



US Army Corps
of Engineers
Alaska District

Public Notice of Application for Permit

Regulatory Division (1145)
CEPOA-RD
2175 University Avenue, Suite
Fairbanks, Alaska 99709-4910

PUBLIC NOTICE DATE: September 30, 2008

EXPIRATION DATE: October 15, 2008

REFERENCE NUMBER: POA-2008-756

WATERWAY: Cripple Creek

Interested parties are hereby notified that a Department of the Army (DA) permit application has been received for work in waters of the United States as described below and shown on the enclosed project drawings.

Comments on the described work, with the reference number, should reach this office no later than the expiration date of this Public Notice to become part of the record and be considered in the decision. Please contact **Sharon Seim** at (907) 474-2166, by fax at (907) 474-2164, or by email at **Sharon.G.Seim@usace.army.mil** if further information is desired concerning this notice.

APPLICANT: Fairbanks North Star Borough, 809 Pioneer Road, Fairbanks, Alaska 99701

AGENT: Ms. Nancy Veitch, Parks Projects Coordinator, Department of Parks and Recreation, Fairbanks North Star Borough, Post Office Box 71267, Fairbanks, Alaska 99707, (907) 459-1099

LOCATION: The project site is located within Sections 24 and 25, T. 1 S., R. 3 W., and Sections 19 and 30, T. 1 S., R. 2 W., Fairbanks Meridian; USGS Quad Map Fairbanks D-3; Latitude 64.8028° N., Longitude -148.0523° W.; Isberg Recreation Area near Fairbanks, Alaska.

SPECIAL AREA DESIGNATION: The project is located within the Isberg Recreation Area, which is managed by the Fairbanks North Star Borough.

PURPOSE: The applicant's stated purpose is to provide a recreational trail system to the public.

PROPOSED WORK: The discharge of approximately 3,300 cubic yards (cy) of gravel into 2.45 acres of waters of the U.S., wetlands, for construction of motorized trails, interpretive trails, and a parking area. All work would be performed in accordance with the enclosed plan (sheets 1-8), dated September 26, 2008.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION: This application is for Phase I development of the Isberg Recreation Area (IRA). The IRA is a 420-acre site located east of Cripple Creek Road and north of Isberg Road (sheet 1 of 8). The IRA is currently undeveloped with the exception of a few existing recreational trails. The Fairbanks North Star Borough (FNSB) plans to develop an open area for outdoor recreation, focusing primarily on recreational trails. Public meetings were held by FNSB in December 2006 and March 2007, and a final IRA Master Plan was published in 2007. The long-term site plan for the IRA is provided on sheet 2 of 8.

The IRA Master Plan recommended that development be based on a list of primary and secondary priorities established by public and community involvement and by available funding. Primary priorities include: a) protection of existing trails, b) new trail development, c) interpretative trails, and d) a main parking area. Secondary priorities include: secondary parking areas and acquisition of adjacent lands for IRA expansion.

Based on these priorities, IRA development would occur in three phases. The current application is for Phase I which would:

- improve the 100-Mile Loop Trail
- construct Parking Lot #1 off Oboe Court
- construct interpretive trails and boardwalks

The 100-Mile Loop Trail is an existing motorized trail that passes through the IRA. This trail shows signs of erosion, rutting, and braiding. The current proposal would harden 100-Mile Loop, and other existing motorized trails within the IRA, by placing geotextile on the existing ground followed by at least six inches of surface course (sheet 4 of 8). Hardened trails would be a maximum of five feet wide, except where passing lanes would be constructed, and would impact 0.59 acres of wetlands through the discharge of 475 cy of fill. Total motorized trail length within the IRA is 3.8 miles of which 0.97 miles are within wetlands.

Two American with Disabilities Act (ADA) accessible interpretive trails, totaling 1.59 miles, would be constructed wholly within wetlands. The purpose of the interpretive boardwalks is to allow individuals access to points of interest within the wetlands for educational and informational opportunities, such as bird watching. Like the motorized trails, ADA trails would be five feet wide and would be built from six inches surface course over geotextile. A boardwalk would then be constructed on the base material (sheet 4 of 8). A total of 1.54 acres of wetlands would be impacted by the discharge of 1,200 cy of fill for the construction of the two interpretive trails.

Parking area #1 would be 110'L x 64'W and would have a 48'L x 24'W approach (sheet 5 of 8). Geotextile would be laid on the existing ground and at least three feet of structural fill with three inches of surface course would be discharged on top. The parking area and approach would discharge 1,650 cy fill into 0.32 acres of wetlands. Restrooms would be located within the footprint of the parking area.

MITIGATION: The applicant proposes the following mitigation measures to avoid, minimize, and compensate for impacts to waters of the United States from activities involving discharges of dredged or fill material:

- The IRA contains 250 acres of wetlands, of which the project footprint would impact 2.45 acres
- Only those areas where trails currently pass through wetlands, or where the wetlands would provide educational opportunities, are proposed for development.
- Interpretive trails would skirt sensitive and/or valuable wetlands (e.g., emergent wetland areas) wherever possible and boardwalks would restrain visitors from undue trespass across sensitive wetlands.
- The overall design for interpretive trails minimizes the number and length of trails necessary for providing substantive educational programs.
- The parking area is located along an existing segment of motorized trail and was chosen due to access constraints elsewhere in the project area. A nearby upland alternative was determined not practicable due to topography and steepness.
- All trails within wetlands would be restricted to five feet wide.

- The existing 100-Mile Loop trail has widened and braided over time as trail users have made new routes through wetlands to avoid standing water and rutted areas. By hardening these trails, further damage to wetlands would be reduced, and in some areas, wetlands would have an opportunity to recover.
- Motorized trails would be relatively straight, not sinuous, thus reducing their wetland footprints.
- The majority of wetlands impacted by IRA development would be black spruce stands or wetlands already impacted by human disturbance. These wetland areas are considered lower value than scrub-shrub, emergent, and waterfowl areas - the areas the interpretive trails intend to highlight for education.
- Culverts would be installed and maintained where standing or moving water has been identified along trails.

WATER QUALITY CERTIFICATION: A permit for the described work will not be issued until a certification or waiver of certification, as required under Section 401 of the Clean Water Act (Public Law 95-217), has been received from the Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation.

CULTURAL RESOURCES: The latest published version of the Alaska Heritage Resources Survey (AHRS) has been consulted for the presence or absence of historic properties, including those listed in or eligible for inclusion in the National Register of Historic Places. There are no listed or eligible properties in the vicinity of the worksite. Consultation of the AHRS constitutes the extent of cultural resource investigations by the District Commander at this time, and he is otherwise unaware of the presence of such resources. This application is being coordinated with the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO). Any comments SHPO may have concerning presently unknown archeological or historic data that may be lost or destroyed by work under the requested permit will be considered in our final assessment of the described work.

ENDANGERED SPECIES: No threatened or endangered species are known to use the project area. Preliminarily, the described activity will not affect threatened or endangered species, or modify their designated critical habitat, under the Endangered Species Act of 1973 (87 Stat. 844). This application is being coordinated with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS). Any comments they may have concerning endangered or threatened wildlife or plants or their critical habitat will be considered in our final assessment of the described work.

ESSENTIAL FISH HABITAT: The Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act, as amended by the Sustainable Fisheries Act of 1996, requires all Federal agencies to consult with the NMFS on all actions, or proposed actions, permitted, funded, or undertaken by the agency, that may adversely affect Essential Fish Habitat (EFH). Preliminarily, the described activity will not affect EFH in the project area. This Public Notice initiates EFH consultation with the NMFS. Any comments or recommendations they may have concerning EFH will be considered in our final assessment of the described work.

TRIBAL CONSULTATION: The Alaska District fully supports tribal self-governance and government-to-government relations between Federally recognized Tribes and the Federal government. Tribes with protected rights or resources that could be significantly affected by a proposed Federal action (e.g., a permit decision) have the right to consult with the Alaska District on a government-to-government basis. Views of each Tribe regarding protected rights and resources will be accorded due consideration in this process. This Public Notice serves as notification to the Tribes within the area potentially affected by the proposed work and invites their participation in the Federal decision-making process regarding the protected Tribal right or resource. Consultation may be initiated by the affected Tribe upon written request to the District Commander during the public comment period.

PUBLIC HEARING: Any person may request, in writing, within the comment period specified in this notice, that a public hearing be held to consider this application. Requests for public hearings shall state, with particularity, reasons for holding a public hearing.

EVALUATION: The decision whether to issue a permit will be based on an evaluation of the probable impacts including cumulative impacts of the proposed activity and its intended use on the public interest. Evaluation of the probable impacts, which the proposed activity may have on the public interest, requires a careful weighing of all the factors that become relevant in each particular case. The benefits, which reasonably may be expected to accrue from the proposal, must be balanced against its reasonably foreseeable detriments. The outcome of the general balancing process would determine whether to authorize a proposal, and if so, the conditions under which it will be allowed to occur. The decision should reflect the national concern for both protection and utilization of important resources. All factors, which may be relevant to the proposal, must be considered including the cumulative effects thereof. Among those are conservation, economics, aesthetics, general environmental concerns, wetlands, cultural values, fish and wildlife values, flood hazards, floodplain values, land use, navigation, shore erosion and accretion, recreation, water supply and conservation, water quality, energy needs, safety, food and fiber production, mineral needs, considerations of property ownership, and, in general, the needs and welfare of the people. For activities involving 404 discharges, a permit will be denied if the discharge that would be authorized by such permit would not comply with the Environmental Protection Agency's 404(b)(1) guidelines. Subject to the preceding sentence and any other applicable guidelines or criteria (see Sections 320.2 and 320.3), a permit will be granted unless the District Commander determines that it would be contrary to the public interest.

The Corps of Engineers 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 of Engineers 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 the 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.

AUTHORITY: This permit will be issued or denied under the following authority:

(X) Discharge dredged or fill material into waters of the United States - Section 404 Clean Water Act (33 U.S.C. 1344). Therefore, our public interest review will consider the guidelines set forth under Section 404(b) of the Clean Water Act (40 CFR 230).

Project drawings and Notice of Application for State Water Quality Certification are enclosed with this Public Notice.

District Commander
U.S. Army, Corps of Engineers

Enclosures

STATE OF ALASKA

DEPT. OF ENVIRONMENTAL CONSERVATION
DIVISION OF WATER
401 Certification Program
Non-Point Source Water Pollution Control Program

DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL CONSERVATION
WQM/401 CERTIFICATION
555 CORDOVA STREET
ANCHORAGE, ALASKA 99501-2617
PHONE: (907) 269-7564/FAX: (907) 334-2415

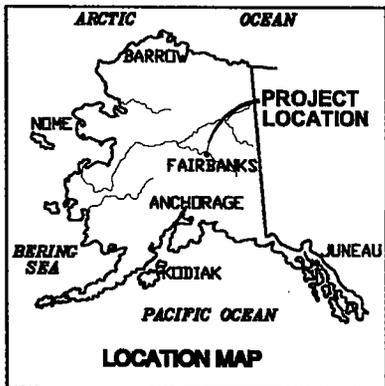
**NOTICE OF APPLICATION
FOR
STATE WATER QUALITY CERTIFICATION**

Any applicant for a federal license or permit to conduct an activity that might result in a discharge into navigable waters, in accordance with Section 401 of the Clean Water Act of 1977 (PL95-217), also must apply for and obtain certification from the Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation that the discharge will comply with the Clean Water Act, the Alaska Water Quality Standards, and other applicable State laws. By agreement between the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and the Department of Environmental Conservation, application for a Department of the Army permit to discharge dredged or fill material into navigable waters under Section 404 of the Clean Water Act also may serve as application for State Water Quality Certification.

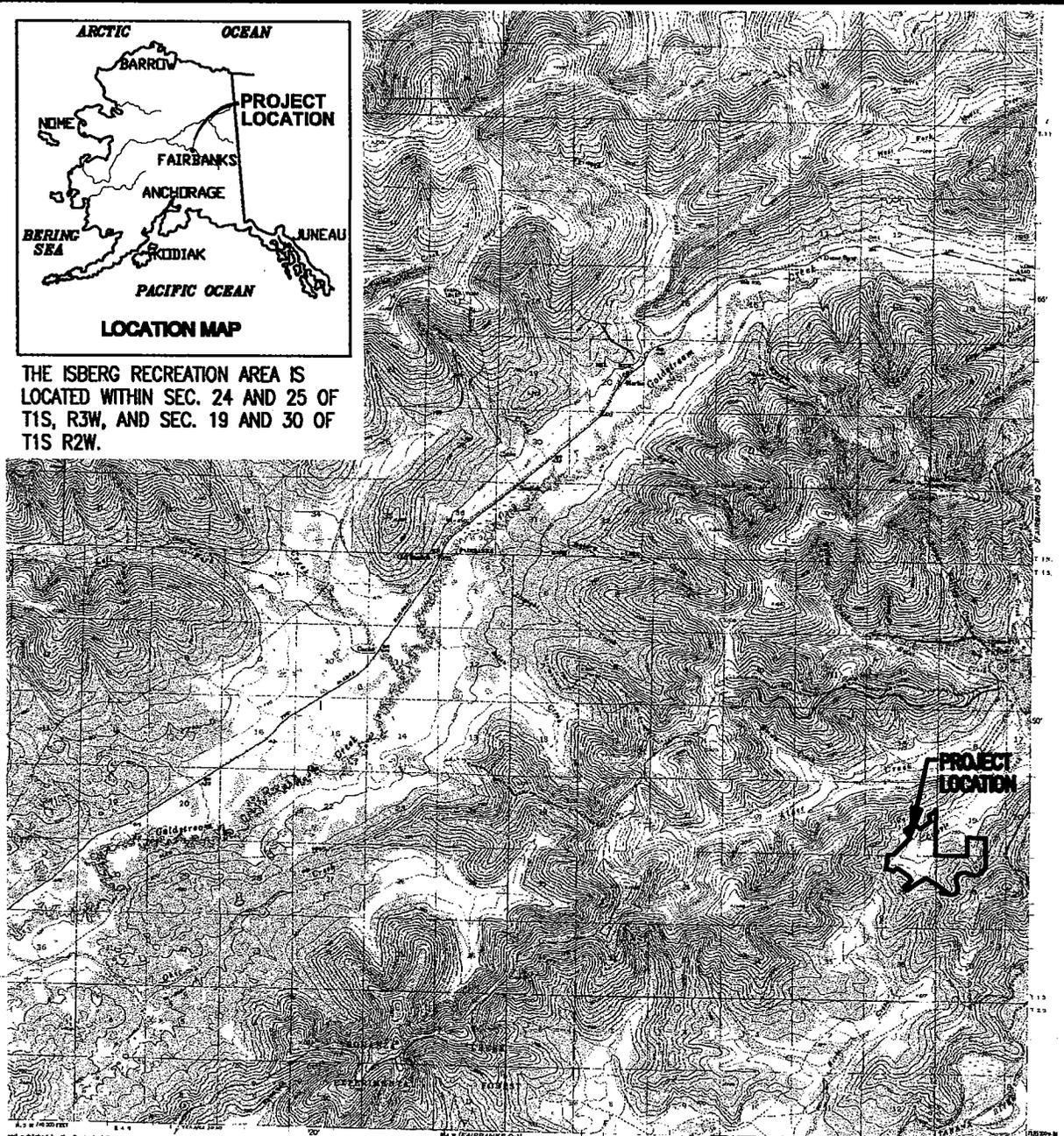
Notice is hereby given that the application for a Department of the Army Permit described in the Corps of Engineers' Public Notice No. **POA-2008-756, Cripple Creek**, serves as application for State Water Quality Certification from the Department of Environmental Conservation.

After reviewing the application, the Department may certify there is reasonable assurance the activity, and any discharge that might result, will comply with the Clean Water Act, the Alaska Water Quality Standards, and other applicable State laws. The Department also may deny or waive certification.

Any person desiring to comment on the project, with respect to Water Quality Certification, may submit written comments to the address above by the expiration date of the Corps of Engineer's Public Notice.



THE ISBERG RECREATION AREA IS LOCATED WITHIN SEC. 24 AND 25 OF T1S, R3W, AND SEC. 19 AND 30 OF T1S R2W.



Scale: 1" = 2 MILES

FOR SALE BY U. S. GEOLOGICAL SURVEY
 FAIRBANKS, ALASKA 99701, DENVER, COLORADO 80202, OR RESTON, VIRGINIA 20192

ROAD CLASSIFICATION ON
 Mainly
 Highway
 Highway
 Scale: 1:62,500

FAIRBANKS (D-3), ALASKA
 16445-01-2680/7500

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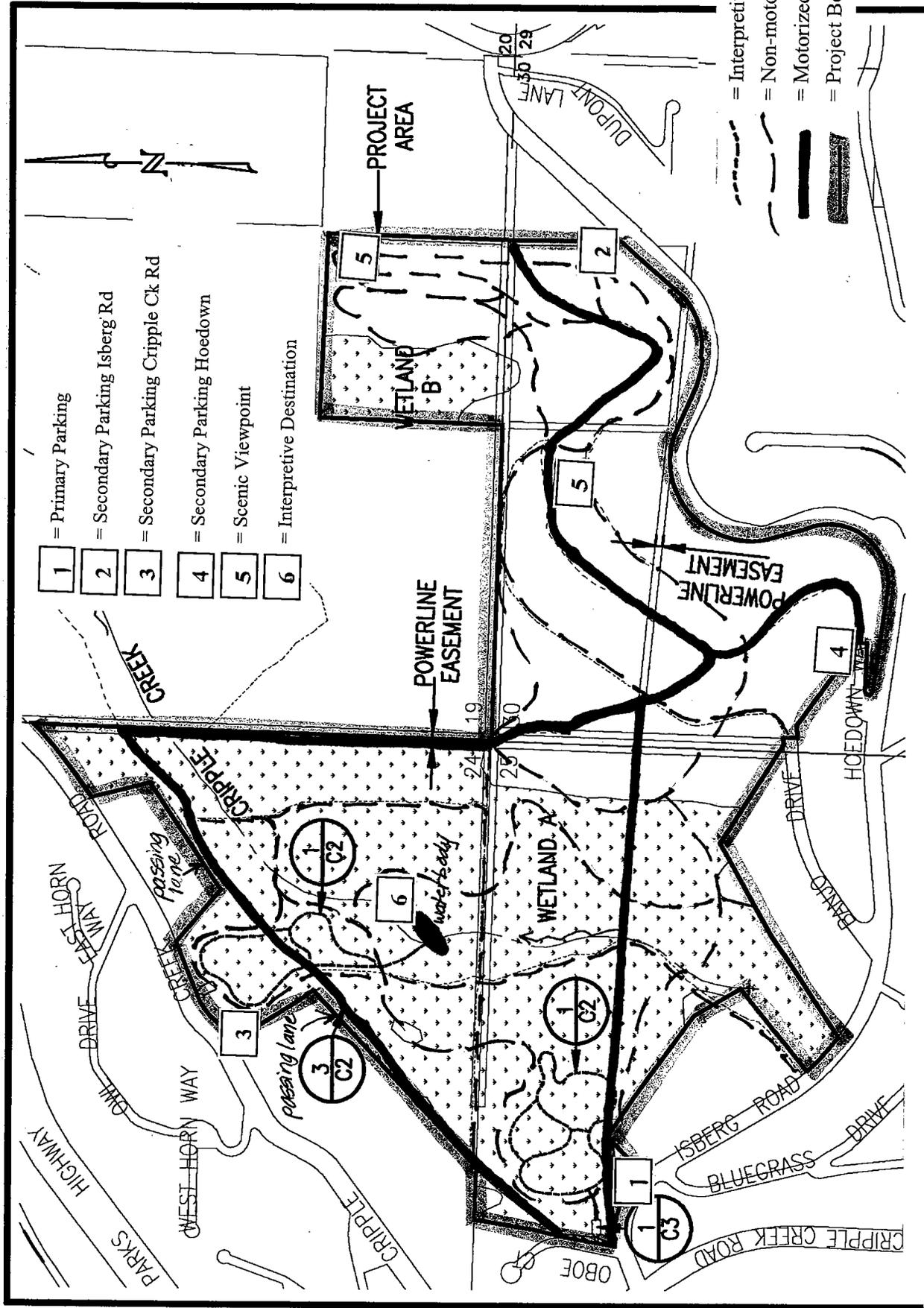


ISBERG RECREATION AREA PHASE 1
 WETLAND PERMIT APPLICATION
 PROJECT LOCATION

DR: YYZ CHK: LLT PAGE

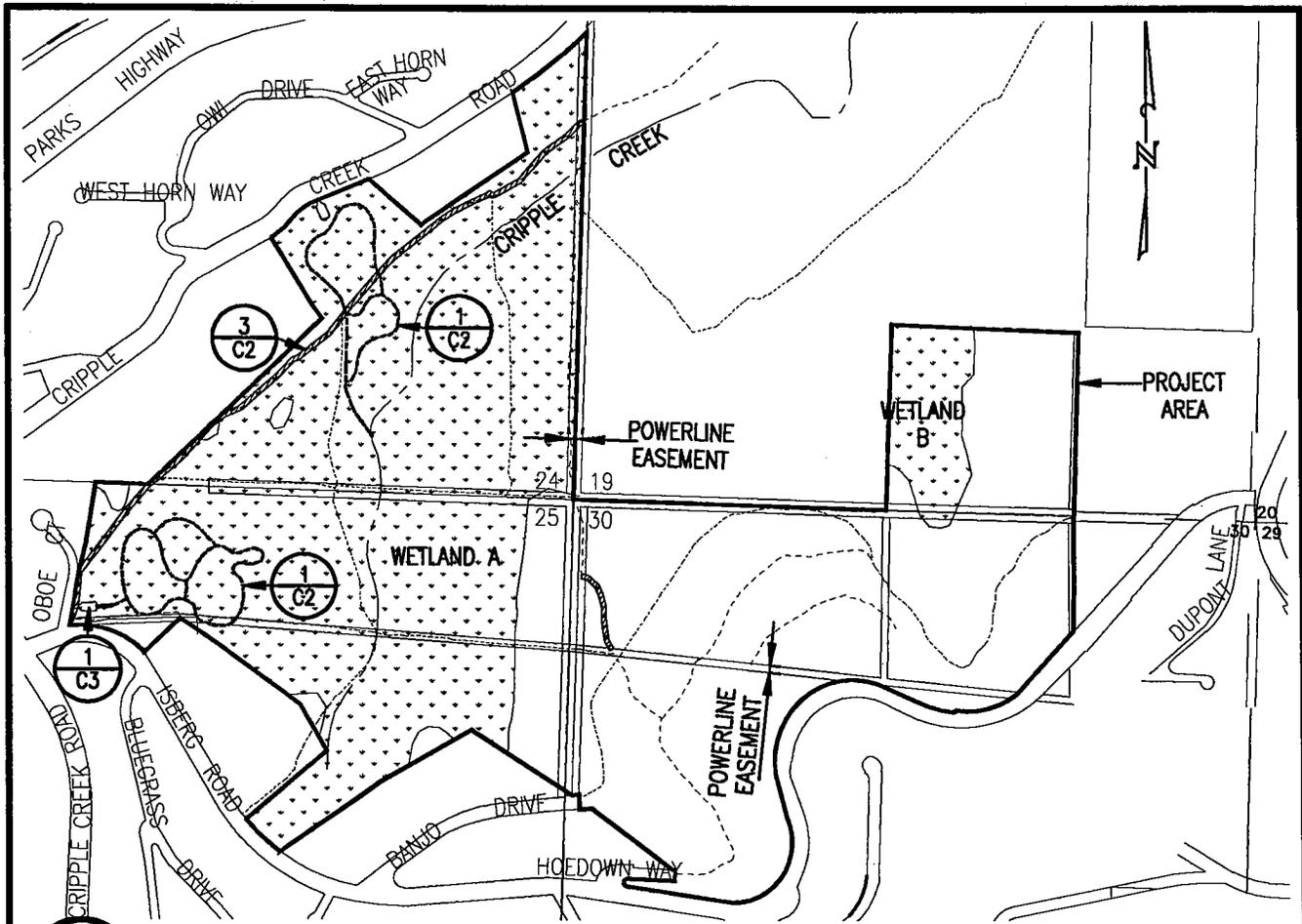
FNSB Dept. of Parks & Recreation
 POA-2008-756, Cripple Creek
 Plans prepared: Sep. 26, 2008, by S. Seim

Project Location
 1" ≈ 2.3 miles



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Recreation Area Site Plan



1 PROJECT PLAN

C1 1" = 1250'

GENERAL INFORMATION

PROJECT AREA: 452 AC.
 MOTORIZED TRAIL LENGTH: 3.80 MI.
 ADA ACCESSIBLE TRAIL LENGTH: 1.59 MI.

WETLANDS: 250 AC.
 IN WETLANDS: 0.97 MI.
 IN WETLANDS: 1.59 MI.

FOOTPRINTS OF PROJECT IN WETLANDS:

BY MOTORIZED TRAIL: 0.59 AC.
 BY ADA ACCESSIBLE BOARDWALK: 1.54 AC.
 BY PARKING AREA: 0.32 AC.
 TOTAL: 2.45 AC.

FILL MATERIAL:

BY MOTORIZED TRAIL: 472 CU.YDS.
 BY ADA ACCESSIBLE BOARDWALK: 1180 CU.YDS.
 BY PARKING AREA: 1643 CU.YDS.
 TOTAL: 3295 CU.YDS.

WETLAND DELINEATION SOURCE: DESIGN ALASKA INC. ENVIRONMENTAL TEAM.

LEDGEND

- EXISTING TRAIL
- ===== NEW MOTORIZED TRAIL
- NEW ADA ACCESSIBLE BOARDWALK
- PROPERTY LINE
- CREEK
- WETLAND

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**ISBERG RECREATION AREA PHASE 1
 WETLAND PERMIT APPLICATION**

PROJECT PLAN

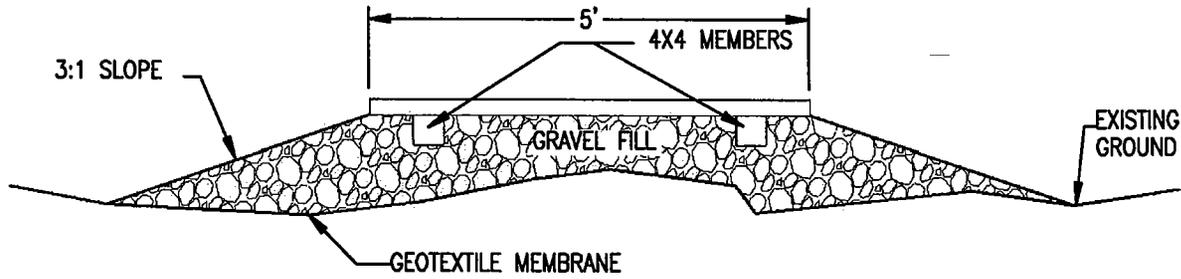
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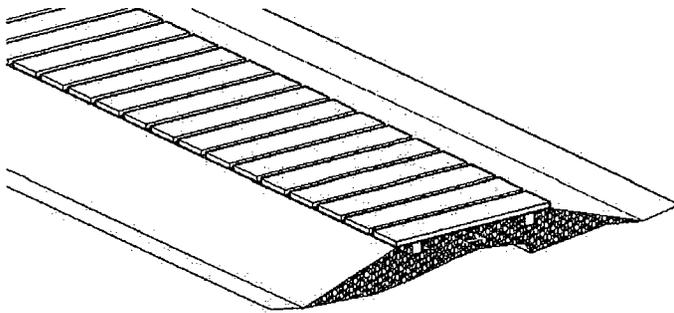
Phase I Project Plan

1" = 1250 feet

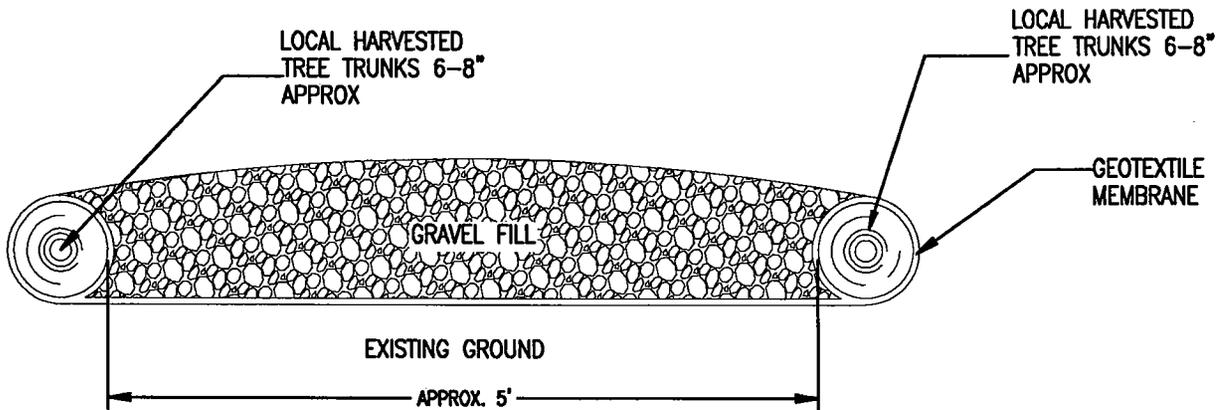
Page 3 of 8



1 WOODEN ADA ACCESSIBLE BOARDWALK
C2 NO SCALE



2 WOODEN ADA ACCESSIBLE BOARDWALK
C2 NO SCALE



3 HARDENED TRAIL FOR MOTORIZED USE
C2 NO SCALE

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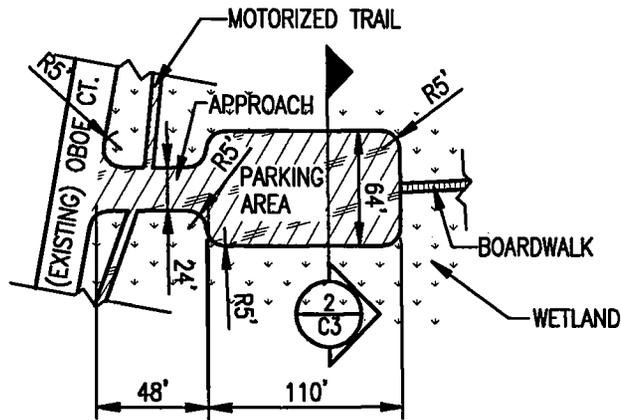


ISBERG RECREATION AREA PHASE 1
 WETLAND PERMIT APPLICATION
 TRAIL SECTIONS

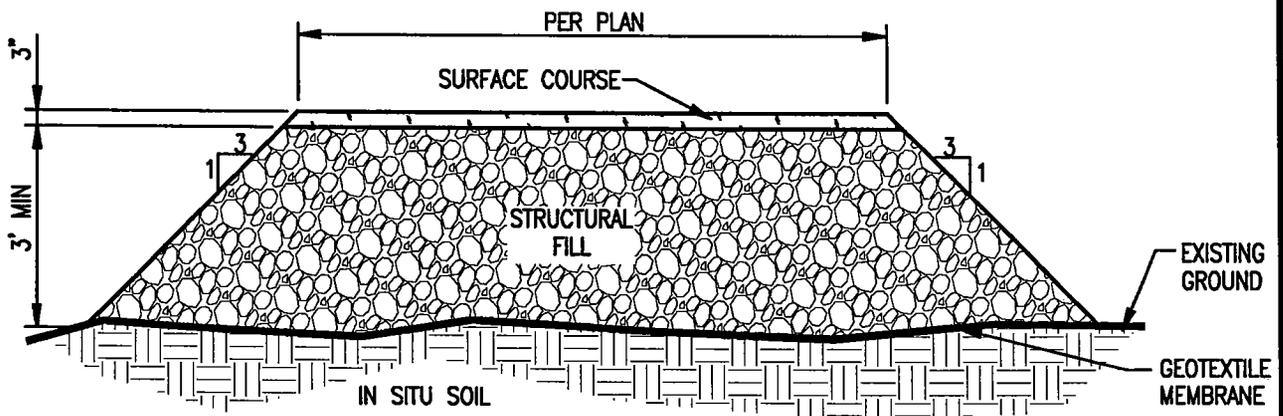
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Trail Sections
 NTS



1 PARKING PAD PLAN #1
C3 NO SCALE



2 PARKING PAD CROSS SECTION
C3 NO SCALE

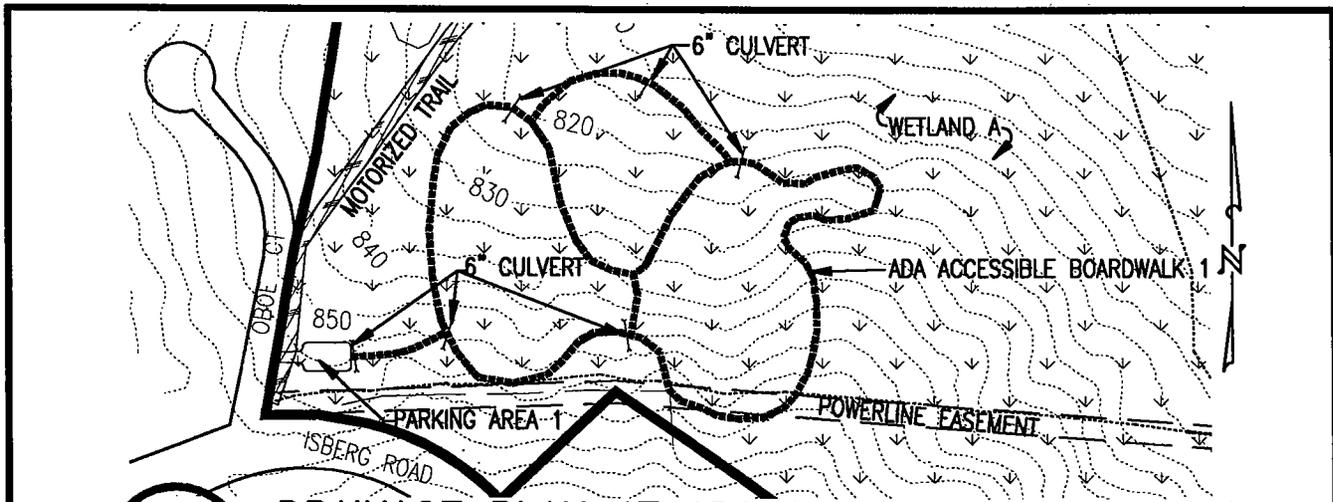
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ISBERG RECREATION AREA PHASE 1
 WETLAND PERMIT APPLICATION
 PARKING AREA PLAN AND SECTION

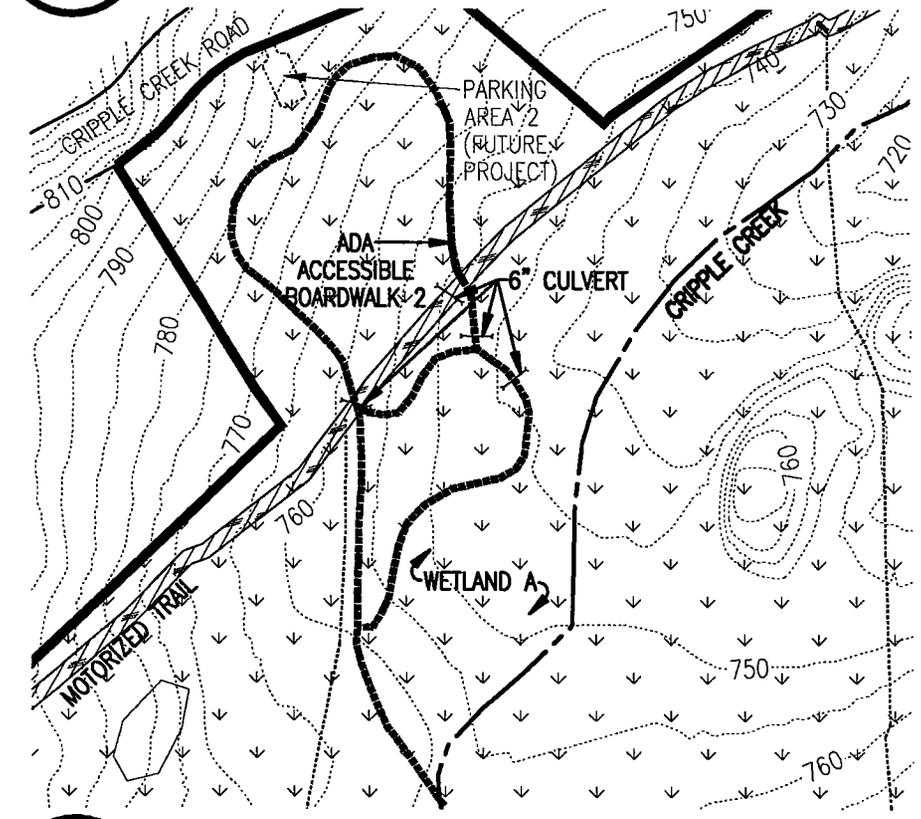
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1 DRAINAGE PLAN AT ADA ACCESSIBLE BOARDWALK 1

C4 1" = 400'

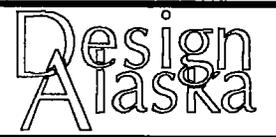


2 DRAINAGE PLAN AT ADA ACCESSIBLE BOARDWALK 2

C4 1" = 400'

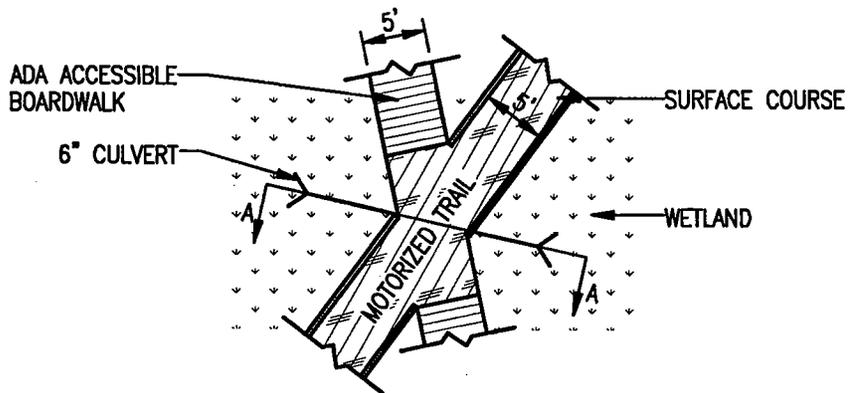
NOTE
THE DRAINAGE PLAN FOR ISBERG RECREATION AREA INCLUDES TEN CULVERTS. ALL ARE LOCATED WITHIN WETLAND A.

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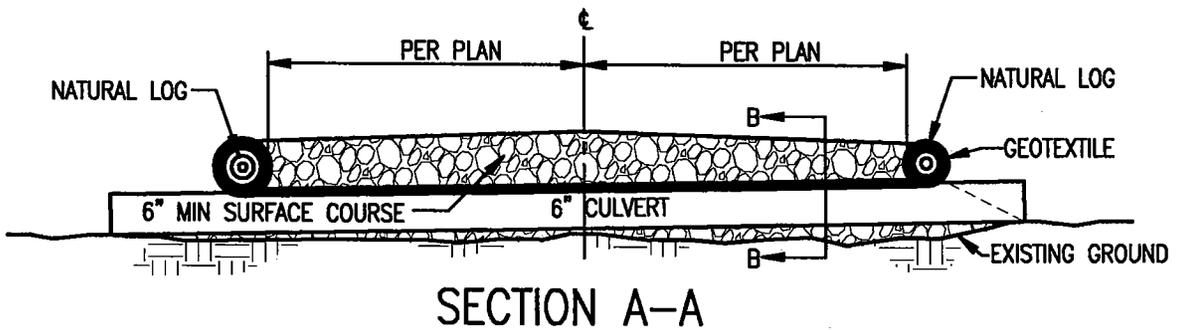


**ISBERG RECREATION AREA PHASE 1
WETLAND PERMIT APPLICATION**
DRAINAGE PLANS

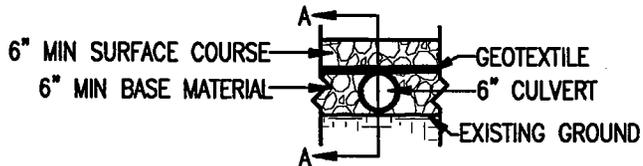
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FNSB Dept. of Parks & Recreation POA-2008-756, Cripple Creek Plans prepared: Sep. 26, 2008, by S. Seim		



1 CULVERT AT MOTORIZED TRAIL PLAN
 C5 NO SCALE



SECTION A-A



SECTION B-B

2 CULVERT AT MOTORIZED TRAIL SECTIONS
 C5 NO SCALE

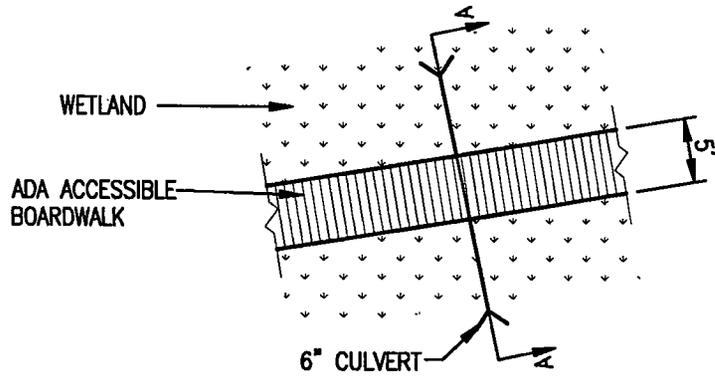
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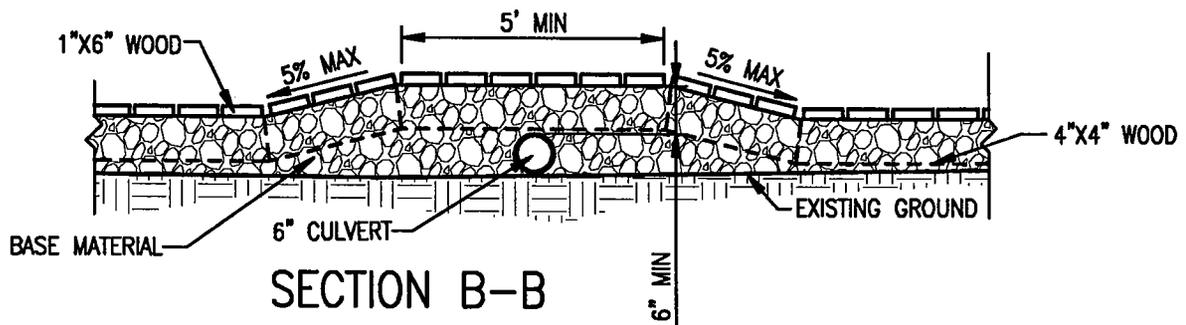
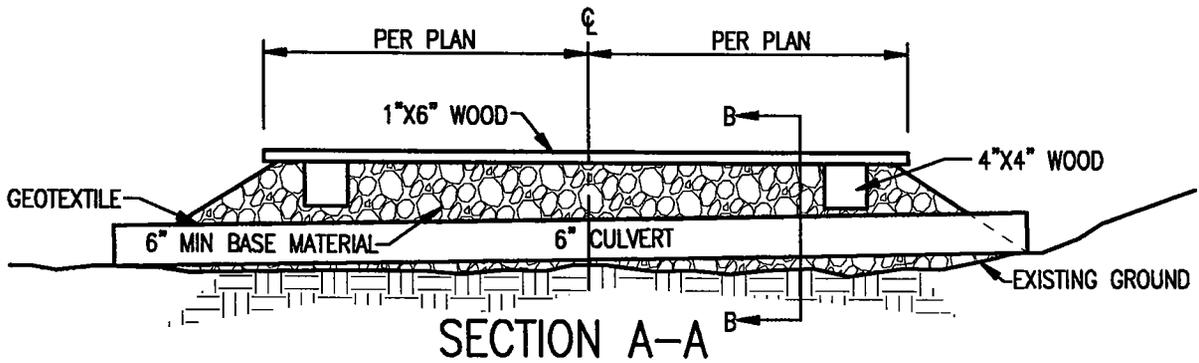
ISBERG RECREATION AREA PHASE 1
 WETLAND PERMIT APPLICATION
 CULVERT DETAILS

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 POA-2008-756, Cripple Creek
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1 CULVERT AT ADA ACCESSIBLE BOARDWALK PLAN
C6 NO SCALE



2 CULVERT AT ADA ACCESSIBLE BOARDWALK SECTIONS
C6 NO SCALE

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ISBERG RECREATION AREA PHASE 1
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 CULVERT DETAILS

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Boardwalk Culverts
 NTS