



United States Department of the Interior

BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT
WINNEMUCCA DISTRICT OFFICE

705 East 4th Street
Winnemucca, Nevada 89445

November 1, 1995

4120.3
NV-241.3

Dear Interested Publics:

The Bureau of Land Management is currently considering the construction of three riparian exclosures and a division fence in the Little Owyhee Allotment. These projects were brought about by the Stipulation For Dismissal Of The Nevada First Corporation Appeals. I have enclosed the Draft Environmental Assessments for your review. If you have any concerns or comments on this project, please provide them to me within 15 days so that I can incorporate them into the planning of this project.

If you have any questions, feel free to contact Gene Seidlitz at 623-1500.

Sincerely yours,

Bob Hansen
Acting Area Manager
Paradise-Denio Resource Area

Enclosures

DRAFT

Environmental Assessment
Antelope # 2 Division Fence

I. Introduction/Overview

Purpose and Need

The proposed action is to split the Antelope Pasture in a north south direction. This action would create two pastures; a riparian pasture (Antelope #2) that would be used for high intensity, short duration grazing every year and a pasture (Antelope #1) that would also be used yearly. With the proposed action, livestock use in Antelope #2 would be controlled so that the livestock impacts to the wetland riparian and streambank riparian habitats would be minimized.

This project was initiated as part of the Stipulation For Dismissal Of The Nevada First Corporations Appeals dated February 17, 1995.

This action is in conformance with the Paradise-Denio Area Land Use Plan.

II. Proposed Action and Alternatives

Proposed Action

The proposed action is to fence approximately 16,834 feet in T.45N., R.42E., Secs. 6, 7, and 18 of the Antelope Pasture. The fence would consist of four strands of fence wire, steel posts, wooden or steel pipe panels and would be built to pronghorn specifications (16", 22", 28", and 40", top three wires barbed, bottom wire smooth). There would be three drainage crossings, two of which would be Type A crossings and the other would require only extra wires. The contractor would be allowed to knock down brush along the proposed route, but the surface would not be cleared. Access to the construction site would be by existing roads in the allotment and by cross country travel.

The fence would be scheduled for construction in 1997 if funding is available. Funding for the project would be through 8100 sources and the fence would be constructed by contract issued by the BLM.

The permittee for the Little Owyhee Allotment, Nevada First Corporation, has been assigned maintenance responsibility.

No Action Alternative

The fence would not be constructed. The wetland riparian and streambank riparian vegetation would continue to be impacted by livestock. The BLM and Nevada First Corporation would not be adhering to the Stipulation For Dismissal of the Nevada First Corporation Appeals.

III. Affected Environment

The fence is located in a sagebrush-grass and riparian vegetation types. Slopes are flat to steep and the soils are shallow to moderately deep. The East Fork of the Little Owyhee River and some washes in the area are ephemeral to intermittent. The proposed fence is located within a mule deer winter range, pronghorn summer range, and a sage grouse general distribution area. Several sage grouse strutting grounds and brooding areas are in the general area.

The proposed fence construction site is located within a Class IV Visual Resource Management (VRM) Area.

Please consult the Paradise-Denio Grazing EIS for a more complete description of the affected environment.

The following critical elements of the human environment are not present and/or not affected by the proposed action or alternatives: air quality, areas of critical environmental concerns, cultural resources, prime or unique farm lands, flood plains, Native American Religious Concerns, paleontology, threatened or endangered species, wastes-hazardous or solid, water quality, wetlands/riparian zones, wild and scenic rivers, wild horses/burros, and wilderness.

IV. Environmental Consequences

Proposed Action

Construction of the proposed action would result in an improvement of the conditions of the streambank riparian habitat of the East Fork of the Little Owyhee River and wetland riparian habitats of upland meadows.

Wildlife populations in the area would benefit from the proposed action. Construction of the fence would result in an increase in vegetative cover and wildlife habitat associated with streambank riparian and wetland riparian habitats. Wildlife would benefit from the increased cover and wildlife habitat associated with riparian habitats. Increased vegetative cover would also stabilize the soils, reduce soil erosion, and control sediment deposition in the riparian areas. This would result in improved water quality and quantity available for wildlife and livestock.

Construction of the fence would cause some short-term damage to vegetation from crushing, trampling, and breaking during construction.

The proposed fence construction would be built to pronghorn specifications, thus, there would be minimal adverse impacts to wildlife.

No on the ground field investigation was conducted for sensitive/protected plants and animal species. However, according to the Nevada Threatened and Endangered Plant Map Book as updated, no sensitive plants have been observed in the project area. The proposed action would have no adverse impact to sensitive plants.

The proposed action to construct the fence could have a potential impact to the following candidate species which are currently proposed for listing as either threatened or endangered.

Pygmy rabbit	Spotted bat
Small-footed myotis	Long-eared myotis
Fringed myotis	Long-legged myotis
Pacific townsend's big-eared bat	Western burrowing owl

Of these species, the Western burrowing owl and the pygmy rabbit have the highest probability of experiencing effects as a result of constructing the fence.

The Western burrowing owl is a small underground nesting bird of prey which lives in colonies inside abandoned rodent and small mammal dens. Potential impacts to these species from construction of the fence include possible damage to burrow entrance by construction vehicles along with temporary displacement of broods. These impacts have low probability of occurring due to the scattered distribution of the species and the likelihood that construction vehicles would not knowingly drive into the den opening. The opening appears as a obvious hole in the ground which is well marked by whitewash excrement from the colony.

Following construction any resident owl would experience a positive benefit from the creation of a new series of perching areas.

The pygmy rabbit exists in sagebrush/grass communities and is therefore widely distributed. Potential impacts to the pygmy rabbit during construction of the fence are from short term damage to vegetation by construction vehicles along with temporary displacement of the young. These impacts would be short term and would occur over a small area relative to the entire community and is therefore not considered to be significant.

The proposed project is located within a Class IV Visual Resource Management (VRM) Area. Visual resources were considered in the analysis of the project and were determined not to be impacted by the proposed action. Therefore, a VRM worksheet was not completed.

A cultural resources inventory CR2-1229 (N) was conducted and found to be negative.

No Action Alternative

The fence would not be constructed.

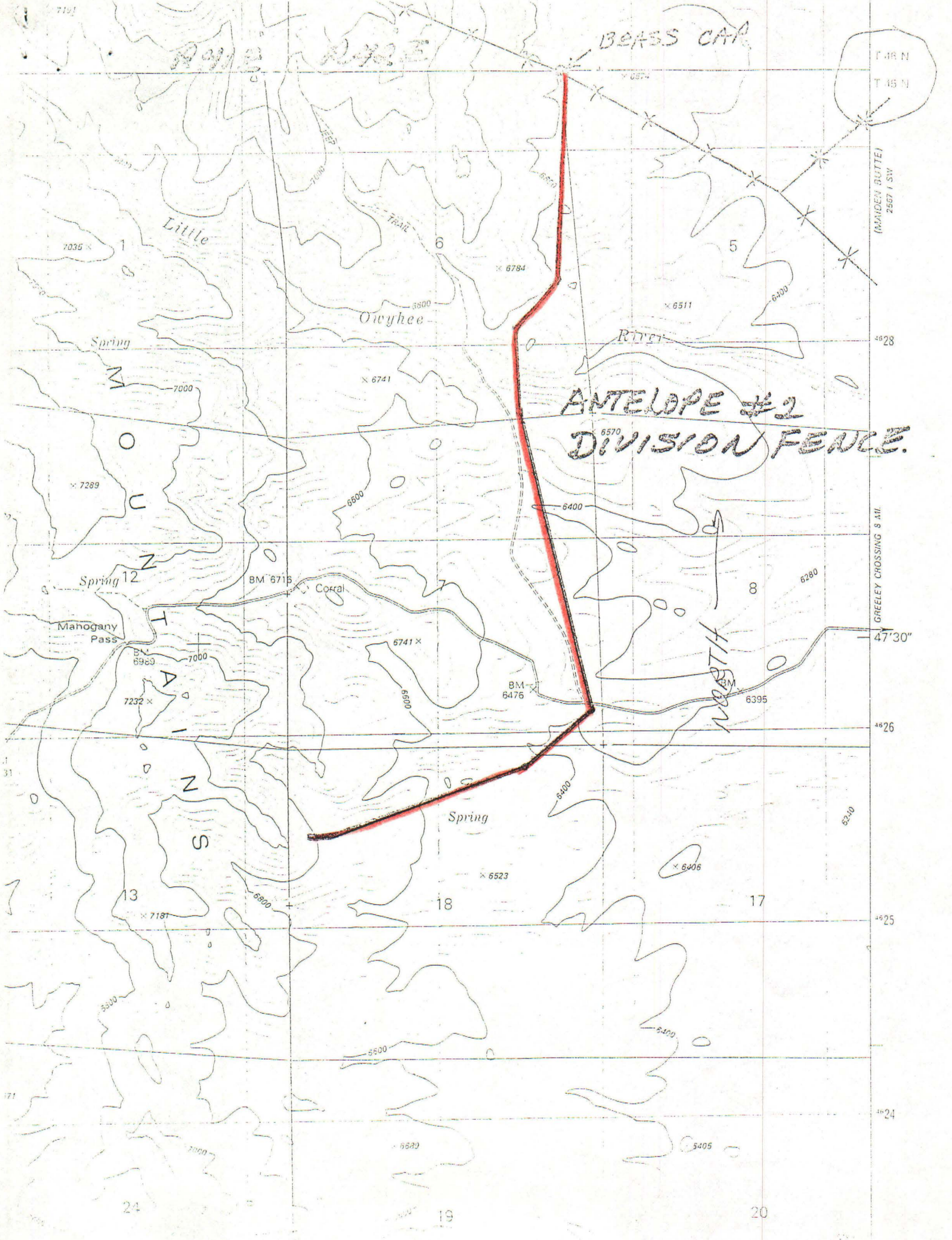
Cumulative Impact Analysis

All resource values have been evaluated for cumulative impacts. It has been determined that cumulative impacts would be negligible as a result of the proposed action or alternative.

V. Specialists Coordination/Concurrence/Comments

The specialists who have signed the face sheet of this document have been involved in the development and review of the proposed project and concluded it would not significantly impact their resources.

The permittee, Nevada First Corporation, has been involved in the coordination of the proposed fence construction.



R 4913 R 492 E

BEASS CAP

T 48 N
T 45 N

(MARDEN GUTTIE)
2567' SW

ANTELOPE #2
DIVISION FENCE.

Greeley Crossing 8 MI

11571
BM

47°30'

46°26'

46°25'

46°24'

24

19

20

DRAFT

Environmental Assessments South Cow Camp Spring Exclosure Antelope Exclosure East Lone Willow Exclosure

I. Introduction/Overview

Purpose and Need

The proposed projects are to fence three wetland riparian habitats. The South Cow Camp Spring Exclosure would also fence off the spring which is the source of water for the wetland riparian habitat. Lone Willow Spring would also be encompassed by an exclosure. Antelope Spring is currently fenced along with the wetland riparian habitats, but the Antelope East Exclosure would fence portions of the remaining wetland riparian habitats. The exclosures are located in the Little Owyhee Allotment. The projects would prevent livestock grazing and trampling of riparian vegetation associated with the wetland riparian habitats. However, in the future, limited livestock use could occur inside the exclosures.

This project was initiated as part of the Stipulation For Dismissal Of The Nevada First Corporations Appeals, on the Little Owyhee Allotment, dated February 17, 1995.

This action is in conformance with the Paradise-Denio Area Land Use Plan.

II. Proposed Action and Alternatives

Proposed Action

The proposed action is to fence three wetland riparian habitats. South Cow Camp Spring Exclosure would be located at T.45N., R.42E., Sec. 24, Antelope Exclosure East would be located at T.45N. R.42E. Sec. 33 and Lone Willow Exclosure would be located at T.46N., R.41&42E., Secs. 1, 12, 13, 6, 7 (see attached maps). The fenced areas would include riparian vegetation associated with the wetland riparian and streambank riparian habitats. The South Cow Camp Spring Exclosure would be approximately 2,530 feet, the Antelope Exclosure East would be approximately 8,310 feet and the Lone Willow Exclosure would be approximately 23,891 feet. There would be seven Type A drainage crossings; two for the Antelope Spring East Exclosure and five for the Lone Willow Exclosure. Each fence would consist of four strands of fence wire, steel posts, wooden or steel pipe panels and would be built to BLM manual pronghorn specifications (16", 22", 28", and 40", top three wires barbed, bottom wire smooth). The contractor would be allowed to knock down brush along the proposed route, but the surface would not be cleared. Access to the construction site would be by existing roads and trails in the allotment.

These projects would be implemented under a cooperative agreement. The permittee, Nevada First Corporation, has agreed to fund, construct, and maintain these exclosures as per Stipulation For Dismissal Of The Nevada First Corporation Appeals dated February 17, 1995.

No Action Alternative

The exclosures would not be constructed. The riparian vegetation would continue to be impacted by livestock. The BLM and Nevada First Corporation would not be adhering to the Stipulation For Dismissal Of The Nevada First Corporation Appeals.

III. Affected Environment

The exclosures would be located in a sagebrush-grass/riparian vegetation types. Slopes are flat to moderately steep and the soils are shallow to moderately deep. The proposed exclosures are located within a mule deer winter range, pronghorn summer range, and a sage grouse general distribution area. Numerous nongame species inhabit the area.

The proposed exclosure site is located within a Class IV Visual Resource Management (VRM) Area.

Please consult the Paradise-Denio Grazing EIS for a more complete description of the affected environment.

The following critical elements of the human environment are not present and/or not affected by the proposed action or alternatives: air quality, areas of critical environmental concern, cultural resources, prime or unique farm lands, flood plains, Native American religious concerns, paleontology, threatened or endangered species, wastes-hazardous or solid, water quality, wild and scenic rivers, and wilderness.

IV. Environmental Consequences

Proposed Action

Implementation of the proposed action would result in an improvement of the condition of the riparian areas and would protect the spring sources for the South Cow Camp Spring and Lone Willow Spring.

Wildlife populations in the area would benefit from the proposed action. Construction of the exclosures would result in an increase in vegetative cover and wildlife habitat associated with each wetland riparian habitat. Wildlife would

benefit from the increased cover and wildlife habitat associated with the springs. Wildlife would benefit from the increased cover conterminous to the water source, by providing protection from predators as they approach the spring to drink. Increased vegetative cover would also stabilize the soils, reduce soil erosion and control sediment deposition in the riparian areas. This would result in improved water quality and quantity available for wildlife utilizing the spring(s).

Construction of the exclosures would cause some short-term damage to vegetation from crushing, trampling, and breaking during construction.

The proposed exclosures would be constructed to pronghorn specifications, thus, there would be minimal adverse impacts to wildlife.

No on the ground field investigation was conducted for sensitive /protected plants and animal species. However, according to the Nevada Threatened and Endangered Plant Map Book as updated, no sensitive plants have been observed in the project area. The proposed action would have no adverse impact to sensitive plants.

The proposed action to construct the exclosures could have a potential impact to the following sensitive species which are currently proposed to listing either threatened or endangered.

Pygmy rabbit	Spotted bat
Small-footed myotis	Long-eared myotis
Fringed myotis	Long-legged myotis
Pacific townsend's big-eared bat	Western burrowing owl

Of these species, the Western burrowing owl and the pygmy rabbit have the highest probability of experiencing effects as a result of constructing the fence.

The Western burrowing owl is a small underground nesting bird of prey which lives in colonies inside abandoned rodent and small mammal dens. Potential impacts to this species from construction of the exclosure include possible damage to burrow entrance by construction vehicles along with temporary displacement of broods. This impact has a low probability of occurring due to the scattered distribution of the species and the likelihood that construction vehicles would not knowingly drive into the den opening. The opening appears as a obvious hole in the ground which is well marked by whitewash excrement from the colony.

Following construction, any resident owls would experience a positive benefit from the creation of a new series of perching areas.

The pygmy rabbit exists in sagebrush/grass communities and is therefore widely distributed. Potential impacts to the pygmy rabbit during construction of the exclosures are from short term damage to vegetation by construction vehicles along with temporary displacement of the young. These impacts would be short term and would occur over a small area relative to the entire community and is therefore not considered to be significant.

The proposed projects are located within a Class IV Visual Resource Management (VRM) Area. Visual resources were considered in the analysis of the project and were determined not to be impacted by the proposed action. Therefore, a VRM worksheet was not completed.

Cultural resources inventories CR2-1228(N), CR2-1230(N) and CR2-1234(N), were conducted and found to be negative.

No Action Alternative

The exclosures would not be constructed. The riparian vegetation would continue to be impacted by livestock.

Cumulative Impact Analysis

All resource values have been evaluated for cumulative impacts. It has been determined that cumulative impacts would be negligible as a result of the proposed action or alternative.

V. **Specialists Coordination/Concurrence/Comments**

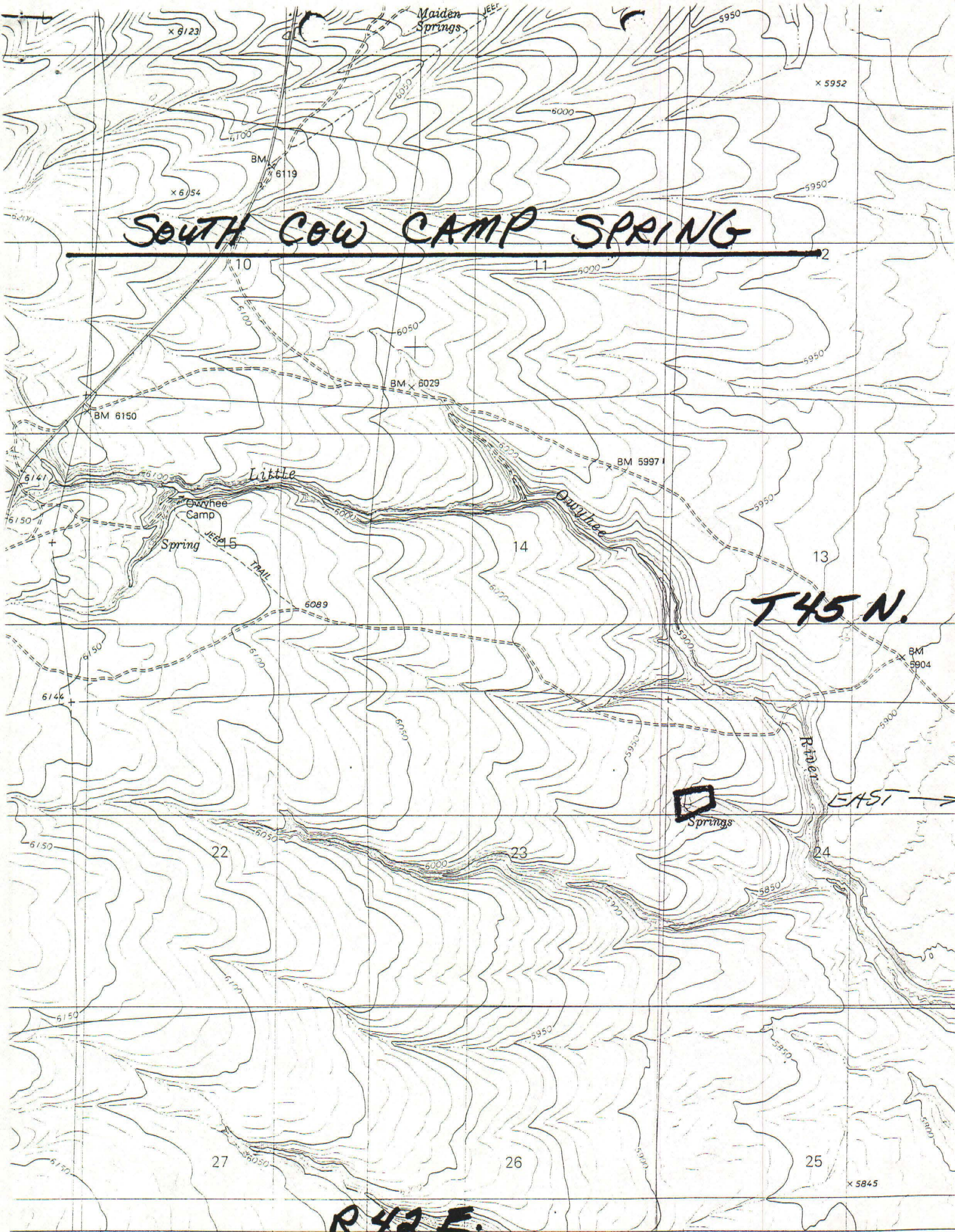
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SOUTH COW CAMP SPRING

T45 N.

R42 E.



ANTELOPE EXCLOSURE EAST.

SOUTH
↓



T 45 N
T 44 N

R42E.

Greeley Crossing

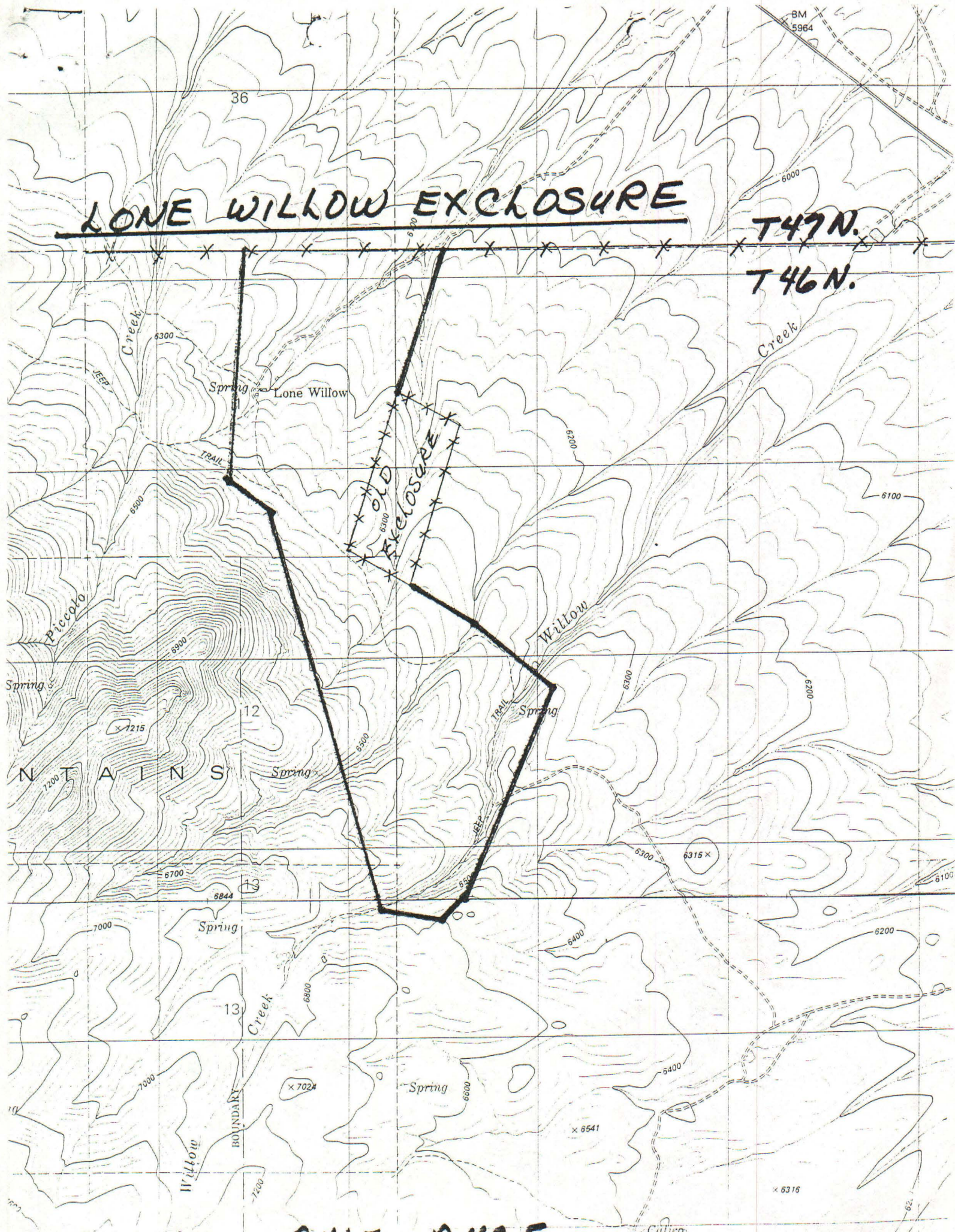
BM 5964

36

LONE WILLOW EXCLOSURE

T47N.

T46N.



MOUNTAINS

12

13

13

ONE DUE

Calico



United States Department of the Interior

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Enclosures

DRAFT

Environmental Assessment
Antelope # 2 Division Fence

I. Introduction/Overview

Purpose and Need

The proposed action is to split the Antelope Pasture in a north south direction. This action would create two pastures; a riparian pasture (Antelope #2) that would be used for high intensity, short duration grazing every year and a pasture (Antelope #1) that would also be used yearly. With the proposed action, livestock use in Antelope #2 would be controlled so that the livestock impacts to the wetland riparian and streambank riparian habitats would be minimized.

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The fence would be scheduled for construction in 1997 if funding is available. Funding for the project would be through 8100 sources and the fence would be constructed by contract issued by the BLM.

The permittee for the Little Owyhee Allotment, Nevada First Corporation, has been assigned maintenance responsibility.

No Action Alternative

The fence would not be constructed. The wetland riparian and streambank riparian vegetation would continue to be impacted by livestock. The BLM and Nevada First Corporation would not be adhering to the Stipulation For Dismissal of the Nevada First Corporation Appeals.

III. Affected Environment

The fence is located in a sagebrush-grass and riparian vegetation types. Slopes are flat to steep and the soils are shallow to moderately deep. The East Fork of the Little Owyhee River and some washes in the area are ephemeral to intermittent. The proposed fence is located within a mule deer winter range, pronghorn summer range, and a sage grouse general distribution area. Several sage grouse strutting grounds and brooding areas are in the general area.

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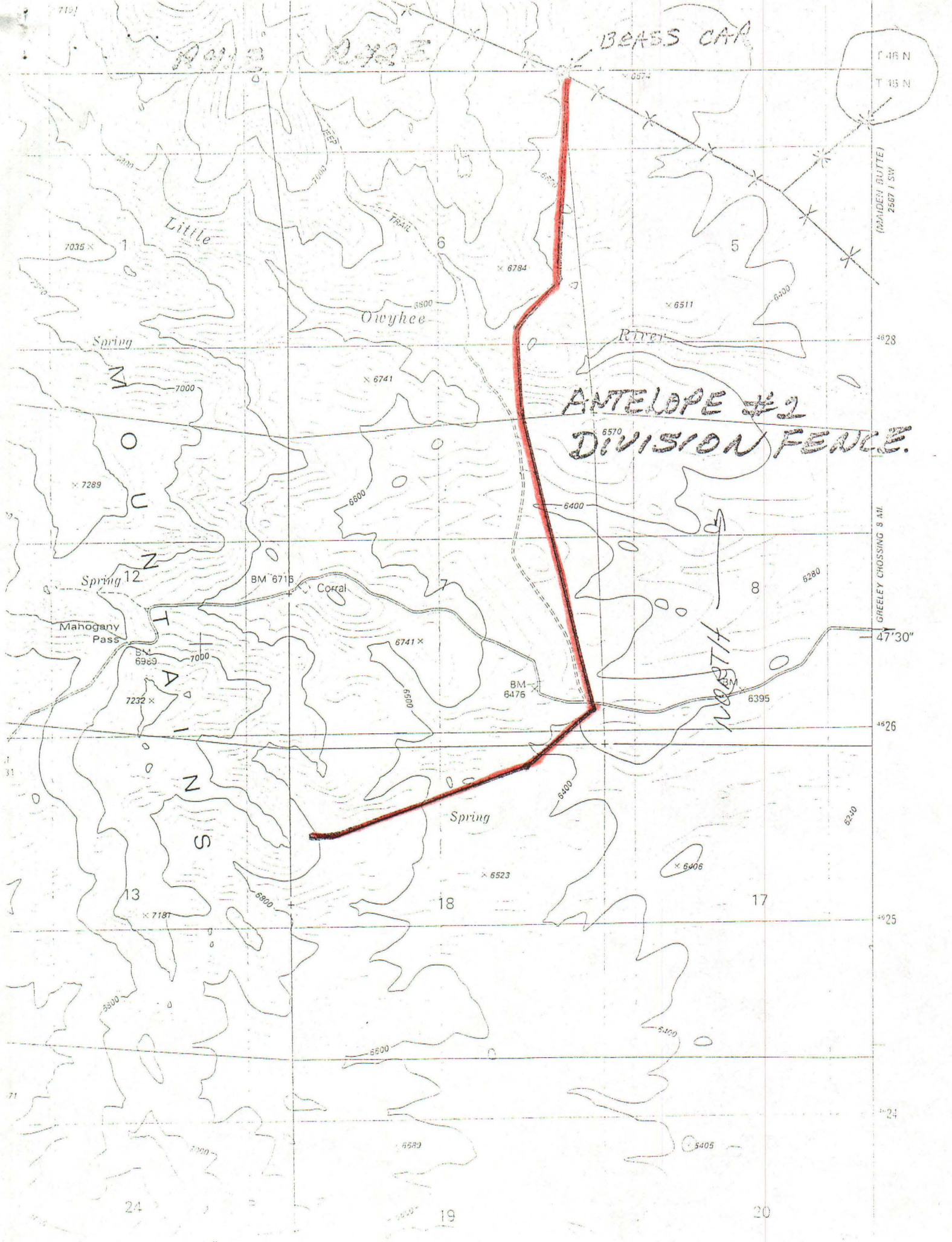
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The permittee, Nevada First Corporation, has been involved in the coordination of the proposed fence construction.



BEASS CAP

T 415 N
T 415 N

(MANGEN BUTTE)
2567' SW

ANTELOPE #2
DIVISION FENCE.

GHEELEY CROSSING 8 AM

NORTH

47°30"

47°26"

47°25"

47°24"

0 41 3 0 42 E

Little

Owyhee

River

Corral

Mahogany Pass

Spring 12

Spring

13

18

17

24

19

20

710'

7035 x

x 6784

x 6511

x 6741

x 7289

BM 6715

6800

6400

6280

7232 x

6741 x

BM 6476

6395

6240

x 7181

x 6523

x 6406

6800

6600

6400

6580

6405

7000

7000

71

DRAFT

Environmental Assessments
South Cow Camp Spring Exclosure
Antelope Exclosure East
Lone Willow Exclosure

I. Introduction/Overview

Purpose and Need

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Cultural resources inventories CR2-1228(N), CR2-1230(N) and CR2-1234(N), were conducted and found to be negative.

No Action Alternative

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Cumulative Impact Analysis

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V. **Specialists Coordination/Concurrence/Comments**

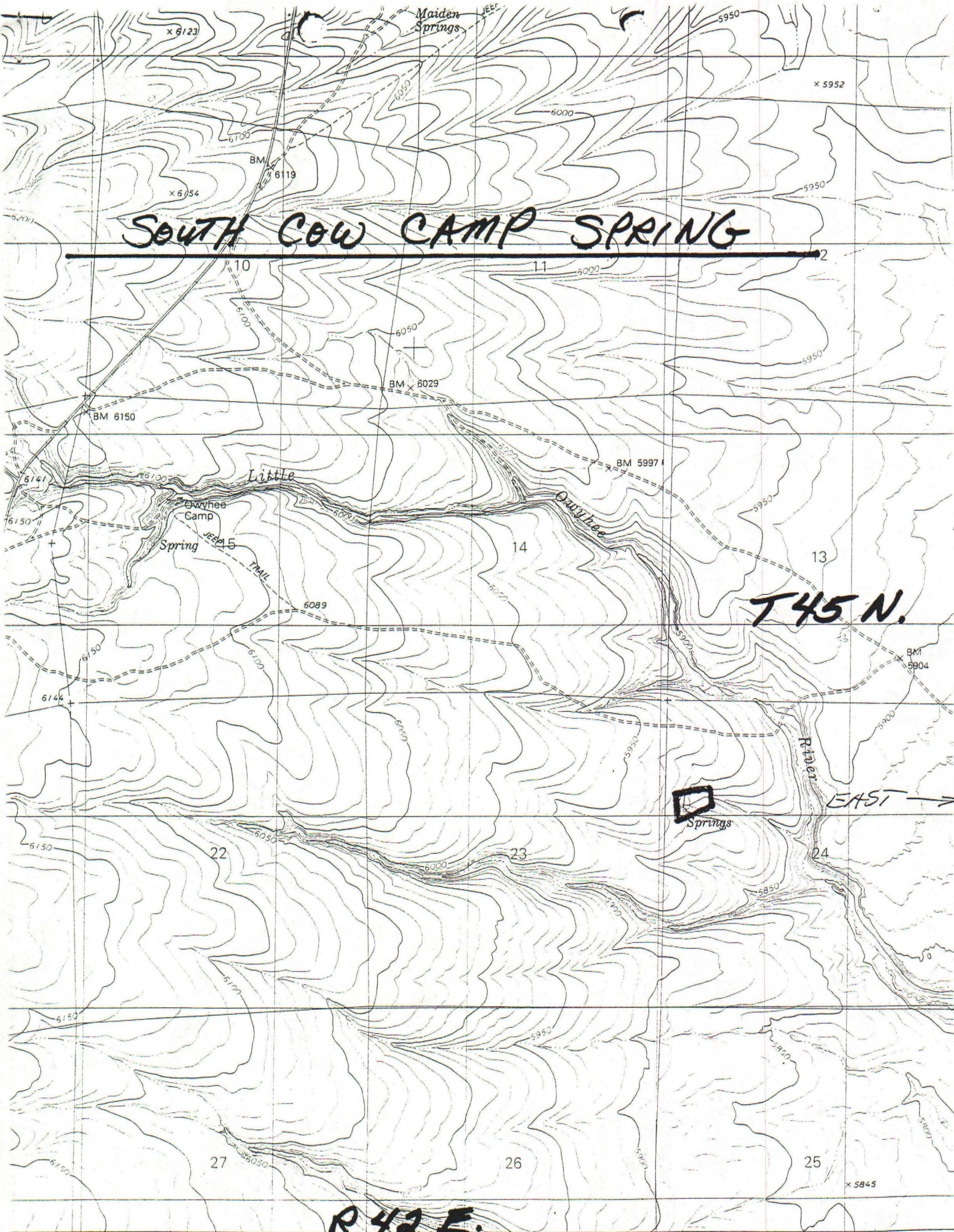
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The permittee, Nevada First Corporation, has been involved in the coordination of the proposed fence construction.

SOUTH COW CAMP SPRING

T45 N.

R42 E.



81 870 000 FEET

492

12120

492

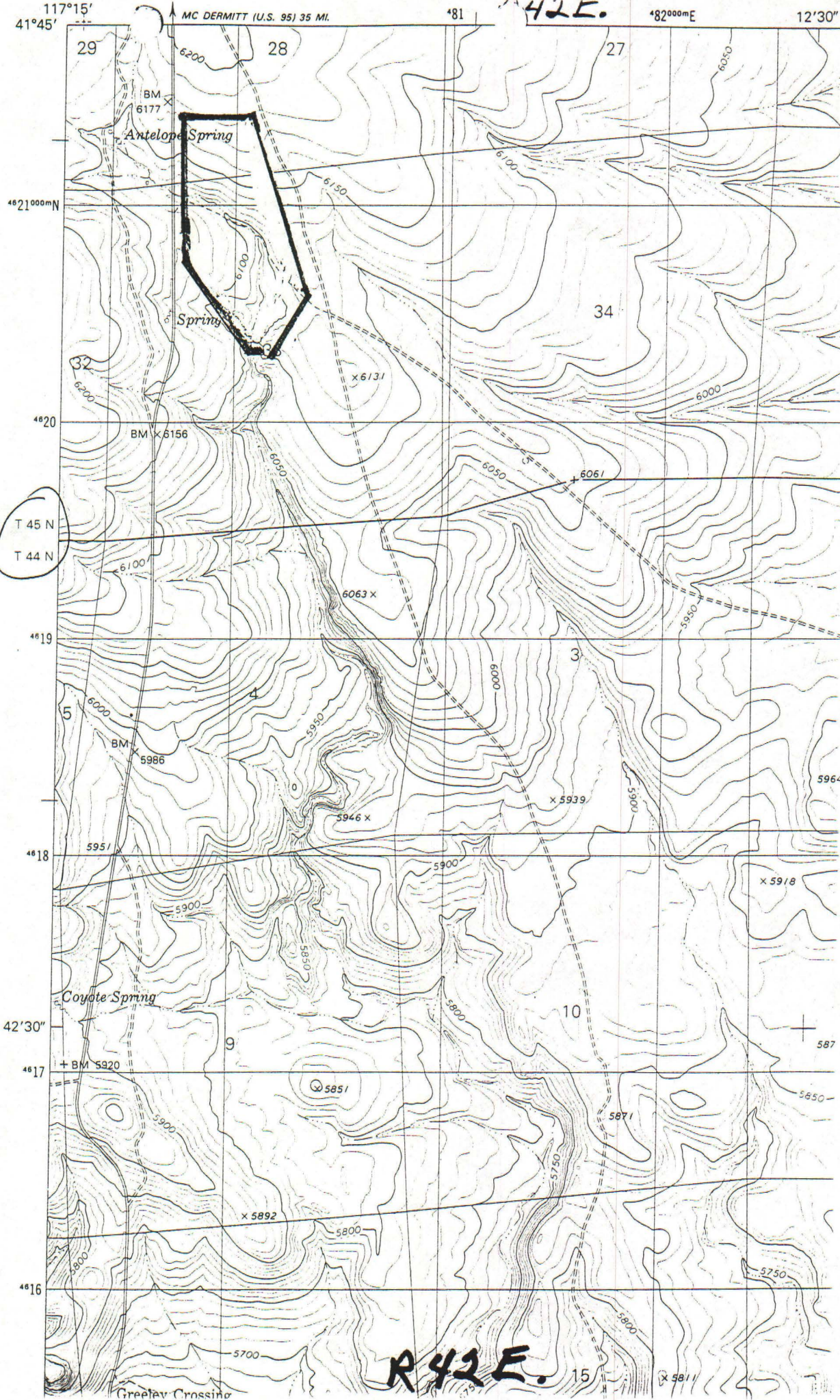
494

(GREENEV FLAT)

100

**ANTELOPE
ENCLOSURE
EAST.**

SOUTH
↓



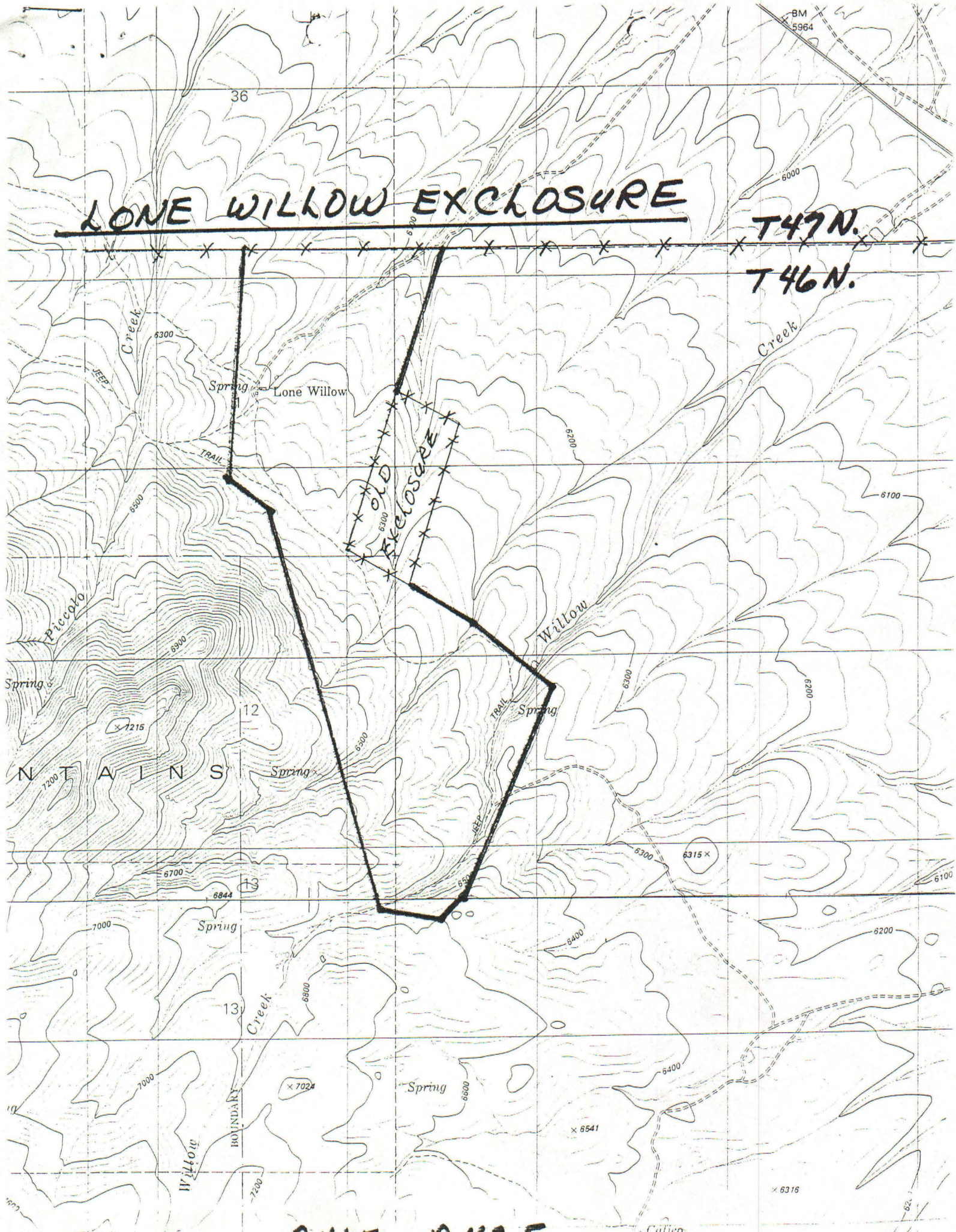
BM 5964

36

LONE WILLOW EXCLOSURE

T47N.

T46N.



N T A I N S

WILLOW

CULICO

Culico



**COMMISSION FOR THE
PRESERVATION OF WILD HORSES**

**255 W. Moana Lane
Suite 207A**

**Reno, Nevada 89509
(702) 688-2626**

November 14, 1995

Mr. Pete Christensen
Paradise-Denio Resource Area
Bureau of Land Management
705 East 4th Street
Winnemucca, Nevada 89406

Subject: Little Owyhee Allotment - Range Improvements

Dear Mr. Christensen:

The Commission for the Preservation of Wild Horses has received the proposed Antelope Division, South Cow Camp Spring, Antelope East and Lone Willow fence projects. These projects are designed to fully protect riparian areas from livestock and wild horse use. While these projects may displace some wild horses, the long term benefits to riparian systems outweigh any impact.

We appreciate the District's progress in implementing stipulated agreements made with Nevada and Nevada First Corporation.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Catherine Barcomb".

CATHERINE BARCOMB
Executive Director