



March 11, 2021

Benjamin Head  
2778 Keystone Drive  
Evergreen, CO 80439

Job Number: 21-12103

Subject: Subsoil and Foundation  
Investigation, Proposed Head Residence,  
30275 Highway 131, Routt County,  
Colorado.

Benjamin,

As requested, NWCC, Inc. (NWCC) has prepared this report that presents the results of the Subsoil and Foundation Investigation for your proposed residence to be constructed within a part of Lot 2 of the Brenner Subdivision (30275 Highway 131) in Routt County, Colorado. The approximate project site location is shown in the attached Figure #1.

The scope of our work included obtaining data from cursory observations made at the site, the logging of two test pits, the sampling of the probable foundation soils and the laboratory testing of the samples obtained. This report presents recommendations for economically feasible and safe type foundations, as well as allowable soil pressures and other design and construction considerations that are advisable, but not necessarily routine to quality design and building practices.

**Proposed Construction:** NWCC understands a single-family residence and detached barn/garage will be constructed at the site. Plans were not available at the time of the investigation. NWCC assumes the lower levels of the residence and barn/garage will likely be constructed with concrete slab-on-grade floor systems located from approximately 0 to 8 feet below the existing grades.

For design purposes, we have assumed that the building loads will be light to moderate typical of this type of residential construction. If loadings or conditions are significantly different from those above, we should be notified to reevaluate the recommendations in this report.

**Site Conditions:** The project site is located north of Highway 131 in Routt County, Colorado. The site was vacant at the time of our investigation and covered with approximately 2 to 3 feet of snow.

Vegetation at the site appeared to consist of sage brush, grasses and weeds. An elevation difference of approximately 4 to 8 feet appears to exist across the proposed building sites. The building envelope is located at the top of a concave hill, and terrain slopes gently to moderately down to the south and east.

**Subsurface Conditions:** To investigate the subsurface conditions at the site, two test pits were advanced on February 23, 2021 with a Bobcat 337 trackhoe. The approximate test pit locations are shown in Figure #2.

Subsurface conditions encountered in the test pits were fairly uniform and generally consisted of a layer of topsoil and organic materials overlying natural clays that extended to the maximum depth investigated, 6 feet below existing ground surface (bgs). Graphic logs of the exploratory test pits are presented in Figure #3, along with associated Legend and Notes.

A layer of topsoil and organic materials was encountered at the ground surface in all test pits and was approximately 6 to 16 inches in thickness. The topsoil and organic materials were silty to clayey, moist and dark brown in color. Natural clays were encountered below the topsoil and organic materials and extended to the maximum depth excavated, 6 feet bgs. The natural clays were nil to slightly sandy, moderately to highly plastic, fine to coarse grained with occasional gravels, stiff to very stiff, slightly moist to moist, blocky and brown to reddish brown in color. Clays appeared to be derived from highly weathered claystone bedrock from approximately 2 ½ to 6 feet bgs in Test Pit 1 and from 3 to 6 feet bgs in Test Pit 2. Samples of the natural clays classified as CL soils in accordance with the Unified Soil Classification System (USCS).

Swell-consolidation tests conducted on samples of the natural clays indicate the materials tested will exhibit a moderate to high swell potential when wetted under a constant load. Swell-consolidation test results are presented in Figures #4 and #5, and all other laboratory test results are summarized in the attached Table 1.

Groundwater seepage was not encountered in any of the test pits at the time of excavation. It should be noted that the groundwater conditions at the site can be expected to fluctuate with changes in precipitation and runoff.

**Foundation Recommendations:** Based on the results of the field and laboratory investigations and our experience with similar projects in this subdivision, NWCC believes a safe and economical foundation system will consist of a deep foundation system consisting of straight shaft skin friction/end bearing piers drilled into the underlying clays. Foundation movement should be within tolerable limits if the following design and construction precautions are observed.

- 1) A minimum pier diameter of 12 inches and a minimum pier length of 20 feet are recommended. A maximum pier length to diameter ratio of 25 is also recommended.
- 2) Piers should be designed using allowable skin friction value of 900 psf for the portion of pier drilled into the natural clays. The upper 5 feet of pier penetration should be neglected in skin-friction calculations. A drill rig of sufficient size, type and operating condition should be used so bottom of the piers can be cleaned out properly and minimum length requirements can be met. If the bottom of piers are properly cleaned and approved by an engineer from this office, then an allowable end bearing pressure of 3,000 psf for the clays may be used in the design. Higher skin

friction and end bearing values may be used in the pier design if competent bedrock materials are encountered in the piers.

- 3) Piers should be reinforced their full length with at least one #5 reinforcing rod for each 16 inches of pier perimeter.
- 4) Piers should be properly cleaned and dewatered prior to steel and concrete placement.
- 5) A 4-inch void should be provided beneath grade beams to prevent expansive soils from exerting uplift forces on grade beams and to concentrate pier loadings. A void should also be provided beneath necessary pier caps.
- 6) NWCC strongly recommends at least two test holes or test piers be drilled at the building site prior to starting the pier drilling operations. Test holes/piers should be drilled to evaluate deeper subsoil/bedrock conditions and verify recommendations given above.
- 7) A representative of NWCC must observe the test hole and pier drilling operations.

**Floor Slabs:** NWCC has assumed the lower levels of the proposed structures will most likely be constructed with concrete slab-on-grade floor systems. On-site soils, apart from the topsoil and organic materials, are capable of supporting slab-on-grade construction. However, floor slabs present a very difficult problem where swelling materials are present near floor slab elevation because sufficient dead load cannot be imposed on them to resist the uplift pressure generated when the materials are wetted and expand. Based on the moisture-volume change characteristics of the natural clays encountered at the site, NWCC recommends structural floor systems over well-ventilated crawlspaces or void form materials be used in the proposed buildings.

If the client elects to construct concrete slab-on-grade floor systems, we recommend the following special design and construction precautions be followed so that the amount of movement in the floor slabs can be reduced if the clays become wetted and swell. Differential slab movements on the order of 1 to 3 inches could occur if the clays are wetted.

- 1) Floor slabs must be separated from all bearing walls; columns and their foundation supports with a positive slip joint. NWCC recommends the use of ½-inch thick cellotex or impregnated felt.
- 2) Interior non-bearing partition walls resting on the floor slabs must be provided with a slip joint, preferably at the bottom, so in the event the floor slab moves, this movement is not transmitted to the upper structure. This detail is also important for wallboard and doorframes and is shown in Figure #6.
- 3) A minimum 6-inch gravel layer must be provided beneath all floor slabs to act as a capillary break and to help distribute pressures. Prior to placing the gravel, excavation should be shaped so that if water does get under the slab, it will flow to the low point of the excavation. In addition, any

topsoil and organic materials should be removed prior to placement of the underslab gravels or new structural fill materials.

- 4) Floor slabs must be provided with control joints placed 10 to 12 feet on center in each direction to help control shrinkage cracking. Locations of the joints should be carefully checked to assure that natural, unavoidable cracking will be controlled. Depth of the control joints should be a minimum of  $\frac{1}{4}$  the thickness of the slab.
- 5) Underslab soils must be kept as close as possible to their in-situ moisture content. Excessive wetting or drying of these soils prior to placement of floor slab could result in differential movement after slabs are constructed.
- 6) It has been NWCC's experience that the risk of floor slab movement can be reduced by removing at least 3 feet of the expansive materials and replacing them with a well compacted, non-expansive fill. If this is done or if fills are required to bring underslab areas to the desired grade, the fill should consist of non-expansive, granular materials. Fill should be uniformly placed and compacted in 6-to-8-inch lifts to at least 95% of the maximum standard Proctor density at or near the optimum moisture content, as determined by ASTM D-698.

Following the above precautions and recommendations will not prevent floor slab movement in the event the soils beneath the floor slabs undergo moisture changes. However, they should reduce the amount of damage if such movement occurs. The only way to eliminate the risk of all floor slab movement is to construct a structural floor over a well-vented crawl space or void form materials.

**Underdrain System:** Any floor levels or crawl space areas constructed below the existing or finished ground surfaces and the foundations should be protected by underdrain systems to help reduce the problems associated with surface and subsurface drainage during high runoff periods.

Localized perched water or runoff can infiltrate the lower levels of the structure at the foundation levels. This water can be one of the primary causes of differential foundation and slab movement, especially where expansive soils are encountered. Excessive moisture in crawl space areas or lower levels can also lead to rotting and mildewing of wooden structural members and the formation of mold and mold spores. Formation of mold and mold spores could have detrimental effects on the air quality in these areas, which in turn can lead to potential adverse health effects.

Drains should be located around entire perimeter of the lower levels and be placed and at least 12 inches below any floor slab or crawl space levels and at least 6 inches below the foundation voids and bottom of the foundation walls. NWCC recommends the use of perforated PVC pipe for the drainpipe, which meets or exceeds ASTM D-3034/SDR 35 requirements, to minimize potential for pipe crushing during backfill operations. Holes in the drainpipe should be oriented down between 4 o'clock and 8 o'clock to promote rapid runoff of water. Drainpipes should be surrounded with at least 12 inches of free draining gravel and should be protected from contamination by a filter covering of Mirafi 140N subsurface drainage fabric or an equivalent product. Drains should have a minimum slope of  $\frac{1}{8}$  inch per foot and be daylighted at

positive outfalls protected from freezing or be led to sumps from which water can be pumped. The use of interior laterals, multiple daylighters or sumps may be required for the proposed structure. Caution should be taken when backfilling so as not to damage or disturb the installed underdrain. NWCC recommends the drainage systems include a cleanout every 100 feet, be protected against intrusion by animals at outfalls and be tested prior to backfilling. NWCC also recommends the client retain our firm to observe the underdrain systems during construction to verify that they are being installed in accordance with recommendations provided in this report and observe a flow test prior to backfilling the system.

In addition, NWCC recommends an impervious barrier be constructed to keep water from infiltrating through the voided areas and/or under the foundation walls. The barrier should be constructed of an impervious material, which is approved by this office and placed below the perimeter drain and up against the sides of the foundation walls. A typical perimeter/underdrain detail is shown in Figure #7.

Placement of an impervious membrane and/or properly compacted clays in crawl space areas to a point at least 12 inches above the top of the foundation voids or bottom of the foundation walls should help reduce the moisture problems in these areas.

**Foundation Walls and Retaining Structures:** Foundation walls and retaining structures, which are laterally supported and can be expected to undergo only a moderate amount of deflection, may be designed for a lateral earth pressure computed based on an equivalent fluid unit weight of 45 pcf for imported, free draining granular backfill and 60 pcf for on-site soils.

Cantilevered retaining structures at the site can be expected to deflect sufficiently to mobilize full active earth pressure condition. Therefore, cantilevered structures may be designed for a lateral earth pressure computed based on an equivalent fluid unit weight of 35 pcf for imported, free draining granular backfill and 50 pcf for on-site soils.

Foundation walls and retaining structures should be designed for appropriate hydrostatic and surcharge pressures such as adjacent buildings, traffic and construction materials. An upward sloping backfill and/or natural slope will also significantly increase earth pressures on foundation walls and retaining structures and the structural engineer should carefully evaluate these additional lateral loads when designing foundation and retaining walls.

NWCC recommends imported granular soils for backfilling foundation walls and retaining structures because their use results in lower lateral earth pressures. Imported granular materials should be placed to within 2 to 3 feet of the ground surface. Imported granular soils should be free draining and have less than 5 percent passing the No. 200 sieve. Granular soils placed behind foundation and retaining walls should be sloped from the base of the wall at an angle of at least 45 degrees from the vertical. The upper 2 to 3 feet of fill should be a relatively impervious soil or pavement structure to prevent surface water infiltration into the backfill.

Wall backfill should be carefully placed in uniform lifts and compacted to at least 95 percent of the maximum standard Proctor density and near the optimum moisture content. Care should be taken not to

overcompact backfill since this could cause excessive lateral pressure on the walls. Some settlement of deep foundation wall backfill materials will occur even if the backfill materials are placed correctly.

**Surface Drainage:** Proper surface drainage at this site is of paramount importance for minimizing infiltration of surface drainage into wall backfill and bearing soils, which could result in increased wall pressures, differential foundation and slab movement. The following drainage precautions should be observed during construction and at all times after the structures have been completed:

- 1) Ground surface surrounding structures should be sloped (minimum of 1.0 inch per foot) to drain away from structures in all directions to a minimum of 10 feet. Ponding must be avoided. If necessary, raising top of foundation walls to achieve a better surface grade is advisable.
- 2) Non-structural backfill placed around structures should be compacted to at least 95% of the maximum standard Proctor density at or near the optimum moisture content to minimize future settlement of the fill. Backfill should be placed immediately after the braced foundation walls are able to structurally support the fill. Puddling or sluicing must be avoided.
- 3) Top 2 to 3 feet of soil placed within 10 feet of foundations should be impervious in nature to minimize infiltration of surface water into wall backfill.
- 4) Roof downspouts and drains should discharge well beyond the limits of all backfill. Roof overhangs, which project two to three feet beyond foundation walls, should be considered if gutters are not used.
- 5) Landscaping, which requires excessive watering and lawn sprinkler heads, should be located a minimum of 10 feet from the foundation walls of the structures.
- 6) Plastic membranes should not be used to cover ground surface adjacent to foundation walls.

**Site Grading:** Slopes on which the proposed structures, driveway and on-site wastewater treatment system (OWTS) are proposed could become unstable due to the proposed construction. Design and construction considerations must be addressed to avoid and/or limit the potential for slope instability at the site. Although a detailed slope stability analysis is beyond the scope of this report, some general guidelines are provided below for initial planning and design. Our office should review the construction plans as they are being prepared so that we can verify that our recommendations are being properly incorporated into the plans.

- 1) Slopes greater than 25 percent should be avoided whenever possible for construction of permanent roads, structures and OWTS.
- 2) Temporary cuts for foundation construction should be constructed to OSHA standards for temporary excavations. Permanent, unretained cuts for driveways or building sites should be kept as shallow as possible and should not exceed a 3(Horizontal) to 1(Vertical) configuration for the

topsoil and organic materials and a 2(Horizontal) to 1(Vertical) configuration for the clays. We recommend these cuts be limited to 10 feet in height or less unless stable bedrock is encountered. The risk of slope instability will be significantly increased if groundwater seepage is encountered in the cuts. NWCC office should be notified immediately to evaluate the site if seepage is encountered, or deeper cuts are planned and assess whether additional investigations and/or stabilization measures are warranted.

- 3) Excavating during periods of low runoff at the site can reduce potential slope instability during excavation. Excavations should not be attempted during the spring or early summer when seasonal runoff and groundwater levels are typically high.
- 4) Fills up to 10 feet in height can be constructed at the site and should be constructed to a 2(Horizontal) to 1(Vertical) or flatter configuration. The fill areas should be prepared by stripping any existing fill materials and topsoil and organics, scarification and compaction to at least 95% of the maximum standard Proctor density and within 2% of optimum moisture content as determined by ASTM D698. The fills should be properly benched/keyed into the natural hillsides after the natural topsoil and organic materials have been removed. The fill materials should consist of the on-site soils (exclusive of topsoil, organics or silts) and be uniformly placed and compacted in 6 to 8-inch loose lifts to the minimum density value and moisture content range indicated above.
- 5) Proper surface drainage features should be provided around all permanent cuts and fills and steep natural slopes to direct surface runoff away from these areas. Cuts, fills and other stripped areas should be protected against erosion by revegetation or other methods. Areas of concentrated drainage should be avoided and may require the use of riprap for erosion control. NWCC recommends that a maximum of 4 inches of topsoil be placed over the new cut and fill slopes. It should be noted that the newly placed topsoil materials may slough/slide off the slopes during the spring runoff seasons until the root zone in the vegetated cover establishes.
- 6) A qualified engineer experienced in this area should prepare site grading and drainage plans. The contractor must provide a construction sequencing plan for excavation, wall construction and bracing and backfilling for the steeper and more sensitive portions of the site prior to starting the excavations or construction.

**Limitations:** The recommendations provided in this report are based on the soils encountered at this site and NWCC's assumptions regarding the proposed construction. NWCC believes this information gives a high degree of reliability for anticipating behavior of the proposed structures; however, NWCC's recommendations are professional opinions and cannot control nature, nor can they assure the soils profiles beneath those or adjacent to those observed. No warranties expressed or implied are given on the content of this report.

Expansive soils were encountered at this site. These soils are stable at their natural moisture content but can shrink or swell with changes in moisture. The behavior of expansive soils is not fully understood. The swell or consolidation potential of a site can change erratically both in lateral and vertical extent. Moisture

changes also occur erratically, resulting in conditions, which cannot always be predicted. Recommendations presented in this report are based on the current state of the art for foundations and floor slabs on expansive soils. As noted previously, the owner must be made aware there is a risk in construction on these types of soil. Performance of the structures will depend on following the recommendations and in proper maintenance after construction is complete. As water is the main cause for volume change in the soils, it is necessary that the changes in moisture content be kept to a minimum. This requires judicious irrigation and providing positive surface drainage away from the structures. Any distress noted in the structures should be brought to the attention of NWCC.

This report is based on the investigation at the described site and on specific anticipated construction as stated herein. If either of these conditions is changed, the results would also most likely change. Therefore, NWCC strongly recommends that our firm be contacted prior to finalizing the construction plans so that we can verify our recommendations are being properly incorporated into the construction plans. Man-made or natural changes in the conditions of a property can also occur over time. In addition, changes in requirements due to state-of-the-art knowledge and/or legislation do occur. As a result, the findings of this report may become invalid due to these changes. Therefore, this report is subject to review and not considered valid after a period of 3 years or if conditions as stated above are altered. It is the responsibility of the owner or his representative to ensure that the information in this report is incorporated into the plans and/or specifications and construction of the project.

If you have any questions regarding this report or if NWCC may be of further service, please do not hesitate to contact us.

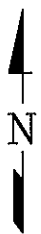
Sincerely,  
NWCC, Inc.

Erika K. Hill, P.E., P.G.  
Project Engineer

Reviewed by Brian B. Lee, P.E.  
Principal Engineer







NOT TO SCALE



PROJECT SITE

Title: VICINITY MAP

Date: 3/10/21

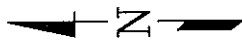
Job Name: Proposed Head Residence

Job No. 21-12103

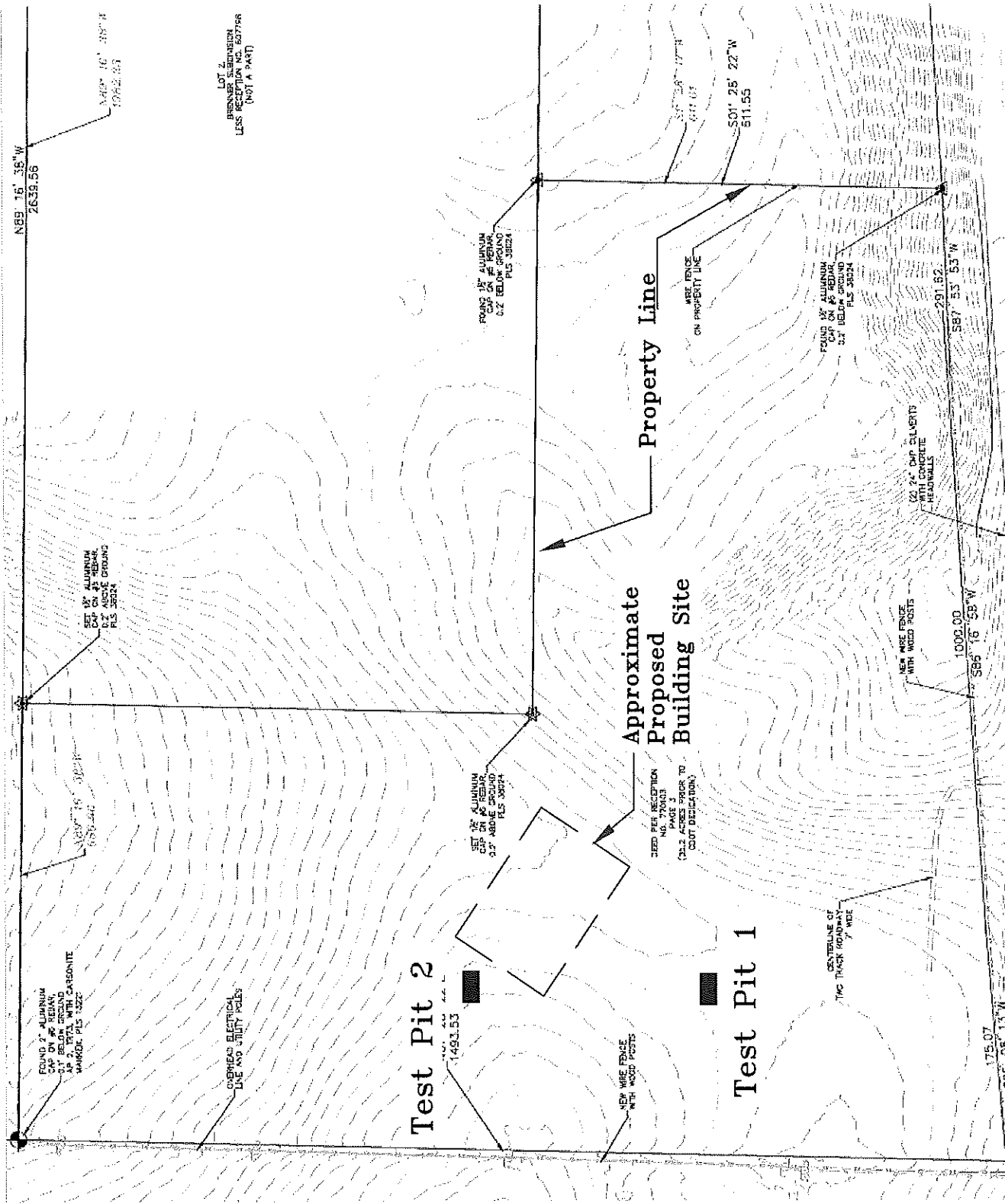
Location: 30275 Highway 131, Routt County, Colorado

Figure #1





NOT TO SCALE



Title:

SITE PLAN/LOCATION OF TEST PITS

Job Name:

Proposed Head Residence

LOCATION:

30275 Highway 131, Routt County, Colorado

Date:

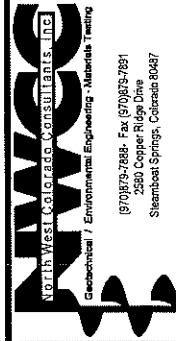
3/10/21

Job No.

21-12103

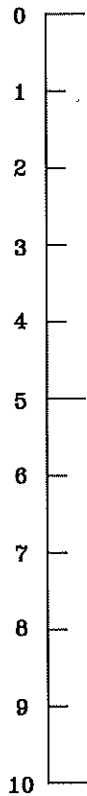
Figure

#2



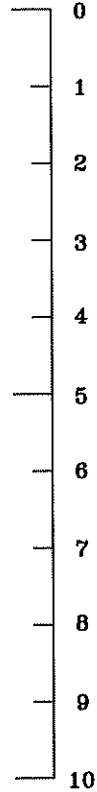
Test Pit 1

Depth (ft)



Test Pit 2

Depth (ft)



LEGEND:



Topsoil and Organics.



CLAYS: Nil to slightly sandy, moderately to highly plastic, fine to coarse grained with occasional gravels, stiff to hard, slightly moist to moist, blocky and brown to reddish brown.



Hand Drive Sample—2" California Liner.

NOTES:

- 1) Test pits were excavated on February 23, 2021 with a Bobcat 337 trackhoe.
- 2) Test pit locations were determined by pacing from topographic features in the field.
- 3) Elevations of the test pits were not measured and the logs are drawn to the depths investigated.
- 4) The lines between materials shown on the test pit logs represent the approximate boundaries between material types and transitions may be gradual.

Title: LOGS, LEGEND AND NOTES

Job Name: Proposed Head Residence

Location: 30275 Highway 131, Routt County, Colorado

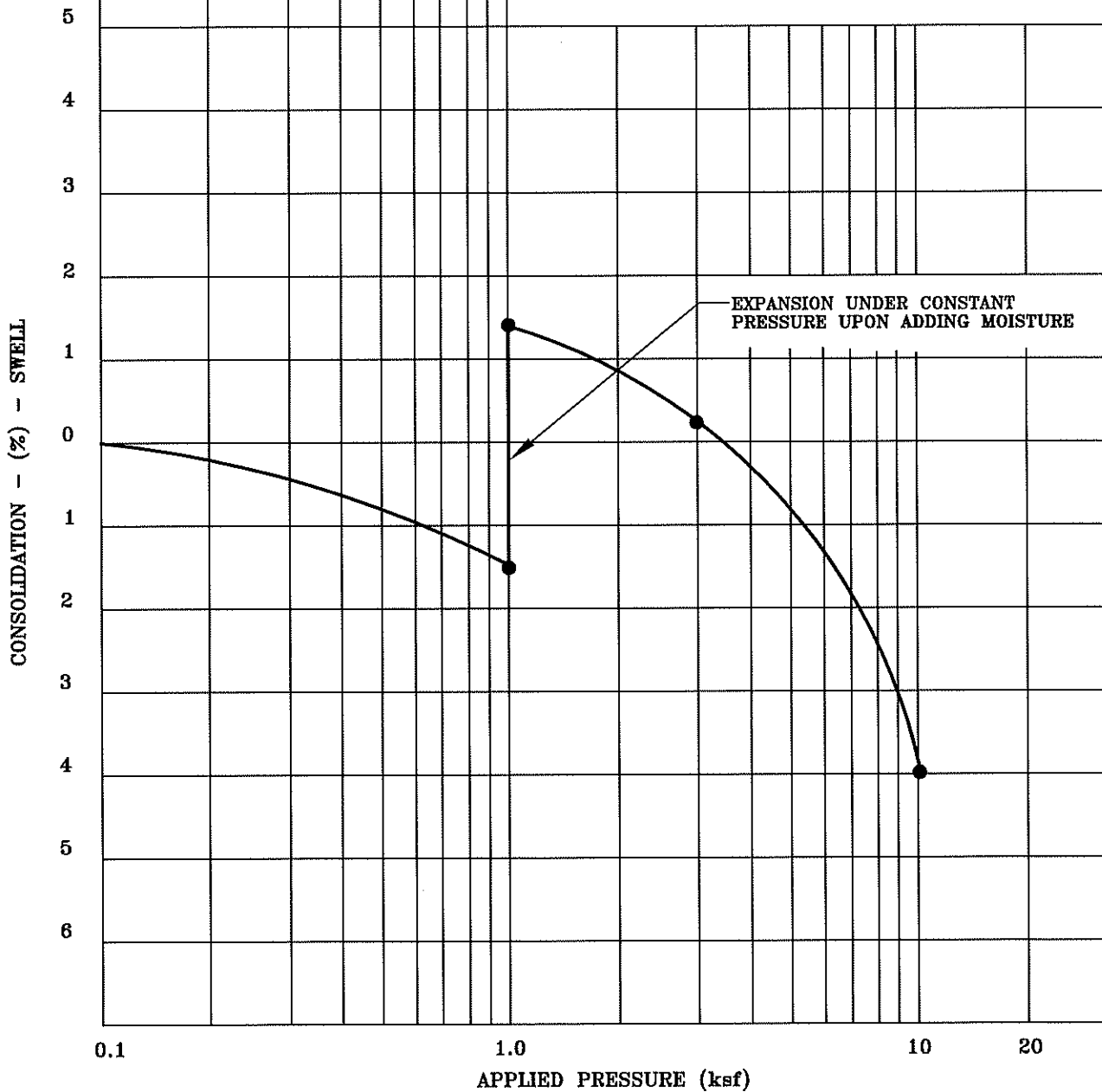
Date: 3/10/21


Job No. 21-12103

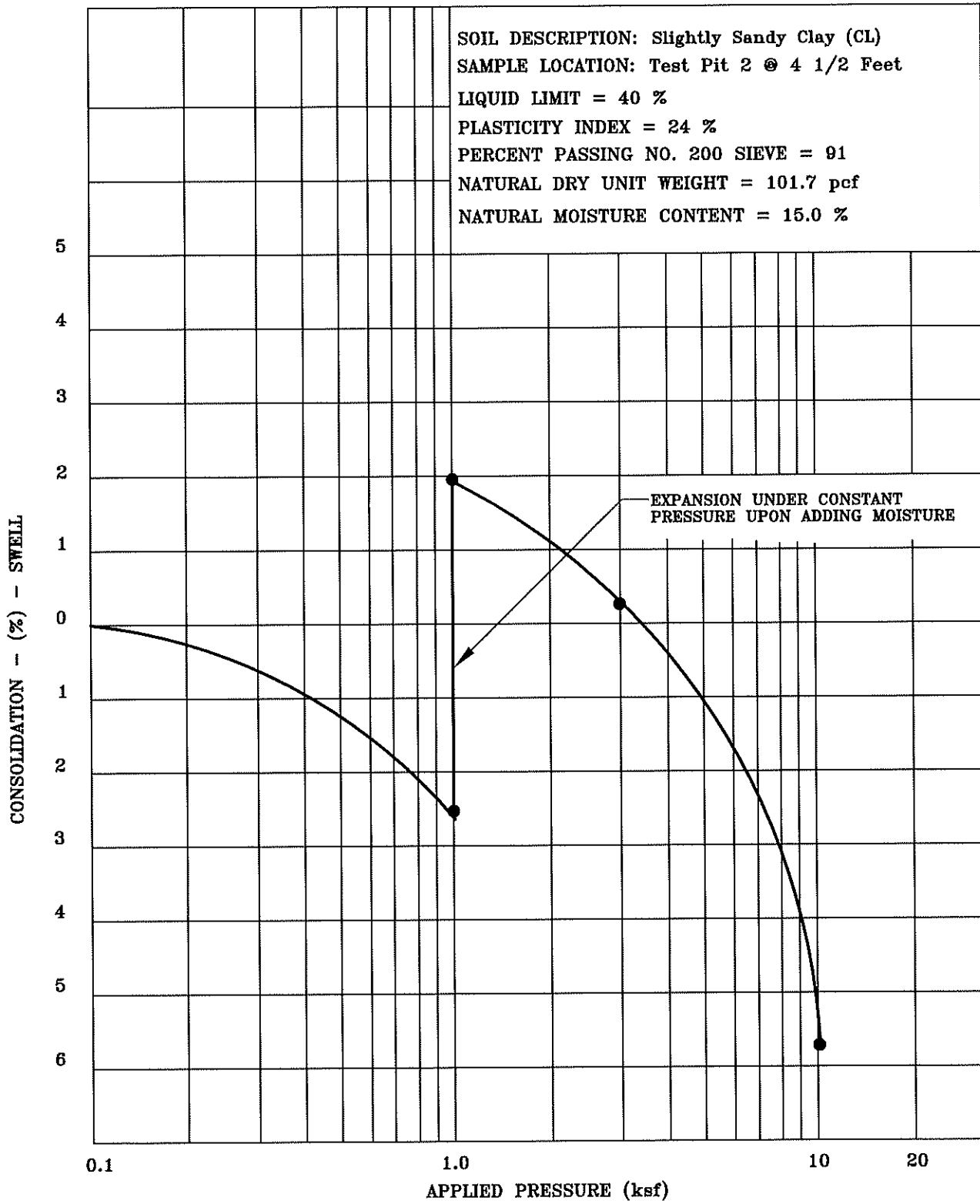
Figure #3



SOIL DESCRIPTION: Slightly Sandy Clay (CL)  
 SAMPLE LOCATION: Test Pit 1 @ 3 Feet  
 LIQUID LIMIT = 39 %  
 PLASTICITY INDEX = 25%  
 PERCENT PASSING NO. 200 SIEVE = 91  
 NATURAL DRY UNIT WEIGHT = 101.7 pcf  
 NATURAL MOISTURE CONTENT = 13.1 %



Title: <b>SWELL-CONSOLIDATION TEST RESULTS</b>		Date: <b>3/10/21</b>	 <p>North West Colorado Consultants, Inc.        Geotechnical / Environmental Engineering - Materials Testing        (970) 679-7888 - Fax (970) 679-7891        2580 Copper Ridge Drive        Steamboat Springs, Colorado 80487</p>
Job Name: <b>Proposed Head Residence</b>		Job No. <b>21-12103</b>	
Location: <b>30275 Highway 131, Routt County, Colorado</b>		Figure <b>#4</b>	



Title: SWELL-CONSOLIDATION TEST RESULTS

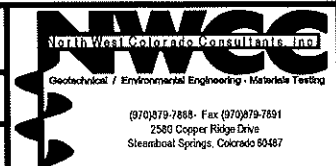
Date: 3/10/21

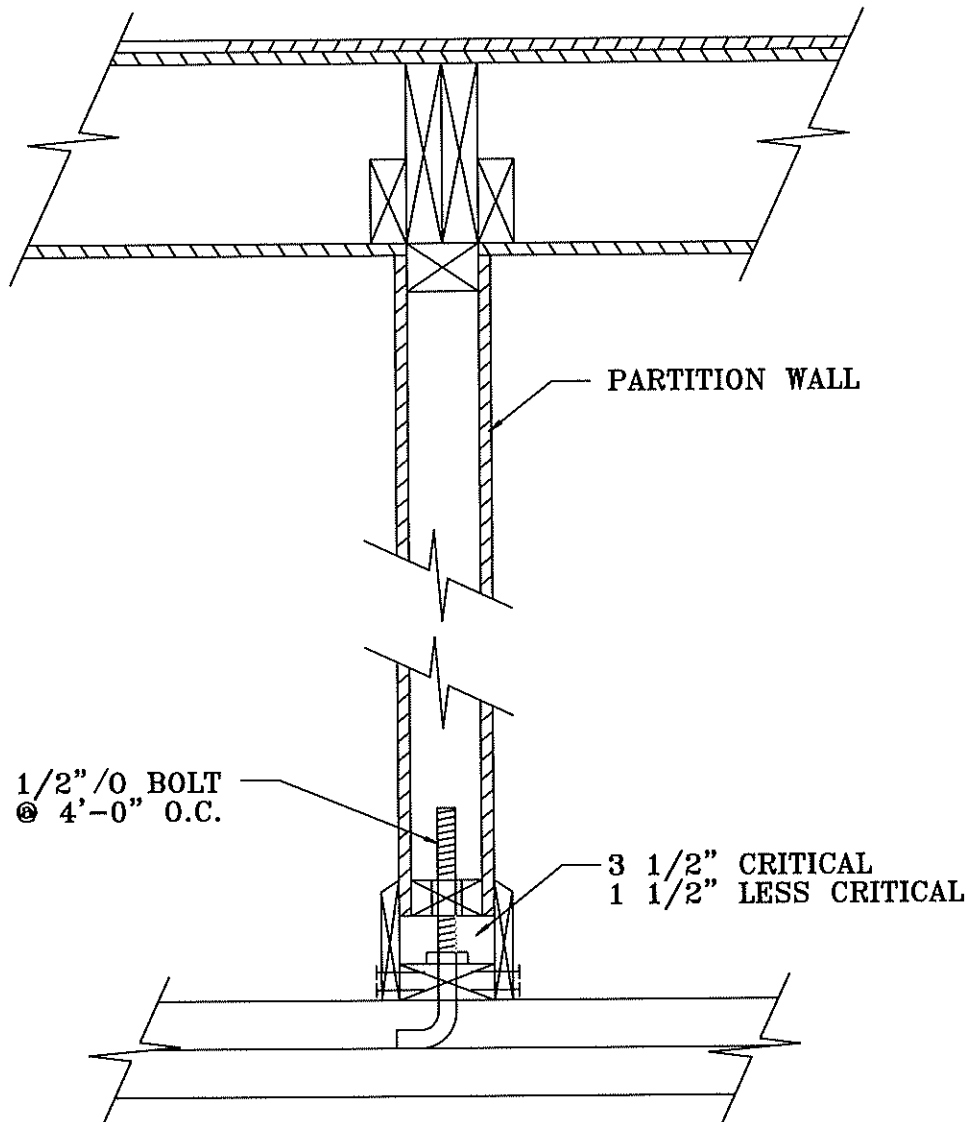
Job Name: Proposed Head Residence

Job No. 21-12103

Location: 30275 Highway 131, Routt County, Colorado

Figure #5





Title: **HUNG PARTITION WALL DETAIL**

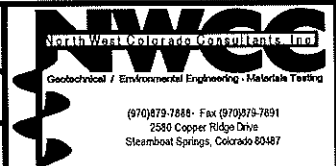
Date: **3/10/21**

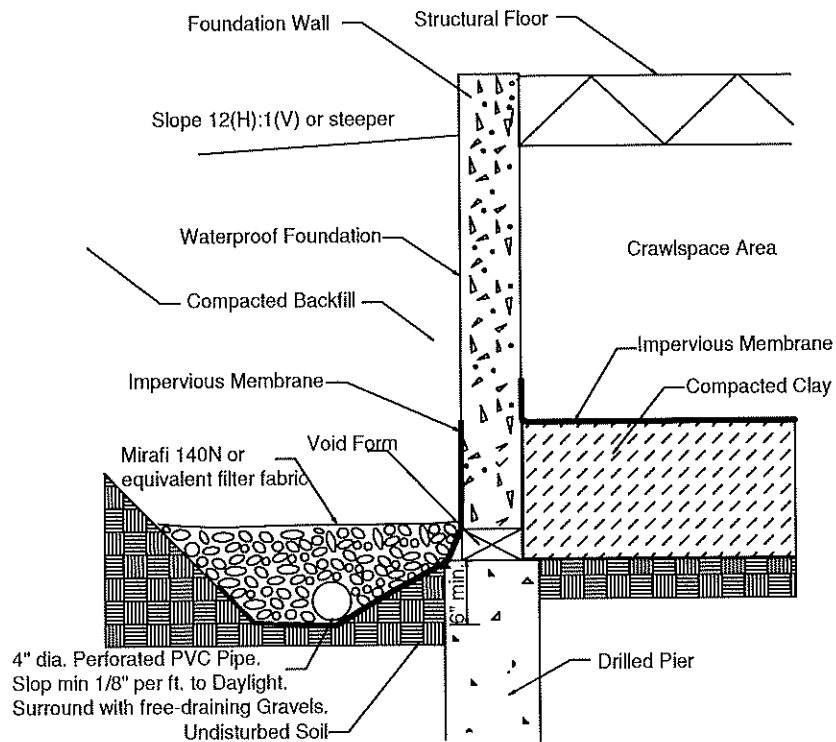
Job Name: **Proposed Head Residence**

Job No. **21-12103**

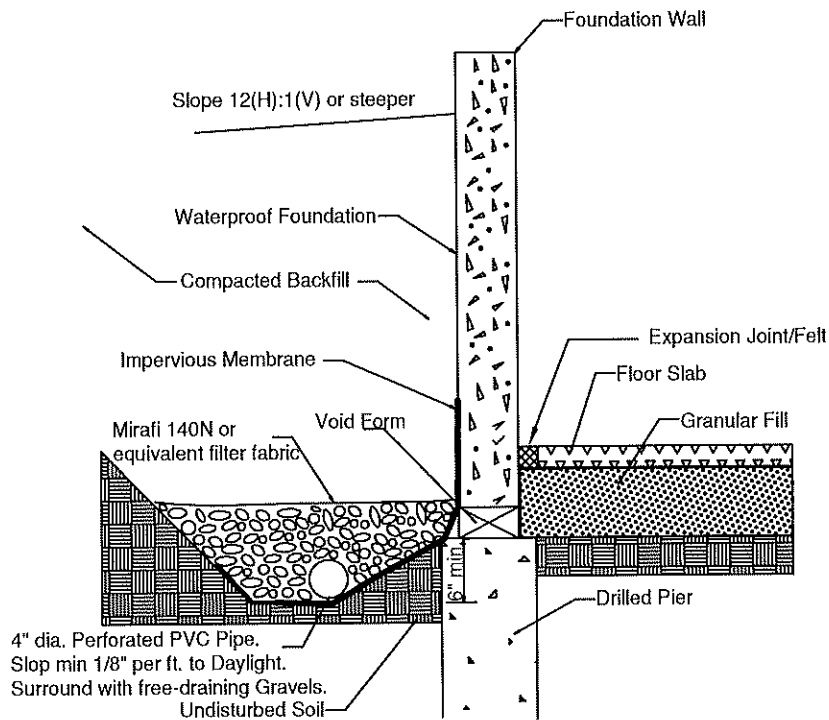
Location: **30275 Highway 131, Routt County, Colorado**

Figure **#6**





Crawlspace Area



Lower Level with  
Floor Slab

Title: **PERIMETER/UNDERDRAIN DETAIL**

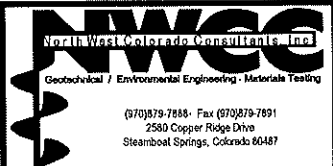
Job Name: **Proposed Head Residence**

Location: **30275 Highway 131, Routt County, Colorado**

Date: **3/10/21**

Job No. **21-12103**

Figure **#7**



*NWCC, Inc.*

TABLE 1

[illegible]