

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

(Type all entries - complete applicable sections)

STATE: Idaho
COUNTY: Idaho
FOR NPS USE ONLY
ENTRY DATE: JUL 30 1974

1. NAME

COMMON: White Bird Grade
AND/OR HISTORIC:

2. LOCATION

STREET AND NUMBER: ~~T28-29N, R1-2E~~ NE 1/4 Sec 6, T28N, R1E, S14
CITY OR TOWN: White Bird
CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT: District #1
STATE: Idaho CODE: 16 COUNTY: Idaho CODE: 049

3. CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY (Check One)	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	ACCESSIBLE TO THE PUBLIC
☐ District ☐ Site ☐ Object	☒ Public ☐ Private ☐ Both	☒ Occupied ☐ Unoccupied ☐ Preservation work in progress	Yes: ☐ Restricted ☒ Unrestricted ☐ No

PRESENT USE (Check One or More as Appropriate)

☐ Agricultural ☐ Commercial ☐ Educational ☐ Entertainment	☐ Government ☐ Industrial ☐ Military ☐ Museum	☐ Park ☐ Private Residence ☐ Religious ☐ Scientific	☒ Transportation ☐ Other (Specify)	Comments
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4. OWNER OF PROPERTY

OWNER'S NAME: Idaho Department of Highways
STREET AND NUMBER: 3311 West State Street
CITY OR TOWN: Boise
STATE: Idaho CODE: 16

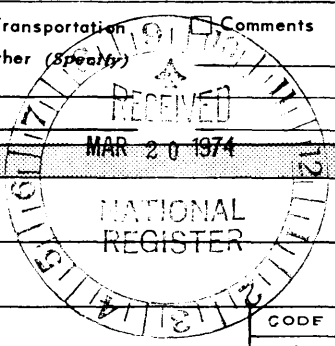
5. LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.: Idaho County Courthouse
STREET AND NUMBER:
CITY OR TOWN: Grangeville
STATE: Idaho CODE: 16

6. REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE OF SURVEY: Idaho State Historic Preservation Plan
DATE OF SURVEY: 1972 ☐ Federal ☒ State ☐ County ☐ Local
DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS: Idaho State Historical Society
STREET AND NUMBER: 610 North Julia Davis Drive
CITY OR TOWN: Boise
STATE: Idaho CODE: 16

SEE INSTRUCTIONS



STATE: Idaho
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7. DESCRIPTION

CONDITION

(Check One)

☒ Excellent ☐ Good ☐ Fair ☐ Deteriorated ☐ Ruins ☐ Unexposed

(Check One)

☒ Altered ☐ Unaltered

(Check One)

☐ Moved ☒ Original Site

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (if known) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The White Bird grade is a good example of an early engineering feat in highway building. U.S. Highway 95 winds up White Bird hill in a series of sharp curves and a dozen switchbacks, giving the impression of a confused snake crawling up a hill. This eight-mile section of two-lane road was originally only sixteen feet wide but in 1938 was widened to eighteen feet. Most of the switchbacks are in a relatively small segment of the grade, so that anyone going along the road scarcely can tell whether the rest of the traffic is going in the same or in the opposite direction. A new grade which will replace the old route is all but complete, with only a bridge still to be built. When the new grade is finished, the old road will remain as a marvel of highway building during the early automobile era.

The southern terminus for the White Bird grade is at a point described as 45°46'40" latitude and 116°17'04" longitude; northern terminus is at a point described as 45°52'28" latitude and 116°12'10" longitude. The corridor which follows the road between these two points is 60 feet wide.

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

3. 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) 1920-1938

AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE (Check One or More as Appropriate)

☐ Aboriginal☐ Education☐ Political☐ Urban Planning☐ Prehistoric☒ Engineering☐ Religion/Phi-☐ Other (Specify)☐ Historic☐ Industry

losophy

☐ Agriculture☐ Invention☐ Science☐ Architecture☐ Landscape☐ Sculpture☐ Art☐ Architecture☐ Social/Human-☐ Commerce☐ Literature

itarian

☐ Communications☐ Military☐ Theater☐ Conservation☐ Music☒ Transportation

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

No other major highway grade in the United States matches this one in the design of its switchbacks, an engineering achievement of the good roads movement after 1916. 21.1 miles of U.S. Highway 95 from White Bird to Grangeville was constructed in 1920, with grading, drainage and crushed rock work done that year. The total cost of this first project was \$362,155. The road was later surfaced with crushed rock in three separate projects in 1922, 1925 and 1927. Finally the road was surfaced with roadmix bituminous in two projects in 1937 and 1938, bringing the total cost for the 21.1 miles of road to \$521,316.

Highway 95 is the only highway in Idaho which connects the northern part of the state with the southern part. The White Bird hill is well-known by all who drive the road as a place where traffic slows considerably, even in good weather, to wind either up or down the sharp curves and switchbacks. Under bad weather conditions, White Bird hill presents a major obstacle to all north-south traffic. The new grade will be appreciated for its greater speed and safety, but the original White Bird grade will be remembered as one of the marvels of highway engineering, built when cars did not travel much more than 25 miles per hour.



HR

9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Records of Idaho Department of Highways, 1921-1938.

NE
11/562900
5079840

SE
11/556260
5069140

SW
11/554840
5069660

NW
11/561720
5080240

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

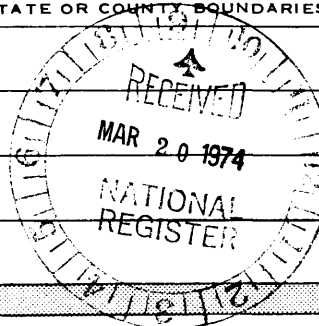
10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING A RECTANGLE LOCATING THE PROPERTY			OR	LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING THE CENTER POINT OF A PROPERTY OF LESS THAN TEN ACRES		
CORNER	LATITUDE	LONGITUDE		LATITUDE	LONGITUDE	
	Degrees Minutes Seconds	Degrees Minutes Seconds		Degrees Minutes Seconds	Degrees	Minutes Seconds
NW	45° 52' 30"	116° 12' 17"		northern terminus:	°	' "
NE	45° 52' 17"	116° 11' 23"		45 52 28	116	12 10
SE	45° 46' 30"	116° 16' 36"		southern terminus:		
SW	45° 46' 50"	116° 17' 40"		45 46 40	116	17 04

APPROXIMATE ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY: 73 acres

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

STATE:	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE



11. FORM PREPARED BY

NAME AND TITLE:
Nancy F. Renk, Site Survey Staff

ORGANIZATION: **Idaho State Historical Society** DATE: **22 Feb. 1974**

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

Maria Wells

Title State Historic Preservation Officer

Date 13 March 1974

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

AK Neotoma
Director, Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation

Date

7/30/74

ATTEST:

W. M. M. 2
Keeper of The National Register

Date

7.26.74



Idaho Co. Idaho ^{grade}

White Bird ~~Battle~~ (~~Indian Battle ground~~)

Photo credit - Idaho Dept. of Highways

White Bird Grade

Idaho County

730.74
d.o.e.

IDAHO DEPT. OF HIGHWAYS
PHOTO

2-0920

0188

PROPERTY OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER



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 Idaho	
FOR NPS USE ONLY	
ENTRY NUMBER	DATE
	JUL 30 1974

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

1. NAME

COMMON: White Bird Grade

AND/OR HISTORIC:

2. LOCATION

STREET AND NUMBER:

T28-29N, R1-2E, B.M.

CITY OR TOWN:

STATE:

Idaho

CODE

16

COUNTY:

Idaho

CODE

049

3. PHOTO REFERENCE

PHOTO CREDIT: Idaho Dept. of Highways

DATE OF PHOTO: 1972

NEGATIVE FILED AT: Idaho Dept. of Highways

3311 West State St., Boise, Idaho

4. IDENTIFICATION

DESCRIBE VIEW, DIRECTION, ETC.

White Bird Grade, looking northwest.

