United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

NPS form 10-900

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
REGISTRATION FORM

APR 05 1989
NATIONAL REGISTER

## 1. Name of Property

historic name **ABANDONED ROUTE 66: ASH FORK HILL**
other names/site number Old Route 66 / AR-03-07-01-1166

## 2. Location

street & number north of Interstate 40 / /not for publication
city, town between Ash Fork and Williams /xx/vicinity
state Arizona code AZ county Coconino code 005 zip code N/A

## 3. Classification

| Ownership of Property | Category of Property | Number of Resources within Property | |
|---|---|---|---|
| | | Contributing | Noncontributing |
| _ private | _ building(s) | | buildings |
| _ public-local | _ district | | sites |
| _ public-State | _ site | | sites |
| x public-Federal | x structure | 2 | structures |
| | _ object | | objects |
| | | 2 | Total |

Name of related multiple property listing:
Historic US Route 66 in Arizona

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

## 4. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, I hereby certify that this |x| nomination |_| request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CRF Part 60. In my opinion, the property |x| meets |_| does not meet the National Register criteria. |_| See continuation sheet.

Evan J. DeBloom — 3-16-89
Signature of certifying official — Date

USDA - Forest Service

In my opinion, the property |✓| meets |_| does not meet the National Register criteria. |_| See continuation sheet.

Shereen Lerner — February 22, 1989
Signature of certifying official — Date

Arizona State Historic Preservation Office
State Historic Preservation Office

## 5. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby, certify that this property is:

|✓| entered in the National Register. — Bruce J. Noble, Jr. — 5/19/89
|_| See continuation sheet.
|_| determined eligible for the National Register.
|_| See continuation sheet.
|_| determined not eligible for the National Register.
|_| removed from the National Register.
|_| other, (explain:)_____

for Signature of the Keeper — Date of Action

6. **Function or Use**

| Historic Functions (enter categories from instructions) | Current Functions (enter categories from instructions) |
|---|---|
| TRANSPORTATION /road-related (vehicular) | Abandoned/not in use |
| [Interstate Highway] | |

7. **Description**

| Architectural Classification (enter categories from instructions) | Materials enter categories from instructions) |
|---|---|
| N/A | foundation |
| | walls |
| | roof |
| | other earth fill, asphalt and cinder surfacing, concrete and cement rubble masonry culverts |

**Describe present and historic physical appearance.**

This property includes two structures: a 1921-22 and a 1932-33 alignment of Route 66 in the vicinity of Ash Fork Hill. Both structures are nominated as a single property because of their physical proximity; in several places the 1932-33 alignment covered the earlier road. Furthermore, both structures were designed to ascend Ash Fork Hill, a 1,700 foot escarpment that was one of the steepest sections along the entire length of Route 66. The two structures demonstrate an evolution in road construction in the decade that saw an explosive increase in automotive use. Although this property is bisected in one place by Interstate 40, the divided segments have strong physical and historical association. Despite having been abandoned for 38 and 56 years, the well-preserved structures retain integrity.

The 1921-22 road which would be designated Route 66 in 1926 was built in two sections. The western 4.8 miles, Federal Aid Project (FAP) 51, was built between October 1921 and January 1923 at a cost of $27,270.86. The 20' wide roadway had a 14' cinder surfaced travelway which was never paved. The eastern 2.8 miles (FAP 37) ascended Ash Fork Hill, and at $50,082.50, cost nearly twice as much to build. State highway crews built this section between July 1921 and June 1922. The roadway here was wider: 22' wide with a 16' cindered travelway. The road was cut into the side of a canyon over most of its length, with bank cuts and side fills its primary features. The road twists and turns as it ascends the side of the canyon. At drainages, workers built metal culverts with basalt rubble masonry and cement headwalls. These headwalls have an appearance of hand craftsmanship not seen in later standardized concrete box culverts. The cement on one culvert is inscribed "May 16 '22".

In 1930-31, state highway engineers drew up plans to improve this section of road. FAP 37 and 51 were combined into the 8.2 mile-long Forest Highway Project 4-B. It followed the same general location of the earlier road, but engineers widened the roadbed and made "numerous refinements in grade and alignment". They investigated alternative ways to ascend Ash Fork Hill, but all would have been longer and more difficult to build. A large amount of fill material was used to maintain an even grade and straight alignment. The fill also kept the road high to facilitate snow removal, which was a primary engineering concern on this section . Cuts through hills were avoided whenever possible to combat snow banks, and deep ditches in several places provided dumps for snow.

/x̄/ See continuation sheet

Skousen Brothers, highway contractors, built the road up Ash Fork Hill beginning in the summer of 1932. Progress proceeded slowly because of the enormous amount of fill required for the curved section at the head of a deep canyon near the top. Work continued into the winter of 1933, and the surface was coated with an "asphaltic dust pallative" in July of that year. The final seal coat pavement was placed in 1935.

Although the roadway was much improved, Ash Fork Hill continued to plague travelers, especially as traffic increased in the 1940s. In 1950, engineers again realigned this section by blasting a new road grade straight up through the steep canyon. Interstate 40 was later built on top of the 1950 alignment.

In 1964, the Arizona Highway Department officially abandoned these alignments to the Kaibab National Forest. Aside from obliteration of access points, the old roads were left intact--even the guard rails still stand on the 1933 canyon curve. The remaining pavement is cracked with weeds growing through it, and erosion has cut across parts of the roads (the 1922 alignment never was paved). A short section of the 1922 road is used for local access, but the remainder is closed to traffic, another factor contributing to its good preservation. In places, the 1933 road destroyed the earlier alignment, and Interstate 40 slashes the property in two. However, both structures retain a high degree of integrity and association with the historic period.

## 8. Statement of Significance

Certifying official has considered the significance of this property in relation to other properties:

|x|nationally |_|statewide |_|locally

Applicable National Register Criteria |x|A |_|B |_|C |_|D

Criteria Considerations (Exceptions) |_|A |_|B |_|C |_|D |_|E |_|F |x|G

| Areas of Significance (enter categories from instructions) | Period of Significance | Significant Dates |
|---|---|---|
| Transportation | 1921-1944 | |
| | | |
| | | |
| | | |
| | Cultural Affiliation | |
| | N/A | |
| | | |
| | | |

| Significant Person | Architect/Affiliation |
|---|---|
| N/A | N/A |
| | |

State significance of property, and justify criteria, criteria considerations, and areas and periods of significance noted above.

This part of abandoned Route 66 is significant for its association with Historic US Route 66 in Arizona and the theme of transportation in America ca. 1920-1944. It also illustrates the evolution of road engineering standards to keep pace with changing transportation needs.

The original road down Ash Fork Hill was only one lane wide and so rutted that tire walls wore out before the treads did. It had no drainage features or road surfacing. The 1922 county road was a tremendous improvement and more than adequate for the low volume of traffic it carried. People generally did not travel far or in adverse weather in the early 1920s. Winter snows made roads impassable; the highway department did not attempt to clear roadways, nor were roads designed for winter weather. A 1934 Arizona Highways article summed up the situation this way: "Ten years ago it was a bold man who attempted to reach the West Coast over U.S. Route 66 during January and February; and if he were fortunate enough to get to Winslow, he would load his car on a Santa Fe freight and ship across to Kingman. . . . Traffic was light--very light--ten year ago, and highway maintenance . . . was not expected to keep the road open during the snow season." Traffic increased substantially in the late 1920s, with large buses and trucks a new addition to the road. Engineers designed the 1932-33 alignment to facilitate snow removal, accomodate increasing traffic and speeds, and improve safety. Engineers wrote that the straighter alignment and gentler grade of the new road would " . . . materially lessen the driving hazard on Ashfork Hill as the old road is steep and the curvature is sharp. The minumum sight distance has been increased. . . . " This fact is obvious when the two alignments are compared in plan view.

/x/ See continuation sheet

This rough and lonely stretch of road had no businesses or attractions alongside it. This section of Route 66 passed through rolling hills clad with juniper at about 6,000 feet in elevation. Although it could become hot in summer and cold in winter, the climate was generally mild. Refuse scattered along the roadside is evidence of the area's popularity for camping. The 1922 road had a handcrafted appearance, with its narrow, twisting roadway and hand constructed basalt rubble culvert headwalls. The 1933 alignment demonstrates the beginnings of modern highway engineering standards, with fill material forming artificial grades resulting in straighter alignments and standardized concrete box culverts. Yet even the 1933 road appears antiquated when compared with the present alignment of Interstate 40, first built in 1950. Route 66's importance as a major interstate highway justified the tremendous cost of blasting and filling in an artificial grade straight up the steep escarpment. All three of the Ash Fork Hill alignments clearly illustrate engineering solutions to the problem of surmounting the Ash Fork escarpment that were appropriate for their time.

The Ash Fork Hill section is an excellent example of the abandoned Route 66 property type. The cross-section template remains intact, and most associated features (pavement, culverts, guard rails) are still in place. This section imparts a strong feeling of historic association. It retains integrity of design, workmanship, location, feeling, association, and setting.

## 9. Major Bibliographical References

Kaibab NF Road and Trail Right-of-Way file 2730: Williams-Ash Fork Highway (US 66)
On file at the Kaibab NF Supervisor's Office, Williams, AZ

Arizona Highways, January 1934, "Traffic Must Keep Moving."

|x| See continuation sheet.

Previous documentation on file (NPS):
|_| preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested.
|_| previously listed in the National Register
|_| previously determined eligible by the National Register
|_| designated a National Historic Landmark
|_| recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey #_____
|_| recorded by Historic American Engineering Record #_____

Primary location of additional data:
|_| State hist. preservation office
|_| Other State agency
|x| Federal agency
|_| Local government
|_| University
|_| Other

Specify repository:
Kaibab National Forest

## 10. Geographical Data

Acreage of property 160 acres

UTM References

| | Zone | Easting | Northing |
|---|---|---|---|
| A | 12 | 370810 | 3859780 |
| B | 12 | 378000 | 3897900 |
| C | 12 | 379600 | 3898360 |
| D | | | |

|_| See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

This property includes two structures: the exposed length of the 1922 alignment is 4.5 miles (7.2 km) and the exposed length of the 1932-33 alignment is 6 miles (9.6 km). Both have the same beginning and end points. These points occur where subsequent construction has buried the original alignment. The property is discontiguous where Interstate 40 slices through it (see attached map and UTM references for these points). Boundary width is 66 feet to each side of each structure's centerline, the original right-of-way. The ROW is defined by standard concrete markers.

|_| See continuation sheet

Boundary Justification

The boundary includes the property type "Abandoned Route 66" defined in the multiple property form. All improvements are contained within the ROW. The boundary includes two structures closely related in theme and function. Although Interstate 40 bisects the property, the divided segments have strong physical and historical association.

|_| See continuation sheet

## 11. Form Prepared By

name/title Teri A. Cleeland
organization Kaibab National Forest
date August 1, 1988
street & number 800 S. Sixth St.
telephone (602) 635-2681
city or town Williams
state AZ zip code 86046

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USDA Bureau of Public Roads, District 2. Location Survey Report, Forest Highway Route 4 [1932]. On file, Kaibab NF historical records.

Plans (undated) for Williams-Ash Fork Highway Federal Aid Project No. 51 and 37 [1922].

Williams News Jan. 13, 1933.

Interview with Ed Silva, July 20, 1988.

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THE FOLLOWING INFORMATION IS THE SAME FOR ALL PHOTOGRAPHS ACCOMPANYING THIS NOMINATION:

1). Abandoned Route 66: Ash Fork Hill
2). Vicinity of Williams and Ash Fork, Arizona
3). Teri A. Cleeland
4). June, 1988
5). Kaibab National Forest, Williams, Arizona

INFORMATION FOR INDIVIDUAL PHOTOGRAPHS:

6). Facing north, 1922 culvert
7). #1

6). Detail, 1922 culvert pictured in photo #1. Inscription in concrete of north headwall: "Elev. BM
5399.94
May 16 '22"
7). #2

6). Facing west, 1922 alignment of Route 66
7). #3

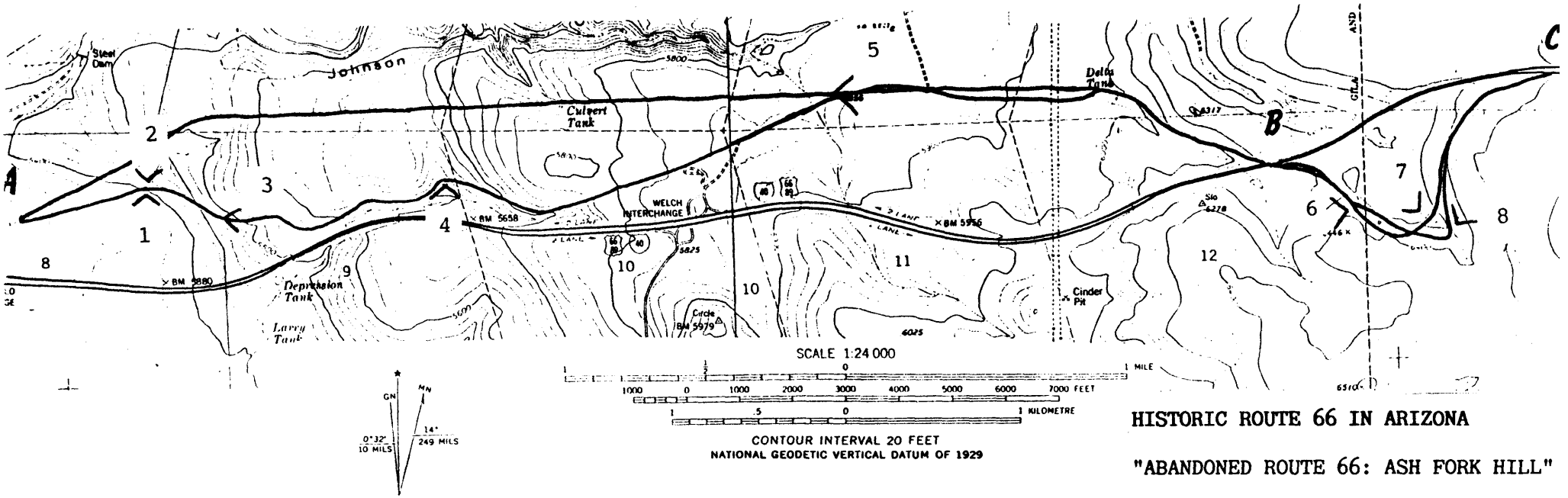
6). Facing north, 1922 culvert
7). #4

6). Facing west, junction of 1922 alignment (left) and 1932 alignment (right)
7). #5

6). Facing east-northeast, 1932-33 alignment curve foreground, 1922 alignment rear
7). #6

6). Facing south-southeast, 1922 alignment curve and culvert seen from 1932-33 alignment curve
7). #7

6). Facing south-southwest, 1922 alignment at the head of the canyon curve. Person is standing at the point shown in photo #7.
7). #8




HISTORIC ROUTE 66 IN ARIZONA

"ABANDONED ROUTE 66: ASH FORK HILL"

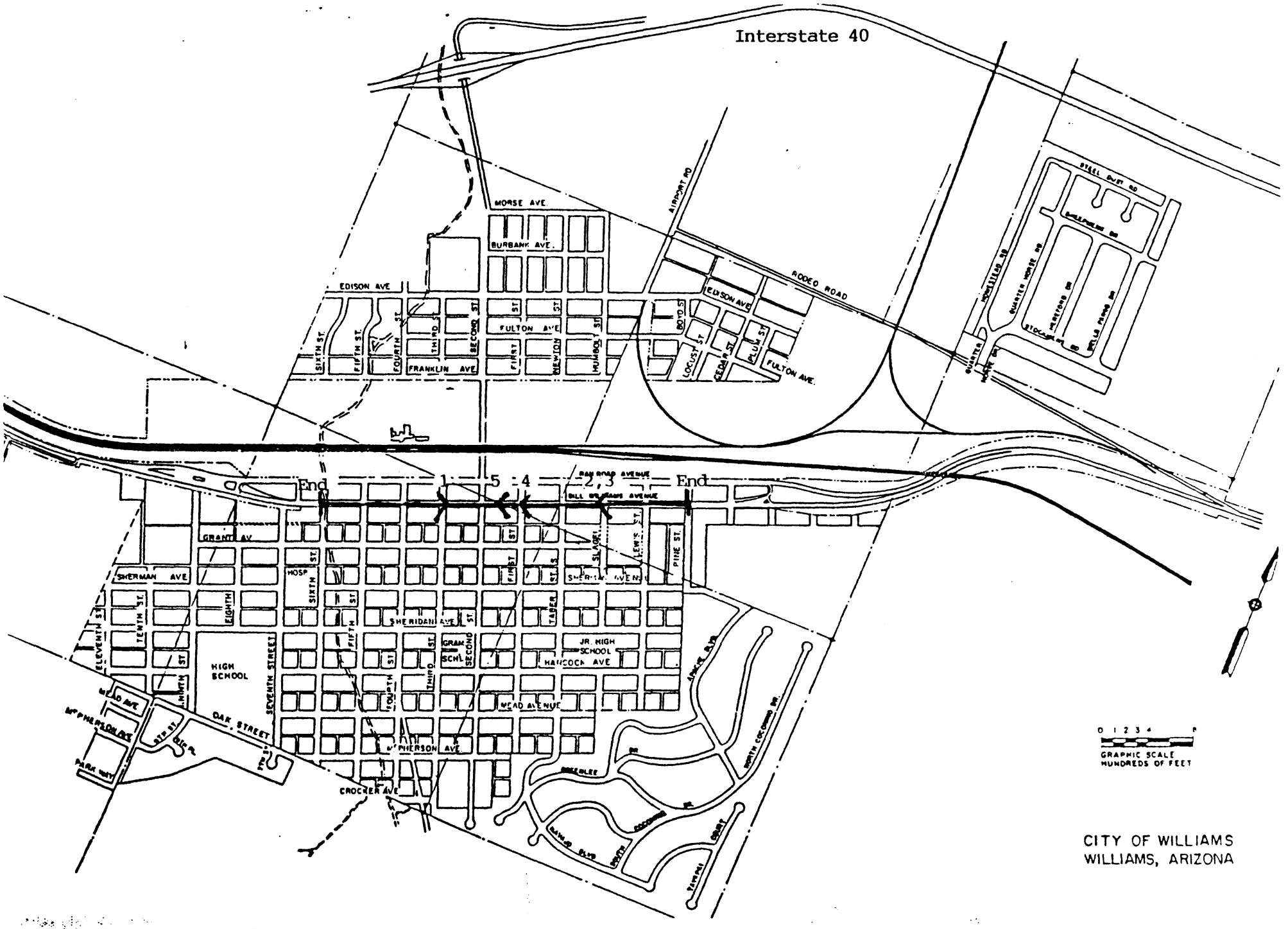
Zone 12

A: 370810E
3897850N

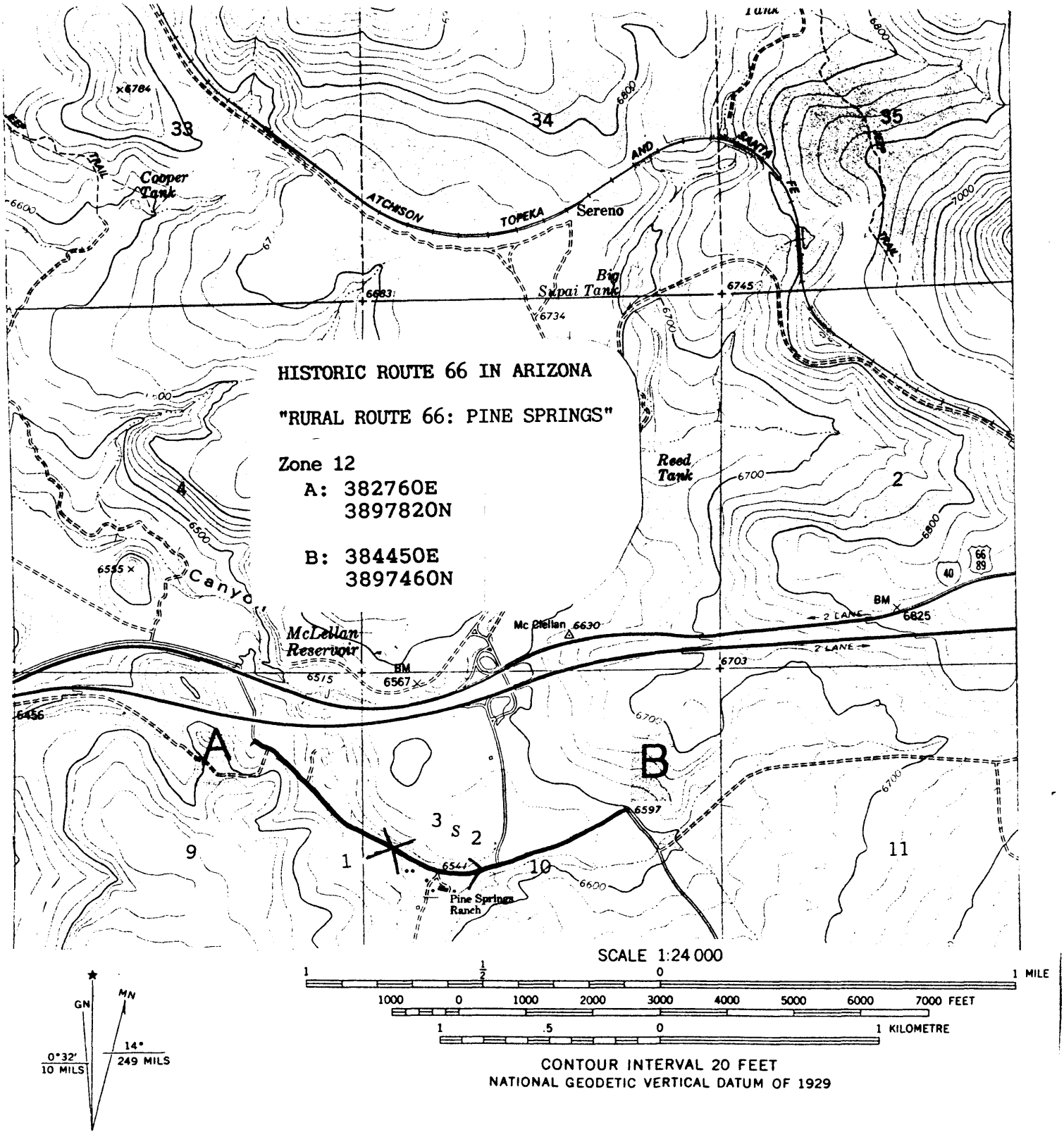
B: 378000E
3897900N

C: 379600E
3898360N

Abandoned Route 66: Ash Fork Hill. Photo points numbered.




"URBAN ROUTE 66: WILLIAMS" (Bill Williams Ave.) Boundaries and photo points indicated.




Rural Route 66: Pine Springs. Photo points numbered.

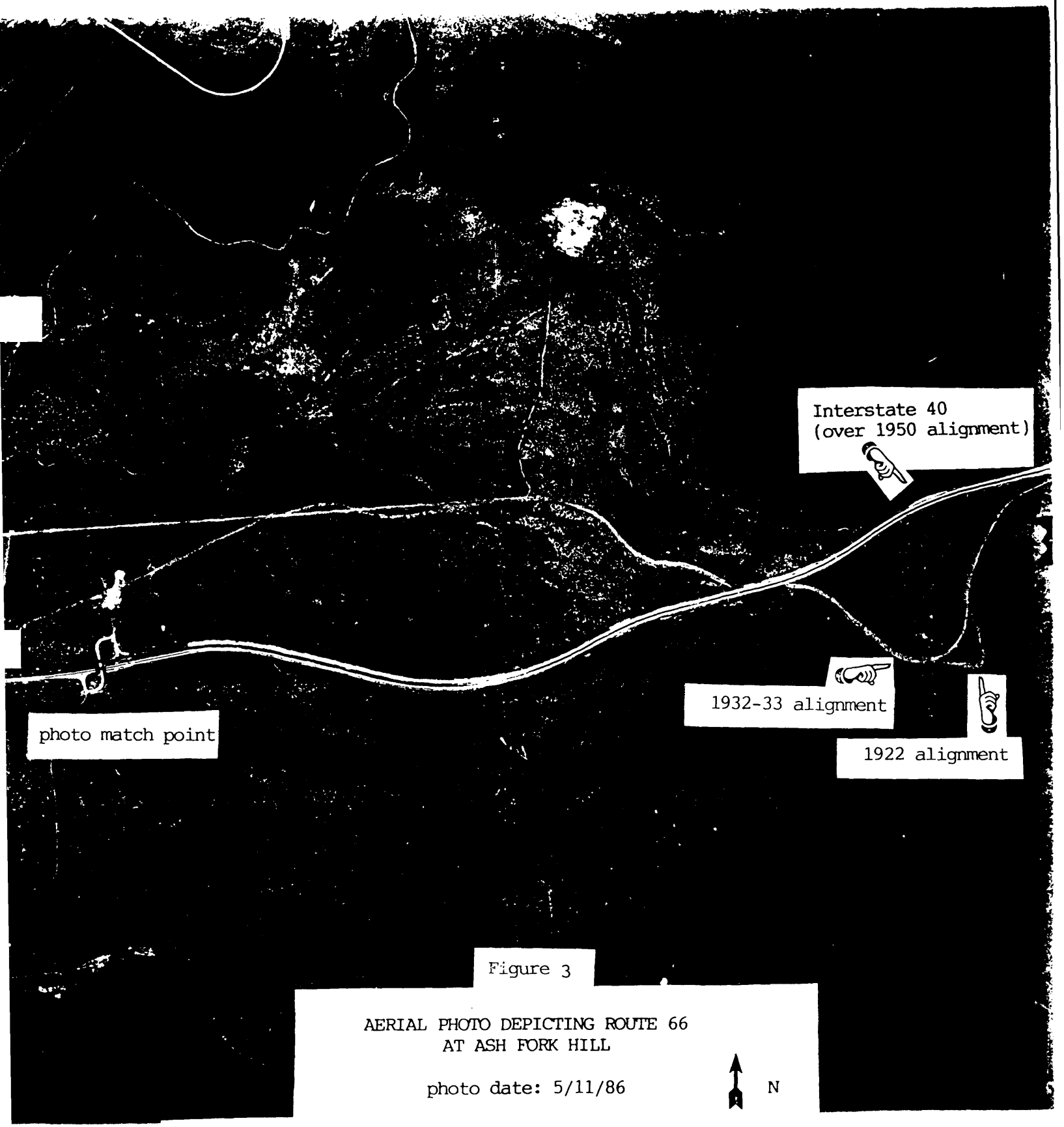



Figure 3

AERIAL PHOTO DEPICTING ROUTE 66
AT ASH FORK HILL

photo date: 5/11/86

N

SCALE 1:24000

1 MILE

7000 FEET

(Best available copy--original photo sent to AZSHPO and Washington DC)

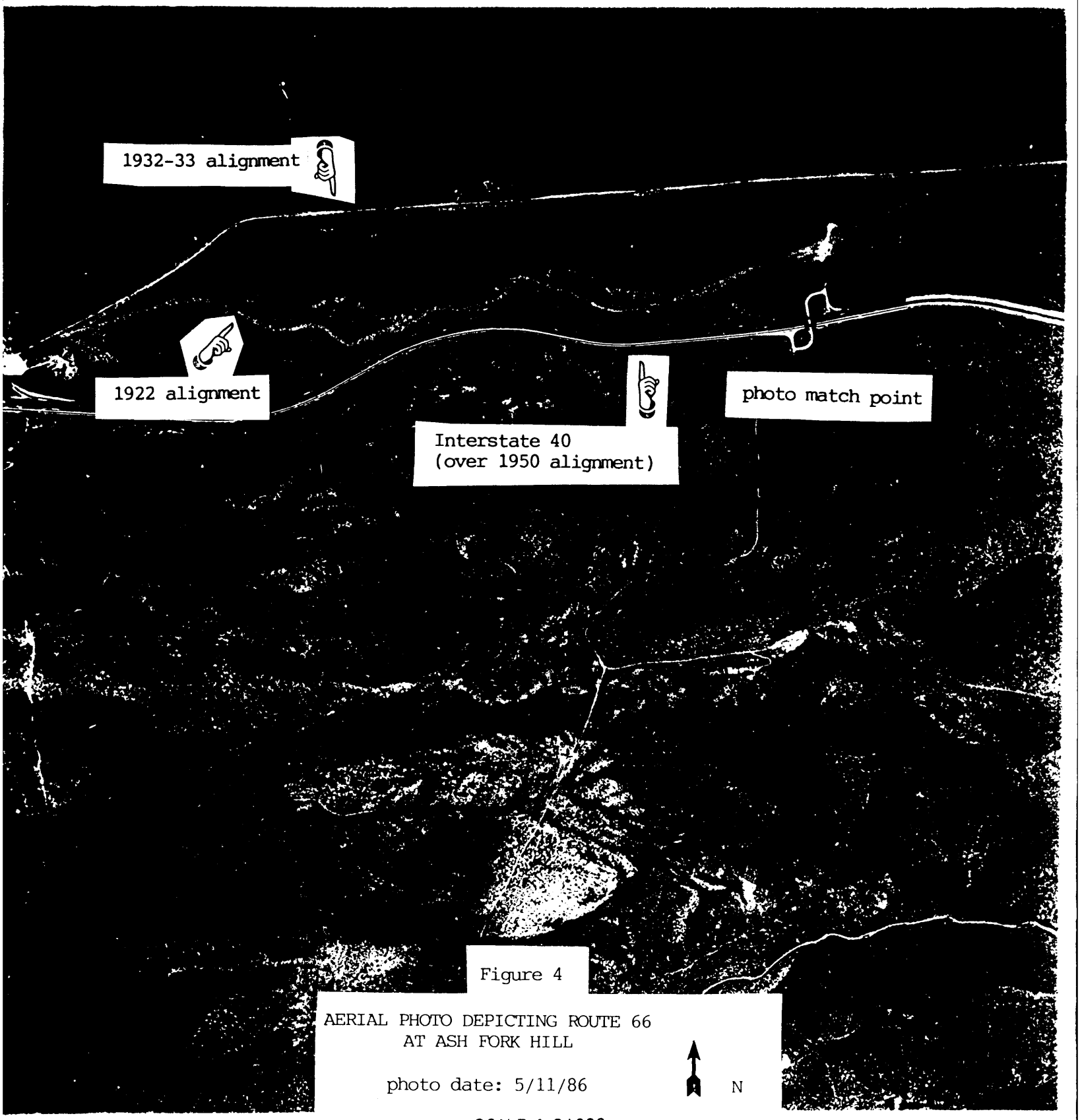



Figure 4

AERIAL PHOTO DEPICTING ROUTE 66
AT ASH FORK HILL

photo date: 5/11/86

N

SCALE 1:24000

1 ½ 0 1 MILE

1000 0 1000 2000 3000 4000 5000 6000 7000 FEET

(Best available copy--original photo sent to AZSHPO and Washington DC)