US Army Corps
of Engineers®
Albuquerque District

PUBLIC NOTICE

Application Number:
SPA-2011-217-ABQ
Date: July 1, 2011
Comments Due: July 15, 2011

SUBJECT: The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Albuquerque District, (Corps) is evaluating a permit application to rehabilitate the two Springer Reservoirs, which would result in impacts to approximately 6.25 acres of wetland waters of the United States. Additionally, the applicant proposes 15.62 acres of temporary impact to other waters of the United States. This notice is to inform interested parties of the proposed activity and to solicit comments.

AUTHORITY: This application is being evaluated under Section 404 of the Clean Water Act for the discharge of dredged or fill material in waters of the United States (U.S.) and/or Section 10 of the Rivers and Harbors Act of 1899 for structures or work in or affecting navigable waters of the U.S.

APPLICANT: Danny Cruz
PO Box 488
Springer, NM 87747
575-483-2682

LOCATION: The project site is located on or near Springer Reservoirs, Springer, Colfax County, New Mexico at Latitude 36.39331 Longitude -104.61405.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION: The applicant proposes to rehabilitate the Springer Reservoirs. Based on the available information, the Corps has determined the basic project purpose is public safety. The Corps has determined the overall project purpose is to to rehabilitate both Springer Reservoir Dams. Springer Dam No. 1 was originally built in 1916, and was modified in 1933, 1937, 1952, 1964, and 1982. Dam No. 2 was initially constructed in 1964 and was rehabilitated in 1982. Both dams have structural deficiencies that pose an unacceptable dam safety risk. The most severe dam safety deficiencies include: inadequate hydraulic capacity and structural deterioration of both emergency spillways; cracking and joint displacements on the outlet pipes under both dams; the presence of an abandoned, outdated outlet pipe extending under both dams; and excessive uncontrolled underseepage through the dam embankments and their foundations. This project is required to repair structural deficiencies in order to meet New Mexico dam safety requirements. The attached drawings provide additional project details.

News Release

The proposed Springer Dam Rehabilitation Project (project) would rehabilitate the aging Springer Reservoir dams and replace the current two-dam and reservoir facility with a single, larger operating storage reservoir and a smaller, non-jurisdictional sediment detention reservoir. The project would enlarge the storage capacity of the lower reservoir through a combination of raising the Dam No. 2 embankment (lower dam) and excavating the lower reservoir area. Dam No. 1 (upper dam) would be decommissioned and removed from jurisdictional status. The project will result in maintaining the overall 353 acre-feet of storage capacity and improving the safety level of the dams. Project components include the following:

Temporary Bypass Pipeline – The construction of a temporary bypass pipeline will allow treatment operations to continue from the upper reservoir while the lower dam and reservoir are under construction.

Labyrinth Weir Spillway for Dam No. 2 – A new spillway would be constructed in the west abutment of Dam No. 2 to handle a probable maximum flood (PMF) event in accordance with New Mexico Dam Safety Rules.

Modify and Raise Dam No. 2 Embankment – Dam No. 2 crest would be raised 6.8 feet, from its current elevation of 5,937.2 feet to 5,944 feet. The dam embankment would be modified to incorporate new elements necessary to meet stability, seismic, and seepage control design criteria.

Enlarge Reservoir No. 2 Storage Capacity – In addition to raising the lower dam embankment, the project will increase permitted storage capacity of the lower reservoir to 340 acre-feet by excavating the reservoir pool area. Approximately 104,000 cubic yards will be excavated from the operating pool.

New Outlet Works for Dam No. 2 – The new outlet of Dam No. 2 is designed to meet the operational needs of the Town of Springer water treatment plant. The outlet has a minimum conveyance capacity of 1.1 million gallons per day (MGD) during normal operations. The outlet works gate controls are designed to remain accessible during flood conditions.

Lowering Dam No. 1 – The crest of Dam No. 1 embankment will be lowered in order to decommission the dam as a high hazard storage facility in accordance with New Mexico dam safety rules. A remnant of the embankment will be left in place to provide 13 acre-feet of storage, which would function as a forebay to settle out sediment before it enters Reservoir 2. The crest of Dam No. 1 will be lowered 11.0 feet from its current elevation of approximately 5,960 feet to 5,949 feet over most of the crest length, with a 150-foot-wide riprap-armored overflow section set at 5,945 feet in elevation.

The project would be constructed in two phases to allow uninterrupted operation of the Town's water treatment facility. Phase I includes the construction of the temporary bypass, Labyrinth Weir Spillway, and realignment of the access road. Phase II includes the decommissioning of Springer Dam No. 1, and enlarging the Dam No. 2 embankment

and associated reservoir pool. The location of the Springer Reservoirs is shown in Figure 1. The existing site conditions are shown in Figure 2. Proposed project components are shown in Figures 3 through 7. The existing waters of the U.S. are shown in Figure 9. All figures listed are attached to this public notice.

PROPOSED MITIGATION: The applicant proposes to allow wetlands to naturally develop within both reservoirs post-contruction. The applicant anticipates that the changes in water level would create additional wetlands, in approximately five feet of elevation in Reservoir No. 1 and within 3 feet of elevation in Reservoir No. 2. The applicant estimates that a total of 6.80 acres of wetlands will naturally develop to replace the 6.25 acres of proposed impact to wetlands. To mitigate the proposed temporary impacts to other (non-wetland) waters of the U.S., there would be an anticipated increase of 2.43 acres in reservoir surface area.

OTHER AUTHORIZATIONS:

State Water Quality Certification: The applicant is required to obtain water quality certification, under Section 401 of the Clean Water Act, from the New Mexico Environment Department. Section 401 requires that any applicant for an individual Section 404 permit provide proof of water quality certification to the Corps of Engineers prior to permit issuance.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:

Environmental Setting. This project is located in the southern shortgrass prairie ecoregion (NMDGF 2006). Compositions of vegetative communities were identified on site field visits during October 2010 and April 2011. Upland communities contain native and non-native grassland species including Indian ricegrass (*Achnatherum hymenoides),* sideoats gramma (*Bouteloua curtipendula*), blue grama (*Bouteloua gracilis*), western wheatgrass (*Agropyron smithii*), Canada thistle (*Cirsium arvense*), and Kochia *(Bassia scoparia*). The reservoirs are surrounded by wetlands representing three vegetative strata including palustrine emergent, scrub-shrub, and forested wetlands as classified according to the Cowardin Classification System (Cowardin 1979) which is used by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's (USFWS) National Wetland Inventory (NWI).

Alternatives. The applicant has provided information concerning project alternatives. Alternatives proposed by the applicant include: Alternative A, an alternative including the construction of dam safety improvements on both existing Dams No. 1 and No. 2, including construction of two new emergency spillways, two new outlet works structures and major upgrades to both dam embankments. Other alternatives may develop during the review process for this permit application. All reasonable project alternatives, in particular those which may be less damaging to the aquatic environment, will be considered.

EVALUATION FACTORS: The decision whether to issue a permit will be based on an

evaluation of the probable impacts, including cumulative impacts, of the described 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 described activity, must be balanced against its reasonably foreseeable detriments. All factors which may be relevant to the described activity will be considered, including the cumulative effects thereof; among those are conservation, economics, aesthetics, general environmental concerns, wetlands, historic properties, fish and wildlife values, flood hazards, floodplain values, land use, navigation, shoreline erosion and accretion, recreation, water supply and conservation, water quality, energy needs, safety, food and fiber production, mineral needs, consideration of property ownership and, in general, the needs and welfare of the people. The activity's impact on the public interest will include application of the Section 404(b)(1) guidelines promulgated by the Administrator, Environmental Protection Agency (40 CFR Part 230).

The Corps 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 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 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.

HISTORIC PROPERTIES: The Corps consulted district files and records, the latest version of the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP), and state records of NRHP-eligible and potentially eligible historic properties to determine if there are any historic properties that may be affected by the proposed undertaking. The project area has been recently surveyed for historic properties. Currently, NRHP-eligible historic properties are known to exist in the project permit area. The permit area has been extensively modified by previous work. Based on this initial information, the Corps has made a determination that the proposed project will not adversely affect historic properties that meet the criteria for inclusion in the NRHP. The Corps has initiated consultation with the SHPO for concurrence with this determination.

ENDANGERED SPECIES: {The Corps has reviewed the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's latest published version of Federally-listed endangered and threatened species located in Colfax County, New Mexico to determine if any listed species or their critical habitat may occur in the proposed project area. The Corps has made a preliminary determination that the proposed project will not affect any Federally-listed endangered or threatened species or their critical habitat that are protected by the Endangered Species Act.

FLOODPLAIN MANAGEMENT: The Corps is sending a copy of this public notice to the local floodplain administrator. In accordance with 44 CFR part 60 (Flood Plain

Management Regulations Criteria for Land Management and Use), the floodplain administrators of participating communities are required to review all proposed development to determine if a floodplain development permit is required and maintain records of such review.

CLOSE OF COMMENT PERIOD: All comments pertaining to this Public Notice must reach this office on or before July 15, 2011, which is the close of the comment period. Extensions of the comment period may be granted for valid reasons provided a written request is received by the limiting date. If no comments are received by that date, it will be considered that there are no objections. Anyone may request, in writing, that a public hearing be held to consider this application. Requests shall specifically state, with particularity, the reason(s) for holding a public hearing. If the Corps determines that the information received in response to this notice is inadequate for thorough evaluation, a public hearing may be warranted. If a public hearing is warranted, interested parties will be notified of the time, date, and location. Comments and requests for additional information should be submitted to:

Deanna L. Cummings, Project Manager
Regulatory Division
US Army Corps of Engineers, Albuquerque District
4101 Jefferson Plaza NE
Albuquerque, NM 87109

Please note that names and addresses of those who submit comments in response to this public notice may be made publicly available through the Freedom of Information Act.

DISTRICT ENGINEER
ALBUQUERQUE DISTRICT
CORPS OF ENGINEERS

Enclosure

News Release

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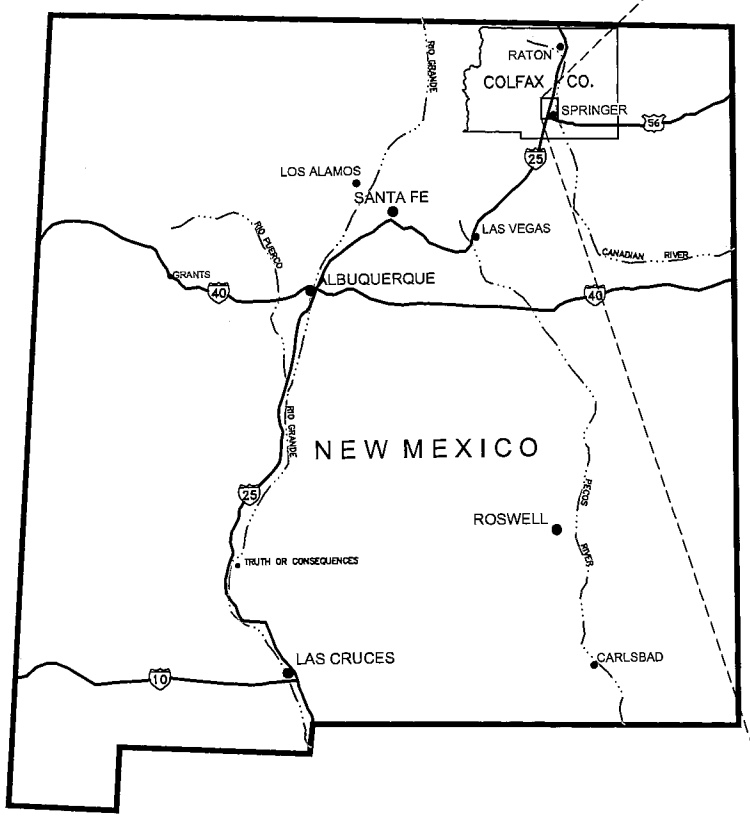

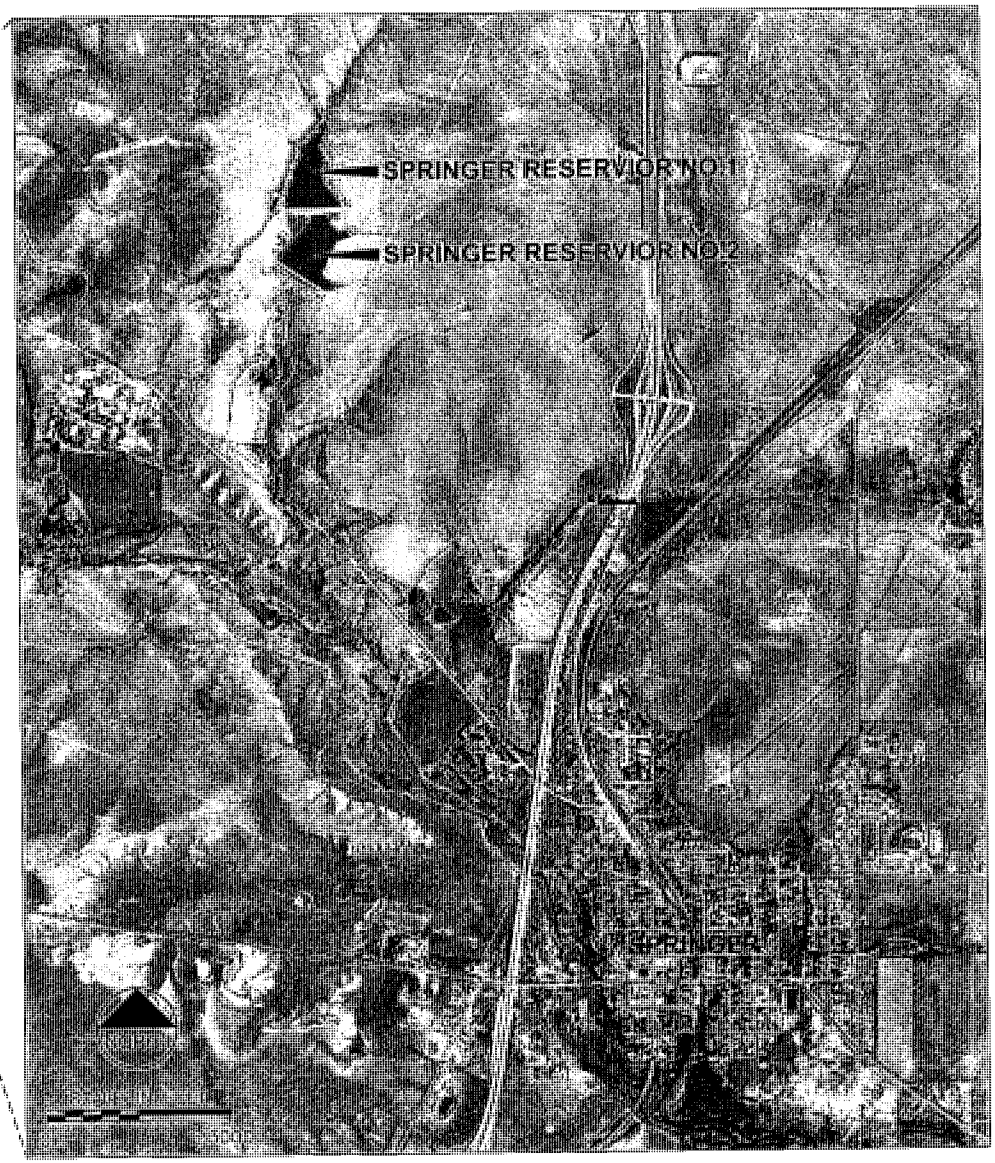

March 2011

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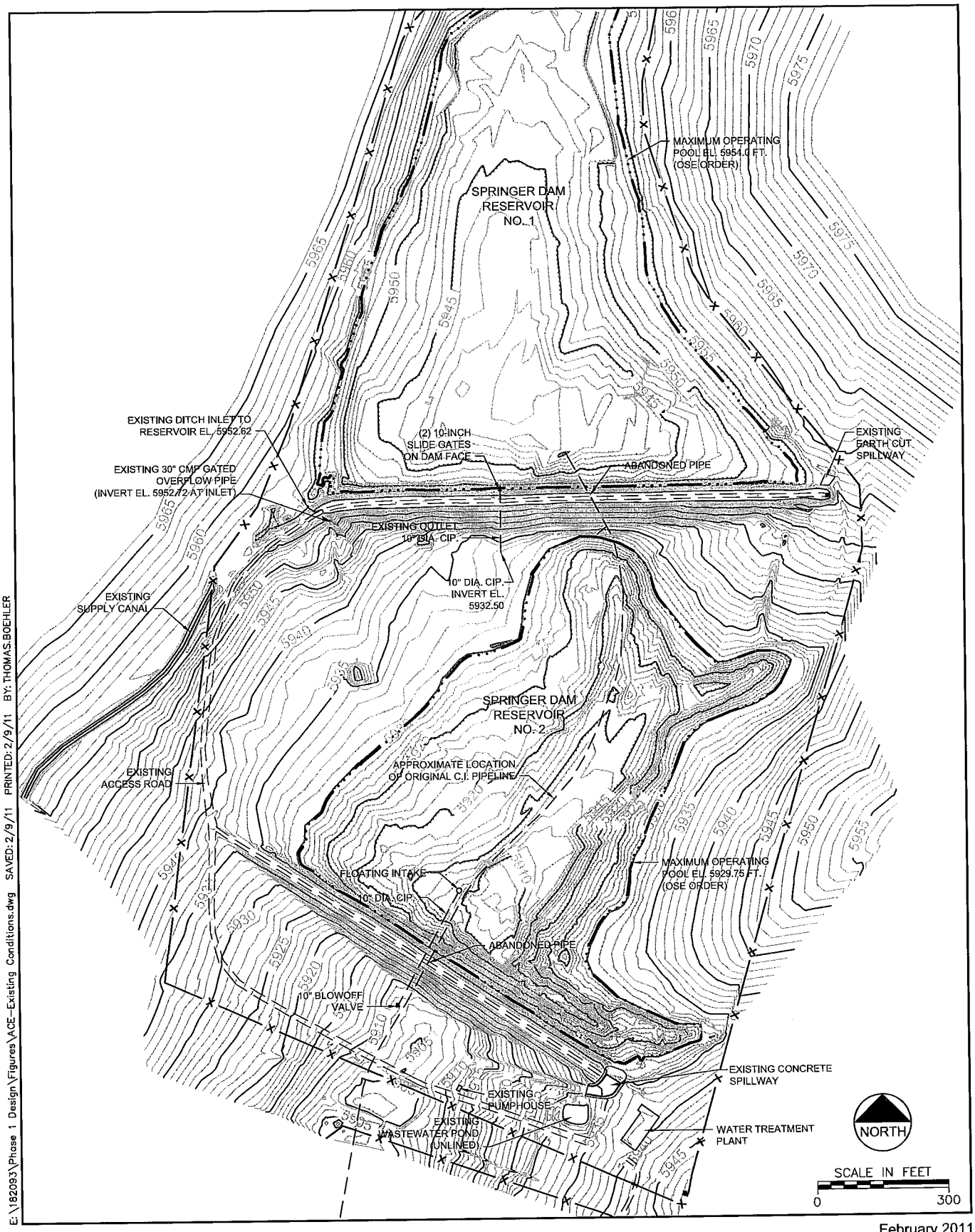
Figure 1
Project Location Map



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Project No. 182093

February 2011

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Springer Dams - Existing Conditions

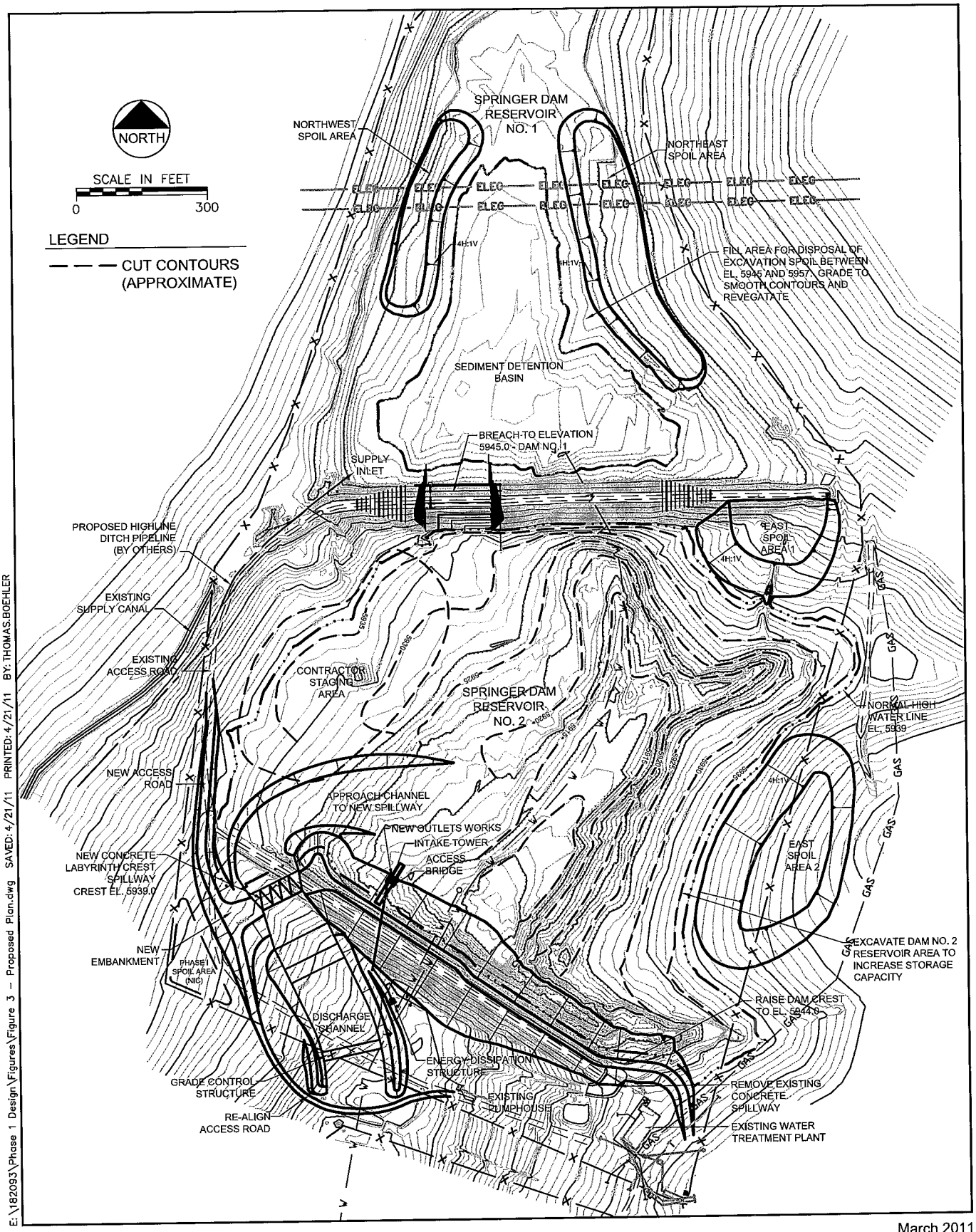

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Figure 3
Springer Dams Proposed Plan

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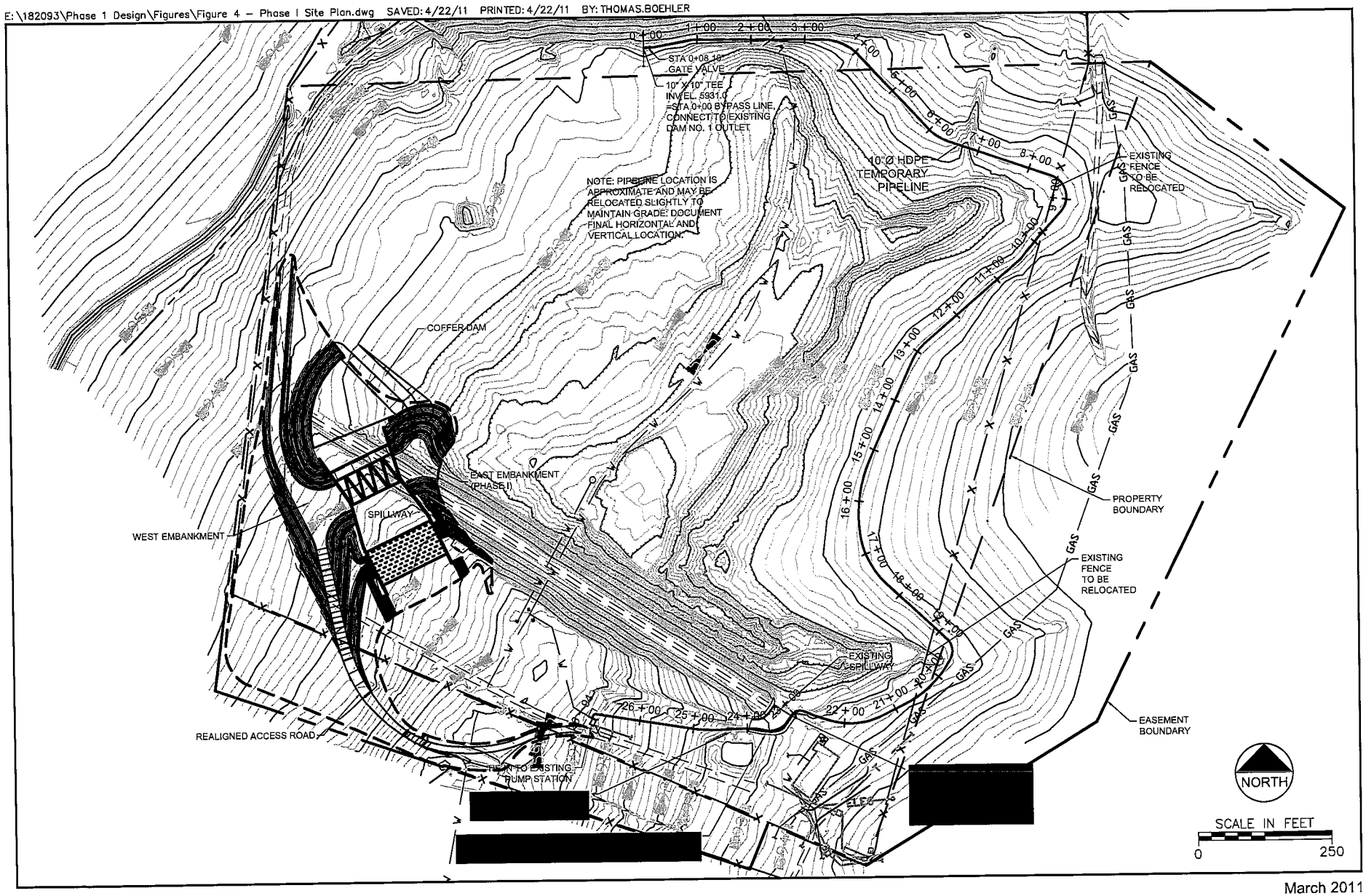

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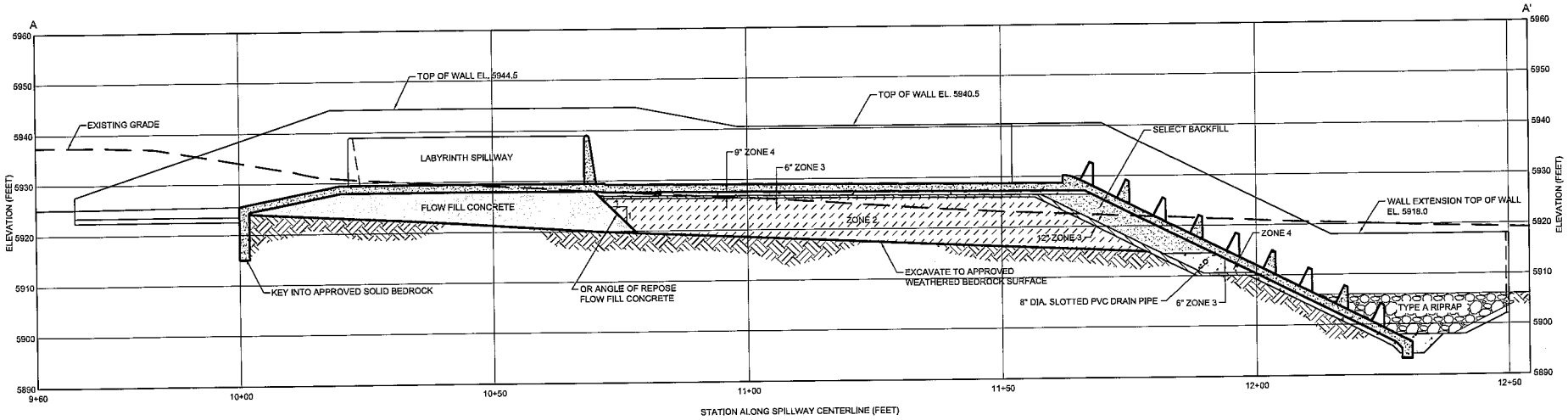
Figure 4
Phase I Site Plan



SPILLWAY CENTERLINE PROFILE
EXCAVATION LIMITS AND BACKFILL ZONES
SCALE: 1" = 20'

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Figure 5
Spillway Centerline Profile

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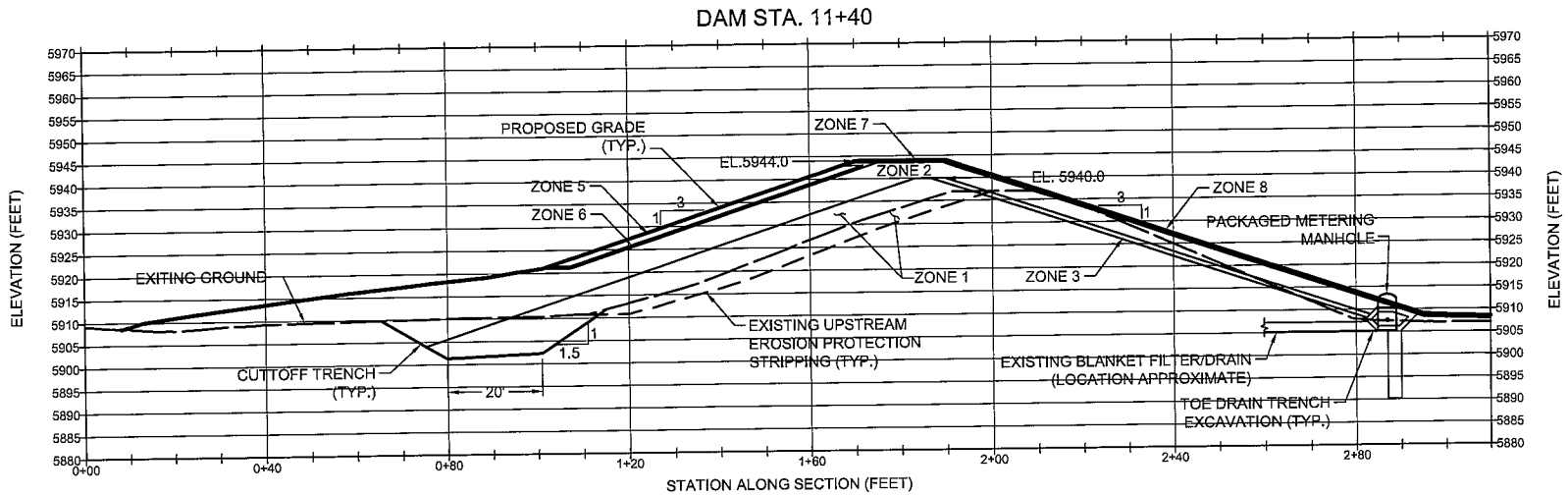

LEGEND

ZONE 1 - CORE (SILTY AND SANDY CLAY)	ZONE 5 - RIPRAP
ZONE 2 - RAISE SHELL AND SEMI-PERVIOUS BACKFILL	ZONE 6 - RIPRAP BEDDING
ZONE 3 - FILTER SAND	ZONE 7 - ROAD BASE
ZONE 4 - GRAVEL DRAIN	ZONE 8 - ROCK MULCH

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Figure 6
Typical Embankment Section

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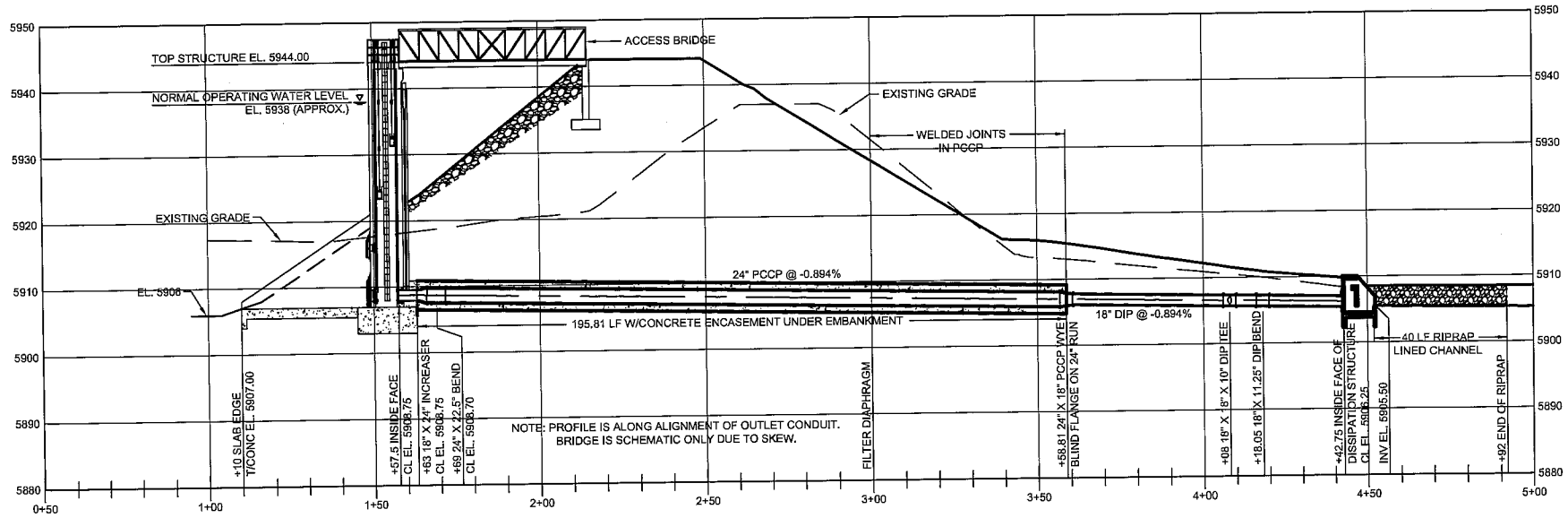

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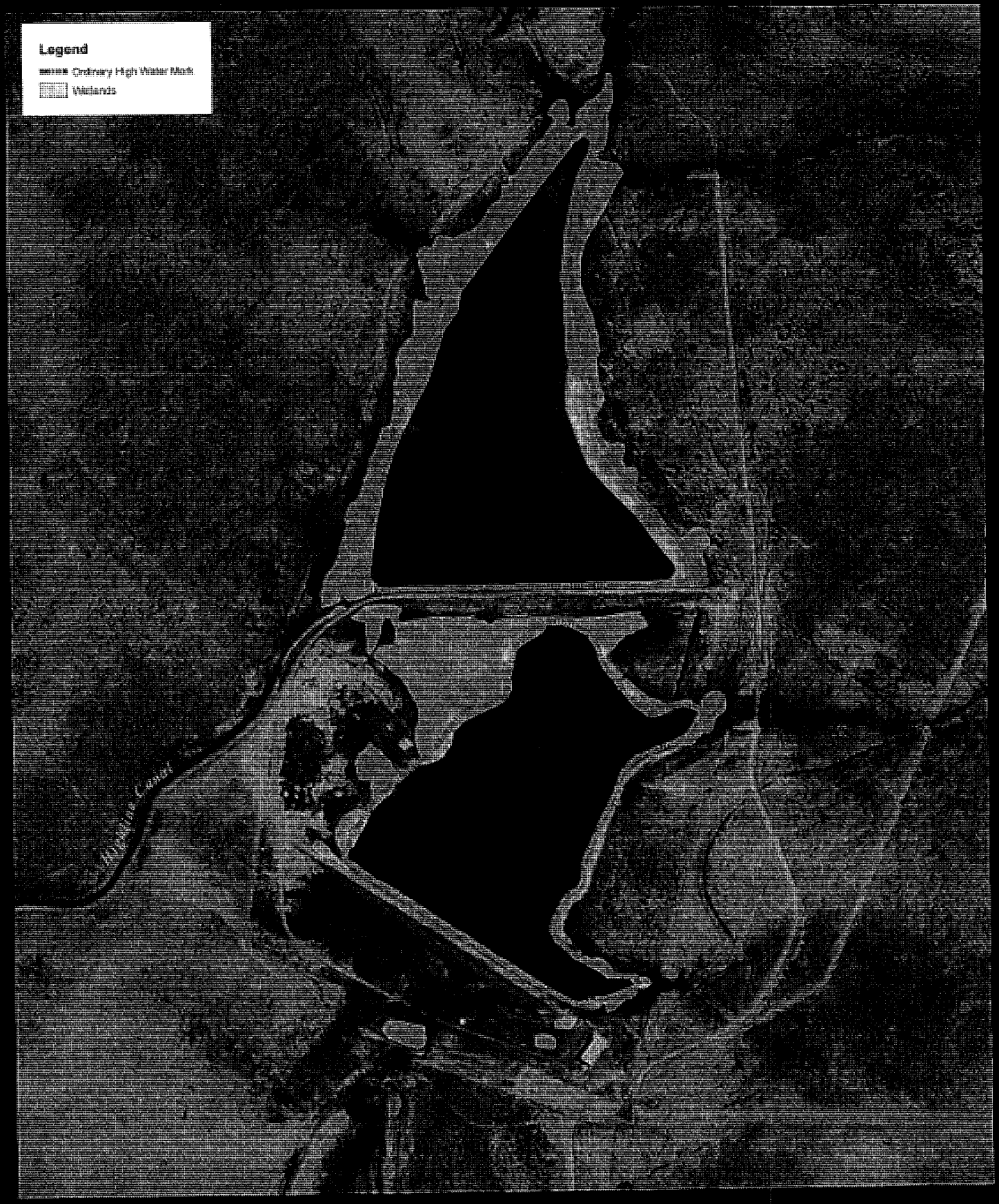
Figure 7
Outlet Works Profile



SPRINGER RESERVOIR REHABILITATION

TOWN OF SPRINGER

Figure 9

Existing Waters of the U.S.

0 200 400 Feet

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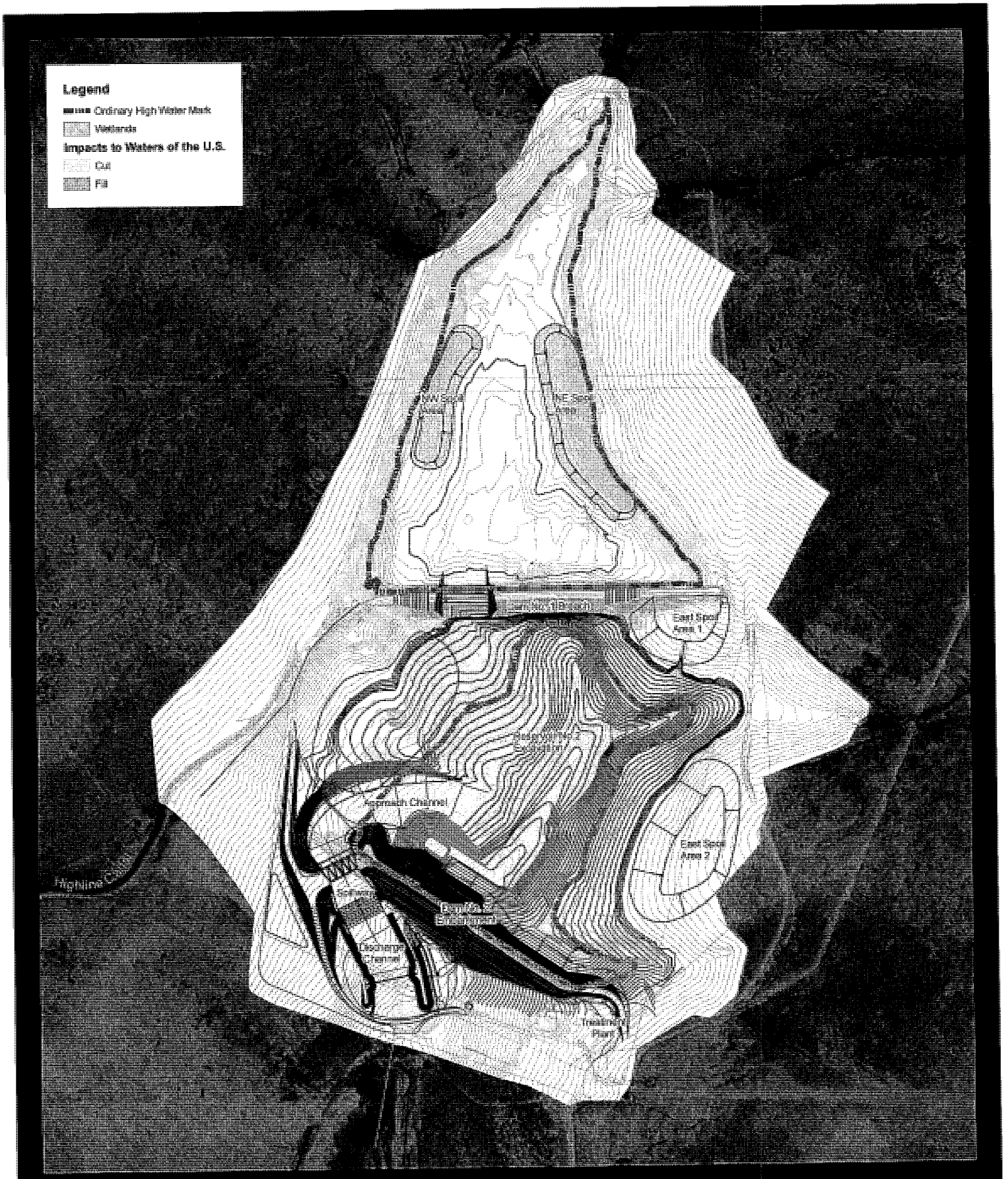

SPRINGER RESERVOIR REHABILITATION

TOWN OF SPRINGER

Figure 10

Impacts to Waters of the U.S.

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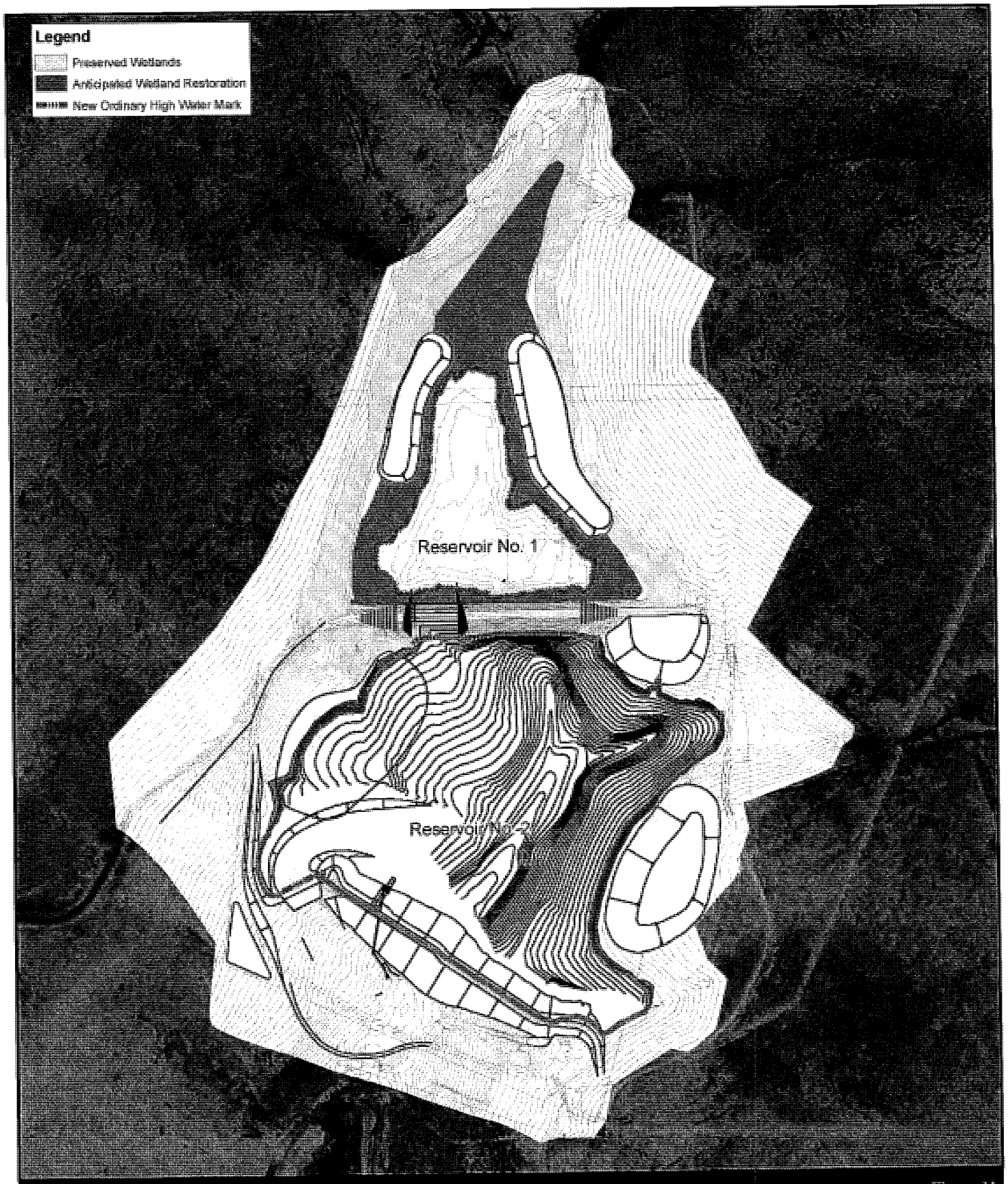

Figure 11

SPRINGER RESERVOIR REHABILITATION

TOWN OF SPRINGER

Anticipated Wetland Restoration

0 200 400 Feet

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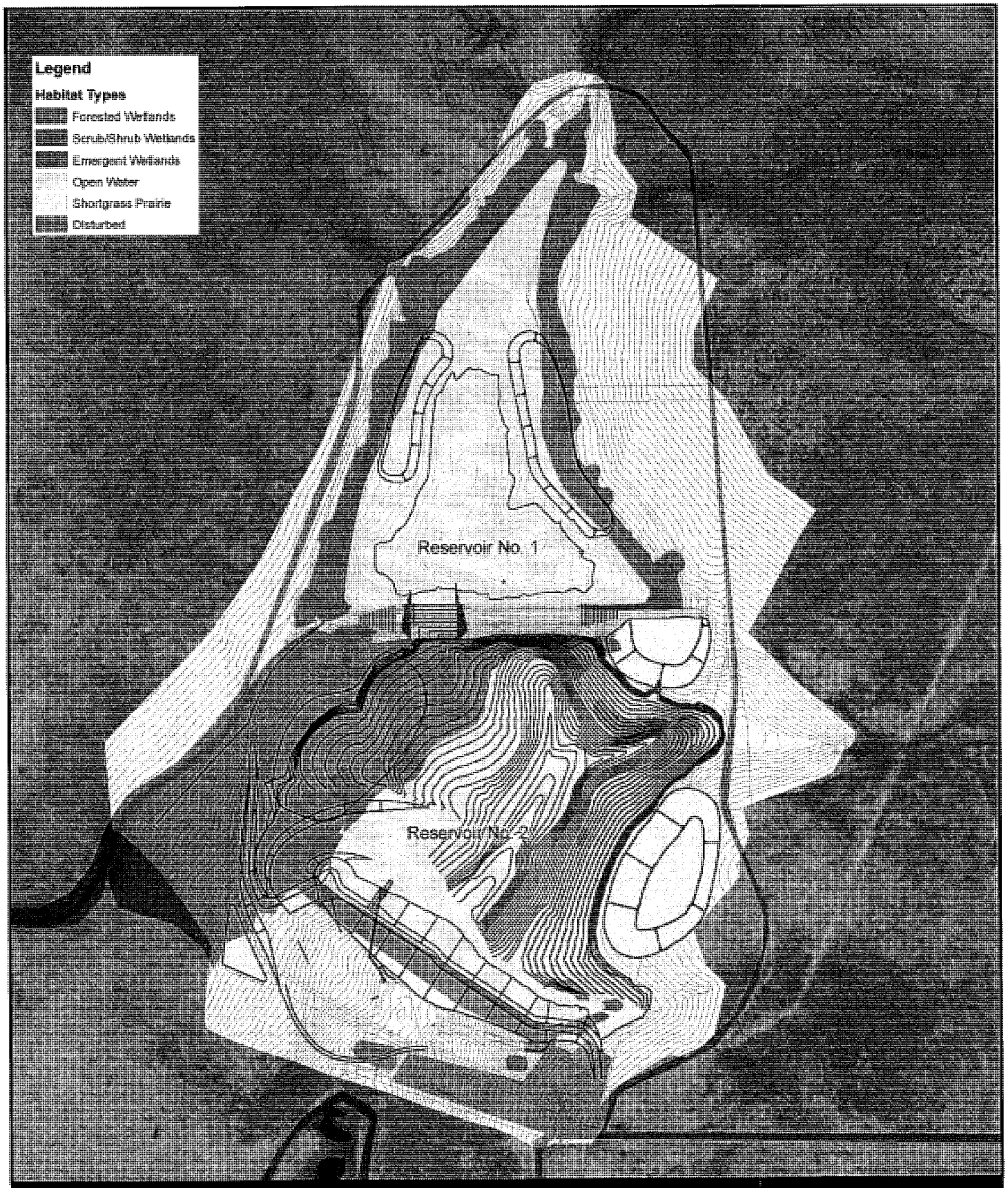

SPRINGER RESERVOIR REHABILITATION

TOWN OF SPRINGER

Figure 12

Habitat Types

0 200 400 Feet

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