PUBLIC NOTICE

U.S. ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS
LOS ANGELES DISTRICT

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NOTICE OF AVAILABILITY OF DRAFT EIS
AND ANNOUNCEMENT OF A PUBLIC MEETING

Ray Mine Proposed Tailings Storage Facility

Public Notice/Application No.: SPL-2011-01005-MWL
Project: Ray Mine Proposed Tailings Storage Facility
Comment Period: January 29, 2016 through March 14, 2016
Project Manager: Michael Langley; 602-230-6953; Michael.W.Langley@usace.army.mil

Applicant
Thomas Aldrich
ASARCO, LLC
5285 East Williams Circle
Suite 2000
Tucson, Arizona 85711

Contact
Amanda Best
WestLand Resources, Inc.
4001 E. Paradise Falls Drive
Tucson, Arizona 85712

Location

The proposed tailings storage facility (TSF) is located approximately four miles south of the Ray Mine Complex, south of the Gila River, within portions of Sections 1, 2, 10 through 12, 14 through 16, 21 through 23, and 26 through 28, Township 4 South, Range 13 East, and portions of Section 36, Township 3 South, Range 13 East. The project pipelines would run from the thickeners at the Ray Mine to the proposed TSF along the Florence-Kelvin Highway.

Activity

To discharge fill materials into approximately 130 acres and indirectly impact an additional 4 acres of waters of the U.S. associated with Ripsey Wash, the Gila River, and unnamed washes to construct a TSF and associated pipelines, power lines, road relocations, stormwater diversions, and other related features. (see attached drawings).

Subject

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Los Angeles District (Corps) has prepared a Draft Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) pursuant to the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) to analyze the potential direct, indirect, and cumulative effects associated with the construction of a TSF associated with the Ray Mine near Kearny, Pinal County, Arizona. The EIS evaluates a No-Action Alternative and two project alternatives. The proposed action is ASARCO's proposal as described in their Section 404 permit application. This notice is to inform interested parties of the availability of the draft EIS for, to solicit comments, and to provide notice of a public meeting that will be conducted during the 45-day public review period.

Authority

The two project alternatives described in the draft EIS would require authorization under Section 404 of the Clean Water Act for the discharge of dredged or fill materials within waters of the U.S.

Project Description

Asarco is proposing to construct, operate, and close a tailings storage facility to support continuing copper mining activities at the Ray Mine Complex. The facility would accommodate tailings that would be collected at the mine, transported via a tailings delivery pipeline, and deposited in slurry form at a discharge point east of Ripsey Wash, an ephemeral wash that is a tributary to the Gila River. The facility footprint is estimated at 2,574 acres and currently has an elevational range of approximately 1,800 to 2,400 feet above mean sea level. The facility is designed for an overall storage capacity of 750 million tons of tailings and embankment materials with a final crest elevation of 2,440 feet. The proposed facility would be built with centerline and upstream construction methods.

A diversion embankment, stormwater detention pond, and channel would be constructed at the upgradient end of the facility to divert flows around the facility to the west to Zellweger Wash. The diversion embankment and stormwater detention pond are designed to handle the 500-year, 24-hour storm event. Water from this impoundment would be pumped and piped to the western diversion channel for conveyance to Zelleweger Wash. A second diversion channel would be constructed along the east side of the facility to drain stormwater runoff from upgradient of the facility to an unnamed tributary wash to the Gila River.

The starter tailings embankment would be constructed at the downgradient end of the facility with a 50-foot- wide berm. Cyclone sands would be used to construct the phased embankments. The ultimate embankment would be constructed to an elevation of 2,440 feet above mean sea level with a tailings deposition elevation just below this elevation.

Some seepage from the tailings impoundment is expected and would infiltrate the alluvial deposits located within Ripsey Wash and its tributaries. Therefore, a seepage collection trench would be constructed within Ripsey Wash downstream of the impoundment to contain the seepage, and a second seepage collection trench will be constructed in a drainage on the east side of the facility. The seepage collection trench will be constructed with a geomembrane liner anchored to bedrock and granular drain rock along the upstream face of the trench to intercept seepage from the tailings facility. A series of riser pipes will be installed within the trench and fitted with submersible pumps to pump collected seepage to the associated reclaimed water ponds.

Asarco is proposing to construct and operate tailings delivery and reclaimed water pipelines as part of the project. The tailings generated from the mill at the Ray Mine would be pumped in slurry form through the tailings delivery pipeline to the proposed facility impoundment area for deposition and a reclaimed water pipeline would be used to pipe reclaimed water back to the Ray Mine for reuse. The pipelines would be constructed along the Florence-Kelvin Highway and connect to the proposed tailings deposition point and reclaimed water ponds located at the proposed facility. The pipelines would be constructed along the existing alignment of the Florence-Kelvin Highway. To address the unlikely event of a pipeline failure, a drain down pond is planned along the pipeline route north of the Gila River for containment of tailings and/or reclaimed water. A pipeline bridge would be constructed at the point where the pipeline route crosses the Gila River.

A 2.2-mile segment of the Florence-Kelvin Highway, a Pinal County-maintained roadway, would require realignment as a result of constructing the facility.

The proposed facility would require the relocation of the San Carlos Irrigation Project power line which currently passes though the northern portion of the facility footprint. An approximately 2.3-mile segment of the power line will be moved north of the TSF and rerouted around the western portion of the project area, approximately following the proposed and existing alignment of the Florence-Kelvin Highway. The planned rerouted power line corridor is approximately 3.2 miles in length.

Asarco will relocate the Arizona National Scenic Trail, which currently runs through the proposed TSF project footprint. A 6.4-mile bypass route to the east of the TSF would be constructed.

Asarco will compensate for the loss of waters of the U.S. by implementing mitigation in the form of riparian restoration and preservation activities at four locations along the San Pedro River and one location along the Gila River, as described in the Conceptual Mitigation Plan, Appendix J of the draft EIS.

Draft EIS Location

The draft EIS is available for review in the following formats and at the locations indicated:

- Electronic Copy
    - Corps website at: http://www.spl.usace.army.mil/Missions/Regulatory/ProjectsPrograms.aspx
    - Compact disks are available upon request from the Corps by contacting Michael Langley at (602) 230-6953 or by email at michael.w.langley@usace.army.mil
- A hard copy is available for review at the following locations:

    Kearny Public Library
    912-A Tilbury Rd.
    Kearny, AZ 85137

    Superior Public Library
    99 Kellner Ave.
    Superior, AZ 85173

Public Meeting

The Corps is conducting a public meeting to receive comments on the draft EIS. The meeting will be held on Wednesday evening, **February 24, 2016** at the Ray Elementary School cafeteria from 6:00 to 9:00 PM (Arizona time). The Corps will conduct a presentation starting at 6:30 pm.

The meeting will consist of an open house and presentation. During approximately the first 30 minutes of the meeting, and following the presentation, attendees will have the opportunity to view displays provided by the Corps and the applicant that provide information on various aspects of the project, environmental resources in the project area, and the Clean Water Act Permitting and NEPA processes. Technical experts will be available at these displays to answer questions about the project.

At the completion of the presentation, the Corps will provide the opportunity for interested parties to make oral comments. Individual commenters will be limited to two minutes of speaking

time. A court reporter will be present at this meeting to record oral comments for the administrative record. After the presentation concludes, the open house will continue until the meeting ends.

Attendees who wish to comment on this project can do so during the meeting by providing oral comments during the designated time. Written comments can also be left with Corps staff or submitted at a later date.

Comments on the Draft EIS

The Corps is soliciting comments from the public; federal, state, and local agencies; Native American tribes; and other interested parties in order to consider and evaluate the impacts of Asarco's proposed project. Any comments received will be considered by the Corps to determine whether to issue, modify, condition, or deny a permit for the proposed project.

Comments can be provided in person, in oral or written form, at the public meeting described above. Comments can also be mailed to:

LOS ANGELES DISTRICT, U.S. ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS
REGULATORY DIVISION
ATTN: Michael Langley
3636 North Central Avenue, Suite 900
Phoenix, AZ 85012-1939

Alternatively, comments can be sent electronically to: Michael.W.Langley@usace.army.mil

For additional information please call Michael Langley of my staff at 602-230-6953 or via e-mail at Michael.W.Langley@usace.army.mil. This public notice is issued by the Chief, Regulatory Division.

Regulatory Program Goals:

- To provide strong protection of the nation's aquatic environment, including wetlands.
- To ensure the Corps provides the regulated public with fair and reasonable decisions.
- To enhance the efficiency of the Corps' administration of its regulatory program.

DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
LOS ANGELES DISTRICT, U.S. ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS
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Phoenix, AZ 85012-1939

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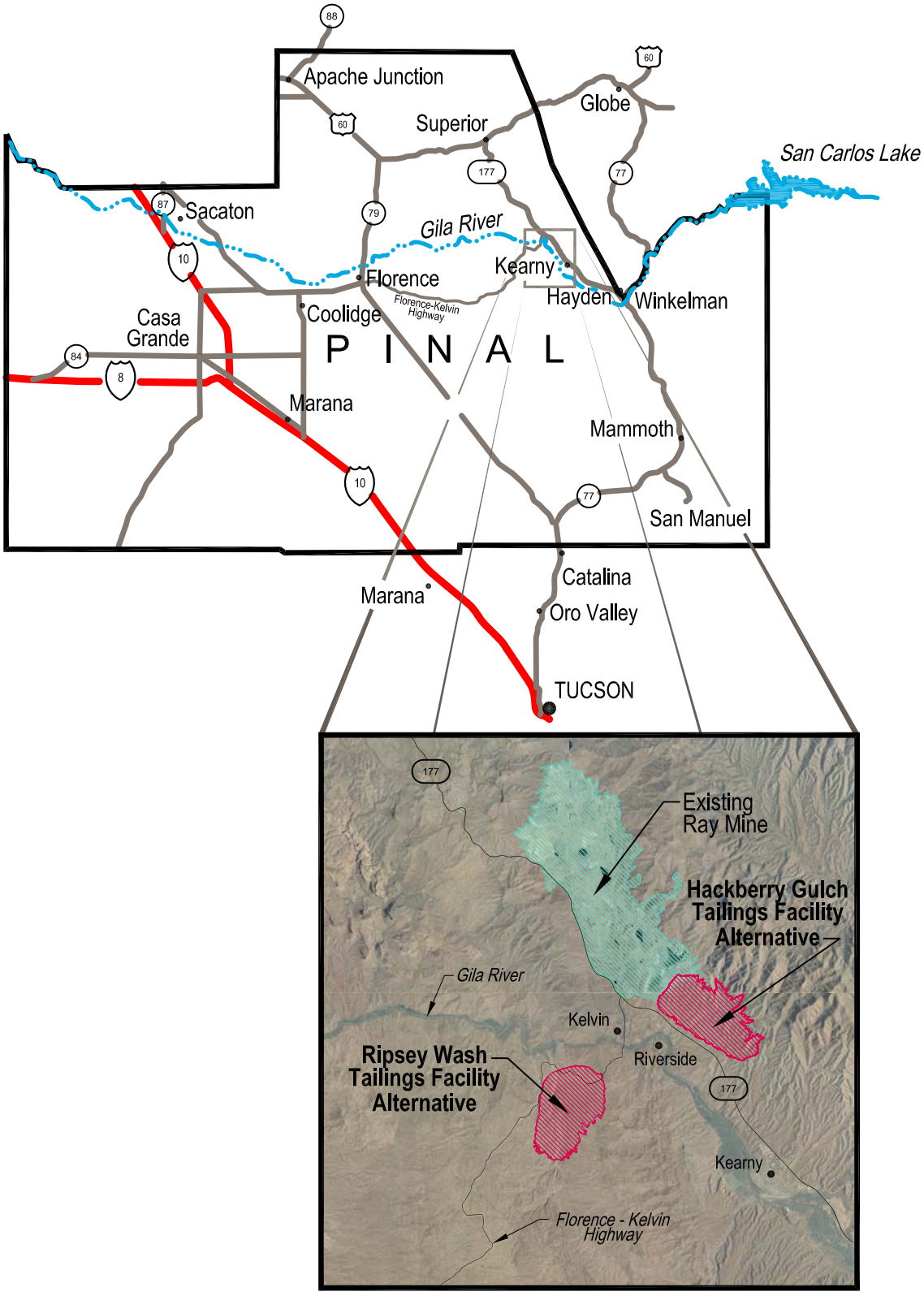

Figure 1
General Location Map

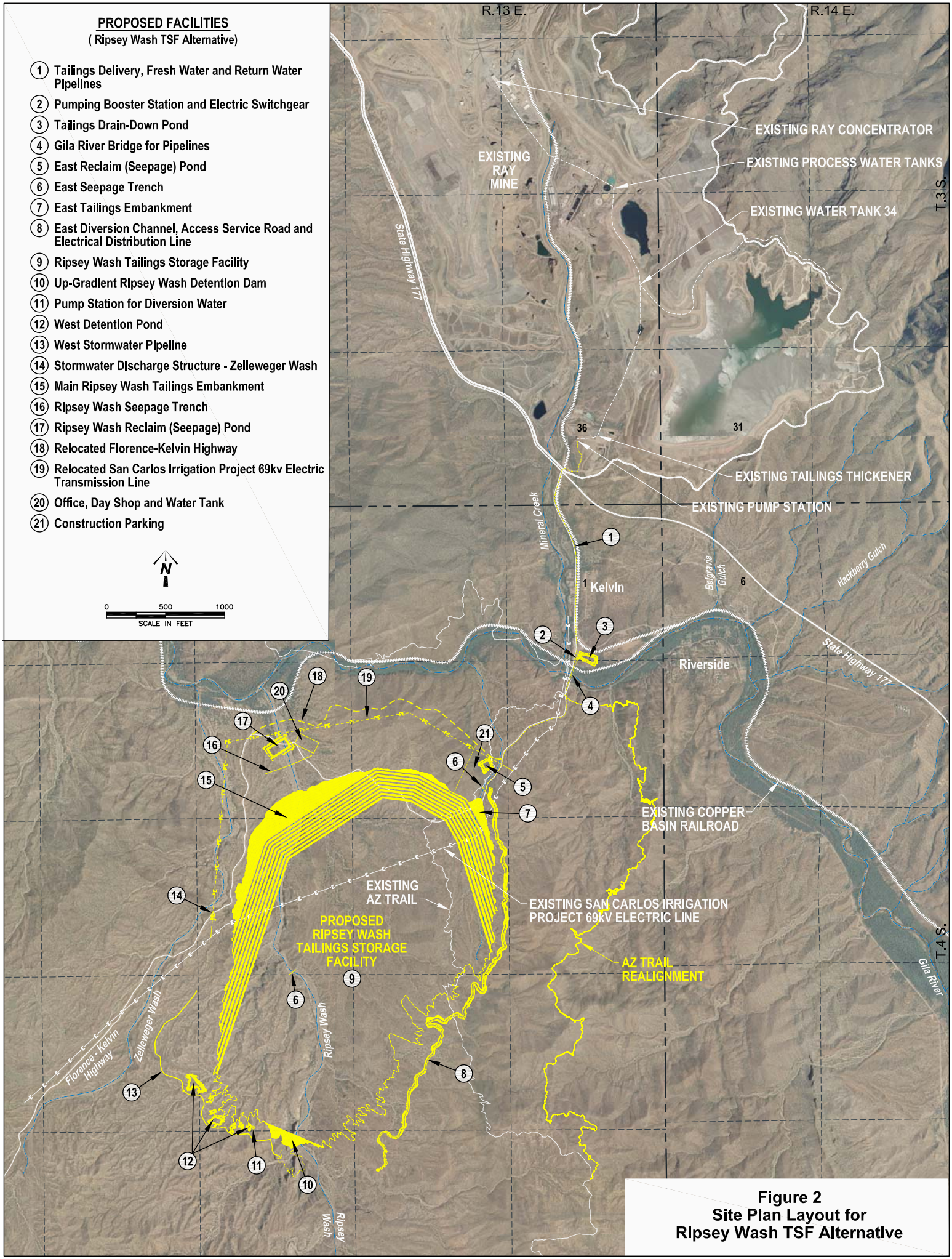

Figure 2
Site Plan Layout for
Ripsey Wash TSF Alternative

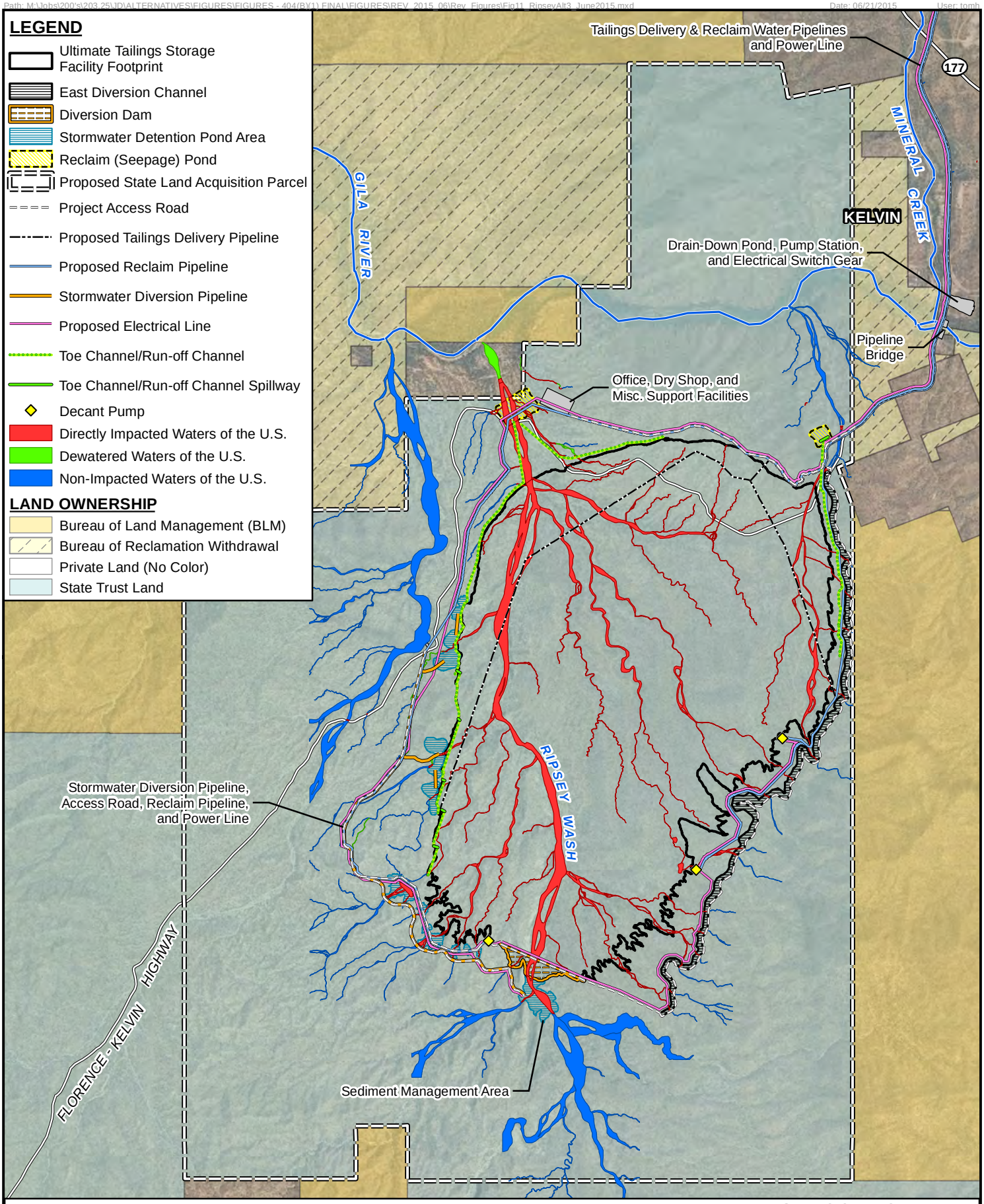

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Photo Source: National Agriculture Imagery Program, 2010.
Land Ownership Provided by BLM

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0 1,500 3,000
Feet

ASARCO LLC
Proposed Tailings Storage Facility
404(b)(1) Alternatives Analysis
Ripsey Wash Alternative 3
Figure 11

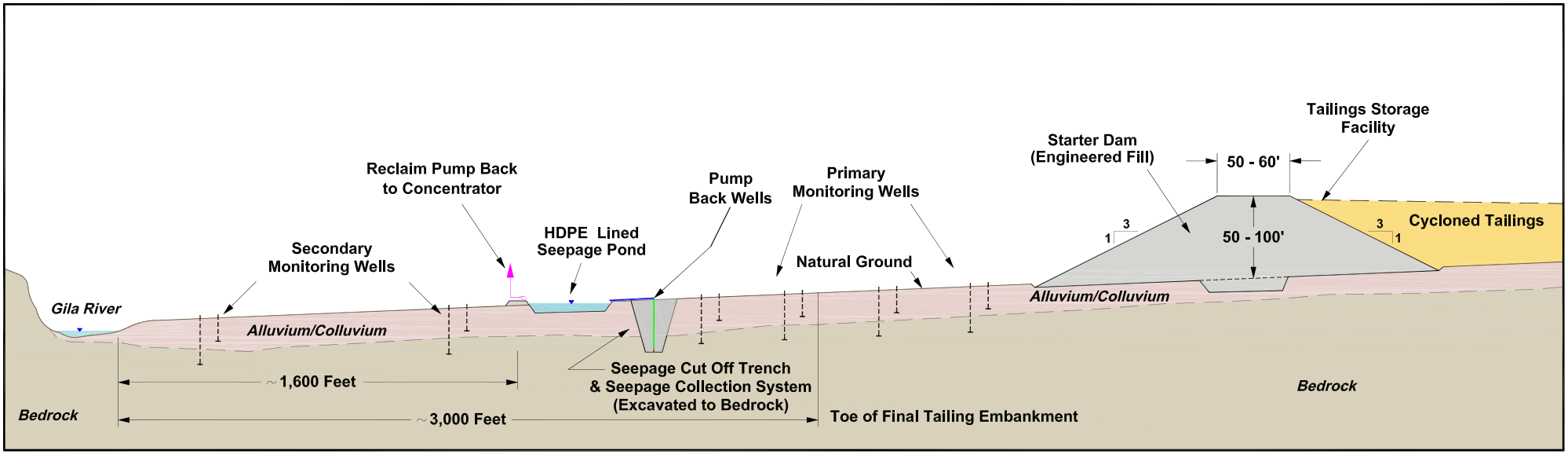


Figure 5
Schematic for Seepage Trenches and Reclaim Ponds

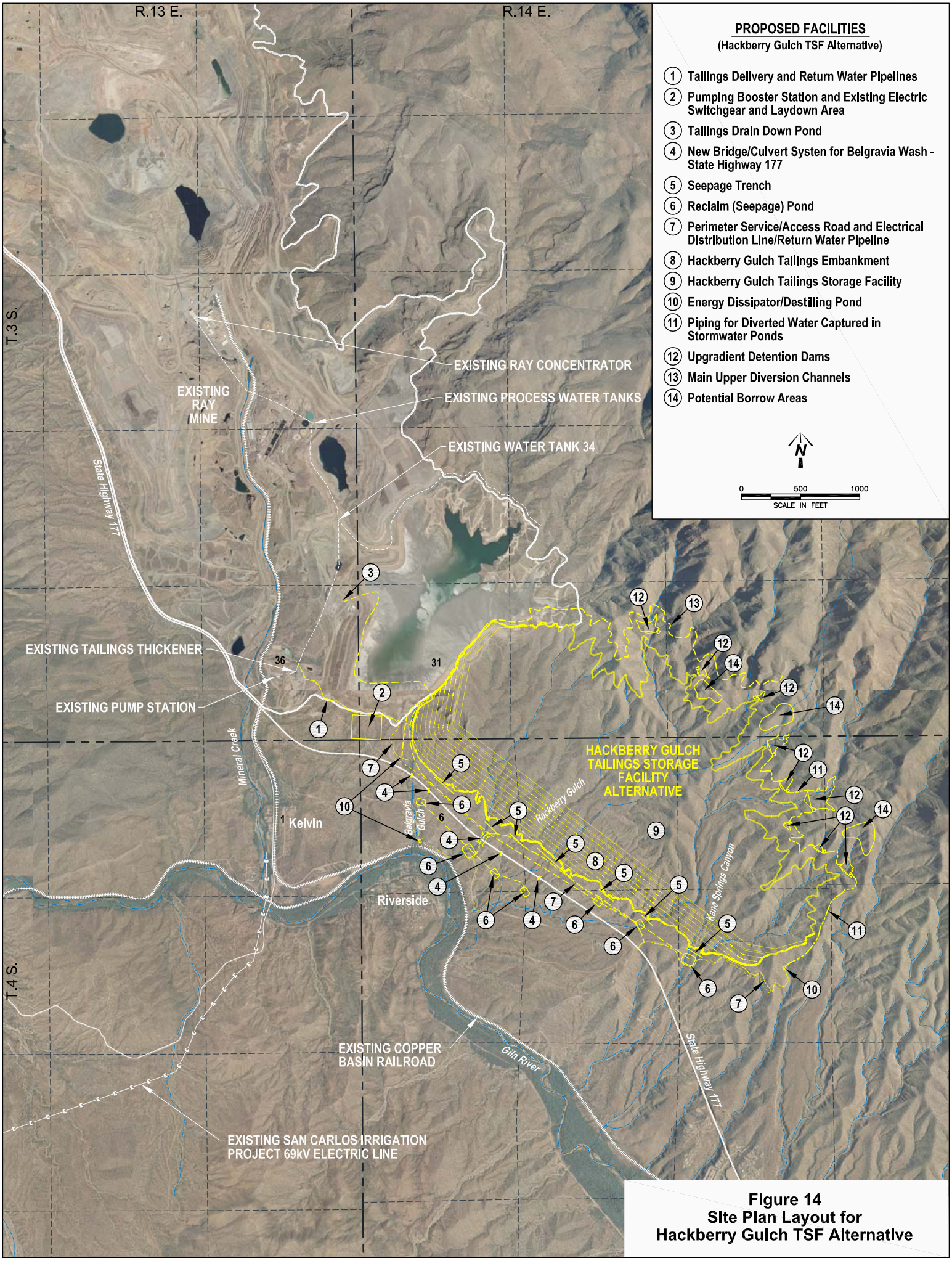
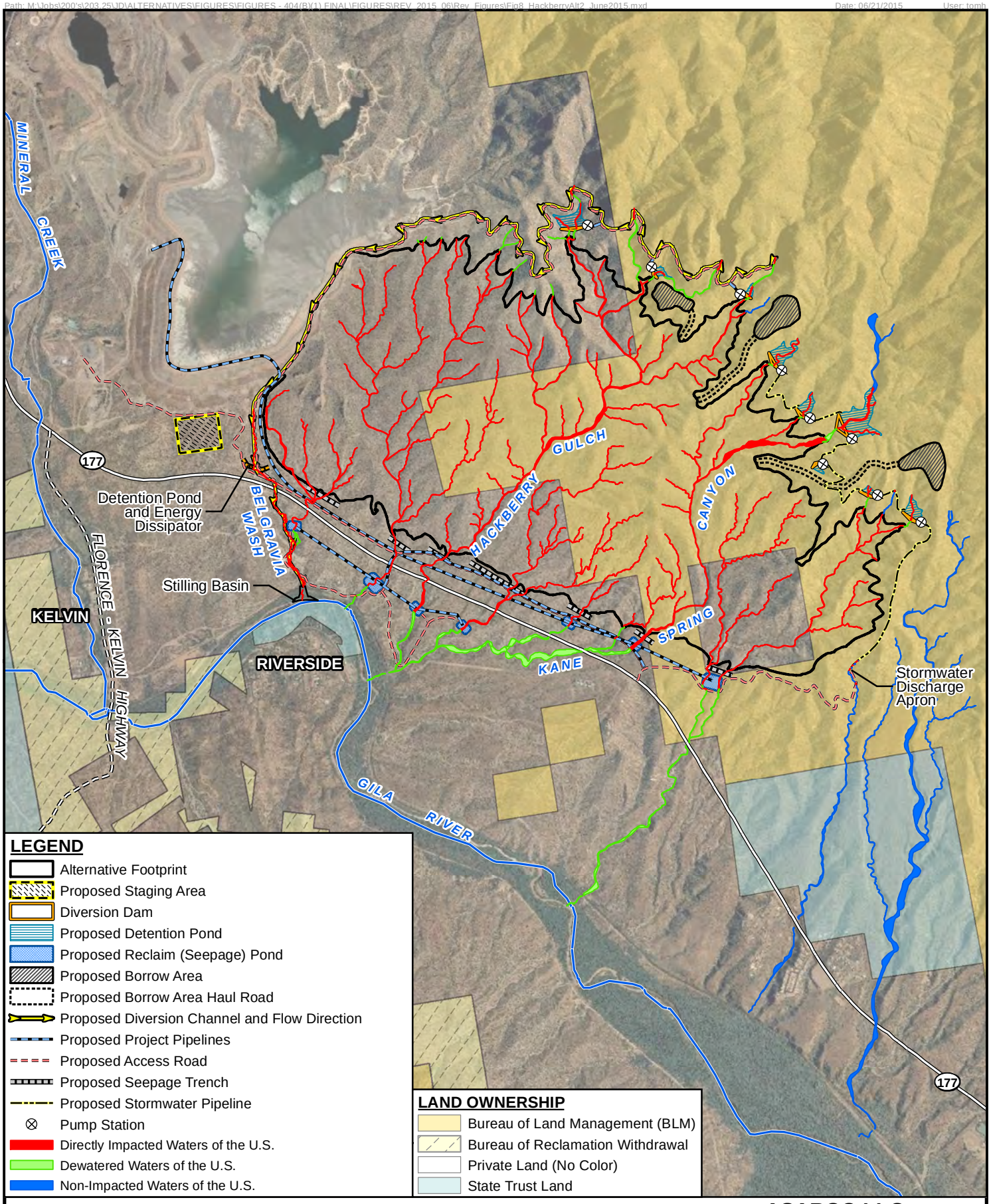


Figure 14
Site Plan Layout for
Hackberry Gulch TSF Alternative



LEGEND

- Alternative Footprint
- Proposed Staging Area
- Diversion Dam
- Proposed Detention Pond
- Proposed Reclaim (Seepage) Pond
- Proposed Borrow Area
- Proposed Borrow Area Haul Road
- Proposed Diversion Channel and Flow Direction
- Proposed Project Pipelines
- Proposed Access Road
- Proposed Seepage Trench
- Proposed Stormwater Pipeline
- Pump Station
- Directly Impacted Waters of the U.S.
- Dewatered Waters of the U.S.
- Non-Impacted Waters of the U.S.

LAND OWNERSHIP

- Bureau of Land Management (BLM)
- Bureau of Reclamation Withdrawal
- Private Land (No Color)
- State Trust Land

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Photo Source: National Agriculture Imagery Program, 2010.
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0 1,500 3,000 Feet

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Proposed Tailings Storage Facility
404(b)(1) Alternatives Analysis
Hackberry Gulch Alternative 2
Figure 8