

WILDERNESS INTENSIVE INVENTORY

EXCELSIOR MOUNTAINS

NV-030-425

CARSON CITY DISTRICT, NEVADA

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WILDERNESS INVENTORY
WILDERNESS SUMMARY SHEET

I. LOCATION

Inventory unit No. NV-030-425

Areas/Island name: Excelsior Mountains

District: Carson City State: Nevada

II. SUMMARY

A. Results of wilderness characteristics analysis.

1. Does the area or island appear to be natural? yes no
2. Does the area or island offer outstanding opportunities for solitude or a primitive and unconfined type recreation? yes no
3. Does the area meet any of the size requirements? yes no
4. Does the area or island have supplemental values? yes no

III. RECOMMENDATION

Check one:

- Area or island should be approved as a WSA.
- Area or island does not qualify for wilderness study.
- A portion of the area(s) or island(s) should be approved as a WSA for further study and reported to the President. The restrictions imposed by Section 603 will no longer apply (reference to map) on the remainder of the area.

IV. APPROVAL

A. District Manager: _____

Date: _____

B. State Director: Edward T. Spang

Date: 11/14/80

WILDERNESS INTENSIVE INVENTORY

Unit Number: NV-030-425

Unit Name: Excelsior Mountains

Introduction

The Excelsior Mountains unit is located in Mineral County, approximately 25 miles southeast of Hawthorne, Nevada. The unit is generally mountainous in character and surrounded by sagebrush covered flats on all sides except the northeast and southwest. (Figures 1 and 2)

An intensive inventory was conducted on the Excelsior Mountains unit to document the presence or absence of wilderness characteristics. The Wilderness Handbook, a policies and procedures guide to the wilderness inventory, lists these characteristics as follows:

1. Size. At least 5,000 contiguous roadless acres of public land.
2. Naturalness. The imprint of man's work must be substantially unnoticeable.
3. Either:
 - a. An outstanding opportunity for solitude; or,
 - b. An outstanding opportunity for a primitive and unconfined type of recreation.*

To qualify for Wilderness Study Area (WSA) designation, an inventory unit must meet all three of the above criteria, or if less than 5,000 roadless acres, it must be: (1) contiguous with other potential wilderness lands; or, (2) have strong public support for its preservation in a wilderness state and be large enough to make such preservation practicable.

Where a portion of the inventory unit was separated from the bulk of the unit by roads, that portion was evaluated for wilderness on its own merits. Areas found to be less than 5,000 acres of public land and/or in an unnatural condition were not considered further. Thus, final judgement on outstanding opportunities for solitude or recreation was made on only those areas which were already found to be larger than 5,000 acres, roadless, and in a natural state.

*Condensed from Section 2c of the Wilderness Act of 1964.

1. SIZE

Narrative:

The Excelsior Mountains unit consists of 66,850 acres of public land and approximately 683 acres of patented land. These figures are slightly different than those shown in the Situation Evaluation for this unit due to the exclusion of private land acreage along the unit boundary, and a more careful assessment of the public land acreage within the area.

Road/way analysis proved to be a major factor in determining an area's size. The Wilderness Inventory Handbook defines a road as a route which has been "improved and maintained by mechanical means to insure relatively regular and continuous use". A route which carries traffic but which appeared to have been created and maintained solely by the passage of vehicles was designated a way. Roads to the interior of a unit were intrusions on naturalness, and were removed from the unit by indenting the border to follow the road up one side, around the terminus, and down the other side. Ways, which showed no mechanical improvement or maintenance and were not substantially noticeable were left within the unit. Boundary modifications removing roads from the unit deleted minimal acreage. Documented roads and ways each received a number for reference purposes.

Early in the intensive inventory, road documentation necessitated the deletion of 1,140 acres of public land due to inadequate size. The remaining 65,710 acres of public land finally assessed for wilderness characteristics consist only of the actual roadless area within the original unit.

The three subunits deleted due to the documentation of roads (Figure 3):

- Area A: A relatively new road (Road 20) connects Roads 13 and 03. The circumscribed area contains 240 acres.
- Area B: This 50-acre parcel is completely surrounded by a portion of Road 22.
- Area C: Portions of Road 27 form all but the southern boundary of this subunit. County Road 365 makes up the area's southern boundary. This 850-acre parcel also is bisected by the eastern portion of Road 28.

These areas are of insufficient size for wilderness consideration.

After the deletion of the roaded area, the inventory unit consists of one area.

Area D: This area consists of 65,710 acres and was fully evaluated for the presence or absence of wilderness characteristics. Private acreage totalling 683 acres is scattered throughout this subunit.

Conclusion: Area D contains over 5,000 acres of roadless land.

2. NATURALNESS

Narrative:

The Wilderness Act of 1964 defines a wilderness as an area which "generally appears to have been affected primarily by the forces of nature, with the imprint of man's work substantially unnoticeable". Using this definition, a boundary modification was necessary to exclude part of the unit which shows substantially noticeable imprints of man's work.

The term "essentially natural" has been employed here to describe an area where the works of man are substantially unnoticeable to the average visitor.

Area D: This subunit of 65,710 acres is bounded by two BLM maintained roads, a county road, seven documented roads, patented lands and the Toiyabe National Forest.

The major impacts upon naturalness consist of roads and mining activity, both of which are numerous. (Figures 4 and 5)

Road 05, north of Marietta, was deleted from the unit during the initial inventory phase. This road leads to extensive mining activity, primarily on patented lands. The same is true of Road 04.

Roads 21 and 22 provide access to mining activity on the west side of Moho Mountain and in the vicinity of Subunit B.

Roads 11, 12, 29, 30 and 32 also provide access to prospects and mining activity.

Road 13 provides access to patented land and, though a way in portions, further provides a means of traversing the unit from north to south.

Eight other roads extend into the subunit and have been excluded from the area.

In addition, several ways enter the subunit, some of which provide access to mining claims, prospects and old mining activity. Although they are substantially unnoticeable from a naturalness standpoint, they do have an effect upon primitive recreational opportunities. This will be addressed in the next section of this report.

Two fencelines enter the subunit. Their total length is less than three miles, and they are not substantially noticeable.

Much of the mining activity in the subunit occurs on patented land. Approximately 150 acres of public land impacted by mining and roads have been deleted from the subunit based on naturalness considerations, leaving approximately 65,560 acres that are in an essentially natural state.

Conclusion:

Area D is in an essentially natural state where the imprint of man's work is substantially unnoticeable.

3. OUTSTANDING OPPORTUNITY FOR SOLITUDE OR A PRIMITIVE AND UNCONFINED RECREATION ANALYSIS

A. Solitude

Narrative:

Solitude is defined in the Wilderness Handbook as "the state of being alone or remote from others, isolation; a lonely or secluded place". Although some subjective judgements must be made in assessing this criterion, the Handbook has established guidelines delineating factors which influence solitude, including "size, natural screening, and the ability of the user to find a secluded spot". Configuration of an area, as well as size is important in determining a user's ability to avoid the sights and sounds of other people. Natural screening is a product of interaction between varied topography and the presence of vegetation, resulting in seclusion and isolation. All of these factors are addressed below.

Area D

Size:

Although the subunit is large, its configuration restricts the opportunity for an outstanding solitude experience.

The area measures approximately eight miles (north-south) by eighteen miles (east-west) at its extremes, though it narrows to less than two miles in width in the eastern portion of the subunit. More than thirty roads and ways penetrate the subunit and many of them provide access into the very heart of the area.

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Once the documented roads are deleted from the area, the border of the subunit shows several deep indentations, thus causing a major alteration in the configuration of the subunit. (Figure 6) Virtually no point within the area is further than one and one-half miles from a documented road. The ability of a visitor to the area to avoid the sights and sounds of other people, as well as the impacts of man's works, is greatly restricted by the area's configuration.

Despite its large size, the area's configuration is not conducive to an outstanding opportunity for solitude.

Natural Screening:

Topographic and vegetative screening ranges from poor to very good within the area. The sagebrush covered flats and low hills in the northwest, north central and far eastern portions of the unit, as well as in Little Huntoon Valley and the area around Marietta, provide virtually no vegetative screening and only minimal topographic screening.

As the elevation in the subunit increases, so does the amount and quality of natural screening.

On the southern flank of the mountainous portion of the subunit, vegetative screening below the 7200' elevation is minimal. In the northern portions of the area, vegetative screening is minimal below the 6600' elevation. Above these elevations, however, the subunit is vegetated by a pinyon-juniper association which provides generally good vegetative screening. The density of this coverage is variable, and the screening which it provides changes markedly from one part of the area to another. In most places, screening opportunities are fair, while at the higher elevations, dense stands of vegetation are found which provide extremely good screening within the immediate vicinity. Such stands are interspersed with open and sparsely covered areas, however, such that the overall screening effect is only moderate.

Topographic screening in the mountainous portion of the unit is generally good. The terrain is moderately to highly dissected throughout, and visitors to the area would be well-screened from other users on nearby hills and in washes. The mountain tops within the subunit provide generally unrestricted views of the surrounding area, and the rolling character of these mountains allows a visitor to see, in many cases, either a boundary road, a penetrant road, or some of the extensive mining activity within the area.

While both vegetative and topographic screening are generally conducive to seclusion and isolation, numerous man-made intrusions limit their actual overall effectiveness.

Ability of the User to Find a Secluded Spot:

Despite the large size of the subunit, the impacts of man can be found interspersed throughout the area.

Moho Mountain, the highest point within the subunit and a likely destination point for a visitor to the area, has a documented road climbing to mining activity less than half a mile northwest of its summit. Mining on the south side of Moho Mountain is even more extensive.

Excelsior Mountain, another likely destination point for a visitor, provides views of both the north and south boundary roads of the unit and lies within a mile of mining activity north of the Bird-song Mine. Approximately 2,700 acres in the northwest and north central part of the subunit are included in an ordinance impact testing area utilized by the U.S. Army Ammunition Depot in Hawthorne, Nevada.

Documented roads provide access to virtually every part of the area, thus making it difficult for a visitor to avoid the impacts of man or to avoid the sights and sounds of other people. Secluded spots can be found, however, given the proximity of man-made intrusions and the fact that many of the key features in the area are relatively accessible by vehicle, it is unlikely that a visitor to the subunit would be able to experience a feeling of seclusion and isolation such as is expected within a wilderness area.

Conclusion:

Area D

1. Despite its large size, the area's configuration is not conducive to an outstanding opportunity for solitude.
2. Natural screening ranges from poor to very good within the area and, while generally conducive to a feeling of seclusion and isolation, its overall effectiveness is limited by the numerous works of man found within the subunit.
3. Although secluded spots can be found within the area, most of the key features can either be reached by, or are within a short distance of, a documented road. No point within the subunit is more than a mile and one-half from a documented road. The feeling of seclusion and isolation necessary to a wilderness experience is not present within the area.

This area does not possess outstanding opportunities for solitude.

B. Primitive and Unconfined Recreation

Narrative:

The Wilderness Inventory Handbook defined "primitive and unconfined recreation" as "those activities that provide dispersed, undeveloped recreation which do not require facilities or motorized equipment". Examples of such activities include hiking, backpacking, hunting, horseback riding, rock climbing, and sightseeing for botanical, zoological or geological features. An area is considered to have outstanding opportunities for this type of recreation either through a diversity of possible activities, or the outstanding quality of one activity.

Area D

Hunting/Trapping:

Hunting and trapping opportunities are poor to fair. Some chukar are present although populations are small (less than 15 birds per square mile). The area provides winter range for migratory mule deer populations and supports a small resident herd. Hunting opportunities are considered poor to fair. The western portion of the subunit is believed to support a small mountain lion population which follows the movements of the deer herds. Mountain cottontails and black-tailed jackrabbits are found throughout the subunit. Trapping of bobcat and coyote takes place within the area and opportunities are considered fair.

Winter Sports:

Snow travel on skis and snowshoes is possible at times, although snow cover can vary considerably from year to year. Lower elevations receive marginal snow cover and coverage at the higher elevations is frequently spotty. Access to the snow generally requires some walking or difficult driving due to limited winter access conditions. The area is not known for quality opportunities of this type and little such use presently occurs. Although there is some potential, it could not be considered outstanding.

Day Hiking:

Day hiking opportunities are fair to good. Several roads provide relatively easy access to the interior of the area, from which a visitor can reach the higher elevations with little difficulty. Circle hikes are possible, as are short hikes along the main ridge-top. It also would be feasible to hike across the range and be picked up on the opposite side.

Backpacking and Camping:

Backpacking and camping opportunities are marginal. As noted earlier, no spot within the subunit is more than one and one-half miles from a documented road. Mining activity is extensive within the central portion of the unit and it would be virtually impossible for a visitor to avoid the impacts of man's activity while undertaking a camping or backpacking trip. Many of the key features within the area are accessible by road.

Water is extremely scarce within the subunit. Only three springs exist within the area and two of these are accessible by documented roads. There are no perennial streams in the subunit.

The lack of water and the proximity of many key features to physical intrusions severely limits the number of suitable campsites within the subunit.

Mountain/Rock Climbing:

The mountainous character of much of the unit necessitates a certain amount of easy mountain and rock climbing simply to get around within the unit. However, opportunities for this type of activity alone are limited. There are no good technical climbing opportunities within the subunit.

Horseback Riding:

Horseback riding opportunities are marginal. Although the size of the area is conducive to such opportunities, the lack of water and limited forage greatly inhibit the enjoyment of this activity. Furthermore, the more highly dissected and heavily vegetated portions of the subunit present additional obstacles to a quality experience.

Sightseeing:

Sightseeing opportunities are moderate to good. The mountainous character of the area and the pinyon-juniper woodland at the higher elevations provides pleasing vistas. Views from the heights, looking outside the unit toward the Sierra Nevada, Walker Lake and the White Mountains, are impressive. However, botanical, zoological and geological features within the area are limited, and opportunities for sightseeing inside the area are marginal. In addition, the intrusions discussed previously further limit sightseeing opportunities.

Conclusion:

No single dispersed recreation opportunity is outstanding. Although opportunities exist for hunting and trapping, day hiking, backpacking,

horseback riding and sightseeing, all of these are limited and even when combined, they could not provide an outstanding opportunity for primitive and unconfined recreation.

Opportunities for primitive and unconfined recreation are not outstanding within the unit.

4. SUPPLEMENTAL VALUES

Narrative:

The Handbook defines supplemental values as "ecological, geological or other features of scientific, educational, scenic or historical value."

The old mining town of Marietta is located along the southern boundary of the unit and much of the Marietta Mining District lies within the area. Some structures associated with this historic activity still remain. Several ruins associated with mining activity also can be found in Silver Dyke Canyon.

No threatened or endangered species are known to occur within the unit, although the presence of mountain lions and raptors is an important ecological value within the area. A small petroglyph site is located beside BLM Road 3032 just inside the subunit.

Limited supplemental values exist within the unit.

5. POSSIBILITY OF CERTAIN AREAS RETURNING TO A NATURAL CONDITION

Narrative:

The Wilderness Handbook provides that:

"An inventory unit or portion of an inventory unit in which the imprint of man's work is substantially noticeable, but which otherwise contains wilderness characteristics, may be further considered for designation as a Wilderness Study Area when it is reasonable to expect the imprint of man's work to return or be returned to a substantially unnoticeable level either by natural processes or by hand labor".

The key phrase in this statement refers to the type of processes used to achieve rehabilitation - "natural processes or hand labor".

Areas cited earlier for "impaired naturalness" generally show intrusions which cannot return to a natural state without intensive application of mechanized labor. Mining scars, for example, generally require massive effort for rehabilitation, including movement of soil into pits or scrapes and artificial revegetation of the disturbed area. Natural revegetation rates are very slow, so that natural rehabilitation of a mining area is not to be expected within several decades.

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The only man-made impacts which show a real potential for rehabilitation are ways. Most ways would eventually return to a natural condition on their own if closed to traffic. Rehabilitation would be slow, but revegetation is possible given time, and possible use of hand tools to prepare the ground.

DRAFT INTENSIVE WILDERNESS INVENTORY NARRATIVE SUMMARY

Excelsior Mountains

NV-030-425

1. Area Description - The Excelsior Mountain unit is located in Mineral County, approximately 25 miles southeast of Hawthorne, Nevada. The unit is generally mountainous in character and surrounded by sagebrush covered flats on all sides except the northeast and southwest. Its boundaries are formed by a county road, two BLM maintained roads, documented roads and patented lands.

2. Wilderness Characteristics
 - a. Size. The original Excelsior Mountains Intensive Inventory Unit contained 67,533 acres, of which 638 acres are patented lands. The remaining 66,850 acres are held in public ownership and administered by the BLM. Acreage deleted due to the size considerations totaled 1,140 acres, resulting in a subunit of 65,710 acres, upon which a complete intensive inventory was conducted.
 - b. Naturalness. An area of 65,560 acres was determined to be in an essentially natural condition. Approximately 150 acres were deleted from the unit due to a lack of naturalness.
 - c. Outstanding Opportunities for:
 - (1) Solitude. Solitude opportunities were not deemed outstanding due to the configuration of the roadless area, numerous intrusions in the unit, and the presence of several mines, including some active ones within the center of the unit.
 - (2) Primitive and Unconfined Recreation. While some activities, notably day hiking and sight-seeing, are possible within the unit, outstanding opportunities do not exist. Water supplies are scarce, and the presence of roads and mines deep within the unit restricts both the types and quality of recreational opportunities available to a visitor.

- d. Supplemental Values. Limited ecological and historical supplemental values were found to exist within the unit. Historic values are those relating to the extensive mining activity within the unit.
 - e. Rehabilitation Potential. While many of the ways in the unit could be rehabilitated, the vast majority of mining activity within the area will continue to be substantially noticeable for many years to come.
3. Recommendation - The area does not qualify for wilderness study and should be dropped from the wilderness review process.
4. Rationale for Recommendation - Although a portion of the unit contains more than 5,000 acres of contiguous public land that generally appears to have been effected primarily by the forces of nature with the imprint of man's work substantially unnoticeable, neither outstanding opportunities for solitude nor a primitive and unconfined type of recreation are present.

Wilderness Intensive Inventory Signature Sheet

Inventory Unit # NV-030-425
 Name Excelsior Mountains

I. Field Inventory

Size Analysis	<u>Terry Knight Robert L Beckmann</u>	<u>1/24/80</u>
Naturalness	<u>Terry Knight Robert L Beckmann</u>	<u>1/24/80</u>
Solitude	<u>Terry Knight Robert L Beckmann</u>	<u>1/24/80</u>
Recreation	<u>Terry Knight Robert L Beckmann</u>	<u>1/24/80</u>
Supplemental Values	<u>Terry Knight Robert L Beckmann</u>	<u>1/24/80</u>
Rehabilitation	<u>Terry Knight Robert L Beckmann</u>	<u>1/24/80</u>
	Signature	Date

II. Review

District Wilderness Specialist

Frank J. D'Amore _____
 Name Signature Date

Resource Area Manager

W.R. Brigham _____
 Name Signature Date

Draft Initial Inventory

Area Name: Excelsior Mountains Inventory Unit No: NV-030-425

District: Carson City (N-030)

Unit Analysis and Evaluation

Size: 66,600 acres of public land.

General Vegetation and Topographic Features: The terrain is generally mountainous and heavily vegetated by pinyon and juniper.

Naturalness: Several unreviewed ways are found in the unit, but the area appears to be in an essentially natural condition.

Solitude/Primitive and Unconfined Recreation: Outstanding opportunities for solitude or primitive, unconfined recreation may exist.

Unit Recommendation - The area is recommended for intensive wilderness inventory.

Final Initial Inventory

UNIT NUMBER NV-030-425 NAME Excelsior Mountains

PUBLIC LAND ACREAGE 66,600

ORIGINAL RECOMMENDATION: Area to be intensively inventoried.

SUMMARY OF PUBLIC COMMENT RECEIVED: Sixteen comments were received. They were split with some identifying roads or intrusions or other resource values, and others identifying wilderness characteristics.

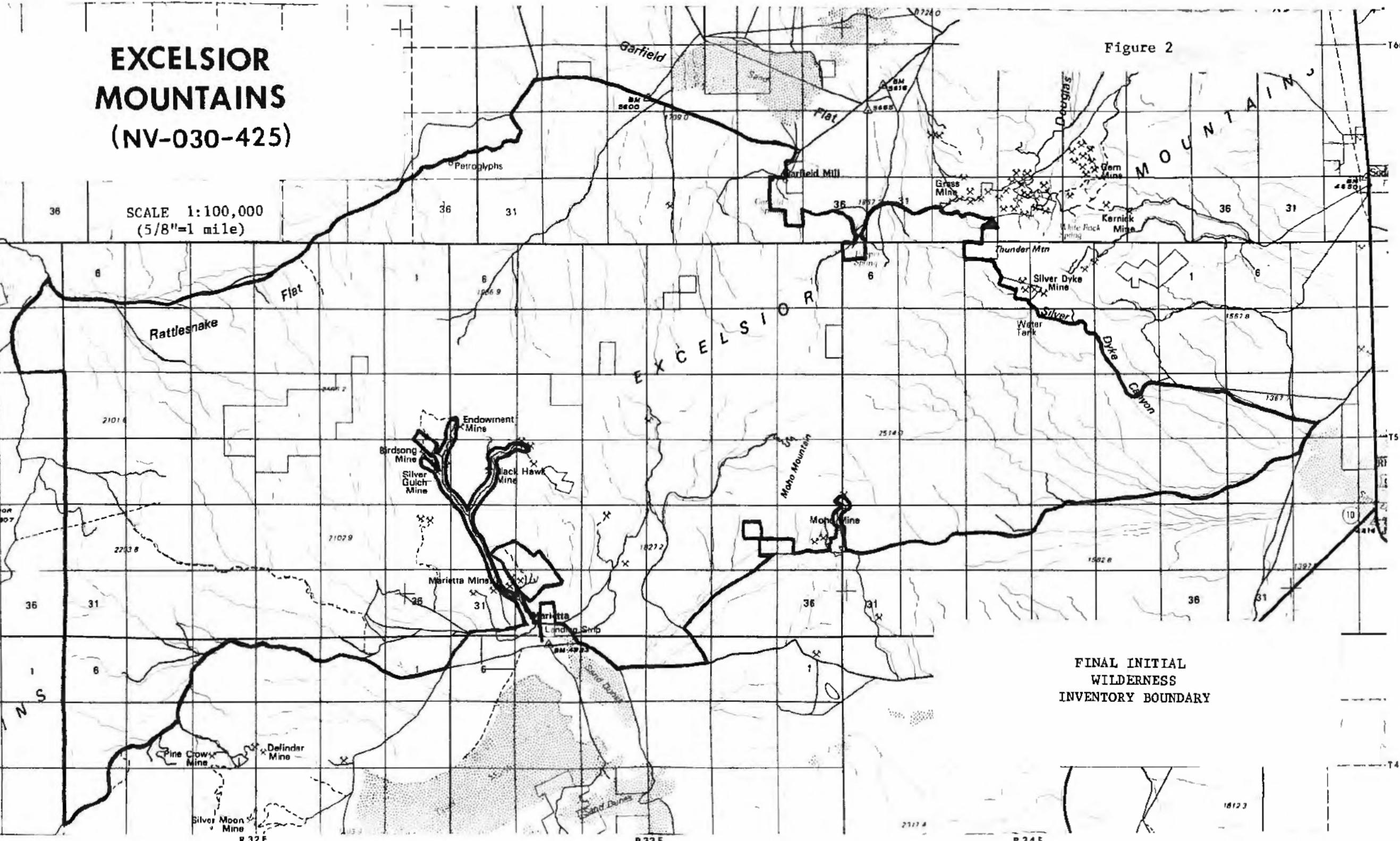
FINAL DECISION: 450 acres will be dropped from further wilderness consideration.
66,150 acres will be intensively inventoried.

RATIONALE: Although public comments were received supporting the presence and absence of wilderness characteristics, the Bureau believes that portions of the area clearly lack wilderness characteristics and should be dropped from further wilderness consideration. The remainder will be intensively inventoried.

EXCELSIOR MOUNTAINS (NV-030-425)

SCALE 1:100,000
(5/8"=1 mile)

Figure 2



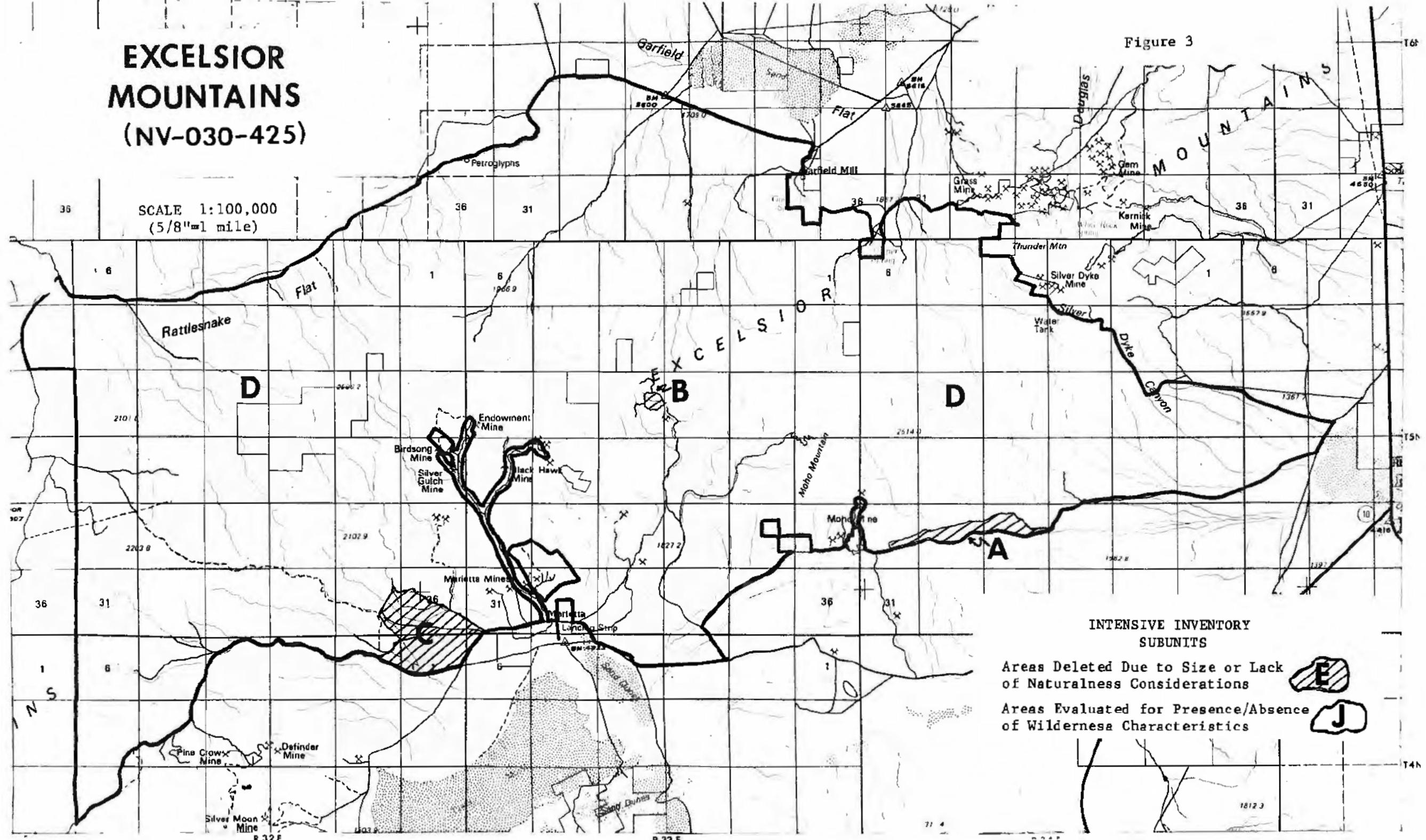
FINAL INITIAL
WILDERNESS
INVENTORY BOUNDARY



EXCELSIOR MOUNTAINS (NV-030-425)

Figure 3

SCALE 1:100,000
(5/8"=1 mile)



INTENSIVE INVENTORY SUBUNITS

Areas Deleted Due to Size or Lack
of Naturalness Considerations



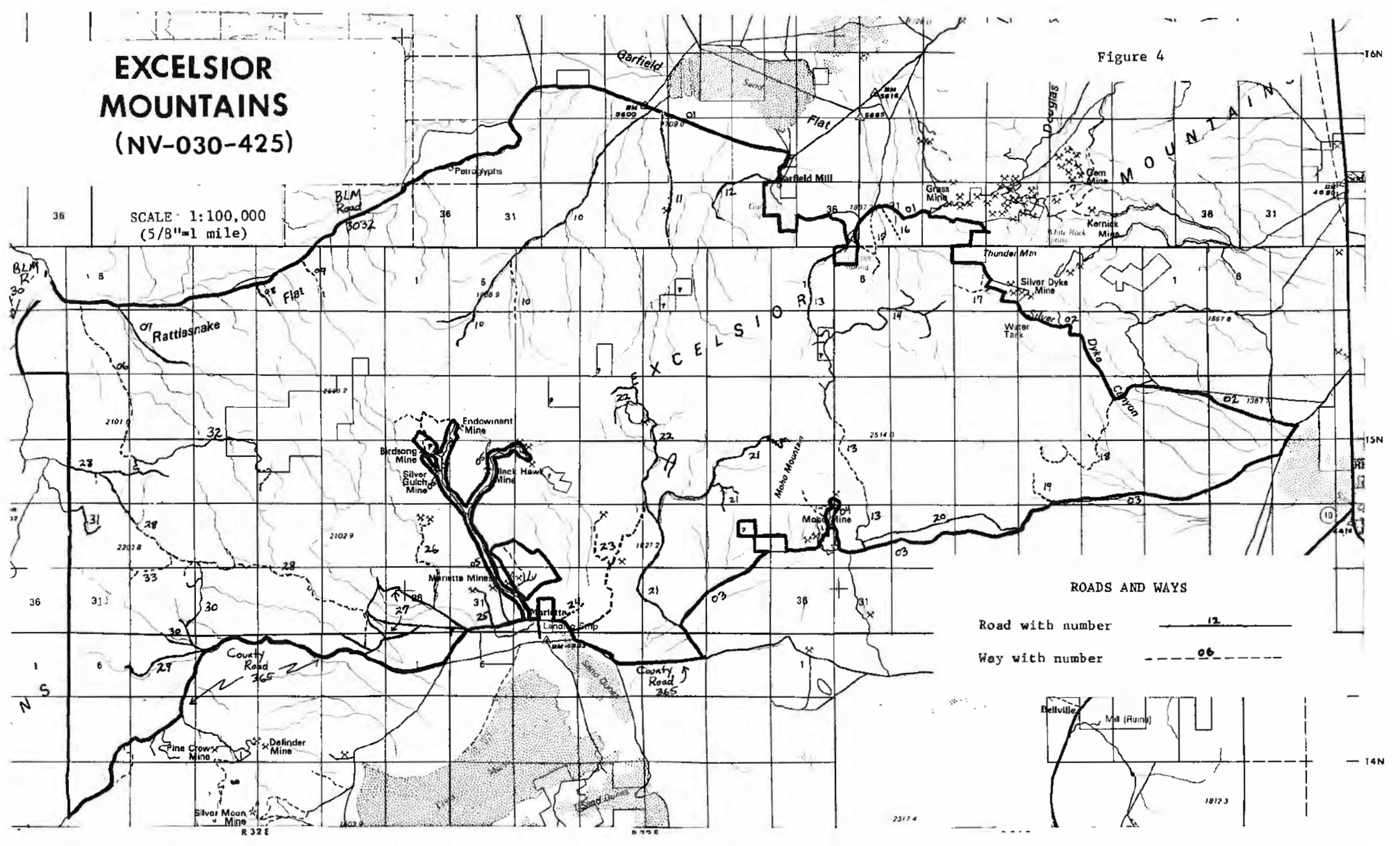
Areas Evaluated for Presence/Absence
of Wilderness Characteristics



EXCELSIOR MOUNTAINS (NV-030-425)

Figure 4

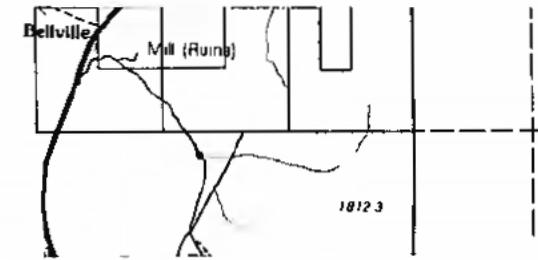
SCALE 1:100,000
(5/8"=1 mile)



ROADS AND WAYS

Road with number 12

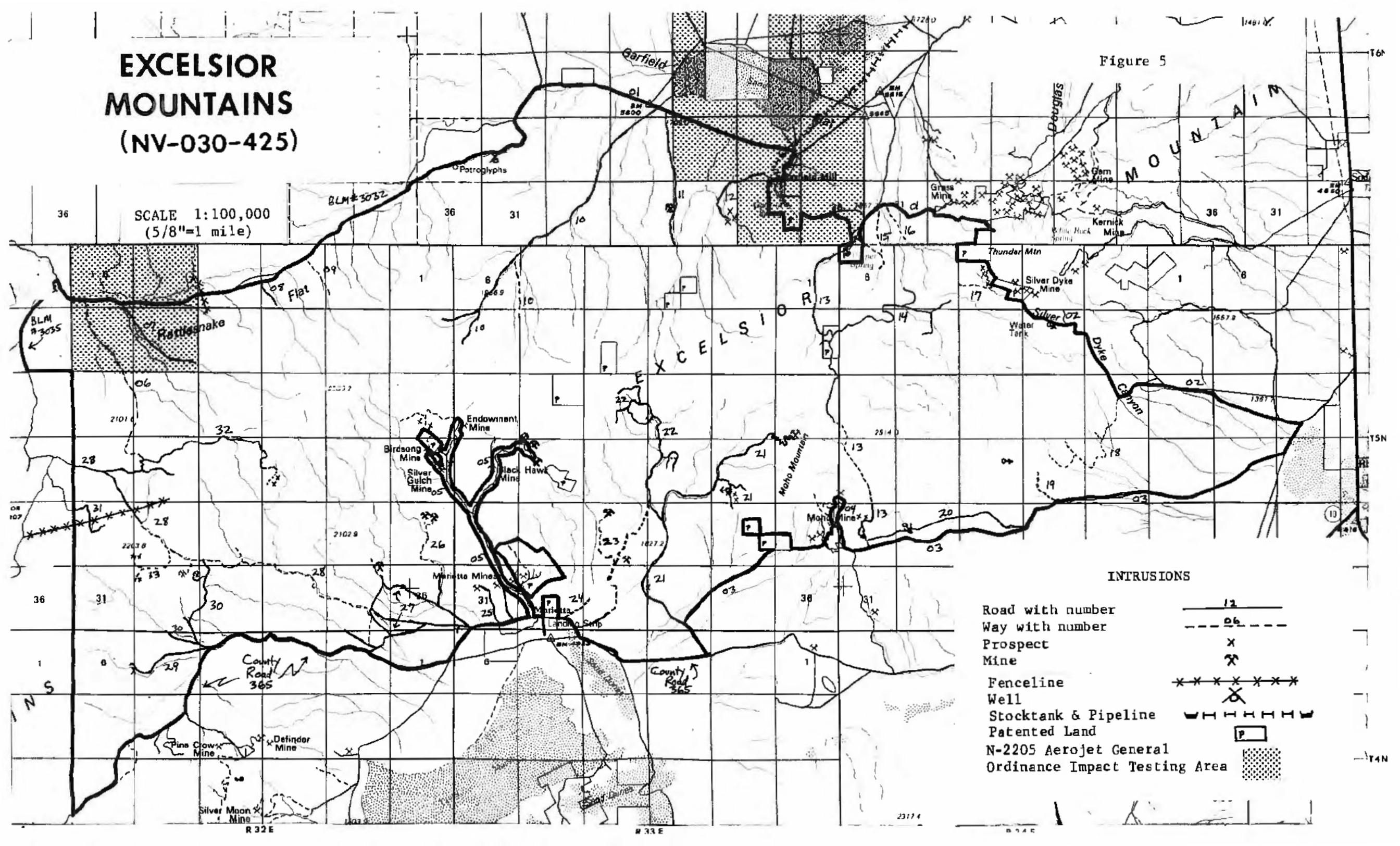
Way with number 06



EXCELSIOR MOUNTAINS (NV-030-425)

Figure 5

SCALE 1:100,000
(5/8"=1 mile)



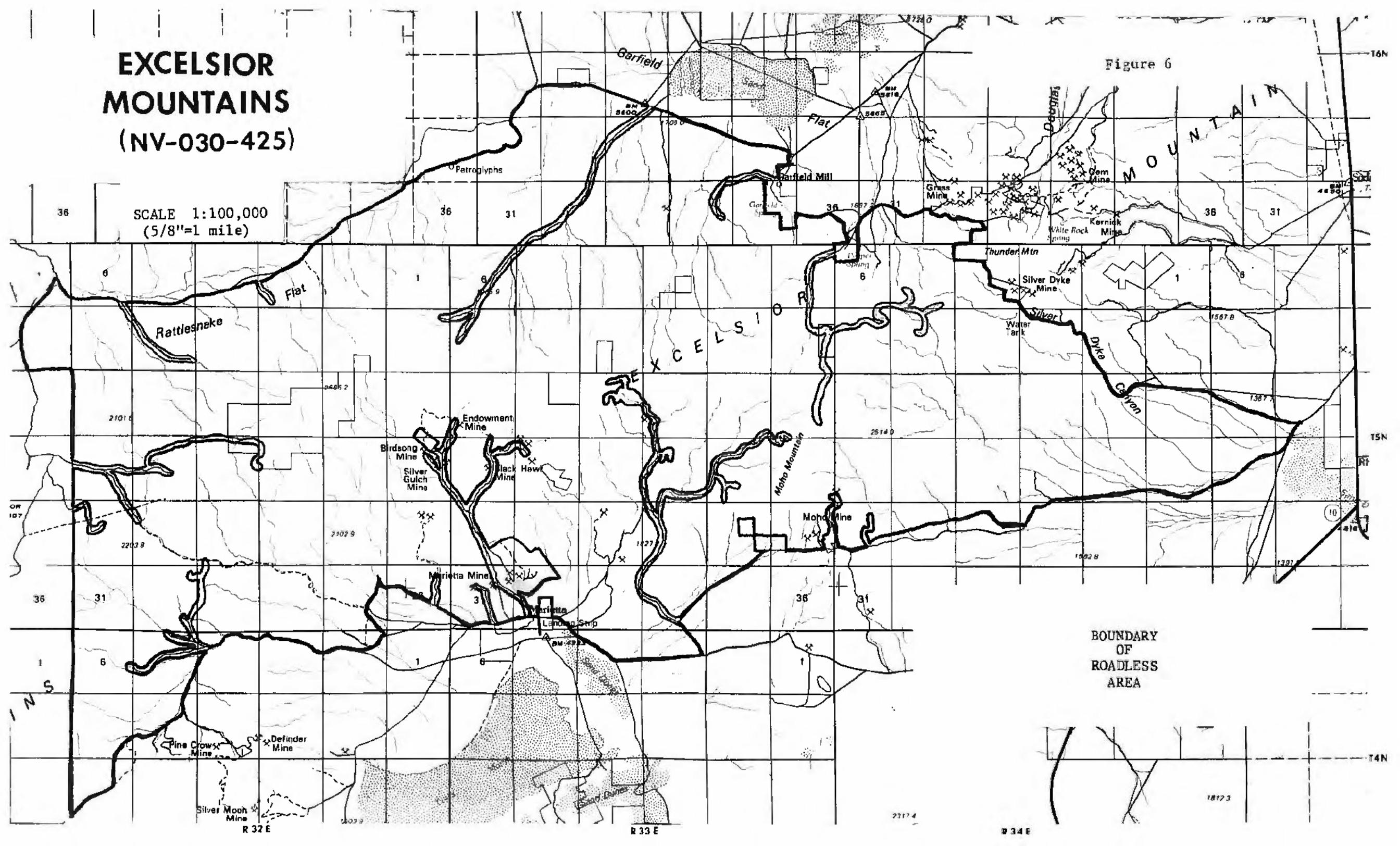
INTRUSIONS

- Road with number
- Way with number
- Prospect
- Mine
- Fenceline
- Well
- Stocktank & Pipeline
- Patented Land
- N-2205 Aerojet General Ordinance Impact Testing Area

EXCELSIOR MOUNTAINS (NV-030-425)

Figure 6

SCALE 1:100,000
(5/8"=1 mile)



EXCELSIOR MOUNTAINS (NV-030-425)

Figure 7

SCALE 1:100,000
(5/8"=1 mile)

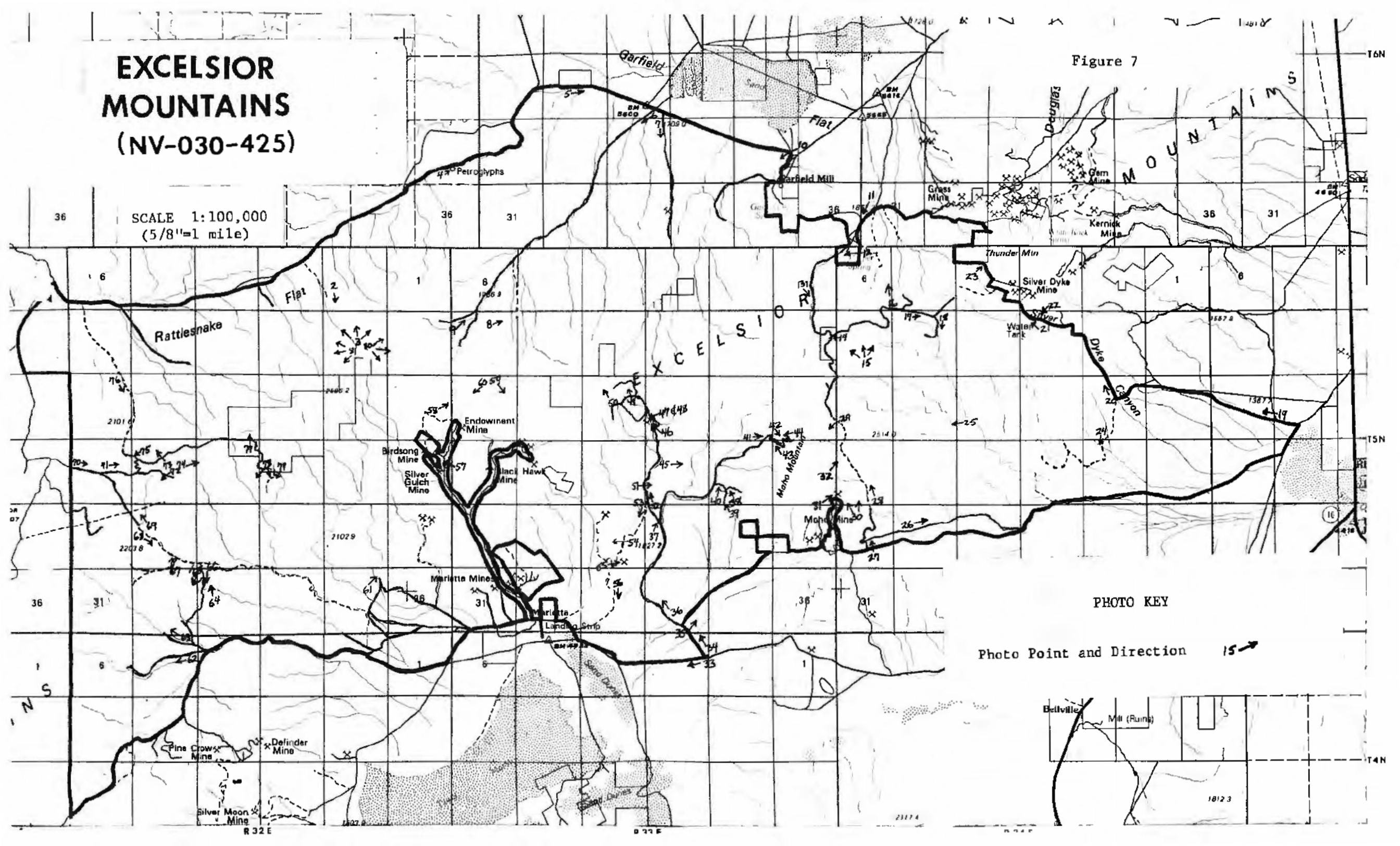


PHOTO KEY

Photo Point and Direction 15 →

Bellville Mill (Ruins)

18123

R 32 E

D 77 E

21174

T6N

T5N

T4N



1. Looking into the unit from the northwest, across Rattlesnake Flat. (106-21,22,23)



2. Aerial view looking south to Excelsior Mountain. (46-27)



3. Panorama looking northwest (left) to northeast (right) from on top of Excelsior Mountain. BLM road 3032 can be seen running across the middle of the photo. This road in the northern boundary of the unit. (46-10,11,12,13)



4. Petroglyphs next to the northern boundary road. (BLM road 3032). (131-14)



5. Documented road 01, looking east.
The unit is to the right of the
road. (131-4)



6. Documented road 10, looking south
west. (131-6)



7. Documented road 11, looking south.
(131-8)



8. Looking east across the northern flats of the unit. A portion of way 10 can be seen in the middle-ground. (46-26)



9. Looking northeast across the flat at road 10. (46-25)



10. Road junction on north central boundary. Roads lead to Garfield Spring and to road 12. (131-9)



11. A portion of road 01 leading to Pepper Spring and connecting to road 13. (131-12)



12. Pepper Spring area (private land). Road in background is road 13. (131-15)



13. Road 13 winding up the mountain. (131-17)



14. Road 14 looking west.
(131-21)



15. Panorama looking northwest, showing road 14 connecting with road 13, one branch of which goes down the canyon in the left center and the other branch continues south out the left side of the picture. The area in the left center of the picture is patented land. (99-10.11.12)



16. Looking down on Garfield Flat area from road 14. Ways 15 and 16 can be seen on the left. Roads in the lower right foreground are in unit NV-030-425a, Camp Douglas. Boundary roads are easily visible from many parts of the unit. (132-1,2)



17. Road 14, looking east.
(132-3)



18. South fork of road 14. This dead ends in approximately one-half mile. (132-5)



19. Boundary road 02, looking west. (132-17).



20. Boundary road 02, looking northwest up Silver Dyke Canyon. (132=19).



21. Aerial view of read 02 and old workings at Silver Dyke. (99-21).



22. Silver Dyke. (132-22).



23. Old ruins, workings and way above Silver Dyke Canyon. (47-29)



24. Way 18 leading across the eastern flats of the unit. (133-5).



25, Deeply cut canyon in the eastern portion of the unit. This is somewhat unusual in that it is the most highly eroded portion within the unit. Road 14 is over the hill on the right. Way 13 is over the hill on the left. Extensive mining activity on Moho Mountain can be seen from the hilltops on the left.

(99-18,19).



26. Road 20, looking east. Subunit A is to the right of the road. (132-16).



27. Road 13, looking north from road 03. (132-14).



28. Road 13 comes in from the left and becomes way 13 in the center of the picture. (132-12).



29. Looking southwest from way 13 toward Marietta and Teel's Marsh. Road 22 can be seen on the right. Road 21 winds up Moho Mountain on the left. (132-6).



30. Mining activity on the southeast slope of Moho Mountain. Note the way climbing up the mountain almost to its summit. (99-13,14).





31. Mining roads northeast of those shown in photo 30. Note the sparse vegetation in this area. (99-15).



32. Looking northeast from above the east side of Moho Mountain. Way 13 is in the wash at right center. Road 14 runs east-west just below the white rock outcropping seen in the left background. (See photo 15). Natural screening is fair to moderate in this area. (99-17).



33. Junction of county road 365 and documented road 03, looking west. (130-20).



34.

Documented road 03 in background, looking north from junction with county road 365. (130-19).



35.

Junction of road 21 (coming in from the left) with road 03, looking northeast. Moho Mountain is in the background. (130-21).



36. Looking northwest into the unit along road 21. (130-22).



37. Junction of road 22 (left) with road 21. (130-24).



38. One of only three springs within the unit. This spring lies beside road 21. (137-7).



39. Mining activity along road 21. (137-8).



40. Mining activity along road 21. The ridge in the background is the main ridge within the area and lies east west along the middle of the unit. (137-11).



41. Road 21 switchbacking up the northwest side of Moho Mountain. (99-9).



42. Mining activity on Moho Mountain (137-14).



43. Road 21 from Moho Mountain, looking west. The road continues on down the valley. Road 22 can be seen on the hills in the background. (137-17).



44. Another photo looking across to road 22 and down on road 21 from Moho Mountain. (137-19).



45. Looking back east toward Moho Mountain from road 22. Some of the switch-backs of road 21 can be seen in the background. (137-24).



46. Looking at subunit B, surrounded by road 22. (99-6).



47. Road 22.

(138-2).



48. Road 22 and old mining implements (138-5).



49. North fork of road 22, leading away from subunit B.
(138-8).



50. Looking northwest from the south fork of road 22. The north fork of road 22 can be seen in the middleground. The hill in the background is along the main ridge of the range and road 10 and Garfield Flat lie on the other side of the ridge.
(138-10).



51. An adit and tailings pile on the east side of road 22.
(138-11).



52. Looking north along road 22.
(137-21).



53. Looking south along road 22. Way 23
can be seen rising out of the roadbed
on the right.
(137-20).



54. The west fork of way 23 can be seen
in the distance leading to mining
activity. Photo was taken from
the east fork of way 23.
(138-16).



55. Mining activity on the east side of way 23. (138-18).



56. Way 23 as it drops into the southern flats of the unit. (138-23).



57. Mining activity around the Birdson Mine, looking northwest. (101-21).



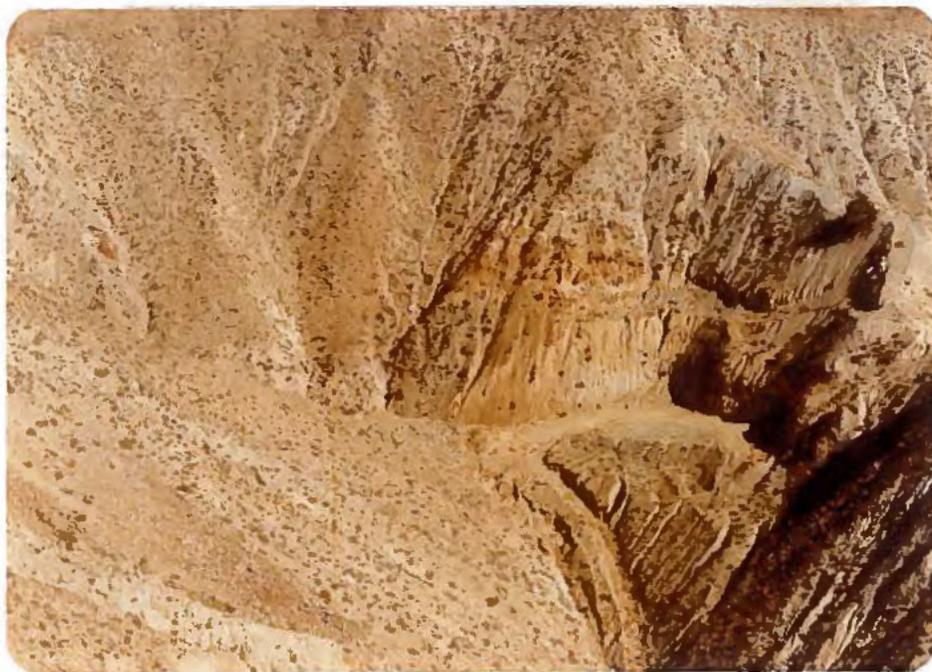
58. Looking northeast from just north of the Birdsong Mine. Road 10 and Garfield Flat are on the other side of this ridge. The next two photos are taken from the hill on the right. (101-22).



59. Panorama looking southeast toward Moho Mountain. The Candelaria Hills are in the distance. Several roads can be seen in the flats outside the unit. Road 21 and 22 are located between Moho Mountain and the point from which this picture was taken. (99-2,3,4).



60. Little Huntoon Valley can be seen in the middle distance. Both road 05 and much of the mining activity north of Marietta is located between the hills in the middleground and this photo point. The view is toward the southwest. (101-24,25).



61. Mining activity at the northern tip of road 27. (101-20).



62. Looking west along road 29. The BLM/Forest Service Boundary runs north-south along the ridgeline seen in the photo. (101-13).



63. The two forks of road 30 looking northwest. The mountains in the background are on Forest Service land. (101-15).



64. Road 30 connecting with way 28. Mining activity can be seen in the lower left of the photo. (101-16).



65. Old building near mining activity
off road 30.

(102-19).



66. Road 30 between way 28 and county
road 365, looking south.

(102-20,21).

67. Locked gate on way 33, looking down at way 28. Way 33 leads to mining activity. (102-16).



68. Looking southeast along way 28. Not claim stake. Much of this area is staked. (102-16).



69. Way 28 seen from the air. This way becomes a road in its upper reaches. (101-18).



70. Entering land administered by the BLM. This area is presently a designated firewood cutting area. Road 28 is seen in the foreground.
(102-1).



71. Looking east into the unit from beside road 28.
(102-2,3).



72. Looking southwest out of the unit (the hills in the background are on USFS administered land). The truck is parked at the end of the north fork of road 28.

(102-6).

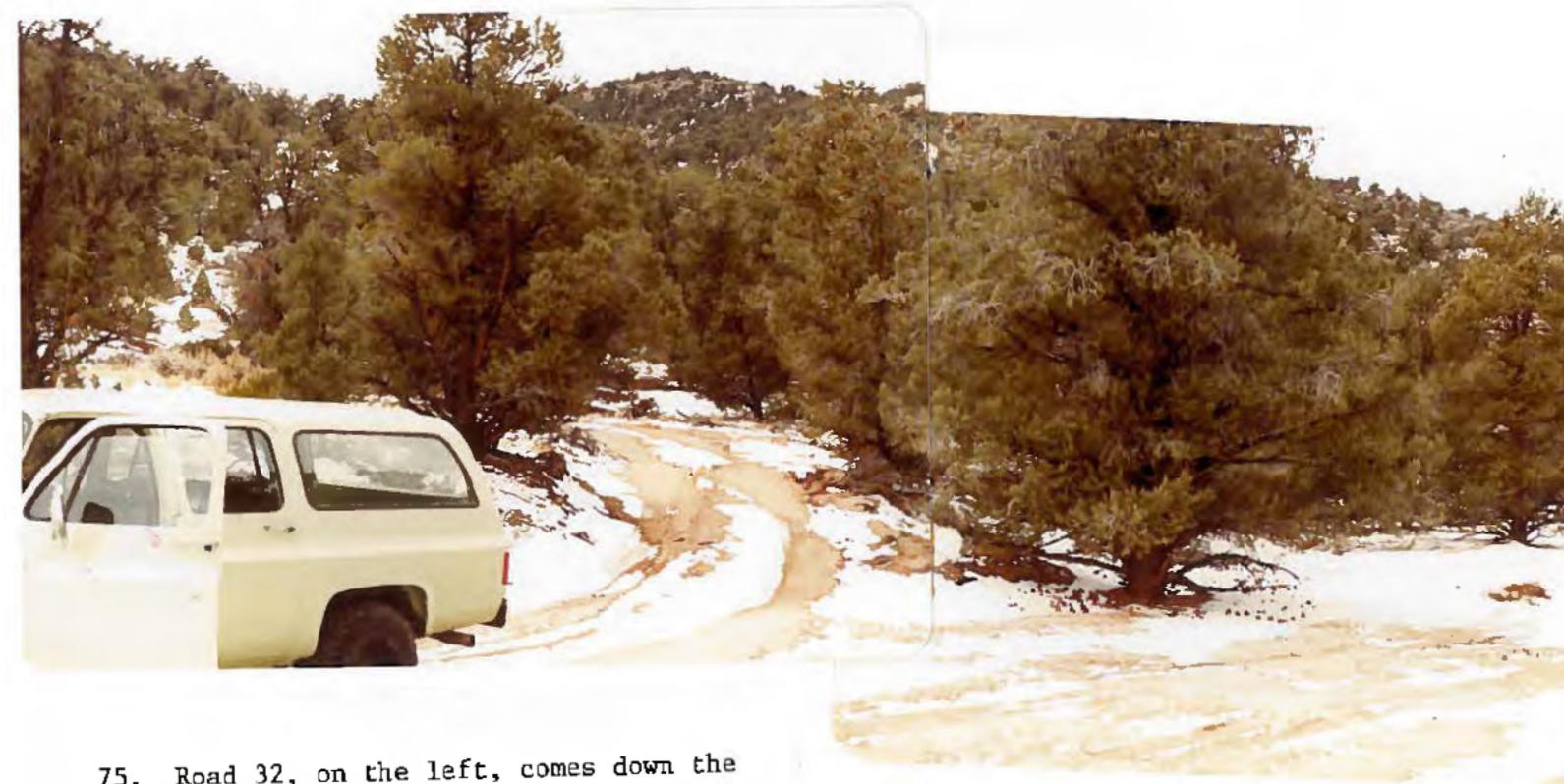


73. Looking northwest toward Rattlesnake Flat. The hills west of the flat and to the south are on land administered by the Forest Service.

(102-9,10).



74. Looking northeast, road 32 can be seen climbing up the wash in the middle of the photo. Note the interspersed areas of generally open terrain and pinyon-juniper associations. (102-11,12).



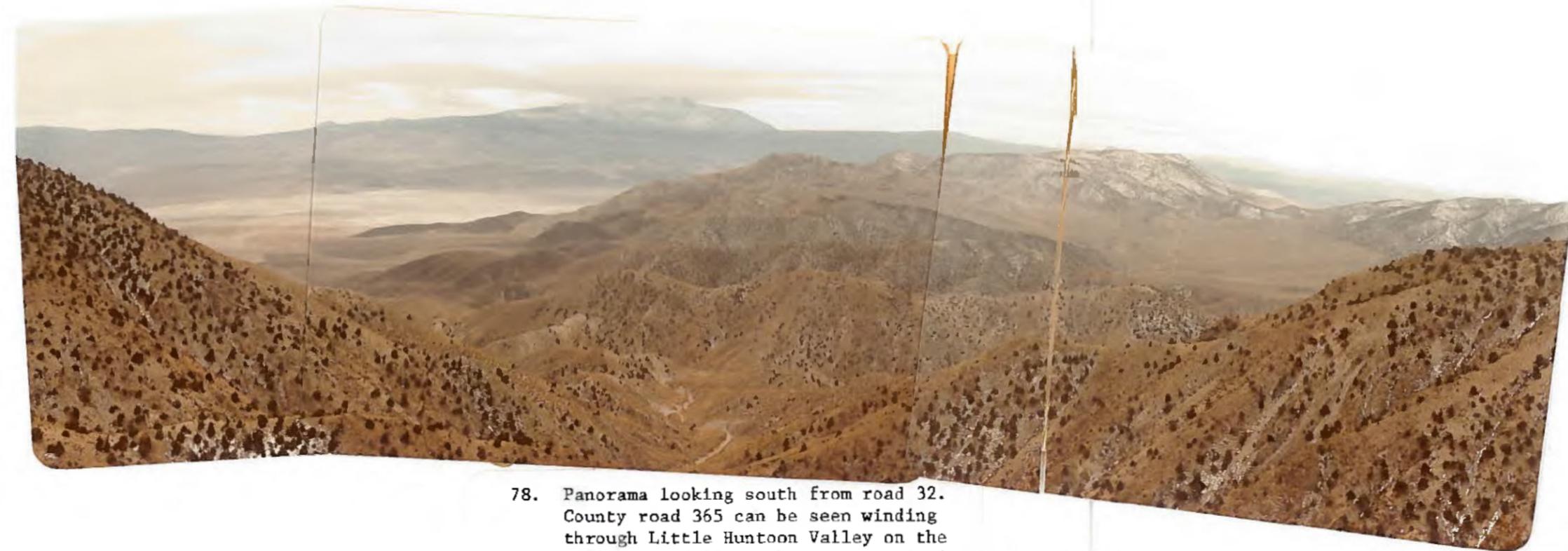
75. Road 32, on the left, comes down the hill from road 28. Way 06 runs out of the picture to the right. (104-1,2).



76. Looking southwest up way 06.
(104-21).



77. Looking north across an open flat
southwest of Excelsior Mountain. Road
32 is on the right.
(104-19,20).



78. Panorama looking south from road 32. County road 365 can be seen winding through Little Huntoon Valley on the right. Road 32 can be seen continuing down the mountain in the lower left and lower center - it does not connect with way 28. (104-6,7,8).



79. Looking down on road 32 from the same area as in the previous photo. The mountains in the background are outside the unit. (104-10).



80. Panorama from the top of Excelsior Mountain, looking from the northeast to the southeast. Moho Mountain can be seen in the middle distance. The mining activity along road 05 north of Marietta is over the hill in the foreground. Teels Marsh is in the distance on the right. Note the lack of screening in this area.

(46-15,16,17).



81. Panorama from the top of Excelsior Mountain, looking from the southwest to the northwest. Teels Marsh and Boundary Peak can be seen on the left. The snow-capped Sierra Nevada is in the distance. The nearby mountains at right center are within the Toiyabe National Forest. Although this is a highly scenic view, it should be remembered that all of the features mentioned above are outside the unit.

(46-18,19,20,21).

WILDERNESS INVENTORY SITUATION EVALUATION

I. Wilderness Unit Identification

Excelsior Mountains
Unit No. NV-030-425
Carson City District, Nevada

II. Unit Analysis

This unit of 66,600 acres of public land is bounded on the west by BLM Road 3035 and the Toiyabe National Forest, on the east by a documented road, on the south by a county road and a documented road, and on the north by BLM Road 3032, a county road, a documented road and a lineation connecting private land to a documented road.

The unit encompasses a large, essentially natural portion of the Excelsior Mountains. The area is generally mountainous in character and heavily vegetated by pinyon-juniper. Rattlesnake and Garfield Flats are located in the northern portion of the unit and Little Huntoon Valley is found in the southwestern portion of the area.

At least six mine sites are located around Marietta in the south central portion of the unit and roughly half a dozen ways provide access to this activity and Moho and Rock Canyon Springs. Public input has indicated that a crude four-wheel drive way crosses the range, but it was impossible to field check this information prior to submission of this evaluation.

III. Unit Evaluation

This area appears to have potential for further wilderness consideration. Despite the existing intrusions, the unit is quite large and remains in an essentially natural condition. The character of the unit is unique in relation to surrounding units, and both vegetative and topographic screening are present. There appears to be good potential for solitude and primitive and unconfined recreation opportunities. Further inventory will be required to determine the actual extent of naturalness in the unit and whether or not the opportunities for solitude and primitive recreation are outstanding.

IV. Unit Recommendation

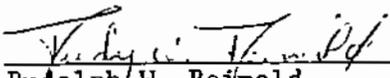
This area is recommended for intensive wilderness inventory.

Terry F. Knight
Wilderness Specialist

5000

Date

V. Approval



Rudolph W. Reinold
Walker Area Manager

3-21-79

Date

Thomas J. Owen
District Manager

Date

CARSON CITY DISTRICT

FINAL INITIAL WILDERNESS INVENTORY

SUMMARY NARRATIVE

Unit Number: NV-030-425

Unit Name: Excelsior Mountains

Acreage of Public Land: 66,600

I. Original Recommendation :

- Unit clearly lacks wilderness characteristics and should be eliminated from the wilderness review process.
- Unit may have wilderness values and is recommended for intensive inventory.

II. Public Comment Received Specific to this Unit:

- No comments affecting the boundaries or recommendations have been received. The original recommendation is correct.
- Comment(s) have been received concerning this unit. A field review has verified that the original recommendation is correct.
- Comment(s) have been received concerning this unit, but have not been field checked. The comment(s) will be considered in the intensive inventory.
- Comment(s) and subsequent review of this unit have resulted in a change from the original recommendation for a portion of the area or the entire area.
- Comment(s) received supported the original recommendation for this unit. The original recommendation is correct.

Summary of Comment

Nine public comments were received. All but one mentioned that the area is heavily mineralized and contains numerous mineral prospects. Two comments specifically mentioned the eastern portion of the unit around the Camp Douglas area. Four other comments pointed out the mining activity taking place north of Marietta around the Endowment, Birdsong, Badger, Silver Gulch and Black Hawk mines. One comment supported the original recommendation.

BLM Response and Rationale to Comment

The fact that mineralization occurs within the unit is not sufficient reason to alter our original recommendation. However, the Camp Douglas area was excluded in our initial inventory recommendation, primarily because of the large amount of mining activity which has taken place in that portion of the mountain range. -

The southern boundary has been moved approximately $\frac{1}{4}$ mile north to the main road going through Marietta and has been further altered in order to exclude private lands in the Marietta area, the mining activity north of Marietta mentioned in several of the public comments, and the roads leading to this activity. In addition, private land along the boundary east of Marietta has been deleted as has the mining activity and an associated road leading to it just north of these private parcels. One comment mapped mines in the southwest and northwest corners of the unit. These will be checked during the intensive inventory phase.

Approximately 450 acres of public land are involved in the above activities and are recommended for deletion from intensive inventory (submit NV-030-425-A).

III. Final Decision:

- This unit will be intensively inventoried to determine the presence or absence of wilderness characteristics.
- This unit clearly does not have wilderness characteristics and is eliminated from the wilderness review process.
- A portion of this unit clearly does not have wilderness characteristics and is eliminated from the wilderness review process. The remainder will be intensively inventoried.

IV. Is extended comment period required:

Yes No

- Yes, only for the portion that has been changed from the original recommendation.

FINAL INITIAL INVENTORY

AMENDMENTS

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Frank J. O'Amore
Wilderness Specialist

8/30/79
Date

/s/ H. James Fox
for
Thomas J. Owen
District Manager

AUG 27 1979
Date

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Carson City District, Nevada

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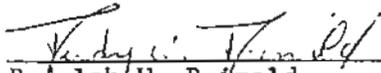
IV. Unit Recommendation

This area is recommended for intensive wilderness inventory.

Terry F. Knight
Terry F. Knight
Wilderness Specialist

3/8/79
Date

V. Approval



Rudolph W. Reimold
Walker Area Manager

3-21-79

Date

Thomas J. Owen
District Manager

Date

CARSON CITY DISTRICT

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Frank J. O'Amore
Wilderness Specialist

8/30/79
Date

/s/ H. James Fox
for
Thomas J. Owen
District Manager

AUG 27 1979
Date

E. CEISIO MOUNTAINS (NV-030-425)

SCALE 1:100,000
(5/8"=1 mile)

