

IDAHO STATE HISTORICAL SOCIETY

REFERENCE SERIES

SITE REPORT - SAINT MARIES-PLUMMER AREA

Number 642

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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: Saint Maries River descends through timbered hills (mostly non-Forest Service lands) with some valley meadows to Saint Maries. Similar hills and broader valleys with extensive farm land continue farther west along watersheds of other Spokane River streams. Important white pine and other forest products are produced in this area, along with agricultural products from non-irrigated farms on Coeur d'Alene Indian reservation lands. Mining has not gained importance here.

Railroads, forest roads, and paved highways provide an adequate transportation network that encourages recreation as well as logging. Elevations vary from at Saint Maries to at Grandmother mountain.

2. Prehistory and significant archaeological sites:

3. Cultural resource surveys and archaeological literature:

4. Historical summary:

1. Exploration and fur trade, 18 -1841

2. Jesuit mission and Mullan Road, 1842-1861
 3. Indian reservation negotiations, 1862-
 4. Early lumber industry, -1907
 5. Railroad construction and service, 1908-1919
 6. Transportation improvement, 1920-1932
 7. New Deal and wartime adjustment, 1933-1945
 8. Contemporary life, 1946-
5. Historical documentation and literature:
 6. Historic sites inventory:

7. Industrial archaeological and engineering sites summary: Surface evidence of placer mining in this area offers opportunities for study of industrial procedures utilized in historic production. Hydraulic pits, patterns of dredging operations, or tailings that distinguish hill claims from stream claims--or that identify Chinese services--provide information of historic importance. Prospector's pits disclose gravels that were searched unsuccessfully for gold. Ditches, flumes, stream diversions, and similar evidence of water sources also are important.

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: Survey of the St. Maries-Plummer area has been so scattered that it is difficult to generalize about the area's architecture. Extensive settlement of the area began in the 1880's with homesteading and the building of sawmills. The lumber industry still is an important part of the area's economy. Architectural sites related to those two activities date from the major period of growth, 1890's through 1930.

In St. Maries there are a number of brick, frame, and stucco hotels and apartments of interest. Few houses have been

recorded. Commercial and institutional buildings of brick, stucco, and frame have features from the Colonial Revival, Renaissance Revival, art deco, and neo-Gothic styles. Terra cotta and iron are used in ornamentation. Examples of frame commercial buildings with false fronts may be seen in Emida; these are in poor condition. The St. Maries-Plummer area has rural sites of considerable interest, including board and batten barns and frame and log farm houses. At the North Idaho Sub-agency in the Plummer vicinity is a group of frame houses of interest for their association with the Nez Perce population. One of the area's most significant sites is the 1877 Mission of the Sacred Heart, a frame building at Desmet.

Thirty-three architectural sites have been recorded in the St. Maries-Plummer area. Half of these are in the area's principal town, St. Maries, and the remainder are scattered among smaller towns and populated centers. Nine rural sites have been recorded. All parts of the St. Maries-Plummer area need further survey for architectural sites and remains. Towns and centers that have received no attention include the following:

Beneway	Emerald Creek	Santa
Chatcolet	Emida	Setters
Clarkia	Mowry	Tensed
Conkling Park	Sanders	

National Register sites of architectural significance include the Kootenai Inn in St. Maries and the Coeur d'Alene Mission of the Sacred Heart, Desmet.

9. United States Geological Survey Maps:

Anthony Peak 1969
 Bovill (15') 1961
 Emida (15') 1957
 Fairfield (15') Wa.-Id. 1954
 Fernwood (15') 1961
 Grandmother Mtn. 1969
 Huckleberry Mtn. 1969
 Merry Creek 1969
 Plummer (15') 1957
 Rochat Peak 1950
 St. Joe (15') 1957
 St. Maries (15') 1957
 Tekoa 1964
 Tensed (15') 1957

10. Cultural resource management recommendations:

Publications--450 N. 4th Street, Boise, ID 83702--208-334-3428