

Citizens for Responsible
Forest Management
P.O. Box 167
Boulder Creek, CA 95006
(831) 338-4300

Rec'd 9/22
after PC
Hearing

Santa Cruz County Planning Commission
County Government Center
701 Ocean Street, Room 400
Santa Cruz, CA 95060

September 20, 1999

Re: 98-0604 NO SITUS APN: 079-121-12, proposal to rezone SU to TP, Owner: Aalfs

Dear Commissioners,

Concerned neighbors have contacted us and requested that we submit comment with regard to the appropriateness of rezoning this parcel to timber production. As you may be aware, our organization has actively participated in local efforts to reform logging practices. This process started in the autumn of 1997 when the Board of Supervisors formed the timber technical advisory committee (TTAC) to identify problems and recommend solutions through zoning ordinances and/or forest practice rule changes. The Board of Forestry adopted some of the county's requested changes but the more substantive rules were not. Those rules were submitted a second time and were rejected again this year. The Board of Supervisors will as a result take up the zoning restrictions again in November. Part of their agenda will be criteria to be used in determining the appropriateness of rezoning parcels such as this one.

The issues of concern are *proximity to residential* properties, *steepness and erodibility* of slope, *viewshed* values, and *appropriate resources*.

Proximity to residences:

The Supervisors recognized that logging is fundamentally an industrial activity and as such requires buffering setbacks from residential uses. One of the rules not approved by the Board of Forestry was a residential setback. This parcel has residential parcels on three sides and will expose these residents to all the impacts associated with this intrusive and sometimes damaging activity.

Steepness and Erodibility:

This property is situated on a very steep hillside sometimes referred to as a "cliff" and is composed of highly erodible or easily fractured soils, such as Santa Margarita sandstone, Lompico mudstone and shales. These soil types combined with steepness result in an extreme erosion hazard. Consider the location of houses above this parcel and the San Lorenzo River below it. These factors combine to create a potential risk for the health and safety of the residents. The residents on top from the direct impact of soil loss and movement and those below from redirected river flow.

Viewshed values:

Highway 9 is designated as a wild and scenic highway by the state of California. This parcel is visible from the highway by northbound traffic from Ben Lomond to Brookdale. The visual impact of logging, even selection cut logging, is unmistakable, even to the untrained eye. This is especially true on steep slopes facing the highway where any disturbance stands out and is enhanced by the grade.

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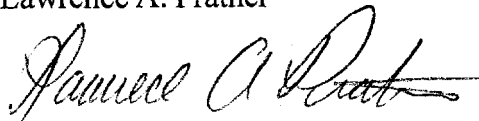
Appropriate resources:

The Zoning maps from the County Planning Department include a "timber overlay", which indicates the distribution of timber resources throughout the County. This overlay, while disputed in some instances, is only present on a very small corner of this parcel. Therefore, it may be questionable if this parcel qualifies.

We believe for these reasons that this parcel is not a good candidate for rezoning to timber production. If you find that you are uncomfortable making a decision at this juncture, you may wish to reconsider this matter after the Board of Supervisors have had an opportunity to review and act on the rezoning criteria in November.

Thank you for your consideration.

Lawrence A. Prather



Cc: Supervisor Jeff Almquist, Fifth district
Board of Supervisors
Alvin James, Planning Director
Cathleen Carr, Project Planner

Submitted at:
9/22/99 Planning
Commission
by Dennis Kehoe

#98 - 0604

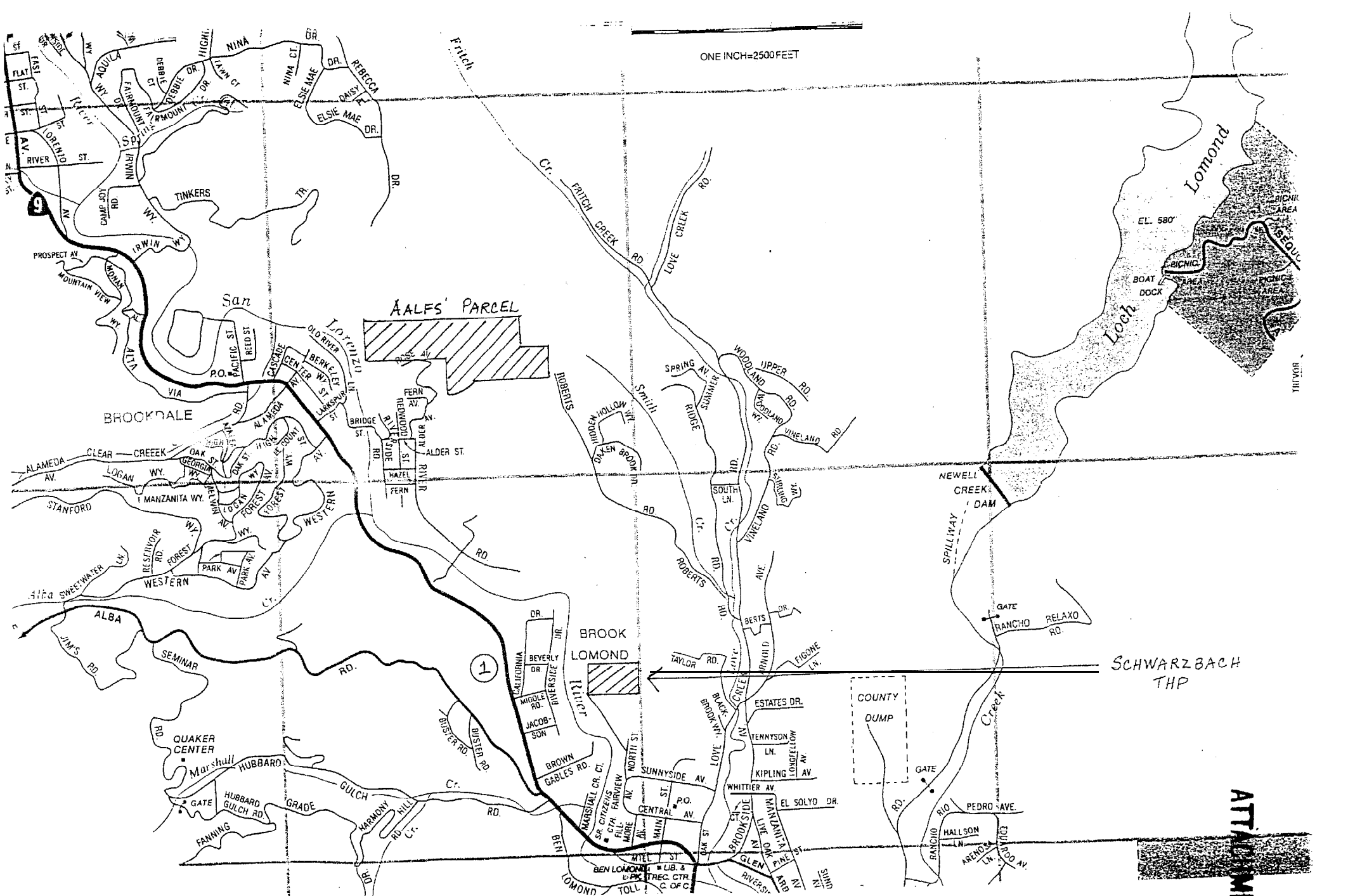
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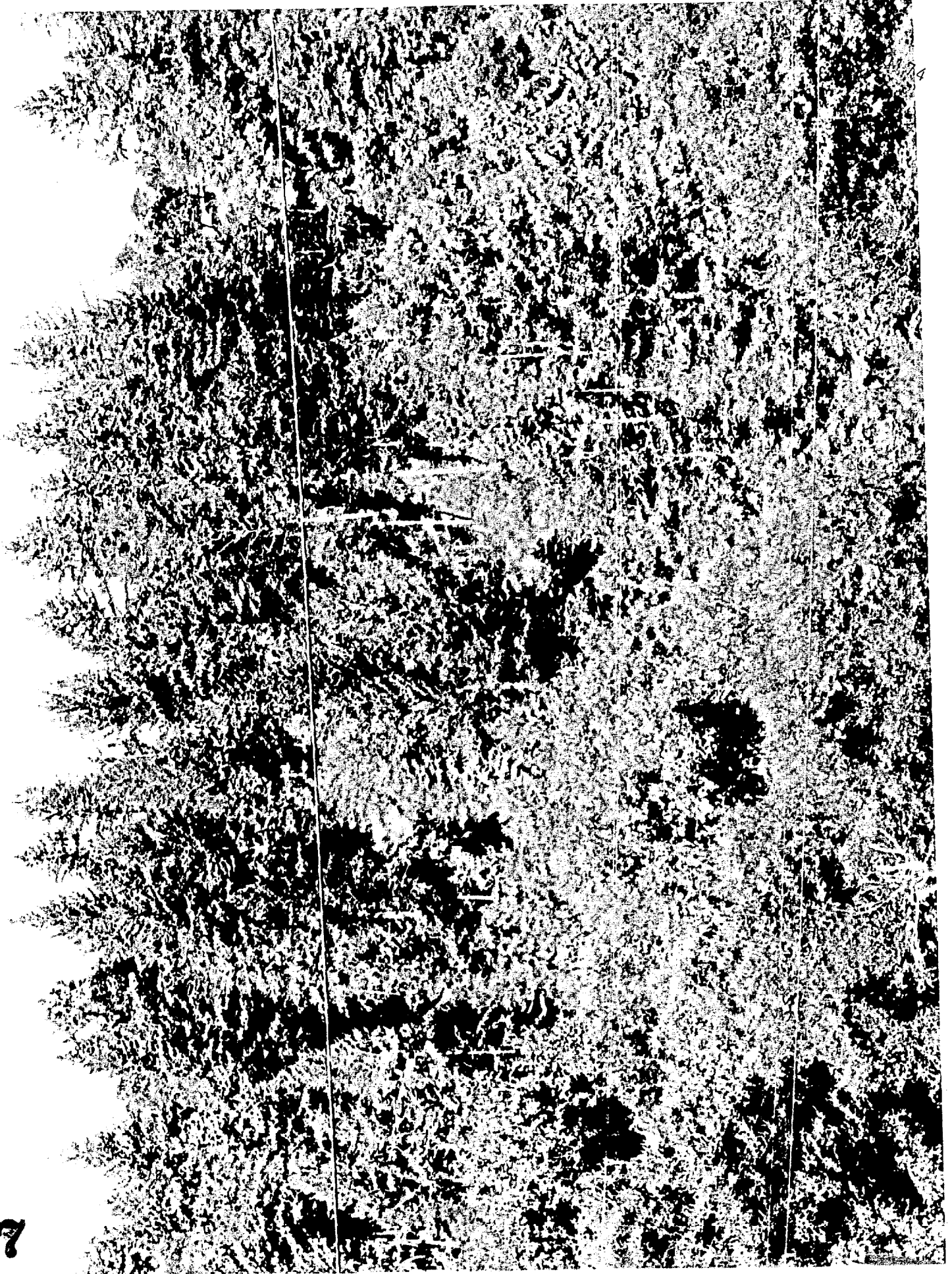
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REZONING

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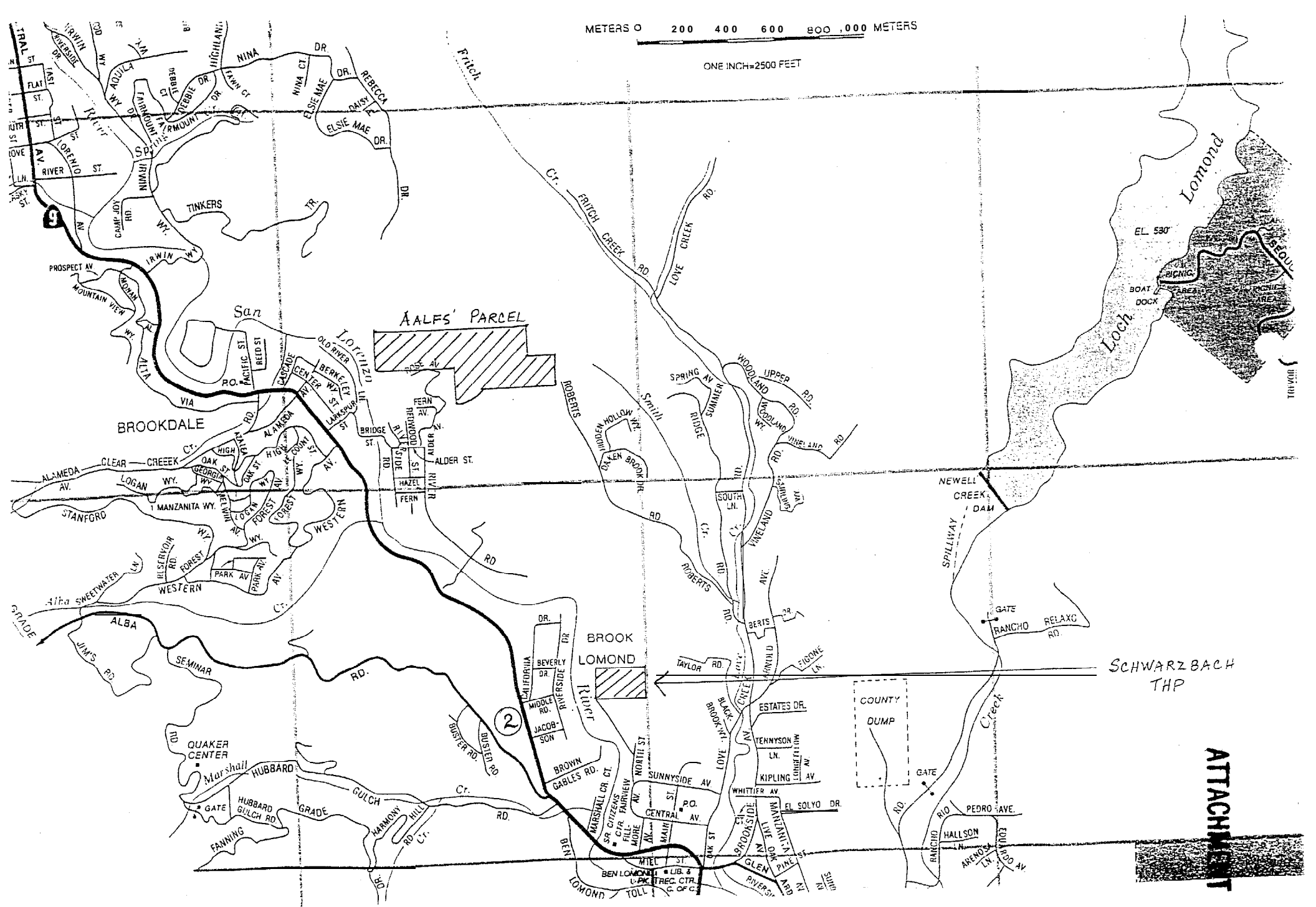
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ONE INCH=2500 FEET



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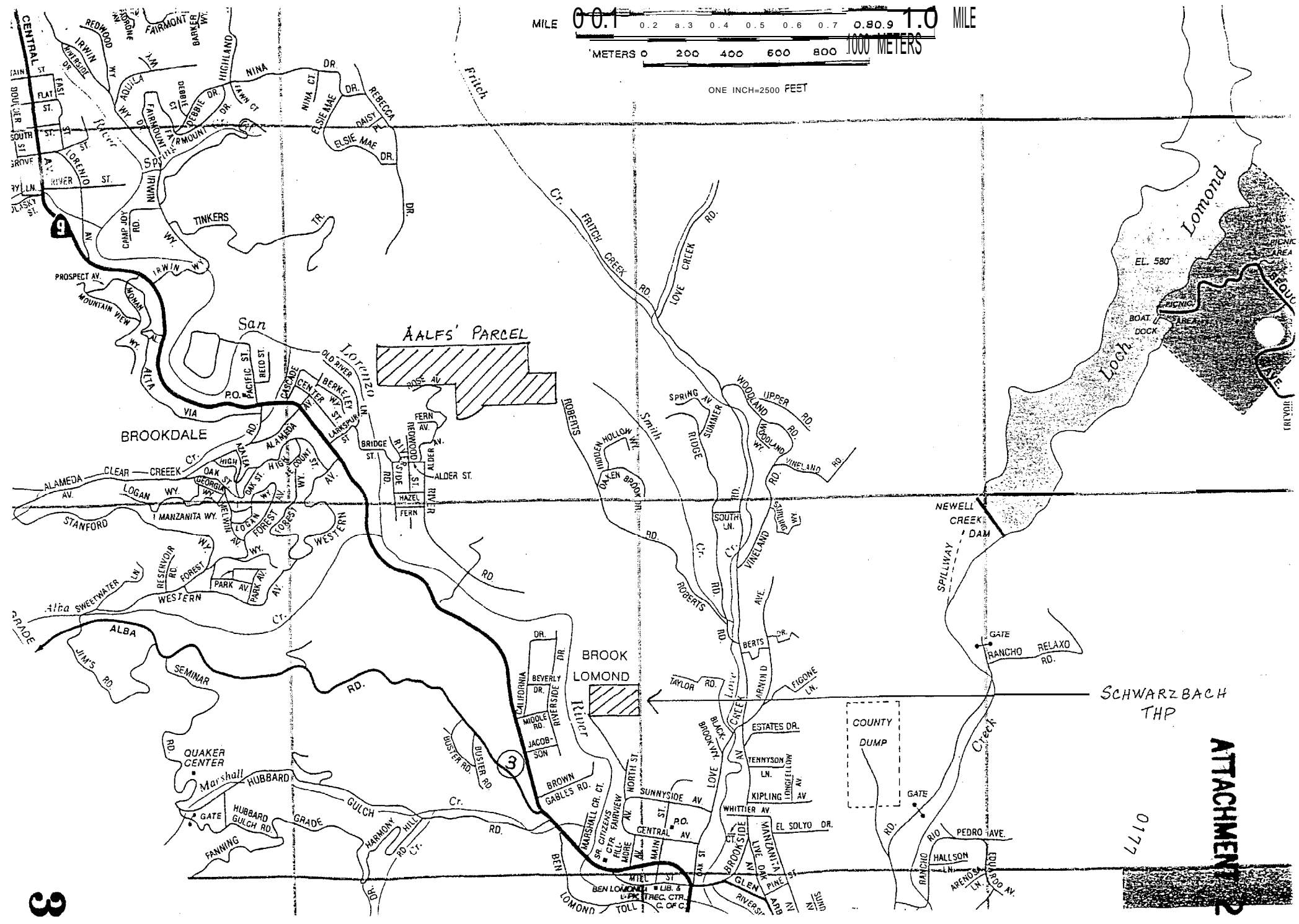
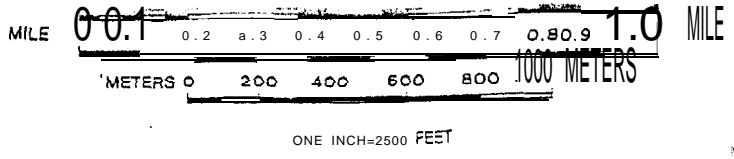
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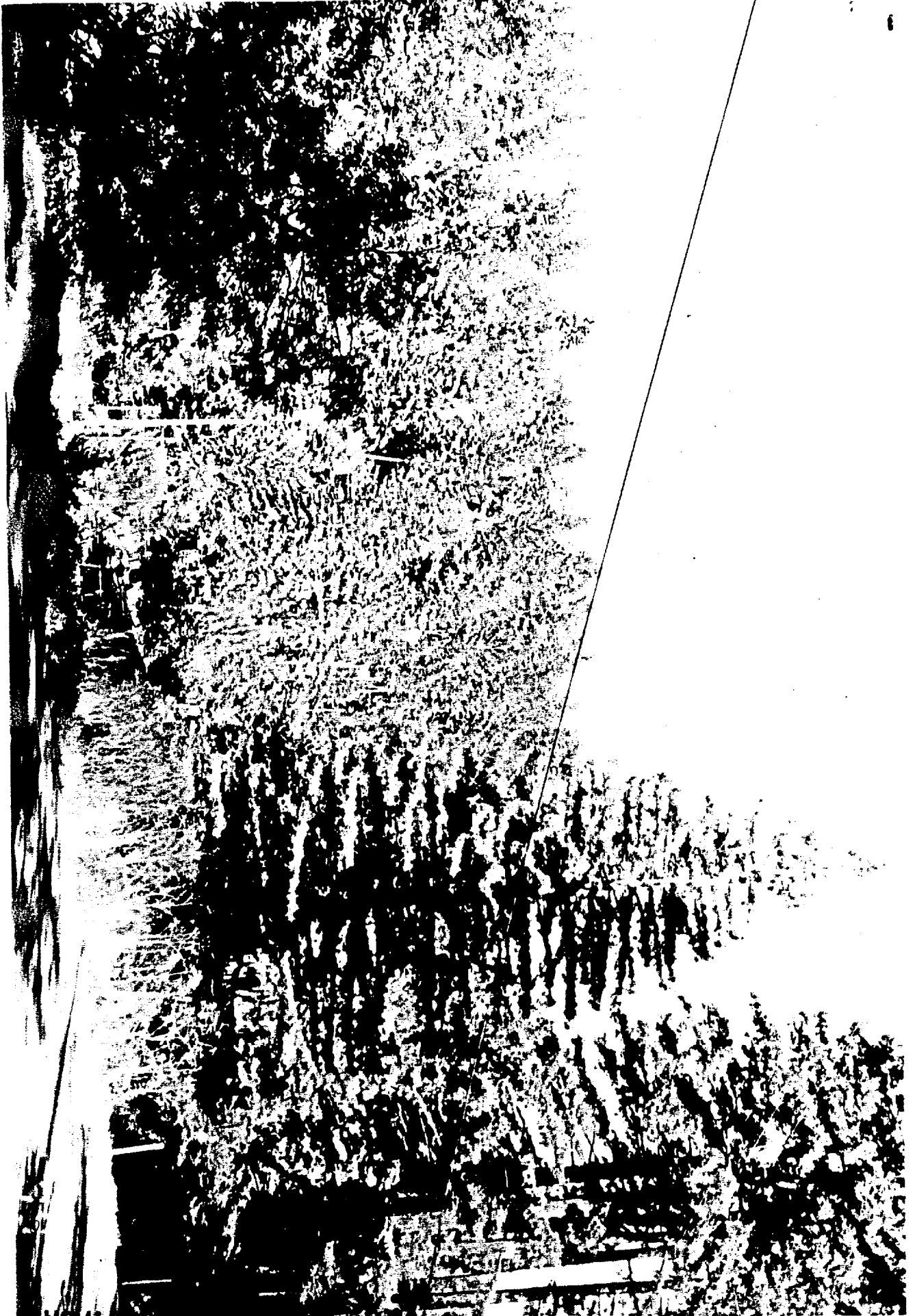


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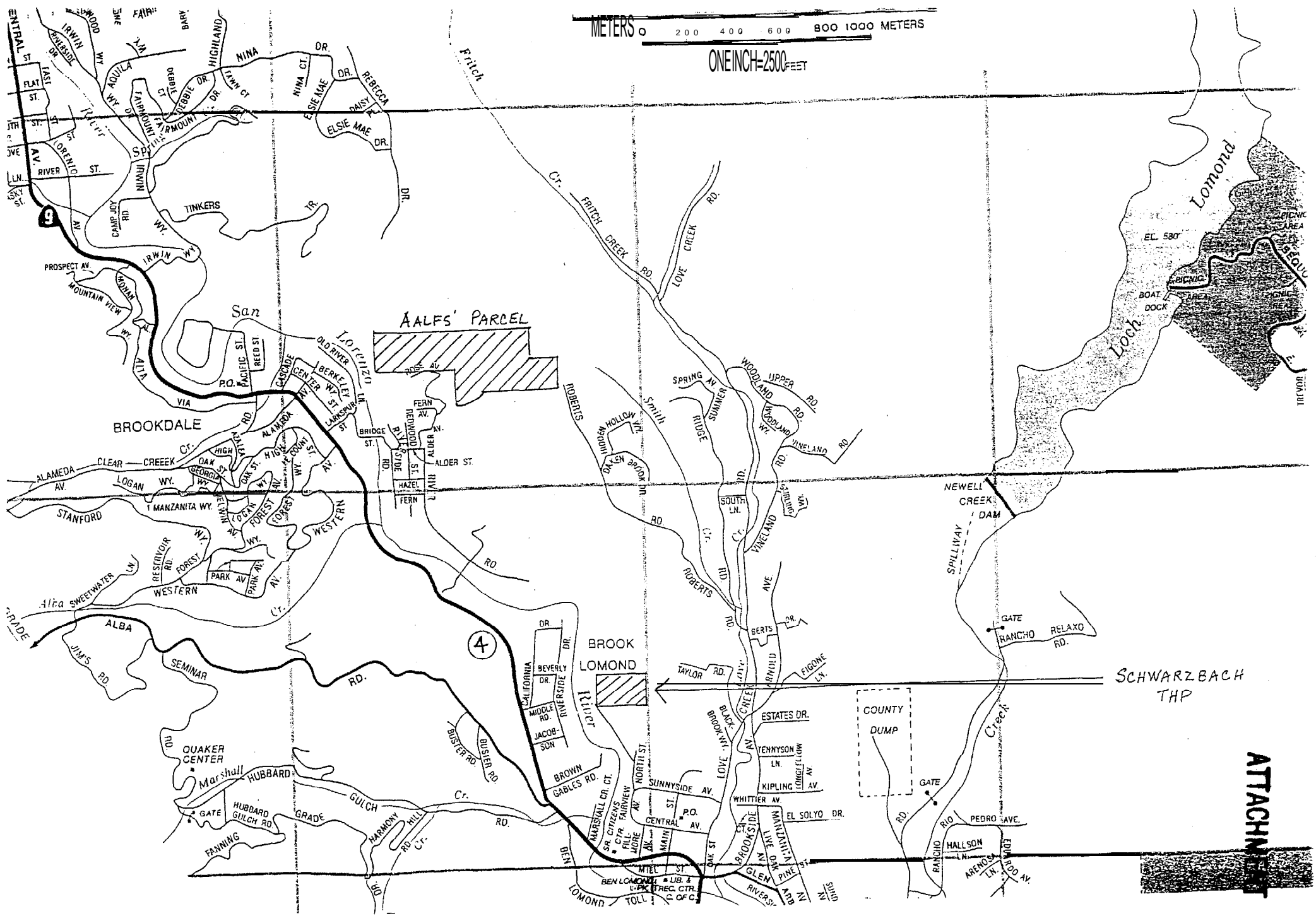
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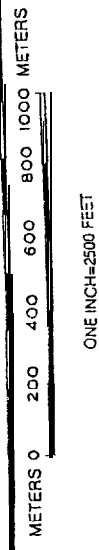
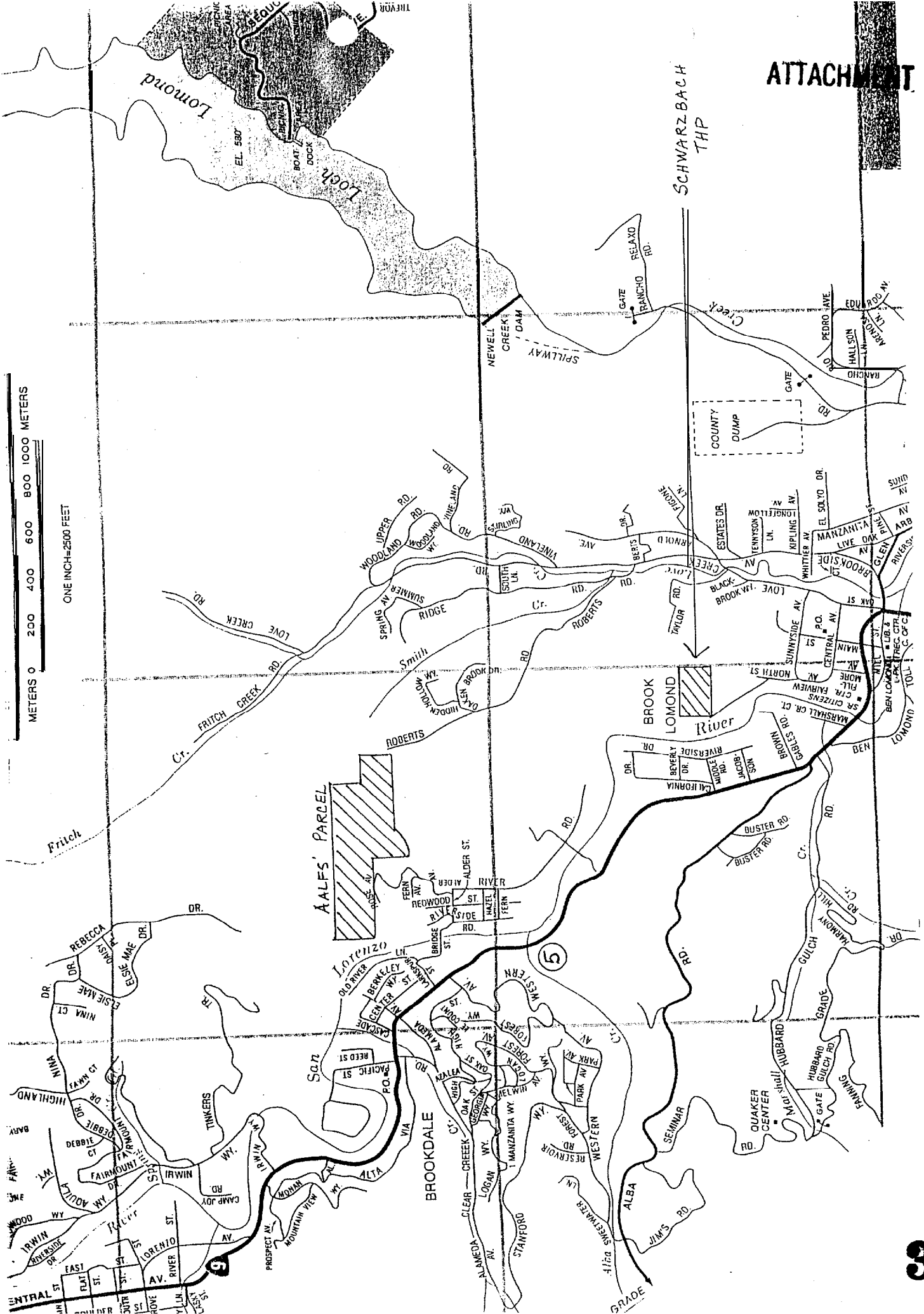
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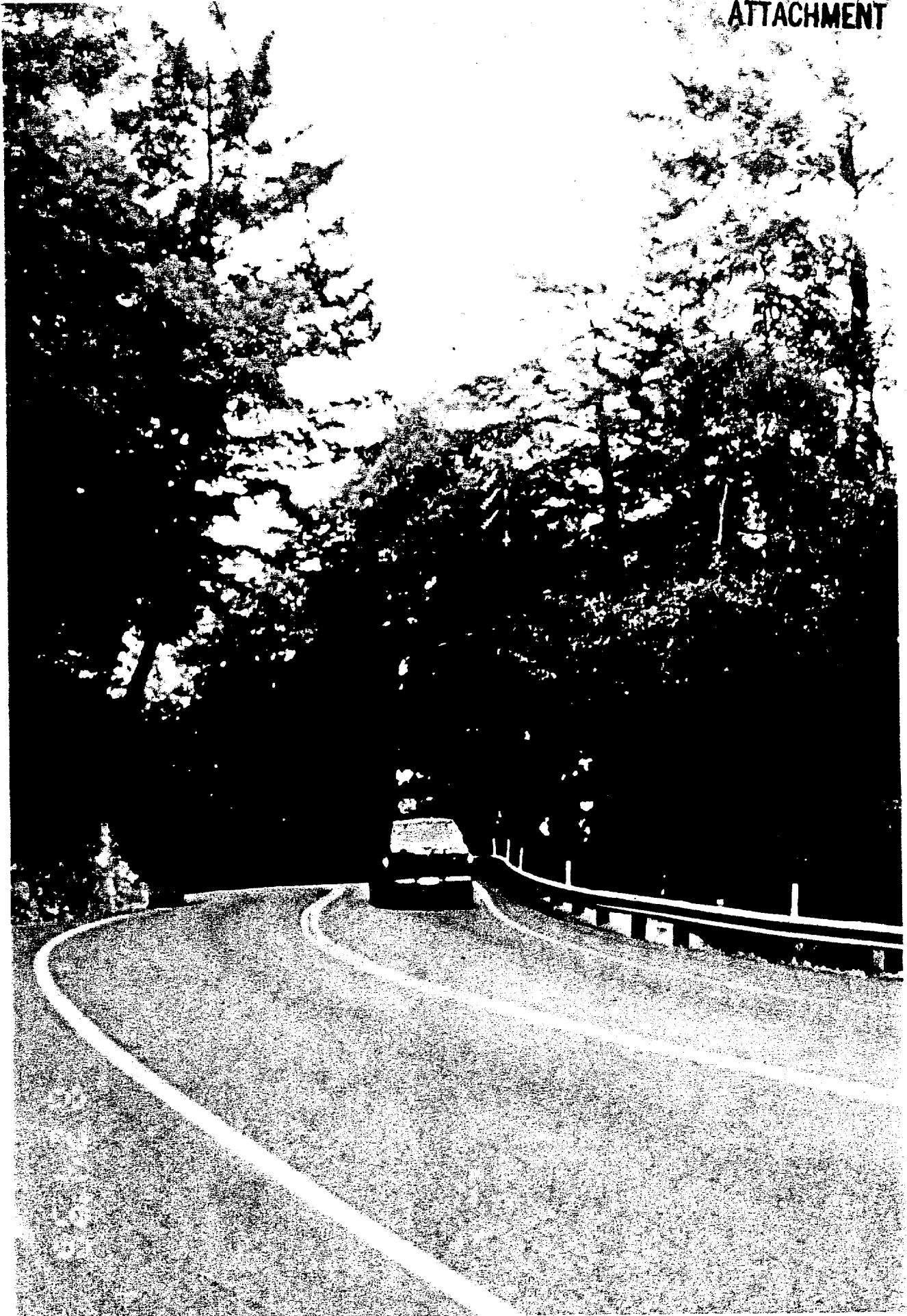
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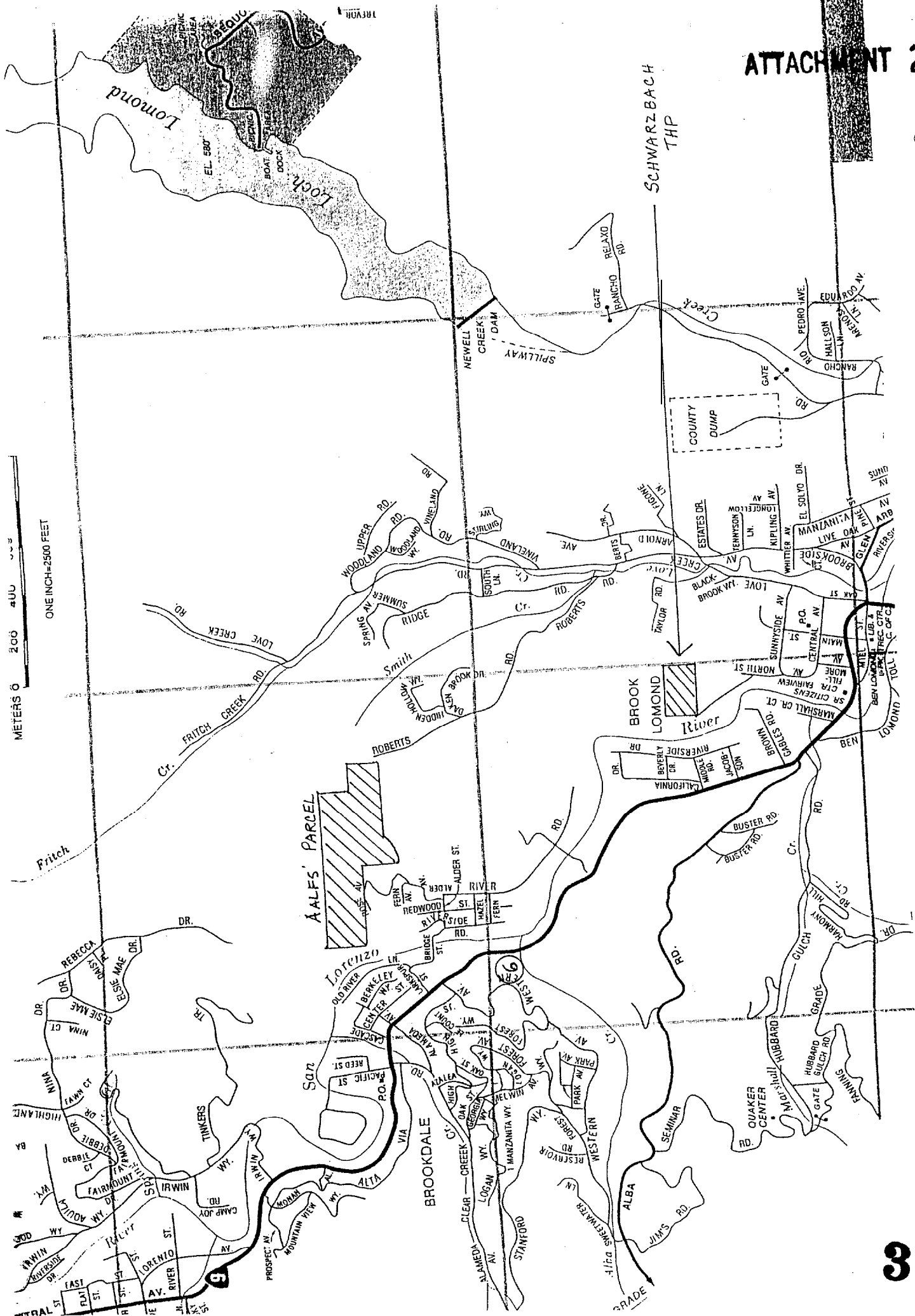


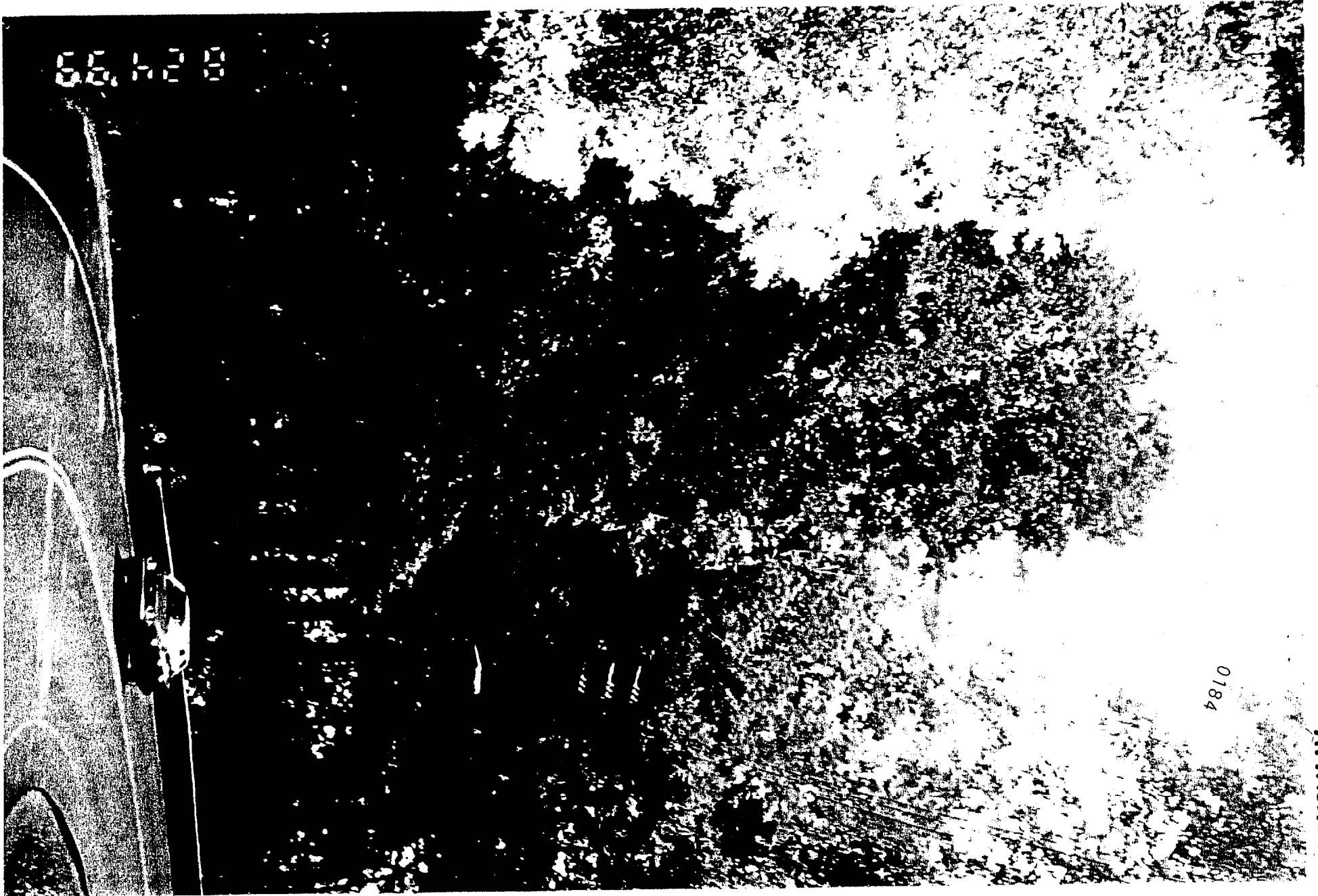
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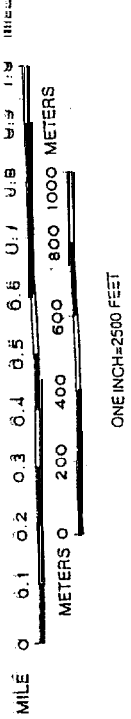
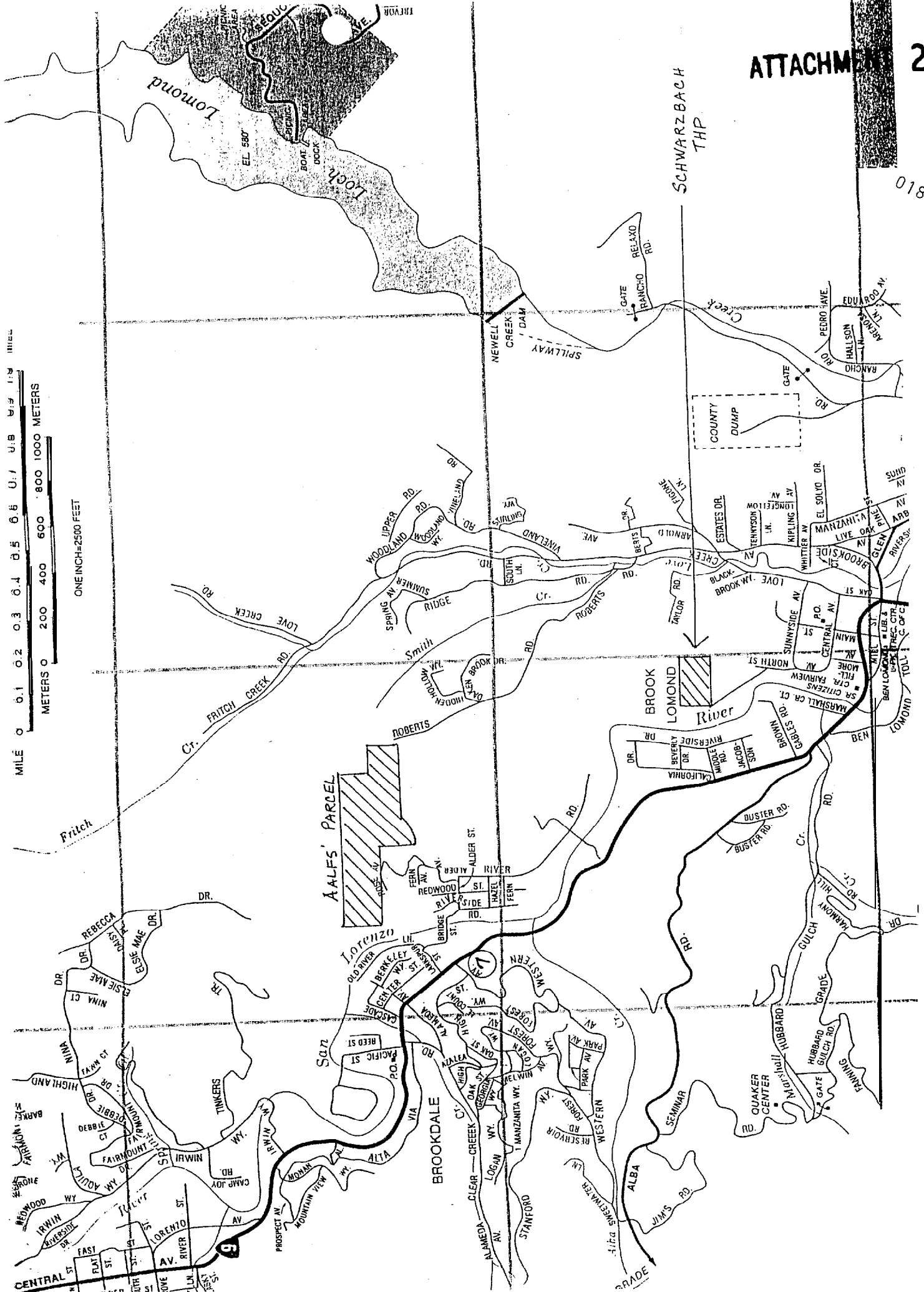


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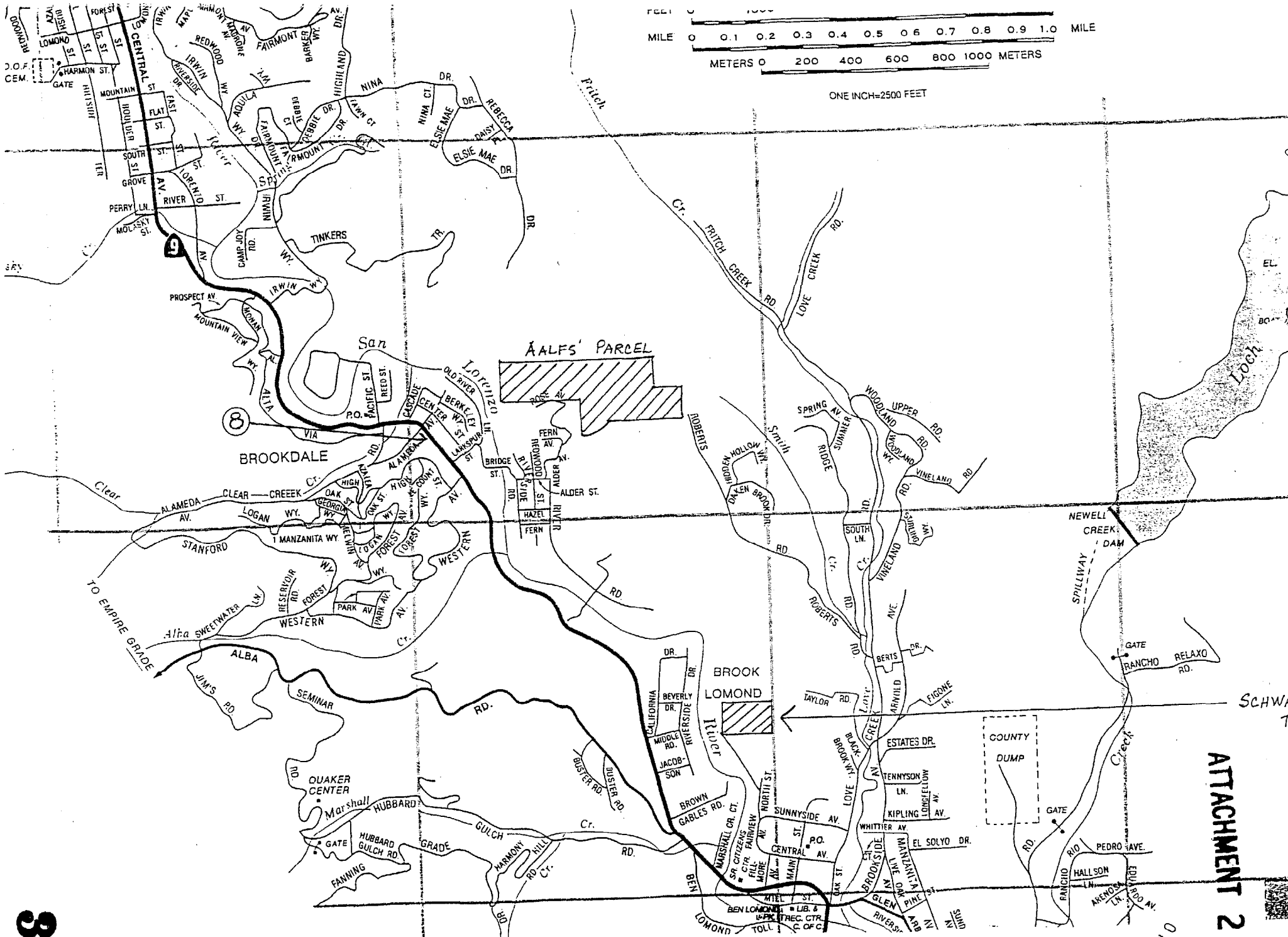
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