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BUREAU OF MINERAL RESOURCES, GEOLOGY AND GEOPHYSICS



Record 1972/9

ADA-LA TROBE PUMPED STORAGE HYDRO-ELECTRIC SCHEME, S.E.C., VICTORIA, 1971.

by

B.H. Dolan, P.J. Hill, and E.J. Polak

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CONTENTS

			Page					
,	SUMMARY							
1.	INTRODUCTION							
2.	GEOLOGY							
3.	ME	THODS AND EQUIPMENT	2					
4.	RESULTS							
· • •	4. 4. 4.	Seismic velocities Depth to bedrock Structural indications Dynamic properties of rocks in situ Laboratory measurements on cores	3 4 5 6 7					
5.	CON	ICLUSIONS	7					
6.	REFERENCES							
		ILLUSTRATIONS						
PLATE	1.	Location map (J55/B5-52A)						
	2.	Layout of traverses (J55/B5-43A)						
	3.	Upper Dam Site No. 1 (J55/B5-53)						
	4.							
	5.	Subsidiary Dam Site (J55/B5-55)						
	6.	Cross traverses (J55/B5-56)						
	7.	Dowey's Spur Road Traverse (J55/B5-57)						
	8.	Portal and Tunnel No. 1 (J55/B5-58)						
	9.	Tunnel No. 1 continuation (J55/B5-59)						
*	10.	Portal and Tunnel No. 2 (J55/B5-60)						
1	11.	Tunnel No. 2 continuation (J55/B5-61)						
1	12.	Tail race cut (J55/B5-62)						
	13.	Tail race cut continuation (J55/B5-63)						
1	l 4 .	Lower Dam Site (J55/B5-64)						
1	L5.	Lower Dam Site continuation (J55/B6-65)						
1	l6.	Dynamic properties of rocks (J55/B5-66A).						

SUMMARY

A seismic refraction survey was carried out in January-February 1971 by the Bureau of Mineral Resources, Geology and Geophysics on the site of the proposed pumped storage hydro-electric scheme of the State Electricity Commission of Victoria (S.E.C.) near Powelltown, Victoria. Two 24-channel seismic refraction units were used with geophone spacing of 25 or 50 ft on normal spreads and 10 ft on weathering spreads.

The bedrock in the area consists of Upper Devonian granite. The bedrock is characterized by a very high seismic velocity, but several zones of lower seismic velocity were located and interpreted as shear zones.

The overburden consists of weathered granite <u>in situ</u>, scree material, and alluvium. The weathered rock extends on some locations to depths of 200 feet.

The values of Poisson's ratio and modulus of elasticity for bedrock measured in situ and in the BMR Rock Testing Laboratory on cores are given. The correlation between in situ and laboratory measurements is high.

1. INTRODUCTION

The State Electricity Commission of Victoria proposes to construct a pumped storage hydro-electric scheme on the Ada and La Trobe Rivers near Powelltown. Investigations, consisting of geological mapping, drilling, and seismic refraction surveying, were carried out.

The proposed Ada-La Trobe pumped storage scheme is located in the Warburton area, approximately 70 miles east of Melbourne (see locality map, Plate 1). The scheme consists of an upper storage located on the Ada River and a lower storage located on the La Trobe River. The water storages will be connected through a power station by a tunnel approximately 1½ miles long, the head available for power generation being about 1000 ft. During the low power demand in Melbourne, the turbines will be reversed and the water pumped up from the lower storage area into the upper reservoir. Two alternative sites for the upper dam and tunnel were investigated.

A similar scheme at Wilhelmina has been investigated simultaneously (Dolan et al., 1971). The details of the schemes are discussed by Howard (1970).

A seismic refraction survey was carried out by the BMR Engineering Geophysics Group to assist in the site investigation. The party consisted of E.J. Polak, P.J. Hill, B.H. Dolan (Geophysicists) and M. Dickson (Technical Assistant). The work was carried out between 19 January and 17 February, 1971. The State Electricity Commission provided the topographical survey and six field hands to assist in the geophysical work.

Mr F.J. Taylor assisted with interpretation of results.

The field measurements were made in British units. The laboratory measurements and the plots of modulus of elasticity, which resulted from the laboratory measurements, were made in metric units.

2. GEOLOGY

(Prepared by P. Learmonth, S.E.C., Vic.)

The area covered by the proposed works is located entirely within the Tynong Granite Massif. The granite is a light coloured, mediumgrained to porphyritic potash granite of Upper Devonian age (Baker et al., 1938).

Rock outcrops are rare and weathering is extensive, the depth of completely weathered rock extending to at least 150 feet in some instances. Where observed in drilling, the change from completely weathered to hard

fresh rock is quite abrupt, there being no distinct zone of moderately weathered rock.

The stream pattern of the area is controlled by a rectangular system of joints and faults. The deep weathering of the granite may also have resulted as a consequence of this joint and fault system.

3. METHODS AND EQUIPMENT

The seismic refraction method was used in the survey (Heiland, 1946). The depths to the different velocity layers at the shotpoints were calculated using the time intercept method (Heiland, 1946, 512) and the depth at each geophone along the traverse was obtained using a modified method of differences (Heiland, 1946, 548). The values of Poisson's ratio and modulus of elasticity for bedrock material at a number of localities were calculated from in situ measurements of longitudinal and transverse wave velocities (Polak, 1963). To determine the ratio of longitudinal to transverse wave velocities, three Hall-Sears 7 Hz 3-component shallow-borehole geophones were used. These were buried at 25 ft spacing along the traverse line and shots were fired at sufficient distance from the geophones to assure bedrock velocities were measured.

In the BMR Rock Testing Laboratory, Poisson's ratio, modulus of elasticity, and logarithmic decrement, were determined on core samples from boreholes in the area. These values were calculated from measurements of ultrasonic velocities in the cores, the resonant frequency of vibrations, and the shape of their frequency response curves near resonance (Polak, 1963).

The equipment used during the survey consisted of two identical 24-channel S.I.E. seismic refraction seismographs and 20 Hz T.I.C. geophones. The spacing of geophones was 25 or 50 ft for normal spreads and 10 ft for weathering spreads. Shots were fired 5 ft and 200-400 ft from each end of the geophone spread and in line with spread, with an additional shot at the centre of the spread.

4. RESULTS

The layout of seismic traverses is shown on plate 2 and the sections obtained from seismic interpretations are shown on plates 3 to 15.

4.1 Seismic velocities

Two broad categories of materials can be resolved on the basis of seismic velocities:

- (1) unconsolidated material with a seismic velocity of less than 5,500 ft/sec
- (2) weathered and unweathered bedrock with seismic velocities between 3,500 and 20,000 ft/sec.

In the range 3,500 to 5,500 ft/sec, velocities in both groups overlap and therefore the final inclusion of material in any of the groups must be done with the help of geological or drilling evidence.

4.1.1 Unconsolidated material

Unconsolidated material consists of soil, alluvium, hillwash and scree material.

- (i) Soil and alluvium Soil and alluvium form a generally thin layer of up to six ft, but possibly reaching a depth of 25 ft on some locations. Seismic velocity is between 800 to 1,200 ft/sec. In all computations, a velocity of 1,000 ft/sec was accepted for this layer. A velocity of 5,000 ft/sec was obtained in some areas of known alluvium, indicating the layer is completely water saturated and presumably below the water table.
- Hillwash and scree material and very weathered bedrock material these are found on slopes and on flat areas below the slopes. The material consists of angular or partly rounded boulders imbedded in clay, and the velocities in this layer are between 3,000 and 5,000 ft/sec. It is possible that at the bottom of this layer large boulders increase layer velocity, and scree material may be included into lower layers in the seismic interpretation. Very weathered bedrock material will have the same velocity as scree material, the only difference being that this material is in situ.

4.1.2 Weathered to unweathered material

(i) Completely weathered (CW) to highly weathered (HW) rock— This material has the same velocity as scree material; the only difference being that the weathered material is in situ, a fact which is not recognizable from seismic velocities.

(ii) Slightly weathered to fresh bedrock - Higher seismic velocities 5,000 ft/sec to approximately 8,000 ft/sec indicate rock less weathered than above with seismic velocities increasing with the decrease in weathering. Above 8,000 ft/sec the rock should be jointed, possibly with some weathering on joints, and the joints may be open for lower velocities in this range; with velocities of above 12,000 ft/sec, the rock is fresh with joints closed.

The seismic velocities can be related to some physical properties of the rock, and the relationship between seismic velocity and modulus of elasticity will be discussed in parts 4.3 and 4.4. Two important relations should be mentioned here:

- (a) the rippability it is generally possible to remove, without blasting, rock with a seismic velocity of 6,000 ft/sec using a D9 bulldozer (Bartlett, 1969);
- (b) the strength of rock rock with seismic velocity of 7,500 ft/sec will support a medium height earth dam (Wiebenga & Polak, 1956).

4.2 Depth to bedrock

Depths to bedrock obtained during the survey are plotted on plates 3 to 15.

There are some limitations to the seismic method, and these should be remembered when examining the results shown on the plates:

- 1) Using a spacing of 50 ft between geophones, some of the details of the bedrock surface can be missed and thus narrow zones of deeper weathering may not be recorded at all; the depressions in the buried surface may be shown to be shallower and the uplifts to be depressed.
- 2) On sections where several low velocity layers are shown to lie directly on high velocity bedrock (e.g. Plate 9), the existence of a thin layer with velocity of 7,000 to 10,000 ft/sec is suspected, but the layer is too thin to be shown on the time distance curves. The depth shown on the section will be slightly underestimated if this layer exists.

- 3) The depth to bedrock is calculated using a conversion factor obtained at the shot points. Between the shot points, the conversion factor is interpolated assuming a gradual lateral change of properties of upper layers. This may introduce some inaccuracy in depth determination.
- 4) The boundaries between upper layers are determined at shot points, but interpolated between them. For this reason they are shown as a broken line on the sections.

The error of the absolute depth determinations is estimated to be about 15 percent. This is based on experience from previous surveys where the interpretations of the seismic surveys have been tested by drilling. The relative depth to bedrock and the general shape of the interface will show greater accuracy.

4.3 Structural indications

Structural changes in the bedrock may be indicated by the seismic survey in several ways:

- 1) by a change in seismic velocity;
- 2) by a localized change in thickness of overburden or local deflection in the bedrock interface;
- 3) by a change in character on part of the field record.

It is necessary to stress that the use of only one geophysical method to indicate structural changes will not generally be sufficient for a high level of confidence in the interpretation. Therefore the following indications in this Record should be considered as suggestions for further investigations by geological or other means.

- 4.3.1 A fault is possible in cutting No. 1 portal (Plate 8) at chainage 799, and in No. 1 dam site (Plate 3) at chainage 2686. Mussa Creek may follow this fault further east, with indications of faulting at chainage 830 (Plate 5 near peg No. A55) and on chainage 350 on cross-line No. 3 (Plate 5).
- 4.3.2 In tunnel No. 1, an indication of a fault is shown at chainage 4774 followed by a low velocity zone (9,500 ft/sec) extending to chainage 5272 (Plate 9). This indication of a fault is confirmed by thickening of the overburden layer. Continuation of this structure is suggested in tunnel No. 2 at chainage 4566 (Plate 11) by thickening of the weathered layer. However, there is no corresponding drop in bedrock velocity as in tunnel No. 1.

- 4.3.3 In tunnel No. 1 (Plate 9) at chainage 6760, a boundary between two velocities 17,000 and 11,000 ft/sec may be faulted. This fault may cross the tailrace cut at chainage 600 (Plate 12), although there is no corresponding change in seismic velocities.
- 4.3.4 Along the whole length of the tailrace cut (Plates 12 and 13), a less weathered layer of velocity 7,000 to 8,500 ft/sec is indicated. The same layer is too thin on the tunnel lines to be recorded. The tunnel lines are located along the slope where the weathered material would be more subject to slumping, resulting in deep penetration of surface water and more rapid removal of weathered material, while the tailrace traverse is level and therefore the weathered material is more stable. It is also possible that the tailrace cut traverse follows a fault, and the deeper weathering is a result of this fault. The thickness of the alluvium (5,000 ft/sec) increases in an easterly direction, indicating deep erosion of La Trobe River.
- 4.3.5 On the Lower Dam site, the La Trobe River follows a fault which is indicated by a depression in the bedrock and a lower velocity zone (Plate 14) close to peg S.
- 4.3.6 On the Lower Dam site, a possibility of a fault exists at the southern end at chainage 450 (from peg A) where a low velocity zone is indicated (Plate 14).
- 4.3.7 Excessive thickness of overburden at chainage 338 (Plate 15), Section U-Y may represent a fault parallel to the La Trobe River, but there is no decrease in bedrock velocity.
- 4.3.8 Although seismic refraction work indicates that the directions of flow of Mussa Creek and La Trobe River (see 4.3.1 and 4.3.5) are controlled by faults, there is no evidence that the Ada River follows a fault.

4.4 Dynamic properties of rocks in situ

Table 1 gives the dynamic properties of the rock as measured on the sites and the locations where the geophones and the shot were placed for the test.

The computation of the results was carried out according to the usual procedure (Polak, 1963).

In computing the dynamic properties of the rock in situ, it is necessary to know the specific gravity. In order to obtain the specific gravity, use was made of a plot of longitudinal velocity against specific gravity of core samples. Hence from the known values of longitudinal velocity in situ, the specific gravity was chosen. This procedure gives an average value (between shot and geophone), of modulus of elasticity for the rock in situ which is higher than the true value because there is an overestimation of the density, no account being taken of jointing. This overestimation may be up to 10 percent for rock of low velocity. For deeper rocks, where the joints are more closed, the overestimation is very small.

The dynamic properties of rocks listed on Table 1 were measured at the interface of the unweathered bedrock (the lowest velocity 13,100 ft/sec). The results are plotted on Plate 16. Extrapolating the best fitting line to the velocity of the rock in the shear zone (9,000 ft/sec = 2,800 m/sec), a value for the modulus of elasticity of 2.3 x 10 lbs/sq in is obtained. This value is lower than the value for average concrete, and therefore if the shear zones extend into the tunnel or underground power station, this fact must be taken into consideration in design of the structures or tunnel lining.

4.5 Laboratory measurements or cores

Table 2 gives the value of some properties of rocks from Ada-La Trobe bores measured in the BMR Rock Testing Laboratory. Plate 16 shows a plot of modulus of elasticity versus the seismic velocity. Table 2 indicates that 3 rock cores described as a "slightly weathered" are characterized by a velocity of more than 17,000 ft/sec and 3 rock cores described as "moderately weathered" give velocity of 10,000-12,000 ft/sec.

The regression coefficients on both laboratory and field measurements are very high, indicating that the quality of rock is uniform over the area investigated.

Values for the logarithmic decrement of the fresh rock cores are low, and even for moderately weathered rock are below 0.1 (E2 = 0.086; E4 = 0.089), indicating uniform weathering throughout each rock core.

5. CONCLUSIONS

The following conclusions can be reached from the results of the seismic refraction survey:

5.1 Weathering

The extent of weathering is considerable in all parts of the surveyed area and weathering depths of 180 to 200 ft are quite common.

On many locations in the area, the highly weathered material is so thick that the thin slightly weathered layer beneath it has probably been missed. The deeper weathering along the tunnel lines may indicate slumping of the weathered material down the slope.

5.2 The bedrock

High seismic velocities indicate good quality rock. Several wide zones of lower velocity were found and may indicate shear zones connected with faulting.

5.3 Dynamic properties of rocks

Moduli of elasticity of the bedrock, as measured in the field and in the laboratory, are high. Values of both measurements correlate very closely. It is expected that the bedrock, if jointed, has the joints closed. Where there are low velocity zones (less than 11,000 ft/sec), the modulus of elasticity of the rock is lower than that of concrete. Some of these zones extend below tunnel level.

6. REFERENCES

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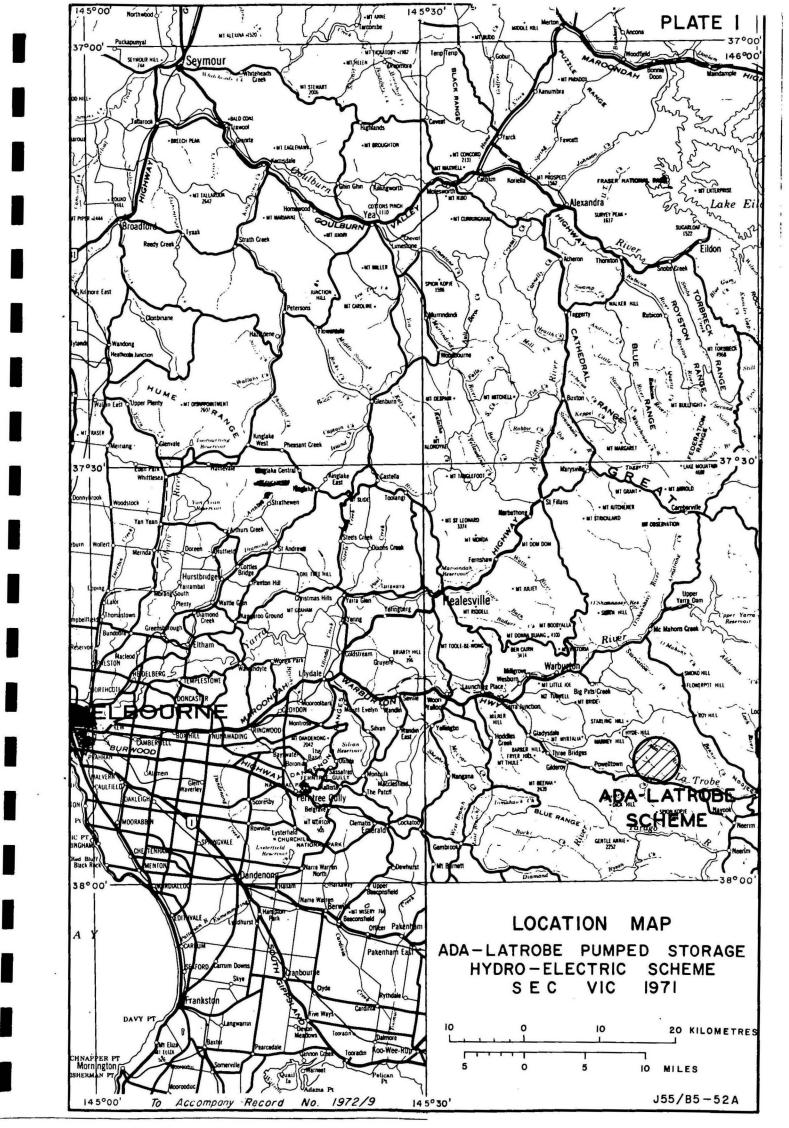
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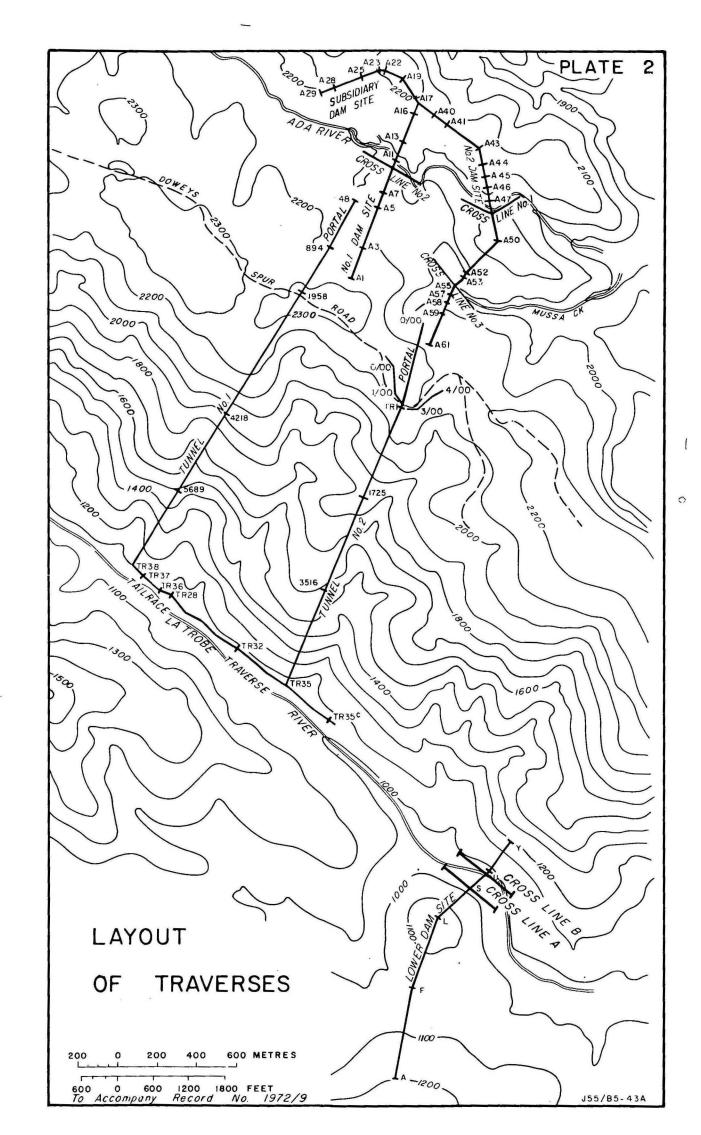
TABLE 1. DYNAMIC PROPERTIES OF ROCKS - IN SITU MEASUREMENTS

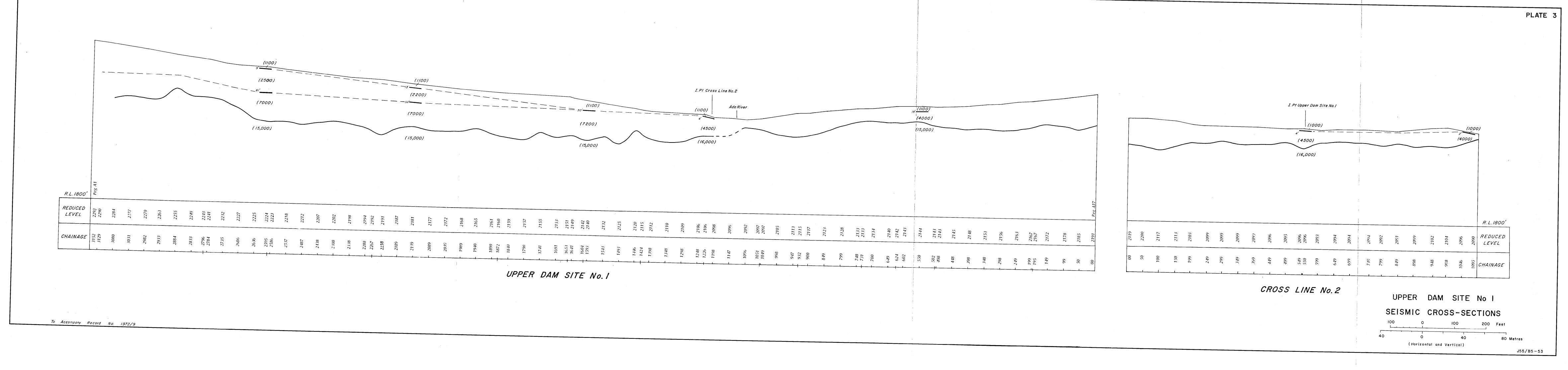
Location Geophone Position Shot Position (chainage)		Longitudinal Velocity		Poisson's Ratio	Modulus of kg/cm ² x 10 ⁵	Elasticity lbs/sq in x 106	S.G. as measured from the plot of S.G. against velocity for core samples	
		m/sec	ft/sec		· · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · ·			
NO. 1 DAM SITE					15			
2050	3 205 ·	4600	15000	0.21	4.93	7.01	2.57	
2150	800	4600	15000	0.28	4.34	6.17	2•57	
2550	2820	4600	15000	0.28	4.34	6.17	2.57	
DAM NO. 2	,		,					
400 ft South of Peg A61	00 (Peg A55)	4900	16000	0.245	5•32	7.56	2.58	
1125 Between Pegs A43,	1600 (A50)	4600	15000	0.28	4.34	6.17	2.57	
SUBSIDIARY DAM SIT	E							
Peg A28	250 ft East of Peg A23	4000	13100	0.25	3•44	4.89	2.53	
CONNECTION TIE (SU	BSIDIARY, NO. 2 DA	M SITES)					·	
300 (Between Pegs A17, A19)	Peg A23	5100	16700	0.29	5.27	7•49	2.60	
LOWER DAM SITE								
500	1125	4600	15000	0.27	4•44	. 6.31	2.57	
TUNNEL NO. 1						*		
7 50	295	4900	16000	0.285	4.88	6.95	2.58	
5700	4900	4600	15000	0.3.	4.12	5.86	2.57	
2350	1200	4600	15000	0.295	4.18	5•94	2.57	
2250	3200	4300	14100	0.26	3.93	5•59	2.55	
5650	4125	4300	14,100	0.3	3.57	5.08	2.55	

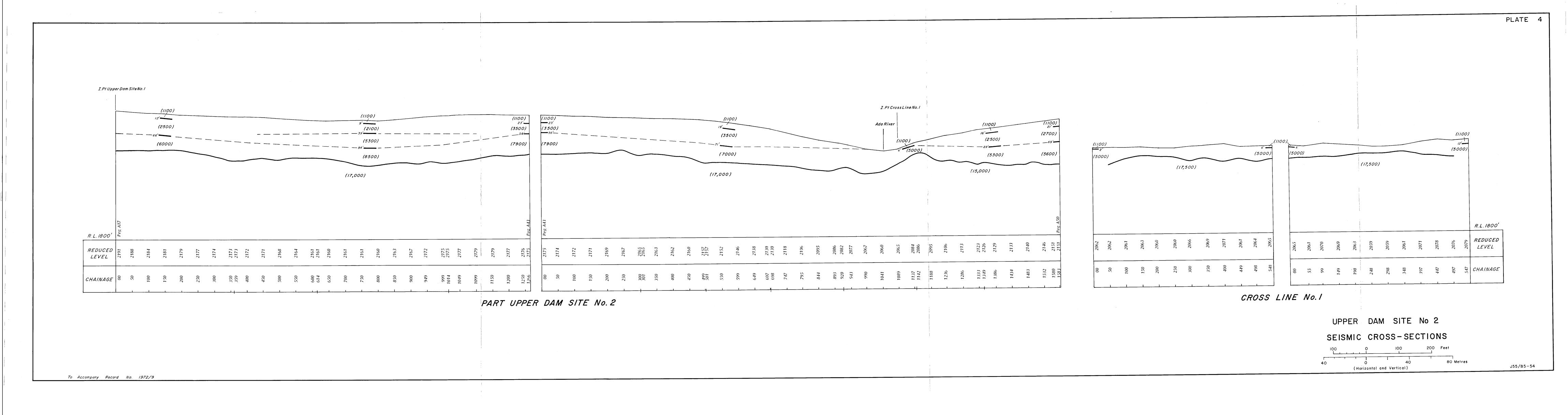
TABLE 2. LABORATORY MEASUREMENTS

Borehole	Depth Feet	Rock Type	Specific Gravity		oudinal city ft/sec	Modulus of kg/cm ² . x10 ⁵	f Elasticity lbs/in ² x10 ⁶	Poisson's Ratio	Logarithmic Decrement
E1	9916" - 1001	Granite Slightly Weathered	2.58	5279	17300	5•73	8.15	0.28	0.056
E2 .	134'6" - 135'	Moderately Weathered	2.49	3194	10500	2.21	3.14	0.24	0.096
E2	16816" - 1691	Slightly Weathered	2.56	5223	17,100	5•97	8.49	0.25	0.032
E4	1551 - 15516"	Moderately Weathered	2.53	3723	12200	2.80	3.98	0.28	0.089
E 5	1361	Highly Weathered	2.08						
E7	121' - 121'6"	Fresh	2.65	5733	18800	7.04	10.01	0.28	0.021
E7	9016" - 911	Moderately	2.45	2600	8500	:			
E7	94' - 94'6"	Weathered Slightly Weathered	2.61	5275	17,300	5.36	7.62	0.31	0.050
E8	24'6" - 25'	Slightly Weathered	2.60	4841	15900	5.00	7.11	0.27	0.056
E12	3615" - 361	Fresh	2.63	4975	16300	5-14	7-31	0.29	0.041

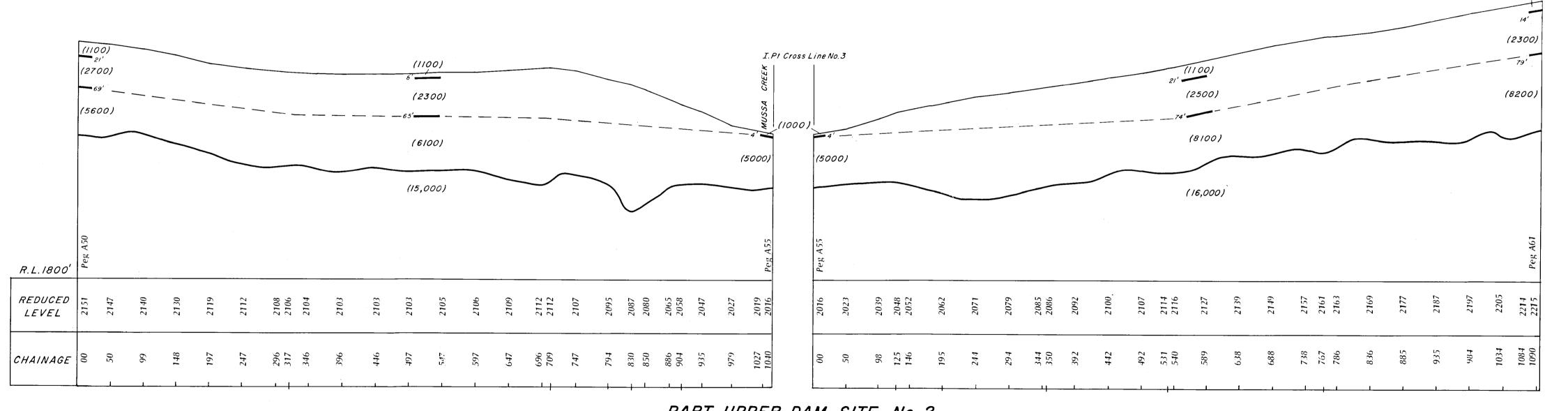


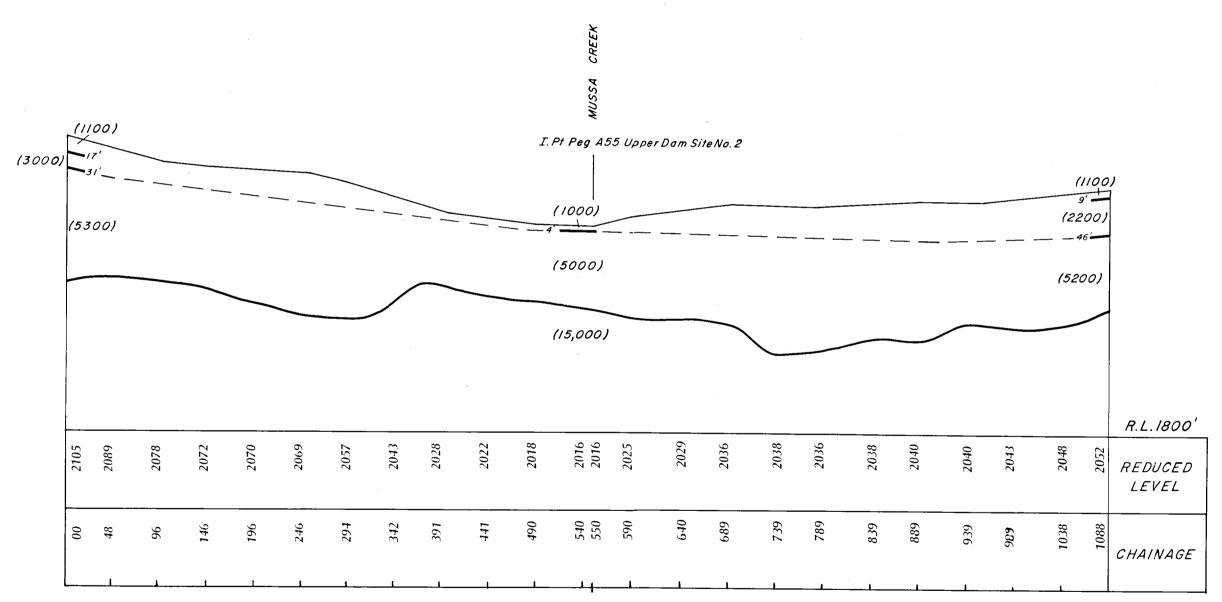










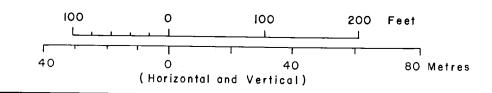


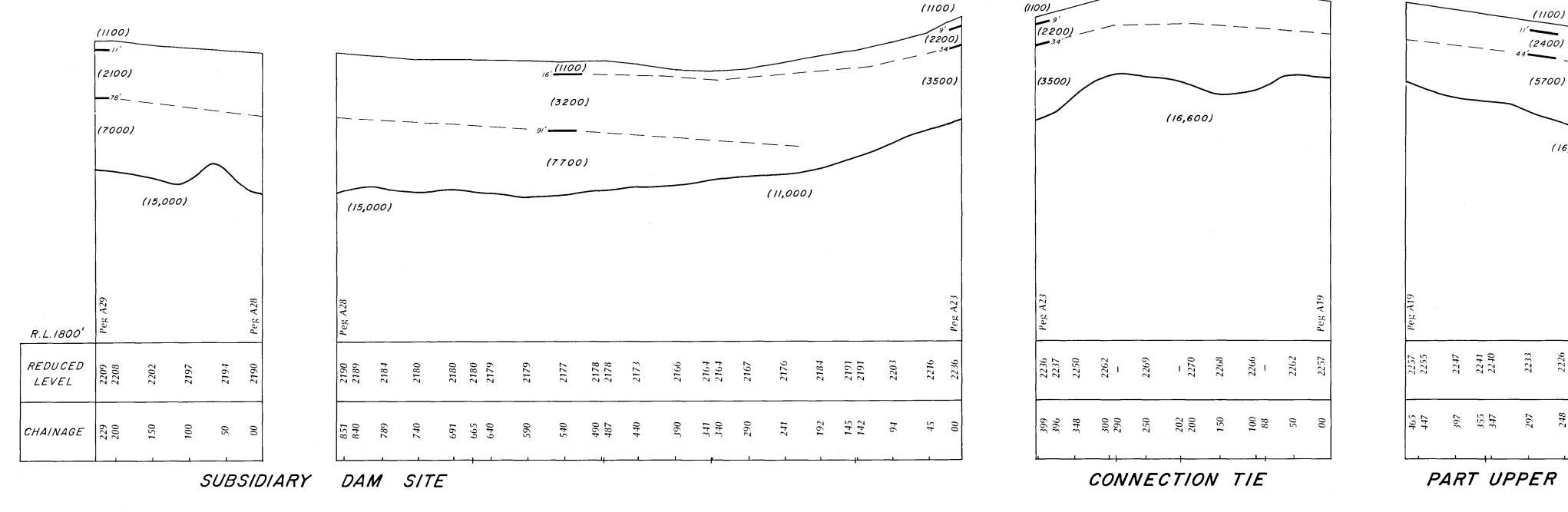
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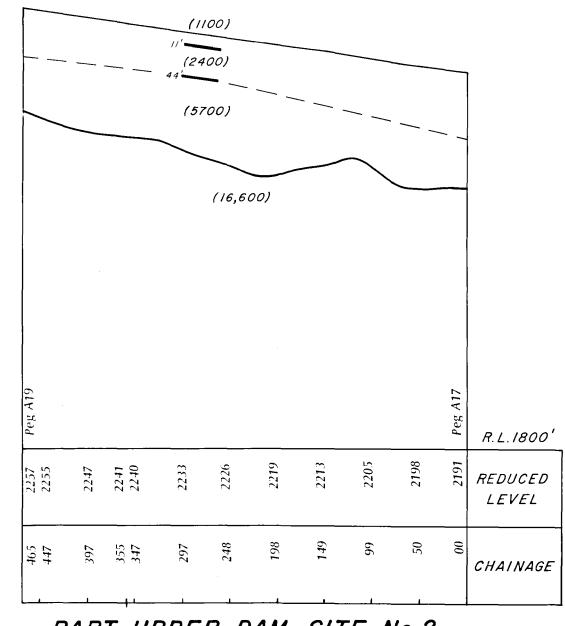
PART UPPER DAM SITE No. 2

SUBSIDIARY DAM SITE

SEISMIC CROSS-SECTIONS

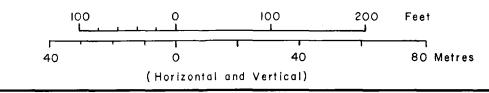




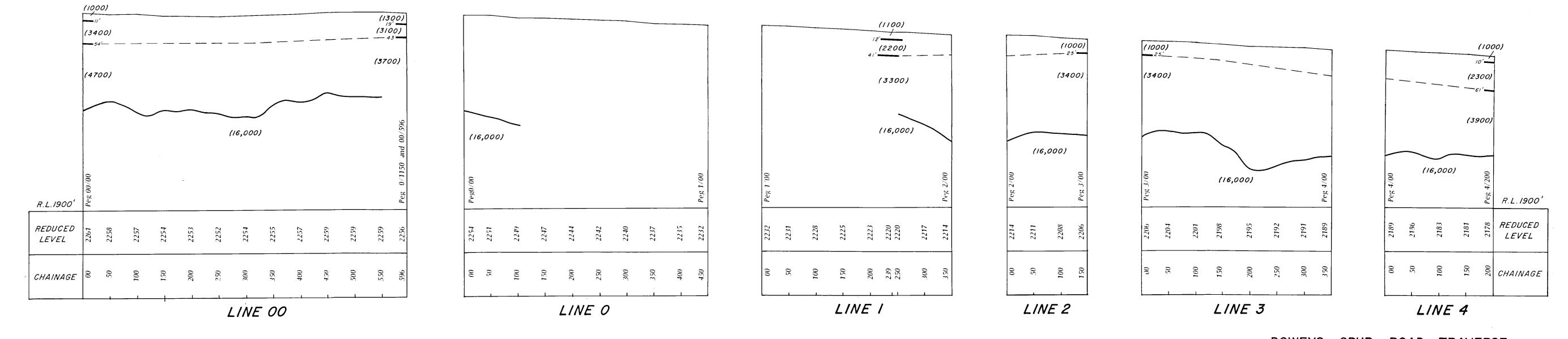


PART UPPER DAM SITE No.2

SEISMIC CROSS-SECTIONS



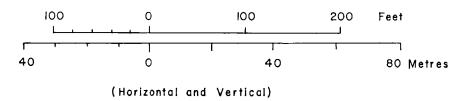
To Accompany Record No. 1972/9



DOWEYS SPUR ROAD TRAVERSE

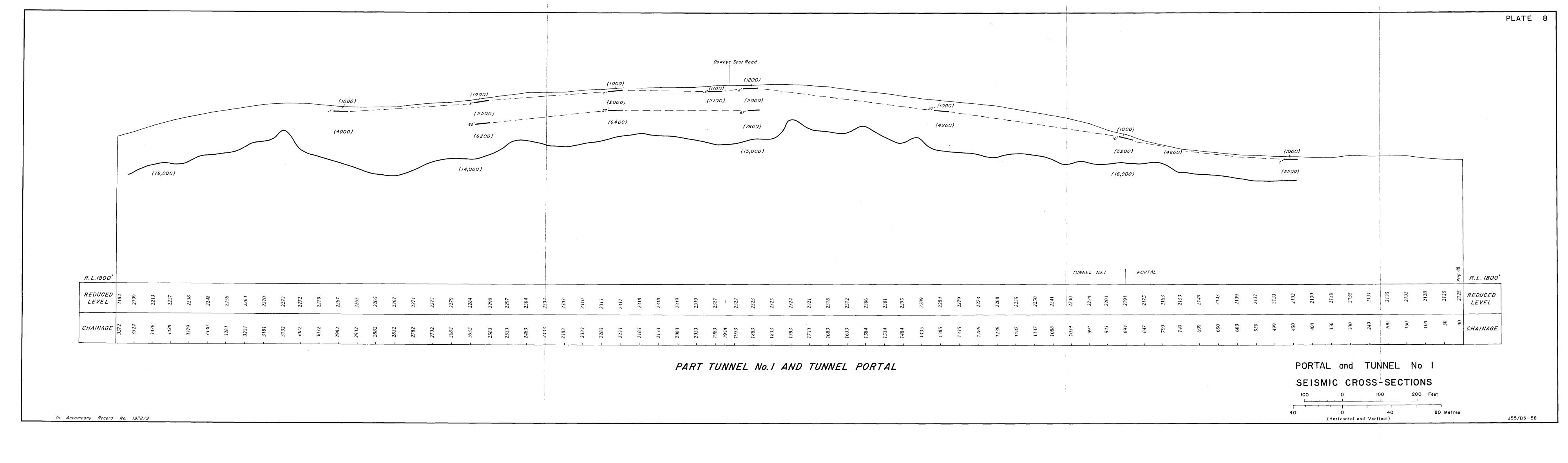
DOWEYS SPUR ROAD TRAVERSE

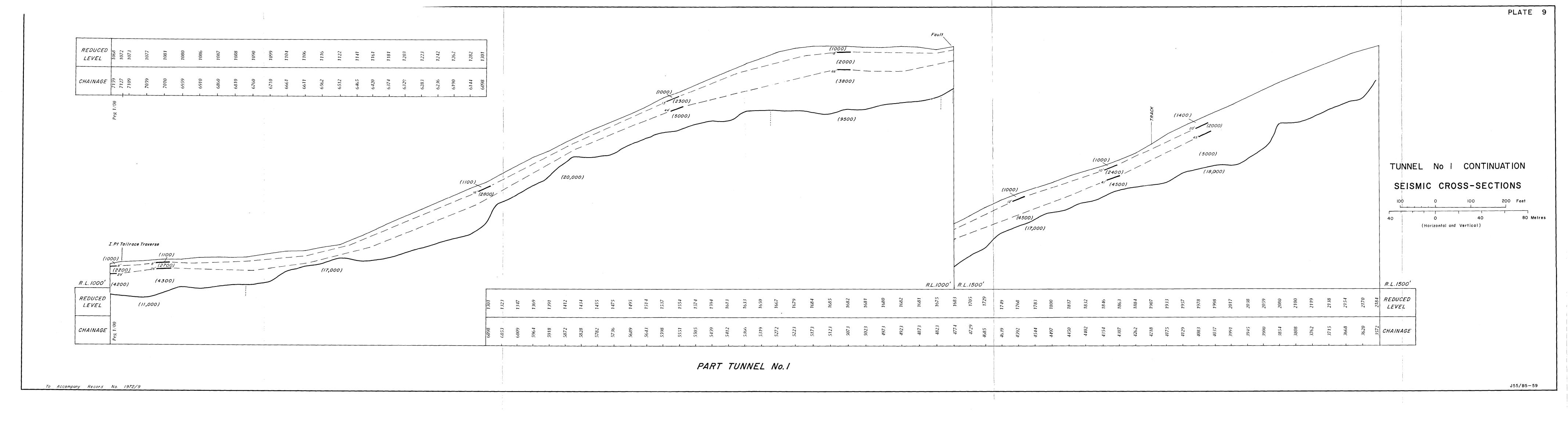


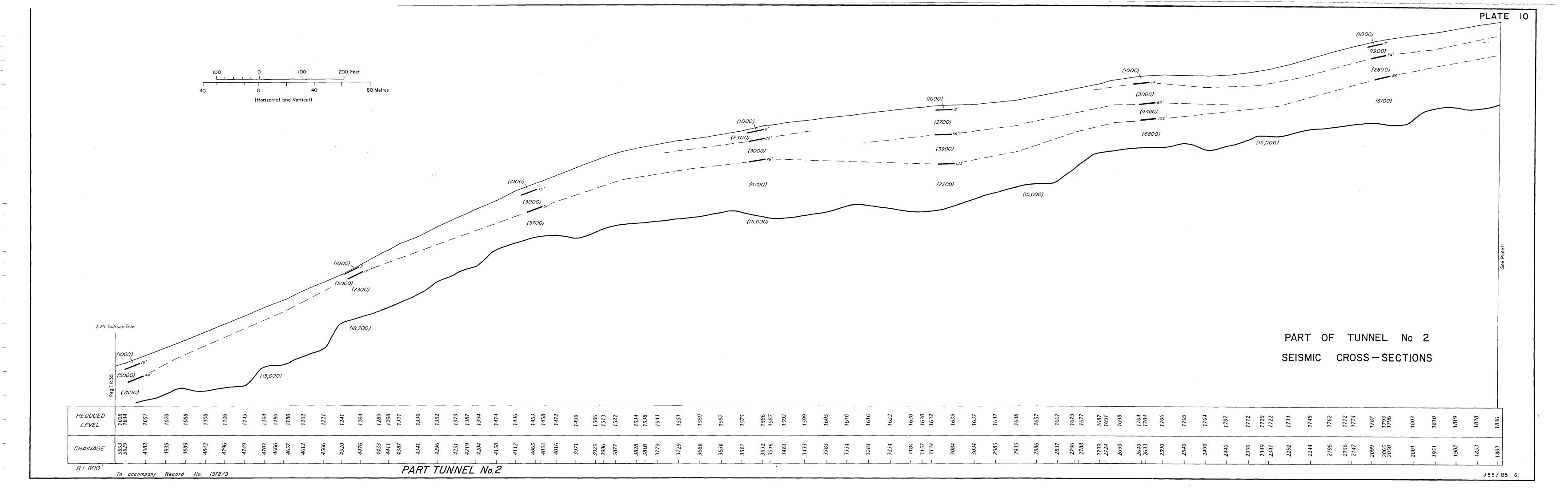


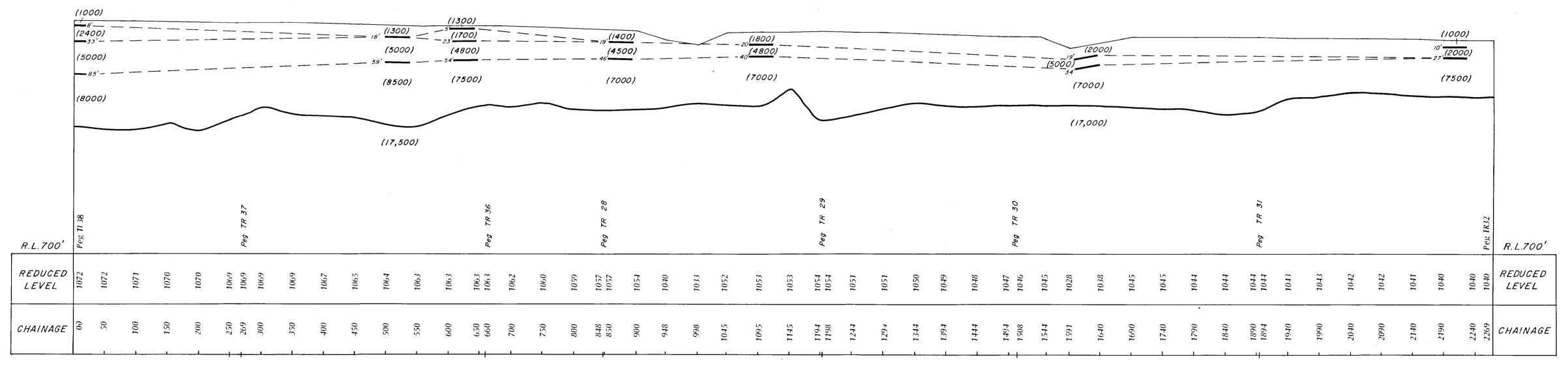
J55/B5-57

To Accompany Record No. 1972/9









PART TAILRACE TRAVERSE

TAILRACE CUT

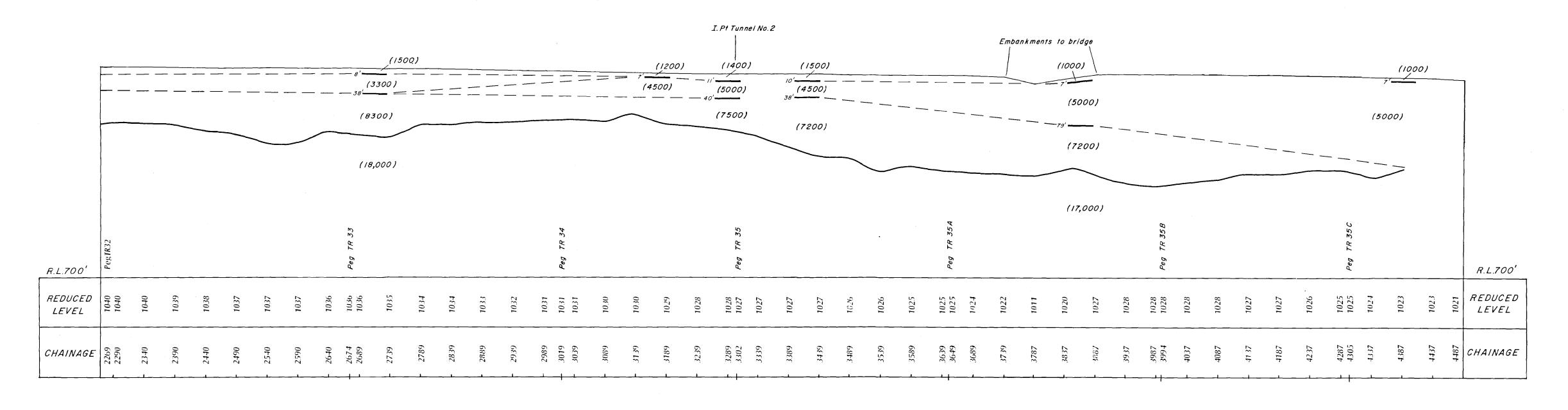
SEISMIC CROSS-SECTIONS

100 0 100 200 Feet

40 0 40 80 Metres

(Horizontal and Vertical)

To Accompany Record No. 1972/9



PART TAILRACE TRAVERSE

TAILRACE CUT CONTINUATION
SEISMIC CROSS-SECTIONS

