

RECLAMATION

Managing Water in the West

**DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT
FOR
El Paso County Riverside Canal and Structure Improvement
Project**



U.S. Department of the Interior
Bureau of Reclamation
Albuquerque Area Office
Environment Division
Albuquerque, New Mexico

March 2008

Table of Contents

1.0 Purpose of and Need for Action..... 1

1.1. Introduction: 1

1.2. Proposed Action: 1

1.3. Need for the Action 1

1.4. Purpose of the Action: 3

1.5. Laws, Regulations, and EISs that affect this EA: 3

1.6. Public Scoping and Issues: 4

2.0 Description of Alternatives Including the Proposed Action..... 5

2.1. Introduction: 5

2.2. Description of the Alternatives:..... 5

2.3. Process Used to Consider, Select, and Eliminate Alternatives 6

2.4. Discussion of Alternative B:..... 6

2.5. Summary Comparison of the Alternatives, the Predicted Achievement of the Project Objectives, and the Predicted Environmental effects of Reasonable Alternatives. 10

3.0 Affected Environment 11

3.1. Introduction 11

3.2. Description of Relevant Resources (see issues from 1.6 of Chapter 1)..... 11

3.2.1. Wildlife 11

3.2.2. Cultural Resources (Issue #2 Historic Features of the Riverside Canal) 11

3.2.3. Wetlands 14

3.2.4. Water Resources (groundwater) 14

3.2.5. Vegetation (Ysleta del Sur Pueblo affected resources)..... 17

3.2.6. Environmental Justice 18

3.2.7. Indian Trust Assets 18

3.2.8. Air Quality and Noise 18

4.0 Environmental Consequences..... 19

4.1. Introduction 19

4.2. Predicted Effects on Each Relevant Issue and Resources 19

4.2.1. Wildlife..... 19

4.2.2. Cultural Resources 19

4.2.3. Wetlands 20

4.2.4. Water Resources 20

4.2.5. Vegetation 21

4.2.6. Environmental Justice 21

4.2.7. Indian Trust Assets 22

4.2.8. Air Quality and Noise 22

4.3. Irreversible and Irretrievable Commitment of Resources of the Proposed Action..... 23

5.0 Environmental Commitments..... 23

6.0 Consultation and Coordination 23

7.0 List of Preparers 24

8.0 References..... 24

Appendix A 25

Appendix B 46

Appendix C 53



Acronyms and Abbreviations

EA	Environmental Assessment
DM	Departmental Manual
ITAs	Indian Trust Assets
NEPA	National Environmental Policy Act
NHPA	National Historic Preservation Act
Reclamation	Bureau of Reclamation
P.L	Public Law
EPA	Environmental Protection Agency
USGS	United States Geological Survey
MOA	Memorandum of Agreement
EIS	Environmental Impact Statement
UTEP	University of Texas at El Paso
NPDES	National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System
cfs	Cubic feet per second
CFR	Code of Federal Regulations