

*APPENDIX D*  
*Correspondence*







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

REPLY TO  
ATTENTION OF:

July 11, 2007

Planning, Environmental and Regulatory Division

SUBJECT: Supplemental Environmental Assessment for the Proposed Construction of Fence, Lights and Road Improvements along the International Boundary and Water Commission Levee in El Paso County

United States International Boundary and Water Commission  
ATTN: Mr. Doug Echlin  
U.S. Section, IBWC  
417 North Mesa Street, C-310  
El Paso, TX 79902

Dear Mr. Echlin:

On behalf of U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) and Department of Homeland Security, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) intends to prepare a Supplemental Environmental Assessment (SEA) for the proposed construction of up to 21 miles of pedestrian fence, border lighting, and road improvements along a section of the United States Section, International Boundary and Water Commission (USIBWC) levee near the Rio Grande from the Rio Bosque to the Fabens Port of Entry (POE) in El Paso County, Texas. In addition, four bridges over the District irrigation canal would also be replaced.

The SEA will analyze the potential for significant adverse or beneficial impacts of the proposed action. The SEA is tiered from the 2006 Programmatic Environmental Assessment (PEA) for Proposed Tactical Infrastructure, Office of Border Patrol, El Paso Sector, Texas Stations.

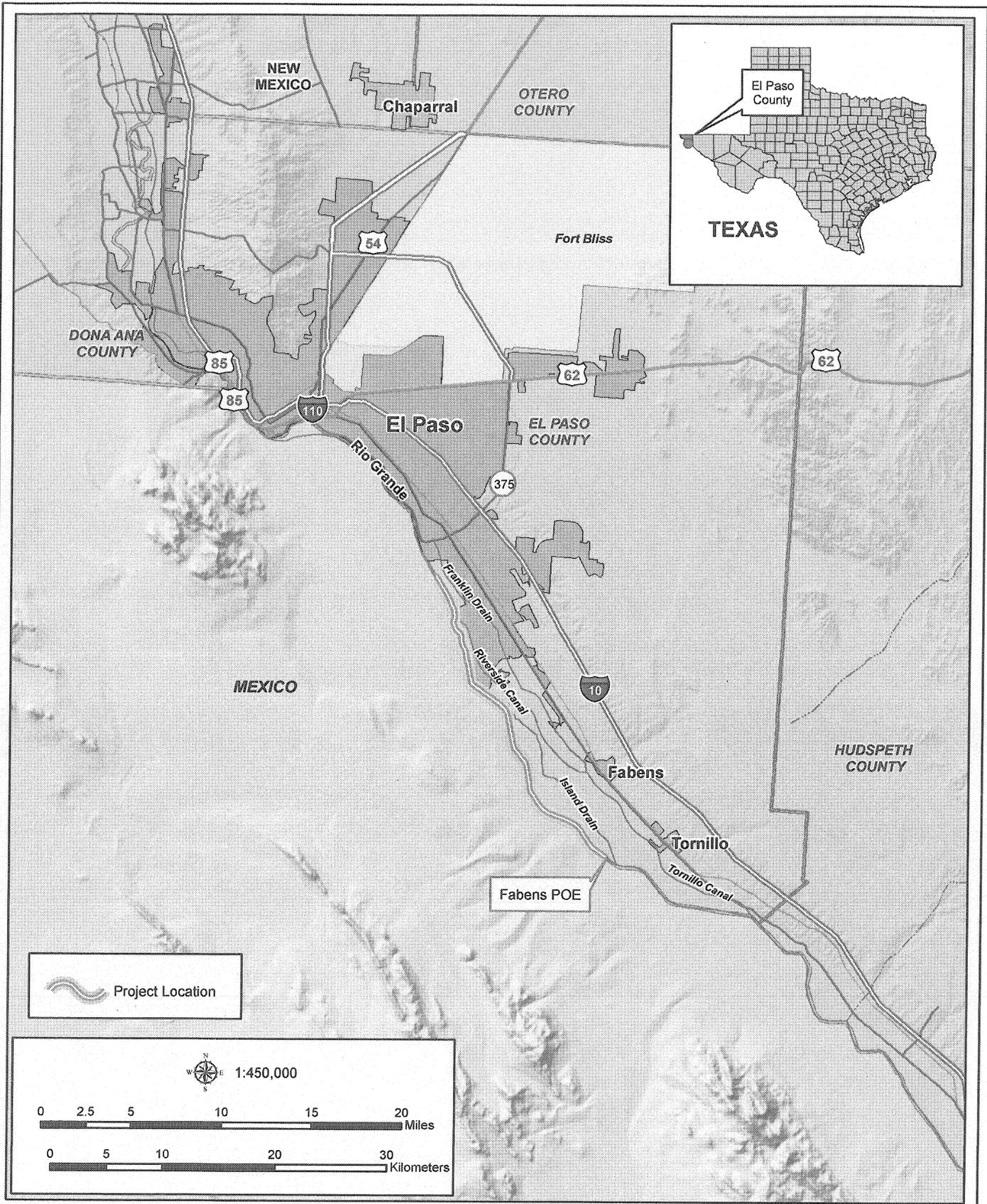
We are currently in the process of gathering the most current information available regarding environmental resources and other areas of concern occurring within this area. We respectfully request that your agency provide input regarding unique or environmentally sensitive areas or other issues that you believe may be affected by the proposed OBP activities.

We intend to provide your agency with a copy of the Draft SEA for the proposed action once completed. Please let us know if additional copies are needed. Your prompt attention to this request would be greatly appreciated. If you have any questions, please call Mr. Charles McGregor at (817) 886-1585.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "William Fickel, Jr.", written over a horizontal line.

William Fickel, Jr.  
Chief, Planning, Environmental  
and Regulatory Division



Project Location Map



July 2007



INTERNATIONAL BOUNDARY AND WATER COMMISSION  
UNITED STATES AND MEXICO

OFFICE OF THE COMMISSIONER  
UNITED STATES SECTION

November 5, 2007

Mr. Charles McGregor  
United States Army Corps of Engineers  
Fort Worth District  
Engineering Construction Support Office  
P.O. Box 17300  
Fort Worth, TX 76102-0300

Dear Mr. McGregor:

Reference is made to various letters dated October 18, 2007, from Mr. Robert F. Janson, U.S. Customs and Border Protection, requesting us to become a cooperating agency with regard to the development of National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) environmental documentation for the proposed construction, maintenance, and operation of tactical infrastructure throughout the international boundary. According to the letters, the following projects are being considered:

- 1) Environmental Impact Statement for Proposed Construction, Maintenance, and Operation of Tactical Infrastructure, U.S. Department of Homeland Security, U.S. Customs and Border Protection, U.S. Border Patrol San Diego Sector;
- 2) Environmental Assessment for Proposed Construction, Maintenance, and Operation of Tactical Infrastructure, U.S. Department of Homeland Security, U.S. Customs and Border Protection, U.S. Border Patrol San Diego Sector;
- 3) Environmental Assessment for Proposed Construction, Maintenance, and Operation of Tactical Infrastructure, U.S. Department of Homeland Security, U.S. Customs and Border Protection, U.S. Border Patrol El Centro Sector;
- 4) Environmental Assessment for Proposed Construction, Maintenance, and Operation of Tactical Infrastructure, U.S. Department of Homeland Security, U.S. Customs and Border Protection, U.S. Border Patrol Yuma Sector;
- 5) Supplemental Environmental Assessment for Proposed Construction, Maintenance, and Operation of Tactical Infrastructure, U.S. Department of Homeland Security, U.S. Customs and Border Protection, U.S. Border Patrol El Paso Sector;
- 6) Environmental Assessment for Proposed Construction, Maintenance, and Operation of Tactical Infrastructure, U.S. Department of Homeland Security, U.S. Customs and Border Protection, U.S. Border Patrol Marfa Sector;

- 7) Environmental Assessment for Proposed Construction, Maintenance, and Operation of Tactical Infrastructure, U.S. Department of Homeland Security, U.S. Customs and Border Protection, U.S. Border Patrol Del Rio Sector; and
- 8) Environmental Impact Statement for Proposed Construction, Maintenance, and Operation of Tactical Infrastructure, U.S. Department of Homeland Security, U.S. Customs and Border Protection, U.S. Border Patrol Rio Grande Valley Sector.

The United States Section, International Boundary and Water Commission (USIBWC) accepts your request to become a cooperating agency in the NEPA process. We look forward to working with you on issues related to the international boundary, specifically international treaties and agreements, issues related to USIBWC jurisdiction, and USIBWC real property. Due to the overwhelming list of Border Patrol initiatives along the international boundary, I have designated Mr. Richard Peace, Division Engineer, Operations and Maintenance Division, as the agency single point of contact for matters related to these projects. Mr. Peace can be reached at (915) 832-4158 for overall project coordination. If you have any questions feel free to contact me at (915) 832-4101.

Sincerely,



Carlos Marin, P.E.  
Commissioner



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

July 11, 2007

REPLY TO  
ATTENTION OF:

Planning, Environmental and Regulatory Division

SUBJECT: Supplemental Environmental Assessment for the Proposed Construction of Fence, Lights and Road Improvements along the International Boundary and Water Commission Levee in El Paso County

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service  
ATTN: Mr. Allen Strand  
6300 Ocean Drive, Campus Box 338  
Corpus Christi, TX 78412

Dear Mr. Strand:

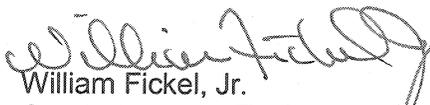
On behalf of U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) and Department of Homeland Security, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) intends to prepare a Supplemental Environmental Assessment (SEA) for the proposed construction of up to 21 miles of pedestrian fence, border lighting, and road improvements along a section of the United States Section, International Boundary and Water Commission (USIBWC) levee near the Rio Grande from the Rio Bosque to the Fabens Port of Entry (POE) in El Paso County, Texas. In addition, four bridges over the District irrigation canal would also be replaced.

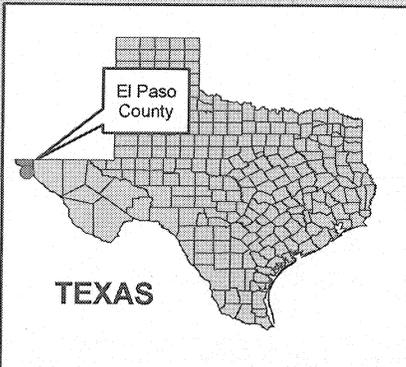
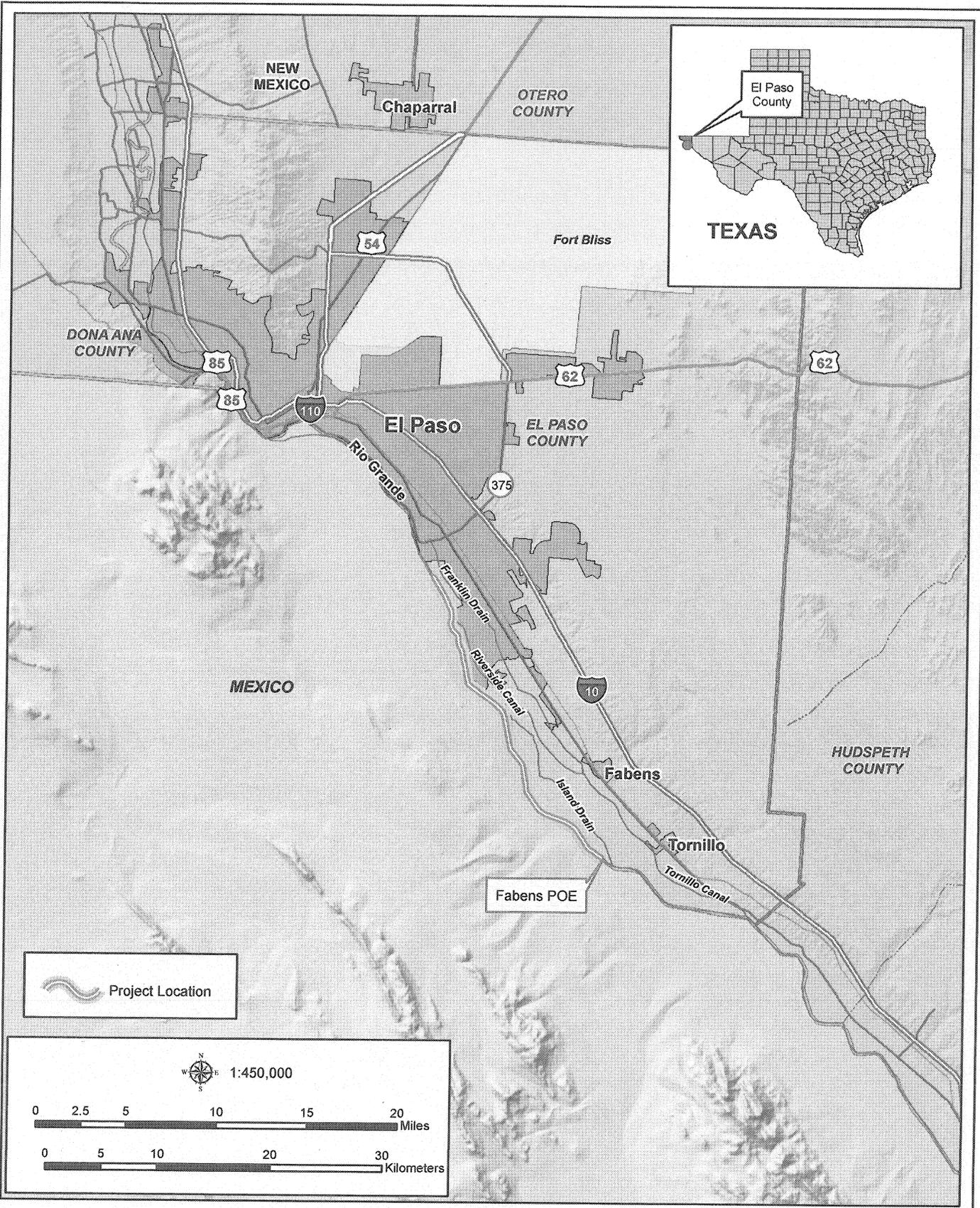
The SEA will analyze the potential for significant adverse or beneficial impacts of the proposed action. The SEA is tiered from the 2006 Programmatic Environmental Assessment (PEA) for Proposed Tactical Infrastructure, Office of Border Patrol, El Paso Sector, Texas Stations.

Enclosed is a map showing the location of the project corridors for both PEAs. We are currently in the process of gathering the most current information available regarding Federally and state listed species potentially occurring within this area. We respectfully request that your agency provide input regarding protected species, designated critical habitat, descriptions of the sensitive resources (e.g., rare or unique plant communities, threatened and endangered and candidate species), and unique or environmentally sensitive areas that you believe may be affected by the proposed OBP activities.

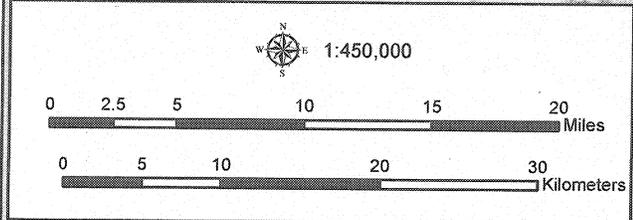
We intend to provide your agency with a copy of the Draft SEA for the proposed action once completed. Please let us know if additional copies are needed. Your prompt attention to this request would be greatly appreciated. If you have any questions, please call Mr. Charles McGregor at (817) 886-1585.

Sincerely,

  
William Fickel, Jr.  
Chief, Planning, Environmental  
and Regulatory Division



 Project Location



Project Location Map



# United States Department of the Interior

## FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE

10711 Burnet Road, Suite 200

Austin, Texas 78758

512 490-0057

FAX 490-0974

**AUG 07 2007**



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PER-E  
-EE

William Fickel, Jr.  
Chief Planning, Environmental, and Planning Division  
Department of the Army  
Fort Worth District, Corps of Engineers  
P.O. Box 17300  
Fort Worth, TX 76102-0300

Consultation #: 21450-2007-TA-0216

Dear Mr. Fickel:

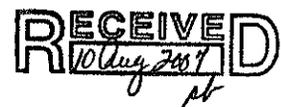
Thank you for your July 11, 2007, letter to the U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service's (Service) Corpus Christi Field Office regarding your intent to develop a Supplemental Environmental Assessment for the proposed construction of fence, lights, and road improvements along the United States Section, International Boundary and Water Commission (USIBWC) levee in El Paso County. Please note that for your convenience, we have established a single point of contact for border security projects in Texas. Please continue to send all future correspondence to Mr. Allan Strand, Field Supervisor, Corpus Christi Ecological Services Field Office, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, c/o TAMU-CC, 6300 Ocean Drive, Campus Box 338, Corpus Christi, TX 78412. However, you may receive letters signed by myself or Allan Strand, depending upon the geographic location of the project. For your convenience, please find enclosed a map of both offices' jurisdictions on a county-by-county basis.

According to your letter, the proposed project may include up to 21 miles of pedestrian fence, border lighting, and road improvements along a section of the USIBWC levee near the Rio Grande from the Rio Bosque to Fabens Port of Entry in El Paso County, Texas. In addition, four bridges over the District irrigation canal will be replaced.

We are providing the following information to assist consultants and/or Federal action agencies in assessing, avoiding, and minimizing adverse effects to species listed as threatened or endangered according to the Endangered Species Act of 1973, as amended (16 United States Code [U.S.C.] 1531 *et seq.*), designated critical habitat, as well as migratory birds protected by the Migratory Bird Treaty Act of 1918, as amended (16 U.S.C. §§ 703-712), and designated wetlands.

### Federally Listed Species

According to Section 7(a)(2) of the Endangered Species Act and its implementing regulations, it is the responsibility of each Federal agency to ensure that any action they authorize, fund, or carry out is not likely to jeopardize the continued existence of any Federally-listed species. In this case, the responsibility belongs to the U.S. Customs and Border Patrol or their designated representative.



A county-by-county listing of Federally-listed threatened and endangered species that occur within this office's work area can be found at <http://www.fws.gov/southwest/es/EndangeredSpecies/lists/>. You should use the county-by-county listing and other current species information to determine whether suitable habitat for a listed species is present at your project site. If suitable habitat is present, a qualified individual should conduct surveys to determine whether a listed species is present. After completing a habitat evaluation and/or any necessary surveys, you should evaluate the project for potential effects to listed species and make one of the following determinations:

- 1) *No effect* - the appropriate determination when a project, as proposed, is anticipated to have no effects to listed species or critical habitat. A "no effect" determination does not require section 7 consultation; however, the action agency should maintain a complete record of their evaluation, including the steps leading to the determination of effect, the qualified personnel conducting the evaluation, habitat conditions, site photographs, and any other related information.
- 2) *May affect, but is not likely to adversely affect* – the appropriate determination when a proposed action's anticipated effects are insignificant, discountable, or completely beneficial. Insignificant effects relate to the size of the impact and should never reach the scale where "take" of a listed species occurs. "Take" is defined as harass, harm, pursue, hunt, shoot, wound, kill, trap, capture or collect, or to attempt to engage in any such conduct. In addition to the direct take of an individual animal, habitat destruction or modification can be considered take, regardless of whether it has been formally designated as critical habitat, if it would result in the death or injury of wildlife by removing essential habitat components or impairing essential behavior patterns, including breeding, feeding or sheltering. Discountable effects are those extremely unlikely to occur. Based on best judgment, a person would not be able to meaningfully measure, detect, or evaluate insignificant effects, or expect discountable effects to occur. This determination requires written concurrence from the Service. A biological evaluation or other supporting information justifying this determination should be submitted with a request for written concurrence.
- 3) *May affect, is likely to adversely affect* – the appropriate determination if any adverse effect to listed species or critical habitat may occur as a direct or indirect result of the proposed action, and the effect is not discountable or insignificant. This determination requires formal section 7 consultation.

The Service's Consultation Handbook is available online to assist you with further information on definitions, process, and fulfilling Endangered Species Act requirements for your projects at <http://endangered.fws.gov/consultations/s7hndbk/s7hndbk.htm>.

If a "may affect" determination is made, the Federal action agency shall initiate the formal section 7 consultation process by writing to: Field Supervisor; U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service; c/o TAMU-CC, Campus Box 338; 6300 Ocean Drive; Corpus Christi, Texas 78412. If no effect is evident, no further consultation is needed; however, we would appreciate it if you could submit a copy of your determination for our files.

Non-Federal representatives (i.e. consultants, state agencies, county or local officials) may request and receive species lists, prepare environmental documents, biological assessments, and provide information for formal consultations. However, the Service requires the action agency to designate the non-Federal representative in writing. If not designated, we recommend non-Federal

representatives provide a complete record of their evaluation to the Federal action agency so that they may make a determination of effect and, if necessary, consult with the appropriate Service office on the proposed action.

The Service recommends the action agency and/or non-Federal representative maintain a complete record that identifies steps leading to the determination of effect, the qualified personnel conducting the evaluation, habitat conditions, site photographs, and any other related articles.

#### State Listed Species

The State of Texas protects certain species. Please contact the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department (Endangered Resources Branch), Fountain Park Plaza Building, Suite 100, 3000 South IH-35, Austin, Texas 78704 (telephone 512/912-7011) for information concerning fish, wildlife, and plants of State concern or visit their website at <http://www.tpwd.state.tx.us/nature/Ending/animals/mammals/>.

#### Migratory Birds

The Migratory Bird Treaty Act (MBTA) implements various treaties and conventions for the protection of migratory birds. Under the MBTA, taking, killing or possessing migratory birds is unlawful. Many may nest in trees, brush areas or other suitable habitat. The Service recommends activities requiring vegetation removal or disturbance avoid the peak nesting period of March through August to avoid destruction of individuals, nests or eggs. If project activities must be conducted during this time, we recommend surveying for nests prior to commencing work. If a nest is found, and if possible, the Service recommends a buffer of vegetation ( $\geq 164$  feet [ft] for songbirds,  $\geq 328$  ft for wading birds, and  $\geq 590$  ft for terns, skimmers and birds of prey) remain around the nest until young have fledged or the nest is abandoned. A list of migratory birds may be viewed at <http://migratorybirds.fws.gov/intrnltr/mbta/proposedbirdlist.pdf>.

#### Wetlands

Wetlands and riparian zones provide valuable fish and wildlife habitat and contribute to flood control, water quality enhancement, and groundwater recharge. Wetland and riparian vegetation provide food and cover for wildlife, stabilize banks, and decrease soil erosion. These areas are inherently dynamic and very sensitive to changes caused by such activities as overgrazing, logging, major construction, or earth disturbance. Executive Order 11990 asserts that each agency shall provide leadership and take action to minimize the destruction, loss or degradation of wetlands, and to preserve and enhance the natural and beneficial value of wetlands in carrying out the agency's responsibilities. Construction activities near riparian zones should be carefully designed to minimize impacts. If vegetation clearing is needed in these areas, they should be re-vegetated with native wetland and riparian vegetation to prevent erosion or loss of habitat. We recommend minimizing the area of soil scarification and initiating incremental re-establishment of herbaceous vegetation at the proposed work sites. Denuded and/or disturbed areas should be re-vegetated with a mixture of native legumes and grasses.

Species commonly used for soil stabilization are listed in the Texas Department of Agriculture's (TDA) Native Tree and Plant Directory, available from TDA at P.O. Box 12847, Austin, Texas 78711. The Service also urges taking precautions to ensure sediment loading does not occur to any receiving streams in the proposed project area. To prevent and/or minimize soil erosion and compaction associated with construction activities, avoid any unnecessary clearing of vegetation, and

Mr. William Fickel, Jr.

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follow established rights-of-way whenever possible. All machinery and petroleum products should be stored outside the floodplain and/or wetland area during construction to prevent possible contamination of water and soils. No permanent structures should be placed in the 100-year floodplain.

If your project will involve filling, dredging, or trenching of a wetland or riparian area it may require a Section 404 permit from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (COE). For permitting requirements please contact the U.S. Corps of Engineers, District Engineer, P.O. Box 1229, Galveston, TX 77553-1229, (409) 766-3002.

Beneficial Landscaping

In accordance with Executive Order 13112 on Invasive Species and the Executive Memorandum on Beneficial Landscaping, where possible, any landscaping associated with project plans should be limited to seeding and replanting with native species. A mixture of grasses and forbs appropriate to address potential erosion problems and long-term cover should be planted when seed is reasonably available. Although Bermuda grass is listed in seed mixtures, this species and other introduced species should be avoided as much as possible. The Service also recommends the use of native trees, shrubs and herbaceous species that are adaptable, drought tolerant and conserve water.

Service Response

Please note that the Service strives to respond to requests for project review within 30 days of receipt, however, this time period is not mandated by regulation. Responses may be delayed due to workload and lack of staff. Failure to meet the 30-day timeframe does not constitute a concurrence from the Service that the proposed project will not have effects to threatened and endangered species.

Thank you for your concern for endangered and threatened species and other resources, and we appreciate the opportunity to comment on the proposed project. If we can be of further assistance, or if you have any questions about these comments, please contact Larisa Ford at 361-994-9005. Please refer to the Service Consultation number listed above in any future correspondence regarding the proposed construction of fence, lights, and road improvements along the USIBWC levee in El Paso County.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Adam Zerrenner', with a long horizontal line extending to the right.

Adam Zerrenner  
Field Supervisor

Enclosure

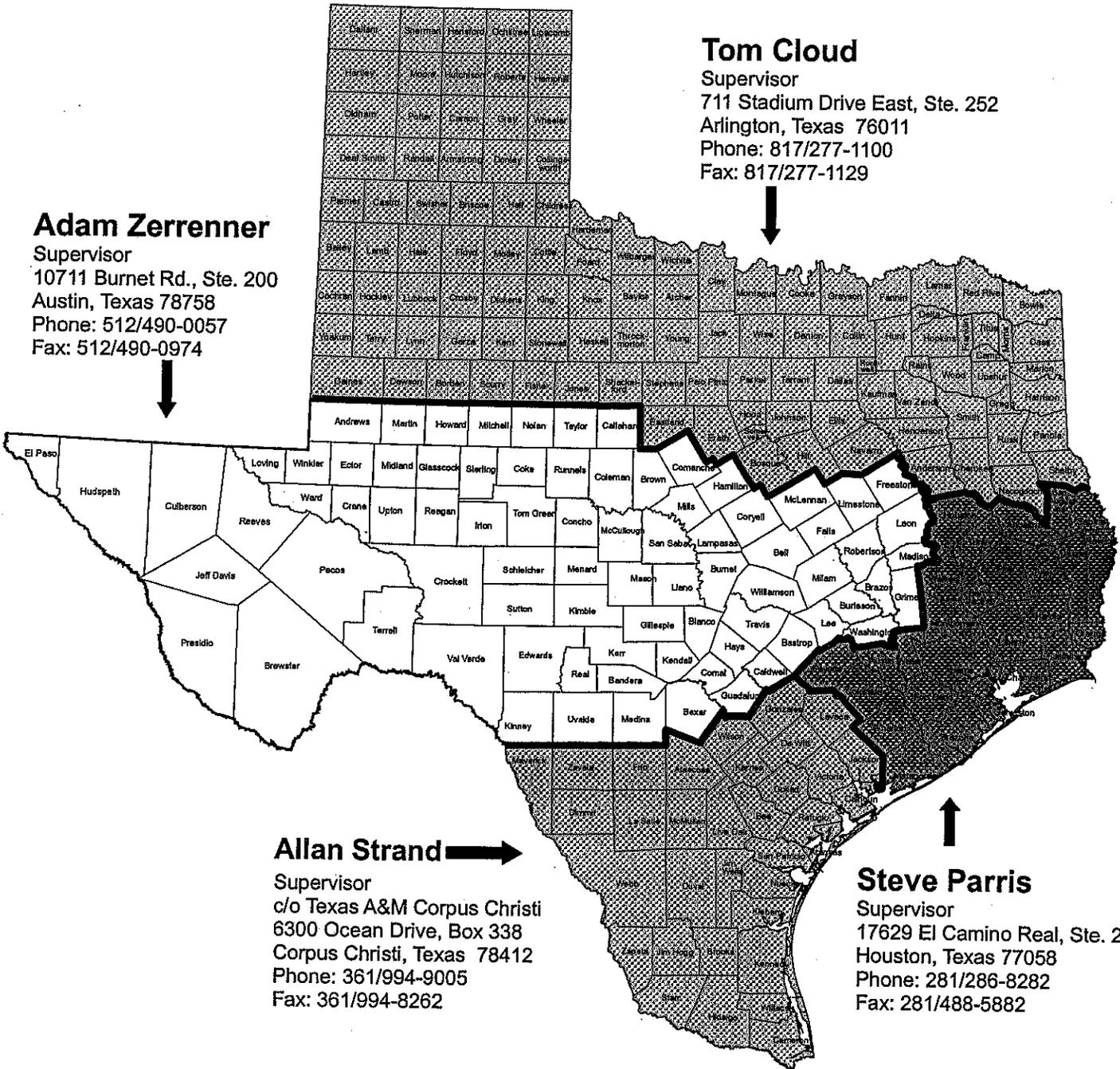
cc: Allan Strand, Corpus Christi ESFO, Corpus Christi, Texas

**U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service**  
**Ecological Services Field Offices**  
**Areas of Responsibility**

**Joy Nicholopoulos**  
 Texas State Administrator for Ecological Services  
 8027 Exchange Drive  
 Austin, Texas 78754  
 Phone 512/927-3557  
 Fax 512/927-3590

**Tom Cloud**  
 Supervisor  
 711 Stadium Drive East, Ste. 252  
 Arlington, Texas 76011  
 Phone: 817/277-1100  
 Fax: 817/277-1129

**Adam Zerrenner**  
 Supervisor  
 10711 Burnet Rd., Ste. 200  
 Austin, Texas 78758  
 Phone: 512/490-0057  
 Fax: 512/490-0974



**Allan Strand** →  
 Supervisor  
 c/o Texas A&M Corpus Christi  
 6300 Ocean Drive, Box 338  
 Corpus Christi, Texas 78412  
 Phone: 361/994-9005  
 Fax: 361/994-8262

**Steve Parris**  
 Supervisor  
 17629 El Camino Real, Ste. 211  
 Houston, Texas 77058  
 Phone: 281/286-8282  
 Fax: 281/488-5882





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

REPLY TO  
ATTENTION OF:

June 21, 2007

Planning, Environmental and Regulatory Division

SUBJECT: Section 106 consultation for the proposed Phase III installation of lighting, a pedestrian fence, road maintenance and the replacement of four bridges.

Mr. F. Lawrence Oaks  
Attn: Ms. Debra Beene  
Texas Historical Commission  
1511 Colorado St.  
Austin, Texas 78701

Dear Mr. Oaks,

On behalf of the U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP), Office of Border Patrol, El Paso Sector, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Fort Worth District is preparing a Supplemental Environmental Assessment for the proposed installation of various infrastructure within an approximately 20-mile long corridor along the U.S.-Mexico border from the City of El Paso water treatment plant east to the Fabens port of entry (POE) (Figures 1-6).

Flood lights would be installed for a distance of 20 miles along the U.S. Section, International Boundary and Water Commission (USIBWC) levee from the end of the existing light corridor constructed as part of CBP's Phase II tactical infrastructure project (near the City of El Paso water treatment plant at Rio Bosque) to the Fabens POE at the Guadalupe Bridge. The light standards would be steel poles approximately 45 feet high and installed at the south toe of the USIBWC levee, within the Rio Grande floodplain. Transformers would be placed on the ground near the southern edge of the top side of the levee, and six metal bollards, approximately 4 feet high, would be installed for protection (Photograph 1). The power lines for the light poles would be underground with the possible exception of lateral feeds from the local grid. The location of these lateral feeds is not known at this time. Archaeological monitoring during the installation of all light poles within the 20-mile long project corridor would be conducted to ensure no deeply buried archaeological deposits would be impacted during the installation of the lights.

A pedestrian fence would be installed at the base of the north slope of the USIBWC levee, within the 2- to 8-foot wide corridor between the levee and the existing irrigation ditch (Photograph 2), for the entire length of the project (approximately 20 miles). The fence would be between 15 and 16 feet tall, and designed to withstand an impact by a 10,000-pound (gross weight) vehicle traveling at 40 miles per hour. Gates would be installed at set intervals for emergency rescues within the irrigation canal and the Rio Grande floodplain. Given the disturbance from past construction activities associated with the USIBWC levee and the irrigation ditch, it is not anticipated that any intact cultural material would be impacted by the construction of the fence.

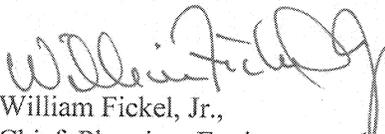
In addition, approximately 2 miles of road improvements would be conducted on the levee/ditch bank roads that are owned by the El Paso County Water Improvement District No. 1 (EPCWID1). The road is currently a dirt road that often becomes impassable during inclement weather. The proposed road improvements would entail grading and leveling the road and the application of an all-weather aggregate surface. This would take place in an area that has been impacted by the past construction of the road, levee and irrigation ditch. As a result, there is a little probability that intact cultural deposits are present in this area.

Finally, up to four bridges would be replaced over the EPCWID1 irrigation canal. The locations of the bridges would be at sites where previous canal bridges were located, but have since been removed (Photographs 3-6). A 300 by 300 foot temporary staging area would be utilized at the south end of each bridge location.

Preliminary investigations of the files at the Texas Archaeological Research Laboratory indicated that portions of the project cross the features of the EPCWID1 Historic District and sites 41EP4678 and 41EP4679, the Riverside Intercepting Drain and Riverside Canal Respectively. The EPCWID1 Historic District has been listed on the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) under criteria A and C. Both 41EP4678 and 41EP4679 are recommended potentially eligible under criterion A. It is not anticipated that the proposed infrastructure installation would impact the integrity of these historic properties. Replacement of the four bridges over the irrigation systems would be limited to areas where there were pre-existing bridges and that are noted as ancillary structures in the EPCWID1 Historic District form. The placement of the fence would be done so it would not impact the structural integrity of the irrigation systems, and would provide protection for the irrigation systems from illegal vehicle and pedestrian traffic through the area. A cross section of the proposed infrastructure and its relationship to the USIBWC levee and irrigation canal is shown in Figure 7.

Given that the area of the proposed infrastructure has been previously disturbed in the past by the construction of the USIBWC levee and irrigation canal, roads and bridges; that there is a low probability for intact cultural deposits; and that an archaeological monitor will be present during the installation of all lights, no adverse impacts to historic properties are anticipated. In accordance with 36 CFR Part 800.4(d)(1) we ask for your concurrence that no historic properties will be affected by the proposed project as planned. We plan to consult with appropriate Federally recognized Native American Tribes on this action and will coordinate any concerns for traditional cultural places or sacred sites that come to light through that consultation. If you have any questions pertaining to this project please do not hesitate to contact Ms. Nancy Parrish at (817) 886-1725 or via email at [nancy.a.parrish@swf02.usace.army.mil](mailto:nancy.a.parrish@swf02.usace.army.mil).

Sincerely,

  
William Fickel, Jr.,  
Chief, Planning, Environmental  
and Regulatory Division

Enclosures

ATTACHMENT

From: Parrish, Nancy A SWF [mailto:Nancy.A.Parrish@swf02.usace.army.mil]  
Sent: Monday, July 23, 2007 4:06 PM  
To: Debra Beene  
Cc: Eric Webb; John Lindemuth  
Subject: Ysleta Lights Project

Hi Debra-

Sorry it took me a while to get this back to you today, I was hoping to get the info on the depths of excavation for the light posts and fence to add to this, but I can't get the engineer on the phone.

Anyway, in reference to the planned CBP infrastructure along the canal in the Ysleta Station area of operations, we will ensure the 300 x 300 foot staging areas are located outside the boundary of the NRHP-eligible canal site. If possible, we will select staging areas that have previously been disturbed. If that is not possible, then we will have the areas surveyed by a professional archaeologist prior to use as a staging area. The staging areas are only meant to serve as a location to park heavy equipment and supplies such as steel or prefabricated fence/barriers, light posts, etc. \and should not require significant blading, grading or excavation. ✓

Bridge construction should not impact any sort of intact deposits as they will be located in areas where previous bridges have been situated. I will ask the engineer what the plans are for any remaining/existing footings. If necessary, extant bridges can be documented (HABS/HAER?) before they are replaced since they are cited as contributing elements to the NRHP canal sites. The new bridges can also be designed to mimic the old design so as to not create visual impacts to the site.

I will get back to you about the depths of excavation.

Thanks for the call. I look forward to working together in the future.  
Nancy

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Nancy Parrish  
Archaeologist  
BRAC NEPA Support Team  
US Army Corps of Engineers  
Fort Worth District  
819 Taylor Street, Room 3A14  
Fort Worth, TX 76102  
Ph. 817.886.1725  
Fax 817.886.6499  
Cell 817.229.3371

<b>CONCUR</b>	
by	<u>William A. Mark</u>
for F. Lawrence Oaks State Historic Preservation Officer	
Date	<u>7/26/07</u>
Track#	<u>200710143</u>





DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY  
FORT WORTH DISTRICT, CORPS OF ENGINEERS  
P. O. BOX 17300  
FORT WORTH, TEXAS 76102-0300  
July 11, 2007

REPLY TO  
ATTENTION OF:

Planning, Environmental and Regulatory Division

SUBJECT: Supplemental Environmental Assessment for the Proposed Construction of Fence, Lights and Road Improvements along the International Boundary and Water Commission Levee in El Paso County

University of Texas at El Paso  
Center for Environmental Resource Management  
Mr. John Sproul, Manager  
Rio Bosque Wetlands Park  
500 West University Avenue  
El Paso, TX 79968-0684

Dear Mr. Sproul:

On behalf of U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) and Department of Homeland Security, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) intends to prepare a Supplemental Environmental Assessment (SEA) for the proposed construction of up to 21 miles of pedestrian fence, border lighting, and road improvements along a section of the United States Section, International Boundary and Water Commission (USIBWC) levee near the Rio Grande from the Rio Bosque to the Fabens Port of Entry (POE) in El Paso County, Texas. In addition, four bridges over the District irrigation canal would also be replaced.

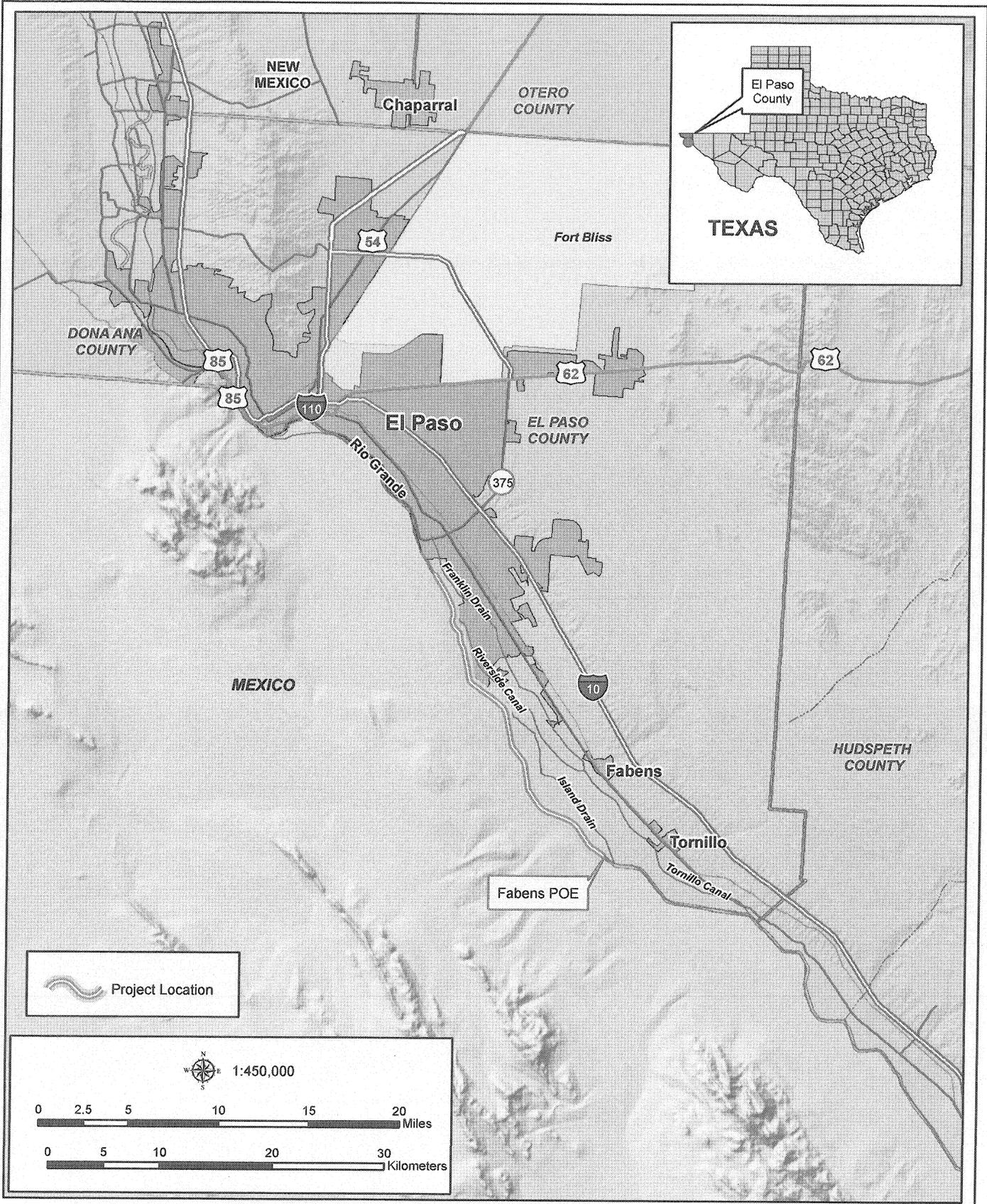
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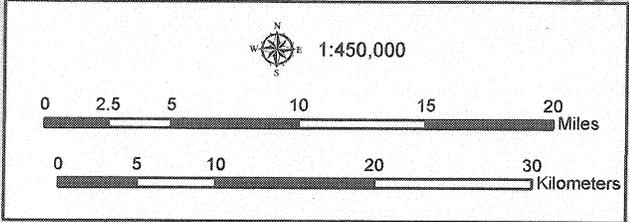
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Sincerely,

  
William Fickel, Jr.  
Chief, Planning, Environmental  
and Regulatory Division



 Project Location



Project Location Map

THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS AT EL PASO

WJ  
PER-E

September 18, 2007



Mr. William Fickel, Jr., Chief  
Planning, Environmental and Regulatory Division  
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Fort Worth District  
P.O. Box 17300  
Fort Worth, TX 76102-0300

Center for  
Environmental  
Resource  
Management

Re: Supplemental Environmental Assessment for the Proposed Construction of Fence, Lights and Road Improvements along the International Boundary and Water Commission Levee in El Paso County, Texas

Dear Mr. Fickel:

Thank you for giving us the opportunity to provide input to the Supplemental Environmental Assessment (SEA) that will be prepared for construction of up to 21 miles of fence, border lighting and road improvements along the Rio Grande levee from the vicinity of Rio Bosque Wetlands Park to the Fabens Port of Entry in El Paso County, Texas. We offer these comments to assist you in your work.

Rio Bosque Wetlands Park as a Unique, Environmentally Sensitive Area

Rio Bosque Wetlands Park is a City of El Paso park located immediately east of the Rio Grande levee in the project area. At 372 acres, it is the largest city park in El Paso. The University of Texas at El Paso manages the site under a license agreement with the City.

The Rio Grande valley in the El Paso area is a highly modified environment. The wetlands, riparian forests and other productive native habitats once found in the valley are today largely gone. Rio Bosque Wetlands Park is the largest and most significant parcel of relatively natural land remaining along the river in this region.

Since 1999, UTEP has been working at Rio Bosque to establish, over time, approximate examples of the native plant and animal communities characteristic of the Rio Grande and its floodplain in pre-settlement days. This work is guided by a Biological Management Plan that you can access through our website, [www.riobosque.org](http://www.riobosque.org).

This ecological restoration effort began with a project to create a shallow-water emergent wetland as mitigation for construction of the American Canal Extension, a concrete-lined canal that parallels the Rio Grande upriver from the Park. The U.S. Section of the International Boundary and Water Commission did the site-preparation work for this mitigation project in 1997.

The work involved building a winding channel through the Park that follows the former alignment of the Rio Grande before it was channelized as part of the Rio Grande Rectification Project in the mid-1930s. Also built were a series of large, shallow impoundments that can be flooded by diverting water from the main channel. In total, approximately 100 acres

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500 W. University Ave.  
El Paso, Texas  
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[www.cerm.utep.edu](http://www.cerm.utep.edu)

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(27% of the Park) can be flooded. The source of water for flooding these areas is treated effluent from the adjacent Roberto Bustamante Wastewater Treatment Plant. El Paso County Water Improvement District No. 1 and El Paso Water Utilities cooperate to provide this water to the Park when it is not being used for irrigation.

The ecological restoration effort at Rio Bosque is a long-term undertaking, but it has already enjoyed significant progress. The landscape at the Park has changed dramatically over the past 10 years. With each passing year, native plant associations are becoming increasingly prominent, and wildlife numbers and species richness are increasing. To date, 219 bird species, 20 mammal species, 16 reptile species and 4 amphibian species have been recorded at the Park. Lists of these species can be found at [www.riobosque.org](http://www.riobosque.org).

#### Impacts to Wildlife and Wildlife Movement

Due to a unique combination of circumstances, the segment of the Rio Grande downstream of the site of the former Riverside Diversion Dam for several miles supports a narrow band of riparian vegetation, much of it native cottonwood and willow, that is more extensive than the riparian vegetation found along other segments of the river near El Paso. For approximately one mile, Rio Bosque Wetlands Park is immediately east of this portion of the river floodway.

The link between Rio Bosque and the river floodway is an important one. Currently, there is an unimpeded connection between the two. Terrestrial wildlife can move readily between the Park and the floodway. The floodway also provides opportunities for movement of native wildlife between the Park and other pockets of suitable habitat along the river. A fence would sever these connections and adversely affect wildlife use of the Park. Accordingly, we ask that you fully evaluate in the SEA the impacts of any fencing, lighting or road improvements on wildlife and wildlife movement, especially with respect to Rio Bosque Wetlands Park.

#### Aesthetic Impacts

Rio Bosque Wetlands Park is managed as a natural area. We want to offer visitors a chance to experience what the river valley once was like, before intensive land-use and water-management practices began transforming it into the highly modified environment we see today. A fence and a series of light towers paralleling the Park can be expected to detract from this experience. Please address in the SEA the aesthetic impact of any fencing, lighting or road improvements.

#### Recreational Impacts

Since 1999, the City and County of El Paso have pursued a vision of a trail that winds along or near the Rio Grande throughout the length of El Paso County. Upriver of El Paso, a portion of this trail is complete. Ultimately, the trail would link many river-valley cultural, historic and environmental features, including Rio Bosque Wetlands Park. Please address in the SEA the impact of any fencing, lighting or road improvements on the proposed Rio Grande Trail System.

Mr. William Fickel, Jr.  
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Alternatives

Given the potential impacts – both at Rio Bosque and elsewhere – of the proposed project on wildlife, wildlife movement, aesthetics and recreational opportunity, the use of sensors and cameras to provide a “virtual fence” in place of a physical fence deserves consideration for all or portions of the project area. Please fully evaluate such an alternative in the SEA.

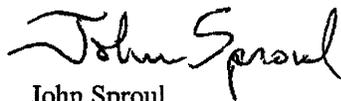
We also recommend that the SEA explore approaches to lighting that will minimize impacts to Rio Bosque Wetlands Park and other sensitive sites along the project alignment, including:

- shielding and other appropriate design features to prevent light trespass on the Park, and
- design and placement of the light poles to eliminate or minimize their visibility from the Park during daytime.

In your letter of July 11, 2007, you state that the SEA is to be tiered from the 2006 Programmatic Environmental Assessment for Proposed Tactical Infrastructure, Office of Border Patrol, El Paso Sector, Texas Stations. We would appreciate obtaining a copy of that document to better understand how the proposed project might relate to Rio Bosque Wetlands Park.

Thank you for the opportunity to contribute to the SEA for the proposed project. Please keep us informed of its progress, and please feel free to contact me if you have questions or need more information.

Very truly yours,



John Sproul  
Program Coordinator/Manager  
Rio Bosque Wetlands Park  
(915) 747-8663  
(915) 747-5145 fax  
jsproul@utep.edu

c: Deborah Hamlyn, Deputy City Manager, Quality of Life Services, City of El Paso  
Barry Russell, Acting Director, Parks and Recreation Dept., City of El Paso





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

July 11, 2007

REPLY TO  
ATTENTION OF

Planning, Environmental and Regulatory Division

SUBJECT: Supplemental Environmental Assessment for the Proposed Construction of Fence, Lights and Road Improvements along the International Boundary and Water Commission Levee in El Paso County

El Paso Water Improvement District No. 1  
ATTN: General Manager  
P. O. Box 17489  
El Paso, TX 79917-7489

Dear Gentlemen:

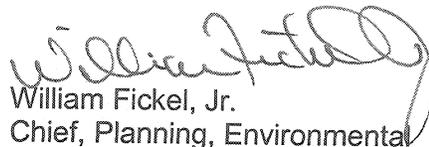
On behalf of U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) and Department of Homeland Security, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) intends to prepare a Supplemental Environmental Assessment (SEA) for the proposed construction of up to 21 miles of pedestrian fence, border lighting, and road improvements along a section of the United States Section, International Boundary and Water Commission (USIBWC) levee near the Rio Grande from the Rio Bosque to the Fabens Port of Entry (POE) in El Paso County, Texas. In addition, four bridges over the District irrigation canal would also be replaced.

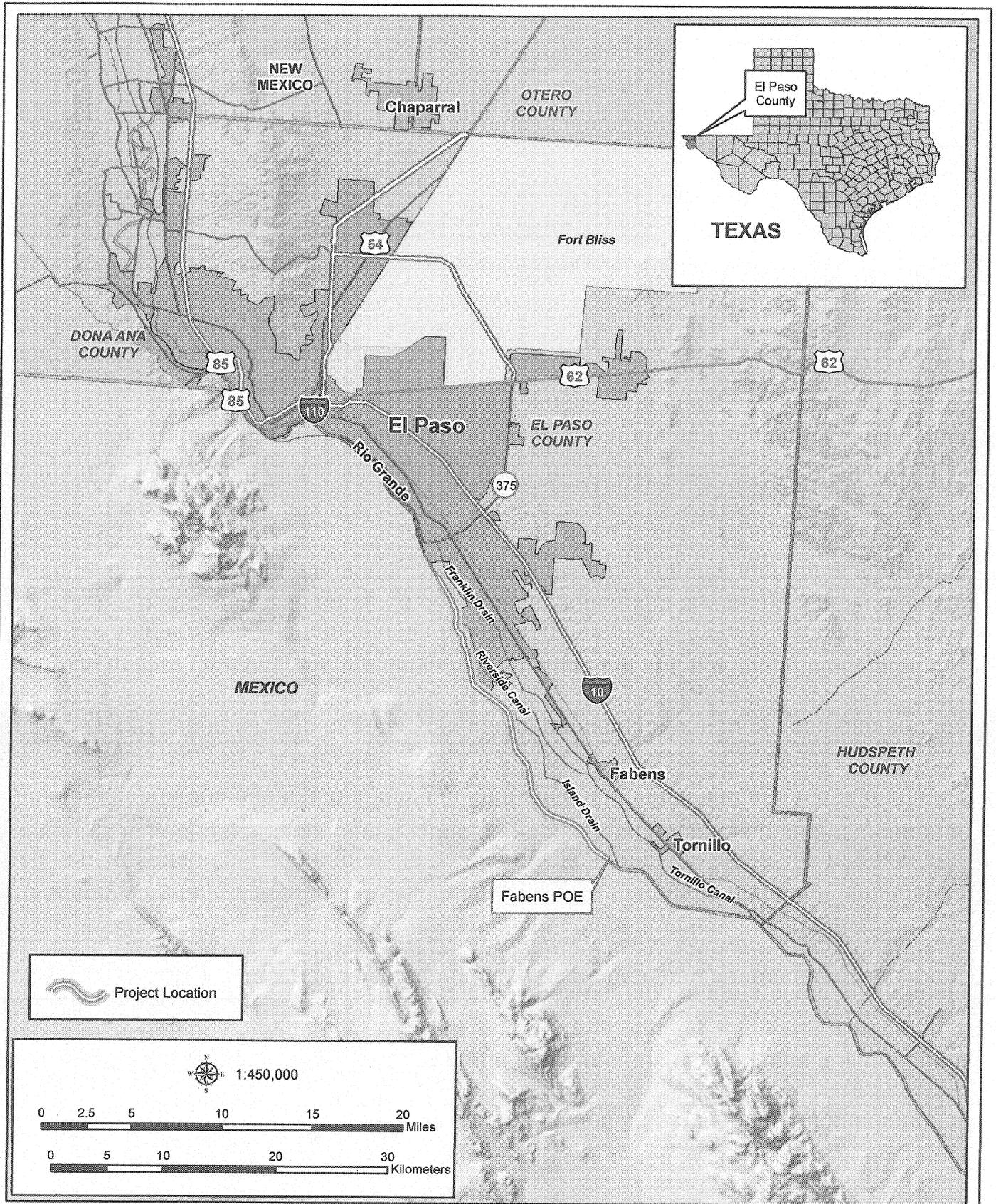
The SEA will analyze the potential for significant adverse or beneficial impacts of the proposed action. The SEA is tiered from the 2006 Programmatic Environmental Assessment (PEA) for Proposed Tactical Infrastructure, Office of Border Patrol, El Paso Sector, Texas Stations.

We are currently in the process of gathering the most current information available regarding environmental resources and other areas of concern occurring within this area. We respectfully request that your agency provide input regarding unique or environmentally sensitive areas or other issues that you believe may be affected by the proposed OBP activities.

We intend to provide your agency with a copy of the Draft SEA for the proposed action once completed. Please let us know if additional copies are needed. Your prompt attention to this request would be greatly appreciated. If you have any questions, please call Mr. Charles McGregor at (817) 886-1585.

Sincerely,

  
William Fickel, Jr.  
Chief, Planning, Environmental  
and Regulatory Division



Project Location Map



July 2007



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

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ATTENTION OF:

July 11, 2007

Planning, Environmental and Regulatory Division

SUBJECT: Supplemental Environmental Assessment for the Proposed Construction of Fence, Lights and Road Improvements along the International Boundary and Water Commission Levee in El Paso County

Texas Parks and Wildlife  
West Texas Wildlife District  
ATTN: Mr. Tim Bone, Natural Resource Specialist  
109 South Cockrell  
Alpine, TX 79830

Dear Mr. Bone:

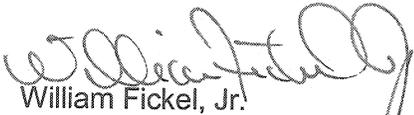
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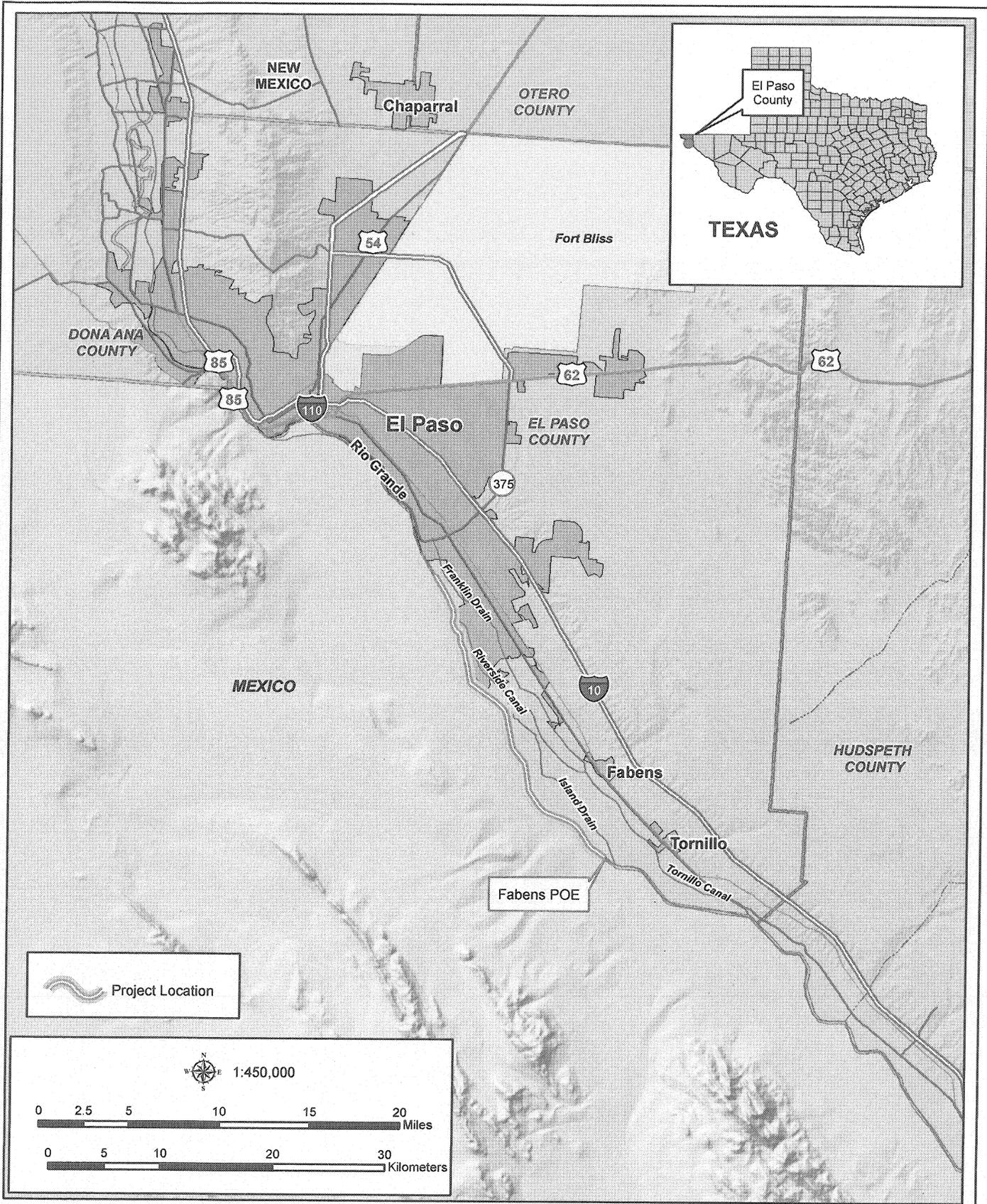
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July 2007



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

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ATTENTION OF:

July 11, 2007

Planning, Environmental and Regulatory Division

SUBJECT: Supplemental Environmental Assessment for the Proposed Construction of Fence, Lights and Road Improvements along the International Boundary and Water Commission Levee in El Paso County

Texas Commission on Environmental Quality  
ATTN: Ms. Patty Reeh  
1921 Cedar Bend Drive, Suite 150  
Austin, TX 78758

Dear Ms Reeh:

On behalf of U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) and Department of Homeland Security, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) intends to prepare a Supplemental Environmental Assessment (SEA) for the proposed construction of up to 21 miles of pedestrian fence, border lighting, and road improvements along a section of the United States Section, International Boundary and Water Commission (USIBWC) levee near the Rio Grande from the Rio Bosque to the Fabens Port of Entry (POE) in El Paso County, Texas. In addition, four bridges over the District irrigation canal would also be replaced.

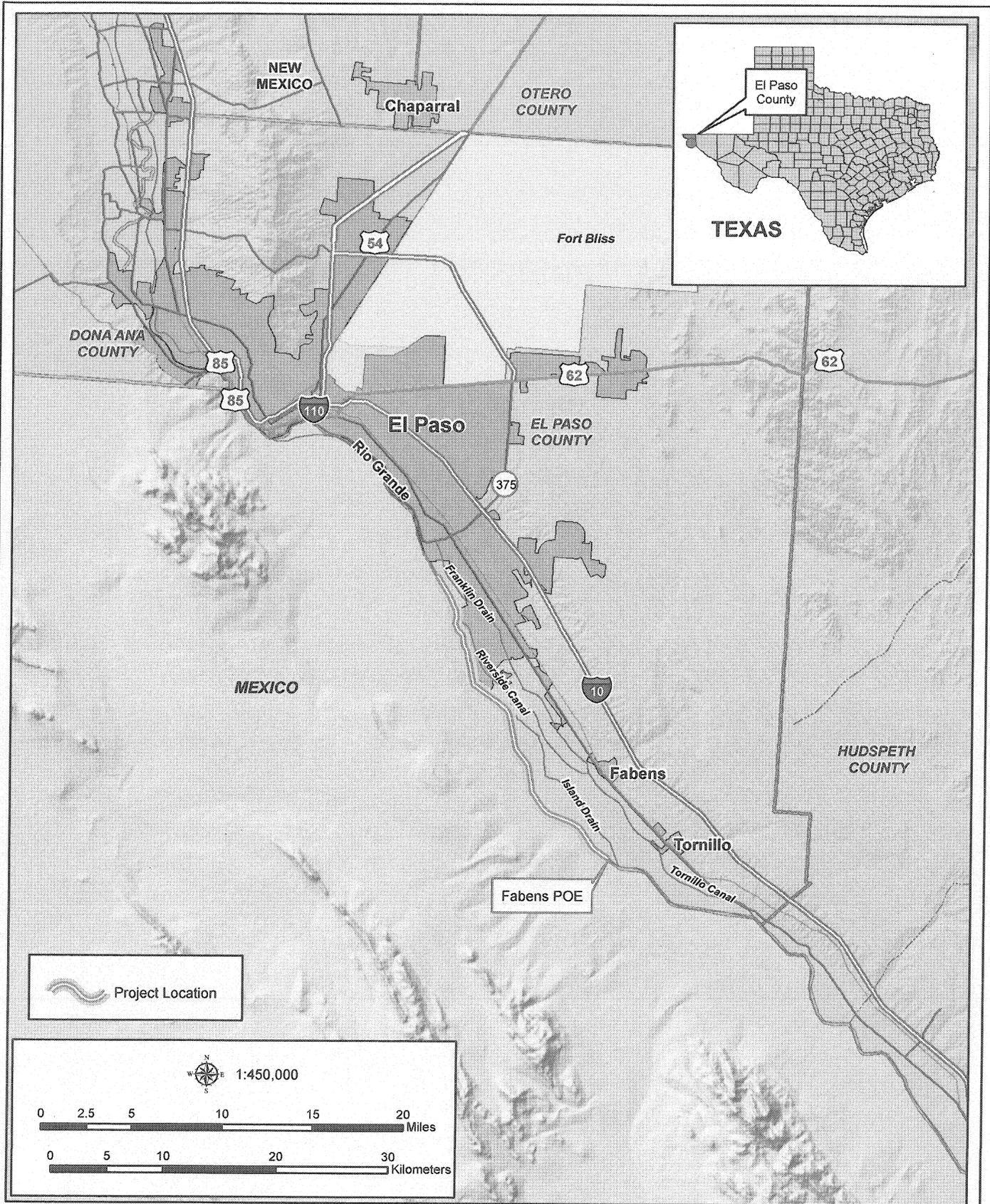
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