

**SITE SURVEY SUMMARY SHEET**  
**FOR**  
**DERP-FUDS SITE NO. J09NV1115**  
**LOVELOCK NORTH GUNNERY RANGE**

**SITE NAMES:**

Lovelock North, also known as Lovelock Aerial Gunnery Range and Black Rock Desert Gunnery Range. For the duration of this report the site will be referred to as Lovelock North.

**LOCATION:**

Lovelock North was located in the Black Rock Desert; a vast, dry, alkali lake bed, 100 miles northeast of Reno in Humboldt county, Nevada. Lovelock North is part of the remains of the ancient Lake Lahontan. It presently contains the Quinn River drainage, an ephemeral stream, often dry by late summer. The target area was located at approximately latitude of 41°05'N and a longitude of 188°48'W.

**SITE HISTORY:**

An undated list of Gunnery Range and Target Area Releases Since World War II by the Twelfth Naval District (12ND) states that the North Range (Lovelock North) of the Lovelock Aerial Gunnery Range consists 676,758 acres of Public Lands and 41,241.34 acres of patented lands. The land was granted to the DoD from the Department of the Interior, Bureau of Land Management (BLM) in a letter dated 13 January 1945. No records pertaining to the usage of this property from 1945 until 1949 were found. A letter Permit from the Department of the Interior dated 22 September 1949 granted 272,000 of the 718,000 acres to the DoD revoking the remaining 446,000 acres, stating that the 272,000 "is all that is available to the Navy." The DoD renamed the 272,000 acres to Black Rock Desert Gunnery Range.

The Lovelock Aerial Gunnery Range included a six mile safety area from the exterior boundaries as a safety requirement based on the estimated maximum carrying capacity of .50 caliber shells when fired. Lovelock South, addressed under Formerly Used Defense Site (FUDS ) No. J09NV1116, and Lovelock North were to create one aerial gunnery range, Lovelock Aerial Gunnery

Range, separated only by the Western Pacific Railroad. No firing runs were to cross the Western Pacific Railroad, which ran east to west between the two areas.

An Organizational Chart for Naval Air Bases in the 12ND dated 21 July 1945 lists Gunnery Range, Lovelock under NAAS, Fallon, which in turn is listed under Naval Air Station(NAS), Alameda. NAAS Fallon was the gunnery satellite field for all fleet squadrons based in the San Francisco area as of 1955. Because of this heavy use and the advent of faster, higher flying aircraft and new aircraft weapons, the Department of the Navy stated that the existing 272,000 acre Black Rock Desert Range had become inadequate and an additional 1,372,160 acres was requested for the expansion of the range. For the purpose of this expansion the Navy requested the BLM to withdraw the land from the public domain in June of 1955.

It was noted in November of 1956, that Mr. Gale, Office of Secretary of Defense, made the statement that the Black Rock Desert Gunnery Range expansion would not be approved and that two million acres in the Tonopah range, approximately 30 by 50 miles, would be made available and that if a satellite Air Station was required to utilize that range it would be funded. The acquisition of the property to expand the Black Rock Desert Gunnery Range created controversy and no documentation has been located which would indicate that the acquisition occurred.

According to an 2 April 1959 newspaper article, Naval jet aircraft from NAAS Fallon were to begin using the Black Rock Desert Gunnery Range for gunnery practice with 22mm machine guns. The practice was scheduled to begin an hour before sunrise and end an hour after sunset for the month of April. The majority of the aircraft were to be planes which flew at the speed of sound and which would fire at towed targets. Ammunition coated with different colors would tell how effective each craft was at firing at the targets.

The article also states that under the agreement with the BLM and the Nevada Fish and Game Commission, Black Rock Desert Gunnery Range could be used throughout the year. The boundaries of the range were set by Public Land Order No. 1632 of 1958.

In a summary of presentations regarding the acquisition of the Black Rock Desert Gunnery Range, it was noted that the Navy needed the Black Rock Desert Gunnery Range for 180 weekdays per year and that the length of time the area would be required should not extend beyond 1965. No other information regarding deactivation was located.

**SITE VISIT:**

On 4 August 1999 Ms. Christina Prescott and Ms. Nicola Holmes from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) and Mr. Steve Brooks from the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) conducted the site visit for the Lovelock North Gunnery Range. Mr. Brooks stated that a co-worker, Mr. Mike Bilbo, had found 90mm casings, .50 caliber casings, what appeared to be a practice bomb and some slugs on the range. During the site visit a 90mm casing was found at latitude 40°53'11.22"N and longitude 119°05'17.73"W.

**CATEGORY OF HAZARD: NDAI**

**AVAILABLE STUDIES AND REPORTS:**

1. Correspondence, maps, and memorandum, 1940's through 1960's (National Archives, San Bruno, CA)

**PA POC:** Mr. William Mullery, CESP-K-ED-EB, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Sacramento District, (916) 557-6944.

DEFENSE ENVIRONMENTAL RESTORATION PROGRAM  
FORMERLY USED DEFENSE SITES  
FINDINGS AND DETERMINATION OF ELIGIBILITY

LOVELOCK NORTH GUNNERY RANGE  
HUMBOLDT AND PERSHING COUNTIES, NEVADA  
DERP-FUDS PROJECT NO. J09NV1115

FINDINGS OF FACT

1. This report of Findings and Determination of Eligibility has been prepared as requested for the Lovelock North Gunnery Range. Although the site consisted of 718,000 acres in 1945, this amount varied over time. Use of the 718,000 acres which originally comprised the range was granted to the DoD by a Department of the Interior letter dated January 13, 1945. There is no record of the DoD's use of the property from this time until the 1950s when a smaller range was consisting of 272,000 acres was acquired and the range was renamed Black Rock Desert Gunnery Range. This property was acquired by letter permit from the Department of the Interior in 1949.

2. While information regarding the specific use of the target area was not located, it is known that NAAS, Fallon under NAS, Alameda used the target During World War II, when propellor type aircraft were used and gunnery training from Fallon was conducted over an area comprised of approximately 1,559,000 acres. This area, located in Pershing and Humboldt Counties, Nevada, was known as the Lovelock Aerial Gunnery Range and used by the Navy. As of 1955, NAAS Fallon was the gunnery satellite field for all fleet squadrons based in the San Francisco area. In April 1959 the area was used for gunnery practice with 22 millimeter machine guns.

3. The Department of Interior permit for the north portion of the Lovelock Gunnery Range was canceled by a BuDocks letter dated March 6, 1946. The letter lists the property as surplus. In a summary of presentations regarding the acquisition of either the Black Rock or Sahwave Ranges, it was noted that the Navy needed the Black Rock Range for 180 weekdays and the Sahwave Range for 143 days, and the length of time the area would be required should not extend beyond 1965 (SB0849). No other information regarding deactivation/disposal is available at this time.

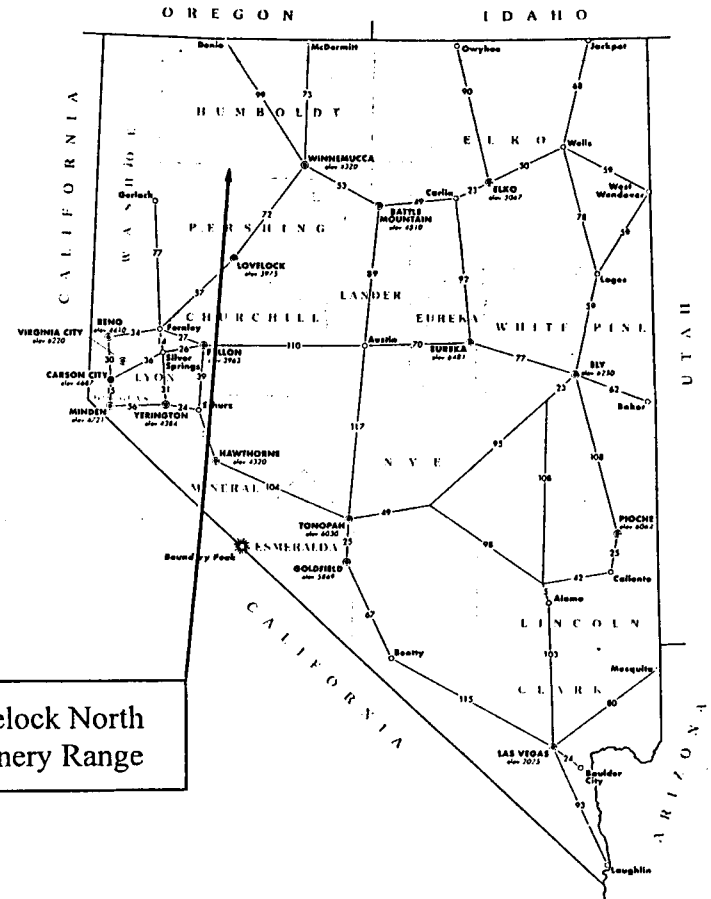
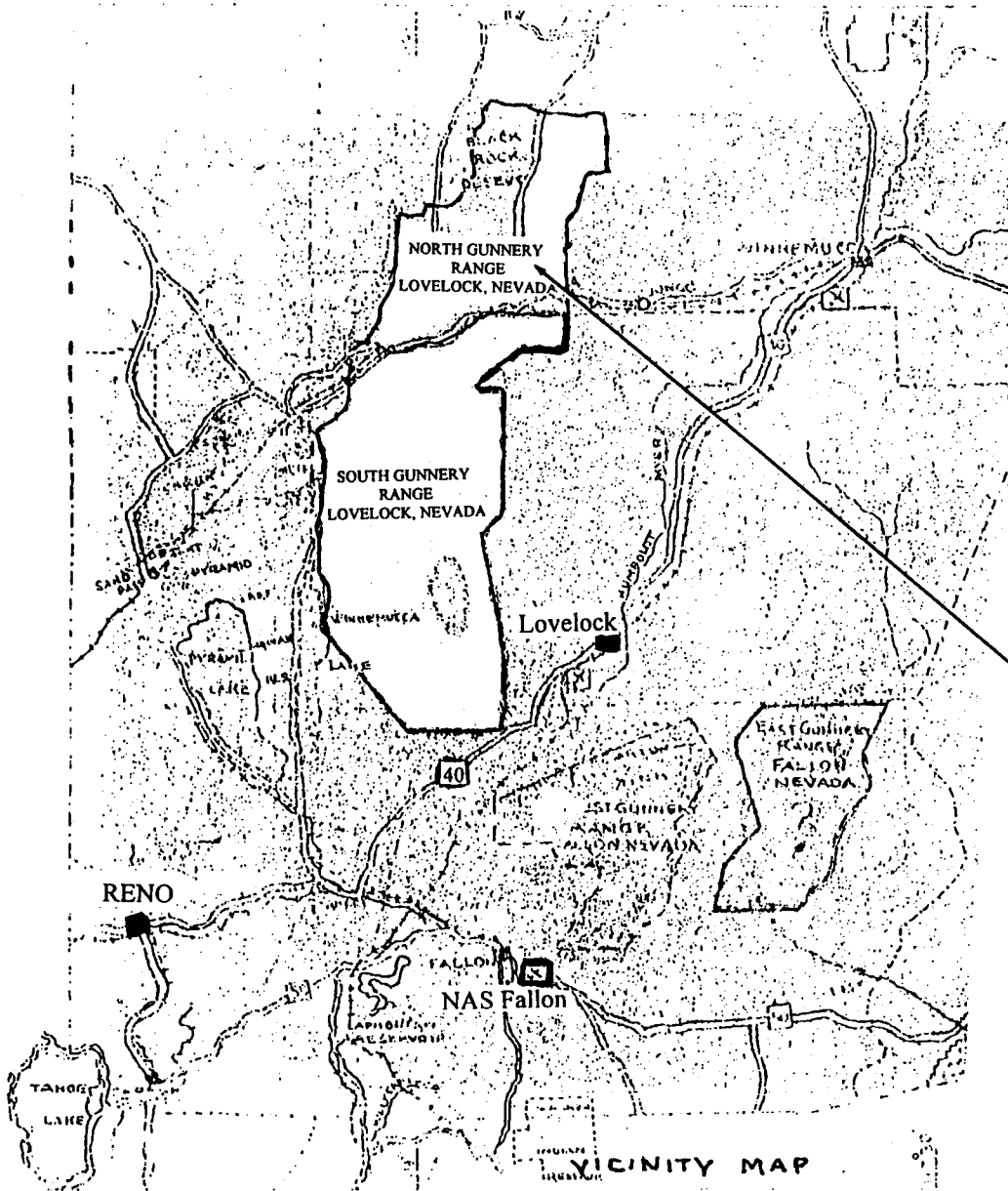
DETERMINATION

Based on the foregoing findings of fact, the site has been determined to be formerly used by DoD. It is therefore eligible for the Defense Environmental Restoration Program - Formerly Used Defense Sites established under 10 USC 2701 et seq.

30 Sep 79

DATE

*Peter T. Madsen*  
PETER T. MADSEN  
COLONEL (P), U.S. ARMY  
COMMANDING



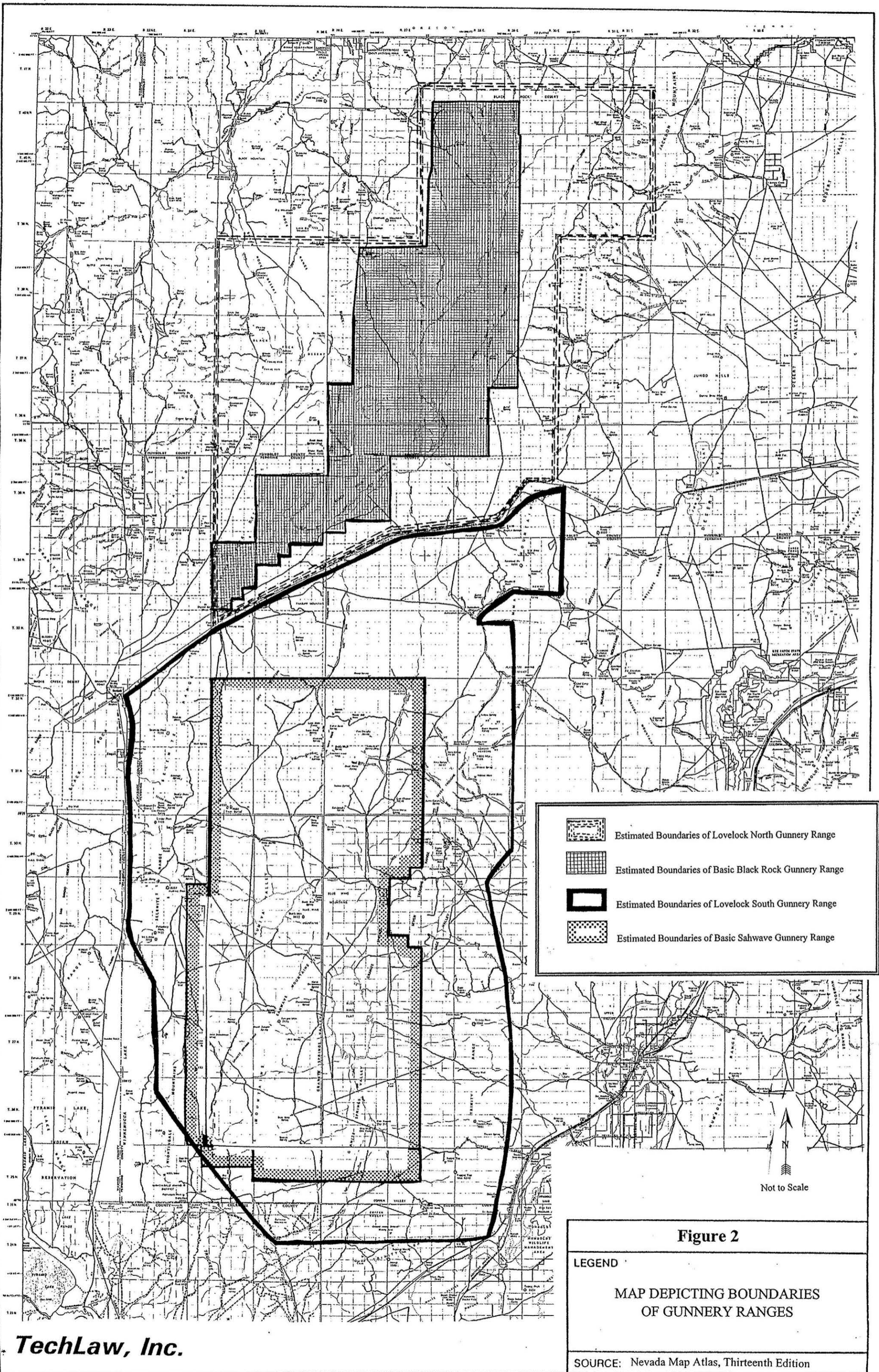
Lovelock North  
Gunnery Range





Figure 1

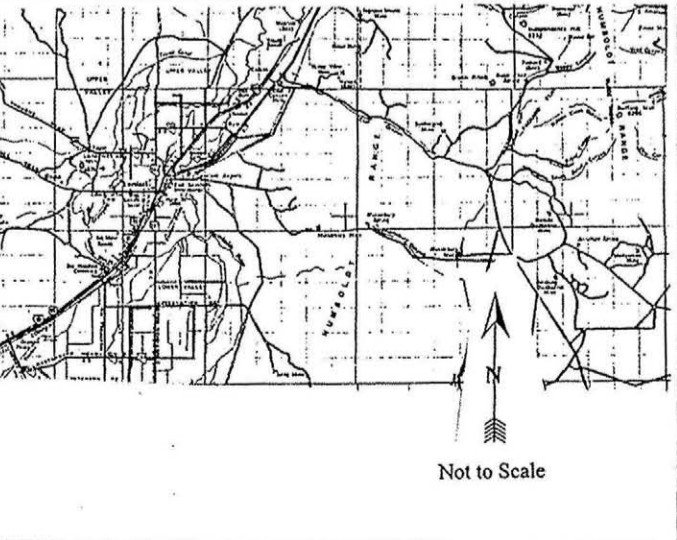
LEGEND

MAP DEPICTING  
SITE LOCATION

SOURCE: SAN BRUNO NATIONAL ARCHIVES



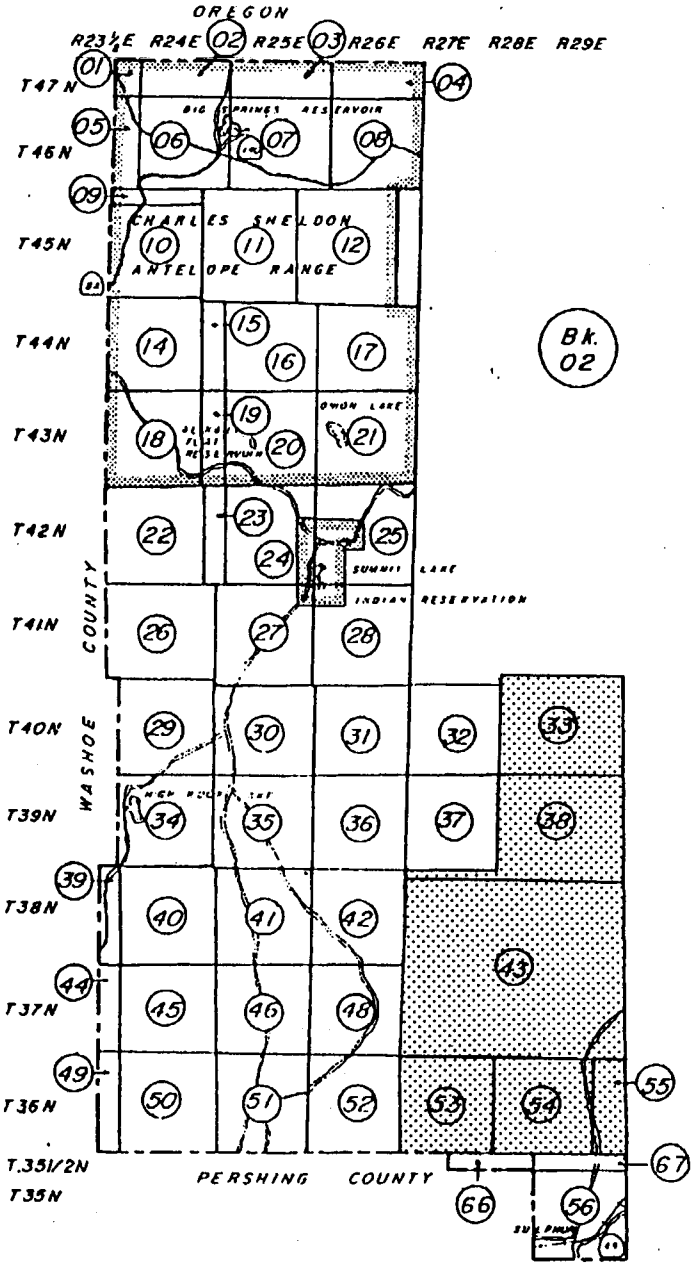
-  Estimated Boundaries of Lovelock North Gunnery Range
-  Estimated Boundaries of Basic Black Rock Gunnery Range
-  Estimated Boundaries of Lovelock South Gunnery Range
-  Estimated Boundaries of Basic Sahwave Gunnery Range



**Figure 2**

**LEGEND**  
 MAP DEPICTING BOUNDARIES  
 OF GUNNERY RANGES

SOURCE: Nevada Map Atlas, Thirteenth Edition



Not to Scale

This property is designated as the Black Rock Desert Gunnery Range on the Humboldt County Assessor's Parcel Maps. Formerly a portion of the Lovelock North Gunnery Range.

**Figure 3**

LEGEND

MAP DEPICTING REAL PROPERTY AT LOVELOCK NORTH GUNNERY RANGE

SOURCE: Humboldt County Assessor's Office