

APPENDIX G

**(Habitats, Wetlands, Endangered
Species, Fish and Wildlife Section)**

- G.1 - “Habitats, Wetlands, Endangered Species,
Fish and Wildlife Report”**

- G.2 - Letter from US Department of Interior,
Fish and Wildlife Services**

- G.3 - Records of Conversation**

**G.1 - "HABITATS, WETLANDS, ENDANGERED
SPECIES, FISH AND WILDLIFE REPORT"**

Introduction

This document is the final report on "Habitat, Wetlands, Fish and Wildlife" wherein floral and faunal resources were investigated. These results are presented in coordination with the United States Fish and Wildlife Service.

Objectives

The objectives of this investigation are to:

- delineate habitats within the American Canal Project area,
- determine if any of the habitats within the American Canal Project area are wetlands,
- determine if any habitats are critical habitats,
- determine if any potential federal and state listed, proposed, or candidate threatened or endangered species occur within the project area,
- census birds, mammals, fish, reptiles and amphibians within the project area,
- determine an indicator species within the habitats, and
- determine effects of alternatives on the indicator species within the project area.

Methods

Study Area

The American Canal Project (ACP) area is a narrow 1.98-mile (3.19-km) corridor along the American Canal from the American Dam to the International Dam (Fig. 1). The International Dam (referred to as the "Mexican Dam" on the 1935 International Boundary and Water Commission map).

- The Upper Section is between the American Dam and the conduit where the conduit is enclosed to go under West Paisano Drive. There is an access road on either side of the open channel in the Upper Section, which is used by the United States Section, International Boundary and Water Commission (USIBWC). The Upper Section is bounded by a chain link fence.
- The Middle Section lies east of West Paisano Drive. The open channel in the Middle Section is bounded on both sides by a chain link fence without an access road.
- The Lower Section extends from West Paisano Drive to the International Dam. The Lower Section is bounded by the Rio Grande on one side and a chain link fence on the other. An access road lies on both sides of the open channel in the Lower Section and is used by the US Border Patrol.

Data was collected between 16 June 1999, and 30 June 1999.

Habitat delineation

A 100 meter line transect was surveyed for vegetation in the Upper and Lower Sections. Vegetation was identified at every even meter along the transect. Where more than one species of vegetation occurred, those species were noted. Canopy species type was also collected wherever it occurred along the transect. Habitats are delineated based upon the vegetation types occurring within the study areas. In the Middle Section, a line transect was not feasible because the area between the Canal and the chain link fence ranged from fifteen centimeters to three meters wide. An observational survey for vegetation was performed.

Herpetofauna

A 100 meter line transect was walked for reptiles and amphibians on three consecutive days in the Upper and Lower Sections. Any reptiles or amphibians spotted during the survey were identified and recorded. All reptiles and amphibians seen inside the project area at any time were noted regardless of its presence on the transect. In the Middle Section, a line transect was not feasible because the area between the Canal and the chain link fence ranged from fifteen centimeters to three meters wide. An observational survey for reptiles and amphibians was performed.

Birds

An inventory of birds was established using an area search method (Ralph, et al. 1993). In each section a circular one hectare plot was sampled. Monitoring began at dawn, and lasted 20 minutes. The number and species of birds observed and heard were recorded. All birds observed outside the designated plots, but within the project area, and all birds observed in areas adjacent to the project area were noted.

Mammals

Small terrestrial mammals were sampled using Sherman traps in the Upper and Lower Sections. Twenty Sherman traps were set out 5 meters apart along a 100 meter line transect. Traps were opened at dusk and checked the following morning. Captured mammals were identified and released. Observational techniques were used for diurnal, burrowing, and mammals too large to be captured in Sherman traps. To compensate for their range, all mammals observed outside the transects, but within the project area, and all mammals observed in areas adjacent to the project area were noted. In the Middle Section, a line transect was not feasible because the area between the Canal and the chain link fence ranged from fifteen centimeters to three meters wide. An observational survey for mammals was performed

Results

Upper Section of the American Canal

The vegetation survey in the Upper Section yielded *Cressa truxillensis*, *Cynodon dactylon*, and *Solanum eleagnifolium* as the predominant species. *Prosopis glandulosa* and *Ailanthus altissima* are the most common trees. *Happlopappus gracilis*, *Spaeralcea*, *Salsola kali*, and *Caesalpinia gilliesii* were also seen (Table 1). The most common birds observed were Rock Dove, Cliff Swallow and Barn Swallow. Cliff Swallow nests were observed at the flow measurement bridge, and the entrance to the enclosed conduit at

the southern end of this section. Common Nighthawk, Mourning Dove, Redwing Blackbird, Western Kingbird, Killdeer, Great Tailed Grackle, European Starling, House Finch, and Mallard were also observed in the project area. Snowy Egret and Great Egret were observed on the Rio Grande river directly adjacent to the project area (Table 2). Three species of reptiles, *Cnemidophorus inornatus*, *Cnemidophorus uniparens*, and *Urosaurus ornatus*, were observed (Table 3). *Cynomys ludovicianus*, *Citellus spilosoma*, and *Sylvilagus autoboni* were the only mammals observed (Table 4).

Middle Section of the American Canal

The Middle Section has minimal terrestrial habitat. The habitat consists of areas where cracks have formed in the concrete canal and vegetation has grown through. The area between the Canal and the project area boundary ranges from fifteen centimeters to three meters in width on both sides of the Canal. Areas at the northern and southern end have more terrestrial habitat which is dominated by *Cynodon dactylon*. *Prosopis glandulosa* was the predominant tree observed. *Hoffmanseggia densiflora*, *Malva neglecta*, *Mentzelia pumila*, *Larrea tridentata*, and *Yucca elata* were also observed (Table 1). Rock Dove and Mourning Dove are the predominant birds observed. Other birds observed were Cliff Swallow, Killdeer, Great Tailed Grackle, Western Kingbird, and Redwing Blackbird (Table 2). Potential Cliff Swallow nesting sites were observed at the entrances to the closed conduits at the northern and southern ends of the Middle Section. Two species of reptiles, *Urosaurus ornatus* and *Uta stansburiana*, were observed. (Table 3). *Sylvilagus autoboni* and *Lepus californicus* were the only mammals observed (Table 4).

Lower Section of the American Canal

Cressa truxillensis, *Suaeda suffrutescens*, *Atriplex canescens*, and *Cynodon dactylon* are the most abundant plant species observed in the Lower Section. *Tamarix pentandra*, *Prosopis glandulosa*, and *Ulmus pumila* was the most common trees observed. Other plant species observed were *Calliandra humilis*, *Conyza canadensis*, *Arundo donax*, *Caecalpinia gilliesii*, and *Yucca elata* (Table 1). Rock Dove, Redwing Blackbird, Mourning Dove, Cliff Swallow and House Sparrow were the most common birds observed. Great Tailed Grackle, Northern Mockingbird, Western Kingbird, and Barn Swallow were also observed in the Lower Section. Mallard and Snowy Egret were observed on the Rio Grande River directly adjacent to the project area (Table 2). Potential Cliff Swallow nesting sites were observed at the entrances to the closed conduits at the northern and southern ends of the Lower Section. *Bufo speciosus* and *Cnemidophorus uniparens* were the only reptile and amphibian species observed (Table 3). *Mus musculus* was the only mammal observed in the Lower Section (Table 4).

Wetlands

A Wetland is defined as an area that is saturated by surface or ground water with vegetation adapted for life under those soil conditions. No wetland was observed in the project area. The Army Corps of Engineers has stated that this project is not regulated under the provisions of Section 404 of the Clean Water Act concerning wetlands (see Letter from US Department of the Army, Albuquerque District, Corps of Engineers contained within this Appendix).

Assessment and Discussion

The only habitat in all three sections is a ruderal habitat. A ruderal habitat is defined as a habitat where disturbance is sustained but where there is no intentional substitution of vegetation. Roadsides are an example of ruderal habitats (Goudie, 1994). Species typical to ruderal habitats and observed in all sections include *Cressa truxillensis*, *Cynodon dactylon*, and *Solanum eleagnifolium*. *C. truxillensis* is the most abundant species observed in each area, and is known to be a ruderal and an invasive plant of disturbed areas. *S. eleagnifolium* is quite common and is also considered an invasive weed (Kearney and Peebles, 1969). The access roads to either side of the Canal in the Upper Section and the Lower Section are frequently used by USIBWC and the US Border Patrol employees. These access roads in the Upper and Lower Section are void of all but the most hearty vegetative pioneers. Faunae in the project area include animals which are common in ruderal habitats. *Cnemidophorus uniparens* populations have been observed expanding into areas that have been overgrazed (Degenhardt, et al, 1996).

Table 1
Vegetative Species Observed in the Three Sections of the American Canal
Between the American Dam and the International Dam, El Paso, Texas.
June 18, 1999 to June 30, 1999

Species	Common Name	Upper Section	Middle Section	Lower Section
<i>Ailanthus altissima</i>	Tree of Heaven	4	0	0
<i>Arundo donax</i>	Giant Reed	0	0	3
<i>Atriplex canescens</i>	Fourwing Saltbush	0	0	3
<i>Caesalpinia gilliesii</i>	Bird of Paradise Tree	4	0	5
<i>Calliandra humilis</i>	Fairy Duster	0	0	1
<i>Conyza canadensis</i>	Horseweed	0	0	7
<i>Cressa truxillensis</i>	Alkali Weed	27	26	13
<i>Cynodon dactylon</i>	Bermuda Grass	5	23	5
<i>Haplopappus gracilis</i>	Haplopappus	1	0	0
<i>Hoffmanseggia densiflora</i>	Hog Potato	0	7	0
<i>Larrea tridentata</i>	Creosote	0	1	0
<i>Malva neglecta</i>	Common Mallow	0	2	0
<i>Mentzelia pumila</i>	Stick Leaf	0	2	0
<i>Prosopis glandulosa</i>	Mesquite	2	11	3
<i>Salsola kali</i>	Russian Thistle	3	4	0
<i>Solanum eleagnifolium</i>	Evening Nightshade	3	4	2
<i>Sphaeralcea sp.</i>	Globemallow	2	0	0
<i>Suaeda suffrutescens</i>	Desert Seepweed	0	0	22
<i>Tamarix pentandra</i>	Salt Cedar	0	0	1
<i>Ulmus pumila</i>	Siberian Elm	1	0	2
<i>Yucca elata</i>	Soaptree Yucca	0	1	2

Table 2
Bird Species Observed in the Three Sections of the American Canal
Between the American Dam and the International Dam, El Paso, Texas.
June 18, 1999 to June 30, 1999

Species	Common Name	Upper Section	Middle Section	Lower Section
<i>Agelaius phoeniceus</i>	Redwing Blackbird	0	3	10
<i>Anas platyrhynchos</i>	Mallard	1	0	2
<i>Carpodacus mexicanus</i>	House Finch	3	0	0
<i>Casmerodius albus</i>	Great Egret	1	0	0
<i>Charadrius vociferus</i>	Killdeer	5	2	0
<i>Chordeiles minor</i>	Common Nighthawk	13	0	0
<i>Columba livia</i>	Rock Dove	56	34	36
<i>Egretta thula</i>	Snowy Egret	4	0	1
<i>Hirundo pyrrhonata</i>	Cliff Swallow	6	2	17
<i>Hirundo rustica</i>	Barn Swallow	18	0	1
<i>Mimus polyglottos</i>	Northern Mockingbird	0	0	1
<i>Passer domesticus</i>	House Sparrow	0	0	17
<i>Quiscalus mexicanus</i>	Great Tailed Grackle	8	4	7
<i>Sternus vulgaris</i>	European Starling	4	0	0
<i>Tyrannus verticalis</i>	Western Kingbird	3	1	1
<i>Zenaida macroura</i>	Mourning Dove	6	7	12

Table 3
Amphibian and Reptile Species Observed in the Three Sections of the American
Canal Between the American Dam and the International Dam, El Paso, Texas
June 18, 1999 to June 30, 1999

Species	Common Name	Upper Section	Middle Section	Lower Section
<i>Bufo speciosus</i>	Texas Toad	0	0	1
<i>Cnemidophorus uniparens</i>	Little Striped Whiptail	2	0	1
<i>Cnemidophorus inornatus</i>	Desert Grassland Whiptail	1	0	0
<i>Urosaurus ornatus</i>	Tree Lizard	1	3	0
<i>Uta stansburiana</i>	Side Blotched Lizard	0	2	0

Table 4
Mammal Species Observed in the Three Sections of the American Canal
Between the American Dam and the International Dam, El Paso, Texas.
June 18, 1999 to June 30, 1999

Species	Common Name	Upper Section	Middle Section	Lower Section
<i>Citellus spilosoma</i>	Spotted Ground Squirrel	2	0	0
<i>Cynomys ludovicianus</i>	Blacktail Prairie Dog	1	0	0
<i>Lepus californicus</i>	Blacktail Jackrabbit	0	1	0
<i>Mus musculus</i>	House Mouse	0	0	2
<i>Sylvilagus autoboni</i>	Desert Cottontail	3	1	0

The aquatic habitat in the Canal is temporary. The Canal flows with water during the irrigation season, and fish that have historically been observed in the main canal of the Rio Grande have been observed in the American Canal. Fish species in the Canal can be accounted for by migration from the Rio Grande during the high flow rates of the irrigation season. The habitat is not continually viable because the Canal is concrete, and therefore does not support aquatic vegetation important for aquatic communities. Species observed have historically included Bullhead Catfish, Large Mouth Bass, Sunfish, Gizzard Shad, Common Carp, River Carpsucker, Mosquito Fish, and other minnows and shiners (US Fish and Wildlife Service, 1993). Frequent emptying of the water in the Canal excludes the possibility of permanent fish populations.

No potential federal and state listed proposed, or candidate threatened or endangered species were found within the project area (Table 5).

Table 5
Endangered Species Listed as Occurring in El Paso County Texas
List Compiled by Texas Parks and Wildlife 1999

Species	Common Name	Status
<i>Coryphantha sneedii sneedii</i>	Sneed Pincushion Cactus	Endangered
<i>Empidonax trailii extimus</i>	Southwestern Willow Flycatcher	Endangered
<i>Falco femoralis septentrionalis</i>	Northern Aplomado Falcon	Endangered
<i>Falco peregrinus anatum</i>	American Peregrine Falcon	Endangered
<i>Sterna antillarum</i>	Interior Least Tern	Endangered
<i>Strix occidentalis lucida</i>	Mexican Spotted Owl	Endangered

Conclusions

To determine the effects of the proposed alternatives provided by the USIBWC on the wildlife community within the project area, a representative species was selected from the community as an indicator species to be examined in light of the proposed alternatives provided by the USIBWC.

The Cliff Swallow represents a species whose activities utilize much of the resources within and surrounding the project area. Many nests have been observed at the entrances to the closed conduits and at the flow measurement bridge near the American Dam. There were six potential Cliff Swallow nesting sites observed along the entire length of the project area. Cliff Swallows feed on flying insects that are attracted to the water of the river and the Canal and the surrounding vegetation. The Cliff Swallow was selected as the indicator species for the wildlife, habitat, and wetlands portion of this environmental assessment (see Table 6).

1. Closed Conduit Alternative. Closed conduits would probably reduce the number of feeding sites for Cliff Swallows on the Canal; however the proximity of the Rio Grande river immediately adjacent to the Upper and Lower Sections would probably continue to provide feeding sites. Nesting sites at the flow measurement bridge would probably not be effected. Nesting sites observed at the entrances to the conduits would probably become inaccessible; however the new entrance to the enclosed conduit would provide potential nesting sites. The Closed Conduit Alternative would probably cause no change to Cliff Swallow populations. The Closed Conduit Alternative would probably reduce the number of Cliff Swallow nesting sites by four (Table 6.).

2. Closed/Open Channel Alternative A. Replacing the Middle Section with a closed conduit would probably reduce feeding area on the Canal; however the proximity of the Rio Grande river to the project area would probably continue to provide feeding sites. The entrances to the closed conduits that provide nesting sites will be gone thereby reducing nesting sites. This reduction in the nesting sites would probably not affect the number of Cliff Swallow nesting sites because the flow measurement bridge in the Upper Section would remain available for nesting, and the entrance to the closed conduits in the Lower Section would continue to provide nesting sites. The Closed/Open Channel Alternative A would probably cause no change to Cliff Swallow populations. The Closed/Open Channel Alternative A would probably reduce the number of Cliff Swallow nesting sites by two (Table 6.).

3. Closed/Open Channel Alternative B. Closing in the Upper and Lower Sections would probably reduce feeding area and nesting sites for the Cliff Swallow on the Canal; however the proximity of the Rio Grande river to the project area would probably continue to provide feeding sites. The reduction in the nesting sites would probably not significantly impact the Cliff Swallow because the flow measurement bridge in the Upper Section would remain available for nesting, and the entrances to the closed conduits in the Middle Section would continue to provide nesting sites. The Closed/Open Channel Alternative B would probably not reduce Cliff Swallow populations, but would probably reduce Cliff Swallow nesting sites by two (Table 6.).

4. Open Channel Alternative. Rebuilding all existing open sections of the Canal would probably not reduce the feeding areas and nesting sites for the Cliff Swallow. Rebuilding the open sections of the Canal would probably cause no significant impact on Cliff Swallow populations. Rebuilding the open sections of the Canal would cause no significant impact on Cliff Swallow nesting sites.

5. No-Action Alternative. The No-Action Alternative would not change existing conditions in the project area, and therefore not effect Cliff Swallow populations and Cliff Swallow nesting sites.

Table 6
Effects to Habitat and Wetlands, Fish and Wildlife
From Five American Canal Reconstruction Alternatives

Resource	Alternative 1	Alternative 2	Alternative 3	Alternative 4	Alternative 5
Number of Endangered Species displaced	0	0	0	0	0
Number of Cliff Swallow Nesting Sites	2	4	4	6	6
Population of Cliff Swallows	25	25	25	25	25
Acres of local Wetlands affected	0	0	0	0	0
Permanent Fish population in Canal	0	0	0	0	0
Number of Endangered Species Habitats in Canal Area	0	0	0	0	0

Literature Cited

Degenhardt, William G., Charles W. Painter, Andrew H. Price. 1996. Amphibians and Reptiles of New Mexico. University of New Mexico Press, Albuquerque, NM

Goudie, Andrew. 1994. The Human Impact on the Natural Environment. Fourth Edition. The MIT Press, Cambridge, Mass.

Kearney and Peebles, 1969. Arizona Flora. University of California Press, Berkeley and Las Angeles, CA.

Ralph, C. John, G. R. Geipel, P. Pyle, T. E. Martin, D. F. DeSante. 1993. Handbook of Field Methods for Monitoring Landbirds. U.S. Forest Service Technical Report: PSW-GTR-144.

Short, Robert M. 1993. Fish and Wildlife Coordination Act Report, American Canal Extension Project. United States Fish and Wildlife Service. Unpublished.

**G.2 - LETTER FROM US DEPARTMENT OF INTERIOR,
FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICES**



United States Department of the Interior



FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICES

Austin Ecological Services Office
Hartland Bank Building
10711 Burnet Road, Suite 200
Austin, Texas 78758
(512)490-0057

SEP 20 1999

2-15-99-I-0806

John Knopp
Encon International
7307 Remcon, Suite 101
El Paso, Texas 79912

Dear Mr. Knopp,

We have reviewed the "American Canal Environmental Assessment, Habitat, Wetlands, Fish and Wildlife, Final Report" dated September 2, 1999, prepared by Mr. Jacob Worley and received in our office on September 7, 1999. The Assessment concerns a proposed project by the International Boundary and Water Commission for improving 3.186 km of the American Canal in El Paso from the American Dam to the International Dam.

We concur with the findings in the Assessment that no significant effects to fish and wildlife resources are anticipated and the project will have no affect to species listed as threatened or endangered. For any potential concerns regarding wetlands, we recommend you contact the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Albuquerque District, Regulatory Branch.

Thank you for coordinating this project with us. For further correspondence regarding this project, please reference the Consultation Number on this letter. Any questions may be addressed to Nathan Allan at 512-490-0057.

Sincerely,

William Seawell
for

David C. Frederick
Supervisor

cc: Jacob C. Worley, 7305 S. Main, Mesilla Park, NM 88047

G.3 – RECORDS OF CONVERSATION

RECORD OF CONVERSATION - ENCON File # 122-9
Habitats, Wetlands, Endangered Species, Fish and Wildlife

Name: Ray Brown
Agency: US Fish & Wildlife Service (Austin)

Date/Time: 3/7/01 2:30 p.m.
Phone No: 512-490-0057

RE: Migratory Bird Treaty of 1918

Because reconstruction of the American Canal is limited to the non-irrigation season (October - February), no birds will be directly impacted. Therefore, the US Fish and Wildlife Service does not require a permit or request mitigation measures for project compliance with the Migratory Bird Treaty of 1918.

Recommended Action or Response

Name and Date: John Knopp 3/7/01

**RECORD OF CONVERSATION - ENCON File # 122-9
Habitats, Wetlands, Endangered Species, Fish and Wildlife**

Name:	<u>Kamile McKeever</u>	Date/Time:	<u>3/7/01 3:00 p.m.</u>
	<u>US Fish and Wildlife Service</u>	Phone No:	<u>505-248-7887</u>
Agency:	<u>(Albuquerque)</u>	Fax No:	<u>505-248-7885</u>

RE: Empty Nest Policy

Because the proposed construction project would not destroy any eggs or nestlings, the Interim Empty Nest Policy of the US Fish and Wildlife Service, Region 2, does not require either a permit or written notification of the beginning date of construction.

Recommended Action or Response

Name and Date: John Knopp 3/7/01

APPENDIX H

(Real Estate, Utilities, Easements, and Rights-of-Way)

H.1 - Real Estate, Utilities, Easements, and Rights-of-Way Text

H.2 - Records of Conversation

H.3 - Documents

**H.1 - REAL ESTATE, UTILITIES, EASEMENTS,
AND RIGHTS-OF-WAY TEXT**

REAL ESTATE, UTILITIES, EASEMENTS, AND RIGHTS-OF-WAY

1.0 Introduction

This section is best understood while referring to the map provided at Figure 4, Appendix C. The narrow study corridor constitutes the route of the closed conduit segments and both levees of the three open channel segments of the American Canal. The eastern levee of the Lower Open Channel segment is adjacent to the western property line of many commercial businesses, and the western levee is adjacent to the flood plain of the Rio Grande. The eastern side of the Middle Open Channel segment adjoins BNSF Railroad tracks adjacent to ASARCO, and the western side of this channel portion adjoins the curb of West Paisano Drive. The eastern levee of the Upper Open Channel segment is adjacent to the rear of the USIBWC Field Offices and unimproved ASARCO flood plain land (formerly the site of Smelertown), while the western levee is adjacent to the Rio Grande.

Within the corridor are rights-of-way for BNSF Railroad, West Paisano Drive, and the USIBWC American Canal. Easements for various utilities and telecommunications companies also lie within the rights-of-way.

Real estate values considered included not only adjoining properties, but also farms to which water is delivered through the American Canal. The local properties would be directly affected; while farms would be indirectly affected.

2.0 Utilities

Several public and private utility companies utilize the study corridor. They include El Paso Water Utilities-Public Service Board, El Paso Electric Company, El Paso Natural Gas, Southern Union Gas, various telecommunications companies, and the US Border Patrol. No utility lines cross into Mexico through the study area. The locations of the various utility easements are detailed below, and the routes are marked on the area map of utilities located at Figure 4, Appendix C. Because utility lines are sometimes moved or extended, the utility locations noted in this Assessment should be checked again before canal reconstruction begins.

UTILITIES LOCATED WITHIN AMERICAN CANAL RECONSTRUCTION AREA, JUNE 2000

Name of Company	Utility	Locations in Project Area as Reported October, 1999	Utility Locations Affected by Reconstruction Activities
El Paso Water Utilities – Public Service Board	36-inch potable water main	One continuous main within project area: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>From Downtown</u>: northbound Paisano Drive Right-of-Way (ROW), crosses Paisano over south end of Conduit B, then within southbound Paisano ROW 	None
El Paso Water Utilities – Public Service Board	24-inch sewer main increasing to 30-inch	One continuous main within project area: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>From south</u>: crosses Lower Open Channel near Hart Lane, then north within western Lower Open Channel Levee (35'-50' from concrete canal lining), crosses south end of Conduit A, then north within northbound Paisano ROW 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sewer Main Crossing Lower Open Channel near Hart Lane • Sewer Main Crossing south end of American Canal Conduit A
Southern Union Gas	Gas distribution lines	Two lines within project area: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>From south</u>: crosses Paisano near Globe Mills, then within paved road in front of businesses adjoining Lower Open Channel segment • <u>From north</u>: along northbound Paisano ROW in Upper Open Channel segment 	None
El Paso Natural Gas	Gas lines	None (From south along BNSF RR tracks, then north through ASARCO)	None
El Paso Electric	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Buried cables • Overhead lines 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • West of Paisano along Closed Conduits and Middle Open Channel segments (Routing for buried cables to planned new lighting along Lower Open Channel is not yet determined) • East of Lower Open Channel Levee, behind businesses west of Paisano 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • None • None unless large equipment requires extra clearance
Southwestern Bell	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Buried lines • Overhead lines 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • None • East of Lower Open Channel Levee, behind businesses west of Paisano 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • None • None unless large equipment requires extra clearance
MCI	Fiber optic lines	East of tracks, in BNSF RR ROW	None
QWEST	Fiber optic lines	West of tracks, in BNSF RR ROW	None, if RR right-of-way not disturbed
Sprint Communications	Fiber optic lines	None	None
US Border Patrol	Spotlights shining on Rio Grande and American Canal	Mounted on power poles east of Lower Open Channel levee, behind businesses west of Paisano. These will probably be relocated by Border Patrol before Oct. 2000	None, if moved by Border Patrol before Oct. 2000 construction

3.0 Rights-of-Way and Easements

Rights-of-way would be needed from both TxDOT and the BNSF Railroad for staging of reconstruction activities (equipment, vehicles, supplies, etc.) for the Middle Open Channel segment of the American Canal. Entering the BNSF Railroad right-of-way requires requesting a permit from the railroad at least six weeks before entrance is required. A Railroad flagman, physical barriers, and other right-of-way requirements must also be provided. Additional BNSF Railroad slope requirements for any reconstruction involving Railroad rights-of-way can be obtained from the BNSF field division engineer in Albuquerque. A Union Pacific Railroad ROW would not be needed for this reconstruction project.

Along the Middle Open Channel, the western lip of the concrete canal adjoins the curb of West Paisano Drive. At that point, Paisano has no shoulder, and no additional right-of-way. Therefore, using the TxDOT right-of-way for staging would involve closing the northbound lane of West Paisano over the entire length of the Middle Open Channel, approximately 3000 feet. Personnel from the TxDOT Maintenance Department require at least a week's notification for lane closure, but request as much notice as possible.

Fiber optic lines which are laid in easements of the BNSF Railroad right-of-way will probably not be affected by construction staging activities which might take place in the Railroad right-of-way. The present USIBWC right-of-way appears to be sufficient for reconstruction in the Upper and Lower Open Channel segments, and may be sufficient for reconstruction in the Middle Open Channel segment. After the engineering specifications for the project are developed, it will be possible to determine if additional right-of-way access is needed for actual construction.

The US Border Patrol uses existing power poles along the Lower Open Channel to support its lighting equipment, and uses buried electric cable to provide power to this lighting equipment. At present, the Border Patrol is planning to install new lighting on its own poles, reportedly, closer to the river. Although this lighting equipment is not a separate utility, it has been included with utilities in this section.

4.0 Real Estate Values

The only real estate values to be considered in the study area are those of the commercial and apartment properties on West Paisano Drive adjoining the Lower Open Channel Segment. However, indirectly, real estate values of the farms irrigated from the American Canal system would also be affected in the event of a canal failure.

Resale Values in the Study Area

Because none of the canal reconstruction alternatives involves closing the roads in front of any businesses, no loss of revenue is expected during construction. Similarly, because none of the canal reconstruction alternatives would require acquiring any of the adjoining land, and the canal would not limit or improve access to these businesses, the resale values of the nearby properties are not expected to change. However, one of the local business owners feared an increase in the number of local burglaries and a resulting increase in the insurance premium if the canal was rebuilt entirely as a closed conduit.

Taxable Appraised Values in the Study Area

The Central Appraisal District, which has the authority to appraise commercial buildings for all local and state taxing entities, does not expect any of the alternatives to alter the taxable appraisals of the study area properties.

Indirect and Cumulative Effects to Irrigated Farms and El Paso Agribusinesses

El Paso County houses approximately 1700 businesses either directly or indirectly involved in agriculture-related business. Over 69,000 acres of farmland are irrigated with surface water distributed by the El Paso County Water Improvement District #1 which obtains its water from the American Canal. In the local desert climate with an average annual rainfall of seven inches, all agricultural crops are irrigated; none is dryland-farmed. Annual El Paso County agricultural production is currently estimated to be valued at approximately \$302 million. However, the financial worth to El Paso County agricultural-related production, manufacturing, processing, wholesale and retail trade is valued at approximately \$7.1 billion. Agribusiness is a very important sector of the El Paso economy. Any disaster or loss to the local farmers is multiplied by its effect on farm workers, chemical companies, wholesalers, transporters, retailers, banks, cotton gins, and many other businesses. El Paso agribusiness relies on dependable delivery of quality irrigation water.

Except for the No-Action Alternative, any of the four other alternatives chosen for reconstruction would help to protect the values of farms which use the American Canal for obtaining irrigation water. As discussed in the Assessment, if the old concrete canal lining suffers major damage during the peak summer

irrigation season, and requires only one month of closure for repair, the loss in crop value could reach \$20 million for farms whose irrigation water is transported via the American Canal. A \$20 million loss would result in an estimated 500 local farm bankruptcies. The cumulative agribusiness “ripple effect” could result in up to \$300 million in local losses.

As fully detailed in the Water and Soil Section at Appendix L, any of the alternatives, except the No-Action Alternative, also protect the permanent delivery of water to the El Paso Water Utilities' water treatment plants. By the year 2005, all potable water for El Paso will likely be treated water from the Rio Grande.

5.0 Summary of Effects

The effects of the five alternatives are conveniently summarized in the chart on the following page. Major utility mains and lines would be relatively unaffected, except for the points at which water and sanitary sewer mains cross over the closed conduit sections. At those areas, the water or sewer mains might need to be supported or disconnected and reconnected as the section of new closed conduit is connected to the old section. However, as the engineering specifications are not yet developed, it is not possible to state with certainty whether or not the water or sewage mains would need to be relocated.

Railroad and highway rights-of-way would be used for staging construction activities (i.e., personnel, equipment, vehicles, supplies, etc.) along the Middle Open Channel. The present USIBWC right-of-way appears to be sufficient for reconstruction in the Upper and Lower Open Channel segments, and may be sufficient for reconstruction in the Middle Open Channel segment. When the engineering specifications for the project are developed, it will be possible to determine if additional right-of-way access would be needed.

More important than the utilities or the right-of-way issues, are the real estate concerns. While local real estate values are expected to be relatively unaffected directly by any of the alternatives, real estate values of farms served by the American Canal could be greatly affected if a major canal failure develops during the peak summer irrigation months. As discussed in the Water Section of this report, a major failure of the patched and crumbling original three-inch-thick concrete canal lining could result in a repair period of up to 30 days, with a resulting disastrous loss of water and income to farms, related agribusinesses, and to the El Paso Water Utilities – Public Service Board.

The indicator issue chosen in the table on page 6 is the real estate-related number of local farm bankruptcies in the event of a canal failure and repair within the next five years.

**SUMMARY OF EFFECTS ON REAL ESTATE, UTILITIES, RIGHTS-OF-WAY, & EASEMENTS
FROM FIVE CANAL RECONSTRUCTION ALTERNATIVES**

Effect ↓	Alternative →	Alt 1	Alt 2	Alt 3	Alt 4	Alt 5
Length of water mains to be relocated (in feet)		0	0	0	0	0
Length of waste water mains to be relocated (in feet)		0	0	0	0	0
Length of gas lines to be relocated (in feet)		0	0	0	0	0
Length of buried electric cable to be relocated (in feet)		0	0	0	0	0
Length of overhead electric lines which might need to be relocated (in feet)		600	0	600	600	0
Length of fiber optic lines to be relocated (in feet)		0	0	0	0	0
TxDOT ROW used for staging during construction (in feet, approx.)		3000	3000	3000	3000	0
BNSF Railroad right-of-way used for staging during reconstruction (in feet, approx.)		3000	3000	3000	3000	0
Change in taxable appraised values of commercial properties adjoining Lower Open Channel (in %)		0	0	0	0	0
Change in Resale Value of Commercial Properties adjoining Lower Open Channel (in %)		0	0	0	0	0
Loss in El Paso County agricultural production from 30-day canal failure repair		\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$20 million
Loss to agribusinesses from emergency 30-day canal failure repair period		\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$300 million
Local farm bankruptcies resulting from 30-day canal failure repair period		0	0	0	0	500

6.0 Mitigations

The American Canal is used as a source of drinking water for the City of El Paso. Therefore, at any location where a sanitary sewer crosses over a closed or open channel segment of the canal, the canal should be protected from possible cross-contamination or infiltration of sanitary sewage, per standard engineering practices and local ordinances.

H.2 - RECORDS OF CONVERSATION

**RECORD OF CONVERSATION - ENCON File # 122-9
Real Estate**

Name: Mr. James Boggs
Agency: Boggs Real Estate Appraisal

Date/Time: 8/31/99
Phone No.: 915-854-3670

Mr. Boggs stated that the proposed alternatives of the American Canal would have no noticeable effect on the privately-owned commercial or residential property in the project area. The only change in property values would be to the subject property itself because potentially, the owner would be able to build over a box culvert but not over an open canal. However, as the owner of the canal (USIBWC) cannot sell the land, and has no plans to build any structures over or adjacent to the Canal, there would be no actual change in the property value.

Recommended Action or Response

Name and Date: John Knopp 8/31/99

**RECORD OF CONVERSATION - ENCON File # 122-9
Real Estate**

Name: Vince Kemendo, Asst. Manager
Agency: EP Central Appraisal Dist.

Date/Time: 10/4/99 3:30 p.m.
Phone No.: 915-780-2000

"Presently, we would not anticipate any change in property values along the project site for any of the proposed alternatives."

Recommended Action or Response

Name and Date: John Knopp 10/4/99

**RECORD OF CONVERSATION - ENCON File # 122-9
Utilities**

Name: Becky
Agency: Texas Call One

Date/Time: 10/8/99
Phone No.: 800-245-4545

Planned a "Survey Type" Investigation for 9:00 a.m., Wednesday, Oct. 13th.

Confirmation # 281-61-90

Will locate utilities along canal.

Recommended Action or Response

Name and Date: John Knopp 10/8/99

**RECORD OF CONVERSATION - ENCON File # 122-9
Utilities**

Name: Rick Deragish
Agency: Sprint Communications

Date/Time: 10/13/99
Phone No.: 915-203-3895

No fiber optic lines in study corridor

Recommended Action or Response

Call Collin Sword, District Engineer at (800) 254-3798.

Name and Date: John Knopp 10/13/99

H.3 - DOCUMENTS

**LOCATION REQUEST
INFORMATION**

- YOUR TELEPHONE NUMBER
- YOUR NAME
- COMPANY
- COMPANY ADDRESS
- CITY OR CLOSEST TOWN
- COUNTY
- STREET ADDRESS
- NEAREST STREET INTERSECTION
- TYPE OF WORK
- LENGTH OF JOB
- BLASTING (YES OR NO)
- TYPE OF WORK

HB 2295, The Texas Underground Facility Damage Prevention Act requires that Excavators in Texas notify a one call notification center 48 hours prior to digging.

An easy TOLL FREE call providing the information above can prevent costly damages, prevent accidents, protect the environment and meet the requirements of the Law.

Be Safe. . .

Not Sorry !

Call Before

Digging

Blasting

Drilling

Grading

Pipe Pushing

Boring

Earth Moving

Texas One Call System

1-800-245-4545

Texas Law – HB 2295

Requires Excavators to contact a notification center at least 48 hours before digging.

For Information call

Gary Craig

At the

Texas One Call Office

(281) 970-0505

**CALL
BEFORE YOU DIG
FOR FREE LOCATION
OF UNDERGROUND
FACILITIES
IN YOUR AREA**



Texas One Call System

1-800-245-4545

WHAT IS TEXAS ONE CALL ?

Texas One Call is a computerized notification center, which establishes a communications link between those who dig underground (excavators) and those who operate underground facilities (operators).

Texas One Call center is funded by members who are operators engaged in:

1. Communications
2. Gas Distribution
3. Gas Transmission and Gathering
4. Electric Power
5. Products/Pipelines
6. Water and Wastewater

(Water & Wastewater are "Class B" facilities per HB2295 and are NOT required to register with a one call notification center)

Texas One Call will determine from the excavator the location of the work.

Texas One Call will notify all its members with underground facilities in the area where the excavation will take place as well as all registered notification centers in Texas.

All operator members of all registered notification centers will mark their facilities in the area of the excavation. **ONLY ONE CALL IS NECESSARY.**

All messages to and from Texas One Call are recorded for the protection of both the excavator and the operators.

WHO BENEFITS ?

Everyone...operators, excavators and the general public benefit from the elimination of dig-ins, damages and outages. It reduces the chance of injury or worse, damage to public and private property and loss or interruption of services vital to public safety.

HOW MUCH DOES IT COST ?

Texas One Call Service is FREE to excavators. The notification center is funded by members of Texas One Call . Cost of membership is offset by the reduction in cost of repairs due to dig-ins.

HOW TO USE TEXAS ONE CALL SYSTEM

1. Excavator dials the Texas One Call System toll free number 1-800-245-4545.
2. An operator at the center records the required information listed on the back of this brochure, tells the caller names of companies and notification centers that will be notified, and gives the caller a Location Request Number.
3. The Location Request message is transmitted by computer link to the owners of the underground facilities and to all other registered notification centers in Texas.
4. The underground facility owner or operator marks the Location of facilities at the excavation site.

APWA STANDARD

COLOR CODE FOR TEMPORARY MARKING OF UNDERGROUND FACILITIES

RED - Electric Power Lines, Cables, Conduit and Lighting Cables

YELLOW - Gas, Oil, Steam, Petroleum or Gaseous Material.

ORANGE - Communication, Alarm or signal Lines, Cables or Conduit.

BLUE - Water, Irrigation and Slurry Lines.

GREEN - Sewers and Drain Lines

PINK - Temporary survey Markings

WHITE - Proposed Excavation

THE TEXAS ONE CALL TOLL-FREE PHONE NUMBER PROVIDES THE MEANS TO CONTACT ALL REGISTERED UNDERGROUND

APPENDIX I

(Transportation Section)

- I.1 - Transportation Text**
- I.2 - Sun Metro Bus Route**
- I.3 - City of El Paso Traffic Fatality and Injury Information (1997-1998)**
- I.4 - Records of Conversation**

I.1 - TRANSPORTATION TEXT

TRANSPORTATION CORRIDOR

1.0 Introduction

The study area lies within a narrow transportation corridor leading northwest from downtown El Paso. This transportation corridor comprises one federal highway, railroad tracks from two different railroads, and one local bus route. The study area does not include any international bridges, navigable waterways, designated bicycle paths, or major pedestrian walkways.

2.0 Highways

The American Canal crosses twice under West Paisano Drive (US 85), and generally parallels Paisano Drive for the entire two-mile study area. Paisano is a divided four-lane roadway which connects downtown El Paso and west El Paso. Although the El Paso-Juarez area is a major center of interstate trucking, Paisano is not a major truck route. Most interstate commercial trucks use Interstate 10, located less than a quarter mile east of the study corridor. According to the 1998 Traffic Map produced by the Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT), Division of Transportation Planning, West Paisano Drive carried approximately 19,000 vehicles per day in 1998. Paisano appears to be heavily traveled only during the morning and evening rush hours. In comparison, the adjacent segment of Interstate 10 carried approximately 117,000 vehicles per day in 1998.

The Yandell Overpass, the main traffic artery connecting West Paisano Drive with Sunset Heights and UTEP, carried approximately 4480 vehicles per day according to the 1998 TxDOT Traffic Map. The overpass would be unaffected by any of the five alternatives of canal reconstruction.

Many of the persons who enter the United States illegally on foot do so by crossing the Rio Grande immediately west of the study corridor, then cross Paisano Drive and Interstate 10. As these individuals are often running fast to avoid apprehension by the US Border Patrol, they often dart out into the dangerous, fast-moving traffic. The Engineering Department of the City of El Paso cited two pedestrian traffic fatalities and one incapacitating pedestrian injury in that area of Interstate 10 during 1998, and one fatality and one incapacitating pedestrian injury during 1997, but reported no recorded incidences on cars driving into the Canal in the study area.

In the two-mile study section of West Paisano Drive, the City of El Paso Engineering Department did not record any pedestrian fatalities during 1997 and 1998, but did report two pedestrian injuries each year. According to the US Border Patrol, most persons who cross the Rio Grande in the study area do so at the closed conduit segments of the American Canal. If enclosing the entire canal length in closed conduits results in tripling the number of daily illegal crossings, as predicted by the US Border Patrol, the number of pedestrian injuries and deaths will likely rise accordingly.

During reconstruction of the Middle Open Channel, the Engineering Department of the IBWC expects the need for northbound lane closure along the entire length of the Middle Section due to the narrow USIBWC right-of-way. The guardrail would be removed to facilitate the use of the lane for construction-related trucks, supplies, equipment, and for safety purposes. During any construction, concrete traffic barriers would be installed to prevent drivers from accidentally driving into the Canal. Reconstruction of the Upper or Lower Open Channel Segments would require only short duration lane closure at the point where those segments intersect West Paisano Drive. According to TxDOT Maintenance Department personnel, even if one lane of West Paisano Drive were closed in each direction at the same time, the highway could still carry the normal volume of traffic, with minor delays expected only during the rush hour period, especially in the evening.

The truck entrance to ASARCO will be unaffected by construction and will remain open; however, the automobile entrance would be closed during reconstruction of the Middle section.

The study corridor lies within an area of future TxDOT construction which would complete the construction of Loop 375 from downtown El Paso to the northwest. However, this highway construction is still many years away according to TxDOT Planning personnel. At present, TxDOT has not chosen the exact route, dimension, or elevation of the roadway. While Loop 375 may or may not pass through the study corridor, there is no way to evaluate the potential effects of canal reconstruction on any future Loop 375 construction at present.

3.0 Railroads

Two railroads are located in the traffic corridor, the Burlington Northern Santa Fe (BNSF) Railroad and the Union Pacific (UP) Railroad. Burlington Northern uses these tracks principally for local traffic, usually five trains per day Monday through Friday, with fewer trains on Saturday and none on Sunday. Because of the proximity of the BNSF tracks to the international boundary, BNSF Railroad reports a high rate of thefts and vandalism to its trains in this area, especially while the trains are sitting on side tracks waiting for another train to pass.

The BNSF track is located uphill from and adjacent to the Middle Open Channel Segment of the American Canal. Use of portions of the BNSF right-of-way would be essential during canal reconstruction activities. However, to prevent damage or delays to the Railroad, the BNSF requires anyone using the right-of-way to have a BNSF flagman, railroad insurance, and a BNSF permit.

Approximately twenty groundwater pumps are located in the BNSF right-of-way from a remediation system for a previous ASARCO diesel release. ASARCO has verbally offered the use of these pumps for the dewatering operations during the canal reconstruction. Together, these ASARCO water pumps can pump approximately 30 gpm (gallons per minute). Two fiber optic cables are located in the BNSF right-of-way, which adjoins the USIBWC Middle Open Channel right-of-way.

Locally, the Union Pacific Railroad carries much more traffic than the BNSF Railroad. However, in the study corridor, the BNSF tracks adjoin the Middle Open Channel segment of the American Canal, while the Union Pacific tracks are located at least one hundred yards up to about a half mile east of the American Canal. Therefore, no direct effects to the Union Pacific Railroad operations appear likely, while direct effects to the BNSF Railroad operations would be expected.

4.0 Bus Routes

The West Paisano Drive corridor is serviced by only one bus route. The Westside Express (Sun Metro Bus #18) neither picks up nor drops off passengers in the study corridor. The bus route uses the corridor Monday through Friday from approximately 6:30 to 8:30 a.m. and from 4:30 to 6:30 p.m. In case of construction or traffic delays, the Sun Metro Westside Express travels on Interstate 10, and maintains the same schedule. The route carries approximately 2600 riders per month or 130 riders per day.

5.0 Bicycle Paths

At present, there are no designated bicycle paths through the study area. However, the City of El Paso Parks and Recreation Department hopes to construct bike paths through the corridor in the future. While no actual plans have been drawn up for the corridor study area, the City has applied for a TxDOT grant to help develop a park with bike paths and walkways just south of the study area. The US Border Patrol does not allow bicycle traffic on the American Canal levees.

6.0 Pedestrian Traffic

Typically, very few pedestrians are observed walking on the concrete sidewalks along West Paisano Drive in the study corridor. Most pedestrian traffic would typically be from downtown to the Rescue Mission at 1949 West Paisano, located on the east side of Paisano near the southern end of the study corridor. The US Border Patrol and the El Paso Police Department discourage pedestrians (even utility company and other workers) from walking along the fenced levees of the American Canal, especially alone or at night. Typically no pedestrians are observed walking along the Canal. However, the City of El Paso Parks and Recreation Department would include walkways and bike paths near portions of the Canal, if the Department ever constructs a riverside park as occasionally discussed by City Parks Department personnel. Actual plans for such a park do not yet exist.

7.0 International Bridges

No international pedestrian or vehicular bridges exist in the study corridor. The closest international bridges are located approximately 1½ miles south in downtown El Paso.

8.0 Navigable Waterways

Neither the American Canal nor the El Paso reach of the Rio Grande are considered to be navigable waterways. There are no other navigable waterways in the study area.

9.0 Summary of Transportation Effects

Most of the effects on the local transportation corridor caused by the canal reconstruction are considered to be short-term or temporary (such as lane closure), and would occur only during construction activities. The few remaining effects are considered to be long-term or permanent. As the construction will not increase or decrease the number of area businesses or residences, the canal reconstruction project is not expected to change the permanent traffic volume on Paisano Drive (U.S. 85). The annual number of Interstate 10 pedestrian traffic fatalities was chosen as the indicator issue in the following table.

**SUMMARY OF EFFECTS TO THE TRANSPORTATION RESOURCE
FROM FIVE CANAL REPLACEMENT ALTERNATIVES**

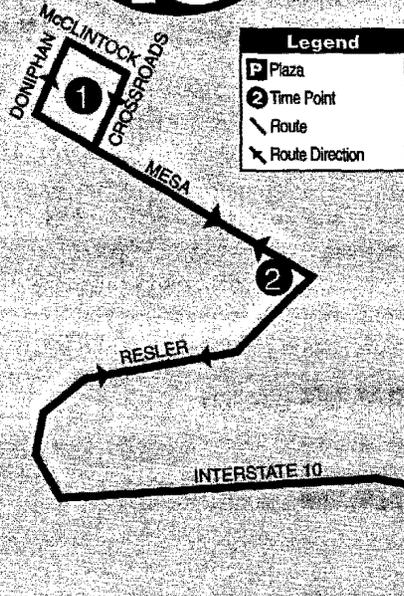
Alternative→	Alt 1	Alt 2	Alt 3	Alt 4	Alt 5
Effect ↓					
Paisano Drive capacity during Canal construction activities (# cars / day)	19,000	19,000	19,000	19,000	19,000
Yandell Drive overpass capacity during Canal construction activities	4,480	4,480	4,480	4,480	4,480
Southbound Paisano Drive (U.S. 85) lane closure during construction (# lanes)	0	0	0	0	0
Northbound Paisano Drive (U.S. 85) lane closure during construction (# lanes)	1	1	1	1	0
Bus traffic during construction (buses / day)	10	10	10	10	10
Pedestrian traffic during construction (# / hour)	0-1	0-1	0-1	0-1	0-1
BNSF Railroad capacity during construction (# trains / day)	5	5	5	5	5
Miles of bike paths open to public in study area after construction	0	0	0	0	0
Cars going off Paisano Drive (U.S. 85) into American Canal after construction	0	0	0	0	0
Estimated annual pedestrian traffic deaths on Interstate 10 after construction	4.5	3.0	4.5	1.5	1.5
Annual pedestrian traffic injuries on Interstate 10 and Paisano after construction	7.5	5.0	7.5	2.5	2.5
Long term additional traffic on Paisano Drive (U.S. 85) after construction	0	0	0	0	0

10.0 Mitigations

The U.S. Border Patrol, El Paso Police Department, BNSF Railroad, UP Railroad, and ASARCO have requested the construction of tall fences topped with barbed or razor wire on both sides of any canal reconstruction alternative. Adding additional fences, lighting, surveillance equipment, and Border Patrol personnel would help to reduce the number of persons crossing the river, the number of traffic fatalities and injuries, and the number of drownings. However, only the installation of additional fences will likely be in the budget of USIBWC mitigation actions. The other suggested mitigations involve actions by the US Border Patrol.

I.2 - SUN METRO BUS ROUTE

Route 18 Westside Express



Legend

- Plaza
- Time Point
- Route
- Route Direction

Transfer Points:

- Plaza
- Myrtle & Stanton
- City Hall
- Mesa & Resler
- Mesa & Doniphan

Weekday Service Only

Boarding Point at Plaza Transit Center:
Main and Oregon

Morning

	Doniphan & Mesa	Mesa & Resler	City Hall	Plaza Transit Ctr	Myrtle & Stanton	Mesa & Resler	Doniphan & Mesa
1	2	3	4	5	2	1	
6:18	6:25	6:44	6:47	6:52	7:11	7:18	
6:48	6:55	7:14	7:17	7:22	7:41	7:48	
7:18	7:25	7:44	7:47	7:52	8:11	8:18	
7:48	7:55	8:14	8:17	8:22	---	---	
8:18	8:25	8:44	8:47	8:52	---	---	

Plain Type=AM / Bold Type= PM

Evening

	City Hall	Plaza Transit Ctr	Myrtle & Stanton	Mesa & Resler	Doniphan & Mesa	Mesa & Resler	City Hall
3	4	5	2	1	2	3	
4:15	4:18	4:23	4:42	4:49	4:56	5:15	
4:45	4:48	4:53	5:12	5:19	5:26	5:45	
5:15	5:18	5:23	5:42	5:49	5:56	6:15	
5:45	5:48	5:53	6:12	6:19	6:26	6:45	
6:15	6:18	6:23	6:42	6:49	6:56	7:15	

Plain Type=AM / Bold Type= PM

**I.3 - CITY OF EL PASO TRAFFIC FATALITY AND INJURY
INFORMATION (1997 - 1998)**

**Pedestrian Accidents on Highways Between
International Dam and American Dam
(Source: El Paso Police Department)**

Year	Highway	Cross Street or Milepost	Date	Time	Cause	Results
1997	I-10 West	MP 18	08-27-97	0538	Pedestrian Not Crossing at Intersection	Fatal
1997	I-10 West	MP 18	11-20-97	1450	Pedestrian Not Crossing at Intersection	Incapacitating Injury
1997	West Paisano (U.S. 85)	Ruhlen Ct.	10-26-97	1600	Pedestrian Not Crossing at Intersection	Incapacitating Injury
1998	West Paisano (U.S. 85)	Ruhlen Ct.	05-25-98	2008	Pedestrian Not Crossing at Intersection	Incapacitating Injury
1998	I-10 East	MP 18	11-13-98	1907	Pedestrian Not Crossing at Intersection	Fatal
1998	I-10 East	MP 18	11-13-98	1907	Pedestrian Not Crossing at Intersection	Fatal

I.4 - RECORDS OF CONVERSATION

**RECORD OF CONVERSATION - ENCON File # 122-9
Transportation**

Name: Pete Dunavent

Date/Time: 9/1/99

Agency: Sun Metro

Phone No: 915-534-5829

Only Bus #18 runs through West Paisano. There are 5 express buses in the morning and 5 in the afternoon.

The route carries 2,600 passengers per month.

Recommended Action or Response

Name and Date: John Knopp 9/1/99

**RECORD OF CONVERSATION - ENCON File # 122-9
Transportation**

Name: Judy Ramsey, Trans. Planning Admin.

Date/Time: 9/99

Agency: Texas Dept. of Transportation

Phone No: 915-774-4322

Texas Dept. of Transportation plans to extend Loop 375 from downtown through study area in about 10 years.

No specs or right-of-way requirements exist yet.

Recommended Action or Response

Name and Date: John Knopp 9/99

**RECORD OF CONVERSATION - ENCON File # 122-9
Transportation**

Name: Lt. Roy Davis, Supervisor

Date/Time: 10/6/99

Agency: El Paso Police, Traffic Enforcement

Phone No: 915-564-7000

Border Patrol Operation "Hold the Line" began in 1993 and dropped the traffic fatalities dramatically, 40%.

Recommended Action or Response

Call Luisa Garcia at City Engineering in Traffic & Transportation Dept. for statistics of fatalities and injuries.

Name and Date: John Knopp 10/6/99

**RECORD OF CONVERSATION - ENCON File # 122-9
Transportation**

Name: Mitch Espinoza, Trainmaster

Date/Time: 10/12/99 10:15 a.m.

Agency: Burlington Northern Santa Fe Rlrd.

Phone No: 915-534-2308

There are 3 freight trains per day (6:00 a.m., 9:00 a.m., and 10:30 p.m.) on the tracks by the Canal - 6 days per week.

There is also a roundtrip local industry train five days a week. The train services ASARCO, the cement company, and other local industries. During their 3:30 p.m. to 3:30 a.m. shifts, cars may remain sitting on the tracks for a time, but generally not till after 5:00 p.m.

Recommended Action or Response

Call Mario Reyes (Burlington Northern Santa Fe Police) about railroad crime.

Name and Date: John Knopp 10/12/99

**RECORD OF CONVERSATION - ENCON File # 122-9
Transportation**

Name: Henry Lara, Field Engineer
Agency: BNSF Railroad, NM Division

Date/Time: 10/25/99 10:00 a.m.
Phone No: 505-767-6847

Before planned construction design, engineers should contact him.

Addendum June 5, 2000 2:00 p.m.

**Meeting with Harry Lara, John Knopp, Andy Sieger, and Steve Fox
at Canal at entrance to ASARCO**

Currently the BNSF Railroad requires constructing a 2:1 slope to insure slope stability. However, for this project the BNSF can accept a steeper 1.5:1 slope during and after canal construction. BNSF Railroad requests that canal plans be submitted to the railroad for review. Mr. Lara anticipates no disruption in service during canal reconstruction.

Name and Date: John Knopp 10/25/99

**RECORD OF CONVERSATION - ENCON File # 122-9
Transportation**

Name: Henry Mondragon, Roadmaster
Agency: Burlington Northern Santa Fe Rlrd.

Date/Time: 10/25/99
Phone No: 915-534-2366

The right-of-way fluctuates by the Middle Channel location. However, to work within 25 feet of the centerline requires a flagman at \$500.00 per day plus overtime, railroad liability insurance, and paperwork. Applications for working on Railroad Rights-of-way land require approximately 6 weeks to process.

Recommended Action or Response

- 1) Call Harry Lara, New Mexico Division Field Engineer concerning slope and sheet pile requirements (505) 767-6847.
- 2) Call Ben Calyborne from Catellus Management in Irving, Texas for requirements concerning Right-of-way. USIBWC should give copies to contractors for reconstruction meeting.

Name and Date: John Knopp 10/25/99

**RECORD OF CONVERSATION - ENCON File # 122-9
Transportation**

Name: Mario Reyes, Capt. Railroad Police
Agency: BNSF Railroad, Resource Protection Div.

Date/Time: 10/26/99 1:00 p.m.
Phone No: 915-534-2309

Because trains coming into the yards are easy targets for criminals, the trains are frequently vandalized or burglarized.

Before 1993 when the Border Patrol began "Operation Hold the Line," the railroad averaged 27 burglaries per day near the project area, (roughly 810 per month). That number was reduced to approximately 1 per month, a 99.9% reduction.

High fences with barbed wire would reduce crime if open canals are replaced with closed conduits.

People who open closed containers or cars to keep warm also suffer.

More fences and gates would help reduce crime.

Recommended Action or Response

Send explanation and chart.

Name and Date: John Knopp 10/26/99

**RECORD OF CONVERSATION - ENCON File # 122-9
Transportation**

Name: Robert Tejada, Dir. of Maintenance
Agency: Texas Dept. of Transportation

Date/Time: 10/26/99
Phone No: 915-774-4319

For construction, submit traffic Control Plan (signage, barriers, etc.) to him.

Texas Dept. of Transportation needs at least a week to process lane closure requests, but more time is better.

West Paisano will be able to handle the normal traffic even with lane closure during construction.

Recommended Action or Response

Name and Date: John Knopp 10/26/99

APPENDIX J

(Environmental Justice)

- J.1 – Environmental Justice Text**
- J.2 – American Canal Crime Statistics
From 1996-1999**
- J.3 – American Canal Warning Poster
Distributed in Mexico**
- J.4 – Rio Grande River Park Concept Documents**
- J.5 – Records of Conversation**

J.1 – ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE TEXT

ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE

1.0 Rationale and Description

When environmental justice was added in 1994 to the scope of National Environmental Policy Act-related environmental assessments, the expected assessment areas were never explicitly detailed. Rather, a spirit was shaped to include justice concerns to the community, and especially the direct and indirect consequences to the health and well being of the poor.

2.0 Introduction

The study area is a very sparsely populated area approximately one mile north of downtown El Paso, the poorest (per capita) major city in the United States. The area lies in an Empowerment Zone designated by the Federal government to promote redevelopment in poor areas.

Lower Open Channel Area: There are two apartment buildings or tenements that cater to low-income people. One of the apartment buildings originally served as the site of Fort Bliss in the late 1800s before the Army Post was moved to its present location northeast of downtown El Paso. The apartment buildings house a somewhat transient population estimated to be fewer than 50 persons. The windows of the apartments are covered with iron security bars. The back yards of the apartment buildings, which adjoin the Lower Open Channel of the American Canal, have wire fences topped with barbed wire, which have been cut in many places. At the present time, no grocery stores, convenience stores, laundries, gas stations, or other services related to local residents are located in the study corridor. No local buses serve the residents of the study corridor. The area near the apartment buildings has very few trees or other amenities of any type. Adjoining the apartments is a small, little-used City Park with an onsite wastewater lift station which is used to pump sanitary sewage westward across the Canal and uphill to the Northwest Wastewater Treatment Facility located north of Executive Center Drive.

Some small manufacturing or service businesses are located adjacent to the apartments. The largest and best known of the businesses is the historic Hacienda Café located east of the south end of the Lower Open Channel. Typically, the local residents are not employed in the adjoining businesses. Because of the high rate of local burglaries by persons who cross the Rio Grande to burglarize El Paso residences or businesses, the adjacent businesses are typically surrounded by high chain link fences topped with barbed and/or razor wire.

Across Paisano Drive from the row of businesses is the Rescue Mission of El Paso, which houses up to 125 homeless persons a night during the peak winter months. The yard of the Rescue Mission is also enclosed with high security fences to prevent burglaries.

Middle Open Channel Area: The fenced open channel is located east of Paisano Drive, and the Rio Grande lies to the west of Paisano. Adjacent to the Canal are the Burlington Northern Santa Fe Railroad tracks. The ASARCO (American Smelting and Refining Corporation) smelter facility occupies the land east of the railroad tracks. Though the ASARCO property rises steeply above the railroad tracks and a guard is posted at the gate to reduce unauthorized access to the property, ASARCO personnel report a relatively high rate of burglaries and thefts of company vehicles and equipment.

Upper Open Channel Area: Adjoining this canal segment is a USIBWC field office, which contains the only structures remaining from the historic community known as "Smelertown." This former residential community was condemned and razed in the 1960s because of high levels of lead found both in the blood levels of the residents and in the soil of the neighborhood. There are no residences or other businesses in the area of the Upper Open Channel.

3.0 Crime / Border Patrol / EP Police Department

The United States Border Patrol is charged by the Department of the Interior with the task of protecting the American border from drug runners, weapons smugglers, and undocumented aliens trying to enter the country illegally. Border Patrol Agents have the authority to detain persons entering illegally. Border Patrol officers in the study area have occasionally been the targets of gunmen from across the border, and Border Patrol vehicles are frequently attacked with rocks and guns by Mexican criminal gang members who have crossed into the United States. A few years ago in the study area, Mexican criminals routinely blocked West Paisano at night and then robbed the unsuspecting drivers of their money and sometimes their cars. In 1993, after national news coverage of the problem, the Border Patrol obtained money to begin "Operation Hold the Line." This operation increased the number of agents, installed lighting, surveillance cameras, motion detectors, and tall fences along the American Canal or the Rio Grande in the study area.

To reduce the number of crimes along the border and to minimize the personal danger to its agents, the US Border Patrol has begun an improvement of the security in the area between downtown and the International Dam. New 1000-watt lights will be installed approximately 150 feet apart on tall poles near the river. Motion sensors and additional surveillance cameras will also be mounted on the poles.

The Westside Command of the El Paso Police Department is assigned the task of protecting persons and property in the study area. Police officers described and named several criminal gangs operating in areas in Mexico immediately across the Rio Grande from the study area. They described witnessing robberies, assaults, and rapes committed in Mexico by gang members who prey on the Mexican poor, especially individuals waiting to cross the Rio Grande into the United States.

For the three-year period from 1996 through 1998, the El Paso Police Department recorded one Robbery, four Aggravated Robberies, eight Burglaries of Habitations and Businesses, twelve Burglaries of Vehicles, three Aggravated Assaults, and five Thefts in the study area. Police personnel reported that the crime rate was much worse before the Border Patrol's "Operation Hold the Line" began in 1993. The Police Department reported that the Operation has reduced traffic fatalities by 40%, and has greatly reduced the number of burglaries and other types of crime in a large portion of the City of El Paso. El Paso Police Department personnel feared that replacing the open channels with closed conduits would probably result in a higher crime rate. Police personnel expressed concern that as they could not assign special officers exclusively to the canal area, officers might be delayed in arriving at crime scenes. The Police Department noted that they cannot detain anyone until a crime is committed, and the Border Patrol would have to increase security if the open channel segments were replaced with closed conduits.

4.0 Drownings in and Rescues from Canal

Minimizing the number of drownings is included as a part of the training and is a responsibility of the US Border Patrol Agents. They seek to accomplish this goal by 1) improving canal safety equipment, 2) publicizing the dangers of drowning in the swift canal waters, and 3) improving the percentage of successful live rescues from the canal. To warn of the dangers, the Border Patrol provides public service announcements to be used on Juarez radio stations and large posters to be placed in public buildings in Juarez. (A reduced example of one of the posters follows within this Appendix).

The Border Patrol keeps records of rescues and drownings for the entire American Canal and Rio Grande American Canal Extension (RGACE). They estimated that approximately one third of the canal rescues and half the canal drownings actually occur in the two-mile long original American Canal. As can be seen in the following table, when Border Patrol Agents began receiving improved rescue training and rescue equipment, the number of live rescues increased and the number of drownings decreased.

**ANNUAL NUMBER OF HUMAN DROWINGS AND LIVE RESCUES
FROM THE AMERICAN CANAL
REPORTED BY US BORDER PATROL AGENTS**

Activity	Fiscal Year				
	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999
Estimated Number of Drownings in 2-mile long American Canal	Not Available	Not Available	Not Available	10	5
Estimated Number of Live Human Rescues in 2-mile long American Canal	15	30	25	30	15

5.0 Businesses in the Study Area

The private police departments of both the Burlington Northern Santa Fe Railroad and the Union Pacific Railroad reported a high rate of burglary and vandalism of their trains in the study area, especially in the areas closest to the Lower Open Channel and Conduit B. Personnel from both railroads stated that they expected the rate of crime to rise if the open channels are reconstructed as closed conduits, but they could not estimate the percentage increase. Police personnel from both railroads described a very dramatic reduction in crime against their trains when the Border Patrol began its "Operation Hold the Line" in 1993.

Owners of businesses adjoining the Lower Open Channel of the American Canal stated that persons routinely cut through their fences or barbed wire after crossing the river and the canal. Reportedly, those persons run through their properties on their way into El Paso; but occasionally, they burglarize the area businesses. Business owners did not recall seeing drowning victims in the canal, but they had heard of drownings in the canal over the past years. Local business owners seemed to be more concerned about the possibility of higher crime if the Lower Open Channel segment were enclosed as a closed conduit (alternatives 1 and 3). The business owners also feared a corresponding increase in their insurance rates.

6.0 Proposed Rio Grande Riverpark

In conjunction with the National Park Service, the Texas Department of Transportation, the City of Sunland Park, and other agencies and local groups, the City of El Paso has structured a four-phase plan to develop a park on the eastern bank of the Rio Grande from downtown El Paso north to Borderland Road, a distance of approximately 15 miles.

The City Department of Planning, Research, and Development plans to gradually develop the park with historic markers, trees, walking trails, bike paths, and picnic tables. The first phase would extend from downtown El Paso to the International Dam. The second phase of the park would encompass the entire 2-mile Canal area. The objective of El Paso Planning Department personnel is to begin Phase II park construction within approximately three to five years. While plans have not been finalized, tentative plans include a fourteen-foot wide bicycle path near the river. City Planning personnel stated that the bike path could be built near fenced open channel segments or even above closed conduit segments. In the study area, the bike path is expected to cross the canal only once, at or near the head gates of the American Canal. In all five reconstruction alternatives, that 400-foot canal section would be left open, and therefore, construction of a bicycle and a footbridge would be required over the open channel.

7.0 Summary of Environmental Justice Effects from the Five Canal Reconstruction Alternatives

None of the four construction alternatives is expected to seriously disrupt the lives of the local residents or business owners during construction. Similarly, none of the alternatives is expected to change the number of permanent jobs in the study area.

The US Border Patrol expects fewer drownings with more sections of closed conduits, but also expects the higher number of illegal border crossings to result in higher numbers of pedestrian traffic fatalities and pedestrian injuries, (Refer to Transportation Section in Appendix I of this report). Similarly, the El Paso Police Department and the US Border Patrol would both expect an increase in crime in the study area as well as in other sections of west El Paso due to any additional channel enclosures. Both agencies anticipate the need for additional Border Patrol agents and equipment where existing open channel segments become closed conduits.

**SUMMARY OF EFFECTS TO
ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE RESOURCE
FROM THE FIVE CANAL REPLACEMENT ALTERNATIVES**

Alternative→	Alt. 1	Alt. 2	Alt. 3	Alt. 4	Alt. 5
Effect ↓					
Number of local residents to be relocated by reconstruction	0	0	0	0	0
Number of local residents to be permanently employed by new businesses created through canal reconstruction	0	0	0	0	0
Annual number of crimes reported to El Paso police in American Canal area	24	16	24	8	8
Number of annual drownings in American Canal	0	3*	1*	5*	5
Change in number of annual illegal crossings to US via American Canal area	300%	100%	200%	0%	0%
Number of Border Patrol Agents needed to protect American Canal area	16	12	14	8	8
Number of additional pole-mounted 1000-watt lights needed by Border Patrol	48	19	33	0	0
Additional annual costs to Border Patrol	\$1,564,000	\$1,150,000	\$1,377,000	\$630,000	\$630,000
Initial facility improvement costs to Border Patrol	\$1,600,000	\$900,000	\$1,300,000	\$300,000	\$300,000
Approximate length of proposed River Park adjoining Canal (in miles)	2	2	2	2	2

* Construction of additional fences as a mitigation would probably lower the number of drownings from these estimates.

The Annual Number of Drownings in the American Canal was chosen as the indicator issue for the Environmental Justice Resource.

8.0 Mitigations

The El Paso Police Department, US Border Patrol, BNSF Railroad, UP Railroad, and ASARCO have all requested the construction and regular maintenance of eight-foot-high fences topped with barbed wire throughout the entire length of the Canal, especially for any closed conduit sections. This mitigation would reduce the crime rate, the number of drownings, and the number of traffic deaths on I-10.

**J.2 – AMERICAN CANAL CRIME STATISTICS
FROM 1996-1999**

(Source: El Paso Police Department)

EL PASO POLICE DEPARTMENT
EL PASO, TEXAS

INTER - OFFICE MEMORANDUM

TO: Lt. Davidson

FROM: Westside Impact Team

RE: NEPA Environmental Assessment for 2-mile long segment of the American
Canal beside Paisano Drive.

DATE: Sept 06, 1999

The following is a breakdown of criminal activity reported from the 1700
to 2800 block of W. Paisano over a three year period (Jan 01, 1996 thru
Sept 01, 1999).

Aggravated Robberies: (Four)

- #1. 2200 W. Paisano, #96-169020
- #2. 2400 W. Paisano, #96-227335
- #3. 2300 W. Paisano, #99-182359
- #4. 2000 W. Paisano, #99-183324

Robberies: (One)

- #1. 2300 W. Paisano, #97-003100

Burglary of Habitation & Business: (Eight)

- #1. 2000 W. Paisano, #96-296076
- #2. 2000 W. Paisano, #96-305040
- #3. 1720 W. Paisano, #97-169039
- #4. 1720 W. Paisano, #97-185278
- #5. 2000 W. Paisano, #97-228164
- #6. 1720 W. Paisano, #97-303211
- #7. 2616 W. Paisano, #98-175077
- #8. 2000 W. Paisano, #99-139349

Burglary of Vehicles: (Twelve, five of which were Border Patrol units)

- #1. 2300 W. Paisano, #96-126326
- #2. 2301 W. Paisano, #97-167329
- #3. 2700 W. Paisano, #97-192053
- #4. 2800 W. Paisano, #97-192048
- #5. 2800 W. Paisano, #98-227350 (BP)
- #6. 2000 W. Paisano, #98-212044 (BP)
- #7. 2000 W. Paisano, #98-234321
- #8. 2301 W. Paisano, #98-242099 (BP)
- #9. 2301 W. Paisano, #98-250116 (BP)
- #10. 2300 W. Paisano, #98-336173
- #11. 2000 W. Paisano, #99158202
- #12. 2301 W. Paisano, #99232029 (BP)

Aggravated Assaults: (Three, one which was on a Police Officer)

- #1. 2300 W. Paisano, #96-004036
- #2. 2300 W. Paisano, #96-094314
- #3. 2200 W. Paisano, #96-213048

Theft Cases: (Five)

- #1. 2301 W. Paisano, #96-029201
- #2. 2301 W. Paisano, #96-046132
- #3. 2000 W. Paisano, #96-089240
- #4. 2616 W. Paisano, #98-141146
- #5. 2301 W. Paisano, 99-188173

Numerous Cases of Vandalism

**J.3 – AMERICAN CANAL WARNING POSTER
DISTRIBUTED IN MEXICO**

(Source: US Border Patrol)

MEXICANO, NO ARRIESGUES TU VIDA AL CRUZAR A ESTADOS UNIDOS; CONOCE TUS DERECHOS Y OBLIGACIONES



NO TE EXPONGAS A PELIGROS. NO CRUCES POR RIOS, CANALES DE RIEGO, ZONAS DESERTICAS O CARRETERAS RAPIDAS. NO DUERMAS EN VIAS DE FERROCARRIL. NO TE DEJES ENGAÑAR CON INFORMACION INCORRECTA SOBRE EL CRUCE.

SI ERES DETENIDO POR ALGUNA AUTORIDAD EN ESTADOS UNIDOS, TIENES DERECHO A SER TRATADO CON RESPETO AUNQUE NO CUENTES CON DOCUMENTOS QUE VALIDEN TU LEGAL ESTANCIA EN ESTE PAIS. EN TAL CASO, TE SUGERIMOS SEGUIR ESTAS RECOMENDACIONES:

EVITA CUALQUIER CONFRONTACION CON LA AUTORIDAD. NO ASUMAS ACTITUDES AGRESIVAS; NO TE RESISTAS NI INTENTES ESCAPAR; SOLO EXIGE QUE SE RESPETEN TUS DERECHOS

NO CONDUZCAS CON MENTIRAS, SIEMPRE PROPORCIONA TU NOMBRE COMPLETO Y TU DOMICILIO CORRECTO. ESTO SERA DE GRAN UTILIDAD EN EL CASO DE QUE ALGUN FAMILIAR QUIERA LOCALIZARTE

SI NO CONSIDERAS NECESARIO, TIENES DERECHO A CONTAR CON LA PRESENCIA DE UN ABOGADO O DE UN REPRESENTANTE DEL CONSULADO MEXICANO PARA QUE RECIBAS ORIENTACION

SI ERES MENOR DE EDAD Y VIENES ACOMPAÑADO POR UN FAMILIAR ADULTO, ENTREGA A LA AUTORIDAD MIGRATORIA PARA QUE NO LOS SEPALEN

NO UTILICES DOCUMENTOS FALSOS O QUE NO TE PERTENEZCAN, PUES PODRIAS SER PROCESADO PENALMENTE Y TERMINAR EN LA CARCEL; TAMPOCO PORTES ARMAS DE FUEGO, NAVAJAS U OTROS INSTRUMENTOS PELIGROSOS

**CONSULADO GENERAL
DE MEXICO**

**DEPARTAMENTO DE PROTECCION
TELEFONOS**

(915) 544-9299 Y 533-4082

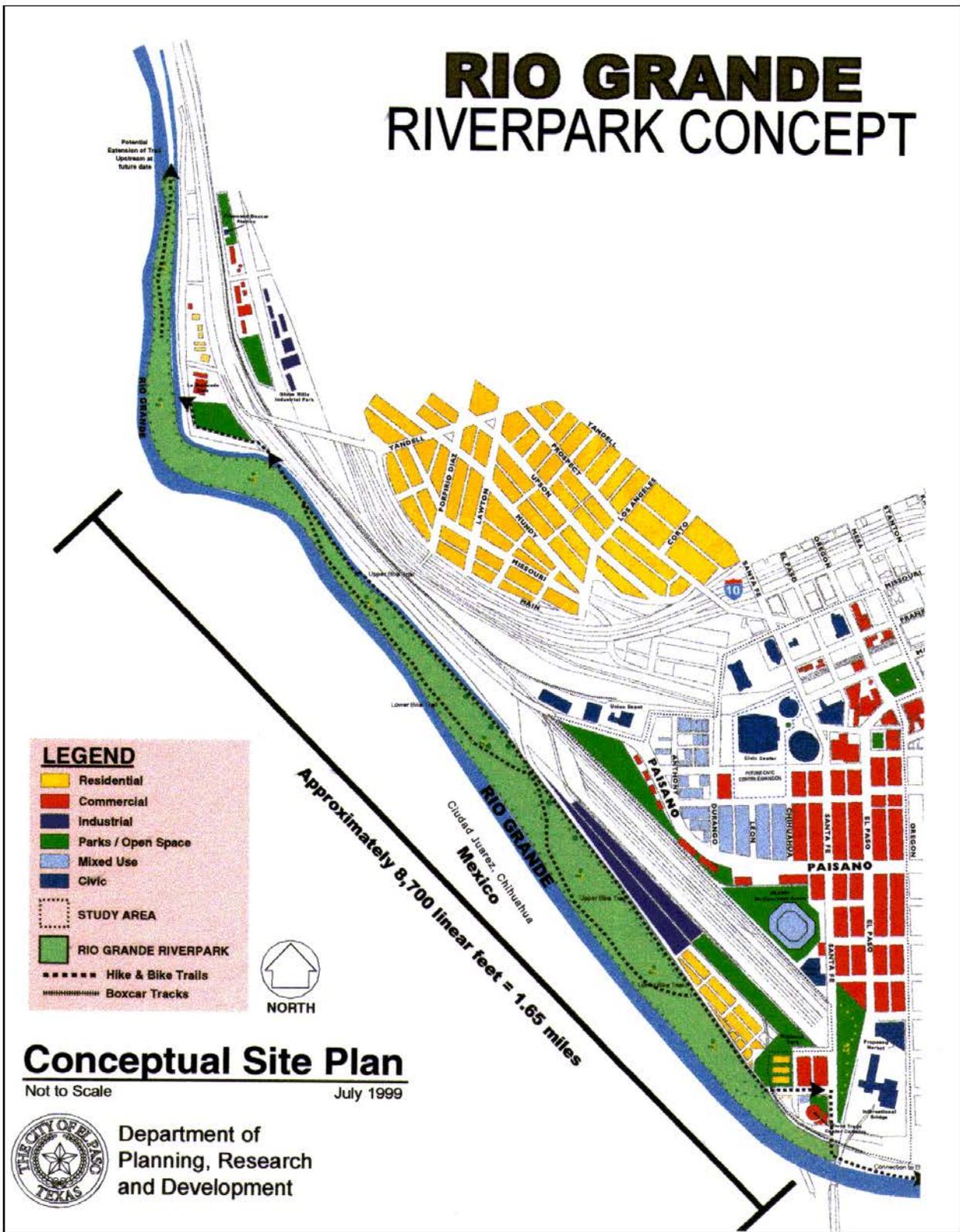
910 EAST SAN ANTONIO
EL PASO, TEXAS 79901

SI CUENTAS CON UN BOLETO DE AVION Y/O AUTOBUS QUE NO USASTE POR HABER SIDO DETENIDO, SOLICITA QUE TE COMUNIQUEN CON UN REPRESENTANTE DEL CONSULADO DE MEXICO PARA AYUDARTE A RECLAMAR EL REEMBOLSO DE LO QUE PAGASTE. SI RADICAS EN CIUDAD JUAREZ, TE RECOMENDAMOS QUE PARA ESTE TRAMITE TE DIRIJAS A LA DELEGACION DE LA SECRETARIA DE RELACIONES EXTERIORES, UBICADA EN MELQUIADES ALANIS 6588, TELEFONOS 17 59 64 Y 17 59 63

**J.4 – RIO GRANDE RIVER PARK CONCEPT
DOCUMENTS**

(Source: City of El Paso)

RIO GRANDE RIVERPARK CONCEPT



RIO GRANDE RIVERPARK CONCEPT



Potential hike trail with
bridge over drainage area.



Open space near trail
and river bank.

View of park
from northwest.



Department of
Planning, Research
and Development

RIO GRANDE RIVERPARK CONCEPT

Trail Design Concepts.



Department of
Planning, Research
and Development



United States Department of the Interior
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE
INTERMOUNTAIN REGION
Intermountain Support Office - Santa Fe
P.O. Box 728
Santa Fe, New Mexico 87504-0728



In reply refer to:

D18(IMSIF-RTCA)

Mr. Nat Campos
Planning Director
Two Civic Center Plaza
El Paso, Texas 79901-1196

Dear Mr. Campos:

It is a pleasure to inform you that the Rio Grande Riverpark project has been selected for support by the National Park Services' Rivers, Trails and Conservation Assistance Program (RTCA) for Fiscal Year 2000. Paul Cusumano and I will represent RTCA in this effort and I will be your primary contact for assistance and information. The RTCA program works with communities across the United States to develop community plans which address: quality of life issues relating to trails and greenways, recreation, river corridor enhancements, fisheries and habitat improvements, cultural resource enhancement, and environmental education.

The Rio Grande Riverpark application for assistance rated very strong in our regional project selection process. We were very impressed with the partners already supporting the Riverpark idea and the City's willingness to take on a very complex and challenging project. The Rio Grande should become an attractive community resource for El Paso.

We are currently developing a work plan for our involvement in the project. We hope all of the partners in the Rio Grande Task Force could sign a partnership agreement indicating their willingness for a collaborative approach to Rio Grande planning and improvements.

We look forward to working with your staff and other partners in this ambitious project. If you have any questions about RTCA assistance, please call me at (505) 988-6092.

Sincerely,

Attila Bality
Outdoor Recreation Planner,
Rivers, Trails and Conservation Assistance Program

J.5 – RECORDS OF CONVERSATION

RECORD OF CONVERSATION - ENCON File # 122-9
Environmental Justice

Name: Lt. Tim Davidson and Officer Rudy Bonilla

Date/Time: 9/24/99 2:00 pm

El Paso Police Department-Westside

Agency: Command

Phone No: 915-585-6000

Subject: Effects of 5 USIBWC American Canal Alternatives on Crime in El Paso

The subject area is considered to be an area of high numbers of crimes against persons and property. Most crimes in this area are committed by persons who cross the Rio Grande from Mexico, commit the crime, and return very quickly to Mexico. Many Kern Place home burglaries are committed by persons crossing the river near Apache Creek and the Hacienda Café, and then crossing under Interstate 10 through storm drains. Occasionally the criminals block traffic on Paisano Drive, and assault or rob drivers. Recently, one criminal on a hill threw large rocks at a Police car parked near the entrance to ASARCO, damaging the car and injuring one officer. train cars are often burglarized as the train sits waiting on side tracks near Paisano Drive.

Statistics provided by the Police Department counted only the number of crimes actually reported to police, and said to have been committed along Paisano Drive. The actual numbers are known by the Police Department to be much higher, including assaults or crimes against Police Officers, Border Patrol Agents, undocumented aliens, and others. Reported crimes from January 1, 1996 to September 1, 1999 included

Aggravated Robberies	04
Robbery	01
Burglaries of Habitation or Business	08
Burglaries of Vehicle	12
Aggravated Assaults	03
Thefts	05
TOTAL	33
(Yearly Average)	08

The Police have observed that fences are not good crime deterrents. Criminals quickly cut the fences with wire cutters and go through. The Rio Grande is often too shallow to deter criminals. Deeper than the river, the American Canal has been the best deterrent to crime. The Police are handicapped to control the crime problem because they cannot arrest anyone until after they have committed a crime, not just for coming across the river. Only the Border Patrol can do that. They suggest that as any canal segments are enclosed, fewer deterrents will remain, crime levels will rise, and more Border Patrol agents will be needed to patrol the area.

RECORD OF CONVERSATION Continued

Name: Lt. Tim Davidson and Officer Rudy Bonilla

Date/Time: 9/24/99, 2:00 pm

Agency: El Paso Police Department-Westside Command

Phone No.: 915-585-6000

Predicted Effects of American Canal Reconstruction Alternatives on the Number of Crimes Committed on the US Side of the Border Near the American Canal in El Paso, Texas					
Alternative 0 Effect o	Alternative 1	Alternative 2	Alternative 3	Alternative 4	Alternative 5
Estimated Number of Crimes Reported in the Area of the American Canal	24	16	24	08	08
Estimated % Change in Annual Number of Crimes Reported in El Paso	200% Increase	100% Increase	200% Increase	0% Increase	0% Increase

Addendum June 1, 2000

The El Paso Police Department Westside Command prefers Alternative 4, which would maintain the swift-flowing Canal as a crime deterrent. The Police Department recommends fences be reconstructed on both sides of the Canal.

Name and Date: John Knopp 6/1/00

RECORD OF CONVERSATION - ENCON File # 122-9 Environmental Justice

Name: Ernesto Martinez, James Gonzales,
Edward Gerber, Fernando Melendez
Agency: U.S. Border Patrol

Date/Time: 10/5/99 9:00 a.m.
Phone No.: 915-834-8350

Subject: Effects of 5 USIBWC American Canal Alternatives on U.S. Border Patrol Activities

The Border Patrol Agency is responsible for preventing the flow of drugs and undocumented persons from crossing the international border. The subject area is considered by the Agency to be an area of high numbers of illegal border crossings, drug smuggling, and violent crimes. To reduce those problems, the Border Patrol has added more personnel, installed lights, cameras, and "sensor" fences. Border Patrol agents stated that fences along the canal or the river can reduce the number of persons crossing the border, but cannot stop the traffic entirely. Before the fence was installed, Border Patrol agents sometimes saw vehicles driving across the shallow riverbed near the middle open canal segment in non-irrigation months. Especially where enclosed by fences, the American Canal has been the best deterrent to drug trafficking and illegal crossings. The agents stated that the numbers of illegal crossings had increased significantly in the area south of the International Dam after the American Canal Extension was enclosed in a closed culvert, similar to what is planned in this project area. The increased number of illegal crossings and drug smuggling operations has necessitated an ongoing improvement of fences and lighting from the international bridges downtown upriver to the International Dam. The fences are 8-foot high fences topped with barbed wire. Lighting towers spaced approximately 150 feet apart house 1000-watt lights. The Agency suggest that as any canal segments are enclosed and fewer deterrents remain, incidences of illegal crossings and crimes committed will rise, and more Border Patrol agents, fences, and lights will be needed to protect the area. The Agency also predicted that an increase in the number of illegal crossings would result in a proportional increase in the number of traffic-related deaths and injuries on both Paisano Drive and Interstate 10, paralleling the 2-mile long canal.

The Agency considers the upper segment of the canal near the headgates to be the area of the highest number of illegal crossings and drug smuggling, the northern end of the middle open canal segment near the pump house to be second highest, and the southern end of the middle open canal segment across from the entrance to ASARCO to be third. The Agency reports many persons crossing the Canal via a small utility footbridge near the Hacienda Café.

The number of reported drownings in the American Canal was approximately ten during fiscal year 1998 and five in fiscal year 1999. The Border Patrol attributes this reduction from 1998 to 1999 to the agency's purchase and use of improved life-saving equipment, and to the Border Safety Initiative which publicizes in Mexico the dangers of crossing the canal.

Human Drownings in and Rescues from the American Canal & American Canal Extension					
Parameter and Location	Fiscal Year				
	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999
Estimated Number of Drownings in 2-mile long American Canal	Not available	Not Available	Not Available	10	5
Reported Number of Live Human Rescues from American Canal & its Extension (from American Dam to Riverside Dam)	45	90	75	90	44
Estimated Number of Live Human Rescues in 2-mile long American Canal, American Dam to International Dam, (One third of the total number rescued from the canal & extension).	15	30	25	30	15

Note: While the number of live rescues and drowning victims recovered from the Canal and canal extension are known, the exact numbers of rescues and drownings which actually occurred in the 2-mile section of the Canal were not recorded, and are uncertain.

**Record of Conversation (continued)
Environmental Justice**

Predicted Effects of Various American Canal Reconstruction Alternatives On the U.S. Side of the Border Near the American Canal in El Paso, Texas					
Alternative → Effect ↓	Alternative 1	Alternative 2	Alternative 3	Alternative 4	Alternative 5
Approximate Length of Open Canals (feet)	400 feet	4925 feet	2345 feet	8005 feet	8005 feet
Approximate Length of Box Culverts (feet)	10,129 feet	5604 feet	8184 feet	2524 feet	2524 feet
Estimated % Change in Number of Annual Illegal Crossings in 2-mile canal area	300% Increase	100% Increase	200% Increase	0% Increase	0% increase
# of Border Patrol Agents needed to protect Upper Segment of Canal	4	2	2	2	2
Annual Cost of Salaries & Equipment to protect Upper Segment of American Canal	\$300,000	\$150,000	\$150,000	\$150,000	\$150,000
Annual Cost of Salaries & Equipment to protect Upper Segment of American Canal	\$300,000	\$150,000	\$150,000	\$150,000	\$150,000
# of Border Patrol Agents needed to protect Middle & Lower Segments	12	10	12	6	6
Annual Cost of Salaries & Equipment to protect Middle & Lower Segments	\$1,080,000	\$900,000	\$1,080,000	\$450,000	\$450,000
Annual Cost of Salaries & Equipment to protect entire 1.98-mile canal	\$1,380,000	1,050,000	\$1,230,000	\$600,000	\$600,000
Estimated Number of additional pole-mounted 1000-watt Lamps Needed	48	19	33	0	0
Estimated Cost to Install Lighting, Fencing and Surveillance Cameras	\$1,600,000	\$900,000	\$1,300,000	\$300,000	\$300,000
Estimated Annual Cost of Electricity and Maintenance of Lighting, Cameras, & Fences	\$184,000	\$100,000	\$147,000	\$30,000	\$30,000
Estimated Additional Annual Cost	\$1,564,000	\$1,150,000	\$1,377,000	\$630,000	\$630,000

The Border Patrol suggests enclosing all segments of the canal (open or closed) with two rows of razor-wire-topped 8-foot high chain link fences, spaced approximately six feet apart, as a mitigation for all four alternatives to reduce the number of illegal crossings.

Addendum June 1, 2000

The Border Patrol prefers Alternative 4 which would maintain the deterrence of an open canal, while saving between \$520,000 and \$934,000 per year in expenses if Alternatives 1, 2, or 3 were chosen.

Name and Date: John Knopp 6/1/00

**RECORD OF CONVERSATION - ENCON File # 122-9
Environmental Justice**

Name: Rosemary Staley, Chief Planner

Date/Time: Nov. 5, 1999

Agency: City of El Paso, City Planning

Phone No.: 915-541-4718

She spoke of the phases of the park, including the American Canal area being included in Phase 2. City will put up "Quality of Life" issues for bond issue in 2000, and then they'll have a timetable. Park will extend from downtown to NM line, then overlap Sunland Park's new River Park, and then extend to Borderland Road.

They may connect it over the old American Dam or over the old bridge to a New Mexico Chihuahua Park where "Monument 1" is located. They need a 14-foot wide bike path that is handicap accessible. A bridge or culvert would be needed over the head gates of the American Canal.

Recommended Action or Response

Name and Date: John Knopp 11/5/99