



DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
HUNTSVILLE DIVISION, CORPS OF ENGINEERS
P. O. BOX 1600
HUNTSVILLE, ALABAMA 35807-4301

REPLY TO
ATTENTION OF

January 5, 1993

Ordnance and Technical
Programs Division

SUBJECT: Ordnance Hazards at Dolly Sods Wilderness
Area

Ms. Nancy Feaks
District Manager
Monongahela National Forest
Potomac Ranger District
HC 59, Box 240
Petersburg, West Virginia 26847

Dear Ms. Feaks:

This letter is in reference to your November 3, 1993, inquiry as to when the Corps of Engineers plans to investigate ordnance hazards at Dolly Sods Wilderness. Prioritization of the sites is based on what we call a Risk Assessment Code (RAC) for each site. There are potentially as many as 1200 sites nationwide. We are commencing with RAC 1 sites which have the greatest potential for danger and high populations of people. Then, we will do RAC 2 sites. The Dolly Sods site is a RAC 2 based on the Inventory Project Report (INPR) prepared by Huntington District Corps of Engineers and concurred in by Huntsville Division Corps of Engineers. Presently, this site is not scheduled for investigation. We have recommended to our Headquarters to include it in the next fiscal year (1995) program.

Enclosed you will find a draft proposed plan for remediation of the site, if and when the project becomes funded. We appreciate and share your concerns for the potential dangers at this site. We wish we had the resources and funds to do more projects than we presently can.

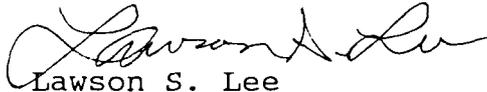
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If you have any further questions, please contact Mr. Roland Belew at commercial 205-955-5304 or Mr. C. Robert Britton at commercial 205-955-5482.

Sincerely,



Lawson S. Lee
Chief, Ordnance and Technical
Programs Division

Copies Furnished:

Commander, HQUSACE, ATTN: CEMP-RF (Wash),
20 Massachusetts Avenue, NW., Washington, DC
20314-1000

~~XXXXXXXXXX~~ U.S. Army Engineer District, Huntington,
ATTN: CEORH-ED (Wayne Budrus), 502 8th Street,
Huntington, West Virginia 25701-2070

Commander, U.S. Army Engineer Division, Ohio River,
ATTN: CEORD-DL-MS (Patty Bertsch), P. O. Box 1159,
Cincinnati, Ohio 45201-1159

DRAFT

PROPOSED PLAN

DOLLY SODS WILDERNESS AREA FORMER WEST VIRGINIA MANEUVER AREA DAVIS, WEST VIRGINIA

BACKGROUND

Pursuant to Council on Environmental Quality Regulations implementing the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), this document records the remedial action decision for the unexploded ordnance and related debris contamination caused by previous DOD-related activities on the Former West Virginia Maneuver Area. A Feasibility Study of Remedial Action Alternatives has been prepared for the site. The former West Virginia Maneuver Area was used by the Thirteenth Army Corps of the Third Army for mountain training and maneuvers including the firing of artillery and mortars during 1943-44. The 10,215 acres of the Dolly Sods Wilderness Area is situated within the approximately 2,181,000 acres of the former West Virginia Maneuver Area. This property was purchased by the U.S. Forest Service between 1910-13. The Dolly Sods Wilderness Area was created by an act of Congress in 1975.

An unexploded ordnance field investigation conducted during the July-October 1991 timeframe, sampled 18 areas scattered throughout Dolly Sods. The sampling encompassed a surface clearance of 281 acres and a subsurface clearance of 10 acres. During the surface clearance, six unexploded ordnance items were located. During the subsurface clearance, six unexploded ordnance items were located between 6"-24". UXO was found in Area 1 in the northern section of Dolly Sods and Areas 7, 11, and 14 in the south central region of Dolly Sods around Breathed Mountain and in the Red Creek valley. No evidence of UXO was found in any of the other sampled areas.

ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED

In arriving at the decision, four alternatives were considered: no action, and remediation at three different levels.

There are unexploded ordnance items in the Dolly Sods area which exposes visitors of the Wilderness Area to dismemberment and/or death. The risk to unexploded ordnance must be minimized. The three different remediation levels considered were:

Level One: The areas considered for remediation under this level include areas which are accessible to the public and can be remediated without brush clearance. A total of 250 acres would be included in this remediation alternative. (See figures 4-1 and 4-2)

Level Two: The areas considered for remediation under this level include an expanded acreage which are accessible to the public, but also includes selective clearing of vegetation. A total of 916 acres would be included in this remediation alternative. (See figures 4-3 and 4-4)

Level Three: The areas considered for remediation under this level include an expanded acreage which are accessible to the public, but also includes selective clearing of vegetation. A total of 1,282 acres would be included in this remediation alternative. (See figures 4-5 and 4-6)

DECISION

Based on the primary objective of the project (to minimize risk, to protect public health, safety and general welfare) and the alternatives analyses, the preferred action is the Level Three Remediation Alternative with a subsurface clearance down to 24 inches. Even though this alternative is the more costly and will present significant, but short-term impacts to the vegetation and wildlife, it is not technically feasible to effectively locate and remove unexploded ordnance items from these areas without the associated short-term impacts.

All located unexploded ordnance will be destroyed in-place by detonation.

For an effective, cost efficient, and safe remediation action to be completed at this site, the present restriction on motorized vehicles must be waived. The establishment of helicopter landing zones, within the Wilderness Area, must also be undertaken.

MITIGATION

All practical means to avoid or minimize environmental harm from the selected alternative will be taken. The two endangered animal species, which may be found in the wilderness area (the Cheat Mountain Salamander and the Northern Virginia Flying Squirrel), are not known to exist in the proposed remediation areas and will not be directly impacted. No endangered plant species are found in the area.

However, Dolly Sods is a harsh environment and several years may be required for vegetation to recover in cleared areas. Only small undergrowth, grasses, and fallen trees will be cleared in areas accessible to hikers, campers, or hunters. Impact to vegetation will be minimized to the greatest extent feasible. Prior to the remedial action, trained personnel will work closely with the U.S. Forest Service and the Department of Natural Resources to define archaeologically significant areas, sensitive plants, and animal habitats that must be protected, and steps to avoid or minimize impact will be established.

PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT

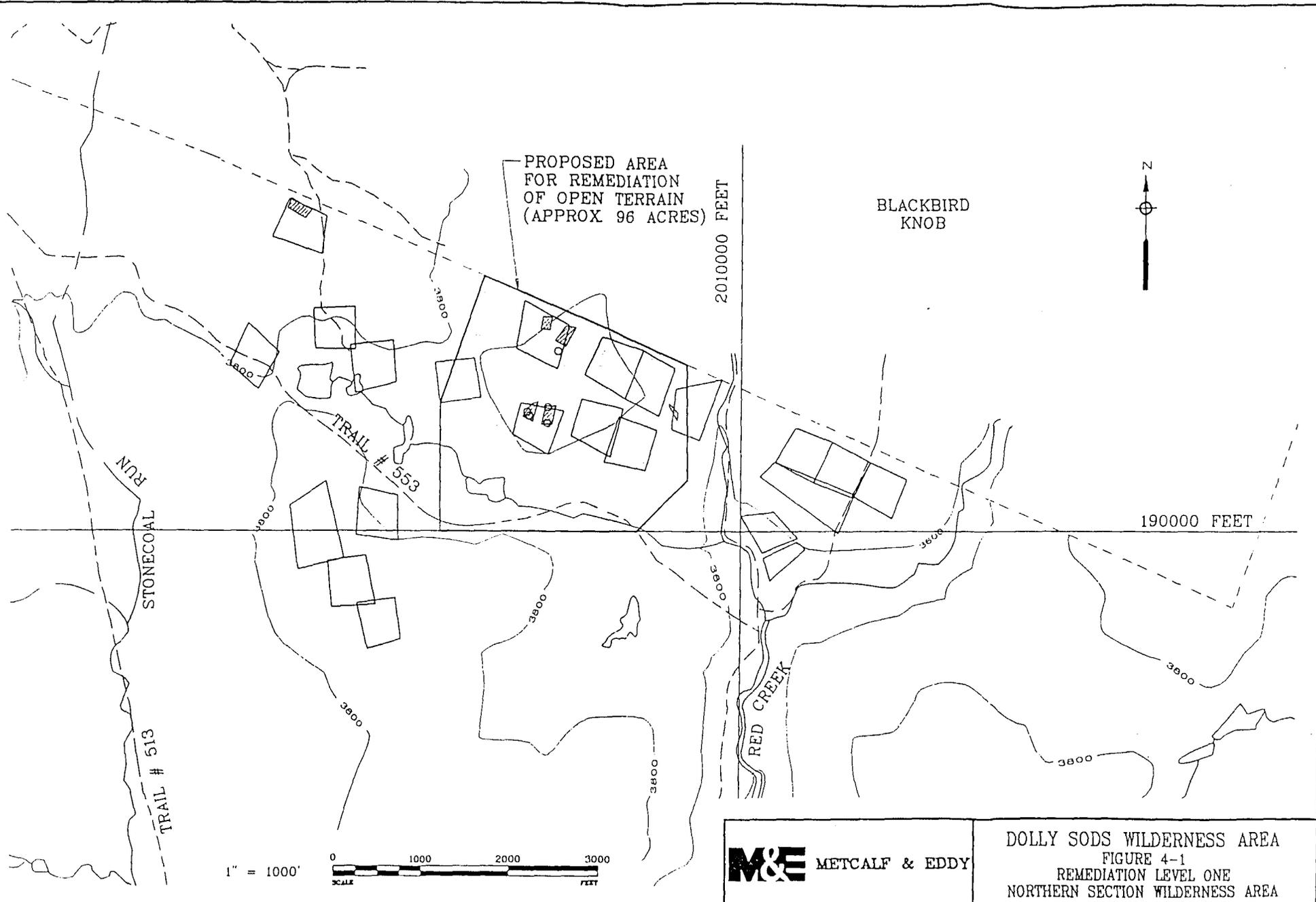
A thorough public involvement program will be conducted throughout the site evaluation process. Public concerns, such as safety, socioeconomic and environmental effects will be carefully considered.

During the removal action, public entrance into the Wilderness Area will have to be restricted.

ENVIRONMENTAL COMPLIANCE

The environmental documentation has been prepared in accordance with NEPA. The project has appropriately considered all applicable environmental laws, executive orders, and other policies as required.

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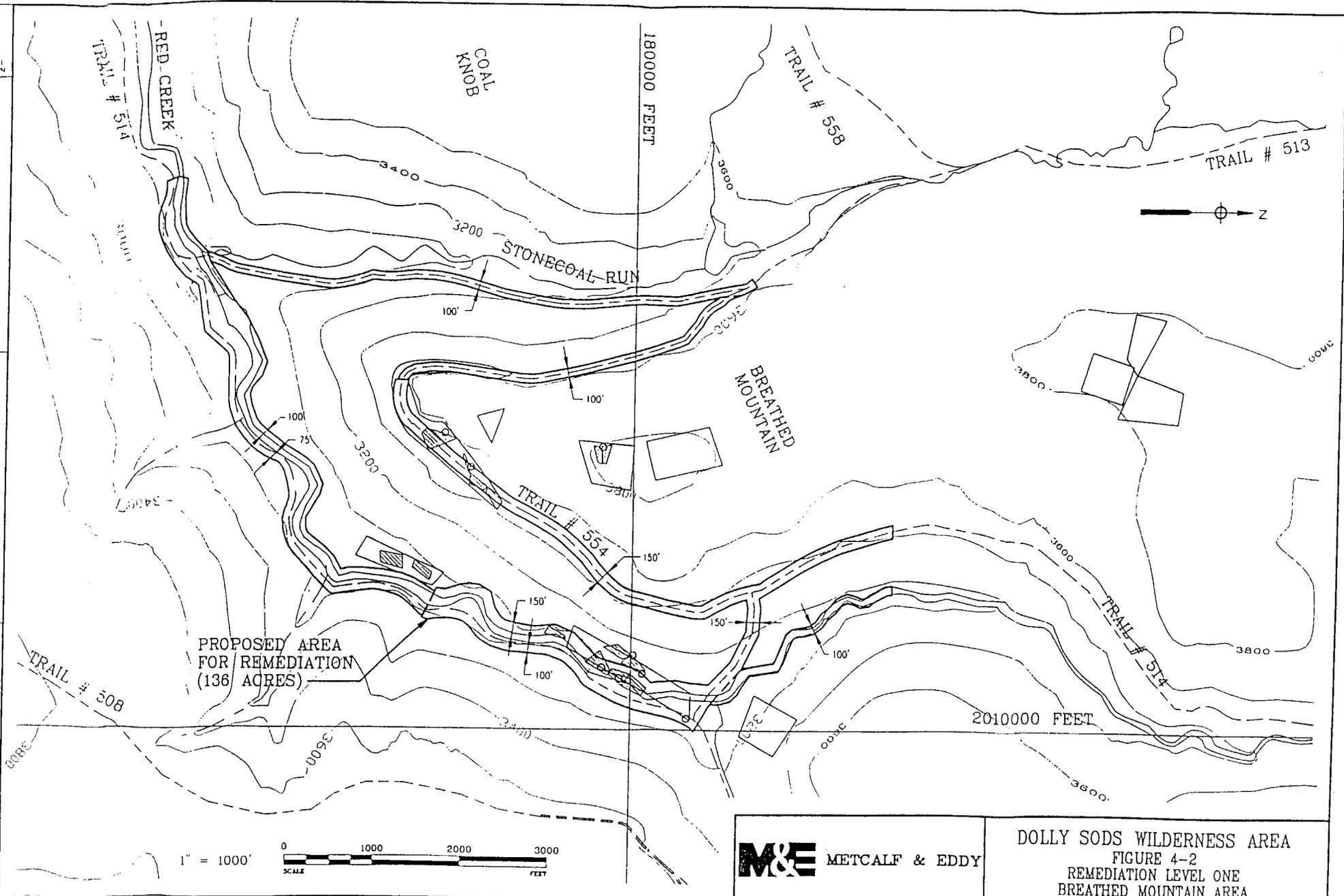


1" = 1000'



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DOLLY SODS WILDERNESS AREA
FIGURE 4-1
REMEDICATION LEVEL ONE
NORTHERN SECTION WILDERNESS AREA

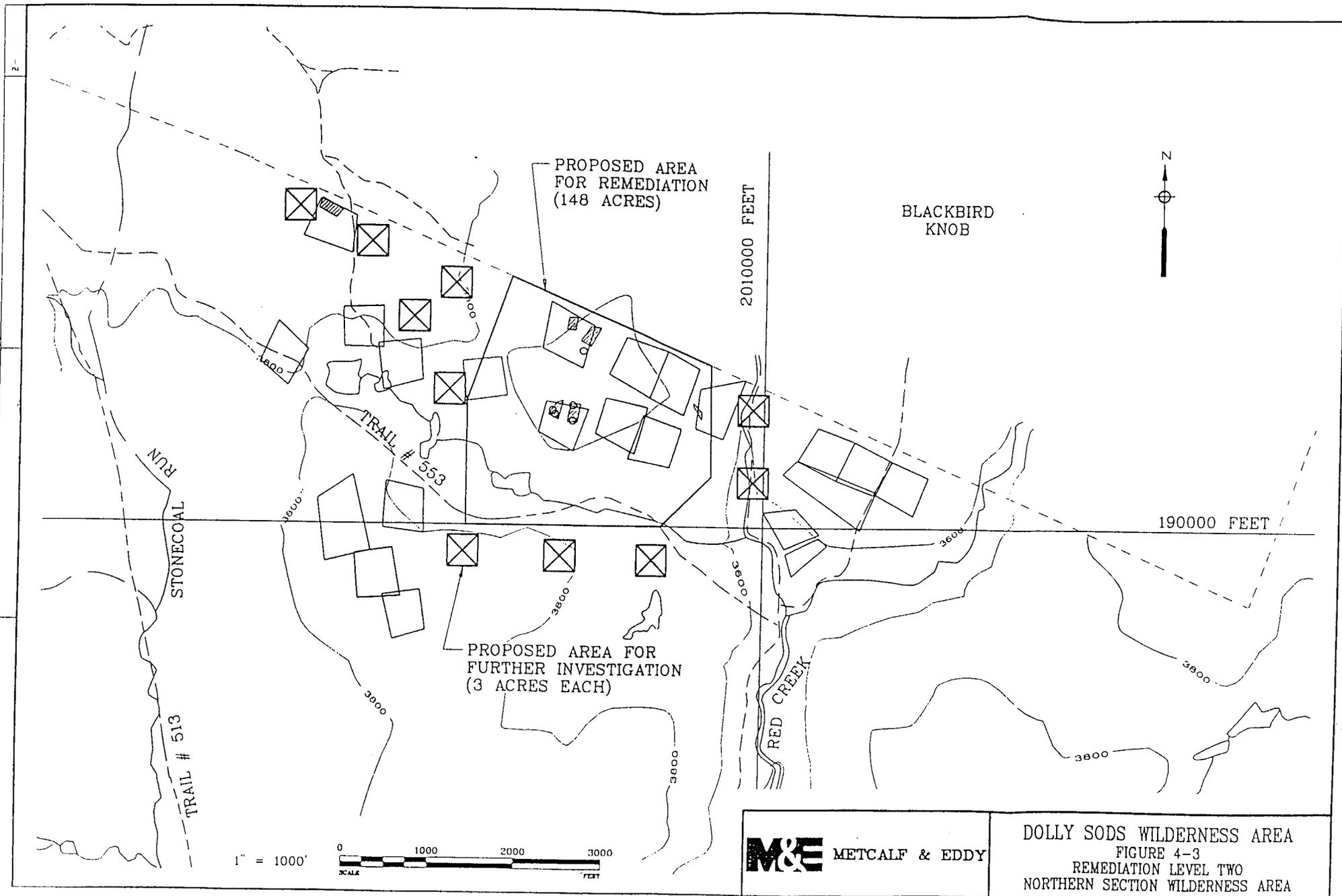


PROPOSED AREA
FOR REMEDIATION
(136 ACRES)

1" = 1000'
0 1000 2000 3000
SCALE FEET

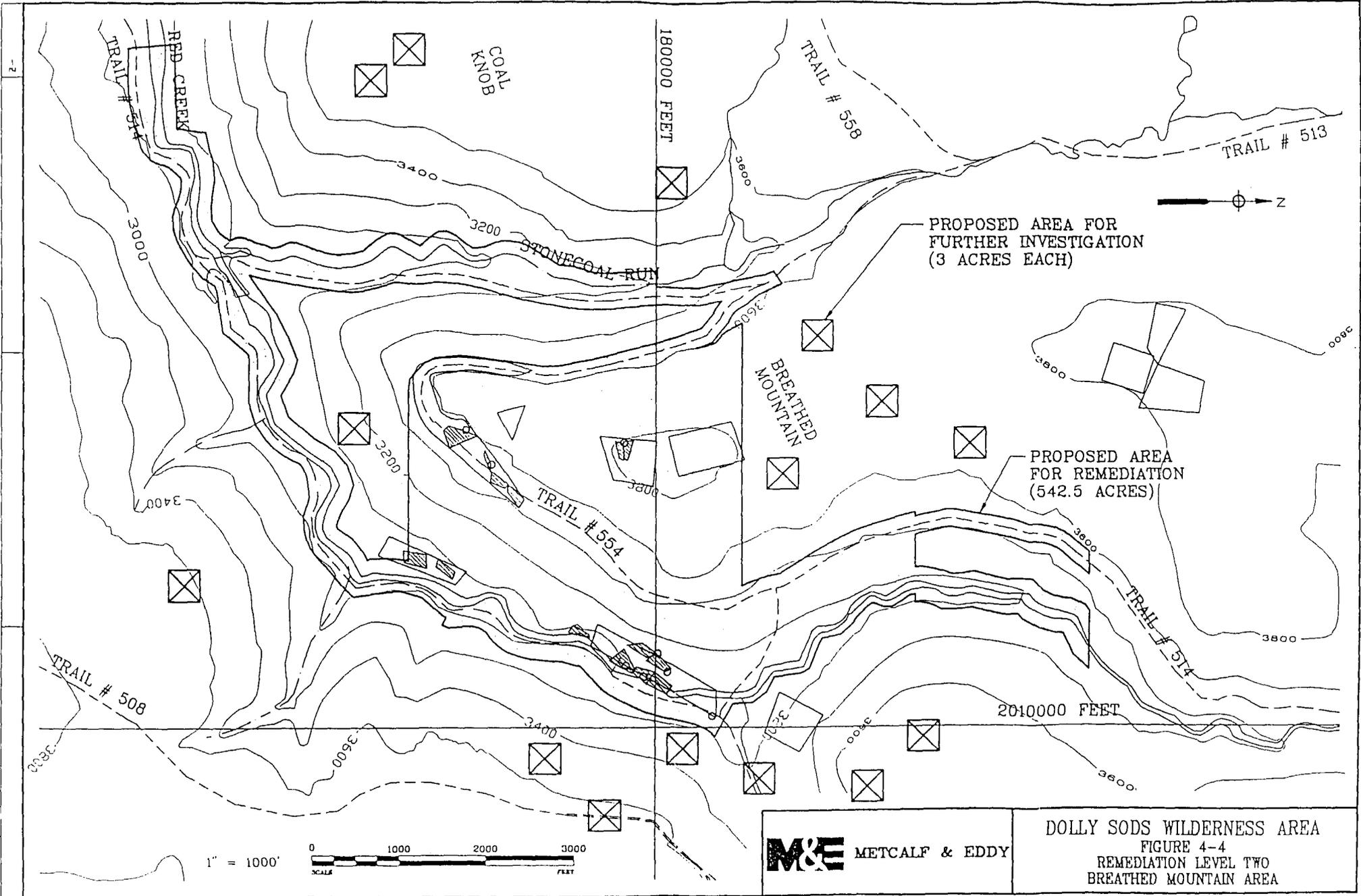
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DOLLY SODS WILDERNESS AREA
FIGURE 4-2
REMEDATION LEVEL ONE
BREATHED MOUNTAIN AREA



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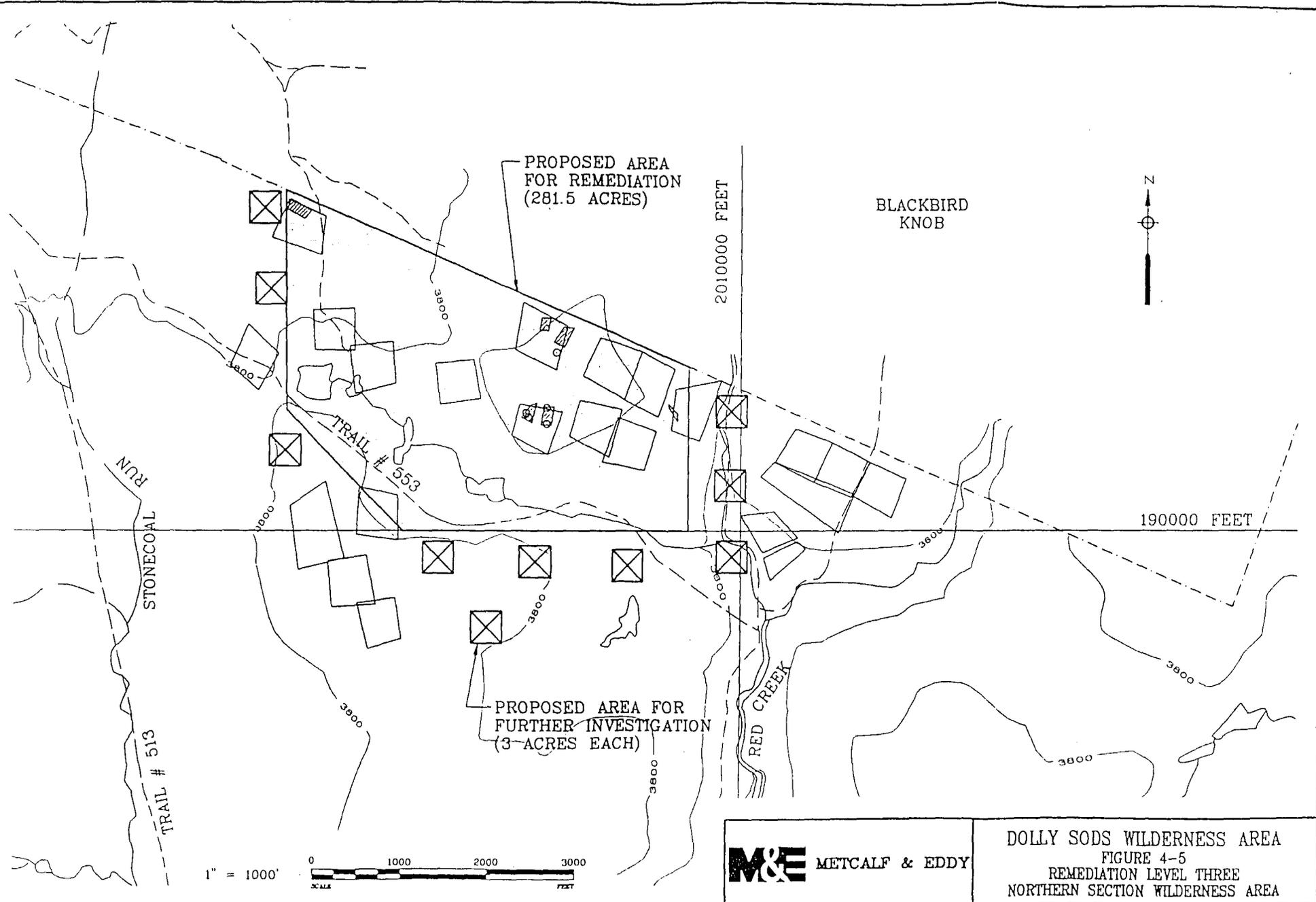
DOLLY SODS WILDERNESS AREA
 FIGURE 4-3
 REMEDIATION LEVEL TWO
 NORTHERN SECTION WILDERNESS AREA



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DOLLY SODS WILDERNESS AREA
 FIGURE 4-4
 REMEDIATION LEVEL TWO
 BREATHED MOUNTAIN AREA

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DOLLY SODS WILDERNESS AREA
FIGURE 4-5
REMEDATION LEVEL THREE
NORTHERN SECTION WILDERNESS AREA

