

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM

FOR NPS USE ONLY

RECEIVED
DEC 19 1977

DATE ENTERED
NOV 21 1978

SEE INSTRUCTIONS IN *HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS*
TYPE ALL ENTRIES -- COMPLETE APPLICABLE SECTIONS

1 NAME

HISTORIC
Barber Dam and Lumber Mill Historical Archaeological Site

AND/OR COMMON

LOCATION T 3 N, R 3 E; SE¼ of Section 29.

STREET & NUMBER

CITY, TOWN Boise

STATE Idaho

VICINITY OF CODE

COUNTY Ada

CODE

NOT FOR PUBLICATION
CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT Second

CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	PRESENT USE
☐ DISTRICT	☒ PUBLIC	☐ OCCUPIED	☒ AGRICULTURE
☒ BUILDING(S)	☐ PRIVATE	☒ UNOCCUPIED	☐ MUSEUM
☒ STRUCTURE	☐ BOTH	☐ WORK IN PROGRESS	☐ COMMERCIAL
☒ SITE	☒ PUBLIC ACQUISITION	☒ ACCESSIBLE	☐ EDUCATIONAL
☐ OBJECT	☐ IN PROCESS	☐ YES: RESTRICTED	☐ ENTERTAINMENT
	☐ BEING CONSIDERED	☒ YES: UNRESTRICTED	☐ GOVERNMENT
		☐ NO	☐ INDUSTRIAL
			☐ MILITARY
			☐ OTHER:

OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME
Ada County

STREET & NUMBER
Courthouse; 5th & Jefferson

CITY, TOWN Boise

STATE Idaho

VICINITY OF

LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.
Ada County Courthouse

STREET & NUMBER
5th & Jefferson

CITY, TOWN Boise

STATE Idaho

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE
Idaho State Historic Sites Survey

DATE
1972

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS
Idaho State Historical Society

CITY, TOWN Boise

STATE Idaho

FEDERAL ☒ STATE ☐ COUNTY ☐ LOCAL ☐

7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION

☐ EXCELLENT
☒ GOOD
☐ FAIR

☒ DETERIORATED
☒ RUINS
☐ UNEXPOSED

CHECK ONE

☒ UNALTERED
☐ ALTERED

CHECK ONE

☒ ORIGINAL SITE
☐ MOVED DATE _____

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The Barber dam and lumber mill historical archaeological site is situated on the north bank of the Boise river five miles east of Boise. It includes a powerhouse and dam with an earth embankment, a cottage and outbuilding, several concrete foundations and the remains of a railroad spur.

The powerhouse and dam are the major extant structures. The two-story 60' x 70', reinforced concrete power station is an industrial building distinguished by its two-story round arched windows. It has a gabled roof of structural steel and houses four turbine bays. The only intact equipment are the gates to regulate the turbines' water flow. The building is stable, although abandoned. Extending south of the powerhouse across the river is a 400' long crib dam. Constructed of 12" x 12" timbers and filled with rocks, the dam stands 21' high and 86' wide, with a log chute and fish ladder on the north side. A 1500' earth embankment extends north of the power plant and creates a large holding pond. The dam is still in operation.

A modest one-story frame cottage with a gabled roof and front porch is to the northwest of the power station. This clapboard structure is in disrepair and is vacant. A small wood shack is to the west of it.

The concrete walls of the six-unit boiler house stand north of the powerhouse. The circular concrete stack foundation and concrete foundation of at least one outbuilding are visible in the field west of the embankment, as are the eroded remains of a railroad spur grade and various concrete retaining walls and foundation debris. The site of the mill house is distinctly indicated by artifactual material such as brick fall and window glass fragments. Contemporary newspaper accounts also record several other outbuildings, boarding houses, barns and workshops, and contemporary photographs of both the mill and powerhouse are available.

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

BARBER DAM REHABILITATION PROJECT, Idaho State Water Resource Board (Boise: November, 1976).

Ralph W. Hidy, Frank E. Hill, Allan Nevins, TIMBER AND MEN: THE WEYERHAEUSER STORY, (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1963), p. 260.

Idaho Daily Statesman, Boise, Oct. 11, 1904, p. 5, c. 1; Oct. 4, 1904, p. 4, c. 1;

Oct. 19, 1904, p. 4, c. 1.

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY 10

UTM REFERENCES

E (southwest extension of Spillway): Zone 11, Easting ⁵⁷⁰⁻⁹⁷⁰ 571025, Northing 4823580

160A	1,1	57,1	2,0	0	4,8	2,3	4,6	0	020B	1,1	57,1	0,6	0	4,8	2,3	2,9	0	260
ZONE	EASTING				NORTHING				ZONE	EASTING				NORTHING				
c	1,1	57,0	9,7	5	4,8	2,3	1,7	5	D	1,1	57,0	9,9	0	4,8	2,3	4,2	5	400

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

Begins at the southwest extension of the spillway on the southwest bank of the Boise River and extends across the river to the southeast corner of the powerhouse; extends parallel to the spillway from the southeast corner of the powerhouse 220 meters along the embankment, then at a right angle 220 meters northwest, then at a right angle southwest to the river bank, then on a line running from that point back to the southeast corner of the powerhouse.

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE

11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE

Michael Ostrogorsky, Consulting Archaeologist

ORGANIZATION

Idaho State Historical Society

DATE

12 Dec 77

STREET & NUMBER

610 North Julia Davis Drive

TELEPHONE

384-2120

CITY OR TOWN

Boise

STATE

Idaho

12 STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER CERTIFICATION

THE EVALUATED SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS PROPERTY WITHIN THE STATE IS:

NATIONAL ☐

STATE ☒

LOCAL ☐

As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service.

STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER SIGNATURE

Marie Wells

TITLE

State historic preservation officer

DATE

12 Dec 77

FOR NPS USE ONLY

I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS PROPERTY IS INCLUDED IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

ATTEST:

DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF ARCHEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION

William L. Bouch

DATE

11/14/78

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

DATE

100 17, 1978

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

8 SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD		AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW			
☐ PREHISTORIC	☒ ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC	☐ COMMUNITY PLANNING	☐ LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE	☐ RELIGION	
☐ 1400-1499	☒ ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC	☐ CONSERVATION	☐ LAW	☐ SCIENCE	
☐ 1500-1599	☒ AGRICULTURE	☒ ECONOMICS	☐ LITERATURE	☐ SCULPTURE	
☐ 1600-1699	☒ ARCHITECTURE	☐ EDUCATION	☐ MILITARY	☐ SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN	
☐ 1700-1799	☐ ART	☐ ENGINEERING	☐ MUSIC	☐ THEATER	
☐ 1800-1899	☐ COMMERCE	☐ EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	☐ PHILOSOPHY	☐ TRANSPORTATION	
☒ 1900-	☐ COMMUNICATIONS	☒ INDUSTRY	☐ POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	☐ OTHER (SPECIFY)	
		☐ INVENTION			

SPECIFIC DATES 1904-1934 BUILDER/ARCHITECT A. J. Wiley

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Barber dam and lumber mill historical archaeological site is archaeologically significant as: one of the few remaining lumber mill facilities left standing from the 1900s. It offers visitors an opportunity to actually see the interrelationship between the dam, lake, powerhouse and once standing mill.

Although the site has been abandoned for almost a half-century (the mill was dismantled in 1934), from a strictly historical archaeological perspective the site appears virtually undisturbed. The pasture where the plant once stood has never been plowed. As the lumber operation was only in operation for the first three decades of this century, the plant site provides an unparalleled opportunity to expand the data base for future historical and industrial archaeological research, not only locally but regionally as well, in an industry so important to the development of Idaho's economy, and that of the west.

Barber dam and mill was only one facet of the pioneering operation of the Weyerhaeuser group in Idaho at the turn of the century. Like all too many of these undertakings the Barber Lumber Company was characterized by: bright initial hopes, extensive acquisition of timber, unexpected difficulties in logging and transport, failure of manufacture to justify investment, heavy assessments on stockholders, and a growing sense of frustration.

Organized in July 1902 by James T. Barber, Sumner G. (Jack) Moon and others the Barber Lumber Company anticipated large returns from its 25,000 acres of timberland located along Grimes and More's creek in the Boise Basin. In October 1904 the company commenced erecting the mill, power plant and company town east of Boise. An Idaho Daily Statesman editorial reflected the optimism of the owners and expressed the local excitement and interest in the undertaking, As the company will employ several hundred men in the construction of its works and in making the necessary river improvements and keep perhaps 200 employed constantly, the enterprise becomes of very great importance to the city. The coming of these people will mark a new era in the industrial development of Boise! The lumbering enterprise is of the highest importance in itself, while it is likely to be the indirect means of bringing about other developments that will further add to the prosperity of the city.³

Such were the hopes of 1904, which were rendered architecturally through the classically inspired powerhouse.

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Significance

CONTINUATION SHEET

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By November 1905 the 1500 horsepower electrical plant was in operation, and, through a contract with the Capital Electric Light, Motor and Gas Company of Boise, was supplying Boise with its power. The mill was not yet in operation however, due to difficulties incurred in attempting to drive logs down Grimes and More's creeks. Heavy snows prevented winter logging and high water was needed to drive the logs. Thus the ponderosa logs had to sit in water all winter, which stained them blue and produced low grade lumber. To circumvent this problem the Intermountain Railway Company was granted a charter in 1907 to build a line between Centerville and Barber. Due to economic and legal difficulties the railroad was not begun until 1914, following the merger of the Barber Lumber Company with the Payette Lumber Company. The mill, which had been closed since 1908, resumed operations in 1915. The mill remained in operation until the depression hit and in 1934 was closed down and dismantled.

¹ Barber Dam Rehabilitation Project, p. 5.

² Timber and Men, p. 262.

³ Idaho Daily Statesman, October 4, 1904, p. 4, c. 1.

RECEIVED

DEC 19 1977

NATIONAL
REGISTER

BARBER DAM AND LUMBER MILL
SITE PLAN
(NOT TO SCALE)

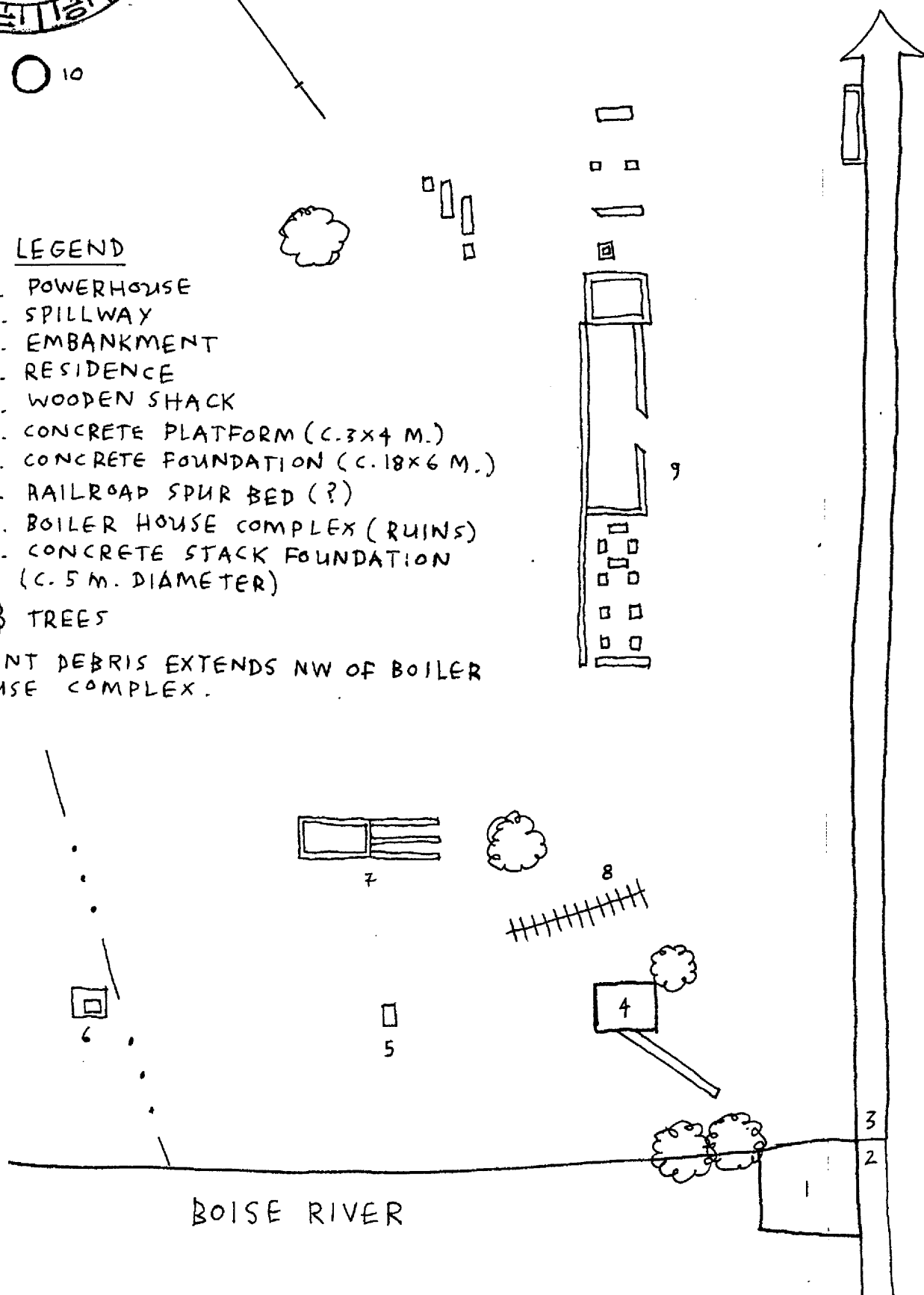
10

LEGEND

1. POWERHOUSE
2. SPILLWAY
3. EMBANKMENT
4. RESIDENCE
5. WOODEN SHACK
6. CONCRETE PLATFORM (C. 3x4 M.)
7. CONCRETE FOUNDATION (C. 18x6 M.)
8. RAILROAD SPUR BED (?)
9. BOILER HOUSE COMPLEX (RUINS)
10. CONCRETE STACK FOUNDATION
(C. 5 M. DIAMETER)

TREES

PLANT DEBRIS EXTENDS NW OF BOILER
HOUSE COMPLEX.





Barber Dam
Boise, Idaho

Photographer - Don Hibbard
1977

Idaho State Historical Society

View of dam and power plant from the south.

Site survey