

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

NR Listed  
6-20-10

National Register of Historic Places  
Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form* (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

1. Name of Property

historic name Butterfield Overland Mail Route Segment

other names/site number WA1060, CW0419

2. Location

street & number Bugscuffle Road south of Strickler and Old Cove City Road north of Chester  not for publication

city or town Strickler  vicinity

state Arkansas code AR county Washington code 143 zip code 72959

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended, I hereby certify that this  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 for in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property  meets  does not meet the National Register criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant  nationally  statewide  locally. (See continuation sheet for additional comment.)

Cochie Maeth  
Signature of certifying official/Title

4/13/10  
Date

Arkansas Historic Preservation Program  
State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property  meets  does not meet the National Register criteria. ( See Continuation sheet for additional comments.)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of certifying official/Title

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that the property is:

- entered in the National Register.
  - 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:)

Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

Segment

Name of Property

County and State

5. Classification

Ownership of Property (Check as many boxes as apply)

Category of Property (Check only one box)

Number of Resources within Property (Do not include previously listed resources in count.)

- Ownership options: private, public-local, public-State, public-Federal

- Category options: building(s), district, site, structure, object

Contributing Noncontributing

Table with 2 columns: Contributing, Noncontributing and 4 rows: buildings, sites, structures, Total. Values: 2, 2

Name of related multiple property listing (Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing.)

N/A

Number of Contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

0

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions (Enter categories from instructions)

TRANSPORTATION/road related

Current Functions (Enter categories from instructions)

TRANSPORTATION/road related

7. Description

Architectural Classification (Enter categories from instructions)

No Style

Materials (Enter categories from instructions)

foundation Earth, gravel

walls N/A

roof N/A

other

Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

Segment

Name of Property

County and State

8. Statement of Significance

Eligible National Register Criteria

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

- Criteria A, B, C, D with checkboxes and descriptions.

Criteria Considerations

(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)

Property is:

- Criteria A through G with checkboxes and descriptions.

Levels of Significance (local, state, national)

Statewide

Areas of Significance (Enter categories from instructions)

Transportation

Period of Significance

1858-1861

Significant Dates

NA

Significant Person (Complete if Criterion B is marked)

NA

Cultural Affiliation (Complete if Criterion D is marked)

NA

Architect/Builder

NA

Narrative Statement of Significance

(Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography

(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

- Documentation checkboxes: preliminary determination, previously listed, landmark, survey, engineering.

Primary location of additional data:

- Location checkboxes: State Historic Preservation Office, Other State Agency, Federal Agency, Local Government, University, Other.

Name of repository:

Segment

Name of Property

County and State

10. Geographical Data

Age of Property Approximately 51.78 acres

UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

A	15	378707	3960887
	Zone	Easting	Northing
B	15	3777968	3959877

C	15	377721	3959792
	Zone	Easting	Northing
D	15	377371	3959034

See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

(Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

The property consists of a 34-foot wide strip of land connecting the following key UTM points on the Rudy, and Strickler, Arkansas, quad maps: A 15/378707/390887; D 15/3777371/3959034; and P 15/380880/3953117.

Boundary Justification

(Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)

These boundaries contain all of the remains of the Butterfield Overland Mail Route that follow Bugscuffle Road and Old Cove City Road that still retain their historic integrity, and include a ten-foot buffer on either side.

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Mark Christ/Community Outreach Director

organization Arkansas Historic Preservation Program date 4-28-10

street & number 1500 Tower Building, 323 Center Street telephone (501) 324-9880.

city or town Little Rock state AR zip code 72201

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

Continuation Sheets

Maps

A USGS map (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location

Photographs

Representative black and white photographs of the property.

Additional items

(Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items.)

Property Owner

(Complete this item at the request of SHPO or FPO.)

name \_\_\_\_\_

street & number \_\_\_\_\_ telephone \_\_\_\_\_

city or town \_\_\_\_\_ state \_\_\_\_\_ zip code \_\_\_\_\_

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listing. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 470 et seq.)

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P. O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reduction Projects (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20303.



United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 1

### SUMMARY:

The Butterfield Overland Mail Route Segment is an improved gravel road that runs for 13.35 miles following Bugscuffle Road south of Strickler in Washington County to its junction with Old Cove City Road, then follows that road until it becomes paved north of Chester in Crawford County.

### ELABORATION:

The Butterfield Overland Mail Route Segment is an improved gravel road that runs for 13.35 miles following Bugscuffle Road south of Strickler in Washington County to its junction with Old Cove City Road, then follows that road until it becomes paved north of Chester in Crawford County. The Bugscuffle Road section is 7.54 miles long, while the Old Cove City Road section is 5.81 miles long.

The road is about 12 feet wide and features several deeply incised sections. GIS data show that the road follows closely the road from Fayetteville to Van Buren shown on the 1839 Government Land Office map. It remains a rugged road, particularly in the section now designated as Bugscuffle Road, where bedrock is frequently visible.

The Butterfield Overland Mail Route Segment is clearly identifiable as a historic road segment. It has excellent integrity of location, situated as it has been since at least 1839, and setting, being located in a rural, wooded environment much as it would have been at the time the Butterfield Mail used it between 1858 and 1861. Though it has been graded and graveled, particularly along the Old Cove City Road section, since its use by the stagecoach line, its original design, workmanship and materials are very apparent. As a clearly identifiable road segment, it conveys excellent integrity of feeling and association.

The Butterfield Overland Mail Route Segment conveys a feeling of ruggedness and travel and, though improved in the years since its use by the Butterfield line, would still be identifiable today by travelers who had taken the stagecoach along it between 1858 and 1861.

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## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 1

### SUMMARY:

The Butterfield Overland Mail Route Segment is being nominated to the National Register of Historic Places under **Criterion A** with **statewide significance** as a remarkably intact remnant of the stagecoach route that ran from 1858 to 1861 and provided the first overland transcontinental mail by stagecoach.

### ELABORATION:

In March of 1857, Senator William K. Gwinn of California and Representative John S. Phelps of Missouri sponsored legislation to speed the rate at which mail could be delivered to the Pacific Coast from the Mississippi River valley, addressing a situation under which it took a letter three months to get to San Francisco from Philadelphia via steamship. The bill authorized the Postmaster General to "contract for the conveyance of the entire letter mail from such point on the Mississippi River as the contractors might select, to San Francisco . . . at a cost not exceeding three hundred thousand dollars per annum for a semimonthly, four hundred and fifty thousand for weekly, or six hundred thousand dollars for semiweekly service."<sup>1</sup>

John Butterfield of New York, already president of the newly formed American Express Company, submitted the winning proposal, with a contract signed September 16, 1857, calling for routes beginning at St. Louis, Missouri, and Memphis, Tennessee, to converge at Little Rock. The convergence point was soon moved to Fort Smith, and service was to commence on September 16, 1858.<sup>2</sup>

In the year before service commenced, Butterfield purchased 250 closed Concord coaches, 500 open-sided Celerity coaches and other vehicles, 1,800 horses and mules, and 3,000 tons of grain and hay delivered to stations along the route. In addition he arranged for provisions to be warehoused along the route, had wells dug or water supplies arranged, and hired 1,200 superintendents, drivers, guards, blacksmiths and other personnel. The bulk of the drivers hailed from New England and had been apprenticed on some of Butterfield's other stage lines.<sup>3</sup>

Passengers traveling the entire distance from St. Louis to San Francisco would pay \$200 for the trip (and were allowed 40 pounds of luggage at no extra cost), while "way passengers" traveling between stations would pay 10 cents per mile. Postal rates were a dime for each letter. The Butterfield Overland Mail Route covered about 120 miles every 24 hours, stopping at 141 stations located about 20 miles from each other along the entire route.<sup>4</sup>

The Butterfield Overland Mail Route from Memphis made its first mail run on September 16, 1858. This initial endeavor started by taking the Memphis-Little Rock Railroad to its terminus 12 miles east of Madison



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## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 2

on the St. Francis River before heading overland through the wilderness to Des Arc on the White River. Butterfield had contracted with the Chidester, Reeside & Co. line to carry the mail from there to Norristown (near modern-day Russellville). Butterfield stages then carried the mail from Dardanelle to Fort Smith, beating the mail from St. Louis – which had left St. Louis at about the same time, some 66 hours earlier – by 15 minutes.<sup>5</sup>

Unlike the St. Louis-based route, the Butterfield's Memphis run utilized numerous routes and methods of travel. When the Arkansas River was high enough, the mail would travel down the Mississippi to the mouth of the Arkansas, then travel up that river to Little Rock from which it would move on by stagecoach. When the Arkansas was too low for steamboat traffic, the Butterfield would take the White River to Clarendon or Des Arc before switching to stagecoach travel. Sometimes the entire route across eastern Arkansas would be taken by stage.<sup>6</sup>

Despite the uncertainty of the mode of travel of the Memphis route, several stops at established stations could be anticipated. The first was at Madison, then on to the Jackson House in Des Arc. From there, the stage would go to the Atlanta Hotel in Atlanta (later named Austin) before heading to Little Rock's noted Anthony House at Markham and Main streets. The stage would head west, crossing Palarm Creek near modern-day Mayflower, and go to Rocky Gap (southwest of modern Conway) to August Hartje's Inn. Crossing Cadron Creek by ferry, the stage would strike north toward Plummer's Station (NR listed 8-11-75) in Plummerville, then west to Lewisburg (south of modern Morrilton). The Butterfield would move west through Hurricane to Pott's Inn (NR listed 6-22-70) in Pottsville, then to Norristown where it crossed the Arkansas River and took the Little Rock to Cantonment Gibson Road from Dardanelle to Fort Smith (including the Short Mountain Road Segment, NR listed 1-24-08), and then west to San Francisco.<sup>7</sup>

The St. Louis-based Butterfield Overland Mail Route would travel its first 160 miles to Tipton, Missouri, by train, where the mail and passengers would transfer to stagecoaches for 17 stops in Missouri before entering Arkansas. It followed the Springfield to Fayetteville Road into Arkansas, a path that had been laid out in the summer of 1835 and that was used extensively by Cherokee Indian detachments during the removals of the late 1830s. The first stop was at Callahan's Tavern in what later became Rogers, then the stage went south through Cross Hollows and Mudtown to Fitzgerald's Station (NR listed 5-29-03) at present-day Springdale. From there, it headed to Fayetteville, where Butterfield had constructed a hotel, a station, and several large barns to serve the company.<sup>8</sup>

From Fayetteville, the Butterfield followed a path through the Boston Mountains. Passing through Cato Springs, the stagecoach went to Hog Eye – a settlement noted for its tavern – then to Park's Station, and then seven miles to Strickler's. From there to Cedarville, the ride along the section being nominated here became





## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 3

interesting and the stretch became known as “the roughest 10 miles between St. Louis and San Francisco.” One Butterfield employee wrote that “the stage reels from side to side like a storm-tossed bark, and the din of the heavily ironed wheels in constant contact with the flinty rock, is truly appalling.” Traveler William Talleck wrote in 1860 that “our principle danger was the extreme liability of an overset; but, though often apparently within a hair’s breadth, we escaped the unpleasantness.” A white-knuckled reporter from New York noted that “I might say the road was steep, rugged, jagged, rough and mountainous and then wish for more impressive words,” while the Postmaster General’s Report for 1858 simply stated that “it is impossible that any road could be worse.”<sup>9</sup>

The relieved travelers would next reach Brodie’s Station south of Lee Creek (Butterfield Overland Mail Route—Lee Creek Segment and Butterfield Overland Mail Route – Lucian Wood Road Segment, NR listed 9-29-09), then follow the road to reach Woosley’s Station south of Cedarville, and then on to Van Buren where the stage would cross the Arkansas River by ferry to Fort Smith. From there it headed west, following a route roughly through Spiro and Durant, Oklahoma, through Sherman, San Angelo and El Paso, Texas, then through Deming and Lordsburg, New Mexico, Tombstone, Arizona, and finally through Los Angeles and San Francisco, California. The first west-bound mail, which included John Butterfield as a passenger, left St. Louis on September 16, 1858, and arrived at San Francisco on October 10, a total of 24 days.<sup>10</sup>

The Butterfield Overland Mail continued in business for around three years, but after the onset of the Civil War its stock and stages were targeted for seizure by Confederate authorities and proved tempting targets for opportunistic guerrillas in Missouri, Arkansas and Texas, as well as for Native Americans to the west. In addition, the Pony Express, which opened for business on April 2, 1860, had proved to be a faster and more economical means of delivering mail, and the Western Union opened its transcontinental telegraph on October 24, 1861. John Butterfield was ousted from the company because of debt in 1860 and the firm merged with the Wells Fargo, continuing to carry the mail with that company until 1869.<sup>11</sup>

The Butterfield Overland Mail Route Segment is a tangible reminder of the stagecoach line that provided the first transcontinental mail service in the United States. The road provides a unique opportunity to share the experiences of the nineteenth-century travelers who braved the rough roads from Missouri to California.

The Butterfield Overland Mail Route Segment is being nominated to the National Register of Historic Places under **Criterion A** with **statewide significance** as a remarkably intact remnant of the stagecoach route that ran from 1858 to 1861 and provided the first overland transcontinental mail by stagecoach.

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National Park Service

## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 9 Page 1

### Bibliography

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Sanders, Kirby. *Driver's Guide to The Butterfield Overland Mail Route* (Springdale, AR: Heritage Trail Partners, 2008)

<sup>1</sup> Kirby Sanders, *Driver's Guide to The Butterfield Overland Mail Route* (Springdale, AR: Heritage Trail Partners, 2008) ii.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, ii-iii; W.J. Lemke, "The Butterfield Overland Mail Through Northwest Arkansas" in W.J. Lemke and Ted R. Worley, *The Butterfield Overland Mail in Arkansas* (Little Rock: Arkansas History Commission, 1957) 3.

<sup>3</sup> Sanders, *Driver's Guide*, iii; Lemke, "The Butterfield Overland Mail," 3.

<sup>4</sup> Lemke, "The Butterfield Overland Mail," 3. Several other stations were added after 1858.

<sup>5</sup> Ted R. Worley, "The Butterfield Overland Mail – Memphis to Fort Smith Branch," in Lemke and Worley, *The Butterfield Overland Mail in Arkansas*, 11-12.

<sup>6</sup> Worley, "The Butterfield Overland Mail," 12-13.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*, 14-16.

<sup>8</sup> Dan Littlefield, Jr., Amanda L. Paige and Fuller Bumpers, "The Pea Ridge National Military Park Site: Interpretive Contexts," found at [http://anpa.ualr.edu/trail\\_of\\_tears/indian\\_removal\\_project/site\\_reports/pea\\_ridge/pea\\_ridge\\_1.htm](http://anpa.ualr.edu/trail_of_tears/indian_removal_project/site_reports/pea_ridge/pea_ridge_1.htm), downloaded February 3, 2009; Lemke, "The Butterfield Overland Mail," 4-6.

<sup>9</sup> Lemke, "The Butterfield Overland Mail," 5-7; Earl J. Hess, Richard W. Hatcher III, William Garrett Piston and William L. Shea, *Wilson's Creek, Pea Ridge & Prairie Grove: A Battlefield Guide with a Section on Wire Road* (Lincoln, NE: University of Nebraska Press, 2006), 252.

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid.*, 8-9; Sanders, *Driver's Guide*, iv.

<sup>11</sup> Sanders, *Driver's Guide*, iv; Nancy Hendricks, "Butterfield Overland Express," found at <http://www.encyclopediaofarkansas.net/encyclopedia/entry-detail.aspx?entryID=2308>, downloaded February 2, 2009.

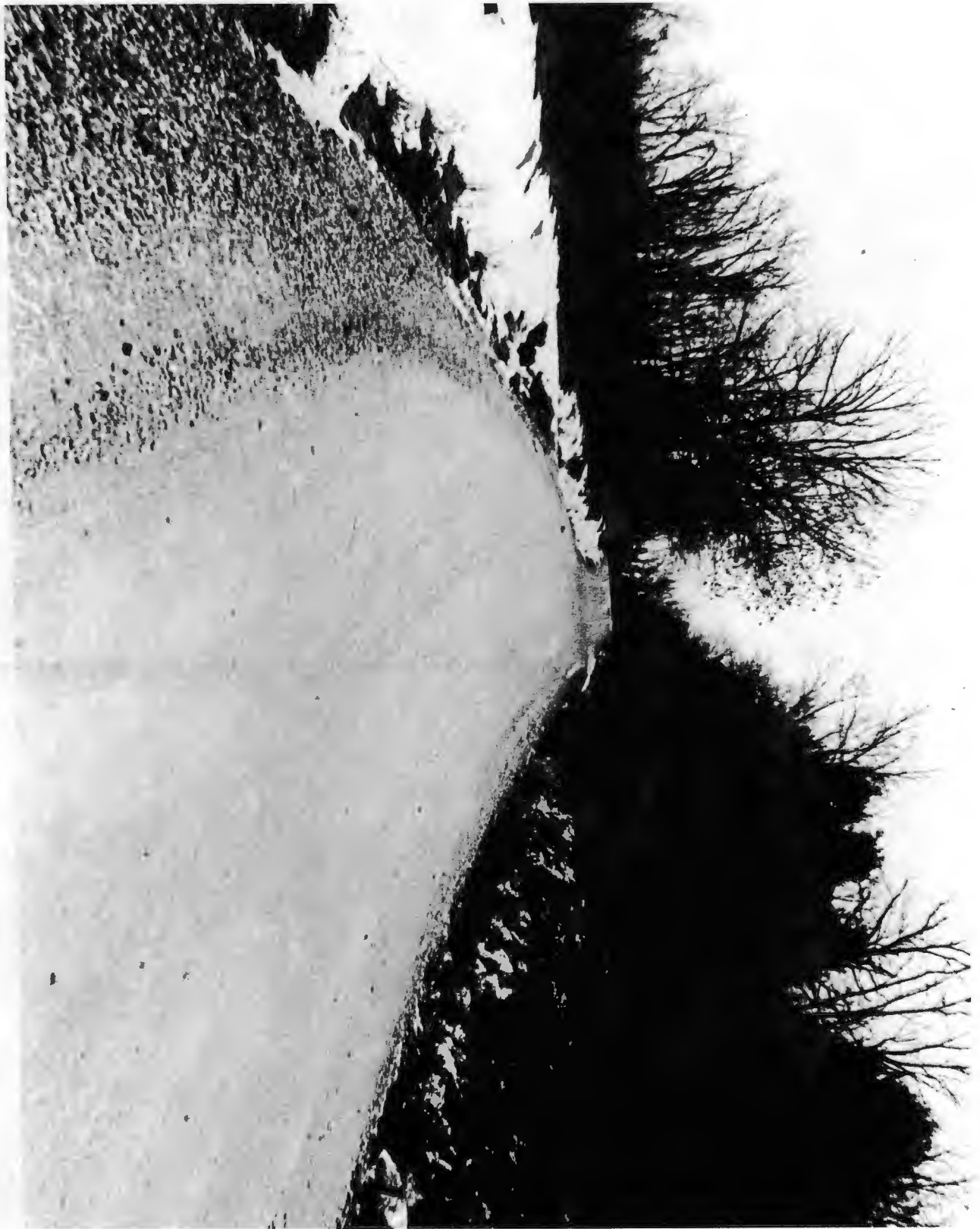










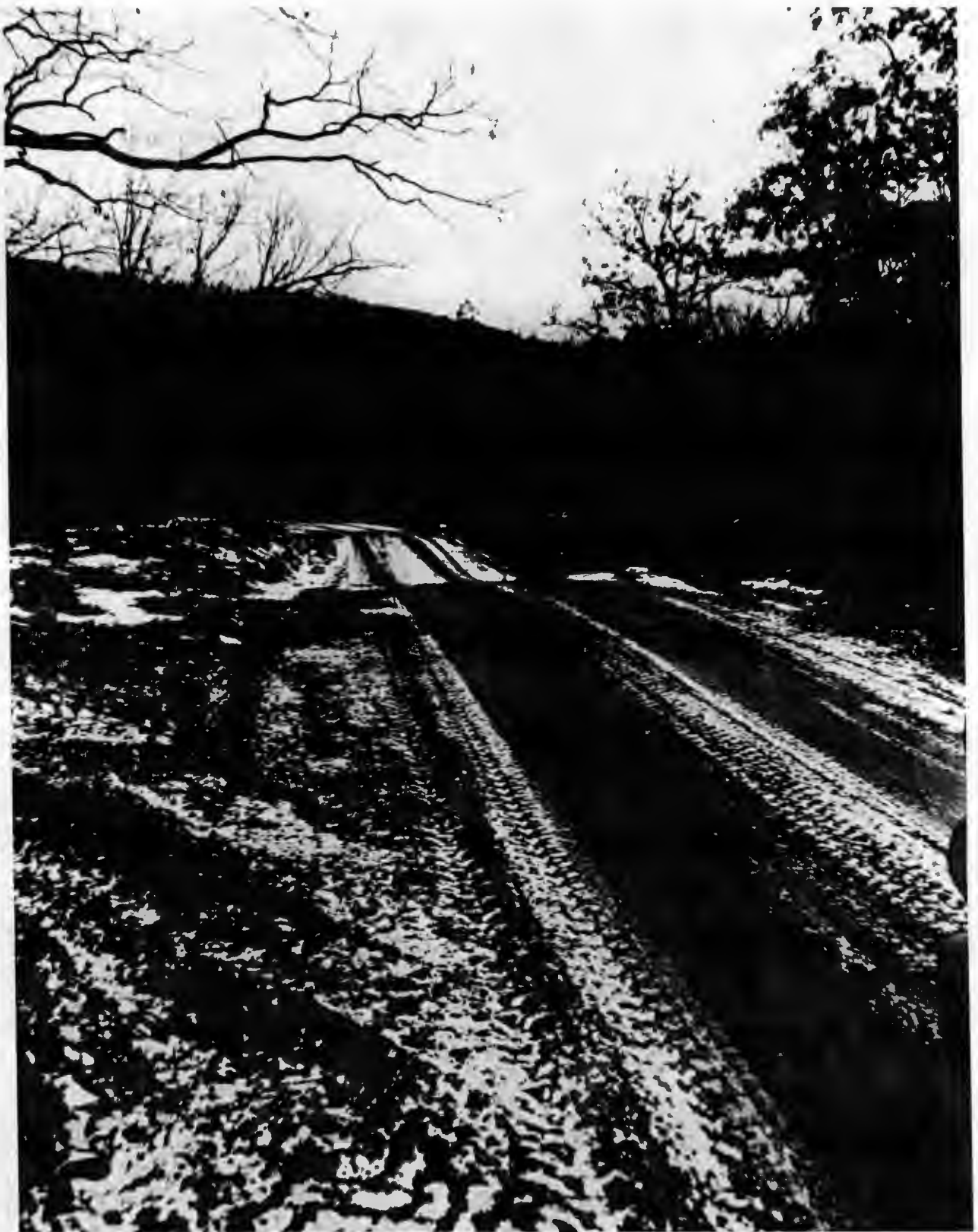






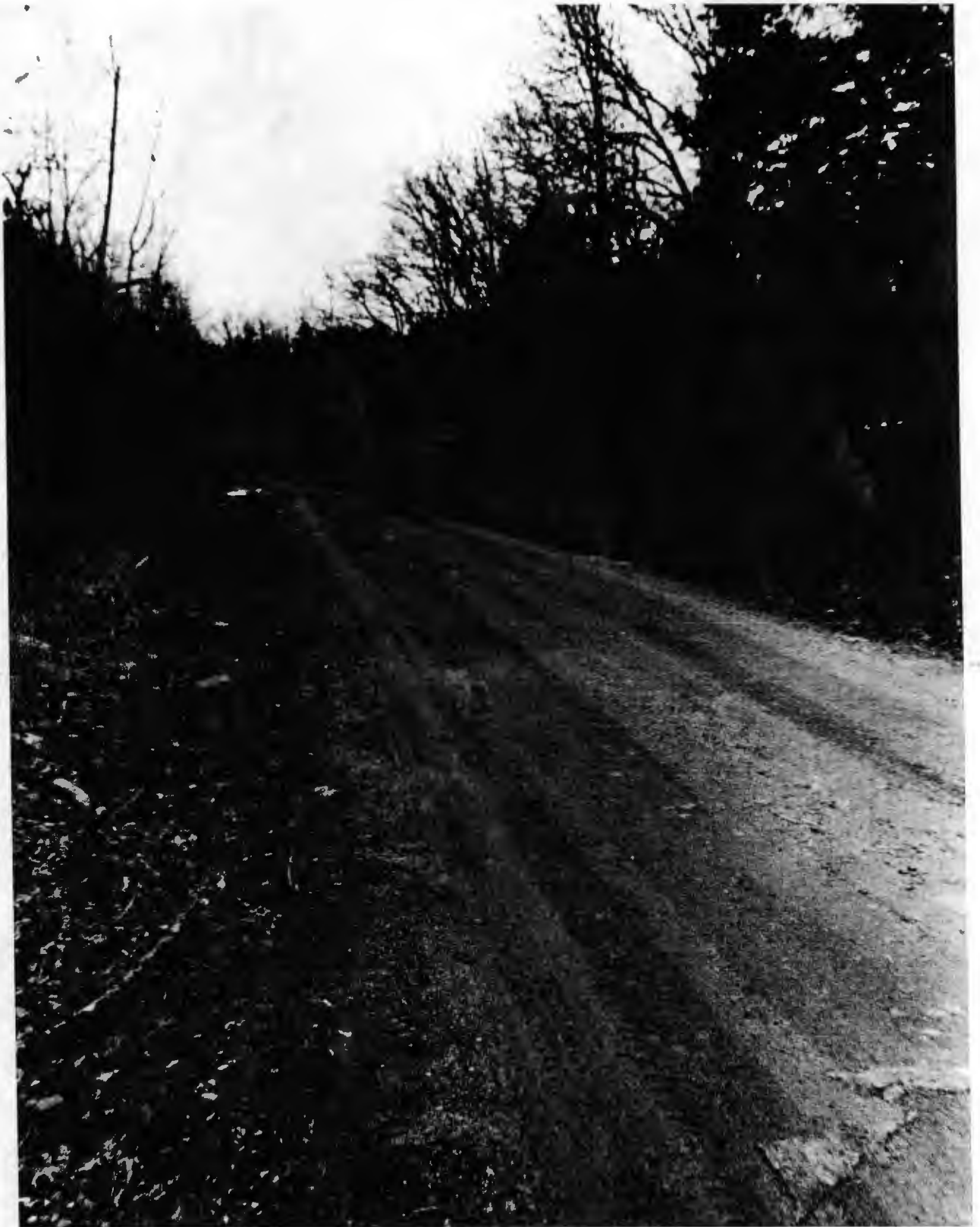












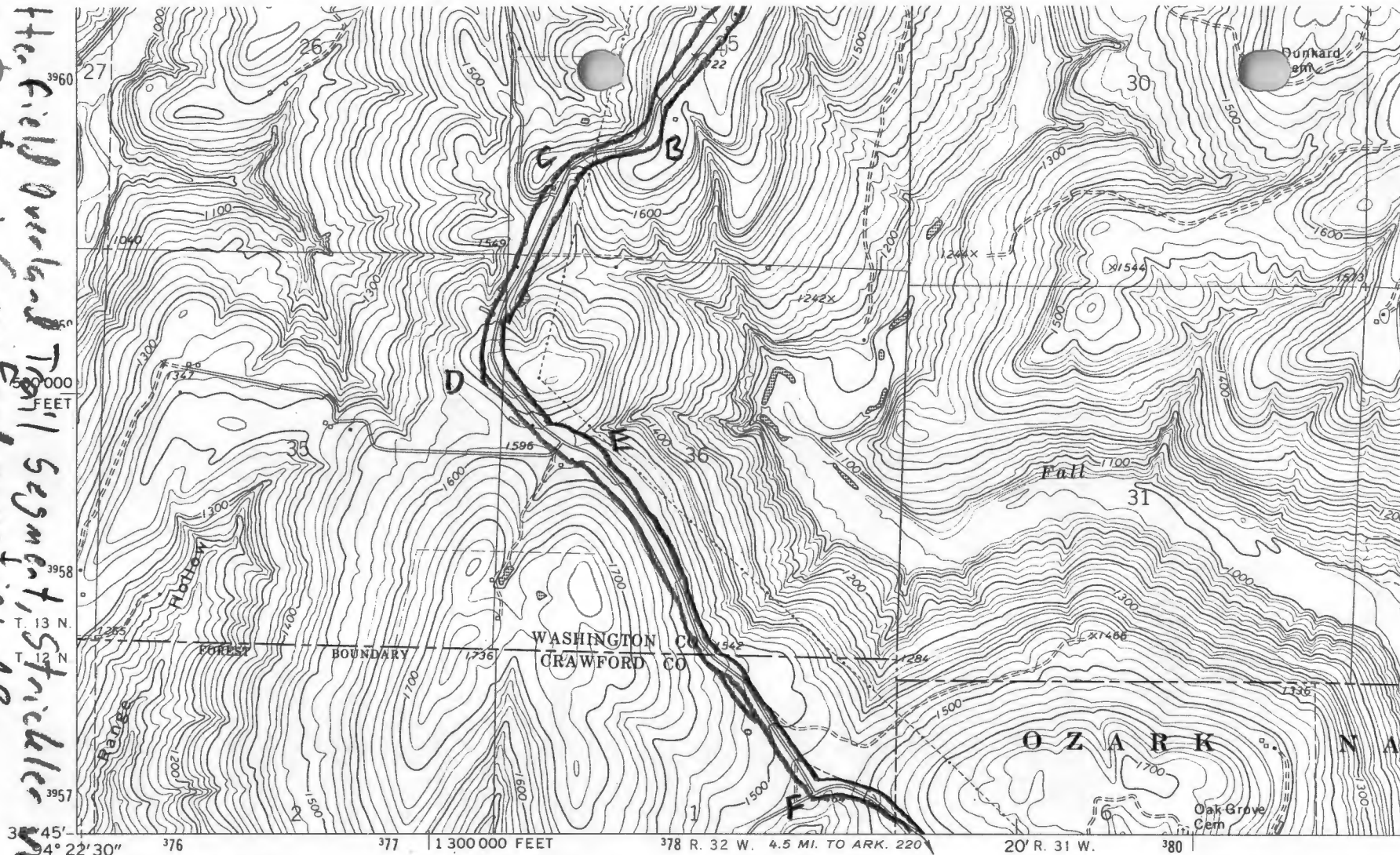




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 15/377221/3959792 D:15/377371/3959034  
 15/377763/3958616 F:15/378623/3957228

The Field Overland Trail Segment, Strickler  
 Washington + Crawford Counties, AR

(NATURAL DRAINAGE)  
 7155 III NW



Mapped, edited, and published by the Geological Survey

Control by USGS and USC&GS

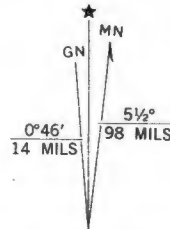
Topography by photogrammetric methods from aerial photographs taken 1968. Field checked 1970

Polyconic projection. 1927 North American datum  
 10,000-foot grid based on Arkansas coordinate system, north zone  
 1000-meter Universal Transverse Mercator grid ticks,  
 zone 15, shown in blue

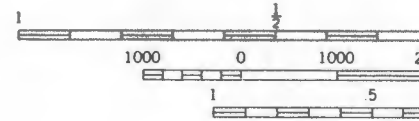
To place on the predicted North American Datum 1983  
 move the projection lines 6 meters south and  
 18 meters east as shown by dashed corner ticks

There may be private inholdings within the boundaries of  
 the National or State reservations shown on this map

Revisions shown in purple and woodland compiled in cooperation with  
 U. S. Forest Service from aerial photographs taken 1980 and other sources  
 Partially field checked by U. S. Forest Service. Map edited 1983



UTM GRID AND 1983 MAGNETIC NORTH  
 DECLINATION AT CENTER OF SHEET



CONT  
 NATIONAL G

THIS MAP COMPLIES  
 FOR SALE BY U. S. GEOLOGICAL SURV  
 AND ARKANSAS GEOLOGICA  
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UNITED STATES  
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
GEOLOGICAL SURVEY

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