will be taken to protect the resource. No mitigation measures will be required.

4.2.4 CULTURAL RESOURCES

No impact will occur to cultural resources as a result of the proposed action. A site files search resulted in no sites having been reported in the areas of the proposed action, and further examination of the sites by qualified archaeologists revealed no cultural resources. Should any cultural resources be identified during construction then the work would cease, the appropriate State Historic Preservation Office contacted, and appropriate measures taken. No mitigation measures will be required.

4.2.5 AIR QUALITY

Little impact to the air resource will occur from the Proposed Action. The short-term production of dust by construction activities and emissions from construction and other vehicles will be little more than that created by vehicles traveling on nearby and unpaved roads. Although it has been noted that Dona Ana County is in non-attainment for ozone emissions, the Proposed Action will have no effect on ozone emissions. All other project sites in Texas and New Mexico are located in counties that are in attainment of ozone standards. No mitigation measures will be needed.

4.2.6 AESTHETICS

Little impact will occur to aesthetics at the Proposed Action sites. Visual characteristics of the Proposed Action areas will be unaffected at the four renovation sites. The two Alamogordo sites, where construction of new facilities will occur, will result in a new border checkpoint station being erected at each of the two locations and the dismantling of two stations at the old locations.

The overall effect to the aesthetics of the general area will be low. No mitigation measures will be required.

4.2.7 Land Use

Little impact will occur to land use as a result of the proposed action. The Proposed Action will take place within the existing highway ROW and will not remove land from its current use. No mitigation measures will be required.

4.3 SUMMARY OF UNAVOIDABLE ADVERSE IMPACTS

There will be no unavoidable adverse impacts as the result of the Proposed Action.

4.4 SUMMARY OF MITIGATION MEASURES

No mitigation measures will be required for the Proposed Action. Standard construction procedures will minimize all impacts to the environment.

5.0 LIST OF PREPARERS

Individual	Responsibility	Education
Kate L. Bartz	Technical Coordinator	MLA, Landscape Architecture and Environmental Planning
Marla Burrow	Document Preparation	M.U.P., Planning
Nancy Ford	Quality Assurance, Document Production	M.A., English
Howard C. Higgins	Quality Assurance, Project Manager	Ph.D., Anthropology
Bill Hudspeth	CAD Specialist	M.A., Anthropology
David Staley	Document Preparation	M.A., Anthropology

6.0 LIST OF PERSONS CONSULTED

Agency	Individual	Title
State of New Mexico Department of Game and Fish	Andrew Sandoval	Chief, Conservation Services Division
Texas Parks and Wildlife Department, Wildlife Habitat Assessment Division	Roy G. Fry	Wildlife Biologist
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service		
Austin Ecologic Services	Steve Helfert	Field Supervisor
New Mexico State Supervisor	Jennifer Fowler-Probst	State Supervisor

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APPENDIX A:

CONSULTATION LETTERS

01735-0683.1

GOVERNOR
Gary E. Johnson

DIRECTOR AND SECRETARY
TO THE COMMISSION
Gerald A. Maracchini

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3/12/97

March 11, 1997

Mr. David P. Staley
Environmental Scientist
TRC Mariah Associates, Inc.
4221-B Balloon Park Road, NE
Albuquerque, NM 87109

RE: Proposed Construction of Border Patrol Checkpoint Stations

Dear Mr. Staley:

In response to your request regarding the above-cited project, we are enclosing a list of threatened and endangered species which occur in Dona Ana and Otero counties. Based on the information you provided, there should be no significant direct impacts to wildlife or sensitive habitats.

We suggest you contact the New Mexico State Forestry Division (827-5830) regarding state-listed endangered plants and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (761-4525) regarding species of federal concern. Thank you for the opportunity to review and comment on the proposed construction of the border patrol checkpoint stations.

Sincerely,

Andrew V. Sandoval, Chief
Conservation Services Division

AVS/JB/ia

xc: Craig Nordyke (SW Area Operations Chief, NMGF)

Encl.

THREATENED, ENDANGERED, PROPOSED & CANDIDATE WILDLIFE: Dona Ana County, New Mexico

Common Name	SCIENTIFIC NAME	FEDERAL END.	FED.... THREAT.	PROP. CAND.	Prev.. C2...	STATE END.	STATE.. THREAT.
Texas Horned Lizard	Phrynosoma cornutum	-	-	-	X	-	-
Neotropic Cormorant	Phalacrocorax brasilianus	-	-	-	-	-	X
White-faced Ibis	Plegadis chihi	-	-	-	X	-	-
Bald Eagle	Haliaeetus leucocephalus	-	X	-	-	-	X
Common Black-hawk	Buteogallus anthracinus	-	-	-	-	-	X
Ferruginous Hawk	Buteo regalis	-	-	-	X	-	-
Aplomado Falcon	Falco femoralis septentrionalis	X	-	-	-	X	-
American Peregrine Falcon	Falco peregrinus anatum	X	-	-	-	-	X
Whooping Crane	Grus americana	X	-	-	-	X	-
Interior Least Tern	Sterna antillarum	X	-	-	-	X	-
Black Tern	Chlidonias niger	-	-	-	X	-	-
Common Ground-dove	Columbina passerina	-	-	-	-	X	-
Burrowing Owl	Speotyto cunicularia hypugaea	-	-	-	X	-	-
Mexican Spotted Owl	Strix occidentalis lucida	-	X	-	-	-	-
Boreal Owl	Aegolius funereus	-	-	-	-	-	X
Buff-collared Nightjar	Caprimulgus ridgwayi	-	-	-	-	X	-
Broad-billed Hummingbird	Cynanthus latirostris	-	-	-	-	-	X
Costa's Hummingbird	Calypte costae	-	-	-	-	-	X
Southwestern Willow Flycatcher	Empidonax traillii extimus	X	-	-	-	X	-
Bell's Vireo	Vireo bellii arizonae	-	-	-	-	-	X
Gray Vireo	Vireo vicinior	-	-	-	-	-	X
Baird's Sparrow	Ammodramus bairdii	-	-	-	X	-	X
Varied Bunting	Passerina versicolor	-	-	-	-	-	X
Occult Little Brn. Myotis Bat	Myotis lucifugus occultus	-	-	-	X	-	-
Yuma Myotis Bat	Myotis yumanensis	-	-	-	X	-	-
Fringed Myotis Bat	Myotis thysanodes	-	-	-	X	-	-
Western Small-footed Myotis Bat	Myotis ciliolabrum	-	-	-	X	-	-
Spotted Bat	Euderma maculatum	-	-	-	X	-	X
Townsend's Big-eared Bat	Plecotus townsendii pallescens	-	-	-	X	-	-
Big Free-tailed Bat	Nyctinomops macrotis	-	-	-	X	-	-
Organ Mtns. Colorado Chipmunk	Tamias quadrivittatus australis	-	-	-	X	-	X
Southern Pocket Gopher	Thomomys umbrinus	-	-	-	-	-	X
Plains Pocket Gopher	Geomys bursarius	-	-	-	X	-	-
Pecos River Muskrat	Ondatra zibethicus ripensis	-	-	-	X	-	-
Desert Bighorn Sheep	Ovis canadensis mexicana (endangered pops)	-	-	-	-	X	-
Dona Ana Talussnail	Sonorella todseni	-	-	-	X	-	X
Anthony Blister Beetle	Lytta mirifica	-	-	-	X	-	-

NATIVE WILDLIFE APPARENTLY NO LONGER OCCURRING IN DONA ANA COUNTY

Chihuahua Catfish	Ictalurus sp	(Previously federal C2)
American Eel	Anguilla rostrata	(extirpated from New Mexico)
Mexican Tetra	Astyanax mexicanus	(New Mexico threatened)
Rio Grande Chub	Gila pandora	
Rio Grande Silvery Minnow	Hybognathus amarus	(federal endangered; NM threatened)
Rio Grande Shiner	Notropis jemezanus	(Previously federal C2)
Rio Grande Bluntnose Shiner	Notropis simus simus	(extinct)
Gray Redhorse	Moxostoma congestum	(New Mexico threatened)
Flathead Catfish	Pylodictis olivaris	
Arizona Black-tailed Prairie Dog	Cynomys ludovicianus arizonensis	(Previously federal C2)
Gray Wolf	Canis lupus	(extirpated from NM; federal endangered)
Grizzly Bear	Ursus arctos	(extirpated from NM; federal threatened)
Ovate Vertigo	Vertigo ovata	(Previously federal C2; NM threatened)

THREATENED, ENDANGERED, PROPOSED & CANDIDATE WILDLIFE: **Otero County, New Mexico**

Common Name	SCIENTIFIC NAME	FEDERAL END.	FED.... THREAT.	PROP. CAND.	Prev.. C2...	STATE END.	STATE.. THREAT.
White Sands Pupfish	Cyprinodon tularosa	-	-	-	X	-	X
Sacramento Mtn. Salamander	Aneides hardii	-	-	-	X	-	X
Texas Horned Lizard	Phrynosoma cornutum	-	-	-	X	-	-
Mottled Rock Rattlesnake	Crotalus lepidus lepidus	-	-	-	-	-	X
Neotropic Cormorant	Phalacrocorax brasilianus	-	-	-	-	-	X
White-faced Ibis	Plegadis chihi	-	-	-	X	-	-
Bald Eagle	Haliaeetus leucocephalus	-	X	-	-	-	X
Northern Goshawk	Accipiter gentilis	-	-	-	X	-	-
Common Black-hawk	Buteogallus anthracinus	-	-	-	-	-	X
Ferruginous Hawk	Buteo regalis	-	-	-	X	-	-
Aplomado Falcon	Falco femoralis septentrionalis	X	-	-	-	X	-
American Peregrine Falcon	Falco peregrinus anatum	X	-	-	-	-	X
Interior Least Tern	Sterna antillarum	X	-	-	-	X	-
Black Tern	Chlidonias niger	-	-	-	X	-	-
Common Ground-dove	Columbina passerina	-	-	-	-	X	-
Burrowing Owl	Speotyto cunicularia hypugaea	-	-	-	X	-	-
Mexican Spotted Owl	Strix occidentalis lucida	-	X	-	-	-	-
Elegant Trogon	Trogon elegans	-	-	-	-	X	-
Southwestern Willow Flycatcher	Empidonax traillii extimus	X	-	-	-	X	-
Bell's Vireo	Vireo bellii arizonae	-	-	-	-	-	X
Gray Vireo	Vireo vicinior	-	-	-	-	-	X
Varied Bunting	Passerina versicolor	-	-	-	-	-	X
Baird's Sparrow	Ammodramus bairdii	-	-	-	X	-	X
Occult Little Brn. Myotis Bat	Myotis lucifugus occultus	-	-	-	X	-	-
Cave Myotis Bat	Myotis velifer	-	-	-	X	-	-
Fringed Myotis Bat	Myotis thysanodes	-	-	-	X	-	-
Long-legged Myotis Bat	Myotis volans	-	-	-	X	-	-
Western Small-footed Myotis Bat	Myotis ciliolabrum	-	-	-	X	-	-
Townsend's Big-eared Bat	Plecotus townsendii pallescens	-	-	-	X	-	-
Big Free-tailed Bat	Nyctinomops macrotis	-	-	-	X	-	-
Penasco Least Chipmunk	Tamias minimus atristriatus	-	-	-	-	X	-
Gray-footed Chipmunk	Tamias canipes	-	-	-	X	-	-
AZ Black-tailed Prairie Dog	Cynomys ludovicianus arizonensis	-	-	-	X	-	-
S. Guadalupe Pocket Gopher	Thomomys bottae guadalupensis	-	-	-	X	-	-
Plains Pocket Gopher	Geomys bursarius	-	-	-	X	-	-
White Sands Wood Rat	Neotoma micropus leucophaea	-	-	-	X	-	-
Meadow Jumping Mouse	Zapus hudsonius luteus	-	-	-	X	-	X

NATIVE WILDLIFE APPARENTLY NO LONGER OCCURRING IN OTERO COUNTY

Longnose Dace	Rhinichthys cataractae	
Green Sunfish	Lepomis cyanellus	
Merriam's Elk	Cervus elaphus merriami	(extinct)
Gray Wolf	Canis lupus	(extirpated from NM; federal endangered)
Grizzly Bear	Ursus arctos	(extirpated from NM; federal threatened)
Desert Bighorn Sheep	Ovis canadensis mexicana	(New Mexico endangered)