

# IDAHO STATE HISTORICAL SOCIETY

## REFERENCE SERIES

### SITE REPORT - SOUTH FORK SNAKE

Number 653

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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: Above Poplar, Snake River's south fork flows through a canyon that contains Palisades reservoir. Arid lower lands blend into timbered slopes under Forest Service administration on higher ridges. A south fork highway to Jackson Hole and a connection north to Teton valley provide transportation through this area, which has ranching as well as logging. Elevations vary from                    above Poplar to 9,478 feet at Elk Mountain.

2. Prehistory and significant archaeological sites: People have inhabited southern Idaho for fourteen thousand years or more. Until about eight thousand years ago they were noted primarily as big game hunters. Since then, they specialized more in camas, bitterroot, and other natural crops and seeds, as well as in smaller game. But they continued to hunt large game that remained after earlier elephants, camels, giant sloth, and other ice age creatures left as climatic conditions changed.

3. Cultural resource surveys and archaeological literature:

4. Historical summary: Major historical episodes include

1. Exploration and fur trade, 1812-1862
2. Prospecting, 1863-
3. Ranching, 18 -1906
4. Forest Service administration, 1906-
5. Transportation improvement, 19
6. Palisades Dam, 19

5. Historical documentation and literature:

6. Historic sites inventory:

7. Industrial archaeological and engineering sites summary:

8. Architectural survey: The Idaho Historic Sites Inventory records no sites of architectural interest in the south Fork Snake study area. All parts of the area deserve further survey for sites related to the area's development as farming, ranching, and recreational land. The following towns and centers need inspection for architectural remains:

Alpine  
 Irwin  
 Palisades  
 Swan Valley

There are no National Register sites of architectural significance recorded in the study area.

9. United States Geological Survey Maps:

Alpine 1966  
 Big Elk Mtn. 1966  
 Commissary Ridge 1966  
 Conant Valley 1966  
 Fourth of July Peak 1974  
 Heise SE 1951  
 Hell Creek (15') 1924  
 Herman 1966  
 Mt. Baird 1966  
 Palisades Dam 1966  
 Palisades Peak 1966  
 Poker Peak 1966  
 Red Ridge 1966  
 Stouts Mtn. 1974  
 Swan Valley 1966  
 Thompson Peak 1966  
 Victor  
 Wheaton Mtn. 1966

10. Cultural resource management recommendations:

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