

MINUTE ITEM

This Calendar Item No. 32
was approved as Minute Item
No. 32 by the State Lands
Commission by a vote of 3
to 0 at its 9/25/84
meeting.

CALENDAR ITEM

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CLARIFICATION OF THE CALIFORNIA/OREGON BOUNDARY

The Acts of Admission of the States of California and Oregon describe their mutual boundary as the 42nd degree of North latitude. The location of State boundaries described in relation to lines of latitude or longitude is generally understood to be in reference to astronomic determinations, which differ somewhat from the corresponding geodetic lines appearing on government maps. In 1867, the United States General Land Office contracted with United States Astronomer and Surveyor, Daniel Major, to locate and mark this parallel from the northeast corner of the State of California to the Pacific Ocean. Pursuant to this contract, Major established the location at which the 120th meridian of longitude intersects the 42nd parallel of latitude. He then proceeded west, taking intermittent readings and measurements and setting monuments, until he arrived at the Pacific Ocean, approximately 213 miles west of his point of beginning.

During the past 115 years, a number of questions have arisen regarding the accuracy of the original survey. Retracement surveys by the United States General Land Office, some years ago, pointed out a number of inaccuracies in Major's work in the westernmost portion of his survey. Also, the initial point of the survey was found to have a longitudinal error of over three miles. Nevertheless, there has been no official repudiation of Major's line by the United States Government.

Recent measurements by staff have shown that at the location of the town of New Pine Creek, the old line marked by Major is approximately one-half mile south of the actual 42nd degree of North latitude. At the Pacific Ocean, the marked line is approximately one-quarter mile south of the true latitudinal position. Major's survey did not extend into the Pacific Ocean; therefore, no currently identifiable line separates jurisdiction between the States of California and Oregon in the offshore region.

Although it appears that to date there have not been any significant problems resulting from the inaccuracies of the original survey, there are some potential problems which could arise which are related primarily to governmental jurisdiction and land titles. For example, the States' entitlements to school and lieu land selections from the United States could be questioned in view of the continuing uncertainty of somewhat analogous problems along the California - Nevada border. Also if oil or other minerals are ever recovered from the offshore lands, the apportionment of royalty funds between California and Oregon could become disputed.

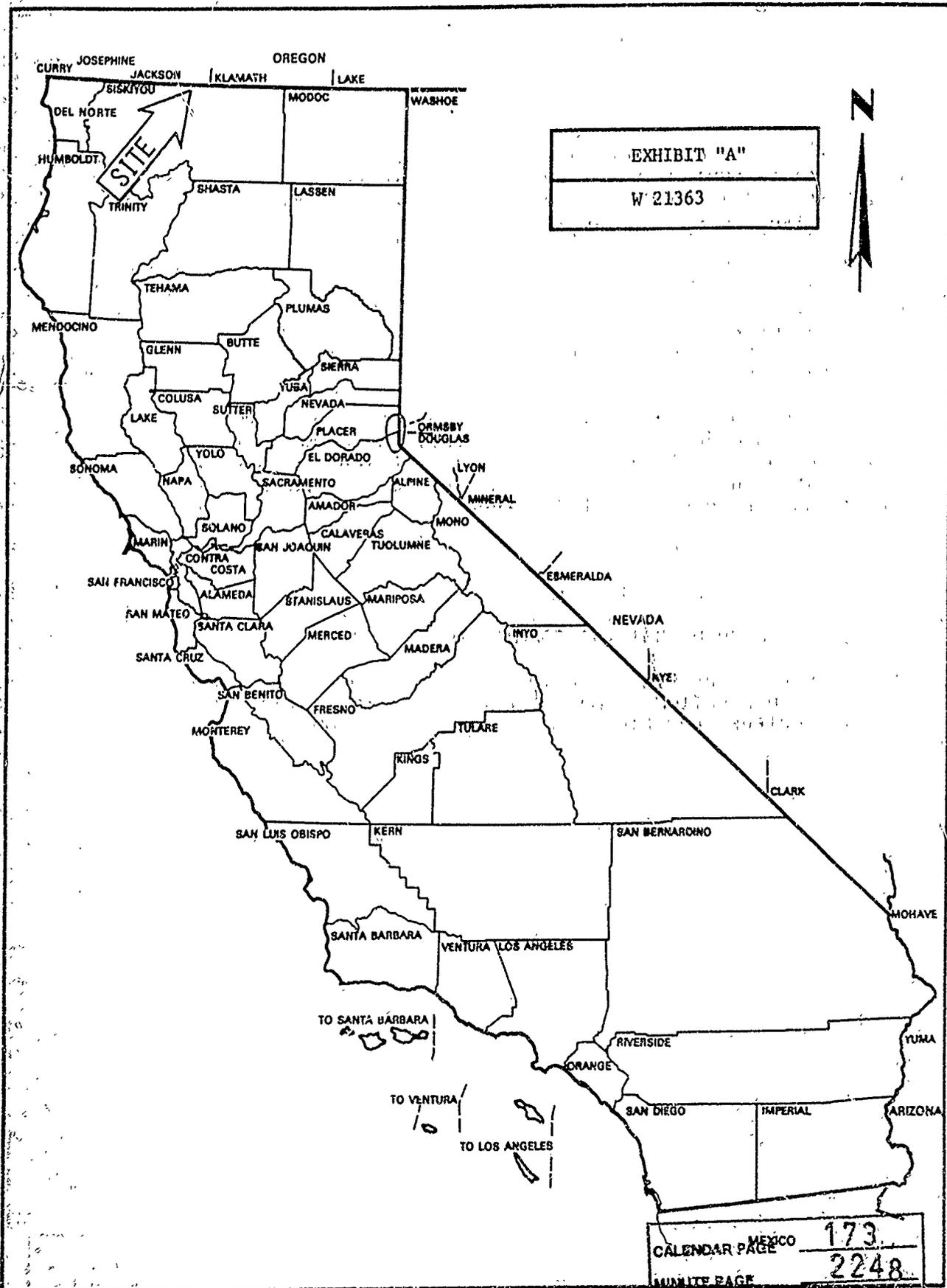
It is recommended that this boundary question be promptly resolved. In order to further this end, the Commission staff should conduct a study of the question of land titles in the interstate zone and perform further boundary location work along the 42nd parallel of latitude.

AB 884: N/A.

EXHIBITS: A. Site Map.

IT IS RECOMMENDED THAT THE COMMISSION:

1. AUTHORIZE THE STAFF AND THE ATTORNEY GENERAL'S OFFICE TO TAKE SUCH ACTION AS MAY BE NECESSARY, INCLUDING LITIGATION, TO ACHIEVE CLARIFICATION OF THE STATE BOUNDARY WITH OREGON.



CURRY JOSEPHINE JACKSON OREGON
 BISKIYOU KLAMATH LAKE
 DEL NORTE MODOC WASHOE
 HUMBOLDT SHASTA LASSEN
 TRINITY
 TEHAMA PLUMAS
 MENDOCINO BUTTE
 GLENN BUTTE SIERRA
 COLUSA BUTTE YUBA
 LAKE BUTTE NEVADA
 SONOMA NAPA SACRAMENTO PLACER
 EL DORADO ORMSBY DOUGLAS
 ALPINE LYON
 AMADOR AMNERAL
 MONO
 CALAVERAS TUOLUMNE
 SAN JOAQUIN ESMERALDA
 CONTRA COSTA MARIPOSA
 SAN FRANCISCO STANISLAUS
 SAN MATEO SANTA CLARA MERCED
 MADERA INYO NEVADA
 SANTA CRUZ SAN BENITO FRESNO
 MONTEREY TULARE
 KINGS
 CLARK
 SAN LUIS OBISPO KERN SAN BERNARDINO
 SANTA BARBARA VENTURA LOS ANGELES
 TO SANTA BARBARA
 TO VENTURA
 TO LOS ANGELES
 RIVERSIDE YUMA
 ORANGE SAN DIEGO IMPERIAL ARIZONA