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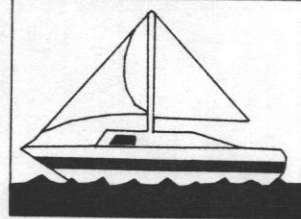
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Lake Mead National Recreation Area: 3 Documents, backcountry management plan 1986 and 1988 and Environmental assessment of alternatives for backcountry management plan [no date]. LAME / LAME-0083, tec/LAME / Interpretation Division Library 1986, 1988

Backcountry Management Plan

LAKE MEAD

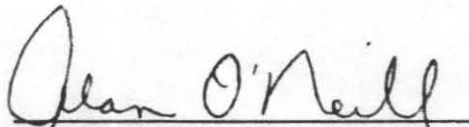
NATIONAL RECREATION AREA/NEVADA

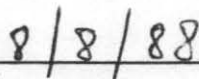


UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE
LAKE MEAD NATIONAL RECREATION AREA
REVISED JULY 1988

BACKCOUNTRY MANAGEMENT PLAN

APPROVED:


Alan O'Neill, Superintendent


Date

INTRODUCTION

This document is part of the Resources Management Plan (RMP) for Lake Mead National Recreation Area. It deals with the category of "human use" as outlined in the RMP and will identify specific management elements.

BACKGROUND

Lake Mead National Recreation Area, in southern Nevada and northwestern Arizona, was formally established by the Act of October 8, 1964 (78 Stat. 1039). It includes two reclamation impoundments, Lake Mead and Lake Mohave. Dramatic contrasts characterize Lake Mead National Recreation Area. The seemingly endless desert and massive mountain ranges, unencumbered by dense vegetation, are strange and awesome to many visitors. In contrast, most of the life forms of the desert are cryptic, small, and even fragile, but likewise unfamiliar to urban oriented visitors. Another unusual contrast in the incongruity of two enormous bodies of water in one of the most arid environments in the Western Hemisphere. Rugged north-trending mountain ranges and broad alluvial slopes dominate the recreation area.

Shaped by fiercely hot summers, temperate winters, and low cumulative, but often locally intense rainfall, the desert generally supports sparse creosote bush and mesquite communities. However, in washes and other areas where moisture periodically accumulates, scattered cottonwood, tamarisk, and salt bush grow. On the higher and wetter Shivwits Plateau are a pinyon/juniper forest and stands of ponderosa pine.

Lake Mead National Recreation Area contains a great diversity of wildlife. Most notable is the elusive desert bighorn, which thrive in the River Mountains and other ranges. Other animals include the mule deer, cougar, bobcat, coyote, ringtail cat, and a host of small desert rodents. Large numbers of feral burros create problems of habitat degradation. Over 230 species of birds have been recorded, including more than 60 species of waterfowl attracted to the impounded water.

Several species of game fish have been introduced to Lake Mead and Lake Mohave, including the largemouth black bass, rainbow trout, silver salmon, channel catfish, black crappie, bluegill, green sunfish, and most recently the striped bass. Lake Mead is noted nationally for its bass fishing. Native fish species still exist in the Colorado River in what is now Lake Mohave. Of particular interest and concern is the endangered Bonytail Chub and the Razorback Sucker.

Archeological artifacts and petroglyphs provide a record of early Indian habitation, but many of the most significant of these are now underwater. Fossil evidence is abundant, chronicling the plants and animals of other eras.

The primary users of Lake Mead National Recreation Area are residents of southern Nevada, southern Utah, Arizona and southern California. The residents of southern California are the most numerous out of state users of the recreation area, and their use is increasing at a rapid rate. The coastal area of southern California is a sprawling "supercity," and one of the fastest growing regions in the United States. It had a population of 11.5 million in 1970, and 17 million in 1985.

The purpose of this plan is to address and resolve the major issues surrounding the management of backcountry activities.

THE PROBLEMS AND THE ISSUES

Access to the backcountry is gained primarily through vehicle use on secondary roads and by boat from developed launching ramps. Recreational use in the Lake Mead National Recreation Area backcountry is concentrated primarily along the shoreline with beach camping, swimming, fishing, boating, hiking, and water skiing being the major activities. Other backcountry activities include: hunting, camping, pleasure driving, etc.

Travel to beach areas by boat leaves no lasting impacts on the water surface. Vehicular travel, however, does impact the environment by creating dust, compacting soil, destroying vegetation, disrupting wildlife, etc.

Many miles of shoreline are suitable for recreational activities. All of these areas are accessible by boat but there are only about 50 access points for vehicles with approximately one third of these being passable by passenger car. The recreationists who do not own boats are utilizing these access roads and, in seeking isolated beach space, are driving cross country illegally.

Visitation to the recreation area is gradually increasing, over eight million in 1987, with shoreline use increasing proportionately. This heavy use is usually evident from March to October when temperatures are warm, fishing is good, and other water sports are inviting. With increased lakeshore use, degradation of park resources from indiscriminate camping, off-road vehicle use and poor sanitation practices is accelerating.

With the improvements in self-contained vehicles and vessels over the years, length of stay by some visitors had increased to the point that they were residing in the backcountry by living on their houseboats or in their land based campers. Since long term occupancy would prohibit use of these sites for recreational purposes by other visitors, limits as to length of stay are necessary.

The above problems are a direct result of the increase in the recreational use of the area and the technological improvements of recreational type vehicles and vessels.

Due to the increase in recreational use and the resultant resource impacts it was necessary to place constraints on how, where, and how long visitors use the recreation area in order to assure that every visitor has equal opportunity to enjoy the area and to protect the natural environment. Management of the backcountry must be guided not only by visitor demands and public input, but also by environmental considerations, legislative purpose, and National Park Service policies.

LEGISLATIVE AND PLANNING INFLUENCES

Management of recreational use in the recreation area backcountry is influenced directly by legislative mandates, the most significant being the National Park Service Act of 1916 which provides:

"...The service thus established shall promote and regulate the use of the Federal areas known as national parks, monuments, and reservations, hereinafter specified, by such means and measures as conform to the fundamental purpose of said parks, monuments and reservations, which purpose is to conserve the scenery and natural and historic objects and wildlife herein and to provide for the enjoyment of the same in such manner and by such means as will leave them unimpaired."

And the Act of Congress passed in 1964 (Public Law 88-639) establishing a basis for more effective administration of Lake Mead National Recreation Area for public benefit. Public Law 88-639 states in part:

"Lake Mead National Recreation Area shall be administered by the Secretary of the Interior for general purposes of public recreation, benefit, and use, and in a manner that will preserve, develop, and enhance, so far as practicable, the recreation potential, and in a manner that will preserve the scenic, historic, scientific, and other important features of the area. . ."

Lake Mead National Recreation Area Statement for Management identifies objectives which directly influence management of the backcountry.

"To assess carrying capacities and establish zones for various recreational activities on both water and land to guide future area management and continue providing a quality recreation experience."

The General Management Plan provides overall guidance and direction for management of the diverse resources of the recreation area.

THE PLAN

This plan encompasses all lands outside developed areas or paved roads. Developed areas are identified in Appendix "B."

1. Management Objectives

- a. Protect and preserve the natural environment of the backcountry.
- b. Establish limitations for backcountry use that will allow for recreation enjoyment, but protect the resources.
- c. Reduce high visitor density and congestion at areas where detrimental impacts occur.
- d. Maintain water quality.
- e. Adhere to all public health and safety standards.
- f. Establish reasonable time limits for backcountry use that will allow equal opportunity for their use.

SPECIFIC ELEMENTS OF THE PLAN

Camping: Visitors will be provided opportunities to camp in a desert backcountry environment without the full complement of services and facilities normally provided at developed campgrounds.

Backcountry camping is limited to 30 days within any consecutive 12 month period, unless specified otherwise.

The following types of backcountry camping experiences are available within the recreation area.

1. Boat Camping

Lakes Mead and Mohave are open for boat camping except the following locations:

- a. Hoover Dam and Davis Dam administrative areas marked by buoys and cables.
- b. Developed areas identified in Appendix B.
- c. Overton Wildlife Management Area.
- d. Certain coves temporarily closed for research. These coves are marked with "Boats Keep Out" buoys.

Camping Limits - Areas where camping limits are other than 30 days are listed below:

<u>Lake Mohave</u>	<u>Length of Stay (Days)</u>
Telephone Cove (Arizona) to Stop Sign Cove	7
Telephone Cove (Nevada)	7
Ski Cove	7
Box Cove	7
 <u>Lake Mead</u>	
Horsepower Cove	7
Saddle Cove	7
33 Hole and Pitchfork Cove	7
Upper Gypsum Wash	7
Lower Gypsum Wash	7
Upper Government Wash	7
Lower Government Wash	7
Eight-0 Cove	7
Crawdad Cove	7
Box Car Cove	7

2. Vehicle Camping

Backcountry camping by vehicle is allowed at the locations listed below. These locations are shown on the maps in Appendix A.

The perimeters of backcountry camping areas will be marked by signs and physical barriers to identify the boundaries within which vehicles must be kept. Vehicles taken beyond these limits will be in violation of 36 CFR, Section 4.29(b).

Camping with a vehicle in the backcountry at any location other than those listed below is prohibited. However, along any approved road, visitors may park their vehicles immediately adjacent to the traveled portion of the roadway for the purpose of recreational activities such as hiking, backpacking, hunting, nature study or other recreational activities.

NEVADA

<u>Lake Mohave</u>	<u>Length of Stay (Days)</u>
Telephone Cove (end of Nevada Telephone Cove Road)	7
Green Light Cove (end of Powerline Road)	30
83 Dollar Cove	30
Clam Cove (end of Empire Wash Road)	30
Willow Cove	30
Nellis Cove	30
Nine Mile Coves (end of Nine Mile Road)	30
Six Mile Coves (end of Six Mile Road)	30
Solicitor Cove (end of Copper Mountain Road)	30
Opal Mountain Point (end of Opal Mountain Road)	30
Powerline Wash (end of Powerline Road)	30
Aztec Wash Area (end of Aztec Wash Road)	30
Fire Mountain Cove (end of Fire Mountain Road)	30
Placer Cove (end of Montana Wash Road)	30
Burro Wash	30
 <u>Lake Mead</u>	
Horsepower Cove	7
Saddle Cove (end of Water Treatment Plant Road)	7
33 Hole and Pitchfork Cove	7
Upper Gypsum Wash (end of 4.2 Road - Gypsum Wash)	7
Lower Gypsum Wash (end of 4.4 Road - Gypsum Wash)	7
Upper Government Wash (end of 5.7 Road - Government Wash)	7
Lower Government Wash	7
Crawdad Cove (end of 8.8 Road - right fork)	7
8.0 Cove (end of 8.0 Road)	7
Alkali Point (Road 95)	7
Boxcar Cove (end of 8.8 Road - left fork)	7
Boulder Wash (end of Boulder Wash Road)	30
Boathouse Cove (end of Boathouse Cove Road)	30
Rogers Bay (end of Rogers Wash Road)	30
Stewarts Bay (end of Stewarts Point Road)	30
Salt Cove (end of Salt Cove Road)	30
St. Thomas Wash (end of St. Thomas Road)	30
The Virgin River Narrows (end of Narrows Road)	30
Catclaw Cove (end of Catclaw Road)	30
Scanlon Bay (end of Gregg Wash Road)	30
Devils Cove (end of Devils Cove Road)	60

ARIZONA

<u>Lake Mohave</u>	<u>Length of Stay (Days)</u>
Telephone Cove (end of Arizona Telephone Cove Road)	7
Arrowhead Cove (off Powerline Road)	30
Shoshone Cove (off Powerline Road)	30
Sidewinder Cove (end of Mohave Crossing Road)	30
Jeep Cove (end of Portland Wash Jeep Trail)	30
Cottonwood East Area (end of Cottonwood Valley Road)	30
Arizona Bay (end of Cottonwood Valley Road)	30
Oil Pan Cove (end of Eldorado Jeep Trail)	30
Monkey Cove	30

Lake Mead

Kingman Wash (end of Kingman Wash Road)	30
Bonelli Landing (end of Bonelli Road)	30
Detrital Wash (end of Bonelli Road - right fork)	30
Salt Spring Cove (end of Salt Spring Wash Road)	30
Gregg's Hidout (end of Gregg's Hideout Road)	30
Hualapai Bay (end of Hualapai Wash Road)	30
Pearce Ferry (end of Pearce Ferry Road)	30
Pigeon Cove (off Grand Wash Road)	30
Grand Wash (end of Grand Wash Road)	30

Backcountry areas other than the shoreline where vehicle camping is allowed are shown on the maps in Appendix A. These include:

Newberry Mountains	30
Empire Mine	30
El Dorado Canyon Overlook	30
Bowl of Fire	30
Pinto Valley	30
Black Mountains	30
Sheep Camp	30
Petroglyph Wash	30
Pope Mine	30
Cohenour Mine	30
Gilbert Canyon	30
Jumbo Wash	30
Salt Springs Wash	30
Upper Hualapai	30
Grapevine Canyon (Meadview)	30
Pearce Wash	30
Shivwits Plateau (camping is allowed along approved roads. Vehicles should not move out of road any further than necessary to clear the traveled portion of the roadway.)	30

3. Backpack or Horseback Camping

Backpack or horseback camping in the backcountry will be allowed in any backcountry location except those listed below.

There are a number of administrative or ecologically sensitive areas within the recreation area which are off limits to camping. The following list identifies those areas closed to camping.

- a. Hoover Dam Administrative Area - high security area administered by the Bureau of Reclamation.
- b. Alfred Merritt Smith Water Treatment Plant and Facilities - high security area supplying municipal and industrial water to southern Nevada, administered by Las Vegas Valley Water District.
- c. Developed areas identified on maps in Appendix B. Developed campgrounds are available.
- d. Overton State Wildlife Management Area - administrative and ecologically sensitive area administered by Nevada Department of Wildlife.
- e. Within 500 feet of any roads.
- f. Within any area marked for, "Day Use Only."

APPROVED ROADS

Section 4.19(B) of Title 36, Code of Federal Regulations prohibits the use of motor vehicles outside established roads.

The existing road system within Lake Mead National Recreation Area consists of 219 miles of paved roads, 335 miles of maintained secondary roads (major and miscellaneous access), and about 300 miles of non-maintained roads.

An approved roads map identifies all designated roads within the recreation area and is available to the public at all ranger stations.

A. Approved backcountry roads will be marked by distinctive signs as follows:



2. The sign will be aluminum, approximately eight inches in length and seven inches wide and attached to posts, four feet high. The road number will be painted on the sign and correspond to the road number shown on the Approved Roads Map.

3. Road standards for graded roads will be as follows:

a. The more popular and heavily used roads will be graded at least once a year or more often if conditions warrant. To be determined by District Supervisors. Other Standards for these roads are as follows:

- (1) Minor grading when required.
- (2) Road width not to exceed 22 feet.
- (3) All fill areas compacted with water.
- (4) Any required fill material will be from the local area.
- (5) Drainage accomplished by ditches or culverts. No bridges will be used.
- (6) Dust control solution may be used where extreme dust problems exist.
- (7) Road stablization solution may be used to stabilize loose, sandy road surfaces.

b. Less frequently used roads will be graded on an as needed basis; to be determined by District Supervisors. Other standards are as follows:

- (1) Any required fill material will be from a local source.
- (2) Drainage accomplished by ditches only.
- (3) No dust control or stabilization oil will be used.
- (4) Road width not to exceed 22 feet.

c. Primitive roads

- (1) No maintenance performed.

Old road scars and impacts created by illegal off-road travel will be rehabilitated and returned to a natural condition as funds and manpower permit.

BOATING: Boating activities are regulated by National Park Service and State boating regulations. The waters of Lakes Mead and Mohave are marked with appropriate aids to navigation as required by the U.S. Coast Guard. Boating information, navigational information, and regulations are provided at launching ramps.

HIKING: There are no developed or maintained foot trails within the recreation area and backcountry use in the traditional sense of hiking or walking is engaged in by relatively few people. Most hiking occurs during periods of spring wildflower bloom or is associated with hunting or nature studies. For the most part, this type of use is limited to several hours maximum because of climate and topography. Local organizations and groups sometimes lead backcountry hikes in the recreation area. There are a few areas of concentrated use by backpackers, but as yet no significant environmental impact to area resources.

There are future plans for the development of trails in certain areas throughout the recreation area and crosscountry hiking will continue to be permitted throughout the recreation area. Crosscountry travel can be expected to remain minimal due to topography and climate. However, groups of hikers using the backcountry will be encouraged to use washbottoms and lakeshore whenever possible.

HUNTING: Hunting is permitted throughout most of the recreation area except where no shooting zones have been designated for purposes of public safety. A copy of these zones is available at all Ranger Stations. Generally the closed areas are located near population concentrations. No shooting zones extend for one mile or more from any developed area such as marinas or launch ramps. All hunting must conform to current Federal and State laws.

MINING AND GRAZING: Grazing and mineral leasing are permitted in the recreation area by statute. Over one million acres are under grazing permits to 30 permittees. Grazing permits are administered through a cooperative agreement with the Bureau of Land Management. All mineral leasing and most of the grazing takes place in the backcountry. Lake Mead National Recreation Area is not open to the filing of mining claims.

Existing and proposed mineral explorations and mining leases are evaluated and monitored to insure that these activities are compatible with recreational activities and the preservation of natural and scenic resources.

AIRCRAFT: The operation of aircraft in the backcountry is permitted in accordance with Federal Aviation Agency rules and the following National Park Service regulations:

1. Aircraft may land only at designated landing strips.

2. The entire water surface of Lakes Mead and Mohave are designated landing areas except for the following restrictions:

- a. Aircraft may not be operated under power on those water surfaces designated as special anchorages, including harbors and fairways.
- b. The operation or use of aircraft on water within 500 feet of bathing beaches, boat docks, floats, piers, ramps or within one mile of water control structures is prohibited.

HORSE USE: Horse use is permitted in the backcountry but riders will be encouraged to travel on designated roads, wash bottoms and along the lakeshore below the high water line. Crossing and traversing ridges and hills will be discouraged due to the possibility of erosion in concentrated use areas. Graze for stock is not available in the area and must be supplied by the user.

ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT

1. Fires

- a. Campfires are allowed at all backcountry camping locations. However, at times when and in locations where fire danger to the resources is determined to be high, the Superintendent may prohibit fires by the posting of appropriate signs.

2. Human Waste Disposal

- a. It is recommended that all campers utilize a closed system camp toilet and remove human waste generated by their group, whenever possible. To the extent staffing levels and funding will allow the National Park Service will install and maintain toilets in areas of concentrated use.
- b. When a closed system toilet is not available, the following procedure should be followed:

Locate a suitable area of soft dirt at least 300 feet from the water's edge. Dig a shallow hole (approximately 8-10 inches deep). Bury all waste, including toilet paper, in the hole. It is important to stay well back from the water's edge so that rising lake levels do not reach the waste before biological processes have time to work.

3. Trash, Litter, Soap

All trash and litter must be carried out of the backcountry. Use of soap is not allowed in springs or streams. Discharging of sewage into any waters of the recreation area is prohibited.

4. Archeological Resources

No archeological site may be disturbed. No artifact may be removed from the recreation area.

5. Monitoring and Research

Monitoring of visitor impact on backcountry use sites, especially shoreline areas will be done on a continuing basis. Research will also continue in areas of:

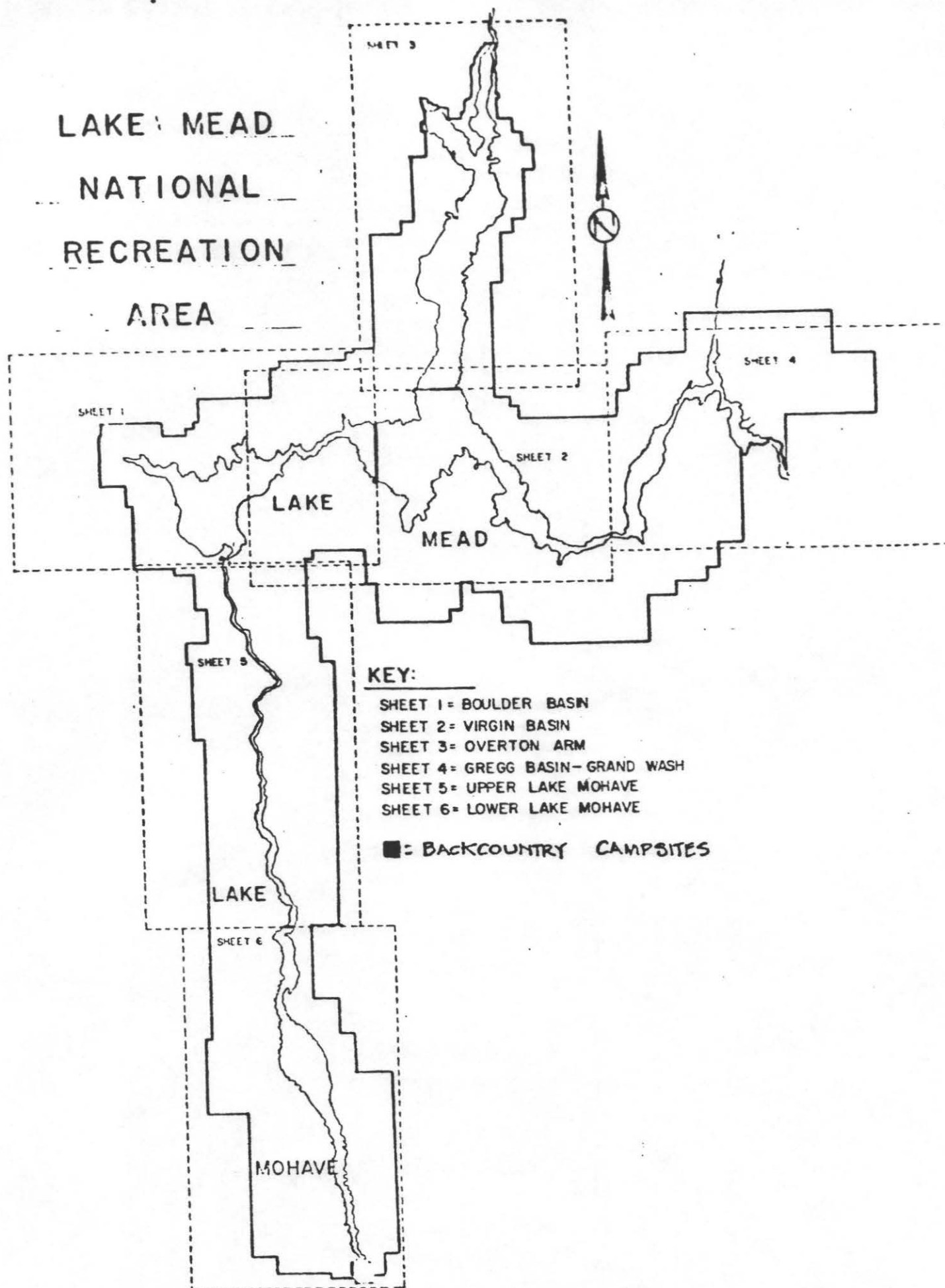
- a. Public health and sanitation at backcountry use sites.
- b. Impact of vehicles on the backcountry.
- c. Impact on vegetation.
- d. Impact on wildlife.

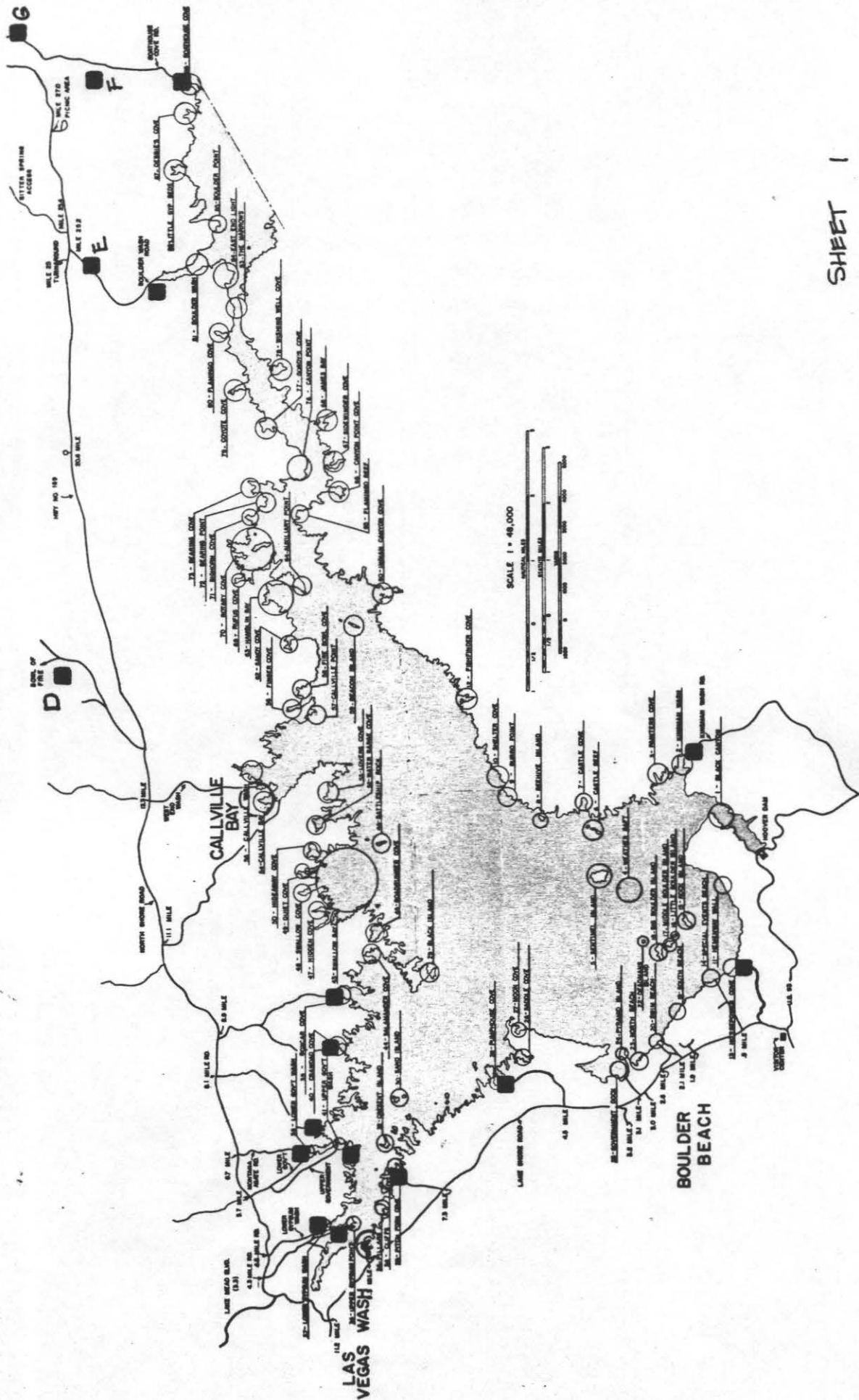
PLAN REVIEW AND REVISION

Future modifications of the plan will be based on data and information from monitoring of use, formal studies, and from public input.

APPENDIX A
BACKCOUNTRY CAMPSITES

LAKE MEAD NATIONAL RECREATION AREA



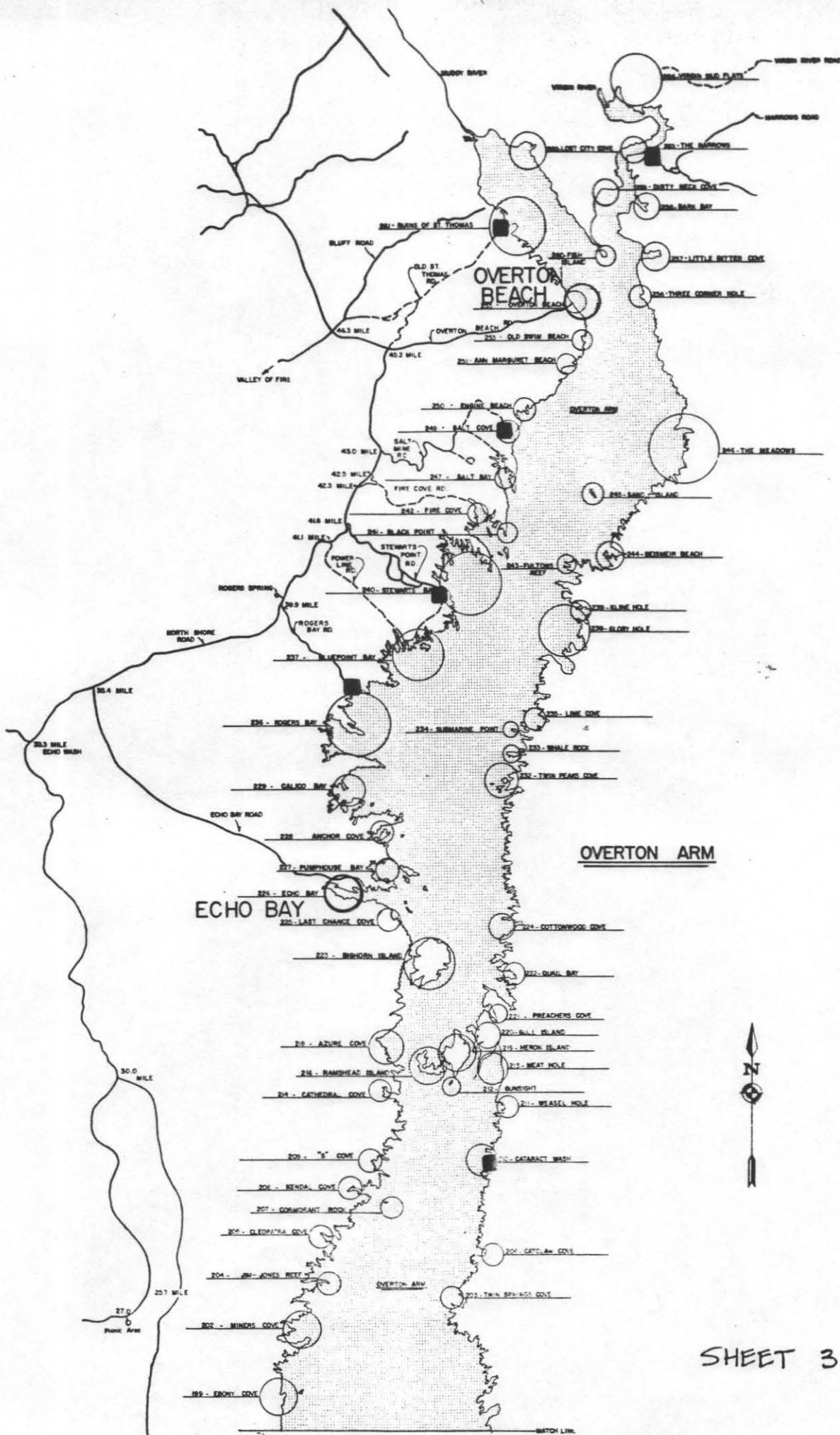


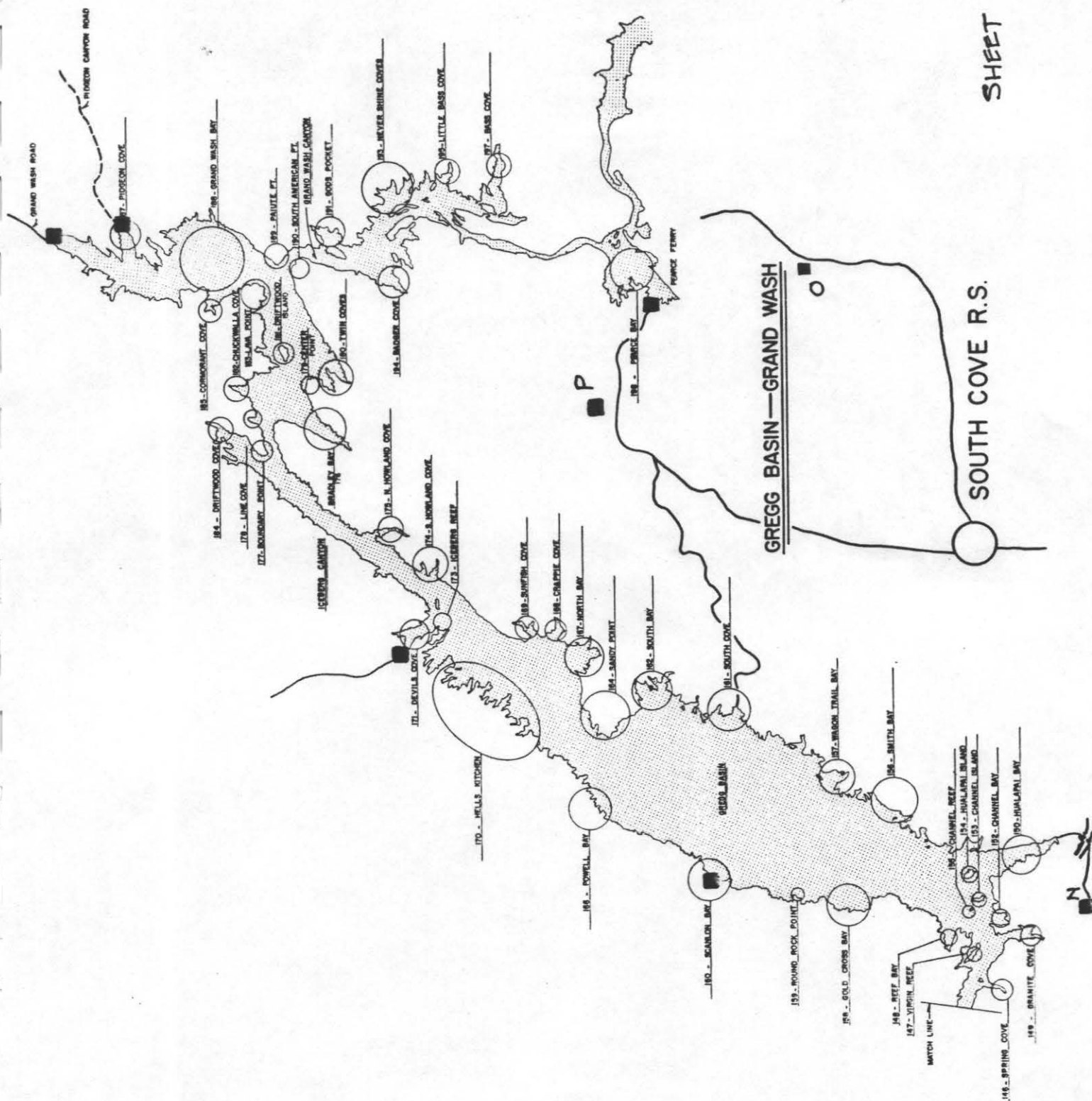
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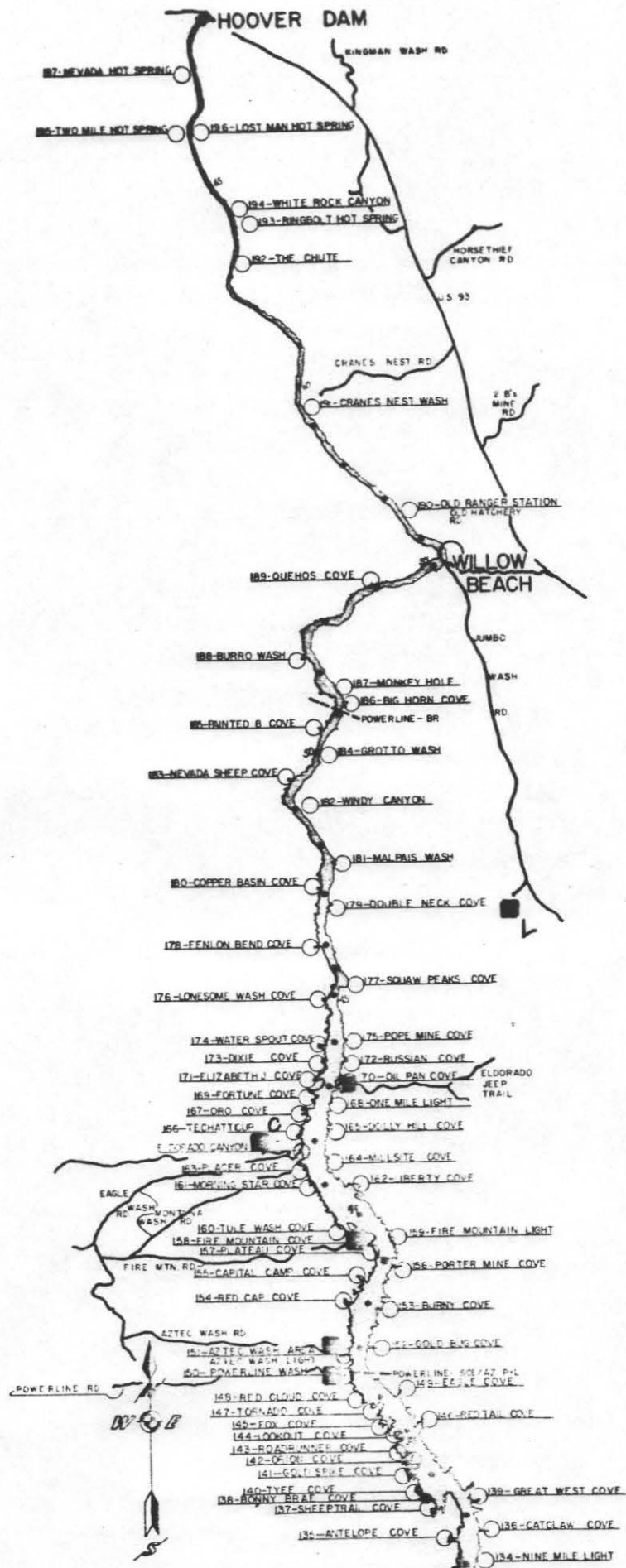
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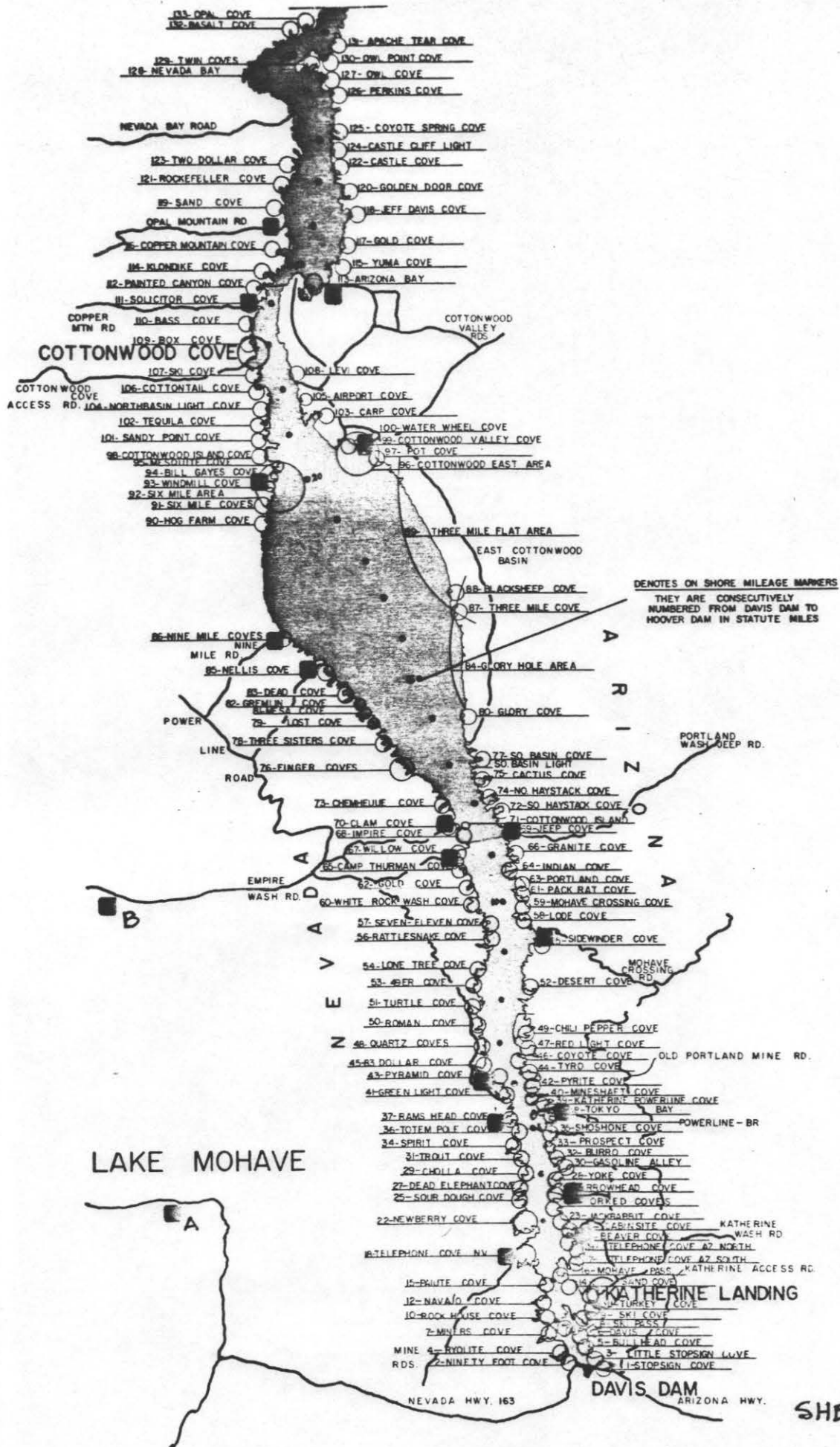
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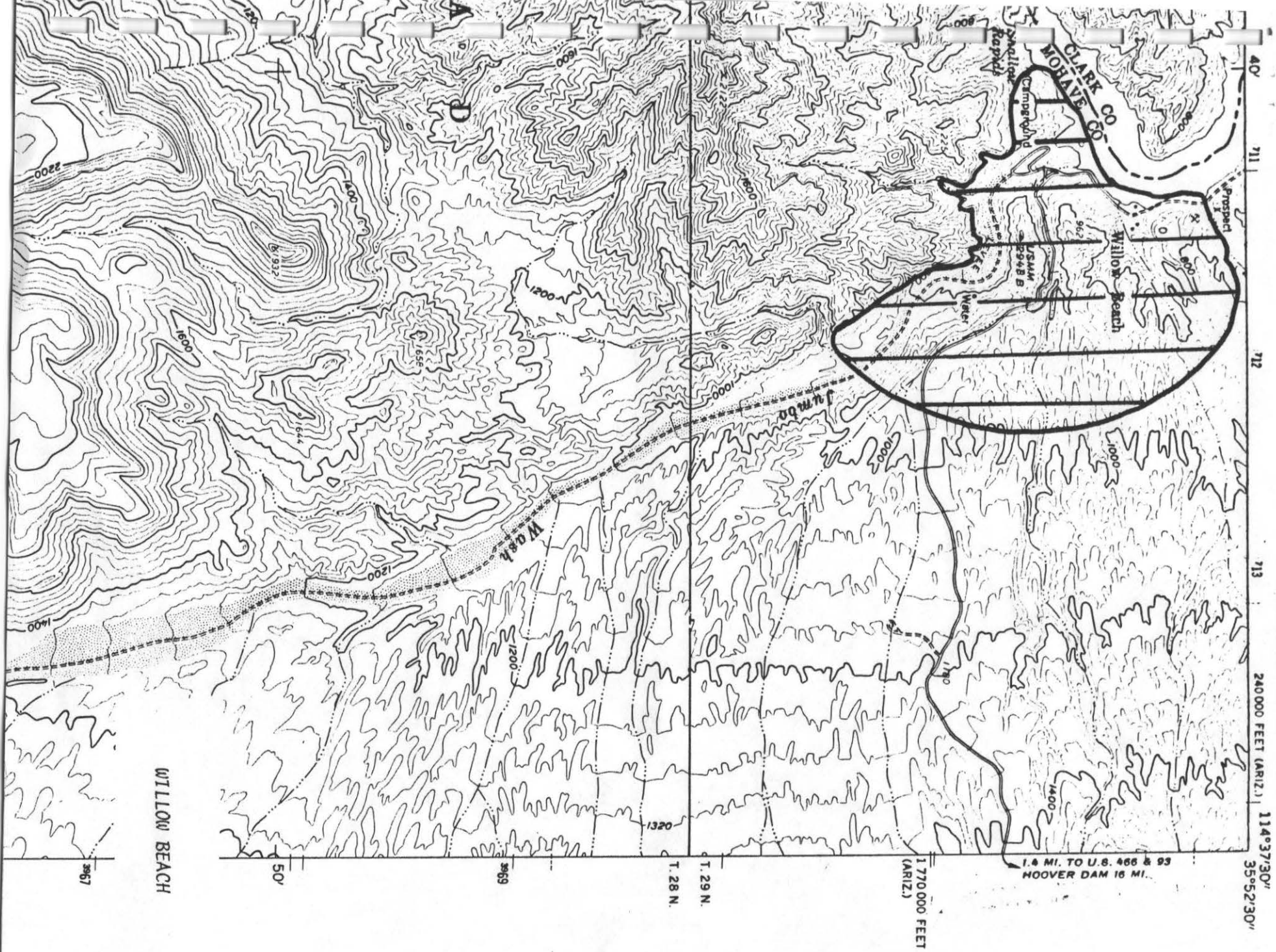




APPENDIX B
DEVELOPED AREA MAPS

WILLOW BEACH QUADRANGLE
ARIZONA - NEVADA
7.5 MINUTE SERIES (TOPOGRAPHIC)
SW 1/4 BLACK CANYON 15' QUADRANGLE

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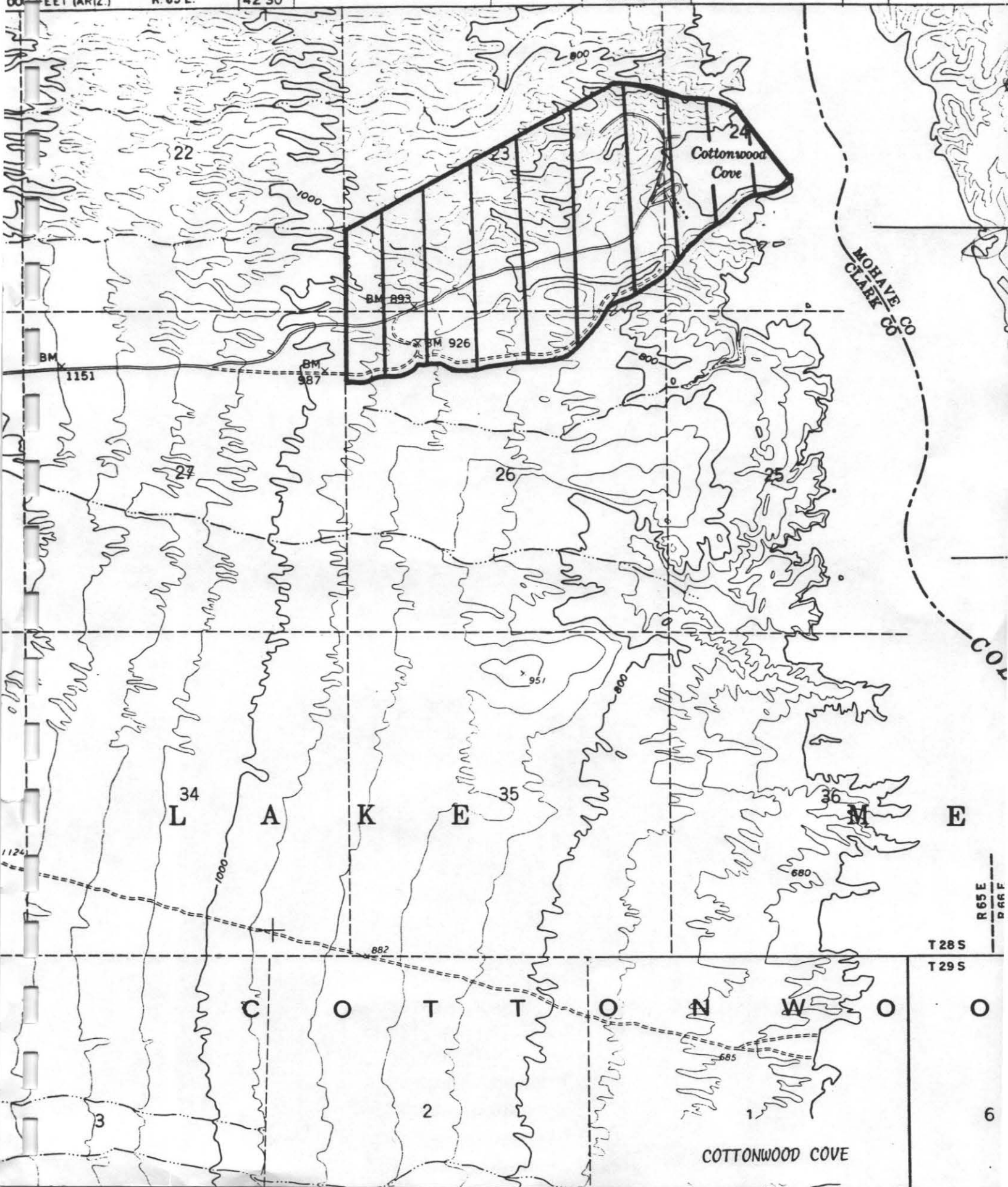


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R. 65 E.

42'30"

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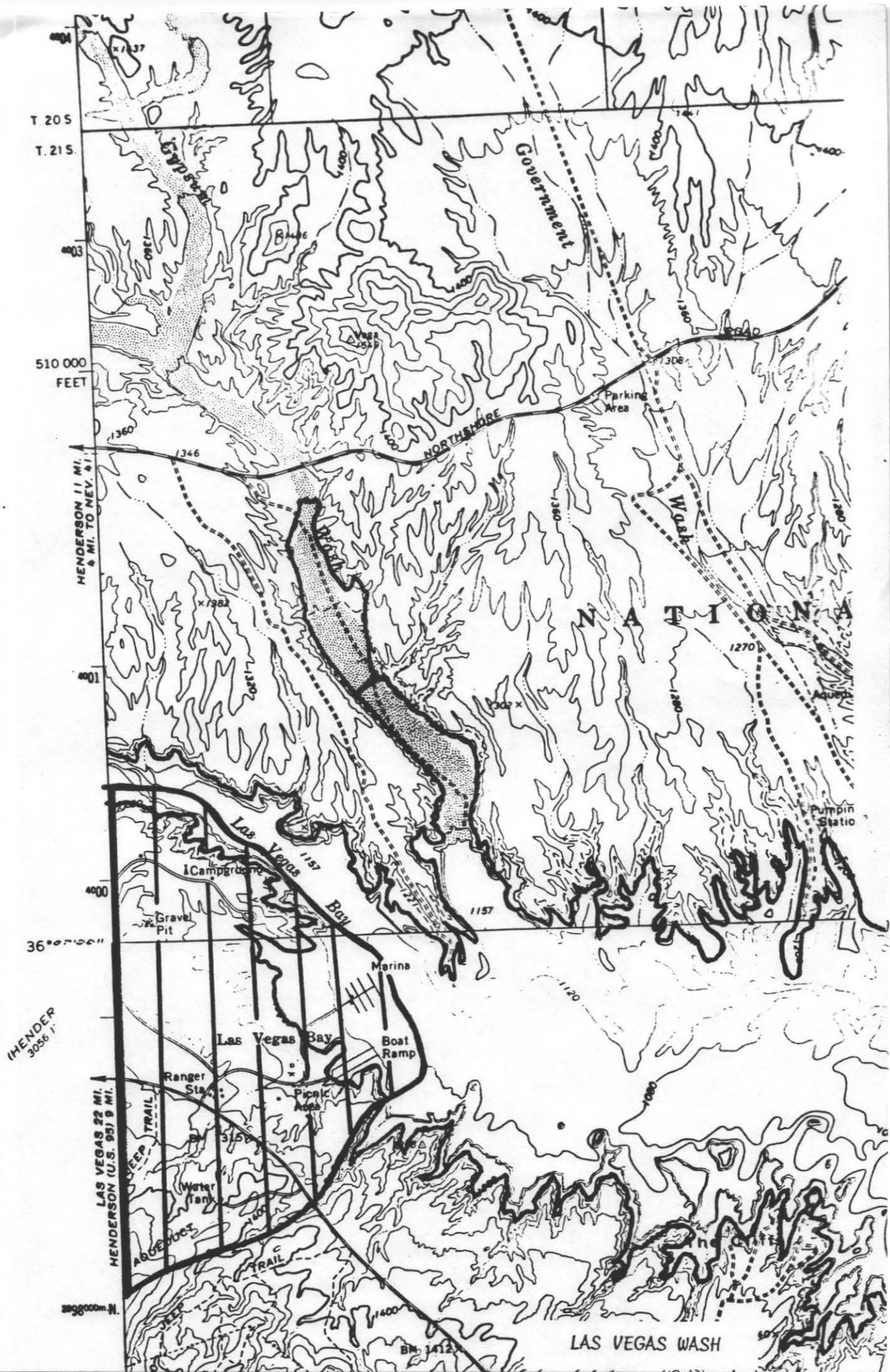


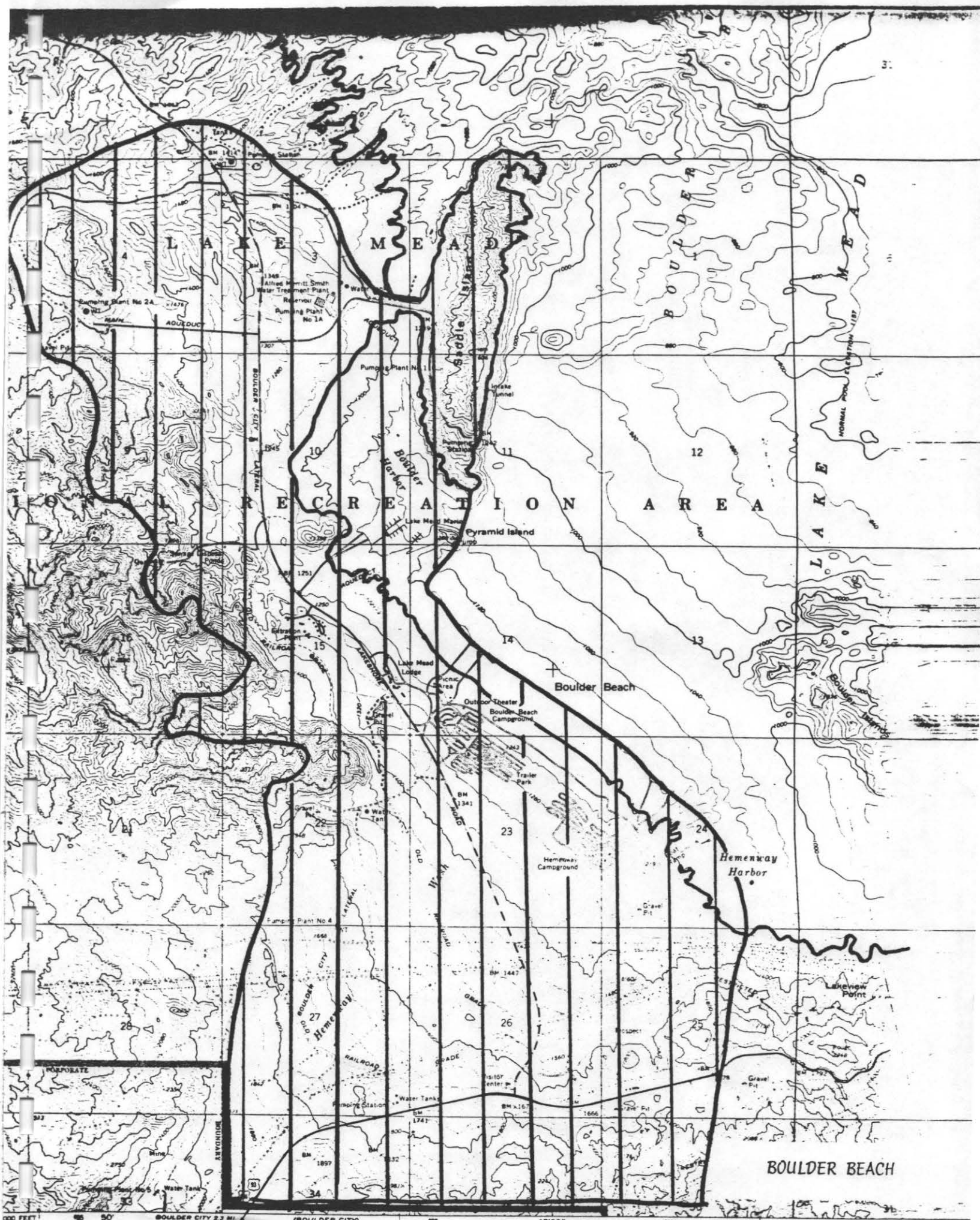
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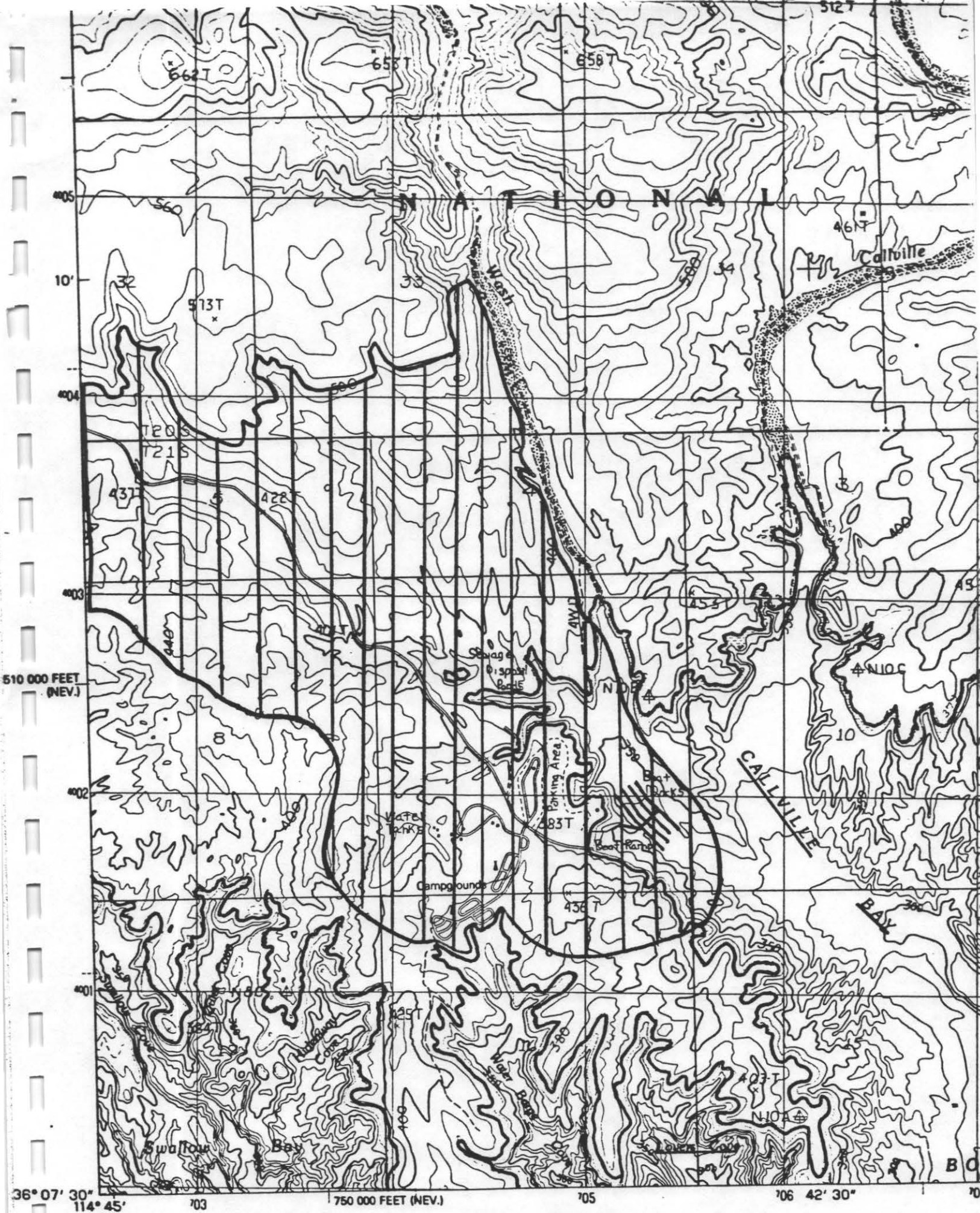
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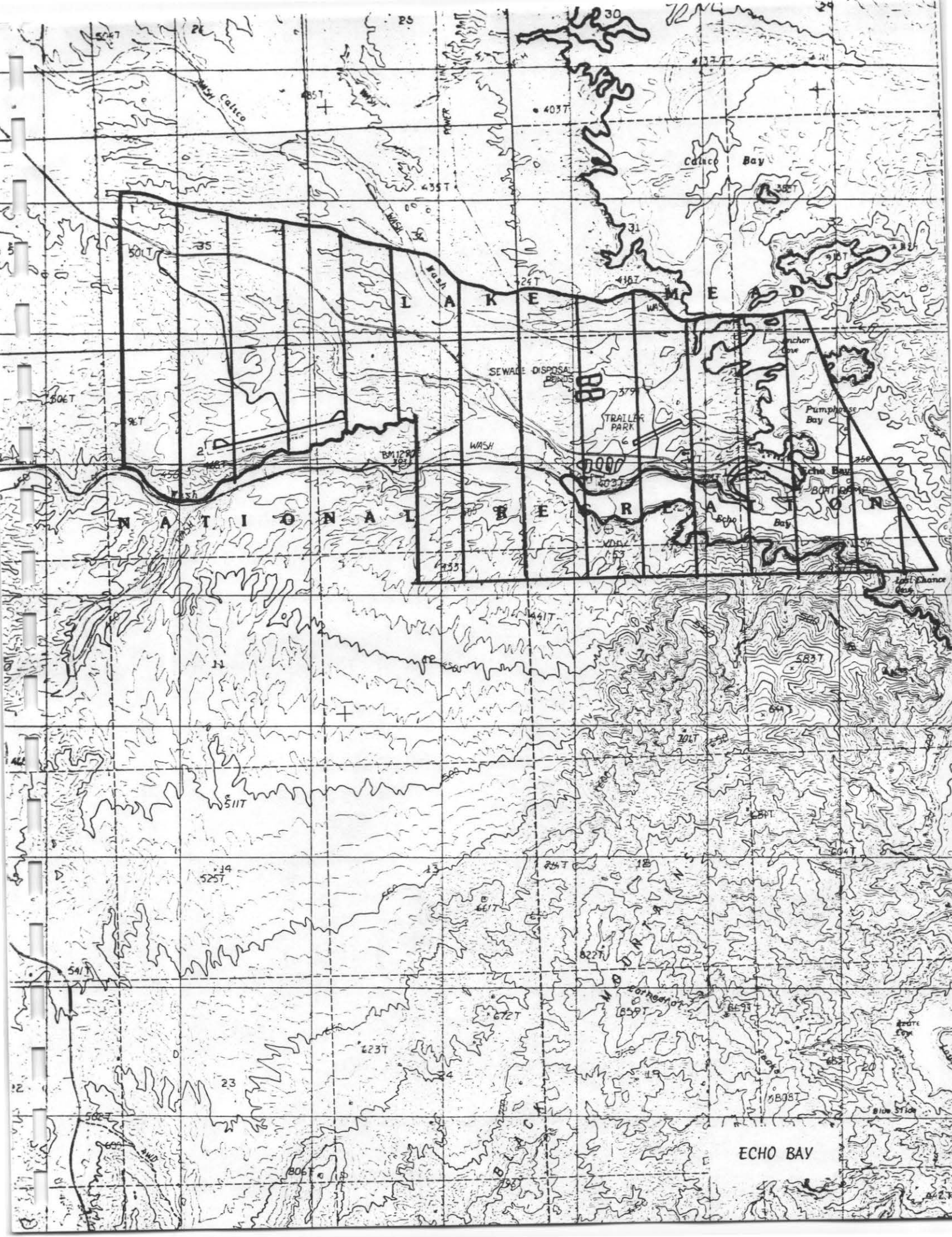


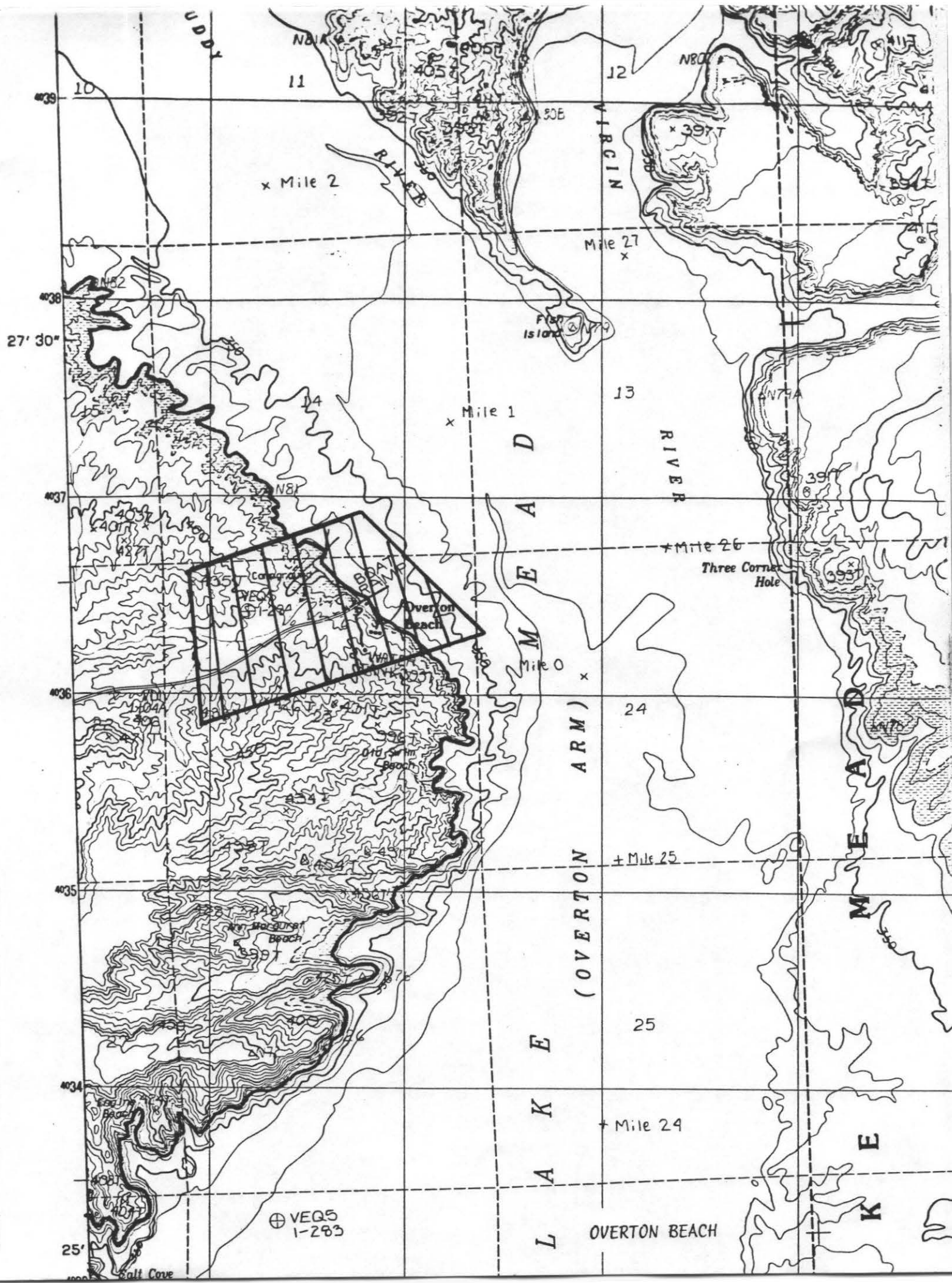


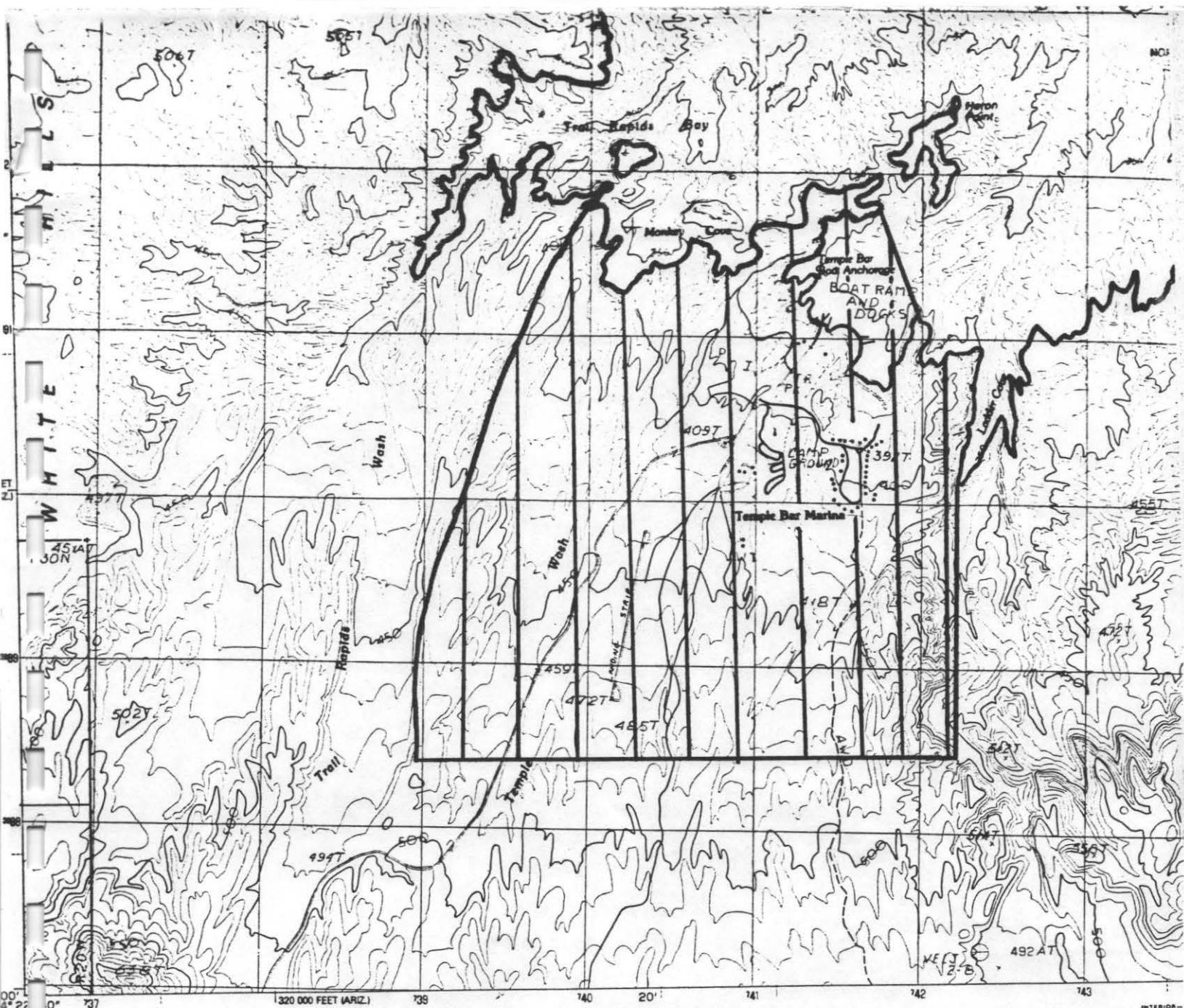


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CALLVILLE BAY





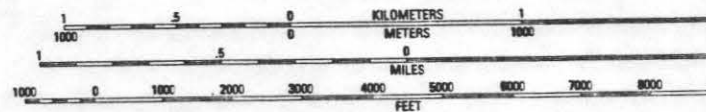


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 CONTROL BY USGS, NOS. 1000
 COMPILED FROM AERIAL PHOTOGRAPHS TAKEN 1973 AND 1977-78
 FIELD CHECKED 1982 MAP EDITED 1983
 PROJECTION 1000-METER UNIVERSAL TRANSVERSE MERCATOR
 GRID: 1000-METER UNIVERSAL TRANSVERSE MERCATOR...ZONE 11
 10,000-FOOT STATE GRID TICS. ARIZ. WEST AND NEV. EAST ZONES
 UTM GRID DECLINATION 1°35' EAST
 1980 MAGNETIC NORTH DECLINATION 14° EAST
 VERTICAL DATUM NATIONAL GEODETIC VERTICAL DATUM OF 1929
 HORIZONTAL DATUM 1927 NORTH AMERICAN DATUM
 To place on the predicted North American Datum of 1983,
 move the projection lines as shown by dashed corner ticks
 (4 meters north / 72 meters east)
 There may be private inholdings within the boundaries of any
 Federal and State Reservations shown on this map
 Underwater contours compiled from USDA maps
 originally mapped in 1935 at 1:12,000 scale
 Where omitted, land lines have not been established
 Areas covered by dashed light-blue pattern
 are subject to controlled inundation

PROVISIONAL MAP
 Produced from original
 manuscript drawings. Infor-
 mation shown as of date of
 field check.

3

SCALE 1:24 000



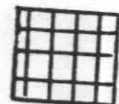
CONTOUR INTERVAL 10 METERS

CONTROL ELEVATIONS SHOWN TO THE NEAREST 0.1 METER
 OTHER ELEVATIONS SHOWN TO THE NEAREST METER
 To convert meters to feet multiply by 3.2808
 To convert feet to meters multiply by 0.3048

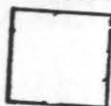
THIS MAP COMPLIES WITH NATIONAL MAP ACCURACY STANDARDS
 FOR SALE BY U.S. GEOLOGICAL SURVEY, DENVER COLORADO 80225, OR RESTON, VA

TEMPLE BAR





7 day limit



30 day limit

