

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

FOR FEDERAL PROPERTIES

PHO 626101

FOR NPS USE ONLY	
RECEIVED	MAR 28 1979
DATE ENTERED	JUL 10 1979

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

1 NAME

HISTORIC

Minidoka Relocation Center

AND/OR COMMON

Camp Minidoka

5.8.

LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER

2 1/2 miles northeast of Idaho State Highway 25 on Hunt Road

NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CITY, TOWN

Hunt

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

VICINITY OF

2

STATE

Idaho

CODE

16

COUNTY

Jerome

CODE

053

CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	PRESENT USE
<input type="checkbox"/> DISTRICT	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PUBLIC	<input type="checkbox"/> OCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE
<input type="checkbox"/> BUILDING(S)	<input type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> UNOCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSEUM
<input type="checkbox"/> STRUCTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> BOTH	<input type="checkbox"/> WORK IN PROGRESS	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCIAL
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> SITE	PUBLIC ACQUISITION	ACCESSIBLE	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATIONAL
<input type="checkbox"/> OBJECT	<input type="checkbox"/> IN PROCESS	<input type="checkbox"/> YES: RESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> ENTERTAINMENT
	<input type="checkbox"/> BEING CONSIDERED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES: UNRESTRICTED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> GOVERNMENT
		<input type="checkbox"/> NO	<input type="checkbox"/> RELIGIOUS
			<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENTIFIC
			<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRIAL
			<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY
			<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER:

AGENCY

REGIONAL HEADQUARTERS: (If applicable)

USDI Bureau of Reclamation, Pacific Northwest Regional Office

STREET & NUMBER

550 West Fort Street -- Box 043

CITY, TOWN

boise

STATE

Idaho

VICINITY OF

LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE,

REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

Bureau of Reclamation, Minidoka Project Office

STREET & NUMBER

1359 Hansen Ave. -- Box 549

CITY, TOWN

Burley

STATE

Idaho

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE

Idaho Statewide Inventory of Historic Places

DATE

1976

FEDERAL STATE COUNTY LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR

SURVEY RECORDS

Idaho State Historical Society

CITY, TOWN

610 N. Julia Davis Drive, Boise

STATE

Idaho

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 property being nominated is only a small part of the Minidoka Relocation Center. When the camp was deactivated in 1945, most of the land and property was disposed of by the Bureau of Reclamation. Returning war veterans were granted homesteads on the land and each was given two of the camp's buildings; many farms in the area are still using sheds that were once barracks and warehouses at the center. Most of the residence area is now under cultivation and shows little evidence of its former use as an interment camp.

The nominated parcel is at the camp's entrance where a bridge crosses the Northside Canal. The ruins of two structures, a guard station and visitors reception center (with the original visitors parking lot), lie between the county road and the canal. From this location one can look northward and view the entire camp residence area. The structures consist of concrete foundations with walls of local basalt blocks cemented by concrete mortar. Although in ruins, these are the least altered remnants still in public ownership.

8 SIGNIFICANCE

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

SPECIFIC DATES 1942-1945

BUILDER/ARCHITECT Morrison Knudsen Const. Co./US Army

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The ruins of Camp Minidoka, a Japanese-American interment camp during World War II, are tangible reminders of one of the most serious and painful contradictions of our country's philosophy of freedom. Through a nefarious legal fiction, over 110,000 loyal Americans were wrenched from their homes and forcefully detained without due process of law, in bleak, barbed-wire enclosed camps scattered over isolated inland areas on desolate tracts of Federal land. The concrete slabs, dilapidated shacks, and scattered refuse surrounded by rich farmland--much of it reclaimed by the camp's inmates, is also a memorial to the suffering and remarkable courage of the Japanese-Americans of that time.

Despite being less than 50-years old, this site represents an exceptional chapter in the history of the United States that should always be remembered. Commemoration of this event should take place before memories fade and the sharpness of the event is dulled by time.

The Japanese-American experience in the United States is marked by their exceptional achievements in the face of extreme resistance by the white majority. Hostility, that for years had been aimed at the Chinese, was immediately directed against the first Japanese immigrants to the west coast in the late 1800's. The 1870 Naturalization Statute of the United States denied most Asian aliens the right to become naturalized citizens; this forced most Issei (first generation Japanese in the U.S.) to remain citizens of Japan to retain some official status and representation. Other laws were passed refusing the Issei the right to own land, severely restricting their ability to lease land, and forbidding them from working on many State and Federally-funded projects.^{1/}

Impetus for this repressive legislation came from numerous white dominated organizations and businesses. Primary among these were the Hearst and McClatchy newspaper chains.^{2/} Years of vituperative, yellow journalism by these leading publications firmly implanted the seeds of intolerance and distrust of all Asians in the minds of the white majority population. The Japanese in particular were portrayed as mysterious, inscrutable, and latently dangerous. Joining the major newspapers in the demand for the removal of the Japanese was the California Joint Immigration Committee (originally the Japanese and Korean Exclusion League). This powerful group was officially backed by such prestigious organizations as the American

1. Act of June 17, 1902 (32 Stat. 388, 389)

2. Weglyn, M. 1976. Years of infamy. William Morrow and Co., Inc., pages 29, 174, 221.

Myer, D.S. 1971. Uprooted Americans, Univ. of Arizona Press, pages 12, 15, 15, 18, 24, 42, 80, 84, 104, 173, 282, 326.

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Bureau of Reclamation: 1945. Minidoka Project History--1944. On file at USBR Regional Office, Boise, Idaho
 Bureau of Reclamation. 1946. Minidoka Project History--1945. On file at USBR Regional Office, Boise, Idaho.

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY 6.06

UTM REFERENCES

A	1 1	7 2 5 3 2 0	4 7 2 8 5 2 0	B			
	ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING		ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING
C				D			

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

The boundary of the nominated parcel is outlined in black on the accompanying 1944 map entitled "Minidoka Relocation Center" and drawn at a scale of 1/4 mile to the inch.

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

Terry Zontek--Pacific Northwest Regional Archeologist

ORGANIZATION

Bureau of Reclamation

DATE

February 12, 1979

STREET & NUMBER

550 West Fort Street--Box 043

TELEPHONE

(208) 384-1579

CITY OR TOWN

Boise

STATE

Idaho

12 CERTIFICATION OF NOMINATION

STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER RECOMMENDATION

YES

NO

NONE

Merle Wells

STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER SIGNATURE

In compliance with Executive Order 11593, I hereby nominate this property to the National Register, certifying that the State Historic Preservation Officer has been allowed 90 days in which to present the nomination to the State Review Board and to evaluate its significance. The evaluated level of significance is National State Local.

FEDERAL REPRESENTATIVE SIGNATURE

Robert Williams *David Breakley*

TITLE

Pacific Northwest Regional Director
 U.S. Bureau of Reclamation

DATE

3-4-79 / 7/6-28-79

FOR NPS USE ONLY

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

DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF ANCESTRY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION

ATTEST:

Bill Belmont

-KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

DATE

7-10-79

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

DATE

7/9/79

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Legion, the California State Federation of Labor, California Grange, and the Native Sons of the Golden West.^{3/} Other Western States were not blameless; they followed California's lead in the campaign against Japanese-Americans.

Instead of driving the Japanese from the United States, the new immigrants adapted to the hostility and consolidated their position. Issei parents purchased land in the name of their children born in the United States (who were U.S. citizens). The agricultural land was often of marginal quality, or in shapes and sizes considered uneconomical by white farmers; but the Japanese-American farmer's skill turned this acreage into commercially successful truck farms. In the cities marketing of these crops was the domain of the Japanese-American. By World War II, this group produced 50-percent of the fruits and vegetables for market, and dominated the retail distribution of produce in southern California.

To protect themselves against the widespread antagonism, Japanese-Americans formed tight-knit communities held together by producer-marketing cooperatives, prefectural societies (organizations comprised of persons from the same district in Japan), and the Japanese Association. Adding to this structure was the Japanese family with its strong parental control which resulted in low rates of crime, juvenile delinquency, and dependence on public welfare. Within the community there were conflicts and rivalries, but these institutions did not allow them to become apparent to outsiders for fear of criticism or reproach.

The success of the Japanese-American and their model behavior was seemingly changing the old racist ideas implanted in the minds of the general population. In the weeks after the bombing of Pearl Harbor, Japanese-Americans experienced acceptance and support in the Western States. Like everyone else they worried about the Japanese military threat to Hawaii and the west coast, and pitched in to aid in the war effort. Many of the men rushed out to enlist in the armed forces; for example, in Idaho the first person to enlist after Pearl Harbor was a Japanese-American.

However, prejudices were rekindled in the familiar anti-Oriental organizations. White-dominated business and farming groups jealous of the inroads Japanese-Americans had made in the market and covetous of their valuable property, called for the removal of their superefficient competitors. Politicians, eager for a popular issue to carry them through the coming election year, vigorously responded to this ready-made chance to appear as hard-nosed protectors of the populace.

A new force joined the anti-Japanese brigade. The military, who had for years underestimated the power and skill of the Imperial Army, groped for for an explanation for the successive crushing defeats of Allied Forces in the Pacific.

3. Spicer, et al. 1969. Impounded people. Univ. of Arizona Press, page 40.

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Ignoring 10-years of intensive FBI and Naval Intelligence studies which unequivocally vouched for the loyalty of the Japanese-Americans in Hawaii and the west coast, the military establishment began speaking of the "actual or potential threat" posed by this minority. Furthermore, the military had no proof of any espionage or sabotage by Japanese-Americans at Pearl Harbor or in the Western State. This evidence did not compel even one military official to speak in defense of Japanese-Americans when the rumors began to fly about subversion and sedition.

President Roosevelt shared many of the negative views about Japanese-Americans, plus was in the position of having to buoy the Nation's fears.^{4/} As a result, on February 19, 1942, he issued Executive Order 9066 authorizing the War Department to establish "military areas" from which any person could be excluded and evacuated. Within a month, Japanese-Americans were ordered to leave "Military Area 1" - the entire Pacific coastal region and southern Arizona.

At first each family made their own moving plans and chose their own destination; however, instant resistance from inland states, and great logistical problems immediately stopped the exodus. To cope with the problems, the War Relocation Authority (WRA) was established on March 18, 1942, to construct and administer camps to house all excluded persons for the duration of the war. By the fall of 1942 the entire west coast population of 110,000 Japanese-Americans--70,000 of which were U.S. citizens--had been moved and quartered in ten "relocation centers" located on the deserts and swamps of the American west.

One of these relocation centers, Camp Minidoka, was located in south-central Idaho on 34,000 acres of Bureau of Reclamation land on the sagebrush covered Snake River Slope. The community of Hunt, Idaho, was so created to house the 10,000 evacuees of all ages and occupations gathered from the restricted areas of Oregon, Washington, and Alaska.

The last of the camp's inmates arrived on September 15, 1942, to find a hot, dusty, crowded camp still under construction, but possessing the essential elements of a small American town. A 600-bed hospital, schools, library, social halls, churches, ball fields, fire station, store, theater, and other facilities were spread in orderly fashion over the 946-acre camp area. However, the military-style buildings, high barbed-wire fence, and guard towers manned by armed troops set this community apart from nearby towns.

4. Weglyn, M. 1976. Years of Infamy. William Morrow and Co., Inc., Pages 27, 54, 73-74.

Daniels, R. 1971. Concentration Camps U.S.A.: Japanese Americans and World War II. Holt, Rinehart and Winston, Inc., Pages 27-28.

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Original goals were to develop the center into a fully producing farm community, but a change in WRA philosophy to emphasize the placement of evacuees into white communities turned Minidoka into a minimum agricultural development project. Other factors, namely the use of evacuees as contract farm workers by private farmers to alleviate severe labor shortages outside the center, and the opening of the military to Japanese-Americans, combined with the new policy to strip the camp of the younger, more vigorous residents. Nevertheless, 1048.75 acres of desert were reclaimed and planted in a variety of crops before labor shortages forced the cessation of farming in 1945.

Beside farming, the evacuees filled almost all the jobs concerned with the day-to-day functioning of the camp. Japanese-American draftsmen, surveyors, and laborers worked with the Bureau of Reclamation to plan, design, and construct the camp's irrigation system and to maintain the nearby Milner-Gooding Canal. Doctors, mechanics, nurses, secretaries, and dentists were just some of the many positions commonly filled by the evacuees--all for the, even then, ridiculously low wages of \$12 to \$19 per month. For comparison, Axis prisoners of war in the nearby Rupert POW camp received \$19.20 for a month's labor in the fields.^{5/}

Camp living was marked by a lack of privacy and fragmentation of family functions into several locations. These factors resulted in frayed nerves and changes in family relations which caused a weakening of the traditionally strong familial control over individuals. Government policies aimed at resettling the evacuees in regular communities and the military service further eroded normal family life by freeing many young people from the authority of the older generations.

Camp Minidoka closed on October 26, 1945, when the last Japanese-American family was moved out.^{6/} Most people returned penniless to their old homes as they had either sold their property for next to nothing in the rushed days just before evacuation, or found that it had been sold for unpaid taxes while they were in the center. Economic reparations have never been granted despite the Government's admission that the operation was illegal and totally unnecessary. Nevertheless, Japanese-Americans have recovered remarkably well, with surprisingly little bitterness, and rejoined the mainstream of American life.

Although Camp Minidoka has lost its physical integrity, the scattered remnants remind us of what can happen when our country allows fear and racism to overpower our founding principles of freedom.

5. Bureau of Reclamation. 1945. Minidoka Project History--1944. On file at BR Regional Office, Boise, Idaho, page 28.
6. Bureau of Reclamation. 1946. Minidoka Project History--1945. On file at BR Regional Office, Boise, Idaho, page 32.

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- Daniels, Roger. 1971. Concentration Camps U.S.A.:Japanese-Americans and World War II. Holt, Rinehart, and Winston, Inc.
- Myer, D.S. 1971. Uprooted Americans. Univ. of Arizona Press, Tucson.
- Spicer, E.H., A.T. Hansen, K. Luomala, and M.K. Opler. 1969. Impounded People. Univ. of Arizona Press. Tucson.
- U.S. Statutes at Large, Act of June 17, 1902 (32 Stat. 388, 389).
- Weglyn, M. 1976. Years of Infamy. William Morrow and Co., Inc., New York.

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**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
PROPERTY MAP FORM**

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SEE INSTRUCTIONS IN *HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS*
TYPE ALL ENTRIES -- ENCLOSE WITH MAP

1 NAME

HISTORIC

Minidoka Relocation Center

AND/OR COMMON

Camp Minidoka

2 LOCATION

CITY, TOWN

Hunt

___VICINITY OF

COUNTY

Jerome

STATE

Idaho

3 MAP REFERENCE

SOURCE Bureau of Reclamation

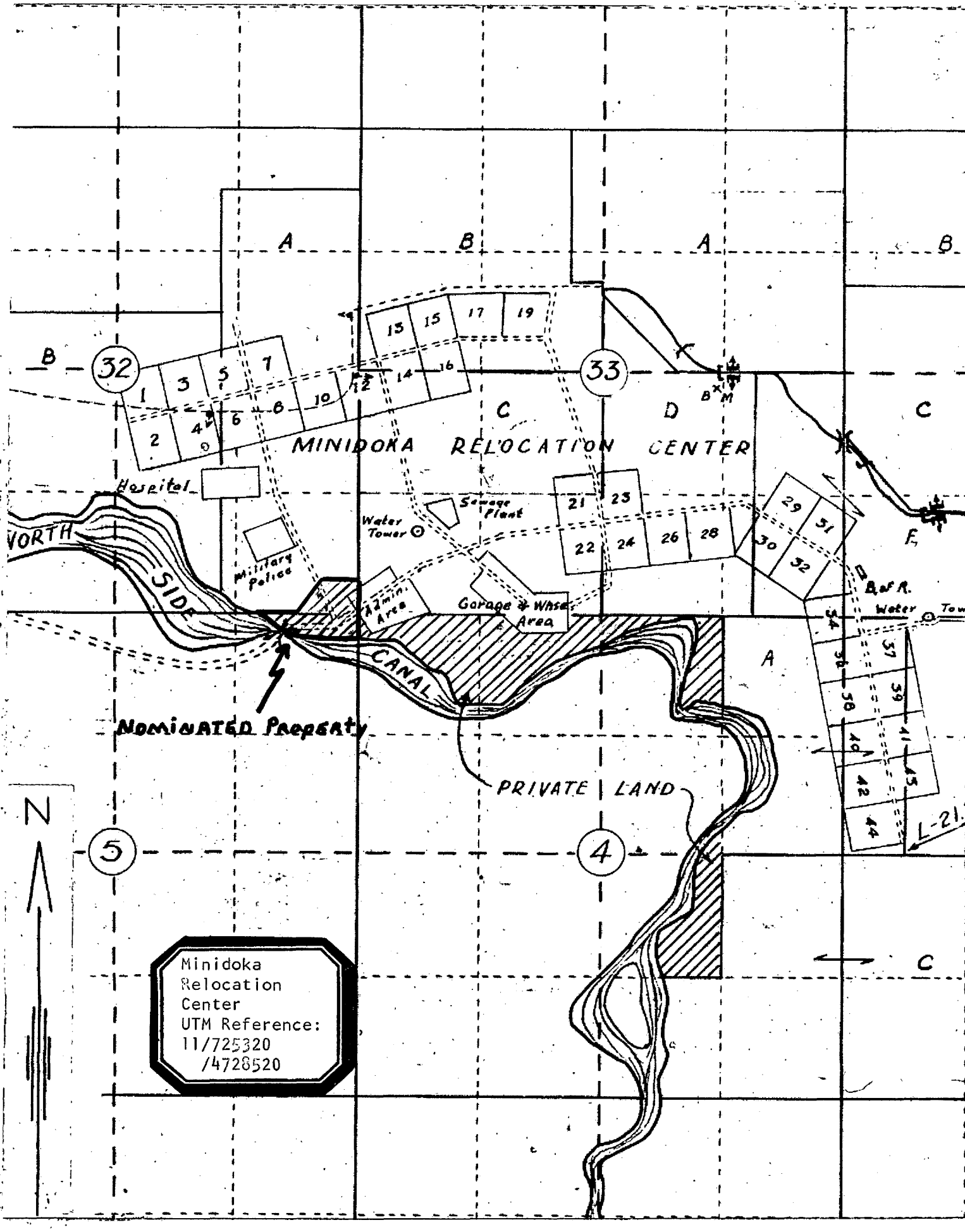
SCALE 1 inch = 1/2 mile

DATE February 21, 1944

4 REQUIREMENTS

TO BE INCLUDED ON ALL MAPS

1. PROPERTY BOUNDARIES
2. NORTH ARROW
3. UTM REFERENCES



NOMINATED PROPERTY

PRIVATE LAND

Minidoka
Relocation
Center
UTM Reference:
11725320
/4728520



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SEE INSTRUCTIONS IN *HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS*
TYPE ALL ENTRIES ENCLOSE WITH PHOTOGRAPH

1 NAME

HISTORIC

Minidoka Relocation Center

AND/OR COMMON

Camp Minidoka

2 LOCATION

CITY, TOWN

Hunt

___VICINITY OF

COUNTY

Jerome

STATE

Idaho

3 PHOTO REFERENCE

PHOTO CREDIT Terry Zontek

DATE OF PHOTO January, 1979

NEGATIVE FILED AT

Bureau of Reclamation Regional Office -- Boise, Idaho

4 IDENTIFICATION

DESCRIBE VIEW, DIRECTION, ETC. IF DISTRICT, GIVE BUILDING NAME & STREET

Interior of Visitors Reception Center
View to South

PHOTO NO

2

[Handwritten signature]



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Minidoka Relocation Center

AND/OR COMMON

Camp Minidoka

2 LOCATION

CITY, TOWN

Hunt

___ VICINITY OF

COUNTY

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STATE

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NEGATIVE FILED AT

Bureau of Reclamation Regional Office -- Boise, Idaho

4 IDENTIFICATION

DESCRIBE VIEW, DIRECTION, ETC. IF DISTRICT, GIVE BUILDING NAME & STREET

Entrance Post and Visitors Reception Center
View to Southwest

PHOTO NO

3