

PUBLIC NOTICE

**US Army Corps
of Engineers®**

APPLICATION FOR PERMIT

Public Notice/Application No.: 2004-01219-SDM

Comment Period: September 7, 2004 through October 6, 2004

Applicant

Bureau of Indian Affairs
San Carlos Irrigation Project
ATTN: Mr. Robert Carolin
PO Box 250
Coolidge, Arizona 85228
(520) 723-6200

Location

In the Picacho Reservoir, which discharges into canals that are tributary to the Santa Cruz Wash, at (Section 2, T7S, R8E), Pinal County, Arizona. (Hydrologic Unit Code 15050100 – Middle Gila)

Activity

To discharge dredged or fill material into approximately 3 acres of Picacho Reservoir to construct an outlet channel in order to efficiently remove stored irrigation water for users downstream of the reservoir. For more information, see page 3 of this notice and attached drawings.

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). Interested parties are invited to provide their views on the proposed work, which will become a part of the record and will be considered in the decision. This permit application will be issued or denied under Section 404 of the Clean Water Act (33 U.S.C. 1344).

Comments can be e-mailed to sallie.mcguire@usace.army.mil or mailed to:

**U. S. Army Corps of Engineers
ATTENTION: Regulatory Branch (2004-01219-SDM)
3636 North Central Avenue, Suite 900
Phoenix, Arizona 85012-1939**

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 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 will be required to obtain water quality certification, under Section 401 of the Clean Water Act, from the Arizona Department of Environmental Quality and/or the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. For any proposed activity on Tribal land that is subject to Section 404 jurisdiction, the applicant will be required to obtain water quality certification from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. For any proposed activity on land other than Tribal land that is subject to Section 404 jurisdiction, the applicant will be required to obtain water quality certification 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- The latest version of the National Register of Historic Places has been consulted and this site is not listed. This review constitutes the extent of cultural resources investigations by the District Engineer, and he is otherwise unaware of the presence of such resources.

Endangered Species- Preliminary determinations indicate that the proposed activity would not affect federally-listed endangered or threatened species, or their critical habitat. Therefore, formal consultation under Section 7 of the Endangered Species Act does not appear to be required at this time.

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

To discharge dredged or fill material into approximately 3 acres of Picacho Reservoir to construct an outlet channel in order to efficiently remove stored irrigation water for water users downstream of the reservoir. The entire Picacho Reservoir covers about 1,000 acres. Flows have not been directed into this area of the reservoir for approximately the past four years. The vegetation within the reservoir consists primarily of mesquite trees and Russian thistle. Due to the lack of water in recent years much of the vegetation has dried up, and many mesquite in the project area appear dead. The proposal is to open up an outlet channel that is 16 feet wide, 2,700 feet long, with a 0.2% slope to collect the shallow stored water within the low point of the reservoir. The outlet channel would allow the water to be discharged through two existing 36-inch culverts. Excavated material (about 18,500 cubic yards) will be placed in an embankment parallel to the channel.

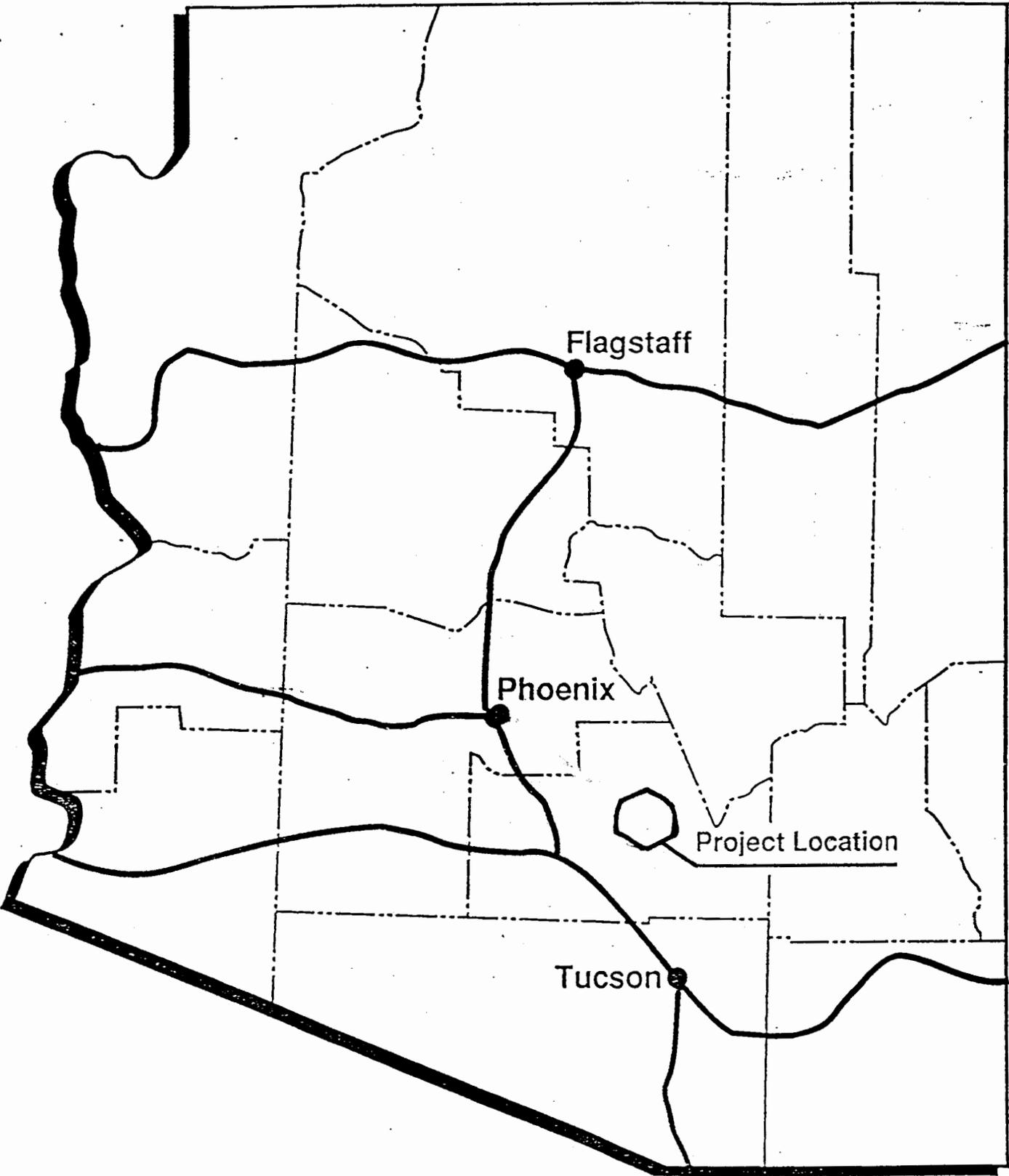
Additional Project Information

The applicant's project purpose is to construct the outlet channel so that they will be able to release a sufficient volume of water from the reservoir to downstream users. The overall project purpose is irrigation.

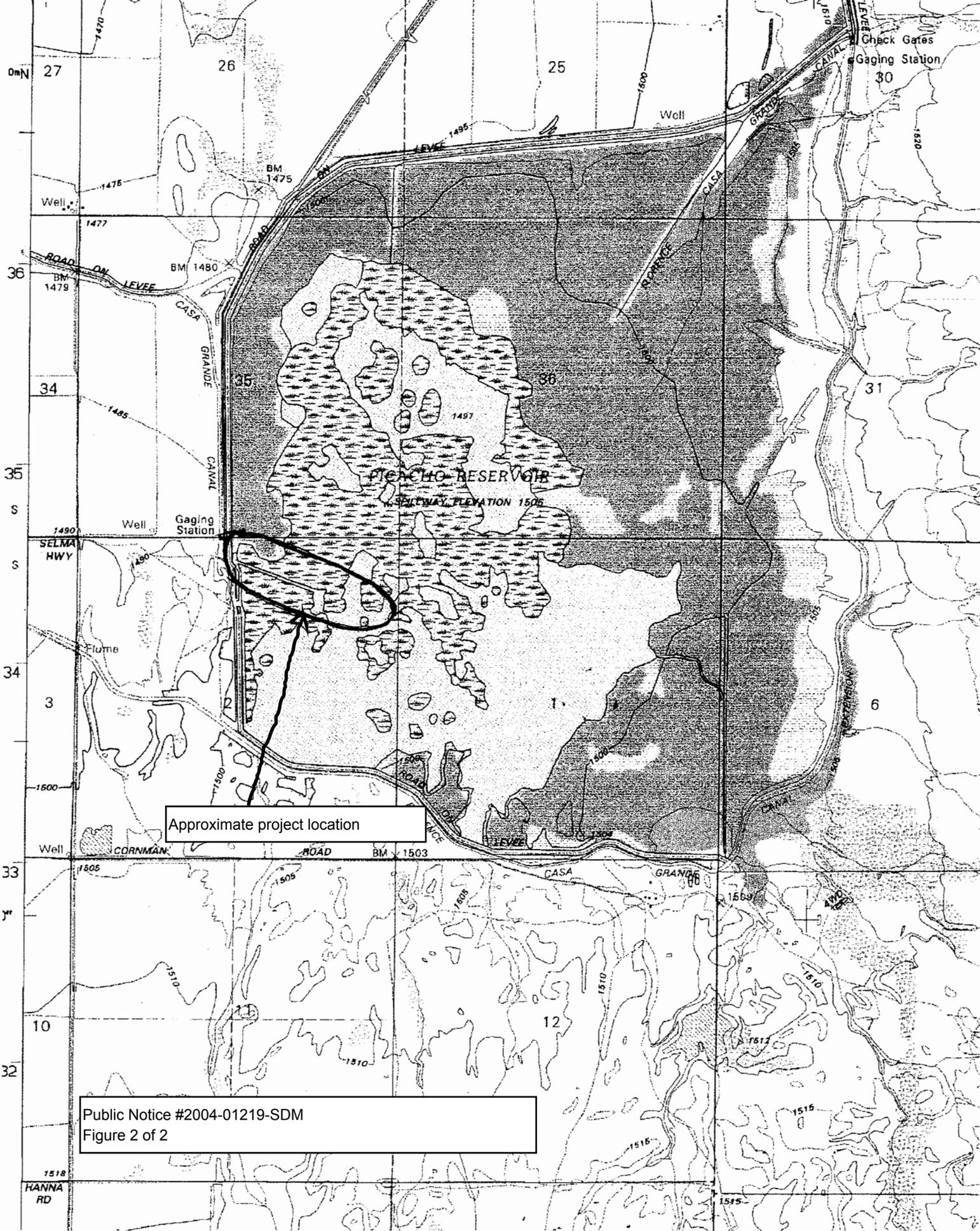
Proposed Special Conditions

To be developed.

For additional information please call Sallie D. McGuire at (602) 640-5385 x 221. This public notice is issued by the Chief, Regulatory Branch.



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Figure 1 of 2



Approximate project location

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Figure 2 of 2