

OWENS RIVER VALLEY (BISHOP) RAILROAD, INYO COUNTY CALIFORNIA

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Feb. 5, 2024

INTRODUCTION

This report is part of a research project that describes the relationships between mines and railroads in the Mojave Desert and southwestern Great Basin of southeastern California and southwestern Nevada. t

The collection can be accessed at
<http://www.greggwilkerson.com/railroads.html>

Italics indicate quotations.

HISTORY

The Carson and Colorado Railroad passed by Bishop on its way to Keeler from Benton in 1882-1883. The Owens Valley Railroad (ORV) was incorporated November 17, 1910 to create a connection for Bishop (Myrick, 1962:314). This short line started at the **Laws** siding and ended in the town of Bishop 5.3 miles to the southwest. This was called the "Red Apple Route" and plans were for the railroad to be an electric one.

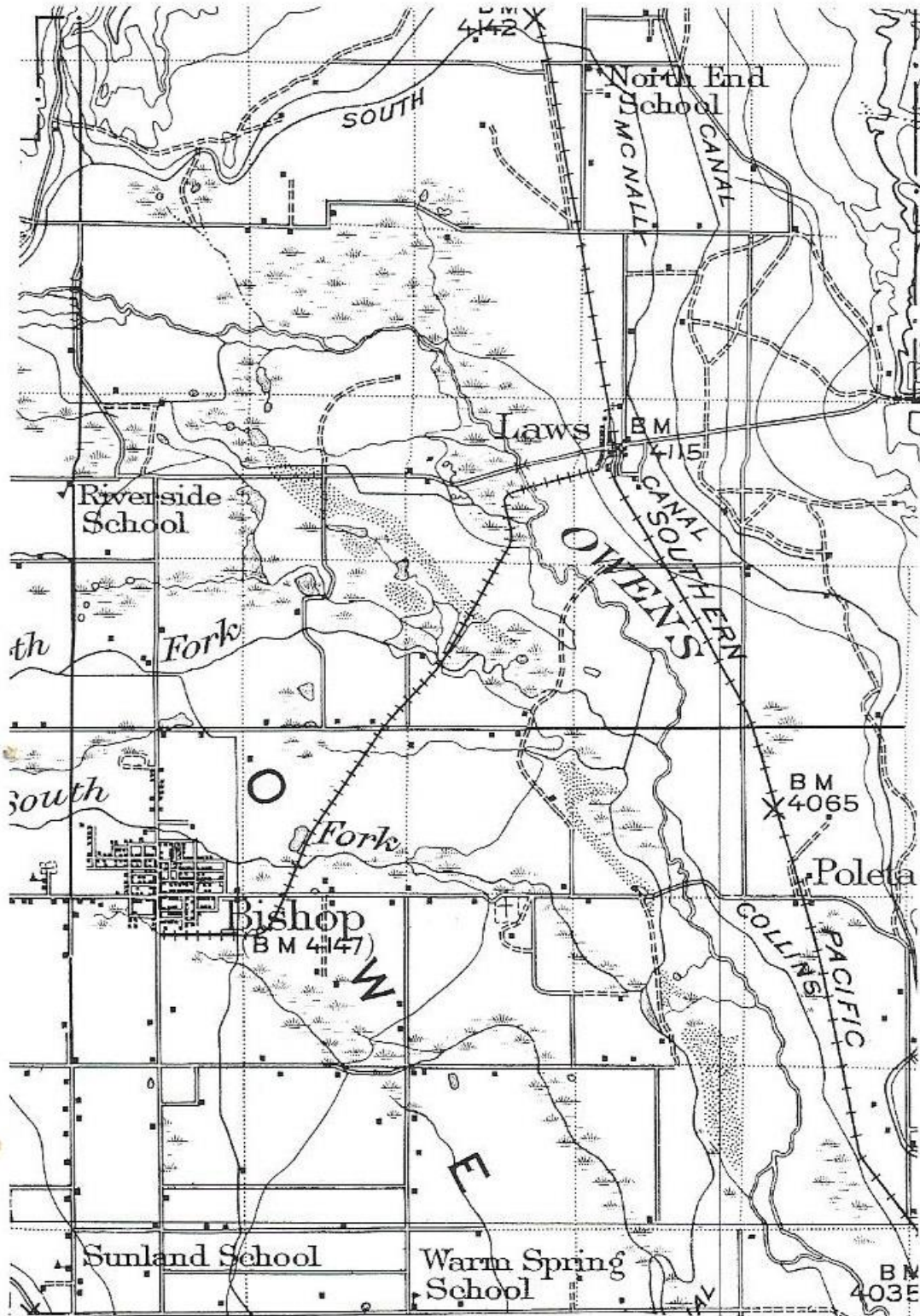
Laws siding is at the southwest edge of the Volcanic Tablelands at the north end of Owens Valley.

The city of **Bishop** is 5.8 miles to the southwest of **Laws**, near Bishop Creek and northeast of Coyote Ridge. It was named for one of the first European settlers in the area, Samuel A. Bishop. Owens Lake was named for Richard Owens, a member of John C. Fremont's 1845 exploration party which included Kit Carson and Ed Kern. Later the entire valley became known as The Owens Valley. The city of Bishop came into being in 1860 due to the need for beef in a booming mining camp some eighty miles to the north, Aurora, Nevada (Wikipedia, 2023c, Western Mining History, 2023e).

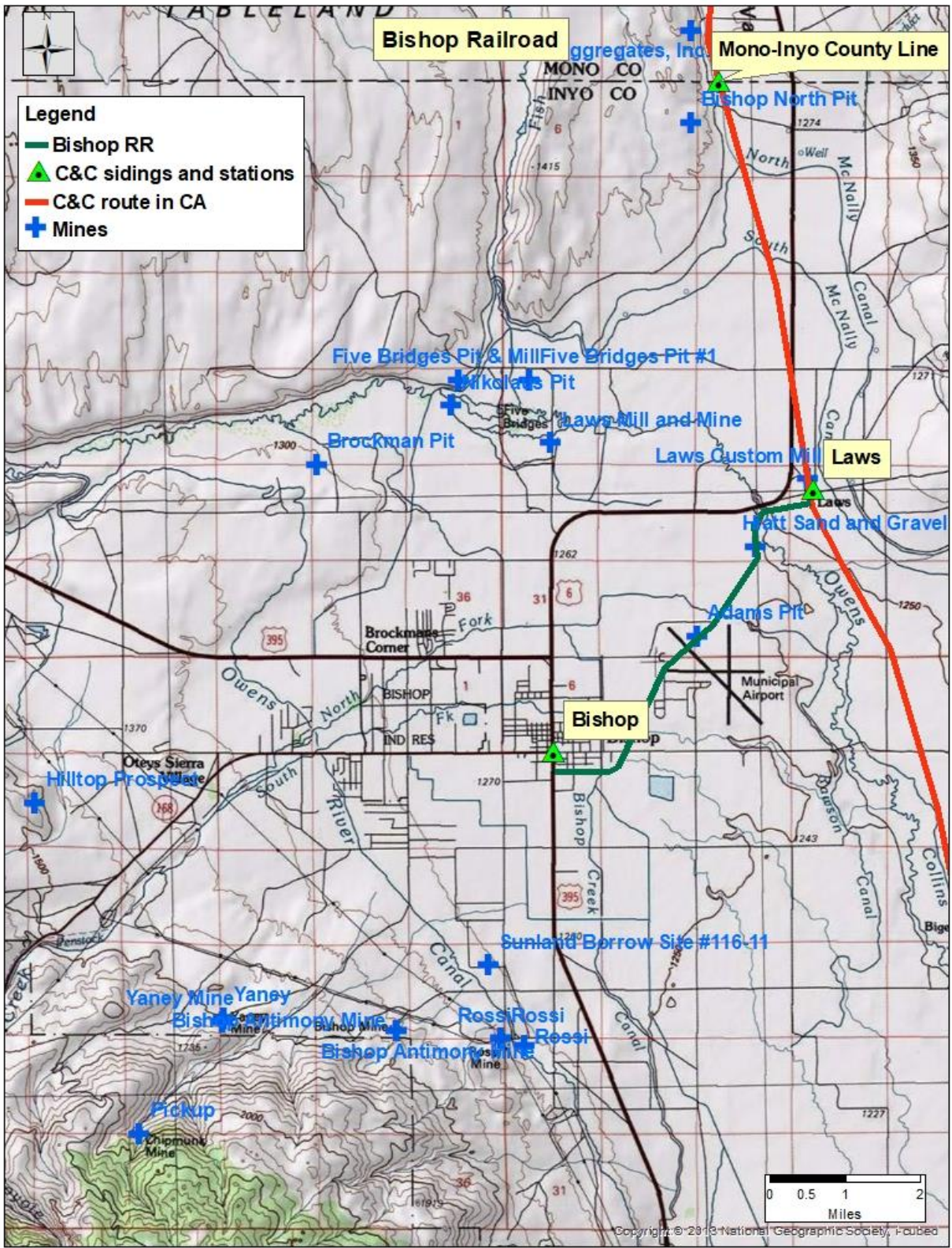
The short line to Bishop from the C&C was intended to be built in as part of the expanding construction programs for the Los Angeles Aqueduct. The OVR Railroad grade plan was near several tungsten and antimony mines on the northeast flank of Coyote Ridge. They are part of the Bishop Tungsten District. These were the Rosi, Yaney, Pickup, and Bishop Antimony mines. The mines were discovered in 1913. The Pine Creek Tungsten mine operated through 2001 (Norman and Stewart, 1951:97-98, 198, Lemmon and Tweto, 1962; Bateman, 1965). The ORV railroad was never completed (Myrick, 1962:314-315)



Caption: Owens Valley Railroad grade construction, 1911. From Frank Merrill photo, Arthur D. Haig Collection. From Myrick, 1962, p. 315.



Caption: portion of U.S. Geological survey topographic map of 1913 showing Owens Valley Railroad line (From Myrick, 1962, p. 315).



REFERENCES

All references in this report are available at

<http://www.greggwilkerson.com/iv-references.html>