Form No. 10-306 (Rev. 10-74)

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE
NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM
FOR FEDERAL PROPERTIES

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

1 NAME
HISTORIC
Great Sierra Mine (Dana Village) Historic Site
AND/OR COMMON
Great Sierra Mine

2 LOCATION
STREET & NUMBER
Not applicable (Yosemite National Park) — NOT FOR PUBLICATION
CITY, TOWN
San Francisco
STATE
California

2 CLASSIFICATION
CATEGORY
X DISTRICT
BUILDING(S)
STRUCTURE
SITE
OBJECT

OWNERSHIP
PUBLIC
PRIVATE
BOTH
PUBLIC ACQUISITION
IN PROCESS
BEING CONSIDERED

STATUS
X OCCUPIED
UNOCCUPIED
WORK IN PROGRESS
ACCESSIBLE
YES: RESTRICTED
X YES: UNRESTRICTED
NO

PRESENT USE
AGRICULTURE
COMMERCIAL
X PARK
EDUCATIONAL
PRIVATE RESIDENCE
ENTERTAINMENT
RELIGIOUS
GOVERNMENT
SCIENTIFIC
INDUSTRIAL
TRANSPORTATION
MILITARY
OTHER

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

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION
COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.
National Park Service, Yosemite National Park headquarters
STREET & NUMBER
P.O. Box 577
CITY, TOWN
Yosemite National Park
STATE
California

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS
TITLE
Historic Buildings Inventory
DATE
1961
DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS
Yosemite National Park files
CITY, TOWN
Yosemite National Park
STATE
California
### DESCRIPTION

**CONDITION**

- _EXCELLENT_  
- _GOOD_  
- _FAIR_

**CHECK ONE**

- _DETERIORATED_  
- _UNALTERED_  
- _ORIGINAL SITE_

**CHECK ONE**

- _RUINS_  
- _MOVED_  
- _DATE_ 1960s

*Mining equipment moved to Pioneer History Center, Wawona*

DESCRIPT THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The Great Sierra Mining Company established Dana Village as the support facility for the operations of the Sheepherder Lode. The village is located above Gaylor Lake on Tioga Hill.

The remains of 5 stone cabins, a wooden blacksmith shop, and a small stone powder house can be seen today. The equipment originally in this mine was removed by the Park for reasons of preservation, and is displayed at the History Center (Wawona).

The walls of the cabins and powder house are well defined, but portions are toppled over and in ruins. The blacksmith shop was destroyed in an explosion during the last months of operation, and those timbers are scattered about the site. The shaft openings are caved in, and filled with rubble.

One cabin is relatively intact with only its roof removed. The cabin is a one-story, one-room masonry structure measuring c. 25' x 18'.

The walls are very thick, c. 4' at the base and 3' at the top, consisting of small jagged slabs of metamorphic rock (schist or slate) and stacked on a rubble bond completely without mortar. There is one window on the south wall and one door on the east wall, both framed with hand-hewn lumber, weathered and bleached. The cabin had a gable roof which was removed; the gable ends were stone masonry. The plates for the roof structure and 4 beams are intact.

The cabin has evidently been rebuilt and repaired several times, but the nature of the dry-masonry construction requires this type of maintenance. The cabin therefore does not violate the criteria concerning reconstruction.

To prevent further collapse of masonry, the roof should be restored. A new gable on the south end will have to be built and debris should be removed from inside the building. The building has potential as an interpretive tool in relating the story of the silver miners and the opening of the Tioga Pass region. Maintenance of the cabin is adequate preservation for this resource.
Mining activity on the crest and eastern slope of the central Sierra Nevada is closely interwoven with events leading to the formation of Yosemite National Park. The Great Sierra Mine (Dana Village) was the site of the most intensive, albeit unprofitable, silver mining effort within the present park boundary and is of local significance in industry. The cabin is of local significance architecturally; its type of masonry construction is very rare, and it exhibits a high level of handcraftsmanship. The Great Sierra Mine, originally called the "High Rock" or "Mt. Dana", was one of several claims located along a ledge atop Tioga Hill and about 800 feet south of the fabled Sheepherder Lode, reputed to be a fabulously rich silver vein. The Lode was discovered in 1860 and rediscovered in 1874 by a young sheepherder, Thomas Brusky, Jr. Brusky and others staked claims along the Sheepherder and the adjacent ledge, and the ensuing seven years produced a confusing litany of title changes, counterclaims, etc. In 1881 the Great Sierra Consolidated Silver Mining Company purchased all claims in the immediate vicinity of Tioga Hill. The company established the mountaintop community of Dana, including a post office branch, that same year, intending to work the mining operation year-round. Living conditions at c. 11,000 feet were difficult and the miners soon relocated at "Bennetville" near the northern base of Tioga Hill.

Originally the company sank two shafts at the Great Sierra Mine, going down 100 feet before summit work was abandoned in favor of a tunnel through the side of the hill that would intersect both silver ledges. Driving a tunnel into extremely hard rock required special drilling machinery. It took more than two months to haul eight tons of equipment the nine miles from the foot of Bloody Canyon to the Great Sierra Mine tunnel. The equipment was transported on 6 heavy sleds by 10 to 12 men and 2 mules. One section required an almost vertical climb of 2,160 feet.

In 1884 the tunnel had been driven 1,784 feet and more than $300,000 expended when the Great Sierra Consolidated Silver Mining Company collapsed and closed down operations. The claim changed hands several times and in 1933 work was resumed with modern equipment. The tunnel was driven several hundred feet further without striking the Sheepherder Lode and the second ill-fated operation ended. Today the National Park Service controls access to the mine tunnel.

The mining activity on Tioga Hill attracted hundreds of men and women to Yosemite's high Sierra region. Conservationists, already lobbying to establish a federal reserve that would abolish grazing in Tuolumne Meadows and the indiscriminate cutting of trees in the sugar pine tracts, agitated anew over the potential destruction of spectacular scenery caused by mining. It is difficult to assess whether Tioga Hill and its environs would have been included in the boundaries delineating Yosemite National Park in 1890 if the Sheepherder Lode had proven to contain factual, instead of legendary, wealth.
MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES
Pioneer Yosemite History Center, Interpretive Prospectus, Yosemite NP Library
Hubbard, Douglass, Ghost Mines of Yosemite. (Fresno: Awani Press, 1958)
Russell, Carl P. 100 Years in Yosemite, rev. ed. (Yosemite Natural Hist. Assn., 1957)

GEOGRAPHICAL DATA
ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY Less than 10 acres on summit

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION
A complete delineation of the boundaries of the Great Sierra Mine could probably be ascertained from the title patent to the mine. The prime resources on the site are the drywall masonry cabin and the ruins of the other structures on the summit of Tioga Hill

FORM PREPARED BY
NAME/TITLE Leslie Starr Hart, Historian
Merrill Ann Wilson, Historical Architect
ORGANIZATION National Park Service, Denver Service Center
STREET & NUMBER 655 Parfet Street, P.O. Box 25287
CITY OR TOWN Denver
STATE Colorado 80225

CERTIFICATION OF NOMINATION
STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER RECOMMENDATION YES.V NO. NONE
STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER SIGNATURE
FEDERAL REPRESENTATIVE SIGNATURE

IN COMPLIANCE WITH EXECUTIVE ORDER 11593, I HEREBY NOMINATE THIS PROPERTY TO THE NATIONAL REGISTER, CERTIFYING THAT THE STATE HISTORIC RESERVATION 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 ___.
Form No. 10-301a
(Pev. 10-75)

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
PROPERTY PHOTOGRAPH FORM

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

1. NAME

HISTORIC

Great Sierra Mine (Dana Village) Historic Site

AND/OR COMMON

Great Sierra Mine

2. LOCATION

CITY, TOWN

Yosemite National Park

VICINITY OF

Gaylor Lake/Tioga Hill

COUNTY

Tuolumne

STATE

CA

3. PHOTO REFERENCE

PHOTO CREDIT Merrill Ann Wilson/National Park Service

DATE OF PHOTO 1975

NEGATIVE FILED AT Denver Service Center/National Park Service/655 Parfet, P.O. Box 25287/Denver, CO 80225 (TWE)

4. IDENTIFICATION

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

Dry wall masonry cabin showing entrance and window. View is to north.

Crest of Tioga Hill is directly behind chimney.
UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
PROPERTY PHOTOGRAPH FORM

FOR NPS USE ONLY
RECEIVED DEC 19 1977
DATE ENTERED MAY 24 1978

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PHOTO CREDIT
Merrill Ann Wilson/National Park Service
DATE OF PHOTO
1975

NEGATIVE FILED AT
Denver Service Center/National Park Service/655 Parfet,P.O. Box 25287
Denver, Co 80225 (TWE)

4 IDENTIFICATION

DESCRIBE VIEW, DIRECTION, ETC. IF DISTRICT, GIVE BUILDING NAME & STREET
Wall and window framing detail—cabin at the Great Sierra Mine.

PHOTO NO. 2.