STATE OF CALIFORNIA -- THE RESOURCES AGENCY PETE WILSON, *Governor*

CALIFORNIA COASTAL COMMISSION
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STAFF REPORT AND RECOMMENDATION

ON CONSISTENCY DETERMINATION

Consistency Determination No.	**CD-90-98**
Staff:	MPD-SF
File Date:	7/30/1998
45th Day:	9/13/1998
60th Day:	9/28/1998
Commission Meeting:	9/10/1998

FEDERAL AGENCY: **U.S. Navy**

DEVELOPMENT LOCATION: Central shoreline of the Naval Air Weapons Station, Point Mugu, Ventura County (Exhibits 1-3)

DEVELOPMENT DESCRIPTION: Repairs and modifications to existing western and central seawalls (Exhibits 2-8)

SUBSTANTIVE FILE DOCUMENTS:

1. Consistency Determination CD-91-95, Navy, Repair and partial removal of existing seawalls of the Naval Air Weapons Station, Point Mugu.

2. Negative Determination ND-13-95, Navy, Mugu Lagoon Revetment, Radar Calibration Facility shoreline, Naval Air Weapons Station, Point Mugu.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Navy has submitted a consistency determination for repairs to damaged portions of the central and western seawalls at the Naval Air Weapons Station (NAWS) at Point Mugu. As the Commission has determined previously, the existing seawalls are needed to protect vital naval military facilities located along the Pt. Mugu shoreline. The repairs would not expand existing shoreline structures at NAWS. The project would not adversely affect shoreline transport and is consistent with the shoreline structures policy

(Section 30235) of the Coastal Act. The construction period would avoid sensitive habitat resource impacts, and the project is consistent with the environmentally sensitive habitat and marine resource policies (Sections 30240 and 30230) of the Coastal Act. Public access and recreation would not be adversely affected, as the immediate project area is not accessible to the public due to military security needs, and downcoast recreation would not be affected, as the seawall would not be expanded to the point where they would affect sand supply downcoast. The project is therefore consistent with the public access and recreation policies (Sections 30210-30212) of the Coastal Act.

STAFF SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATION:

I. Project Description. The Navy proposes repairs to the existing central and western seawalls at the Naval Air Weapons Station (NAWS) at Point Mugu in Ventura County. The proposal involves repairs to damaged portions of the western half of the central seawall, and to the entire western seawall (Exhibits 2-8). The project is needed to repair damaged and deteriorated sections of the seawalls and to provide shoreline protection for vital naval military facilities located along the Pt. Mugu shoreline.

The Navy divides the project into two segments: the central seawall and the western seawall. Along the central seawall, the Navy proposes to repair 2300 ft. of damaged seawall by filling in several gaps in the seawall and constructing a less steep slope of 2:1 (the existing slope is approximately 1:1, although as originally designed the slope was less steep (approximately 1.5:1)). Along the western seawall, the Navy also proposes to repair 2300 ft. of seawall. The Navy states this seawall is needed to protect existing explosives storage facilities that the Navy contends cannot be relocated due to safety reasons. The western seawall also protects the Navy's most commonly used runway at NAWS, as well as an existing mission-critical road (Beach Rd.).

The repair work involves placement of 25,000 tons of rock, as well as temporary excavation of sand. Excavated sand will be replaced upon completion of the repairs. The heights of the seawalls will vary slightly: the mid-central seawall will increase by 2-6 ft., for a total height of 18 ft.; the mid-west-central seawall will increase 2-4 ft., for a total of 15 ft., and the west-central seawall will increase 1-5 ft., for a total of 13 ft. The western seawall will remain at 12-14 ft. in height. The repairs will include replacing the caps of the seawalls.

The construction period for the proposed repairs is currently scheduled to take place between October 1, 1998, and February 15, 1999. The construction schedule was selected to avoid effects on snowy plovers, least terns, and Light-footed clapper rails. Any future maintenance of the seawalls would also be performed during this winter time period. Equipment to be used for the repairs includes a crane, bulldozer, crawler, front-end loader, excavator, and dump trucks.

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) of the affected area. If the Commission has certified the LCP and incorporated it into the CCMP, the LCP can provide guidance in applying Chapter 3 policies in light of local circumstances. If the Commission has not incorporated the LCP into the CCMP, it cannot guide the Commission's decision, but it can provide background information. The Ventura County LCP has been certified by the Commission but has not been incorporated into the CCMP.

III. Federal Agency's Consistency Determination. The 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 motion:

MOTION. I move that the Commission concur with the Navy's consistency determination.

The staff recommends a **YES** vote on this motion. A majority vote in the affirmative will result in adoption of the following resolution:

Concurrence

The Commission hereby **concurs** with the consistency determination made by the Navy for the proposed project, 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.

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 applicable requirements of that section have been satisfied. The seawall is not designed to protect a public beach, as the Point Mugu shoreline is not publicly accessible due to military security needs. Therefore the Commission must first determine whether the seawall repairs are required to protect a coastal-dependent facility or an existing structure. The proposed repairs meet this test because they are needed both to protect existing structures and coastal dependent uses. During its review of the Navy's previous repairs and modifications to Navy seawalls at NAWS (CD-91-95), the Commission determined that the existing seawalls were needed to protect several vital military facilities located within the beach area of NAWS. The Commission noted that some of these facilities qualified as coastal dependent uses because they needed to be located along the shoreline in order to function. The central seawall protects several Navy buildings (including coastal dependent Navy facilities). The western seawall protects existing explosives storage facilities that the Navy contends cannot be relocated due to safety reasons. The western seawall also protects the Navy's most commonly used runway at NAWS, as well as an existing mission-critical road (Beach Rd.). In addition, the project is not a new shoreline protective device, but rather a repair to an existing shoreline protective device. Therefore, because the seawalls are not being materially expanded or extended they are not shoreline protective devices "that alter... natural shoreline processes." Analyzed either way, the Commission finds the project is an allowable use under Section 30235.

The second test of Section 30235 is whether the project has been designed to eliminate or mitigate any adverse impacts on local shoreline sand supply. Historically, littoral sand transport along this section of shoreline begins with river transport of sand from the Santa Clara and Ventura Rivers and Calleguas Creek, to and along the coast. Two offshore submarine canyons, as well as several harbor entrances, interrupt sand transport downcoast. Most of the sand that is transported as far downcoast as NAWS enters the Mugu Submarine Canyon, although until recently some sand passed by the canyon to downcoast beaches. Construction of the Port Hueneme jetties upcoast of Pt. Mugu in 1938-1940 reduced the extent of sand reaching Pt. Mugu, and caused sand to be transported to the Hueneme offshore canyon, which is upcoast of the Mugu Submarine Canyon. Although ongoing harbor dredging and beach replenishment replaces some of the sand lost to the system, shoreline erosion continues at Pt. Mugu, and the offshore advancement of the Mugu Submarine Canyon towards shore is likely to accelerate that erosion. Several Moffatt and Nichol studies conducted for the Navy have documented that, at this time, very little sand transport occurs beyond (i.e., downcoast of) the head of the Mugu Submarine Canyon. For these reasons, past Commission decisions have noted that shoreline erosion at Point Mugu is a very significant problem.

However, in this case the project would not exacerbate shoreline erosion. Due to the decreased slopes of the seawall, the repairs should serve to reduce erosive wave forces affecting sand transport scour by reflecting less wave energy. The Commission finds that the proposed repairs will not exacerbate erosion or adversely affect shoreline sand supply. The Commission therefore concludes that the project is consistent with all the tests of Section 30235 of the Coastal Act.

B. Public Access and Recreation. Sections 30210-30212 of the Coastal Act provide for the maximization of public access and recreational opportunities, with certain exceptions for, among other things, military security needs and public safety. In reviewing Defense Department consistency determinations for activities on bases that are off limits to the public for military security reasons, the Commission typically attempts to substantiate claims of military security access restrictions, as well as analyze whether proposed projects generate burdens on public access.

The Naval Air Weapons Station at Pt. Mugu is a "secure military area" (access to the base is restricted to authorized personnel). The Commission has historically determined that projects at this base that do not generate access burdens do not entail the need for public access provisions, given the Navy's legitimate, high security classified defense-related activities throughout most portions of this base. Thus, as the Commission found in reviewing previous repairs to the central and eastern seawalls (CD-91-95), the proposed project would not generate burdens on public access and recreation and would be consistent with the public access and recreation policies (Sections 30210-30212) of the Coastal Act.

C. Marine Resources/Habitat. 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. Use 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 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.*

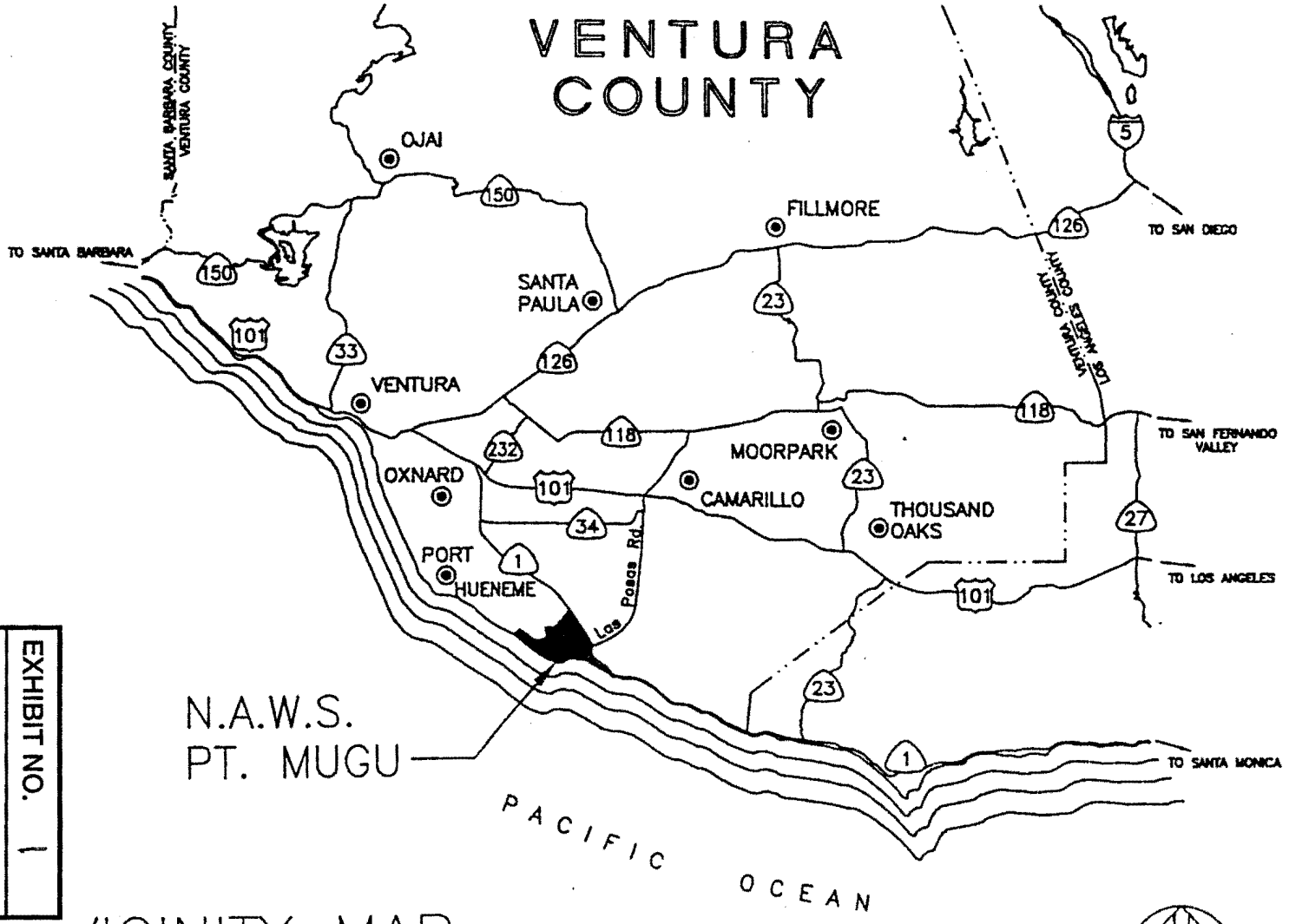
Habitat communities in the project area include subtidal, intertidal, supra-tidal, open water, sandy beach, and nonmarine habitats. The oceanside face of the seawall provides human-made rocky and subtidal habitat, and the seawall crest provides supra-tidal habitat. These areas offer habitats for a variety of marine algae, invertebrates, plankton, fish, marine mammals, seabirds, and shorebirds.

Marine mammals in the project area include primarily harbor seals and occasionally sea lions. Harbor seals reside in the lagoon and use it as a haulout and pupping area. The number of seals fluctuates from approximately 80-100 in winter and about 200-210 in spring. An average of 25-30 pups is born at Mugu Lagoon per year. Sea lions haul-out on nearby beaches and only occasionally on the seawall face. The number of sea lions in the area varies from 20-40 per year. Effects on sea lions would not be significant, as sea lions can tolerate noise and can easily relocate. Harbor seals in the lagoon would not be affected.

Endangered, threatened and candidate/special status species in the project area include: California brown pelican, California least tern, western snowy plover, light-footed clapper rail, peregrine falcon, and the salt marsh bird's beak. Effects on these species would be avoided due to the timing of the construction period.

The Navy further anticipates construction-related impacts to be short-term and temporary, consisting of increases in the amount of suspended particulates and turbidity. Thus these impacts would be local and relatively minor, and upon completion of the construction/excavation, species most likely to be directly affected would recolonize previously disturbed areas.

The construction period for the proposed repairs is currently scheduled to take place between October 1, 1998, and February 15, 1999. The construction schedule was selected to avoid effects on snowy plovers, least terns, and Light-footed clapper rails. Any future maintenance of the seawalls would also be performed during this winter time period. This timing would avoid sensitive habitat resource impacts. In conclusion, the Commission agrees with the Navy that the construction impacts would be minor, and that the Navy has incorporated necessary measures to avoid impacts to sensitive habitat resources. The Commission therefore finds that with these measures the project is consistent with the marine resource and environmentally sensitive habitat policies (Sections 30230 and 30240) of the Coastal Act.

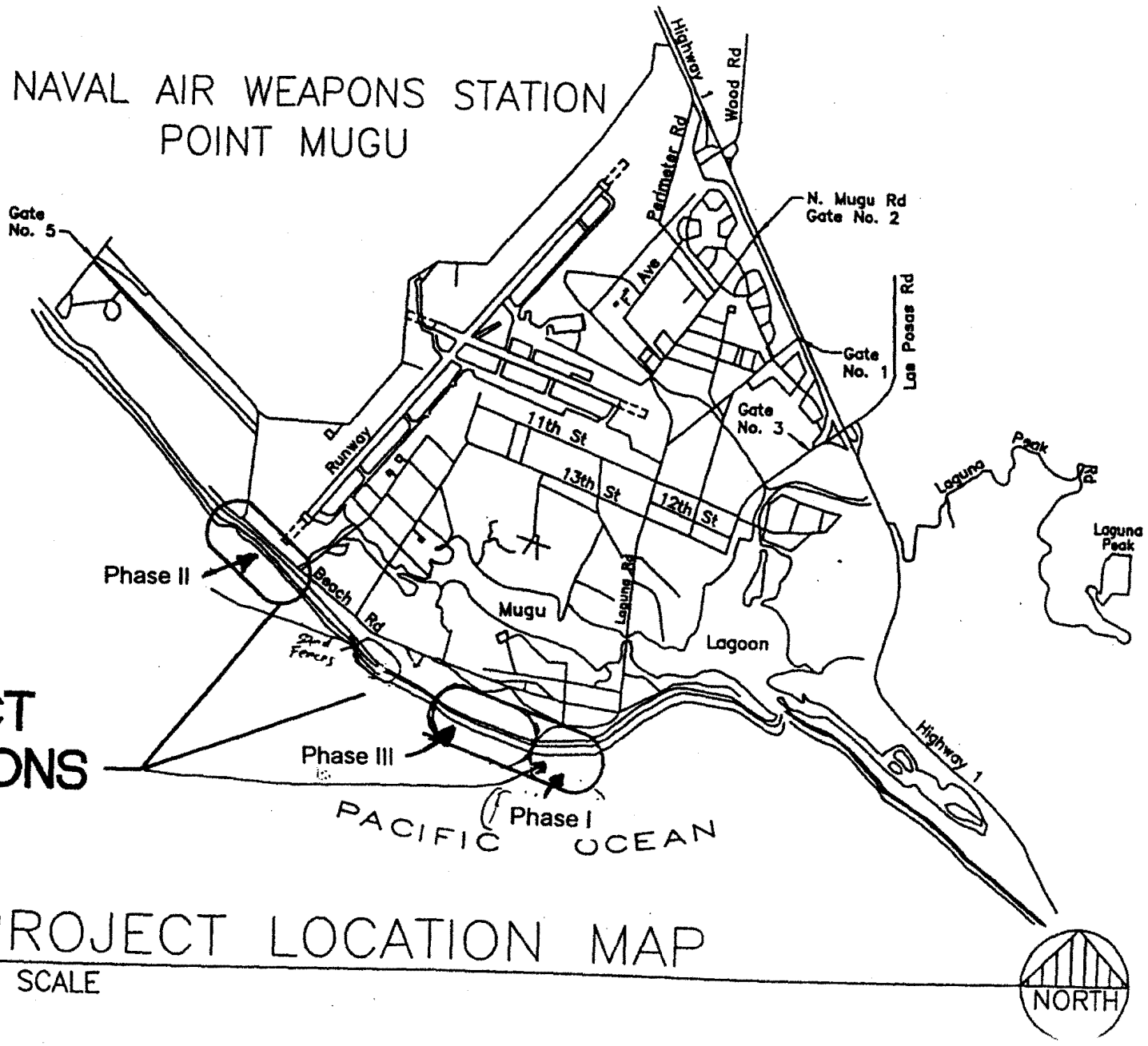


VICINITY MAP

EXHIBIT NO. 1

APPLICATION NO. CD-60-82

California Coastal Commission



PROJECT LOCATIONS

PROJECT LOCATION MAP

NO SCALE

EXHIBIT NO. 2
APPLICATION NO.
CD-90-98
California Coastal Commission

REPAIR SEAWALL MIDDLE SECTION

PHASES I AND III

N.A.W.S. PT. MUGU, CALIFORNIA

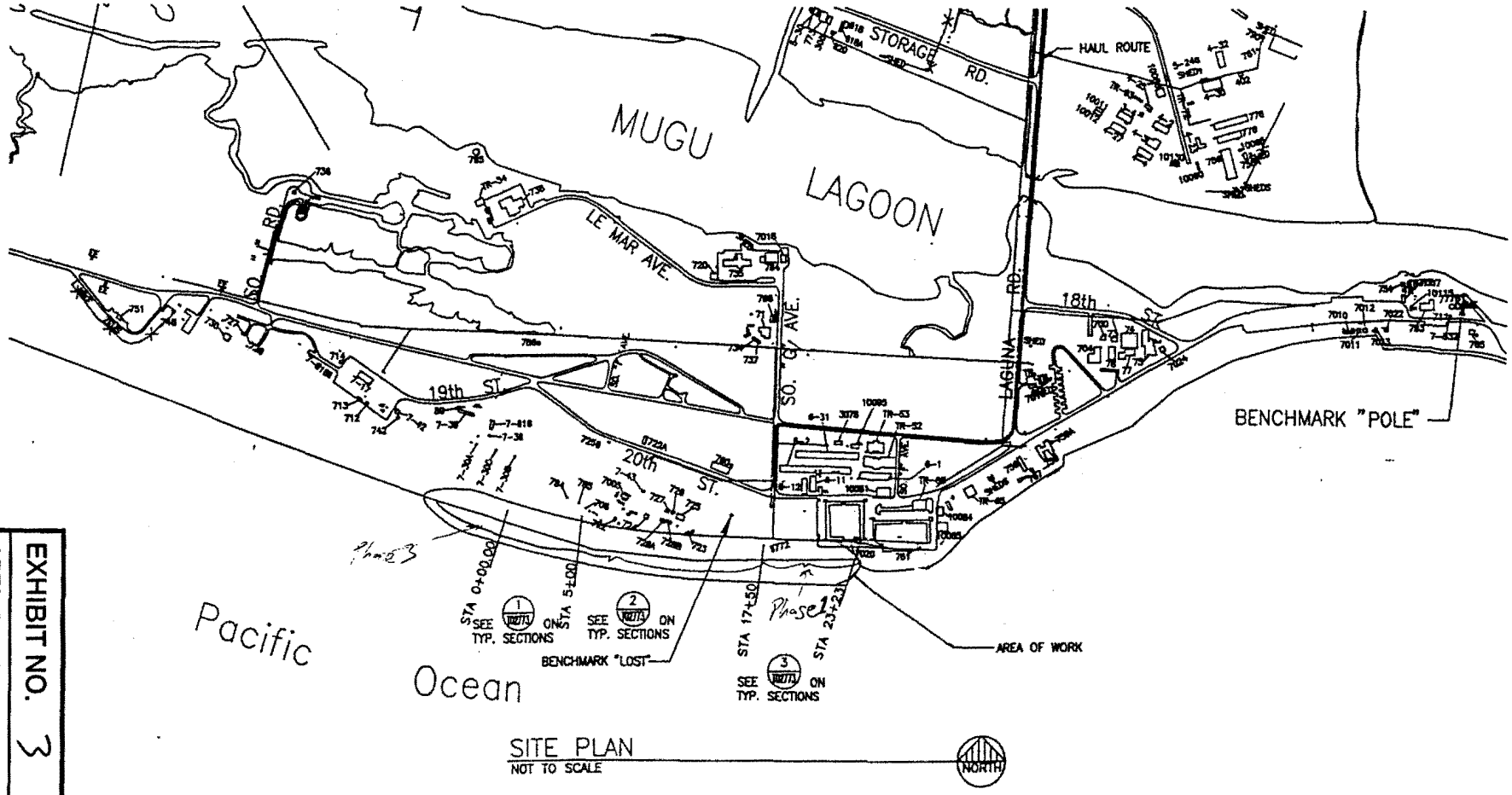


FIGURE 3

EXHIBIT NO. 3
APPLICATION NO. CD-96-98
California Coastal Commission

DRAWING NO. T02772

REPAIR SEAWALL (PHASE 2)
N.A.W.S. PT. MUGU, CALIF.

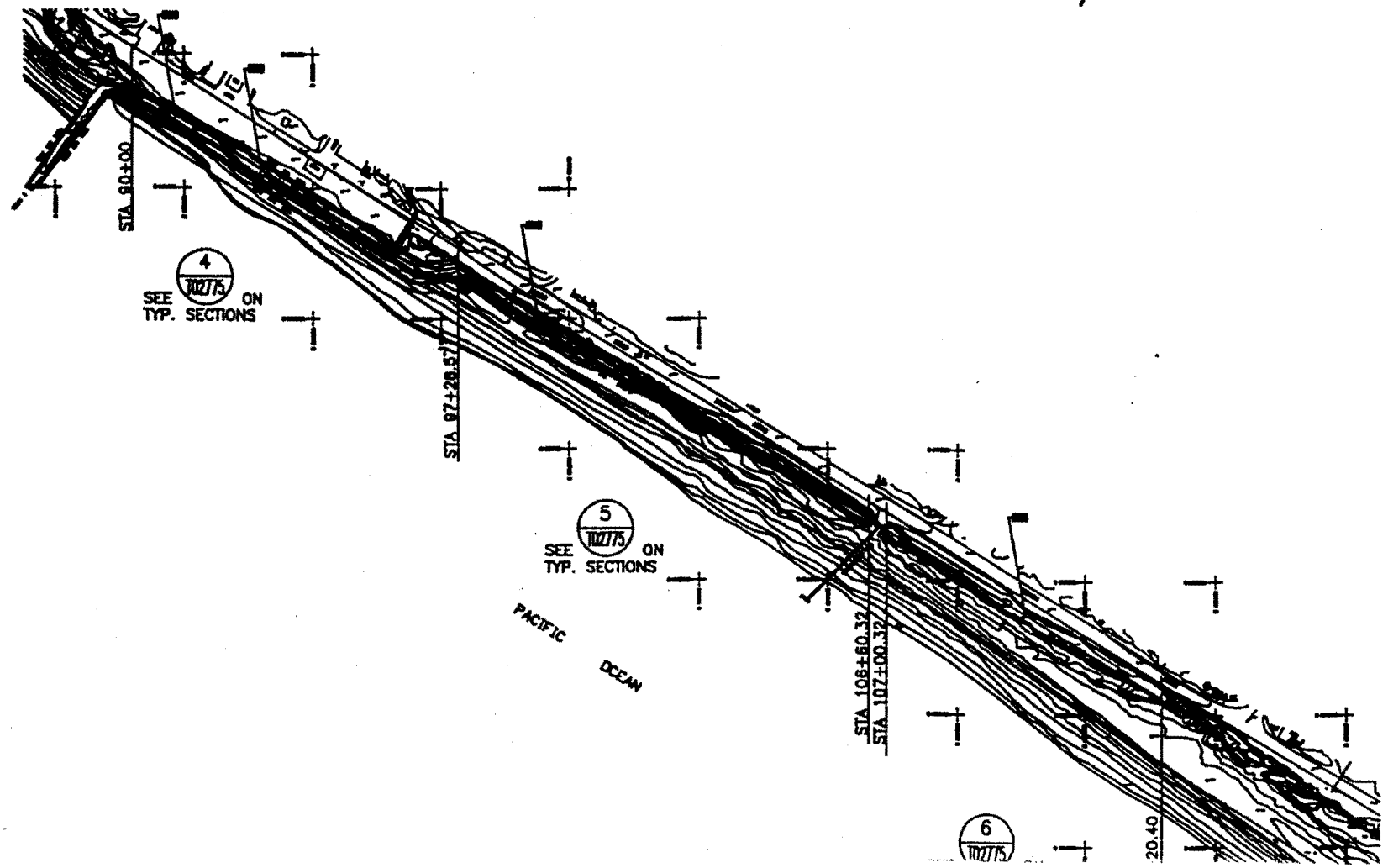
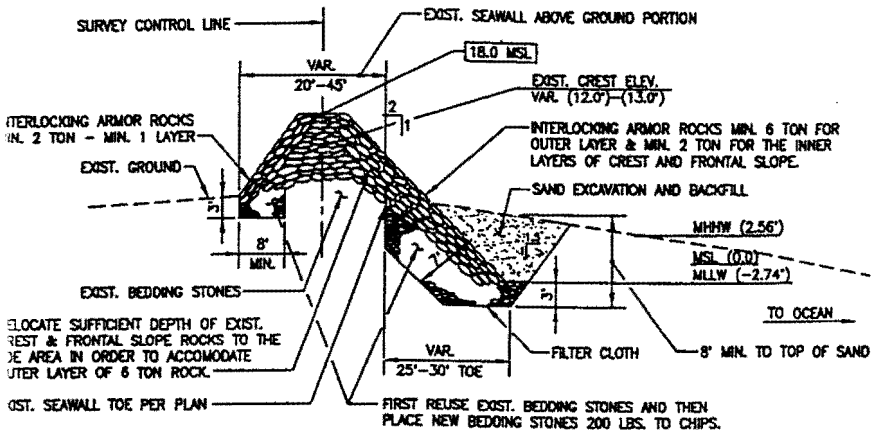


EXHIBIT NO. 4

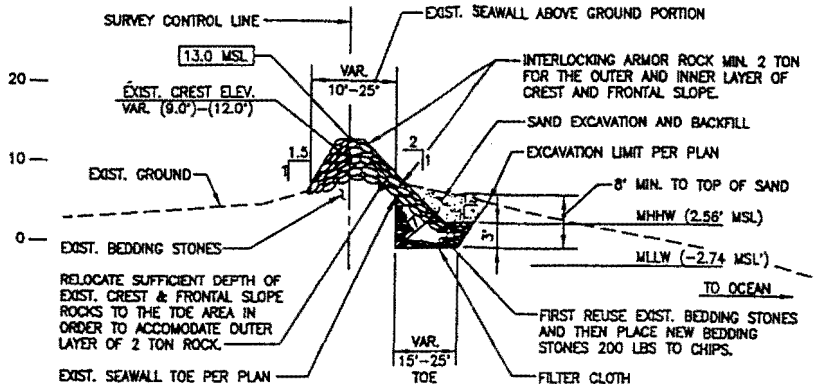
APPLICATION NO. CD-90-98

California Coastal Commission



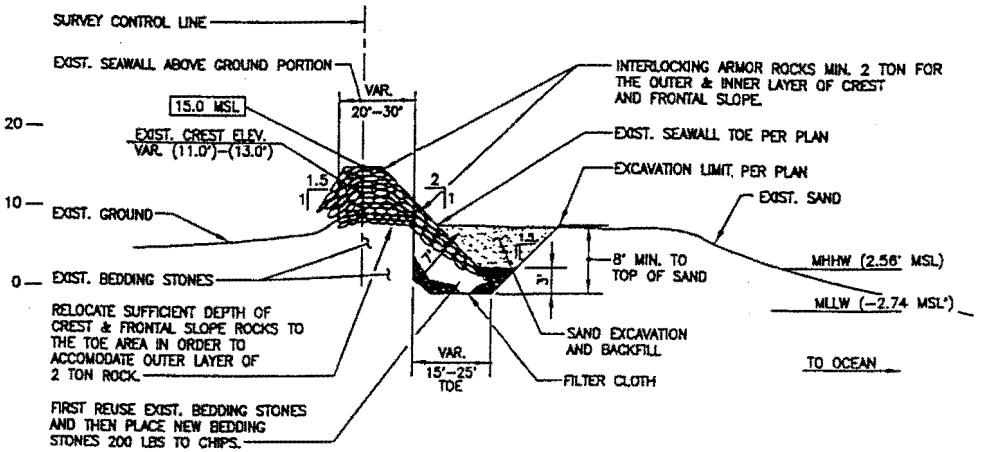
TYPICAL SECTION
FROM STA. 17+50 TO STA. 23+23
SCALE: HORIZ. 1"=20'
VERT. 1"=10'

3
X



TYPICAL SECTION
FROM STA. 0+00 TO STA. 5+00
SCALE: HORIZ. 1"=20'
VERT. 1"=10'

1
X

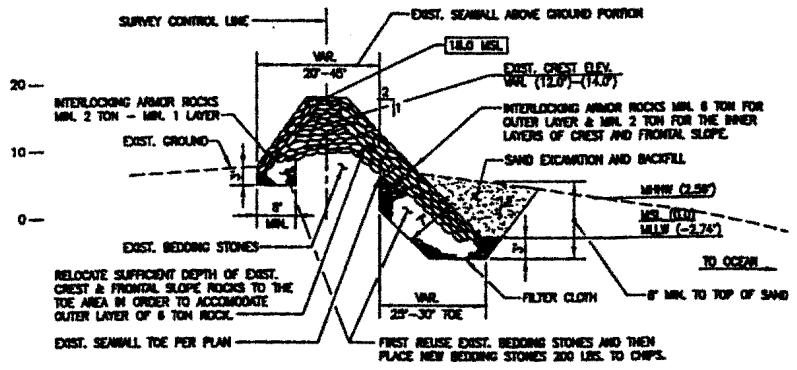


TYPICAL SECTION
FROM STA. 5+00 TO STA. 17+50
SCALE: HORIZ. 1"=20'
VERT. 1"=10'

2
X

FIGURE 4

EXHIBIT NO. 5
APPLICATION NO.
CD-60-98
California Coastal Commission



TYPICAL SECTION (6/X)
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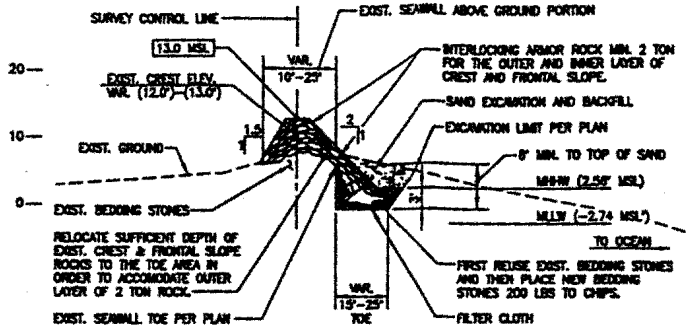
SCALE: HORIZ. 1"=20'
VERT. 1"=10'



TYPICAL SECTION (4/X)
FROM STA.90+00 TO STA. 97+28.57
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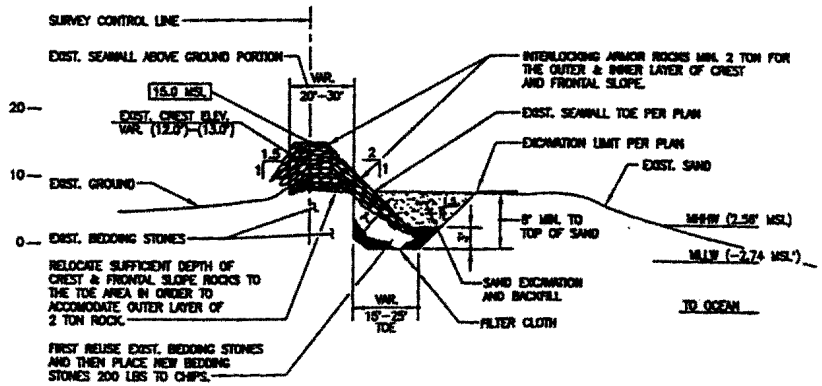
VERT. 1"=10'



TYPICAL SECTION (5/X)
FROM STA. 97+28.57 TO STA. 106+60.32
SCALE: HORIZ. 1"=20'
VERT. 1"=10'

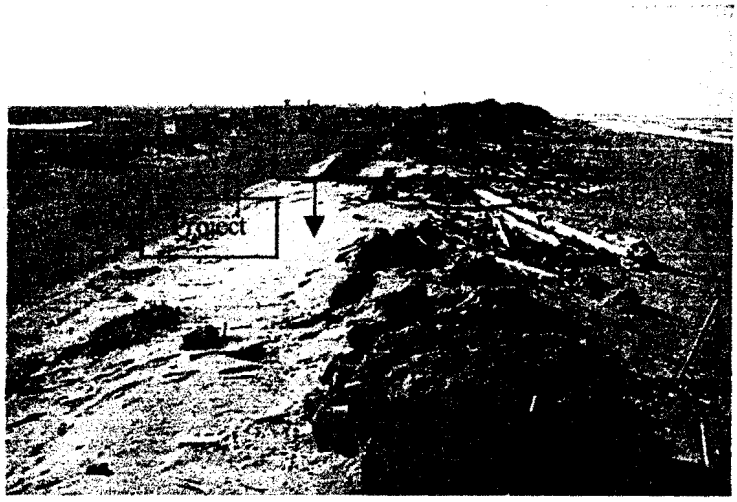
02775

EXHIBIT NO. 6
APPLICATION NO. CD-90-98
California Coastal Commission

FIGURE 6

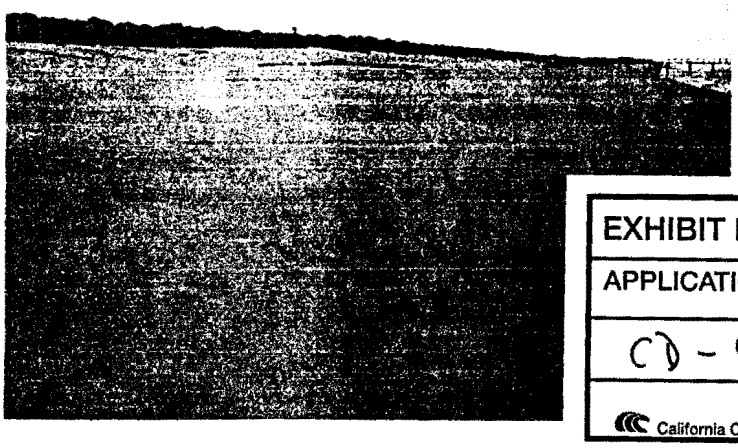
Central Seawall, western side. Aerial view of Phase II.

Central Seawall, western side. Phase III west end of Central Seawall.



Western Seawall, east section where project begins.

Western Seawall, east section view to west. Note scatter of large rocks.

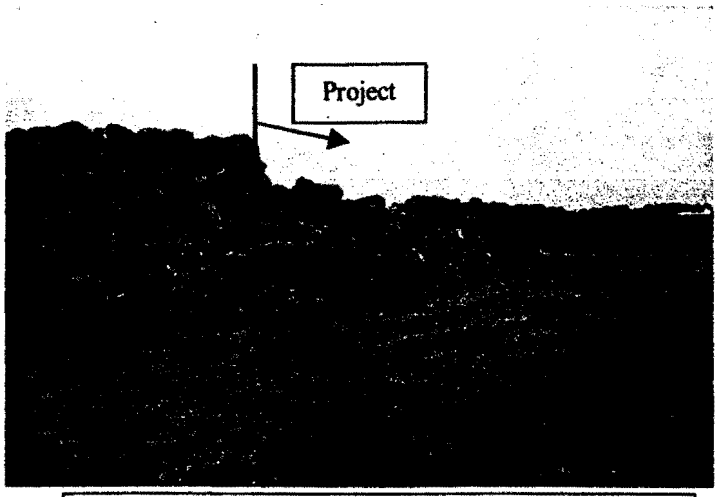


Western Seawall, central section. Photo during low tide. Note lack of dry sand beach.

Western Seawall, central section view to west.

EXHIBIT NO. 7
APPLICATION NO.
CD-90-98
California Coastal Commission

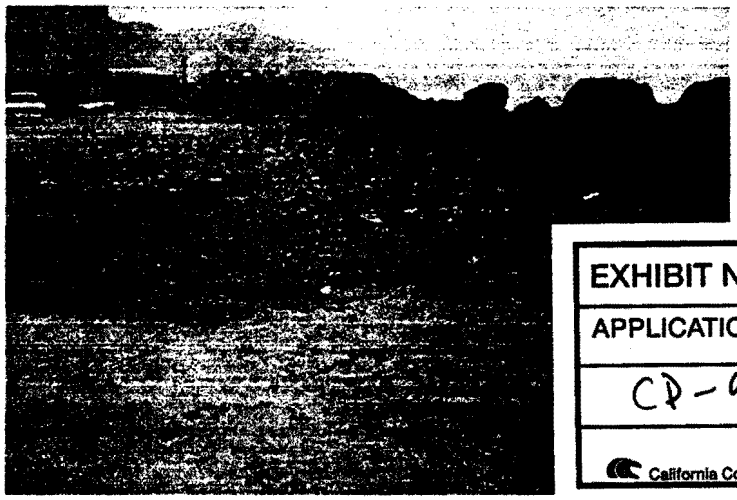
Central Seawall, western side, west of B-761. Note loss of sand. Previous years, during the same season, a dry sand beach was present here.



Central Seawall, western side, west of B-761. Project begins here.

Central Seawall, western side. Portions of this section have been blow-out during winter storms. Note the rock debris scattered.

Central Seawall, western side. Additional rock debris scattered. Top of structure uneven.



Central Seawall, western side. Summer waves overtopped during June 1998.

Central Seawall, western side. Additional damage to structure.

EXHIBIT NO. 8

APPLICATION NO.

CP-90-98

California Coastal Commission