

**Special Use Permit WSUP21-0036 and WADMIN21-0016 Silver Circle Ranch  
Board of Adjustment Hearing date February 3, 2022**

**Holcomb Ranch Community Opposition to  
WSUP21-0036 and WADMIN21-0016  
Presentation to Board of Adjustment**

Dear Honorable Members of the Board of Adjustment:

We are a group of neighbors who live immediately adjacent to and in the area surrounding 3400 Holcomb Ranch Lane, where a commercial equestrian center has been proposed to be constructed, despite significant flaws which render the scale of this use incompatible with the site and detrimental to the surrounding residential properties. Although we respect the desire of the clients of the applicant, Pro Pony LLC (“Applicant”), to have a recreational facility, most, if not all, of these clients do not live in our neighborhood and may not understand the consequences of a having a large commercial enterprise next door. We neighbors are thankful for this hearing before the Board of Adjustment since Pro Pony has been operating without authorization for its commercial use for 2 years.

We are asking you to consider that the Applicant has not described the full extent of the impacts of its proposed use to the neighborhood. This incompatible use proposal would create a number of significant issues including groundwater contamination, nuisance conditions, fire safety concerns, and direct harm to neighboring uses.

Moreover, the Applicant refers to its request for an SUP as an “grandfathered horse stable operation”, which is an incorrect characterization of the allowed use on the property. A commercial stable is only permitted with a special use permit, otherwise the use is prohibited. We understand that a significantly smaller commercial stable operation functioned at this site 12 years ago, but since then has not been a commercial enterprise; instead, it only had stables for private use. Because the commercial stable aspect of this property has not been in effect for many years, it is not grandfathered under Washoe County Code. *See* WCC 110.904.20(a)(2) (“If such a [nonconforming] use ceases for any reason for a period of more than twelve (12) consecutive months, any subsequent use of such land shall conform to the requirements of this Development Code for the regulatory zone in which it is located”).

There were never 23 horses on this property. There were no high intensity lights. Amplified public address systems were never used. No clinics, shows, competitions or other events were held inviting horses and riders that were not on-site. No industrial sized 13,580 square foot metal building rising 4 stories above the existing grade ever existed. Thus, this application should not be given any treatment as a “grandfathered” use. We respectfully request that this Board consider all of the significant and adverse impacts that this immense use will have on our small neighborhood.

## **Comments relating to WSUP21-0036**

A commercial operation is not compatible with our neighborhood as it exists today. In order to approve this SUP for new commercial stable 5 findings must be satisfied. These findings cannot be met.

### **1. Consistency. The proposed use is consistent with the action programs, policies, standards and maps of the Master Plan and the applicable area plan**

Staff Comment:

“The Area Plan acknowledges that residents own horses and, ‘the area still possesses a rural quality that pays homage to its Western heritage.’ ”

Opposition Comment:

This incompatible use proposal is inconsistent with several policies of the Southwest Truckee Meadows Area Plan, including but not limited to the following:

- Policy SW.2.5: Significant lighting is proposed, but the Area Plan requires lighting be minimized to ensure “dark sky” standards.
- Policy SW.2.10: The impact of new uses on adjacent properties must be mitigated through a community process. The Applicant has only invited its supporters, who are not adjacent property owners, to its community process. The affected community has been left out of this sham process.
- Policy SW.2.13: The proposed use must consider the impacts to the neighborhood, including with respect to traffic, lighting, hours of operation, parking, and safety. The neighbors have been left out of this process and cannot be assured that these impacts have been mitigated.
- Policy SW.2.14: Approval of this SUP must include a finding that the community character will be adequately conserved through mitigation of potential negative impacts. Considering that staff is recommending approval with only standard and de minimis conditions of approval, this finding cannot be met.
- Policy SW.10.3: Approval of this SUP must include a finding that no significant degradation of air quality will occur. The wear on the land from a herd of commercial horses will eliminate any grasses on the meadow. The barren pastureland will allow dust, pollutants, and ground up feces to become airborne and cause further burden to downwind property owners. We are not aware of any demonstration from the Applicant that these conditions will be mitigated.

Furthermore, many of the neighbors own horses and cattle but not as an intensive commercial operation – they are for our own use and enjoyment. There is nothing whatsoever about the boarding of 23 horses with just 3 acres of pasture and the proposed construction of a featureless 13,580 square foot building rising 4 stories above ground level that pays homage to our Western Heritage.

**2. Site Suitability. Adequate utilities, roadway improvements, sanitation, water supply drainage, and other necessary facilities have been provided [....]**

Staff Comment: “The site is physically suitable for the type of development. The site has been used as commercial stable for many years...”

Opposition Comment:

It is our understanding that commercial horse boarding ceased on or about 2010. Warren Nelson’s horses were kept there after that. When the property was sold to Pro Pony, there were no horses on site and no commercial operation had existed for over a decade. Pro Pony did not take over a grandfathered commercial stable use. They bought land with a stable and a barn on it and now seek to convince this body that the abandoned use should be grandfathered, despite the clear Washoe County Code provisions to the contrary. There has never been as many as 23 horses on site until Pro Pony bought the property. Please see section A below that lists the degradation that has occurred with that level of intensity.

Additionally, there is not adequate sanitation or drainage which exists on the site to serve this intense, incompatible use. We understand that the property runs on septic, and will not have the capability to serve a commercial enterprise with patrons on the premises constantly. The sheer number of the Applicant’s supporters (who are not neighbors) should indicate to this body the amount of additional traffic and sewage usage at this site.

Finally, increasing the number of permitted horses on this site will create significant drainage issues for adjacent neighbors living downstream. Toxins from urine, feed, and other chemicals will pollute adjacent properties and creeks.

**3. Issuance Not Detrimental. Issuance of the permit will not be significantly detrimental to the public health, safety or welfare; injurious to the property or improvements of adjacent properties; or detrimental to the character of the surrounding area.**

Staff Comment: “The commercial stable is existing with two outdoor arenas on site.”

Opposition Comment:

Staff’s comment is demonstrably false. This is an application to establish a new commercial stable operation. It does not exist. There were never outdoor arenas until Pro Pony started operating without having obtained this special use permit. There were 3 acres of irrigated pasture. There was an outdoor riding ring, a rectangular outdoor riding area that could be used for dressage practice and a round pen.

Staff Comment: The conditions of approval will further provide requirements for the facility to operate without significant negative impact upon the surrounding area...”

Opposition Comment:

We cannot find any meaningful operating conditions in the staff report that address issues critical to securing the quiet enjoyment and character of our neighborhood. We believe that a new commercial operation is detrimental to the character of our neighborhood, injurious to adjacent properties and detrimental to the public safety on Holcomb Ranch Lane.

If, however, you decide that the findings required for approving a SUP for a new commercial stable can be made after taking into consideration the public testimony on February 3, 2022, you have the authority to impose operating conditions for the life of the business that should be applied to any new commercial use moving into a high density rural neighborhood.

The following are issues that we feel need to be addressed at a minimum:

**1. There should be a maximum of 12 horses allowed.**

5 for personal use and 7 for boarding/lessons. When Warren Nelson was alive he lived on site. During that time there were on average 8 to 9 horses. Commercial boarding had been discontinued for over a decade when Pro Pony purchased the property. Their commercial activity that was not authorized by a special use permit has increased the number of horses from 0 to 23. The prior use was residential, not commercial. Now, the owner and the trainers do not live on site.

The correct starting point for analyzing the incremental impacts of this application is from 0, not from 23. In addition, the number of horses is not the whole story. With horses used for personal use only one rider is typical. With a business emphasis on lesson horses the number of riders increases tremendously and the impact on the neighborhood increases along with it.

Pro Pony's current unauthorized operation of a 23 horse commercial stable has already had a significantly detrimental effect on the character of the area as detailed in the following pages.

**A. The Site is not Suitable.**

Today what once was 3 acres of scenic grass pasture has been divided into a number of paddocks turning into dirt. Today on this turn in the road, manure is visibly piled in front of a residence and an unattractive large metal cargo container is parked. See [Pictures 1, 2 and 3](#).

**B. Significant detriment to the Public Safety.**

There has already been a significant increase in the traffic caused by the 23 horse operation that has not been authorized by a special use permit. The focus should not be

on the increase in traffic from a 23 to a 25 horse operation, rather the proper focus should be on the increase from 0 to 25 horses. This is an application for a new commercial operation and the full impact of the number of trips that logically result from Pro Pony's needing to request a 31 car parking lot needs to be evaluated. The size of this parking lot would be larger than many strip mall lots on Longley Lane and throughout intense mixed used areas of Washoe County. A truck and trailer coming from the west on Holcomb cannot make a right turn into the driveway without veering into oncoming traffic. What effect does that have on the safety of both vehicles and the bicyclists that use this route constantly? [See Pictures 4, 5 and 6.](#)

### **C. Detrimental to the Adjacent Properties.**

The smell of urine from the stable and from the manure pile resulting from the current level of a 23 horse operation is unimaginable. The application does not even mention that an amplified public address system is used and destroys the quiet enjoyment. The application does not disclose that during their unauthorized commercial use operation high intensity lights have been installed on 25 to 30 foot poles that ruin the nights. The use of an amplified public address system and the high intensity lights should be prohibited at all times. There are residences adjacent to the south, east and diagonally west as well as on the rise directly above the site. [See Pictures 7 and 8.](#)

### **D. Detrimental to the Character of the Surrounding Area.**

Many horses and cattle are in the area but not as a part of an intense commercial enterprise. Simply put, a commercial enterprise in this neighborhood is not an appropriate use. A 23 horse operation is not compatible with the neighborhood that exists in 2022.

### **2. All Buildings should meet Commercial Code Standards.**

This is a new use that must come into compliance with all applicable building codes. The application is not merely a change to an existing nonconforming use. It does not appear that this new commercial operation meets existing commercial building standards. The barn, the stable, the apartments, the trainers' full bath and the public restroom should be required to comply with current commercial codes relating to, among other things, fire, electrical, plumbing, and Americans with Disabilities Act access.

### **3. Environmental concerns for Pollution by Animal Waste need to be addressed.**

There are Washoe County protection requirements for keeping urine and manure from leaching into the ground water, Dry Creek and Last Chance Ditch which all flow through the property and onto the property that is directly across Holcomb Ranch Lane. If a horse drinks 20 gallons of water per day most of that comes out the "other end" as urine and makes its way into the ground water and adjacent creeks – especially during the times of year when the pasture is flood irrigated.

A horse may produce 50 pounds of manure daily. Add another 60 to 70 pounds of barn waste daily and it is readily apparent that tons of animal and barn waste should be removed offsite by third party contractors and kept in enclosed dumpsters in the interim.

#### **4. Competitions/Clinics/Shows etc. should be expressly prohibited on site.**

Competitions, clinics, shows, and other such large gathering events were not held before Pro Pony began their operation without the appropriate use permission from the Board of Adjustment. The applicant has requested competitions, clinics and shows with 50 riders from the “community”. When the addition of parents, other trainers and spectators, horses, trucks and trailers are considered, it is likely that 150 to 200 people will be on site at any given event. These types of events would have a significant impact on the surrounding neighborhood and especially so on the immediately adjacent neighbors, who oppose this application.

Furthermore, allowing such events goes beyond what is permitted for a commercial stable use. Bringing in horses, riders and spectators does not fit the definition of a commercial stable operation. They have been using an amplified public address system. These types of public events should require permits for outdoor entertainment or other extremely intense uses. These type of events might be suitable for properties with 35 to 40 acres, but they are not well suited for properties of this size adjacent to residential homes.

The application provides no analysis of the incremental traffic impact caused by those events. The weekends are probably the times most heavily used by cyclists who would be jeopardized by trucks and horse trailers, especially when driven by people unfamiliar with the area.

The Applicant indicates that the upper pasture area can be used for trailer parking. Only 1 access per parcel is permitted on Holcomb Ranch – that is the driveway. There is no other access to the upper pasture permitted via Holcomb Ranch.

There is one public restroom in the barn and only a 2,000 gallon residential rated septic system– being used by 150-200 people. This is woefully insufficient.

#### **5. Hours of Operation.**

Lessons, training, etc. should be limited to the hours between 7 AM to 6 PM, or until sundown, whichever is earlier, Tuesday through Saturday. There are residences all around this site that are affected by this operation. Any other operating hours would significantly injure our quiet enjoyment.

#### **6. Washoe County Health.**

We agree with the condition included in the staff report. In addition, County Health and appropriate agencies should monitor how the horse wash stall waste water and high

pressure barn/stable cleaning water is captured by the septic system to avoid polluting ground water and streams running through the property and onto neighbors' property.

## **Comments relating to WADMIN21-0016**

An industrial sized metal building does not honor the history of Warren Nelson and Silver Circle Ranch.

### **1. Accessory Use.**

The proposed 13,580 square foot building that is approximately 29 feet tall is “being addressed as an “accessory use” according to the application. However, the owner and trainers do not live on the site, so the primary use cannot be considered residential. It is clear that this massive building would be a significant part of the primary use. There are 3 apartments in the barn with total square footage of 1,400. This is not appropriate and the Board should reject the idea that the enormous metal building is merely accessory.

### **2. The Site Is Not Suitable.**

The building will sit on about 10 feet of fill because it will be in a FEMA Flood Zone AE. This is a serious concern, as demonstrated in the picture we provide depicting water running through the site in 2017. [See Picture 9.](#)

More importantly, if completed the 13,580 square foot building would be about 39 feet above the existing grade. This site is certainly not suitable for a building of even half that height. The size and footprint of the building would cover an entire lot in a residential area – more than a quarter acre.

### **3. The Building is Injurious to the Adjacent Properties and Detrimental to the Character of the Surrounding Area.**

The narrative of the application fails to mention that the height of this building is 29 feet. If completed it would sit about 39 feet above the existing grade due to the added fill. That is the equivalent of a 4-story high rise in this rural residential neighborhood. The design is featureless and the material is metal. It has an industrial feel and impact that is totally incompatible with the surroundings. [See Picture 10.](#) The proposed building clearly does not blend into the character of the residences adjacent to the south, east and diagonal. [See Pictures 11, 12, 13 and 14.](#)

If approved, Pro Pony will cut down at least 14 cottonwood trees that are 30 to 50 feet tall and replace them with this building. The loss of these 14 mature trees is a significant environmental impact that will be “detrimental to the character of the surrounding area”.

By our estimate, the building would be built extremely close to Holcomb Ranch Lane and after adding 10 feet of fill would rise about 21 feet above it. Yet the Applicant has the audacity to request a waiver of commercial landscaping and screening requirements.

Allowing this metal building to take the place of 14 existing mature trees is completely inappropriate for this rural residential neighborhood.

There is nothing whatsoever about the building “that pays homage to [the area’s] Western Heritage” as described by the Southwest Area Plan. This metal building would be about twice as tall as Tom Dolan’s Kia Dealership on South Virginia Street and about twice as tall as Les Schwab Tire on South Virginia Street. Both of those commercial buildings are about 15,500 square feet. This metal building is 13,580 square feet. There is no site on this property that is suitable for such a massive industrial structure in the middle of a residential neighborhood. It would have a disastrous impact on the adjacent properties and on the character of our neighborhood. [See Picture 15.](#)

**4. The “neighborhood meeting” excluded actual adjacent neighbors and did not accurately describe the impacts to the neighborhood.**

Flying Diamond Ranch at 8790 Lakeside Dr. (the property adjacent to the north), and The Hsu family 3600 Holcomb Ranch Lane (property adjacent to the southwest) did not receive notices of a meeting. There were only 2 actual neighbors present at the meeting. Those notices were not mailed. They were taped to the outside of the mailbox. It was an invitation for an open house and did not mention the topics of discussion. While the neighbors were present about 35 people were in attendance. There was no indication that a metal building 13,580 square feet and 29 feet tall was going to be delivered to the site on January 17, 2022.

**5. Letters in support attached to Staff Report are not from neighbors; supporters live across town and will not be affected; should not be considered by the Board of Adjustment.**

For the most part the writers of the support letters do not live in the neighborhood or the nearby vicinity. On average they are about 10 miles distant from the site.

We do not believe that the Board of Adjustment can give reasoned consideration to the information received during the public hearing, and make the five findings required by Washoe County Code. The proposed use is not consistent with the Southwest Area Plan. The site is not suitable. The operation of a 25 horse commercial stable and the erection of a 13,580 square foot metal building that is 29 feet tall are definitely significantly injurious to the property and quiet enjoyment of adjacent properties. The application will be exceedingly detrimental the character of the surrounding area.

Please see the attached list of 27 neighbors of the Holcomb Ranch Community who live in the immediate vicinity of Silver Circle. They represent 41 parcels in the Planning Division District #2. They are opposed to WSUP21-0036 and WADMIN21-0016.

For all of the reasons stated in this letter, the neighboring property owners respectfully request that the Board of Adjustment deny WSUP21-0036 and WADMIN21-0016.

**Holcomb Ranch Community**

**We, the following neighbors,  
Support the Attached Presentation  
in Opposition to WSUP21-0036 and WADMIN21-0016**

Carol Bond  
7240 Lakeside Dr.  
Reno, NV 89511  
APN 040-573-03

Gordon and Suzanne Depaoli  
3925 Fairview Rd.  
Reno, NV 89511  
APN 040-691-04

Thomas Dolan  
2400 Holcomb Ranch Lane  
APN 230-060-07  
2855 Holcomb Ranch Lane  
APN 040-412-14  
100 & 200 Rillough Road  
APNs 230-070-07 & -08

Nancy Flanigan  
2750 Holcomb Ranch Lane  
Reno, NV 89511  
APN 230-070-17

Flying Diamond Ranch LLC  
Jill Brandin  
8790 Lakeside Dr.  
Reno, NV 89511  
APNs 040-650-44 and 040-650-46, -47, -48, -49

Bill Glass Family Trust  
9300 Timothy Dr.  
Reno, NV 89511  
APN 040-660-03

Tom Ghidossi  
1515 Holcomb Ranch Lane  
Reno, NV 89511  
APN 043-062-12, -13, -14, and -15

George and Mary Hemminger  
9700 Timothy Dr.  
APN 040-660-01

Chris and Juliane Hsu  
3600 Holcomb Ranch Lane  
Reno, NV 89511  
APN 040-670-13

Calvin Iida  
8690 Lakeside Dr.  
Reno, NV 89511  
APN 040-650-27

Steve and Dona Kirby  
2335 Diamond J Place  
APN 230-031-10  
and 2347 Diamond J Place  
APN 230-031-11  
Reno, NV 89511

Pete and Cindy Lazetich  
9100 Timothy Dr.  
APN 040-640-09  
and 0 Lombardi Lane  
APN 041-190-08  
Reno, NV 89511

Daniel David Loose  
2220 Holcomb Ranch Lane  
Reno, NV 89511  
APN 230-080-03

Rich Lorson  
2315 Diamond J Place  
Reno, NV 89511  
APN 230-031-02

Morze Family Trust  
4025 Fairview Rd.  
Reno, NV 89511  
APN 040-691-05

Sonny Newman Family Trust  
9400 Timothy Dr.  
Reno, NV 89511  
APN 040-660-05

Ron Palmer  
9675 Timothy Dr.  
APN 040-650-17  
And 0 Holcomb Ranch Lane  
Reno, NV 89511  
APN 040-650-24

Harry and Stella Pappas  
8770 Lakeside Dr.  
Reno, NV 89511  
APN 040-650-28

Durian Pingree  
2400 Diamond J Place  
Reno, NV 89511  
APN 230-032-02

Sheldon Schenk  
7240 Lakeside Dr.  
Reno, NV 89511  
APN 040-573-03

Bart Scott  
3945 Lamay Circle  
Reno, NV 89511  
APN 040-491-41

Mark Sehnert  
2371 Diamond J Place  
Reno, NV 89511  
APN 230-031-03

Rhonda Shafer  
8777 Panorama Dr.  
Reno, NV 89511  
APN 040-401-16

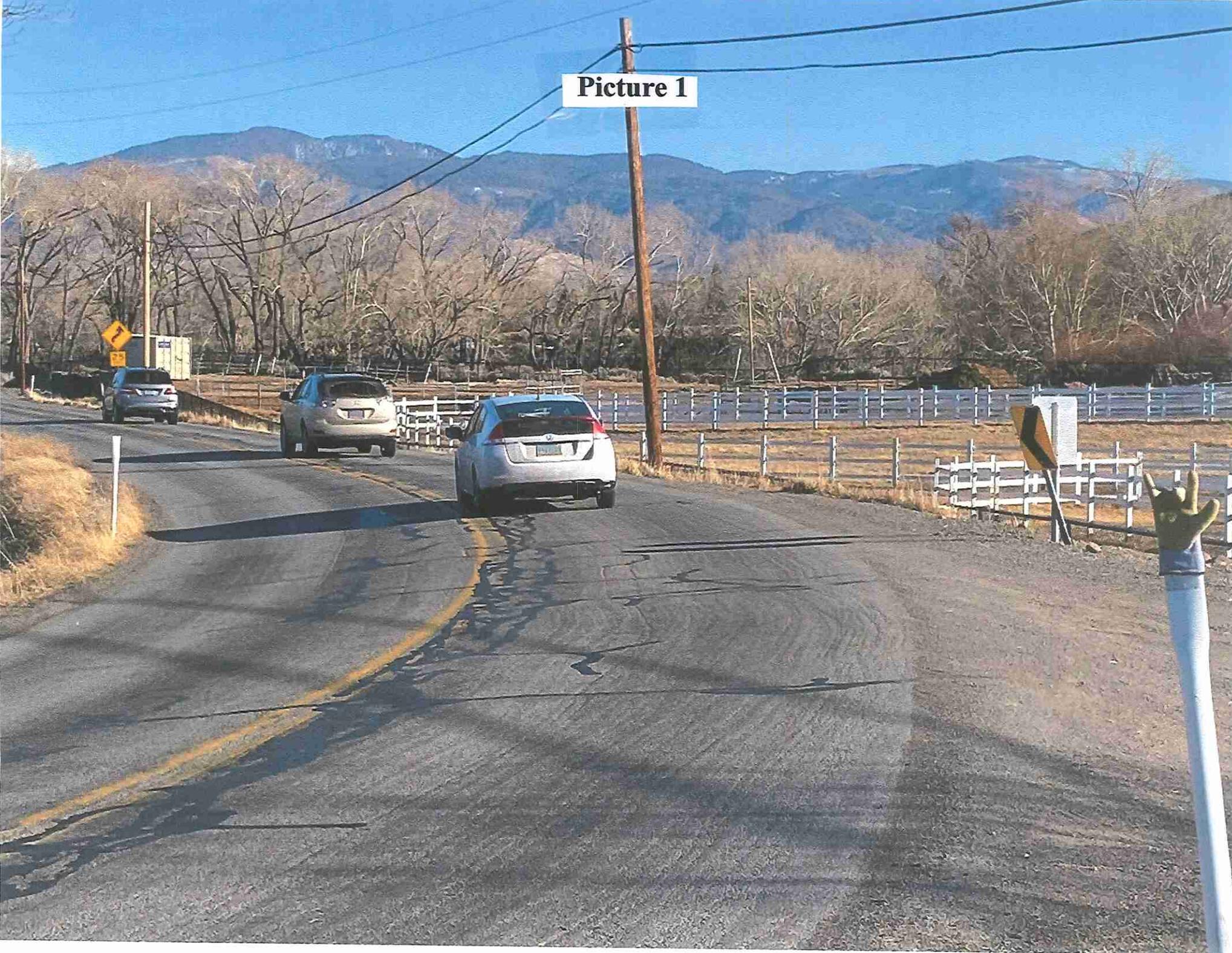
Richard Trachok  
8500 Dieringer Ln.  
Reno, NV 89511  
APN 040-401-05  
And 0 Dieringer  
APN 040-401-17

Jo and Bill Vanderbeek  
8771 Lakeside Dr.  
Reno, NV 89511  
APN 041-130-54

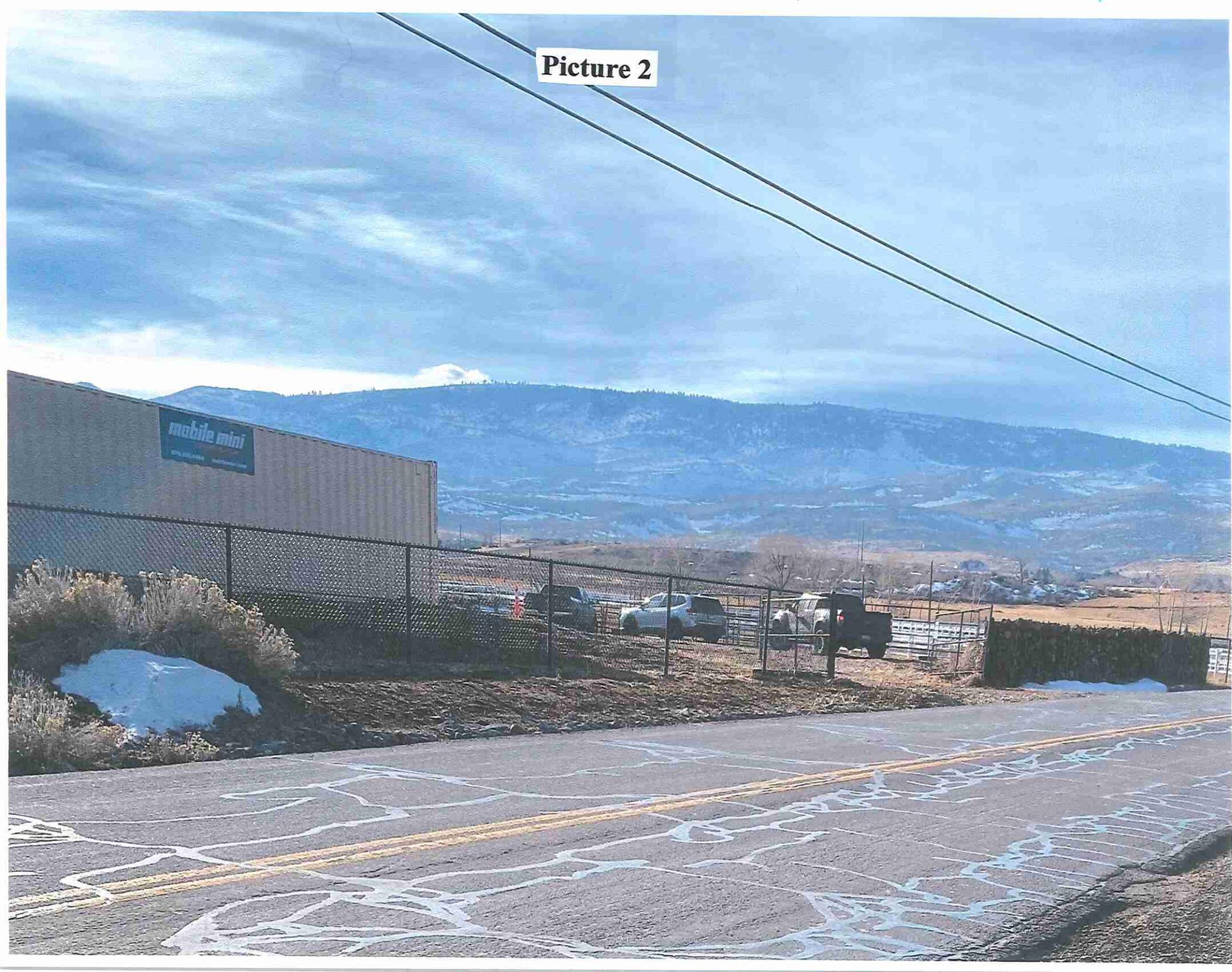
Dan and Vickie Vradenburg  
2358 Diamond J Place  
Reno, NV  
APN 230-032-06

Joanne Zuppan  
8801 Lakeside Dr.  
Reno, NV 89511  
APN 041-130-54

**Picture 1**



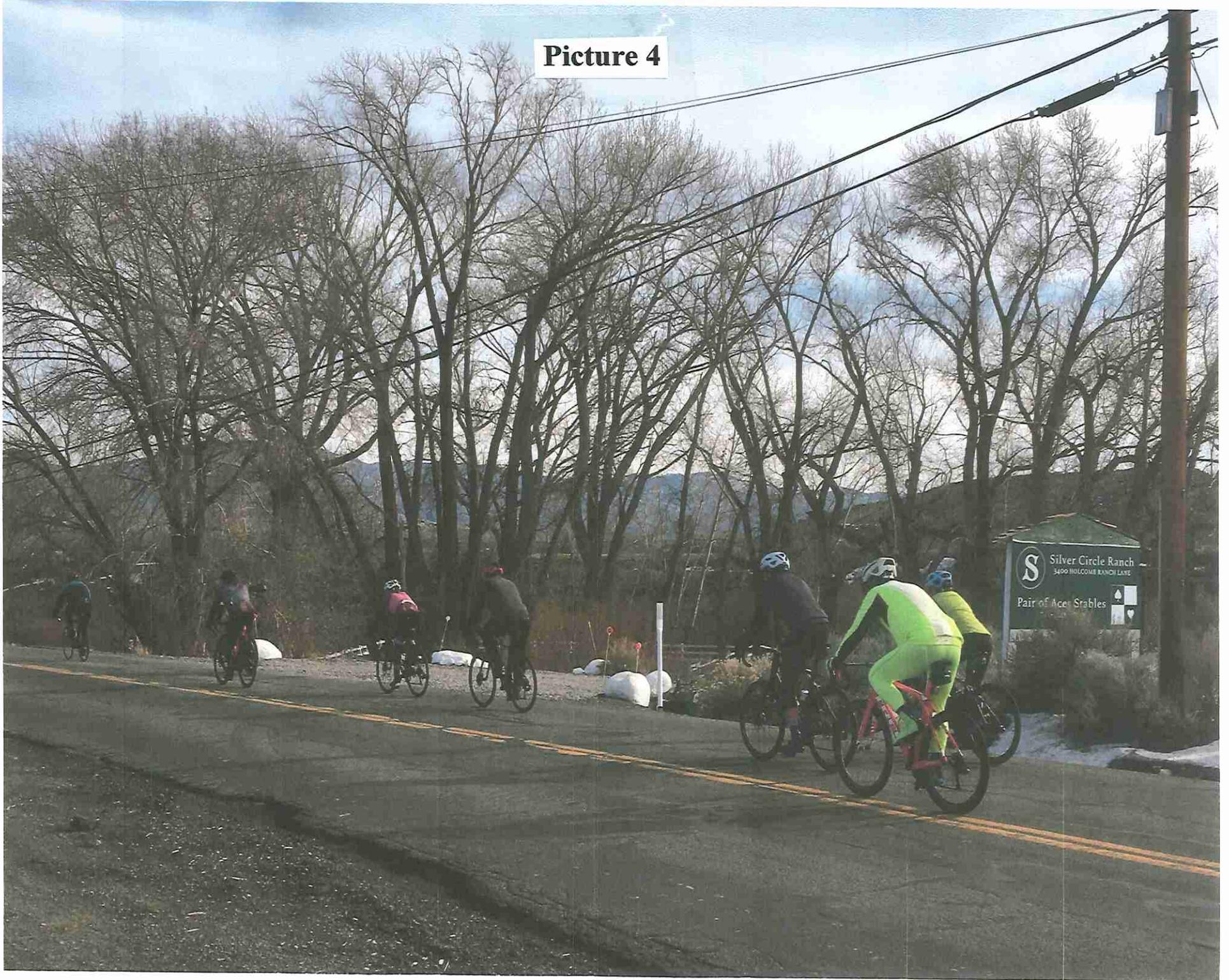
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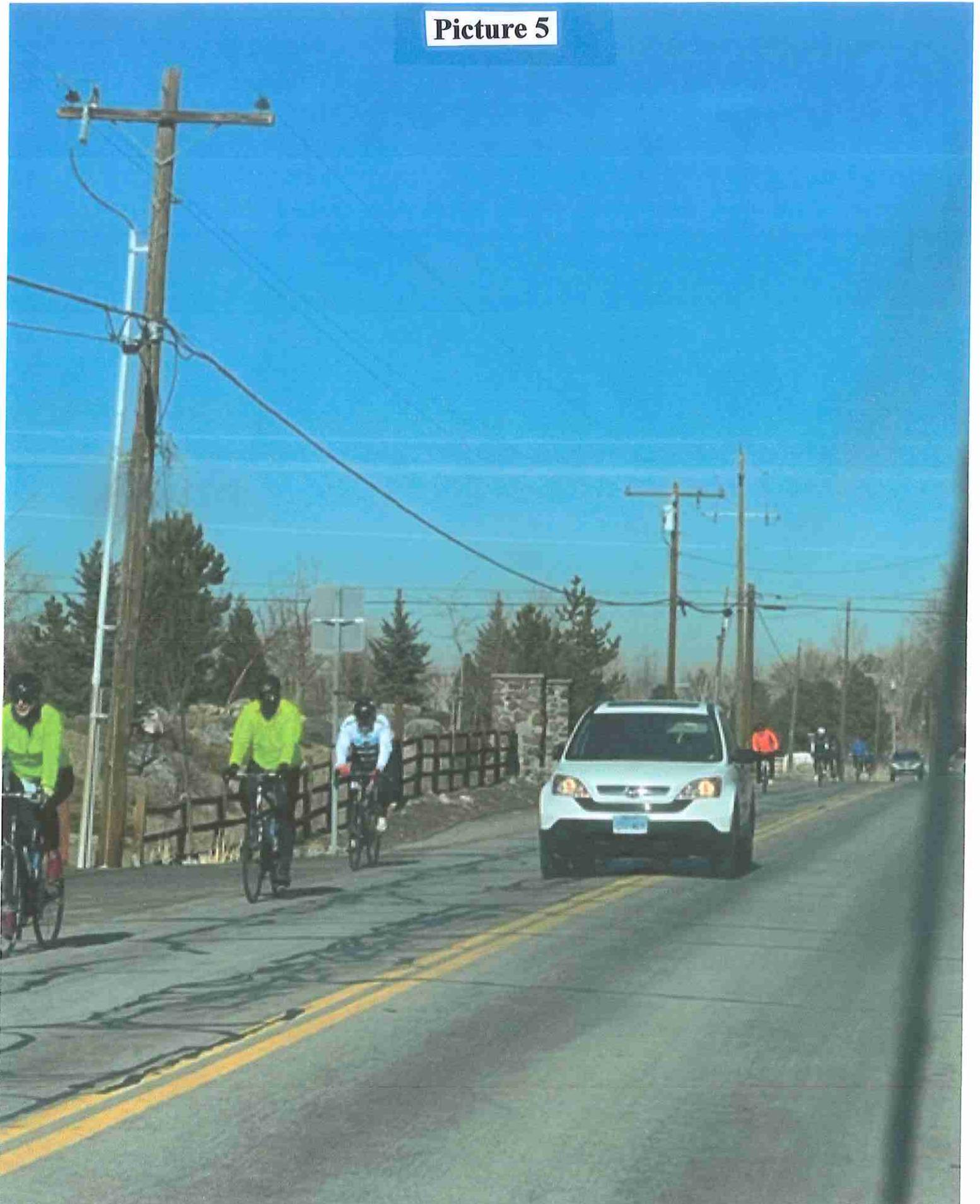
**Picture 3**



Picture 4



Picture 5



**Picture 6**



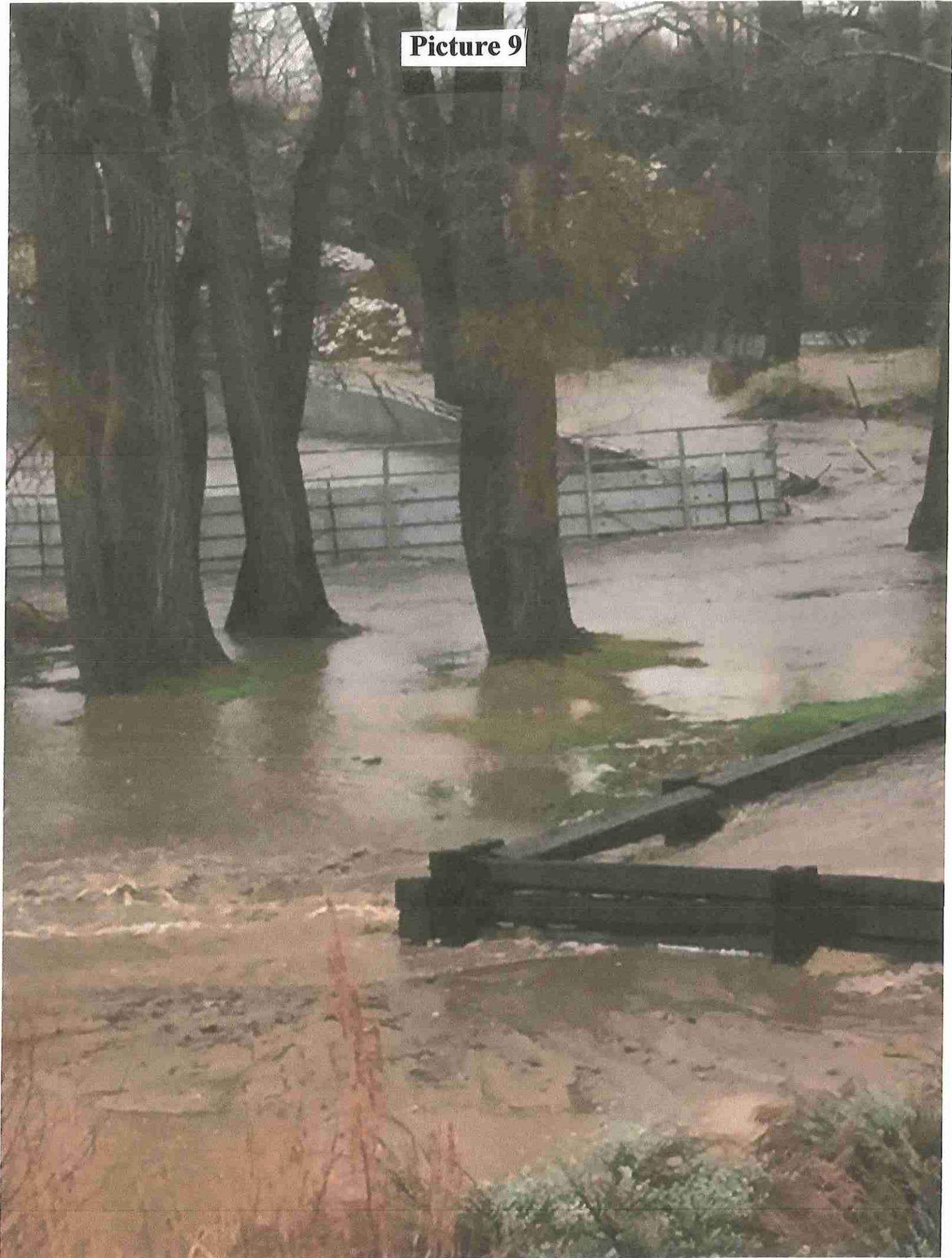
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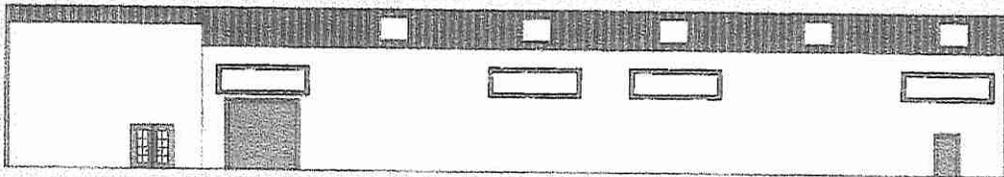


Picture 8



Picture 9

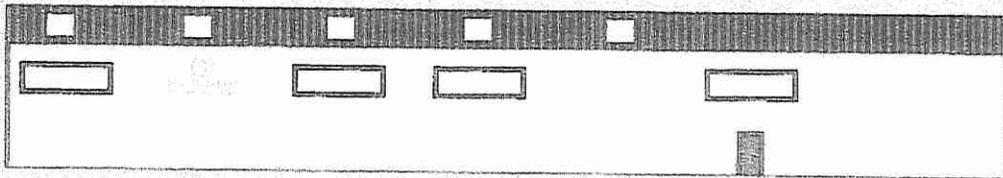




SOUTHEAST VIEW



NORTHEAST VIEW



NORTHWEST VIEW



SOUTHWEST VIEW

SCALE: 1"=10'

Picture 10

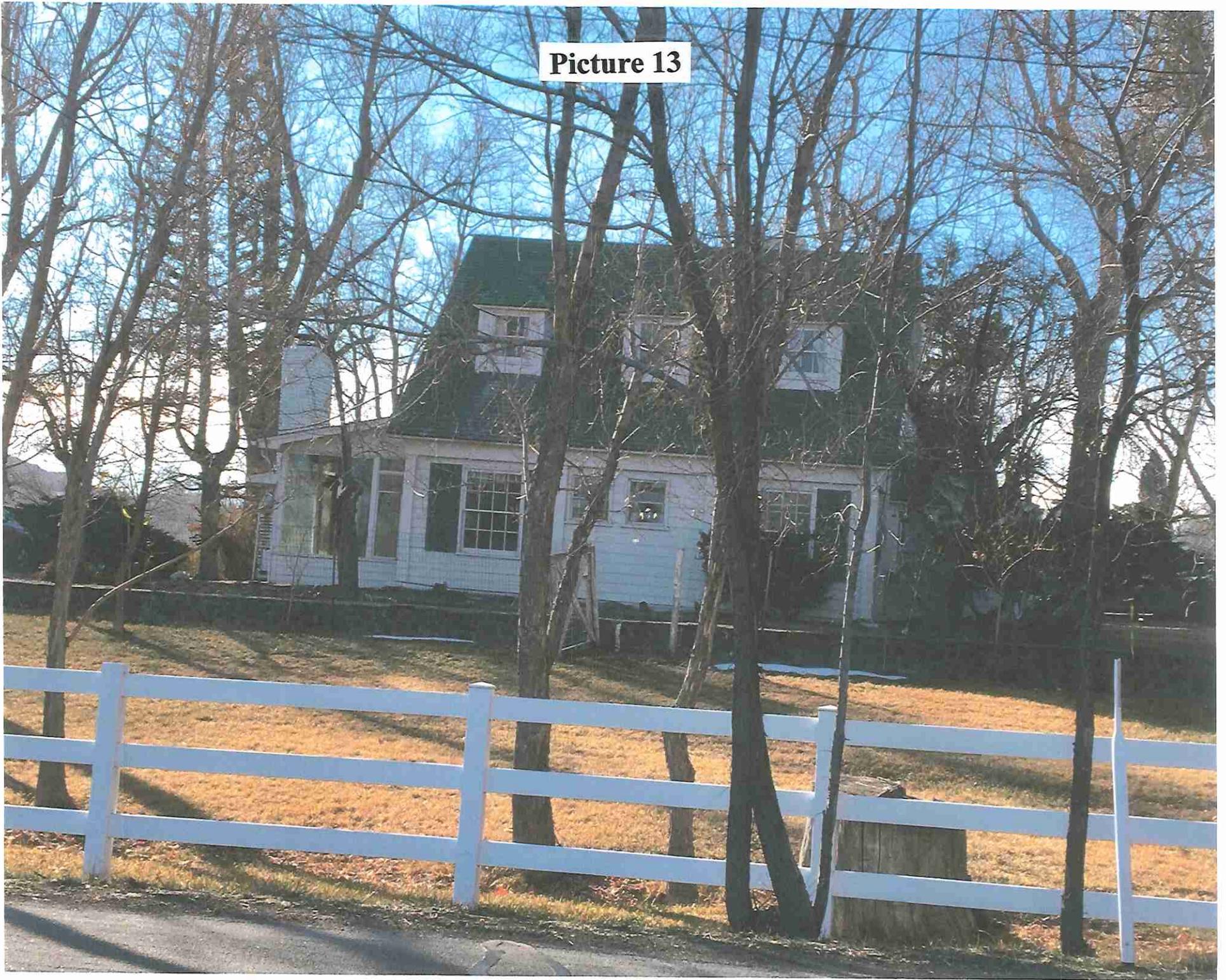
Picture 11



**Picture 12**



Picture 13



**Picture 14**



Picture 15

