

# Towns to Trails

Alignment notes from ground truthing

CONCEPT DRAFT

For groundtruthing analysis only.





## Highlights on Positives

## Suggested Amendments

**CONCEPT DRAFT**

**For groundtruthing analysis only.**

Fantastic way to experience California  
Great riding (single track & dirt roads)  
Good inclusion of towns and communities  
Easy access to resources (food, water, camping, notes)  
Positive receptions from individuals  
No negative interactions with Land Managers (Slinkard, USFS, CASP, etc)  
Continuous narratives across route (historical, geology, ecology)  
Easily split into "segments" which could be ridden in smaller bites

Several areas with difficult route finding  
Several spots near or on major roads  
Some gates / unfriendly neighbors  
Some roads no longer existing  
Several water ways un-crossable  
Small portions of very difficult riding



# Section 1

## South Lake Tahoe - Sorensens

Single track and dirt roads up from SLT to Rim

Trail are easy to navigate and ride

Single track down from Rim Trail until dirt road is  
good

Dirt logging roads / OHV tracks are difficult to  
route find (orange markers) for a short distance.

This is okay with good GPS data, but otherwise  
the purple alternative line will solve it.

CONCEPT DRAFT

For groundtruthing analysis only.





# Section 2

## Sorensens to Markleeville

The lower alternative route through Hope Valley is best

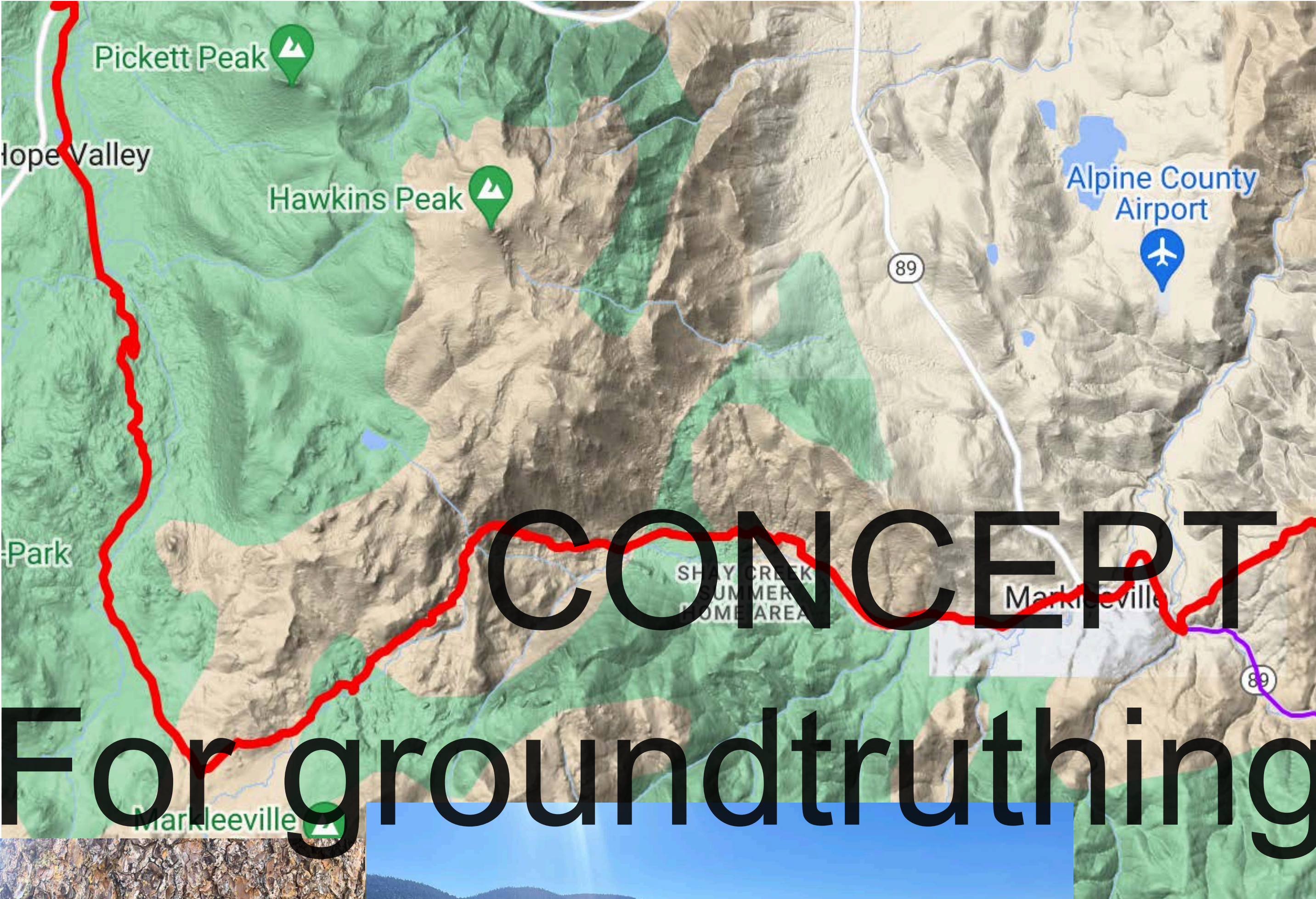
This route largely follows the California Historic Trail

Wagon tracks / road are somewhat vague in the early valley, but fairly easy to navigate. Road gets progressively better to the south.

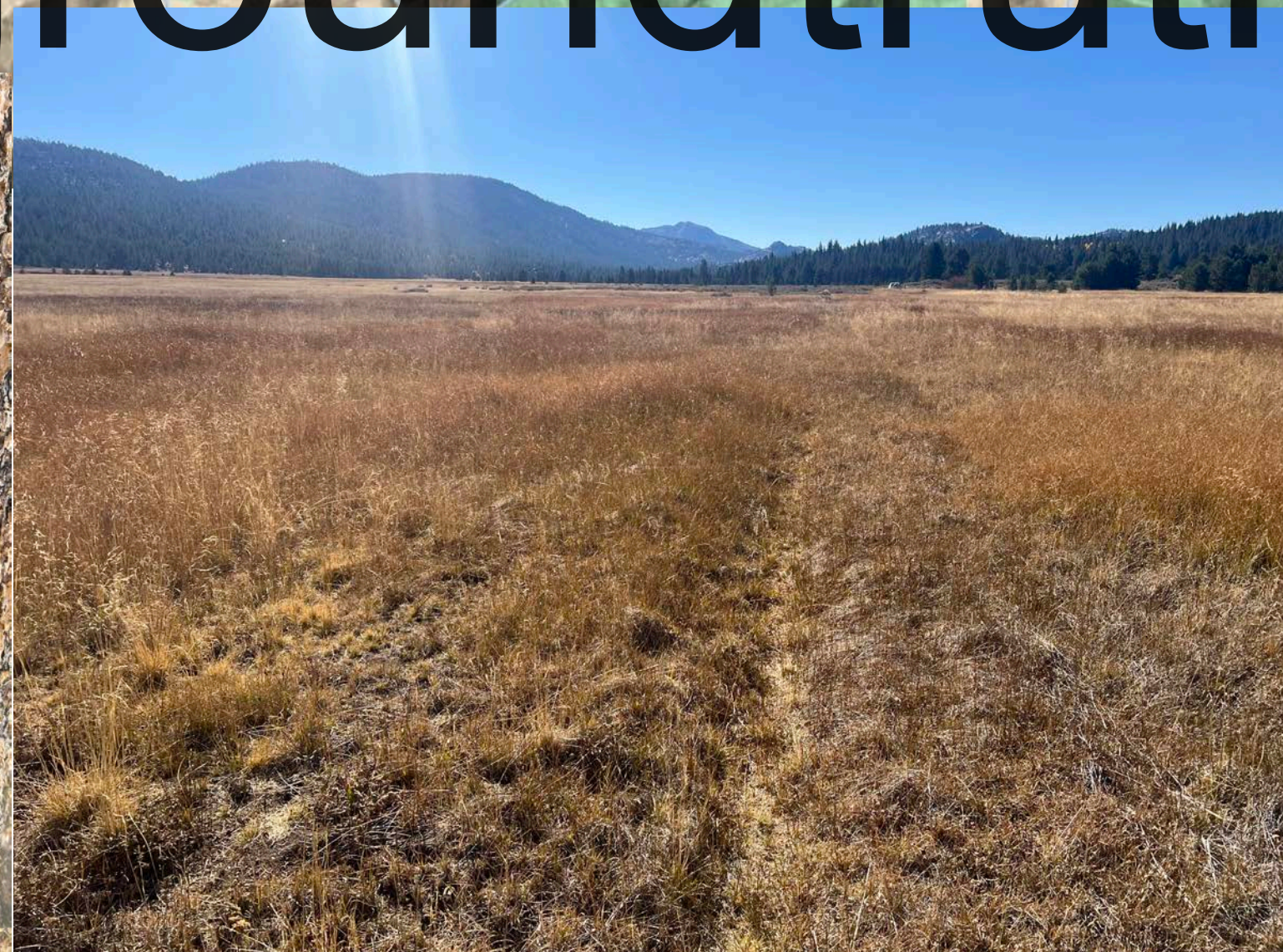
Single track is at least a blue in difficulty - a few sections where carrying the bike is necessary. Stunning though.

Comes out in Grover Hotspring CASP and then to Markleeville

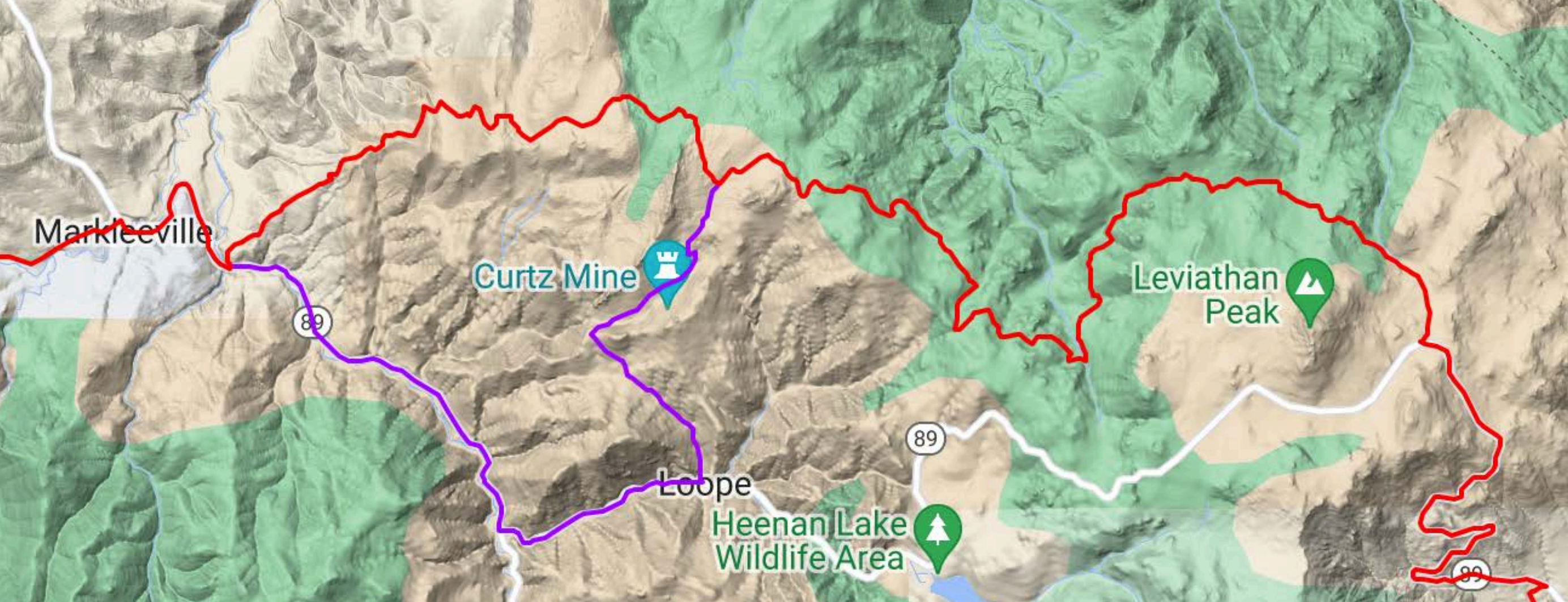
Great section



For groundtruthing







## Section 3

### Markleeville to Slinkard

Initial climb is hard on steep cobbly dirt, mellows out, but requires some hike a bike...

Purple alternative solves by allowing some riding on HWY 89 up a small bit of Monitor Pass, then turns off at Loope Valley on much better dirt.

Route from crest around Leviathan is world class in aspens and big views

The very end where dirt meets 89 descent toward 395 has been amended - the short dirt spur adjacent to road does not exist at all.

Descent down to Slinkard Valley was fine - I didn't see a single car.

Great section





# Section 4

## Slinkard

Overall a pleasant ride through the valley

No signs about bicycles, but I met staff inside and they were all excited I was riding through

The upper alternative (orange point) doesn't exist  
- seems burnt out in fire

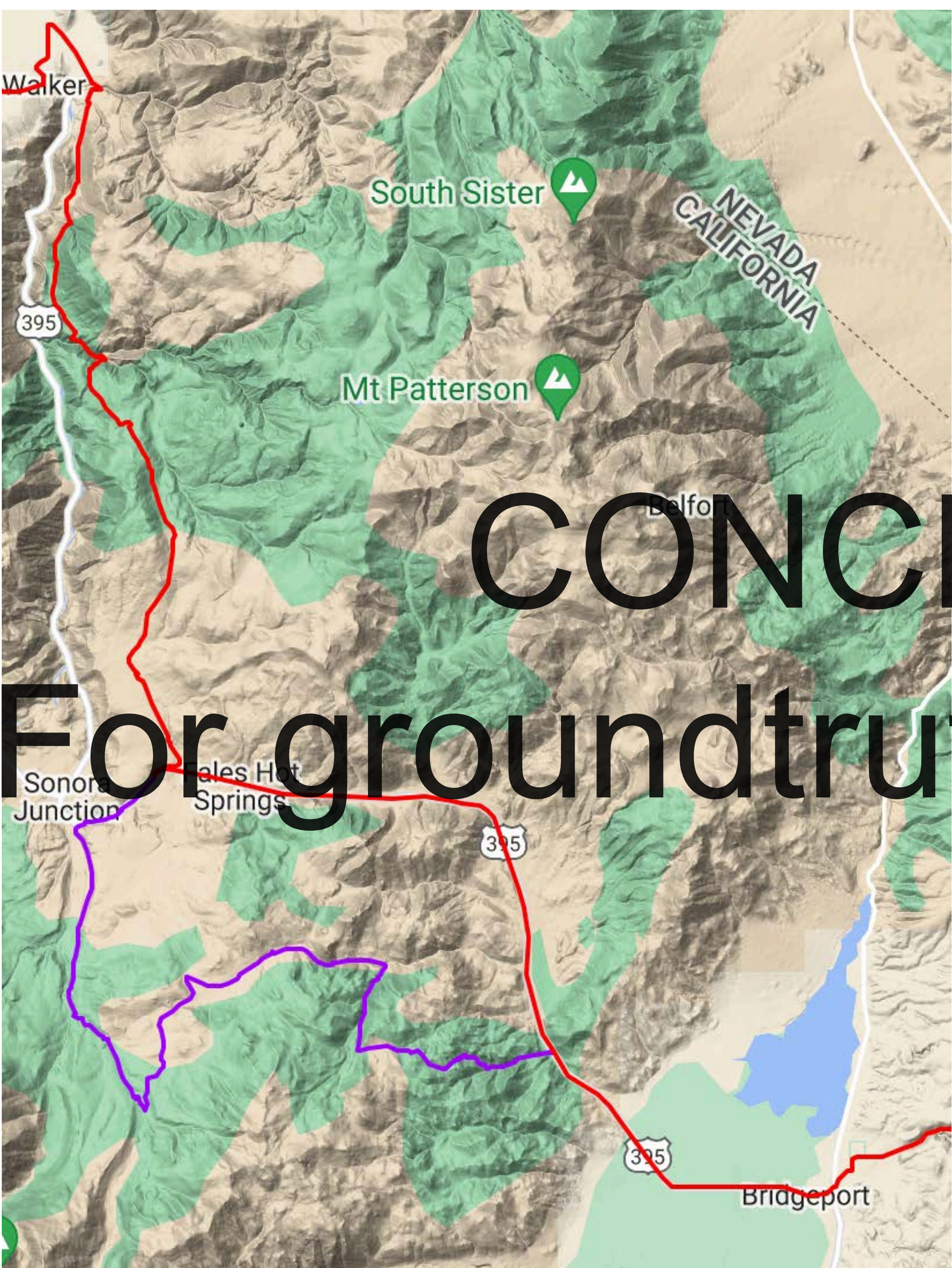
Ending road down to 395 is smooth and steep - easy in N-S direction, but would be very difficult heading north....

395 to Walker was okay with shoulder.

Great section







# Section 5

## Walker to Bridgeport

Proposed route was good exactly as is - road open  
and easy to ride

Somewhat remote, a few water sources, but no cell  
service (AT&T)

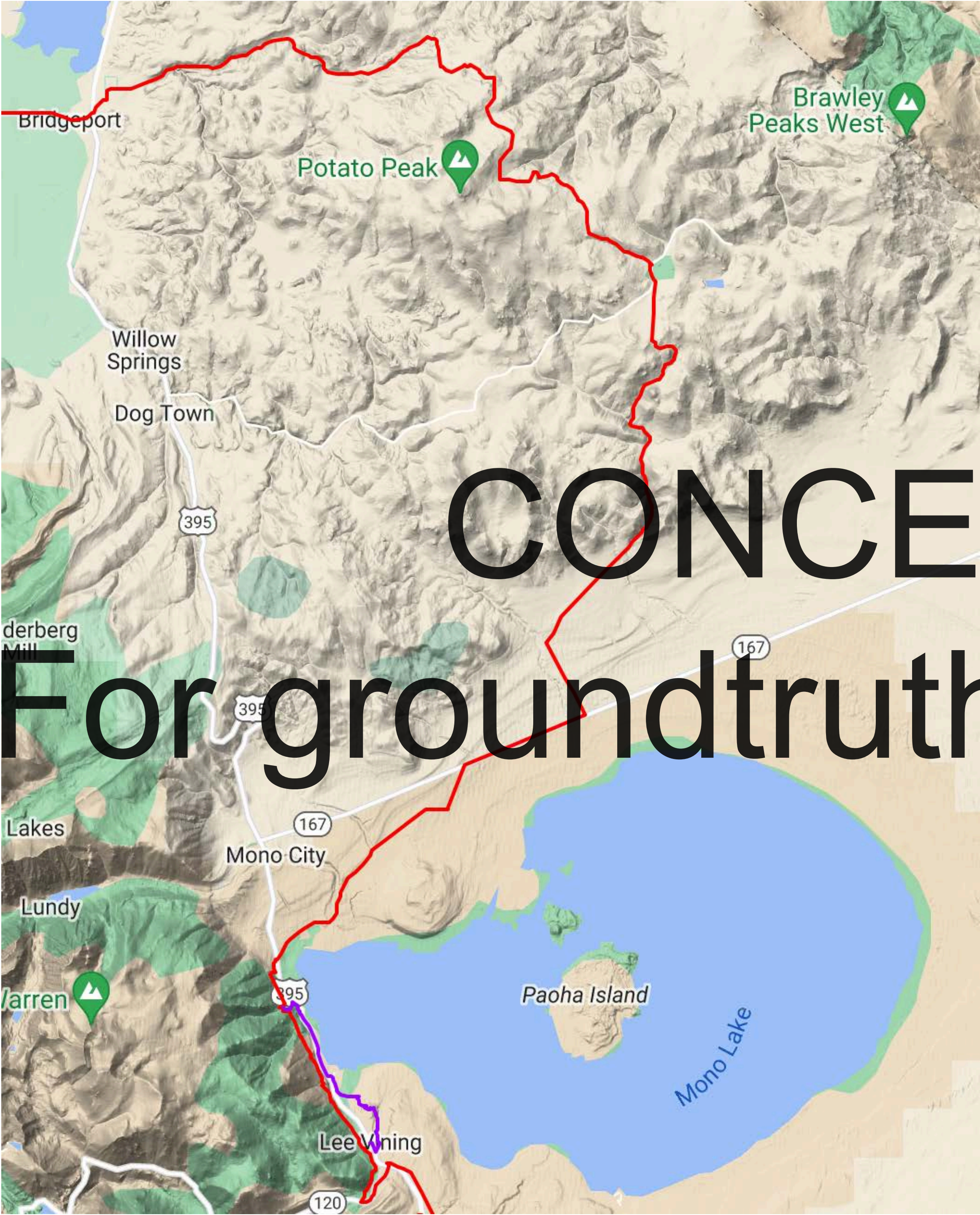
Long ride on 395 to Bridgeport - purple line is  
alternative dirt to replace this.

Good section

CONCEPT DRAFT

For groundtruthing analysis only.





# Section 6

## Bridgeport to Mono

Proposed route was good exactly as is - road open and easy to ride - wouldn't recommend the extra spur to upper town - very remote  
Great to ride through Bodie

CONCEPT DRAFT

For groundtruthing analysis only.

All roads in great shape - fair amount of cattle / OHV but to be expected  
167 & cemetery road were easy





# Section 7

## Mono / Lee Vining

Proposed route didn't work - road fades away by power lines, river crossings are odd / unofficial

Alternative route (purple) uses 395 for some time, then the visitor center area dirt roads to get into town. A fun alternative.

Fairly large change to the route by the Mobil - the initial route roads after the river crossing didn't exist, and the other roads in that area are \*very\* private. Suggested instead going past Mobil to 395, crossing and riding dirt south for several hundred yards, then crossing again to get to Horseshoe Meadow.

Great town to stop in.



CONCEPT DRAFT  
For groundtruthing analysis only.



## Section 8

### Lee Vining to Mammoth

Upper aqueduct road from Horseshoe meadow is great!

Would be nice to make straight route from Grant Lake to June Lake more exciting

Alternative option out 120 wasn't fun / deep sand / windy

Route from June to Mammoth is great as routed.

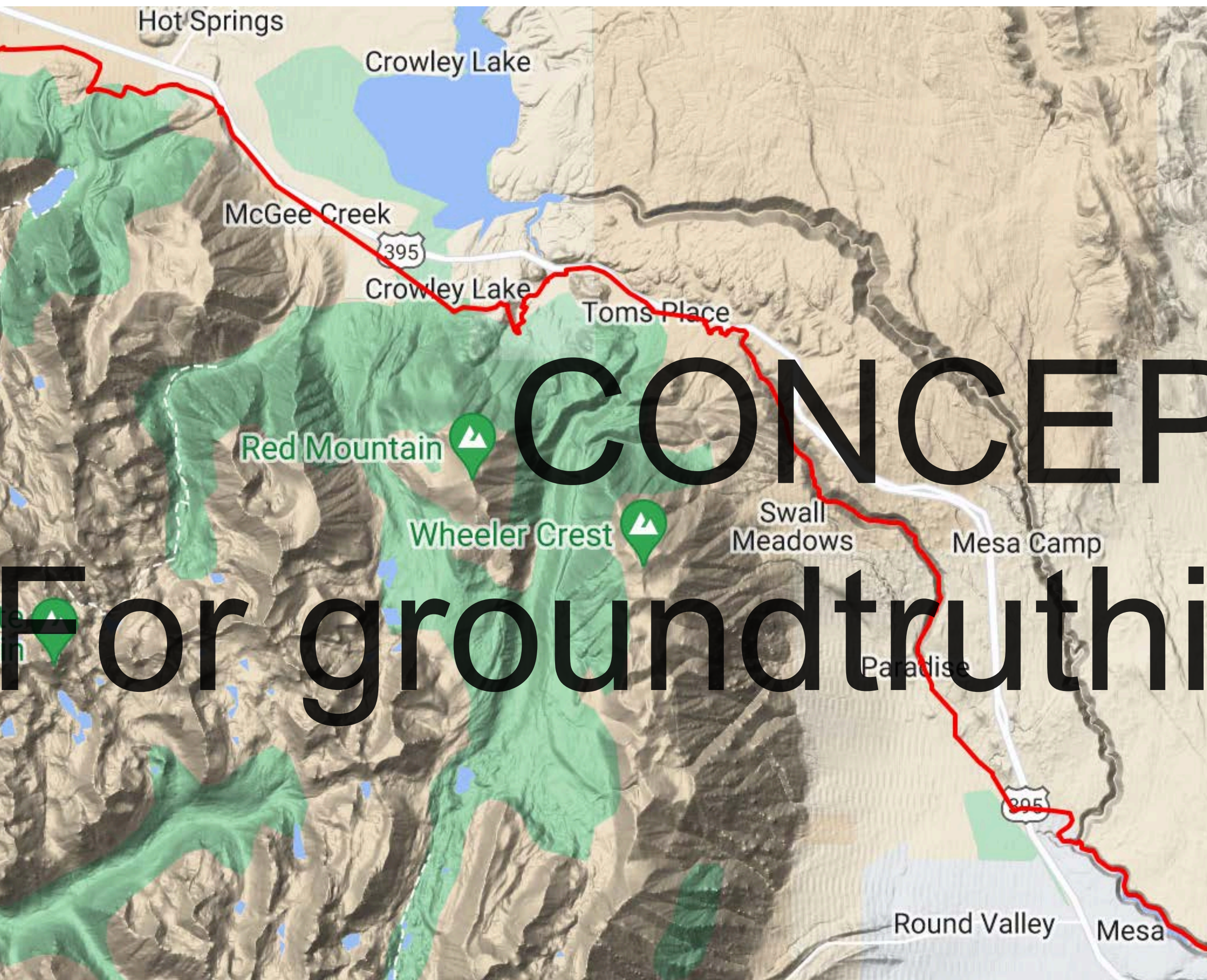
Good section! LADWP & geology context are really cool here



CONCEPT DRAFT

For groundtruthing analysis only.





## Section 9

### Mammoth to Mesa

Section to and by Crowley Lake is good - very pretty

Crowley to Toms Place has a bit of a route finding section in Little Round Valley, where the route crosses a wetland field going from dirt road to grasses to single track by 395, then popping out by Toms Place. Still works

Preferred the route of using either Rock Creek Road or single track to the alternative dirt road section down to Mesa

CONCEPT DRAFT  
For groundtruthing analysis only.



# Section 10

## Mesa to Bishop



There simply was no easy and simple way to cross the Owens. My favorite route option was along Chalk Bluff Road, which has a nicer view of the main arm of the Owens River, and crosses via established concrete bridges.

Section quite pretty and good way to understand geology and the southern valley.

CONCEPT DRAFT

For groundtruthing analysis only.



# Section 11

## Bishop to Big Pine

First section through the single track and OHV trails south of Bishop is great, albeit confusing due to lack of signage and many crossing roads. Needs signage, however the trail system is not currently legalized to my understanding.

Road due south by Wilkerson, Keough, and into Big Pine is fine. Nothing fancy, a long flat plain of a ride, but easy enough distance to cover.

CONCEPT DRAFT

For groundtruthing analysis only.





# Section 12

## Big Pine to Independence

Ride around Crater Mountain from Big Pine is stellar. Onion Valley road good, all dirt roads by lava tubes are great.

Ride through Aberdeen was fine - some cool old mining infrastructure

Route around landing strip and ag fields south of Blackrock worked well - saw the Tule Elk herds there.

CONCEPT DRAFT

For groundtruthing analysis only.





# Section 13

## Independence to Lone Pine

Looping wide of Independence was on smooth dirt road, crossing Symes creek was easy (dirt culvert bridge).

Coming back down to Manzanar seemed okay - the route takes you adjacent to the cemetery. I ran into a few staff / cars while riding through, and none paid me any mind aside from waving hello. It seemed okay? Perhaps worth checking permissions!

Ride from there to Alabama Hills was great! The route right against the cliffs was the ideal choice on account of geology as well as more compacted roads.

Whitney Portal Road currently undergoing construction - chose Tuttle Creek Road as the alternative route down into Lone Pine



For groundtruthing analysis only.



# Section 13

## Lone Pine South

Really not recommended.

It was flat, windy, the construction of 395 moving away from Olancha made it a ghost town with no services at all. The little yellow lemon house is great, but there are no places for folks riding this route to stay here, let alone get a drink after the ride.

Finishing in Lone Pine was beautiful, and had plenty of food, drink, and hotels to celebrate a traverse of the Eastern Sierra.

CONCEPT DRAFT  
For groundtruthing analysis only.



# Route summary

Overall the Towns to Trails route was a world class experience. Ridden from North to South (Tahoe to Lone Pine), the route began with fun, scenic, and relatively easier single track alongside old dirt roads. At the drop off of the Sierra Crest (Monitor Pass), the route leveraged historic dirt roads and conservation areas that encouraged a deeper understanding and appreciation for the Sierra. The small towns passed throughout the route were obvious, easy and well placed opportunities to support local jobs and businesses for food, lodging, and entertainment. The southern half of the route, after Bridgeport, offered passes through State Parks (Bodie), mountain communities (Mammoth), and countless geologic and historic points of interest (Volcanics, Manzanar, mines, LA Aqueduct) - each furthering the users understanding of the region based from hands on experience.

This route is equally well poised to for bike packing, family road trips using segments of the trail, and even educational tours. There is a guidebooks worth of opportunity and experience to be found on this route, and it stands as an incredible opportunity to draw people into the Eastern Sierra under the context of learning, appreciation, and conservation through recreation.



CONCEPT DRAFT  
For groundtruthing analysis only.