

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

(Type all entries - complete applicable sections)

STATE: Idaho
COUNTY: Elmore
FOR NPS USE ONLY
ENTRY DATE DEC 30 1975

1. NAME

COMMON: South Boise Historic Mining District
AND/OR HISTORIC:

2. LOCATION

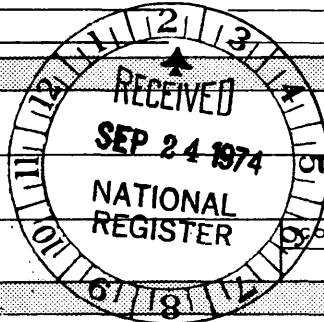
STREET AND NUMBER: <i>South Boise in Sawtooth Natl Forest</i> Sections 3, 4, 7, 8, 9, 10, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 21, 24, T4N, R10E			
CITY OR TOWN: <i>Rocky Road vic.</i>		CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT: #2	
STATE: Idaho	CODE: 16	COUNTY: Elmore	CODE: 039

3. CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY <small>(Check One)</small>	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	ACCESSIBLE TO THE PUBLIC
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> District <input type="checkbox"/> Building <input type="checkbox"/> Site <input type="checkbox"/> Structure <input type="checkbox"/> Object	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Public <input type="checkbox"/> Private <input type="checkbox"/> Both	Public Acquisition: <input type="checkbox"/> In Process <input type="checkbox"/> Being Considered	<input type="checkbox"/> Occupied <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Unoccupied <input type="checkbox"/> Preservation work in progress
PRESENT USE <small>(Check One or More as Appropriate)</small>			
<input type="checkbox"/> Agricultural	<input type="checkbox"/> Government	<input type="checkbox"/> Park	<input type="checkbox"/> Transportation
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Commercial	<input type="checkbox"/> Industrial	<input type="checkbox"/> Private Residence	<input type="checkbox"/> Comments
<input type="checkbox"/> Educational	<input type="checkbox"/> Military	<input type="checkbox"/> Religious	<input type="checkbox"/> Other <small>(Specify)</small>
<input type="checkbox"/> Entertainment	<input type="checkbox"/> Museum	<input type="checkbox"/> Scientific	

4. OWNER OF PROPERTY

OWNER'S NAME: U. S. Forest Service	
STREET AND NUMBER:	
CITY OR TOWN:	STATE:



5. LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.: Elmore County Courthouse	
STREET AND NUMBER:	
CITY OR TOWN: Mountain Home	STATE: Idaho
	CODE: 16

6. REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE OF SURVEY: Idaho State Historic Preservation Plan	
DATE OF SURVEY: 1972 <input type="checkbox"/> Federal <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> State <input type="checkbox"/> County <input type="checkbox"/> Local	
DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS: Idaho State Historical Society	
STREET AND NUMBER:	
610 North Julia Davis Drive	
CITY OR TOWN: Boise	STATE: Idaho
	CODE: 16

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

STATE: Idaho
COUNTY: Elmore
ENTRY NUMBER: 3041
DATE: SEP 30 1974
FOR NPS USE ONLY

7. DESCRIPTION

CONDITION	(Check One)				
	<input type="checkbox"/> Excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> Good	<input type="checkbox"/> Fair	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> Ruins
	(Check One)			(Check One)	
	<input type="checkbox"/> Altered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Unaltered		<input type="checkbox"/> Moved	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Original Site

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (if known) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The South Boise Historic Mining District comprises an area of ten square miles around the town of Rocky Bar, about 45 miles by air northeast of Boise on Bear Creek, a tributary of the Boise River. The region is part of a high mountain basin with altitudes ranging from 5000 to 6000 feet, surrounded by much higher mountains. Trees, mostly pine and fir, are abundant except for the cut-over areas around former camps. There are a large number of gold-bearing veins grouped together in this small area, nearly all bearing strong bodies of ore.

The town of Rocky Bar was the seat of Alturas County from 1864 to 1882, and of Elmore County from 1889 to 1891, but now remains as a small collection of wooden frame buildings typical of mining towns of the last century. Board-and-batten construction is common, as are steep roofs. Practically none of the buildings standing date back before the 1892 fire. Only an 1876 barn in the upper end of the town remained from that earlier era when Rocky Bar became a genuine ghost town in 1942. Like most mining towns, Rocky Bar has an early cemetery in considerable disrepair. This one includes the grave of acting governor Clinton DeWitt Smith: when he died in Rocky Bar on August 19, 1865, Idaho's territorial government came to a halt, with no executive department left.

Spanishtown, on Elk Creek several miles from Rocky Bar, is the location identified with Idaho's Spanish legend, and a surprising number of people come through there each summer because of that interest. (About every western mining state has a Spanish legend of pre-1848 Spanish workings: except for states such as Arizona where early Spanish mining occurred, these are of interest as folklore rather than history.) Not many buildings remain at Spanishtown, with utilitarian construction similar to those at Rocky Bar.

Aside from the buildings left in these two towns, there are still a few buildings to be found at the old mines in the area. The most common evidence of mining activity, however, is the piles of rocks along the stream beds from placering operations, and mine dumps and tailings from the lode operations. The largest placering operations were carried on in the Lison group of claims in Hardscrabble Wash. Other placering was done along Red Warrior Creek, with some of the ground being worked three times, the last time by the Chinese. More placering was done on Elk Creek by Happy Camp, an important center in 1863 and 1864. Buildings from lode operations can be found still at the Wide West Mine in Wide West Gulch, in Hardscrabble Gulch at the Canada Gold Mill, in Blake's Gulch at the Empire Mine, and at the Ophir Mine.

The South Boise Historic Mining District includes sections 3-4, 7-9, 16-18, and the north half and southwest quarter of section 10, the west halves of sections 15, 22, and 24, the north halves of sections 19-21, and the northwest quarter of section 26, T4N, R10E, and section 33 and the west half of section 34, T5N, R10E. The north boundary commences at the northwest corner of section 7, T4N, R10E; runs east 2 miles to the northwest corner of section 33, T5N, R10E; east 1 1/2 miles to the 1/4 corner of sections 27 and 34; south 1 miles to the 1/4 corner of section 34 and section 3, T4N, R10E; east 1/2 mile to the northeast corner of section 3; south

(continued)

S E E I N S T R U C T I O N S

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM**

(Continuation Sheet)

STATE Idaho	
COUNTY Elmore	
FOR NPS USE ONLY	
ENTRY NUMBER	DATE
	DEC 3 1975

(Number all entries)

7

SOUTH BOISE HISTORIC MINING DISTRICT cont'd.

1 1/2 miles to the 1/4 corner of sections 10 and 11; west 1/2 mile to the center of section 10; south 2 1/2 miles to the 1/4 corner of sections 22 and 27; east 1/2 mile to the southwest corner of section 22; north 1/2 mile to the 1/4 corner of sections 22 and 21; west 3 miles to the 1/4 corner of section 19 and section 24, T4N, R9E; and north 2 1/2 miles.

An additional (Bonaparte) segment of the district commences at the northwest corner of section 24, T4N, R10E, east 1/2 mile to 1/4 corner of sections 13 and 24, south 1 1/2 miles to the center of section 25, west 1/2 mile to the 1/4 corner of sections 25 and 26, and north 1 1/2 miles.



SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD (Check One or More as Appropriate)

- Pre-Columbian | 16th Century | 18th Century | 20th Century
 15th Century | 17th Century | 19th Century

SPECIFIC DATE(S) (If Applicable and Known) 1863-1867

AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE (Check One or More as Appropriate)

- | | | | |
|---|--|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Aboriginal | <input type="checkbox"/> Education | <input type="checkbox"/> Political | <input type="checkbox"/> Urban Planning |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Prehistoric | <input type="checkbox"/> Engineering | <input type="checkbox"/> Religion/Phi- | <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Historic | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Industry | osophy | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Agriculture | <input type="checkbox"/> Invention | <input type="checkbox"/> Science | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Architecture | <input type="checkbox"/> Landscape | <input type="checkbox"/> Sculpture | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Art | Architecture | <input type="checkbox"/> Social/Human- | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Commerce | <input type="checkbox"/> Literature | itarian | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Communications | <input type="checkbox"/> Military | <input type="checkbox"/> Theater | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Conservation | <input type="checkbox"/> Music | <input type="checkbox"/> Transportation | _____ |

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Prospectors trying to determine the extent of the Boise mining region set out from the Boise Basin as soon as possible in the spring of 1863, and discovered placers on the Feather River. Then a quartz prospect was located on May 7 not far above Rocky Bar. The South Boise gold rush followed just after the middle of May. Placers on Red Warrior and on Elk Creek at Happy Camp were of some consequence, but the South Boise mines primarily were quartz. During 1864, production with arastras gave very promising results. Stamp mills were brought in in 1865, but failures during 1866 and 1867 set the district back. Until about 1886, development and production was limited largely to gouging of high-grade deposits. British capital made possible the development of the major producer, the Elmore, from 1886 to 1888, and by 1892, it and all the other important properties were practically worked out. Activity continued on a limited scale with something of a revival during the depression after the Featherville dredge had recovered 33,000 ounces of gold between 1922 and 1927. With the suspension of gold mining in the war years, the camp closed down entirely in 1942. Production reached approximately \$6,000,000.

Some of the more important mines are discussed below:

Pittsburg and Elmore Mines: These two mines are thought to be on the same vein, the rich Ada Elmore lode which was discovered in 1863 along the bed of Bear Creek about one mile west of Rocky Bar. The lode strikes due east and dips 65° N. The ore from this vein was very rich. In 1872, a miling of 50 tons yielded \$4000; another time 9 tons of the richest ore yielded \$4500; and up to 1881, the average was \$60 a ton. The richness of the ore made the Elmore the top producer in the area, with a gross production of \$2,500,000. The production of the Pittsburg was estimated between one-quarter and one-half of that of the Elmore. In the late 1880's, the Elmore had a 50-stamp mill to process the ore.

Vishnu Mine: In the same area as the Pittsburg and Elmore, the Vishnu worked the rich ore of the Vishnu and Idaho lodes. Work was discontinued in the 1890's, but started again in the 1920's under the Idaho Gold Corporation.

Wide West Mine: This mine, along Red Warrior Creek in Wide West Gulch,
(continued)

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

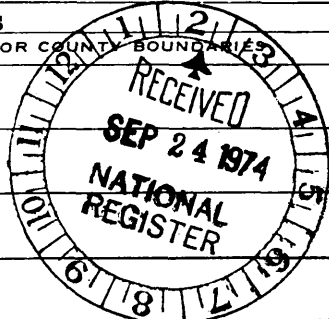
Alfred L. Anderson, Geology of the Gold-Bearing Lodes of the Rocky Bar District, Elmore County, Idaho, Idaho Bureau of Mines and Geology, Pamphlet 65, Moscow, October 1943.

S. M. Ballard, Geology and Ore Deposits of the Rocky Bar Quadrangle, Bureau of Mines and Geology, Pamphlet 26, Moscow, March 1928.

Robert L. Romig, The South Boise Quartz Mines, 1863-1892: A Study in Western Mining Industry and Finance (M. A. thesis, University of California, 1950), 128 pp.

10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING A RECTANGLE LOCATING THE PROPERTY			O R	LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING THE CENTER POINT OF A PROPERTY OF LESS THAN TEN ACRES		
CORNER	LATITUDE	LONGITUDE		LATITUDE numbers	LONGITUDE	BNB 2/1
	Degrees Minutes Seconds	Degrees Minutes Seconds		Degrees Minutes Seconds	Degrees Minutes Seconds	
NW	43 ° 42 ' 39 "	115 ° 19 ' 13 "		11.635295.4843380		
NE	43 ° 42 ' 39 "	115 ° 12 ' 39 "		11.644095.4843550		
SE	43 ° 39 ' 09 "	115 ° 12 ' 39 "		11.644285.4834620		
SW	43 ° 39 ' 09 "	115 ° 19 ' 13 "		11.635475.4834470		
APPROXIMATE ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY:				8640 acres		
LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES						
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:		CODE		
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:		CODE		
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:		CODE		
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:		CODE		



SEE INSTRUCTIONS

11. FORM PREPARED BY

NAME AND TITLE:
Merle Wells, Director

ORGANIZATION: **Idaho State Historical Society** DATE: **9 - 17 - 1974**

STREET AND NUMBER:
610 North Julia Davis Drive

CITY OR TOWN: **Boise** STATE: **Idaho** CODE: **16**

12. STATE LIAISON OFFICER CERTIFICATION

As the designated State Liaison Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service. The recommended level of significance of this nomination is:

National State Local

Name: Merle W. Wells

Title: State Historic Preservation Officer

Date: September 17, 1974

NATIONAL REGISTER VERIFICATION

I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register.

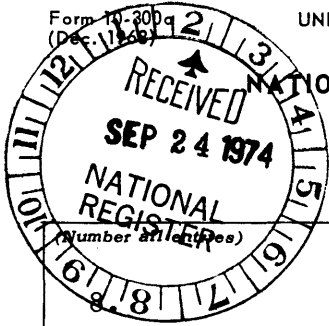
Ray A. ...
Director, Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation

Date: 12/30/75

ATTEST:
W. ...
Keeper of The National Register

Date: DEC 29 1975

STATE	
Idaho	
COUNTY	
Elmore	
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ENTRY NUMBER	DEC 3 8 1975



NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

(Continuation Sheet)

SOUTH BOISE HISTORIC MINING DISTRICT

was one of the early successful mines. An 1873 report stated that the lode is 2-5 feet wide, of gold-bearing quartz in a granite formation. The vein strikes S 75° E and dips steeply to the north. By 1869, there was a 10-stamp mill at the mine, and later a 20-stamp mill was in operation. The total production of this rich mine was \$1,250,000.

Keystone Mine: Directly north of the Wide West is the Keystone, with the vein running parallel to that of the Wide West. The ore, however, was contained in narrow lenselike bodies.

Mountain Goat and Empire Mines: These two mines were right across from each other in Blake's Gulch. There is no early mention of the Mountain Goat, but it is thought to have been either the Alturas or Idaho Bonanza Mine, which had produced together \$100,000 by 1881. The Empire Mine was still being worked in the late 1930's.

Ophir Mine: This mine is located on a vein that can easily be traced for a mile or so to the east and west of the main workings. The vein varies from 2-6 feet in width. The Republic Mine in Hardscrabble Wash is supposed to be on the eastern extension of this Ophir Lode. The Ophir Mine had produced \$80,000 by 1881.

Lison Group: The Lison group of claims in Hardscrabble Wash includes the Republic, Gold Bug, Poorman, General Grant and General Sherman. The latter three lodes were discovered while placering. The area was worked in 1918-1919 by Treasure Mines Company, in 1923 by Rocky Bar Mining Company, and most recently (in the 1930's) by the Canada Gold Mines, Inc.

This historic district is one of about four Idaho mining areas that merit entry on the National Register with extensive acreage. The original Idaho mining complex to be the subject of intensive and careful historical research (in 1948 and 1949), the South Boise mines provide excellent examples of the problems which confronted early western lode development. Because of major early promotion, supported by extremely rich surface values, the South Boise mines gained the largest stamp milling capacity in Idaho from 1864-1866, and experience there proved to be a guide in development of other western lode mining districts. In contrast to early placer camps, most of which lasted for a fairly short time, gold quartz mines provided the economic base which supported supply centers (such as Boise) and farm communities that emerged into the state of Idaho. Enough evidence of this major phase of Idaho history remains in the South Boise historic district to provide excellent opportunities for historic interpretation there. The United States Forest Service already has gone to considerable effort to gather information for historic interpretation there, and Forest Service officials are interested in protection as
(continued)

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INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM**

(Continuation Sheet)

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9.

SOUTH BOISE HISTORIC MINING DISTRICT - con't.

well as interpretation, of the district. A good example of an older Forest Service installation--the Rocky Bar Guard Station--happens to be located close to the largest mines and is included in the district. This will encourage preservation and interpretation of the twentieth century phase of that region's history.



Form 10-301
(July 1969)

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

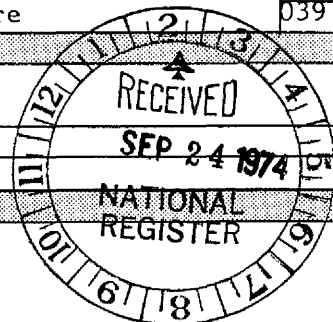
NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
PROPERTY MAP FORM

(Type all entries - attach to or enclose with map)

STATE	
Idaho	
COUNTY	
Elmore	
FOR NPS USE ONLY	
ENTRY NUMBER	DATE
	DEC 30 1975

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

1. NAME			
COMMON: South Boise Historic Mining District			
AND/OR HISTORIC:			
2. LOCATION			
STREET AND NUMBER:			
Sections 3, 4, 7, 8, 9, 10, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, ²⁴ ₁ T4N, R10E			
CITY OR TOWN:			
STATE:		CODE	COUNTY:
Idaho		16	Elmore
			039
3. MAP REFERENCE			
SOURCE:			
U.S.G.S. - Cayuse Point Quadrangle			
SCALE: 1:24,000			
DATE: 1964			
4. REQUIREMENTS			
TO BE INCLUDED ON ALL MAPS			
1. Property boundaries where required.			
2. North arrow.			
3. Latitude and longitude reference.			



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(ROCKY BAR)

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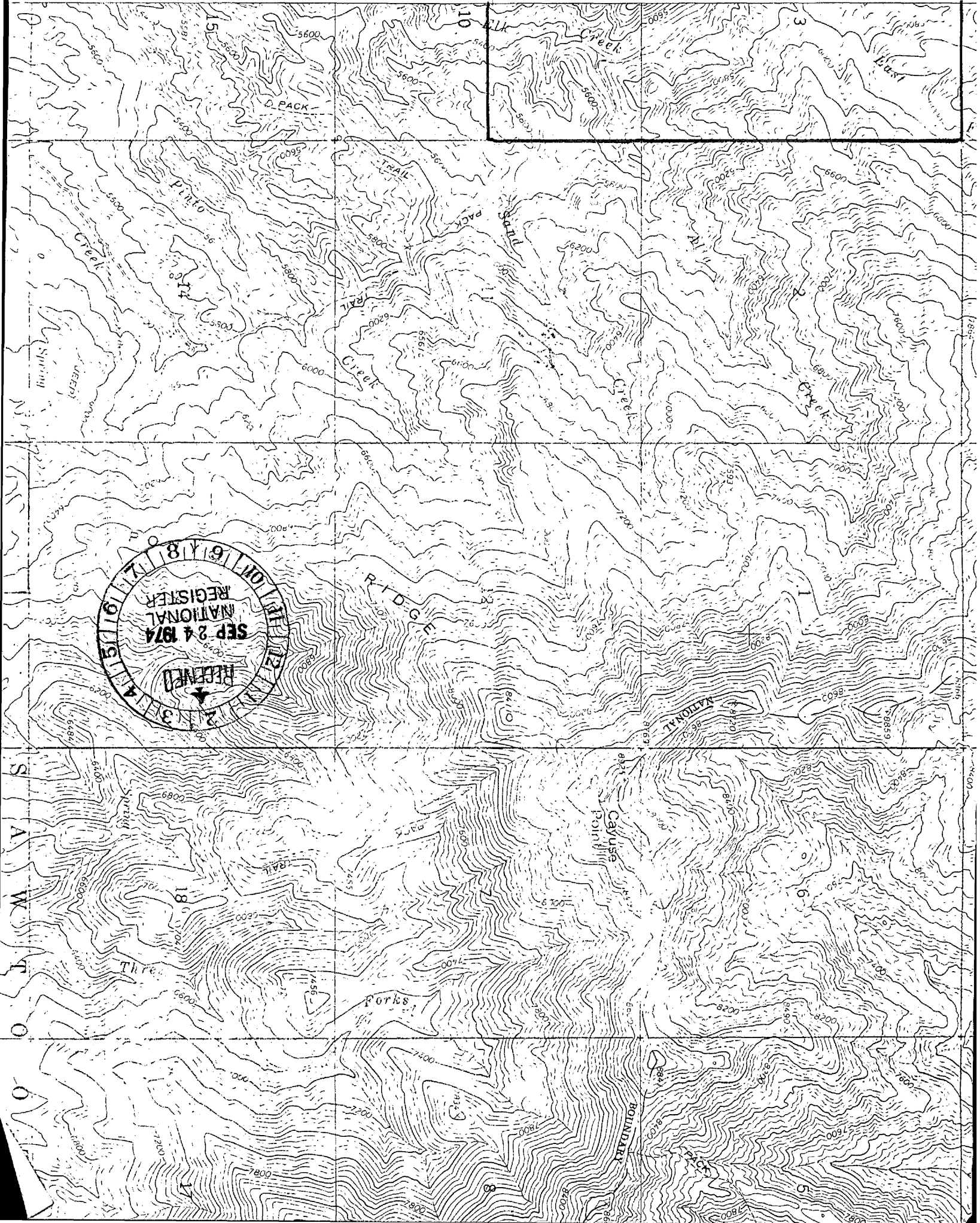
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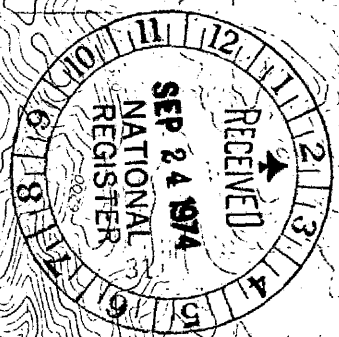
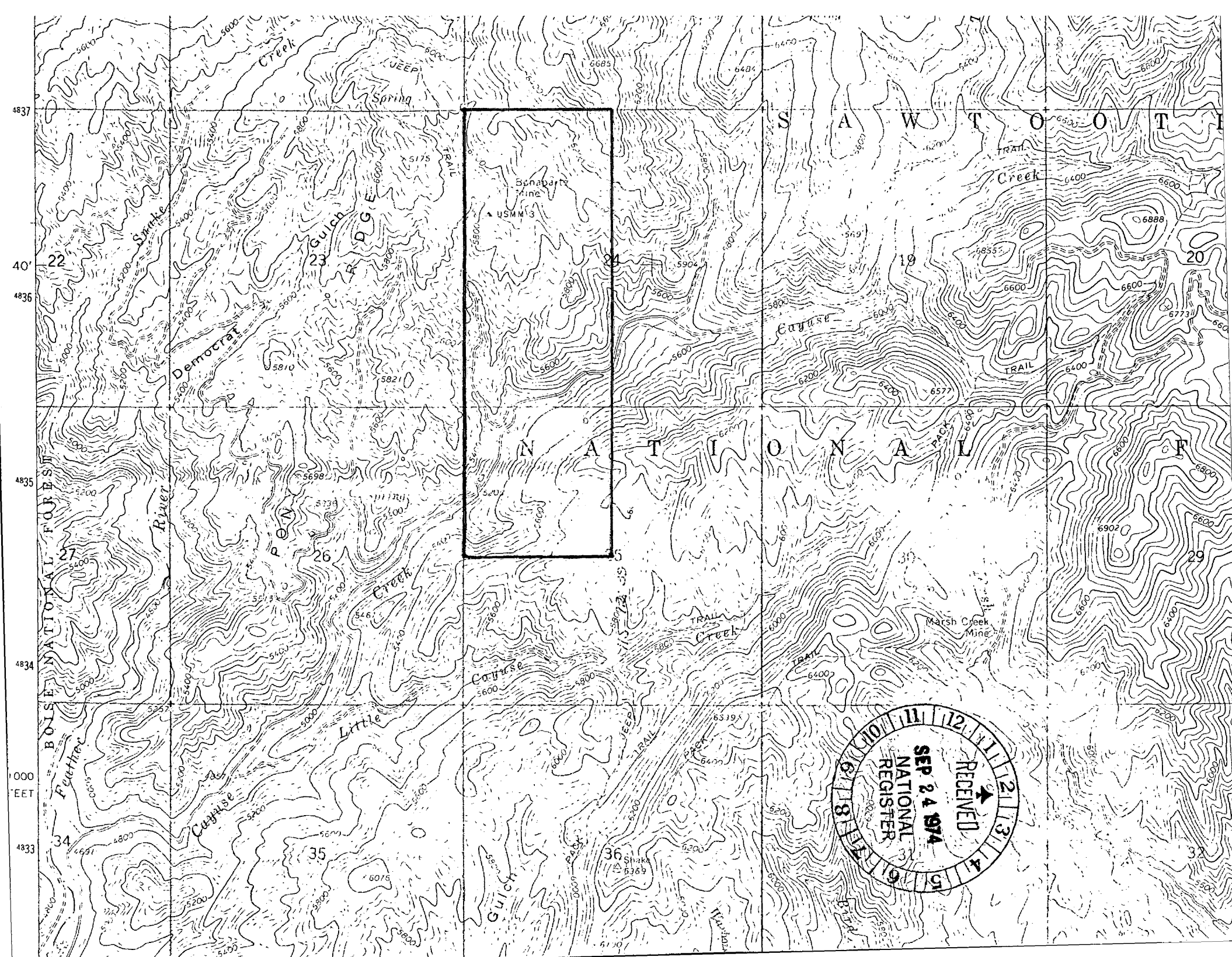
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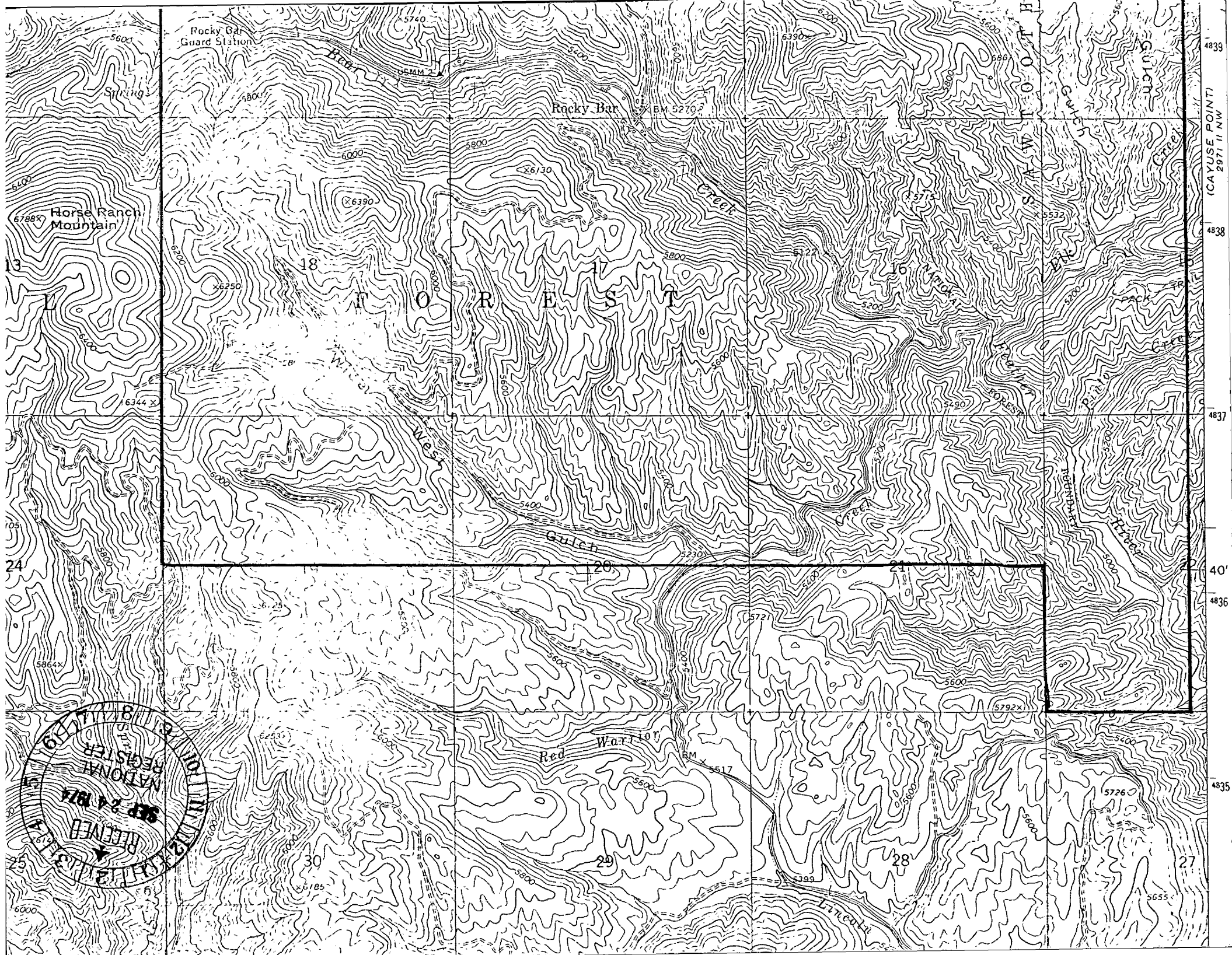
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RECEIVED
SEP 24 1974
NATIONAL REGISTER





Rocky Bar Guard Station

Rocky Bar

Horse Ranch Mountain

T O R I E S

Red Warrior



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