

CITY OF RICHMOND  
**Pt. Molate Community Advisory Committee**

Monday, March 18, 2013 6:30 PM  
Multi-Purpose Room, 440 Civic Center Plaza

**AGENDA**

**Members:**

**Bruce Beyaert**  
Vice-Chair

**Joan Garrett**  
Chair

**Dorothy Gilbert**

**Jim Hite**

**Jeanne Kortz**

**Eduardo Martinez**

**Joseph Puleo**

**Charles T. Smith**

**Nina G. Smith**

**Pam Stello**

**Mary H. Sundance**

**Eileen Whitty**

1. **Call to Order** (1 min.)
2. **Roll Call** (1 min.)
3. **Welcome and Meeting Procedures** (1 min.)

*Individuals who would like to address the committee on matters not listed on the agenda may do so under Open Forum. Please file a speaker's card with the note taker prior to the commencement of Open Forum. Individuals who want to comment on an individual item, please file a speaker's card before the item is called. The standard amount of time for each speaker will be three minutes.*

*At 8:30 PM, any items remaining on the agenda that require immediate attention may be taken out of turn, as necessary. All other items will be continued to another or the following committee meeting in order to make fair and attentive decisions. This meeting adjourns at 9:00 PM. The meeting may be extended by a majority vote of the committee.*

4. **Agenda Review and Adoption** (2 min.)  
*The order in which items will be heard may be adjusted at this time. In addition, items may be removed from or placed on the Consent Calendar at this time.*
5. **Announcements through the Chair** (2 min.)
  - a. Reapplication process for new session of PMCAC starting in June 2013
6. **Open Forum** (3 minutes per person limit)
7. **Presentations, Discussion & Action Items** (35 min.)
  - a. Open Discussion – Cleanup goals and future land uses for Pt. Molate with Bill Lindsay, City Mgr. (10 min.) Discussion (10 min.) Q&A.
  - b. Proposed Bay Trail segments: Pt. Molate, Routing, easements, scope. Bruce Beyaert (10 min.) Discussion (5 min.) Q&A
8. **Staff Reports** (13 min.)  
*Following discussion of each item, the Committee may vote to make recommendations to staff or to the City Council.*
  - a. Phase I Implementation Plan for Pt. Molate Beach, J. Garrett - (10 min.).
  - b. Review of fund balances for Pt. Molate General Fund budget and Navy Escrow Account – (2 min.)
  - c. Committee Log for PMCAC inquiries to staff, contractors – (1 min.).

**CITY OF RICHMOND**  
**Pt. Molate Community Advisory Committee**

Monday, March 18, 2013 6:30 PM  
Multi-Purpose Room, 440 Civic Center Plaza

**AGENDA**

**Members:**

**Bruce Beyaert**  
Vice-Chair

**Joan Garrett**  
Chair

**Dorothy Gilbert**

**Jim Hite**

**Jeanne Kortz**

**Eduardo Martinez**

**Joseph Puleo**

**Charles T. Smith**

**Nina G. Smith**

**Pam Stello**

**Mary H. Sundance**

**Eileen Whitty**

**9. Consent Calendar (2 min.)**

*Items on the consent calendar are considered matters requiring little or no discussion and will be acted upon in one motion*

- a. APPROVE – PMCAC meeting minutes of February 11, 2013

**10. Future Agenda Items (5 min.)**

**11. City Council Liaison Reports (7 min.)**

- a. Report by Councilmember/Mayor McLaughlin regarding recent issues in Richmond relevant to the Advisory Committee. (5 min.)  
b. PMCAC appointment status – TBD (2 min.)

**12. Chair and Sub-Committee Reports (20 min.)**

*Following discussion of each item, the Committee may vote to make recommendations to staff or to the City Council.*

- a. Clean-Up and Restoration (8 min.)
  - Synopsis of Terraphase Monthly Status report of February 2013
  - Synopsis of QMRs for 1) USTs 2) IR Site 1 3) PGWTP
- b. Community Outreach (5 min.)
  - Arts Night Status
- c. Grant Development (3 min.)
  - Grant App. Status
- d. Legal (2 min.)
  - Court Document Request
- e. Chair (2 min.)
  - Identification of pending schedule conflicts

**13. Adjournment of PMCAC regular meeting**

**14. Assemblage of PMCAC Standing Sub-Committees**

**Scheduled Meetings**

Committee Meeting - Monday, April 15, 2013, 6:30pm

This meeting is held in a building that is accessible to people with disabilities. Persons with disabilities, who require auxiliary aids of services using city facilities, services or programs or would like information of the city's compliance with the American Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990, contact: Rochelle Monk, City of Richmond (510) 620-6511 (voice).

Pt. Molate Community Advisory Committee Staff Liaison Contact: Craig K. Murray (510) 307-8140, [craig\\_murray@ci.richmond.ca.us](mailto:craig_murray@ci.richmond.ca.us). Agenda and minute information on the PMCAC can be found on the City Clerk's web location: <http://ca-richmond2.civicplus.com/index.aspx?NID=2442>

Additional correspondence can be directed to [PtMolateCAC@gmail.com](mailto:PtMolateCAC@gmail.com)

PMCAC Repository Information is available at: <https://docs.google.com/open?id=0B9WXrZeb-72MzVkZWQ1ZDQ0tNWJwNC00ZjE4LTgxYjctOTQyMDk4Y2FjNDYw>

## GRASSLANDS OF POINT MOLATE SHORE

When the first Spanish explorers ventured through the Golden Gate into San Francisco Bay they mapped out two large bays, one to the south, San Francisco Bay, and one to the north, San Pablo Bay. The gap between the two bays was cut off by a low grassy island mountain barely connected to the East Bay via a large inner maritime marshland that separated the island from the mainland. The mariners named it "Potrero San Pablo" and the name stuck because it was an open grassland/meadow (i.e., *Potrero*). On the Marin side of the Bay the mountain topography is higher, dominated by an oak/bay forest and glens of open valley oak, black oak, Oregon oak

marsh was filled for the refinery. One of the earliest and most imposing structures along the Point Molate shore is the large brick building that once housed the Winehaven wine bottling and shipping business at Pt. Molate from the early 1900's until Prohibition. Later this area became a Navy base for storing fuels and oil. This was abandoned in the late 1970's.

I was drawn to explore the Potrero San Pablo grasslands in the early 1970's while searching for local populations of native grasses for restoring the soon to be built Berkeley waterfront Park. To my amazement, I found a native red fescue growing



Mule's ears (*Wyethia* sp.) in bloom in the Pt. Molate grassland with Mount Tamalpais in the distance. Photo by David Amme.

woodland with manzanitas and chamise. The eastern end of this range is known as China Point. Between China Point and Potrero San Pablo is the narrows where the waters of the Sacramento and San Joaquin rivers pass into San Francisco Bay. Today, Potrero San Pablo, including the west side shore facing Mt. Tamalpais, is one of the last undeveloped tracts of shoreline habitat in the East Bay where the hills come right down to the water's edge.

For over 5,000 years before the Spanish arrived, the Ohlone/Huchian Band of Native Americans lived in surrounding area, hunting, fishing, and using controlled burns to manage the landscape. They harvested abundant shellfish along the shores and marshes creating large middens. Potrero San Pablo was occupied during the Mexican land grant period followed by the 49'ers and Chinese shrimpers until the early 1900's. The grassland was grazed primarily by horses and cattle. Later in the 20<sup>th</sup> century Standard Oil bought a large portion of the Potrero and built an oil refinery that fortunately is largely hidden on the eastern side of the Potrero ridge where most of the

in the grasslands. In 1970 no one took much notice of native grasses and most assumed that any red fescue in the Bay Area was introduced. But this red fescue was a very special ecotype with thick bluish leaves. I was amazed that it grew vigorously along the shoreline from the water's edge to the top of the Potrero. I dubbed it "Molate fescue" after Point Molate on the western side of the Potrero San Pablo facing Mt. Tamalpais. I've found myself returning to the Potrero San Pablo/Point Molate hills and shore often and explored the rich variety of native grasses. It is one of the best places to see a remnant coastal prairie to the edge of the Bay.

Geologically Potrero San Pablo is a low ridge, part of the narrow gap between San Pablo and San Francisco Bays. From the Pt. Molate

shore you can often watch the summer fogbank rolling past San Quentin, under the Richmond Bridge drawn towards San Rafael and San Pablo Bay. Generally the western shoreline of the Potrero mostly stays sunny with the 2500 ft. Mt. Tamalpais in the distance. The East Bay features include Cerrito Hill in Richmond and Albany Hill in Berkeley. Beyond that is the parallel range of the Berkeley Hills that dives into the center of San Pablo Bay at Point Pinole. The last remaining open grasslands on the Berkeley Hills remain on San Pablo Ridge in Wildcat Canyon where cattle still roam and California oatgrass and purple needlegrass grow.

Potrero San Pablo is uniquely situated. It seems to sit in the rain shadow of Mt. Tamalpais, but actually receives abundant rainfall during major storms and squalls, more precipitation than the rest of the East Bay shoreline. Molate fescue grows on rocky and loamy coastal soils in and around the northern San Francisco Bay. The Molate fescue ecotype is found on either side of the Bay from Point Molate to China Point in Marin County. It grows on San Bruno Mountain and along

the coast of Pacifica where it grows with tufted hairgrass (*Deschampsia caespitosa*) along Highway 1. There are several forms of the Molate fescue growing along the Big Sur coast and on discontinuous locations north of Pt. Arena to Arcata and Patrick's Point in Humboldt County.

Junegrass (*Koeleria macrantha*), California fescue (*Festuca californica*), and the creeping Diego bentgrass (*Agrostis pallens*). Native woody plant communities include California sagebrush (*Artemisia californica*) and the ubiquitous coyote brush (*Baccharis pilularis*). There are beautiful stands of Mule's ears (*Wyethia angustifolia*) and pipevine (*Aristolochia californica*) and a host of large and small understory native woody and emergent plants.

The primary native trees are coast live oak, bay, toyon, and willow. The undisturbed native grassland is very stable. The coyote brush remains in check, unlike that in most of the disturbed East Bay grasslands, which has turned into solid thickets over ten feet tall. This is due primarily to the grassland soil stability and the creeping native *Agrostis pallens* that climbs into the coyote brush keeping the plants small and far apart, often snuffing them out into weak, dying and dead branches. The most critical threat to the Pt. Molate grasslands is the large, solid French broom (*Genista monspessulana*) infestations that were spread by road grading in the late 1980's

The plant communities of the Potrero Hills support gray fox, coyotes, mule deer, black-tailed jackrabbits, and an endless variety of native birds, including jays, seagulls, buzzards, and several soaring raptors. The subtidal zone supports one of the largest beds of the rare eelgrass that provides critical habitat for herring to feed and spawn, and a host of other aquatic species including salmon, Dungeness crab, striped bass, steelhead trout and starry flounder. In turn the fish and invertebrates are an important food source for ducks, shorebirds, and the endangered least tern.

In 2010 the western side of the Pt. Molate shore near the Winehaven building was almost made into a huge casino complex with all the trimmings. Fortunately this was defeated by the City of Richmond voters with a resounding "No". The Point Molate coast and the Potrero San Pablo hills are still not safe. Proposals for condominiums on the shore are still in the works. But there is good reason to hope that the California Native Plant Society, the California Native Grassland Association, the Sierra Club, and other activist organizations will persuade the voters of the City of Richmond to save this precious resource for future generations.

David Amme



San Francisco Quadrangle - AREAL GEOLOGY, U.S. Geological Survey, A.H. Thompson (geographer), Andrew C. Larson (geology), Edition of 1913

Any time of day or year the views are beautiful and the sunsets spectacular. Pt. Molate probably has the best view of Mt. Tamalpais with all it changes and textures in the sunsets and late afternoon fogs. The special combination of climate and topography has created a vibrant plant community. In addition to the Molate red fescue (*Festuca rubra*), the coastal prairie contains beautiful stands of California oatgrass (*Danthonia californica*), purple needlegrass (*Stipa pulchra*), one-sided bluegrass (*Poa secunda*), California melic (*Melica californica*), Torrey's melic (*Melica torreyana*), California brome (*Bromus carinatus*), blue wildrye (*Elymus glaucus*), squirreltail (*E. elymoides*), including a large hybrid form (*E. x hanseni*),

## NATIVE PLANTS ARE REAL SURVIVORS AT POINT MOLATE

Native plants have survived and flourished in undisturbed areas of Point Molate Naval Fuel Depot (NFD) despite ---

- building and operating a naval fuel depot for 55 years,
- planting eucalyptus forests, and
- introducing invasive alien plants such as french broom and pampas grass.

At the urging of the Restoration Advisory Board, the City of Richmond and the Sierra Club, the Navy commissioned a thorough survey of plants located onshore at Point Molate NFD. The October 1997 report "Special-Status Plant Survey and Habitat Assessment" for Point Molate NFD by Michael Wood and Tetra Tech, Inc. concludes that "... numerous plant taxa of botanical significance do occur on site". This survey located 314 species of plants! Three of these species are found nowhere else in the East Bay. An additional seven species have been recorded in five or fewer locations in the East Bay. These special plants represent an important part of the East Bay's botanic heritage.

The Point Molate plant survey report also emphasizes the importance of two rare plant communities:

1. coastal terrace prairie found on the hillsides containing native perennial grasslands, and
2. northern coastal bluff scrub habitat found on bluffs near the Bay.

The report states that both of these habitats "are exceedingly rare in the East Bay and represent diminishing habitats throughout their range". In particular:

The "... native perennial grasses .. exhibit very high levels of density and diversity. Native grasslands of comparable quality are extremely uncommon in the East Bay, as well as in more coastal areas in Marin County. The diversity of wildflowers in the grasslands is also unusual in the region."

In addition, the Refuge Manager of the San Pablo Bay National Wildlife Refuge surveyed the Point Molate intertidal zone and reported: "I was very surprised to find eelgrass in the southern portion of this area - growing in at least a 50-60 acre area. Widgeon and coots were busily feeding upon it. As far as I know this is the only area within the Bay where this important plant still occurs. In addition to the widgeon, there were about 4000 scaup and canvasbacks using these waters. The exposed tidelands receive high use by shorebirds."

Protection, restoration and enhancement of these important plants and plant communities should be factored into the Reuse Plan for Point Molate NFD and the site cleanup program. The two rare plant communities provide important habitat for wildlife and offer unequalled educational opportunities.

BB, June 27, 1998

7B4

Photos from this report are available at the PMCAC Repository. This site is also listed on back of Mtg.  
Agenda: <https://docs.google.com/open?id=0B9WXrZeb-72MzVkZWQ1ZDQtNWlwNC00ZjE4LTgxYjctOTQyMDk4Y2FjNDYw>





1446

737





7B9

1455





1464  
7B11

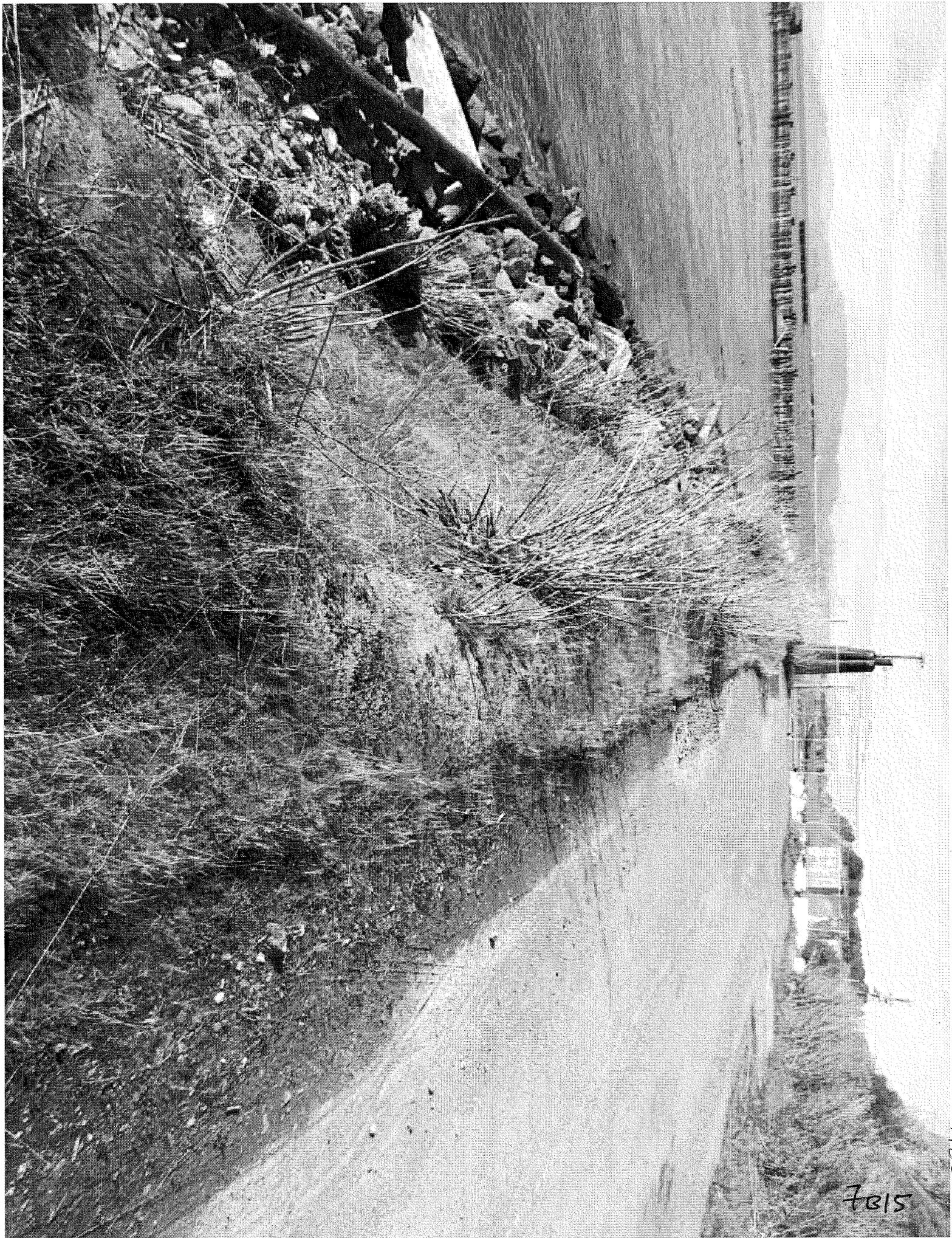




7013

1466

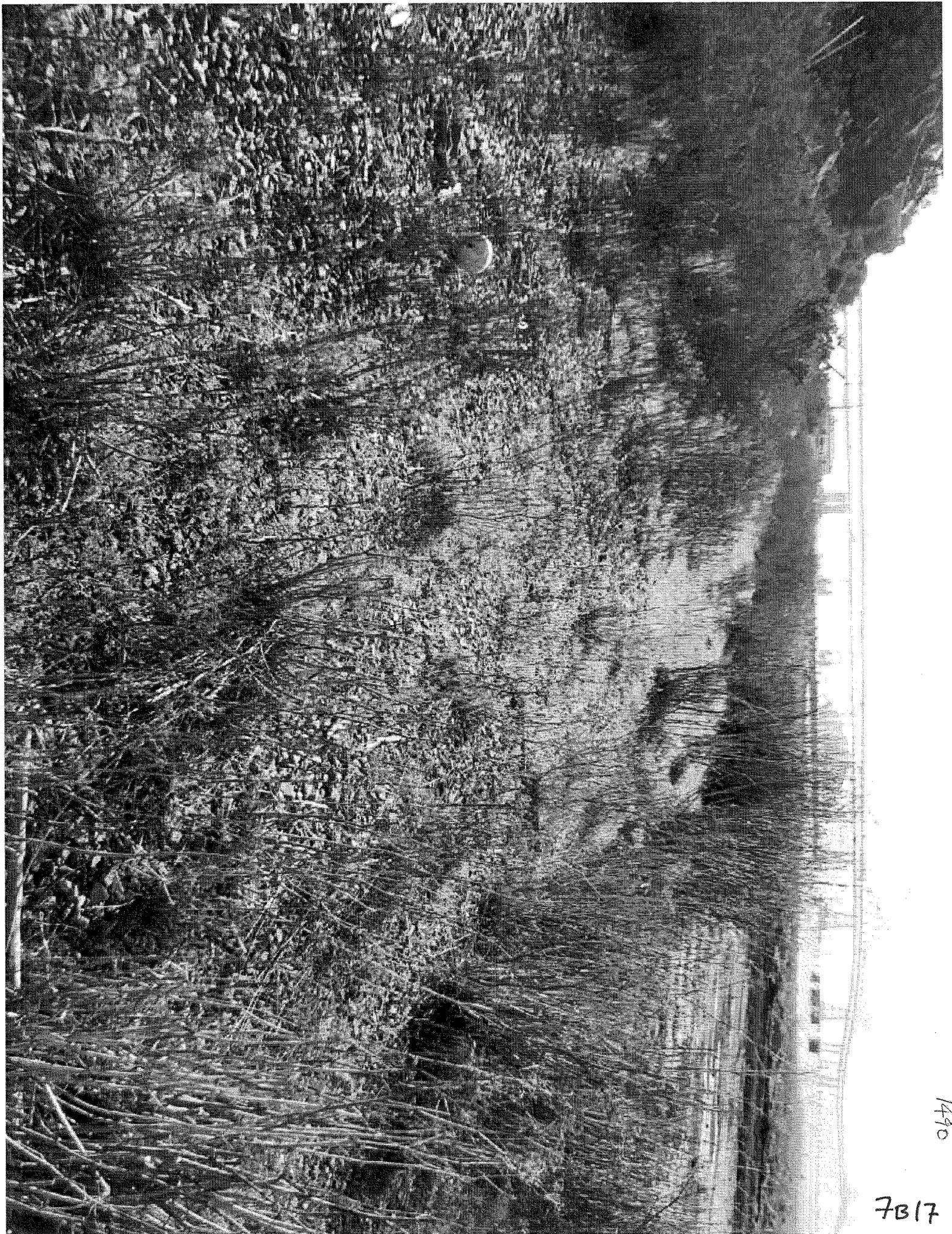




7B15

1480

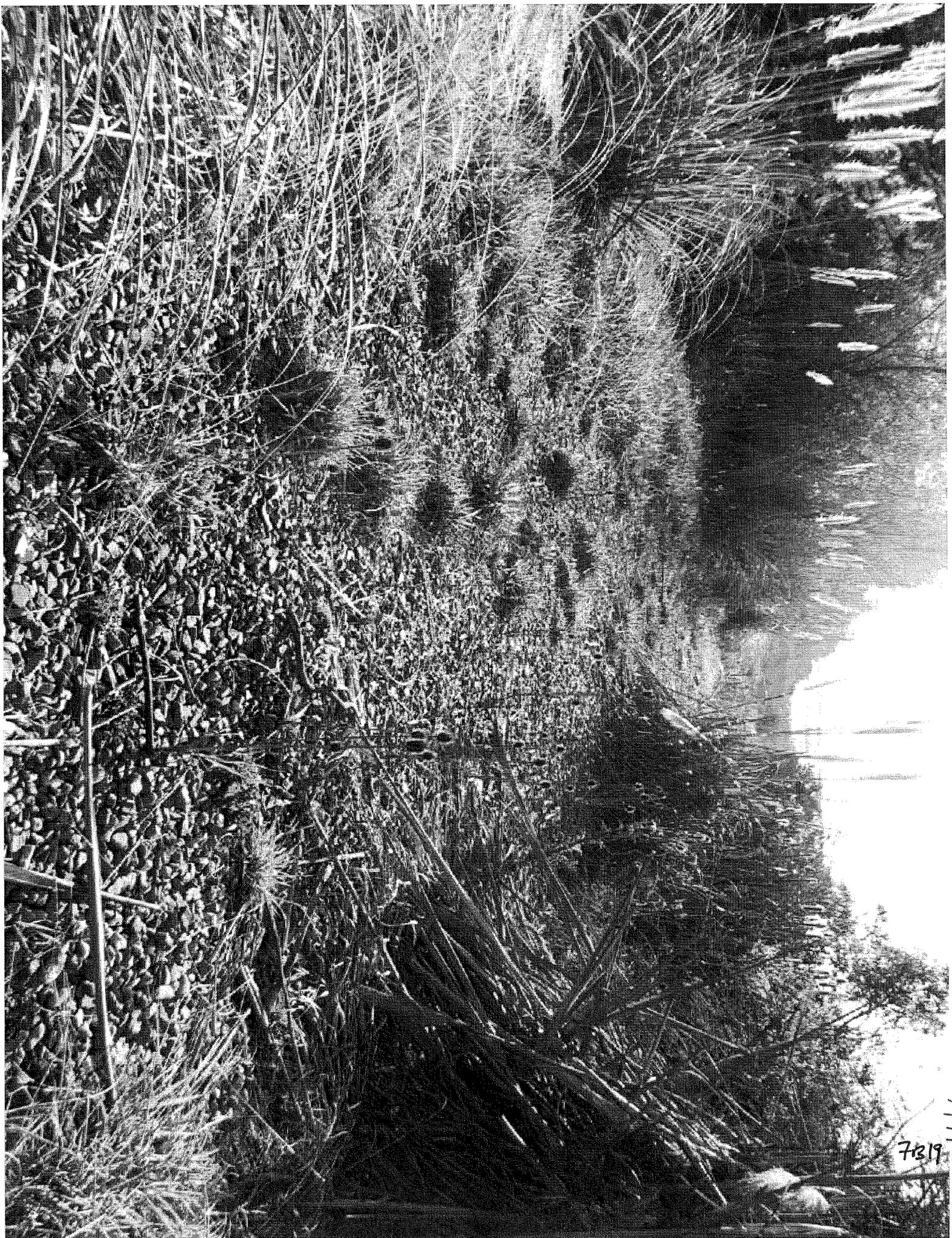




1490

7B17





1494  
71319





7B21

1502





7B23

1506

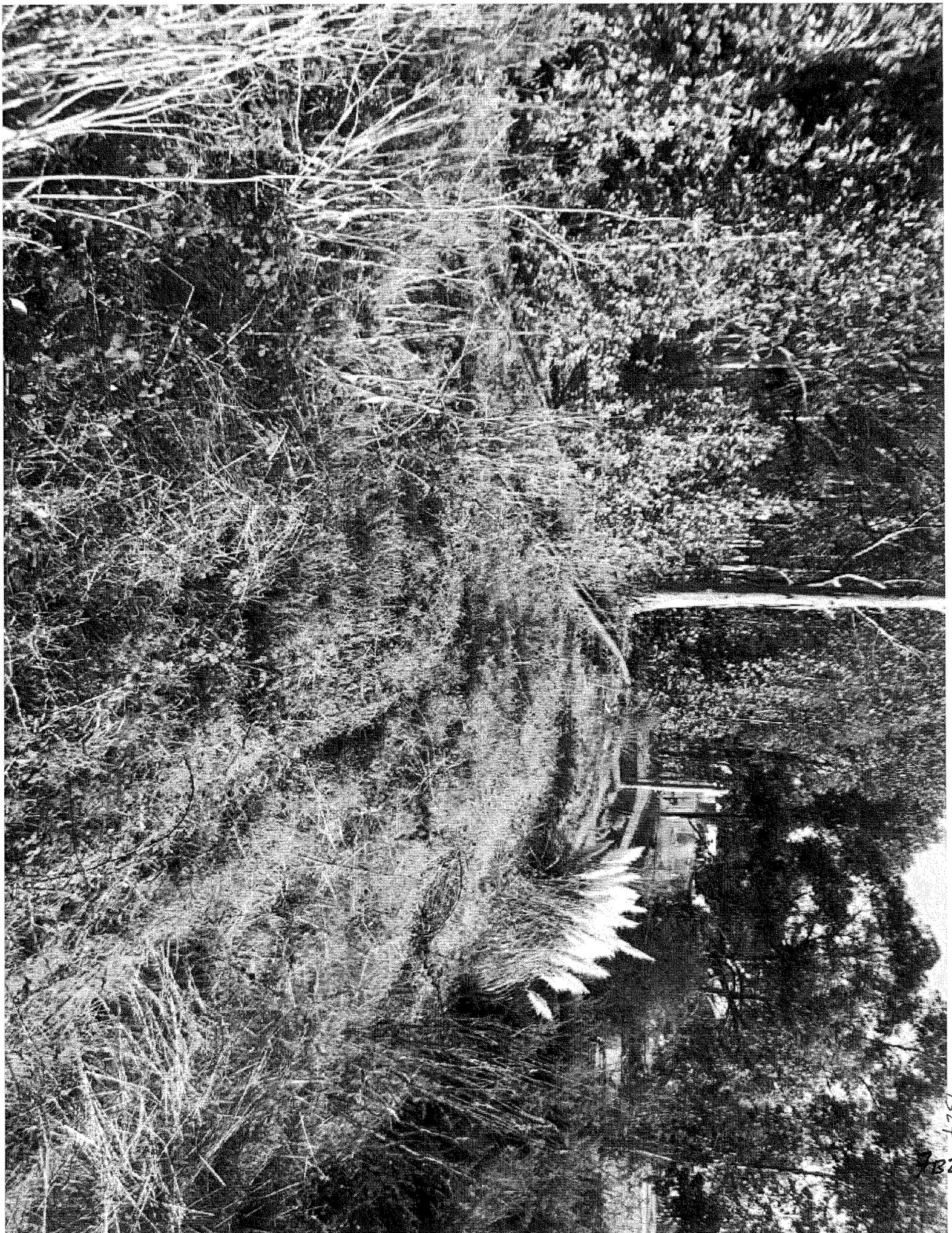




1509

7B25





1527

7B27





1531

7B29

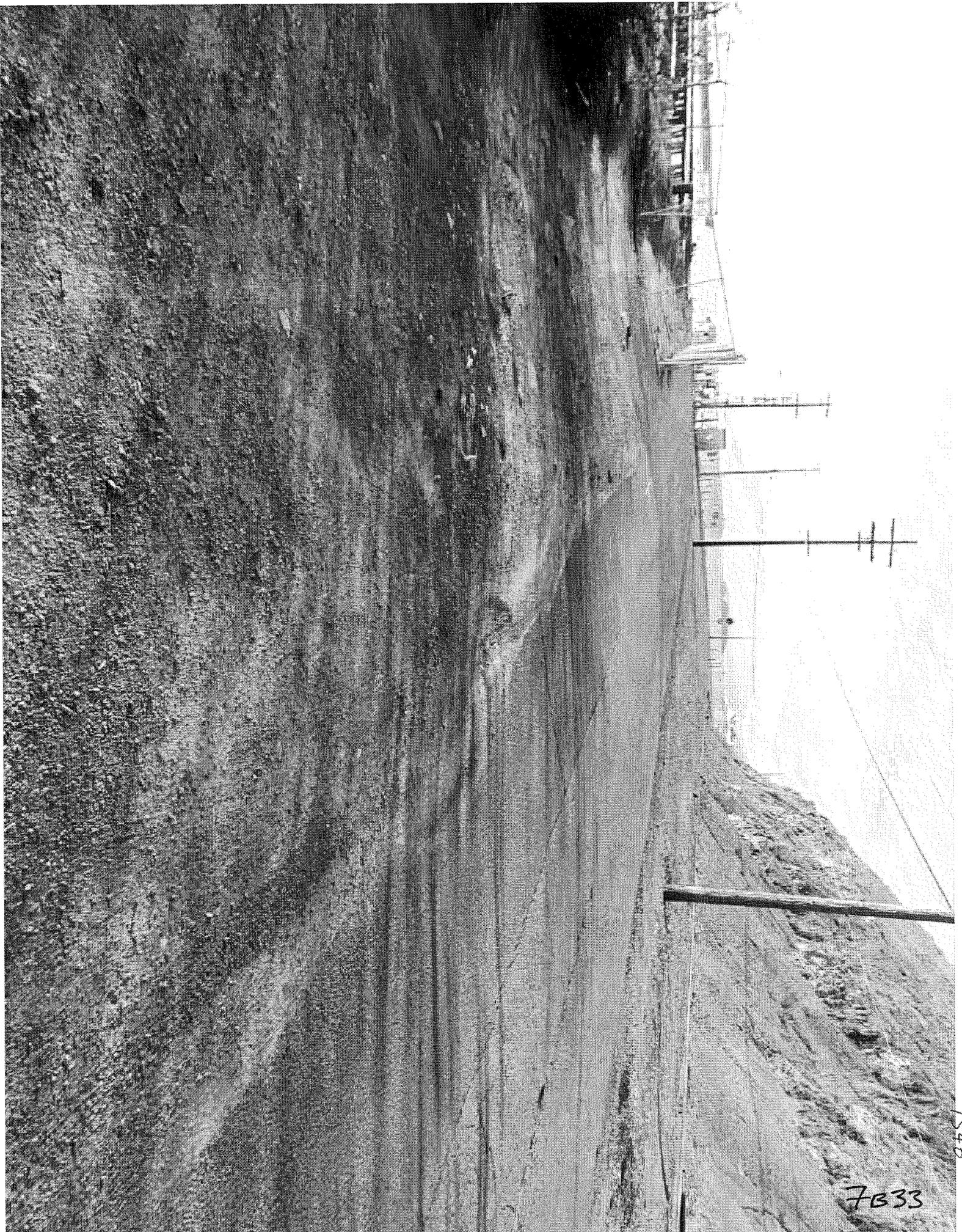
7B30



1539

7B31





7B33

1540





7B35

1546





7B37

1547

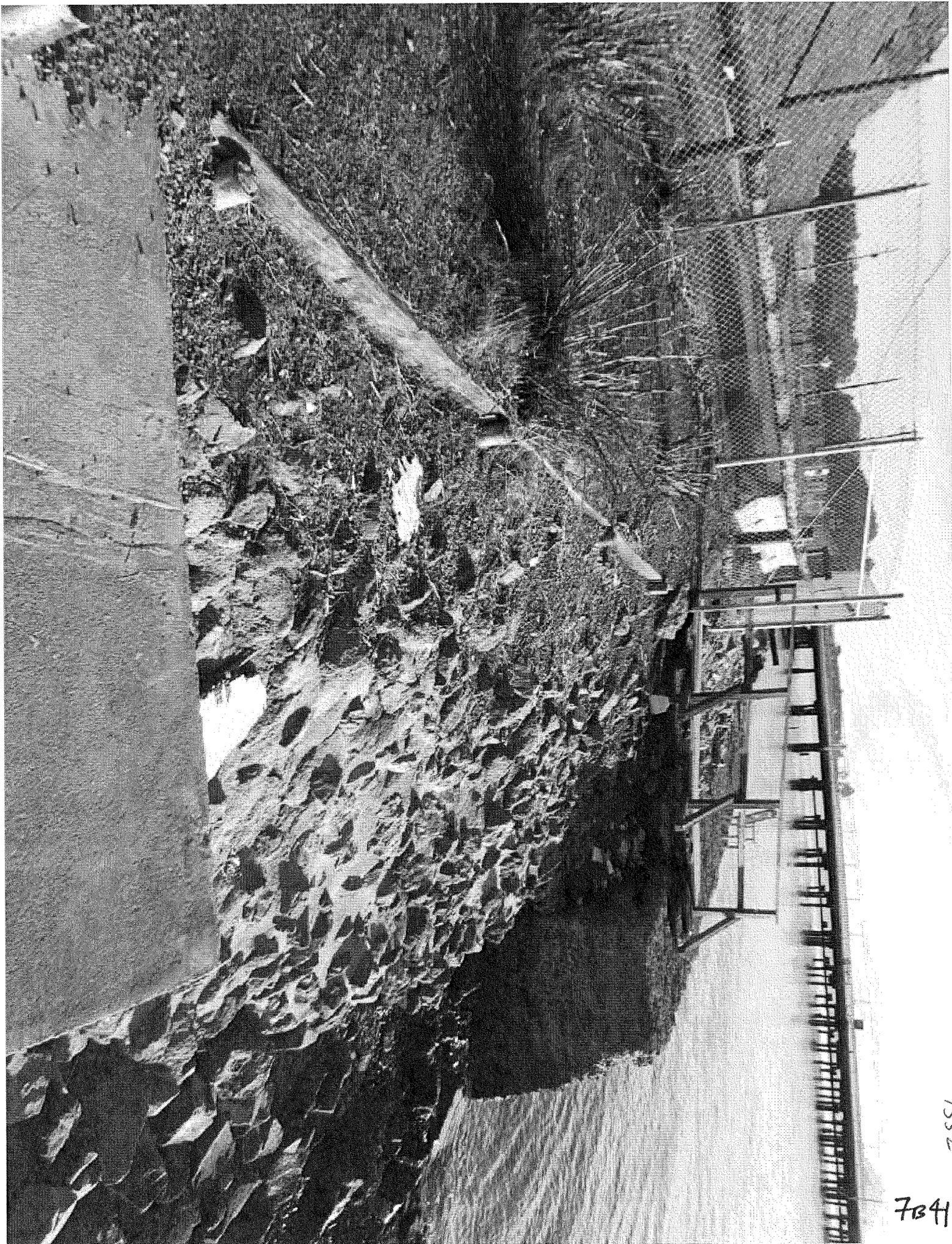




1551

7839





1552

7B41





1596

7643





1599

7B45

7B46