

IDAHO STATE HISTORICAL SOCIETY

REFERENCE SERIES

SITE REPORT - KOOTENAI RIVER AREA

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Historic-site reports contain information designed to assist in two preservation functions. One is preservation planning at the local level. The other is the work of federal agencies in carrying out their responsibilities to comply with historic-preservation requirements prescribed by federal statutes and regulations. These reports summarize local archaeological, historical, and geographical contexts; existing surveys of historic sites; architectural, engineering, industrial; and other cultural resources; and available maps and literature concerning each area. Natural geographical, rather than governmental, boundaries have been used to identify seventy-two areas that vary greatly in size. Site reports reflect a broad cultural and geographical disparity characteristic of diverse regional components found in Idaho, but the areas are designed to incorporate cultural elements of immediate local significance that need to be taken into account for preservation planning.

1. Geographical context: Flowing from Canadian Rockies sources into Montana and Idaho, Kootenai River returns northwest into British Columbia and a Columbia outlet there. Idaho's portion, geographically oriented toward British Columbia cuts through a high ridge in order to enter a long north-south trench recently occupied by a continental ice sheet extension that terminated at Lake Coeur d'Alene more than ten thousand years ago. An old Kootenai valley lake bed, formed around Bonner's Ferry when receding glacial ice still blocked drainage through British Columbia, drained south through Idaho until a warmer climate restored a more northern route. Valley farm lands and timbered ridges now characterize this area. A relatively low elevation (1787) gives Bonner's Ferry a milder winter climate that would be expected in its northern latitude, but higher ridges, ranging to 7,670 feet (Parker Peak), receive heavy winter snow.

With convenient access through Idaho to Spokane Valley, Kootenai River offers a superior transportation route into southeastern British Columbia as well as an east-west rail line (Great Northern from Minneapolis to Seattle) that has lower summits than other routes.

2. Prehistory and significant archaeological sites:

3. Cultural resource surveys and archaeological literature:
4. Historical summary: Major historical episodes include
 1. Exploration and fur trade, 1808-1863
 2. Wild Horse Trail, 1864-1892
 3. Great Northern Railway and early logging, 1892-1906
 4. Forest Service administration, 1906-1919
 5. Lead silver mining, 1920-19
 6. Transportation improvement and farm depression, 1920-1932
 7. New Deal and wartime adjustments, 1933-1945
 8. Advanced farm technology, 1946-
5. Historical documentation and literature:
6. Historic sites inventory:
7. Industrial archaeological and engineering sites summary: Lode mining operations left a variety of indications, many of them relatively permanent in nature. Disturbance of surface outcrops includes trenches and exploratory shafts. In other places, tunnels and raises or stopes that reached surface outlets reveal important aspects of mining activity. If accessible, underground workings have still greater importance for industrial archaeology and engineering analysis. Abandoned tools and equipment, along with items like timbering in tunnels and stopes, add to this record.
8. Architectural resources: forty architectural sites have been recorded in the Kootenai River Area, twenty-six of them in the area's one major town, Bonner's Ferry, and the remainder scattered among three smaller towns and three centers. All parts of the area need further survey; communities with no representation in the architectural survey include Naples, Crossport, Eastport, Meadow Creek, Leonia, Sinclair, Addie, and Ritz.

The sites recorded in Bonner's Ferry date from 1900 through 1914, a period of logging and railroad development in the area. They include frame residences with Queen Anne and Colonial Revival style details and a few brick commercial and institutional buildings. Sites recorded outside Bonner's Ferry include barns, frame and brick institutional buildings, a guard

station at Moyie River, and five farmsteads made up of horizontal timber buildings located along round Prairie Creek.

9. United States Geological survey Maps:

Bonnors Ferry 1965	Meadow Creek 1965
Canuck Peak 1965	Naples 1965
Caribou Creek 1969	Moyie Springs
Clifty Mtn. 1965	Moravia 1965
Continental Mtn. 1968	Mt. Pend Oreille (15') 1951
Copeland 1965	Pyramid Peak 1969
Curley Creek 1965	Ritz 1965
Dodge Peak 1967	Roman Nose 1976
Eastport 1965	Shorty Peak 1969
Farnham Peak 1965	Smith Falls 1968
Grass Mtn. 1965	Smith Peak 1969
Hall Mtn. 1965	The Wigwams 1967
Leonia 1965	Twentymile Creek 1965
Line Point 1965	

10. Cultural resource management recommendations: