

IDAHO STATE HISTORICAL SOCIETY

REFERENCE SERIES

SITE REPORT - GRAND VIEW-CASTLE CREEK-SINKER CREEK

Number 661

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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: This area includes arid rangeland south of Snake River west of Strike dam and below higher Owyhee mountain ridges. Some detached irrigated lands along Sinker Creek and similar streams are included. Scattered ranches thrive at favored locations in a varied terrain of open plains, lava canyons, and dry ridges.

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, 1811-1842

2. Emigrant traffic, 1843-1868
 3. Stockraising, 1868-1919
 4. Transportation improvement, 1920-1932
 5. New Deal and wartime adjustments, 1933-1945
 6. BLM administration, 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.
8. Architectural resources: Sites of importance to the study of architecture in the Grand View-Castle Creek-Sinker Creek study unit include ranches and stage stations. Examples of log construction, lava rock buildings, and wood and willow fences survive. The Idaho Historic Sites Survey records two sites of architectural interest in the area, the Turmes Ranch and Our Lady, Queen of Heaven Church in Oreana.
 The entire study area deserves further survey; in particular, the town of Grand View needs inspection for architectural remains.
 National Register sites of architectural significance includes Our Lady, Queen of Heaven Church in Oreana.
9. United States Geological Survey Maps:
- Antelope Spring 1972
 - Castle Butte 1977
 - Chalk Hills 1947
 - Clover Mtn. 1972
 - Dorsey Butte 1947
 - Grand View 1947
 - Jackass Butte 1947
 - Oreana 1949
 - Ox Lake 1972
 - Pixley Basin 1972

Perjue Canyon 1972
Rough Mtn. 1972
Rough Mtn. NE 1972
Silver City 1965
Sinker Butte 1948
Snow Creek 1972
Triangle (15') 1965
Vinson Wash 1947
Wild Horse Butte 1947

10. Cultural resource management recommendations: