

SALTDAL RAILROAD, KERN COUNTY, CALIFORNIA

Gregg Wilkerson and Larry Vredenburg
Feb. 11, 2024

Contents

| | |
|-------------------|---|
| INTRODUCTION..... | 1 |
| HISTORY..... | 1 |
| REFERENCES..... | 8 |

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

Saltdale was on the north shore of Koehn Lake in Fremont Valley between the El Paso and Rand Mountains. It was adjacent to the Nevada and California railroad.

It was mined illegally for several decades. Mining claims were staked in 1909 by Thomas Thorkildsen and Thomas Rosenburger. The Consolidated Salt Company (CGS) constructed a crushing and screening plant and laid a baby-gauge railroad track onto the playa, from where a gasoline-powered locomotive hauled the salt to the crusher. CGS began shipping in 1914. They were processing 240 tons or more a week by October. The output that year totaled 20,000 tons. In January 1915 the company was shipping about twelve cars of salt weekly. After several court challenges to the legitimacy of the mining operations involving interpretations of the 1901 Saline Placer Act, the mine shut down in 1975 (Hensher and others, 1998, Wilkerson, 2023k).



Caption: Long Beach Salt Company Mill and Plant at Saltdale. Photo by Avirill, 1920. From California State Mining Bureau Photo No. DM A625a. Also from Larry Vredenburg Collection No. 70a-00.



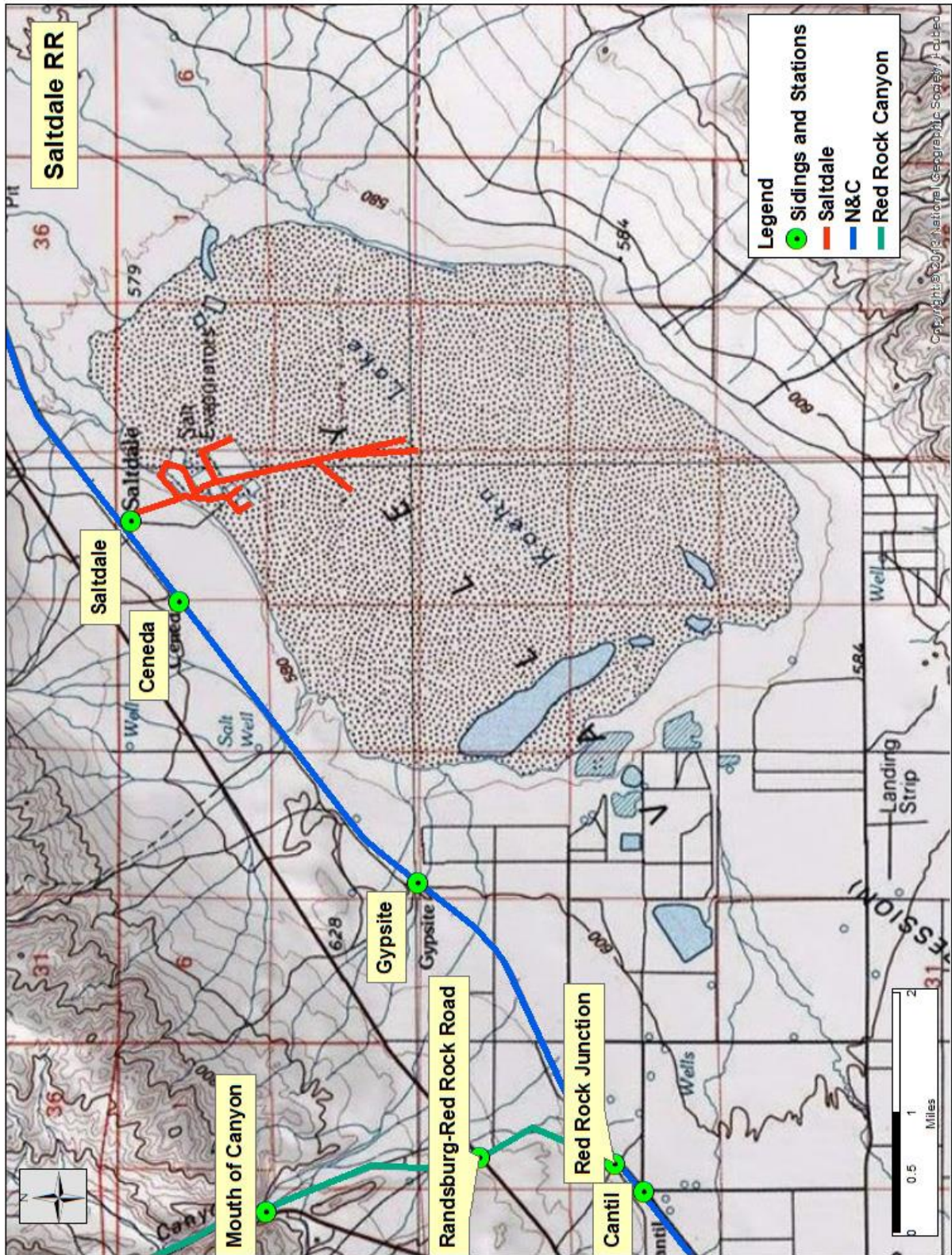
Caption: Harvesting salt at Saltdale, April 1953. From Hensher and others, 1998; Photo by William Ver Planck, California Division of Mines and Geology Collection and Larry Vredenburg Collection.

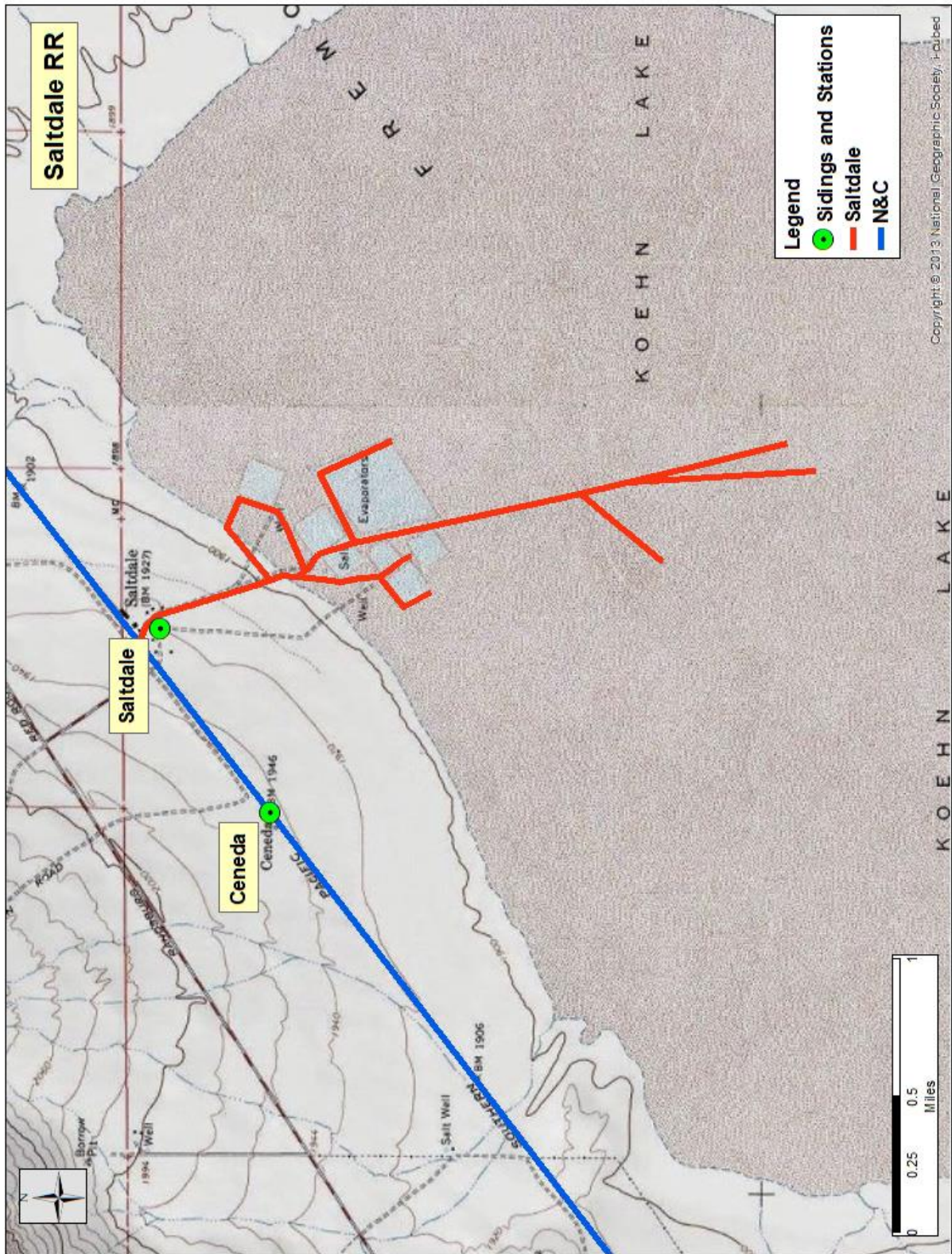


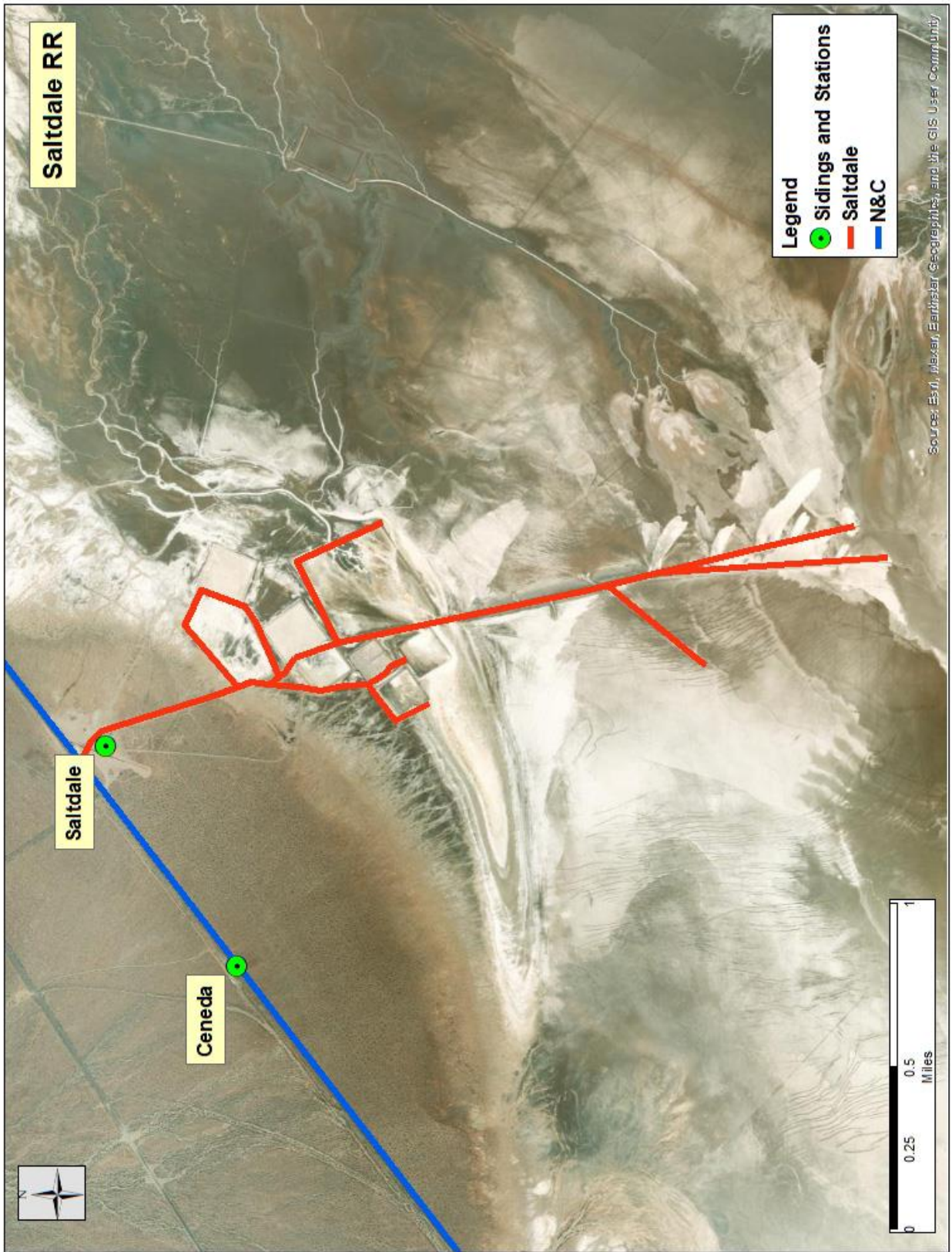
Caption: Saltdale railroad. From <https://www.atlasobscura.com/places/saltdale> accessed Jan. 1, 2024.



Caption: Saltdale ruins. From <https://www.atlasobscura.com/places/saltdale> accessed Jan. 1, 2024.







REFERENCES

All references in this report are available at

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