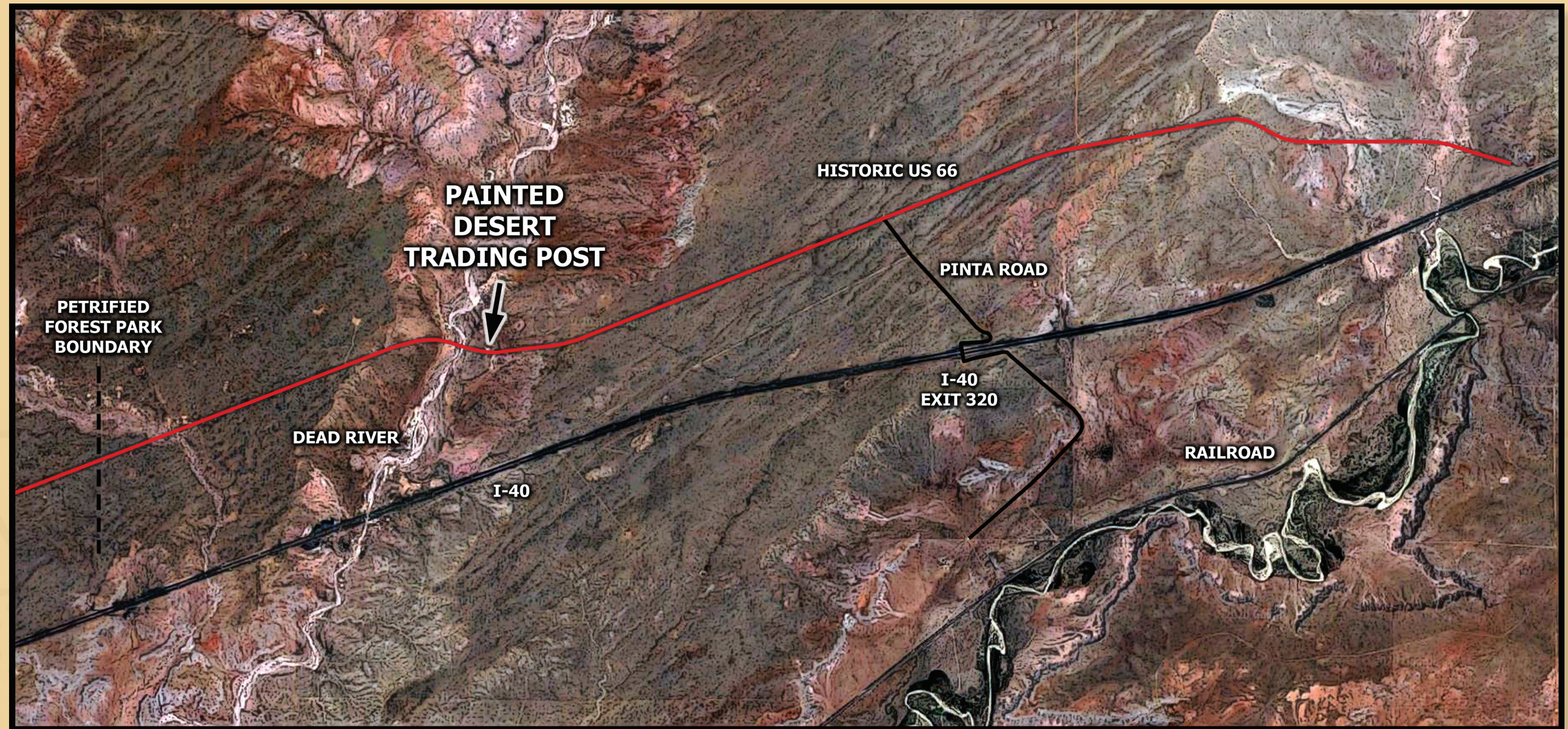


# BYPASS OF THE Painted Desert Trading Post

Business was brisk during the 1940s and early 1950s as US 66 traffic steadily increased. The downside was that the non-durable 1930s asphalt roadway was rapidly deteriorating as the post-war vacation boom continued and Dwight Eisenhower ascended to the presidency.

Plans for an all-new two-lane were on the drawing board by 1954. It was called the Lupton-to-Holbrook Highway, and it mostly bypassed the existing road, including a stretch that was home to several trading posts (including Dotch Windsor's) as well as the Painted Desert Monument, which at the time was a separate park from the Petrified Forest.

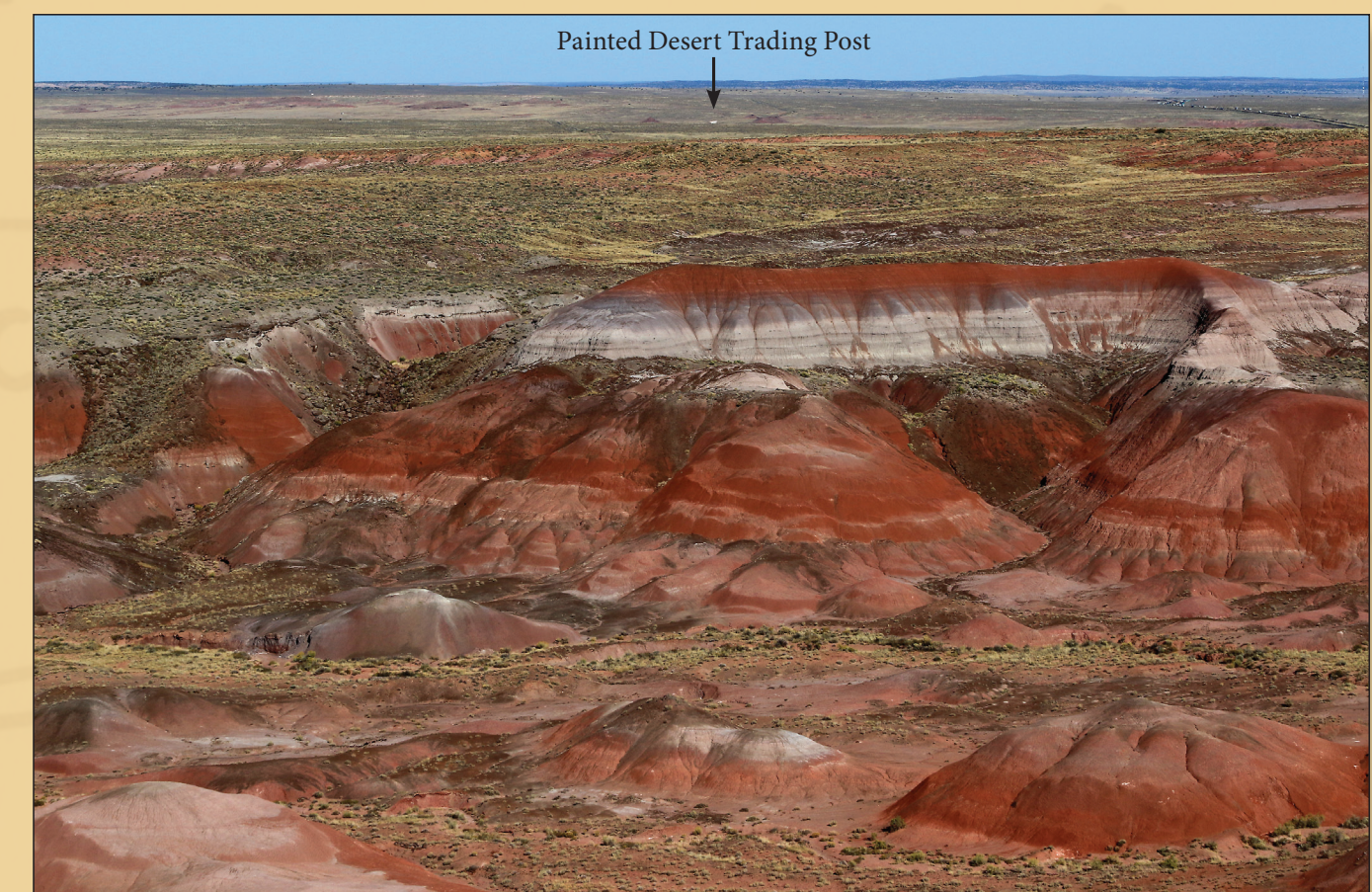


Park Service officials supported the bypass, hoping to leave the nearby Painted Desert Park Trading Post marooned. The so-called tourist trap was on leased state land close to the park's entrance road, but beyond the park service's reach, and there had been a long-standing dispute between the two. Federal officials considered it an eyesore and an obstacle to attaining National Park status for the Painted Desert and Petrified Forest Monuments. Only five miles to the east and helpless to shape its own future stood Dotch Windsor's Painted Desert Trading Post.

Construction of the new two-lane was well underway when the 1956 Interstate Highway Act passed and plans for I-40 through the area were developed, even as the Lupton-to-Holbrook road was being built. The new two-lane was soon destined to become the westbound lanes of the interstate, which would be completed there in the early 1960s.

By late 1957, the bypass two-lane was open to traffic, but the existing road remained accessible, as did a temporary spur road to the Painted Desert Monument. It would be another year before traffic was lost on the old highway, and it wasn't until 1962 that the Painted Desert Park Trading Post was finally acquired and razed. In December of that year, the Painted Desert and Petrified Forest combined to become the Petrified Forest National Park.

Near the banks of the Dead River, Dotch Windsor remained in business until a connector road linking the new highway with the old just east of his place was closed in the summer of 1958. It is reasoned that he remained in residence there for a time, tending his cattle and horses, before moving to Holbrook, where he died in 1964. His trading post has never been repurposed.



From the Painted Desert Loop Road within the Petrified Forest National Park, the trading post can be seen in the distance.