



US Army Corps
of Engineers

Sacramento District
1325 J Street
Sacramento, CA 95814-2922

Public Notice

Public Notice Number: 200375080

Date: March 13, 2003

Comments Due: April 14, 2003

In reply, please refer to the Public Notice Number

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN:

SUBJECT: Application for a Department of the Army permit under authority of Section 404 of the Clean Water Act (CWA) and for water quality certification under Section 401 of the CWA to in the Corcoran Wash, as shown in the attached drawings.

APPLICANT: Mr. Shawn Cooper, City of Grand Junction
1340 Gunnison Avenue
Grand Junction, CO 81501-

LOCATION: North central portion of Canyonview Park, along Corcoran Wash. The park is in the southeast quadrant of the intersection of Interstate Highway 70, and 24 Road., within Section 33, Township 1 North, Range 1 West, Mesa County, Colorado (Figure 1).

PURPOSE: Project purposes include expansion of park maintenance facilities, construction of playing fields with proper safety features, and improvement of both vehicular and pedestrian traffic flows (see Figure 2).

PROJECT DESCRIPTION: Project action is to culvert an additional 500 linear feet of Corcoran Wash to accommodate project purposes. Corcoran Wash is currently culverted under Interstate 70, and also under the northerly edge of Canyonview Park. The culvert is proposed to be extended 500 feet to the south. In addition, the remaining 600 feet of deeply incised (about 10 to 15 feet) and eroding portion of Corcoran Wash would be modified to improve sinuosity, bank slope, and wetland characteristics as environmental compensation for the culvert extension.

Canyonview Park is a developing recreation amenity which needs to evolve from the original plan to accommodate higher than anticipated uses. The only available expansion area for the in-place maintenance facilities is toward the east, where Corcoran Wash is located. Development of four additional playing fields with traffic patterns serving pedestrians and also safety margins at the west end of the fields would best be accomplished by continuing culverting of the stream according to the applicant. A total length of 500 feet of 72-inch diameter RCP culvert is planned to be installed into the perennial stream that also contains narrow stands of reed canarygrass and saltgrass along the water's edge. The remaining sides of the embankment are steep, and either barren or sustain patches of upland grasses.

The environmental compensation consisting of open channel modification would increase channel length, channel capacity, and slope stability as well as wetland characteristics for Corcoran Wash. The reach of Corcoran Wash downstream of proposed work, including 500 feet of culverting and 600 feet of stream modification project has been modified into an environmentally well functioning, meandering, wetland-bearing channel, as compensation for previous aquatic environment impacts under another Corps 404 permit. The applicant's proposed compensatory mitigation would extend this successful effort for another 600 feet.

ALTERNATIVES: The applicant proposed three alternatives:

The applicant's preferred alternative, "A", is described above, and shown on Figure 3. Briefly, it consists of the culverting of 500 feet of Corcoran Wash, with a proposed compensation of 600 feet of stream stabilization including wetland creation. Approximately 0.23 acres of waters of the U.S. would be lost (of which 0.17 acre is wetland), and a total of 0.37 acres of wetlands would be created as a result of the proposed compensatory mitigation. The compensatory work would very slightly increase the open water area (due to created meanders) of the 600 feet of modified stream channel.

Alternative "B" consists of 300 feet of culverting of Corcoran Wash (see Figure 4), and a wetland compensation ratio of only 1:1. The waters of the U.S. impacts are about 0.17 acre, the applicant proposes compensatory mitigation of 0.17 wetland acreage. The applicant states that a pedestrian bridge would be needed to convey traffic, and also, the playing field areas will be diminished, and safety fencing would be installed along the non-culverted portion of Corcoran Wash. The applicant states that this alternative would be more costly due to bridge construction and fencing, and would result in lesser benefits. Additionally, existing utilities buried in the vicinity of the Wash along the 200 feet of channel downstream of the proposed 300 foot culvert extension would prevent the type of channel modification proposed in alternative "A". The utility lines in this 200 foot-reach under alternative "A" also would not be impacted, since this portion of the channel under alternative "A" would be buried. Under alternative "B" the channel slopes in this 200-foot reach could not be flattened since the utility lines would be in the way. The applicant stated that alternative "B" is less acceptable due to higher cost and less benefits than the preferred alternative.

Alternative "C" is the No Action Alternative. Maintenance facility expansion could not occur, and one of the playing fields would be eliminated from construction. Current unsafe public access around Corcoran Wash would persist, and environmental and physical enhancement of Corcoran Wash would not occur according to the applicant. This alternative is the least desirably to the applicant.

AREA DESCRIPTION: Canyonview Park sits on a gently sloping portion of the Grand Valley between the right bank of the Colorado River and the Bookcliff ridges to the north. The Colorado National Monument portion of the layered red sandstone Uncompahgre uplift is a highly visible landform to the south. The climate is semi-arid at this 4500 foot elevation above mean sea level. The park hosts the confluence of Corcoran Wash and one of its tributaries, contributing a wetland and stream complex that separates multi-use playing fields from the established service areas. The park is bounded on the east by residential areas. The areas to the south and west are undeveloped open areas planned for commercial use. Interstate 70 separates

the rural farming and light residential areas to the north. Although the City of Grand Junction is the owner of the park, the park is situated for easy access by the rest of the valley via adjacent Interstate 70. This park is still a work in progress, and the original buildout phasing is being modified to accommodate greater and more diverse needs.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION: Additional information about the project is available upon request. The proposed activity exceeds the limitations of available general permits due to the applicant's desire to exceed more than 300 feet of culverting.

The applicant has requested water quality certification from the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment, Water Quality Control Division in accordance with Section 401 of the Clean Water Act. Written comments on water quality certification should be submitted to Mr. Phil Hegeman, Planning and Standards Section, Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment, Water Quality Control Division, 4300 Cherry Creek Drive South, Denver, Colorado, 80222-1530, on or before **April 14, 2003**.

The Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment, Water Quality Control Division also reviews each project with respect to the anti-degradation provision in state regulations. For further information regarding anti-degradation provision, please contact Mr. Hegeman at the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment, Water Quality Control Division, telephone (303) 692-3518.

No further cultural resources review is warranted because the permit area has been extensively modified by previous work.

This activity would not affect any threatened or endangered species or their critical habitat. The District Engineer has made this determination based on information provided by the applicant and on the Corps' preliminary investigation.

Interested parties are invited to submit written comments on or before **April 14, 2003**. 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 hearings shall state, with particularity, the reasons for holding a public hearing.

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; among those are 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 and fiber production, mineral needs, consideration of property ownership, and in general, the needs and welfare of the people.

For activities involving 404 discharges, a permit will be denied if the discharge does not comply with the Environmental Protection Agency's Section 404(b) (1) guidelines. Subject to the preceding sentence and any other applicable guidelines or criteria, a permit will be granted unless the District Engineer determines it would be contrary to the public interest.

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.

Written comments on this permit application should be submitted to the District Engineer at the address listed above. Please furnish a copy of your written comments to the attention of Nick Mezei, Western Colorado Regulatory Office, U.S. Army Engineer District, Sacramento, 402 Rood Avenue, Room 142, Grand Junction, Colorado 81501-2563. For further information, please contact Nick Mezei, at telephone number (970) 243-1199, extension 13, or email Nick.Mezei@usace.army.mil.

Michael J. Conrad, Jr.
Colonel, US Army
District Engineer

Enclosures: Drawing(s)