GENOA PEAK ROAD
Toiyabe National Forest
Glenbrook Vicinity
Douglas County
Nevada

HAER No. NV-12
HAER
NEV
3-GLENB.V,
1-

PHOTOGRAPHS

WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

HISTORIC AMERICAN ENGINEERING RECORD
National Park Service
Western Region
Department of the Interior
San Francisco, California 94107

HAER
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HISTORIC AMERICAN ENGINEERING RECORD
GENOA PEAK ROAD HAER No. NV-12

Location: The western end of the Genoa Peak Road segment intersects Interstate Highway 50 1.06 miles west of the Spooner Summit Rest Area.

USGS Glenbrook Nevada Quadrangle, 7.5'
UTM Coordinates: A 248380 4331290 (West end)
B 249330 4330620 (Central Section)
C 249830 4329950 (Central Section)
D 250300 4329670 (East end)

Date of Construction: circa 1869.

Engineer: Unknown

Builder: Carson & Tahoe
Lumber & Fluming Company

Present Owner: United States Department of Agriculture
United States Forest Service
Toiyabe National Forest
1200 Franklin Way
Sparks, Nevada 89431

Present Use: Road

Significance: The Genoa Peak Road was a major historic log haul road used for timber harvest activities associated with the Comstock mining era. This road once interconnected an elaborate network of secondary and tertiary wood skid roads and served as a main artery for wood transport to Spooner Summit, the key lumberyard for the C&TL&FCo.. Its period of significance extends from 1873 through 1898. The structural integrity of this roadbed is highly intact and the overall appearance and character of the graded earthen alignment is preserved and the road still retains most of its 19th century character as a Comstock era log haul road.

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United States Forest Service
United States Department of Agriculture
1200 Franklin Way
Sparks, Nevada 89431

Date: November 1993

I. DESCRIPTION

The Genoa Peak Road and the Genoa Peak Road, Spur are 10-foot wide graded earthen travelways which are approximately 1.5 miles and 9240 feet in length from Genoa Peak to Interstate Highway 50. No other historic features outside of the graded roadbeds are located along these historic log haul routes.

On-site examinations and archival research indicate that the historical integrity of these log haul roads are substantially unaltered from their original structure. The overall routes of the Genoa Peak Road and the Genoa Peak Road, Spurs appear to be fundamentally the same as that depicted on historic maps [U.S.G.S. 1893, reprinted 1949]. Although decades of exposure and disuse have resulted in roadbed erosion and deterioration, ths structural integrity of these features is highly intact. The overall appearance and character of the road alignments are preserved and it still retains most of their 19th century character as a Comstock era log haul roads. The setting for this features is enhanced by its relatively long distance away from a modern highway or travel route.

The only notable additions to the original structure of the Genoa Peak Road and the Genoa Peak Road, Spur are the numerous waterbars constructed by the Forest Service in the early 1950's. These features were located in the roadbed where there was a high probability of downslope erosion and channeling of runoff down the road. Ths waterbars consist of a 1 foot to a 2 foot wide channel that was excavated across the road bed. The dirt produced from this construction was then placed in a mound that is located along the entire length of the downslope side of the channel.

II. Historical Information

The Comstock would not have attained its level of complexity without adequate sources of wood which were supplied by the Tahoe Basin and the area surrounding the Genoa Peak Road. In order to remove the timber from the slopes of the Tahoe Basin and transport it down to the Comstock, a complex supply system of roads, railroads, and flumes was integrated with the innovative logging techniques. The Genoa Peak Road and the Genoa Peak Road, Spur appear to have functioned as a major wood haul roads within the historic Comstock wood conveyance system which centered around Spooner Summit. This primary system road once interconnected an elaborate network of secondary and tertiary wood skid roads and servsd as main artery for wood transport to Spooner Summit.

It has been said that the mines of the Comstock Lode are literally the tombs of the forests of the Sierra. Eliot Lord in 1880 estimated that fully 600 million feet board measure of lumber had been buried in the Comstock mines, enough to build a town of six-room houses for 150,000 people. Not less that 80 million feet of timber and lumber were annually consumed on the Comstock Lode and more than two million cords of wood were consumed as fuel at the hoisting works and by the mills. The urgent demand for fuel wood and the more pressing needs of the mines and those of the growing settlements created an insatiable demand for lumber. Areas east of the crest of the Carson Range were soon depleted of their timber and harvesting was directed to the Lake Tahoe Basin. Much of the logging was done on a contract basis with local loggers who supplied stipulated amounts of timber for large firms.

The need for enormous quantities of timber led to the formation of companies with ample capital to handle larger operations on a scale sufficient to supply the demand. Four major lumber companies operated within the Tahoe Basin. Each developed an impressive network of sawmills, railroads, tramways, flumes, and rafting operations which were designed to cut and move the lumber over the crest of the Carson Range and down to the mines of Washoe.

The Carson & Tahoe Lumber & Fluming Company established their key receiving and sending lumber yard at Spooner Summit. Their operations at Spooner Summit formed the critical link for wood transport from the Tahoe Basin to the Carson Valley. There was smooth, logical flow of material from the woods to the mills to the consumers. Wood was cut on the mountains around the summit and transported short ranges on large wagons by haul road to the summit yard. Longer distances were covered more economically by dragging the logs with horses through log chutes and skid roads. The Glenbrook Railroad delivered lumber from the mills at Glenbrook which had operated around Spooner Summit since 1869. The Company held a virtual monopoly over wood and water resources in this region until 1898.

III. PROPOSED ALTERATIONS

The Carson Ranger District of the Toiyabe National Forest has proposed in the Spooner Summit Timber Sale to harvest timber from a 3415 acre section of land around Spooner Summit. The purpose of the sale is to remove insect and drought-damaged commercial timber, reduce the risk of hazardous trees in recreation areas and travelways, and to remove a fire risk from the immediate vicinity.

Selective thinning of timber stands will encompass timber of varying sizes and include multiple species. Harvested timber will generally be transported from felling locations by helicopter to designated helicopter landings sites. Within the project area, the Genoa Psak Road and the Genoa Peak Road, Spur will be used for ground transport of timber from the helicopter landings.

A number of alterations are proposed along the Genoa Peak Road. The first is located at the road's juncture with Forest Service Road 14N33 to accommodate logging trucks entering the project limits. Most existing water bars on the Genoa Peak Road will be maintained, but fifteen will be removed temporarily to facilitate truck traffic. All removed water bars will be restored after harvesting activities in order to prevent further erosion within the roadbed. In addition, three short segments of road between M.P. 0.68-0.74, 0.82-0.87, 1.68-1.74 are scheduled to be resurfacsd with an aggregate mixturs. These locations will be approximately 12 feet in width and the material will be approximately six inchss in depth. Five turnouts will be constructed along the Genoa Peak Road at Mileposts 0.43, 0.55, 0.82, 1.15, and 1.34. This turnouts will be a minimum of eight feet wide, 50 feet long, and will have 25-foot tapers at each end. Two trses, 20-inch pine and a 28-inch fir, will be removed in order to construct the turnout at M.P. 1.15. The remainder of the Genoa Peak Road, as well as the Genoa Peak Road, Spur, will be graded but the alignment will not be altsred.

Several modifications are proposed within the Genoa Peak Road, Spur prism. The most significant of thess are two Helipads (#13 and #15). These pads consist of one-acrs parcels proposed for construction adjacent to the Gsnoa Peak Road, Spur. A short spur road must be constructed from the Genoa Peak Road, Spur to Helipad #13. Helipad #15 is immediately adjacent to the Genoa Peak Road, Spur and will rsquire no spur road for access. In order to reduce the potential erosion hazard created timbsr harvesting in the immediate vicinity of this feature, six waterbars, similar to thoss described in Section I of this rsport, will be constructed along the steeper portions of the Gsnoa Peak Road, Spur. The final construction activity planned for the Genoa Peak Road, Spur consists of an improvement of the existing stream crossing on the northern end of the ssgment. This construction will reducs the angle of the stream banks and therefore reduce the future erosion potential in the immediate vicinity of the crossing.

IV. SOURCES

Biosystems Analysis, Inc. Determination of Eligibility and Effect For The Spooner Timber Sale on the Toiyabe National Forest, prepared by Susan Lindstrom, September 1993.

Plans and Maps

1893 United States Geological Survey, Map on File Nevada Historical Society, Reno. Reprint 1949

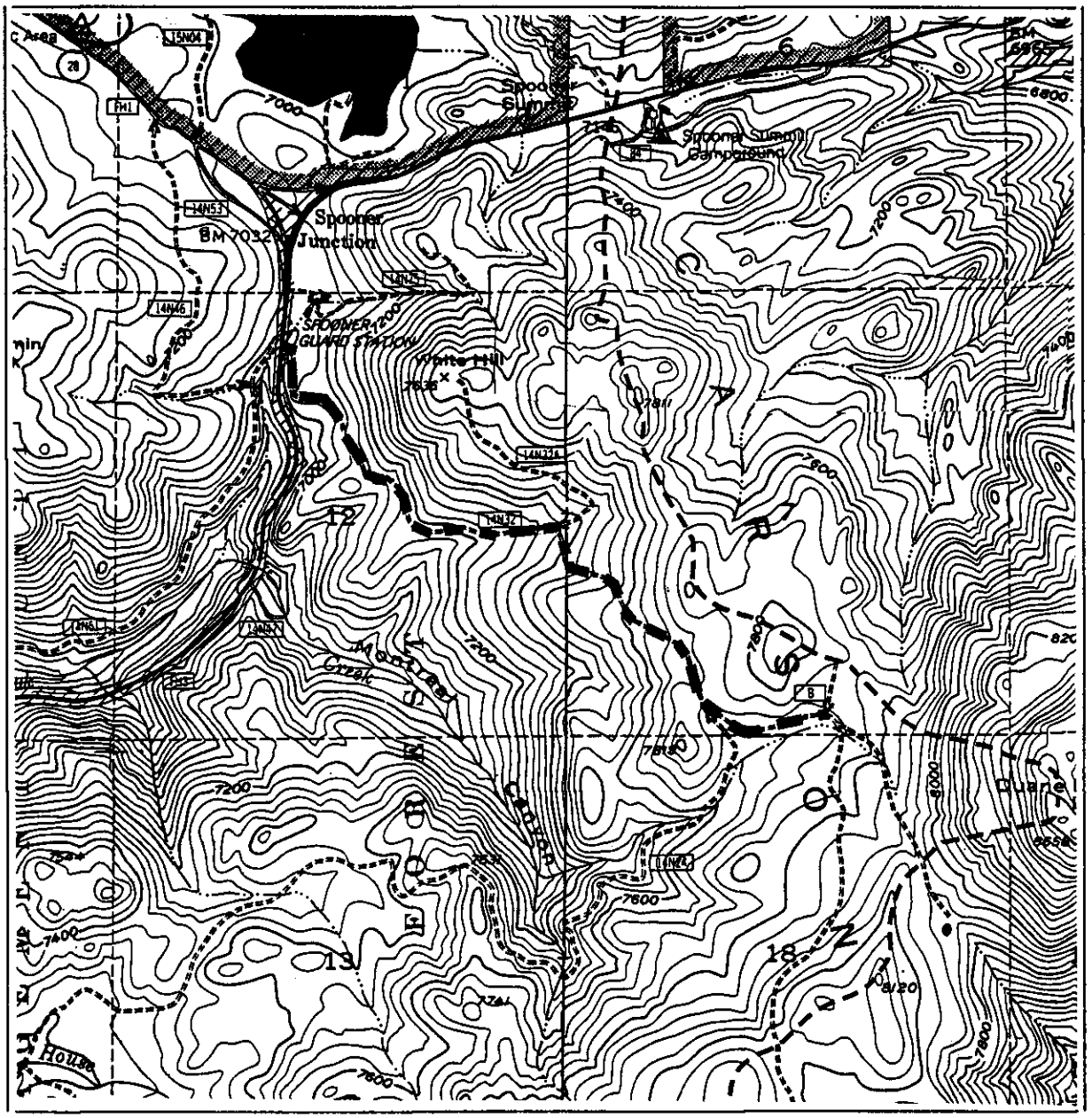
1993 Plan for Construction, Genoa Peak Road, Toiyabe National Forest.

V. PROJECT INFORMATION

This documentation has been prepared by the Toiyabe National Forest as part of a Memorandum of Agreement with the Nevada Division of Historic Preservation and Archaeology. This documentation was prepared prior to construction on the Genoa Peak Road and the Genoa Peak Road, Spur.

The original determination of eligibility for the Genoa Peak Road and the Genoa Peak Road, Spur was written by Susan Lindstrom as part of a subcontract with Biosystems Analysis, Inc.. The documentation provided in this HAER record is based on a previous investigation conducted by Susan Lindstrom. The photographer for this project was David Lanner of the Carson District, Toiyabe National Forest.

FIGURE 1: TOPOGRAPHIC MAP SHOWING THE ROUTE OF THE GENOA PEAK ROAD SEGMENT



U.S.G.S. Quad: Glenbrook, Nev. 7.5' 1955
Photorevised 1982

Scale: 1" = 1500'
1 cm = 118 m

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Dashed Line Represents the Genoa Peak Road Segment

FIGURE 2: PLANS FOR THE PROPOSED ALTERATIONS TO THE GENOA PEAK ROAD
PART A

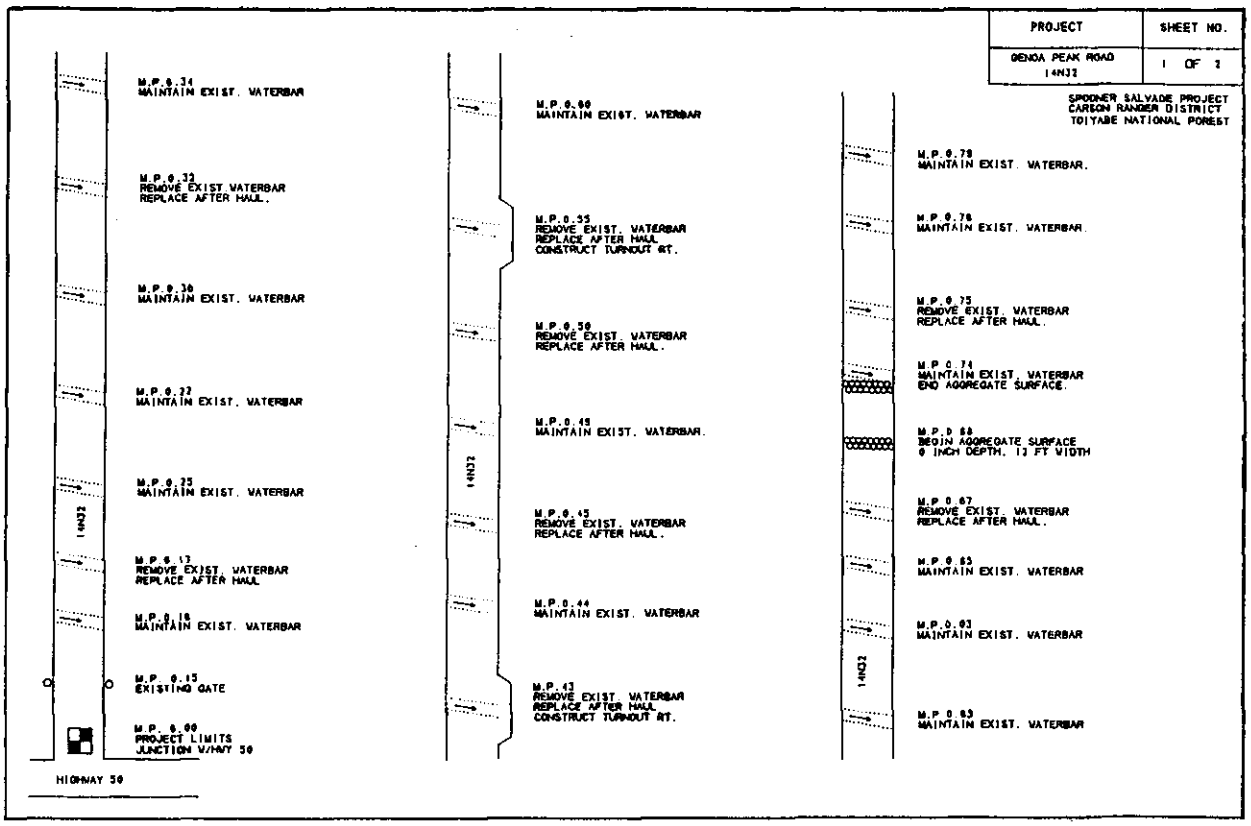


FIGURE 3: PLANS FOR THE PROPOSED ALTERATIONS TO THE GENOA PEAK ROAD
PART B

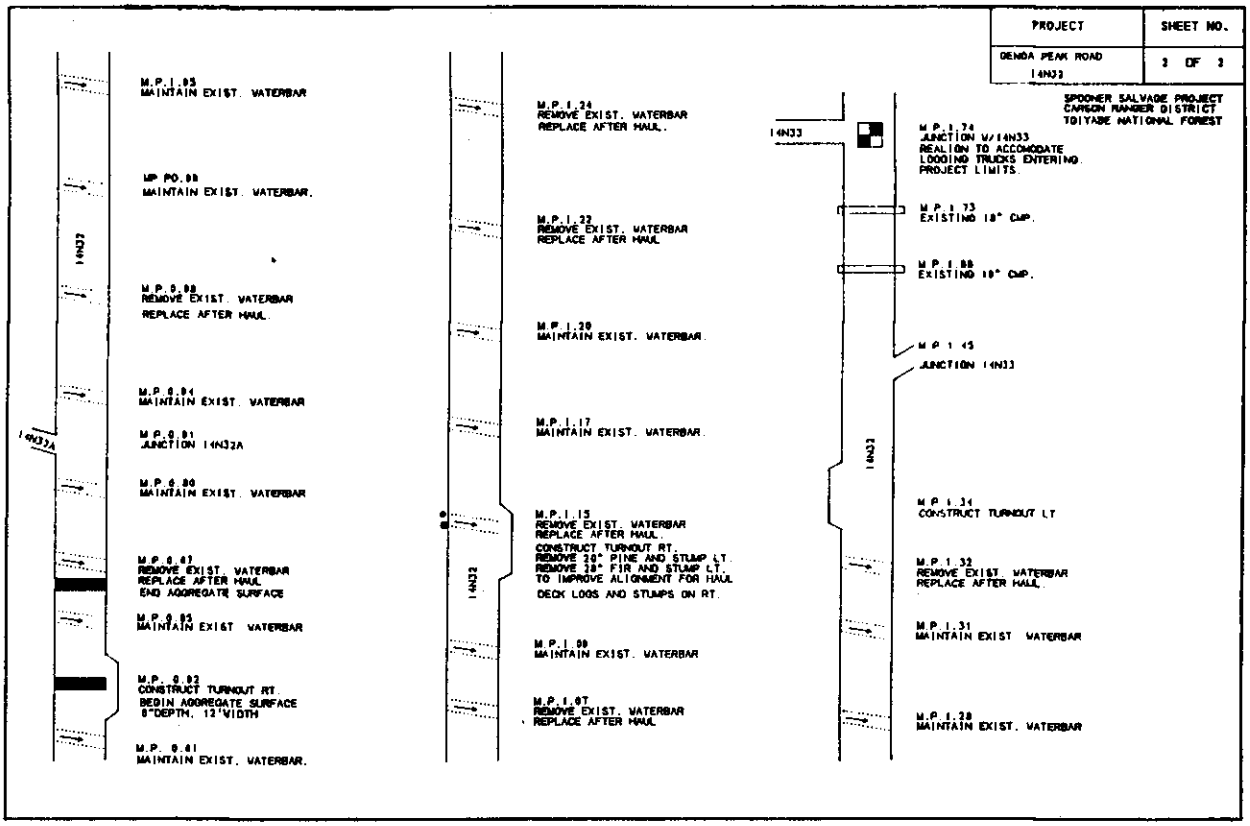
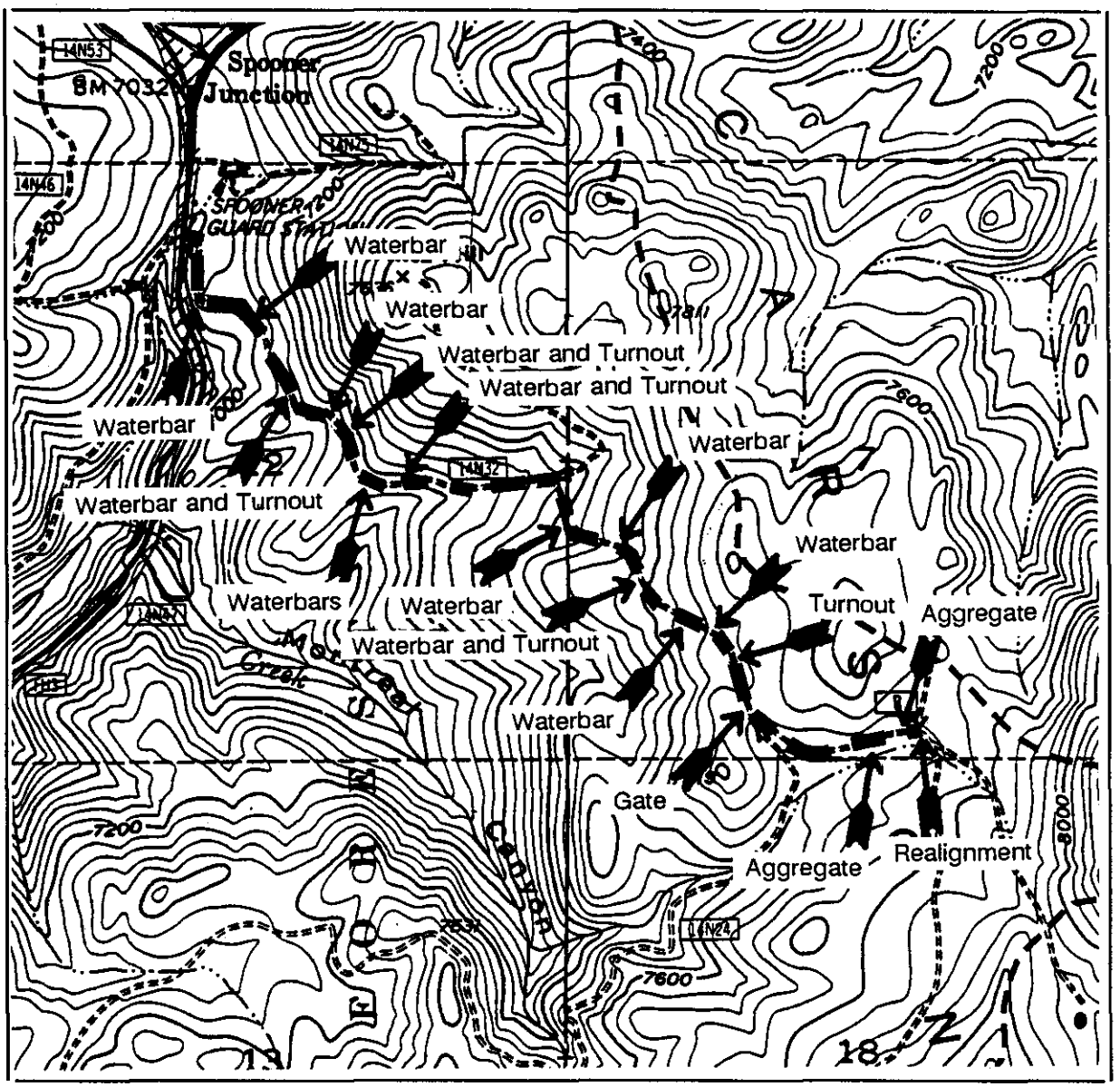


FIGURE 4: TOPOGRAPHIC MAP SHOWING THE LOCATION OF PROPOSED ALTERATIONS TO THE GENOA PEAK ROAD



U.S.G.S. Quad: Glenbrook, Nev. 7.5' 1955
Photorevised 1982

Scale: 1" = 1500'
1 cm = 118 m

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