PUBLIC NOTICE

U.S. ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS **BUILDING STRONG®**
LOS ANGELES DISTRICT

APPLICATION FOR PERMIT
US 180 Columbus Avenue to Snow Bowl

Public Notice/Application No.: SPL-2013-00486-KAT
Project: US 180: Columbus Avenue to Snow Bowl
Comment Period: August 14, 2013 through August 29, 2013
Project Manager: Kathleen Tucker; 602-230-6956; Kathleen.A.Tucker@usace.army.mil

Applicant
Audra Merrick, P.E.
ADOT Flagstaff District
1801 S. Milton Road (F500)
Flagstaff, AZ 86001
928.779.7596
amerrick@azdot.gov

Contact
John Wennes
ADOT Environmental
jwennes@azdot.gov
602.712.6974

Location
The proposed project area is located along United States Highway (US) 180 at between MP 216.20 and MP 224.06, within the City of Flagstaff, Coconino County, Arizona. (35.228891°N, -111.660171°W, NAD83).

Activity
This activity would involve the discharge of fill material into 0.004 acre of waters and 0.025 acre of wetlands within unnamed tributary to Rio de Flag for the removal and extension of a corrugated metal pipe. In addition there will be 0.004 acre of fill material into Rio de Flag at MP 223.57 (See attached drawings). For more information see page 3 of this notice.

Interested parties are hereby notified that an application has been received for a Department of the Army permit for the activity described herein and shown on the attached drawing(s). We invite you to review today's public notice and provide views on the proposed work. By providing substantive, site-specific comments to the Corps Regulatory Division, you provide information that support the Corps' decision-making process, all comments received during the comment period become part of the record and will be considered in the decision. This permit will be issued, issued with special conditions, or denied under Section 404 of the Clean Water Act. Comments should be mailed to:

US Army Corps of Engineers
Los Angeles District, Phoenix Office
3636 N. Central Ave., Suite 900
Phoenix, AZ 85012

Alternatively, comments can be sent electronically to: Kathleen.A.Tucker@usace.army.mil

The mission of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Regulatory Program is to protect the Nation's aquatic resources, while allowing reasonable development through fair, flexible and balanced permit decisions. The Corps evaluates permit applications for essentially all construction activities that occur in the Nation's waters, including wetlands. The Regulatory Program in the Los Angeles District is executed to protect aquatic resources by developing and implementing short- and long-term initiatives to improve regulatory products, processes, program transparency, and customer feedback considering current staffing levels and historical funding trends.

Corps permits are necessary for any work, including construction and dredging, in the Nation's navigable water and their tributary waters. The Corps balances the reasonably foreseeable benefits and detriments of proposed projects, and makes permit decisions that recognize the essential values of the Nation's aquatic ecosystems to the general public, as well as the property rights of private citizens who want to use their land. The Corps strives to make its permit decisions in a timely manner that minimizes impacts to the regulated public.

During the permit process, the Corps considers the views of other Federal, state and local agencies, interest groups, and the general public. The results of this careful public interest review are fair and equitable decisions that allow reasonable use of private property, infrastructure development, and growth of the economy, while offsetting the authorized impacts to the waters of the United States. The permit review process serves to first avoid and then minimize adverse effects of projects on aquatic resources to the maximum practicable extent. Any remaining unavoidable adverse impacts to the aquatic environment are offset by compensatory mitigation requirements, which may include restoration, enhancement, establishment, and/or preservation of aquatic ecosystem system functions and services.

Evaluation Factors

The decision whether to issue a permit will be based on an evaluation of the probable impact including cumulative impacts of the proposed activity on the public interest. That decision will reflect the national concern for both protection and utilization of important resources. The benefit, which reasonably may be expected to accrue from the proposal, must be balanced against its reasonably foreseeable detriments. All factors which may be relevant to the proposal will be considered including the cumulative effects thereof. Factors that will be considered include conservation, economics, aesthetics, general environmental concerns, wetlands, cultural values, fish and wildlife values, flood hazards, flood plain values, land use, navigation, shoreline erosion and accretion, recreation, water supply and conservation, water quality, energy needs, safety, food production and, in general, the needs and welfare of the people. In addition, if the proposal would discharge dredged or fill material, the evaluation of the activity will include application of the EPA Guidelines (40 CFR Part 230) as required by Section 404 (b)(1) of the Clean Water Act.

The Corps of Engineers is soliciting comments from the public; Federal, state, and local agencies and officials; Indian tribes; and other interested parties in order to consider and evaluate the impacts of this proposed activity. Any comments received will be considered by the Corps of Engineers to determine whether to issue, modify, condition or deny a permit for this proposal. To make this decision, comments are used to assess impacts on endangered species, historic properties, water quality, general environmental effects, and the other public interest factors listed above. Comments are used in the preparation of an Environmental Assessment and/or an Environmental Impact Statement pursuant to the National Environmental Policy Act. Comments are also used to determine the need for a public hearing and to determine the overall public interest of the proposed activity.

Preliminary Review of Selected Factors

EIS Determination- A preliminary determination has been made that an environmental impact statement is not required for the proposed work.

Water Quality- The applicant has applied for a water quality certification, under Section 401 of the Clean Water Act, from the Arizona Department of Environmental Quality. Section 401 of the Clean Water Act requires that any applicant for an individual Section 404 permit provide proof of water quality certification to the Corps of Engineers.

Cultural Resources- Preliminary determinations indicate that the proposed project will not have any effect on any sites listed, or eligible for listing, in the National Register of Historic Places, or otherwise of national, state, or local significance.

Endangered Species- Preliminary determinations indicate that the proposed activity would have no affect on federally-listed endangered or threatened species, or their critical habitat.

Public Hearing- Any person may request, in writing, within the comment period specified in this notice, that a public hearing be held to consider this application. Requests for public hearing shall state with particularity the reasons for holding a public hearing.

Proposed Activity for Which a Permit is Required

Basic Project Purpose- The basic project purpose comprises the fundamental, essential, or irreducible purpose of the proposed project, and is used by the Corps to determine whether the applicant's project is water dependent (i.e., requires access or proximity to or siting within the special aquatic site to fulfill its basic purpose). Establishment of the basic project purpose is necessary only when the proposed activity would discharge dredged or fill material in to a special aquatic site (e.g., wetlands, pool and riffle complex, mudflats, coral reefs). This project will discharge into a wetland and the Corps has preliminarily determined that the basic project purpose is transportation. The project is not water dependent.

Overall Project Purpose- The overall project purpose serves as the basis for the Corps' 404(b)(1) alternatives analysis and is determined by further defining the basic project purpose in a manner that more specifically describes the applicant's goals for the project, and which allows a reasonable range of alternatives to be analyzed. The overall project purpose for the proposed project is to provide a safer roadway by providing additional right hand turn lanes, extending turn lanes and providing adequate paved shoulder for vehicular recover and snow plow operations.

Additional Project Information

The US 180 roadway consists of two 12-foot travel lanes, one in each direction of travel. The posted speed limit is 45 miles per hour (mph). The shoulder at MP 217.85 includes approximately 6 inches of paved roadway, and about 1 foot of steep earthen side-slopes dropping immediately to the base of the corrugated metal pipe (CMP) outlet. Ponding occurs at the base of the CMP outlet which provides growing conditions for roughly 4-foot-high emergent aquatic vegetation erupting at the base of the CMP outlet and extending to beyond the existing ADOT right-of-way (ROW). The narrow roadway shoulders, sharp drop-offs, and encroaching vegetation along US 180 have created potential hazards to the traveling public including motorists and bicyclists. There is little to no recovery area for vehicles and bicycles to safely return to the roadway, and vegetation further hinders visibility for recovering vehicles. ADOT has received numerous complaints regarding the conditions present at the culvert. In

addition, there is physical evidence that vehicle tires have dropped off at the CMP outlet, and collateral damage has incurred to the adjacent, privately-owned, split-rail fence due to a vehicle that was unable to recover back to the roadway. During winter storms, snow removal is hindered in this location due to the threat of maintenance vehicles running off the road or overcompensating, potentially into the on-coming traffic lane to provide the needed clearance. As a result, snow is retained on the roadway adjacent to the culvert, creating an additional obstacle for motorists.

The project is located within the Petran Montane Conifer Forest Biotic Community (Pase and Brown 1994) at elevations ranging from approximately 6,950 to 7,400 feet. Terrain within the greater project vicinity is hilly, becoming mountainous near the San Francisco Peaks, which flank the project area to the north-northeast. Soils in the general project area are well-drained, medium and moderately fine-textured soils weathered from basalt, rhyolite, andesite, cinders, ash-flow tuff, and other volcanic rocks. Geologic formations in the area consist of basaltic and volcanic rocks. Vegetation in the surrounding project vicinity consists of homogeneous, monotypic stands of ponderosa pine (*Pinus ponderosa*) lacking a mid or understory, with sparse grasses such as wheatgrass (*Agropyron spp.*) and squirrel tail (*Hordeum jubatum*).

The majority of the water sources within the project area are ephemeral, flowing off of the San Francisco Peaks and collecting into the Rio de Flag which parallels the roadway to the southwest, outside of the ADOT ROW and project limits. The project limits include an unnamed tributary to the Rio de Flag located at MP 217.85 which occurs within the Flagstaff City limits. Much of the surrounding area is residential and urban development, though private undeveloped land occurs immediately adjacent to the survey area in this region. Vegetation in the tributary includes a stand of cattail (*Typhus spp.*), a single multi-stemmed willow tree, and a dense ground cover of spike rushes (*Eleocharis spp.*) and sedges along a one-foot wide channel with approximately three-inch deep flowing water. Soils in the area are dark, greasy, contain at least 50% organic matter, and have a hydrogen sulfide odor. The presence of aquatic and wetland vegetative species, and the boggy, odorous substrate of the area indicate that the area is frequently wet, and that the unnamed stream is likely perennial or semi-perennial.

ADOT, in association with Federal Highway Administration is planning a pavement preservation project along US 180 from MP 216.20 to MP 224.06. The project involves milling and replacing pavement, extending existing turn lanes, installing turn lanes to side roads where they do not currently exist, and installing or replacing guardrail, as needed. Construction of a new turn lane also necessitates installation of new corrugated metal pipes (CMP) across Magdalena Road and Lake Trail Road where no waters of the US occurs. In addition, the project would extend two drainage culverts including a CMP and a concrete box culvert (CBC) within waters of the US. The CBC, located at MP 223.57 within an ephemeral portion of the Rio de Flag, would be extended 22 feet on each side of the culvert with 4-foot upstream and 6-foot downstream cutoff walls at the base of the CBC extensions. The CMP extension would occur in an unnamed tributary to the Rio de Flag (Unnamed Wash 1) located at MP 217.85, and would impact jurisdictional wetland vegetation. The scope of analysis for this document includes project activities occurring within waters of the US at MP 217.85.

The proposed improvements within waters of the US in Unnamed Wash 1 consist of the following:

- Removing two feet of CMP
- Extending the CMP 16-feet on the downstream side
- Discharging fill material over the top of the CMP to recontour the roadside slopes and accommodate the new length of the CMP and placing rock mulch on the new slope for erosion protection
- Removing vegetation, including riparian and wetland vegetation, as necessary

- Utilizing the project limits for temporary construction access
- Temporarily diverting flows around the construction site to downstream of the project
- Salvaging and replanting a single willow (Salix exigua) tree and installing willow pole plantings within and adjacent to waters of the US
- Reseeding disturbed areas outside of the active channel with a native seed mix

Proposed Mitigation– The proposed mitigation may change as a result of comments received in response to this public notice, the applicant's response to those comments, and/or the need for the project to comply with the 404(b)(1) Guidelines. In consideration of the above, the proposed mitigation sequence (avoidance/minimization/compensation), as applied to the proposed project is summarized below:

- Avoidance: The alternatives analysis for this project indicated that it would not be practicable to avoid waters of the US during project construction.

- Minimization: In order to minimize impacts to waters of the US, the project team coordinated with the project designers to reduce impacts to wetland vegetation from permanent structures. The design team re-evaluated the need for erosion protection at the base of the extended CMP outlet, and riprap was removed from the scope of work, providing more natural ground surface for wetland species to re-establish upon completion of the project. The ROW acquisition for this project includes the minimum necessary to extend the CMP, thereby minimizing the potential work area within waters of the US for construction access and future maintenance of the project. The project scope includes measures that will minimize and rectify impacts to waters of the US. A single willow tree would be excavated, salvaged, and replanted upon completion of construction. In addition, willow tree pole plantings and application of native seed mix in disturbed areas are included in the scope of work to rectify impacts to waters of the US including wetland vegetation. Flows would be maintained during and after construction to ensure that functions and values of the downstream waters of the US including wetlands are maintained.

- Compensation: The proposed action will result in 0.029 acre of impacts to waters of the US including 0.004 acre of other ephemeral waters and 0.025 acre of wetland. Wetland vegetation to be removed includes 0.005 acre of cattail and a single multi-stemmed willow tree and 0.020 acre of rushes interspersed with grasses, though the single willow tree would be salvaged and replanted adjacent to the wash. The wetland area extends well beyond the project limits, and the amount of impacted area next to the road is considered minor relative to the available wetland habitat downstream of the project. However, with the exception of impacts to vegetation within the footprint of the CMP extension, long-term impacts to wetland vegetation within the project limits are expected to be minimal. The scope of work includes salvaging and replanting a single willow tree, installing willow pole plantings, and reseeding disturbed areas with species that are native to the project area in an effort to revegetate portions of the project limits. Because flows will be maintained, cattail and rush species would be able to naturally re-propagate and regenerate portions of the vegetation communities lost from construction. Thus, the inclusion of willow replanting measures and the likelihood of the wetland vegetation communities being regenerated indicate that, over time, the wetland would regain some of its present functions and values. Furthermore, although 0.025 acre of wetland vegetation would be removed from this project, the wetland occurs within a disturbed transportation corridor through an urbanized area within the City of Flagstaff, and the area is not high quality wetland habitat. The vegetation is relatively homogenous and lacks expanses of open water and other dynamic complex stands of wetland and riparian vegetation communities needed for diverse species assemblages to thrive. Although the wetland in the project limits may provide habitat for small aquatic insects and amphibians, and minimal foraging habitat for larger species such as wading birds and terrestrial foraging mammals,

the area does not provide rich functions and values for other aquatic and wetland species such as waterfowl and aquatic mammals given the size of the wetland, lack of water, and location within a relatively urbanized portion of the City of Flagstaff. The applicant recommended that compensatory mitigation was determined not to be required for this project because: 1) impacts to waters of the US including wetlands are minimal relative to the surrounding area, 2) long-term impacts to wetlands are not anticipated due to the project installing willow pole plantings and the likelihood of vegetation regeneration, 3) the project occurs in a disturbed transportation corridor in an urbanized area, and 4) rich functions and values of wetland habitat sufficient for a diverse assemblage of wetland species are not present. The Corps will further evaluate this proposal.

Proposed Special Conditions

The list of proposed Permit Special Conditions is being developed.

For additional information please call Kathleen Tucker of my staff at 602-230-6956 or via e-mail at Kathleen.A.Tucker@usace.army.mil. This public notice is issued by the Chief, Regulatory Division.

Regulatory Program Goals:

- To provide strong protection of the nation's aquatic environment, including wetlands.
- To ensure the Corps provides the regulated public with fair and reasonable decisions.
- To enhance the efficiency of the Corps' administration of its regulatory program.

U.S. ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS – LOS ANGELES DISTRICT
US Army Corps of Engineers
Los Angeles District, Phoenix Office
3636 N. Central Ave., Suite 900
Phoenix, AZ 85012
WWW.SPL.USACE.ARMY.MIL

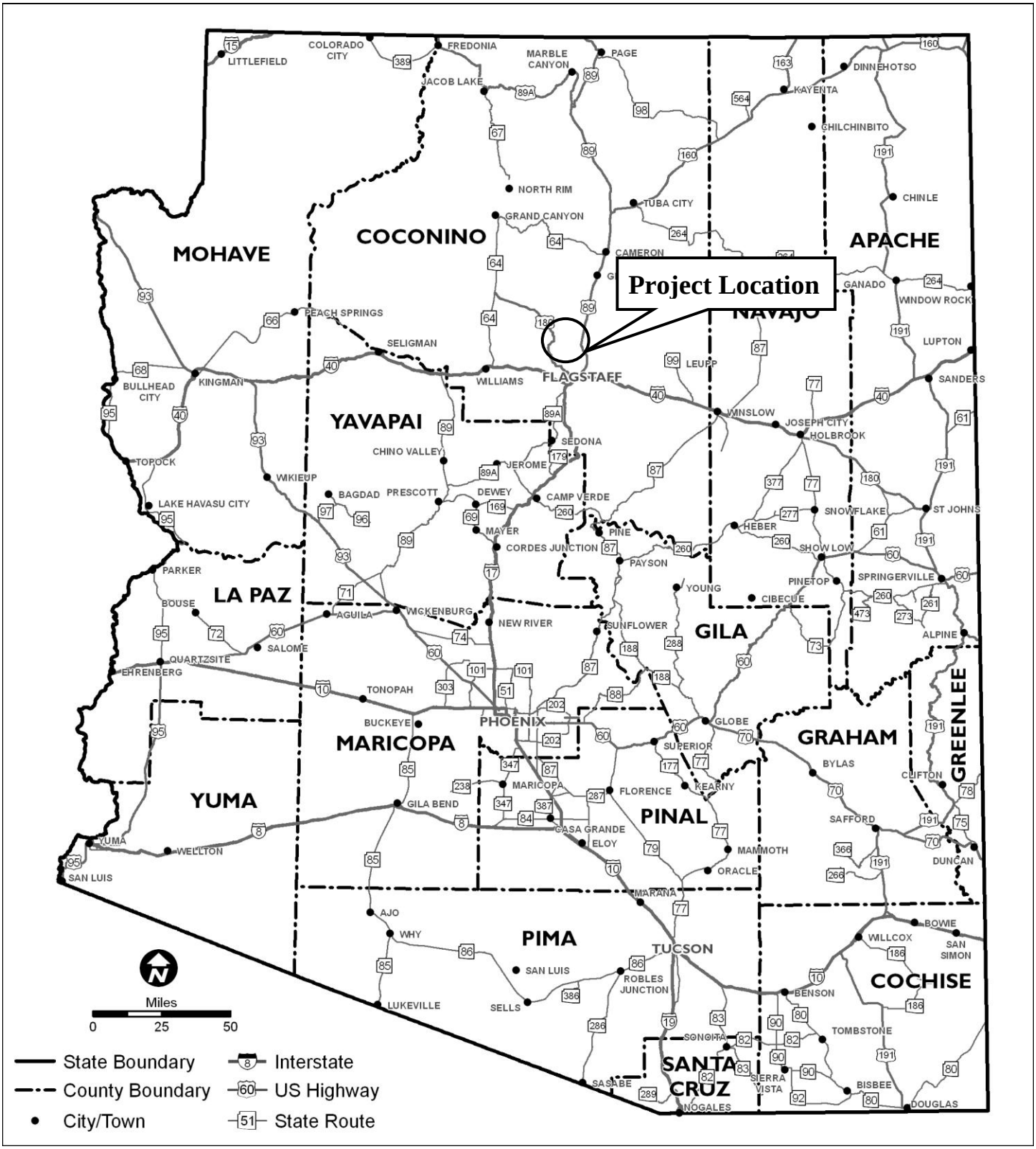


Figure 1. State Location Map

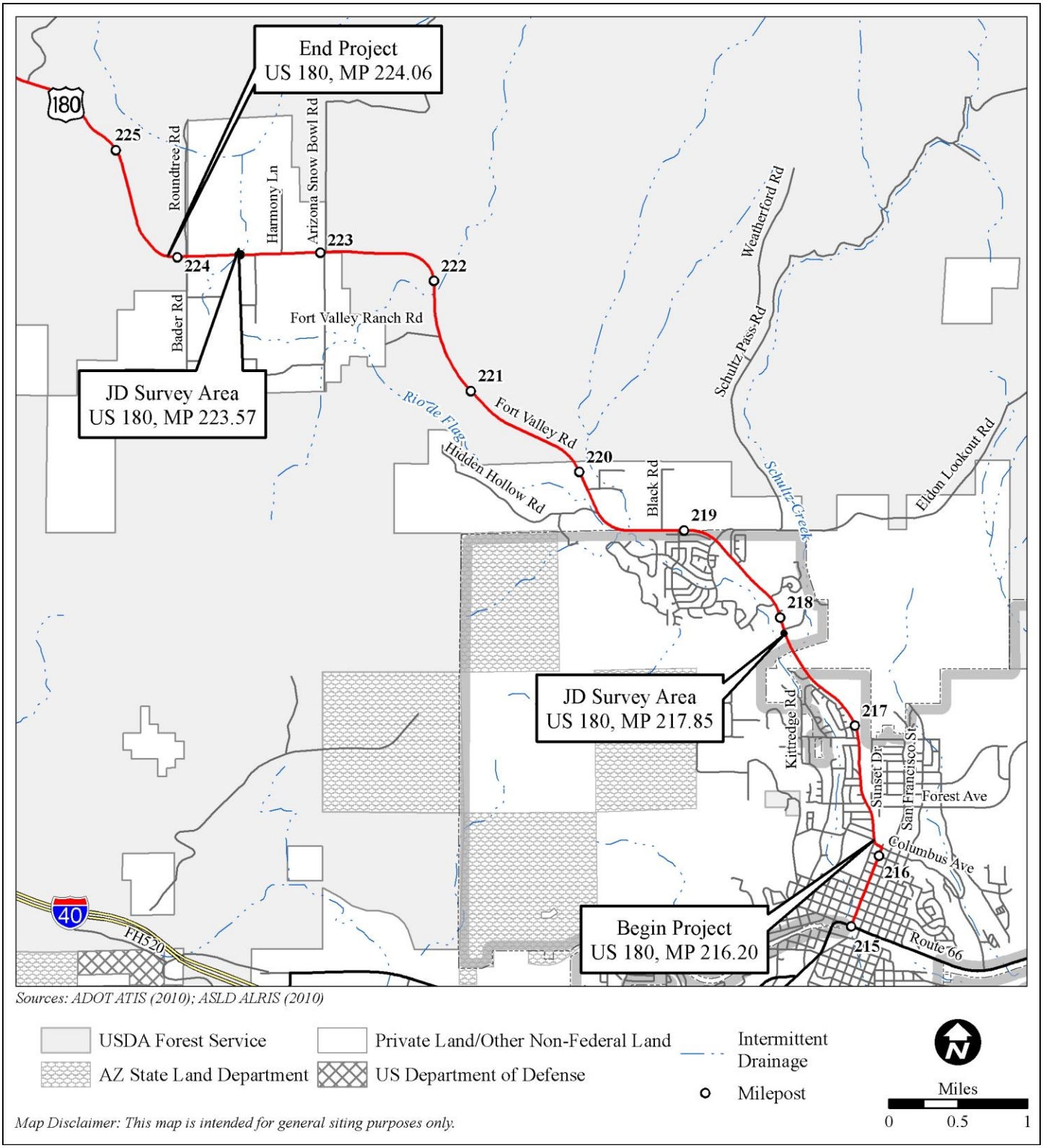


Figure 2. Project Vicinity Map

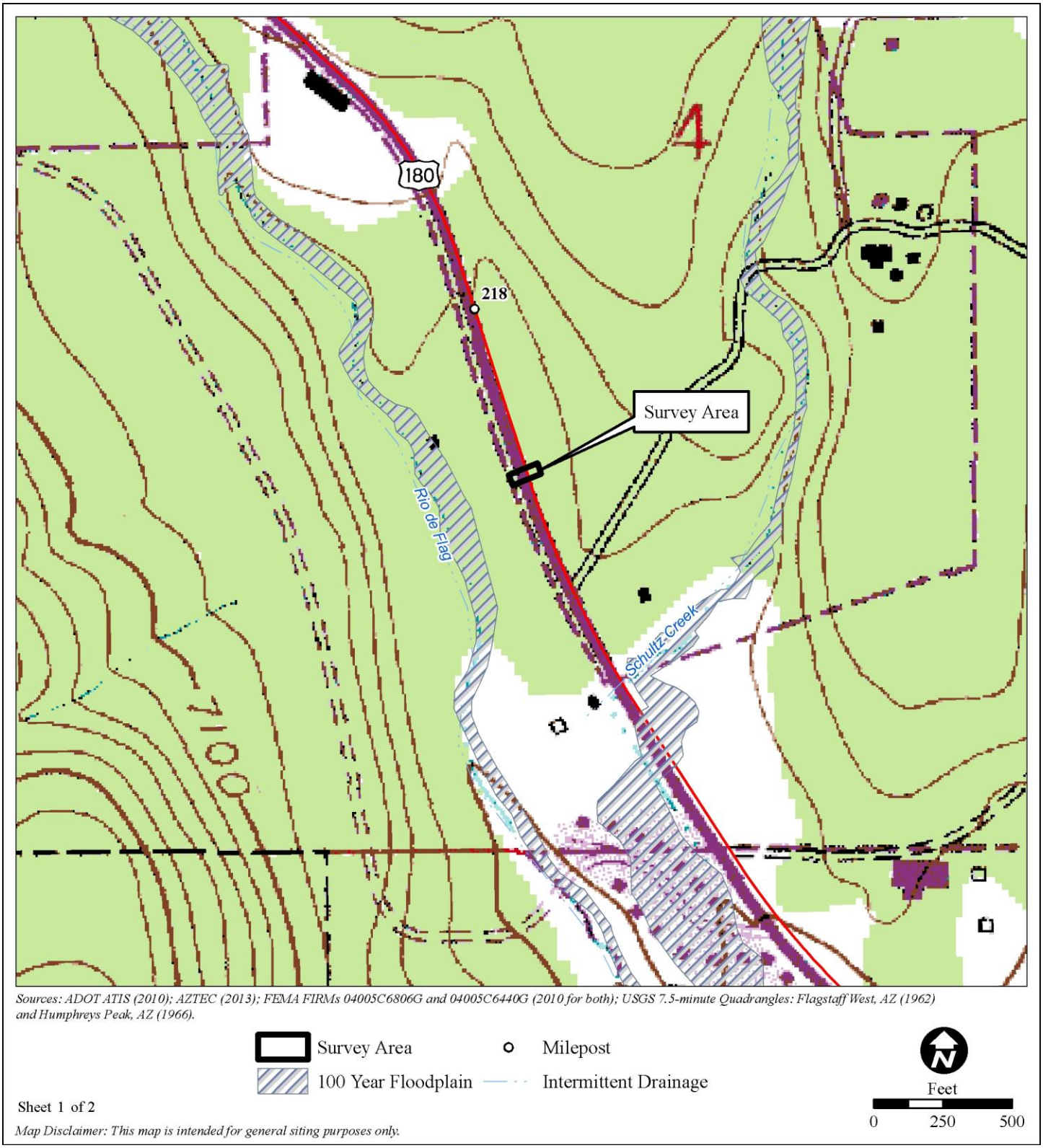


Figure 3a. Survey Area Topographic and Floodplain Map at MP 217.85

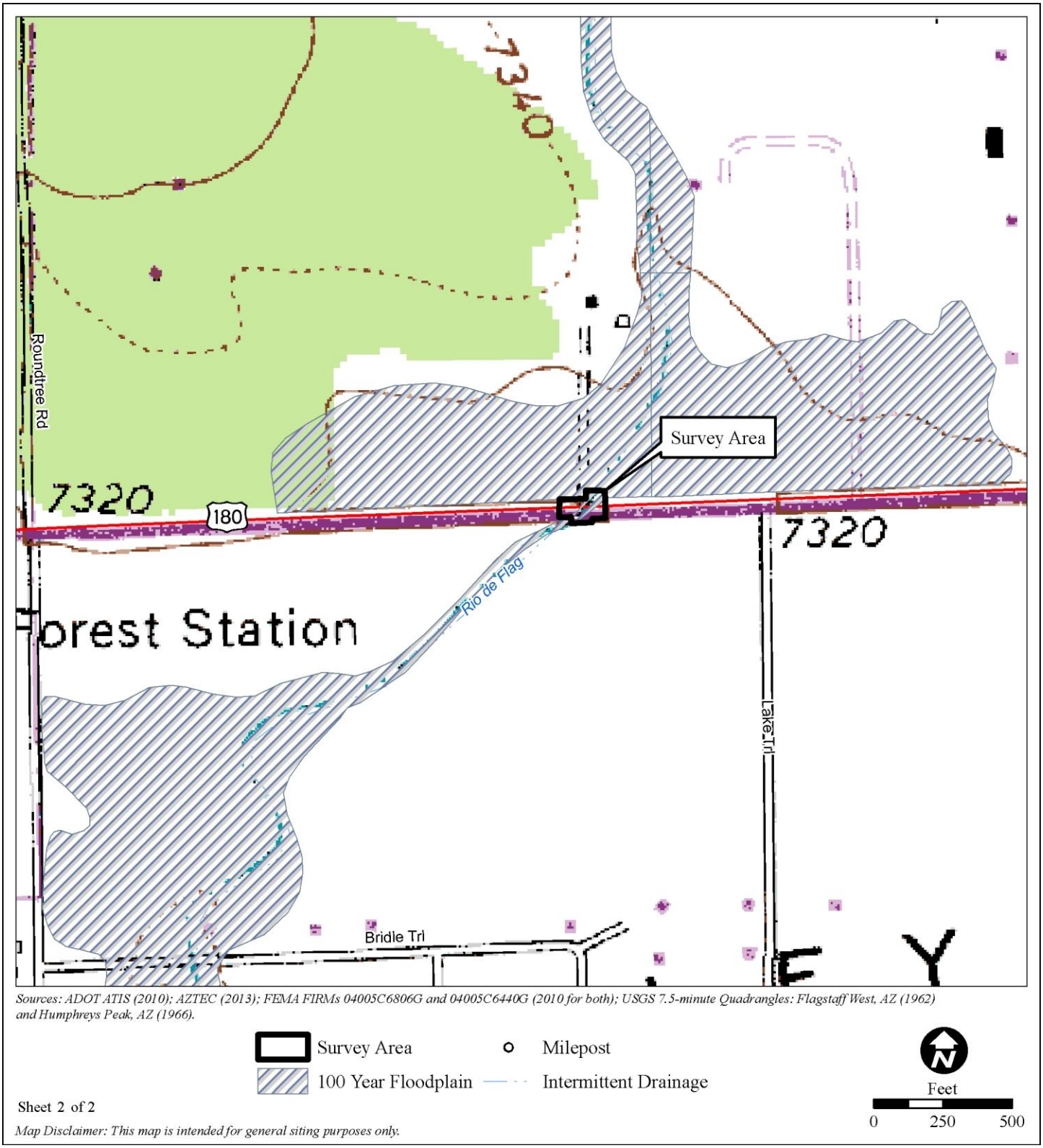


Figure 3b. Survey Area Topographic and Floodplain Map at MP 223.57

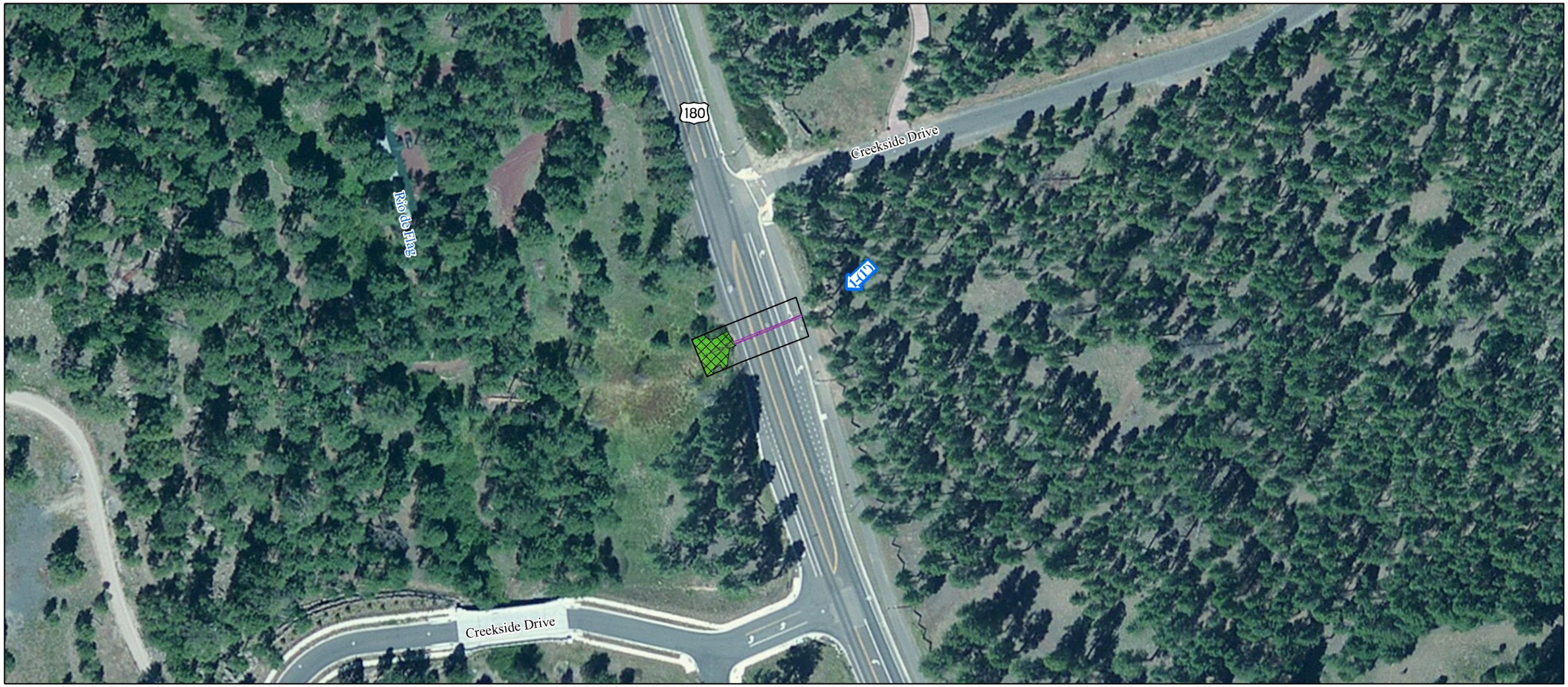


Figure 4. Impacts to Waters of the US, Alternative A – Pipe Extension at MP 217.85 (Preferred Alternative)

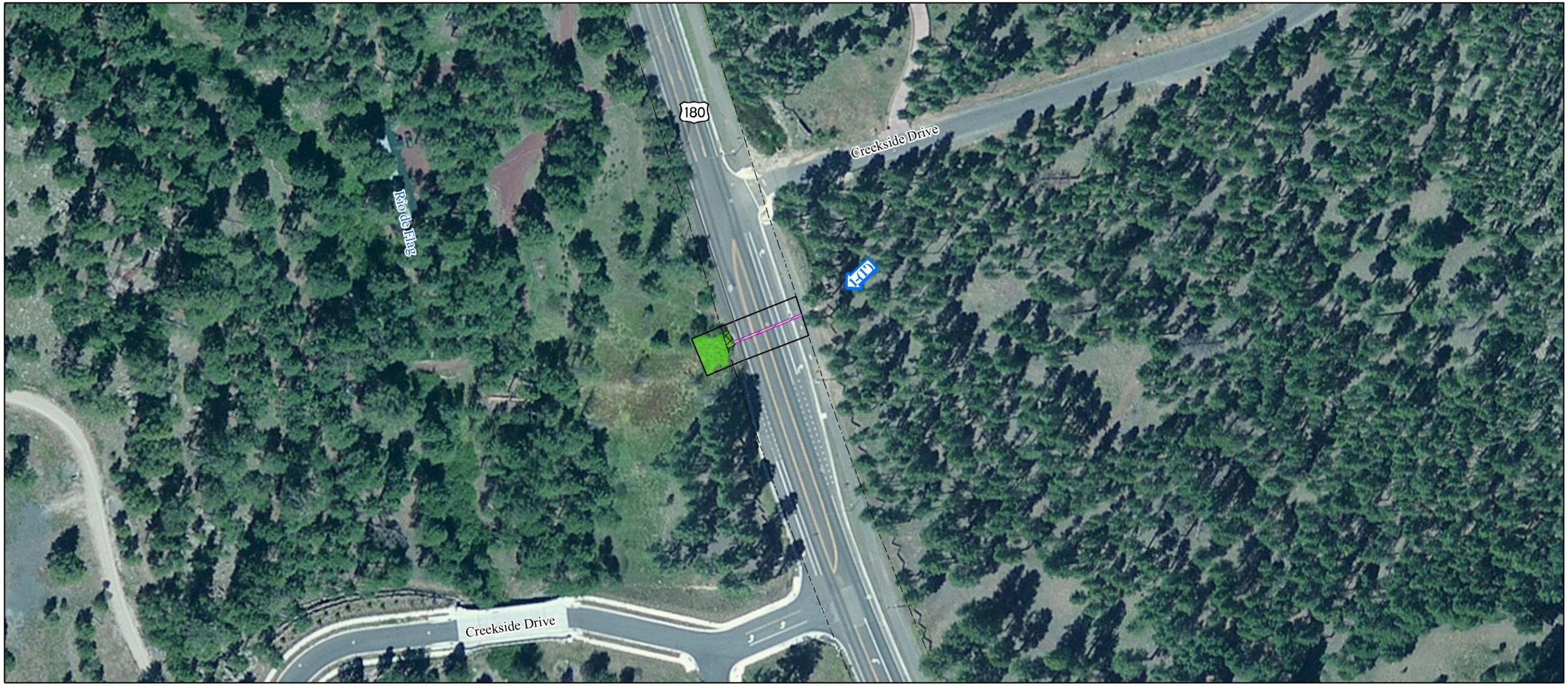


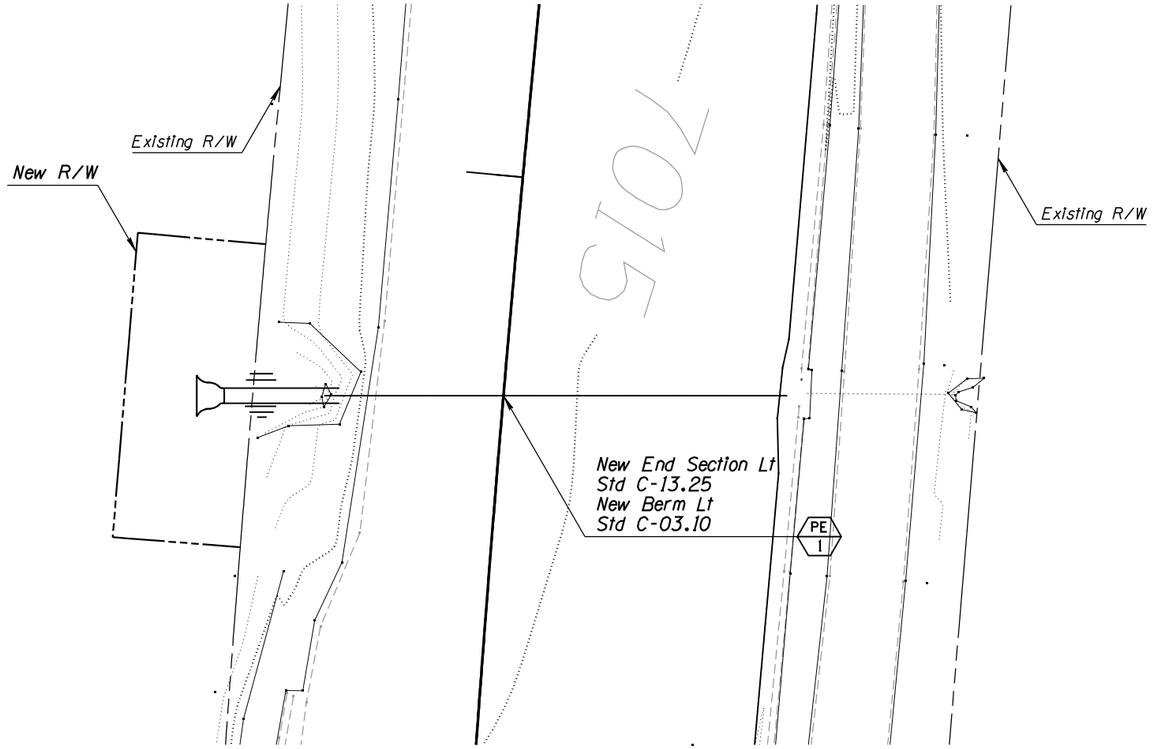
Figure 5. Impacts to Waters of the US, Alternative B – Curb and Gutter at MP 217.85

Figure 6. Impacts to Waters of the US at MP 223.57

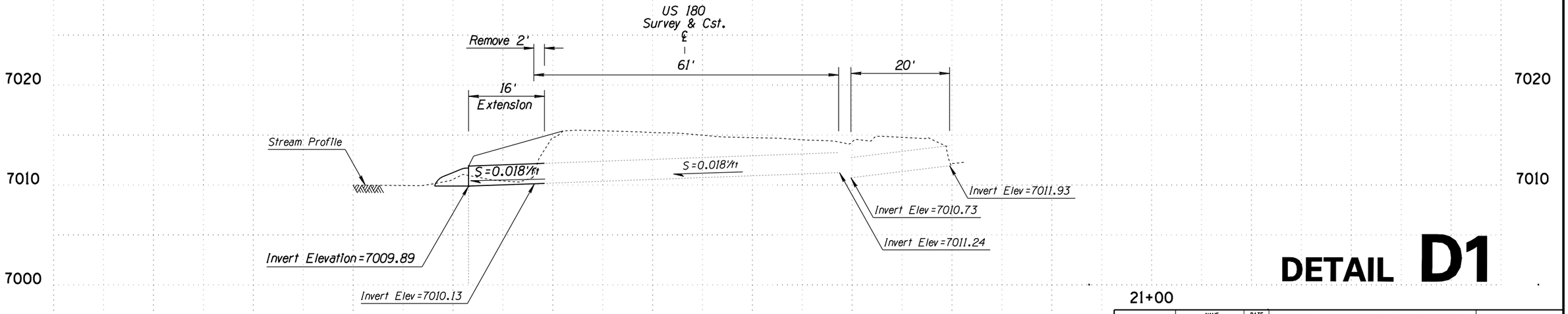
Alternative A - CMP Extension at MP 217.85

F.H.W.A. REGION	STATE	PROJECT NO.	SHEET NO.	TOTAL SHEETS	AS BUILT
9	ARIZ.	180-A(202)T	16		
		180 CN 216			

SURVEY NO. | FINISHED PLANS- | REVISIONS- | LOCATION- | DATE-



NOTES:
The contractor to field verify existing pipe dimensions, slope, and elevations prior to construction.



Sta 97+71.00
Exst 1-24"x61' CMP Skew 4°55'
Remove 2' Lt
Extend 16' Lt No Skew

DETAIL D1

	NAME	DATE
DESIGN	HIREN SHAH	07-13
DRAWN	HIREN SHAH	07-13
CHECKED	J. M. PHILLIPS	07-13
TEAM LEADER	HIREN SHAH	07-13

ARIZONA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
INTERMODAL TRANSPORTATION DIVISION
ROADWAY DESIGN SECTION

DETAIL D1
US 180 STA 97+71.00

ROUTE: US 180 | LOCATION: COLUMBUS AVE - SNOW BOWL

TRACS NO. H8118 01 C | 180-A(202)T

PRELIMINARY
STAGE 95%
Review
NOT FOR CONSTRUCTION OR RECORDING

SHEET 1 OF 4

___ OF ___

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CBC Extension at MP 223.57

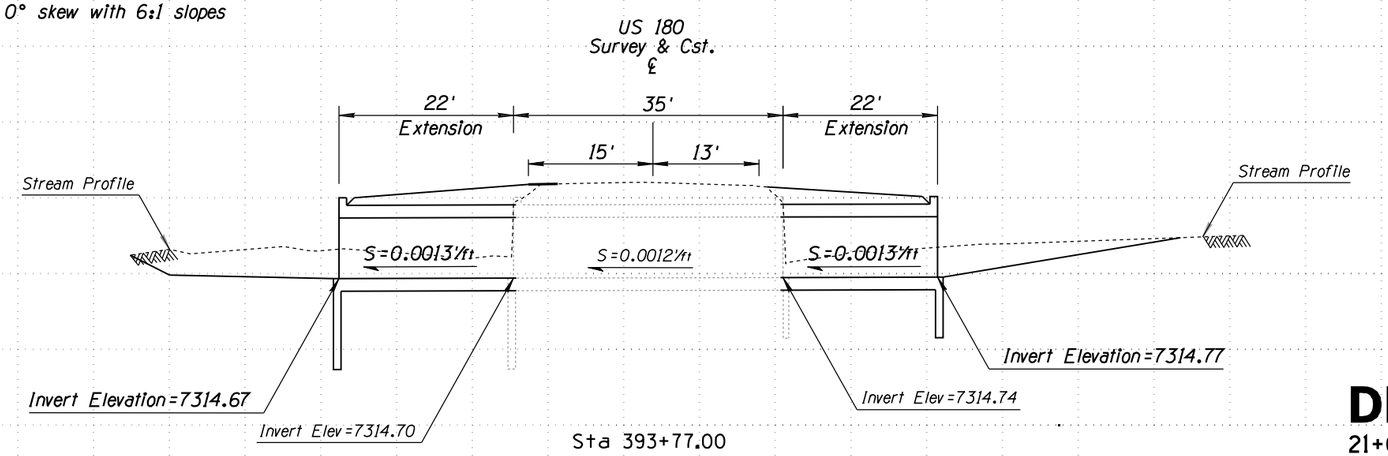
F.H.W.A. REGION	STATE	PROJECT NO.	SHEET NO.	TOTAL SHEETS	AS BUILT
9	ARIZ.	180-A(202)T	17		
		180 CN 216			

NOTES:

See Standard B-01.11 for CBC Extensions

See Standard B-04.50 & B-04.70 for CBC Wingwalls

Inlet & Outlet wingwalls dimensions shall be based on 0° skew with 6:1 slopes



7330 7320 7310

19+00 20+00 21+00

Sta 393+77.00
Exst 8'x4'x35' CBC 28°55'00" Skew
Remove Exst Headwall
& Wingwalls Lt & Rt
Extend 22' Lt & Rt No Skew
New Headwall & Wingwalls Lt & Rt

DETAIL D2

	NAME	DATE
DESIGN	HIREN SHAH	07-13
DRAWN	HIREN SHAH	07-13
CHECKED	J. M. PHILLIPS	07-13
TEAM LEADER	HIREN SHAH	07-13

ARIZONA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
INTERMODAL TRANSPORTATION DIVISION
ROADWAY DESIGN SECTION

DETAIL D2
US 180 STA 393+77.00

ROUTE: US 180 LOCATION: COLUMBUS AVE - SNOW BOWL

TRACS NO. H8118 01 C | 180-A(202)T

PRELIMINARY
STAGE 95%
Review
NOT FOR CONSTRUCTION OR RECORDING

SHEET 2 OF 4 ___ OF ___

SURVEY NO. | FINISHED PLANS | REVISIONS | LOCATION | DATE

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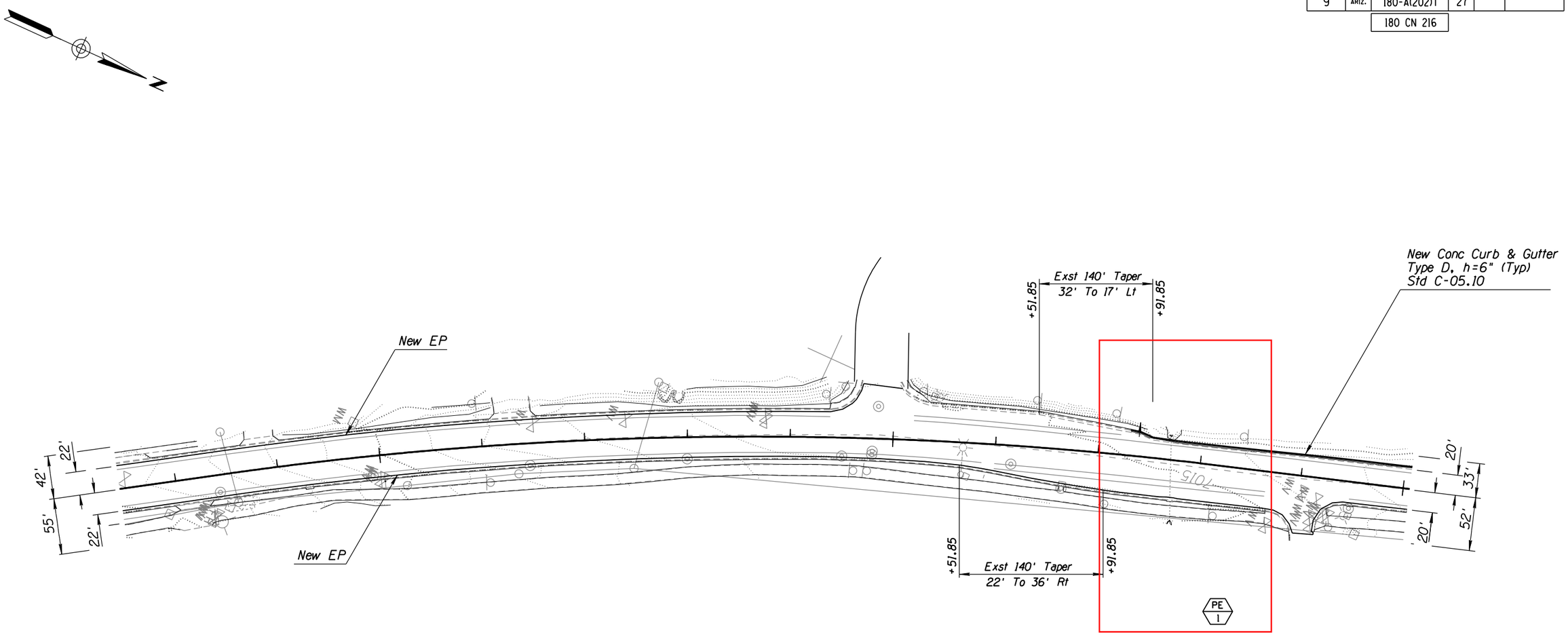
Alternative B - Curb and Gutter at MP 217.85

F.H.W.A. REGION	STATE	PROJECT NO.	SHEET NO.	TOTAL SHEETS	AS BUILT
9	ARIZ.	180-A(202)T	27		
		180 CN 216			



	NAME	DATE
DESIGN	HS, MZ	02-13
DRAWN	HS, MZ	02-13
CHECKED	J. M. PHILLIPS	02-13
TEAM LEADER	HIREN SHAH	02-13

ARIZONA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
INTERMODAL TRANSPORTATION DIVISION
ROADWAY DESIGN SECTION

PLAN SHEET
STA 87+50 TO STA 100+00

ROUTE: US 180 | LOCATION: COLUMBUS AVE - SNOW BOWL

TRACS NO. H8118 01 C | 180-A(202)T

PRELIMINARY
STAGE 60%
Review
NOT FOR CONSTRUCTION OR RECORDING

SHEET 8 OF 33

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