

Categorical Exclusion

(Version: AUG06)

Compliance Tracking Number: 2006-099

PEPC Project Number: 16570

A. PROJECT INFORMATION

Title: Yosemite View Lodge Highway 140 Interim Road Embankment Stabilization

Location: El Portal, Mariposa County, California

Project Manager: Michael Pieper, Facilities Management, Yosemite National Park

Project Manager: Kursten Sheridan, Caltrans

B. COMPLIANCE DETERMINATION

This project is an action that has been determined to result in no measurable environmental effects. It is therefore categorically excluded from further National Environmental Policy Act analysis under Categorical Exclusion: DO12 3.4 C (9) - *Repair, resurfacing, striping, installation of traffic control devices, and repair/replacement of guardrails, culverts, signs, and other minor existing features on existing roads when no potential for environmental impact exists.*

Necessary compliance coordination has been completed regarding the National Historic Preservation Act, the Wilderness Act, the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act, and the Endangered Species Act, as applicable. Environmental impacts will be negligible or less when the project is implemented with the conditions stipulated under **Project Mitigations and Conditions** in **Section I** at the end of the attached *Environmental Screening Form*.

Additional supporting information for this determination and the stipulated conditions can be found in the following attachments (when checked):

- Environmental Screening Form*
- Preservation Assessment Form (YOSE-XXX)*
- Wilderness Minimum Requirement Analysis*
- Wild and Scenic River Section 7 Determination*
- Park Management Terms and Conditions*
- Other:

C. DECISION

On the basis of the environmental impact information in the statutory compliance file, with which I am familiar, I am categorically excluding the described project from further NEPA analysis. No exceptional circumstances or conditions in DO12 3.5 or 3.6 apply and the action is fully described in DO12, Section 3.4.

//R. Kevin Cann, Acting//
Michael J. Tollefson, Superintendent

9/11/06
Date

Original: Statutory Compliance File
cc: Project Proponent

Attachments (1)

*The signed original of this document is on file at
the Environmental Planning and Compliance
Office in Yosemite National Park.*



United States Department of the Interior

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

Yosemite National Park
P.O. Box 577
Yosemite, California 95389

IN REPLY REFER TO:
L7617 (YOSE-PM)

Memorandum

To: Michael Pieper, Project Manager, Facilities Management, Yosemite National Park
Kurstin Sheridan, Project Manager, Caltrans

From: Superintendent, Yosemite National Park

Subject: Notice to Proceed, 2006-099 Yosemite View Lodge Highway 140 Interim Road
Embankment Stabilization (PEPC #16570)

Your proposed project is an action that has been determined to result in no measurable environmental effects. It is therefore categorically excluded from further National Environmental Policy Act analysis under Categorical Exclusion: DO12 3.4 C (9) - *Repair, resurfacing, striping, installation of traffic control devices, and repair/replacement of guardrails, culverts, signs, and other minor existing features on existing roads when no potential for environmental impact exists.*

Necessary compliance coordination has been completed regarding the National Historic Preservation Act, the Wilderness Act, the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act, and the Endangered Species Act, as applicable. This project clearance is valid providing that you adhere to the conditions stipulated in the enclosed *Categorical Exclusion Form* and associated documents when implementing this project.

//R. Kevin Cann, Acting//
Michael J. Tollefson, Superintendent

9/11/06
Date

Enclosure (with attachments)

cc: Statutory Compliance File

*The signed original of this document is on file at
the Environmental Planning and Compliance
Office in Yosemite National Park.*

Environmental Screening Form

(Version: AUG06)

Compliance Tracking Number: 2006-099

PEPC Project Number: 16570

A. PROJECT INFORMATION

Title: Yosemite View Lodge Highway 140 Interim Road Embankment Stabilization

Location: El Portal, Mariposa County, California

Project Manager: Michael Pieper, Facilities Management, Yosemite National Park

Project Manager: Kursten Sheridan, Caltrans

B. PROJECT DESCRIPTION AND BACKGROUND

This project is intended to prevent further erosion under the concreted rock embankment of California State Route 140 along the river-right bank of the Merced River, between Yosemite View Lodge and Crane Creek Bridge, and halt the localized deterioration of the highway.

The California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) proposes to undertake a maintenance project in Mariposa County near the community of El Portal in the Fall of 2006--during the low river flow period. The project would reinforce a large void that developed in the river-right bank of the Merced River and below the embankment of California State Route 140. The flood of December 1996/January 1997 eroded the material underneath the concreted rock slope protecting the road embankment between two bedrock outcrops, creating a hole approximately five to six feet high and, on average, 12 feet back under the slope toward the highway. Subsequent, annual high water continues to erode the embankment, increasing the size of this void.

The erosion of the supporting material from the embankment is causing some settling of the highway roadbed and several significant cracks (both longitudinal and transverse) have developed in the highway pavement. Without stabilization, it is expected that the river would continue to erode the bank, enlarging the void, and threatening the collapse of the roadbed.

This project would involve pumping gunite (a cement slurry material), downslope from the highway, through a large hose. Construction personnel working at the base of the slope would use this hose, and an attached nozzle, to shoot gunite into the void, covering the interior surface of the void and filling gaps between exposed boulders and slope material, thus stabilizing the slope. The entire void would not be filled--the existing embankment material would simply be reinforced to prevent further erosion. The gunite pump and any other construction vehicles used would remain on the highway, or highway shoulder, and would not be driven down the slope or into the river channel.

This project is intended as an interim solution to the erosion and roadbed-settling problem. A project to permanently repair the undermined concrete rock slope protection on Route 140 from the Crane Creek Bridge to 0.6 mile west of the Yosemite National Park boundary--Route 140 Slope Repair (EA 10-0E800)--is planned for construction in 2010 or later.

Table B1 – Background Information

	Yes	No	N/A	Explanation/Notes
1. Did NPS staff conduct a site visit? If yes, list attendees. If no, explain.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Michael Pieper; compliance staff are familiar with the site.
2a. Is the project providing compliance for an action associated with but not covered by an approved plan? (Identify the plan and provide a section or page citation.); OR	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
2b. Is the project in an approved plan? (Identify the plan and provide a section or page citation.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
2c. Is the project consistent with that plan?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
2d. Is the Plan's CE, FONSI, or ROD current?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
3a. Are there any interested or affected parties?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Public and MRP litigants.
3b. Has a diligent effort been made to communicate with them?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>			30-days notice would be given after project approval and before project implementation.
4a. Are there any affected agencies or tribes?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	US Army Corp of Engineers, CA Department of Fish & Game, and CA Regional Water Quality Control Board.
4b. Has consultation been completed?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>			Caltrans is responsible for these consultations

Table B2 – Environmental Screening Form Attachments (provide Attachment letter—A, B, etc.)

	Yes	No	N/A	Explanation/Notes
1. Maps: 2 required (vicinity map & site map)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>			EI Portal Vicinity Map; Caltrans Aerial Photo showing project site; see Attachment A.
2. Drawings (e.g., design, construction)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
3. Site Plans	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
4. Photographs	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Photo of undercut road embankment; see Attachment B.
5. Non-NEPA/NHPA Approvals (Explain)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
6. Other (Explain)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

C. ASSESSMENT OF POTENTIAL RESOURCE EFFECTS

Are any impacts possible on the following resources?	Yes	No	N/A	Data Needed to Determine/Notes
1. Geologic resources: soils, bedrock, streambeds, etc	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
2. From geohazards	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
3. Air quality	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Negligible: temporary during construction.
4. Soundscapes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Negligible: temporary during construction.
5. Water quality or quantity	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Negligible: the proposed work would be done during low water to avoid impacts.
6. Stream flow characteristics	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Negligible: the proposed coating of the inside surface of the eroded void in the highway embankment with gunite would have no material effect on stream flow characteristics.
7. Marine or estuarine resources	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
8. Floodplains or wetlands	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Negligible: the proposed work would have no material effect on the river floodplain; no wetlands would be affected by the proposed work.
9. Land use, including occupancy, income, values, ownership, type of use	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
10. Rare or unusual vegetation – old growth timber, riparian, alpine	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
11. Species of special concern (plant or animal; state or federal listed or proposed for listing) or their habitat	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
12. Unique ecosystems, biosphere reserves, World Heritage Sites	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
13. Unique or important wildlife or wildlife habitat	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
14. Unique or important fish or fish habitat	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
15. Introduce or promote non-native species (plant or animal)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
16. Recreation resources, including supply, demand, visitation, activities, etc.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
17. Visitor experience, aesthetic resources	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
18. Cultural resources including cultural landscapes, ethnographic resources	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
19. Socioeconomics, including employment, occupation, income changes, tax base, infrastructure	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
20. Minority and low income populations, ethnography, size, migration patterns, etc.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
21. Energy resources	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
22. Other agency or tribal land use plans or policies	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
23. Resource, including energy, conservation potential	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
24. Urban quality, gateway communities, etc.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
25. Long-term management of resources or land/resource productivity	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Embankment stabilization would protect the integrity of State Highway 140 and water quality from potential of further embankment erosion and eventual collapse.
26. Other important environment resources (e.g. geothermal, paleontological resources)?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Comments, Mitigations and Conditions:				
1. None				

D. MANDATORY CRITERIA

If implemented, would the proposed action:	Yes	No	N/A	Data Needed to Determine/Notes
1. Have material adverse effects on public health or safety?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	This action would protect the roadway and enhance public safety.
2. Have adverse effects on such unique characteristics as historic or cultural resources; park, recreation, or refuge lands; wilderness areas; wild or scenic rivers; national natural landmarks; sole or principal drinking water aquifers; prime farmlands; wetlands; floodplains; or ecologically significant or critical areas, including those listed on the National Register of Natural Landmarks?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
3. Have highly controversial environmental effects?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
4. Have highly uncertain and potentially significant environmental effects or involve unique or unknown environmental risks?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
5. Establish a precedent for future action or represent a decision in principle about future actions with potentially significant environmental effects?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
6. Be directly related to other actions with individually insignificant, but cumulatively significant, environmental effects?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
7. Have adverse effects on properties listed or eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
8. Have adverse effects on species listed or proposed to be listed on the List of Endangered or Threatened Species or have adverse effects on designated Critical Habitat for these species?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
9. Require compliance with Executive Order 11988 (Floodplain Management), Executive Order 11990 (Protection of Wetlands), or the Fish and Wildlife Coordination Act?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
10. Threaten to violate a federal, state, local, or tribal law or requirement imposed for the protection of the environment?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
11. Involve unresolved conflicts concerning alternative uses of available resources (NEPA sec. 102(2)(E))?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
12. Have a disproportionate, significant adverse effect on low-income or minority populations (EO 12898)?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
13. Restrict access to and ceremonial use of Indian sacred sites by Indian religious practitioners or adversely affect the physical integrity of such sacred sites (EO 130007)?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
14. Contribute to the introduction, continued existence, or spread of federally listed noxious weeds (Federal Noxious Weed Control Act)?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
15. Contribute to the introduction, continued existence, or spread of non-native invasive species or actions that may promote the introduction, growth or expansion of the range of non-native invasive species (EO 13112)?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
16. Require a permit from a federal, state, or local agency to proceed, unless the agency from which the permit is required agrees that a CE is appropriate?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
17. Have the potential for significant impact as indicated by a federal, state, or local agency or Indian tribe?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
18. Have the potential to be controversial because of disagreement over possible environmental effects?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
19. Have the potential to violate the NPS Organic Act by impairing park resources or values?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

Comments, Mitigations and Conditions:

1. None

E. SPECIAL STATUS SPECIES CHECKLIST

Within the area of potential effect, are there:	Yes	No	N/A	Data Needed to Determine/Notes
1. Listed or proposed threatened or endangered species (Federal or State)?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
2. Species of special concern (Federal or State)?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
3. Park rare plants or vegetation?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
4. Potential habitat for any special-status species listed above?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

If "yes" to any of the above questions, a Special-Status Species Checklist must be completed and attached.

Comments, Mitigations and Conditions:

- None

F. NATIONAL HISTORIC PRESERVATION ACT CHECKLIST

Within the area of potential effect:	Yes	No	N/A	Data Needed to Determine/Notes
1. Will there be ground disturbance?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
2. Are there any archeological sites?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
3. Are there any Native American Indian traditional cultural resources?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
4. Is the project within the boundary of an archeological or historic landscape or district?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
5a. Is there a National Historic Landmark?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
5b. Is there a structure(s) on the park's <i>List of Classified Structures</i> ?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
5c. Is there a historic property with a DOE and concurrence by the SHPO or a completed National Register form?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
5d. Is there a cultural property requiring review under NHPA, Section 106?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
6. Would there be alteration of a structure or cultural landscape covered by 5a-d, above?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	

If "yes" to any of the above, then an Assessment of Effects form (YOSE-XXX) must be completed and attached.

Mitigations and Conditions:

- None

G. WILDERNESS ACT CHECKLIST

Is the proposed project:	Yes	No	N/A	Data Needed to Determine/Notes
1. Within designated Wilderness?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
2. Within a Potential Wilderness Addition?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

If "yes" to either of the above, then a Wilderness Minimum Requirements Analysis must be completed and attached.

Mitigations and Conditions:

- None

H. WILD AND SCENIC RIVERS ACT CHECKLIST

Does the proposed project:	Yes	No	N/A	Data Needed to Determine/Notes
1. Fall within a wild and scenic river corridor? If "Yes", name the river(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Merced River
2. Fall within the bed and banks AND affect the free-flow of the river?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	The proposed coating of the inside surface of the eroded void in the highway embankment with gunite would have no material effect on the free-flow of the river.
3. Potentially affect water quality of the area?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
4. Remain consistent with its river segment classification?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	A comprehensive management plan for the river does not exist; therefore, river segments have not been classified; this segment of river could be classified either "scenic" or "recreational" (it is in a developed area and not wilderness); based on preliminary river planning, the proposed work to protect the existing highway would be consistent with either of these likely classifications.
5. Protect and enhance river ORVs?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	A comprehensive management plan for the river does not exist; therefore, river ORVs have not been established; based on preliminary river planning, the proposed work to protect the existing highway likely would be protective of any river ORVs that might be established.
6a. Fall within the River Protection Overlay?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	A comprehensive management plan for the river does not exist; therefore, a River Protection Overlay (RPO) has not been established.
6b. If "Yes", is it consistent with conditions of the River Protection Overlay?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Based on preliminary river planning, the proposed action to protect the existing highway likely would be consistent with probable RPO conditions.
7. Remain consistent with the areas Management Zoning?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	A comprehensive management plan for the river does not exist; therefore, management zoning has not been established; based on preliminary river planning, the proposed action to protect the existing highway likely would be consistent with any proposed management zoning
8a. Fall on a tributary of a Wild and Scenic River?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
8b. If 8a is "Yes", will the project affect the Wild and Scenic River corridor?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
8c. If 8a is "yes", will the project unreasonably diminish scenic, recreational, or fish and wildlife values?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
9. Change the level of use within the river corridor? If "Yes", explain.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
If "yes" to questions 2, 8b, or 8c, then a WSRA Section 7 determination must be completed and attached.				

Mitigations and Conditions:

1. None

I. NEPA Analysis and Approval Conditions

When implemented as detailed in the project description and following all Project Mitigations and Conditions listed below, this project meets the terms and conditions of a categorical exclusion to NEPA.

Applicable Categorical Exclusion:

DO12 C (9) - *Repair, resurfacing, striping, installation of traffic control devices, and repair/replacement of guardrails, culverts, signs, and other minor existing features on existing roads when no potential for environmental impact exists.*

Project Mitigations and Conditions:

1. None

This project has been reviewed in accordance with the above criteria and it has been determined that the project will result in no or minimal environmental effects. Therefore, it is categorically excluded from further environmental review required under the National Environmental Policy Act. Additionally, the necessary compliance coordination has been completed with regard to the National Historic Preservation Act, the Wilderness Act, the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act, and the Endangered Species Act.

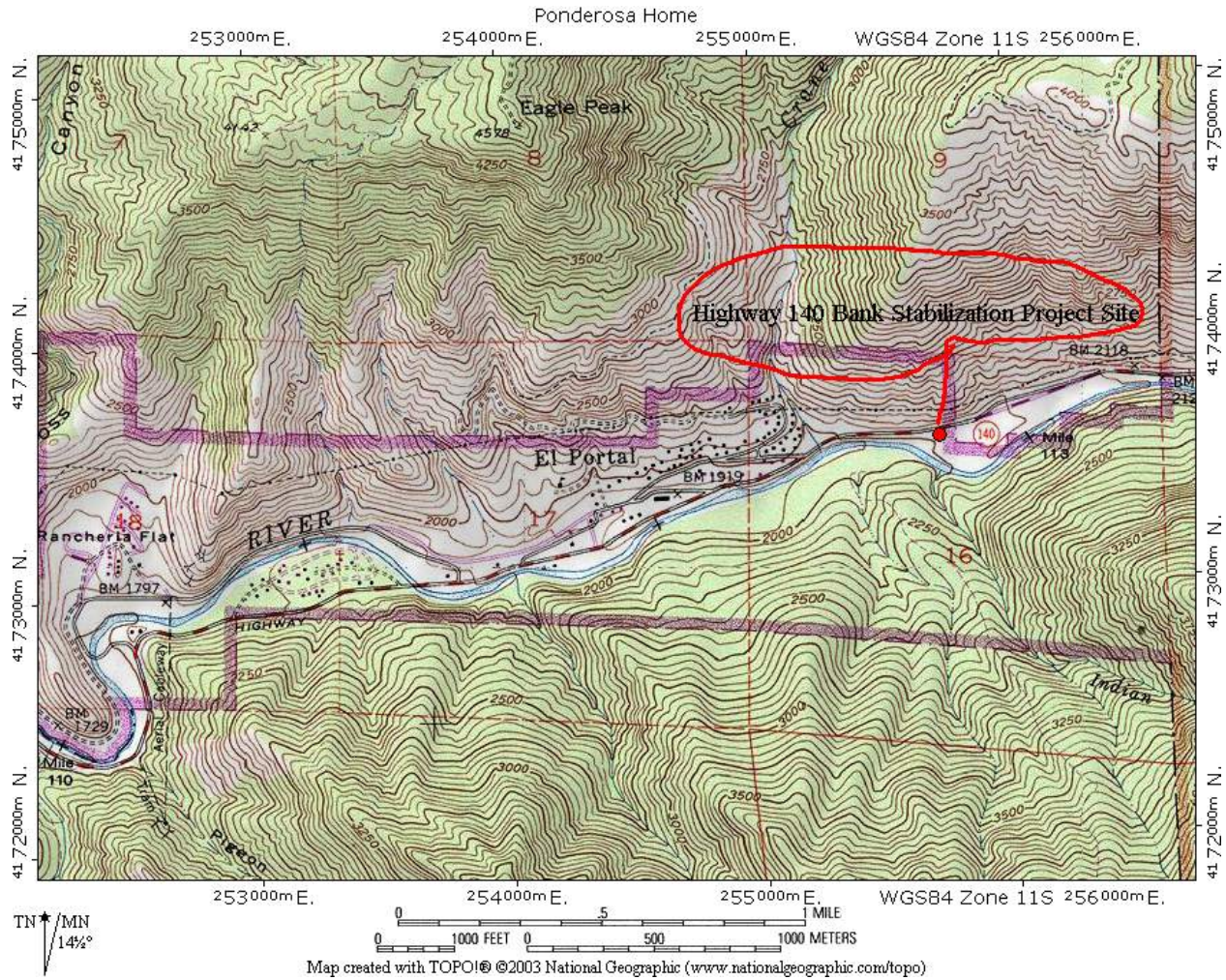
//GWColliver// *8/28/06*
Compliance Specialist **Date**

//Mark A Butler// *8/30/06*
Compliance Program Manager **Date**

//Bill Delaney// *9/6/06*
Chief, Project Management **Date**

*The signed original of this document is on file at
the Environmental Planning and Compliance
Office in Yosemite National Park.*

Attachment A



Map 1 Project Vicinity Map



Photo 1 Aerial photo showing project site on Merced River in El Portal

Attachment B



Photo 2 View of highway embankment showing the eroded void and vehicles on the highway shoulder.