

HOUGHTON ROAD CORRIDOR
TUCSON, ARIZONA
JURISDICTIONAL DELINEATION
FIELD SURVEY REPORT
FINAL

Prepared for

Arizona State Land Department

Subtask I-C-3.2 Deliverable

UPP 47-111563

June 20, 2008

By:
EcoPlan Associates, Inc.

GRS Landscape Architects

INTRODUCTION/PURPOSE

The Arizona State Land Department (ASLD) has retained, through an Urban Planning Permit (UPP) to Westcor, a team of consultants to evaluate planning constraints and opportunities on the 12,000-acre Houghton Road Corridor (HRC) project area, located in southeast Tucson, Pima County, Arizona (Figure 1). This report summarizes the results of field surveys completed to identify washes and other watercourses or features that may be considered jurisdictional by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (Corps) under Section 404 of the federal Clean Water Act (i.e., Waters of the United States [Waters]). This report describes methods used to delineate potential Waters in the field and results of the field effort, including the type, distribution, extent, and characteristics. The latter is based in part on a functions and values assessment completed for potential Waters by GRS Landscape Architects. The findings presented here form a basis for further planning efforts under the ASLD Scope of Work for the HRC UPP No. 47-111563. This report also serves as the basis of a subsequent Draft Jurisdictional Determination Report that will ultimately be submitted to the Corps with a request for formal determination of Waters on the property.

Executive Summary

This report summarizes the results of field surveys completed to identify washes and other watercourses or features that may be considered jurisdictional by the Corps under Section 404 of the federal Clean Water Act on the approximately 12,000-acre HRC project area located in southeast Tucson, Pima County, Arizona.

Named drainages in the project area include Pantano Wash, Atterbury Wash, Civano Wash, Mesquite Ranch Wash, and Julian Wash. Drainages in the southwestern portion of the site are part of the Airport Wash and Julian Wash watersheds, while those in the remainder of the project area are part of the Atterbury Wash, Civano Wash, Mesquite Ranch Wash, and smaller, unnamed watersheds that are tributaries of Pantano Wash. All on-site drainages are ultimately tributaries of the Santa Cruz River.

Based on a comprehensive field survey, approximately 37 miles or 137 total acres of potential Waters were identified in the project area. The potential Waters consist entirely of ephemeral drainages (desert washes) and impoundments thereof (two stock tanks); there are no perennial or intermittent streams, wetlands, or other types of Waters in the project area. A functions and values assessment completed for potentially jurisdictional washes in the project area indicates there are 13.4 miles of drainages with the lowest functions and values (Type FV-1), 8.8 miles of drainages with intermediate functions and values (Type FV-2), and 14.7 miles of drainages with the highest functions and values (Type FV-3).

Field surveys documented use of the project area by a number of wildlife species, including reptiles, birds, and mammals. Evidence of mule deer use was found in relatively few locations on-site. Javelina sign was recorded primarily along Civano Wash and Atterbury Wash and some of their tributaries, while evidence of use by coyotes is more ubiquitous across the site. Larger drainages that support the densest vegetation (i.e., Type FV-3) provide the most valuable cover and nesting habitat for birds and bedding areas for javelina.

Project Location

The project area, HRC, is located in southeast Tucson in northeast Pima County, Arizona. The site encompasses approximately 12,000 acres of undeveloped State Trust land west and east of Houghton Road, north and south of Interstate 10 (I-10), and south of Irvington Road. The project area includes all or portions of:

- Township (T) 15 South (S), Range (R) 15 East (E), Sections 1, 2, 11, 12, 13, 14, 23, 24, 25, 33, 34, 35, and 36
- T15S, R16E, Sections 7, 18, 19, 29, 30, 31, and 32
- T16S, R15E, Sections 1, 2, 3, 4, 10, 11, and 12
- T16S, R16E, Sections 5, 6, 7, and 8

These sections are found on the Tanque Verde Peak (1991), Tucson East (1983), Tucson Southeast (1982), and Vail (1981), Arizona, U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) 7.5-minute Topographic Series (Figure 2). Some adjacent lands are under the jurisdiction of the U.S. Department of Defense (Davis-Monthan Air Force Base) and the ASLD; other adjacent lands are owned by the City of Tucson and private parties.

CONCLUSIONS

Approximately 37 miles or 137 total acres of potential Waters were identified in the project area. These consist of ephemeral drainages (desert washes) and impoundments thereof (two stock tanks); no perennial or intermittent streams, wetlands, or other types of Waters occur. The functions and values assessment completed indicates there are 13.4 miles of drainages with the lowest functions and values (Type FV-1), 8.8 miles of drainages with intermediate functions and values (Type FV-2), and 14.7 miles of drainages with the highest functions and values (Type FV-3). Larger drainages that support the densest vegetation (i.e., Type FV-3) provide the most valuable cover and nesting habitat for birds and other wildlife.