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INSTITUTE

STATE DEPARTMENT  
OF HIGHWAYS AND  
PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION

COOPERATIVE  
RESEARCH

THE EFFECTS OF EMBEDMENT DEPTH, SOIL  
PROPERTIES, AND POST TYPE ON THE  
PERFORMANCE OF HIGHWAY  
GUARDRAIL POST

in cooperation with the  
Department of Transportation  
Federal Highway Administration

RESEARCH REPORT 405-1  
STUDY 2-5-85-405  
HIGHWAY GUARDRAILS



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16. Abstract  <p>The Texas State Department of Highways and Public Transportation (TSDHPT) currently uses two types of guardrail posts: (1) a circular wood post and (2) a steel W6 x 8.5 post. The current specifications require that the post must have a minimum soil embedment depth of 38 in. When a guardrail system is required at a culvert, SDHPT currently requires a rigid bridge rail when the full embedment depth of 38 in. cannot be achieved. The objective of this research study was to determine if the current guardrail design could be modified to achieve the necessary strength when full post embedment could not be achieved. The purpose of this report was to assess the effects of post type, soil conditions, and embedment depth on the load-deformation characteristics of the guardrail post. With this information, it is believed that a successful guardrail can be designed using more post with less than the full 38 in. embedment. Posts with only 18 in. or 24 in. embedment could be used at 3 ft-1 1/2 in. spacing and still produce the required strength for example.</p> <p>A series of static load tests were conducted on timber and steel posts embedded 18 in., 24 in., 30 in., and 38 in. in two different soils to determine the effects of post type, soil conditions, and embedment depth on the amount of energy dissipated by the soil. The results of these field tests were used to verify a mathematical model which could be used to predict guardrail post load capacity.</p>					
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Research Report 405-1  
on  
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Texas Transportation Institute  
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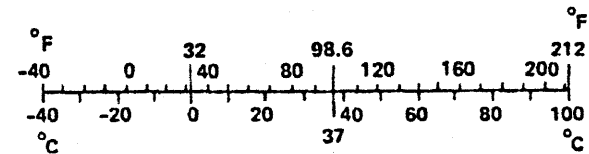
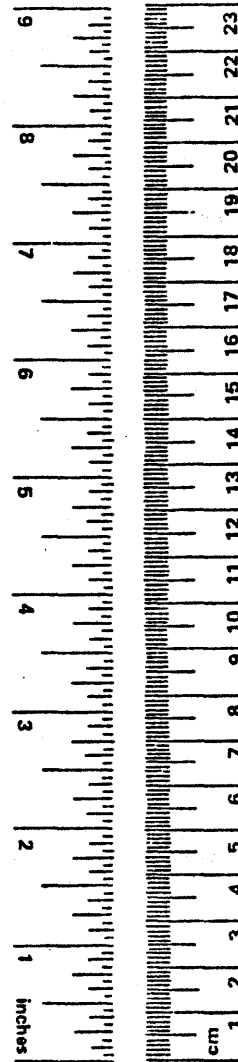
## METRIC CONVERSION FACTORS

### Approximate Conversions to Metric Measures

Symbol	When You Know	Multiply by	To Find	Symbol
<b>LENGTH</b>				
in	inches	*2.5	centimeters	cm
ft	feet	30	centimeters	cm
yd	yards	0.9	meters	m
mi	miles	1.6	kilometers	km
<b>AREA</b>				
in <sup>2</sup>	square inches	6.5	square centimeters	cm <sup>2</sup>
ft <sup>2</sup>	square feet	0.09	square meters	m <sup>2</sup>
yd <sup>2</sup>	square yards	0.8	square meters	m <sup>2</sup>
mi <sup>2</sup>	square miles	2.6	square kilometers	km <sup>2</sup>
	acres	0.4	hectares	ha
<b>MASS (weight)</b>				
oz	ounces	28	grams	g
lb	pounds	0.45	kilograms	kg
	short tons (2000 lb)	0.9	tonnes	t
<b>VOLUME</b>				
tsp	teaspoons	5	milliliters	ml
Tbsp	tablespoons	15	milliliters	ml
fl oz	fluid ounces	30	milliliters	ml
c	cups	0.24	liters	l
pt	pints	0.47	liters	l
qt	quarts	0.95	liters	l
gal	gallons	3.8	liters	l
ft <sup>3</sup>	cubic feet	0.03	cubic meters	m <sup>3</sup>
yd <sup>3</sup>	cubic yards	0.76	cubic meters	m <sup>3</sup>
<b>TEMPERATURE (exact)</b>				
°F	Fahrenheit temperature	5/9 (after subtracting 32)	Celsius temperature	°C

### Approximate Conversions from Metric Measures

Symbol	When You Know	Multiply by	To Find	Symbol
<b>LENGTH</b>				
mm	millimeters	0.04	inches	in
cm	centimeters	0.4	inches	in
m	meters	3.3	feet	ft
m	meters	1.1	yards	yd
km	kilometers	0.6	miles	mi
<b>AREA</b>				
cm <sup>2</sup>	square centimeters	0.16	square inches	in <sup>2</sup>
m <sup>2</sup>	square meters	1.2	square yards	yd <sup>2</sup>
km <sup>2</sup>	square kilometers	0.4	square miles	mi <sup>2</sup>
ha	hectares (10,000 m <sup>2</sup> )	2.5	acres	
<b>MASS (weight)</b>				
g	grams	0.035	ounces	oz
kg	kilograms	2.2	pounds	lb
t	tonnes (1000 kg)	1.1	short tons	
<b>VOLUME</b>				
ml	milliliters	0.03	fluid ounces	fl oz
l	liters	2.1	pints	pt
l	liters	1.06	quarts	qt
l	liters	0.26	gallons	gal
m <sup>3</sup>	cubic meters	35	cubic feet	ft <sup>3</sup>
m <sup>3</sup>	cubic meters	1.3	cubic yards	yd <sup>3</sup>
<b>TEMPERATURE (exact)</b>				
°C	Celsius temperature	9/5 (then add 32)	Fahrenheit temperature	°F



\*1 in = 2.54 (exactly). For other exact conversions and more detailed tables, see NBS Misc. Publ. 286, Units of Weights and Measures, Price \$2.25, SD Catalog No. C13.10:286.





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## INTRODUCTION

When this research study was initiated, the Texas State Department of Highways and Public Transportation (TSDHPT) required the wood guardrail post to have a minimum diameter of 7 in. and a minimum soil embedment depth of 38 in. If the top of the post was domed, the minimum overall length was 69 in., and a minimum overall post length of 66 in. was required if the top of the post was beveled. The specifications stated that the steel W6 x 8.5 guardrail post should comply with the beveled wood post. When a guardrail is required at a culvert where the fill depth will not permit the full embedment depth of the guardrail post, a "rigid" bridge rail is now installed. This rigid bridge rail then calls for a special transition between the flexible guardrail.

The purpose of this research report was to determine the force vs. displacement characteristics and amount of energy absorbed by the lateral soil resistance produced on timber and steel standard guardrail posts embedded 18 in., 24 in., 30 in., and 38 in. in a cohesionless and cohesive soil. The post type, soil properties and length of embedment are important factors in determining the behavior of the guardrail system. This information will be used in other phases of this study to modify the guardrail design. Hopefully, more posts could be used with shallower embedment to achieve the desired strength.

This phase of the study consists of a series of static tests on timber and steel posts embedded 18 in., 24 in., 30 in. and 38 in. in two different types of soil. The work plan consisted of

1. An existing mathematical model for static laterally loaded guardrail posts was used to predict the lateral capacity of the post.
2. Soil tests were conducted to determine the average properties of the cohesive and cohesionless soils.
3. Static field load tests were performed on timber and steel posts with 18 in., 24 in., 30 in. and 38 in. with embedment depths in two types of soils.
4. The test results were compared with each other and with the mathematical model.

## MATHEMATICAL MODEL

Using the fundamental earth pressure theory developed by Coulomb, the static post capacity could be estimated for each specific test condition using the model reported by Broms (1 and 2)\*. For short, free ended, rigid piles in cohesive soils, the distribution of soil resistance along the pile was simulated by Broms (1) as shown in Fig. 1. The ultimate lateral soil pressure along the length is a function of the undrained shear strength,  $C_u$ , and the pile diameter  $B$ .

For cohesionless soils, Broms (2) uses the ultimate pressure distribution shown in Fig. 2. The ultimate soil pressure is defined in terms of  $\gamma$ ,  $L$ ,  $B$  and  $K_p$ ; where  $\gamma$  is the effective unit weight of the soil,  $L$  is the embedment depth,  $B$  is the pile diameter and  $K_p$  is the Rankine passive earth pressure coefficient  $K_p = \tan^2(45 + \phi/2)$ .

The lateral capacity,  $P$ , for the cohesive and cohesionless soils can be determined by using moment and horizontal force static equilibrium equations. These lateral soil pressure distributions proposed by Broms are widely used in practice to predict the ultimate lateral capacity of a pile.

The ultimate lateral soil resistance for the cohesionless and cohesive soils was calculated using Broms' procedures at each embedment depth. These values are presented in Table 1. The lateral post capacity versus embedment depth are plotted in Figures 3 and 4. These static analysis results approximate the ultimate lateral soil capacity developed for each of the static load tests.

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\*Underscored numbers in parentheses correspond to numbers in the list of references.

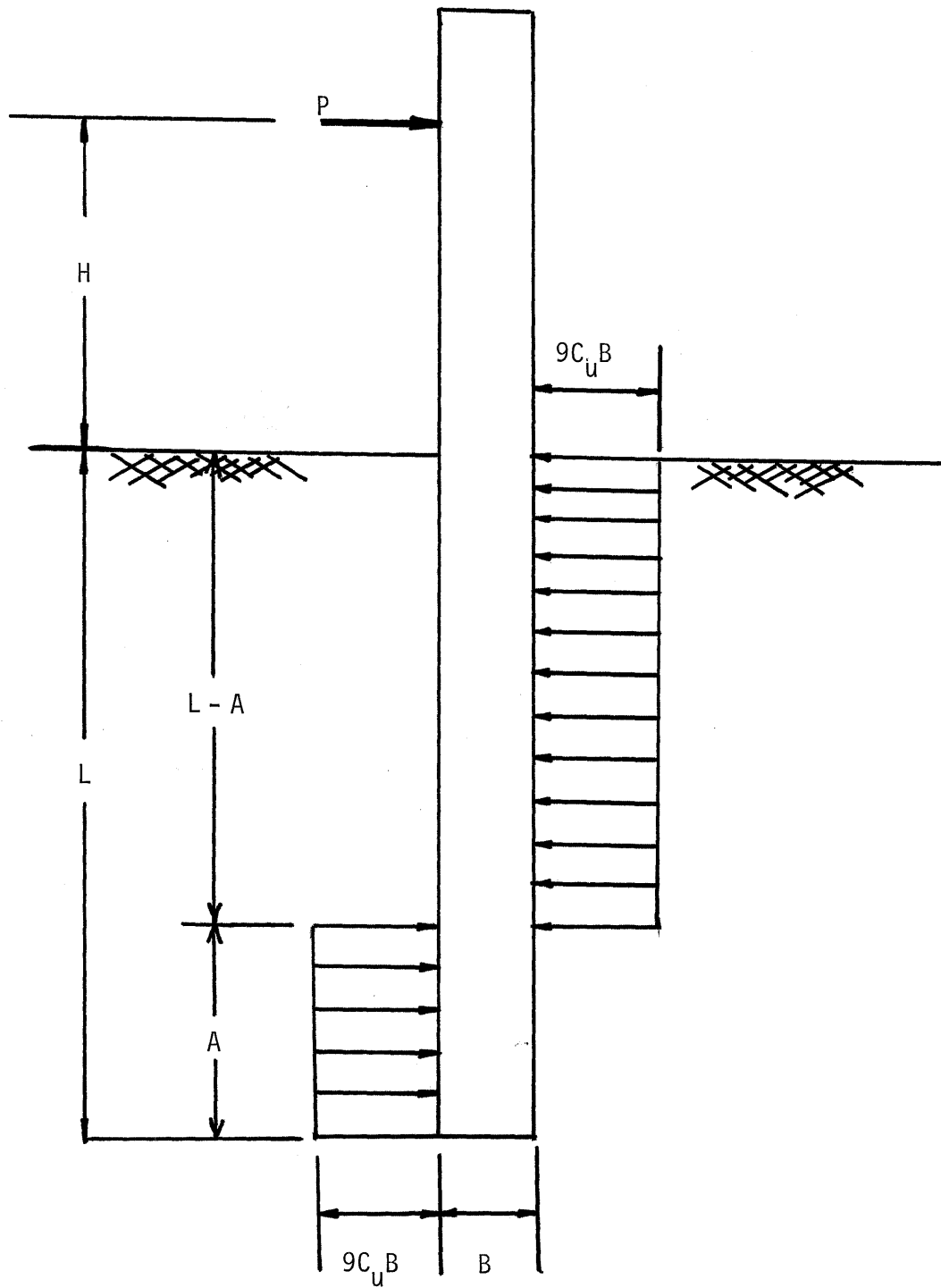


FIG. 1-Brom's Ultimate Lateral Soil Resistance for Cohesive Soils (Ref. 1)

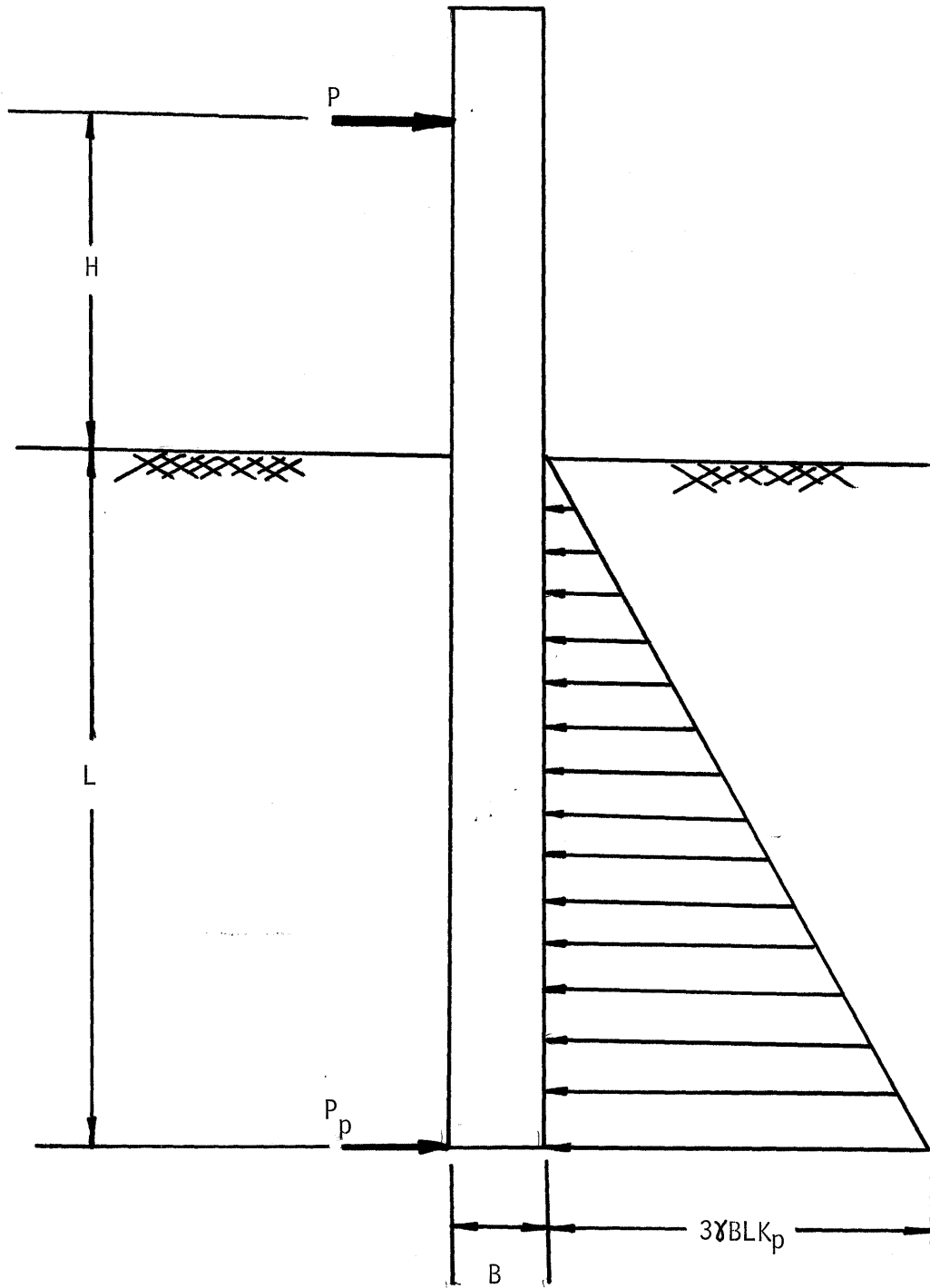
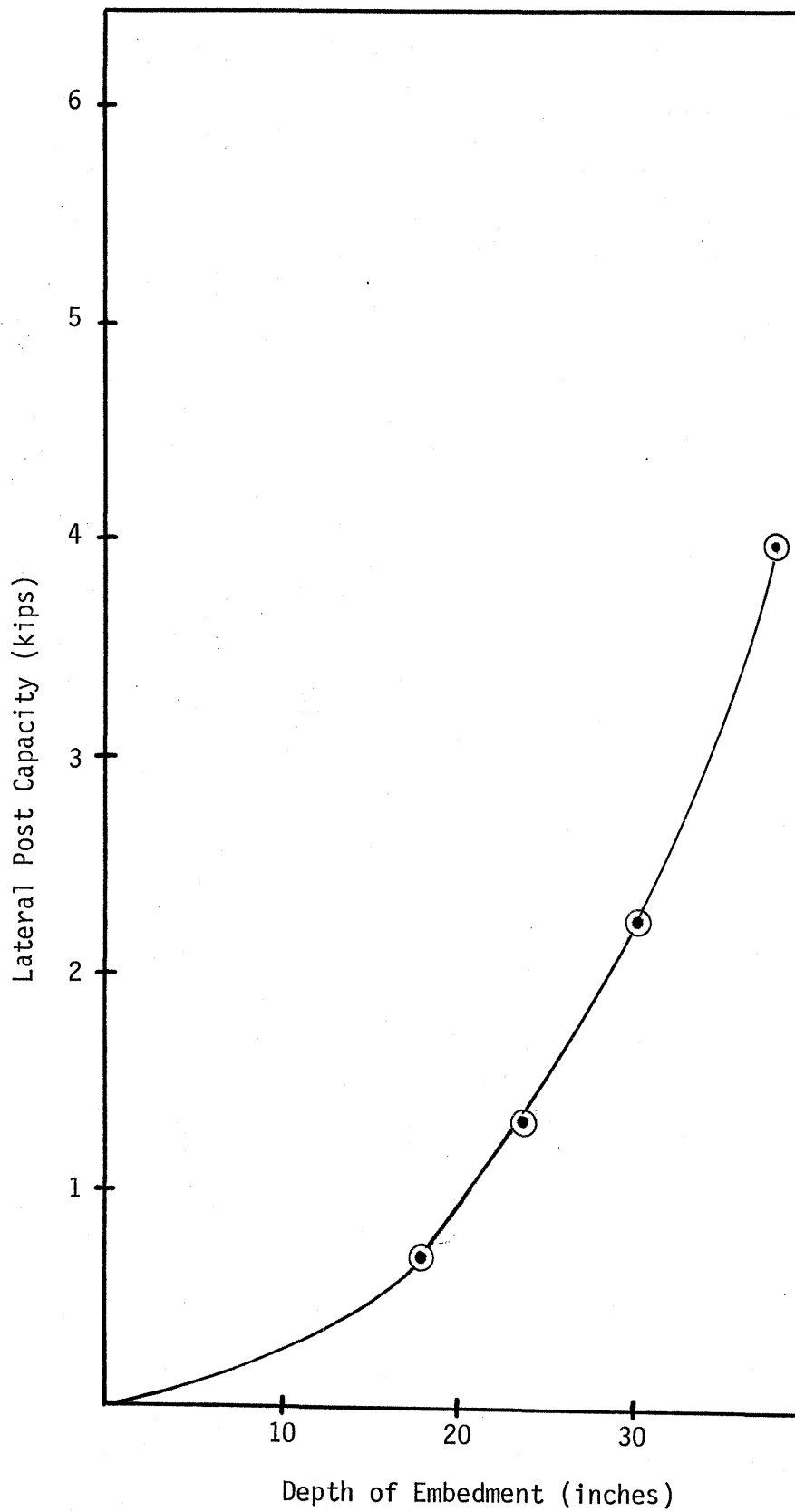


FIG. 2.-Brom's Ultimate Lateral Soil Resistance for Cohesionless Soils (Ref. 2)





Cohesionless Soil

In-Situ Soil Properties

$\gamma = 140$  pcf

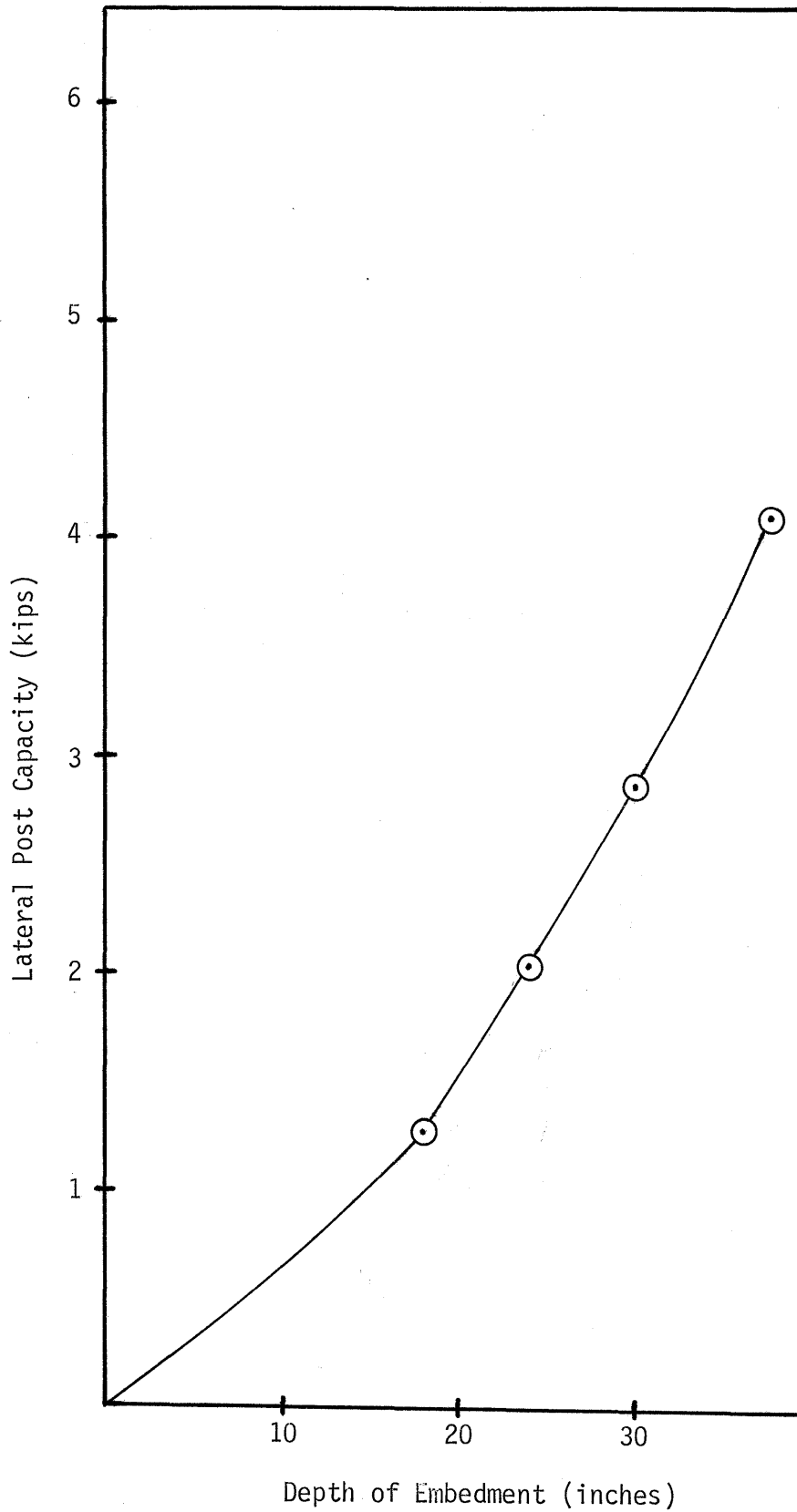
$\phi = 55^\circ$

Post Properties

H = 21 in. height

B = 7 in. diameter

FIG. 3.-Lateral Load vs. Embedment Depth for Analytical Model (Cohesionless Soil)



Cohesive Soil  
In-Situ Soil Properties

$$\sigma = 15.5 \text{ psi}$$

$$\phi = 14.7^\circ$$

$$C_u = c + \sigma \tan \phi$$

Post Properties

H = 21 in. height

B = 7 in. diameter

FIG. 4.-Lateral Load vs. Embedment Depth for Analytical Model  
 (Cohesive Soil)

TABLE 1  
SUMMARY OF STATIC ANALYSIS

Cohesionless Soil

$\gamma = 140 \text{ pcf}$

$\phi = 55^\circ$

Post Properties

Distance to Load = 21 in.

Post Diameter = 7 in.

Embedment Depth (inches)	Maximum Lateral Capacity, (kips)
18	0.7
24	1.3
30	2.3
38	4.0

Cohesive Soil

$\sigma = 15.5 \text{ psi}$

$\phi = 14.7^\circ$

$c = 3.5 \text{ psi}$

$C_u = c + \sigma \tan \phi$

Post Properties

Distance to Load = 21 in.

Post Diameter = 7 in.

Embedment Depth (inches)	Maximum Lateral Capacity (kips)
18	1.3
24	2.0
30	2.9
38	4.1

## SOIL CONDITIONS

To assess the effects of varying soil conditions, it was decided to perform a series of tests in two soils (cohesionless and cohesive) with different properties. The test site was located at the Texas A&M University Research and Extension Center. The test site is shown in Fig. 5. The natural soil at the test site was a stiff cohesive clay which was used as the cohesive soil. A pit had to be constructed to remove the cohesive soil and replace it with a selected cohesionless soil for those tests.

For the natural cohesive soil, two soil borings were used to determine the soil conditions at the test site. Undisturbed soil samples were taken with a 2.0 in. diameter thin-walled tube sampler. Laboratory tests on the samples included unit weights and moisture contents. A direct shear test was also conducted to determine the cohesive strength and angle of internal friction of the cohesive soil. The test results from these tests are shown in Table 2.

After the unconsolidated, undrained, direct shear tests were completed, a plot of shearing stress versus deflection was constructed as shown in Fig. 6. These curves were used to get the maximum shear strength of the soil for each normal stress to plot the strength envelope as shown in Fig. 7. The cohesion and angle of internal friction for the soil could be determined from Fig. 7. The test results indicated that the site consisted of a stiff clay.

The cohesionless soil used was a crushed limestone material obtained from near Georgetown, Texas. An existing stockpile containing this material was used. At the time the pit was constructed, the soil properties were determined using a McGuin water psychrometer and by taking soil samples for laboratory tests.

The in-situ unit weight was difficult to obtain from the McGuin water psychrometer test due to the large particle size of the soil. Conventional methods of shear strength determination could not be used because of the large particle size. To obtain the angle of shear resistance and cohesion, a sieve analysis and water content determination was conducted. A gradation curve, maximum particle size, relative density and overburden pressure were correlated to determine the shear strength and estimate the cohesion of the soil. The gradation curve obtained was constructed from the sieve analysis

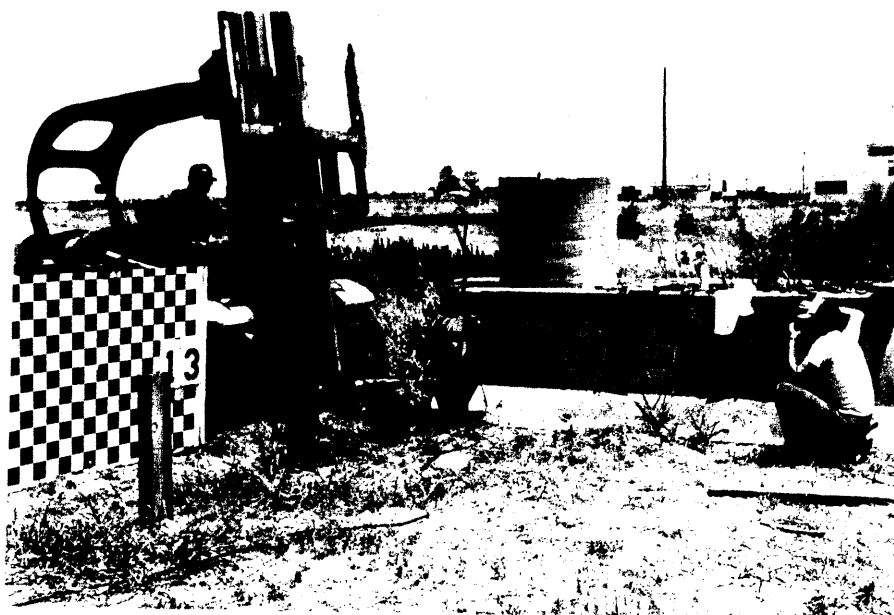


FIG. 5.-Test Site for Static Tests

Unconsolidated Undrained Direct Shear Test (UU)

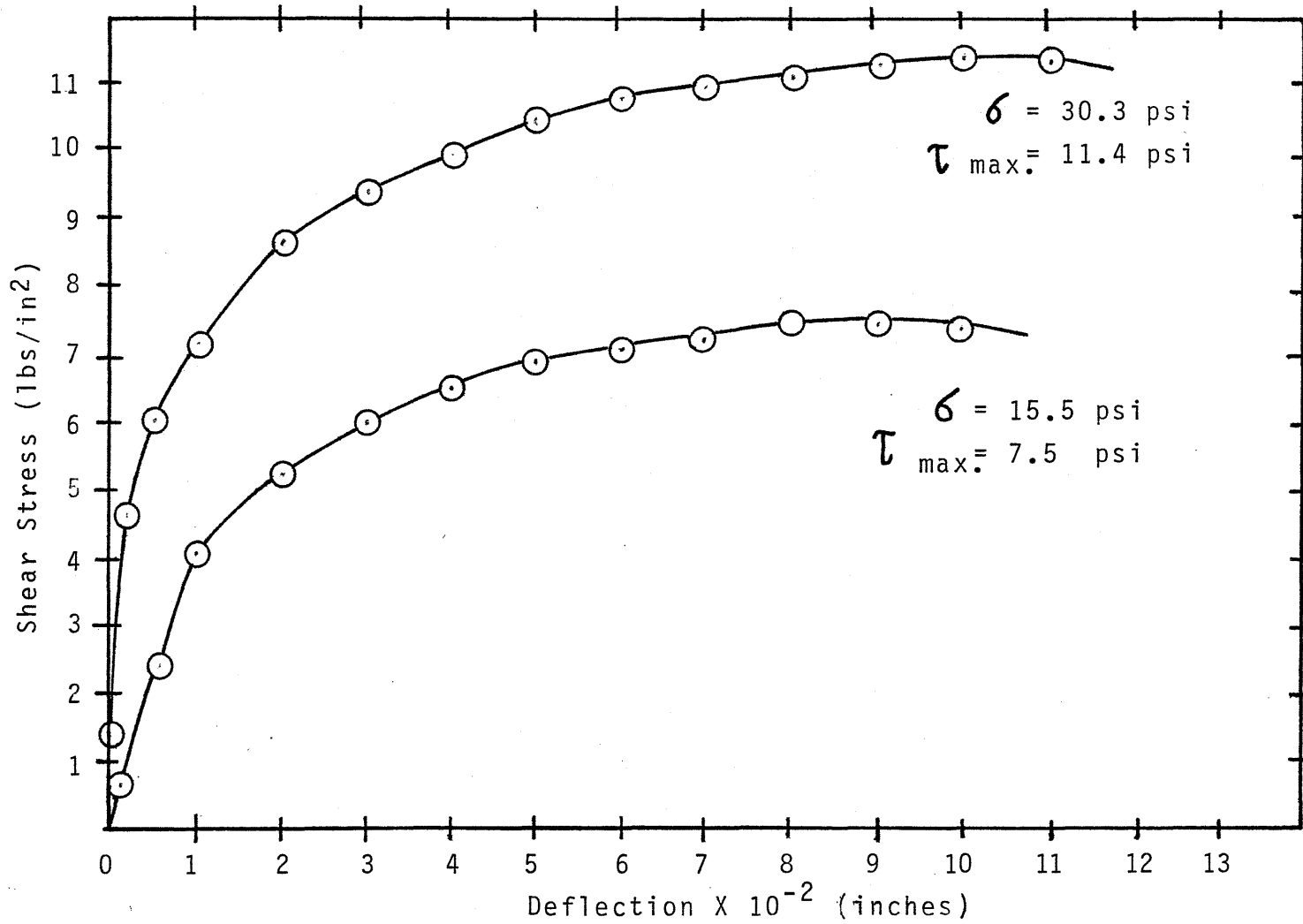


FIG. 6.-Shearing Stress vs. Deflection for Two Different Normal Stresses

Shear Strength Envelope Graph

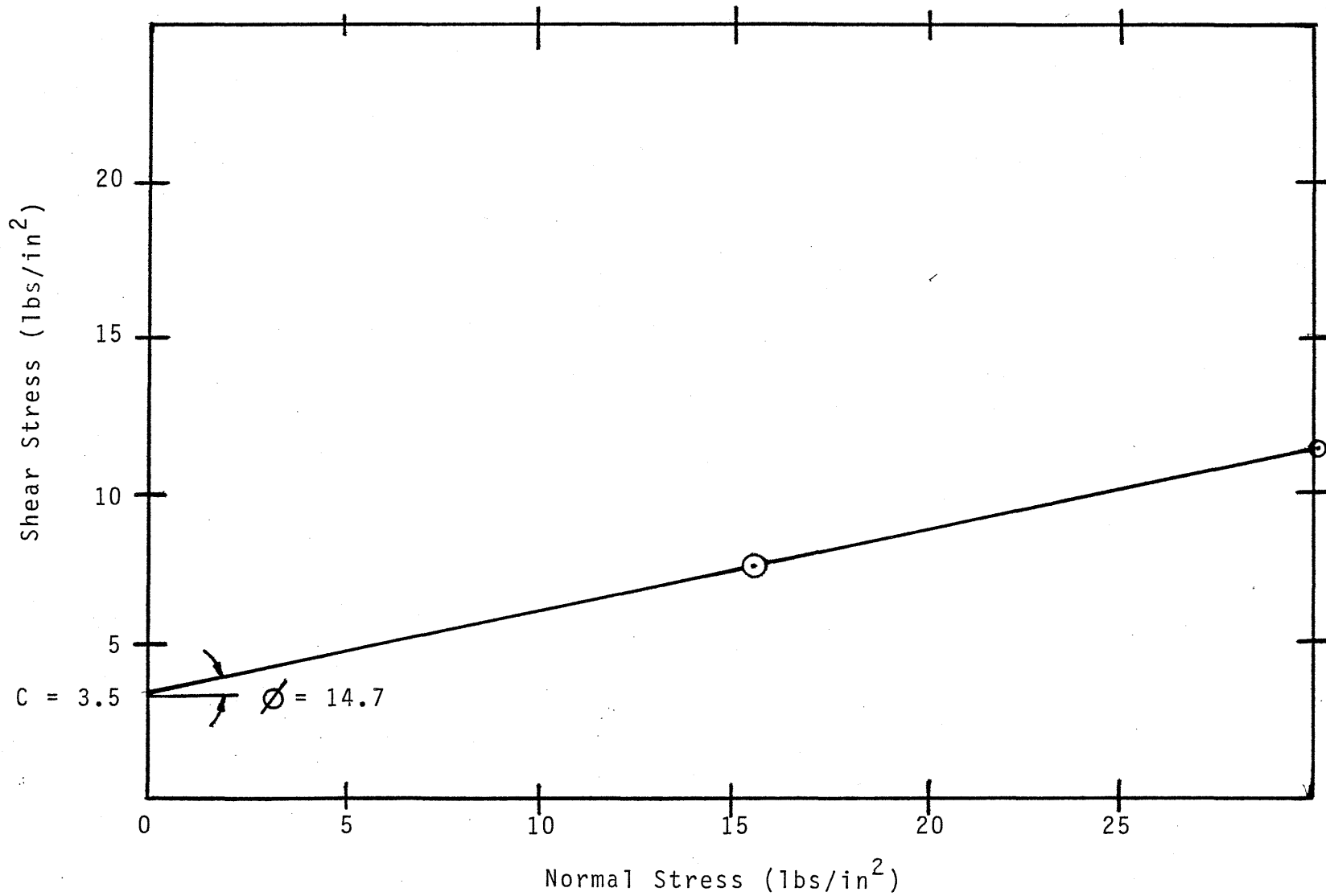


FIG. 7.-Shearing Stress vs. Normal Stress for Cohesive Soil

TABLE 2  
PROPERTIES OF THE SOIL

	Cohesive Soil	Cohesionless soil
Generalized Description of the Soil	Dark, grey stiff clay	Well graded crushed limestone gravel
Total Unit Weight ( $\gamma_t$ ), pcf	126.9	140
Average Moisture Content (w), %	21.8	—
Angle of Internal Friction ( $\phi$ ), °	14.7	48-55
Cohesion (C), psf	504	0-50



shown in Fig. 8. The gravel was classified as a GW (well graded gravel, gravel sand mixture, little or no fines) material of the Unified Soil Classification System. The large triaxial test results presented by Leps (3) are shown in Fig. 9. From these correlations a range of 48 to 55 degrees was chosen for the angle of internal friction. The gravel pit had a large variation of moisture content due to the entrapment of large pockets of water. The moisture content could not be determined because of this variation. The cohesion was estimated from the laboratory tests and engineering experience. The properties of the cohesionless soil are also summarized in Table 2.



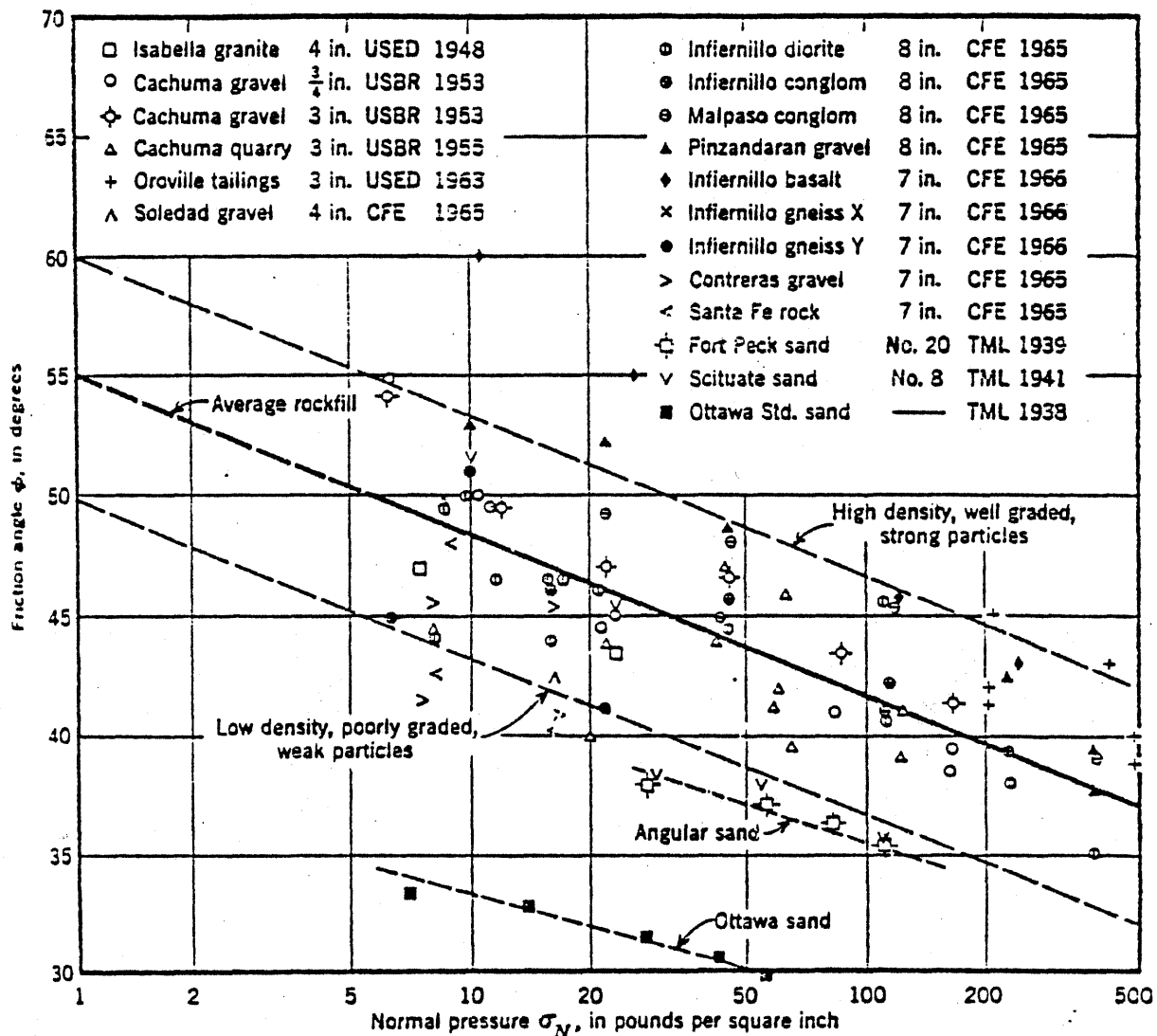


FIG. 9. -Shear Strength of Rockfill Materials from Large Triaxial Tests (after Leps (3))

## STATIC LOAD TESTS

### INTRODUCTION

A series of static guardrail post tests were conducted to determine the effects of embedment depth, soil conditions and post type on the load deformation characteristics of the posts. The effects of reducing the embedment could be determined from the comparison of energy absorbed by the soil-post system. It would be much more economical to have a guardrail system with a few posts embedded 18 in. that would enable a culvert to extend beneath. Currently, the TSDHPT requires a rigid bridge rail when full embedment depth cannot be achieved. These types of traffic rail systems are expensive to construct and sometimes cause a transition problem between the flexible guardrail system and the rigid bridge rail system.

### TESTING PROGRAM

The static guardrail tests that were conducted are summarized in Table 3. A total of 16 tests was performed, eight in cohesive soil and eight in cohesionless soil. Both steel and timber posts were used with embedment depths of 18 in., 24 in., 30 in. and 38 in. for the comparison of energy absorption.

### PLACEMENT OF POST

The test setup and location of the posts are shown in Figs. 10 through 13. To assess the effects of varying soil conditions, the posts were placed in two soils with significantly different properties. A cohesionless gravel and a stiff cohesive clay were used for this purpose.

The posts were placed in the soil by augering a 24 in. diameter hole and tamping the soil around the post in several lifts. After the posts were tamped in place, a four-to-five week period followed to allow the soil to consolidate, relieve construction stresses and to become more uniform with the surrounding soil conditions.

### EQUIPMENT AND INSTRUMENTATION

In order to conduct the tests, a loading system had to be constructed capable of (1) applying a horizontal force to the post at a uniform

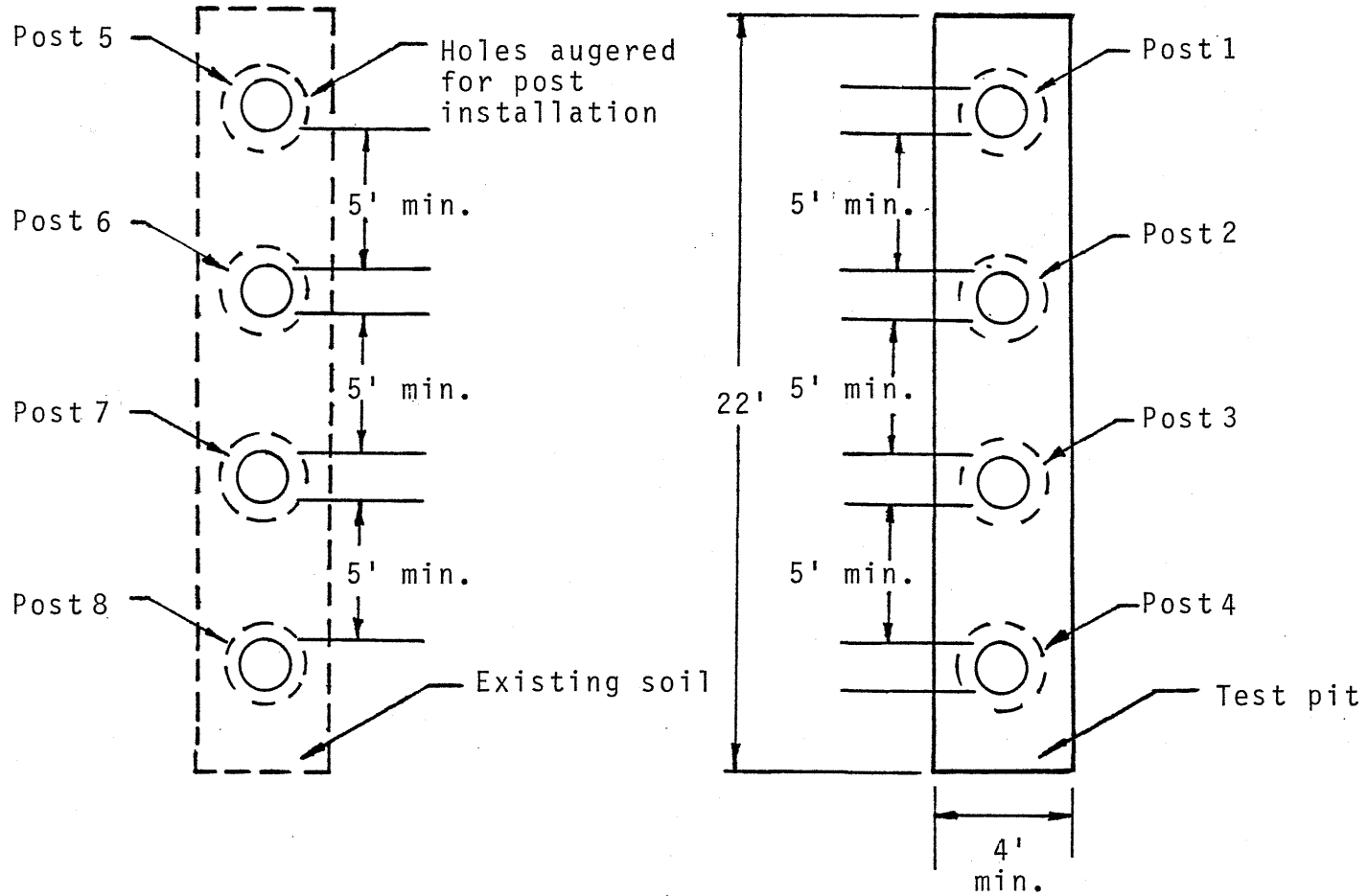
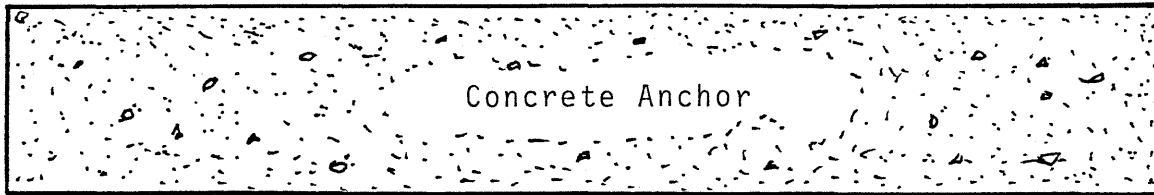


FIG. 10-Location of Posts 1-8

Placement of timber posts

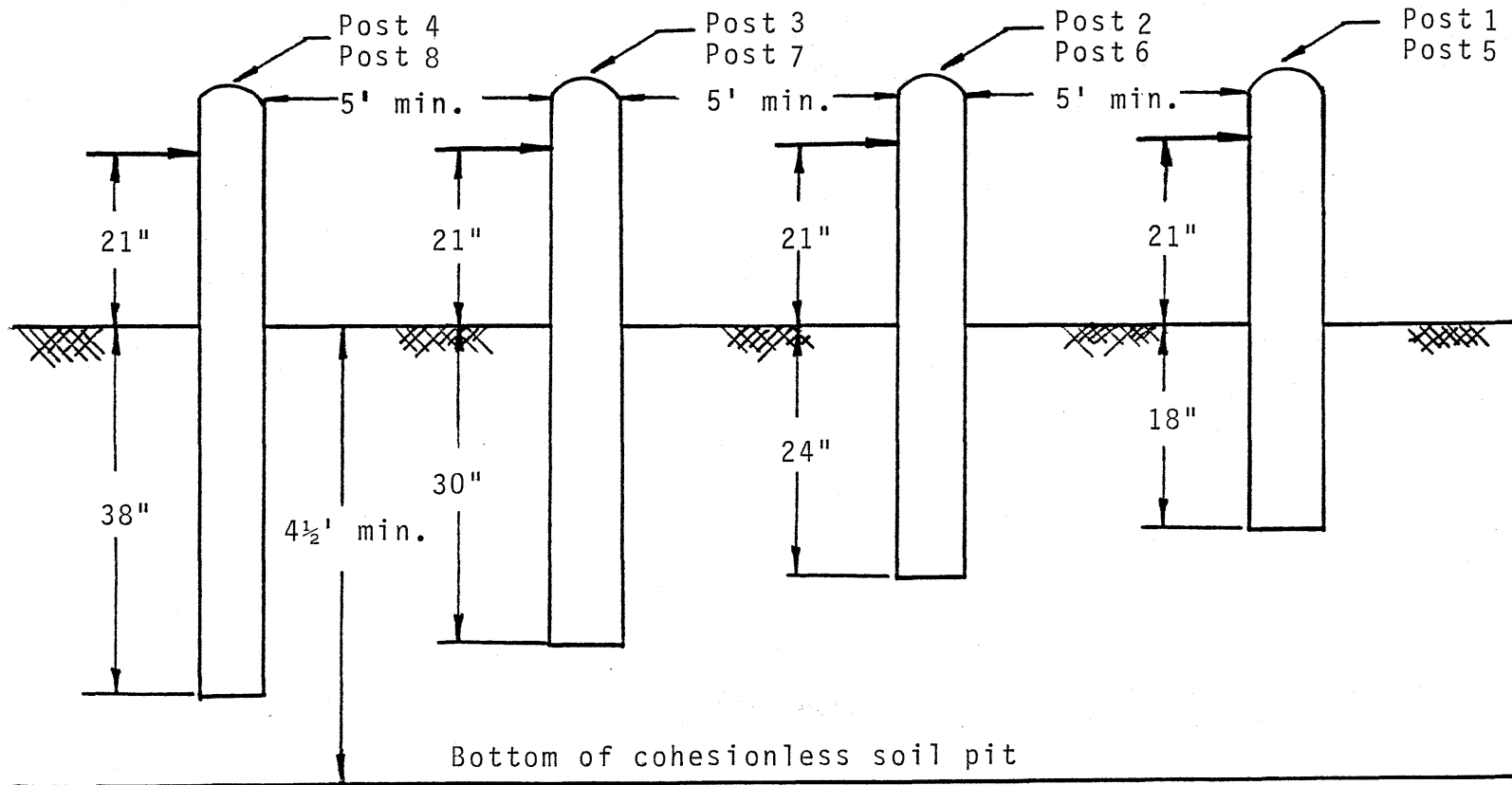


FIG. 11.-Placement of Timber Posts 1-8

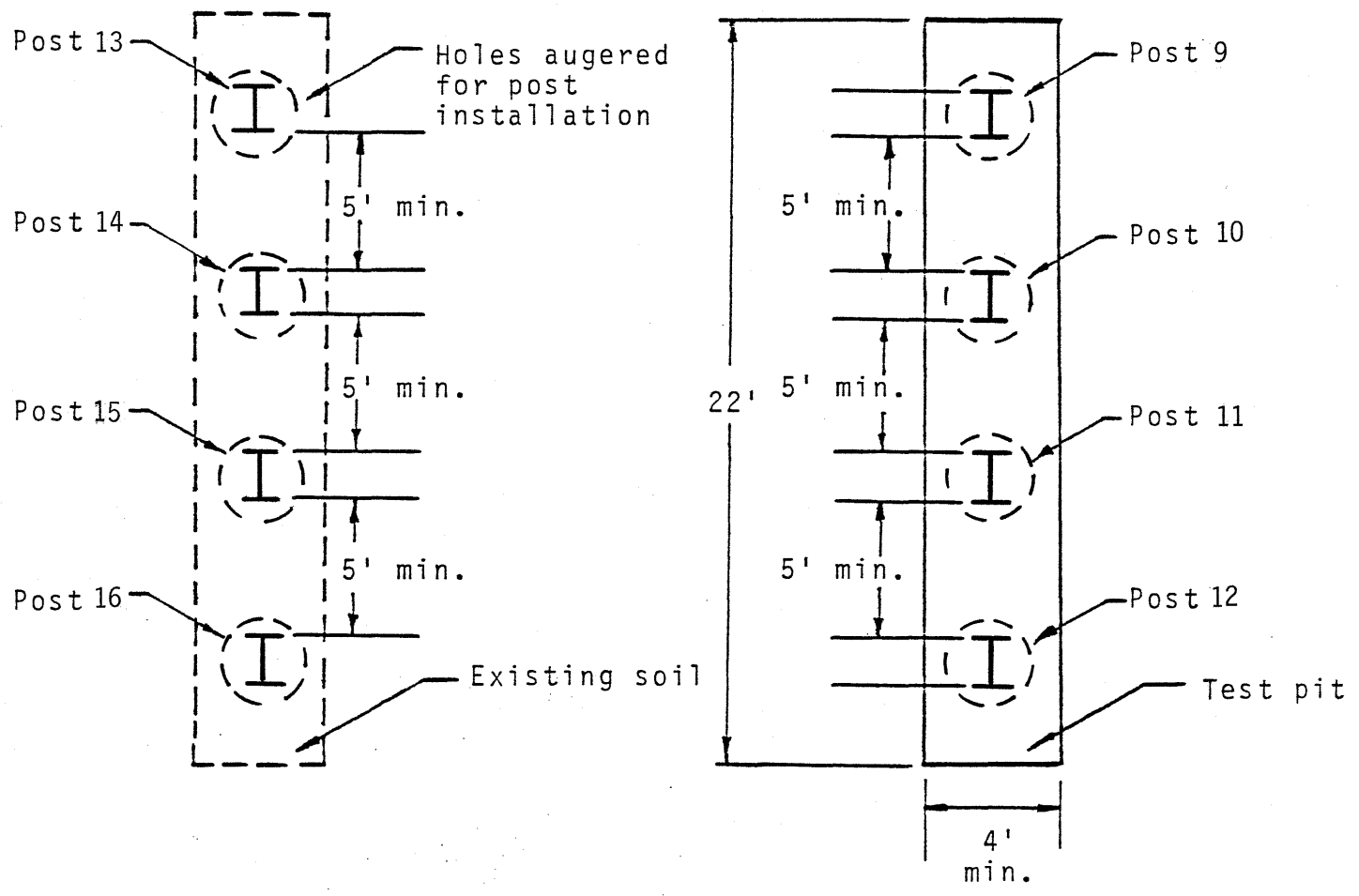
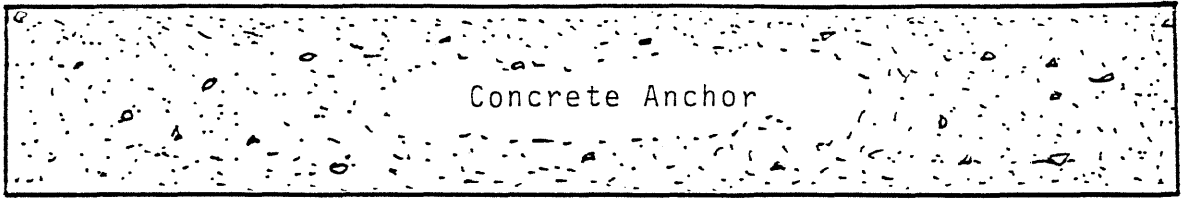


FIG. 12.-Location of Steel Posts 9-16

Placement of steel posts

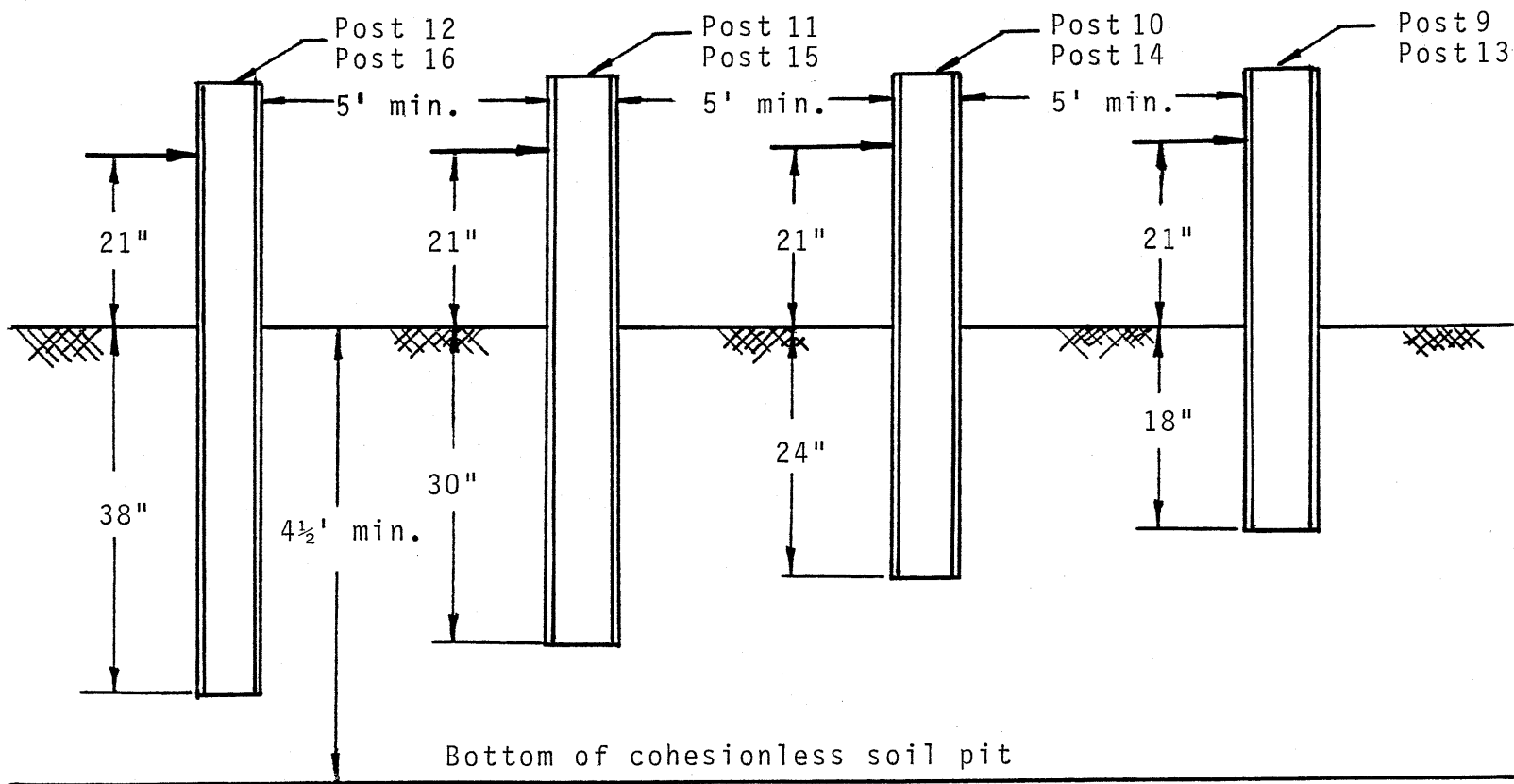


FIG. 13-Placement of Steel Posts 9-16



TABLE 3  
SUMMARY OF TESTS

Test No.	Post Type	Embedment Depth (in.)	Height of Load (in.)	Soil Type
1	Wood	18	21	Cohesionless
2	Wood	24	21	Cohesionless
3	Wood	30	21	Cohesionless
4	Wood	38	21	Cohesionless
5	Wood	18	21	Cohesive
6	Wood	24	21	Cohesive
7	Wood	30	21	Cohesive
8	Wood	38	21	Cohesive
9	Steel	18	21	Cohesionless
10	Steel	24	21	Cohesionless
11	Steel	30	21	Cohesionless
12	Steel	38	21	Cohesionless
13	Steel	18	21	Cohesive
14	Steel	24	21	Cohesive
15	Steel	30	21	Cohesive
16	Steel	38	21	Cohesive

displacement rate, (2) measuring the load acting on the post and (3) measuring the displacement of the post at ground level and at a height of 21 in. To apply the lateral force, a pulley was mounted to a concrete anchor at a height of 21 in. above ground level. A cable was placed through the pulley and attached to the load cell. The free end was attached to a fork lift truck. The fork lift truck slowly raised the cable upward, applying the lateral load to the post. This loading system is shown in Fig. 14.

The load applied to the post was measured by a load cell force transducer attached to the loading bracket as shown in Fig. 15. Before the test, the transducer was calibrated up to a maximum load of 15 kips. The force transducer was constructed of a metal bar instrumented with a full bridge of strain gages. The output from these strain gages was measured with a digital microvoltmeter calibrated to read the load directly. For the series of static tests 1 through 4, the post deflections at the ground surface were measured. In order to locate the pivot point of the post, a second measurement was taken close to the top of the post. For energy absorption comparison, the measured horizontal deflections were graphically converted to deflections at a height of 21 in. For the series of tests 5 through 16 the horizontal deflections were measured once at a height of 21 in. The post displacements were measured with a measuring tape from a fixed point about 5 ft behind the post.

#### TEST PROCEDURE

A specially constructed loading bracket was attached to the post at a height of 21 in. above the ground. The brackets for the steel and timber posts are shown in Figs. 16 and 17. The bracket allowed a horizontal pull throughout the displacement of the post and eliminated the development of stress concentrations in the post. The load transducer was attached to the loading bracket and cable. A small amount of tension was transferred to the cable by raising the forks of the lift truck to take out the initial slack in the loading system. After the calibration number was checked, the load transducer was zeroed. The load was read off the digital microvoltmeter at every one-half inch of movement of the post. The test continued until the post began pulling out of the ground.

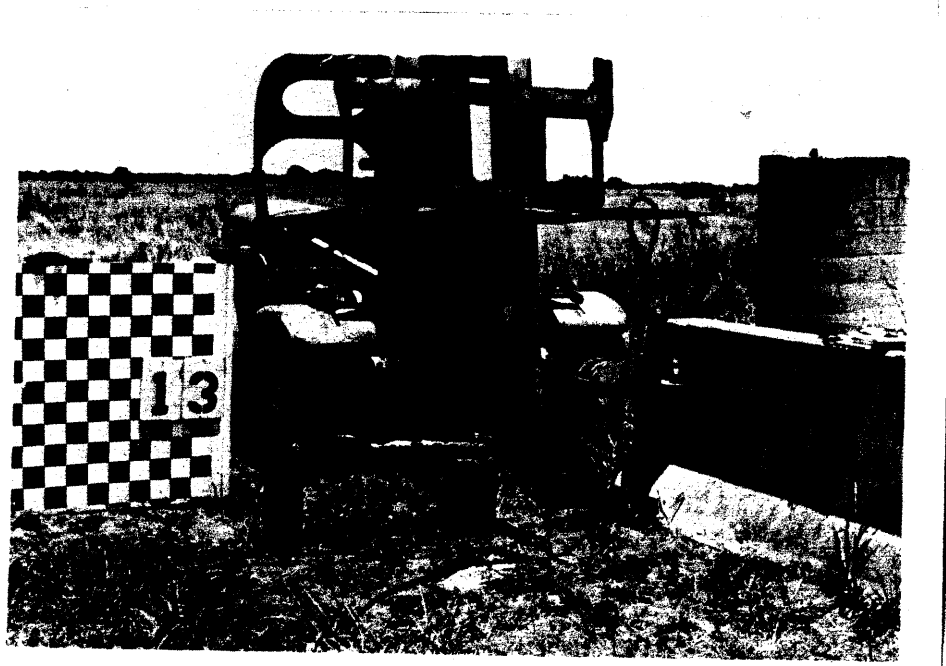
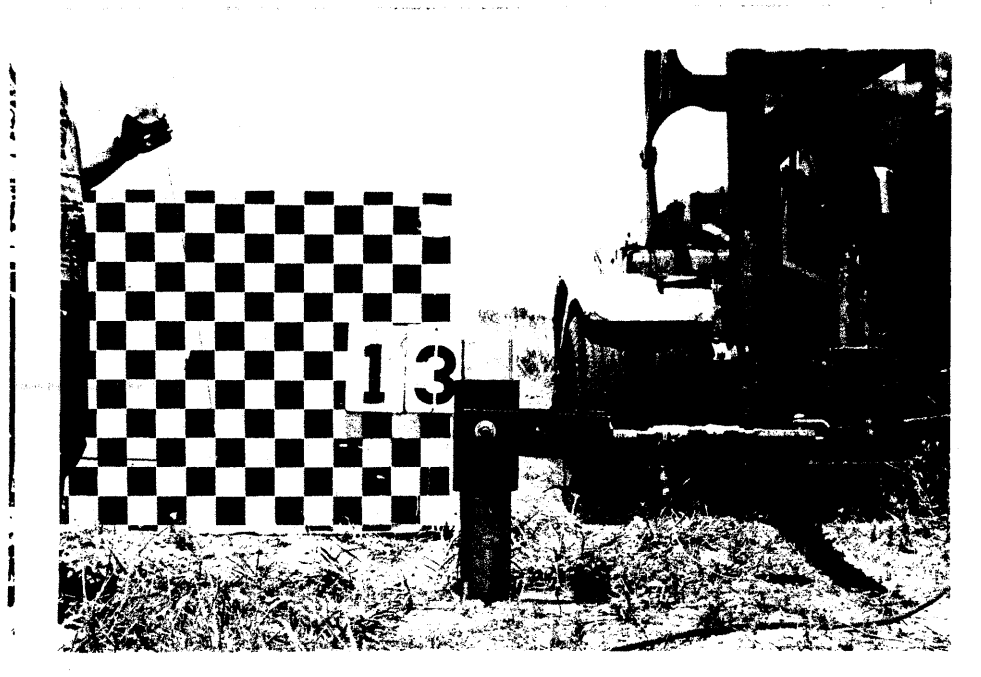


FIG. 14.-Static Testing System

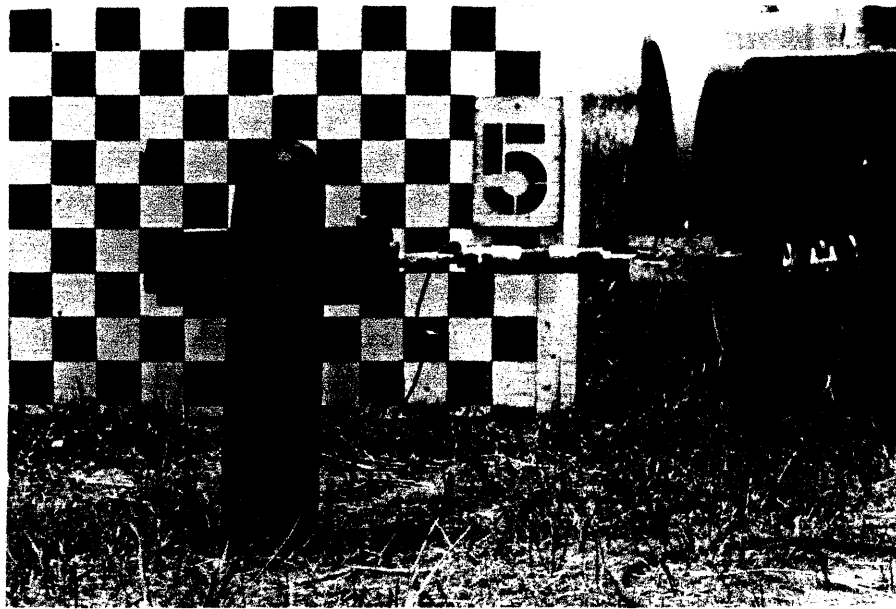


FIG. 15.-Attachment of Force Transducer to the Loading Bracket

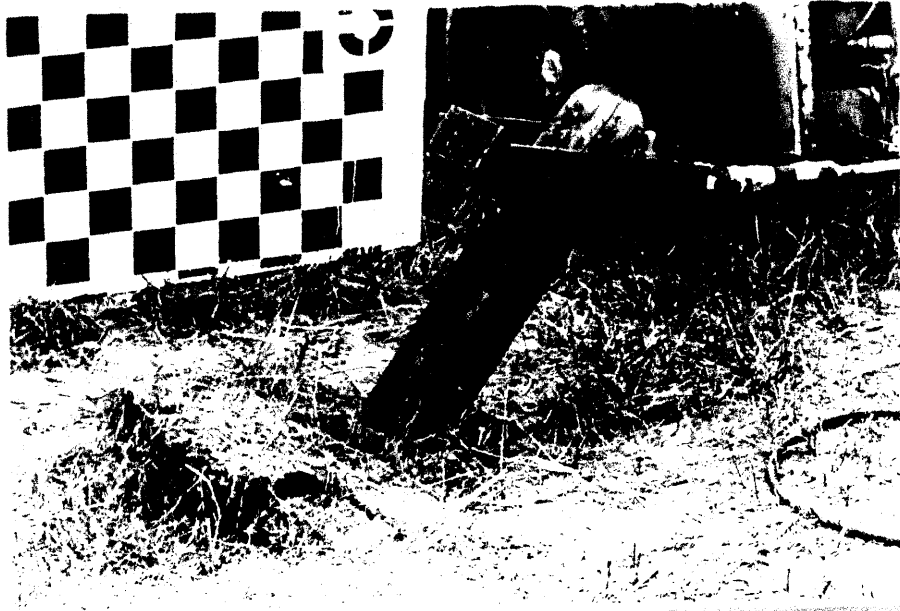


FIG. 16-Loading Bracket for Timber Post

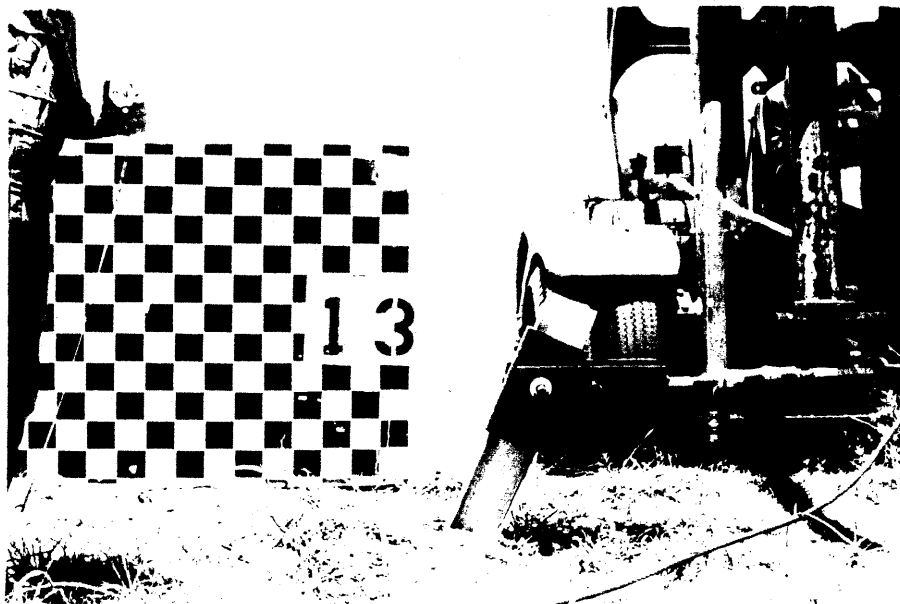


FIG. 17.-Loading Bracket for Steel Post

## RESULTS AND CONCLUSIONS

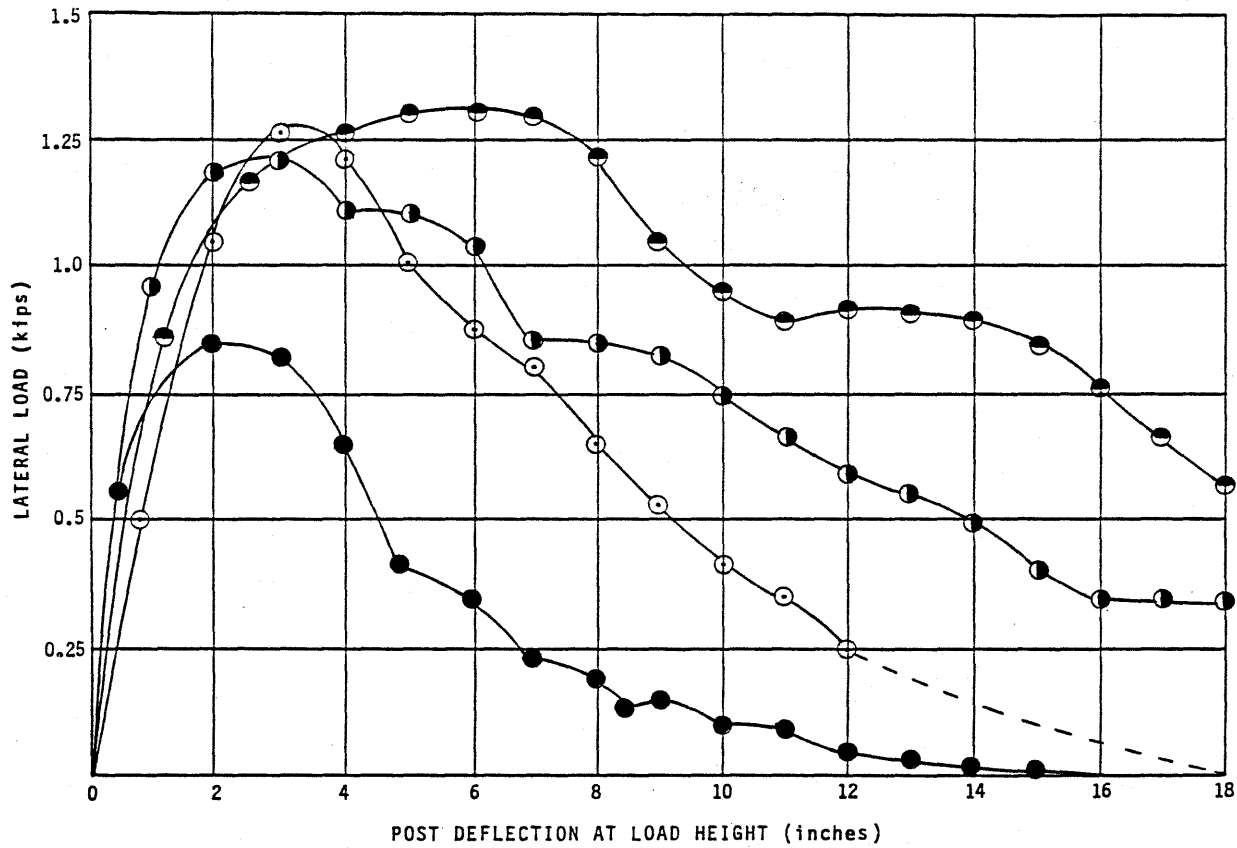
### STATIC TEST RESULTS

The lateral load versus deflection curves for the timber and steel posts are summarized in Figs. 18 to 21. Maximum lateral load values and dissipated energy are presented in Table 4.

For most cases the steel post proved to have a slightly smaller ultimate load and less energy absorption than the timber post with corresponding embedment depths and soil conditions. This was true for all tests except for the steel post embedded 38 in. in cohesive soil. The cohesive soil dissipated more energy than the cohesionless soil for the posts embedded 18 and 24 in. For posts embedded 30 and 38 in., the cohesionless soil absorbed more energy. A significant amount of energy absorbed by the soil was lost by reducing the embedment depth of the guardrail post. The percent differences of the absorbed energy and ultimate lateral capacity between the standard 38 in. embedded post and the other post with similar soil conditions are shown in Table 5. Tables 6 and 7 are provided from TTI Research Report 343-1 (4) and 343-1 Supplement (5) for additional comparisons.

### COMPARISON OF TEST RESULTS WITH THEORETICAL PREDICTIONS

The lateral post capacity versus embedment depth for each static test are plotted with the analytical predictions in Figs. 22 and 23. The actual field test parameters used in calculating the theoretical curve were summarized previously in Table 1. For the cohesionless soil, the theoretical curve underpredicts the actual lateral capacity of the post. This could have been caused by the variation of the soil properties after the soil test samples were taken. The analytical model is also sensitive to the angle of internal friction. This parameter could only be estimated because of inconsistency of the cohesionless soil conditions. The predicted lateral loads for the cohesive soils closely followed the field load test results.



Legend

- Test 1 —●—  
 Test 5 —●—  
 Test 9 —●—  
 Test 13 —○—

Description

- Test 1 - Timber post in cohesionless soil  
 Test 5 - Timber post in cohesive soil  
 Test 9 - Steel post in cohesionless soil  
 Test 13 - Steel post in cohesive soil

FIG. 18.-Lateral Load vs. Deflection for Post Embedded 18 in.

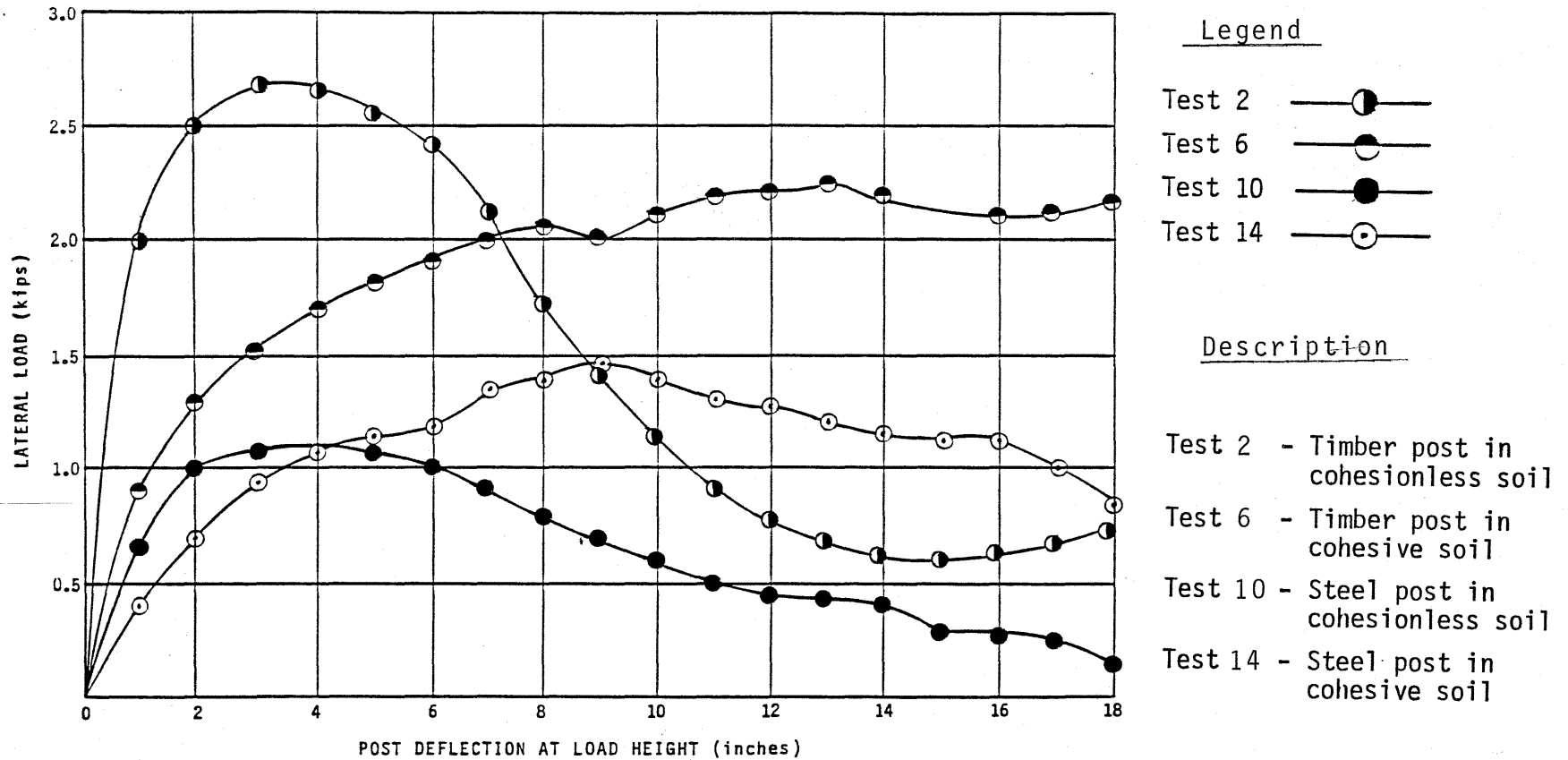


FIG. 19.-Lateral Load vs. Deflection for Post Embedded 24 in.



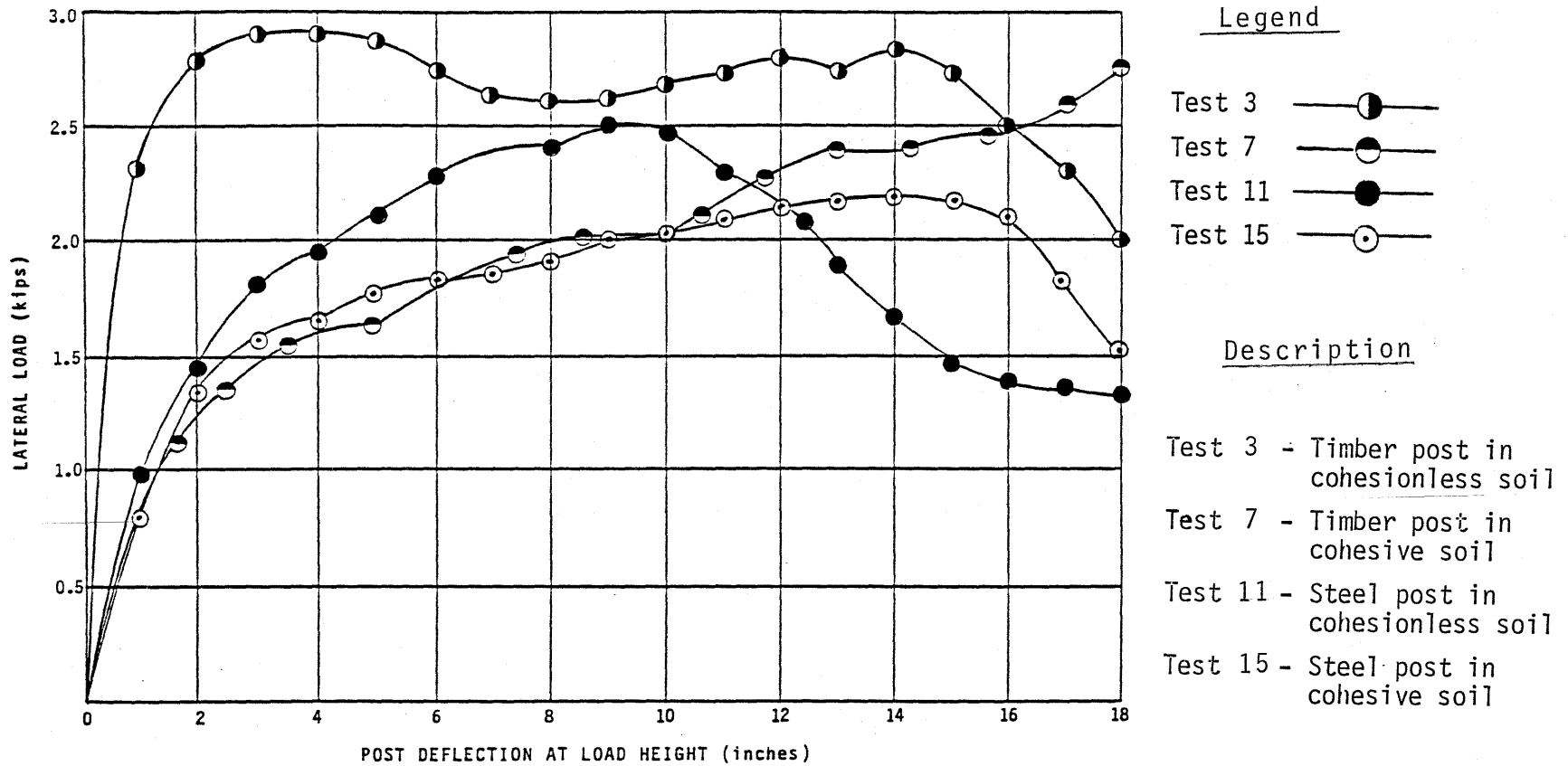


FIG. 20.-Lateral Load vs. Deflection for Post Embedded 30 in.

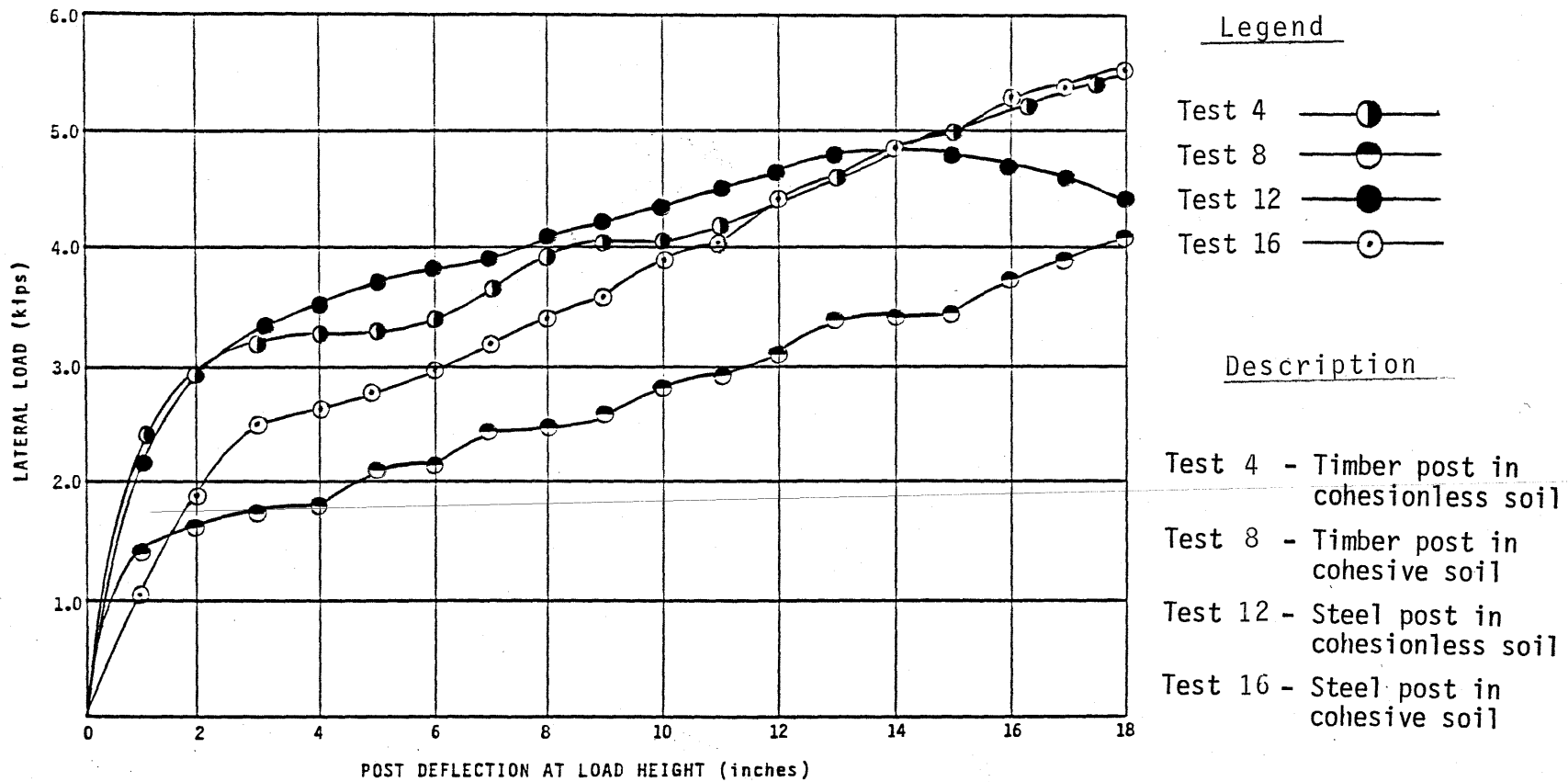


FIG. 21.-Lateral Load vs. Deflection for Post Embedded 38 in.

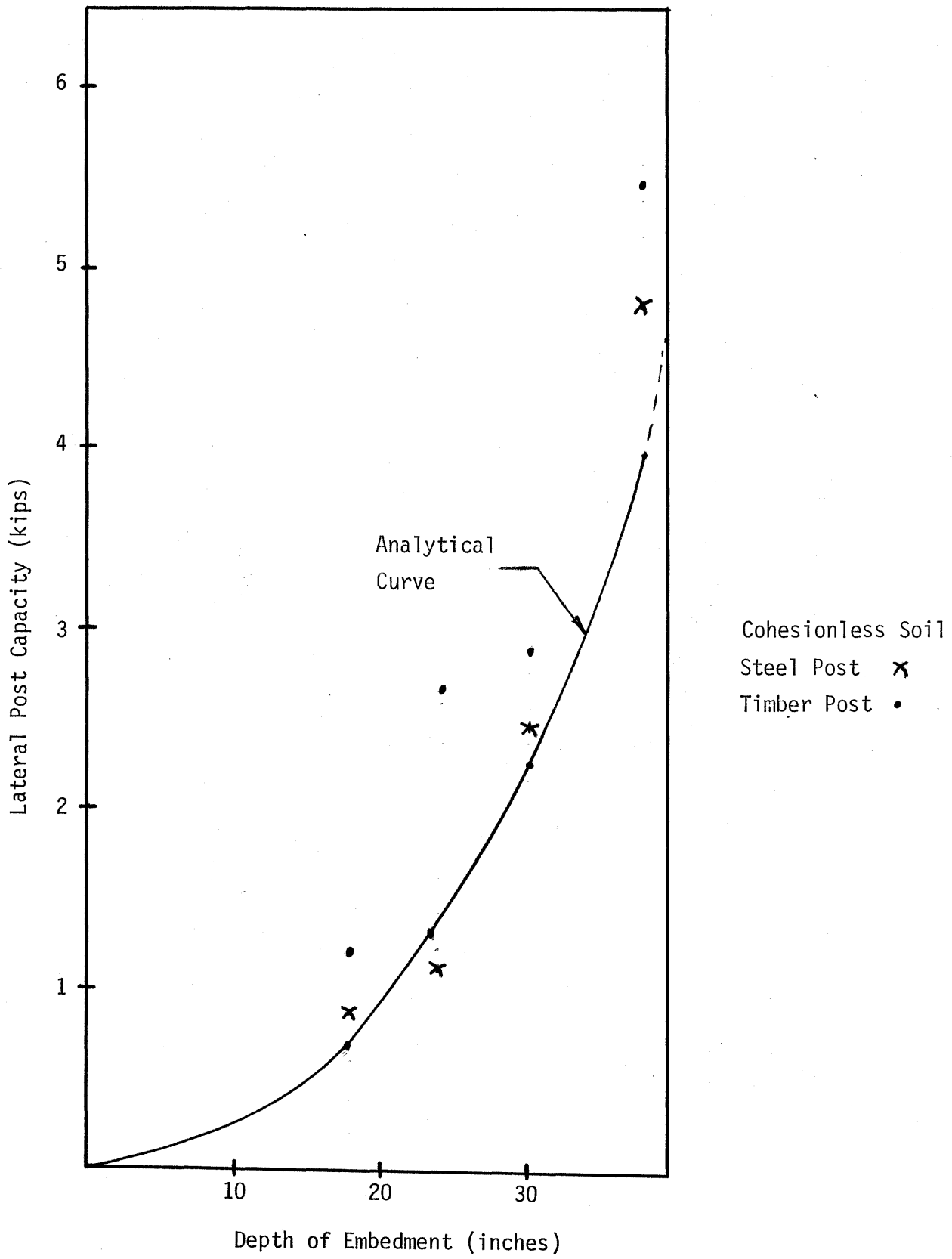


FIG. 22.- Comparison of Analysis and Field Load Tests 1-4 and 9-12

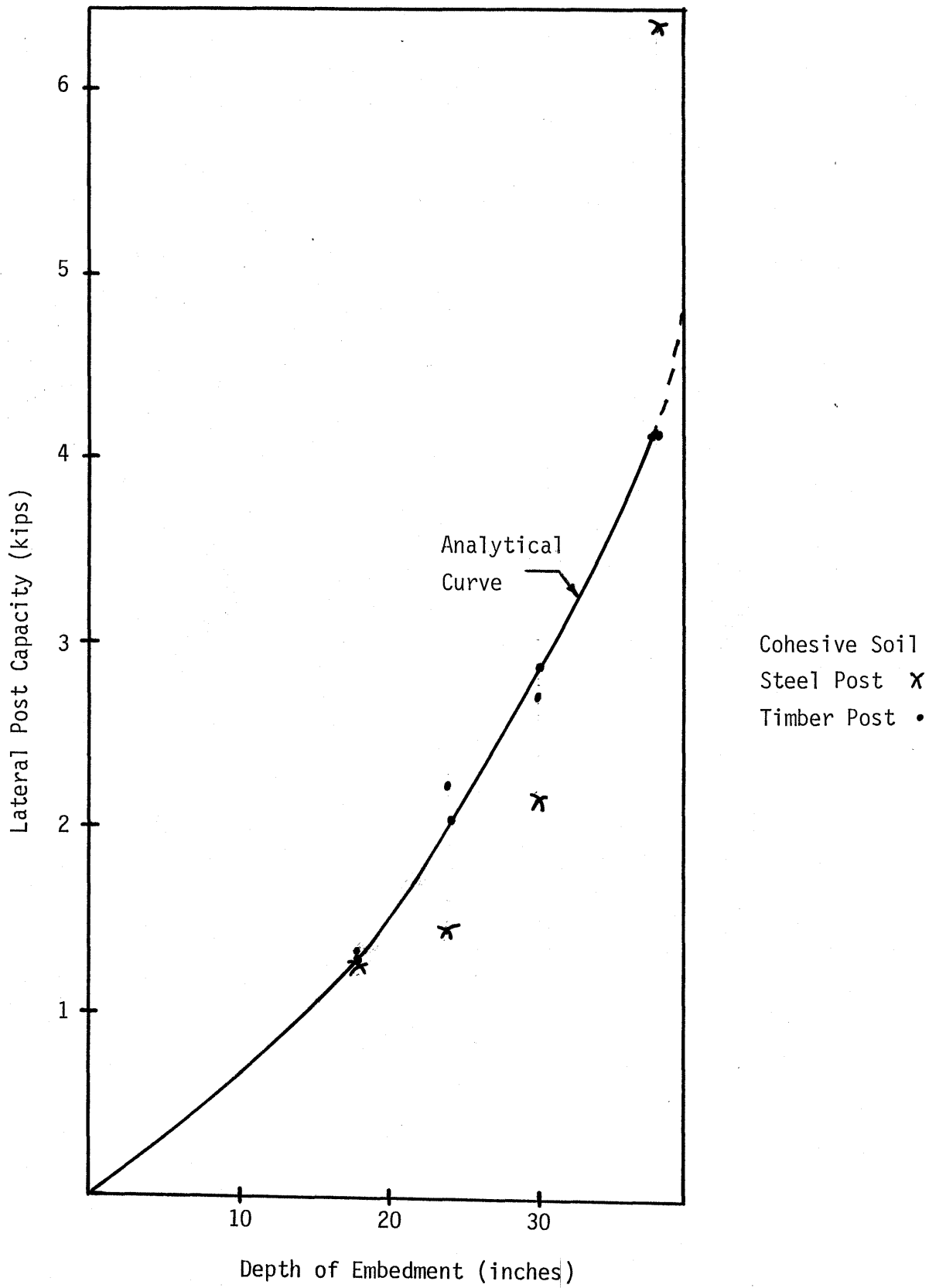


FIG. 23. -Comparison of Analysis and Field Load Tests 5-8 and 13-16

TABLE 4  
SUMMARY OF RESULTS

Test No.	Post Type	Soil Type	Maximum * Force (kips)	Energy** (kips-ft)
1	Wood	Cohesionless	1.20	1.1
2	Wood	Cohesionless	2.71	2.2
3	Wood	Cohesionless	2.92	4.0
4	Wood	Cohesionless	5.47	6.0
5	Wood	Cohesive	1.32	1.5
6	Wood	Cohesive	2.24	2.8
7	Wood	Cohesive	2.74	3.0
8	Wood	Cohesive	4.08	4.0
9	Steel	Cohesionless	0.86	0.4
10	Steel	Cohesionless	1.10	1.0
11	Steel	Cohesionless	2.51	2.8
12	Steel	Cohesionless	4.81	6.0
13	Steel	Cohesive	1.28	0.8
14	Steel	Cohesive	1.46	1.7
15	Steel	Cohesive	2.17	2.7
16	Steel	Cohesive	5.54	5.5

\*Maximum force reached through 18 inches of horizontal deflection.  
 \*\*Energy dissipated after 18 inches of horizontal deflection.

TABLE 5

PERCENT OF STATIC POST TEST WITH  
AN EMBEDMENT DEPTH OF 38 INCHES

TEST NO.	POST TYPE	SOIL TYPE	PERCENT OF MAXIMUM FORCE	PERCENT OF ENERGY
1	Timber	Cohesionless	21.9	18.3
2	Timber	Cohesionless	49.5	36.7
3	Timber	Cohesionless	53.4	66.7
The values above are percentages of test 4..				
5	Timber	Cohesive	32.4	37.5
6	Timber	Cohesive	54.9	70.0
7	Timber	Cohesive	67.2	75.0
The values above are percentages of test 8.				
9	Steel	Cohesionless	17.9	6.7
10	Steel	Cohesionless	22.9	16.7
11	Steel	Cohesionless	52.2	46.7
The values above are percentages of test 12.				
13	Steel	Cohesive	23.1	14.5
14	Steel	Cohesive	26.4	30.9
15	Steel	Cohesive	39.2	49.1
The values above are percentages of test 16.				

TABLE 6 - COMPARISON OF WOOD AND STEEL GUARDRAIL POSTS IN  
COHESIVE AND COHESIONLESS SOIL - STATIC AND IMPACT TESTS (Ref. 4)

TEST NO.	TYPE POST	TYPE SOIL	STATIC TEST		IMPACT TEST 17 MPH	
			MAX. LOAD KIPS	MAX. ENERGY* KIP-FT	MAX. LOAD KIPS	MAX. ENERGY* KIP-FT
1	WOOD	COHESIVE	3.7	4.2	16.3	19.2
2	STEEL	COHESIVE	3.3	3.8	17.0	17.1
	WOOD	COHESIONLESS	3.2	4.4 ✓	13.3	POST BROKE
	STEEL	COHESIONLESS	3.3	4.2	22.4	22.4

EMBEDMENT DEPTH - 38 IN., LOAD HEIGHT - 21 IN.

COHESIVE SOIL = 124 PCF C = 2 KSF

COHESIONLESS SOIL = 119 PCF  $\phi = 50^{\circ}$

\*MAX. POST DEFL. WAS 18 IN.

TABLE 7 - STRENGTH OF TIMBER GUARDRAIL POSTS  
 IN ROCK - 12 IN. DIAM. HOLE 18 IN. DEEP  
 HOLE BACKFILLED WITH CONCRETE, SAND, LIMESTONE, CLAY (Ref. 5)

TEST NO.	TYPE POST	TYPE SOIL	STATIC TEST	
			MAX. LOAD KIPS	MAX. ENERGY KIP-FT
1B	WOOD	ROCK-CONC.	9.9	2.7
2B	WOOD	ROCK-SAND	8.5	3.5
3B	WOOD	ROCK-LIMES.	8.4	3.2
4B	WOOD	ROCK-CLAY	11.4	4.2
			MAX. DEFL. 3 TO 8 IN.	MAX. DEFL. 10 TO 14 IN.



## CONCLUSIONS

The conclusions that can be drawn from this research study are as follows:

1. The analytical model can be used for the analysis of laterally loaded guardrail posts. The comparison of the test results with the analytical predictions indicate that the analysis procedures are fairly reliable for short, free-ended, statically loaded piles (posts).
2. The static guardrail post tests conducted indicate that the steel posts tend to absorb less energy than timber posts. The cohesive soil dissipates more energy than cohesionless soil for posts embedded 18 and 24 in. For posts embedded 30 and 38 in., the cohesionless soil absorbs more energy. The amount of energy absorbed by the soil is significantly reduced by decreasing the embedment depth of the post.
3. It should be realized that the above results and conclusions are based on a limited number of tests performed in the field on the steel and timber posts. Due to the limited time and resources available to the authors, repeatability of the tests was never verified. Dynamic field tests should also be conducted to verify the static test results.

## RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

The following areas are recommended for further research:

1. The conclusions drawn from this research study were based on a limited number of load tests conducted on steel and timber guardrail posts embedded with four different depths in two types of soil. To further support the findings of this study, additional load tests should be performed.
2. To verify the static load tests, dynamic field tests should be performed to study the dynamic behavior of guardrail posts under lateral loads.

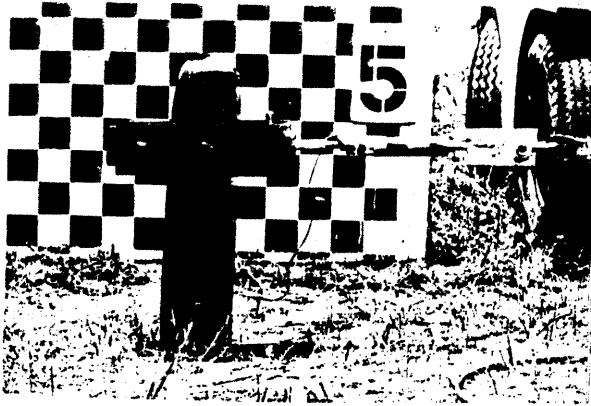
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1. Broms, B., "Lateral Resistance of Piles in Cohesive Soils," Journal of Soil Mechanics and Foundations Division, ASCE, Vol. 90, No. SM2, March 1964, pp. 27-63.
2. Broms, B., "Lateral Resistance of Piles in Cohesionless Soils," Journal of Soil Mechanics and Foundations Division, ASCE, Vol. 90, No. SM3, March 1964, pp. 123-156.
3. Leps, Thomas M., "Review of Shearing Strength of Rockfill," Journal of Soil Mechanics and Foundation Division, ASCE, Vol. 96, No. SM4, July 1970, pp. 1157-1170.
4. Dewey, J. F., Jeyapalan, J. K., Hirsch, T. J., and Ross, H. E., "A Study of the Soil-Structure Interaction Behavior of Highway Guardrail Post," TTI Report No. 343-1 to SDHPT, Austin, Texas, July 1983.
5. Eggers, D. W., Hirsch, T. J., and Ross, H. E., "Strength of Guardrail Post in Rock," TTI Report No. 343-1 Supplement to SDHPT, Austin, Texas, September 1984.

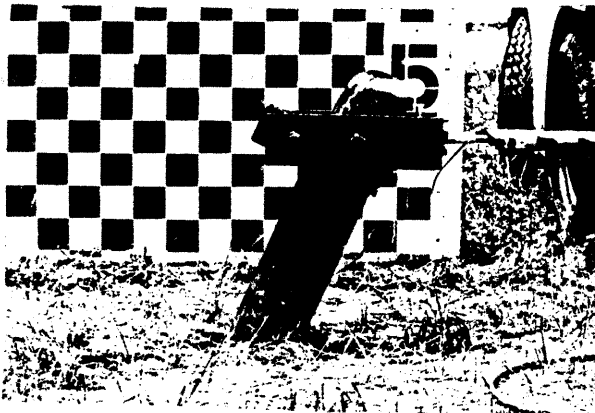
APPENDIX A

SEQUENTIAL PHOTOGRAPHS FOR TESTS 5-16  
(Tests 1-4 photographs are provided on colored slides)

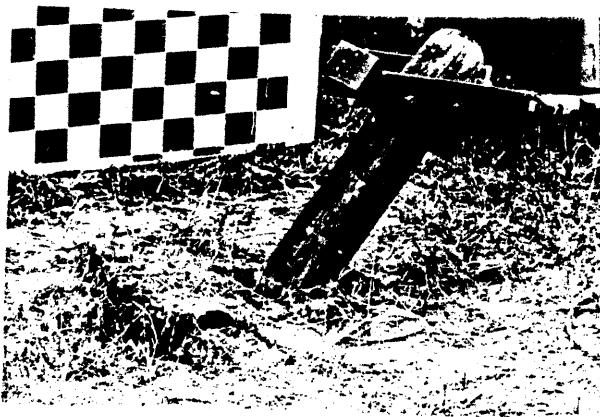




Deflection = 4.4 in.  
Load = 1.3 k

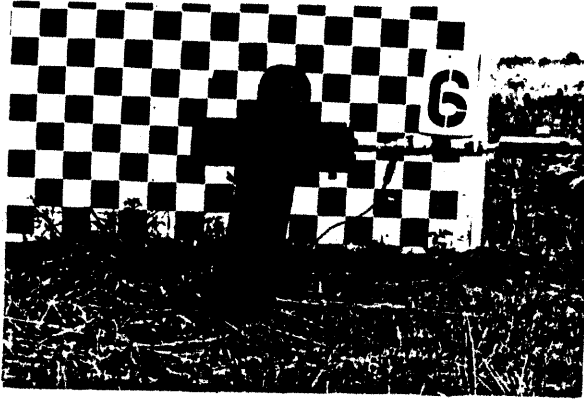


Deflection = 8.0 in.  
Load = 1.05 k

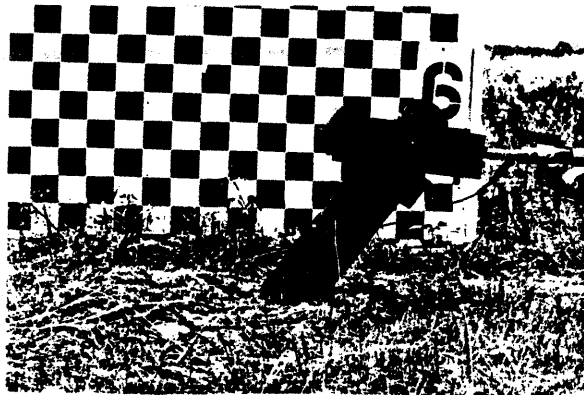


Deflection = 17.4 in.  
Load = 0.74 k

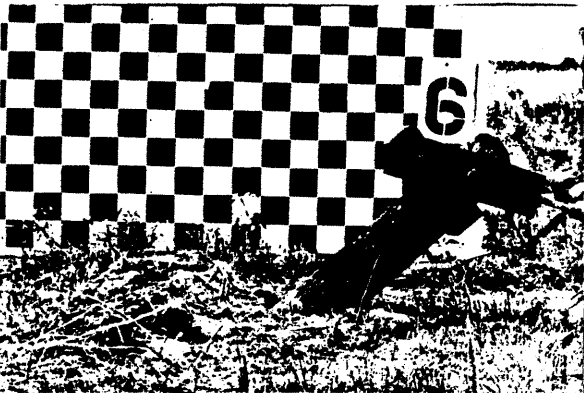
FIG. 24.-Sequential Photographs for Test 5



Deflection = 4.6 in.  
Load = 1.8 k

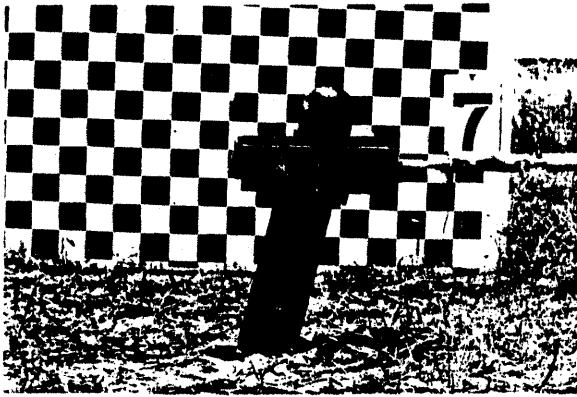


Deflection = 15.1 in.  
Load = 2.13 k

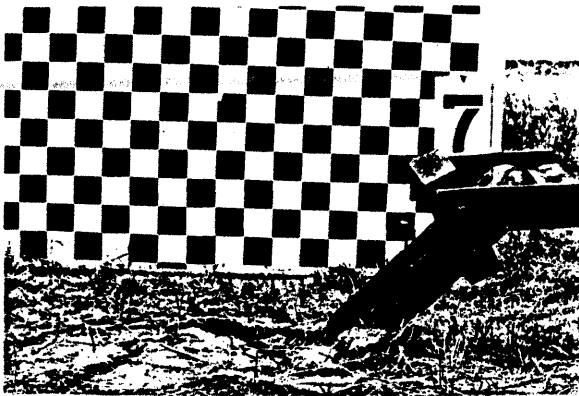


Deflection = 23.1 in.  
Load = 1.32 k

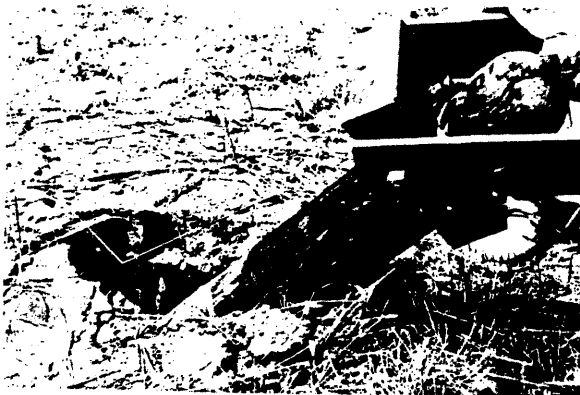
FIG. 25.-Sequential Photographs for Test 6



Deflection = 8.1 in.  
Load = 2.03 k



Deflection = 21.6 in.  
Load = 3.07 k

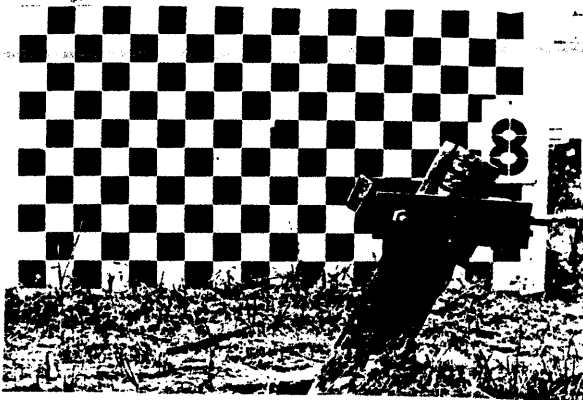


Deflection = 26.6 in.  
Load = 3.2 k

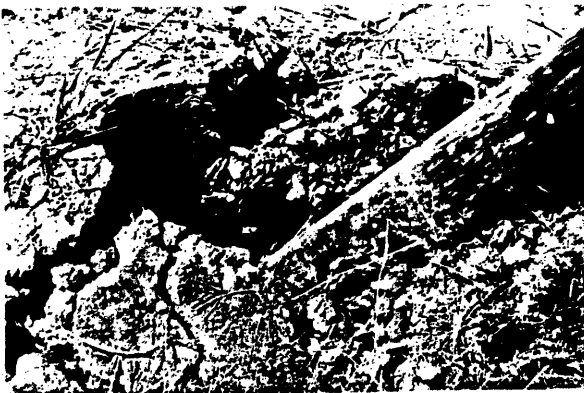
FIG. 26.-Sequential Photographs for Test 7



Deflection = 9.5 in.  
Load = 2.75 k



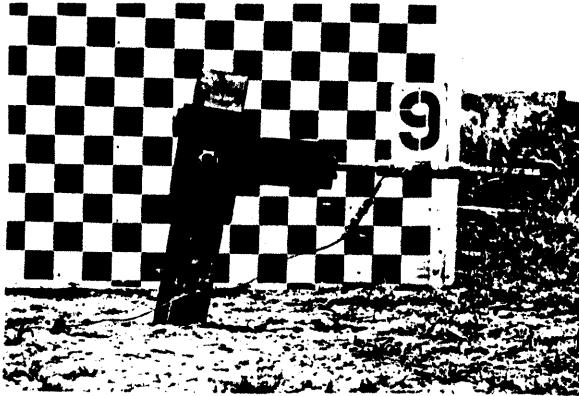
Deflection = 17.5 in.  
Load = 4.07 k



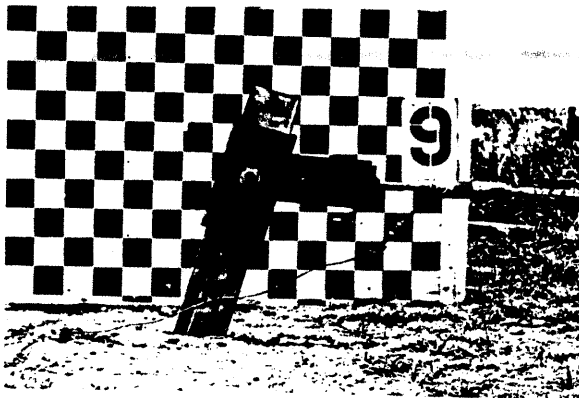
Deflection = 29.0 in.  
Load = 2.46 k

FIG. 27.-Sequential Photographs for Test 8





Deflection = 4.75 in.  
Load = 0.43 k

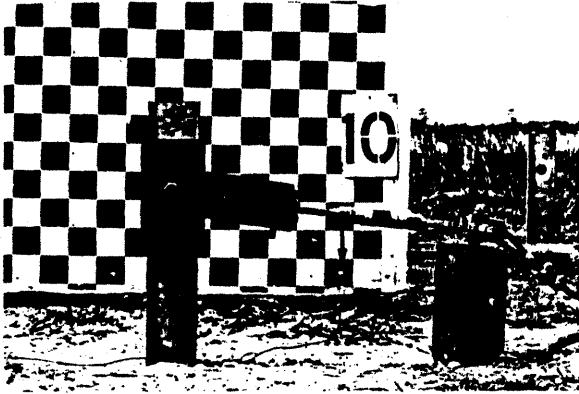


Deflection = 8.0 in.  
Load = 0.18 k

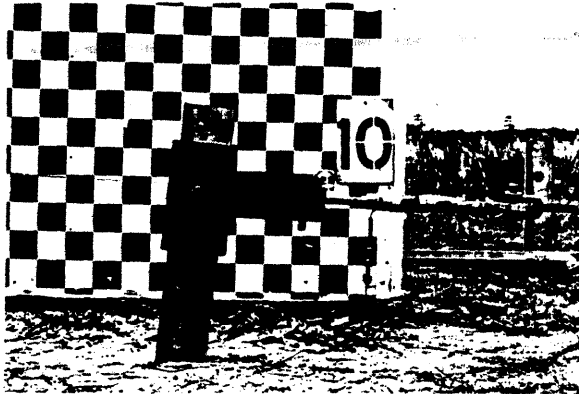


Deflection = 12.5 in.  
Load = 0.35 k

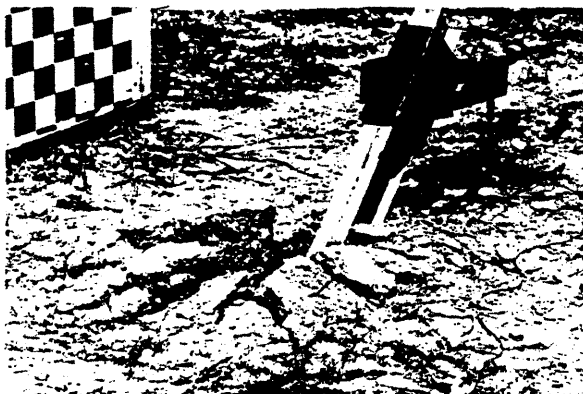
FIG. 28.-Sequential Photographs for Test 9



Deflection = 0.0 in.  
Load = 0.0 k

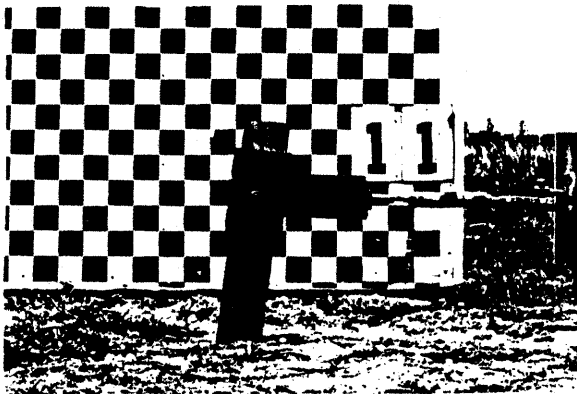


Deflection = 4.0 in.  
Load = 1.1 k

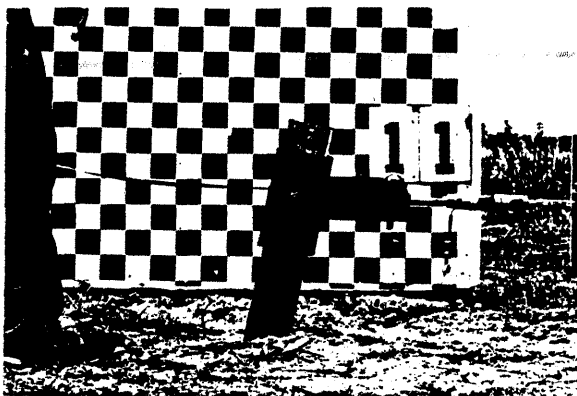


Deflection = 17.0 in.  
Load = 0.19 k

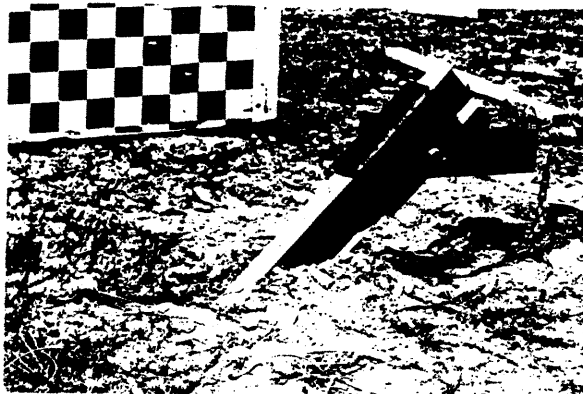
FIG. 29.-Sequential Photographs for Test 10



Deflection = 5.5 in.  
Load = 2.16 k

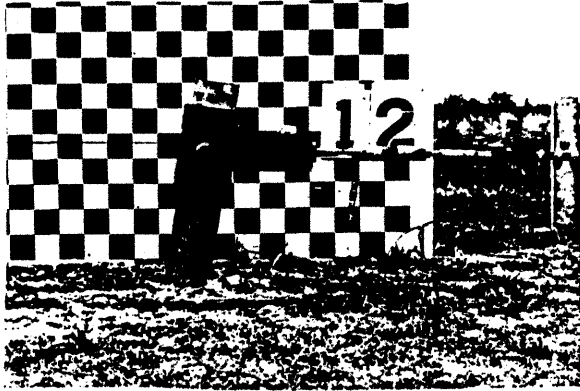


Deflection = 8.0 in.  
Load = 2.4 k

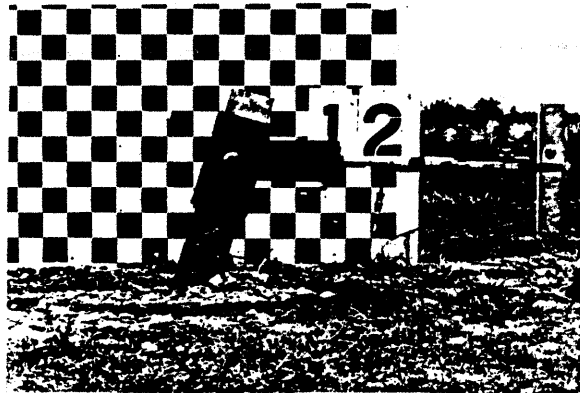


Deflection = 27.5 in.  
Load = 0.41 k

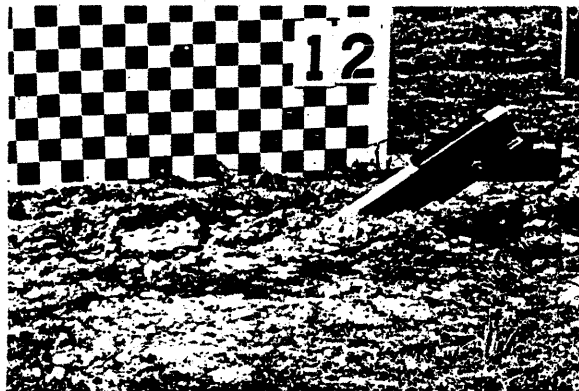
FIG. 30.-Sequential Photographs for Test 11



Deflection = 6.5 in.  
Load = 3.89 k

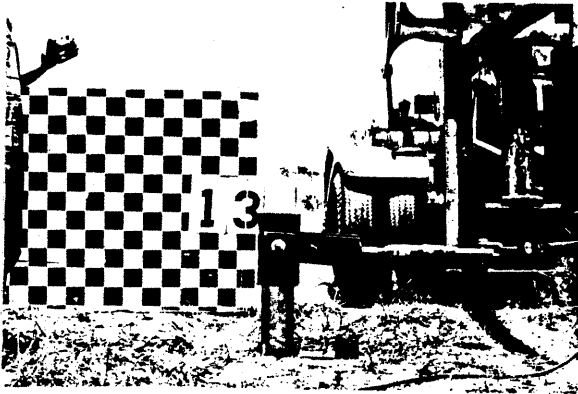


Deflection = 12.0 in.  
Load = 4.66 k

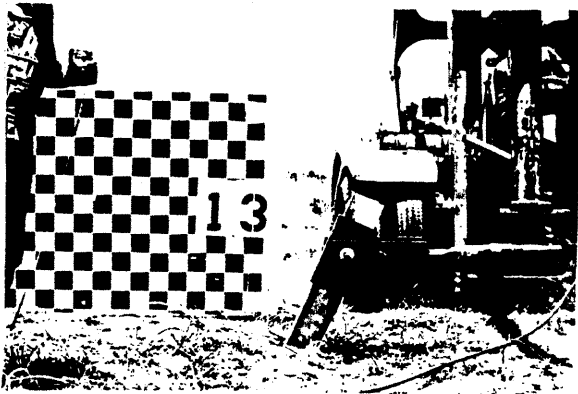


Deflection = 37.0 in  
Load = 0.93

FIG. 31.-Sequential Photographs for Test 12



Deflection = 1.5 in.  
Load = 0.84 k

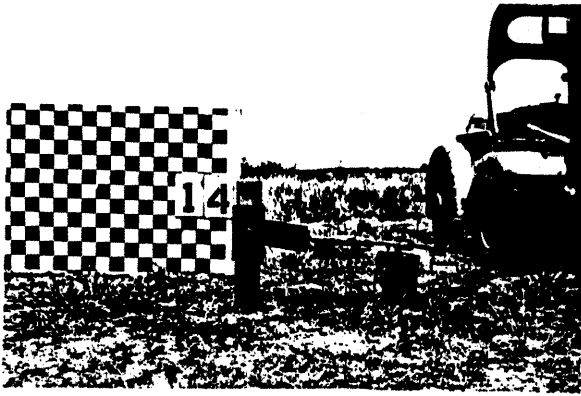


Deflection = 10.5 in.  
Load = 0.38 k

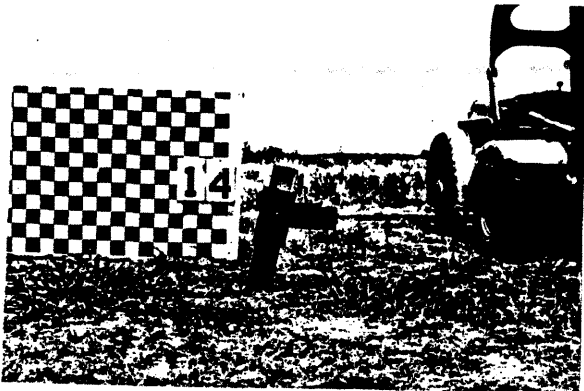


Deflection = 12.5 in.  
Load = 0.22 k

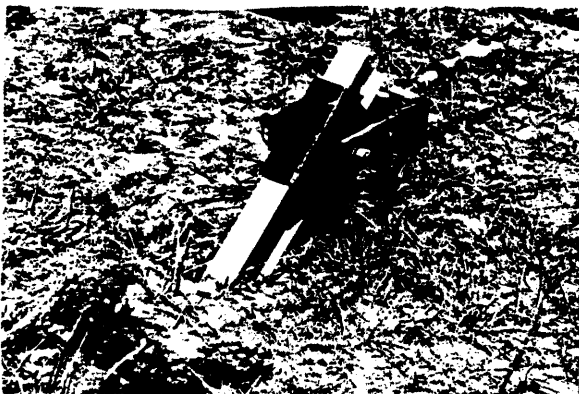
FIG. 32.-Sequential Photographs for Test 13



Deflection = 0.0 in  
Load = 0.0 k

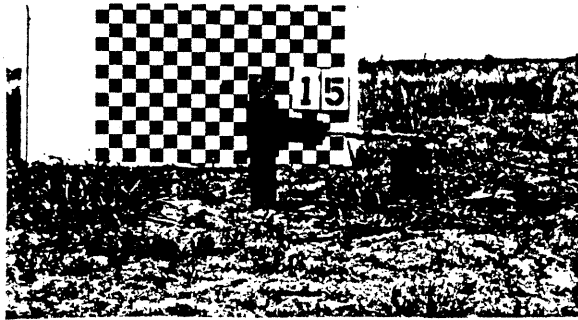


Deflection = 5.5 in.  
Load = 1.15 k

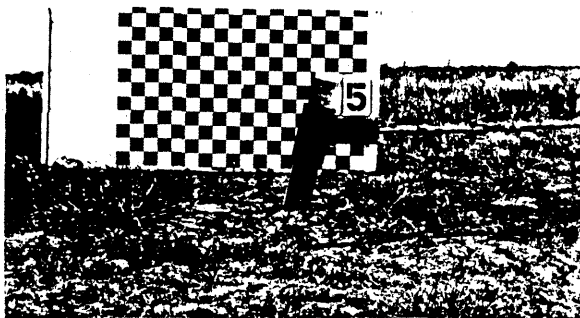


Deflection = 21.5 in.  
Load = 0.25

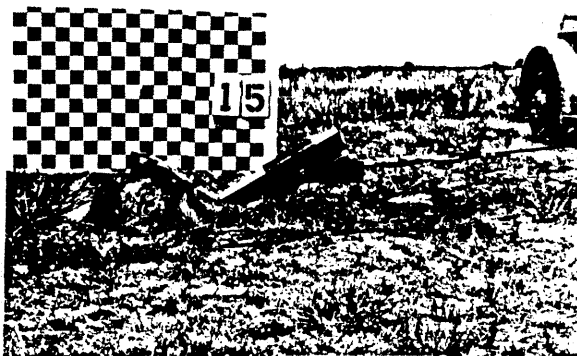
FIG. 33.-Sequential Photographs for Test 14



Deflection = 0.0 in.  
Load = 0.0 k

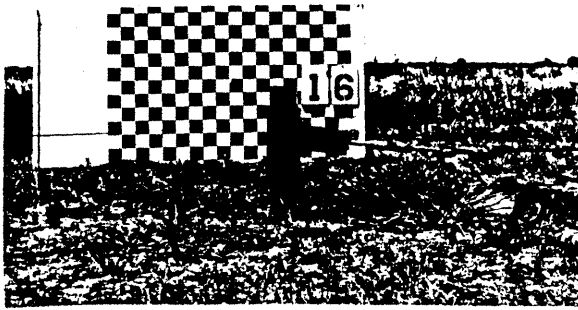


Deflection = 7.0 in.  
Load = 1.85 k

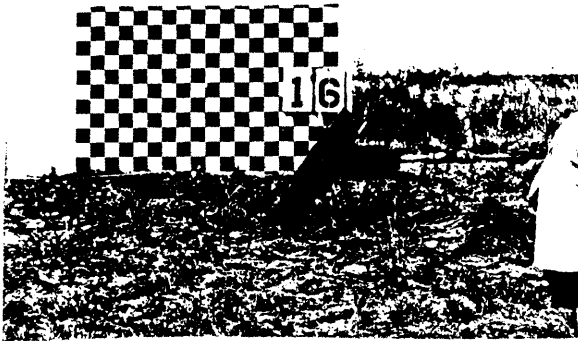


Deflection = 27.5 in.  
Load = 0.39 k

FIG. 34.-Sequential Photographs for Test 15



Deflection = 0.5 in.  
Load = 0.73 k



Deflection = 16.0 in.  
Load = 5.32 k



Deflection = 26.0 in.  
Load = 5.6 k

FIG. 35.-Sequential Photographs for Test 16



APPENDIX B  
SPECIFICATIONS FOR METAL BEAM GUARD FENCE



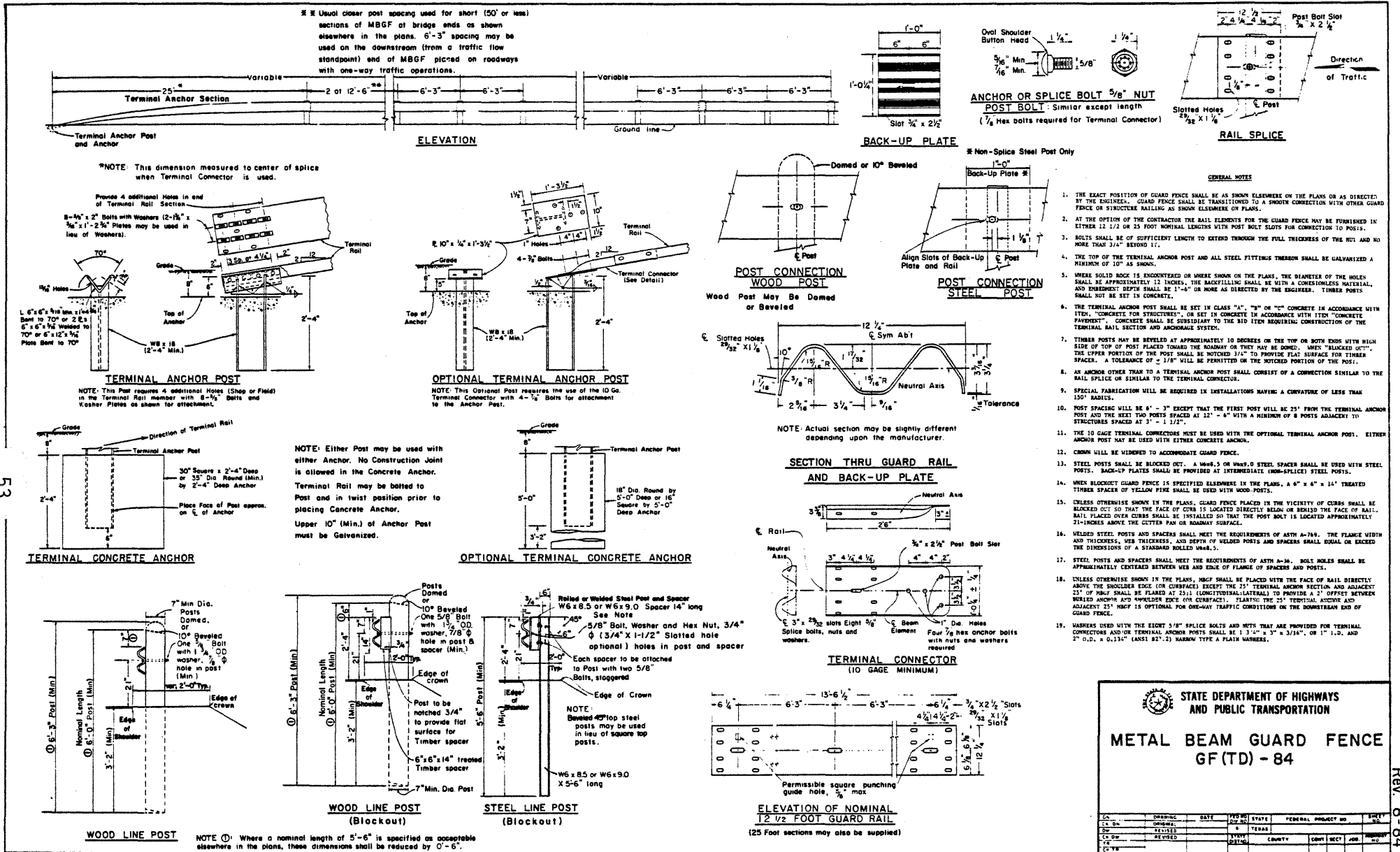


FIG. 36.-Specifications for Metal Beam Guard Fence

STATE DEPARTMENT OF HIGHWAYS  
AND PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION

**METAL BEAM GUARD FENCE**  
GF(TD) - 84

NO.	DATE	BY	STATE	FEDERAL PROJECT NO.	SHEET
DR	REVISED	6	TEXAS		
CC	REVISED				
CC	REVISED				

REV. 8-84

