

# American River Watershed Common Features, Water Resources Development Act of 2016, American River Contract 2 Frequently Asked Questions

## **Project Partners**

The American River Watershed Common Features (ARCF) 2016 Project is a collaborative effort by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE), Central Valley Flood Protection Board, California Department of Water Resources, and the Sacramento Area Flood Control Agency. The project will modernize Sacramento's aging flood control infrastructure while reducing the flood risk to more than 530,000 people and \$62 billion in damageable property in the greater Sacramento region.

## **SEIS/SEIR Public Review Period (June 4, 2021 – July 19, 2021)**

This is an opportunity to learn about the American River Contract 2 bank protection project and submit comments. **The 45-day public review period for the draft SEIS/SEIR will begin on June 4, 2021 and end on July 19, 2021.** Responses to comments will be published in the Final SEIS/EIR.

**A virtual public meeting will be held on June 29, 2021 from 4:30 p.m. to 5:30 p.m. to present details of the project and to receive comments.** Instructions to access the virtual meeting, sign up to receive email notices, and view the draft document are available at: [www.sacleveeupgrades.com](http://www.sacleveeupgrades.com)

Comments can be submitted at the public meeting or anytime during the comment period by email or mail at the following addresses:

Email  
[spk-pao@usace.army.mil](mailto:spk-pao@usace.army.mil)

U.S. Postal Service  
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Public Affairs Office  
1325 J Street  
Sacramento, California 95814

## **Project Area**

The bank protection improvements would occur along the right bank of the American River from just upstream of the Howe Avenue bridge to the downstream end of the Campus Commons Golf Course.

## **Proposed Project Description & Justification**

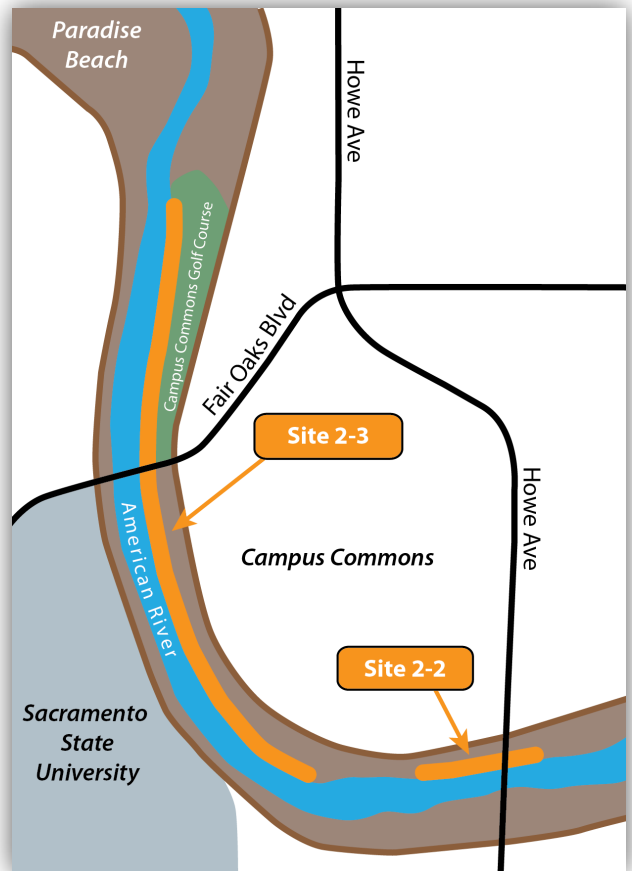
With the 2017 completion of a new auxiliary spillway at Folsom Reservoir and levee improvements that address seepage and stability along the Lower American River, the ability to manage large flood events has greatly improved. More water can be safely released from Folsom Reservoir earlier in a major storm event to create additional flood storage space for anticipated peak inflows into the reservoir. These improvements were designed to allow flood releases into the American River of up to 160,000 cubic feet per second (cfs). The ARCF GRR focused on identifying areas associated with the erosion impacts from the higher and longer releases from Folsom Dam.

The proposed bank protection work would armor the river bank to reduce and prevent erosion which, if left unaddressed, could cause levee failure.

## **Proposed Action**

The Proposed Action consist of the following:

1. Installation of approximately 7,800 linear feet of erosion protection and on-site habitat mitigation features along two levee segments (Sites 2-2 and 2-3) of the Lower American River.
2. Creation of three off-site riparian habitat restoration sites (Arden Pond, Rossmoor East and Rossmoor West).
3. Temporary establishment and use of staging areas, stockpile sites, and haul routes.
4. Reconstruction of the Campus Commons Golf Course.



## **Anticipated Construction Timeline**

### **Pre-construction (November 2021 - May 2022)**

Woody vegetation clearing and pruning, including elderberry shrub transplanting within construction footprints and site preparation and planting activities at mitigation sites.

### **Bank Protection Construction (Summer 2022 - Fall 2022)**

Install waterside erosion rock riprap protection measures and backfill with soil for revegetation.

### **Post-Construction Planting (Begin as early as Fall/Winter 2022)**

Install a mixture of native vegetation along the waterside edge and within mitigation sites in the Parkway.

## **Frequently Asked Questions**

### **1. A GRR FEIS/FEIR was adopted in 2016, why is there a need for a Supplemental EIS/EIR?**

The SEIS/SEIR analyzes details specific to construction, staging areas, haul routes, and construction of off-site mitigation that were not analyzed in the GRR FEIS/FEIR. Further, it addresses the proposal to construct 7,800 linear feet of bank erosion protection improvements along the Lower American River right bank from just upstream of the Howe Avenue bridge to the downstream end of the Campus Commons Golf Course.

### **2. How are stakeholder concerns being addressed?**

Project impacts are presented in the draft SEIS/SEIR. Stakeholders and members of the public are invited to review the document and provide comments during the 45-day public review period. A presentation of project details will be made at the June 29, 2021 public meeting. Comments will be considered and addressed in the final SEIS/SEIR.

Project partners have reached out to interested parties and various stakeholders via the Lower American River Task Force, Lower American River Bank Protection Working Group, as well as public presentations made to the Sacramento County American River Parkway Advisory Committee and Recreation and Parks Commission.

### **3. When reviewing a NEPA/CEQA document what type of comments are appropriate?**

The basic purpose of an environmental document is to help inform decision makers and the public about the potential significant environmental impacts of a project and identify ways that those impacts can be avoided or reduced. Effective comments are substantive in nature and should address specific impacts and concerns related to the Project.

### **4. Why is the Project necessary?**

The Sacramento metropolitan area is one of the most at-risk areas for flooding in the United States due to its location at the confluence and within the floodplain of two major rivers, the Sacramento and American Rivers. Both of these rivers have large watersheds with very high potential runoff, which in the past has overwhelmed the existing flood management system that was designed and built many decades ago before modern construction methods were employed.

Sections of the American River are confined by levees and the energy of the water flow tends to erode river banks and levees over time. Channel erosion could have detrimental effects on the levees by undercutting the foundation materials beneath the levees. The erosion of the river bank may also increase under-seepage through the foundation soil and reduce the overall stability of the levee. Significant erosion can lead to failure of the levee and presents an unacceptable level of risk to public safety.

**5. Once work is completed at these erosion sites, would additional bank protection work be required?**

The work at Sites 2-2 and 2-3 is one component of a comprehensive plan to improve the levees along the Lower American River, as outlined in the 2016 GRR FEIS/FEIR. Additional erosion protection measures would be required along other portions of the American River. Overall, the GRR anticipated that up to 11 miles of erosion protection work would be constructed to complement already completed levee seepage and stability improvements along the American River.

The Project partners are working to develop subsequent phases of design and construction to address the additional erosion protection measures required along the Lower American River. The draft SEIS/SEIR analyzes the immediate work being conducted at Sites 2-2 and 2-3 and the associated mitigation sites. Future bank protection work would be addressed in future supplemental environmental compliance documents.

**6. How would mitigation for impacts to biological resources be addressed in the American River Parkway?**

Generally speaking, the amount of erosion work called for along the Lower American River as part of the ARCF 2016 Project necessitates a significant amount of appropriate mitigation. Unavoidable adverse effects would be mitigated through a combination of on-site and off-site actions. The proposed mitigation measures include compensatory mitigation for salmonids, Yellow-billed Cuckoo and Valley Elderberry Longhorn Beetle, which generally would be accomplished by transplanting elderberry shrubs and creating riparian woodland habitat onsite and offsite within the American River Parkway to compensate for the loss of vegetation from construction of erosion protection features. Further, to the extent feasible, elderberry shrubs would be avoided and/or protected in place by establishing and maintaining work buffers.

**7. How will tree and shrub removal be addressed for the project?**

In order to construct the bank protection measures, trees and shrubs located in the project footprint would be removed prior to the start of construction. Vegetation removal work typically occurs between November 1 and April 30, prior to bird nesting season. The majority of the vegetation affected by project activities are located on lands owned by the County of Sacramento or under the jurisdiction of the State Lands Commission. The project sponsors are working directly with these respective agencies, including Sacramento County Regional Parks, to facilitate removal of the vegetation necessary to accommodate the project and implement appropriate mitigation measures, which would include on-site and off-site mitigation.

**8. What on-site and off-site mitigation is under review?**

To compensate for unavoidable impacts, the Project intends to improve the overall long-term on-site resource conditions, where feasible, through design opportunities. On-site mitigation has been integrated into the design of the bank protection features and includes placement of soil over the erosion protection,

establishment of planting benches, and the restoration of disturbed areas through comprehensive revegetation efforts (see Figures 2-10 and 2-15).

The off-site mitigation areas identified in this SEIS/SEIR are Rossmoor East, Rossmoor West, and Arden Pond. These sites are in addition to the Glenn Hall Park mitigation site and the Rio Americano East and West mitigation sites described in the Supplemental Environmental Assessment/ Supplemental Environmental Impact Report for American River Contract 1. Other sites are also being pursued in anticipation of projected impacts under full implementation of the ARCF 2016 bank protection program. The Rossmoor East and West mitigation sites (see Figures 2-22 and 2-23), would be used for transplanting elderberry shrubs and planting riparian habitat.

The primary components of the Arden Pond Mitigation Site (see Figures 2-20, 2-21) includes a bass pond (up to 9.5 acres) with a minimum 6 feet depth for continued recreational fishing and an adjacent side channel that not only replenishes water in the bass pond but also provides shallow flow areas and periodically inundated floodplain habitat for rearing juvenile salmonids that consists of riparian woodlands plantings and instream-woody material (up to 30.1 acres)

#### **9. How would neighbors living adjacent to the work areas be impacted by Project traffic?**

Haul routes for materials and equipment would utilize Interstate 80 (I-80) to the north or U.S. Highway 50 (U.S. 50) to the south. As depicted on attached Figure 2-25, haul trucks would travel using various routes to access the Howe Avenue and Campus Commons construction sites and staging areas (Sites 2-2, 2-3).

The neighborhoods situated adjacent to the work sites, along the haul routes, ingress and egress points, and staging areas would be notified in advance of scheduled construction activity and any potential road closures and detours.

#### **10. Would the Jedediah Smith Memorial Trail, commonly referred to as the American River Bike Trail, and equestrian trails be impacted?**

Haul trucks and other construction equipment would need to use or cross portions of recreational trails located within the American River Parkway to move materials to the construction and mitigation sites. In areas where construction equipment is required to only cross an existing trail, flaggers would be present to direct traffic. Where larger portions of a trail is impacted or required for construction access, the trail would be temporarily rerouted a short distance away from the construction area. Any required detours would be developed in consultation with the City of Sacramento Bicycle and Pedestrian Coordinator and signage would be posted at the affected locations a minimum of 14-days in advance.

#### **11. During what time period would work occur?**

Between November 2021 – March 2022, site preparation would begin with trimming and/or removal of woody vegetation and relocation of elderberry shrubs located within the construction footprint. In spring 2022, site mobilization activity would begin, and include building temporary access roads, preparing staging areas, rerouting pedestrian and bicycle trails, and installing signage for traffic and alternate transportation routes. Bank protection construction would begin in late Spring 2022 and continue through Fall 2022.

## **12. What are the daily work hours?**

Construction hours would comply with the City of Sacramento's noise ordinance and would be Monday through Saturday from 7:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. No work or hauling would take place on holidays without permission given by the City of Sacramento.

## **13. How would the construction affect the Sacramento County Parks' Campus Commons Golf Course?**

It is anticipated that the golf course would be closed to the public for approximately two years, beginning November 2021. Extensive bank protection measures would be constructed along the river bank of the Campus Commons Golf Course and the property would be used as a staging area to support construction. Restoration of the golf course would begin in spring 2023 and the course could reopen in November 2023.

## **14. How can I stay informed?**

USACE is planning to host an online meeting on June 29, 2021 at 4:30 p.m. to discuss the SEIS/SEIR and obtain public feedback.

Instructions on how to participate in the online meeting can be found at [www.sacleveeupgrades.com](http://www.sacleveeupgrades.com). Stakeholders can also obtain a copy of the draft document from the site and sign up to receive future project-related email updates.

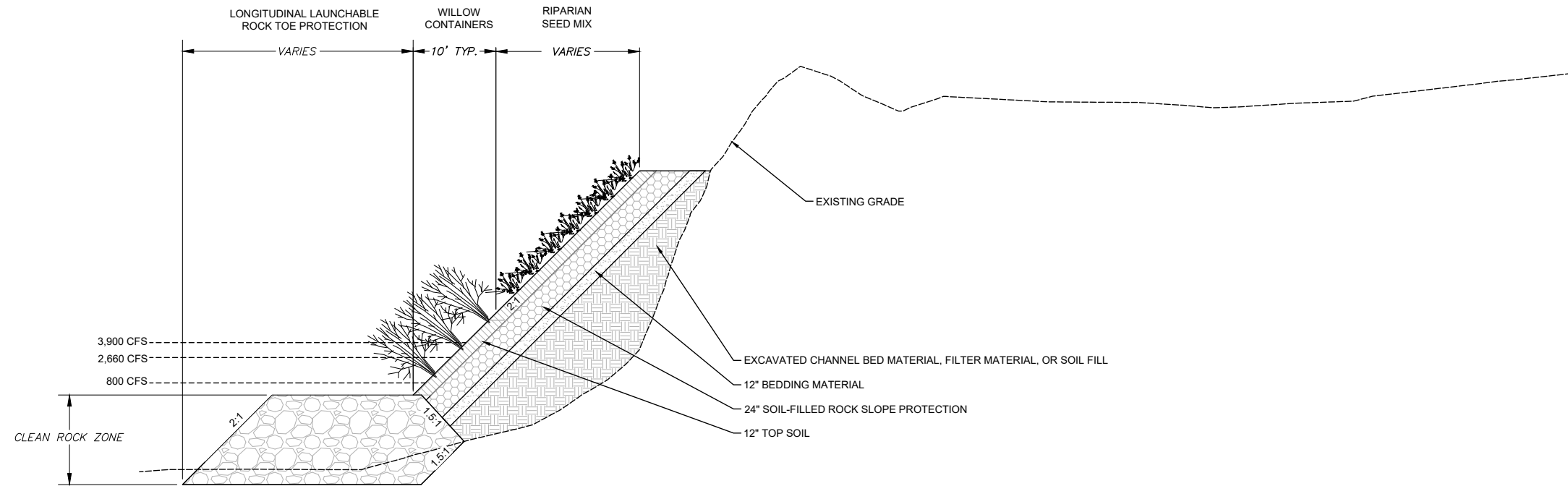
Residents can also contact the USACE Public Affairs Office directly at:

Phone: (916) 557-5100

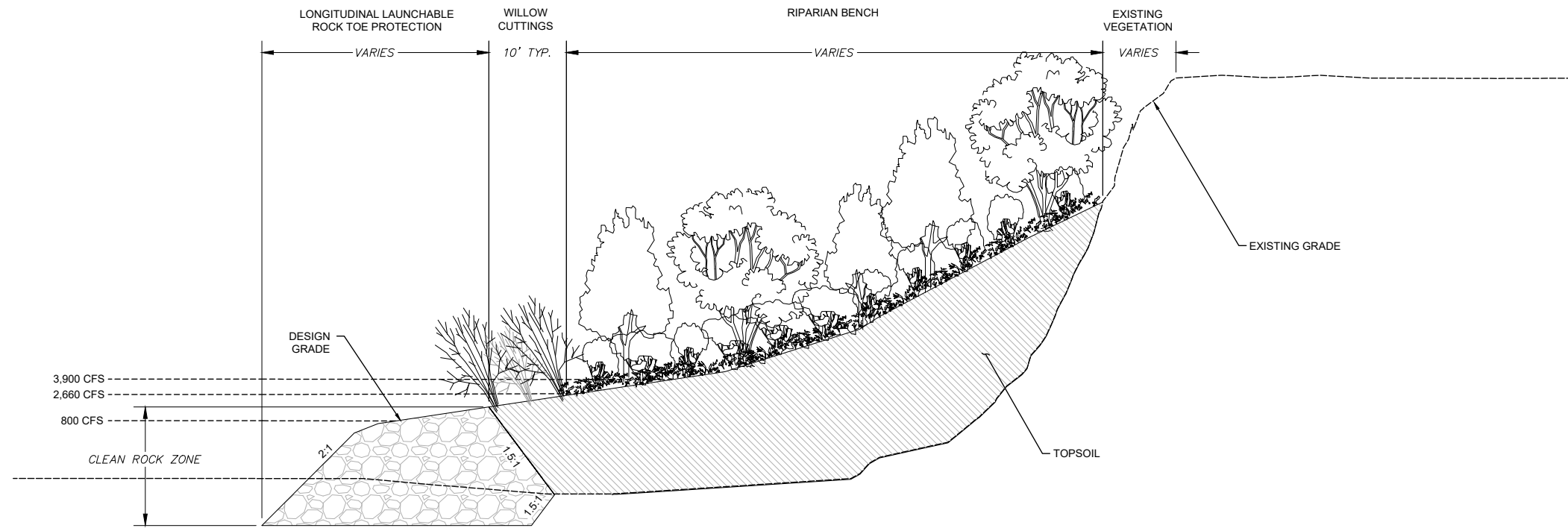
E-mail: [spk-pao@usace.army.mil](mailto:spk-pao@usace.army.mil)

Facebook: [www.facebook.com/sacramentodistrict](http://www.facebook.com/sacramentodistrict)

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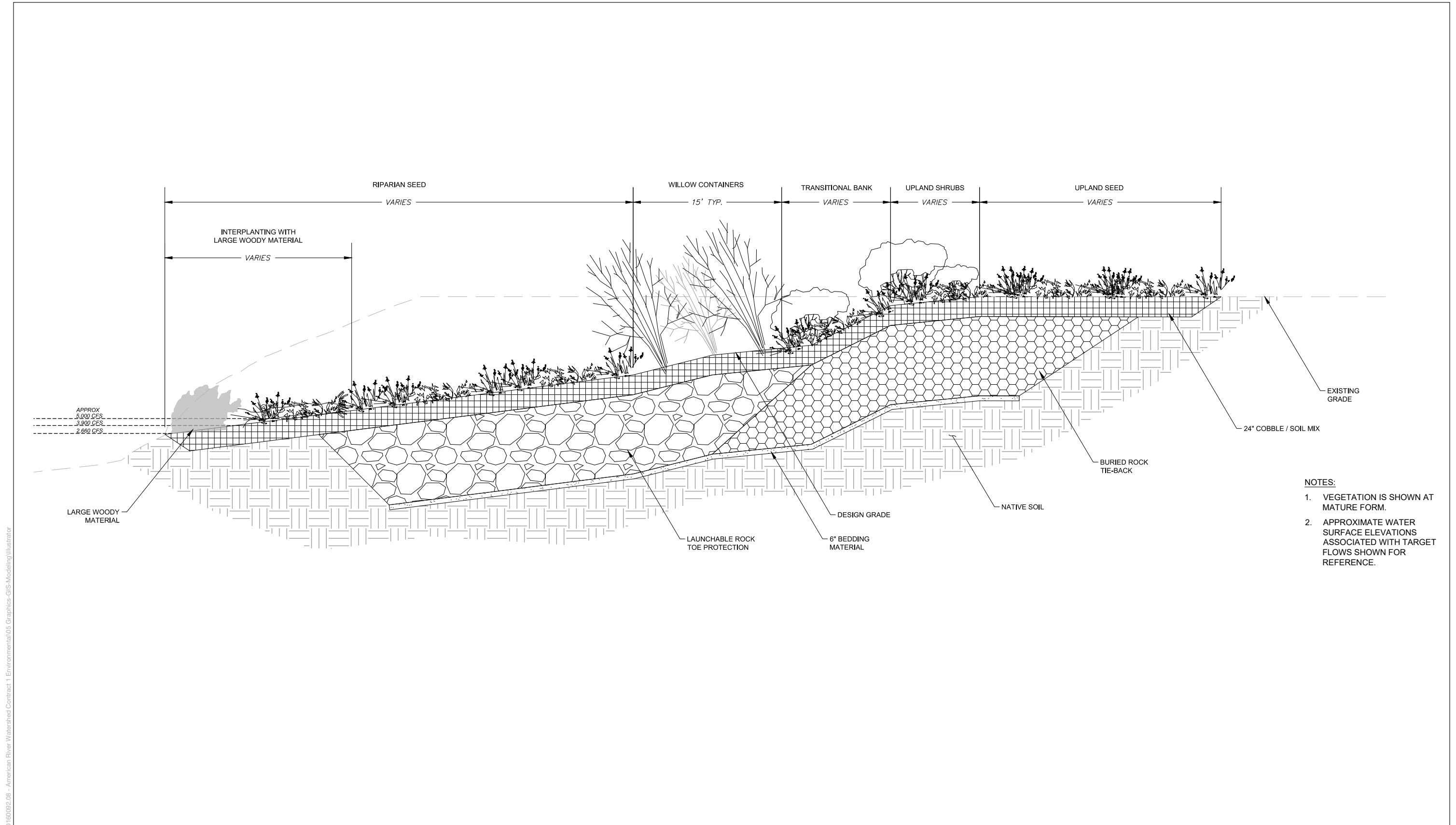


TYPICAL PLANTING SECTION (STATION 516+50 TO 519+50 AND 524+50 TO 528+20)  
 H: 1"=10' V: 1"=5'



TYPICAL PLANTING SECTION (STATION 519+50 TO 524+50)  
 SCALE: 1"=10'

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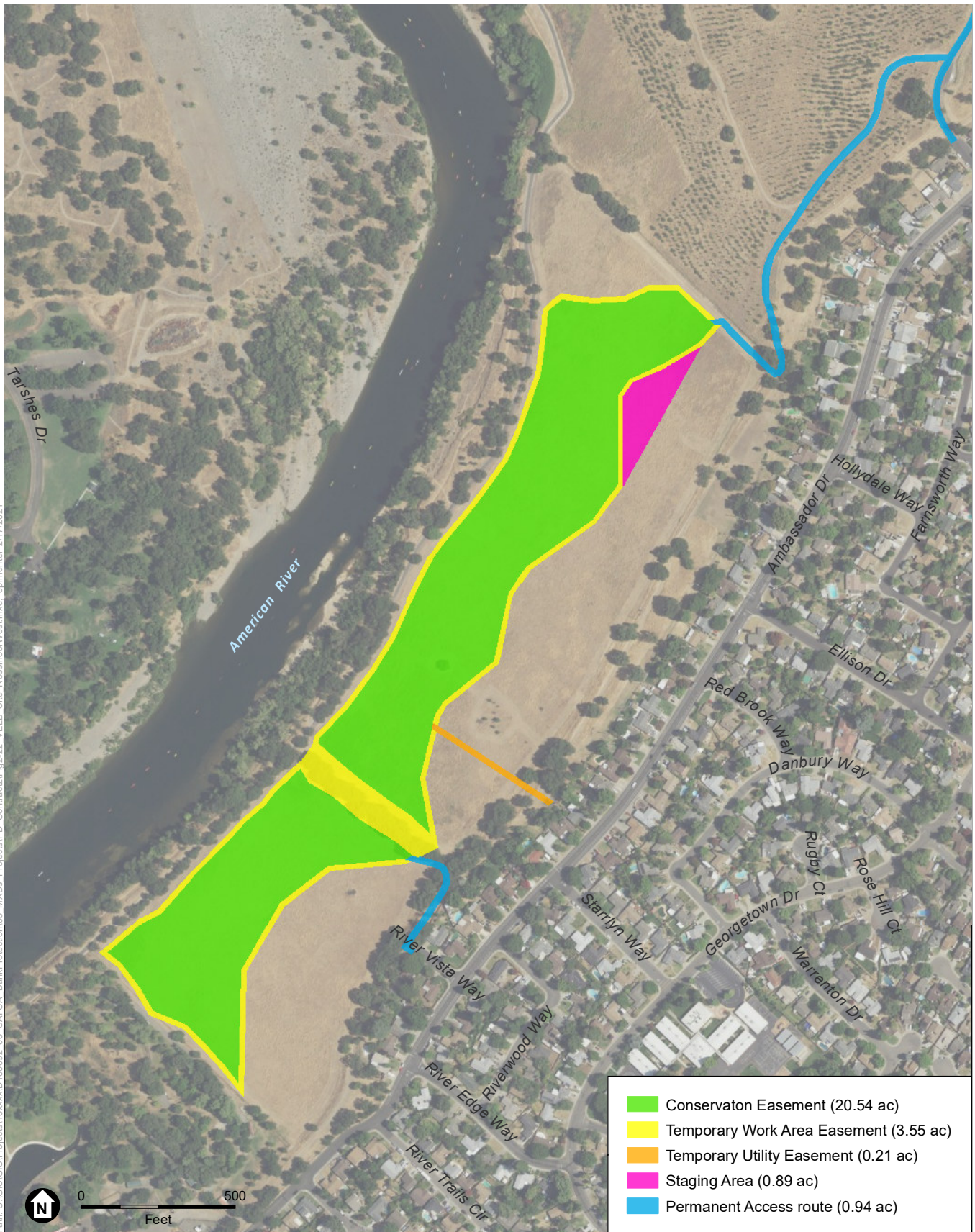
SOURCE: USACE, 2020

ARCF 2016 American River Contract 2

**Figure 2-15**  
Typical Cross Section of Planting Plan on Cobble/Soil Mix Section at Site 2-3







SOURCE: DigitalGlobe, 2018; NHC, 2020; USACE, 2021; ESA, 2021

ARCF 2016 American River Contract 2

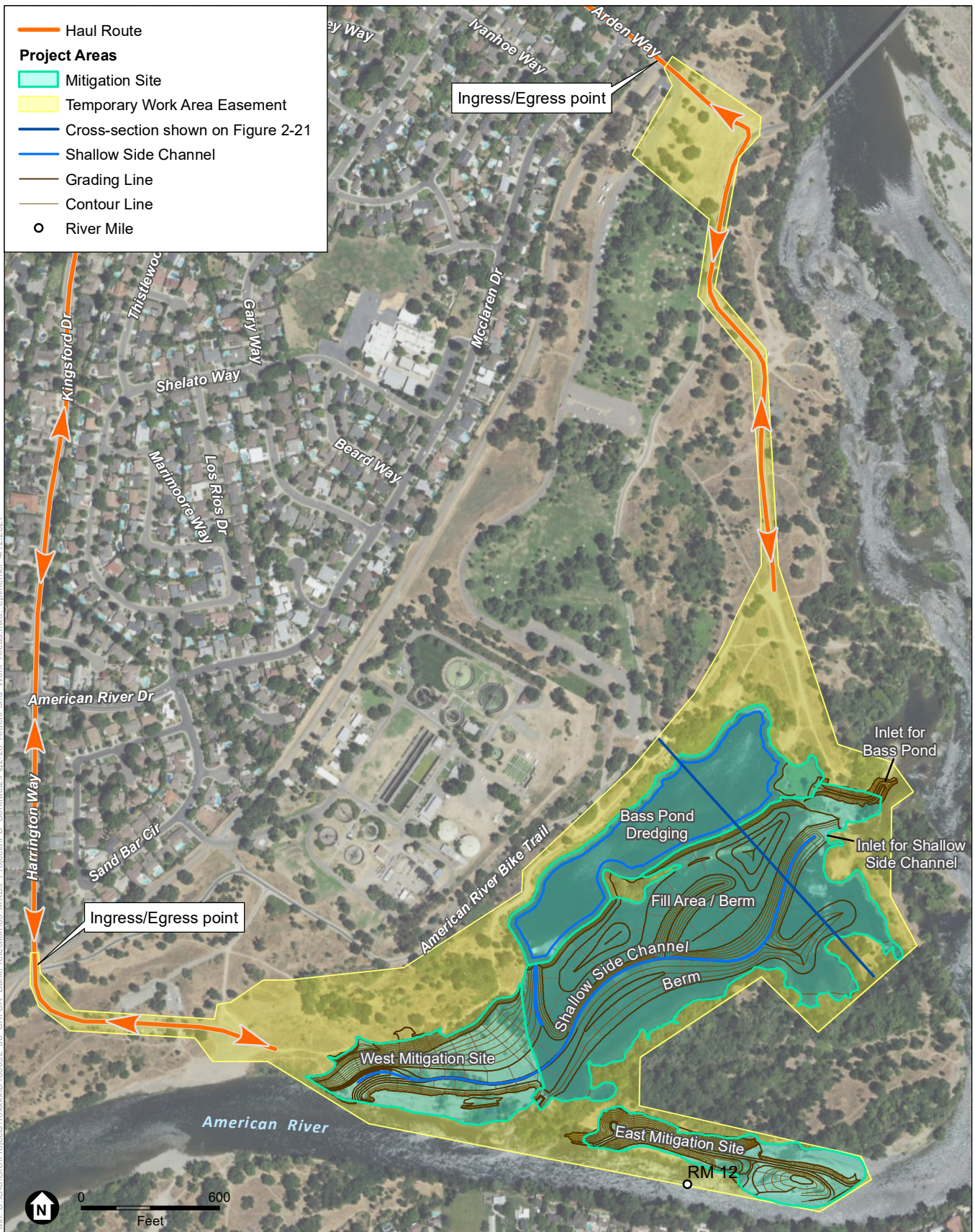
**Figure 2-22**  
Rossmoor West Mitigation Site



SOURCE: DigitalGlobe, 2018; NHC, 2020; USACE, 2021; ESA, 2021

ARCF 2016 American River Contract 2

**Figure 2-23**  
Rossmoor East Mitigation Site

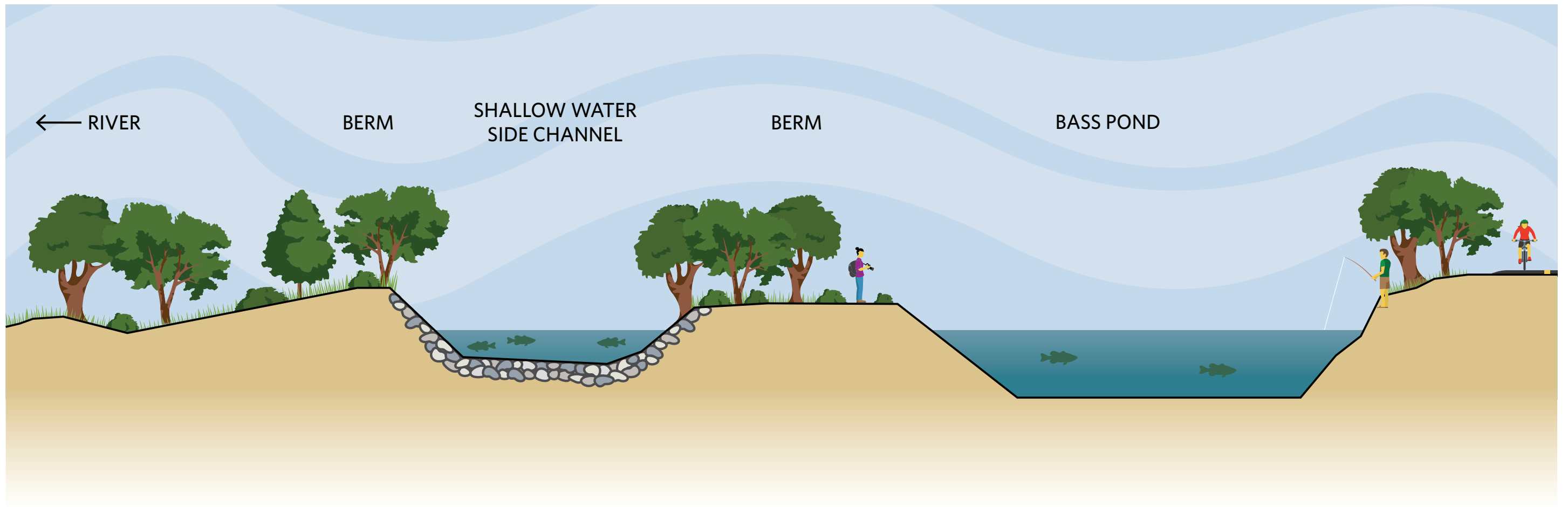


SOURCE: USDA, 2018; NHC, 2021; HDR, 2021; ESA 2021

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**Figure 2-20**  
Arden Pond Mitigation Site





Not to scale

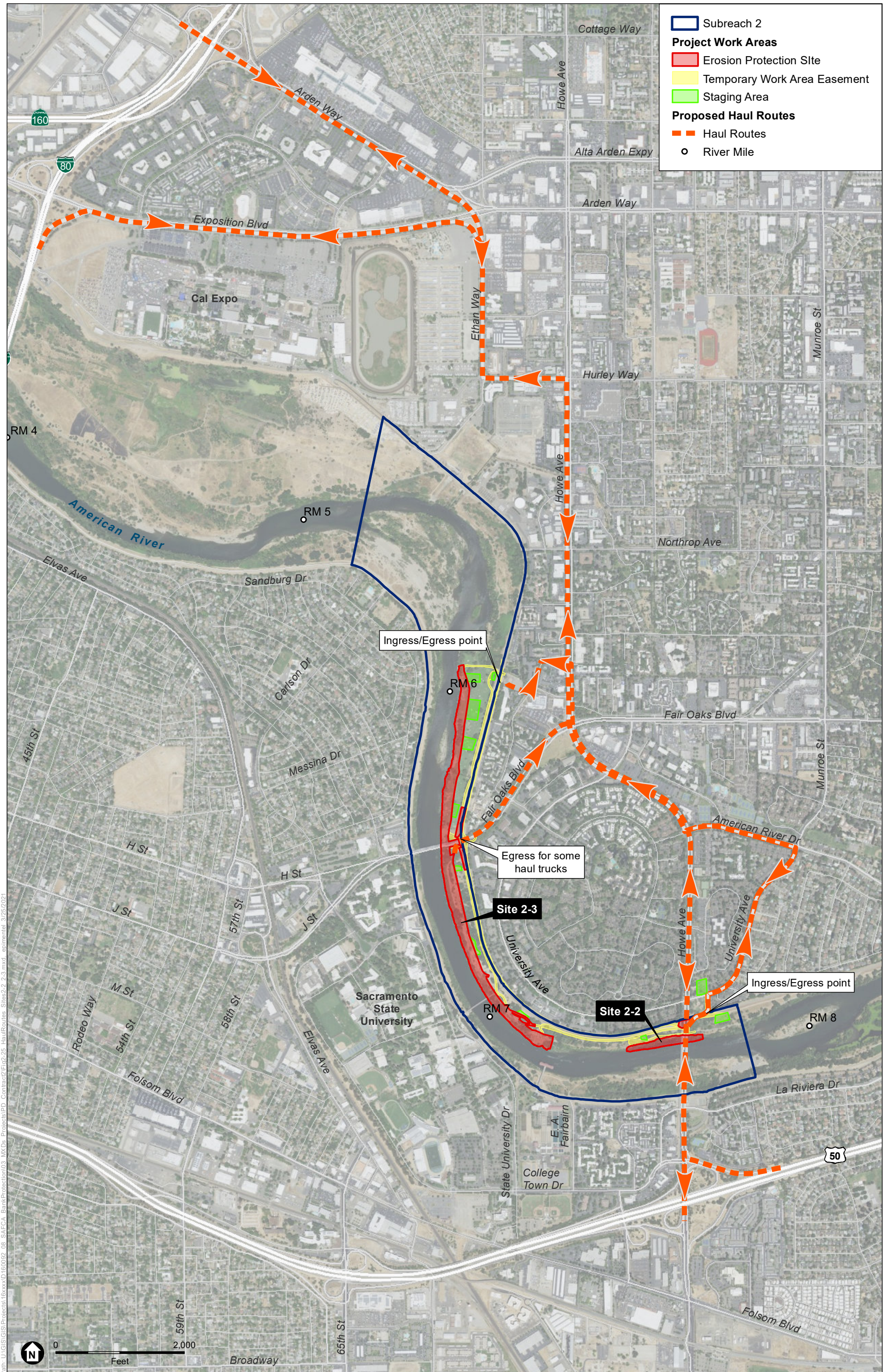
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SOURCE: HDR, 2021

American River Common Features Contract 2

**Figure 2-21**  
Typical Cross Section at Arden Pond Mitigation Site





SOURCE: USDA, 2018; NHC, 2021; ESA, 2021

ARCF 2016 American River Contract 2

**Figure 2-25**  
Haul Routes