



Cochise County
Community Development
Highway and Floodplain Division

Public Programs...Personal Service
www.cochise.az.gov

INTEROFFICE MEMO

Date: April 2, 2015
To: Board of Supervisors
From: Terry Couchenour, GIS Analyst
Subject: Abandonment of a portion of a public drainage easement adjoining Coronado Memorial Road

Recommendation: This department recommends acceptance of the accompanying resolution to abandon an unnecessary portion of a public drainage easement as part of the Ash Canyon Creek Crossing Project on Coronado Memorial Road.

Background (Brief): Due to the 2011 Monument Fire, the watershed of Ash Canyon Creek has been severely damaged. High storm water flows have damaged the crossing of Ash Canyon Creek and Coronado Memorial Road and flooding tops over the roadway causing the roadway to be closed.

In February of 2013, the Flood Control District Board approved Resolution FCD 13-02 authorizing County participation in a Federal Lands Access Grant to provide an improved culvert crossing to carry water flows under Coronado Memorial Road. County participation includes the acquisition of 4 approximately 80' by 80' drainage easements across 2 private properties. These 4 proposed new easements are to augment an existing 50' wide drainage easement that was granted to the public via the Board of Supervisors in 1975.

The downstream property owner, east of Coronado Memorial Road, is also affected by the significant storm water flows at this location and has expended resources to control flows within their ranch. The property owner and the ranch manager have concerns about the improved culvert. They are supportive of the need for road safety, and due to the project, desire to expend additional resources to manage flows immediately downstream of the project. The property owner is not interested in the County's monetary offer for the new easements. Instead the property owner has proposed to grant the new easements in exchange for 3 conditions. These conditions are:

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1. Release (remove the County's ownership of) that portion of the 1975 easement outside of the project area to further enable the property owner to control flows within the ranch and protect the ranch property.
2. Permit the private installation of drainage structures (gabion baskets) downstream of the County's project.
3. Limit the removal of trees within the project area. The property owner and ranch manager understand that certain trees will need to be removed in order to complete the County's project. Their concern is regarding the clearing of trees that do not interfere with the project, as these trees aid in retaining soil.

The Highway and Floodplain division has reviewed this counter offer and recommends acceptance. The concern regarding the trees has been forwarded to Central Federal Lands who is overseeing the construction aspect of the project. The property owner has provided the division with a permit for the private drainage structures and the division will work with the property owner to complete the permit process. The division has reviewed that portion of the 1975 easement and recommends that the portion outside of the project area is unnecessary.

Based on the above, the division requests that the Board adopt the accompanying resolution to abandon the unnecessary portion of the 1975 easement.

Fiscal Impact & Funding Sources: N/A

Next Steps/Action Items/Follow-up: Upon approval of the resolution, a copy will be provided to the property owner and the division's title service provider. The title service provider will then proceed to formalize the new easement conveyance.

Impact of Not Approving: If this resolution is not approved, new easements will not be conveyed and alternative efforts will be required to complete the project.

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