

BACKWATER AT BRIDGES AND DENSELY WOODED  
FLOOD PLAINS, TALLAHALA CREEK AT  
WALDRUP, MISSISSIPPI

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HYDROLOGIC INVESTIGATIONS ATLAS  
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TALLAHALA CREEK AT WALDRUP, MISSISSIPPI

**INTRODUCTION**  
New techniques for predicting water-surface profiles, needed in the design of economical, structurally sound, and environmentally compatible stream crossings, are under investigation. The investigation has accelerated with the advent of digital computers capable of analyzing large quantities of data. Among the techniques is the development of two-dimensional (2-D) digital models. Field data are essential for development and evaluation of these techniques for predicting water-surface profiles. This atlas is the first of a series that will provide a wide range of field data.  
Since 1969 the U.S. Geological Survey has been collecting backwater data where wide, densely vegetated flood plains are crossed by highway embankments and single-opening bridges. The work was done in cooperation with the Department of Transportation Federal Highway Administration, the Alabama State Highway Department, the Louisiana Department of Transportation and Development, and the Mississippi State Highway Department. The objective of this cooperative project is to present the data in a format conducive to the development of improved models for predicting hydraulic responses of flow at highway crossings of streams in complex hydrologic and geographic settings.  
Data were collected at the following 22 sites (fig. 1) for 35 floods; that is, 11 sites had 1 flood each; 9 sites, 2 floods each; and 2 sites, 3 floods each. Analysis of the data (Schneider and others, 1976) showed that backwater and discharge at these sites computed by methods presently in use, would be inaccurate. The flood flow data are unique in the range and detail in which information was collected and provide a base for evaluating digital models relating to open-channel flow. This atlas shows flood data obtained at Tallahala Creek at Waldrup, Miss., one of 22 sites plotted on figure 1:

ALABAMA

Buckhorn Creek near Shiloh  
Pea Creek near Louisville  
Poley Creek near Sanford  
Yellow River near Sanford  
Whitewater Creek near Tarantum

LOUISIANA

Alexander Creek near St. Francisville  
Beaver Creek near Kentwood  
Comite River near Olive Branch  
Cypress Creek near New Orleans  
Flagon Bayou near Libuse  
Little Bayou de Loutre near Truxno  
Tennessee Creek near Elizabeth

MISSISSIPPI

Bogue Chitto near Johnston Station  
Bogue Chitto near Summit  
Coldwater River near Red Bank  
Loloucha Creek at Zama  
Oktomoka Creek east of Magee  
Oktomoka Creek near Magee  
Tallahala Creek at Waldrup  
Thompson Creek near Clara  
West Fork Amite River near Liberty  
Yockanookany River near Thomaston

DESCRIPTION OF DATA

**TYPE OF DATA**  
Data collected at all study sites consist of (1) depths, velocities, and discharges measured through the bridge openings, and (2) peak water-surface elevations along the highway embankment and along cross sections. A minimum of eight valley cross sections were surveyed at approximately one valley-width intervals in the vicinity of the bridge at each site. Locations of the cross sections were aligned perpendicular to the assumed direction of flow. Cross sections were extended to intersect the edge of the valley at equal water-surface elevations. Surveying procedures described in the U.S. Geological Survey Techniques of Water-Resources Investigations series (Matthai, 1967; Benson and Dalrymple, 1967) were followed.

**HIGH-WATER MARKS**  
Water-surface elevations were determined from high-water marks identified along the cross sections and the edges of the valley after each flood. During peak discharge measurements, high-water marks were marked with standard surveying pins along the upstream and downstream sides of the highway embankment. For some floods additional high-water marks were identified in the valley adjacent to the bridge to define in detail the water surface in the approach and exit reaches.

**BRIDGE GEOMETRY**  
Detailed bridge geometry was obtained at each site. The bridge cross section was surveyed at the most contracted section. Piers, spur dikes, wingwalls, abutment slopes, and other pertinent geometry were measured.

**MANNING'S ROUGHNESS COEFFICIENT**  
Schneider and others (1976) used composite Manning's roughness coefficient values (*n*) where frequent changes in roughness occurred. In their study, composite values of *n* were verified by matching step backwater computations of the water surface with actual water-surface profiles for measured discharges. The range of *n* values used in this report is based on values used by Schneider and others (1976). Roughness varies from open fields to dense forests.

Roughness values or ranges of roughness values in different parts of the flood plain are shown on the maps. The values shown are based on water depth. The high value is value where depth is less than 0.6 meter and the low value applies where water depth is greater than 1.0 meter. A linear relation of roughness to water depth is assumed for water depths between 0.6 and 1.0 meter.

PRESENTATION OF DATA

The data are represented on topographic maps enlarged from standard 1:24,000 (or 1:52,500) scale Geological Survey topographic maps which comply with National Map Accuracy Standards. Accuracy limitations of the base maps are retained in the enlargements. Although elevations may be scaled closely on the enlargements, they are not defined with greater accuracy than positions on the base maps.

Ground elevations are placed adjacent to spot elevations. Elevations of floodmarks are indicated by numerical values adjacent to solid triangles. Floodmark elevations for separate floods are shown on separate sheets. Bridge geometry and road-embankment dimensions are shown with brief notations of pier spacing and configuration.

In addition to the data points shown on the maps, discharge measurements of selected floods, plots of cross sections, and procedures for indirect discharge measurements: U.S. Geol. Survey Techniques Water-Resources Inv., book 3, chap. A1, 30 p.

Bradley, J. N., 1970, Hydraulics of bridge waterways: Federal Highway Admin., Hydraulic Design Ser. No. 1, 111 p.  
Colson, B. E., and Hudson, J. W., 1976, Flood frequency of Mississippi streams: Mississippi State Highway Dept., 34 p.  
Hains, C. F., 1973, Floods in Alabama, magnitude and frequency: Alabama Highway Dept., 37 p.  
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Neely, B. L., Jr., 1976, Floods in Louisiana, magnitude and frequency: 3d ed.: Louisiana Dept. Highways, 340 p.  
Schneider, V. R., Board, J. W., Colson, B. E., Lee, F. N., and Druffel, L., 1976, Computation of backwater and discharge at width constrictions of heavily vegetated flood plains: U.S. Geol. Survey Water-Resources Inv., 76-129, 64 p.  
U.S. Water Resources Council, 1976, Guidelines for determining flood flow frequency: Washington, D. C., U.S. Water Resources Council Bull. 17, 26 p.

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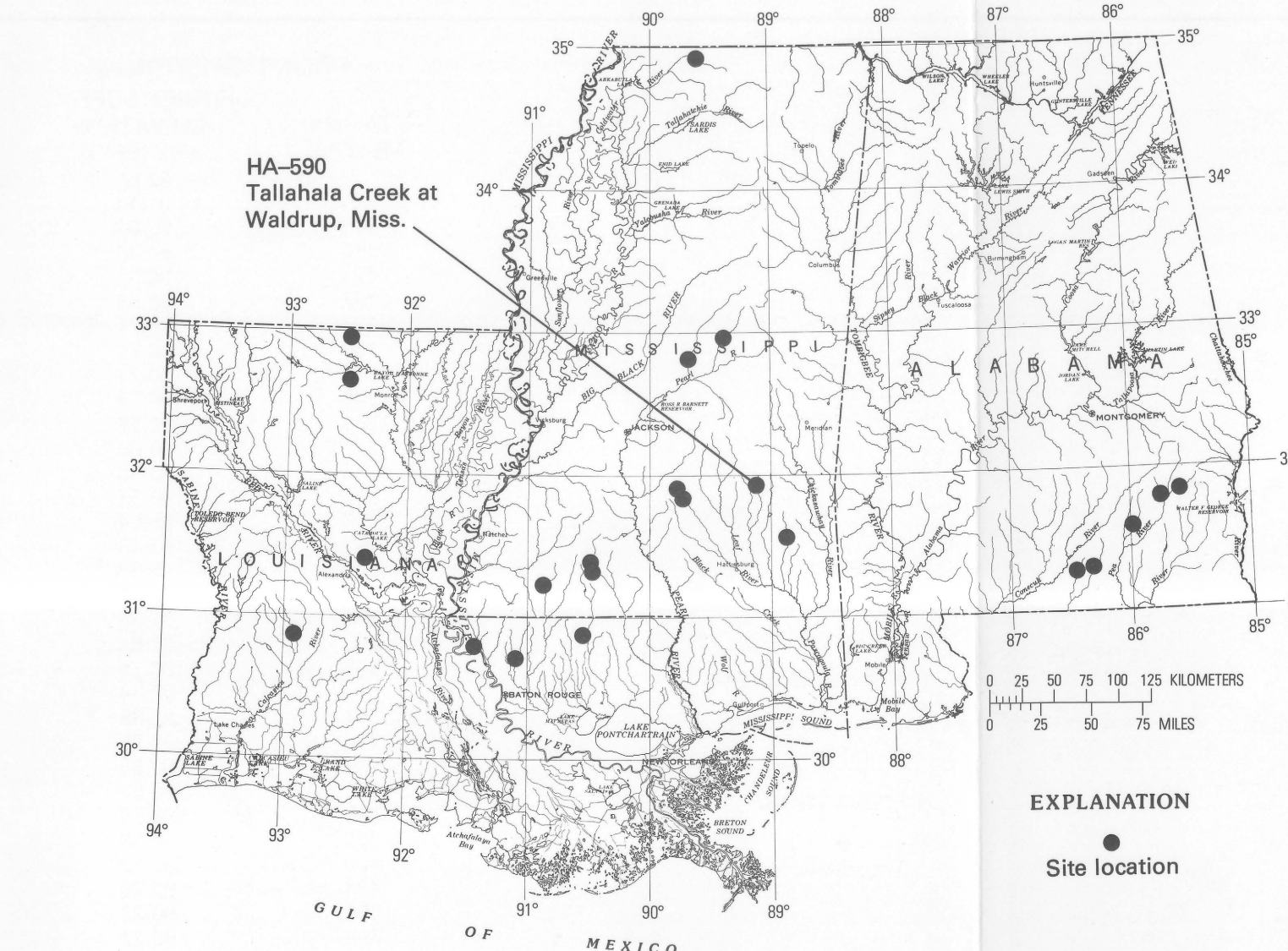


FIGURE 1.—INDEX MAP OF STUDY SITES IN THE BRIDGE BACKWATER INVESTIGATION PROJECT, ALABAMA, LOUISIANA, AND MISSISSIPPI.

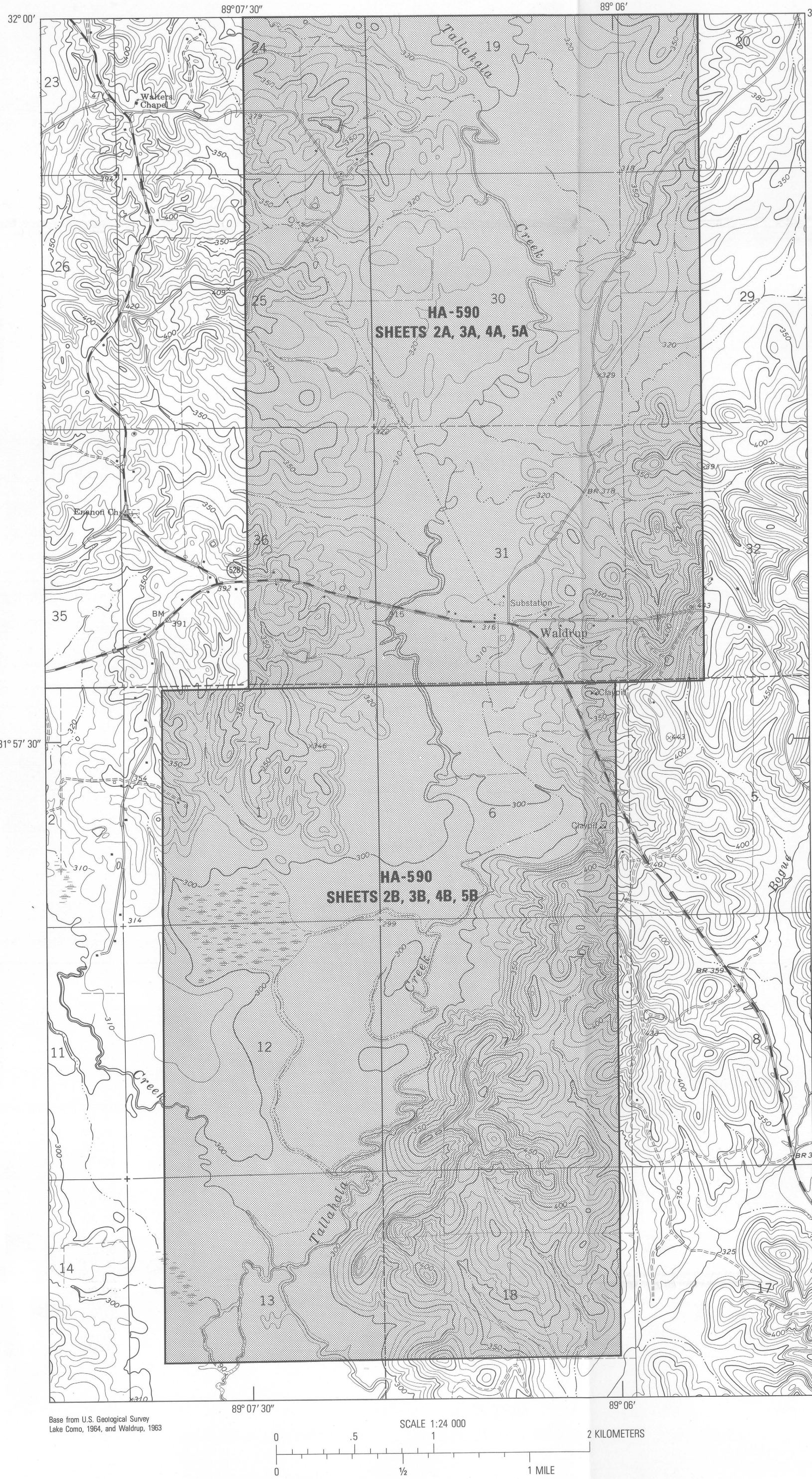


FIGURE 2.—INDEX MAP OF STUDY REACH, TALLAHALA CREEK AT WALDRUP, MISSISSIPPI.

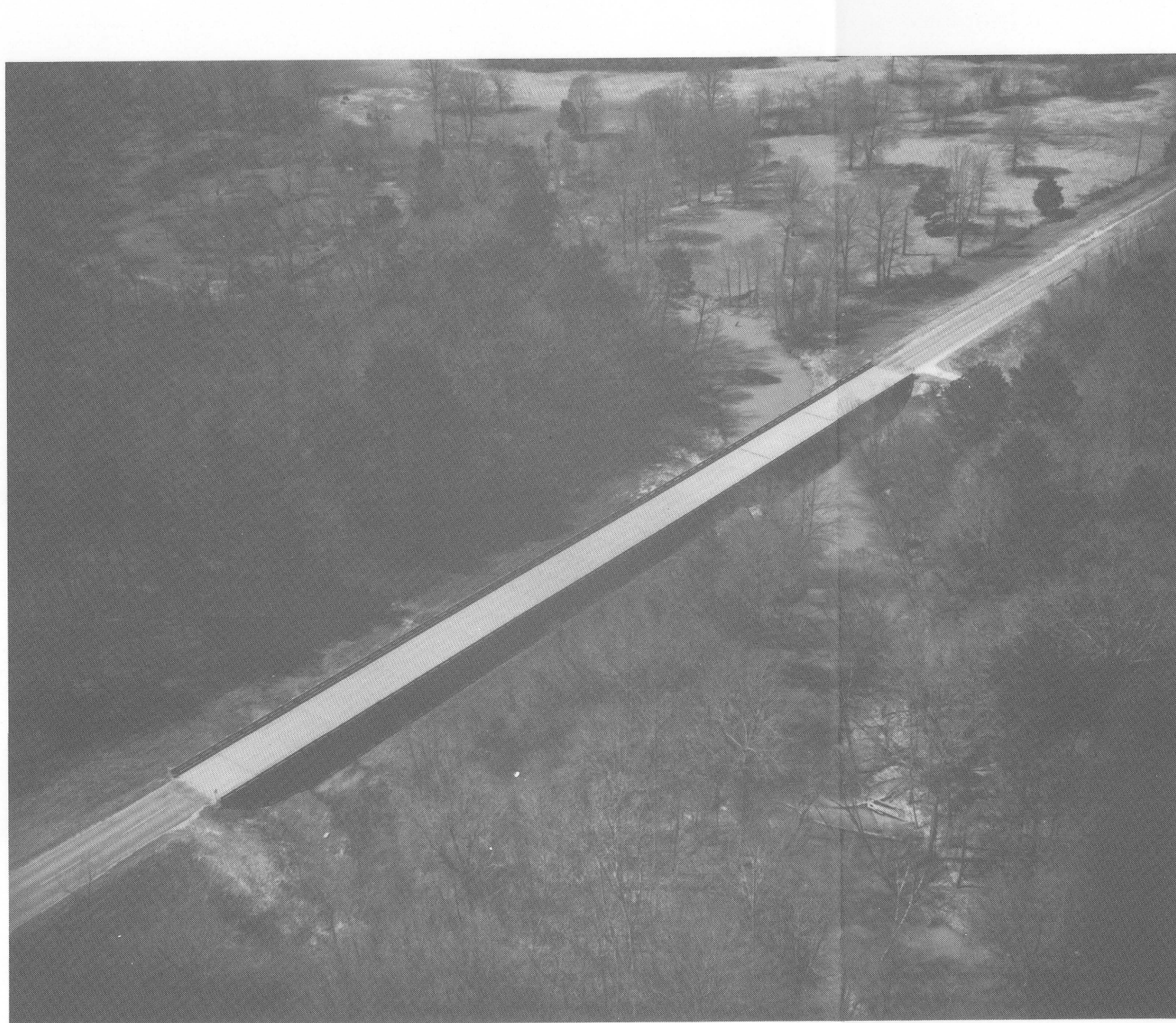


FIGURE 3.—AERIAL VIEW LOOKING DOWNSTREAM AT BRIDGE ON STATE HIGHWAY 528 AT WALDRUP, MISSISSIPPI, MARCH 22, 1978.

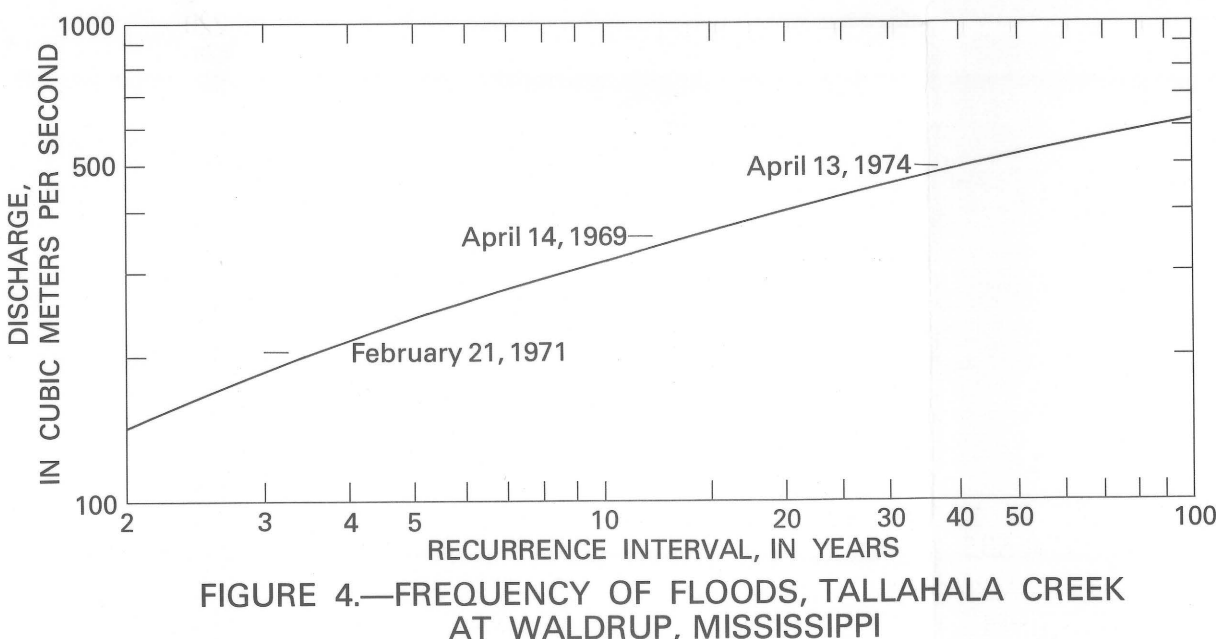


FIGURE 4.—FREQUENCY OF FLOODS, TALLAHALA CREEK AT WALDRUP, MISSISSIPPI

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AND THE MISSISSIPPI STATE HIGHWAY DEPARTMENT

TABLE 1.—VALLEY CROSS-SECTION DATA FOR TALLAHALA CREEK AT WALDRUP, MISSISSIPPI.

CROSS SECTION 1			CROSS SECTION 3 (Cont.)			BRIDGE SECTION (Cont.)			CROSS SECTION 9		
GROUND SURFACE			GROUND SURFACE			GROUND SURFACE			GROUND SURFACE		
STATION (METERS)	ELEVATION (METERS)		STATION (METERS)	ELEVATION (METERS)		STATION (METERS)	ELEVATION (METERS)		STATION (METERS)	ELEVATION (METERS)	
0	91.14		508	91.81		26	90.92		95.06		
41	91.14		528	91.90		30	90.37		101.01		
110	90.04		547	91.78		32	90.43		101.28		
124	90.62		567	91.23		34	90.28		101.22		
145	90.53		584	91.08		36	90.56		99.12		
183	90.71		631	91.68		38	90.53		137		
190	90.71		646	91.52		40	90.56		143		
215	90.71		650	91.35		44	90.56		156		
245	90.74		653	91.01		47	91.93		171		
269	90.68		656	90.68		50	92.53		194		
277	90.68		659	90.68		52	92.53		208		
289	90.59		663	90.76		54	92.53		222		
292	90.37		667	90.07		56	92.53		236		
297	89.64		670	90.68		58	92.53		242		
298	89.74		676	91.47		60	93.12		247		
300	89.37		682	91.89		62	93.12		253		
302	86.87		686	92.60		64	93.02		258		
304	87.36		687	92.75		66	92.90		264		
305	87.61		689	92.72		68	92.81		270		
308	88.15		693	92.75		70	92.81		274		
311	88.64		695	93.15		72	92.51		278		
314	90.53		698	93.33		74	92.51		282		
316	90.53		700	93.42		76	92.51		286		
329	90.62		703	93.51		78	93.18		290		
348	90.56		705	93.51		80	93.18		294		
386	90.53		707	93.12		82	93.18		297		
409	90.22		709	93.24		84	93.02		300		
434	90.22		715	93.94		86	93.02		304		
456	90.22		718	94.91		88	93.02		308		
469	90.22		720	94.91		90	93.02		312		
484	90.13		723	94.91		92	93.02		316		
507	90.13		725	94.91		94	93.02		320		
522	90.13		727	94.91		96	93.02		324		
528	90.16		729	94.91		98	93.02		328		
539	90.10		731	94.91		100	93.02		332		
547	90.10		733	94.91		102	93.02		336		
559	90.10		735	94.91		104	93.02		340		
573	90.13		737	94.91		106	93.02		344		
592	90.04		739	94.91		108	93.02		348		
609	89.95		741	94.91		110	93.02		352		
630	89.95		743	94.91		112	93.02		356		
638	89.82		745	94.91		114	93.02		360		
642	89.85		747	94.91		116	93.02		364		
644	89.85		749	94.91		118	93.02		368		
656	89.92		751	94.91		120	93.02		372		
661	89.92		753	94.91		122	93.02		376		
677	89.85		755	94.91		124	93.02		380		
711	89.73		757	94.91		126	93.02		384		
717	89.73		759	94.91		128	93.02		388		
724	89.82		761	94.91		130	93.02		392		
737	89.76		763	94.91		132	93.02		396		
757	89.58		765	94.91		134	93.02		400		
769	89.40		767	94.91		136	93.02		404		
803	89.34		769	94.91		138	93.02		408		
848	89.34		771	94.91		140	93.02		412		
858	89.34		773	94.91		142	93.02		416		
863	90.83		775	94.91		144	93.02		420		
870	90.83		777	94.91		146	93.02		424		
876	91.17		779	94.91		148	93.02		428		
878	91.50		781	94.91		150	93.02		432		
884	91.74		783	94.91		152	93.02		436		
CROSS SECTION 2			CROSS SECTION 4			CROSS SECTION 6			CROSS SECTION 8		
GROUND SURFACE			GROUND SURFACE			GROUND SURFACE			GROUND SURFACE		
STATION (METERS)	ELEVATION (METERS)		STATION (METERS)	ELEVATION (METERS)		STATION (METERS)	ELEVATION (METERS)		STATION (METERS)	ELEVATION (METERS)	
0	91.14		40	95.22		40	95.22		10	98.15	
55	92.20		42	95.86		42	95.86		23.5	1.77	
61	91.32		44	96.26		44	96.26		37.6	1.83	
62	91.32		46	96.26		46	96.26		45.7	1.68	
64	91.32		48	96.26		48	96.26		51.8	1.62	
66	91.32		50	96.26		50	96.26		57.9	1.52	
68	91.32		52	96.26		52	96.26		64.0	1.49	
70	91.32		54	96.26		54	96.26		70.1	1.58	
72	91.32		56	96.26		56	96.26		76.2	1.58	
74	91.32		58	96.26		58	96.26		82.3	1.55	
76	91.32		60	96.26		60	96.26		88.4	1.55	
78	91.32		62	96.26		62	96.26		94.5	1.52	
80	91.32		64	96.26		64	96.26		100.6	1.57	
82	91.32		66	96.26		66	96.26		106.7	1.52	
84	91.32		68	96.26		68	96.26		112.8	1.35	
86	91.32		70	96.26		70	96.26		118.9	1.22	
88	91.32		72	96.26		72	96.26		125.0	1.22	
90	91.32		74	96.26		74	96.26		131.1	1.18	
92	91.32		76	96.26		76	96.26		137.2	1.02	
94	91.32		78	96.26		78	96.26		143.3	0.96	
96	91.32		80	96.26		80	96.26		149.4	0.92	
98	91.32		82	96.26		82	96.26		155.5	0.88	
100	91.32		84	96.26		84	96.26		161.6	0.84	
102	91.32		86	96.26		86	96.26		167.7	0.80	
104	91.32		88	96.26		88	96.26		173.8	0.76	
106	91.32		90	96.26		90	96.26		179.9	0.72	
108	91.32		92	96.26		92	96.26		186.0	0.68	
110	91.32		94	96.26		94	96.26		192.1	0.64	
112	91.32		96	96.26		96	96.26		198.2	0.60	
114	91.32		98	96.26		98	96.26		204.3	0.56	
116	91.32		100	96.26		100	96.26		210.4	0.52	