**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**

Merced Grove Ranger Station

AND/OR COMMON

Building 6200

---

### 2 LOCATION (Merced Grove) N of El Portal

**STREET & NUMBER**

Not applicable

**CITY. TOWN**

Not applicable

**STATE**

California

**VICINITY OF** El Portal

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### 3 CLASSIFICATION

**CATEGORY**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DISTRICT</th>
<th>BUILDING(S)</th>
<th>STRUCTURE</th>
<th>SITE</th>
<th>OBJECT</th>
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**OWNERSHIP**

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**PUBLIC ACQUISITION**

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**STATUS**

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<th>WORK IN PROGRESS</th>
<th>ACCESSIBLE</th>
<th>YES: RESTRICTED exterior</th>
<th>YES: UNRESTRICTED only</th>
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**PRESENT USE**

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### 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 94102

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### 5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

**COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.**

Administration Building, National Park Service

**STREET & NUMBER**

Box 577

**CITY. TOWN**

Yosemite Village, Yosemite National Park, California

**STATE**

California

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### 6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

**TITLE**

None

**DATE**

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**DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS**

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**CITY. TOWN**

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The Merced Grove Ranger Station, Building 6200, is a log cabin, roughly 24 by 28 feet, which stands adjacent to an old dirt road through the Merced Grove of Giant Sequoia redwood trees (Sequoiadendron Giganteum). To the north, east and west, the land slopes upward into the Sierra Nevada Mountains; to the south is the road. The building has stone foundations and a stone porch at its southwest corner, on the left side of the front. The porch has no railing. The front door enters a living room which fills the southeast corner of the building, and is roughly 12 by 17 feet in dimensions. Immediately behind the porch is a kitchen, 10\(\frac{1}{2}\) by 13\(\frac{1}{2}\) feet, entered by a door on the west side of the living room and a door from a small back porch on the northeast corner of the building. A single bedroom, roughly 12 by 14, fills the northeast corner behind the living room, and the building has a bath, shower, and closet adjacent to the bedroom.

The exterior walls consist of peeled logs notched and overlapping at the six corners (two of which are created by the porch indentations). The ends of the logs are sawn, and are progressively battered or tapered inward towards the roof as they rise. Ridgepole and rafters are peeled logs with sawn ends. A stone chimney rises near the center of the shingled, gable roof. Rustic flower boxes adorn the walls beneath front and side windows. Windows in the structure are casement, 6 lites each. The building was originally stained, but virtually no trace of any protective finish remains on the logs.

A most unusual feature of the building is the manner in which the logs are seated. Each log has been adzed on the bottom to form a curved trough, which fits snugly into the curved upper surface of the log beneath it. Thus no chinking is needed and the walls are particularly tight for a log structure.

The bottom of the back door is badly damaged on the outside, appearing to have been partly chewed through by a persistent animal.
**SIGNIFICANCE**

**PERIOD**
- PREHISTORIC
- 1400-1499: ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC
- 1500-1599: ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC
- 1600-1699: AGRICULTURE
- 1700-1799: ARCHITECTURE
- 1800-1899: ART
- 1890-1900: COMMERCE
- 1900-: COMMUNICATIONS

**AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW**
- COMMUNITY PLANNING
- CONSERVATION
- ECONOMICS
- EDUCATION
- ENGINEERING
- EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT
- INDUSTRY
- INVENTION
- LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE
- LAW
- LITERATURE
- MILITARY
- MUSIC
- PHILOSOPHY
- POLITICS/GOVERNMENT
- RELIGION
- SCIENCE
- SCULPTURE
- SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN
- THEATER
- TRANSPORTATION
- OTHER (SPECIFIC)

**SPECIFIC DATES** 1934 - present

**BUILDER/ARCHITECT** National Park Service

**STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE**

The Merced Grove Ranger Station is of local significance in the category of architecture due to its "rustic" design, which is an unusual variation of the style not reflected in other buildings of rustic architectural significance in the Yosemite locality. It is a stylized version of the log cabins built in these foothills by early pioneers, designed by an architect to blend harmoniously with the natural scene.

The first ranger station in Merced Grove was a 1915 checking station on the Old Coulterville Road, now long gone. By the early 1930s, that road was no longer in use as a park entrance. In 1933, the National Park Service commenced construction of a rustic cabin in Merced Grove amid the Giant Sequoia Redwoods. The building was 95 per cent completed by October, 1934, and was finished in July, 1935. Basically a traditional log cabin, the structure had two unusual features: first, the log ends where they overlapped at the corners were not sawn square, but on a slight incline, so that the ends of the tiered logs were inclined inward or battered toward the roof; second, the bottom of each log was adzed or routed to form a curved trough which fit flush on the curved upper surface of the peeled log beneath it, each log in the walls thus seating tightly against those above and below it, no chinking of gaps thus being required.

For many years, the Merced Grove Cabin served as a summer retreat for Yosemite Park Superintendents, seeking to escape the endless interruptions characteristic of park headquarters and find a spot where they could catch up on pressing paperwork. Superintendent Carl Russell is believed to have done some work on a revised edition of his classic history of Yosemite National Park in this building.
## MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

## GEOGRAPHICAL DATA
ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY: 0.296602

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<tr>
<td>ZONE EASTING NORTING</td>
<td>4,1</td>
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</table>

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

The boundary consists of a rectangle 34 by 38 feet centered on the building.

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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>STATE</th>
<th>CODE</th>
<th>COUNTY</th>
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## FORM PREPARED BY

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NAME / TITLE</th>
<th>Gordon Chappell, Regional Historian</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ORGANIZATION</td>
<td>National Park Service, Western Regional Office</td>
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<tr>
<td>STREET &amp; NUMBER</td>
<td>450 Golden Gate Avenue, Box 36063</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CITY OR TOWN</td>
<td>San Francisco</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>STATE</td>
<td>California</td>
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## CERTIFICATION OF NOMINATION

STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER RECOMMENDATION: YES X, NO _, NONE ___

In compliance with Executive Order 11593, I hereby nominate this property to the National Register, certifying that the State Historic Preservation Officer has been allowed 90 days in which to dissent the nomination to the State Review Board and to evaluate its significance. The evaluated level of significance is: National, State, Local, Federal Representative Signature: 

DATE: OCTOBER 28, 1977

For NPS use only

I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS PROPERTY IS INCLUDED IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF ARCHAEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION: 
ATTEST: J. W. FOR J. S. 
KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER: 
DATE: 12/12/78
Merced Grove Ranger Cabin

November 3, 1934

National Park Service Photos

By Ralph H. Anderson

Yosemite National Park, California

View to Northeast

Photo 1 of 6
Merced Grove Ranger Cabin

Front and East End

Showing windowflower box

Yosemite National Park, California

View to northwest

National Park Service photo by Gordon Chappell

October 2, 1977

Photo 3 of 6
Merced Grove Ranger Cabin
Detail view of front porch area showing
seating of logs, battering of log ends,
stone porch & steps

Yosemite National Park, California
View to northeast

National Park Service photo
by Gordon Chappell

October 2, 1977
Photo 4 of 6

Dec 14 1978
Merced Grove Ranger Cabin
Southwest End

View to East

Yosemite National Park, California

National Park Service Photo
by Gordon Chappell

October 2, 1977

Photo 5 of 6
MERCEI GROVE RANGER CABIN
BACK (NORTHWEST) SIDE AND NORTHEAST END
VIEW TO SOUTH

Yosemite National Park
California

National Park Service photo by
Gordon Chappell
October 2, 1977.

Photo 6 of 6

Dec 14 1978
Merced Grove Ranger Cabin
Front
Yosemite National Park, California
View to Northwest

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE PHOTO
BY GORDON CHAPPELL

OCTOBER 2, 1977
PHOTO 2 OF 6

DEC 14 1978
Merced Grove Ranger Station
Yosemite National Park
Mariposa County, California
El Portal (7.5 minute) quadrangle.
UTM reference:
11 2/49/840 41/81/540