

CALIFORNIA COASTAL COMMISSION

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STAFF REPORT AND RECOMMENDATION ON CONSISTENCY DETERMINATION

Consistency Determination

No. CD-63-96

Staff: LJS-SF

File Date: June 3, 1996

45th Day: July 18, 1996

60th Day: August 2, 1996

Commission Meeting: July 10, 1996

FEDERAL AGENCY: U.S. Navy

DEVELOPMENT
LOCATION:

Naval Submarine Base, Point Loma, San Diego (Exhibits 1 and 2).

DEVELOPMENT
DESCRIPTION:

Slope stabilization of a 200-foot-long section of shoreline along Base entrance road (Exhibits 3-8).

SUBSTANTIVE FILE DOCUMENTS:

1. Consistency Determination CD-86-93 (U.S. Navy)

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

On June 3, 1996, the Commission received a consistency determination from the U.S. Navy for a slope stabilization project along Rosecrans Street within the Naval Submarine Base on Point Loma, San Diego. The project includes clearing of vegetation on the affected portion of the eroding slope, excavation and removal of loose soil, placement of approximately 1,300 cubic yards of backfill material and grading of a new upper surface slope, installation of a cellular confining wall on the lower slope, placement of 256 cubic yards of rip rap along the toe of the slope within the upper intertidal zone of San Diego Bay, and installation of erosion controls and native landscaping at the project site. The length of the affected shoreline is approximately 200 feet. The Navy states that the project is necessary to prevent the collapse of Rosecrans Street (the main entrance to the Base) and parallel utility lines. Should the slope fail, gas, water, and sewer lines could rupture and spill their contents into San Diego Bay. No sensitive habitat would be affected by the project, and public access and recreation would not be affected as the shoreline adjacent to the project site is not publically accessible due to military security needs. The project is consistent with

Section 30235 of the Coastal Act because it is an allowable use under that section, since it is required to protect existing structures in danger from erosion, and because it would not affect shoreline sand transport. The project is also consistent with the marine resource, visual resource, and public access policies of the California Coastal Management Program (Sections 30230, 30240, 30251, 30210, 30211, and 30212 of the Coastal Act).

STAFF SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATION:

I. Project Description. The project site is located at the Naval Submarine Base where Rosecrans Street runs immediately adjacent to San Diego Bay just north of the submarine mooring piers (Exhibits 1 and 2). The proposed slope stabilization work involves clearing of non-native vegetation on an approximately 200-foot-long portion of the slope on the bay side of Rosecrans Street near its intersection with Sylvester Road, excavation and removal of loose soils, placement of approximately 1,300 cubic yards of backfill material and grading of a new upper surface slope, installation of a cellular confining wall along the lower slope, placement of 256 cubic yards of rip rap along the toe of the slope within the upper intertidal zone of San Diego Bay, and installation of erosion mats, erosion control devices, and native landscaping on the face of the cellular confining wall and the regraded upper slope (Exhibits 3-8). Rosecrans Street is located approximately 50 feet above mean sea level (MSL), and the slope stabilization project will occur between approximately +2 MSL and +40 feet MSL.

II. Status of Local Coastal Program. The standard of review for federal consistency determinations is the policies of Chapter 3 of the Coastal Act, and not the Local Coastal Program (LCP) or the Port Master Plan (PMP) of the affected area. If the LCP or the PMP have been certified by the Commission and incorporated into the CCMP, it can provide guidance in applying Chapter 3 policies in light of local circumstances. If the LCP or PMP have not been incorporated into the CCMP, it cannot be used to guide the Commission's decision, but it can be used as background information. The City of San Diego LCP and the San Diego Unified Port District PMP have been incorporated into the CCMP.

III. Federal Agency's Consistency Determination. The U.S. Navy has determined the project to be consistent to the maximum extent practicable with the California Coastal Management Program.

IV. Staff Recommendation:

The staff recommends that the Commission adopt the following resolution:

A. CONCURRENCE.

The Commission hereby concurs with the consistency determination made by the U.S. Navy for the proposed slope stabilization, finding that the project is consistent to the maximum extent practicable with the California Coastal Management Program.

V. Findings and Declarations:

The Commission finds and declares as follows:

A. Shoreline Structures. Section 30235 of the Coastal Act provides:

Revetments, breakwaters, groins, harbor channels, seawalls, cliff retaining walls, and other such construction that alters natural shoreline processes shall be permitted when required to serve coastal-dependent uses or to protect existing structures or public beaches in danger from erosion, and when designed to eliminate or mitigate adverse impacts on local shoreline sand supply. Existing marine structures causing water stagnation contributing to pollution problems and fish kills should be phased out or upgraded where feasible.

Section 30253(2) provides that new development shall:

Assure stability and structural integrity, and neither create nor contribute significantly to erosion, geologic instability, or destruction of the site or surrounding area or in any way require the construction of protective devices that would substantially alter natural landforms along bluffs and cliffs.

The proposed project involves the construction of a slope retaining wall with a riprap toe along the shoreline to protect an existing roadway and gas, water, and sewer lines that parallel the shoreline at approximately +50 MSL. The Commission must first determine if the project is an allowable use under Section 30235 of the Coastal Act, and if so, whether the other requirements of that section and Section 30253 are satisfied. Thus, the Commission must first determine whether the retaining wall is required to protect an existing structure. The Navy states that the slope erosion problem is caused primarily by stormwater and surface runoff from Rosecrans Street and adjacent catch basins and drainage pipes, and to a much lesser extent by occasional wave erosion at the toe of the slope. The erosion of the slope, if allowed to continue unchecked, will eventually lead to collapse of the utility lines and Rosecrans Street into San Diego Bay, with resultant marine resource impacts due to the release of gas, sewage, and sediments into the Bay.

The Commission agrees with the Navy's assertion that the current erosive forces that have caused the subject slope failure are primarily the result of stormwater runoff, rather than wave energy. Further, it appears that local shoreline processes will not be affected by the retaining wall and rip rap toe since there is little wave energy in the project area, due primarily to its protected location behind Ballast Point and the presence of deep navigation waters immediately offshore. The Commission therefore concludes that the project: (1) is required to protect existing structures in danger from erosion; (2) would not adversely affect natural shoreline processes; and (3) would not contribute significantly to erosion. Therefore, the project is consistent with Sections 30235 and 20253 of the Coastal Act.

B. Marine Resources. Section 30230 of the Coastal Act provides:

Marine resources shall be maintained, enhanced, and where feasible, restored. Special protection shall be given to areas and species of special biological or economic significance. Uses of the marine environment shall be carried out in a manner that will sustain the biological productivity of coastal waters and that will maintain healthy

populations of all species of marine organisms adequate for long-term commercial, recreational, scientific, and educational purposes.

Section 30240 of the Coastal Act provides:

(a) Environmentally sensitive habitat areas shall be protected against any significant disruption of habitat values, and only uses dependent on those resources shall be allowed within those areas.

(b) Development in areas adjacent to environmentally sensitive habitat areas and parks and recreation areas shall be sited and designed to prevent impacts which would significantly degrade those areas, and shall be compatible with the continuance of those habitat and recreation areas.

The rip rap toe of the proposed retaining wall would be constructed within the upper reaches of the intertidal zone of San Diego Bay, extending down to approximately +2 mean sea level (MSL). The Navy asserts that the proposed slope repair and placement of 256 cubic yards of rip rap at the toe of the slope would not significantly affect marine resources and environmentally sensitive habitat areas. The project is located outside of the foraging habitat of the California least tern, due to the deep water and strong tidal currents immediately offshore of the project site, and work will occur outside the tern nesting season. Existing maps of eelgrass beds indicate that no eelgrass is present in either the immediate or adjacent offshore area, again due to deep water and swift tidal currents. Erosion control measures will be in place throughout the entire construction period to minimize sedimentation and turbidity in adjacent bay waters. The construction contractor will not be permitted to store materials (including rip rap or backfill materials) at the project site and if barges are used to transport materials to the site, U.S. Coast Guard spill prevention and control measures will be in place to protect marine resources.

By virtue of being allowable uses under Section 30235 (see previous section), the Commission has traditionally found shoreline structures to be an allowable use under the Coastal Act. If the proposed project is not authorized, slope failure could cause a much greater degree of fill than is represented by the project. The Commission has not traditionally required mitigation for minor fill by shoreline structures. In this case, because the rip rap extends for only 200 feet along a currently disturbed section of shoreline, will extend down to approximately +2 MSL, and will provide rock surfaces for possible colonization by marine organisms, the Commission finds that no further mitigation is necessary. The Navy asserts that the proposed slope repair is the least environmentally damaging feasible alternative to protecting Rosecrans Street (the main entrance to the Navy Submarine Base) and the three utility lines from collapse, given the topographical constraints of the Base and the Point Loma Peninsula. There are no other feasible alternatives which meet project objectives and minimize adverse resource impacts. In conclusion, the Commission finds that the project would not significantly affect marine resources, does not require additional mitigation, is the least environmentally damaging feasible alternative, and is consistent with Sections 30230 and 30240 of the Coastal Act.

C. Visual Resources. Section 30251 of the Coastal Act provides:

The scenic and visual qualities of coastal areas shall be considered and protected as a resource of public importance. Permitted development shall be sited and designed to protect views to and along the ocean and scenic coastal areas, to minimize the alteration of natural land forms, to be visually compatible with the character of surrounding areas, and, where feasible, to restore and enhance visual quality in visually degraded areas. New development in highly scenic areas such as those designated in the California Coastline Preservation and Recreation Plan prepared by the Department of Parks and Recreation and by local government shall be subordinate to the character of its setting.

The project could affect public views as it would be visible from boaters on San Diego Bay passing by the submarine base. However, the Navy concludes that existing coastal views toward this industrial area would not be significantly degraded by the slope stabilization work. Repair of the eroding slope and planting native vegetation on the reconstructed slope and retaining wall will serve as a visual resource improvement when compared to the existing situation. Therefore, the Commission agrees with the Navy's conclusion that the project will not adversely affect public views and will be visually compatible with the character of the surrounding area. The Commission therefore finds the project consistent with Section 30251 of the Coastal Act.

D. Public Access. Section 30210 of the Coastal Act provides:

In carrying out the requirement of Section 4 of Article X of the California Constitution, maximum access, which shall be conspicuously posted, and recreational opportunities shall be provided for all the people consistent with public safety needs and the need to protect public rights, rights of private property owners, and natural resource areas from overuse.

Section 30211 provides:

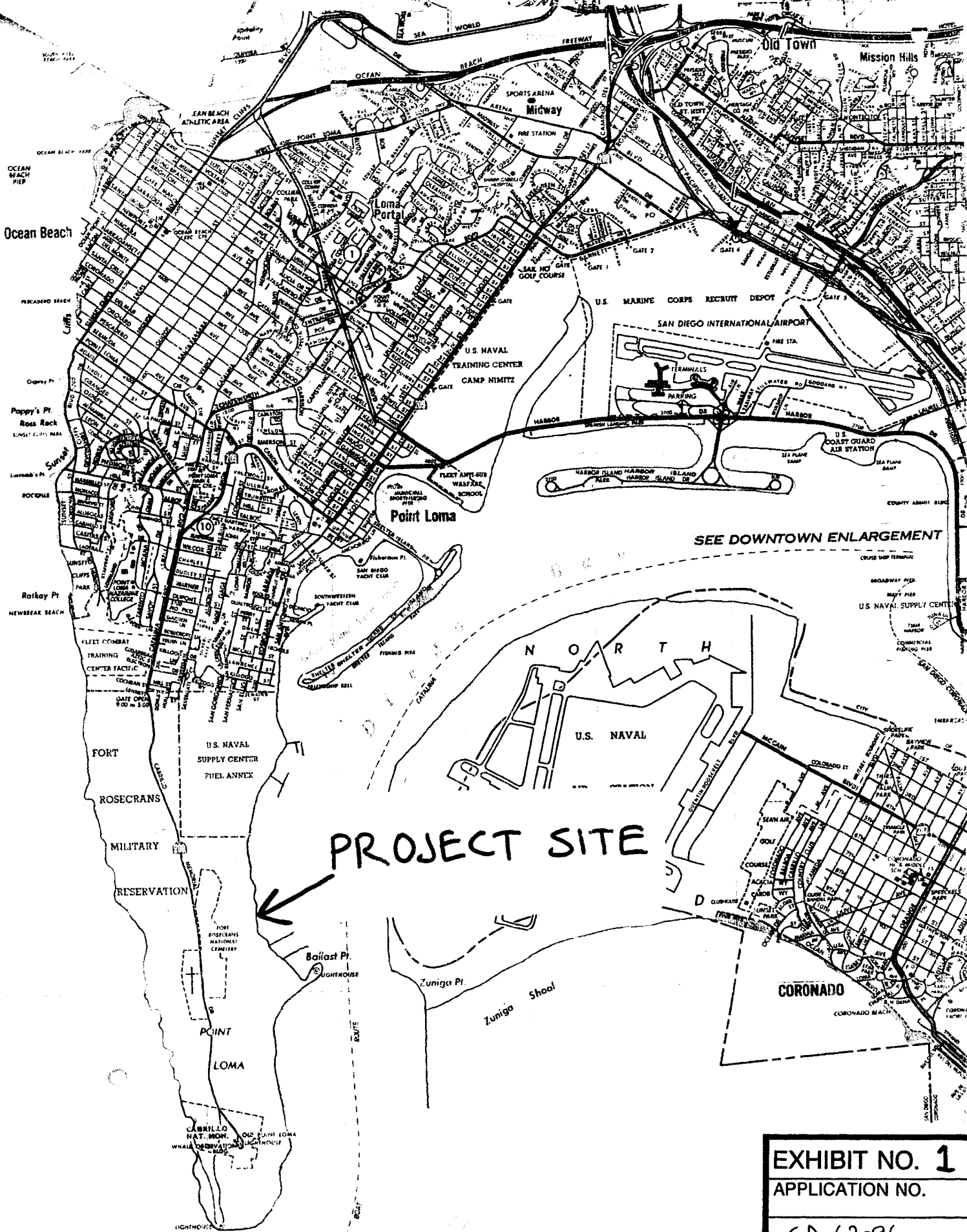
Development shall not interfere with the public's right of access to the sea where acquired through use or legislative authorization, including, but not limited to, the use of dry sand and rocky coastal beaches to the first line of terrestrial vegetation.

Section 30212 provides in part:

(a) Public access from the nearest public roadway to the shoreline and along the coast shall be provided in new development projects except where:

(1) it is inconsistent with public safety, military security needs, or the protection of fragile coastal resources....

The Navy states in its consistency determination that the proposed project is consistent with the public access policies of the Coastal Act. The slope repair work will not affect public access because the shoreline adjacent to the project site is not publically accessible due to military security needs. The Commission concurs and therefore finds the project consistent with Sections 30210, 30211, and 30212 of the Coastal Act.



SEE DOWNTOWN ENLARGEMENT

PROJECT SITE

EXHIBIT NO. 1

APPLICATION NO.

CD-63-96

SLOPE REPAIR
VICINITY MAP
SUBASE S.D.
FIGURE 1

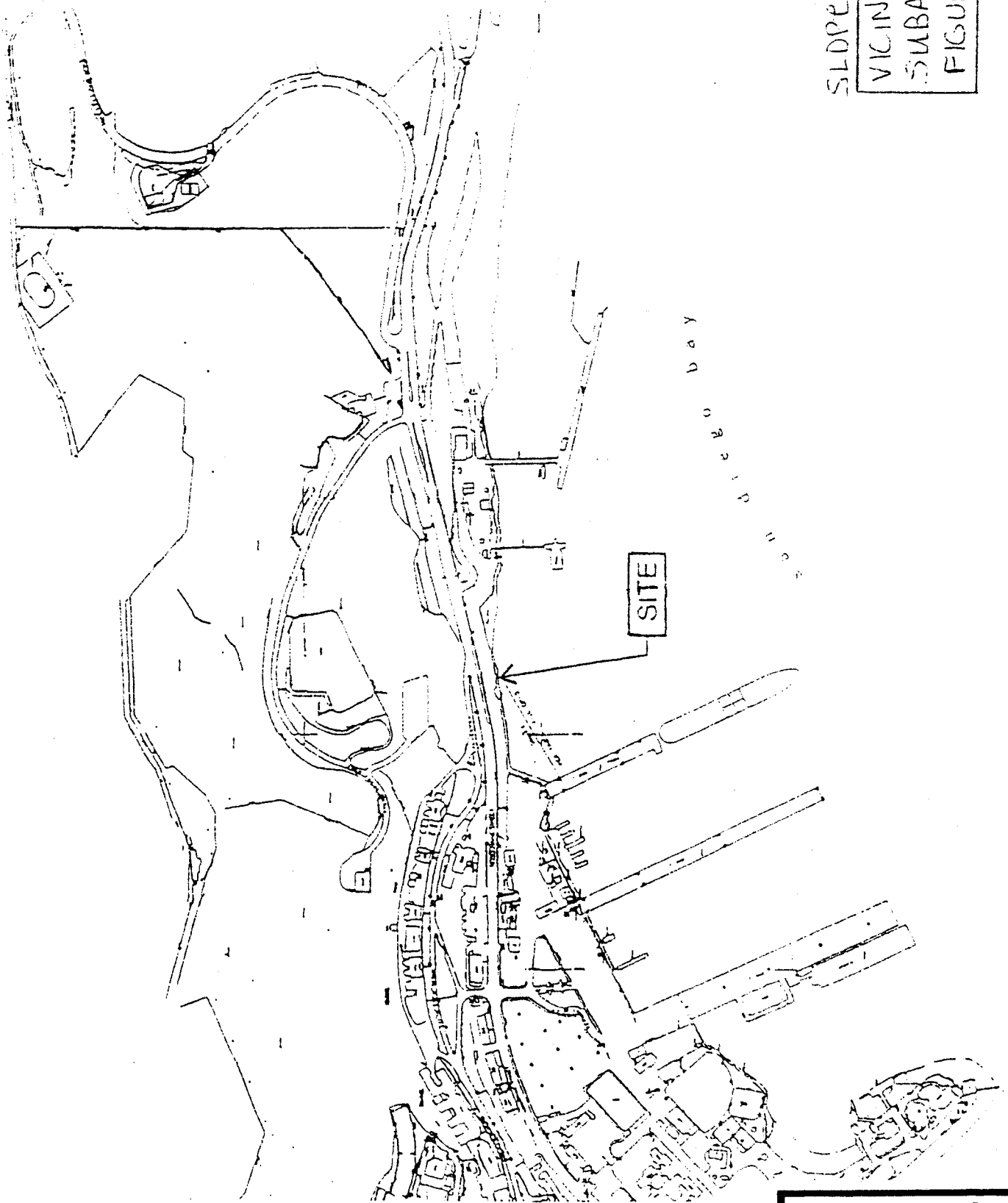
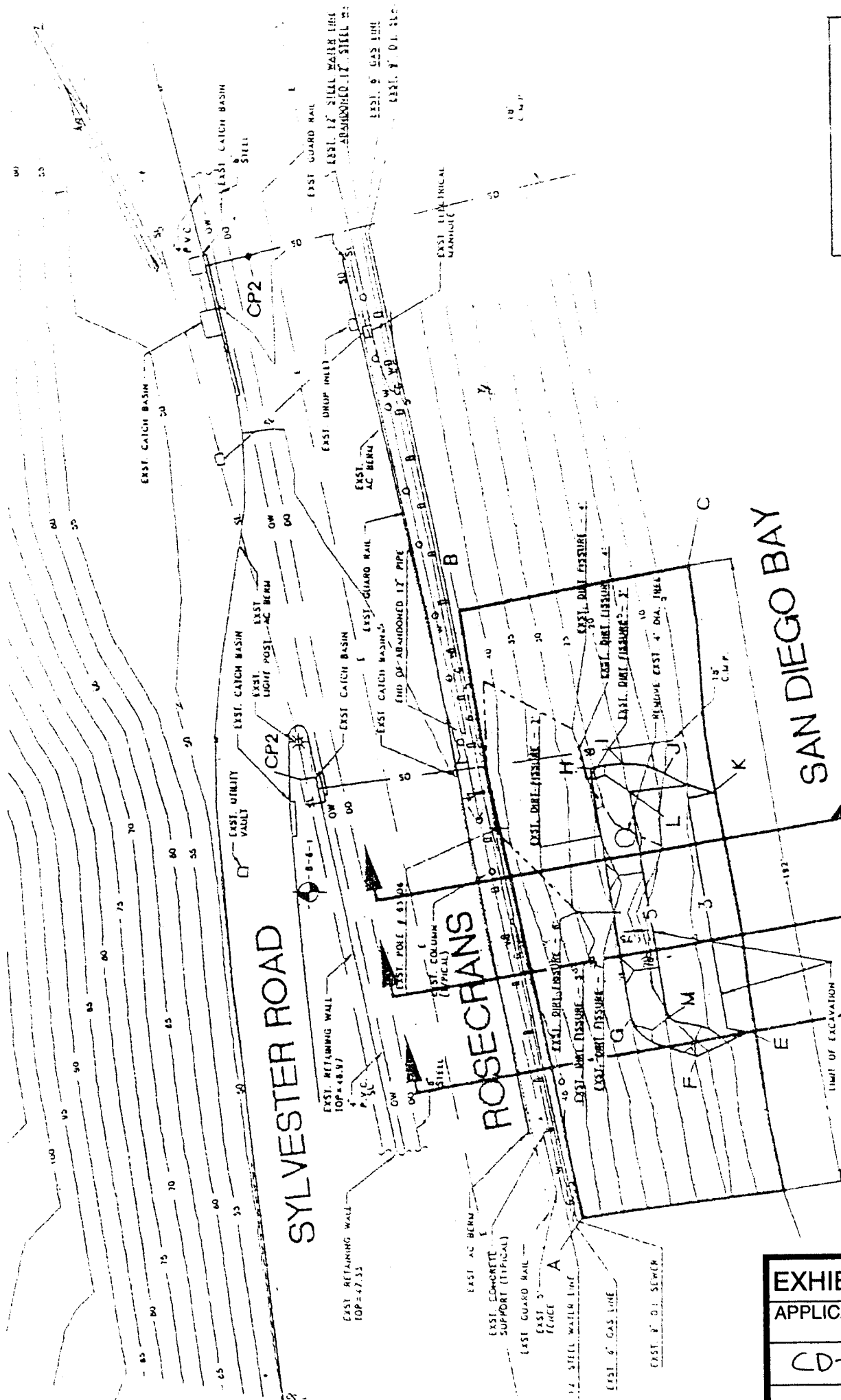


EXHIBIT NO. 2
APPLICATION NO.
CD-63-96

SLOPE REPAIR
 SITE MAP
 FIGURE 2



SAN DIEGO BAY

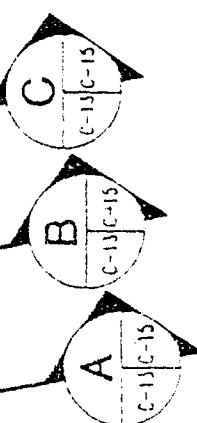
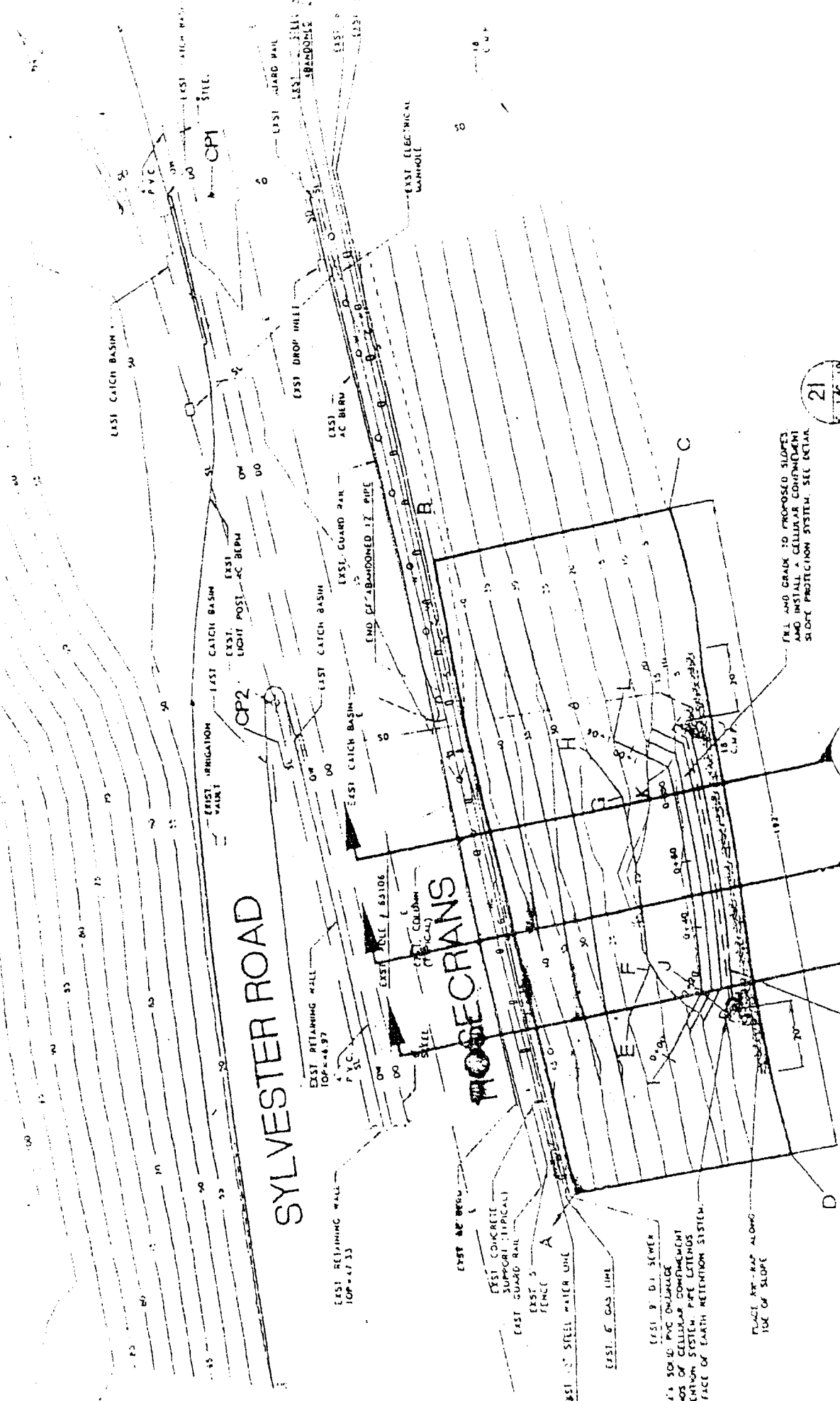


EXHIBIT NO. 3
 APPLICATION NO.
 CD-63-96

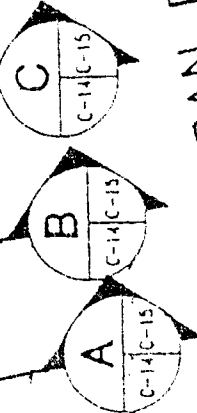
SLOPE REPAIR
 PROPOSED WORK
 FIGURE 3



21
 7-14-19

23
 7-14-19

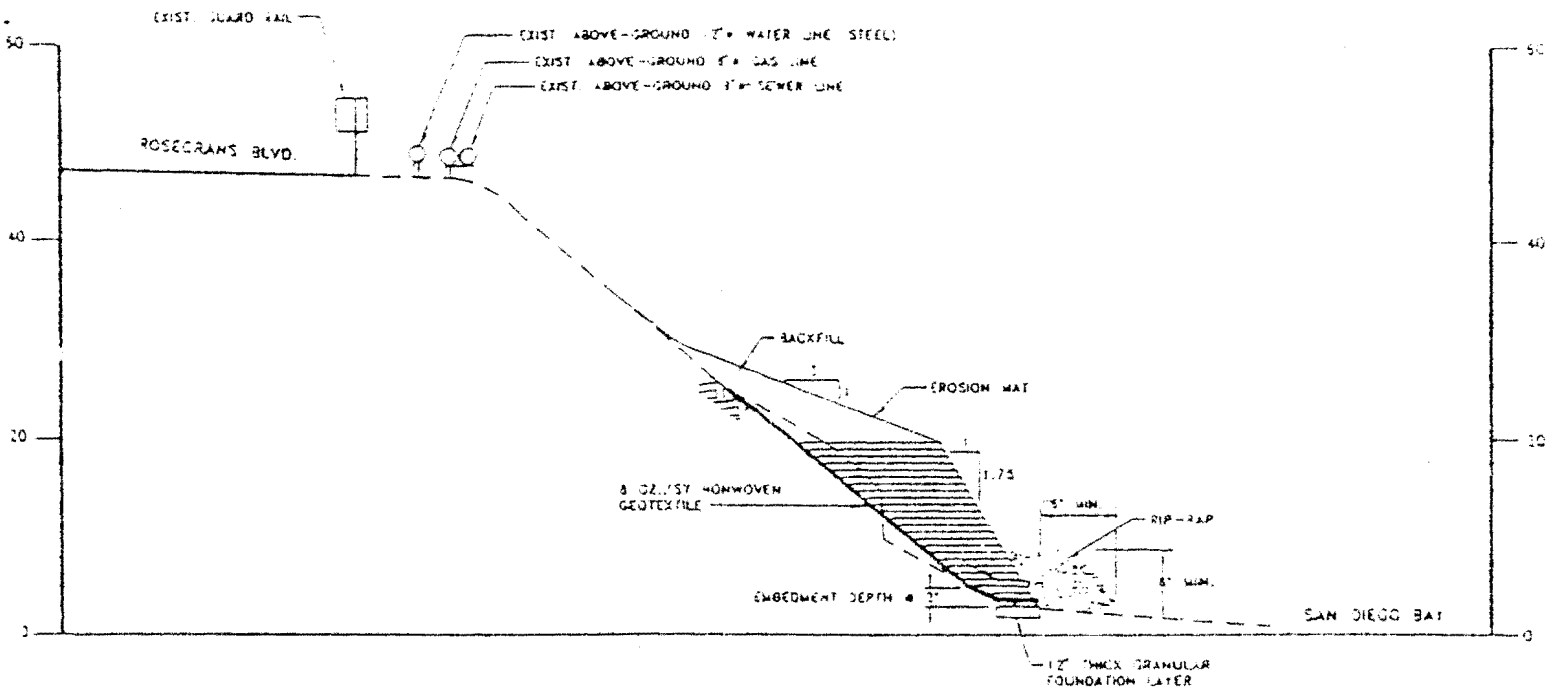
FILE AND GRADE TO PROPOSED SLOPES
 AND INSTALL A CELLULAR CONFINEMENT
 SLOPE PROTECTION SYSTEM. SEE DETAIL.



SAN DIEGO BAY

EXHIBIT NO. 4
 APPLICATION NO.

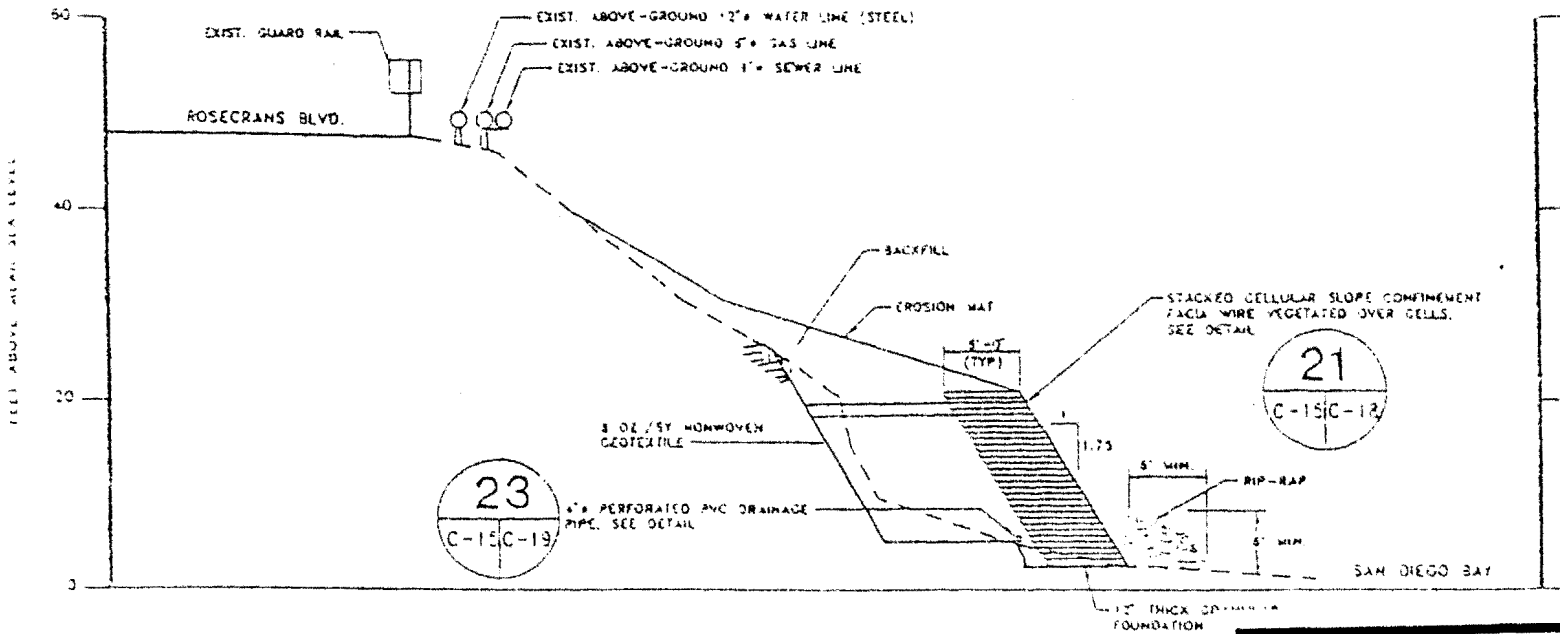
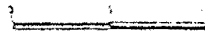
CD-63-96



SECTION - STATION 0+22

A
C-15C-15

HORIZ. SCALE: 1"=10'
VERT. SCALE: 1"=10'



SECTION - STATION 0+50

B
C-15C-15

HORIZ. SCALE: 1"=10'
VERT. SCALE: 1"=10'

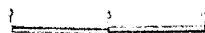


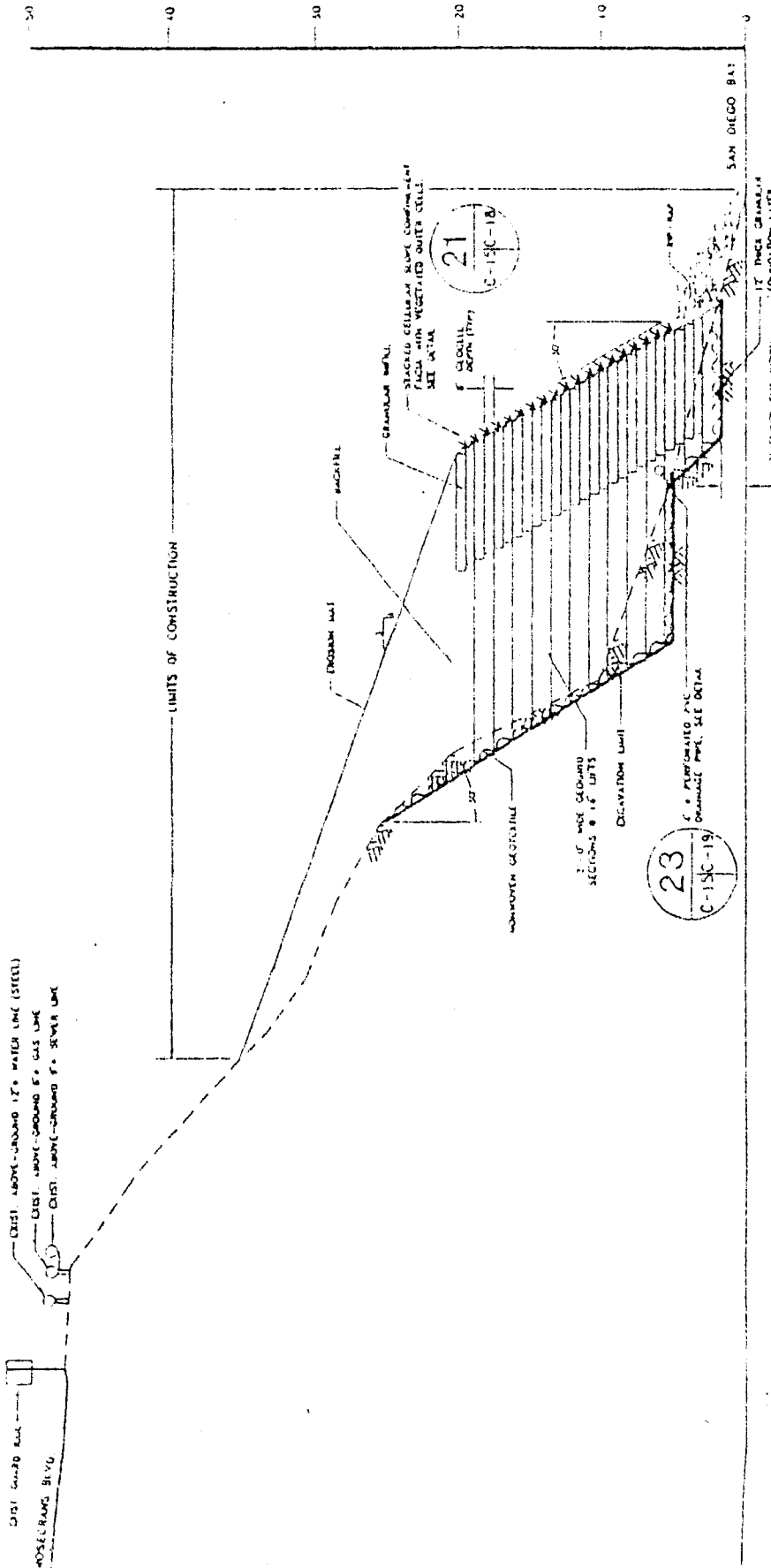
EXHIBIT NO. 5

APPLICATION NO.

CD-63-96

CROSS SECTION
SLOPE REPAIR
FIGURE 5

- - - - - EXISTING GROUND SURFACE
- — — — — PROPOSED GROUND SURFACE
- — — — — PROPOSED EXCAVATION LIMITS



21
C-15C-18

23
C-15C-19

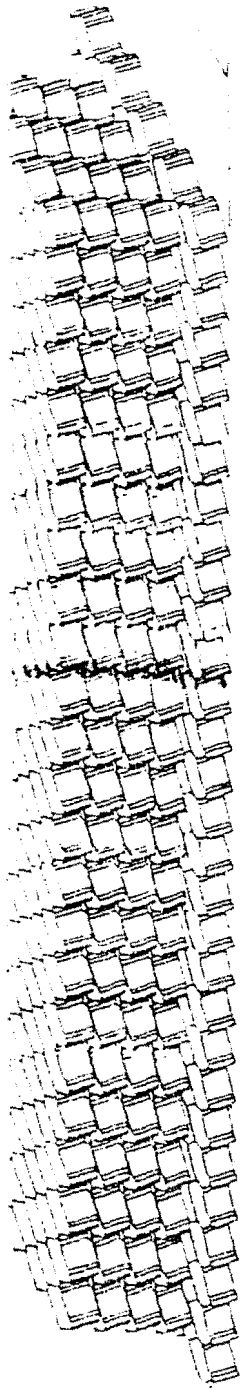
SECTION - STATION 0+80

HORIZ. SCALE 1"=30'
VERT. SCALE 1"=3'

EXHIBIT NO. 6

APPLICATION NO.

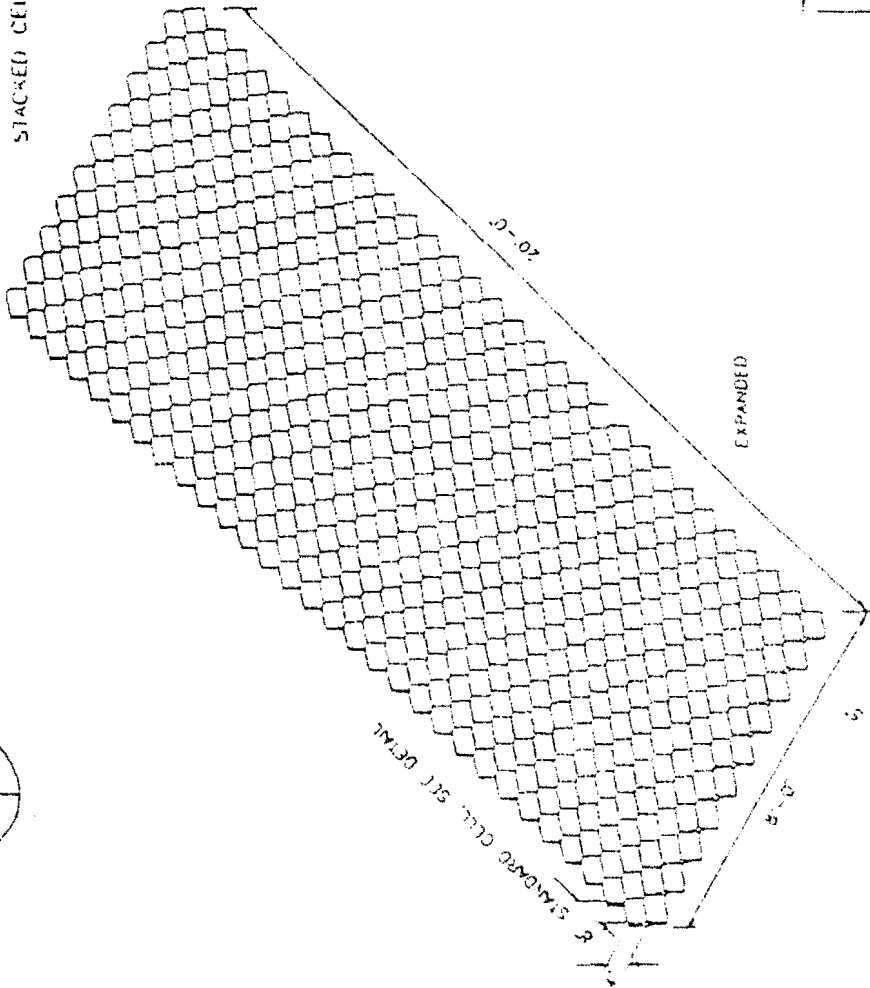
CD-63-96



FOR CELLULAR CONFINEMENT DIMENSIONS, SEE DETAIL

20
C-18C-18

STACKED CELLULAR CONFINEMENT



MOIL
FASTEN ADJACENT CELLULAR
CONFINEMENT SECTIONS TOGETHER
AS PER MANUFACTURERS RECOMMENDATIONS

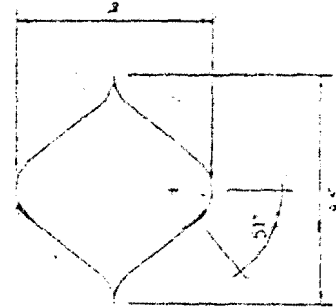
STANDARD CELLULAR CONFINEMENT SECTION DIMENSIONS

DETAIL 19
C-18C-18

SLOPE REPAIR
WORK DETAILS
FIGURE 6



ISOMETRIC VIEW



CONFINEMENT CELL DIMENSIONS

DETAIL 20
C-18C-18

EXHIBIT NO. 7

APPLICATION NO.

CD-63-96

SLOPE REPAIR
LANDSCAPE PLAN
FIGURE 7

SAN DIEGO BAY

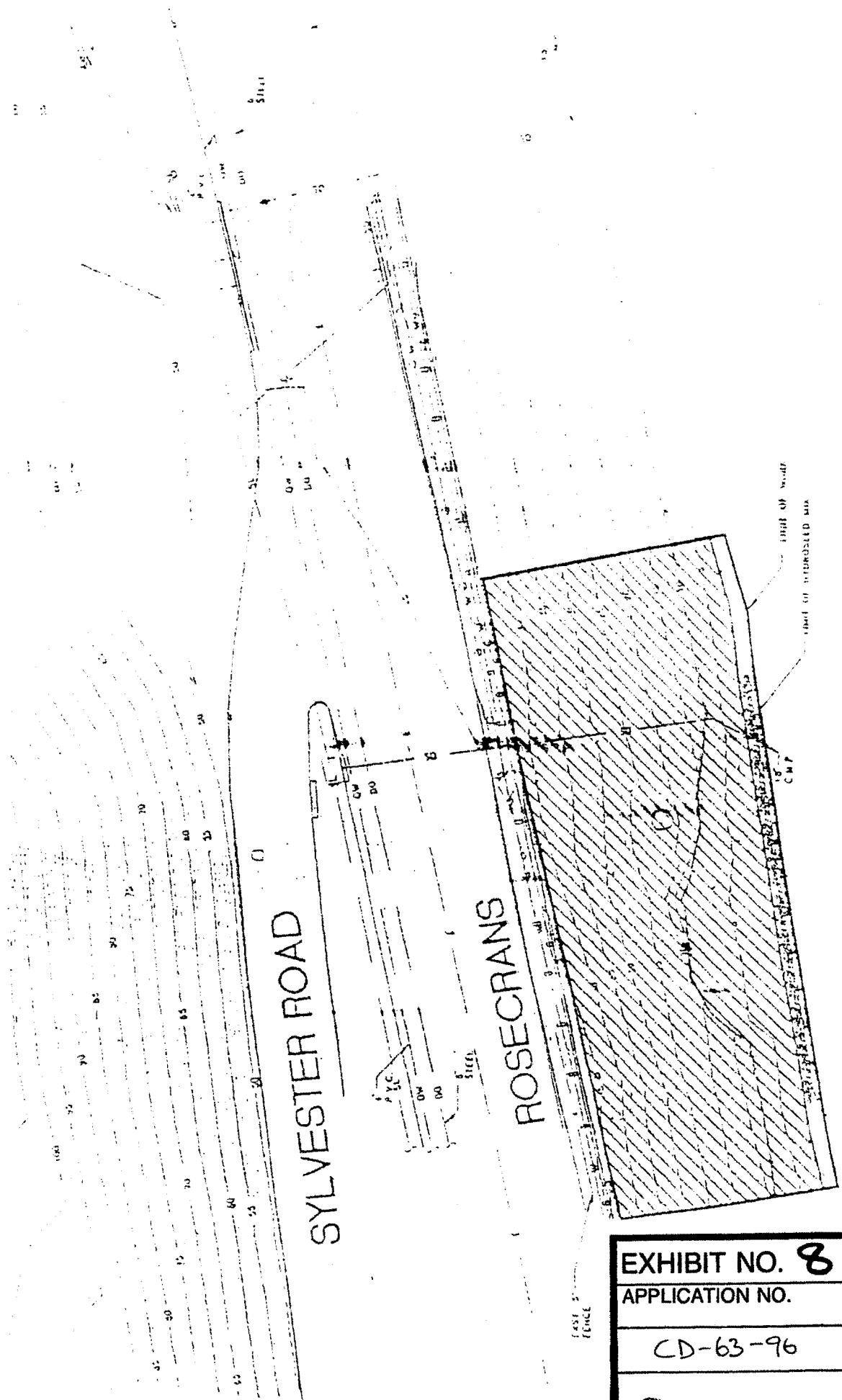


EXHIBIT NO. 8
APPLICATION NO.
CD-63-96

Species	Minimum %	Purity	Termination
Artemisia californica	40/60	15/50	
Eriogonum californicum	40/60	15/50	
Eriogonum californicum subsp. sp. 18/75	90/60	15/50	
Lotus scoparius	10/65	15/50	
Eriogonum fasciculatum	30/60	15/50	
Eriophyllum confertiflorum	70/50	15/50	
Salvia mellifera	70/50	15/50	
Salvia sp.	2/55		
Mimulus pauciflorus	2/55		

ROSEED MIX - NATIVE VEGETATION - SITE 6
I-IRRIGATED