



United States Department of the Interior
BUREAU OF RECLAMATION
Phoenix Area Office
6150 West Thunderbird Road
Glendale, Arizona 85306-4001



PXAO-1500
ENV-6.00

MEMORANDUM

To: All Interested Persons, Organizations, and Agencies

From: Randy N. Chandler
Area Manager

Subject: Notice of Public Scoping Period - Proposed Rehabilitation of the Casa Blanca Canal on the Gila River Indian Reservation (Action by June 2, 2011)

This letter is being offered to the public to encourage early and meaningful participation in the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) review of a proposed Casa Blanca Canal lining and rehabilitation project on lands within the Gila River Indian Reservation, Arizona. The project is proposed by the Gila River Indian Community (Community)/Pima-Maricopa Irrigation Project (P-MIP) and would use Federal funds from the Bureau of Reclamation. After the public scoping period has ended, Reclamation, as the lead Federal agency for compliance with NEPA, will prepare an Environmental Assessment (EA) to evaluate the potential environmental consequences of the proposed project. The Community/P-MIP and Bureau of Indian Affairs will serve as cooperating agencies in the preparation of the EA.

The P-MIP is constructing an extensive irrigation system to serve farmlands within the Community. The Casa Blanca Canal is one of the major irrigation delivery canals of this system. The canal begins at a turnout from the Pima Canal along Olberg Road, less than 1 mile north of State Route 87, and traverses west for 16 miles (Figure 1). The purpose of the project is to improve delivery service by enhancing the efficiency of the irrigation system and by providing more flexibility in its operations to respond to changing needs and conditions.

More specifically, the purpose of the project is to conserve water, reduce operation and maintenance costs, and improve irrigation water delivery service to the Community farmland. To address this purpose, the proposed project includes rehabilitation and modernization of the Casa Blanca Canal. Primary activities of the rehabilitation would be lining the canal with concrete to reduce seepage, modifying the canal prism (cross-sections and profiles) and straightening segments of the alignment to increase system efficiency, and including modernized measurement and control amenities (e.g., check structures, siphons, control gates, turnout structures) to improve delivery service. The project would also include improvements to some

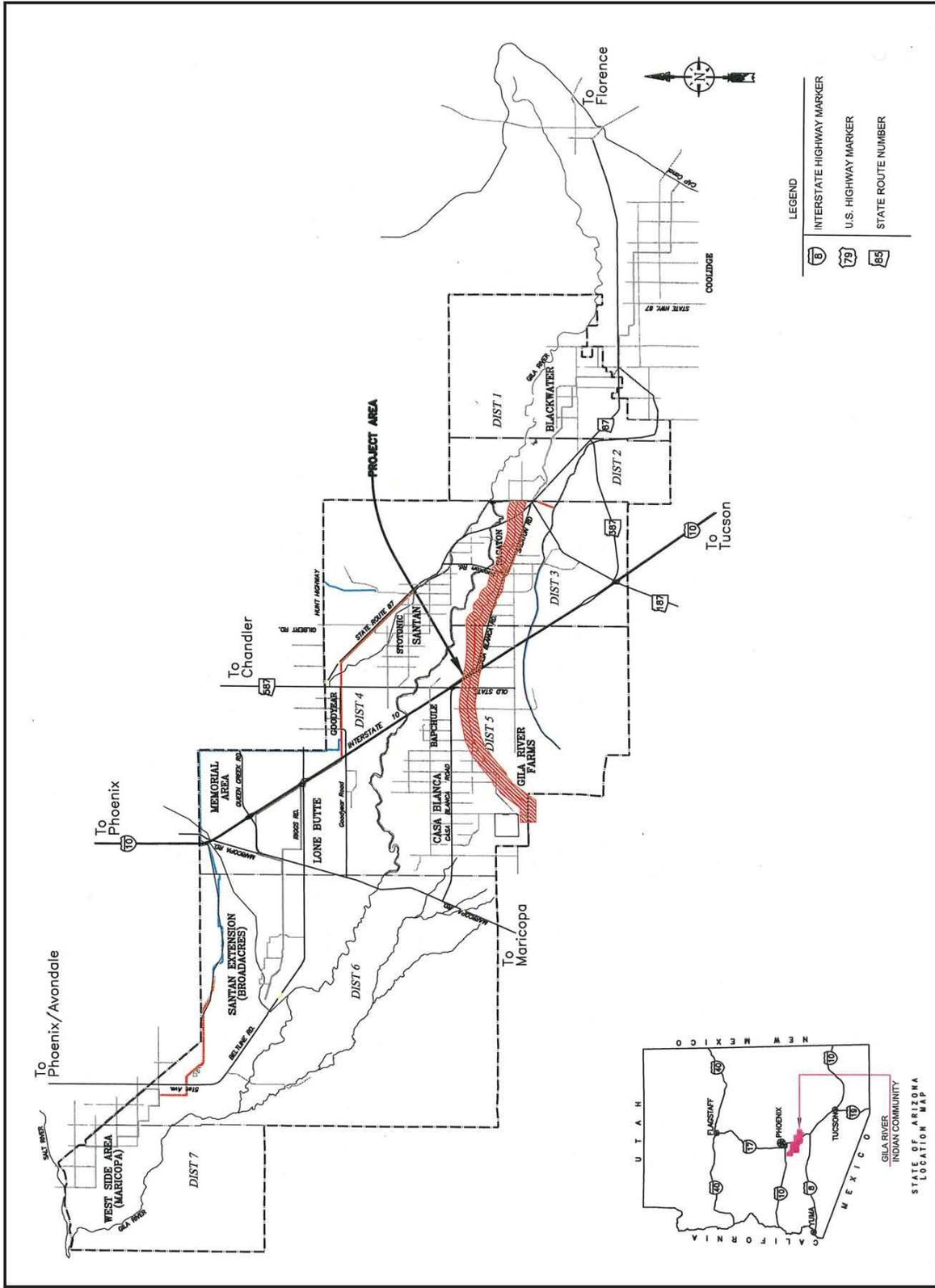
wash and roadway crossings within the canal right-of-way. During construction, the proposed project would utilize existing and new diversion channels to bypass flows around the construction zone within the established right-of-way.

You are encouraged to offer comments on the scope of the upcoming EA, including potential environmental issues and alternatives to the proposed project that would meet the stated purpose and need. Your comments should be submitted by June 2, 2011, to be considered in the Draft EA. Comments can be mailed to Mr. John McGlothlen at the Bureau of Reclamation, Phoenix Area Office, 6150 West Thunderbird Road, Glendale, Arizona 85306; or faxed to 623-773-6486; or emailed to jmcglothlen@usbr.gov. Hand-delivered written comments may be submitted to the aforementioned address between 7:30 a.m. and 4:00 p.m., Monday through Friday, excluding Federal holidays.

By law, the names and addresses of those providing comments are available for public review. However, individuals may request that their name and/or address be withheld from the record. These requests will be honored to the extent allowable by law. If you wish your name and/or address withheld, you must state this prominently at the beginning of your comment letter. All comments from organizations or businesses will be available for public inspection in their entirety.

For additional information, please contact Mr. McGlothlen at the address above, by telephone at 623-773-6256, or by email.

Attachment - Figure 1



W009-269001B10(F).fig

Figure 1. Project location and vicinity