

**FINAL
SOLAR PONDS PLUME PROJECT**

**CONSTRUCTION CLOSEOUT REPORT
FISCAL YEAR 1999**

Rocky Flats Environmental Technology Site

June 1, 2000



Best Available Copy

ATMOSPHERIC
I101-B-000063

Y17

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	<u>Page</u>
1.0 INTRODUCTION.....	1
2.0 PROJECT BACKGROUND.....	1
3.0 GROUNDWATER SYSTEM INSTALLATION	2
4.0 DEVIATIONS FROM THE DECISION DOCUMENT	3
5.0 REFERENCES.....	5

FIGURES

FIGURE 1. GROUNDWATER SYSTEM LOCATIONS	5
FIGURE 2. TREATMENT SYSTEM DETAILS	6

PHOTOGRAPHS

SOLAR PONDS PLUME PROJECT PHOTOGRAPHS.....	7
--	---

APPENDIX

AS BUILT DRAWINGS – TRENCH PROFILES	in back
---	---------

ACRONYM LIST

CDPHE	Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment
DOE	Department of Energy
EPA	Environmental Protection Agency
HDPE	High-Density Polyethylene
ITS	Interceptor Trench System
ITPH	Interceptor Trench Pump House
mg/l	milligrams per liter
pCi/l	Picocuries per liter
PVC	Polyvinyl Chloride
RFCA	Rocky Flats Cleanup Agreement
RFETS	Rocky Flats Environmental Technology Site
RMRS	Rocky Mountain Remediation Services

1.0 INTRODUCTION

This report documents the completion of construction of the collection and treatment system for the Solar Ponds Plume Project at the Rocky Flats Environmental Technology Site (RFETS). This project was conducted in accordance with the Solar Ponds Plume Decision Document (RMRS 1999).

As a result of past waste storage practices at the Solar Ponds, nitrate and uranium are present in groundwater in excess of the Action Level Framework Tier II level groundwater concentrations defined in the Rocky Flats Cleanup Agreement (RFCA) (DOE 1996). The contaminated groundwater has migrated away from the source area towards North Walnut Creek.

As defined in the Decision Document (RMRS 1999), the objectives of this project were to:

- Protect North Walnut Creek by reducing the mass loading of nitrate to surface water and ensure that surface water standards are met in the Creek.
- Design and install a passive system to intercept and treat the contaminated groundwater of the Solar Ponds Plume to remove nitrate.
- Design and construct the reactive barrier system in a manner which minimizes the generation of low-level mixed waste and/or hazardous waste and protects the habitat of Preble's Meadow Jumping Mouse, which was added to the Threatened Species List on May 18, 1998.
- Design the reactive barrier system to allow easy access for operation and maintenance and for reactive media replacement or removal.
- Evaluate the effectiveness of reactive barrier system in removing nitrate.
- Evaluate long-term effectiveness of the treatment system.

2.0 PROJECT BACKGROUND

Five Solar Evaporation Ponds, located in the northeast corner of the Protected Area, were used to store and evaporate radioactive and hazardous liquid wastes. These ponds were drained and sludge removal was completed in 1995. Removal of the sludges eliminated the nitrate and uranium source for the Solar Ponds Plume (RMRS 1999).

To dewater the hillside, six interceptor trenches were installed in 1971. The original six trenches were abandoned in place and the current Interceptor Trench System (ITS) was installed in 1981. The ITS is generally keyed into bedrock and effectively collects much of the water; however some groundwater underflows the collection system, and eventually discharges to North Walnut Creek. About 2.4 million gallons of water were collected from the ITS each year, pumped to the modular storage tanks for storage, and then pumped to Building 374 for evaporation (RMRS 1999).

The Solar Ponds are located on the flat surface at the northern edge of the pediment. A north facing hillside slopes downward to North Walnut Creek. In the Solar Ponds area, the Rocky Flats Alluvium is

up to 23 feet thick. The area of the ITS is primarily covered with a thin layer of colluvium. Bedrock is composed of weathered claystone of the Arapahoe and Laramie Formations. In addition, the Arapahoe No. 1 Sandstone subcrops under the alluvium in the Solar Ponds area. The sandstone does not extend into the drainage, but tends to direct groundwater flow into the collection system (RMRS 1999).

The existing ITS system and the bedrock surface features primarily control groundwater flow. Areas of unsaturated colluvium and shallow bedrock are common. Groundwater flow in the colluvium follows small, north-south trending paleochannels cut into the underlying bedrock claystone.

The Solar Ponds Plume consists of nitrate and uranium contaminated groundwater that extends primarily northward from the source area towards the North Walnut Creek. The highest concentrations of uranium in groundwater are found adjacent to the Solar Ponds, while the higher concentrations of nitrates are found at a greater distance from the ponds. The nitrate plume has a greater areal extent than the uranium plume. The data suggest that while there is uranium in groundwater near North Walnut Creek it is naturally occurring and not part of the uranium plume. The ITS system does drain a portion of the uranium plume and the water from the ITS does contain uranium from that portion of the plume. The average concentration observed recently at the Interceptor Trench Pump House (ITPH) is 220 mg/l nitrate, and 61 pCi/l uranium.

3.0 SYSTEM INSTALLATION

A groundwater collection and treatment system was installed to passively capture and treat the contaminated groundwater. System installation began in June 1999 and was completed on September 22, 1999. The groundwater collection system extends approximately 1,100 feet in an east-west direction (Figure 1). Construction was restricted to the disturbed area around the North Perimeter Road to reduce impacts to Preble's Mouse habitat. Revegetation and regrading was completed in October 1999.

To install the collection system, an excavation was dug at a variable depth of approximately 20 to 30 feet below ground surface and approximately 10 feet into claystone. An impermeable barrier was installed that consists of 80-mil high-density polyethylene (HDPE) panels fitted with an interlocking strip on each side. A hydrophilic cord was threaded through the entire length of the interlock. This cord swells when wet, further sealing the panels together. These panels are 15 feet wide and of a variable height depending on the installation depth. The collection trench cuts across the existing ITS system and intercepts the collected ITS water system upstream of the barrier. The existing ITS is now used to enhance recovery by the collection trench.

The bottom of the collection trench was filled with bentonite pellets to limit bypass or leakage. On the upgradient side of the barrier, approximately one foot of sand was placed over the bentonite. A four-inch perforated HDPE groundwater collection line was bedded into the sand, and piped to the reactor vessel. Sand was then placed around and several feet above the horizontal collection line. The trench was then backfilled. Four piezometers were installed in the collection trench for monitoring water levels within the collection system (Figure 1).

A 46-foot long by 21-foot wide (exterior dimensions) concrete treatment vessel was installed below grade to treat the contaminated groundwater. The location of the treatment vessel was determined by the Preble's Mouse habitat, and by the results of the geotechnical survey. Because of the Preble's Mouse habitat limitations, the treatment cell could not be placed within the stream drainage. Therefore, approximately 12 feet of hydraulic head is required in the collection trench before water enters the treatment cells.

The exterior treatment vessel walls are 2 feet thick and extend approximately 25 feet to the ground surface, for ease in locating the cells and replacing the media. The vessel is divided into two treatment cells by an 18-inch thick, 12-foot high, internal wall. Treatment media occupies the lower 10 feet of each cell. Geomembrane was placed over the media to prevent backfilled materials from settling into the treatment media. The vessel was backfilled with wood chips to reduce the weight over the treatment media, with a final soil cap placed to reduce precipitation infiltration. Small weep holes were installed just above the geomembrane in the north wall of the treatment vessel. These small holes allow precipitation and runoff to drain out of the vessel without entering the treatment media.

The first cell is 31 feet 6 inches long by 17 feet wide (interior dimensions) and is filled with a mixture of sawdust and leaf mold with 10% zero-valent iron by weight to induce denitrification and to remove the uranium by chemical reduction. The media was selected on the basis of bench scale tests conducted at the University of Waterloo. The second cell is 10 feet 6 inches long by 17 feet wide (interior dimensions) and is filled with zero-valent iron to act as a final polisher. There is a one-foot thick layer of gravel at the bottom of both treatment cells. Wood chips at the top of the largest cell and a simple polyvinyl chloride (PVC) pipe dispersion gallery over the upgradient half of the cell spread out the contaminated groundwater over the treatment media. The two treatment cells can be run in series or in parallel. Figure 2 shows the details of the treatment vessel.

The uppermost (southernmost) trench of the ITS was gravel-filled to the ground surface and was designed to collect surface water from the Solar Ponds area. Because the surface water is not contaminated, this trench was blocked to reduce surface water collection by the new system. It is estimated that up to 700,000 gallons of water were collected and treated from this trench. A nominal 2-foot deep trench was excavated over the upper trench, 20 mil HDPE membrane was laid over the gravel, and the excavation was refilled with native soil mixed with the gravel removed from the trench.

4.0 DEVIATIONS FROM THE DECISION DOCUMENT

Three minor modifications were made to the design as presented in the Solar Ponds Plume Decision Document (RMRS 1999). In accordance with RFCA (DOE 1996), the minor modifications were discussed with Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment (CDPHE). Verbal concurrence was obtained prior to implementing these changes.

The collection system, as designed and installed, is approximately 250 feet longer than was originally specified in the Decision Document. The collected system was extended to the west to reduce the potential for groundwater flow around the collection system. Ending the collection trench at the treatment cell, as specified in the Decision Document, would result in 11 feet of water being held against the end of the trench. Therefore the collection trench was extended to the west into an area of higher bedrock. The

elevation of the western end of the collection system rises, thereby minimizing the potential for groundwater flow around the collection system.

A well cluster was installed north of the collection system to provide additional data and for performance monitoring purposes. Three wells were planned with the intent to monitor the colluvium, upper weathered bedrock, and lower weathered bedrock. When the first well was installed, it was noted that only 7 feet of weathered bedrock is present at this location. The decision was then made to install one well to monitor the entire weathered bedrock interval at this location as wells in the upper and lower weathered bedrock were expected to give similar results. Therefore, only two wells were installed; one to monitor the colluvium (70099) and one to monitor the weathered bedrock (70299).

To expedite installation of the collection trench, a working bench was cut approximately 10 feet deep to reduce the depth of the excavation required for installation of the collection system. Barrier panels were originally planned to extend from the bottom of the collection trench to about 2 feet below ground surface as shown in the Decision Document. However, as groundwater flow is generally in the colluvium immediately above the bedrock surface and in the weathered bedrock, the panels were shortened to approximately the depth of the working bench. In addition, the pre-existing ITS now funnels the groundwater into the new collection system along pre-existing laterals. Based on the depth to water and the depth of the existing ITS piping, downgradient flow is effectively blocked, and the groundwater plume is effectively captured. Modifications are as follows.

- At the western end of the system, (the western 350 feet) groundwater within the collection trench will be at the highest elevation. Panels were installed at an elevation of 5893, approximately 8 feet above the projected groundwater table and between 5 and 10 feet below ground surface.
- For the middle 350 feet of the collection system, the tops of panels are approximately 10 feet below ground surface.
- At the eastern end of the system, (the eastern 250 feet) the top of panels are approximately 5 below ground surface due to the location of ITS collection pipes about 10 feet below ground surface.

While not part of the Decision Document, two minor changes in the design were necessitated by utilities that were not located as shown on the Site drawings. The first minor change was required by the ITS line entering the ITPH at a lower elevation than anticipated. When the discharge system was initially excavated, it was noted that the discharge area would be 3 feet higher than the ITS line. The discharge area was then moved about 20 feet further east to the lowest point along the road. Water from the system now drains into the discharge gallery.

The second minor design change was caused by the location of the 60-inch reinforced concrete storm drain that was approximately 30 feet east of where it is shown on Site drawings. The storm drain could not be relocated, and it interfered with placement of the last panel. The top of the storm drain is above the level of groundwater in the trench and above the ITS lines. Placing the panel on top of the storm drain would not result in capture or storage of groundwater. Placing the panel underneath the storm drain could weaken it, and would open a preferential pathway for groundwater to leave the system. Therefore, the last panel was not placed. Instead, 10 supersacks of bentonite, at approximately 3,500 pounds each, were

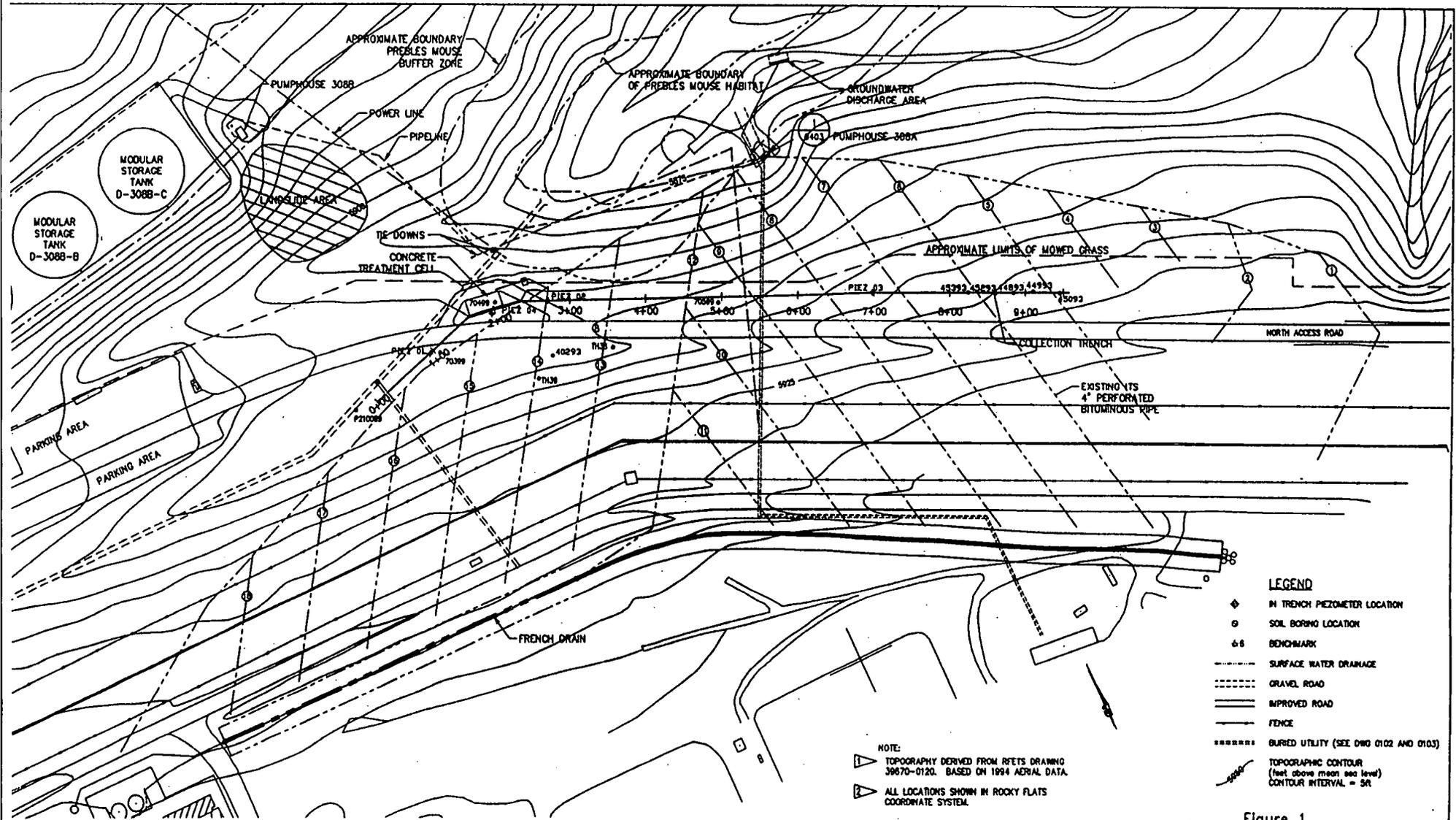
used to seal off the western end of the collection trench including the area around the storm drain. This is sufficient to keep water in the collection trench and to block discharge of water around the storm drain.

Also of note, a large tear occurred in the panels immediately adjacent to the treatment cell. The tear was patched using hot welding techniques. Two bags of bentonite were placed in front of the repaired area to further prevent leakage.

REFERENCES

DOE, 1996, *Final Rocky Flats Cleanup Agreement*, Rocky Flats Environmental Technology Site, Golden, CO, July.

RMRS, 1999, *Final Solar Ponds Plume Decision Document*, RF/RMRS-98-286.UN.



- LEGEND**
- ◆ IN TRENCH PIEZOMETER LOCATION
 - SOIL BORING LOCATION
 - ⊕ BENCHMARK
 - - - SURFACE WATER DRAINAGE
 - - - GRAVEL ROAD
 - ==== IMPROVED ROAD
 - FENCE
 - ***** BURIED UTILITY (SEE DWG 0102 AND 0103)
 - ~ TOPOGRAPHIC CONTOUR (feet above mean sea level) CONTOUR INTERVAL = 5ft

NOTE:

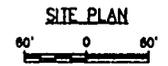
- ▶ TOPOGRAPHY DERIVED FROM RFETS DRAWING 38670-0120. BASED ON 1994 AERIAL DATA.
- ▶ ALL LOCATIONS SHOWN IN ROCKY FLATS COORDINATE SYSTEM.

Figure 1
Groundwater System Locations

RMRS Rocky Mountain Remediation Services, L.L.C.
Rocky Flats Environmental Technology Site
10808 Highway 93, Unit B
Golden, Colorado 80402-8200

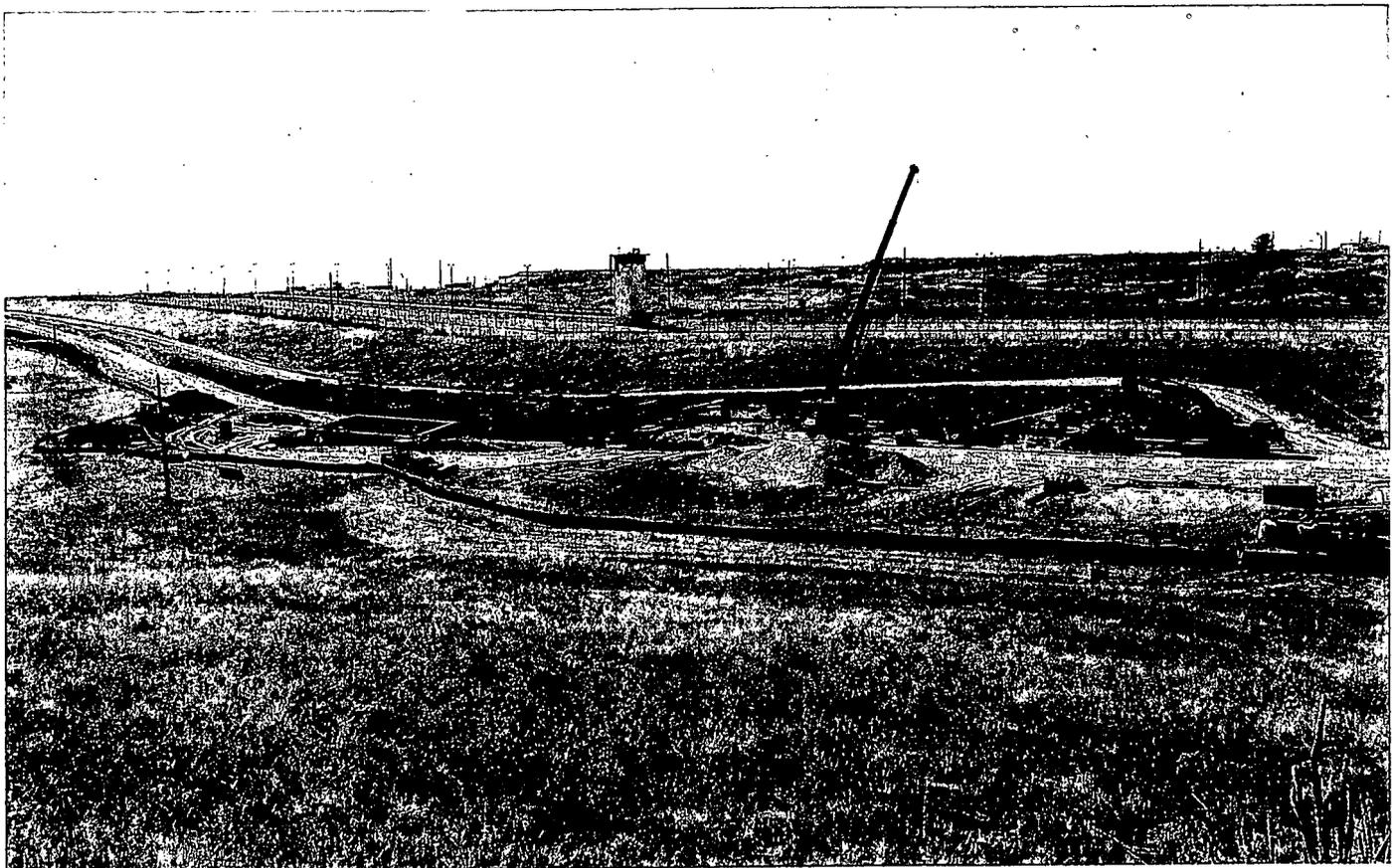
COORDINATES FOR 1999 GEOTECHNICAL BORINGS

Northing	Easting	Elevation	Description
38601.83	21870.86	5898.48	DRILL HOLE (No. 1) 70399
38632.20	21784.99	5900.83	DRILL HOLE (No. 2) 70499
38507.04	22030.69	5908.44	DRILL HOLE (No. 3) 70599



Appendix

As Built Drawings – Trench Profiles



Overviews of Solar Ponds Plume Project

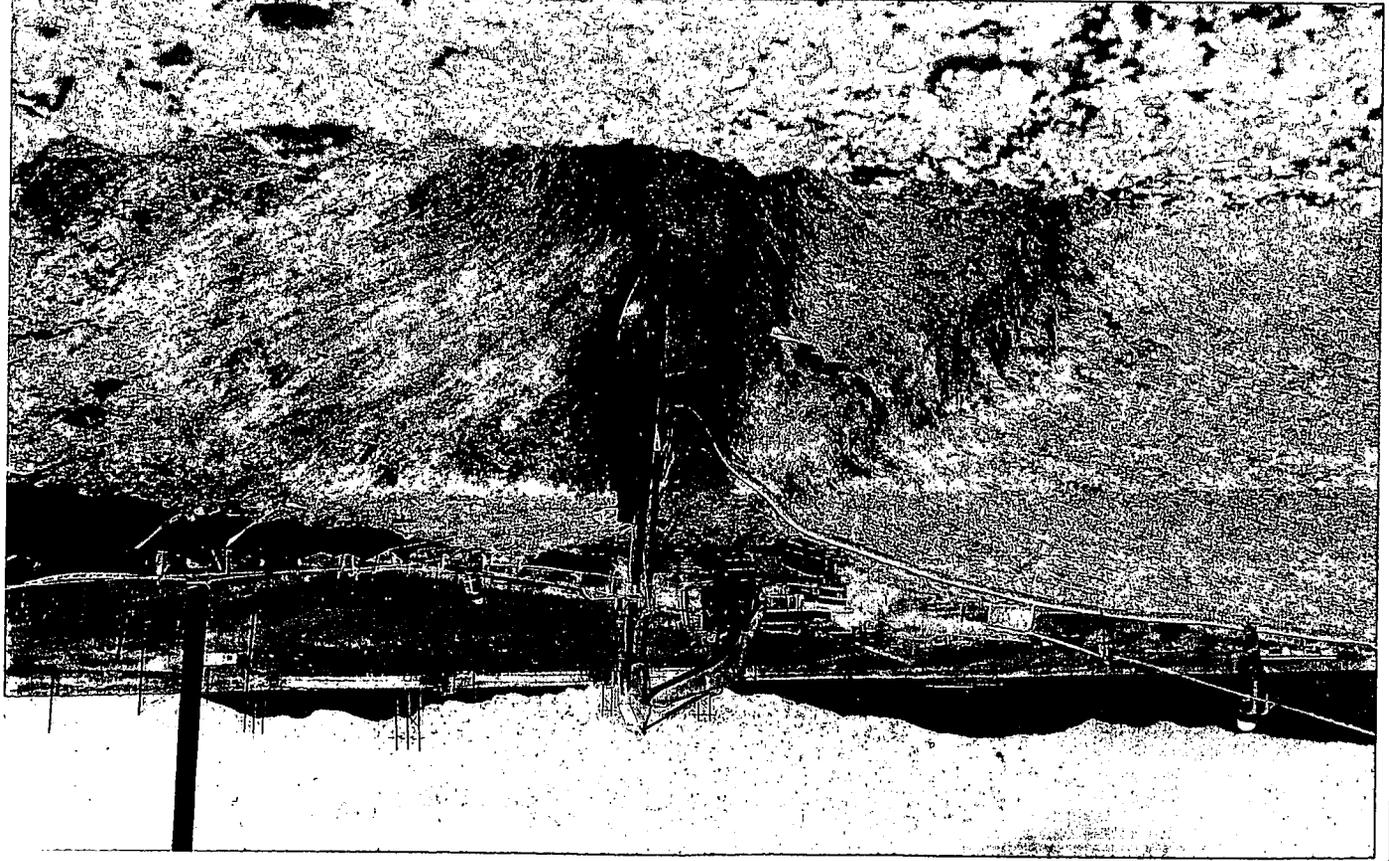


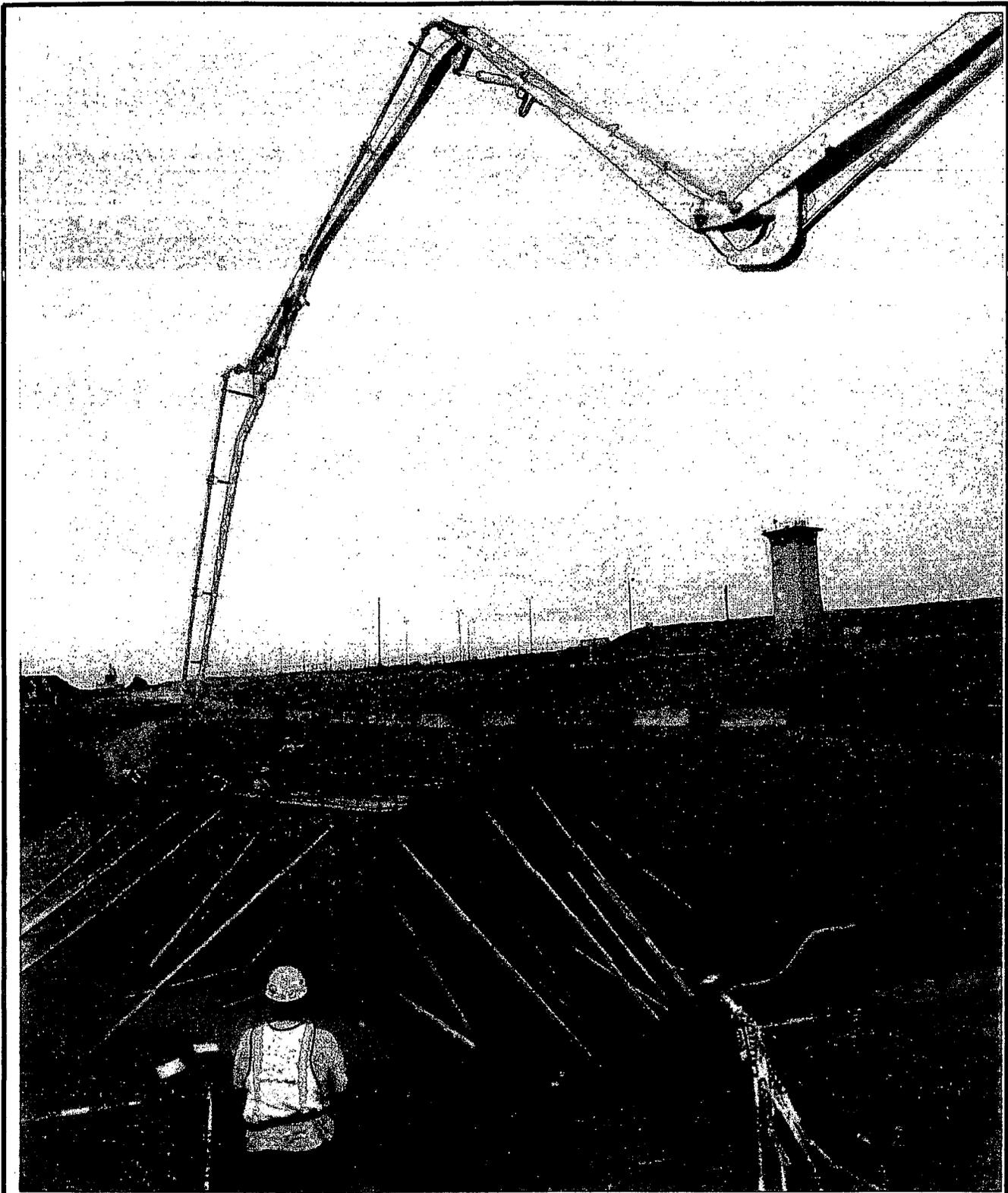
Rocky Mountain
Remediation Services, L.L.C.
... protecting the
environment

Panel Installation at Solar Ponds Plume



Rocky Mountain
Remediation Services, LLC.
...protecting the
environment



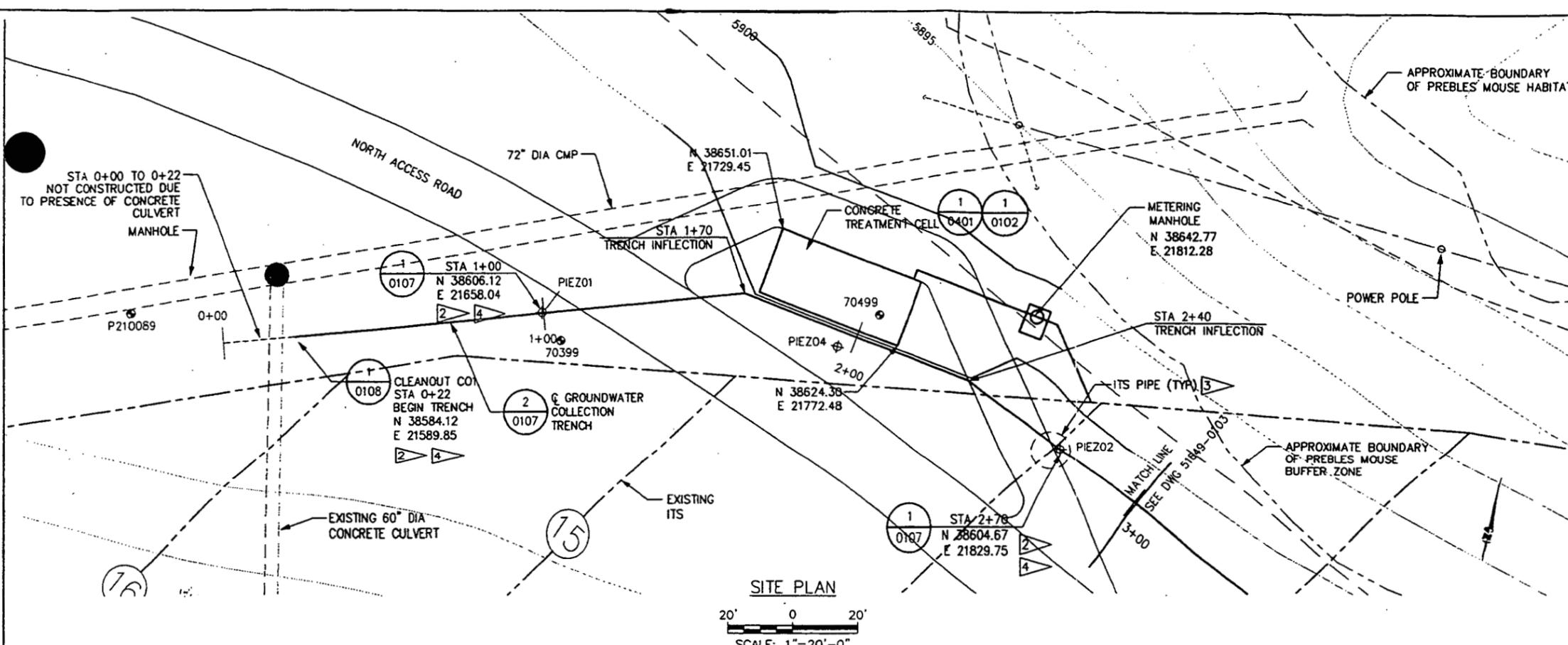


Solar Ponds Plume Treatment Cell

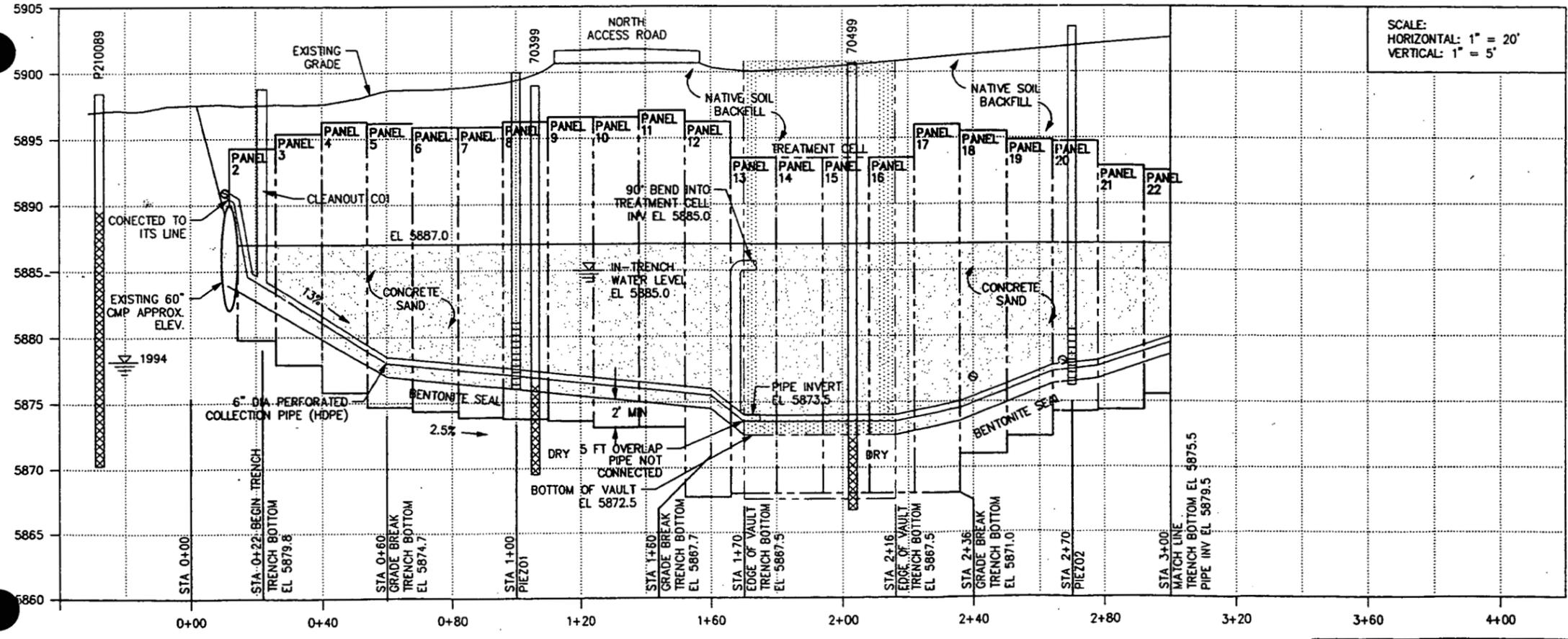


Appendix

As Built Drawings – Trench Profiles



- LEGEND**
- ⊕ IN TRENCH PIEZOMETER LOCATION
 - ⊙ SOIL BORING LOCATION
 - ± 6 BENCHMARK
 - SURFACE WATER DRAINAGE
 - GRAVEL ROAD
 - === IMPROVED ROAD
 - EXISTING FENCE
 - TOPOGRAPHIC CONTOUR (feet above mean sea level) CONTOUR INTERVAL = 5ft
 - ALLUVIUM BOREHOLE DATA
 - BEDROCK BOREHOLE DATA
 - GROUNDWATER LEVEL DURING YEAR SHOWN
 - DRY NO GROUNDWATER ENCOUNTERED AT TIME OF DRILLING
 - ⊙ PROJECTED ITS PIPE PENETRATION INTO COLLECTION TRENCH



- NOTES:**
- 1 DEPTH AND LOCATION OF ITS PIPE IS BASED ON FIELD OBSERVATION DURING CONSTRUCTION.
 - 2 ALL LOCATIONS SHOWN IN ROCKY FLATS COORDINATES.
 - 3 EXISTING ITS PIPE WITHIN COLLECTION TRENCH EXCAVATION REMOVED WITH EXCAVATION EQUIPMENT. UPGRADIENT PIPE DISCHARGES INTO CONCRETE SAND. ITS PIPE CUT 1 FOOT BEHIND DOWNGRADIENT WALL OF TRENCH AND BACKFILLED TO TRENCH SECTION TO PREVENT DAMAGE TO GEOMEMBRANE.
 - 4 PIEZOMETER AND CLEANOUT ELEVATIONS: FEET ABOVE MEAN SEA LEVEL

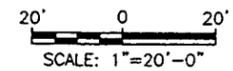
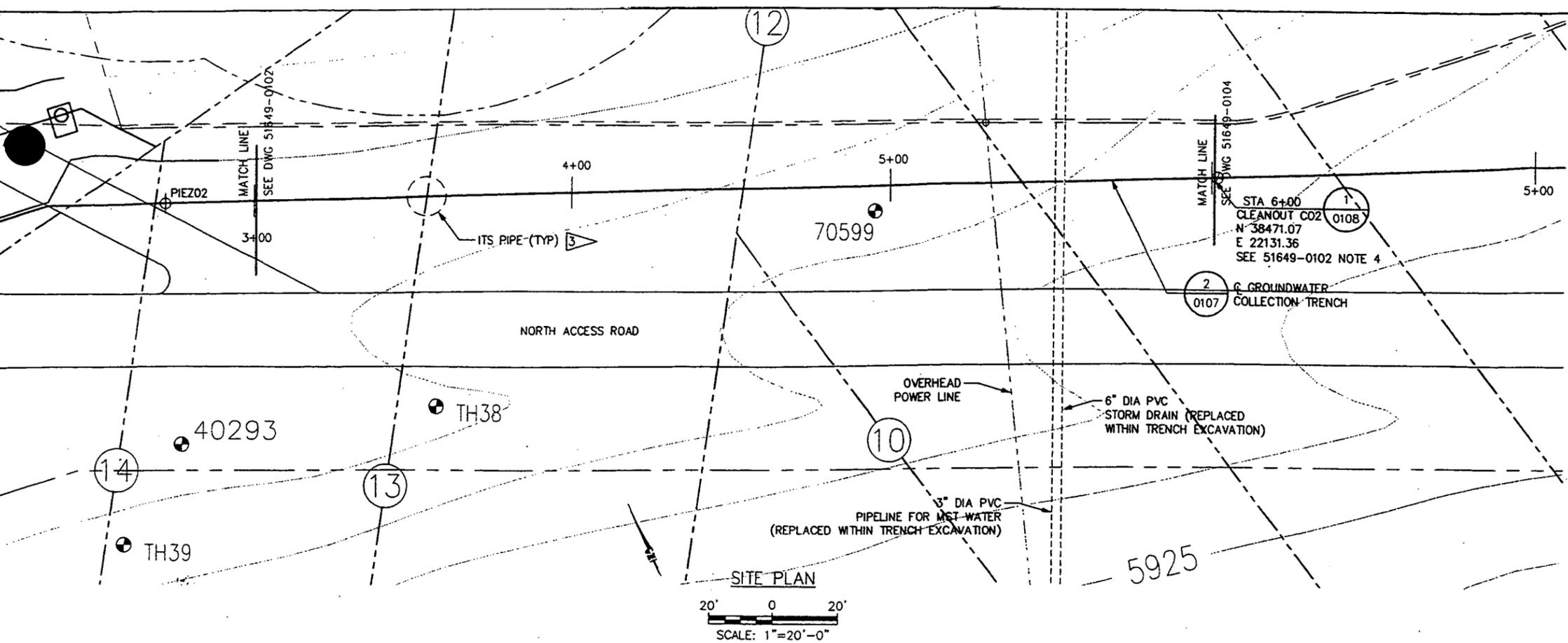
Point	Northing	Easting	Top of Concrete Pad	Top of Casing
PIEZ 01	38606.12	21658.04	5899.58	5901.07
PIEZ 02	38604.67	21829.25	5899.85	5901.59
PIEZ 03	38433.75	22219.66	5919.72	5920.72
PIEZ 04	38619.85	21754.64	5900.71	5901.94
C01	38584.12	21589.85	5897.22	
C02	38471.07	22131.36	5913.29	
C03	38323.34	22455.55	5928.71	

KEYWORDS 1. Contamination 2. Groundwater 3. Remedial 4. Treatment 5. Trench	TOLERANCES FRAC. ± ANGLE ± DEC. ± UNLESS NOTED OTHERWISE	DESIGN COMPANY: OHM/Parsons	PROJECT/WCF NO. 10099204
		DESIGNED BY: FRIESEN DATE: KAF 11/17/99	U.S. DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY ROCKY FLATS OFFICE GOLDEN, COLORADO Rocky Flats Environmental Technology Site GOLDEN, COLORADO
BUDGET/QUALITY Site ROOM/AREA N/A GRID COORD./ELEV. NO. N/A	REVISIONS NO. DATE BY	CHECKED BY: HEALY DATE: JH 11/17/99	CLASSIFIER SCALE: AS NOTED
		APPROVED BY: STENSON DATE: 11/17/99	
PARSONS ENGINEERING SCIENCE, INC. Denver, Colorado 13031 831-8100		SOLAR PONDS PLUME TREATMENT SYSTEM COLLECTION TRENCH PLAN & PROFILE STA 0+00 TO 3+00 DRAWING NUMBER: 51649-0102 ISSUE: A	

PART	QUAN.	DESCRIPTION	MATERIAL
------	-------	-------------	----------

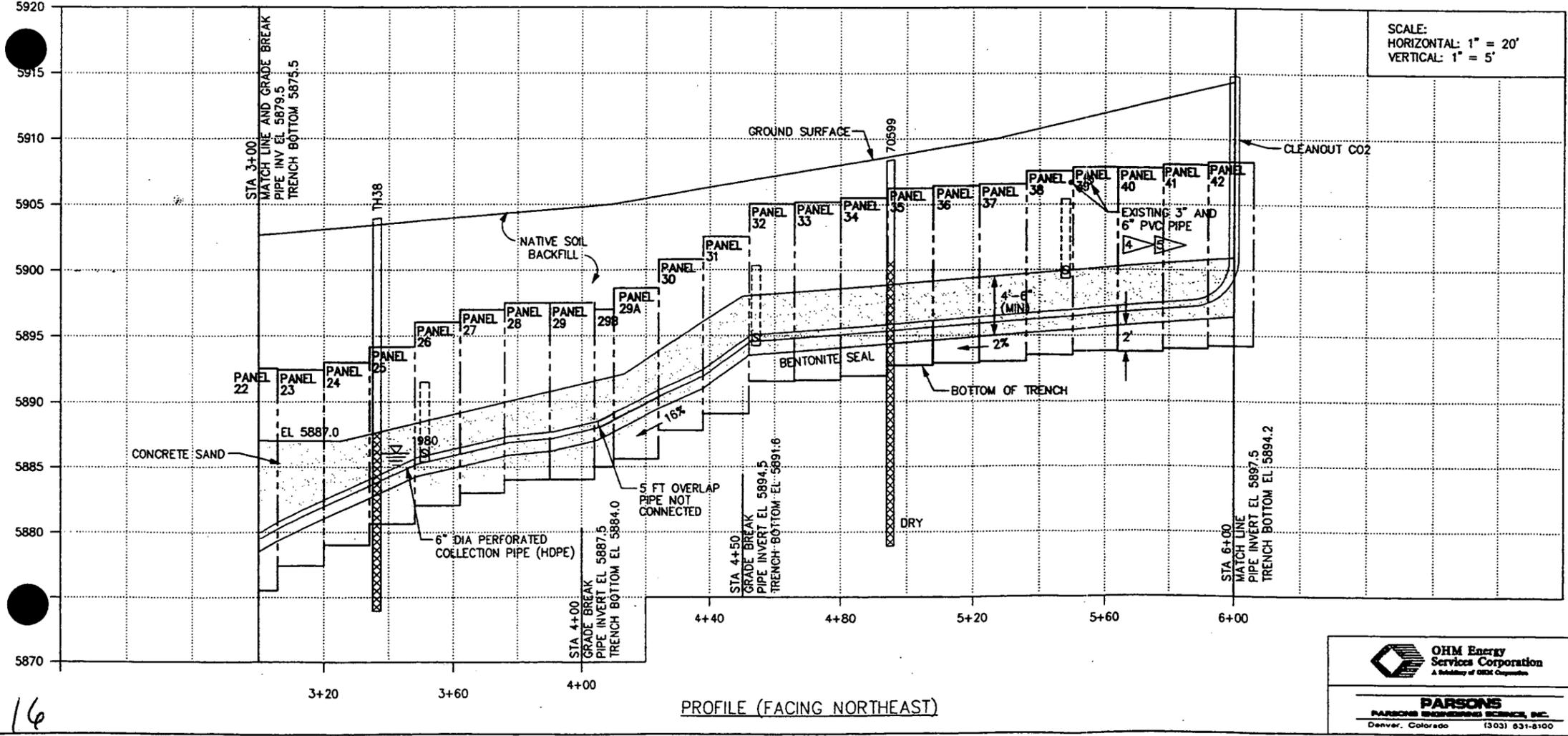
LEGEND

- ⊕ IN TRENCH PIEZOMETER LOCATION
- SOIL BORING LOCATION
- - - SURFACE WATER DRAINAGE
- - - - - GRAVEL ROAD
- ==== IMPROVED ROAD
- FENCE
- - - TOPOGRAPHIC CONTOUR (feet above mean sea level) CONTOUR INTERVAL = 5ft
- (UNDIFFERENTIATED) ALLUVIUM
- CLAYSTONE BEDROCK
- 1994 GROUNDWATER LEVEL DURING YEAR SHOWN
- PROJECTED ITS PIPE PENETRATION INTO COLLECTION TRENCH AND GRAVEL BLANKET



NOTES:

- 1 DEPTH AND LOCATION OF ITS PIPE IS BASED ON FIELD OBSERVATIONS DURING CONSTRUCTION.
- 2 ALL LOCATIONS SHOWN IN ROCKY FLATS COORDINATES.
- 3 EXISTING ITS PIPE WITHIN COLLECTION TRENCH EXCAVATION REMOVED WITH EXCAVATION EQUIPMENT. UPGRADIENT PIPE DISCHARGES INTO CONCRETE SAND. ITS PIPE CUT 1 FOOT BEHIND DOWNGRADIENT WALL OF TRENCH AND BACKFILLED TO TRENCH SECTION TO PREVENT DAMAGE TO GEOMEMBRANE.
- 4 DEPTH, LOCATION AND SIZE OF BURIED PIPE IS ESTIMATED.
- 5 SEALING OF GEOMEMBRANE AROUND EXISTING PIPES NOT REQUIRED.



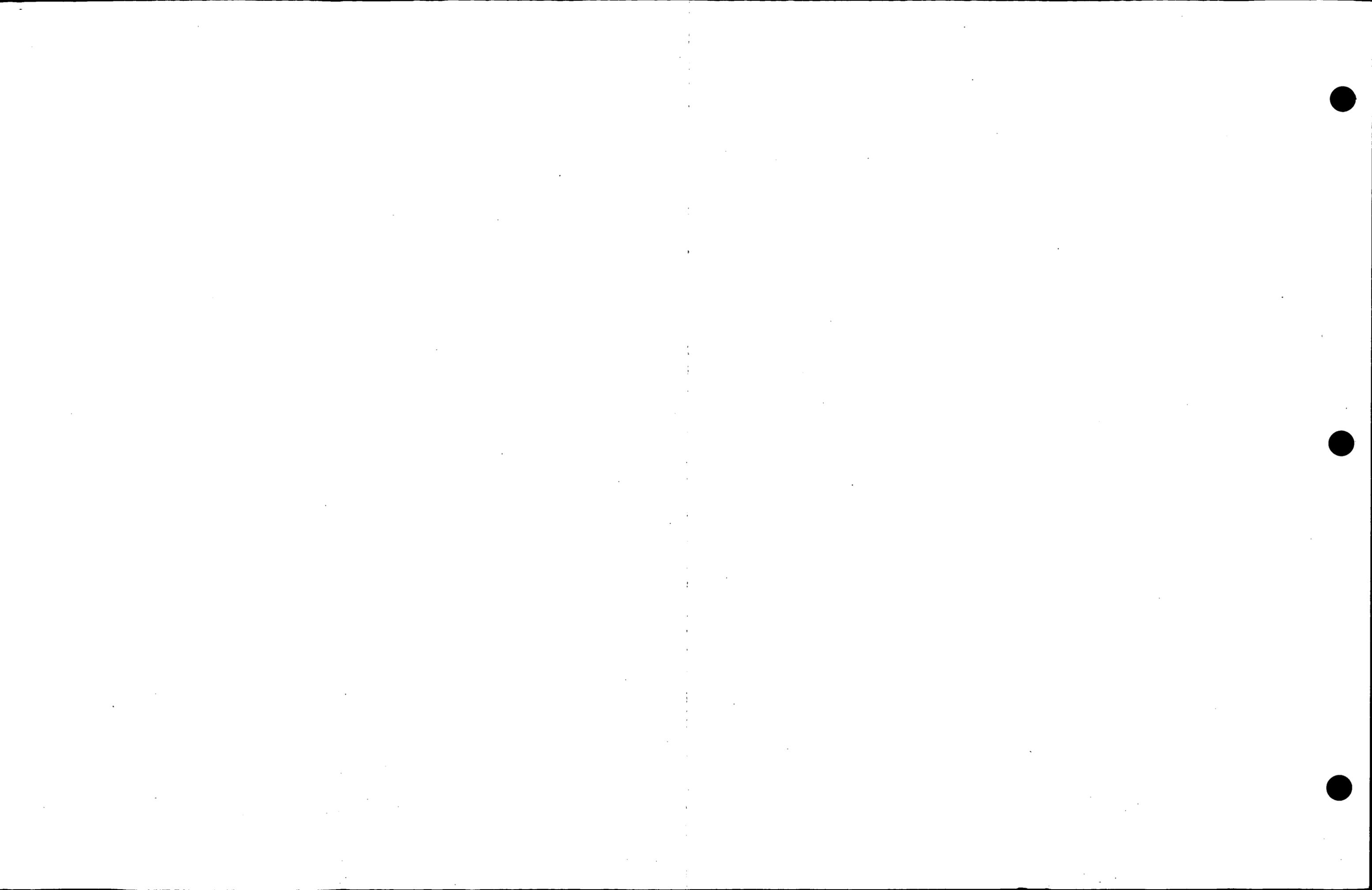
SCALE:
HORIZONTAL: 1" = 20'
VERTICAL: 1" = 5'

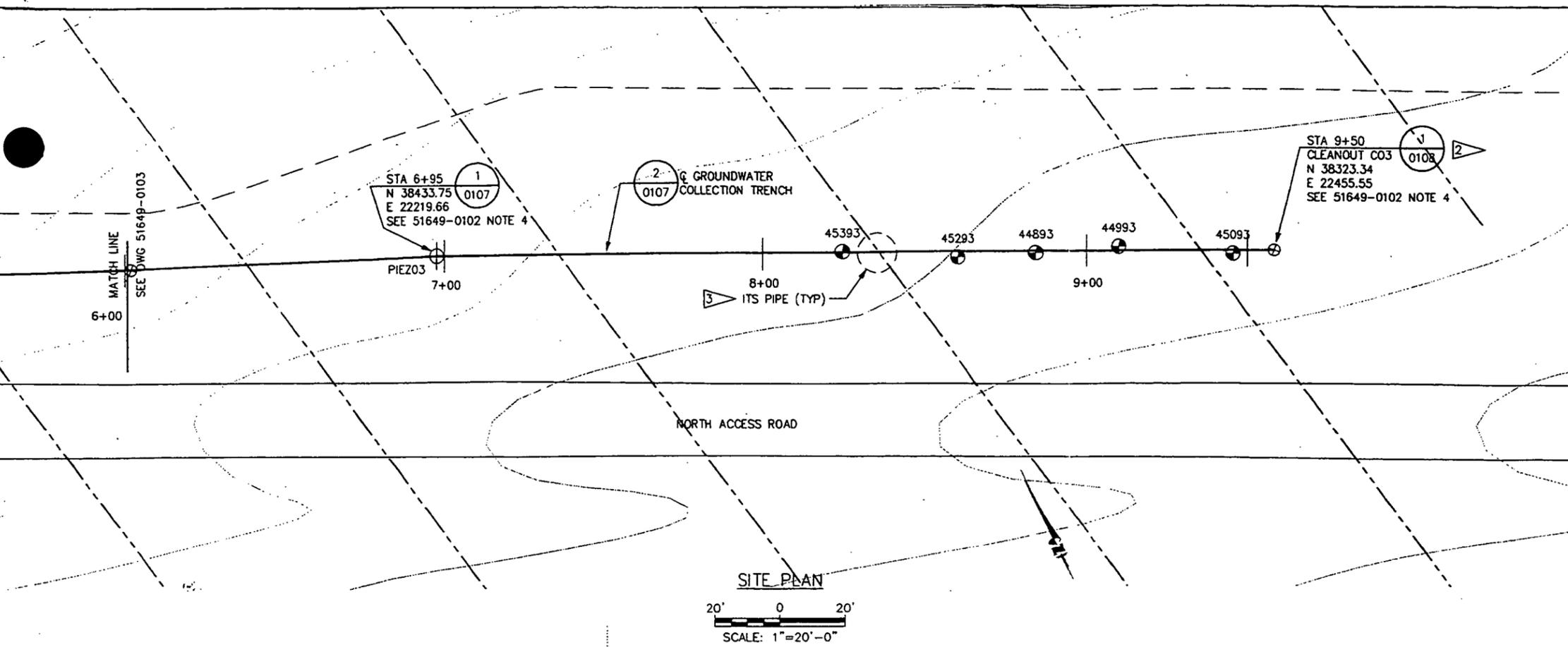
OHM Energy Services Corporation
A Subsidiary of OHM Corporation

PARSONS
PARSONS BRINCKERHOFF SCIENCE, INC.
Denver, Colorado (303) 631-8100

KEYWORDS 1. Contamination 2. Groundwater 3. Remediation 4. Treatment 5. Trench		AS BUILT DESCRIPTION DESIGN COMPANY: OHM/Parsons DESIGNED BY: FRIESEN DRAWN BY: HEALY CHECKED BY: STENSON APPROVED BY: WILKINSON		T0099204 PROJECT/WCF NO. U.S. DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY ROCKY FLATS OFFICE GOLDEN, COLORADO Rocky Flats Environmental Technology Site GOLDEN, COLORADO	
DESIGNER TOLERANCES FRAC. ± ANGLE ± DEC. ± UNLESS NOTED OTHERWISE		DATE 11/26/99		CLASSIFIER LAND USE PRIMROSE	
PROJECT Rocky Flats Environmental Technology Site		SCALE AS NOTED		SIZE D	
PROJECT AREA Site		SCALE AS NOTED		DRAWING NUMBER 51649-0103	
ISSUE AS BUILT		SCALE AS NOTED		ISSUE A	

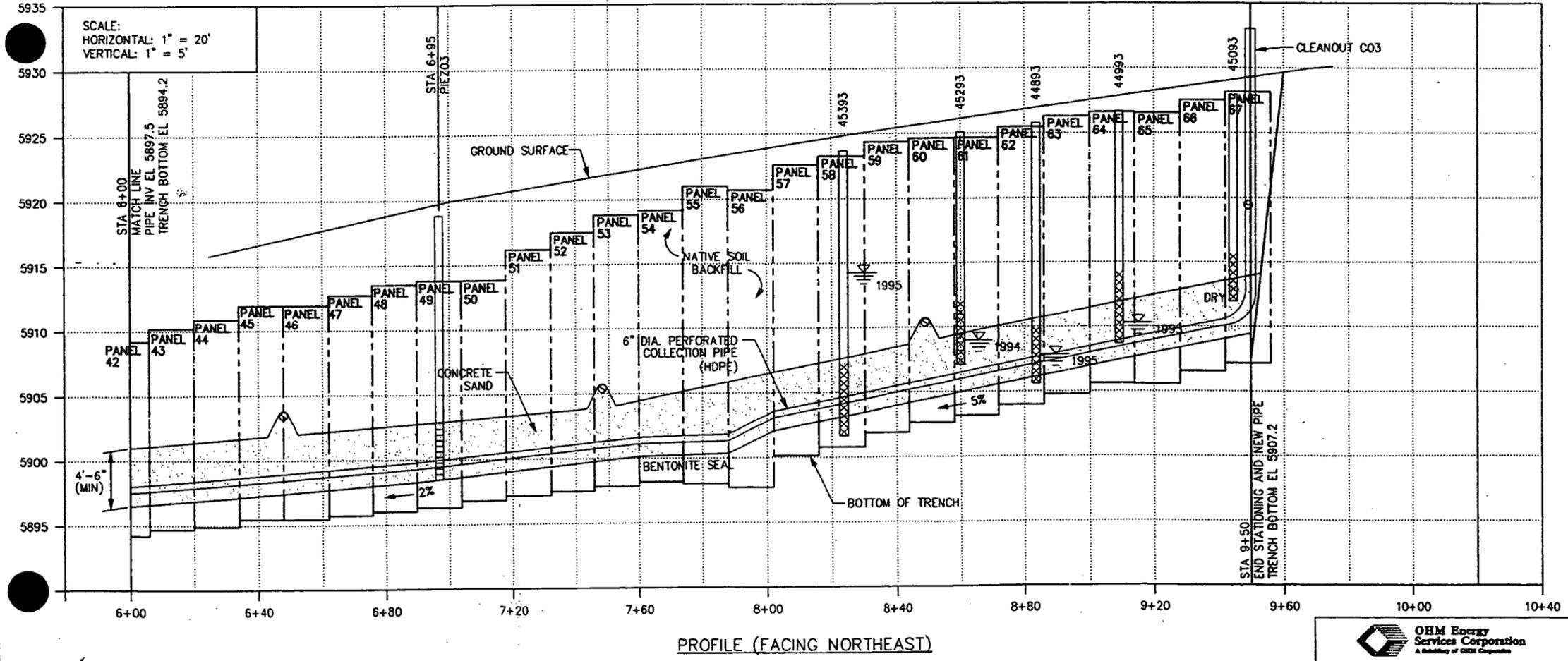
16





- ### LEGEND
- IN TRENCH PIEZOMETER LOCATION
 - SOIL BORING LOCATION
 - SURFACE WATER DRAINAGE
 - GRAVEL ROAD
 - IMPROVED ROAD
 - FENCE
 - TOPOGRAPHIC CONTOUR (feet above mean sea level)
CONTOUR INTERVAL = 5ft
 - BOREHOLE DATA
 - CLAYSTONE BEDROCK
 - 1994 GROUNDWATER LEVEL DURING YEAR SHOWN
 - PROJECTED ITS PIPE PENETRATION INTO COLLECTION TRENCH
 - DRY NO GROUNDWATER ENCOUNTERED AT TIME OF DRILLING

SITE PLAN
 20' 0 20'
 SCALE: 1"=20'-0"



PROFILE (FACING NORTHEAST)

- ### NOTES:
- 1 DEPTH AND LOCATION OF ITS PIPE IS BASED ON FIELD OBSERVATIONS DURING CONSTRUCTION.
 - 2 ALL LOCATIONS SHOWN IN ROCKY FLATS COORDINATES.
 - 3 EXISTING ITS PIPE WITHIN COLLECTION TRENCH EXCAVATION REMOVED DURING CONSTRUCTION. UPGRADIENT PIPE DISCHARGES INTO CONCRTE SAND. ITS PIPE CUT 1 FOOT BEHIND DOWNGRADIENT WALL OF TRENCH AND BACKFILLED TO TRENCH SECTION TO PREVENT DAMAGE TO GEOMEMBRANE.

17/17

OHM Energy Services Corporation
 A subsidiary of OHM Corporation

PARSONS
 PARSONS BRINCKERHOFF SCIENCE, INC.
 Denver, Colorado (303) 831-8100

A ISSUE		AS BUILT DESCRIPTION		T0099204 PROJECT/WCF NO.	
KEYWORDS		DESIGN COMPANY: OHM/Parsons		U.S. DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY ROCKY FLATS OFFICE GOLDEN, COLORADO	
1. Contamination		DESIGNED BY: FRIESEN KAF 10/26/99		Rocky Flats Environmental Technology Site GOLDEN, COLORADO	
2. Groundwater		DRAWN BY: HEALY JH 10/26/99		SOLAR PONDS PLUME TREATMENT SYSTEM	
3. Remediation		CHECKED BY: STENSON 11/1/99		COLLECTION TRENCH PLAN & PROFILE STA 6+00 TO 9+50	
4. Treatment		APPROVED BY: WILKINSON 11/1/99		CLASSIFIER	
5. Trench		REMOVE BURGS SITE		SCALE	
ROOM/AREA		N/A		SIZE	
N/A		N/A		DRAWING NUMBER	
GRID COORD./COL. NO.		AS NOTED		D 51649-0104	
N/A		PRIMROSE		ISSUE	
				A	