

**American River Watershed Common Features,
American River Contract 3A
Draft Supplemental Environmental Assessment /Supplemental
Environmental Impact Report (SEA/SEIR)
Frequently Asked Questions**

Project Partners

The American River Watershed Common Features 2016 (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.

SEA/SEIR Public Review Period (April 13, 2022 – May 27, 2022)

This is an opportunity to learn about the American River Contract 3A bank protection project and submit comments. **The 45-day public review period for the draft SEA/SEIR will begin on April 13, 2022 and end on May 27, 2022.** Responses to comments will be published in the Final SEA/SEIR.

A virtual public meeting will be held on May 5, 2022 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

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

Email

ARCF_LARC3A@usace.army.mil

U.S. Postal Service

U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Public Affairs Office
1325 J Street, Room 1513
Sacramento, California 95814

PublicCommentARCF16@water.ca.gov

Flood Projects Branch
Department of Water Resources
3464 El Camino Avenue Room 200
Sacramento, CA 95821

Project Area

The bank protection improvements would occur along the left bank of the American River near Sutter's Landing Regional Park and the Business 80 bridge.

Proposed Project Description & Justification

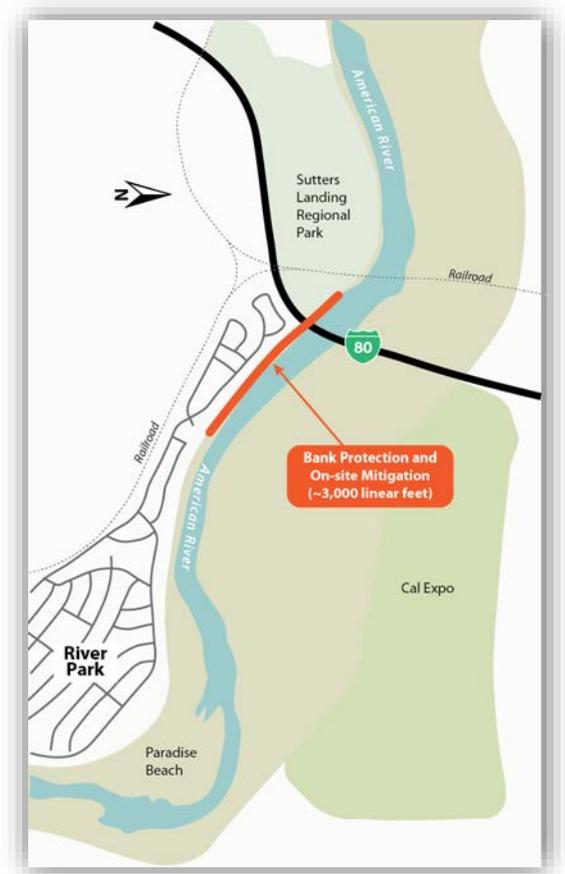
With the 2017 completion of a new auxiliary spillway at Folsom Reservoir and levee improvements that address seepage and stability along the Lower American River, the ability to manage large flood events has greatly improved. More water can be safely released from Folsom Reservoir earlier in a major 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 result in levee failure.

Proposed Action

The Proposed Action consists of the following:

1. Installation of approximately 3,000 linear feet of erosion protection and on-site habitat mitigation features along one levee segment (Site 1-1) of the Lower American River.
2. Temporary establishment and use of staging areas, stockpile sites, and haul routes.



Anticipated Construction Timeline

Pre-construction (October 2022 - May 2023)

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

Bank Protection Construction (May 2023 - Fall 2023)

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

Post-Construction Planting (Begin as early as Fall/Winter 2023)

Install a mixture of native vegetation along the waterside of the levee.

Frequently Asked Questions

1. A GRR FEIS/FEIR was adopted in 2016, why is there a need for a SEA/SEIR?

The **SEA/SEIR** analyzes details specific to construction, staging areas, haul routes, and construction of off-site mitigation that were not analyzed in the 2016 GRR FEIS/FEIR. Further, it addresses the proposal to construct 3,000 linear feet of bank erosion protection improvements along the Lower American River left bank near Sutter's Landing Regional Park and the Business 80 bridge.

2. How are stakeholder concerns being addressed?

Project impacts are presented in the draft **SEA/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 May 5, 2022 public meeting. Comments will be considered and addressed in the final **SEA/SEIR**.

Project partners have reached out to interested parties and various stakeholders via the Lower American River Task Force and Lower American River Bank Protection Working Group, as well as direct mail to properties located near project activities.

3. When reviewing a CEQA/NEPA 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 riverbanks 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 riverbank 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 this erosion site, would additional bank protection work be required?

The work at Site 1-1 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 Lower American River. Overall, the 2016 GRR FEIS/FEIR 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 **SEA/SEIR** analyzes the work being conducted at Site 1-1 and the associated mitigation sites. Future bank protection work would be addressed in subsequent 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 on-site and off-site 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 would 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 October 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 City of Sacramento and the County of Sacramento. 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 both 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 2-4 and 2-5).

The on-site mitigation goal is to ensure that plantings associated with the revegetation of the levee provide a robust habitat for native species and are fully compatible with the surrounding environment. The erosion protection improvements would include the construction of a planting bench along the waterside toe of

the levee to support on-site mitigation that includes trees and shrubs. The tree mix would include native species such as Boxelder, White Alder, Oregon Ash, Sycamore, Cottonwood, and Willows. Complementing the tree plantings would be a variety of native shrub species that may include mugwort, button bush, wild rose, sandbar willow and wild grape, as well as groundcovers that extend further up the slope of the waterside levee.

The off-site mitigation areas were previously identified in the **SEA/SEIR** for Contract 1 and the **SEIS/SEIR** for Contract 2. These sites include Glenn Hall Park, Rio Americano East and West, and Rossmoor East and West. Other sites are also being pursued in anticipation of projected impacts under full implementation of the ARCF 2016 Project bank protection program.

9. How can I learn more about all of the mitigation that may be occurring in the American River Parkway through various ongoing projects and efforts?

USACE has provided details related to the mitigation it is constructing specific to its erosion protection work via its environmental review processes associated with Contracts 1, 2 and 3A to date. These are specific to USACE's erosion protection work.

Another key source of system-wide mitigation review and discussions are held by County Parks and the Natural Resources Management Plan currently under environmental review (<https://regionalparks.saccounty.gov/Parks/Pages/NaturalResourcesManagement.aspx>).

All of USACE's erosion work planning, design and environmental compliance steps are fully aired through briefings with the American River Parkway Advisory Committee (ARPAC), County Parks, the Bank Protection Working Group (BPWG) as well as the Lower American River Task Force (LARTF). Many local residents participate in those briefings.

Additionally, as part of the mitigation planning process, USACE consults with the regulatory agencies responsible for overseeing mitigation and habitat in the parkway, including, among others, Sacramento County Regional Parks, National Marine Fisheries Service, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, National Parks Service (Wild and Scenic Rivers Act), and California Department of Fish and Wildlife. All proposed mitigation measures are included in environmental documentation that is made available for public review and comment prior to the start of the construction.

10. How would neighbors living adjacent to the work area be impacted by Project traffic?

Haul routes for materials and equipment would use Business 80 to the west or U.S. Highway 50 to the south. As depicted on attached Figure 2-12, haul trucks would travel using various routes to access construction sites and staging areas for Site 1-1. The neighborhoods situated adjacent to Site 1-1, 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.

It is anticipated that haul traffic would enter the project area from Sutter's Landing, travel along the American River left bank levee crown and egress at Glenn Hall Park using a temporary access route at the park. Glenn Hall Park and its recreational facilities would remain open and available to the public during construction.

11. How would the construction affect the City of Sacramento's Sutter's Landing Regional Park?

Portions of the Sutter's Landing Regional Park would be used for staging areas and haul routes for the Project. The staging areas would be closed to the public for the duration of the Project schedule, beginning

October 2022. Recreational facilities within Sutter's Landing Regional Park would remain open to the public with traffic safety measures in place (e.g. signage, flaggers, etc.) to prevent accidents during hauling of construction materials and equipment.

12. Would the Jedediah Smith Memorial Trail, commonly referred to as the American River Bike Trail, or any other walking and equestrian trails in the American River Parkway 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. The Project site is not located on the same bank as the Jedediah Smith Memorial Trail. 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 and signage would be posted at the affected locations a minimum of 14-days in advance.

13. Would signage be placed in the project area informing residents where work is happening and what areas remain accessible?

USACE would identify areas where project-related signage provides the most benefit. Signage would be posted a minimum of two weeks prior to the start of construction and include information related to any temporary traffic or recreational impacts. USACE would also send an informational piece via mail to property owners located directly affected by project activities. Details related to the erosion protection construction, including project work hours and haul routes would be described in the mailer and on signage, where appropriate.

14. During what time period would work occur?

Between October 2022 – May 2023, site preparation would begin with trimming and/or removal of woody vegetation and relocation of elderberry shrubs located within the construction footprint. In spring 2023, 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 2023 and continue through Fall 2023.

15. 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. and Sundays from 9:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. No work or hauling would take place on holidays without permission given by the City of Sacramento.

16. Who is the point of contact for residents during this project?

Residents with questions or concerns about the project should contact the USACE Public Affairs Office by telephone at (916) 557-5100 or email ARCF_LARC3A@usace.army.mil

USACE is managing multiple projects within the region, and we ask that residents allow at least 24-48 hours for acknowledgement of the message. We will endeavor to do our best to respond as quickly as possible. Any serious emergency or life-threatening situation that is witnessed, such as theft in progress or vandalism, should be reported to local law enforcement immediately.

17. How can I stay informed?

USACE is planning to host an online meeting on May 5, 2022 at 4:30 p.m. to discuss the **SEA/SEIR** and obtain public feedback.

Instructions on how to participate in the online meeting can be found at 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.

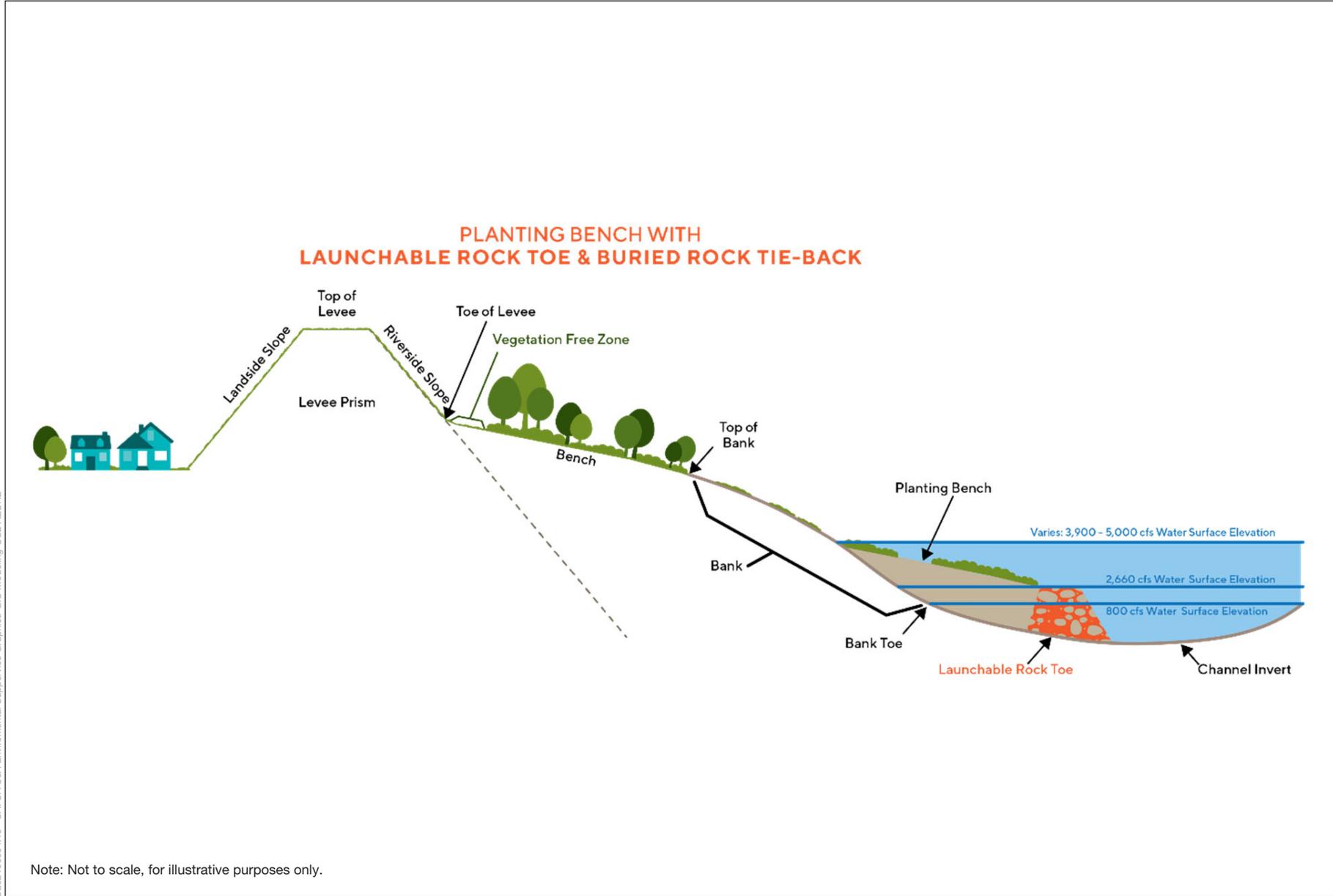
Residents can also contact the USACE Public Affairs Office directly at:

Phone: (916) 557-5100

E-mail: ARCF_LARC3A@usace.army.mil

Facebook: www.facebook.com/sacramentodistrict

Twitter: www.twitter.com/usacesacramento



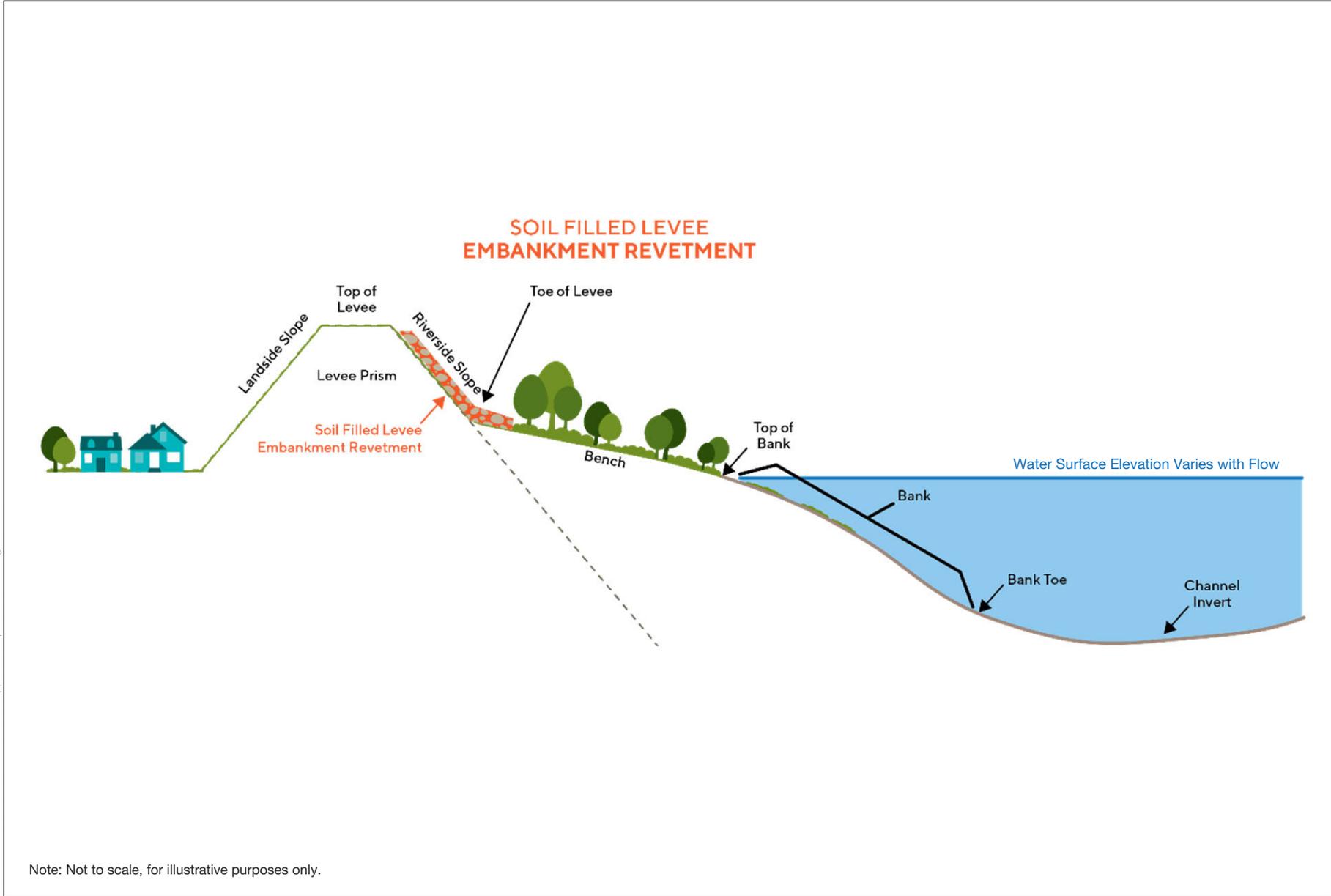
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SOURCE: USACE

ARCF 2016 American River Contract 3A

Figure 2-4
Typical Cross Section Diagram of Planting Bench and Launchable Rock Toe and Buried Rock





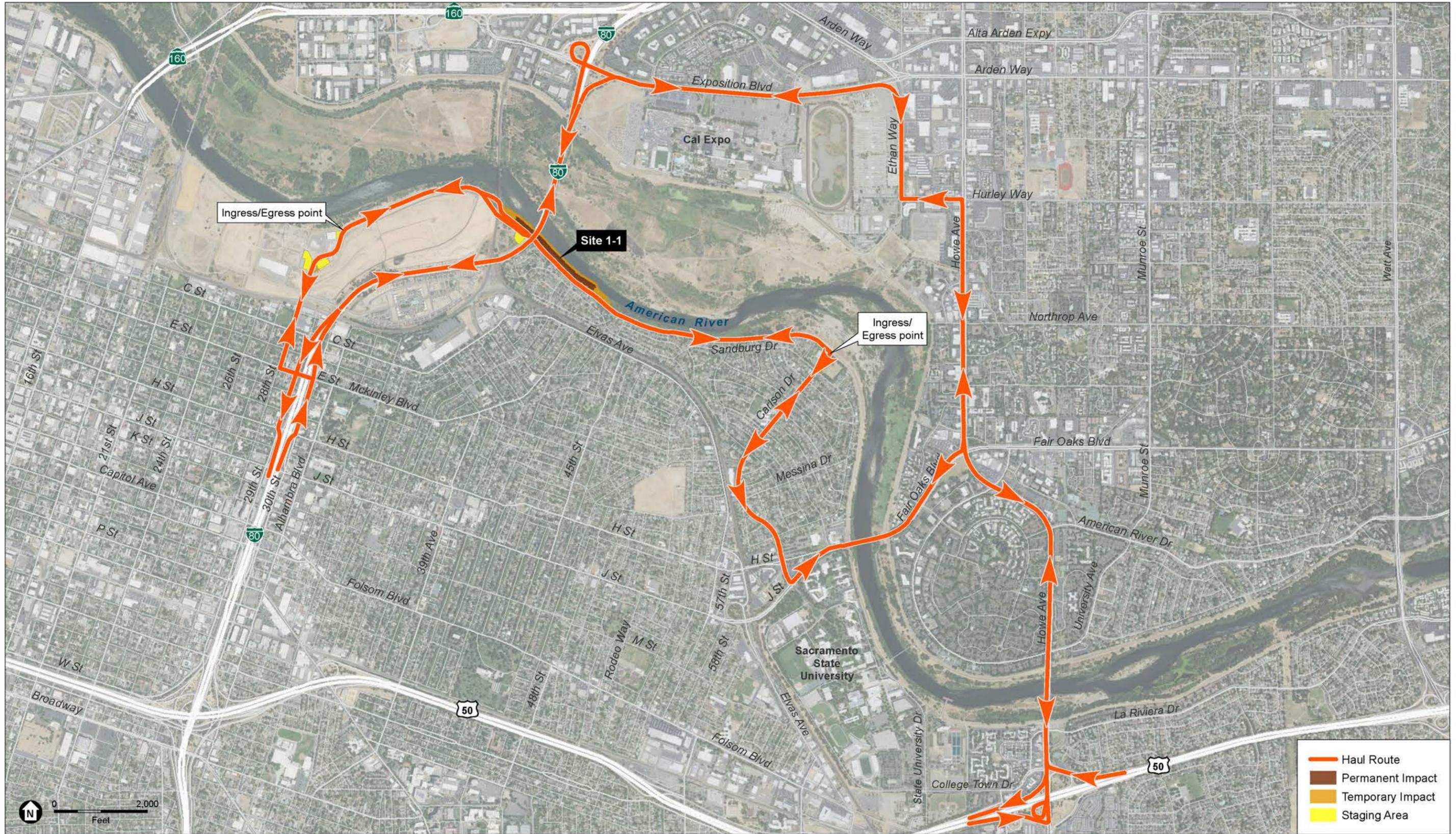
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SOURCE: USACE

ARCF 2016 American River Contract 3A

Figure 2-5
Typical Cross Section Diagram of Soil-filled Levee Embankment Revetment





SOURCE: USDA, 2018; USACE, 2021; ESA, 2022

ARCF 2016 American River Contract 3A

Figure 2-12
Site 1-1 Construction Haul Routes