

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Inventory—Nomination Form

See instructions in *How to Complete National Register Forms*
Type all entries—complete applicable sections

For NPS use only
received AUG 9 1984
date entered SEP 7 1984

1. Name

historic Pierre's Hole 1832 Battle Area *Site*

and/or common N/A

2. Location

street & number Section 15, T4N, R45E, Boise Meridian N/A not for publication

city, town Driggs *vic.* ☒ vicinity of ~~Congressional district~~

state Idaho code 016 county Teton code 081

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input type="checkbox"/> public	<input type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> agriculture
<input type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input type="checkbox"/> commercial
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input type="checkbox"/> educational
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> site	Public Acquisition	Accessible	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment
<input type="checkbox"/> object	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> in process	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial
		<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military
			<input type="checkbox"/> museum
			<input type="checkbox"/> park
			<input type="checkbox"/> private residence
			<input type="checkbox"/> religious
			<input type="checkbox"/> scientific
			<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
			<input type="checkbox"/> other:

4. Owner of Property

name Multiple ownership (see continuation sheet)

street & number N/A

city, town N/A N/A vicinity of state N/A

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Teton County Courthouse

street & number Main and Wallace

city, town Driggs state Idaho

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title Idaho State Historic Sites Inventory has this property been determined eligible? ☐ yes ☒ no

date 1982 ☐ federal ☒ state ☐ county ☐ local

depository for survey records Idaho State Historical Society

city, town Boise state Idaho

7. Description

Condition		Check one	Check one	
<input type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> unaltered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> original site	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> good	<input type="checkbox"/> ruins	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> altered	N/A moved	date N/A
<input type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> unexposed			

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

Pierre's Hole, now known as Teton Valley, is a high mountain basin west of Grand Teton, elevation 13,766. Lower ridges define all but its northern rim. More than 6,000 feet high, Pierre's Hole is less arid and far more attractive than lower desert lands which are encountered farther west. Much of Teton Valley is now farmed, but some is too much a swamp and other parts (including three ranches that make up this traditional battleground National Register nomination site) are less disturbed pastureland. Mounds, rock rings, and artifacts of archaeological interest are notable there. Site boundaries are defined to incorporate 400 acres of land particularly significant in relation to trapper, Nez Perce, and Flathead military operations against a migratory Gros Ventre band which they met in Pierre's Hole, July 18, 1832. Although that encounter encompassed a wider expanse, this nomination area provides an adequate sample more representative of an earlier terrain than neighboring, intensively cultivated fields would furnish. When Merrill Mattes gathered site information for a Grant Teton National Park Pierre's Hole battleground interpretive display in 1957, he photographed Ross Foster's portion (SE 1/4, Section 15) and that view was developed into a large mural painting for exhibit in nearby Jackson's Hole.

Streams, aspen, willows, and similar foliage reminiscent of 1832 still survive within ranchlands incorporated in this nomination. Fences and occasional ranch structures are not too conspicuous and are not included as inventory contributing any significance to this fur trade site. Since Pierre's Hole had brush, trees, and range meadow in 1832, this site retains a general appearance representative of an earlier era, although some portions once covered with aspen or other brush may now be in grass. Even without later ranching, changes in location of vegetation would have occurred. This particular area of 1832 military activity provides a battle-zone cross section that recalls an important episode in regional history.

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 type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> social/
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700–1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> humanitarian
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800–1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input type="checkbox"/> 1900–	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)

Specific dates 1832 **Builder/Architect** N/A

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

As the site of one of the most famous battles of the fur trade period, this area represents an important aspect of Indian as well as fur-trade history. Armed and equipped by trappers, Plateau and Great Plains Indians and their associates frequently engaged in hostilities that also involved white explorers and fur hunters from 1806 (when Meriwether Lewis got into trouble with suspicious Blackfoot plainsmen) until after 1832. North West Company trappers from Canada, including an important Iroquois element, had a tradition of helping their Indian allies in Idaho and Montana challenge their Blackfoot opponents. After 1821, however, British traders followed a Hudson's Bay Company policy of avoiding Indian wars. Mountain men who traded with Saint Louis companies, who were not subject to that kind of control, often faced serious danger. Practically every mountain man was plagued by retaliation provoked by some trappers who attacked Indians of any kind that might appear ominous. A long series of battles, primarily with Blackfoot bands, marked this sequence of conflict between peoples of decidedly different cultures who failed to understand each other's values and customs. In Pierre's Hole, July 18, 1832, a notable battle commenced when Iroquois and Flathead dissidents attacked a Gros Ventre (Blackfoot) leader of a band that happened to come across a detachment of trappers setting out for their fall hunting ground. More than 60 Gros Ventre took shelter in trenches dug in a timber fortification that was hastily assembled when a force of about 60 Nez Perce warriors and mountain men responded to Flathead appeals for help. Six Nez Perce, nine Gros Ventre, and four trappers did not survive this encounter. Total white and Nez Perce casualties--eight each--were remarkably light, considering that any effective attack against such a well protected Gros Ventre fortification entailed great risk. (Later clashes, inspired in part by that battle, increased trapper losses to nine in 1832.)

9. Major Bibliographical References

See continuation sheet

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of nominated property 400 acres

Quadrangle name Bates and Driggs

Quadrangle scale 7.5 minute

UMT References

A

1	2
Zone	Eastings

4	9	0	3	1	0
Northings					

4	8	3	6	0	8	0

B

1	2
Zone	Eastings

4	9	0	3	1	0
Northings					

4	8	3	4	4	7	0

C

1	2
Zone	Eastings

4	8	9	4	8	0
Northings					

4	8	3	4	4	8	0

D

1	2
Zone	Eastings

4	8	8	6	9	0
Northings					

4	8	3	5	2	9	0

E

1	2
Zone	Eastings

4	8	8	6	9	0
Northings					

4	8	3	5	6	7	0

F

1	2
Zone	Eastings

4	8	9	4	8	0
Northings					

4	8	3	6	0	8	0

G

Zone	Eastings

Northings					

H

Zone	Eastings

Northings					

Verbal boundary description and justification

See continuation sheet

List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

state N/A code N/A county N/A code N/A

state N/A code N/A county N/A code N/A

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Richard Lemmers

organization National Park Service date 3 November 1983

street & number N/A telephone (307) 837-2492

city or town Lingle state Wyoming 82223

12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

 national X 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

Merle Wells

title State Historic Preservation Officer

date 28 July 1984

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I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register

Entered in the
National Register

date 9-7-84

Keeper of the National Register

Attest:

date

Chief of Registration

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
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Pierre's Hole 1832 Battle Area

Continuation sheet

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Property Owners:

Randy Murdock
Driggs, Idaho 83422

Silvon Murdock
Driggs, Idaho 83422

Keith Clements
Route 3, Box 220
Rexburg, Idaho 83440

Ross Foster
Driggs, Idaho 83422

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A number of well-known mountain men (including William Sublette, Warren Ferris, Zenas Leonard, Nathaniel and John Wyeth, Robert Campbell, Joe Meek, George Nid-ever, and John Ball) provided accounts of the episode at Pierre's Hole, as did Samuel Parker, who traveled through Pierre's Hole in 1835 with Jim Bridger. Other notable participants included Thomas Fitzpatrick, Milton Sublette, Andrew Dripps, Jean Baptiste Gervais, and Henry Fraeb. Two prominent Nez Perce Indians, Lawyer and Rotten Belly, suffered injuries that caused difficulty, in Lawyer's case, for more than forty years. Many romanticized versions of this engagement have been published but William Sublette's report to William H. Ashley September 21, 1832, of his relief expedition to save Milton Sublette's endangered party is factual:

When we arrived at the spot we found the Blackfeet had taken possession of a point of woods surrounded by willows where they had formed a strong fort of fallen timber and had dug hole in the ground inside the fort where they could be secure from our fire. Finding them thus fortified and that we were exposed to their fire on the prairie without being able to injure them, I proposed entering the willows and approaching their fort where we could be on more equal footing. I was joined by about 30 whites and as many friendly Indians making our force nearly equal to that of our enemy. We advanced to within 15 paces of their fort and continued firing on them which they vigorously returned for some time. Discovering at length that they were too securely protected against our rifles we determined on burning their fort and when early prepared to apply fire to it, one of our friendly Indians who spoke the Blackfeet language and had held conversation with them during the engagement was told by them they were convinced we could kill them all, but that six or eight hundred warriors of their tribe were momentarily expected there who would give us enough of fighting. Owing to the misconstruction of the interpreter who communicated it to the whites he was understood to say that six or eight hundred warriors were then in the valley attacking our camp; consequently the fight was immediately discontinued and not until we got to the prairie was the matter properly explained. It was then deemed too late to renew the attack.

We lost in the engagement Mr. St. Clair of Arkansas who was killed before we reached the fort. Another man, who too fearless ventured up to the fort and fired into it received 2 balls in the head and was instantly killed on the spot, Thomas Quigley of St. Louis was wounded in the head and I understand died on the 8th day afterward. He had started with a trapping party who were about 30 miles from my camp. Miller of Boone Co. in this state was severely wounded in the body which I fear will have proved fatal. Myself and 3 other whites were wounded Six of the Pierced-nose Indians killed and 2 wounded.

Trappers who came to Pierre's Hole in later years continued to make note of their 1832 battleground, which from then on was regarded as a major fur-trade landmark.

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Major Bibliographical References:

Hiram Martin Chittenden, American Fur Trade of the Far West (New York, 1902), 657-664.

Willard C. Hayden, "Battle of Pierre's Hole," Idaho Yesterdays (Summer 1972), 16/2:2-11.

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VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION:

The nomination includes the E 1/2 and S 1/2 NW 1/4 of Section 15, T4N, R45E, Boi^se Meridian. This area includes that battleground portion which remains largely unaltered and serves to recall that episode through visual reminders of Pierre's Hole military operations. Other parts have been changed or separated from this culturally significant area.



Pierre's Hole 1832 Battle Area,
view of Darby Creek trees and Grand Teton from near
section 15

Section 15, T4N, R45E, Boise Meridian
vicinity of Driggs, Teton County, Idaho

Photograph by Richard Lemmers
1983

Negative in Richard Lemmers collection

View from southwest

Photograph one of two



Pierre's Hole 1832 Battle Area,
view of Big Hole range, southwest from battleground,
used for National Park Service Jackson Hole mural.
Section 15, T4N, R45E, Boise Meridian
vicinity of Driggs, Teton County, Idaho

Photograph by Richard Lemmers
1983

Negative in Richard Lemmers collection

View from northeast

Photograph two of two