

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in National Register Bulletin, *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form*. If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. **Place additional certification comments, entries, and narrative items on continuation sheets if needed (NPS Form 10-900a).**

1. Name of Property

historic name Big Cedar School

other names/site number _____

2. Location

street & number 947 Red Fir Road

N/A	not for publication
X	vicinity

city or town Kooskia

state Idaho code ID county Idaho code 049 zip code 83539

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended,

I hereby certify that this X nomination ___ request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60.

In my opinion, the property X meets ___ does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant at the following level(s) of significance:

___ national ___ statewide X local

Signature of certifying official/Title _____ Date _____

State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government _____

In my opinion, the property X meets ___ does not meet the National Register criteria.

Signature of commenting official _____ Date _____

Title _____ State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government _____

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that this property is:

- ___ entered in the National Register
- ___ determined eligible for the National Register
- ___ determined not eligible for the National Register
- ___ removed from the National Register
- ___ other (explain:) _____

Signature of the Keeper _____ Date of Action _____

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5. Classification

Ownership of Property
(Check as many boxes as apply.)

Category of Property
(Check only **one** box.)

Number of Resources within Property
(Do not include previously listed resources in the count.)

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	private
<input type="checkbox"/>	public - Local
<input type="checkbox"/>	public - State
<input type="checkbox"/>	public - Federal

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	building(s)
<input type="checkbox"/>	district
<input type="checkbox"/>	site
<input type="checkbox"/>	structure
<input type="checkbox"/>	object

Contributing	Noncontributing	
1		buildings
		district
		site
		structure
		object
1	0	Total

Name of related multiple property listing
(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing)

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

Public School Buildings in Idaho

N/A

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions
(Enter categories from instructions.)

Current Functions
(Enter categories from instructions.)

EDUCATION/School

RECREATION AND CULTURE/Auditorium

7. Description

Architectural Classification
(Enter categories from instructions.)

Materials
(Enter categories from instructions.)

No Style

foundation: CONCRETE: Concrete Block
walls: WOOD: Weatherboard

roof: METAL: Steel
other: _____

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Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current physical appearance of the property. Explain contributing and noncontributing resources if necessary. Begin with a **summary paragraph** that briefly describes the general characteristics of the property, such as its location, setting, size, and significant features.)

Summary Paragraph

The Big Cedar School is located at 947 Red Fir Road¹ in the north part of Idaho County, Idaho. The one-story building is classified as a school house property type as established in the Multiple Property Documentation Form (MPDF) "Public School Buildings in Idaho." It can be further classified as a One-Room school house property type as established in the "Historic Rural Schools of Idaho County" cultural resource survey (2013). Completed in 1920, the school building is an excellent example of the one-room, gable-front school house form, with character-defining features including rectangular footprint, wood clapboard siding, and lack of applied ornamentation. The primary elevation faces west-northwest onto Red Fir Road (aka Schoolhouse Road) just northeast of its intersection with Big Cedar Road (aka NF-1842).

The Big Cedar School retains its key character-defining features, including the original gable-front form, exterior materials, and rural setting. The original interior spatial arrangement remains unchanged, retaining the historic classroom and cloakroom spaces and finishes. The original one-over-one light wood sash windows are intact. The Big Cedar School retains integrity of its historic design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association. All of its significant character-defining design elements and materials are intact and it clearly conveys its original role and historic associations as a school house property type, as defined in the MPDF. Its modest design and materials successfully convey feelings of its period of construction. Though moved, the relocation was less than 225 feet and is immediately adjacent to the original parcel and the original setting maintained.

Narrative Description

LOCATION AND SETTING

The Big Cedar School is located near the northeast corner of Red Fir (aka Schoolhouse Road) and Big Cedar roads, about ten miles southeast of Kooskia.² The building stands at rural crossroads of two paved roads and is closer to the Nez Perce National Forest boundary to the east than any commercial center (See Figures 1-4).

The original site of the school was about 222 feet west-southwest across the road where a nonhistoric single-family dwelling now stands. The original school parcel retains the historic carriage barn, an original school outhouse, and spring with dry-laid stone retaining wall. The current schoolhouse property contains the schoolhouse, as well as ancillary structures/buildings that support the historic and current community center function of the school building. These ancillary structures/buildings consist of a nonhistoric outhouse (adjacent to the north of the schoolhouse), a nonhistoric garage, and a nonhistoric picnic shelter (both adjacent to the south of the schoolhouse). The immediate vicinity is characterized by rolling terrain traversed by gravel roads

¹ Idaho County lists the road as Red Fir Road. However, all available maps show the road as either Big Cedar Road or Schoolhouse Road. The road was historically known as County Road 398 and known as Big Cedar Creek Road by 1982. The cross road to the south of the schoolhouse was historically known as county road 472.

² Big Cedar School is about nine miles southeast of Kooskia 'as a crow flies,' and about eleven miles by road.

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lined with mature evergreens and interspersed with both natural and manmade clearings containing dwellings and pastureland. (See Photographs 8-11).

EXTERIOR

The Big Cedar School is a one-story, wood-framed building with a rectangular footprint and a gable-front roof. The ridgeline of this one-room schoolhouse runs northwest-southeast. A recessed porch under the southwest corner, at the south end of the primary (northwest) elevation, shelters two entrance doors – one leading north into the cloakroom (now small kitchen) and one leading east directly into the single classroom.

The primary elevation is two bays wide, defined by the entrance porch and a single one-over-one wood sash window (behind a nonhistoric storm window). The southwest side elevation features the original seven, one-over-one wood sash windows, arranged in a band of six units and a separate single unit. The northeast side elevation has three irregularly spaced bays defined by a small one-over-one wood window, a larger one-over-one wood window, and a wood-paneled entrance door. The southeast (rear) elevation features no openings. Each entrance contains a single, five-panel, wood-paneled door.

Historic character-defining exterior features include: the gable-front form; the stepped down gable-front roof over the forwardmost bay containing the cloakroom within; the canted arch profile of the entrance porch openings; the wood clapboard siding; the simple board trim around the windows, at wall corners, and under the eaves; the two original wood-paneled entrance doors under the porch; the small brick chimney at the rear of the roof ridge; and the overall lack of applied ornamentation.

The only apparent alterations include the replacement standing seam metal roof and the small, sensitively designed addition of a shed roof wood shed at the rear of the northeast side elevation. The building rests upon a c1980 foundation structure comprised of concrete block piers and 4"-x-4" wood sills. (See Photographs 1-3).

INTERIOR

The Big Cedar School contains approximately 860 square feet of space comprised of the original cloakroom space (now kitchen) (10'-x-13') and the original single classroom (34'-x-20'). The cloakroom is at the forward part (north end) of the building and features three doorways – one leading to the front porch and two leading into the north end of the classroom. The classroom occupies the remainder of the interior. Four doorways access the classroom – one from the front porch, two from the cloakroom space, and one from the wood shed addition on the northeast elevation. The original wood flooring, as well as the simple wood window and base trim boards, are intact. Nonhistoric secondary sheetrock wall paneling covers the walls and ceiling. (See Photographs 4-7).

INTEGRITY DISCUSSION

The Big Cedar School retains a high degree of six of the seven aspects of integrity and meets the integrity criteria for Schoolhouses in Section F of the Multiple Property Documentation Form "Public School Buildings in Idaho." While the integrity of location is compromised due to its relocation, the minimal movement of only about 222 feet across the road allows the integrity of setting to remain intact, reflected by the building's occupation of its crossroads location among mature evergreens. Its historic identity is clearly conveyed

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through its retention of original character-defining features, including its size, scale, and massing, as well as its original design, materials, and workmanship. It is an excellent example of an early twentieth century rural schoolhouse and retains all the original design features including roof gable, windows, and entrances, as well as the interior spatial arrangement, functional spaces, and finishes. Aside from the minimal relocation, the only apparent alterations include the metal roof, metal foundation skirt, wood shelter addition at the rear of the north side elevation, remodel of the cloakroom into a kitchen, interior wall sheathing, and introduction of nonhistoric ancillary buildings to facilitate community use, including outhouse, shed, and picnic shelter. Each of these alterations are reversible and do not obscure the overall character or design of the building. By virtue of its high degree of retention of all other aspects of integrity, the Big Cedar School continues to clearly convey its historic feelings and associations with the development of education during the early twentieth century in the rural community of Big Cedar, and of Idaho County, Idaho, in general.

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8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

- A Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- B Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- C Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- D Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions.)

EDUCATION

ARCHITECTURE

Period of Significance

1920-1960

Significant Dates

Significant Person

(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

Architect/Builder

Fluharty, Robert (builder)

Criteria Considerations

(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)

Property is:

- A Owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- B removed from its original location.
- C a birthplace or grave.
- D a cemetery.
- E a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- F a commemorative property.
- G less than 50 years old or achieving significance within the past 50 years.

Period of Significance (justification)

The period of significance begins in 1920, the year the building was placed into service, and ends in 1960 when the building was taken out of service as a result of school consolidation.

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Criteria Considerations (explanation, if necessary)

Criteria Consideration B

The Big Cedar School is an excellent example the Schoolhouse property type, as established in the Multiple Property Documentation Form (MPDF) "Public School Buildings in Idaho." Although relocated in 1964, the Big Cedar School retains ample integrity to clearly communicate its historic associations. As described in the MPDF, moved properties are still eligible if "the new location is compatible with the historic character of the structure, and the integrity of location and setting is still apparent." The Big Cedar School's relocation less than 225 feet across the road from its original site meets the threshold of this registration requirement and does not affect the overall ability of the building to communicate its historic significance. The building retains the historic orientation toward the road, as well as the proximate environment of the historic location associated with its period of significance. The original workmanship, materials, design, feeling, and associations, as well as setting of the property remain intact and readily apparent.

Though relocation is not preferred, moved properties can remain eligible under certain conditions depending on their area of significance. Per NRHP guidelines, "A moved property significant under Criteria A or B must be demonstrated to be the surviving property most importantly associated with a particular historic event," meaning "it must be the single surviving property that is most closely associated with the event." The NRHP guidelines continue, "A moved property significant under Criterion C must retain enough historic features to convey its architectural values and retain integrity of design, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association." The Big Cedar School meets both of these requirements for eligibility of moved buildings.

Additionally, per National Register Bulletin *How to Apply the National Register Criteria for Evaluation*, "One of the basic purposes of the National Register is to encourage the preservation of historic properties as living parts of their communities."³ As an active gathering place for area residents, Big Cedar School meets this mission; it is a "living part" of the surrounding community, as it has been since 1920.

Furthermore, though not sufficient to substantiate extension of the period of significance, it is worth noting the auctioning off of the schoolhouse, its relocation, and reuse as a community center occurred more than fifty years ago and represent a documented nationwide trend for school buildings after school consolidation in the 1950s and 1960s. In Idaho County, seven of the twenty-five schoolhouses believed to be extant countywide continue to be rural community meeting centers, including Big Cedar School.⁴

³ U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service, *How to Apply the National Register Criteria for Evaluation* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1990), 29-30.

⁴ Among those schoolhouses now in use as community buildings are the schools in Harpster, Keuterville, Woodland, Big Butte, Joseph Plains, and Glenwood.

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Statement of Significance Summary Paragraph (Provide a summary paragraph that includes level of significance and applicable criteria.)

The Big Cedar School, located at 947 Red Fir Road in the vicinity of Kooskia, Idaho County, Idaho, is eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion A in the area of EDUCATION and under Criterion C in the area of ARCHITECTURE, as described in the Multiple Property Documentation Form (MPDF) "Public School Buildings in Idaho." Constructed in 1920 by local farmer and nonprofessional builder, the building has direct associations with the historic contexts developed as part of the MPDF, specifically "Education During Early Statehood: 1890-1930." The building is locally significant in the area of Architecture as an excellent example of the Schoolhouse property type as documented in the MPDF, as well as for its clearly conveyed associations with the more specific One-Room schoolhouse property type as documented in the "Historic Rural Schools of Idaho County" cultural resource survey (2013). The building is locally significant in the area of Education for its associations with the evolution of rural education during the early twentieth century in Idaho County. The period of significance for the Big Cedar School begins in 1920, at the time of its completion, and ends in 1960 when the school closed as a result of diminishing attendance and the culmination of the county's school consolidation program.

Narrative Statement of Significance (Provide at least **one** paragraph for each area of significance.)

RURAL EDUCATION DEVELOPMENT IN IDAHO COUNTY

Establishment of school systems and schools in Idaho County followed nationwide and statewide settlement patterns. As transportation networks took form and these routes facilitated more than just the initial Euro-American explorers and trappers into regions such as Idaho County, newly arriving families settled. Once an area maintained a sufficient population of families with children, establishment of schools predictably followed. Such was the case with Big Cedar School, established as a result of early 20th century homesteading, timber extraction, national forest establishment, Progressive Era reforms, and road network expansion that, combined, drew settlement to the previously sparsely settled north edge of Idaho County.

Settlement Patterns and Schools

In the north part of Idaho County, the 1890s opening of native Nez Perce lands to non-native settlement, combined with the contemporaneous arrival of the Northern Pacific railroad to Kooskia, spurred settlement to the area. During the 1890s, the influx of newcomers more than tripled Idaho County's population.⁵ By 1900, residents in and around communities such as Clearwater, Kamiah, and Kooskia, were primarily farm families with children listed as "at school."⁶

At the same time, the timbered areas east of the Camas Prairie supported new lumber mills that became significant economic drivers.⁷ The rapid exploitation of timber resources across the West prompted President Theodore Roosevelt to establish the National Forest Service in 1905. By 1908, millions of acres of Idaho

⁵ University of Virginia, Historical Census Browser. Database online, <http://mapserver.lib.virginia.edu/php/county.php> (accessed August 11, 2013).

⁶ Bureau of the Census, "Idaho County, Idaho" *U.S. Federal Population Census, 1900*. Database online, accessed March 2015, <http://www.ancestry.com>.

⁷ Bureau of the Census, "Idaho County, Idaho" *U.S. Federal Population Census, 1910*. Database online, accessed March 2015, <http://www.ancestry.com>.

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County had been drawn into national forests, including the Nez Perce National Forest, the west boundary of which is less than two miles east of present-day Big Cedar School. The 1910 census for the precinct encompassing the area that became known as Big Cedar shows most residents as farm families, with the remaining families headed by miners, sawmill and logging camp laborers, and a handful of forest reserve employees.⁸

During this period, homesteaders began arriving in the vicinity of where Big Cedar School stands today. Review of homestead patents for the six sections including and abutting the Big Cedar School property shows the first settlers received patents in 1907, suggesting they had initially arrived to the land five years previous (the time required by law to 'prove up' the land). Subsequent to the settlement of the first 160-acre homestead in the vicinity, within seven years, another 1,880 abutting acres had been homesteaded by thirteen individuals. This included the land upon which Big Cedar School would stand, the homestead of William Hagen. (See expanded land history below.)

Sufficient settlement had occurred in the north part of Idaho County by 1914 to support establishment of a new school district – District 86, which would be the second-to-last established in the county, evidence of its remoteness and relatively late settlement of the area. Upon establishment, District 86 built a log schoolhouse and hired Eunice Gregg, an immigrant from Ohio born, as the first teacher.

By 1915, Idaho County had eighty-seven school districts (most with one school building each) educating 2,888 pupils between the ages of 8 and 18. More than seven times the number of districts a decade earlier, this would be the peak of pupil population and districts in Idaho County for the rest of the 20th century.⁹ During this period, per state law, the U.S. Forest Service (USFS), the largest landholder in Idaho County paid into the county treasury for roads and schools. From 1915 through 1919, the USFS paid nearly \$6,000 toward Idaho County's road construction and general school funds, with three-quarters of this amount going to roads and the balance going to the general school fund.¹⁰

⁸ Bureau of the Census, "Idaho County, Idaho" *U.S. Federal Population Census, 1910*. Database online, accessed August 10, 2013, <http://www.ancestry.com>.

⁹ Idaho County School Superintendent, "Record of Teachers Employed and Superintendent's Visits," 1901-1902. Available from http://idaho.idgenweb.org/School/records_of_teachers_employed.htm (accessed August 14, 2013), and Idaho County Census Marshal's Report, Volume 1, School District #241 Archives, 1915, 1-3, 1924-25, 27-31, and 1929-30, 45-47.

¹⁰ "Secure Money Aid: Schools and Roads are Made Richer," *Kooskia (Idaho) Mountaineer*, July 14, 1920, 1.

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From 1914 to 1920, another 500 acres in the vicinity of School District 86 had been homesteaded by at least four separate families. The 1920 census documented mostly farmers' families in the precinct including District 86, however the composition of residents reflected more diverse means of making a living than a decade earlier, with miners, a house carpenter, and an "Indian Agency cook," listed, as well as "Patrolman, Forest Service," forest service laborer, and two school teachers – one of which was Nellie Thomas, the first to teach in the new Big Cedar School building constructed in 1920.

Progressive Era

At the same time as settlement increased in the north part of Idaho County, at the turn of the 20th century, a national movement known as the Progressive Era formed in response to the inequity between urban and rural areas. The movement culminated with President Theodore Roosevelt's 1908 formation of the National Commission on Country Life in an effort to find solutions for rural problems, in particular the "rural-school problem."¹¹ At the time, more than 70 percent of Idaho's school population was rural. Authorities on the "rural school problem" published works, such as Mabel Carney's *Country Life and the Country School* (1912) and Ellwood Patterson Cubberley's *Rural Life and Education: A Study of the Rural-School Problem as a Phase of the Rural-Life Problem* (1914), citing Idaho and other states in the West in their discussion of the issues facing rural schools.

¹¹ Brenda Spencer, National Register of Historic Places Multiple Property Documentation Form, "Historic Public Schools of Kansas." (Wamego, Kansas: Preservation Planning and Design, 2005), 4.

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Among the challenges facing rural school districts were the building facilities. Pressure to upgrade school buildings came from publications such as the *American School Board Journal*, the *Better Rural School Bulletin*, and those listed above, leading state superintendents and legislatures to establish standards addressing the issue. Additional pressure came from the U.S. Surgeon General and state boards of health who weighed in on public building construction, including schools, by establishing regulations on sanitation, ventilation, and location (e.g. away from marshy areas and railroads), as well as lighting.¹²

In 1911, the Idaho Superintendent of Public Instruction followed suit and enacted basic standards for building ventilation, heating, sanitation and drinking water.¹³ Because so many Idaho public schools continued to have substandard facilities, in 1921 the legislature set requirements including one that counties were to provide a separate outhouse for boys and girls set “at least twenty feet apart.”¹⁴ To further codify and raise the quality of school buildings, in 1923 the Idaho State Board of Education established specific architectural plans for new school buildings.¹⁵ These dictated building footprint and materials, as well as window size and location. The generally accepted standard nationwide was that windows be “on one side only.”¹⁶ It is during this period of reforms that District 86, only six years in existence, opted to replace their log school building with the existing Big Cedar School in 1920.

Agricultural Recession, Depression, and World War II: 1920s to 1946

Despite the strained conditions during the agricultural recession of the 1920s and the Great Depression of the 1930s, Idaho saw a jump both in population growth and numbers of farms, indicating a pattern of return to farming and rural areas likely due to job scarcity in urban areas and as Dust Bowl refugees came to Idaho.¹⁷ This pattern manifested in Idaho County as it welcomed nearly 2,600 new inhabitants – a growth of more than 25 percent – and it gained another 130 farms between 1930 and 1940.¹⁸

During this period, the community around Big Cedar became known as such and remained relatively stable. The 1930 and 1940 censuses show it as its own precinct and containing about the same number of individuals, approximately seventy-five (75) across about twenty (20) households. Households remained largely sustained by farming, with the balance represented by USFS employees, lumber camp laborers, a truck driver, a flour mill operator, and two WPA laborers. The vast majority of residents in 1940 had been there at least five years, with only a handful having moved to the area from rural parts of Clearwater and Idaho counties.

¹² Taliaferro Clark, U.S. Public Health Service, “The Hygiene of Rural Schools,” September 11, 1914, from Association of Schools of Public Health, *Public Health Reports 1896-1970*, 2364, and Minnesota State Board of Health Regulation, “School Buildings. Construction and Equipment,” Adopted Jan. 9, 1912, 323.

¹³ Jennifer Crabtree, *School Days in Idaho*, Unpublished manuscript (Boise, Idaho: Idaho State Historic Preservation Office, n.d.), 64, from *Report of the Superintendent of Public Instruction, 1911-1912*, 49.

¹⁴ Crabtree, 40.

¹⁵ Crabtree, 63, from *Report of the State Board of Education, 1923-1924*, 20.

¹⁶ William Sherman and Paul Theobald, “Progressive Era Rural Reform: Creating Standards Schools in the Midwest,” *Journal of Research in Rural Education* 17, no. 2 (Fall 2001), 84-91, and “Notes on School Hygiene,” *The School Journal*, 55 (September 4, 1897): 207, and Stuart Rowe, *The Lighting of School-Rooms: A Manual for School Boards, Architects, Superintendents and Teacher* (New York: Longmans, Green and Co., 1906): 42, and Van Evrie Kilpatrick, “A Schoolmaster’s Idea of a Model Classroom for Elementary Schools,” *The American School Board Journal* 1 (April 1915): 17.

¹⁷ “Dust Bowl Immigrants to Northwest Present Nation’s Big Relief Problem,” *Spokane Daily Chronicle*, April 8, 1937.

¹⁸ University of Virginia, Historical Census Browser. Database online, <http://mapserver.lib.virginia.edu/php/county.php> (accessed August 11, 2013).

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Consolidation

By the end of World War II, the previous twenty years of limited resources resulted in a great deal of deferred maintenance of public buildings. Communities felt both a real and emotional need for symbols of progress as post-war economic conditions improved. Though consolidation arguments had been made in Idaho during the late 1930s, the onset of World War II delayed action as education funding was cut further than it had been during the Depression.¹⁹ The inequity in funding, facilities, and education quality had persisted and were major issues consolidation efforts in Idaho arose immediately upon the close of the War.

In 1945 the state legislature allocated \$50,000 for an independent review of Idaho's education system. The report concluded the state's system was outdated, citing its inequity in financial support, county-level teaching certificates, continued use of normal schools to educate teachers (the last one in the nation still doing so), and the fact that two-thirds of the state's school buildings were rural one- and two-room schoolhouses like Big Cedar School.²⁰ The following year, the state legislature passed thirty new education laws reforming the state system. Among them was a new school code dictating consolidation of the state's 1,110 districts.²¹ In Idaho County, a 1946 school district census shows consolidation already in process, with only 63 districts managing the education for 1,640 pupils.²²

An early 1950s federal study documented a pattern of strained school resources nationwide and led most states to initiate comprehensive consolidation attempts, or continue and expand them if they'd already begun the process as in Idaho. The post-World War II Baby Boom underscored the argument for consolidation and dictated timely construction and improvement of schools nationwide, while transportation enhancements across the country facilitated the process of transporting students to distant consolidated schools.²³

In Idaho County, improved road conditions and economic changes in the county's primary industries spurred a population shift to less remote areas. Even despite consolidation, many rural school districts no longer maintained sufficient pupil population to justify a school. By 1954, Idaho County's consolidation process was largely complete with the establishment of districts 241 and 242. Though District 86 consolidated into District 241 by the mid-1950s, Big Cedar School's remoteness extended its use until 1960.

In the second half of the 20th century, as Idaho's Consolidation Movement expanded, one- and two-room rural schoolhouses were auctioned off to the highest bidder or abandoned on their site. When purchased at auction, they were commonly either relocated for conversion into farm outbuildings, dismantled and their parts used as part of new buildings in the vicinity, or, as with Big Cedar School, took on new uses in or near their original locations as community centers or gathering places for churches.²⁴

¹⁹ Crabtree, 64.

²⁰ Crabtree, 69.

²¹ Crabtree, 69, 73, 77.

²² Idaho County Census Marshal's Report, Volume 1, School District #241 Archives, 1946-47, 52-53.

²³ Spencer, 4.

²⁴ In addition to Big Cedar School, among those schoolhouses now in use as community buildings are the schools in Harpster, Keuterville, Woodland, Big Butte, Joseph Plains, and Glenwood.

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Prologue

Idaho's 1,110 school districts present in 1945 consolidated down to 115 by 1989.²⁵ In Idaho County, the eighty-seven districts present in 1915, were reduced to eighty-three by 1945, and subsequently consolidated down to just two less than a decade later. Of the over one hundred (100) school buildings that once stood throughout Idaho County at various times in the last 150 years, today only about twenty-five are thought to be standing, with the status of some unknown. Of those documented as extant, only ten (10) retain sufficient integrity to be eligible for listing in the National Register, including Big Cedar School. Considering the overwhelming loss of so many rural school buildings, the retention and preservation of the few remaining schoolhouses is of utmost importance.

BIG CEDAR SCHOOL: ARCHITECTURAL STYLE AND PROPERTY TYPE

Schoolhouse Property Type

Throughout the nation's history, Americans during early settlement periods constructed modest schools of locally available materials absent any stylistic embellishments. As the first Euro-American immigrants had done when settling the East and the Midwest, when they came to Idaho, they built log buildings no more than one room deep as the first school building in a community. Typical school sites occupied a single acre often located at the corner of a section or at a well-traveled road intersection. Such was the case with District 86, which built a log school at the rural intersection where Big Cedar School originally stood.

As the nation's railroad network finally extended into Idaho County at the close of the 19th century, builders no longer had to rely on local materials. Instead, railcars quickly and cheaply moved mass-manufactured construction materials (e.g. pre-cut lumber, nails, window and door frames, and ornamental details) from distant plants. Before long, vernacular school buildings of relatively light-weight framing replaced earlier hewn log schools. Among the first buildings constructed in a community, the earliest milled lumber schoolhouses reflected the expectation of area settlers as to what a school 'should' look like, and thus often express the influence of eastern and colonial aesthetics associated with civic buildings that typically featured a front-facing gable.²⁶

Despite the advances in building materials and construction techniques of the early 20th century, the Gable-Front form persisted. Even after young communities became established, the form remained popular as an affordable alternative to more ornate and complex architectural styles.²⁷ Nationally accepted standards developed in the Progressive Era – dictating building location, size, orientation, window location and size, and so forth – continued well into the 20th century, further extending the form's persistence. As a result, rural schoolhouses are defined by their plan, massing, general lack of identifiable stylistic elements, and relatively little change over time. Architecturally, Idaho County's historic rural schools generally illustrate the continued use of the nationally recognizable gable-front form, present at Big Cedar School.

²⁵ Crabtree, 73.

²⁶ Spencer, 16.

²⁷ Virginia and Lee McAlester, *A Field Guide to American Houses* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, Inc., 1984), 89-90.

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Gable-Front Schoolhouse Form

The gable-front form has its origins in the Greek Revival stylistic movement that dominated American design from 1830 to 1850, which referenced the triangular pediment on the façade of a Greek temple.²⁸ Originating in the Northeast, where simple gable-front folk houses, churches, and school buildings became popular in the pre-railroad era, the design persisted with the expansion of the railroad network in the mid-to-late 19th century, becoming a dominant building form until well into the 20th century.²⁹

Often referred to as the 'schoolhouse,' the term directly correlates to the form's historically domestic scale, form, and character. The Big Cedar School is an excellent example of this building form. Typical of the vernacular form, the Big Cedar School building features only minimal and modest architectural ornamentation. Though not a good high-style example and thus not categorized as such, it is worth noting the Big Cedar School exhibits the influence of the contemporaneously popular Tudor Revival style. Part of the American Eclectic Movement, the Tudor Revival style became increasingly popular after World War I.³⁰ The style's influence is expressed at Big Cedar School by means of the following character-defining features: multiple, steep, front-facing gables; arched porch openings; and recessed entrance porch.

Developmental history/additional historic context information (if appropriate)

HISTORY OF THE BIG CEDAR SCHOOL

Historically, references to the schoolhouse, the district, and/or the geographical vicinity were various and often interchangeable over time, a common occurrence in such remote areas without an anchoring commercial center. Initially known simply as School District 86, early references to the school and/or district include "Clear Creek" and later "Cedar Creek." The area, district, and/or school don't appear referenced as "Big Cedar" until the mid-to-late 1920s, with the geographic area previously referred to alternately as an undefined part of the Tahoe census precinct, the Tahoe Ridge area, Clear Creek area, and/or the Cedar Creek area.

Upon its establishment in 1914, District 86 built a log schoolhouse and hired Eunice Gregg, a native of Ohio born in 1870, to serve as the first teacher. Gregg had a second grade teaching certificate and taught in the new log schoolhouse from November 1914 through spring 1915, during which time she was paid \$50 each month for her services. This nonextant schoolhouse stood approximately 222 feet to the west-southwest of the current Big Cedar School on land homesteaded by Dutch immigrant, William Hagen (b1873). Under the authority of the 1862 Homestead Act, Hagen had received patent #01070 in November 1909, for the 160-acre parcel that would include the Big Cedar School at its original location. William Hagen held the land for only a short period. By 1918 Hagen was working as an engineer in Kooskia for the Bashaw Lumber Company of Dewey, British Columbia, and by 1921, he had moved his family to Canada.

²⁸ McAlester, 90.

²⁹ McAlester, 90, and Spencer, 16.

³⁰ McAlester, 355.

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Upon William Hagen's departure from the area in the mid-to-late 1910s, the historic record suggests that adjacent landowner, fellow Dutch immigrant, and likely sibling, John Hagen, took ownership of the land including the school parcel. John Hagen (born c1878) had immigrated to the United States around 1892 and by 1910 had 'proved up' 160 acres to receive homestead patent #01532 for the land immediately abutting the south edge of William Hagen's property containing the schoolhouse parcel.

As mentioned above, during a period of Progressive Era reforms statewide, District 86 replaced the substandard and only six-years-active log schoolhouse with the existing Big Cedar School in 1920. The district published a call for bids in the *Kooskia Mountaineer*, asking for proposals for the construction of a new schoolhouse to be submitted to John Hagen by July 1, with the contract to be let July 10, 1920.³¹ Area homesteader and farmer, Robert Fluharty won the bid and the *Mountaineer* reported on July 21, 1920, that he had commenced work on the new school building, with completion expected within 30 days.³² Fluharty maintained this schedule and completed the schoolhouse by August 25th, 1920, when the *Kooksia Mountaineer* reported on its completion, noting it was "quite a nice building." The paper continued, "Surely some teacher is anxious to wear the new off the house."³³



Big Cedar School, District No. 86, 1950s
Courtesy Reed Family Collection

³¹ "District 86 Asks for Bids," *Kooskia (Idaho) Mountaineer*, June 9, 1920, 2.

³² "Clear Creek Items," *Kooskia (Idaho) Mountaineer*, July 21, 1920, 5.

³³ "Clear Creek Items," *Kooskia (Idaho) Mountaineer*, August 25, 1920, 4. Local sources indicate the Idaho County school superintendent at the time, Margaret Sweet, sketched the intended design of the building, which can be found in *Pioneer Schools of Idaho County*. However, for reasons unconfirmed, the completed building did not reflect this design.

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At the time of construction, Fluharty (born c1869), a bachelor immigrant from Iowa, had only arrived about two years earlier on land he homesteaded about 2.5 miles southeast of the school site. The historic record suggests Fluharty employed his neighbor Paul Petrick [sic] to assist on the schoolhouse construction. Petrick (born c1888), the son of German immigrants, hailed from Wisconsin and had also just a few years earlier arrived to homestead land abutting Fluharty's southeast of the school site. Review of school district accounting ledgers from the period show Fluharty received a total of \$267 and Petrick received \$41.50 from the district. In addition, the district purchased \$54.35 worth of lumber from Pete Nelson, a recent Norwegian immigrant living on Red Fir Road.³⁴

The first teacher to teach in the new schoolhouse was Nellie Thomas (born c1866), the daughter of Scottish immigrants and a native of Iowa. The district paid Thomas \$125 each month for teaching from May 1921 and through April 1922.³⁵ The same year the school district paid \$285.17 to the Sears & Roebuck Company for school supplies to outfit the school, likely included desks and the like, which were readily available from the company's mail-order catalog.

Early on, the student population included as many as 25 pupils between the ages of 8 and 18, as it was during the 1924-25 school year when instructor Elmer A. Carpenter taught. School census records available for 1929-1930 show the county with 87 school districts serving 3,178 students between the ages of 6 and 21 years of age. That year, School District No. 86 – Big Cedar – had 18 students, 6 boys and 12 girls between 6 and 21 years of age. The following year, the school had 16 pupils. Students made their way as far as three miles to school by via horses, skis, sled, or by foot five days a week for the eight to nine month school year. The schoolhouse had no electricity and no plumbing, but it did have an outhouse and a natural spring (both still extant on original site). With no formal playground equipment, the students created their own amusement at recess, including climbing and swinging from the cedar trees (still standing at original site) adjacent to the southwest of the schoolhouse.

³⁴ Idaho County School District 86, "Record of Receipts and Expenditures," 1919-1924. Idaho School District #241 archives, and Bureau of the Census, "Idaho County, Idaho" *U.S. Federal Population Census, 1920*. Database online, accessed March 25, 2015, <http://www.ancestry.com>.

³⁵ Idaho County School District 86, "Record of Receipts and Expenditures," 1919-1924.

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During this period, while the district paid John Hagen, owner of the schoolhouse property and father of two daughters attending the school, for wood fuel to heat the schoolhouse, former students also recall various families contributing wood and other supplies to support the school's operation in the later years. Local sources suggest teachers, none of which stayed on more than a year or two, often boarded with the Hagen family in a small frame 'cabin' (nonextant) during the school year.

After about twenty years of 'hosting' the schoolhouse on their land, in May 1938, John and Anna Hagen sold the schoolhouse property to School District 86 for \$25.00.³⁶ During the next two decades, the school typically maintained a student population of about 12 to 15 pupils.

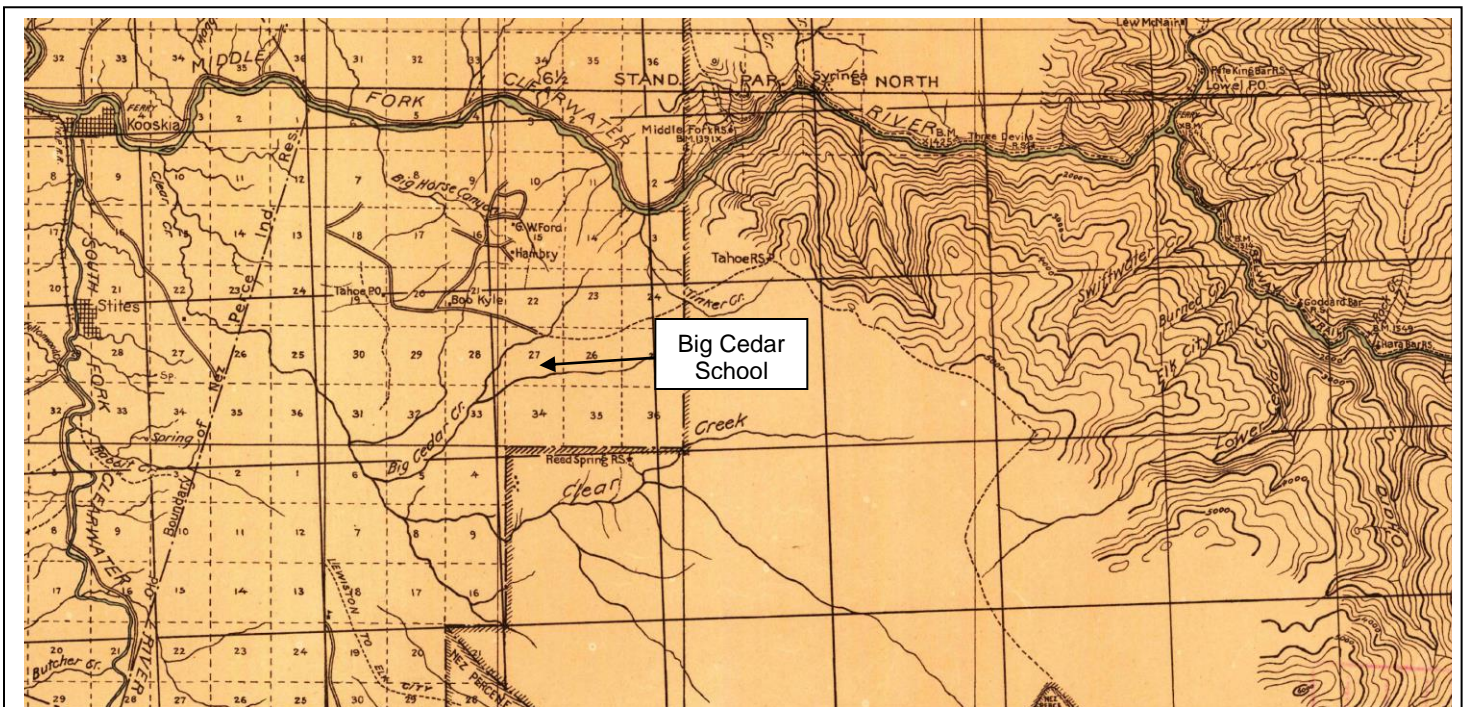
Big Cedar School was remote. The nearest towns of any size were Kooskia and Stites, both about 7 to 9 miles west-northwest. The nearest post office was about four miles to the northwest at Tahoe [Ridge]. The school's location in Section 27 was at the east edge of the surveyed area of Idaho County. As the only public building for miles, the schoolhouse served multiple community functions including dance hall, meeting house, polling place, music hall, and church meeting space.

³⁶ John Hagen, et ux, deed dated May 1, 1938, transferring property to Common School District #86, Idaho County, Idaho.

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By 1958 Big Cedar School District No. 86 had been absorbed into Class "A" School District No. 241 for Idaho and Adams Counties. Though consolidated from a school district management perspective, the schoolhouse remained in operation until 1960, serving about eight pupils at the time. During the summer of 1960, a vote among community and school board members was held to determine if the school should remain as an operating schoolhouse, or if students should be schooled nearly ten miles away in Kooskia or at nearby Red Fir school.³⁷ Once the votes were tallied, the school closed its doors, ending the 40-year chapter of rural education in this one-room schoolhouse



USGS Weippe Quadrangle, 1:125000, 1924 (detail)
Courtesy University of Texas at Austin, Perry-Castaneda Library Online Map Collection

³⁷ "Big Cedar to Vote on School Being Closed," scrapbook newspaper clipping (likely *Idaho County Free Press*), June 30, 1960.

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Big Cedar School, District No. 86, 1950s
Courtesy Reed Family Collection

In 1962, the district auctioned school property and the schoolhouse to the highest bidder, and Stella Hendren became the owner of the schoolhouse property for \$1,000.³⁸ Two years later, Hendren sold the schoolhouse to the Big Cedar Community for \$150 and the schoolhouse moved less than 225 feet off its original site and across the road to its current site, then the property of Dale and Syble Cochran.³⁹ At the time of relocation, the Cochran's gave the Big Cedar Community a 99-year lease, on the condition that "at least one (1) public gathering be held in this property each year." If that didn't occur, "the property reverts to the owners."⁴⁰ At this point, the property began its life as a community use building, with alterations made only as necessary to support community activities; such as the construction of a proper outhouse, a picnic shelter, and a garage building for equipment storage.

³⁸ Joint Class "A" School District No. 241, deed dated January 4, 1962, transferring property to Stella Hendren, Idaho County, Idaho.

³⁹ Stella Hendren, bill of sale dated March 9, 1964, transferring Big Cedar Schoolhouse to Big Cedar Community, Idaho County, Idaho.

⁴⁰ Dale H. and Syble Cochran, lease dated March 23, 1964, letting Big Cedar Community use of the schoolhouse site, Idaho County, Idaho.

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Since that time, the parcel upon which the schoolhouse now stands has changed hands several times – from the Cochans to the Abells to the Greggs and to the Wilseys in 1977; throughout each of these property owner changes, the 99-year lease agreement was maintained.

The relocation of the school took place by sliding the building over logs, which subsequently functioned as the foundation until around 1980. At that time, the Big Cedar Community had begun hosting square dances and it became apparent a more solid and level foundation was in order. A new foundation of concrete piers and 4"-x-4" sills was constructed and still supports the building today. The corrugated metal foundation skirt was added at this time to shield the foundation from snow build up. Around the same time, circa 1980, additional repairs included the metal roof and the introduction of the wood shed addition at the rear of the north side elevation.

In 1982 the Wilsey's replatted a small piece of land from their property and sold the current parcel to Big Cedar Community Center for \$10. The Big Cedar Community continues to own and operate the building as a community center to this day.⁴¹

SUMMARY STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Big Cedar School is an excellent example of the School House property type documented in the MPDF "Public School Buildings in Idaho." It has direct associations with the evolution of education in Idaho County during the early twentieth century and represents the development of schoolhouse buildings. By virtue of its architectural integrity, it is an excellent example of the type of a one-room rural schoolhouse executed across rural Idaho, and Idaho County in particular. It meets the MPDF registration requirements and integrity thresholds and clearly conveys both its historical and architectural associations.

This building retains integrity of design, materials, workmanship, feeling, and associations. Though moved across the road in the second half of the twentieth century, this minimal relocation did not compromise the overall integrity of setting. The integrity thresholds identified in the MPDF for Idaho Schools acknowledges and accepts these types of minimal relocations. One of only a handful of one-room schoolhouses extant in Idaho County, the building continues to clearly communicate its architectural character and significant historic associations with the development of education in Idaho County.

⁴¹ Ralph and Mary Wilsey, warranty deed dated December 17, 1982, transferring property to Big Cedar Community Center, Inc., Idaho County, Idaho.

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9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography (Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form.)

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- Rowe, Stuart. *The Lighting of School-Rooms: A Manual for School Boards, Architects, Superintendents and Teacher*. New York: Longmans, Green and Co., 1906.
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Sherman, William, and Paul Theobald, "Progressive Era Rural Reform: Creating Standards Schools in the Midwest," *Journal of Research in Rural Education* 17, no. 2 (Fall 2001): 84-91.

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Upper Clearwater River Retired Teachers Association. *Pioneer Schools of Idaho County*. Kooskia, Idaho: Paradise Printing, 2004.

Deeds & Leases

John Hagen, etux, deed dated May 1, 1938, transferring property to Common School District #86, Idaho County, Idaho.
Joint Class "A" School District No. 241, deed dated January 4, 1962, transferring property to Stella Hendren, Idaho County, Idaho.

Stella Hendren, bill of sale dated March 9, 1964, transferring Big Cedar Schoolhouse to Big Cedar Community, Idaho County, Idaho.

Dale H. and Syble Cochran, lease dated March 23, 1964, letting Big Cedar Community use of the schoolhouse site, Idaho County, Idaho.

Ralph and Mary Wilsey, warranty deed dated December 17, 1982, transferring property to Big Cedar Community Center, Inc., Idaho County, Idaho.

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67 has been requested)
 previously listed in the National Register
 previously determined eligible by the National Register
 designated a National Historic Landmark
 recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # _____
 recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # _____
 recorded by Historic American Landscape Survey # _____

Primary location of additional data:

State Historic Preservation Office
 Other State agency
 Federal agency
 Local government
 University
 Other
Name of repository: **Big Cedar Community; School District #241**

Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned): Idaho SHPO Inventory Number not yet assigned; Survey Field #001

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10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property Less than one acre
(Do not include previously listed resource acreage.)

UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1	<u>11</u> Zone	<u>591715</u> Easting	<u>5103782</u> Northing	3	<u> </u> Zone	<u> </u> Easting	<u> </u> Northing
2	<u> </u> Zone	<u> </u> Easting	<u> </u> Northing	4	<u> </u> Zone	<u> </u> Easting	<u> </u> Northing

Verbal Boundary Description (Describe the boundaries of the property.)

The boundary of the Big Cedar School is a rectangular tract measuring approximately 50-by-25 feet and encompassing but not exceeding the footprint of the schoolhouse building. The boundary is shown as the bold line on the accompanying map entitled "Figure 4: Sketch Map/Photograph Location Map." Idaho County Parcel Number: 32N05E277550

Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected.)

Removed from the original parcel of land historically associated with the resource, the nomination includes and does not exceed the footprint of the building. The remainder of the parcel is excluded because it contains nonhistoric buildings and a structure (outhouse, garage, picnic shelter) that have no historic association with the Big Cedar School.

The historic spring, outhouse, and carriage barn once associated with the school building were considered for inclusion within a broader boundary. However, the historic significance of these resources is directly tied to the school building. The relocation of the school building, combined with the introduction of a nonhistoric dwelling and garage into the original setting, prevents the historic ancillary resources from clearly communicating their important associations with the school building. Disassociated as they are, they do not retain sufficient integrity of setting, feeling, or association to be eligible for listing in the National Register and do not warrant extension of the boundaries to include them.

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Kerry Davis
organization Preservation Solutions LLC (PSLLC) Date April 2015
street & number 1011 E Jefferson St. telephone 816-225-5605
city or town Boise state ID zip code 83712
e-mail kdavis@preservation-solutions.net

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

- **Maps:** A **USGS map** (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.

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A **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources. Key all photographs to this map.

- **Continuation Sheets**
- **Additional items:** (Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items.)

Photographs:

Submit clear and descriptive photographs. The size of each image must be 1600x1200 pixels at 300 ppi (pixels per inch) or larger. Key all photographs to the sketch map.

Name of Property: Big Cedar School
City or Vicinity: Kooskia (vicinity)
County: Idaho County State: Idaho
Photographer: Kerry Davis, PSLLC
Date Photographed: August 28, 2014

Description of Photograph(s) and number:

All digital images labeled as follows: ID_IdahoCounty_BigCedarSchool_000#.tif

01 of 11.	Primary (west) and south side elevations.	View NE
02 of 11.	Rear (east) and north side elevations.	View SW
03 of 11.	Primary (west) and north side elevations.	View SE
04 of 11.	Interior, classroom.	View E-SE
05 of 11.	Interior, classroom windows detail.	View SE
06 of 11.	Interior, classroom.	View W-NW
07 of 11.	Interior, original cloakroom/current kitchen.	View SW
08 of 11.	Overall property, view from road	View NE
09 of 11.	Nonhistoric garage.	View SE
10 of 11.	Nonhistoric picnic shelter.	View E
11 of 11.	Nonhistoric outhouse.	View SW

Property Owner:

(Complete this item at the request of the SHPO or FPO.)

name Big Cedar Community Center, c/o Dick Tucker
street & number 947 Red Fir Road Telephone 208-926-4302
city or town Kooskia state ID zip code 83539

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C.460 et seq.).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Office of Planning and Performance Management, U.S. Dept. of the Interior, 1849 C. Street, NW, Washington, DC.

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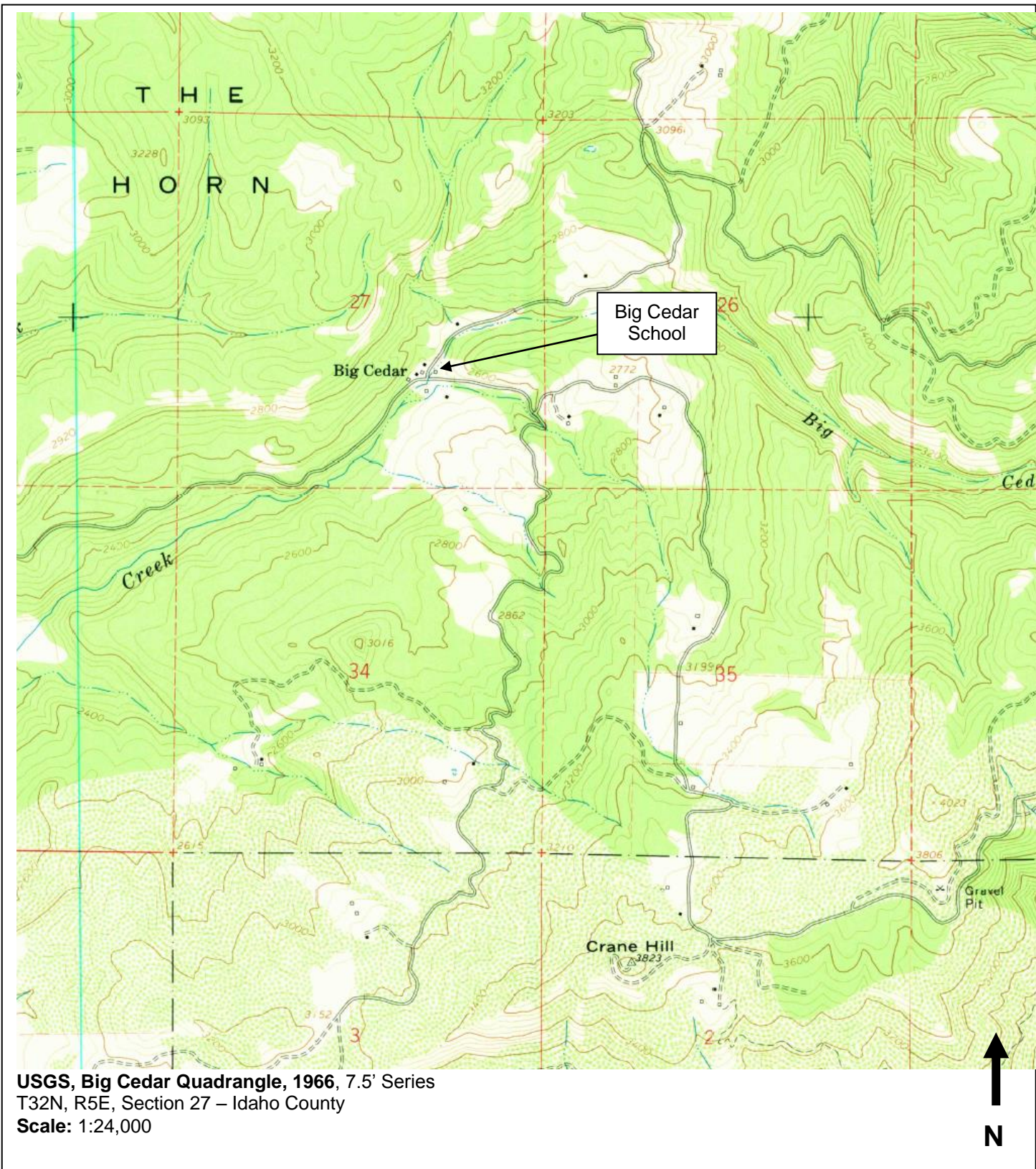
Figure 1: Location Map



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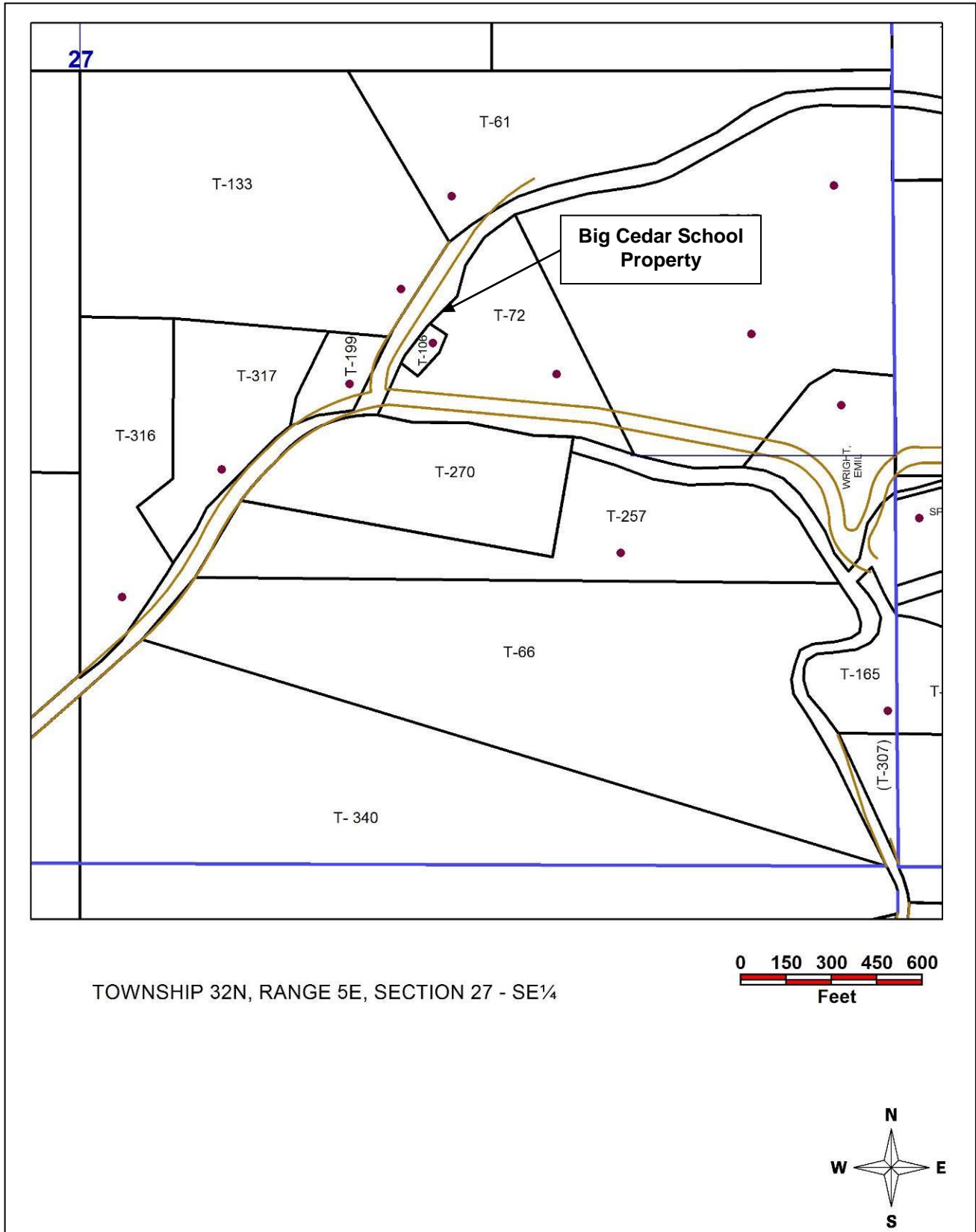
Figure 2: USGS Quadrangle Map



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Figure 3: County Parcel Map



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Figure 4: Sketch Map/Photograph Location Map

