

**CALIFORNIA COASTAL COMMISSION**

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**F 17a****STAFF REPORT AND RECOMMENDATION****ON CONSISTENCY DETERMINATION**

Consistency Determination No.	CD-19-03
Staff:	MPD-SF
File Date:	6/26/2002
60 <sup>th</sup> Day:	5/9/2003
75 <sup>th</sup> Day:	5/24/2003
Extended to:	6/13/2003
Commission Meeting:	6/13/2003

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

**DEVELOPMENT****LOCATION:**

Wilson Cove, San Clemente Island, Los Angeles County  
(Exhibit 1-2)

**DEVELOPMENT****DESCRIPTION:**

Reconstruct and slightly expand an existing boat ramp  
(Exhibits 3-6)

**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

The Navy has submitted a consistency determination for the reconstruction of an existing concrete boat ramp at Wilson Cove on the eastern side of San Clemente Island (Exhibits 1 and 2). The slope of the existing ramp is too steep and narrow, causing safety problems. The slope would be flattened, and 6 ft. in width would be added along approximately two thirds of the ramp's length. Total new area below mean high water would be 270 sq. ft.

The project is an allowable use for fill of open coastal waters as a coastal dependent boating facility. The project is the least damaging feasible alternative (including the No Project alternative) because it is proposed in an area historically disturbed by Navy use of the ramp,

and use of any other site would entail greater environmental damage on the island due to the need for a new ramp. In addition, the Navy has surveyed the area for marine resources and no sensitive marine resources will be filled or disturbed by the project. A rocky hardbottom habitat exists 33 meters from the site; however this habitat will not be affected. The Commission has not historically required mitigation for minor fills of open coastal waters (unless sensitive resources are present). The Navy has further agreed to provide erosion controls and water quality protection measures during construction. With these measures, the project is consistent with the marine resources, ocean fill, and water quality policies (Sections 30230, 30231, 30232, and 30233(a)) of the Coastal Act. The project will not affect public access and recreation and is consistent with Sections 30210-30212 of the Coastal Act.

#### **STAFF SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATION:**

**I. Project Description.** The Navy proposes to reconstruct an existing concrete boat ramp at Wilson Cove on the eastern side of San Clemente Island (Exhibits 1 and 2). The slope of the existing ramp is too steep and narrow, causing safety problems. The Navy proposes to flatten the slope and add 6 ft. in width to the existing, 14 ft. wide ramp (Exhibits 3-6). The total additional width to the ramp would be 390 sq. ft. (65 ft. by 6 ft.). Of this, 270 sq. ft. in area (10 cu. yds. in volume) of would be below mean high water. The first 25 ft. of the ramp (starting seaward) will remain the same width (14 ft. side) and location as the existing ramp; the remaining 65 ft. will be widened to 20 ft. Total length is 90 ft., and the thickness is one foot. Construction activities will including installing a temporary cofferdam around the ramp, and removal of approximately 90 cu. yds. of concrete, with disposal at a developed, upland site on the island (it will either be crushed and used as subgrade material in an ongoing road project at the island, or be disposed of at the island land fill).

**II. Federal Agency's Consistency Determination.** The Navy has determined the project consistent to the maximum extent practicable with the California Coastal Management Program.

**III. Staff Recommendation.** The staff recommends that the Commission adopt the following motion:

#### **MOTION:**

I move that the Commission concur with consistency determination CD-19-03 that the project described therein is fully consistent, and thus is consistent to the maximum extent practicable, with the enforceable policies of the California Coastal Management Program (CCMP).

#### **STAFF RECOMMENDATION:**

Staff recommends a YES vote on the motion. Passage of this motion will result in an agreement with the determination and adoption of the following resolution and findings. An affirmative vote of a majority of the Commissioners present is required to pass the motion.

**RESOLUTION TO CONCUR WITH CONSISTENCY DETERMINATION:**

The Commission hereby **concurs** with consistency determination CD-19-03 by the U.S. Navy, on the grounds that the project described therein is fully consistent, and thus is consistent to the maximum extent practicable, with the enforceable policies of the CCMP.

**IV. Findings and Declarations.** The Commission finds and declares as follows:

**A. Marine Resources.** The Coastal Act provides:

**Section 30230.** *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 30231.** *The biological productivity and the quality of coastal waters, streams, wetlands, estuaries, and lakes appropriate to maintain optimum populations of marine organisms and for the protection of human health shall be maintained and, where feasible, restored through, among other means, minimizing adverse effects of waste water discharges and entrainment, controlling runoff, preventing depletion of ground water supplies and substantial interference with surface water flow, encouraging waste water reclamation, maintaining natural vegetation buffer areas that protect riparian habitats, and minimizing alteration of natural streams.*

**Section 30233(a).** *The diking, filling, or dredging of open coastal waters, wetlands, estuaries, and lakes shall be permitted in accordance with other applicable provisions of this division, where there is no feasible less environmentally damaging alternative, and where feasible mitigation measures have been provided to minimize adverse environmental effects, and shall be limited to... [among other uses]:*

*(1) New or expanded port, energy, and coastal-dependent industrial facilities, including commercial fishing facilities.*

The proposed addition of 270 ft. of concrete to the existing ramp constitutes "fill" under the Coastal Act and must be examined for consistency with Section 30233 of the Coastal Act. Under Section 30233(a), filling of open coastal waters is limited to those cases where the proposed project is an allowable use, where there is no feasible less environmentally damaging alternative, and where mitigation measures are provided to minimize environmental impacts. The Commission has historically found Navy boating facilities (including as ramps and piers) in open coastal waters and estuaries to be allowable uses as coastal dependent facilities. Thus, the Commission finds the proposed project an allowable under Section 30233(a)(1).

The Commission finds that the project is the least damaging feasible alternative (including the No Project alternative) because it represents only a minor addition to an existing disturbed area (see Exhibits 4-5 showing the existing pier and boat ramp in the immediate vicinity). The project is needed for safe small boat operation, and the alternative of not widening the ramp would be to maintain an existing unsafe situation. Further, any other locations on the island would involve construction of a new ramp, which would cause greater habitat impacts.

The Navy conducted a biological survey of the project area, which noted that the immediate project area has a sandy bottom, although a well-developed reef exists approximately 33 meters offshore (to the north of the proposed ramp (Exhibit 5)). The Navy will use a cofferdam for construction, which will limit offsite effects. The Navy further estimates that any turbidity that may be generated from construction activities would be limited to areas within 5 meters of the project site. Noise impacts from cofferdam wall installation will be minimized, as the Navy will use a vibratory hammer to install the walls, which is significantly quieter than use of pile driving equipment. In addition, there are no pinniped/seabird colonies in or near Wilson Cove, which is on the east side of the island; pinnipeds and seabird colonies and haulout areas are generally concentrated on the opposite (north, west, and south) side of the island. Finally, the Navy will include a post-construction monitoring survey of the reef, to assure it has not been adversely affected by the project.

In addition, the Navy has agreed to incorporate controls and other construction-related water quality protection measures recommended by the Commission staff, including: (1) storing, handling, applying, and disposing of petroleum products, and other construction materials properly; (2) establishing fuel and vehicle maintenance staging areas located away from all drainage courses, and designing these areas to control runoff; (3) developing and implementing spill prevention and control measures; (4) providing sanitary facilities for construction workers; (5) maintaining and washing equipment and machinery in confined areas specifically designed to control runoff; (6) avoiding discharges of thinners or solvents into sanitary or storm sewer systems; (7) disposing of washout from concrete trucks at a location not subject to runoff and more than 50 feet away from a storm drain, open ditch or surface water, and when possible, recycling washout by pumping back into mixers for reuse (or, if not feasible, allowing water to percolate through soil and disposing of settled, hardened concrete with trash); and (8) providing adequate disposal facilities for solid waste, including excess asphalt, produced during construction.

No pinniped haulout or seabird nesting colonies are present at Wilson Cove (Exhibit 7). Concerning mitigation for fill impacts, the Commission has historically determined that, where sensitive species are not present, small fills of open coastal waters for coastal dependent boating facilities do not involve mitigation requirements for fill impacts. Based on the above discussion, the Commission concludes that the proposed ramp reconstruction will avoid adverse effects on pinniped, seabird, and other sensitive marine habitats and will avoid adverse

effects on water quality at San Clemente Island or in offshore waters. The Commission therefore finds the project consistent with the ocean fill, marine resources, and water quality protection policies (Sections 30230, 30231, and 30233) of the Coastal Act.

**B. Public Access and Recreation.** Sections 30210 through 30212 of the Coastal Act provides for the maximization of public access, except where "It is inconsistent with public safety, military security needs, or the protection of fragile coastal resources..." (Section 30212). The proposed ramp is located in an area where public access is not allowed; the entire island, as well as a 300-foot "clear" area around the island, is off limits to the public due to military security needs. The Commission has historically determined that projects located within restricted military areas that do not generate access burdens do not entail the need for public access provisions. Due to the lack of burdens on public access generated by the project, and the military security needs which have traditionally been accepted by the Commission at the San Clemente Island, the Commission finds that the project consistent with the public access and recreation policies (Sections 30210, 30211, and 30212) of the Coastal Act.

**C. Previous Commission Reviews of Navy San Clemente Island Projects.** The Commission has concurred with the following Navy consistency determinations at San Clemente Island:

- CD-2-82: extension of an existing pier by the placement of piling and decking for docking ships and support of a crane.
- CD-9-81: refurbishing of pier by placing material from nearby rock quarry & dredge material, installing sheet piles to form a cofferdam.
- CD-4-84: acoustic test range.
- CD-29-89: redevelopment of an naval training center, including the construction of a small-arms range and the establishment of an offshore danger zone.
- CD-37-92: construction of a maritime training facility at Northwest Harbor on San Clemente Island, for special warfare Sea, Air, Land (SEAL) training.
- CD-83-93: continuation of the Standard Range Sonobuoy Quality assurance program off the eastern shore of San Clemente Island, including testing of up to 3,500 buoys annually with testing phased over six to nine days per month.
- CD-20-95: replace a damaged cable crossing West Cove Beach, involving digging a trench above the existing cable, removal of the existing cable, installation of new cable, and filling in the trench with compatible beach sand.

- CD-83-96: replacement of the existing North Light Pier, with associated grading, infrastructure and revetment improvements, at Dolphin Bay, in the northeast shoreline area of San Clemente Island.
- CD-35-97: construction of bachelor enlisted quarters and associated support facilities near Wilson Cove on San Clemente Island.
- CD-89-00: one day operational test in late October 2000 of the Distributed Explosive Technology (DET) system, designed to clear underwater mines and obstacles in the surf zone to water depths of three feet in support of naval amphibious landing operations.

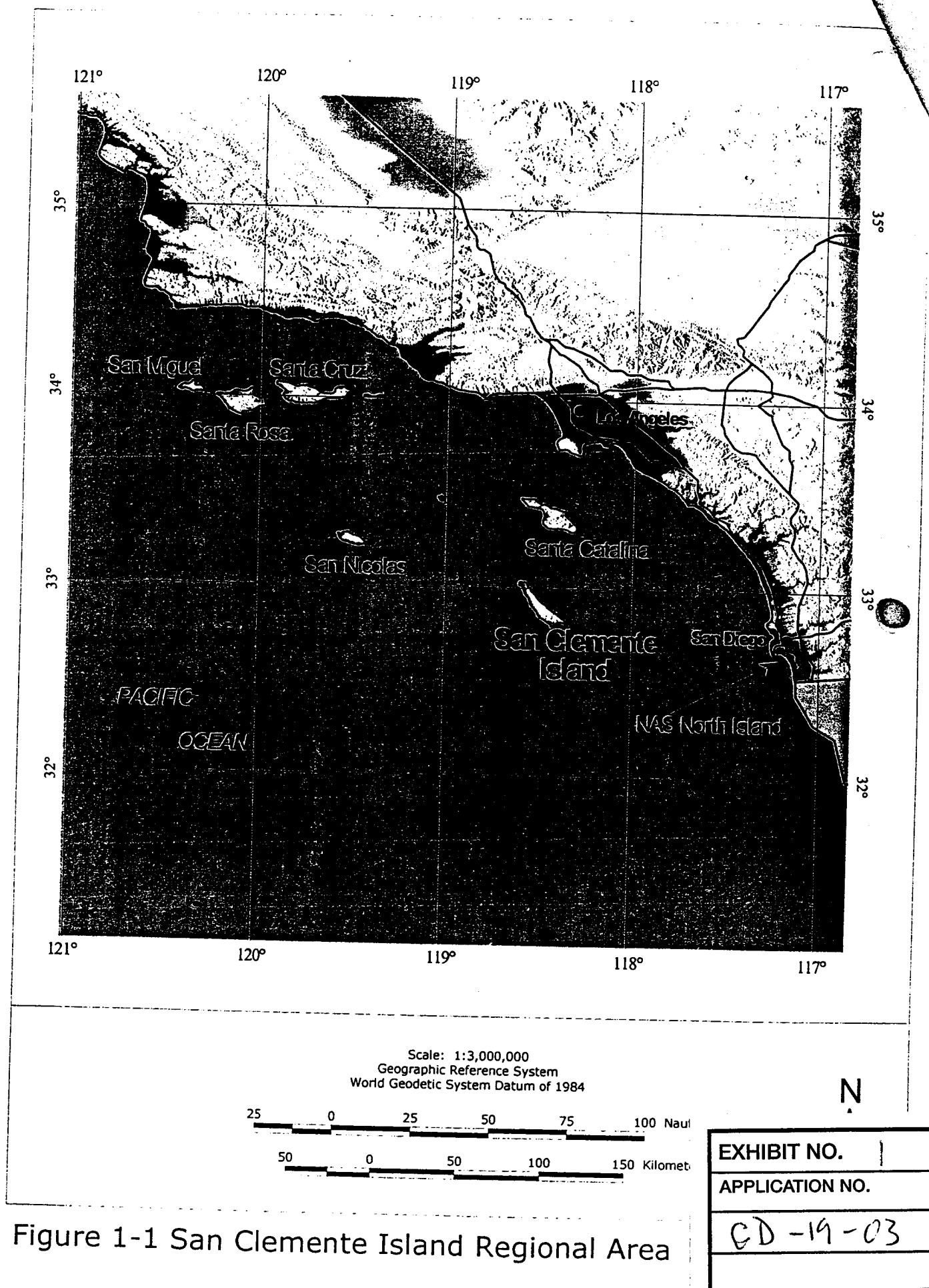
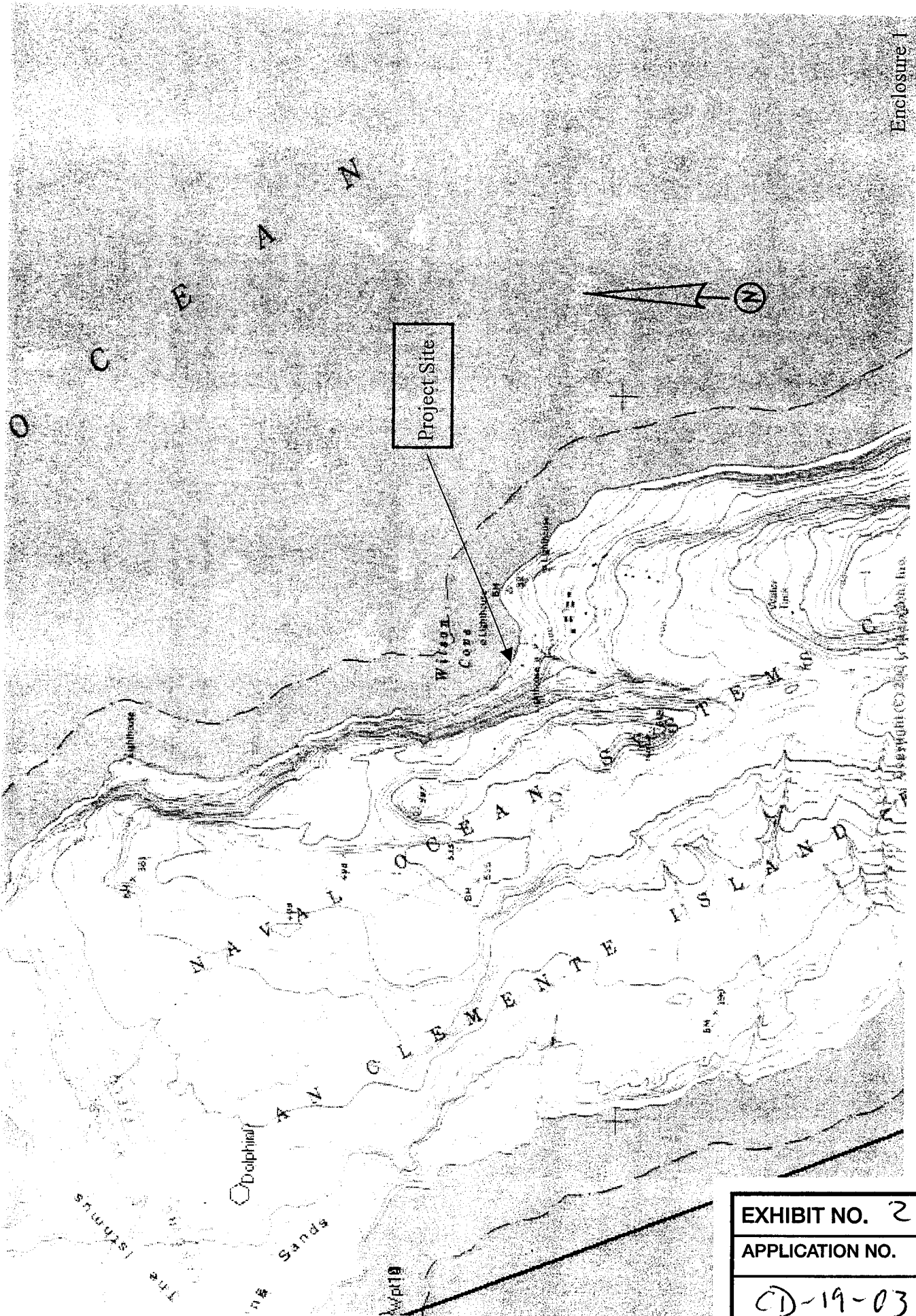


Figure 1-1 San Clemente Island Regional Area

EMU (1-10) S/P/POW/PLAN/PLANNING (See Boat Ramp Enclosure)



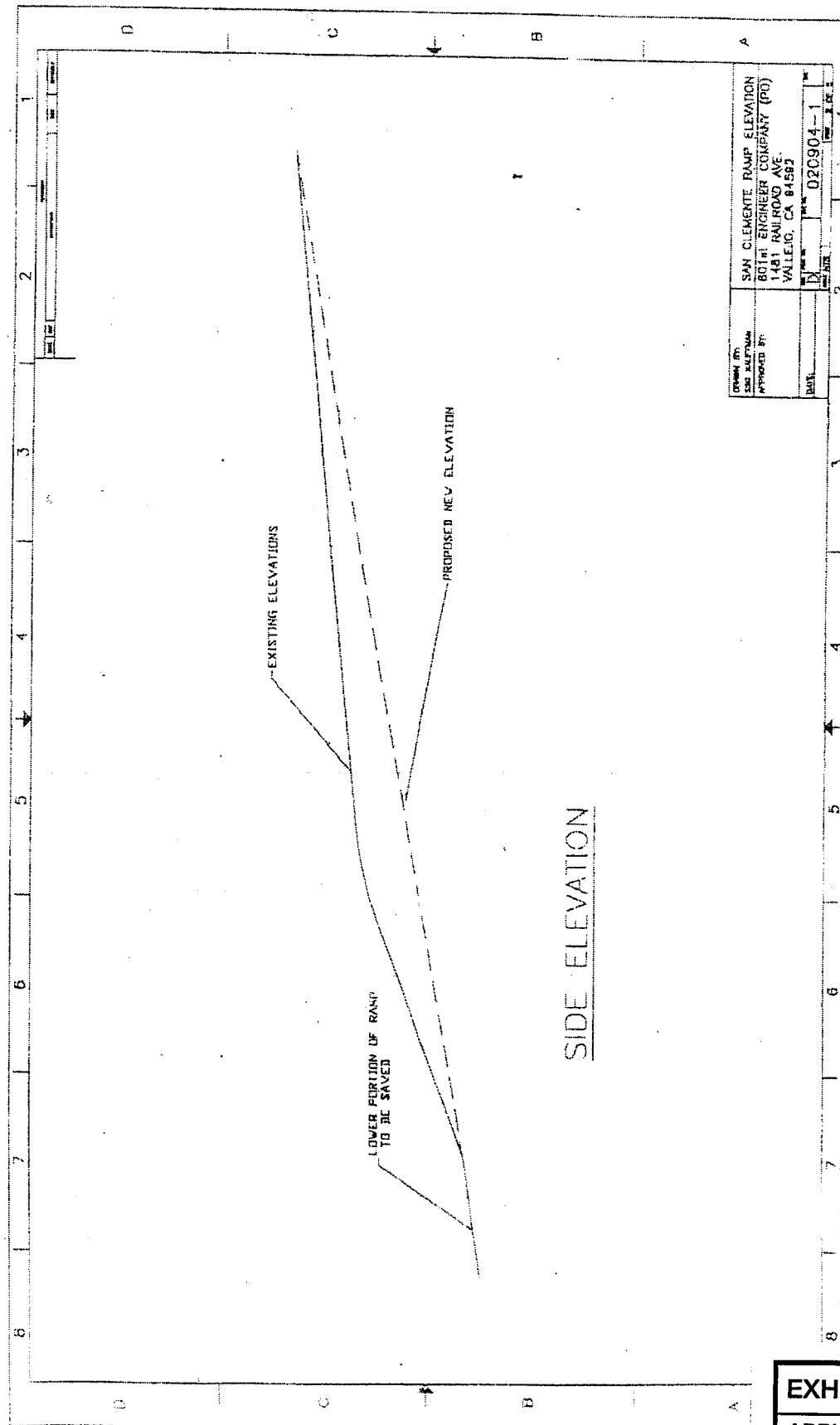
ENCLOSURE 1

EXHIBIT NO. 2

APPLICATION NO.

CD-19-03





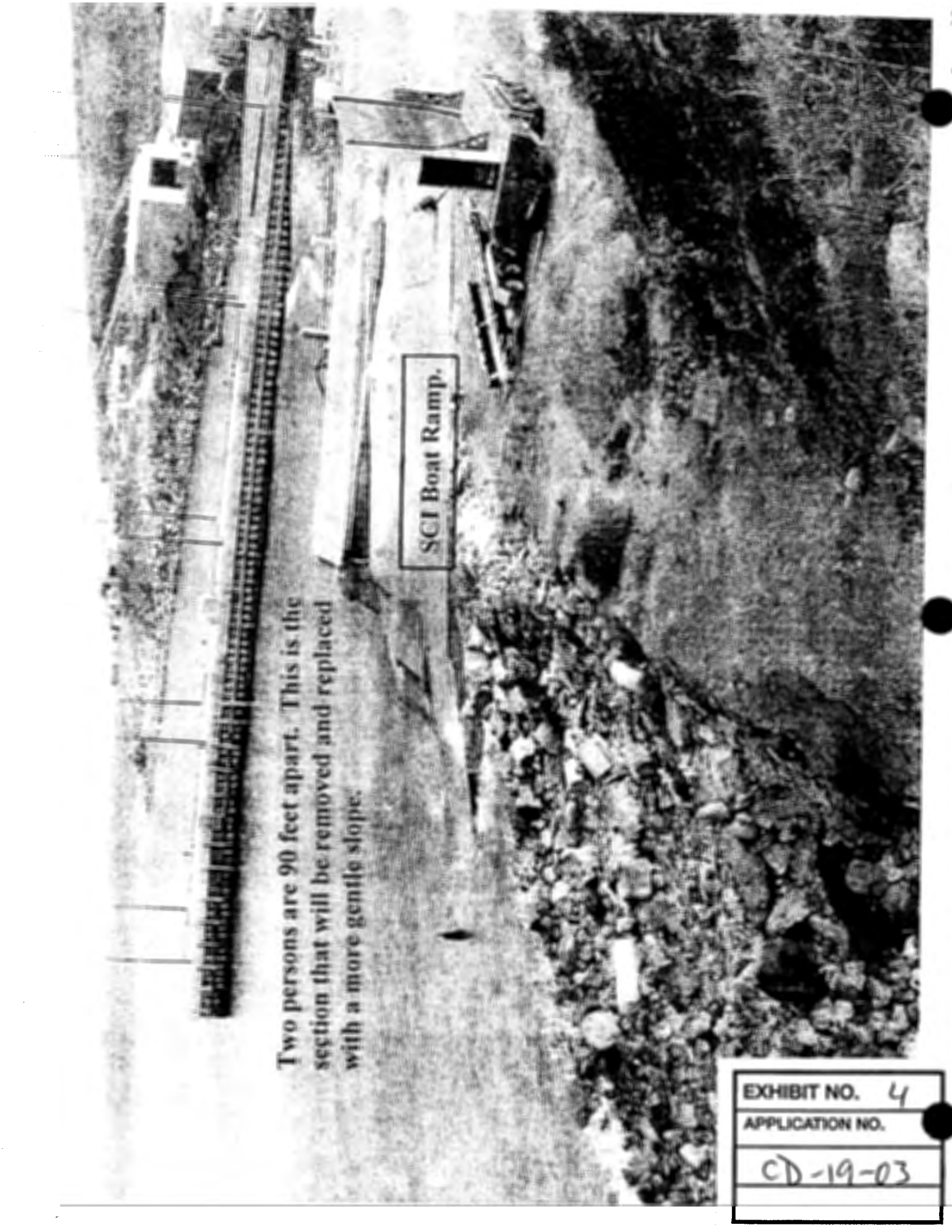
Enclosure 6

*Scope is satisfactory  
Reviewed by Colonel Smith 12.23.02*

EXHIBIT NO. 3

APPLICATION NO.

CD-19-03

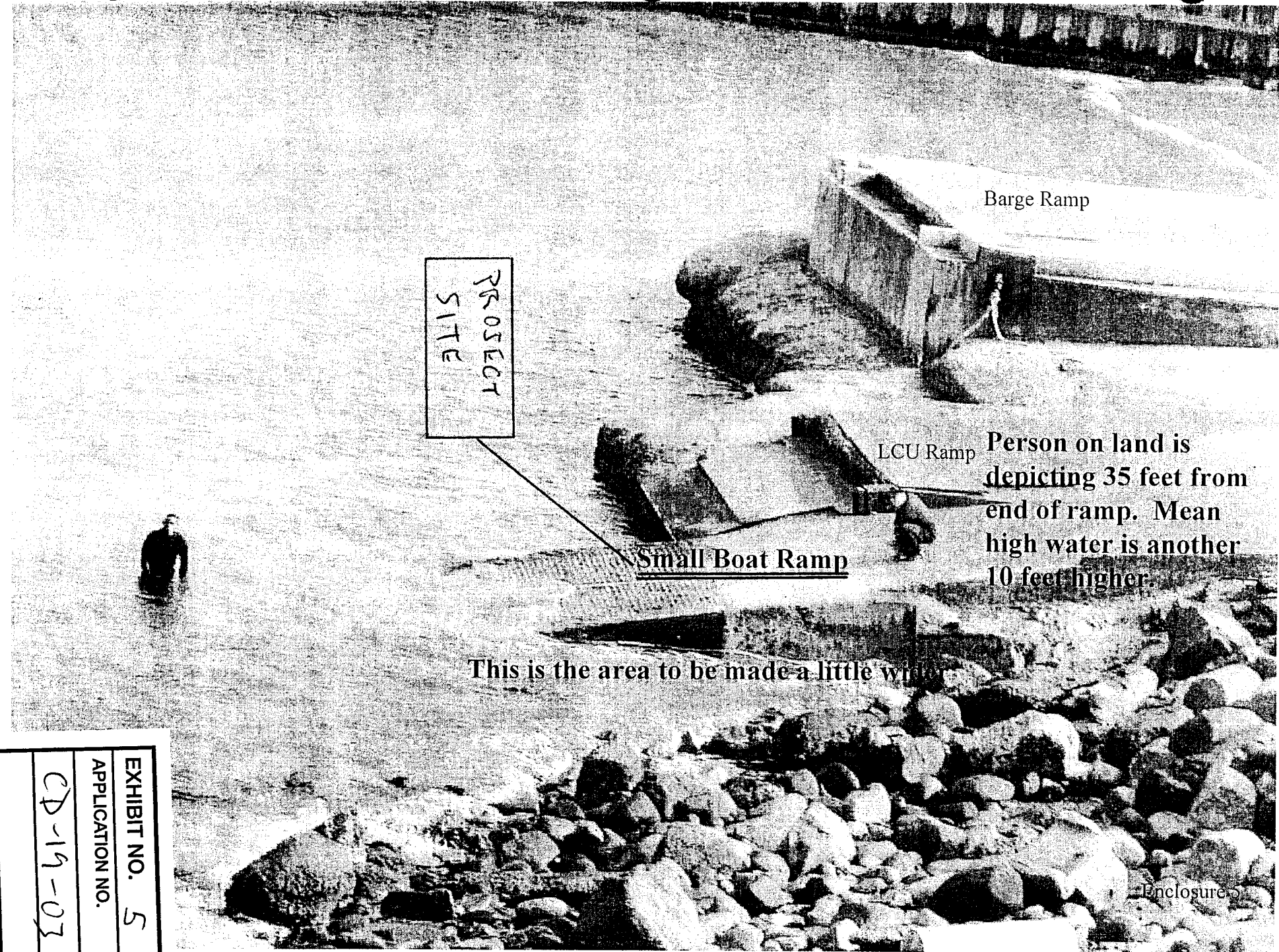


Two persons are 90 feet apart. This is the section that will be removed and replaced with a more gentle slope.

SCI Boat Ramp.

EXHIBIT NO. 4  
APPLICATION NO.

CD-19-03



PROJECT  
SITE

Barge Ramp

LCU Ramp

Small Boat Ramp

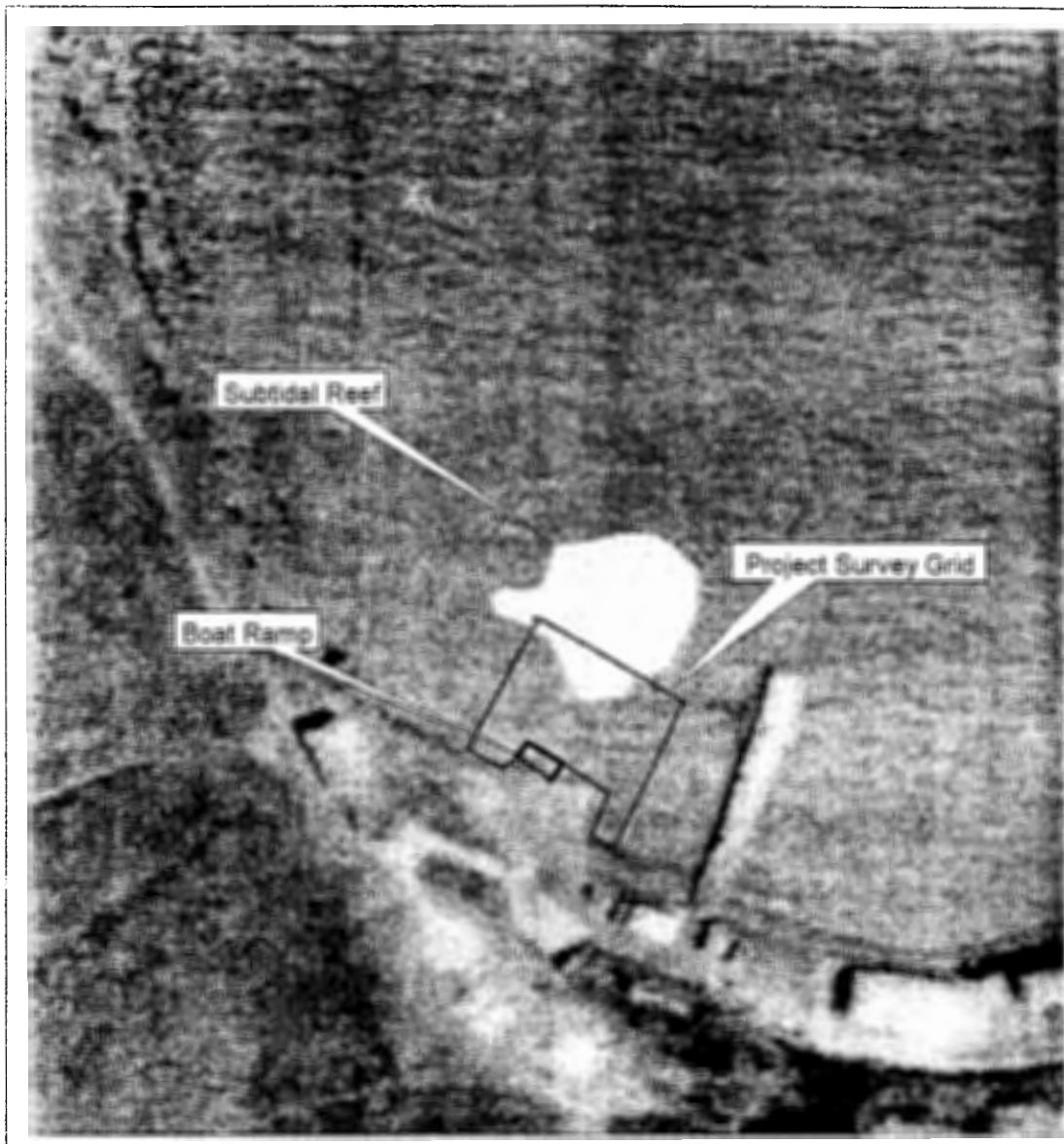
Person on land is depicting 35 feet from end of ramp. Mean high water is another 10 feet higher.

This is the area to be made a little wider

Enclosure 5

EXHIBIT NO. 5
APPLICATION NO.
CD-19-03

NALF San Clemente Island , Wilson Cove  
Boat Ramp Marine Survey



Note:

1. Survey Based on Navy 1996/2003 Field Surveys
2. Mapping conducted by Mitchell Perdue,  
Tim Burr - SWDIV Navy and Danny Hielprin - SAIC

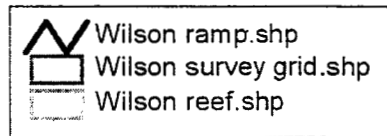


EXHIBIT NO. 6

APPLICATION NO.

Enclost

CD-19-03

Table 5-5. Human activities that could potentially impact focus management species on SCI and estimated probability of negative impact. Ratings of potential conflict are subjective and should be evaluated on a case-by-case basis. Effects related to fire are treated in a separate matrix.

5. Wilson Cove		Species Present in Unit	Activities																					
			Infantry Ops (Battalion Landings)						TARS			SWATS			MTR	FSA 1	FSA 2	General Increase						
			(New)						(New and Existing)			(Existing)						in Tempo						
			Individuals on foot (1-10)	Individuals on foot (10-100)	Individuals on foot (> 100)	Beach Landing	Operational camping	Off-road vehicle traffic	Land Demolitions	Underwater demolitions	Over-the-beach landing	Individuals on foot (1-50)	Land demolitions	Underwater demolitions	Individuals on foot (1-50)	Diving operations	Underwater demolition	Species Present in boundary	Species Present in boundary	Foot traffic	Off-road vehicle traffic	On-road vehicle traffic	Associated increase in FSA	
Management Focus Plant Species	Castilleja grisea*		Not Applicable												Not Applicable	Not Applicable	Not Applicable							
	Delphinium variegatum kinkiense*																							
	Lithophragma maximum*																							
	Lotus dendroideus traskiae*	X									Med		Low								Low			
	Malacothamnus clementinus*																							
	Sibara filifolia*																							
	Brodiaea kinkiensis																							
	Lavatera assurgentiflora glabra																							
	Quercus tomentella																							
	Lyonothamnus floribundus aspleniifolius																							
	Active Dune Specialists																							
	Lotus argophyllus adsurgens																							
	Euphorbia misera																							
Management Focus Animal Species	Terrestrial Mollusks	X	EXHIBIT NO. APPLICATION CD-16									Low			Not Applicable	Not Applicable	Not Applicable							
	Island night lizard*																							
	San Clemente sage sparrow*																							
	San Clemente Island fox	X																				Med		
	San Clemente loggerhead shrike*																							
	Western snowy plover*																							
	Xantus' murrelet																							
	Abalone*																							
Pinniped Haulout																								

\* Effects related to fire are treated in a separate matrix.

EXHIBIT NO. 7  
APPLICATION NO.

CD-19-03



**Military Value: High**

**Fleet Marine Ground**

- Fire Support Coordination
- Engineering Operations

**Naval Special Warfare**

- Land Special Operations
- Maritime Special Operations

**THIRD Fleet**

- Theater-level Operations
- Multiwarfare Operations
- Support Fleet Battle Exercises

**RDT&E**

- Ocean Engineering

**Prohibited Uses:**

Off-road vehicles, heavy wheeled vehicles, tracked vehicles, missile impacts, fixed wing landings, parachute drops, bombing, small arms/live fire, detonations (all sizes), laser designator.

**Other Uses:**

- Recreational fishing areas offshore

**Facilities:**

Wilson Cove contains virtually all of the permanent billeting, feeding, transportation, recreation, and port facilities for Island personnel.

**Roads: Primary- 3.7 mi (5.9 km)**

Secondary- 1.2 mi (2.0 km)

**Natural Resource Value: Lowest**

**Ecological Units:**

- MDS/Grassland complex (6.8 ac)
- MDS Boxthorn/grassland (40.3 ac)
- Maritime Sage Scrub northeast escarpment (31.4 ac)
- Grasslands, clay soils (25.0 ac)

**Wildlife:**

- Island night lizard\*
- Island fox
- Orange-crowned warbler
- \*Federal listed species- Endangered, Threatened, Proposed

**Rare Plants:**

- Artemisia nesiotica*
- Lavatera assurgentiflora glabra* (historic location)
- Lotus dendroideus* var. *traskiae*\*
- \*Federal listed species- Endangered, Threatened, Proposed

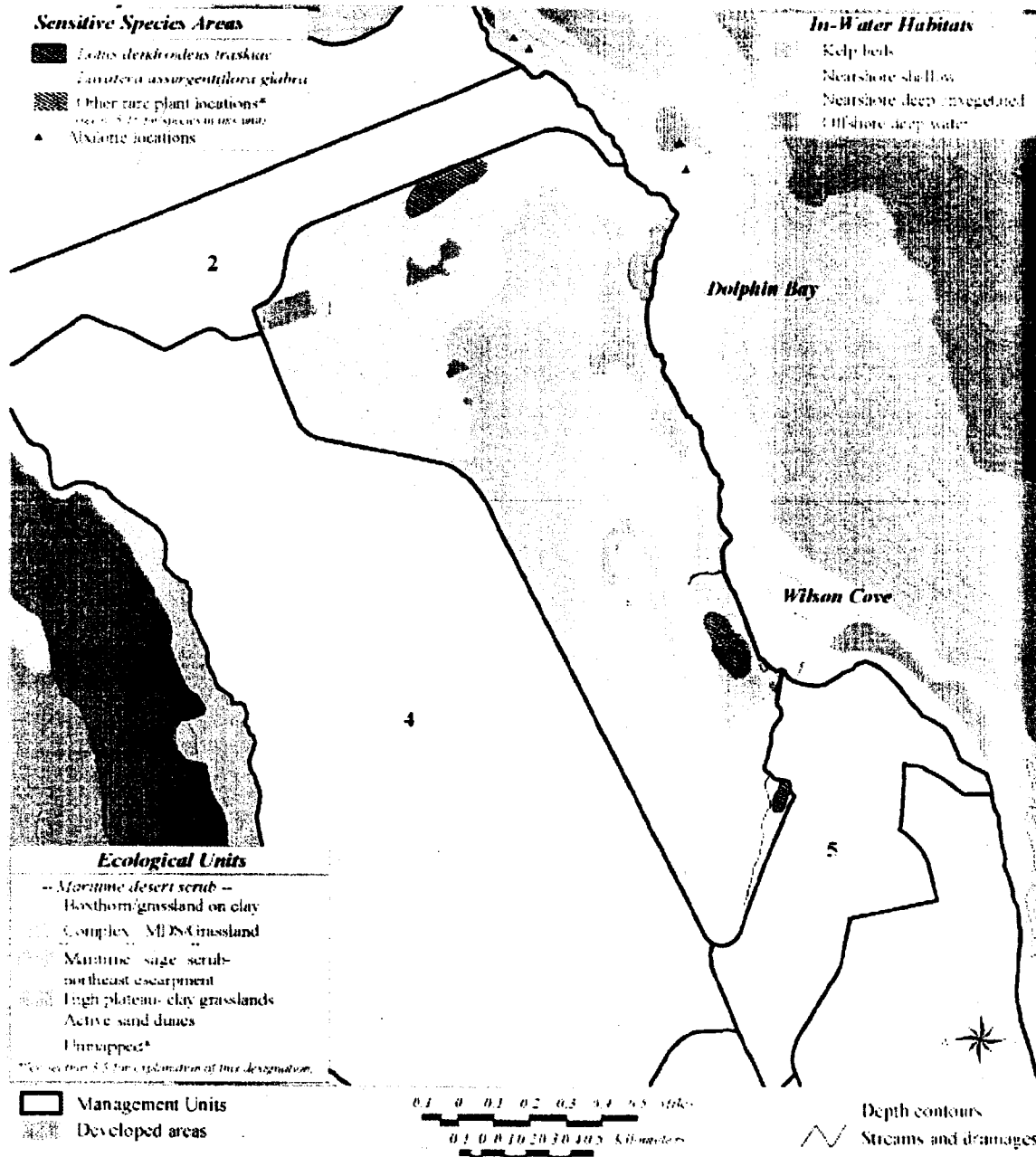
**Special Management Emphases:**

- High military value, so management emphasis is aimed at protecting those military values with increasing flexibility for maintaining natural resource values as an integral part of day-to-day operations.
- Historic location for island tree mallow.
- Trask's island lotus (17% of population occurs in this unit).
- Invasive species management.

**Management:**

- Island tree mallow was known historically from this location and therefore this area should be a priority reintroduction area.
  - For eelgrass, continue to abide by no net loss provisions of the Clean Water Act and mitigation standards under the Southern California Eelgrass Mitigation Policy.
  - Maintain or enhance existing *Lotus* populations.
  - Key weed monitoring and control area to help prevent weed establishment elsewhere on Island. Also to control competition of invasive species with *Lotus* and *Lavatera* populations.
  - Fire management targets in boxthorn/grassland complex are the same as low-density boxthorn habitat. The risk to natural resources from short fire return intervals appears to be low and fire is expected to be a useful tool in control of exotic plants.
  - The risk to natural resources from short fire return intervals in clay grasslands appears to be low and fire is expected to be a useful tool in control of exotic plants. Use prescribed fire to foster a mosaic of grassland with shrubs in patches or on knolls, while considering the impacts of fire on rare shrub species and native herbs and grasses.
  - Few specific fire targets are identified because clay grassland is likely to maintain its health at fire intervals as short as 5-10 years.
  - Manage fire for openness of grasslands and for native perennial herbs and grasses, to enhance transit and prey availability for Island fox, and prey availability for the shrike.
  - Promote a fire regime in Maritime Sage Scrub which allows native shrubs and herbaceous species to out-compete prickly pear and cholla. This means maintaining their competitiveness for light and water. A target fire return interval will be established after consultation on the Fire Management Plan.
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## Natural Resources Locations within Unit 3 (Dolphin Bay)



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