INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM
FOR FEDERAL PROPERTIES

NAME
HISTORIC  ASH MOUNTAIN ENTRANCE SIGN
AND/OR COMMON "INDIAN HEAD"

LOCATION
STREET & NUMBER
Ash Mountain Entrance
CITY, TOWN
Sequoia National Park
STATE
California

CLASSIFICATION
CATEGORY
—DISTRICT
—BUILDING(S)
—STRUCTURE
—SITE
X-OBJECT

OWNERSHIP
PUBLIC
PRIVATE
BOTH

STATUS
—OCCUPIED
—UNOCCUPIED
—WORK IN PROGRESS

PRESENT USE
—AGRICULTURE
—COMMERCIAL
—EDUCATIONAL
—ENTERTAINMENT
—GOVERNMENT
—INDUSTRIAL
—MILITARY
—PRIVATE RESIDENCE
—RELIGIOUS
—SCIENTIFIC
—TRANSPORTATION
—OTHER:

AGENCY
REGIONAL HEADQUARTERS: (If applicable)
Western Regional Office, National Park Service
STREET & NUMBER
450 Golden Gate Avenue, Box 36063
CITY, TOWN
San Francisco

LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION
COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.
Tulare County Courthouse
STREET & NUMBER
Mooney and Mineral King Boulevards
CITY, TOWN
Visalia, California 93271

REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS
TITLE
None
DATE

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS
CITY, TOWN

FOR NPS USE ONLY
RECEIVED
NOV 18 1977
DATE ENTERED
APR 21 1978
DESCRIPTION

CONDITION

X EXCELLENT
— GOOD
— FAIR
— DETERIORATED
— RUINS
— UNEXPOSED

CHECK ONE

X UNALTERED
— ALTERED

CHECK ONE

— ORIGINAL SITE
X MOVED
DATE 1964

DESCRIPT THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The Ash Mountain Entrance Sign (Sequoia National Park) stands along the General’s Highway approximately one-quarter mile inside the western boundary of Sequoia National Park. The four-feet diameter sequoia trunk that forms the structural heart of this monument, which is fifteen feet tall, rises from the center of a two-tiered boulder masonry platform roughly ten feet square. Attached to the west side of the vertical sequoia trunk is a carved sequoia-wood sign measuring approximately 10 feet by four feet by one foot. This massive piece of wood bears the carved legend "SEQUOIA NATIONAL PARK" in letters nearly a foot high. The left hand end of the sign is carved to represent the profile of the Cherokee Indian Sequoyah (1770? to 1843) for whom it is generally assumed the Sequoia trees are named. The carved signboard is attached to the sequoia trunk by means of wooden pegs and large steel brackets. The lower bracket takes the form of a gracefully curved "V" with its upper points supporting the base of the sign and the lower point secured to the trunk by a large metal pin.

The sign has been altered in several ways since its erection during the winter of 1935-1936. The most significant of these changes was that the sign was moved about 100 yards in 1964. The stone foundation was replaced at that time but in a similar style. Originally the sign was unpainted, but in the 1950's it was stained a redwood color and the face of the Indian was painted. This color scheme has been maintained. Probably at the time it was first painted the letters of the legend were slightly deepened and enlarged. As originally designed, the Indian head, which stands on the south shoulder of the road, was balanced by an unadorned log pylon which stood opposite on the northern shoulder. This pylon was destroyed when the Indian head was moved.
STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Ash Mountain Entrance Sign is of local significance in the fields of art, landscape architecture, and social humanitarian endeavor. These qualities of significance relate primarily to the design of the object and to the artistic skill present in its execution.

The idea of an Indianhead entrance sign for Sequoia National Park bearing the profile of the Cherokee Indian Sequoyah first surfaced in 1931 when National Park Service Landscape Architect Merel S. Sager designed a small carved redwood sign for the Ash Mountain Entrance. This sign, which measured less than one-third of the size of the present sign, was attached to an existing log pylon during the summer of 1931. It was adequate for the time, but the steadily increasing quality of workmanship present in park structures soon demanded improvement in the entrance marker.

By 1935 resident park landscape architect Harold G. Fowler had taken the existing thematic concept and refined it in a larger design. For execution of his design he turned to the enrollees of the Civilian Conservation Corps camps placed in Sequoia Park by the Roosevelt Administration. In particular Fowler noted a young enrollee who had displayed a talent for wood working. So Fowler asked enrollee George W. Muno (of CCC Company 915) if he was willing to try his hand at a large scale wood carving project. Muno consented and Fowler took him to the Giant Forest grove of the Big Trees where they picked a piece of fallen sequoia wood that was large enough for the project at hand. Then, Fowler took a piece of blue chalk and sketched the profile of an Indian, using the image on a nickle as a guide. Using chisels and hatchets it took Muno several months to sculpt the Indian head and rout the legend for the sign. While Muno carved in Giant Forest, the park machinist at the Ash Mountain headquarters prepared the metal bracket and CCC crews prepared the log pylon and masonry. During the winter of 1935-1936 the sign was assembled and erected. As the sign went up the enrollees inserted a note into the hollow pin that supported the bracket containing the names of those who had worked on the project.

The sign remained undisturbed until 1964 when it was moved about 100 yards to allow for the construction of a new park checking station.

The sign is of local significance in terms of art as an example of monumental wood sculpture. This sort of work was common to government work of the 1930's, especially that done by the CCC in the national parks and monuments. The association with the CCC gives the structure its social/humanitarian significance, for the CCC was the most concerted social program ever executed in the area in question, and the sign
MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

GEOGRAPHICAL DATA
ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY: 0.005

UTM REFERENCES

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION
An area 15 feet square centered around the sign.

FORM PREPARED BY
NAME / TITLE
William C. Tweed, Park Technician

ORGANIZATION
National Park Service, Sequoia National Park

DATE
April 7, 1977

STREET & NUMBER
Ash Mountain Headquarters

TELEPHONE
(209) 565-3341

CITY OR TOWN
Three Rivers

STATE
California

CERTIFICATION OF NOMINATION
STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER RECOMMENDATION
YES

FEDERAL REPRESENTATIVE SIGNATURE

DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF ARCHAEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER
is a excellent, surviving example of a CCC contribution to National Park Service structures. The significance in landscape architecture results from the sign's design, which falls within scope of National Park Service Rustic architecture as practiced in the 1930's. Its design by a resident landscape architect, and its use of natural materials, (especially stone and redwood) identify this as a rustic structure. Its relocation and minor alterations do not impair its significance or the historical continuity of its purpose.

Significant values requiring management protection relate mainly to the appearance of the sign and its immediate setting. Excepting required maintenance, no alterations should be allowed.
SEQUOIA NATIONAL PARK
INDIAN HEAD ENTRANCE SIGN
SEQUOIA NATIONAL PARK, CA
PHOTO BY J. HOWELL, 1967
NEGATIVE FILED AT:
SEQUOIA PARK HEADQUARTER
THREE RIVERS, CA
VIEW FROM WEST Tulare County
282
PROPERTY OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

APR 27 1978
ASH MOUNTAIN ENTRANCE SIGN
SEQUOIA NATIONAL PARK, CALIFORNIA

Zone 11
Northing 3-35-550
Easting 40-39-390