

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

(Type all entries - complete applicable sections)

PH0037885

STATE: Idaho Second District	
COUNTY: Owyhee	
FOR NPS USE ONLY	
ENTRY NUMBER	DATE
MAY 19 1972	

1. NAME			
COMMON: Silver City Historic District			
AND/OR HISTORIC:			
2. LOCATION			
STREET AND NUMBER: Section 6, T5S, R3W see new			
CITY OR TOWN: On Jordan Creek location			
STATE Idaho		CODE 16	COUNTY: Owyhee
3. CLASSIFICATION			
CATEGORY (Check One)		OWNERSHIP	STATUS
District ☒ Building ☐ Site ☐ Structure ☐ Object ☐		Public ☒ Private ☐ Both ☐	Public Acquisition: In Process ☐ Being Considered ☐
			Occupied ☒ Unoccupied ☐ Preservation work in progress ☐
			Yes: Restricted ☐ Unrestricted ☒ No: ☐
PRESENT USE (Check One or More as Appropriate)			
Agricultural ☒	Government ☐	Park ☐	Transportation ☐
Commercial ☐	Industrial ☐	Private Residence ☐	Other (Specify) ☐
Educational ☐	Military ☐	Religious ☐	
Entertainment ☐	Museum ☐	Scientific ☐	
4. OWNER OF PROPERTY			
OWNERS NAME: Multiple ownership; Bureau of Land Management			
STREET AND NUMBER:			
CITY OR TOWN:		STATE:	CODE
5. LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION			
COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC: Owyhee County Courthouse			
STREET AND NUMBER:			
CITY OR TOWN: Murphy		STATE: Idaho	CODE 16
APPROXIMATE ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY: 10,240			
6. REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS			
TITLE OF SURVEY:			
DATE OF SURVEY: Federal ☐ State ☐ County ☐ Local ☐			
DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS:			
STREET AND NUMBER:			
CITY OR TOWN:		STATE:	CODE

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

STATE: Idaho
COUNTY: Owyhee
ENTRY NUMBER: MAY 19 1972
DATE: FOR NPS USE ONLY

7. DESCRIPTION

CONDITION	(Check One)					
	Excellent ☐	Good ☐	Fair ☐	Deteriorated ☒	Ruins ☐	Unexposed ☐
INTEGRITY	(Check One)			(Check One)		
	Altered ☐	Unaltered ☒		Moved ☐	Original Site ☒	

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (If known) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

This historic district includes the closely related old towns of Silver City, Ruby City, Boonsville, Dewey, and Fairview along with major silver mines on War Eagle Mountain and Florida Mountain. A placer mining stretch of upper Jordan creek also is included, along with the ends of the Reynold's creek, Jordan creek, and Scotch Bob roads to the mines.

About forty buildings, including the early-day Idaho Hotel, remain at Silver; some are maintained, and others are falling into disrepair. The ghost town atmosphere has not been ruined by modernization, and excellent opportunities exist for interpretation of a mining community in the mines as well as in the town. The town has a number of residences, some old commercial buildings, lodge buildings, and a school and church. Traces of early placer mining are limited, but dumps, mill sites, tunnels, shafts, and an exposed quartz vein (about the best example to be found anywhere) may still be seen. Part of the Cumberland mill (built too late for use) survives. Foundations of other mills are visible.

This area includes sections 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, and 9 of T5S, R3W; sections 31-32 of T4S, R3W; sections 25, 26, 35, and 36 of T4S, R4W; and sections 1, 2, and 12 of T5S, R4W. In a major district such as this, the mines extend over considerable area. The workings of the Trade Dollar Consolidated along include a system of interconnected tunnels in Florida Mountain which connect Silver City and Dewey, more than two miles apart.

This historic district needs to be interpreted as an area, and because it is remote from settlement, it can be preserved without difficulty. BLM, the agency which owns the land, agrees that this whole area should be protected.

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

8. SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD (Check One or More as Appropriate)

Pre-Columbian ☐16th Century ☐18th Century ☐20th Century ☐15th Century ☐17th Century ☐19th Century ☒

SPECIFIC DATE(S) (If Applicable and Known)

AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE (Check One or More as Appropriate)

Aboriginal ☐Education ☐Political ☐Urban Planning ☐Prehistoric ☐Engineering ☐Religion ☐Other (Specify) ☒Historic ☐Industry ☐Philosophy ☐Mining ☐Agriculture ☐Invention ☐Science ☐Art ☐Landscape ☐Sculpture ☐Commerce ☐Architecture ☐Social/Human ☐Communications ☐Literature ☐Language ☐Conservation ☐Military ☐Theater ☐Music ☐Transportation ☐

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE (Include Personages, Dates, Events, Etc.)

Boise Basin gold discoveries in 1862 brought mining to the Owyhee region the next year. Coming from the new town of Placerville, Michael Jordan's party of 29 prospectors found gold on Jordan Creek, May 18, 1863; after working up the stream a few days, they returned to Boise Basin with news that set off the Owyhee gold rush. Quartz discoveries in July and August, particularly the rich Orofino high on War Eagle Mountain, augmented the easily worked placers. Not until another important lode, The Morning Star, was located October 14, 1863, did it begin to become apparent that the Owyhee mines would be noted primarily for silver. By the fall of 1864, ore from the Orofino and the Morning Star began to keep a number of different stamp mills busy producing a million dollars a year. Then in September, 1864, incredibly rich ore turned up in another magnificent War Eagle property called, somewhat imaginatively, the Poorman. A claim war stopped work on the Poorman after a production of only six days, but in those six days, surface operations by the haviest methods yielded over \$500,000 worth of ore. Litigation over title to the Poorman was finally compromised; in the summer of 1866, serious efforts began on that property. Fabulously spectacular Poorman ore specimens were displayed in Congress and in the Paris International Exposition, where the Poorman exhibit received a special gold medal in 1867. Additional major lode discoveries on War Eagle Mountain led to a full-scale underground claim war early in 1868. Hostilities were suppressed, and the mines went on producing until the failure of the Bank of California, August 26, 1875, brought most work to a halt. The community did not collapse even then although Silver City's daily newspaper (The Owyhee Avalanche) had started August 19, 1865, and had become Idaho's earliest daily after telegraph service reached Silver City, August 31, 1875) eventually had to become a weekly again.

Most of Silver City's \$40,000,000 mineral yield came from lower grade properties in Florida Mountain, which could be developed because of improved transportation available after the Oregon Short Line commenced transcontinental rail service in 1884. Most of the buildings go back to this later era, less spectacular but more productive than the early years. After the big companies shut down in 1912, Silver City continued as county seat until a 1934 referendum moved the county government to Murphy. After wartime restrictions terminated mining in 1942, Silver City became an authentic ghost town.

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Mildretta Adams, Historic Silver City (Homedale, 1960).
 Paul B. Christian, Idaho's Silver City (M.A. Thesis, University of California, 1952).
 Betty Derig, A History of Silver City, Idaho (M.A. Thesis, University of Montana, 1951).
 Lem A. York, Descriptive and Commercial Directory of Owyhee County, Idaho (Silver City, 1898).
 Bulletin 22,, Idaho Bureau of Mines and Geology (Moscow, 1964)

10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING A RECTANGLE LOCATING THE PROPERTY				O R	LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING THE CENTER POINT OF A PROPERTY OF LESS THAN ONE ACRE			
CORNER	LATITUDE				LONGITUDE			
NW	Degrees	Minutes	Seconds	Degrees	Minutes	Seconds		
NE	43°	02'	40"	116°	46'	00"		
SE	42°	59'	20"	116°	40'	00"		
SW	42°	59'	20"	116°	46'	00"		

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

STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE

20
UTM
HF

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

11. FORM PREPARED BY

NAME AND TITLE:		Merle Wells, State Liaison Officer	
ORGANIZATION	Idaho State Historical Society	DATE	Sept. 2, 1971
STREET AND NUMBER:			
610 North Julia Davis Drive			
CITY OR TOWN:	Boise	STATE	Idaho
		CODE	16

12. STATE LIAISON OFFICER CERTIFICATION

NATIONAL REGISTER VERIFICATION

As the designated State Liaison 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. The recommended level of significance of this nomination is: National ☐ State ☒ Local ☐ Name <u>Merle Wells</u> Title <u>State Liaison Officer</u> Date <u>September 2, 1971</u>	I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register. <u>Robert K. Utley</u> Chief, Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation Date <u>5/19/72</u> ATTEST: <u>[Signature]</u> Keeper of The National Register Date <u>May 12/1972</u>
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NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES

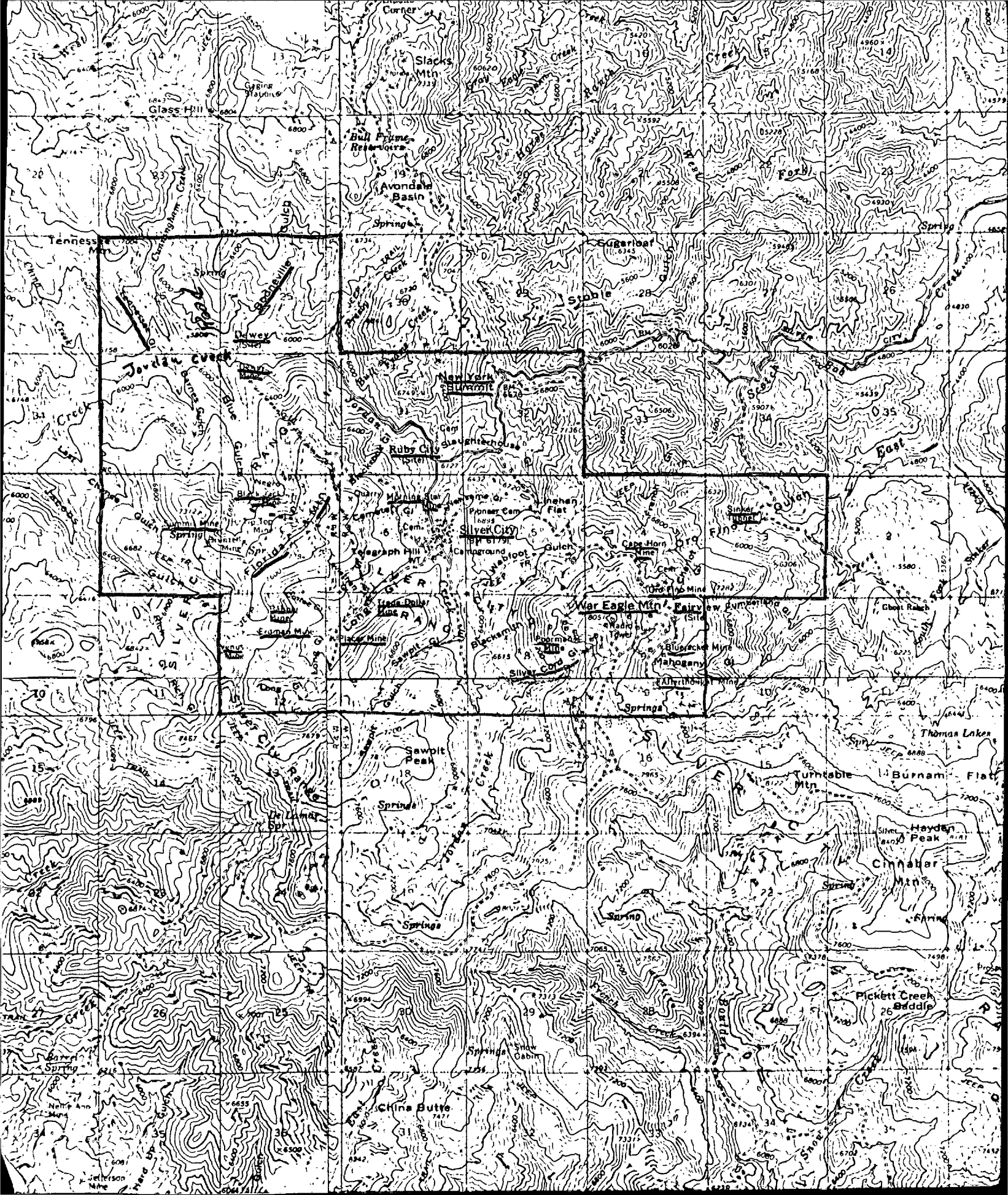
PROPERTY MAP FORM

(Type all entries - attach to or enclose with map)

STATE Idaho	
COUNTY Owyhee	
FOR NPS USE ONLY	
ENTRY NUMBER MAY 19 1972	DATE

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

1. NAME			
COMMON: Silver City			
AND/OR HISTORIC:			
2. LOCATION			
STREET AND NUMBER:			
Section 6, T5S, R3W			
CITY OR TOWN:			
On Jordan Creek			
STATE: Idaho	CODE 16	COUNTY: Owyhee	CODE 073
3. MAP REFERENCE			
SOURCE: Topographic Sheet: Silver City, Rooster Comb, Triangle, and United States Geological Survey: Flint Creek Quadrangles.			
SCALE: 1:62,500			
DATE: 1965			
4. REQUIREMENTS			
TO BE INCLUDED ON ALL MAPS			
1. Property boundaries where required.			
2. North arrow.			
3. Latitude and longitude reference.			





UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
PROPERTY PHOTOGRAPH FORM

(Type all entries - attach to or enclose with photograph)

STATE Idaho	
COUNTY	
Owyhee	
FOR NPS USE ONLY	
ENTRY NUMBER MAY 4 9 1972	DATE

1. NAME

COMMON: Silver City H.P.

AND/OR HISTORIC:

2. LOCATION

STREET AND NUMBER:

Section 6, T5S, R3W

Silver City, Id.

CITY OR TOWN:

On Jordan Creek

STATE:

Idaho

CODE

16

COUNTY:

Owyhee

CODE

073

3. PHOTO REFERENCE

PHOTO CREDIT: Idaho State Historical Society

DATE OF PHOTO: 1960

NEGATIVE FILED AT:

Idaho State Historical Society

4. IDENTIFICATION

DESCRIBE VIEW, DIRECTION, ETC.

View of Silver City and Jordan Creek

looking from southwest from the morning

Star camp.

SEE INSTRUCTIONS