

1 **1.0 INTRODUCTION**

2
3 The United States (U.S.) Customs and Border Protection (CBP) and U.S. Border Patrol
4 (USBP) propose to construct, operate, and maintain approximately 7 miles of new
5 roads, 10 miles of primary pedestrian fence, and 10 miles of road improvements along
6 the U.S./Mexico international border in eastern San Diego County, California. The
7 proposed fence and road improvements would be primarily restricted to the 60-foot wide
8 Roosevelt Reservation, which are public lands managed by the U.S. Bureau of Land
9 Management (BLM). However, some of the new road construction would extend
10 beyond the Roosevelt Reservation and affect additional Federal and private lands. The
11 Proposed Action would occur within the USBP El Cajon, Campo, and Boulevard
12 Stations' Areas of Operations (AO). The proposed tactical infrastructure (TI) is located
13 adjacent to numerous TI components that were described in the *Final Environmental*
14 *Assessment for Various Road Improvements from Canyon City to the Imperial County*
15 *Line, San Diego County, California, March 2003*, by the U.S. Department of Homeland
16 Security (DHS). Therefore, much of the information contained in the DHS 2003
17 Environmental Assessment (EA) will be incorporated by reference into this EA. Site
18 specific surveys for various resources were conducted for this EA in order to update
19 information from the DHS 2003 EA. This EA is also tiered from the Immigration and
20 Naturalization Service's (INS) 2001 *Supplemental Programmatic Environmental Impact*
21 *Statement for the Continuation of Immigration and Naturalization Service and Joint Task*
22 *Force Six Activities along the Southwestern Border* (INS 2001).

23
24 This EA is divided into seven sections plus appendices. Section 1 provides background
25 information on USBP missions, identifies the purpose of and need for the Proposed
26 Action, describes the area in which the Proposed Action would occur, and explains the
27 public involvement process. Section 2 provides a detailed description of the Proposed
28 Action, other alternatives considered, and the No Action Alternative. Section 3
29 describes the existing environmental conditions and potential environmental impacts
30 that could occur from each alternative evaluated in detail. Section 4 discusses potential

1 cumulative impacts and other impacts that might result from implementation of the
2 Proposed Action, combined with foreseeable future actions. Section 5 discusses
3 potential mitigation measures to reduce adverse effects. Sections 6 and 7 provide a list
4 of references and preparers for the EA.

5
6 **1.1 USBP BACKGROUND**
7

8 The mission of CBP is to prevent terrorists and terrorist weapons from entering the
9 United States, while also facilitating the flow of legitimate trade and travel. In supporting
10 CBP's mission, USBP is charged with establishing and maintaining effective control of
11 the border of the U.S. USBP's mission strategy consists of five main objectives:

- 12
- 13 • Establish substantial probability of apprehending terrorists and their
14 weapons as they attempt to enter illegally between the Ports of Entry
15 (POEs)
 - 16 • Deter illegal entries through improved enforcement
 - 17 • Detect, apprehend, and deter smugglers of humans, drugs, and other
18 contraband
 - 19 • Leverage "smart border" technology to multiply the effect of enforcement
20 personnel
 - 21 • Reduce crime in border communities and consequently improve quality of
22 life and economic vitality of targeted areas.
23

24 USBP has nine administrative sectors along the U.S./Mexico international border. Each
25 sector is responsible for implementing an optimal combination of personnel, technology,
26 and infrastructure appropriate to its operational requirements. The San Diego Sector is
27 responsible for San Diego County in California. The areas affected by the Proposed
28 Action include the southeastern portion of San Diego County.

29
30 **1.2 PURPOSE AND NEED**
31

32 The purpose of the Proposed Action is to increase border security within the USBP San
33 Diego Sector through the construction, operation, and maintenance of TI in the form of
34 fences and roads and other supporting technological and tactical assets. The USBP

1 San Diego Sector has identified 14 discrete areas along the border that experience high
2 levels of illegal cross-border activity. This activity occurs in areas that are remote and
3 not easily accessed by USBP agents, contain thick vegetation that can provide
4 concealment, near POE's where concentrated populations might live on either side of
5 the border, or have quick access to U.S. transportation routes.

6
7 The Proposed Action is needed to provide USBP agents with the tools necessary to
8 strengthen their control of the U.S. borders between POEs in the USBP San Diego
9 Sector. The Proposed Action would help to deter illegal cross border activities within the
10 USBP San Diego Sector by improving enforcement, preventing terrorists and terrorist
11 weapons from entering the U. S., reducing the flow of illegal drugs, and enhancing
12 response time, while providing a safer work environment for USBP agents.

13

14 **1.3 PROPOSED ACTION**

15

16 The project corridor for this EA extends from Tecate Port-of-Entry to the eastern edge of
17 O'Neill Valley, near the San Diego/Imperial County line (Figure 1-1). The project study
18 corridor is defined by a 100-foot to 250-wide corridor, approximately 30 miles long.
19 However, TI is not currently proposed along the entire corridor.

20

21 USBP proposes to construct, maintain, and operate TI consisting of 14 discrete sections
22 of primary pedestrian fence, patrol roads, and access roads along the U.S./Mexico
23 international border in the USBP San Diego Sector, California (examples of primary
24 pedestrian fence are included in Appendix A). Proposed TI includes installation of
25 primary pedestrian fence sections in areas of the border that are not currently fenced.
26 The proposed locations of TI are based on a USBP San Diego Sector assessment of
27 local operational requirements where such infrastructure would assist USBP agents in
28 reducing illegal cross-border activities. The Fiscal Year (FY) 2007 DHS Appropriations
29 Act (Public Law [P.L.] 109-295) provided \$1,187,565,000 under the Border Security
30 Fencing, Infrastructure, and Technology appropriation for the installation of fencing,

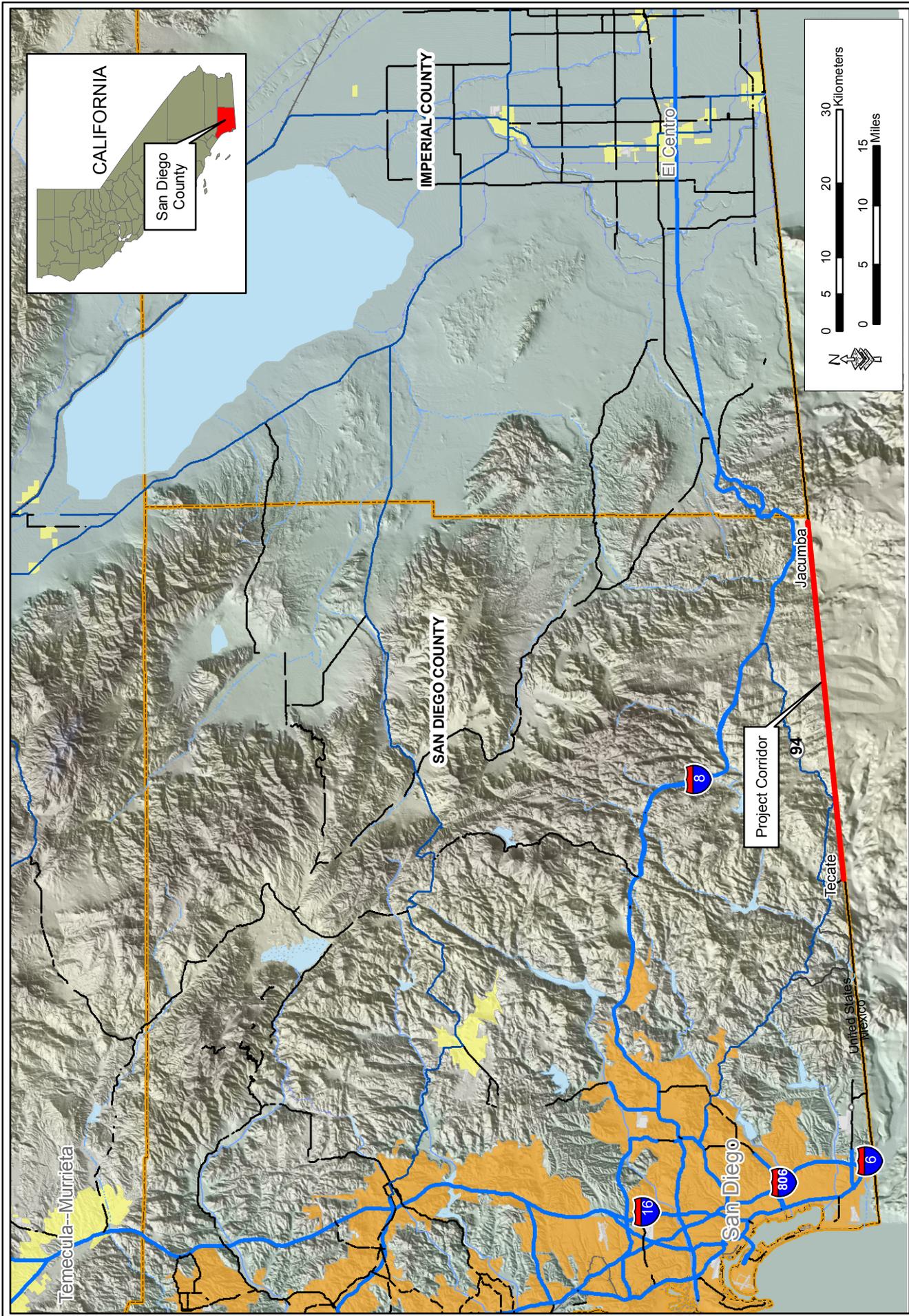


Figure 1-1: Vicinity Map

1 infrastructure, and technology along the border (CRS 2006). Figure 1-2 illustrates the
2 location of the proposed TI within the San Diego Sector. Details of the Proposed Action
3 are included in Section 2.2.2.

4

5 **1.4 FRAMEWORK FOR ANALYSIS**

6

7 The process for implementing the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) is codified
8 in Code of Federal Regulations 40 (CFR) Parts 1500–1508, *Regulations for*
9 *Implementing the Procedural Provisions of the National Environmental Policy Act*, and
10 DHS’s related Management Directive (MD) 5100.1, *Environmental Planning Program*.
11 The Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) was established under NEPA to
12 implement and oversee Federal policy in this process.

13

14 An EA is prepared when a proposed action is anticipated to have potentially “significant”
15 environmental impacts, or a proposed action is environmentally controversial. CEQ
16 regulations specify that the following must be accomplished when preparing an EA:

17

- 18 • Briefly provide evidence and analysis for determining whether to prepare
19 an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) or a Finding of No Significant
20 Impact (FONSI)
- 21 • Aid in an agency’s compliance with NEPA when an EIS is unnecessary
- 22 • Facilitate preparation of an EIS when one is necessary.

23

24 To comply with NEPA, the planning and decision making process for actions proposed
25 by Federal agencies involves a study of other relevant environmental statutes and
26 regulations. The NEPA process, however, does not replace procedural or substantive
27 requirements of other environmental statutes and regulations. It addresses them
28 collectively in the form of an EA or EIS, which enables the decision maker to have a
29 comprehensive view of major environmental issues and requirements associated with
30 the Proposed Action. According to CEQ regulations, the requirements of NEPA must
31 be integrated “with other planning and environmental review procedures required by law
32 or by agency so that all such procedures run concurrently rather than consecutively.”

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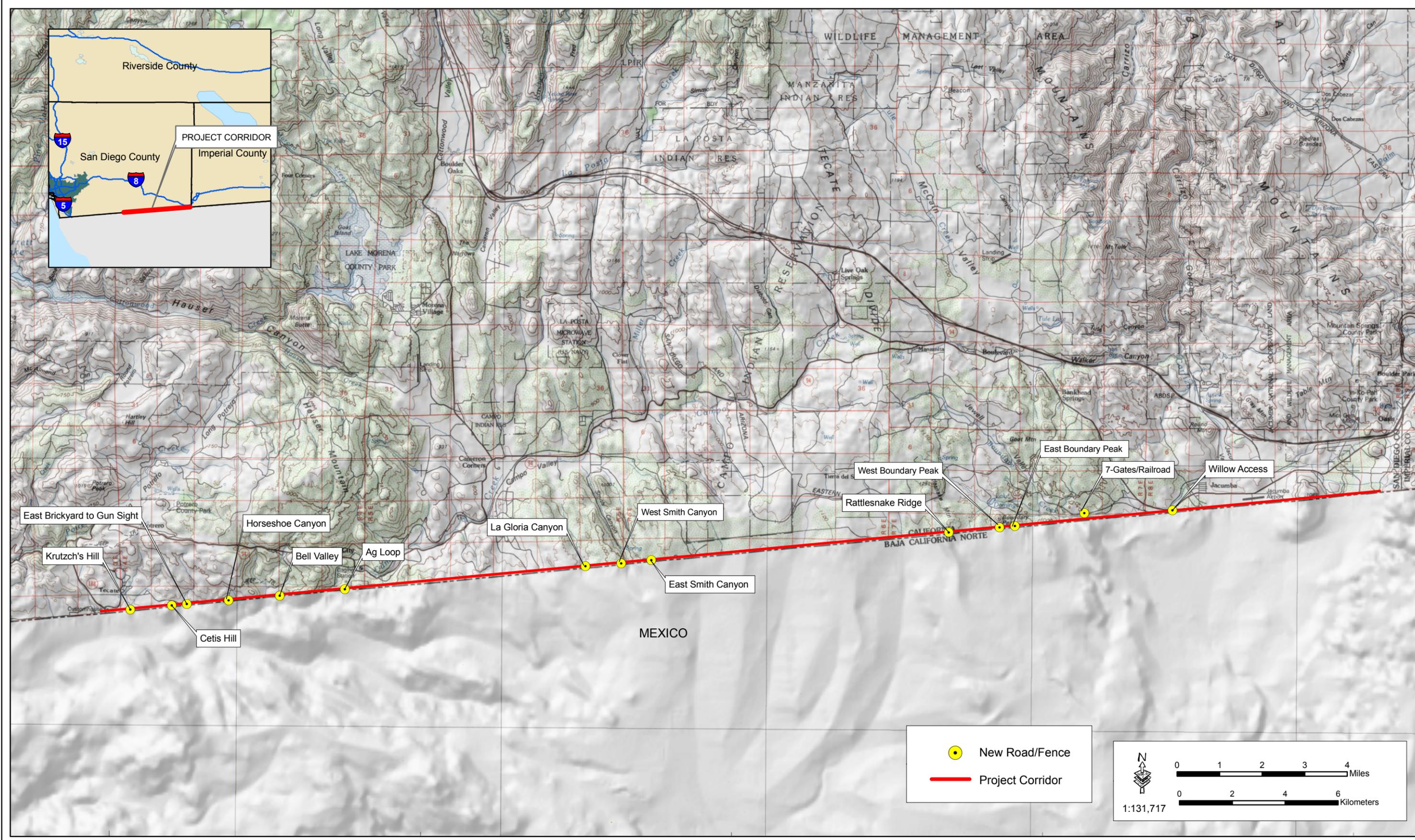


Figure 1-2: Project Location Map

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1 Within the framework of environmental impact analysis under NEPA, additional
2 authorities that may be applicable include the Clean Air Act (CAA), Clean Water
3 Act(CWA) (including a National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System [NPDES] storm
4 water discharge permit and Section 404 permit), Section 10 of the Rivers and Harbors
5 Act of 1899, Noise Control Act, Endangered Species Act (ESA), Migratory Bird Treaty
6 Act (MBTA), National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA), Archaeological Resources
7 Protection Act (ARPA), Resource Conservation and Recovery Act (RCRA), Toxic
8 Substances Control Act (TSCA), and various Executive Orders (EOs). A summary of
9 EOs that might be applicable to the Proposed Action include EO 11988 (Floodplain
10 Management), EO 11990 (Protection of Wetlands), EO12088 (Federal Compliance with
11 Pollution Control Standards), EO 12580 (Superfund Implementation), EO 12898
12 (Federal Actions to Address Environmental Justice in Minority Populations and Low-
13 Income Populations), EO 13045 (Protection of Children from Environmental Health
14 Risks and Safety Risks), EO 13423 (Strengthening Federal Environmental, Energy, and
15 Transportation Management), EO 13175 (Consultation and Coordination with Indian
16 Tribal Governments), EO 13148 (Greening the Government through Leadership in
17 Environmental Management) and EO 13186 (Responsibilities of Federal Agencies to
18 Protect Migratory Birds), EO 11514 (Protection and Enhancement of Environmental
19 Quality, as amended by EO 11991); EO 12114 (Environmental Effects Abroad of Major
20 Federal Actions); EO 13101 (Greening the Government through Waste Prevention,
21 Recycling, and Federal Acquisition); EO 13123 (Greening the Government through
22 Efficient Energy Management); EO 13148 (Greening the Government through
23 Leadership in Environmental Management); and EO 13149 (Greening the Government
24 through Federal Fleet and Transportation Efficiency).

25

26 Table 1-1 lists major Federal and state permits, approvals, and interagency coordination
27 required to construct, maintain, and operate the proposed TI.

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Table 1-1. Major Permits, Approvals, and Interagency Coordination

Agency	Permit/Approval/Coordination
U.S. Department of the Interior, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Section 7 ESA consultation - MBTA coordination
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - CWA NPDES permit
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - CWA Section 404 permit
San Diego Regional Water Quality Control Board	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - CWA Section 401 State Water Quality Certification
San Diego Air Pollution Control District	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - CAA permit consultation
California Department of Fish and Game (CDFG)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - California Endangered Species Act (CESA) coordination
California State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - NHPA Section 106 consultation
Federally recognized American Indian Tribes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Consultation regarding potential effects on cultural resources
Advisory Council on Historic Preservation (ACHP)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - NHPA Section 106 consultation

2

3 **1.5 PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT**

4

5 Agency and public involvement in the NEPA process promotes open communication
 6 between the public and the government and enhances the decision-making process. All
 7 persons or organizations having a potential interest in the Proposed Action are
 8 encouraged to participate in the decision-making process.

9

10 NEPA and implementing regulations from the President’s CEQ and DHS direct
 11 agencies to make their EAs and EISs available to the public during the decision-making
 12 process and prior to actions being taken. The premise of NEPA is that the quality of
 13 Federal decisions will be enhanced if proponents provide information to the public and
 14 involve the public in the planning process.

15

16 Through the public involvement process, USBP notified relevant Federal, state, and
 17 local agencies of the Proposed Action and requested input regarding environmental
 18 concerns they might have regarding the Proposed Action. The public involvement

1 process provides USBP with the opportunity to cooperate with and consider state and
2 local views in its decision regarding implementing this Federal proposal. As part of the
3 EA process, USBP has coordinated with agencies such as the BLM; U.S.
4 Environmental Protection Agency (EPA); U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS);
5 California State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO); and other Federal, state, and local
6 agencies (see Appendix B). Input from agency responses has been incorporated into
7 the analysis of potential environmental impacts.

8
9 A Notice of Availability (NOA) for this EA and proposed FONSI will be published in the
10 *San Diego Tribune*. This is done to solicit comments on the Proposed Action and
11 involve the local community in the decision-making process. Comments from the public
12 and other Federal, state, and local agencies will be incorporated into the Final EA and
13 included in Appendix B.

14
15 Throughout the NEPA process, the public may obtain information concerning the status
16 and progress of the EA via the project Web site at *www.BorderFenceNEPA.com*; by
17 emailing *information@BorderFenceNEPA.com*; or by written request to Mr. Charles
18 McGregor, Environmental Manager, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Fort Worth District,
19 Engineering and Construction Support Office, 814 Taylor Street, Room 3B10, Fort
20 Worth, TX 76102, and Fax: (817) 866-6404.

21

22 **1.6 COOPERATING AND COORDINATING AGENCIES**

23

24 The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE)-Los Angeles District, BLM Palm Springs-
25 South Coast Field Office, and U.S. Section, International Water Boundary and Water
26 Commission (USIBWC) as cooperating agencies, and the USFWS as a coordinating
27 agency, also have decision-making authority for components of the Proposed Action
28 and intend for this EA to fulfill their requirements for compliance with NEPA. The CEQ
29 regulations implementing NEPA instruct agencies to combine environmental documents
30 to reduce duplication and paperwork (40 CFR 1506.4).

1 The USACE-Los Angeles District Engineer has the authority to authorize actions under
2 Section 404 of the CWA. Applications for work involving the discharge of fill material
3 into waters of the United States will be submitted to the USACE-Los Angeles District
4 Regulatory Program Branch for review and a decision on issuance of a permit will be
5 reached.

6
7 Section 7 of the ESA (P.L. 93-205, December 28, 1973) states that any project
8 authorized, funded, or conducted by any Federal agency should not "...jeopardize the
9 continued existence of any endangered species or threatened species or result in the
10 destruction or adverse modification of habitat of such species which is determined ... to
11 be critical." The USFWS is a cooperating agency regarding this Proposed Action to
12 determine whether any federally listed or proposed endangered or threatened species
13 or their designated critical habitats would be adversely impacted by the Proposed
14 Action, to streamline the Section 7 consultation process, to identify the nature and
15 extent of potential effects, and to jointly develop measures that would avoid or reduce
16 potential effects on any species of concern. The USFWS will issue their Biological
17 Opinion of the potential for jeopardy. If their opinion is that the project is not likely to
18 jeopardize any listed species, they can also issue an incidental take statement as an
19 exception to the prohibitions in Section 9 of the ESA.

20
21 Along some of the proposed fence sections the tactical infrastructure would follow
22 rights-of-ways (ROWs) administered by the USIBWC. The USIBWC is an international
23 body composed of a U.S. Section and a Mexican Section, each headed by an Engineer-
24 Commissioner appointed by their respective president. Each Section is administered
25 independently of the other. The USIBWC is a Federal government agency
26 headquartered in El Paso, Texas, and operates under the foreign policy guidance of the
27 Department of State (USIBWC 2007). The USIBWC would provide access and ROWs
28 to construct proposed tactical infrastructure within the San Diego Sector. It will also
29 ensure that design and placement of the proposed tactical infrastructure does not
30 impact flood control process and does not violate treaty obligations between the U.S.
31 and Mexico.

1 As mentioned, a request to be a cooperating agency was also be submitted to BLM,
2 since some of the road improvements, required to construct and maintain the fence,
3 would be located within lands managed by BLM. BLM is required to manage the natural
4 resources to ensure sustainability of grazing leases, recreational opportunities, cultural
5 resources, and natural resources. As part of this mission, the EA will need to address
6 project impacts to BLM's Range Management Plan. BLM has accepted this invitation to
7 be a cooperating agency (Appendix B).

8

9 **1.7 CALIFORNIA ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY ACT**

10

11 The California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) as promulgated in the California
12 Public Resources Code §§21000-21177, was adopted in 1970 by the State of California
13 to inform governmental decision-makers and the public about the potential
14 environmental effects of a project, identify ways to reduce adverse impacts, offer
15 alternatives to the project, and disclose to the public why a project was approved.
16 CEQA applies to projects undertaken, funded, or requiring an issuance of a permit by a
17 public agency. For this project, CEQA is applicable because under Section 401 of the
18 CWA (33 United States Code [U.S.C.] 1341), states and tribes are delegated authority
19 to approve, condition, or deny all Federal permits of licenses that might result in a
20 discharge to state or tribal waters, including wetlands. Projects that have a potential for
21 resulting in physical change to the environment, and or that might be subject to several
22 discretionary approvals by governmental agencies including construction activities,
23 clearing or grading of land, improvements to existing structures, and activities or
24 equipment involving the issuance of a permit, are required to go through the CEQA
25 process. The California Code of Regulations (CCR), Title 14, Section 15063, allow the
26 use of a NEPA document to meet the requirements for an Initial Study under CEQA.

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SECTION 2.0
PROPOSED ACTION AND ALTERNATIVES

1 **2.0 PROPOSED ACTION AND ALTERNATIVES**

2
3 This section provides detailed information on USBP’s proposal to construct, maintain,
4 and operate TI along the U.S./Mexico international border in the San Diego Sector,
5 California. The range of reasonable alternatives considered in this EA is constrained to
6 those that would meet the purpose and need described in Section 1 to provide USBP
7 agents with the tools necessary to achieve effective control of the border in the San
8 Diego Sector. Such alternatives must also meet essential technical, engineering, and
9 economic threshold requirements to ensure that each is environmentally sound,
10 economically viable, and complies with governing standards and regulations.

11
12 The screening criteria for alternatives are described below in Section 2.1, followed by a
13 description of the No Action Alternative (Section 2.2). Section 2.3 provides specific
14 details of the Proposed Action Alternative, Section 2.4 describes the only other viable
15 alternative (Secure Fence Act Alternative). Other alternatives that were considered
16 during the preparation of the EA, but not analyzed in detail, are discussed in Section
17 2.5.

18
19 **2.1 SCREENING CRITERIA FOR ALTERNATIVES**

20
21 The following screening criteria were used to develop the Proposed Action and evaluate
22 potential alternatives. USBP San Diego Sector is working to develop the right
23 combination of personnel, technology, and infrastructure to meet its objective to gain
24 effective control of the border in the USBP San Diego Sector.

- 25
26 • USBP Operational Requirements. The selected alternative must support
27 USBP mission needs to hinder or delay individuals crossing the border
28 illegally. Once individuals have entered an urban area or suburban
29 neighborhood, it is much more difficult for USBP agents to identify and
30 apprehend suspects engaged in unlawful border entry. In addition, around
31 populated areas it is relatively easy for cross-border violators to find
32 transportation into the interior of the United States.

- 1 • Threatened or Endangered Species and Critical Habitat. The selected
2 alternative would be designed to minimize adverse impacts on threatened
3 or endangered species and their critical habitat to the maximum extent
4 practical. USBP is working with the USFWS to identify potential
5 conservation and mitigation measures.
- 6 • Wetlands and Floodplains. The selected alternative would be designed to
7 avoid and minimize impacts on wetlands, surface waters, and floodplain
8 resources to the maximum extent practicable. USBP is working with the
9 USACE-Los Angeles District to avoid, minimize, and mitigate potential
10 impacts on wetlands, surface waters, and floodplains.
- 11 • Cultural and Historic Resources. The selected alternative would be
12 designed to minimize impacts on cultural and historic resources to the
13 maximum.

14 15 **2.2 ALTERNATIVE 1. NO ACTION ALTERNATIVE**

16
17 CEQ regulations require inclusion of the No Action Alternative. Under the No Action
18 Alternative, the fence and road improvements would not be constructed. The No Action
19 Alternative will serve as a baseline against which the impacts of the proposed action
20 alternative can be evaluated. However, the No Action Alternative does not satisfy the
21 purpose and need or Congressional mandates.

22 23 **2.3 ALTERNATIVE 2. PROPOSED ACTION**

24
25 CBP/USBP proposes construction, operation, and maintenance of fence and roads at
26 various locations along the entire 30-mile long corridor. It should be noted that TI is not
27 proposed for construction along the entire 30-mile corridor and that USBP has identified
28 this alternative as the Preferred Alternative. New road construction is described below
29 in Section 2.3.1. Road improvements would occur along some border roads to reduce
30 driving hazards and concealment opportunities for IAs. These actions are described in
31 Section 2.3.2. The proposed primary pedestrian fence construction is described in
32 Section 2.3.3.

2.3.1 Road Improvements

New roads would be constructed at 14 different locations. These locations and the lengths of each road are described in Table 2-1 and detailed maps of the location and footprint of each component are contained in Appendix A.

Table 2-1. New Road Construction, by USBP Station

Road Name	Affected Station	Miles	Road Type
Krutzch's Hill	El Cajon	0.26	Construction
Cetis Hill	El Cajon	0.62	Construction
East Brickyard to Gunsight	El Cajon	0.25	Construction
Horseshoe Canyon	El Cajon	1.00	Construction/Access
Bell Valley	El Cajon	0.18	Patrol
Ag Loop	El Cajon	0.52	Construction/Access
La Gloria	Campo	0.25	Construction/Access
West Smith Canyon	Campo	0.25	Patrol
East Smith Canyon Access	Campo	0.03	Access
Rattlesnake Ridge	Campo	1.14	Construction/Access
West Boundary Peak	Campo	0.09	Construction
East Boundary Peak	Campo	0.09	Construction
7 Gates Railroad	Boulevard	2.00	Patrol
Willows Access Road	Boulevard	0.08	Access
Total		6.76	

As indicated in Table 2-1, there are three types of roads proposed, based on their intended use. Construction roads are needed to construct additional infrastructure, such as fence or future installation of lights or cameras. These roads are typically 12 to 16 feet wide to allow construction equipment to access the project site. The road is not improved (*i.e.*, no all-weather surface is applied), but can be used for future maintenance purposes. With the exception of the Willows Access Road and the East Smith Canyon Access Road, a new primary pedestrian fence (as described in Section 2.3.2), would be constructed along each of the new road segments.

Patrol roads are needed to provide a safe driving surface along the border. Patrol roads are typically 28 feet wide exclusive of parallel drainage ditches, shoulders and safety berms. These roads are typically constructed at grades less than 18 percent; thus, cut and fill activities are needed in terrain where hills and valleys occur. Aggregate and soil stabilizing or binding agent would be added to the surface of the road, once the

1 construction is completed, to reduce erosion and maintenance activities. A top shot of
2 the soil stabilizing agent would be added to the surface on an annual basis to ensure
3 the road surface longevity. Water bars would be installed at various locations along the
4 road to direct stormwater into parallel ditches or down slope to reduce erosion of the
5 road surface. Some roads proposed would have grades greater than 18 percent and,
6 thus, would require pavement to ensure safe driving conditions and control erosion.

7
8 Access roads (typically 12 to 16 feet wide) are constructed to allow USBP agents to
9 access areas that previously were inaccessible due to rough terrain, no roads, or
10 contained private lands. As shown in Table 2-1, many of the construction roads would
11 serve a dual purpose of allowing construction of the TI and future USBP access. These
12 roads would also provide access for maintenance activities required in the future.

13
14 A low water crossing (LWC) or similar drainage structure would be required at some
15 stream crossings to ensure access, except during extreme flood conditions. The design
16 of the LWC has not been determined as yet, but would typically consist of a concrete
17 swale or rock gabions. Rip rap would be placed on the upstream and downstream side
18 of the LWC for energy dissipation. The footprint of the LWC would be expected to
19 extend approximately 25 to 40 feet on either side of the crossing to allow placement of
20 the rip rap. Likewise, the design for other types of drainage structures have not been
21 finalized as yet, but would be expected to include reinforced concrete pipe (RCP) with
22 energy dissipation installed on either end of the RCP. Clean, native material would be
23 brought in from local sources for fill activities.

24
25 Descriptions of the specific actions proposed for implementation at each of the sites
26 listed in Table 1-1 are presented below. These components are described in order from
27 west to east (see Figure 1, previously).

- 28
29 • **Krutzch's Hill.** Krutzch's Hill is a small hill that is bisected by the
30 international border. Road construction on the south side of the border
31 has created a vertical cut approximately 40 feet deep that is less than 2
32 feet from the border. The existing primary pedestrian fence is at risk of
33 collapsing onto the Mexican side of the border if this vertical slope fails.

1 Consequently, USBP proposes to remove the fence and the remaining
2 portion of Krutzch's Hill, and bring the entire area down to the surrounding
3 grade. The primary pedestrian fence would then be re-installed along the
4 border. Approximately 1.9 acres would be impacted by this component.
5 All lands within this segment are within the Roosevelt Reservation.

- 6 • **Cetis Hill.** Cetis Hill is a large hill that is privately-owned and bisected by
7 the international border. Primary pedestrian fence has been installed on
8 either side of the hill, but not over the top of the hill, along the border.
9 Access roads have been constructed to the top of the hill on the south
10 side of the border, providing illegal aliens (IA) with opportunities to conduct
11 surveillance from an advantage point and to illegally breach the border. A
12 construction access and maintenance road would be constructed as close
13 to the border as possible. Primary pedestrian fence would also be
14 installed along the border and tie into the primary pedestrian fence on
15 either side of Cetis Hill. Current preliminary designs indicate that a
16 permanent footprint, varying from 60 to 125 feet wide, would be required
17 to allow construction and maintenance of the road and fence.
18 Approximately 3.4 acres would be permanently impacted by this
19 component.

- 20 • **East Brickyard to Gunsight.** The East Brickyard to Gunsight road and
21 fence component is located to the east of Cetis Hill. This section is under
22 BLM ownership. This small section of road is proposed because of the
23 lack of barrier, on-going development on the Mexican side of the border,
24 and to allow USBP to obtain the advantage of the high ground. A
25 construction access/maintenance road would be constructed within the
26 60-foot Roosevelt Reservation and a primary pedestrian fence would be
27 installed along the southern toe of the road. This component would
28 permanently impact about 0.9 acre.

- 29 • **Horseshoe Canyon.** USBP's existing patrol road begins to veer
30 northward of the border, immediately east of the East Brickyard to
31 Gunsight component in order to traverse Sacred Canyon and eventually
32 Horseshoe Canyon. Consequently, no border barriers, except for very
33 short reaches of permanent vehicle barrier (PVB), have been installed in
34 this reach and the area has become a high traffic route for both illegal
35 pedestrians and vehicles. The proposed action in this area is to construct
36 a construction access and maintenance road as close to the border as
37 practicable and install a primary pedestrian fence on the southern toe of
38 the road. Cut and fill activities would be required at some minor drainages
39 to keep the footprint close to the border and to avoid creating unsafe
40 driving conditions. The cut and fill at Horseshoe Canyon would be more
41 extensive, however. The footprint would be approximately 200 feet wide
42 in the bottom of the canyon and approximately 40 feet high. The slopes
43 would be 2:1 (2 feet horizontal to 1 foot vertical). The total length of the
44 Horseshoe Canyon component would be approximately 0.93 mile. The
45 western end of the road/fence would begin near the east side of Sacred

1 Canyon. An existing access road would be improved to allow
2 construction. The eastern end of the road/fence would dead end into a
3 steep rock outcrop on the eastern side of Horseshoe Canyon. Another
4 existing access road on the western side of Horseshoe Canyon would be
5 improved to facilitate construction. The two access roads and the
6 construction/maintenance road and primary pedestrian fence would
7 impact a total of approximately 5.9 acres. The footprint for this component
8 is contained within BLM land.

- 9 • **East Bell Valley.** The East Bell Valley component would consist of
10 constructing a short (0.18 mile) segment of patrol road and primary
11 pedestrian fence. There are existing segments of primary pedestrian
12 fence in this reach that need to be connected. The East Bell Valley would
13 tie all these segments together and extend the patrol road as far east as
14 practicable. The road would be widened to 60 feet in this reach to
15 accommodate an all-weather patrol road, drag road, and associated
16 parallel drainage ditches. A drag road is used by USBP agents to check
17 for sign of IA traffic. The drag road surface is prepared by dragging tires
18 or brushes behind a USBP vehicle to smooth the surface so that evidence
19 of crossings is readily apparent. Drag roads are typically adjacent to patrol
20 roads and are often just a wide shoulder of the patrol road.
21 Approximately 0.9 acre would be permanently impacted by this action.

- 22 • **Ag Loop.** The Ag Loop road is located east of the Eastern Railroad
23 Tunnel which extends into Mexico. This area is used as an advantage
24 point by IAs and smugglers, who use either the tunnel or existing high
25 ground at the Ag Loop to breach the border when USBP agents are not
26 present. Patrol roads in this area are located far to the north, due to
27 terrain restrictions, and the area between the border and the patrol roads
28 provides excellent concealment opportunities. The proposed action is to
29 extend existing access roads south to the border and then install a
30 construction access/maintenance road and primary pedestrian fence
31 along the border for approximately 0.5 mile. This action would help to
32 reduce illegal vehicle and pedestrian traffic and allow USBP agents to gain
33 the advantage of the higher grounds for surveillance. This component
34 would permanently impact approximately 3.2 acres, all of which is located
35 within BLM lands.

- 36 • **La Gloria Canyon.** A patrol road and primary pedestrian fence are
37 proposed for construction across La Gloria Canyon. The road is needed
38 to allow quick access across La Gloria Canyon. The current patrol road is
39 approximately 0.2 miles north of the border; however, because of the
40 severe grades and sharp curves, driving time from one side to the other
41 requires up to 10 minutes, in good weather. This is an unsafe condition for
42 USBP agents during emergency situations and it provides excellent
43 opportunities for IAs to escape into the U.S. This component would
44 require extensive cut and fill activities to create a road platform that
45 traverses the canyon. The entire length would be approximately 0.25 mile

1 long; the width and height of the embankment would be approximately 100
2 feet and 35 feet, respectively. Primary pedestrian fence would be installed
3 from the ends of the existing primary pedestrian fence on either side of La
4 Gloria Canyon to the primary pedestrian fence along the road
5 embankment. This component would impact approximately 2.3 acres.
6 This corridor is contained within BLM lands.

- 7 • **West Smith Canyon.** Smith Canyon is a deeply incised canyon
8 (approximately 500 feet deep) that trends northwest to southeast. Smith
9 Canyon is within BLM lands. The current access road to the western rim
10 of the canyon is located approximately 600 to 800 feet north of the border.
11 There is also an 800-foot long gap in the primary pedestrian fence that
12 creates opportunity for illegal pedestrians and vehicles to breach the
13 border. The proposed action is to extend the existing patrol road to the
14 western rim of Smith Canyon and install primary pedestrian fence along
15 the southern toe of the road. The road segment would be approximately
16 0.25 mile long and up to 60 feet wide. No drag road is expected to be
17 constructed in this reach since most of the area is comprised of cap rock.
18 Blasting would probably be required to construct the road. Approximately
19 0.9 acre would be impacted by this component.

- 20 • **East Smith Canyon Access Road.** The current access from the existing
21 patrol road to the border on the east rim of Smith Canyon is a very narrow
22 and circuitous road with steep grades, all of which create unsafe driving
23 conditions for USBP agents and maintenance equipment operators. This
24 road is proposed for abandonment; a new road would be constructed to
25 replace the current access road. The new access road would be located
26 approximately 0.4 mile from the eastern rim of the canyon in an area that
27 has been previously disturbed. The access road would be approximately
28 24 feet wide and 200 feet long and impact about 0.1 acre.

- 29 • **Rattlesnake Ridge.** The existing patrol road in the Rattlesnake Ridge
30 area is located approximately 0.5 mile north of the border and is situated
31 on private lands within San Diego Gas and Electric Company (SDG&E)
32 utility right-of-way. The length of patrol road is approximately 17 miles
33 starting at the western edge of Rattlesnake Ridge to the border at Larry
34 Pearce Road. This length and the circuitous route requires up to 30
35 minutes for USBP agents to respond to incursions or emergency actions
36 that occur within this reach. No primary pedestrian fence has been
37 installed in this area, so it too, is a high traffic area for illegal pedestrian
38 and vehicular traffic. The proposed action would be to construct a patrol
39 road and primary pedestrian fence as close to the border as practicable.
40 The construction footprint would be maintained within the 60-foot wide
41 Roosevelt Reservation, and thus, some vertical grades would be greater
42 than 18 percent. The road length would be approximately 1.1 mile long.
43 Construction of this road would reduce the amount of time required by
44 USBP agents to respond to emergencies by more than 25 minutes.
45 Installation of the primary pedestrian fence would be expected to preclude

1 illegal vehicle traffic and substantially reduce illegal pedestrian traffic. The
2 road and primary pedestrian fence would permanently impact
3 approximately 5 acres.

- 4 • **West Boundary Peak.** The existing primary pedestrian fence has a gap
5 that is approximately 425 feet long. The primary pedestrian fence was not
6 installed by previous Joint Task Force Six (JTF-6) actions due to large
7 boulders and a small drain. The proposed action at this location is to
8 install primary pedestrian fence in the gap; a construction
9 access/maintenance road would be required to install the primary
10 pedestrian fence. This would remove an opportunity for illegal pedestrian
11 and vehicle traffic to breach the border. It would also provide continuous
12 and parallel access along the border that currently is not available. The
13 road and primary pedestrian fence footprint would impact approximately
14 0.4 acres within the Roosevelt Reservation.
- 15 • **East Boundary Peak.** The existing primary pedestrian fence ends near a
16 large outcrop of rock, which provides a gap that is approximately 425 feet
17 long. The proposed action at this location is to install primary pedestrian
18 fence that ties into the rock outcrop and closes the gap; a construction
19 access/maintenance road would be required to install the primary
20 pedestrian fence. This would remove an opportunity for illegal pedestrian
21 and vehicle traffic to breach the border. The road and primary pedestrian
22 fence footprint would impact approximately 0.4 acres within the Roosevelt
23 Reservation.
- 24 • **7 Gates/Railroad Road.** This road is located east of Jacumba and would
25 be constructed adjacent to and within the right of way of the Southern
26 Pacific Railroad. Some cut and fill activities would be required to widen
27 the railroad corridor to accommodate both the railroad and the USBP
28 patrol road. The road would be approximately 12 feet wide and 2 miles
29 long. Construction of this road would substantially reduce the amount of
30 time to respond to incursions or emergency situations to the east and west
31 of this area. Currently, travel to either side involves driving approximately
32 18 miles along unimproved roads and Old Highway 80 and requires up to
33 30 minutes. Construction of this road would reduce the time required to
34 respond to less than 5 minutes. All areas that would be impacted have
35 already been disturbed by past railroad and other road construction. The
36 total area to be disturbed by this action is estimated to be 2.9 acres.
- 37 • **Willow Access Road.** In the Jacumba area, USBP's current access from
38 Old Highway 80 to the border is through private property. Landowners
39 have threatened to prevent use of these access roads. Consequently,
40 USBP has recently acquired an easement to access the border. The
41 easement would be developed into an access road. Use of the road
42 would be restricted to Government agencies and their representatives.
43 The road would be approximately 16 feet wide and have parallel drainage

1 on either side. The total area anticipated to be impacted would be less
2 than 0.2 acre.
3

4 **2.3.2 Road Improvements**

5 In addition to the new roads, slight improvements to the existing border road would be
6 implemented at various locations along the project corridor. Improvements would
7 include widening the road to encompass the entire 60-foot wide Roosevelt Reservation
8 and applying an all-weather surface, as described above. The majority of the existing
9 border road is currently 60 feet wide; however, many reaches are about 35 feet to 40
10 feet wide or contain large boulders, trees, or narrow strips of vegetation that create
11 concealment opportunities for IAs and increase health and safety risks to USBP agents.
12 Approximately 10 miles along the entire 30-mile long corridor would be widened or
13 would be improved to remove large boulders and trees. This road widening would
14 impact approximately 37 acres within the 30-mile long corridor.
15

16 **2.3.3 Fence**

17 Approximately 10 miles of primary pedestrian fence are also proposed as part of the
18 Proposed Action Alternative. These 10 miles include both new construction and
19 conversion of existing PVBs to primary pedestrian fence. The primary pedestrian fence
20 would be installed in the same areas described for the roads, with the exception of the
21 Willow Access Road, Smith Canyon Access Road, and 7 Gates Road. Vehicle fence
22 would be converted at two locations (Willow Access Road and O'Neil Valley). Table 2-2
23 provides the location and length of each fence segment.
24
25
26
27
28
29
30
31
32

Table 2-2. Fence Construction, by USBP Station

Area Name	Affected Station	Length (miles)	Fence Type
Krutch's Hill	El Cajon	0.26	Replacement
Cetis Hill	El Cajon	0.62	New
East Brickyard to Gunsight	El Cajon	0.25	New
Horseshoe Canyon	El Cajon	1.00	New
Bell Valley	El Cajon	0.18	Conversion
Ag Loop	El Cajon	0.52	New
La Gloria	Campo	0.25	New
Smith Canyon	Campo	0.25	New
Rattlesnake Ridge	Campo	1.14	New
West Boundary Peak	Campo	0.09	New
East Boundary Peak	Campo	0.09	New
Willows	Boulevard	4.00	Conversion
O'Neil Valley	Boulevard	1.16	Conversion
Total		9.81	

The primary pedestrian fence would be installed approximately 3 feet north of the international border, within the Roosevelt Reservation. The final design will be selected by the USACE. Typical types of primary pedestrian fences selected are illustrated in Appendix A. However, at a minimum, the fence must be 15 to 18 feet high and capable of withstanding a crash of 10,000-pound (gross weight) vehicle traveling at 40 miles per hour. As mentioned above, there is an existing primary pedestrian fence at Krutch's Hill; however, due to construction activities on the south side of the border, the primary pedestrian fence is at risk of collapsing and will be replaced after the road improvements are completed. Three areas (Bell Valley, Willows and O'Neil Valley) currently contain PVBs; these barriers will be converted to or replaced with primary pedestrian fence, as appropriate. Any PVBs that are removed will be recycled.

2.3.4 Blasting

Blasting might be required in certain sections (*i.e.*, 7 Gates and West Smith Canyon) that have large rocks or boulders, which create sharp curves, large humps in the road, or other driving hazards that need to be eliminated. Holes would be drilled into the center of the larger rocks and detonating material would be placed in the hole. The detonating material would be activated in order to split or fracture the rock into smaller more manageable pieces for removal. This process would create low-level noise. A noise analysis would be conducted prior to construction by the blasting contractor in

1 order to create a plan that would ensure the action would not risk injury or significantly
2 impact people near the construction site.

3

4 **2.3.5 Lighting**

5 To account for heat restrictions for adequate concrete drying and curing processes,
6 most concrete pours for low water crossings, other drainage structures, and fencing
7 would need to take place during pre-dawn hours during summer months. However, the
8 possibility exists that work would have to occur on a 24-hour basis. A 24-hour schedule
9 would be implemented only when additional efforts are needed in order to maintain the
10 work task schedule due to weather or other unforeseen situations. In order to facilitate
11 construction activities during these work hours, portable lights would be used. It is
12 estimated that no more than 10 lights would be in operation at any one time at each
13 project site.

14

15 A 6-kilowatt self-contained diesel generator powers
16 these lights (Photograph 2-1). Each unit typically
17 has four 400 to 1000-watt lamps. The portable light
18 systems can be towed to the desired construction
19 location, as needed. Upon completion of
20 construction activities, all portable lights would be
21 removed from the project corridor. Lights would be
22 oriented to illuminate the work area. The area
23 affected by illumination is limited to 200 feet from



Photograph 2-1. Portable lights

24 the light source. Also, the lights may or may not have shields placed over the lamps to
25 reduce or eliminate the effects of backlighting because they are work lights and would
26 not be deployed specifically for providing lighting for enforcement purposes.

27

28 **2.4 ALTERNATIVE 3: SECURE FENCE ACT ALIGNMENT ALTERNATIVE**

29

30 The Secure Fence Act of 2006 (Public Law 109-367) authorized the construction of at
31 least two layers of reinforced fencing along the U.S./Mexico international border. Two
32 layers of fence, known as primary and secondary fence, would be constructed

1 approximately 130 feet apart along the same route as Alternative 2, the Preferred
2 Alternative.

3
4 This alternative would also include construction and maintenance of access and patrol
5 roads. The patrol road would be between the primary secondary fences. Figure 2-1
6 shows a typical schematic of permanent and temporary impact areas for this alternative.
7 The design of the TI for Alternative 3 would be similar to that of Alternative 2.

8
9 Construction of the proposed TI would impact an approximate 130-foot wide corridor for
10 approximately 10 miles along the 14 primary pedestrian fence segments. This
11 construction corridor would accommodate access roads and construction staging areas.
12 Vegetation would be cleared and grading may occur where needed. Wherever
13 possible, existing roads would be used for construction access. This is a viable
14 alternative and will be evaluated in the EA.

15

16 **2.5 OTHER ALTERNATIVES EVALUATED BUT ELIMINATED FROM**
17 **CONSIDERATION**

18
19 Several other alternatives to the Proposed Action were evaluated but eliminated from
20 further consideration due to impediments to construction or failure to meet the purpose
21 and need for the project. These are discussed in the following subsections.

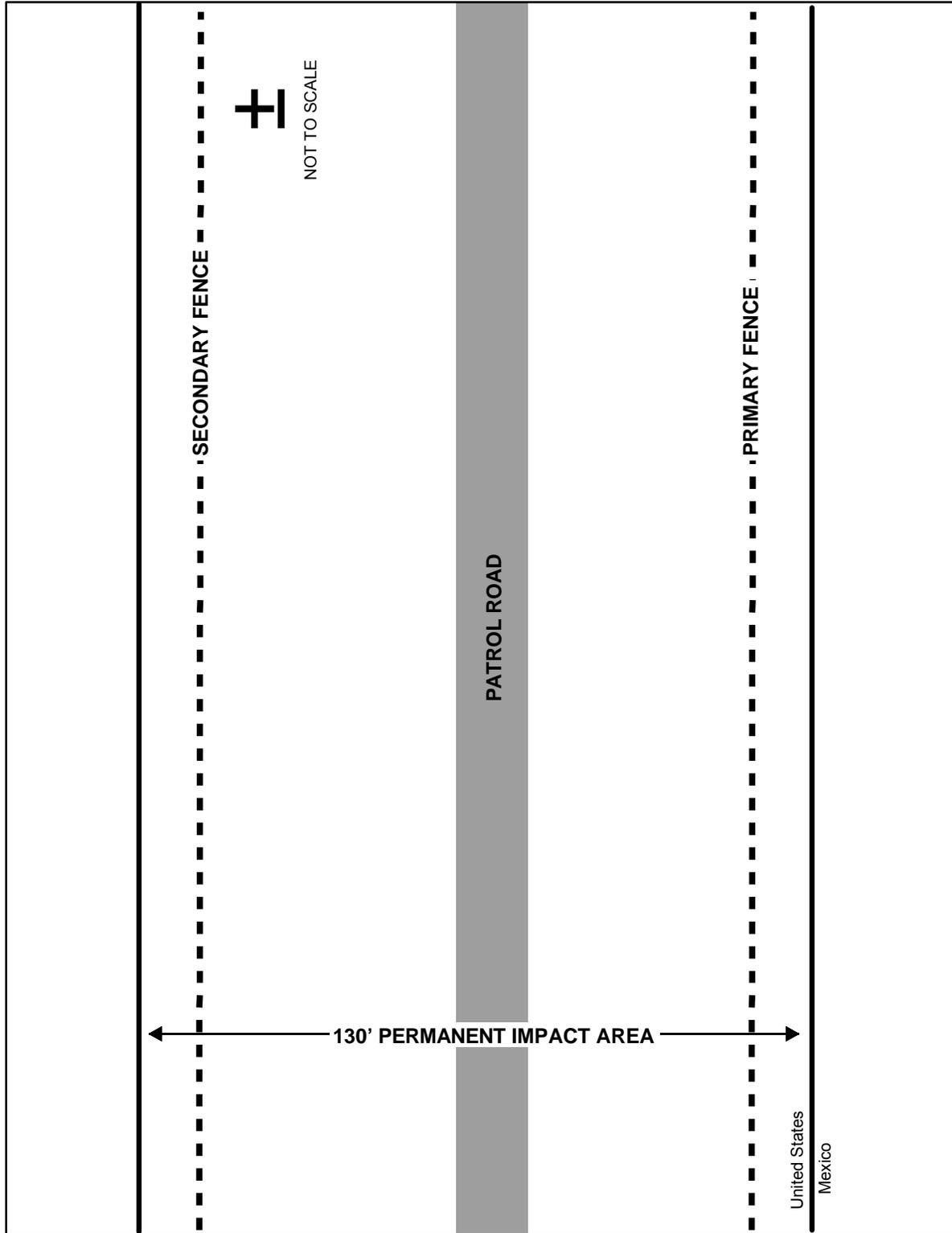
22

23 **2.5.1 Additional USBP Agents in Lieu of Tactical Infrastructure**

24 USBP considered the alternative of increasing the number of USBP agents assigned to
25 the border as a means of gaining effective control of the border. Under this alternative,
26 USBP would hire and deploy a significantly larger number of agents than are currently
27 deployed along the U.S./Mexico international border and increase patrols to apprehend
28 cross-border violators. USBP would deploy additional agents as determined by
29 operational needs, but might include 4-wheel drive vehicles, all-terrain vehicles,
30 helicopters, or fixed-wing aircraft. Currently, USBP maintains an aggressive hiring
31 program and a cadre of well-trained disciplined agents.

1
2

Figure 2-1. Schematic of Proposed Impact Areas—Alternative 3



3

1 This alternative was determined not to meet the screening criteria of USBP operational
2 requirements. The physical presence of an increased number of agents could provide
3 an enhanced level of deterrence against illegal entry into the U.S., but the use of
4 additional agents alone, in lieu of the proposed TI, would not provide a practical solution
5 to achieving effective control of the border in the San Diego Sector. The use of physical
6 barriers has been demonstrated to slow cross-border violators and provide USBP
7 agents with additional time to make apprehensions (USACE 2000).

8
9 A Congressional Research Service (CRS) report (CRS 2006) concluded that USBP
10 border security initiatives such as the 1994 “Operation Gatekeeper” required a 150
11 percent increase in USBP manpower, lighting, and other equipment. The report states
12 that “It soon became apparent to immigration officials and lawmakers that the USBP
13 needed, among other things, a ‘rigid’ enforcement system that could integrate
14 infrastructure (i.e., multi-tiered fence and roads), manpower, and new technologies to
15 further control the border region” (CRS 2006).

16
17 Tactical infrastructure, such as a primary pedestrian fence, is a force multiplier to allow
18 USBP to deploy agents efficiently and effectively. As TI is built, some agents would be
19 redeployed to other areas of the border within the sector. Increased patrols would aid in
20 interdiction activities, but not to the extent anticipated under the Proposed Action. As
21 such, this alternative is not practical in the USBP San Diego Sector and will not be
22 carried forward for further detailed analysis.

23

24 **2.5.2 Vehicle Barriers in Lieu of Fence**

25 The option to construct vehicle fence in lieu of the primary pedestrian fence would
26 restrict vehicles from illegally entering the United States; however, vehicle fences would
27 not prevent potential terrorists, illegal aliens, or drug smugglers from entering the U.S.
28 on foot in the San Diego Sector. For these reasons, construction of vehicle fences,
29 rather than a primary pedestrian fence, was eliminated from further consideration.

30

1 **2.5.3 Fence Types**

2 Pedestrian, aesthetic or hybrid fence alternatives were considered. The final primary pedestrian
3 fence design would be determined during the final design phase based on operational
4 parameters and maintenance requirements. For purposes of evaluating the proposed action
5 and alternatives, the environmental impacts of constructing, operating and maintaining
6 any of the three primary pedestrian fence designs would be virtually identical since the
7 foundations, construction, operations and maintenance access requirements, and fence
8 heights would be the same for any fence alternative selected. Therefore, no additional
9 fence designs will be evaluated in detail in this EA.

10

11 **2.5.4 Fence Only Alternative**

12 The Fence Only Alternative would involve construction of the primary pedestrian fence
13 only in areas where road construction or improvement is not required. Specifically,
14 these locations are West of Tecate, Willows, Airport Mesa, Boundary Peak, and O'Neil
15 Valley. This alternative would provide an additional 5.84 miles of primary pedestrian
16 fence. The fence would be constructed in the same manner as described above under
17 Section 2.3.3. This alternative would not provide the additional advantage of high
18 ground in some of the crucial areas that USBP needs, reduce risks to health and safety
19 of USBP agents due to unsafe driving conditions, reduce the time required to respond to
20 illegal incursions or emergency situations, or eliminate gaps in the primary pedestrian
21 fence that create escape opportunities for cross border violators. Thus, it was
22 eliminated from further consideration.

23

24 **2.5.5 Additional USBP Agents in Lieu of Tactical Infrastructure**

25 USBP maintains an aggressive hiring program and a cadre of well-trained and
26 disciplined agents. The physical presence of an increased number of agents may
27 provide an enhanced level of deterrence against illegal entry into the U.S. However,
28 additional agents alone, in lieu of the proposed TI, would not provide a practical solution
29 to achieving effective control of the border in USBP San Diego Sector. Furthermore,
30 this alternative would result in additional USBP agents working under conditions that are

1 not as safe, effective, or efficient as the conditions would be with the construction of the
 2 required TI. As such, this alternative will not be carried forward for further analysis.

3

4 **2.5.6 Technology in Lieu of Tactical Infrastructure**

5 Under this alternative, USBP would use radar, cameras, lights, and other technology to
 6 identify cross border crossings. The use of technology is a critical component of *SBI_{net}*
 7 and can be an effective force multiplier, allowing USBP to monitor large areas and
 8 deploy agents to where they will be most effective. However, physical barriers are often
 9 a required component to effectively control illegal entry into the United States. The use
 10 of technology alone would not provide a practical solution to achieving effective control
 11 of the border in USBP San Diego Sector. Therefore, this alternative would not meet the
 12 purpose and need as described in Section 1.2 and will not be carried forward for further
 13 analysis.

14

15 **2.6 SUMMARY**

16

17 The three alternatives carried forward for analysis are the No Action Alternative,
 18 Proposed Action Alternative, and the Secure Fence Act Alignment Alternative. An
 19 alternative matrix (Table 2-3) compares the three viable alternatives relative to the
 20 purpose and need. Table 2-4 presents a summary matrix of the impacts from the three
 21 alternatives analyzed and how they affect the environmental resources in the region.

22

23 **Table 2-3. Relationship between Purpose and Need and Alternatives**

Requirements	Alternative 1: No Action Alternative	Alternative 2: Proposed Action Alternative	Alternative 3: Secure Fence Act Alignment Alternative
Deter cross-border activities	NO	YES	YES
Enhance the response time for USBP agents	NO	YES	YES
Enhance the safety of USBP agents	NO	YES	YES
Prevent terrorists and terrorist weapons from entering the U.S.	NO	YES	YES
Reduce the flow of illegal drugs	NO	YES	YES

Table 2-4. Summary Matrix

Affected Environment	No Action Alternative	Proposed Action Alternative	Secure Fence Act Alignment Alternative
Land Use	No direct impacts are expected.	Approximately 27 acres of private land would be required to construct this alternative. The remainder of the project corridor is within the Roosevelt Reservation or on BLM property. The BLM is cooperating agency for this project; therefore, although land use would change in these areas, it is an acceptable change. No significant impacts are expected as the indirect beneficial impacts would greatly outweigh the minor direct impacts.	Approximately 157 acres of private and Federal lands would be changed from their current uses to USBP infrastructure. No significant impacts are expected as the indirect beneficial impacts would greatly outweigh the minor direct impacts.
Geology/Soils	No direct impacts are expected.	Geology resources in the region would not be significantly impacted. Up to 78 acres of soils could be permanently impacted if this alternative is implemented. The soils are regionally and locally common; thus, no significant impacts would occur. No prime farmlands would be impacted.	If implemented at least 157 acres of soils could be permanently impacted under this alternative. No prime farmlands would be impacted. No significant impacts to soils or geology would occur as a result of the Proposed Action Alternative.
Hydrology and Groundwater	No direct impacts are expected.	The total amount of water withdrawal over the life of the project is approximately 15 acre-feet. Water would be obtained from existing wells or those that were previously analyzed in the DHS 2003 EA. No deficit would occur to the region's available groundwater sources; therefore, no significant impacts to water resources would occur.	At least 30 acre-feet of water would be required for dust suppression and construction activities. No deficit would occur to the region's available groundwater sources; therefore, no significant impacts to water resources would occur.
Surface Waters and Waters of the U.S.	No direct impacts are expected.	The Proposed Action Alternative would result in indirect beneficial impacts to ephemeral streams as a result of reducing illegal vehicle traffic and reducing erosion and sedimentation.	This alternative would have greater impacts to surface waters and waters of the U.S. than the Proposed Action Alternative. No significant impacts would occur.
Floodplains	No direct impacts are expected.	No direct impacts to floodplains would occur. Indirect impacts could occur as IAs try to circumvent the proposed infrastructure.	The same impacts as those presented for the Proposed Action Alternative would be expected if this alternative were chosen.

Table 2-4, continued

Affected Environment	No Action Alternative	Proposed Action Alternative	Secure Fence Act Alignment Alternative
Vegetation	No direct impacts are expected.	Approximately 123 acres would be impacted if the Proposed Action Alternative is chosen. However, of the 123 acres only 78 would be permanently impacted; the remainder would be temporarily impacted and rehabilitated. No significant impacts would be expected. Indirect impacts could occur to areas outside of the project corridor.	At least 157 acres of permanent impacts could occur if the proposed action is implemented. The vegetation is regionally and locally common. Thus, no significant impacts would be expected.
Wildlife and Aquatic Resources	No direct impacts are expected.	If implemented, approximately 78 acres of habitat could be permanently impacted while 45 would be temporarily impacted. The temporarily impacted areas would be rehabilitated. The habitat in the corridor is locally and regionally common. Therefore, no significant impacts are expected. Wildlife movement across the international boundary would be impeded within the corridor; however, these impacts would be minimal to wildlife, locally or regionally. Indirect impacts could occur to areas outside the project corridor.	This alternative would impact at least 157 acres of wildlife habitat. However, this habitat is locally and regionally common and its loss would not constitute significant impacts. Wildlife movement impacts would be the same as those discussed for the Proposed Action Alternative. Therefore, no significant impacts are expected. Indirect impacts could occur to areas outside of the project corridor.
Protected Species	No direct impacts are expected.	The Proposed Action Alternative would likely adversely affect Quino checkerspot butterfly; and the coastal California gnatcatcher. No significant impact to any state or BLM protected species is expected.	Additional NEPA documentation and biological surveys would have to be completed in order to accurately analyze the impacts to protected species if this alternative is chosen.
Cultural Resources	No direct impacts are expected.	No cultural resources would be impacted either directly or indirectly.	Additional NEPA documentation and biological surveys would have to be completed in order to accurately analyze the impacts to protected species if this alternative is chosen.
Air Quality	No direct impacts are expected.	Under the Proposed Action Alternative, exhaust pollutants and dust emissions would increase temporarily from the operation of heavy equipment used for construction activities. These emissions would return to pre-construction levels following construction. The Proposed Action Alternative would have an indirect beneficial impact to air quality as a result of reducing fugitive dust emissions.	The impacts to air quality in the region would be similar to those mentioned for the Proposed Action Alternative; however, these impacts would be greater in nature. Regardless, due to the good wind dispersal patterns and the remote nature of the project corridor these impacts too would be below <i>de minimis</i> levels and would not be significant.

Table 2-4, continued

Affected Environment	No Action Alternative	Proposed Action Alternative	Secure Fence Act Alignment Alternative
Climate	No direct impacts are expected.	No impacts are expected.	No impacts are expected.
Noise	No direct impacts are expected.	The project corridor is located in remote areas with one residential or other sensitive receptor; therefore, the impacts would be minimal and temporary.	Noise impacts would be greater than the Proposed Action Alternative due to the larger footprint. However, these impacts too would be temporary and cease upon completion of the construction activities. No significant impacts are expected.
Aesthetics	No direct impacts are expected.	The aesthetics of the project corridor would be not be substantially impacted due to the existing infrastructure in place throughout most of the corridor. The beneficial impacts from the reduction of IAs and associated trash would outweigh any adverse impacts. No significant impacts would occur. Indirect impacts could occur outside of the project corridor.	Similar impacts as those discussed for the Proposed Action Alternative would be expected for this alternative; however, due to the larger footprint and the addition of a second fence, the adverse impacts would be greater.
Hazardous Materials	No direct impacts are expected.	Potential indirect impacts associated with the spill of petroleum, oil, or lubricants could occur during construction. Impacts associated with any potential spills would be minimized through the implementation of mitigation measures incorporated as part of the Proposed Action Alternative.	The same impacts as those discussed for the Proposed Action Alternative would be expected for this alternative if it were implemented.
Socioeconomics	No direct impacts are expected.	Minor, temporary impacts could occur. Indirect beneficial impacts would occur within the region due to the reduction of IA foot traffic and the associated societal cost (e.g. crime, vandalism, drug smuggling).	Minor, temporary impacts could occur. Indirect beneficial impacts would occur within the region due to the reduction of IA foot traffic and the associated societal cost (e.g. crime, vandalism, drug smuggling).
Environmental Justice and Protection of Children	No direct impacts are expected.	One residence is located near the 7 Gates/Railroad project site while all other areas are remote and uninhabited. This alternative would not require the displacement of any residence or disproportionately impact minority populations, low income families, or put children at risk of injury.	The same impacts as those discussed for the Proposed Action Alternative would be expected for this alternative since no additional fence would be installed along the 7 Gates/Railroad corridor.

Table 2-4, continued

Affected Environment	No Action Alternative	Proposed Action Alternative	Secure Fence Act Alignment Alternative
Sustainability and Greening	No direct impacts are expected.	Federal sustainability and greening practices would be implemented to the greatest extent practicable. No significant impacts are expected to occur.	The same impacts as those discussed for the Proposed Action Alternative would be expected for this alternative if it were implemented.
Human Health and Safety	No direct impacts are expected.	Construction activities would be completed by professionals who are skilled in their duties. Construction activities would be completed under Occupational Health and Safety Administration guidelines and would not jeopardize the health or safety of those working or residing in or near the project corridor. No significant impacts would occur.	The same impacts as those discussed for the Proposed Action Alternative would be expected for this alternative if it were implemented.

1 **2.7 IDENTIFICATION OF THE PREFERRED ALTERNATIVE**

2
3 CEQ's implementing regulation 40 CFR 1502.14(c) instructs NEPA preparers to
4 "Identify the agency's preferred alternative or alternatives, if one or more exists, in the
5 draft statement and identify such alternative in the final statement unless another law
6 prohibits the expression of such a preference." USBP has identified its Preferred
7 Alternative as Alternative 2.

8
9 Implementation of Alternative 2 would meet USBP's purpose and need described in
10 Section 1.2. The No Action Alternative would not meet USBP's purpose and need.
11 Alternative 3 would meet USBP's purpose and need but would have greater
12 environmental impacts compared to the Preferred Alternative. USBP might need to
13 implement this alternative at some point in the future, depending on future IA traffic and
14 USBP operational needs and strategies. At the present time, however, USBP believes
15 that this level of TI is not necessary. Still, it will be carried forward as a viable
16 alternative.