National Park Service

Cultural Landscape Inventory

2023

Baker Ranger Station

Great Basin National Park

National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior

Interior Regions 8, 9, 10, and 12

555 Battery Street, Suite 122
San Francisco, CA 94111

415-623-2100 phone
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CULTURAL LANDSCAPES
Fiscal Year 2023 Condition Assessments for:

Great Basin National Park

Regional staff assessed 1 cultural landscape in 2023. Please refer to the last page of the summary report for a list of management category and condition definitions.

2023 CULTURAL LANDSCAPE SUMMARY REPORT: MANAGEMENT CATEGORY AND ASSESSED CONDITION

	Cultural Landscape Name	Resource ID	Previous Condition	Latest Condition	Latest Year Assessed	Management Category
1	Baker Ranger Station	725127	New Record	Good	2023	Should be Preserved and Maintained

Park Comments:

Superintendent Concurrence:
I concur with the cultural landscape condition updates identified in this Summary Report, including the cultural landscape conditions and management categories, as entered in the Cultural Resources Inventory System (CRIS) (subject to any comments above).

ANITA HANSEN
Digitally signed by ANITA HANSEN
Date: 2023.11.06 14:43:03 -08'00'

Superintendent, Great Basin National Park Date

NPS Form 10-900
(Rev. 8-86)

OMB No. 1024-0018

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INTERAGENCY RESOURCES DIVISION
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE
NATIONAL REGISTER BRANCH

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations of eligibility for individual properties or districts. See instructions in *Guidelines for Completing National Register Forms* (National Register Bulletin 16). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the requested information. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, styles, materials, and areas of significance, enter only the categories and subcategories listed in the instructions. For additional space use continuation sheets (Form 10-900a). Type all entries.

1. Name of Property

historic name Baker Ranger Station
other names/site number Baker Guard Station/ Baker Administrative Site

2. Location

street & number Great Basin National Park ☐ not for publication
city, town Baker ☒ vicinity
state Nevada code NV county White Pine code 033 zip code 89311

3. Classification

Ownership of Property	Category of Property	Number of Resources within Property	
		Contributing	Noncontributing
☐ private	☒ building(s)	4	2 buildings
☐ public-local	☐ district		sites
☐ public-State	☐ site		5 structures
☒ public-Federal	☒ structure		objects
	☐ object	4	7 Total

Name of related multiple property listing: none

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 0

4. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, I hereby certify that this ☑ nomination ☐ request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property ☑ meets ☐ does not meet the National Register criteria. ☐ See continuation sheet.

Signature of certifying official — Date 9/21/95

National Park Service
State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property ☒ meets ☐ does not meet the National Register criteria. ☐ See continuation sheet.

Ronald M. Jones /State Historic Preservation Officer — Date 28 August 1995
Signature of commenting or other official

Nevada State Historic Preservation Office
State or Federal agency and bureau

5. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby, certify that this property is:

☒ entered in the National Register. ☐ See continuation sheet. — Beth Grosvenor McKee — 10/19/95
☐ determined eligible for the National Register. ☐ See continuation sheet.
☐ determined not eligible for the National Register.
☐ removed from the National Register.
☐ other, (explain:) _____

for Signature of the Keeper — Date of Action

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Cultural Landscape Inventory Number 8

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Parent Cultural Landscape Inventory Number ..... **Error! Bookmark not defined.**

Park Name 8

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Park Org Code 8

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Introduction

Cultural Landscapes in the Cultural Resources Inventory System

CRIS is the National Park Service's database of cultural resources on its lands, consisting of archaeological sites, historic structures, ethnographic resources, and cultural landscapes. The set of CRIS records for cultural landscapes is referred to as CRIS-CL. CRIS-CL records conform to a standardized data structure known as the Cultural Landscapes Inventory (CLI).

The legislative, regulatory and policy directions for conducting and maintaining the CRIS are as follows: Section 110 of the National Historic Preservation Act, NPS Management Policies (2006), Director's Order 28 (Cultural Resources) and Director's Order 28a (Archeology).

The Cultural Landscapes Inventory (CLI)
The CLI is the data structure within CRIS used to document and evaluate all potentially significant landscapes in which NPS has or plans to acquire any enforceable legal interest.
Each CRIS-CL record is certified complete when the landscape is determined to meet one of the following:

- Landscape individually meets the National Register of Historic Places criteria for evaluation; or,
- Landscape is a contributing element of a property that is eligible for the National Register; or,
- Landscape does not meet the National Register criteria, but is managed as cultural resources because law, policy or decisions reached through the park planning process.

Cultural landscapes are varied in type and include historic sites, historic designed landscapes, historic vernacular landscapes, and historic ethnographic landscapes; however, a cultural landscape also may fit within more than one type. Those cultural landscapes eligible for the National Register have significance in the nation's history on a national, state, or local level, as well as integrity.

The legislative, regulatory and policy directions for conducting and maintaining the CLI within CRIS are as follows:

The *National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (16 USC 470h-2(a)(1)),* which states that "Each Federal agency shall establish…a preservation program for the identification, evaluation, and nomination to the National Register of Historic Places…of properties…"

Executive Order 13287: Preserve America, 2003. Sec. 3(a), which states that "…Each agency with real property management responsibilities shall prepare an assessment of the current status of its inventory of historic properties required by section 110(a)(2) of the NHPA…No later than September 30, 2004, each covered agency shall complete a report of the assessment and make it available to the Chairman of the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation and the Secretary of the Interior…"

Executive Order 13287: Preserve America, 2003. Sec. 3(c), which states that "each agency with real property management responsibilities shall, by September 30, 2005, and every third year thereafter, prepare a report on its progress in identifying…historic properties in its ownership and make the report available to the Councill and the Secretary…"

The Secretary of the Interior's Standards and Guidelines for Federal Agency Historic Preservation Programs Pursuant to the National Historic Preservation Act, 1998, which provides under Standard 2 the guidance that follows: "An agency provides for the timely identification and evaluation of historic properties under agency jurisdiction or control and/or subject to effect by agency actions (Sec. 110 (a)(2)(A) and Sec. 112."

*Management Policies 2006. 5.1.3.1 Inventories, which states that "*The Park Service will (1) maintain and expand the following inventories…about cultural resources in units of the national park system…Cultural Landscape Inventory of historic designed landscapes, historic vernacular landscapes,…and historic sites…"

Cultural Resource Management Guideline, 1997, Release No. 5, page 22 issued pursuant to Director's Order #28, which states that "As cultural resources are identified and evaluated, they should also be listed in the appropriate Service-wide inventories of cultural resources."

General Information

Cultural Landscape Inventory Name	Baker Ranger Station
Cultural Landscape Inventory Number	725127
Park Name	Great Basin National Park
Park Alpha Code	GRBA
Park Org Code	8520
Property Level	Landscape

Landscape/Component Landscape Description

The Baker Ranger Station landscape is a historic vernacular landscape that lies east of State Highway 487 in the northern portion of Baker, NV. The boundary of the Baker Ranger Station encloses approximately two-and-a-half acres, just south of the Great Basin Visitor Center. Great Basin National Park (GRBA), a unit of the National Park Service (NPS), lies in central-eastern Nevada, in White Pine County, protecting 77,180 acres. The park has been occupied for over 12,000 years, and the natural setting continues to contain a rugged landscape, with various features from desert valleys and snow-covered peaks.

The Baker Ranger Station District was a US Forest Service administrative headquarters for the Baker Ranger District. After the headquarters moved, the site continued to be used as an administrative site to house staff and for utility purposes. The landscape includes four wood-frame buildings that date to the period of significance. These buildings are single-story gable roof structures painted white with green trim. In addition, the complex consists of a cement semi-cellar single-story gable roof structure painted white with green trim dating from the mid-1940s, an aluminum shed from the 1960s, and a log hoist from the early 1990s. Baker Ranger Station was listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1995.

SIGNIFICANCE SUMMARY

The Baker Ranger Station is significant in the areas of social history, politics/government, and conservation under Criterion A and architecture under Criterion C. The landscape reflects a property important for its association with Forest Service administration as a center for implementing and enforcing federal conservation and land management policies. It is also an

example of Depression-era construction, designed based on the Forest Service Improvement Handbook and specialized suggestions for Region Four and built with the assistance of alphabet soup agencies such as the WPA and CCC. The period of significance covers the duration of this construction by the Forest Service from 1933 to 1936.

ANALYSIS AND EVALUATION SUMMARY AND CONDITION

Under National Register guidelines, historic properties must possess integrity for all periods of significance. All resources from the historic period contain the necessary integrity. The landscape characteristics at the Baker Ranger Station district that convey historic significance are spatial organization, vegetation, topography, buildings and structures, circulation, views and vistas, and small-scale features.

The site retains all seven aspects of integrity: location, workmanship, materials, design, setting, feeling, and association. The landscape is in good condition.

Landscape Hierarchy Description

The Baker Ranger Station landscape is located within Great Basin National Park (GRBA).

Landscape Type

Historic Vernacular Landscape

Historic Site

Site Plan

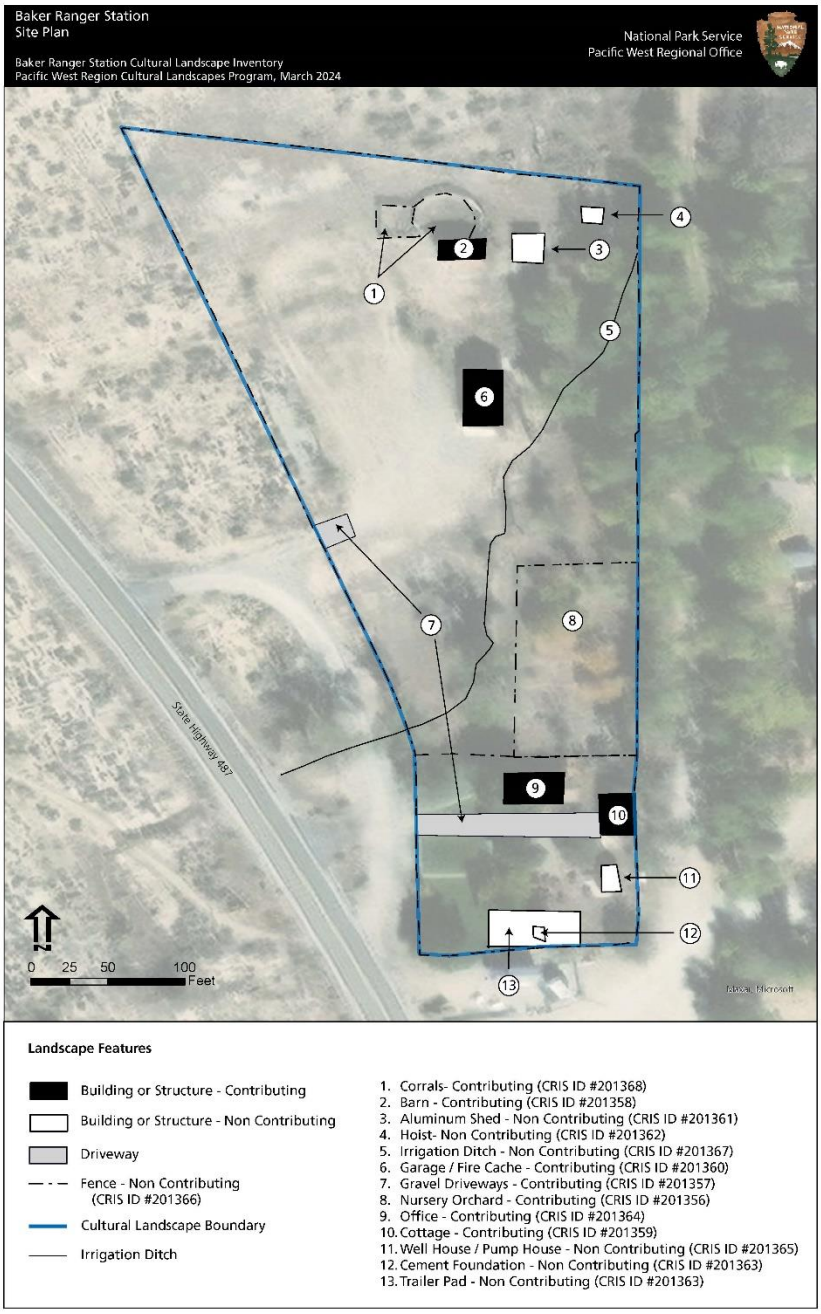

Figure 1. Baker Ranger Station Site Plan. See Supplemental Information for a full size version.

Other Names

Name	Type

Baker Guard Station	Historic
Baker Administrative Site	Historic

Concurrence Information

Park Superintendent Concurrence

Yes

Park Superintendent Concurrence Date

11/06/2023

Completion Status Explanatory Narrative

The National Register of Historic Places nomination was converted to the CLI by Maddie Levesque, Regional Cultural Resources Intern, with the assistance of Richard Freitas, Historical Landscape Architect in the regional office in 2023. Park cultural resources staff provided existing conditions photos and GIS for the site plans.

Geographic Information

Area (Acres)

2.5 acres

Boundary Description

The Baker Ranger Station landscape is located in Township 13N, Range 70E, in section 9. There is a fence surrounding the entire two-and-a-half-acre border of the landscape.

Regional Landscape Contexts and Narratives

Physiographic

The Baker Ranger Station is near the eastern base of the southern Snake Range in the broad, alluvial Snake Valley. Drainage is by intermittent stream flow to the east, away from the mountains. The surface comprises alluvium and soil, composed primarily of fluvial gravels, loamy sands, exposed clays, and conglomerates. The vicinity features quantities of quartz cobbles and pebbles, much of which have been hauled to the site for a driveway, service yard, and surface landscaping.

Cultural

The Great Basin region has been occupied for over 12,000 years. The first group to occupy the area was the Paleo-Indians about 12,000 to 9,000 years ago. They are considered big game hunters of animals such as bison and the extinct mammoth and ground-sloth, following these herds through a nomadic lifestyle.

The Great Basin Desert Archaic was the next cultural group to occupy this region about 9,00 to 1,500 years ago. These people were hunter-gatherers and continued the lifestyle of the Paleo-Indians, following game animals such as the mule deer and antelope. The Desert Archaic also gathered wild plants such as onions, Great Basin wild rye, and pinyon pine nuts. They made baskets, mats, hats, and sandals from plant fibers and used animal hides to make cloth, blankets, and mocassins.

The Fremont lived in the area about 1,500 to 700 years ago. They were a horticultural group that planted corn and squash while still harvesting wild plants and hunting. They built small villages,

including one near present-day Baker, now known as the Baker Archeological Site, and produced pottery.

The Shoshone came into this area around 700 years ago, and their descendants continue to live in the area today. The ancestral Shoshone were hunter-gatherers. They lived in temporary structures made of brush known as wikiups and moved to follow game and collect wild plants. They made baskets and undecorated pottery. They hunted deer, rabbits, and antelope. The nearest descendants of the early Shoshone live in Ely, Nevada.

Trappers, and several military expeditions, one led by Captain John Fremont, traveled across Nevada in the early 1800s. Mail and pony express stations dotted the landscape by the 1850s. Immigrants crossed the northern Great Basin on the California Trail on the way to California. Around 1855, the first Euro-American entered the area around Great Basin National Park to establish ranching operations. Discoveries of silver and gold in the region brought six mining operations to the South Snake Range a few decades later.

The 1880s saw the establishment of a ranch near today's Lehman Creek by Absalom Lehman, where he grew and raised food for local miners. In 1885, he discovered the cave system that now bears his name and devoted the rest of his life to guiding people through the natural wonder. Ranching continued to be a significant part of the Great Basin's cultural heritage. For many years cattle grazed on the east side of the South Snake Range, even after establishing Great Basin National Park. In the summer months, sheep still graze on high-elevation meadows on the park's west side.

Political

The Baker Ranger Station landscape is a unit of the Great Basin National Park in White Pine County, Nevada, in the Fourth Congressional District of Nevada.

Regional Landscape Context Graphics

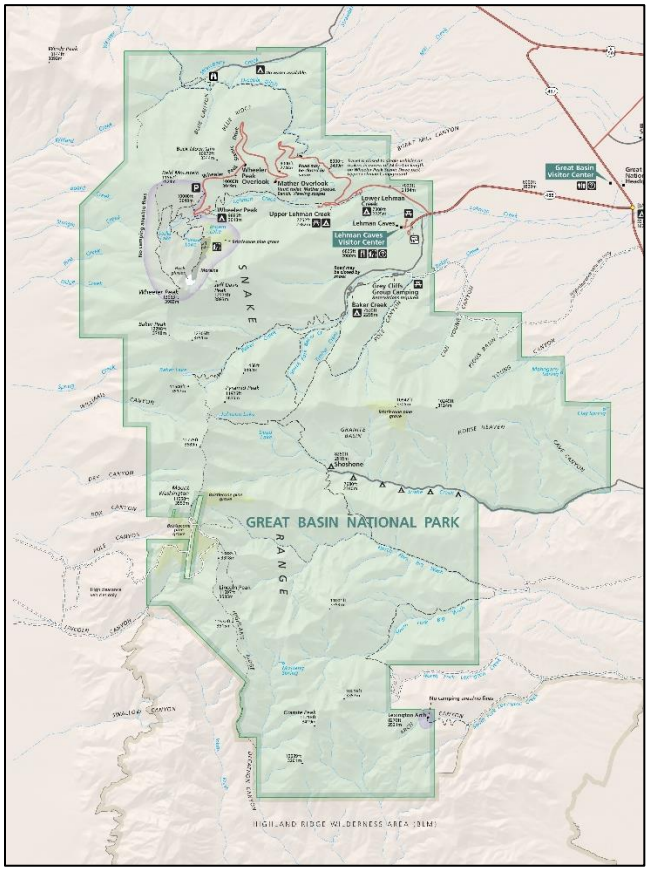

Figure 2: Great Basin National Park map.

Location Map Graphic Information

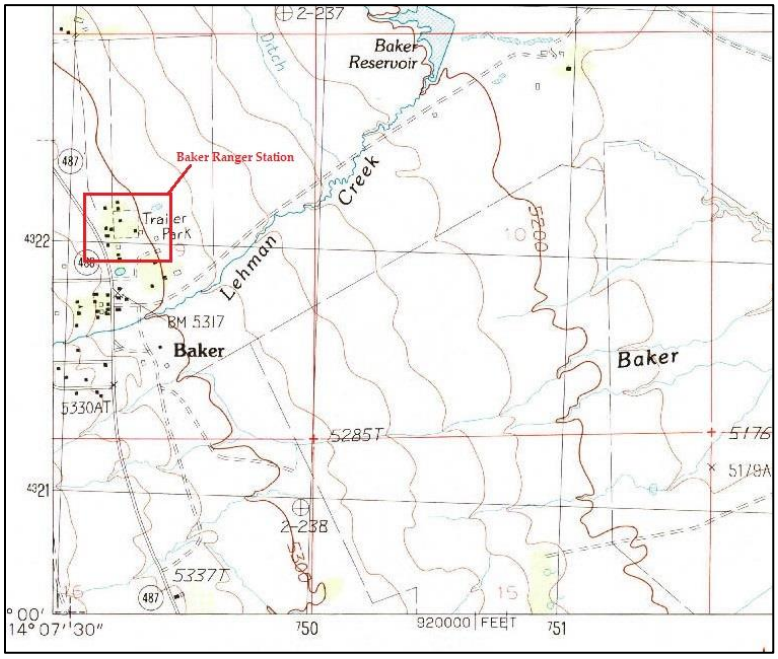

Figure 3: Baker Ranger Station location map

State and County

State

Nevada

County

White Pine County

Management Information

Management Category

Should be Preserved and Maintained

Management Category Date

10/19/1995

Management Category Explanatory Narrative

The Baker Ranger Station meets the criteria for Management Category B (Should Be Preserved and Maintained) because it 1) meets National Register criteria as representative of Depression-era public works promotion and conservation service job programs with the National Forest Service, 2) is compatible with the park's legislated significance, providing recreational and interpretive opportunities to instill visitor appreciation of the landscape, and 3) has a continuing purpose that is appropriate to its traditional use.

Legal Interests

Legal Interest Type	Fee Simple Reservation Expiration Date	Other Organization/Agency	Legal Interest Narrative
Fee Simple			

Adjacent Lands Information

Do Adjacent Lands Contribute?

No – Adjacent lands do not contribute

Narrative

As the landscape only concerns the use of the property as a local Forest Service administration center to implement federal conservation and land management policies and the building's architectural significance, the adjacent lands do not contribute.

Uses Information

Functions and Uses

Major Category	Category	Use/Function	Historic Use	Current Use	Primary Use
Government	Government Office	Ranger Station	Yes	Yes	Yes
Domestic (Residential)	Institutional Housing		Yes	Yes	Yes

Public Access

Public Access

Unrestricted

National Register Information

Documentation Status

Keeper – Documented

Documentation Narrative Description

The Baker Ranger Station was listed on the National Register of Historic Places on October 19, 1995.

National Register Significance Level

State

National Register Significance -- Contributing/Individual

Individual

National Register Classification

District

Statement of Significance

CRITERION A

The Baker Ranger Station is recommended for nomination to the National Register of Historic Places under Criteria A and C. Under Criterion A, the station is considered a property significant for its association "with events that have contributed to the broad patterns of our history." The applicable areas of significance for which the ranger station has been evaluated under this criterion are politics/government, social history, and conservation. The period of significance for the ranger station is 1933-1936, the construction period of the four extant buildings that formed the nucleus of the 1930s-era station complex.

The Baker Ranger Station building complex is significant because it served as a local Forest Service administrative center for implementing federal conservation and land management policies, which focused on balanced public use of national forests under multiple-use and sustained-yield principles in Nevada during a 75-year period. The Forest Service constructed four of the extant buildings at the complex during the 1930s, using funds and personnel provided by federal Depression-era agencies. These programs were established to promote national economic recovery and the welfare of American society through national public works projects and conservation service jobs for the unemployed.

The Forest Service and the Conservation Movement:

The Baker Ranger Station is located within the Baker Administrative Site, which served as a local administrative headquarters for the Baker Ranger District, comprising the Snake and Mount Moriah divisions of Nevada National Forest, from 1911 to 1957. After Nevada National Forest was divided between Humboldt and Toiyabe National Forests, the Baker Administrative Site became a guard station. This station then served as a work center for the east side of the Ely Ranger District of Humboldt National Forest from 1957 to 1986. Thus, the Baker Administrative Site served as a local Forest Service administrative center to implement all federal conservation and land management policies focusing on the effective public use of national forests throughout this period.

During the mid-nineteenth century, a movement to preserve the nation's natural resources commenced in the United States. By 1864 three scientific thinkers articulated the need for conservation and the preservation of our country's natural resources from exploitation by business and settlement: Henry David Thoreau, the Massachusetts naturalist-poet-philosopher; George Perkins Marsh, a Vermont lawyer/scholar; and Frederick Law Olmstead, superintendent of the Central Park project in New York City. Their writings became the foundation upon which all subsequent conservation proponents built their arguments. For example, Olmstead advocated the concept of great "public parks" and was responsible for launching a movement to protect the giant sequoias in Yosemite Valley from commercial exploitation. As a result of pressure exerted on Congress, they passed a law in 1864 that granted Yosemite Valley and the Mariposa Grove of Big Trees to the State of California as a state park. This was the first time any government set aside public lands purely to preserve scenic values.[1]

The "public park" concept, involving the preservation of significant natural features and their management for the benefit of the people, circulated throughout the East and Midwest from the mid-1860s onward. As a result of several expeditions in the 1870s, pressure mounted that

[1] U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service, National Survey of Historic Sites and Buildings, *Theme XIX: Conservation of Natural Resources*, 1963, 2-19; Dennis Drabelle, *The Power of Scenery: Frederick Law Olmsted and the Origin of National Parks* (University of Nebraska Press: Bison Books, 2021), 68-70.

Yellowstone should be preserved. On March 1, 1872, President Ulysses S. Grant signed the Yellowstone Park bill into law, thus establishing our first national park because it was located in Wyoming Territory and hence under the immediate administration of the federal government. A precedent had been established to reserve and withdraw areas from settlement and set them apart as public parks for the benefit and enjoyment of the people. The Yellowstone Park Act empowered the Secretary of the Interior to protect fish and game from wanton destruction and provide for the preservation and retention of timber, mineral deposits, natural curiosities, and scenic wonders within the park.[2]

Meanwhile, wholesale devastation of timber reserves in the West continued. In 1876, the forestry agent position in the U.S. Department of Agriculture was established to study the dual problem of timber consumption and preservation of forest lands. Other federal efforts that contributed toward awakening public interest in the diversified natural resources of the West were Hayden's Geological and Geographical Surveys of the Territories of the United States, John Wesley Powell's United States Geographical and Geological Survey of the Rocky Mountain Region, and Lieutenant George M. Wheeler's Geographical Surveys West of the One-Hundredth Meridian. In 1879 these three groups were incorporated into the United States Geological Survey (USGS) and placed under the Department of the Interior with authorization to conduct all scientific surveys performed by the federal government.[3]

During the 1870s and 1880s, a group of scientists, naturalists, landscape architects, foresters, geologists, and editors of national periodicals, refined the basic concepts of conservation. Through their leadership, they progressed in reversing the traditional American attitude toward utilizing natural resources. For instance, conservationists focused considerable energy on a movement to repeal the Timber Culture Act of 1873 and the Timber Cutting Act of 1878. At the forefront of this movement were conservationists interested in forestry, such as Charles S.

[2] *Theme XIX: Conservation of Natural Resources*, 22-23; *The Power of Scenery*, 73; Horace M. Albright and Frank J. Taylor, *"Oh, Ranger!": A Book About the National Parks* (Golden, CO: Outbooks, 1980), 121.

[3] *Theme XIX: Conservation of Natural Resources*, 29, 35-37; Clifford M. Nelson, eds., Records and History of the United States Geological Survey, U.S. Department of the Interior, U.S. Geological Survey, 2000, 1.

Sargent, John Muir, and Robert V. Johnson, aided by the General Land Office of the U.S. Department of the Interior and foresters in the U.S. Department of Agriculture. Although these acts were intended to provide a system for forest conservation, they came with a considerable amount of fraud. As a result, much valuable timber land was lost as it fell into the hands of large corporations and timber speculators. The Timber Culture Act of 1873 authorized anyone who kept forty acres of timber land in good condition to acquire a title to 160 acres. The minimum tree-growing requirement was reduced to ten acres in 1878. The Timber Cutting Act of 1878, on the other hand, allowed bona fide settlers and miners to cut timber in the public domain free of charge for their use.[4]

In 1890, a committee of the American Association for the Advancement of Science presented President Benjamin Harrison with a petition recommending that a commission be established to "investigate the necessity of preserving certain parts of the present public forest as requisite for the maintenance of favorable water conditions."[5] The petition further urged that "pending such investigation, all timber lands of the United States be withdrawn from sale and provision be made to protect the said lands from theft and ravages by fire, and to supply in a rational manner the local needs of wood and lumber until a permanent system of forest administration be had."[6] President Harrison and Secretary of the Interior John W. Noble endorsed the proposals, and it passed in Congress without debate. The Forest Reserve Act (26 Stat. 1095), signed into law by President Harrison on March 3, 1891, repealed the Timber Culture Act of 1873 and the Timber Cutting Act of 1878. Section 24 further provided:

> That the President of the United States may, from time to time, set apart and reserve, in any state or territory having public land bearing forests, in any part of the public lands, wholly or in part covered with timber or undergrowth, whether of commercial value or not, as public

[4] Richard B. Morris, ed., *Encyclopedia of American History: Bicentennial Edition* (New York: Harper & Row Publishers, 1976), 637; *Theme XIX: Conservation of Natural Resources*, 73-74.

[5] Van Hise, Charles Richard, Loomis Havemeyer, G. A. Roush, and Frederick Haynes Newell, *Conservation of Our Natural Resources, based on Van Hise's The Conservation of Natural Resources in the United States* (New York: Macmillan Co., 1930), 242.

[6] Banjamin Horrace Hibbard, *A History of Public Land Policies* (New Cork: Macmillan Co., 1924), 530.

> reservations, and the President shall, by public proclamation, declare the establishment of such reservations, and the limits thereof. The forest reservations were to be administered by the Department of the Interior.[7]

While the law did not define the objectives for setting aside the forest reservations, the implied purpose was to protect "forest growth against destruction by fire and ax and preservation of forest conditions upon which water conditions and water flow."[8] The new policy was based on the perception "that a forest cover on slopes and mountains must be maintained to regulate the flow of streams, to prevent erosion, and thereby to maintain favorable conditions in the plains below."[9] The policy of reserving forest land was thus "confined mainly to those localities in which agriculturists" were "dependent upon irrigation."[10] The overriding goal of the reserve policy was "to maintain favorable forest conditions, without, however, excluding the use of these reservations for other purposes. "[11]

Throughout the next decade, the Department of the Interior refined its policies concerning the forest reserves' objectives and regulations. The administration of the reserves was assigned to the Forestry Division of the General Land Office. The reserve management system was adopted on June 30, 1897, and amended on March 21, 1898. By 1902 the department had developed the objectives for national forest reserves into a formal policy statement:

> The object of setting land aside for forest reserves is
> 1. To protect a growth of timber of land which is not fit to grow other crops and under conditions where no such protection is assured or can be supplied by private persons or local authorities.

[7] Forest Reserve Act, March 3, 1891 (26 Stat. 1095).

[8] United States Department of the Interior, *Annual Report of the Secretary of the Interior*, U.S. Government Printing Office, 1895, 104.

[9] *Annual Report of the Secretary of the Interior*, 1895, 119.

[10] *Annual Report of the Secretary of the Interior*, 1895, 104.

[11] *Annual Report of the Secretary of the Interior*, 1895, 104.

> 2. To keep a growth of vegetation, especially of timber on mountain lands which would otherwise wash and gully.[12]

Thus, the Forest Reserve Act and the implementation of its provisions became the cornerstones of early national conservation policy. The act would later be characterized as "the most important legislation in the history of Forestry in America" by Gifford Pinchot, the first Chief Forester of the U.S. Forest Service.[13] Benjamin H. Hibbard, a revered public lands historian, also commented on the effect of the act, establishing a precedent for keeping private interests' disposal of such resources out of the public domain:

> Without question, the act permitting the withdrawal of public (forest) land from private entry was the most signal act yet performed by Congress in the direction of a national land policy.[14]

In 1905, the newly established U.S. Forest Service under the Department of Agriculture took over the administration of national forest reserves from the General Land Office under the Department of the Interior. Under the leadership of Chief Forester Gifford Pinchot, the Forest Service became active in the crusade to conserve the nation's natural resources. As part of its conservation ethic, the new bureau favored a policy of multi-purpose resource utilization under which the land and its resources would serve various regulated economic functions.[15]

The earliest regulations and instructions for the administration of the national forest reserves under the new bureau were based upon general policies laid down in a letter Pinchot wrote for Secretary of Agriculture James Wilson, outlining his duties as Chief Forester. The policies supported using resources within a practical conservation framework rather than preserving the forests as game reserves or public playgrounds. The letter, dated February 1, 1905, read in part:

---

[12] United States Department of the Interior, *Annual Report of the Secretary of the Interior*, U.S. Government Printing Office, 1902, 19-20.

[13] Gifford Pinchot, *Breaking New Ground* (New York: Harcourt, Brace & Co., 1947), 85.

[14] *History of Public Land Policies*, 532.

[15] Richard Polenberg, "The Great Conservation Contest," *Forest History Newsletter* 10, no. 4 (January 1967): 13-14.

> In the administration of the forest reserves it must be clearly borne in mind that all land is to be devoted to its most productive use for the permanent good of the whole people, and not for the temporary benefit of individuals or companies. All the resources of forest reserves are for use, and this use must be brought about in a thoroughly prompt and business-like manner; under such restrictions only as will insure the permanence of these resources. The vital importance of forest reserves to the great industries of the Western States will be largely increased in the near future by the continued steady advance in settlement and development. The permanence of the resources of the reserves is therefore indispensable to continued prosperity, and the policy of this Department for their protection and use will invariably be guided by this fact, always bearing in mind that the conservative use of these resources in no way conflicts with their permanent value.
>
> You will see to it that the water, wood, and forage of the reserves are conserved and wisely used for the benefit of the home builder first of all, upon whom depends the best permanent use of lands and resources alike. The continued prosperity of the agricultural, lumbering, mining and livestock interests is directly dependent upon a permanent and accessible supply of water, wood, and forage, as well as upon the present and future use of these resources under businesslike regulations, enforced with promptness, effectiveness, and common sense. In the management of each reserve local questions will be decided upon local grounds; the dominant industry will be considered first, but with as little restriction to minor industries as may be possible; sudden changes in industrial conditions will be avoided by gradual adjustment after due notice, and where conflicting interests must be reconciled the question will always be decided from the standpoint of the greatest good of the greatest number in the long run.[16]

On June 14, 1905, Secretary Wilson approved Pinchot's manuscript as a set of regulations and instructions to govern the national forest reserves. They published the manuscript in a small pocket volume entitled "The Use of the National Forest Reserves" and placed it in the hands of

[16] *History of Forest Service Policy and Past and Present Administrative Procedure on National Forest Range Laws in Northeastern Nevada, Preliminary Draft*, 1939, Box 1, Folder 4, University of Nevada, Special Collections Department.

all field men on July 1, when its contents went into effect. Soon renamed the "Use Book," it stated that the national forest reserves:

> Are for the purpose of preserving a perpetual supply of timber for home industries, preventing destruction of the forest cover which regulates the flow of streams, and protecting local residents from unfair competition in the use of forest and range. They are patrolled and protected at Government expense, for the benefit of the community and the home.[17]

The administration of forest reserves was not for the government's benefit but for the people. The revenue derived from them does not go into the general fund of the United States but toward maintaining a workforce organized to serve the public interests. Their three chief duties were to protect the reserves against fire, assist the people in their use, and see that they were properly used.[18]

The Forest Service centralized the administration responsibilities of the national forests (national forest reserves were redesignated national forests in 1907) in Washington, D.C., until 1908. That year, the Forest Service established six administrative regions, each supervised by a regional (district) forester to whom the Washington Office delegated substantial authority. Regional foresters were authorized to exercise administrative discretion over a wide range of functions. Over time, the Forest Service extended the foresters' jurisdiction, so they amassed considerable autonomy in making decisions for the forests under their administration.[19]

Nevada National Forest:

The 1908 reorganization established the Intermountain Region, or Region 4, with headquarters at Ogden, Utah. This region covered national forest lands in Idaho south of the Salmon River, Wyoming west of the Continental Divide, Utah, Nevada, a small portion of western Colorado,

[17] Gifford Pinchot, *Use of the National Reserves: Regulations and Instructions*, U.S. Department of Agriculture, Forest Service, 1905, 7.

[18] *Breaking New Ground*, 264-67.

[19] Harold K. Steen, *The U.S. Forest Service: A Centennial History* (University of Washington Press, 2013), 77.

and Arizona north of the Grand Canyon. Although the region's configuration has changed somewhat since its creation, the general boundary outlines remain the same.[20]

After the establishment of the U.S. Forest Service in 1905, Pinchot became interested in the forest resources in central-eastern Nevada as well as other parts of the West. Protection of the remaining timber supply from fire and private exploitation, conservation of the watersheds for agricultural irrigation, and efficient, regulated grazing administration for range replenishment and preservation were crucial elements of Pinchot's interest in the area.[21]

In 1906, the Forest Service examined central-eastern Nevada to develop proposals for new national forest reserves. The surveys, under the direction of Forest Expert L. Von Wernstedt, covered "a strip of country 50 to 60 miles wide along the Utah State line in eastern Nevada, between the Lincoln County line and the Central Pacific R.R."[22] As a result of these surveys, Wernstedt recommended that four national forests be established: Ely, Steptoe, Osceola, and Snake.

Under the recommendations of Wernstedt, the Acting Secretary of the Interior, on September 1, 1906, "temporarily withdrew from all disposals except under the mineral laws, certain vacant unappropriated public lands for the proposed Osceola Forest Reserve, Nevada." The proposed forest reserve comprised some 270,720 acres in three divisions-west, east, and south.[23]

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[20] Thomas G. Alexander, *The Rise of Multiple-Use Management in the Intermountain West: A History of Region 4 of the Forest Service*, United States Department of Agriculture, Forest Service, 1987.
[21] Eunice Miller, *The Timber Resources of Nevada* (Unpublished M.A. thesis, University of Nevada, Reno, 1924), 67-68, quoted in Harlan D. Unrau, "Baker Ranger Station," National Register of Historic Places Nomination Form (Washington, DC: U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service, 1992).
[22] L. Von Wernstedt, *Report on the Proposed Ely, Steptoe, Osceola, and Snake National Forests, Nevada*, Forest Service, 1906, Record Group 49, Records of the Bureau of Land Management, National Archives and Records Administration, Washington, D.C., quoted in "Baker Ranger Station," National Register of Historic Places Nomination Form.
[23] Chief, Division "R," General Land Office to Chief, Division "C," General Land Office, September 7, 1906; Chief of Drafting Division, General Land Of'fice to Chief of Division MR," General Land Office, September 10, 1906, RG 49, National Archives and Records Administration, Washington, D.C, quoted in "Baker Ranger Station," National Register of Historic Places Nomination Form.

This proposed Osceola Forest Reserve was never established. On February 10, 1909, President Theodore Roosevelt issued Proclamation No. 839, creating Nevada National Forest, a reserve covering much of the same area as the earlier Osceola proposal.[24] From 1912 to 1919, the boundary of the Nevada National Forest would be adjusted several times.[25]

Baker Administrative Site:

On May 16, 1911, President Howard Taft established the Baker Administrative Site in Baker, Nevada, through Executive Order 1354. On the recommendation of the Secretary of Agriculture, it ordered "that the E ½ of the NW 1/4 of Section 9, T. 13 N, R 70 E, MDM, Nevada, containing 80 acres, be temporarily withdrawn from settlement, location, sale or entry" and "be reserved for use by the Forest Service as a ranger station in the administration of the [Nevada] National Forest."[26]

The earliest document discussing the administration of the Nevada National Forest is an inspection report prepared by Inspector of Grazing Ernest Winkler on October 25, 1916. This report mentioned the forest supervisor, forest clerk, and four forest rangers' roles within the organization of the Nevada National Forest. Headquarters for the forest was located in Ely. The forest was divided into five administrative units: Schell Creek Division (291,570.5 acres); Mount Moraja Division (132,620 acres); Snake Division, which included the area of present-day Great Basin National Park (183,083.24 acres); Quinn Canyon Division (249,761.76 acres); and White Pine Division (362,929.94 acres). The five divisions were divided into four ranger districts, each under the immediate supervision of a forest ranger.[27]

Although the districts were relatively large, Winkler characterized them as having "limited activity," thus requiring little supervision. The grazing authorization for the entire forest was 6,000 cattle and horses and 56,000 sheep (1,500 cattle and horses and 13,000 sheep in the Snake Creek Division), and free use timber cutting and timber sales were limited. There was no range

[24] Theodore Roosevelt, Presidential Proclamation No. 839, Nevada National Forest, Nevada, February 10, 1909.

[25] Harlan D. Unrau, *Basin and Range: A History of Great Basin National Park, Nevada. Historic Resource Study*, Department of the Interior, National Park Service, 1990, 241-47.

[26] President Howard Taft, Executive Order No. 1354, Baker Administrative Site, May 16, 1911.

[27] Richa Wilson, *Privies, Pastures, and Portables: Administrative Facilities of the Humboldt-Toiyabe National Forest, 1891-1950, Historic Context Statement*, USDA Forest Service, 2001, 40.

immediately adjacent to the forest sheep used during the summer, so there was little likelihood of trespass on forest lands from that source. The cattle tended to drift off rather than on forest lands because they were accustomed to range in the valleys below. Given these conditions, there was not as intense a need for supervision in Nevada compared to other more heavily used forests, such as in Utah and Idaho. So the Nevada National Forest could "be successfully administered by four rangers" but would "necessitate close field supervision on the part of the Supervisor and the development of systematic and organized effort."[28]

Baker Ranger District:

According to the inspection report, the Snake Creek and Mount Moraja divisions were administered as part of the Baker Ranger District under the supervision of Forest Ranger Charles P. Thompson. District headquarters were located in the Baker Ranger Station "about a block, or a block and one-half from the Baker post office, store and hotel."[29] The ranger station was located on 80 acres of land, 20 of which produced "a rather poor stand of meadow grass."[30]

Among the essential administrative issues facing the Baker Ranger District, as well as the entire Nevada National Forest, were water development, trail construction, sign installation, boundary marking, and fire control. According to Winkler, efforts should be initiated to enlarge the grazing area of the forest by securing a proper water development system. He especially urged the construction of long, galvanized one-piece troughs supported by cedar posts "for sheep watering purposes."[31]

Trail development was to be deferred "in view of the more important projects, administrative and water development." Meanwhile, the rangers should be responsible for "brushing out and

[28] *Basin and Range*, 248.

[29] Ernest Winkler, Memorandum for the District Forester, Inspector of Grazing, 1440-Inspection, Year 1916, October 25, 1916, quoted in "Baker Ranger Station," National Register of Historic Places Nomination Form.

[30] Winkler, Memorandum for the District Forester.

[31] Winkler, Memorandum for the District Forester; *Privies, Pastures, and Portables*, 73.

keeping intact present trails." This could be done with minor inconvenience if the rangers "carry an appropriate axe for the purpose, at least a portion of the time."[32]

While road and trail signage had received little attention, Winkler felt that plans for such signs should be given immediate attention. He especially urged the necessity of placing fire warning signs on trees throughout the forest. Winkler also recommended that permanent boundary marking be expedited in Nevada National Forest. The boundaries were to "be marked with cedar posts, peeled and made conspicuous by the use of paint." Where posts were unavailable, "appropriate rock monuments built after a pattern that will distinguish them" should be constructed.[33]

By 1921, Forest Ranger Graham S. Quate supervised the Baker Ranger District. He was a new employee with the Forest Service, having experience in ranching and handling stock on the range. Before joining the Forest Service, he worked as a clerk for the Internal Revenue Service.[34]

In September 1932, Forest Supervisor Chester J. Olsen visited the Baker Ranger District to evaluate its administrative operations. His report, prepared on February 11, 1933, contained the following description of activity in the district:

> The Baker Ranger District is the smallest district on the Nevada N.F. and contains a gross area of 297,508 acres, the average for the Forest being approx. 516,000 acres. There are 141 miles of exterior Forest boundary, the average exterior Forest boundary being 248 miles for the six ranger districts. Permit obligations are 608 C[attle] & H[orses] and 14,452 S[heep] & G[oats] with no lambing privileges. There is some little timber activity on the district and a lot of recreational use on the Lehman Creek and Baker drainages. The Lehman Caves National Monument, which is under the supervision of the Government, is also located on

[32] Winkler, Memorandum for the District Forester.
[33] Winkler, Memorandum for the District Forester.
[34] C.B. Morse, Memorandum for District Ranger, 1440-Inspection, Year 1921, June 8,1921, National Archives and Records Administration, San Francisco Branch, San Bruno (Accession No. 61 333/Location No. 88830), quoted in "Baker Ranger Station," National Register of Historic Places Nomination Form.

the district. Everything considered the work on this ranger district is below the average on this Forest.[35]

Baker Ranger Station:

During the early 1930s, the Forest Service developed plans for a new ranger station complex of buildings at the Baker Administrative Site. Nevada National Forest Supervisor Olsen approved the improvement plan for the new building compound in the two-and-a-half-acre quadrant in the southeast corner of the site on May 8, 1934, followed by Assistant Regional Forester C.N. Woods' approval on September 13, 1934. The plan, generally followed as the new ranger station compound was built, provided for constructing three of the extant buildings at the site. This included two dwellings, one serving as an office, in addition to a single car garage and storeroom to be built according to standard Forest Service building plans. They also scheduled the construction of a well and pump structure and a four-horse barn. The plan delineated areas for lawn, flowers, and shrubs, a garden if water was available, walks, and a gravel driveway.[36]

From 1933 to 1936, the Forest Service built the new building complex at the Baker Ranger Station according to standard bureau building plans. They constructed five principal buildings: a dwelling, office, garage/storeroom (present cottage), barn, and warehouse (current garage/fire cache). Four of these buildings remain at the site today, with the dwelling being moved to the Ely District Ranger Station to be used as an Assistant Ranger's dwelling in January 1959.[37]

The Forest Service utilized funds and personnel provided by federal Depression-era agencies to construct the new station compound. These agencies were established to promote national economic recovery and the welfare of American society through national public works projects and conservation service jobs for the unemployed. For example, the Public Works Administration

[35] C.J. Olsen, Memorandum, 1440-Inspection Year 1933, February 11, 1933, National Archives and Records Administration, San Francisco Branch, San Bruno (Accession No. 61-333/Location No. 88830), quoted in "Baker Ranger Station," National Register of Historic Places Nomination Form.

[36] Improvement Plan, Baker Ranger Station, Nevada National Forest, May 8, 1934, Folio, Improvement Plans, Forest Service, Region Four, Baker Ranger Station, Historical Records, USFS, Elko, Nevada, quoted in "Baker Ranger Station," National Register of Historic Places Nomination Form.

[37] *Privies, Pastures, and Portables*, 154; Improvement Plan, Baker Ranger Station, 1934.

(PWA) worked to increase employment and business activity through "pump-priming" to stimulate the economy. The dwelling was built from 1933 to 1934 for $4,500 under the National Industrial Recovery Act (NIRA), with funding from the PWA.[38]

The Emergency Relief Appropriation Act, enacted into law on April 8, 1935, signaled the federal government's withdrawal from the arena of direct relief during the Great Depression. The act established a large-scale national works program to employ the jobless, leaving direct relief to the states and local communities. The Works Progress Administration (WPA), later renamed the Works Projects Administration in 1939, was the principal agency of this program. About 85 percent of the funds spent on WPA projects went directly into wages and salaries. By March 1936, the WPA employed more than 3,400,000 people, with the overall total at the end of its operations in 1943 reaching more than 8,500,000 different people on 1,710,000 projects, having spent around $11,000,000,000. Most of the projects were geared to the employment of manual labor. During its 8-year history, the WPA built 651,087 miles of highways, roads, and streets, and constructed, repaired, or improved 124,031 bridges, 125,110 public buildings, 8,192 parks, and 853 airport landing fields.[39]

Beginning in the summer of 1935, the Forest Service started utilizing funds and personnel provided by the Emergency Relief Appropriation Act for work projects in Nevada National Forest, including the projects at the Baker Ranger Station. For instance, on July 19, 1935, the Ely Record reported that 45 men "will be placed at work by the Forest Service in White Pine, Nye and Lander counties, according to [Nevada National] Forest Supervisor George Larson."[40] The Emergency Relief Appropriation Act had provided $37,110 for labor and $6,750 for materials for these work projects in the national forest. With the funds, the Forest Service intended to hire five

[38] Lisa Thompson, "Public Works Administration (PWA), 1933-1943," The Living New Deal, accessed June 9, 2022, https://livingnewdeal.org/glossary/public-works-administration-pwa-1933-1943/; U.S. Congress, House, National Industrial Recovery Act, HR 5755, Seventy-third Congress, 1st sess., , introduced in House March 9, 1933, https://www.govinfo.gov/content/pkg/GPO-CRECB-1933-pt1-v77/pdf/GPO-CRECB-1933-pt1-v77-3.pdf.

[39] U.S. Congress, Joint Resolution: Making Appropriations for Relief Purposes, 74th Cong. 1st sess., 1935. H.J. Res. 117; Donald S. Howard, The WPA and Federal Relief Policy (New York: Russell Sage Foundation, 1943).

[40] *The Ely Record*, July 19, 1935.

supervisors at $125 per month, 19 men from White Pine County, 18 from Nye County, and eight from Lander County. Except for the supervisors, the men would be hired through the employment offices. The men's monthly wages in towns such as Baker with populations under 5,000 was $55 for skilled labor, $45 for intermediate, and $40 for unskilled labor.[41]

According to available documentation, the Emergency Relief Appropriation Act of 1935 funded the construction of the office, garage, storeroom, barn, and warehouse from 1935 to 1936. The structures were built according to standard Forest Service building plans, and the bureau awarded the contracts for their construction.[42] Other projects related to the construction of the new compound also utilized funds and personnel provided under the act, such as installing a windmill and a complete water system.[43]

The Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) Reforestation Relief Act, enacted into law on March 31, 1933, represented the federal government's effort to promote American society's welfare by establishing a program to provide conservation service jobs for single, unemployed young men during the Great Depression. The act authorized the CCC to provide work for 250,000 jobless male citizens between the ages of 18 and 25 in reforestation, road construction, prevention of soil erosion, and national park and forest and flood control projects under the direction of army officers. Four government departments (War, Interior, Agriculture, Labor) cooperated in administering and implementing the program. The CCC had up to 500,000 enrollees at one time, and by the end of 1941, it had employed over 2,000,000 young men.[44]

The Forest Service also utilized the CCC to work on several projects at the new ranger station compound. The only documented projects at the new complex to involve the CCC were the erection of the windmill and the construction of the water distribution system (and presumably

[41] *The Ely Record*, July 19, 1935.

[42] Forest Ranger to Forest Supervisor, September 18, 1934, File-7310 Buildings & Related Facilities, Baker Guard Station 04-1122, Records, U.S. Forest Service, Ely District Ranger Station, Ely, Nevada; quoted in the "Baker Ranger Station," National Register of Historic Places Nomination Form.

[43] *Ely Record*, February 14, 1936.

[44] John A. Solmond, *The Civilian Conservation Corps 1933–1942: A New Deal Case Study* (Duke University Press, 1967).

the sewage system) between 1935 and 1936. During these projects, the CCC worked together with a small crew of men hired under the WPA.[45]

The new Baker Ranger Station was completed during the spring and summer of 1936. In April, The Forest Service hired J. Carroll Reiners, a landscape engineer and recreational planner from Los Angeles, to plot "the arrangement of improvements on about 12 recreational areas and administrative sites."[46] Reiners, who had developed plans for the recreational development of the Baker and Lehman creek areas the previous spring, prepared a "Landscape Planting Plan" for the Baker Ranger Station dated May 12, 1936. The plan provided for the construction of a low rock wall along the south edge of the station area, a driveway between the dwelling and the office, a two-space parking pad behind the office, a wash line along the east fence to the rear of the residence, graveled areas to the north and west of the office as well as the southeast corner of the quadrant, lawn areas to the west and south of the dwelling, a vegetable garden along the east fence to the northeast of the office, and a large barn and warehouse service yard. The plan identified the location of eleven Carolina poplar, nine silver-leaf poplar, and four Black Locust trees. In addition, it identified the areas where Nootka rose, golden currant, snowberry, red cedar, mountain juniper, common lilac, and syringa should be planted. While the plan was approved by Forest Supervisor George C. Larson on May 19 and was checked by landscape architect A.L Curtiss on June 1, the project never received final approval by the Ogden Regional Office and thus was never fully implemented. However, elements of the planting plan can be seen in the current configuration of trees and the shrubbery of the current layout of the station.[47]

Baker Guard Station:

[45] *The Ely Record*, February 14, 1936.

[46] *The Ely Record*, April 12, 1935.

[47] *The Ely Reward*, June 12, 1936; Nevada National Forest, Baker Ranger Station, Landscape Planting Plan, dated May 12, 1936, Folio, Improvement Plans, Forest Service, Region Four, Baker Ranger Station, Historical Records, USFS, Elko, Nevada, quoted in "Baker Ranger Station," National Register of Historic Places Nomination Form.

Various reorganizations during the 1940s and 1950s led to more efficient management of the Nevada National Forest.[48] In May 1957, the ranger districts in Nevada National Forest were consolidated as part of a cost-cutting move to streamline management. Among other organizational actions, the Baker and Ely ranger districts were combined with headquarters for the enlarged Ely District, including the Snake, Mount Moriah, and Schell Creek divisions in Ely. Thus, the Baker district ranger position was eliminated, and the ranger station was downgraded to a guard station.[49]

The boundaries of three national forests in Nevada were realigned on July 1, 1957. Nevada National Forest, with headquarters in Ely, dissolved, with the Charleston Mountain area near Las Vegas transferred to Toiyabe National Forest and the White Pine and Ely ranger districts transferred to Humboldt National Forest with headquarters in Elko. The realignment of administrative units was announced as "part of a servicewide program to increase the efficiency of operation and to give better service to the people who use the national forests."[50]

The Snake Division of Humboldt National Forest continued to be administered under the Ely Ranger District. Further consolidation and administrative realignment reduced ranger districts in Humboldt National Forest to five, Mountain City, Ruby Mountains, Jarbidge, Santa Rosa, and Ely, by 1984. The latter district, headquartered in Ely, administered the Schell Creek, Snake, and

[48] Organization Chart, Nevada National Forest, January 27, 1954, O-Organization-Nevada-General, CY 1954, RG 95, National Archives and Records Administration, San Francisco Branch, San Bruno (Accession No. 61B-320/Location No. 88817), quoted in "Baker Ranger Station," National Register of Historic Places Nomination Form.

[49] L.A. Dremolski, Forest Supervisor to Regional Forester, November 8, 1957, Notebook – *HNF History, Information & Education*; L.A. Dremolski, Forest Supervisor to Files, March 14, 1961, Notebook – *HNF History. Administration & Operation*. Historical Files, USFS, Elko, Nevada, quoted in "Baker Ranger Station," National Register of Historic Places Nomination Form.

[50] News Service, Forest Service, Release, June 27, 1957, Notebook – *HNR History. Information & Education*. Historical Files, USFS, Elko, Nevada, quoted in "Baker Ranger Station," National Register of Historic Places Nomination Form.

White Pine divisions, as well as Ward Mountain in White Pine County, the Grant Range in Nye County, and the Quinn Canyon Range in Nye and Lincoln counties.[51]

By the mid-1980s, the Forest Service used five facility sites to manage the Snake Division. One of these sites was the Baker Guard Station, consisting of an office, bunkhouse, two trailer pads, pumphouse, warehouse, barn, corral, fire cache, two metal buildings, and pasture.[52]

On October 27, 1986, Congress passed Public Law 99-565 (100 Stat. 3181) establishing Great Basin National Park, a 77,082-acre mountain park comprising lands within the Snake Division of Humboldt National Forest. As a result, the Forest Service vacated the Baker Guard Station, ending their 75-year-long use of the administrative site for bureau conservation and land management purposes. They transferred the 80-acre Baker Administrative Site to the National Park Service under the Department of the Interior Appropriations Act of 1991, approved on November 5, 1990, to be used as an administrative site for the park. It remains under this authority today.[53]

CRITERION C

Under Criterion C, the Baker Ranger Station is considered a significant property because it embodies "the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction" and represents "a significant and distinguishable entity whose components may lack individual distinction." Architecture is the applicable area of significance for which the ranger station has been evaluated under this criterion. The period of significance for the ranger station is the same as those stated under Criterion A. From 1933 to 1936, the Forest Service constructed three extant buildings (cottage, office, and barn) at the site according to standard Forest Service building

[51] U.S. Department of Agriculture, Forest Service, Humboldt National Forest Land and Resource Management Plan. Final Environmental Impact Statement. (1986), III-l, quoted in "Baker Ranger Station," National Register of Historic Places Nomination Form.

[52] Development, Special Uses, Basic Data, Great Basin National Park General Management Planning Team Files, Denver Service Center, National Park Service, quoted in "Baker Ranger Station," National Register of Historic Places Nomination Form.

[53] U.S. Congress, An Act to establish a Great Basin National Park, in the State of Nevada, and for other purposes, 99th Cong., 2nd sess., HR 2506, January 21, 1986; U.S. Congress, Department of the Interior and Related Agencies Appropriations Act, 102nd Cong., 1st sess., HR 2686, January 3, 1991.

plans. These buildings, which together formed the nucleus of the 1930s-era ranger station complex, represent the simple but functional vernacular-style administrative structures used by the Forest Service in Nevada.

Depression-Era Architecture:

Before the Great Depression, much of the Forest Service's construction was not thought out, with the sole purpose of getting things built quickly. They did not include much concern for future operations at these sites, such as future expansion needs. But as public conservation funding grew, the Forest Service's operations expanded with it, providing a new necessity for staff housing and equipment accommodation to adequately serve the Forest Service during this transitional period. The Depression-era programs, such as the CCC and WPA, focused on the thoughtful planning of administrative sites, ranger stations, and service compounds to serve a primarily functional role within the Forest Service. This meticulous outline for future construction allowed for a balanced arrangement of buildings and landscapes, incorporating economic development, harmony with surroundings, and conformation with existing physiographic conditions.

Individually and collectively, the administrative, protective, and recreational sites and structures reflect the comprehensive planning typical of the era and represent a distinct style of architecture. The durability of construction, attention to detail, and quality of workmanship are exemplified in the alphabet soup agencies' improvements of sites, such as the Baker Ranger Station. But beyond this, these landscapes embody a non-intrusiveness nature to their surroundings, incorporating the conservation focus of this period of Forest Service history. Such administrative buildings' refined style and support buildings harmonize with the natural environment as if almost becoming a part of it.

The Baker Ranger Station Architecture:

The Forest Service constructed four extant buildings (cottage, office, barn, and garage/fire cache) and portions of the utility systems and infrastructure of the 1930s-era ranger station complex. From 1933 to 1936, three buildings at the Baker Ranger Station compound were built according to the Ogden Regional Office's standard Forest Service building plans. Each regional office in the

Forest Service was responsible for preparing the site and landscape plans and designing individual structures within compliance with standards and guidelines for construction and materials established by the Washington Office.[54] These plans varied from region to region and reflected local availability of materials and supervisory expertise to some extent.[55] The three structures, their dates of construction, and building plan numbers are:

1. Cottage (1935) Building Plan R-4, No. 23
2. Office (1936) Building Plan R-4, No. 4
3. Barn (1936) Building Plan R-4, No 13B

The garage/fire cache was not constructed according to a standard Forest Service building plan. Still, its design and construction materials are similar and compatible with those of the three structures mentioned above. The residence for the Baker District Ranger was constructed according to Building Plan R-4, No. 1. This structure, however, was moved to the Ely District Ranger Station in January 1959.[56]

While the buildings have undergone some exterior changes and numerous interior modifications, the integrity of the structures is good. The alterations to the buildings have not detracted significantly from their overall ambiance and historic character.

National Register Significance Criteria

Criterion A: Event

Criterion C: Design/Construction

National Register Periods of Significance (with Historic Context Themes)

Start Year/Era and End Year/Era	Historic Context Theme	Subtheme	Facet

[54] R.H. Rutledge, *Building Construction Manual*, U.S. Department of Agriculture, Forest Service, Region Four, U.S. Government Printing Office, 1935, https://www.fs.fed.us/eng/facilities/documents/building_construction_manual.pdf.

[55] Elizabeth Gail Throop, Utterly Visionary and Chimerical : A federal response to the depression: an examination of Civilian Conservation Corps construction on National Forest System lands in the Pacific Northwest (MA thesis: Portland State University, 1979), 29-33, https://pdxscholar.library.pdx.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=3940&context=open_access_etds.

[56] Improvement Plan, Baker Ranger Station, 1934..

1933-1936 CE	Shaping the Political Landscape	Political and Military Affairs 1865-1939	Vernacular Architecture The Great Depression and the New Deal, 1929-1941
1933-1936 CE	Transforming the Environment	Conservation of Natural Resources	The Forest Service and Forest Preservation The Conservation Movement Matures 1908-1941
1933-1936 CE	Expressing Cultural Values	Architecture	Vernacular Architecture

National Register Areas of Significance

Category	Subcategory (only for Archeology and Ethnic Heritage)	Narrative
Architecture		
Conservation		
Politics/Government		
Social History		

National Historic Landmark

Status

No

World Heritage Site

Status

No

National Natural Landmark

Status

No

NRIS Information (with Other Certifications)

NRIS Name

Baker Ranger Station

NRIS ID

95001224

Other Name

Baker Guard Station; Baker Administrative Site

Primary Certification Date

10/17/1995

Chronology & Physical History

Chronology

Start Year	Start Era	End Year	End Era	Major Event	Major Event Description
1909	CE	1909	CE	Established	Nevada National Forest established with Proclamation 839
1911	CE	1911	CE	Established	Executive Order 1354 passed on May 16, 1911, establishing the site where the Baker Ranger Station would be located
1911	CE	1911	CE	Built	Ranger residence constructed
1918	CE	1918	CE	Established	Baker Ranger Station became a permanent year-round administrative site
1921	CE	1921	CE	Expanded	Ranger station consisted of the residence, two room log building (office/storeroom), garage, log barn, chicken coop, and pasture
1921	CE	1921	CE	Planned	Foundation for the Ranger residence planned.
1924	CE	1924	CE	Built	The original well at the Baker Ranger Station dug by hand
1926	CE	1926	CE	Expanded	The well at the station was deepened
1933	CE	1933	CE	Established	Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) Reforestation Relief Act enacted into law on March 31, 1933
1933	CE	1933	CE	Moved	Old ranger's residence moved by 1933 to the center of Baker and converted into a tavern
1933	CE	1934	CE	Built	New dwelling built from 1933 to 1934
1934	CE	1934	CE	Planned	Nevada National Forest Supervisor Chester J. Olsen and Assistant Regional Forester, C.N. Woods, approved an improvement plan for the new Ranger Station
1935	CE	1935	CE	Established	Emergency Relief Appropriation Act enacted into law on April 8, 1935

1935	CE	1936	CE	Built	Workers employed by the WPA constructed the office, garage, storeroom, barn, and warehouse
1935	CE	1936	CE	Built	CCC workers erected the windmill and the construction of the water distribution system
1936	CE	1936	CE	Developed	Baker Ranger Station completed during the spring and summer

Physical History

ORIGINAL BAKER STATION

The passage of Executive Order 1354 on May 16, 1911 established the site where the Baker Ranger Station would be located. According to President Taft, the land was to be "reserved for use by the Forest Service as a ranger station in the administration of the [Nevada] National Forest."[57] President Theodore Roosevelt established the Nevada National Forest two years prior with Proclamation 839.[58]

The first building at the new Baker Ranger Station was built in 1911.[59] Inspector of Grazing Ernest Winkler prepared the earliest description of the station in an inspection report from October 25, 1916. Winkler describes it as being "about a block, or a block and one-half from the Baker post office, store and hotel, with twenty acres of the station producing "a rather poor stand of meadow grass." The Baker Ranger Station itself did not "present a very dignified appearance" and was probably not up to the standards of the ordinary ranch houses in Baker." The ranger residence consisted of four small rooms. It was "constructed on a square similar to the usual Ranger Station house" and described as "unsightly," with several paint colors and no porch. A badly deteriorated barn was also on the premises, with an unfenced yard overgrown with weeds. This

[57] Executive Order 1354, May 16, 1911.

[58] Proclamation Number 839 (35 Stat. 2220), 1909.

[59] Descriptive Sheet, Improvement Plan, Baker Ranger Station, Nevada National Forest, ca. 1936, Folio, Improvement Plans, Forest Service, Region Four, Baker Ranger Station; J. Arlen Rounds, Building Maintenance Condition Survey, Ely Ranger Station and Baker Guard Station, Ely Ranger District, Humboldt National Forest, August 11 & 12, 1969, n.p. Historical Records, U.S. Department of Agriculture, Forest Service, Humboldt National Forest, Headquarters, Elko, Nevada, quoted in "Baker Ranger Station," National Register of Historic Places Nomination Form.

residence served as a home for Forest Ranger Charles P. Thompson and his family, as well as housing his office and Forest Service supply storage.[60] Thompson was the supervisor of the Snake Creek and Mount Moriah divisions of the Nevada National Forest, which created the Baker Ranger District.

The Baker Ranger Station did not become a permanent year-round administrative site until 1918.[61] Soon after that, improvements were carried out at the station. By 1921, Forest Ranger Graham S. Quate supervised the Baker Ranger District. C.B. Morse, Assistant Director Forester, described the ranger station improvements of that year. The station complex consisted of:

> a four-room frame house (26' x 26') boards vertical and battened with shingle roof; a two room log building (one used for office and the other for supplies); a 10' x 14' garage, log with corrugated iron roof; an 18' x 28' log barn with shingle roof; a little shack used for a chicken coop; and a good yard fence and pasture fence. The house, through the industry and ingenuity of the present Ranger and his predecessor, has been made into a fairly comfortable dwelling. One room was beaver boarded last year and is very comfortable and presents a very neat appearance. The rest of the house should be beaver boarded at the very earliest opportunity. The Ranger at this station comes in contact with the public more than the rest on this Forest and this station is visited more and the Service should provide quarters which are a credit to it. The house has no foundation, but it is planned to construct one this year. The two-room log building used for office and storeroom was built of old logs previously use for another building. They have done a very good job considering the material available and the building is a very serviceable one, although not very pretty to look at. The office room has been beaver boarded and has a good floor in it and makes a very presentable office. The store room is satisfactory for its purpose. An old cellar is on the place which is not much account and presents a bad appearance. It should be replaced. The garage is a good little building.

[60] Memorandum for the District Forester, Ernest Winkler, Inspector of Grazing, October 25, 1916, 1440-Inspection Year 1916, Record Group 95, Records of the U.S. Forest Service, National Archives and Records Administration, San Francisco Branch, San Bruno (Accession No. 61-333/Location No. 88830), quoted in the National Register Nomination for Baker Ranger Station.

[61] Descriptive Sheet, Improvement Plan, Baker Ranger Station.

> The barn is a one-story log building with shingle roof. It is 18' x 28' and has four double stalls. It's a pretty good stable, but is not provided with any room for hay, no grain bin nor saddle and harness room. There is a well-constructed woven wire fence around the yard and it adds materially to the appearance of the place. There is also a good wire fence on the rest of the 80 enclosing the so called pasture. The pasture is a place for stock to exercise. Hay must be fed the year around. Arrangements are being made for water for the place. It is badly needed. Quate has put in a little lawn and a number of trees and has a small stream of water for them and a small garden. The station as a whole presents a very good appearance and shows a lot of work by the Ranger.[62]

The original well at the Baker Ranger Station was hand dug during the spring of 1924 and deepened in 1926.[63] However, the need for an adequate water supply and the question of water rights for the ranger station would continue to plague Forest Service officials. These issues, along with others, surfaced in an inspection report of the station by C.N. Woods in October 1926:

> At the Baker R.S. some paint could be used to advantage, although it is not badly needed at that. The buildings at the Baker R.S. seem adequate. Modern plumbing should be installed if it is practical to do it and keep within the $500 limitation. A well furnishes water and water will have to be lifted by a windmill or gas engine if it is put into the house.
>
> There is no pasture at this station except within the yard and around the house, and hay has to be fed yearlong. We have been using water to irrigate the lawn and trees around the house. It seems doubtful whether we have any water right. I understand that steps have been taken to adjudicate the water, but I believe the Forest Service has not been in on this. If it is found we have no water right because of prior use of all the water by others, and it becomes

[62] Memorandum for District Ranger, C.B. Morse, Assistant District Forester, June 8, 1921, 1440-Inspection Year 1921, RG 95, National Archives and Records Administration, San Francisco Branch, San Bruno (Accession No. 61-333/Location No. 88830), quoted in "Baker Ranger Station," National Register of Historic Places Nomination Form.

[63] Rounds, Building Maintenance Condition Survey, n.p, quoted in "Baker Ranger Station," National Register of Historic Places Nomination Form.

necessary, it is thought we should make an attempt to buy enough water for the lawn, trees and garden. A cellar is needed at the Baker Ranger Station.[64]

DEPRESSION-ERA CONSTRUCTION. 1933-1936

During the early 1930s, the U.S. Forest Service developed plans for a new ranger station complex at the Baker Administrative Site. Nevada National Forest Supervisor Chester J. Olsen approved an improvement plan for this new station on May 8, 1934, followed by approval from the Assistant Regional Forester, C.N. Woods, on September 13, 1934. This plan called for the construction of four of the extant buildings at the Baker Ranger Station.[65]

First, two dwellings, one of which would serve as an office, and a single car garage and storeroom, were to be built according to standard Forest Service building plans. The plan also provided a well and pump structure and a four-horse barn. The proposal delineated areas for lawn, flowers and shrubs, a garden if water was available, walks, and a gravel driveway. The entire complex of structures for the new ranger station would be located within the two-and-a-half-acre plot in the southeast corner of the Baker Administrative Site.[66]

Before the construction of the new buildings, the existing structures were either removed from the site or dismantled for residents of the area to use these materials for other building projects. The old ranger's residence, for example, was moved to the center of Baker and converted into a tavern.[67]

POST-SIGNIFICANT CONSTRUCTION, 1936-PRESENT

[64] Nevada Inspection Report by C.N. Woods, October 1926, 1440-Inspection Year 1926, RG 95, National Archives and Records Administration, San Francisco Branch, San Bruno (Accession No. 61-333/Location No. 88830), quoted in "Baker Ranger Station," National Register of Historic Places Nomination Form.

[65] Improvement Plan, Baker Ranger Station, 1934.

[66] Improvement Plans, Baker Ranger Station, 1934.

[67] "Baker Ranger Station," National Register of Historic Places Nomination Form, Section 7, 5.

In 1970, a Forest Service residence was completed in the staff housing area at the monument, thus allowing the bureau to move the former residence at the Baker Guard Station to Ely.[68]

By the mid-1980s, the Forest Service used five facilities to manage the Snake Division. The Baker Guard Station consisted of an office, bunkhouse, two trailer pads, pumphouse, warehouse, barn, corral, fire cache, two metal buildings, and pasture.[69]

[68] John L. Schippleck, Interpretive Prospectus for Lehman Caves National Monument, Nevada, August 1973, 23, Vertical Files, Great Basin National Park, quoted in *Basin and Range*, 375.

[69] *Basin and Range*, 268.

Analysis & Evaluation

Analysis and Evaluation Summary

The physical integrity of the Baker Ranger Station district is evaluated by comparing landscape characteristics and features present during the period of significance (1933-1936) with current conditions. The landscape characteristics discussed in this section are natural systems and features, spatial organization, cluster arrangement, buildings and structures, circulation, vegetation, topography, land use, views and vistas, small-scale features, constructed water features, and archeological sites. Extant landscape features associated with these characteristics convey the site's significance as a Nevada National Forest district headquarters with Depression-era vernacular architecture. While there are extant landscape features from before and after the period of significance, they do not contribute to the site's significance.

While several modifications to the ranger station district have been carried out since its construction, the station retains a fair degree of integrity as a compound embodying the typical characteristics of a 1930s-era Forest Service ranger station in Nevada.

INTEGRITY

Location

Location is the physical place where the historic property was constructed or the place where the historic event occurred. The Baker Ranger Station landscape has remained in its location east of the Snake Range. This location offers scenic views of the surrounding landforms, as well as easy access to transportation throughout the National Forest. Individual features such as the 1930s cottage, office, and barn buildings remain in their original locations. As a result, the overall location of the developed area remains intact and retains integrity of location.

Setting

Setting is the physical environment of a historic property. Whereas location refers to the specific place where a property was built, or an event occurred, setting refers to the character of the area in which the property played its historical role.

Overall, the setting of the Baker Ranger Station landscape appears much as it did during the historic period. The district is set within the Snake Valley's dry, flat desert area, just east of the eastern Snake Range. West of the landscape is State Highway 487, which generally runs northwest to southeast. Features related to setting have changed little, and the surrounding native vegetation has remained unchanged. Topographic features and the positioning and arrangement of structures concerning the neighboring Snake Range have also remained unchanged and are significant in terms of the setting. Views from the area of Wheeler Peak and the surrounding ranges remain distinct and intact from the period of historic development. Overall, integrity of setting is unchanged.

Design

Design is the combination of elements that create a property's form, plan, space, structure, and style.

Forest Service staff and planners designed and constructed the Baker Ranger Station with the help of the WPA and CCC. Design significance is evident in the spatial organization of the area, building form, and use of native materials. The site plan is organized considering the purpose, utility, ease of approach, and general convenience when deciding the layout of buildings, driveways, and walks. Facilities are practical and simple in form, typical of Depression-era design, and follow a prototypical structure with gabled roofs, overhanging eaves, floor plans, and scale. Small-scale features, such as fencing, were also similar in character and appropriately scaled within the context of the surrounding natural areas. Despite the contemporary materials of some elements, many of the landscape features remain faithful to the original site plan. Overall, integrity of design is retained.

Materials

Materials are the physical elements combined or deposited during a particular time and in a specific pattern or configuration to form a historic property. The choice and combination of materials reveal the preferences of those who created the property and indicate the availability of particular materials and technologies.

Overall, the historic and natural materials of the Baker Ranger Station remain. The application of native materials in building construction and landscape features is a distinguishing characteristic of the district. Wood utilized in building construction continues to serve as an identifiable design element from Forest Service development in the 1930s. Using native materials reflects a conscious effort to design with locally available materials that fit with the surrounding landscape. Over time, minimal changes have occurred in terms of historic building materials.

The topography and soils are relatively intact except for minimal alterations that have occurred with construction projects. Vegetation communities present at the time of the area's development generally persist, and substantial retention of historic materials indicates integrity is retained.

Workmanship

Workmanship is the physical evidence of the crafts of a particular culture or people during any given period in history or prehistory. Most buildings from the period of significance remain, excluding the ranger residence, which was moved after the period of significance. Those remaining buildings have withstood decades of use with little maintenance, indicating high-quality craftsmanship. So, integrity of workmanship is retained.

Feeling

Feeling is a property's expression of a particular period's aesthetic or historic sense. It results from the presence of physical features that, taken together, convey the property's historic character. In conjunction with location and setting, feeling describes what the property feels like or the senses it evokes in a person on the property.

The physical features that comprise the site, including building clusters, vegetation patterns, views, and circulation features, create a feeling of a 1930s Forest Service administrative complex. These features collectively contribute to the rustic feel associated with this district. Overall, integrity of feeling is retained.

Association

Association is the direct link between an important historic event or person and a historic property. The Baker Ranger Station continues to function in some capacity for which it was

designed—as park residences and offices. The area's association with the WPA, CCC, and Depression-era design survives through building forms, circulation systems, materials, and organization. Similarly, the site's association retains integrity as an example of Forest Service planning ideals of the 1930s era that advocated for systemized construction for practical use. The overall integrity of association is retained.

Landscape Characteristics and Features

This section presents an analysis of landscape characteristics and associated features and a corresponding List of Classified Structures' names and numbers, if applicable. It also includes an evaluation of whether the feature contributes to the property's National Register eligibility for the historic period (1933-1936), contributes to the property's historic character, or if it is noncontributing, undetermined, or managed as a cultural resource. If a feature is non-contributing, it is evaluated as "compatible" (visually congruent with the historic character of the landscape) or "incompatible" (visually incongruent with the historic character of the landscape).

Natural Systems and Features

Natural systems and features are the natural aspects that have influenced the development and physical form of the landscape and can include geology, geomorphology, hydrology, ecology, climate, and native vegetation. The principal natural features of the area surrounding the Baker Ranger Station district include alluvial fans, bajadas, playas, bolsons, and pediments. These geomorphic landforms are typical of dry, arid climates, such as at Great Basin National Park. Wind and running water are primary agents of erosion and deposition in forming these features in such arid regions.

Alluvial fans, composed of older and younger alluvium, expand into the Snake Valley from the borders of Great Basin National Park. The highway from Baker to the park entrance crosses a gently sloping alluvial fan. Alluvial fans in the Great Basin commonly merge to form a bajada, a broad, continuous alluvial slope extending from the base of a mountain range into an inland basin.

Playas and bolsons in the Snake Valley may be viewed from various overlooks and mountain peaks in Great Basin National Park. The vegetation-free playas are underlain by stratified clay, silt, sand, and soluble salts. Playas are flat-bottomed depressions that are often temporarily covered by water due to spring runoff in Nevada. Bolsons are also flat-bottomed, alluvium-floored desert valleys or depressions centered on a playa. The term is generally restricted to the southwestern United States and Mexico. Bolsons collect the drainage from the surrounding ranges. Dry for most of the year, playas may become lakes during spring runoff, and in exceptionally wet springs, they may fill the entire bolson.

In summary, the natural systems and features that contribute to the development within the historic district retain integrity and contribute to the historic setting of the property.

Spatial Organization

Spatial organization is the three-dimensional organization of physical forms and visual associations in a landscape, including articulating ground, vertical, and overhead planes that define and create spaces. The spatial organization within the Baker Ranger Station is dominated by its relationship to State Highway 487, which links the district to the main travel route. The placement of each resource was to be considered with great care regarding practicality and aesthetic reasoning, according to the Region Four Building Construction Manual. This manual called for spacing of about fifty feet between each building when possible, each squared to the other, surrounded by an appropriate yard area that was fenced in. The Baker Ranger Station district follows these basic principles that guide the site's spatial organization, thus retaining its integrity and serving as a contributing landscape characteristic.

Image 1: Overview of the barn, corral, and garage/fire cache, looking east from State Highway 487.

Land Use

Land uses are the principal activities in a landscape that form, shape, and organize the landscape due to human interaction. Historic land uses associated with Baker Ranger Station include residential, administrative, and maintenance/utility uses. From 1911, the site was used for all three purposes, and they continue to serve the same or similar purposes today. Thus, the land use retains integrity and contributes to the landscape.

Vegetation

Vegetation includes deciduous and evergreen trees, shrubs, vines, groundcovers, and herbaceous plants and plant communities, whether indigenous or introduced in the landscape. The vegetation community of the Baker Ranger Stations is desert grasslands. Common plants include saltbush, sage, and various grasses. Trees in the quadrant include cottonwood, poplar, and black

locust. Some shrubbery has been planted around several of the buildings. Since 1990, the National Park Service has planted a few fruit tree seedlings from the historic Lehman Orchard near the mouth of Lehman Caves, the majority in a fenced-in area on the east edge of the ranger station compound. Turf areas are maintained west and southwest of the office.

NURSERY ORCHARD (Non-contributing)

Post-Historic and Existing Conditions:

In 1990 the National Park Service erected a fenced-in area along the east edge of the ranger station compound to the north/northeast of the office. The site's purpose was to serve as a nursery for fruit tree seedlings from the historic Lehman Orchard below the mouth of Lehman Caves. The Nursery Orchard is a non-contributing resource because of its age, and it is not associated with the buildings of the 1930s-era station compound.

Feature Name	Feature Contribution	CRIS CL Feature ID	CRIS-HS Resource Name	CRIS-HS Resource ID	FMSS Record Number
Nursery Orchard	Non-Contributing	201356			

Image 2: Overview of the orchard, looking south.

Circulation

Circulation refers to the spaces, features, and applied material finishes that constitute landscape movement systems.

GRAVEL DRIVEWAYS (Contributing)

Historic Condition:

Since the 1930s, the ranger station is accessed by two graveled driveways from the highway. One drive, which has a cattle guard at the fence line, passes eastward toward the cottage just south of the office. A second entrance to the ranger station passes east/northeast from the highway to the graveled service area to the west of the barn and garage/fire cache.

Post-Historic and Existing Conditions:

The two driveways exist today with their original 1930s alignments. They are in good condition and should be considered a contributing resource to the ranger station complex.

Feature Name	Feature Contribution	CRIS CL Feature ID	CRIS-HS Resource Name	CRIS-HS Resource ID	FMSS Record Number
Gravel Driveways	Contributing	201357	Baker Ranger Station Paths and Driveway	212624	

Image 3: View of gravel driveway leading to the cottage, looking east.

Buildings and Structures

Buildings are elements constructed primarily for sheltering any form of human activity in a landscape, while structures are components built for functional purposes other than sheltering human activity. The Baker Ranger Station includes four wood-frame buildings that date to the 1930s. These buildings are single-story gable roof structures painted white with green trim. In addition, the complex consists of a cement semi-cellar single-story gable roof structure painted white with green trim dating from the mid-1940s, an aluminum shed from the 1960s, and a log hoist from the early 1990s.

COTTAGE (Contributing)

*Historic Condition***:**

The cottage structure was originally constructed in 1935 as a single-story wood-frame building. The dwelling was built under contract by Mrs. Vida Simonsen according to Forest Service Building Plan R-4, No. 23, and was designed to serve as a single-car garage and storeroom. Its exterior walls were built with 6-inch fir channel rustic lumber. The storeroom (north portion of the structure) was lined with unpainted shiplap. The front (west) facade had a two-door swinging garage door on the south side.

Post-Historic and Existing Conditions:

From 1958 to 1968, the Forest Service remodeled the structure into a bunkhouse, converting the garage into a kitchen/bathroom and the storeroom into sleeping quarters. Doors were installed in the west and north facades. From 1968 to 1969, new electric wiring was installed, a propane furnace replaced the hot water flue heating system, and the walls were insulated with sheet rock. In 1974, a new septic tank was installed, and in 1978, refurbished the bathroom. The walls and ceilings were given new insulation, and new kitchen cabinets were installed. In 1986, a wood stove was installed in the living room/bedroom.

The bunkhouse served as living quarters for Forest Service seasonal help until 1986 when the bureau vacated the structure. In 1991 the National Park Service made various interior improvements to the building, preparatory to using it for year-round living quarters for park personnel.

The present cottage is a rectangular single-story wood-frame structure painted white with green trim. The building (18 feet x 24 feet) rests on a cement foundation with a gable roof composed of wood shingles painted green. A cement-covered chimney rises above the roof on the rear (east) side of the roof's crest. The front (west) facade has a window and front door, the rear (east) facade features a window, the north facade has a door, cement two-step porch, and electric meter, and the south facade has a window. A short cement wall and slab porch approach the front door. To the immediate south of the front door is a large plywood panel covering an opening where a garage door was once in place.

The structure's interior has been remodeled and modernized by the National Park Service since 1990 and is used for living quarters by park personnel. The north portion of the structure has paneled walls and a wood-burning heater and serves as a living room/bedroom with a closet extending from the rear part of the central interior wall. The south portion of the structure contains a modern kitchen/dining area and a bathroom to the rear. The kitchen and bathroom have painted sheetrock walls and linoleum floors.

The cottage is in good condition and should be considered a contributing resource to the ranger station complex. While the interior has undergone extensive remodeling and the exterior has had several modifications, the structure retains a reasonable degree of integrity.

Image 4: View of the north and east facades of the cottage, looking southeast.

OFFICE (Contributing)

Historic Condition:

As originally constructed in 1936, the office was a single-story wood-frame structure containing one room having approximately 500 square feet of floor space for use as office space by Forest Service personnel. It was built of 6-inch fir channel rustic lumber according to Forest Service Building Plan R-4, No. 4. The structure conformed to the standard building plan with several exceptions:

(1) addition of a window in the front facade similar to those in the north and south facades;

(2) reversal of the position of the front door from the north to the south side of the front facade;

(3) elimination of the window seat and combination table and cabinet; and

(4) movement of the flue to within 18 inches of the center of the rear wall.

Behind the office was a two-car parking area reached by a gravel driveway extending from the fence line along the structure's south. The west and north sides of the office were landscaped with gravel.

Post-Historic and Existing Conditions:
The Forest Service installed linoleum on the office floor in 1941. By the late 1970s, the office was heated with propane and had a wash basin. The structure was wired for electricity during the early 1970s. In 1978 the office was insulated, its interior walls were paneled, and its electrical wiring was upgraded.

The office served as office space for Forest Service personnel until 1986 when the bureau vacated the structure. The National Park Service remodeled the interior in 1990-91 and has since used the building for office space for park personnel.

The present office building is a rectangular single-story wood-frame structure painted white with green trim. The office (16 feet, 4 inches x 24 feet) rests on a cement foundation and has a gable roof composed of wood shingles painted green. The structure has a brick chimney. The front (west) facade features a wooden porch (painted gray) and three wood pillars (painted white).

The north and south facades have windows, while the front has a door on the south portion and a window on the north side. A cement sidewalk approaches the front of the office from the driveway, along with a lawn area also in front of the building. At the rear of the building is a small bathroom addition (approximately 5 feet x 5 feet) that was added by the National Park Service in 1990. The bathroom has an outside door on its south facade. The interior of the one-room office was remodeled by the National Park Service from 1990 to 1991 for use as office space by park personnel. Among the improvements were the installation of paneling, fluorescent lighting, a rug, and new electrical wiring and outlets.

The office is in good condition and should be considered a contributing resource to the ranger station complex. While the interior has undergone extensive remodeling, the exterior has been altered very little since the 1930s, except for the small bathroom addition at the rear of the structure. Thus, the office retains a relatively high degree of integrity.

Image 5: View of the south and east facades of the office, looking northwest.

BARN (Contributing)

Historic Condition:

As originally constructed in 1936, the barn was a two-story wood-frame structure containing space for two horses, hay, grain, and saddles on its lower floor. The upper loft served as storage for hay and grain. The structure was built according to Forest Service Building Plan R-4, No. 13B. The exterior walls were constructed with 6-inch fir channel rustic lumber. The original barn contained 192 square feet of floor space, not including a chicken coop attachment to the rear of the structure. The corral to the north of the barn featured a water trough at its east (rear) edge. The chicken coop was torn down during the summer of 1937, but another chicken coop addition was built at the rear of the barn at a later date. No other changes or modifications are known to have been carried out on the barn by the Forest Service.

Post-Historic and Existing Conditions:

The barn is a rectangular two-story wood-frame structure painted white with green trim. The building (12 feet x 16 feet) rests on a cement foundation with a gable roof composed of wood shingles painted green. The barn has no windows/openings on its north, south, or east facades. On its front (west) facade, it has a sliding barn door on a track on its lower floor and a swinging two-door opening for the loft on its upper story. The interior of the lower floor of the barn has unpainted wood siding, and the loft is framed with wood plank beams. The barn is used for storage.

A one-story wood frame addition (approximately 6 feet x 12 feet) is attached to the rear of the barn. The attachment is white with green trim and rests on cement cinder blocks. It has an asbestos-shingle roof that slopes to the east, windows on its north and east facades, and a door on its south facade. Once a chicken coop and general storage area, the attachment was remodeled by the National Park Service from 1990 to 1991 to serve as a tack room.

A metal hitching bar painted white extends west from the southwest corner of the barn's front facade. To the north of and extending from the barn is a white-painted, 7-sided wood-fenced corral (approximately 24 feet x 27 feet), with the barn as one side of the enclosure. A gate in the corral fence is adjacent to the barn. A smaller white-fenced corral or pen (approximately 15 feet x 18 feet) extends to the west of the larger corral.

The barn, tack room attachment, and adjacent corrals are in good condition and should be considered a contributing resource to the ranger station complex. While the tack room extension is not original and has undergone subsequent renovation, the barn and adjacent corrals have been little altered since the 1930s. Thus, the structure retains a relatively high degree of integrity.

Image 6: View of the barn's west façade, looking east.

GARAGE/FIRE CACHE (Contributing)

Historic Condition:

As originally constructed in 1936, the garage/fire cache was designed to be a warehouse. The structure was not built according to any standard Forest Service building plans. The warehouse had a concrete foundation (20 feet x 34 feet) projected twelve inches above the ground. The studding was 81/2 feet long and braced, and six-inch fir channel rustic lumber was used for the exterior wood-frame walls. The structure had a shingle roof and a ten-foot sliding wood door on the south (front) facade to fit a truck inside. The floor was gravel. A ten-foot room was partitioned off at the north end of the structure. The space provided warehouse storage, had a board floor, and was made mouse-proof. The room was later converted for use as a shop.

Post-Historic and Existing Conditions:

The garage/fire cache has been little altered since 1936. The aforementioned outside cupboard was added before 1954, and the fire hose drying rack was built in the 1970s or early 1980s. In 1973, the structure was wired for electricity, and in 1976 the interior walls and ceiling were insulated. A stove was installed during the late 1970s or early 1980s. In 1990, the National Park Service installed new insulation in the building.

The present garage/fire cache is a rectangular single-story wood-frame structure painted white with green trim. The building (20 feet x 34 feet) rests on a cement foundation with a gable roof composed of wood shingles painted green. The front (south) facade features a 10-foot sliding wood garage door on a track and a cement slab apron (approximately 15 feet x 18 feet) extending southward. The east and west facades each have two windows, and the rear (north) facade features a centrally located door and two cement steps between two windows. A storage cupboard is attached to the west corner of the north facade, and a roofed fiberglass awning-like cover projects over the electrical meter in the north corner of the east facade. A metal heating flue projects from the east side of the roof.

A cement slab lies adjacent to the northeast corner of the structure. A wire mesh grating elevated on cut log posts extends from the slab toward the east edge of the ranger station compound. This grating is a fire hose drying rack built by the Forest Service.

The interior of the garage/fire cache has a cement floor, and the interior walls are insulated but not paneled. The ceiling consists of wood rafters. The structure is used for parking one vehicle and providing storage space for parking firefighting equipment and materials.

The garage/fire cache is in good condition and should be considered a contributing resource to the ranger station complex. The structure, which has undergone only minor exterior and interior modifications since its construction in 1936, retains a relatively high degree of integrity.

Image 7: View of the east and north facades of the garage/fire cache and fire hose rack, looking south-southwest.

WELL HOUSE/PUMP HOUSE (Non-contributing)

Historic Condition:

Initially constructed in 1944, the well house/pump house was built according to Forest Service handbook standards. The structure housed an electric-powered pump and pressurized water tank. In 1953 a new 89-foot well was drilled, and a jet gasoline pump and pressure tank were installed in the well house/pump house. More recent improvements to the structure include roof insulation in 1977, upgraded wiring, and installation of a new pump in 1978.

Post-Historic and Existing Conditions:

The present well house/pump house is a rectangular, single-story, semi-cellar concrete structure painted white with green trim. The building (8 feet x 14 feet) has a gable roof of wood shingles

painted green. The structure's concrete walls are 8 feet in height, although four feet, eight inches of their stature are below ground surface. The front (south) facade has a weather-stripped wood door, and the front and rear (north) facades feature shiplap siding above the concrete walls extending 3 feet, 4 inches above the ground surface. Screened vents are cut into the shiplap near the gable's peak on both the north and south facades. An electrical meter and box are attached to the north facade.

A cement slab extends several feet south from the door on the south facade and around the west facade of the structure. Incorporated in the cement slab on the west side of the building is a square-shaped slab of older cement with the etched notation -- HGSQ 1924.

The interior walls and floor of the structure are cement, while the ceiling is composed of plank boards. Five cement steps lead from the front door down to the semi-cellar floor.

At the north end of the floor is a pressurized tank and pumping equipment for the ranger station well. Immediately to the north of the well house/pump house and south of the cottage is a white water storage tank.

Although the well house/pump house retains a high degree of integrity and its appearance is generally compatible with the other structures of the ranger station complex, it should be considered a non-contributing resource because it was not constructed during the period of significance.

Image 8: View of the west and south facades of the well house/pump house, looking north.

ALUMINUM SHED (Non-contributing)

Post-Historic and Existing Conditions:

The Forest Service erected the present Aluminum Shed (approximately 6 feet x 6 feet) during the 1960s or early 1970s. It is mounted on a cement foundation east of the barn and has a wood door on its east (front) facade. The Forest Service used the shed for paint storage, and the National Park Service, which mouse-proofed the structure during the early 1990s, continues to use it for storage.

The Aluminum Shed should be considered a non-contributing resource because of its age, its structural incompatibility with the rest of the ranger station complex, and its non-association with the buildings of the 1930s-era station compound.

HOIST (Non-contributing)

Post-Historic and Existing Conditions:

A hoist (approximately 10 feet x 10 feet), consisting of log corner supports and a metal frame on top, was constructed northeast of the barn (in the northeast corner of the two 1/2-acre ranger station compound) by the National Park Service during the early 1990s. A metal containerized off-loader holding sand for snow removal operations is suspended from the frame with chains.

The hoist should be considered a non-contributing resource because of its age, its structural incompatibility with the rest of the ranger station complex, and its non-association with the buildings of the 1930s-era station compound.

TRAILER PAD AND CEMENT FOUNDATION (Non-contributing)

Post-Historic and Existing Conditions:

The present Trailer Pad and Cement Foundation, located against the fence on the south edge of the ranger station complex, was constructed by the Forest Service during the 1960s. The trailer pad (approximately 18 feet x 40 feet) consists of a rock and gravel base. A square-shaped cement platform (approximately 6 feet x 6 feet) was included in the pad on which an aluminum shed was erected to house a washer, dryer, and Franklin stove.

The Trailer Pad and Cement Foundation should be considered a non-contributing resource because of its age, its structural incompatibility with the rest of the ranger station complex, and its non-association with the buildings of the 1930s-era station compound.

Feature Name	Feature Contribution	CRIS CL Feature ID	CRIS-HS Resource Name	CRIS-HS Resource ID	FMSS Record Number
Barn	Contributing	201358	Baker Ranger Station Barn	056840	
Cottage	Contributing	201359	Baker Ranger Station Garage & Storeroom	056838	

Garage/Fire Cache	Contributing	201360	Baker Ranger Station Warehouse	056842	
Office	Contributing	201364	Baker Ranger Station Office	056839	
Aluminum Shed	Non-contributing	201361	Baker Ranger Station Aluminum Shed	1171634	
Hoist	Non-contributing	201362	Baker Ranger Station Hoist	1171635	
Trailer Pad and Cement Foundation	Non-contributing	201363	Trailer Pad and Cement Foundation	1171636	
Well House/Pump House	Non-contributing	201365	Baker Ranger Station Well House/Pump House	1171637	

Views and Vistas

A view is the expansive and/or panoramic prospect of a broad range of vision that may be naturally occurring or deliberately contrived. A vista is a controlled prospect of a discrete, linear degree of vision intentionally contrived. The location of the Baker Ranger Station at the base of the Snake Range affords a variety of views. Upon entering the district, there is a 360 view of the Snake Valley area. To the west contains one of the site's most stunning views of the eastern Snake Range, including the iconic Wheeler Peak. To the east are the continued flat playas of the Snake Valley, which allows for an open view of the entire area. Overall, views remain similar to those of the historic period.

Image 9: View of Wheeler Peak to the west.

Small-Scale Features

Small-scale features provide detail and diversity for both functional needs and aesthetic concerns in the landscape.

CORRALS (Contributing)

Historic Condition:

To the north of and extending from the barn is a white-painted, 7-sided wood fenced corral (approximately 24 feet x 27 feet), with the barn as one side of the enclosure. A gate in the corral fence is adjacent to the barn. A smaller, white-fenced corral or pen (approximately 15 feet x 18 feet) extends to the west of the larger corral.

Post-Historic and Existing Conditions:

The corrals were built around 1936 to the north of the barn and featured a water trough at its east (rear) edge. They are in good condition and should be considered a contributing resource to the ranger station complex. The corrals associated with the barn have been little altered since the 1930s, and thus, the structure retains a relatively high degree of integrity.

FENCES (Non-contributing)

Post-Historic and Existing Conditions:

The existing fence around the portion of the ranger station compound encompassing the office, well house/pump house, and cottage encloses a rectangular plot of ground 110 feet by 139 feet. The fence consists of rough-cut pinyon-juniper posts connected by cut plank railing at their tops, and planks support a heavy wire mesh grating.

The portion of the compound encompassing the garage/fire cache, barn, hoist, and aluminum shed, as well as the graveled service yard adjoining the barn and garage/fire cache, consists of a barbed-wire fence supported by rough-cut pinyon-juniper posts. The fence in this portion of the quadrant follows the compound's north, east, and south sides are generally straight directional lines, but the fence line on the west side extends in a north-northwest alignment. To the west of this fenced area is another smaller enclosure following similar directional alignments and consisting of similar materials.

The fence lines associated with the two enclosures around the ranger station buildings follow the approximate original alignments associated with the 1930s-era compound. The Forest Service installed the smaller fenced enclosure west of the garage/fire cache, barn, hoist, and aluminum shed during the 1950s. While the fence lines are apparently in their historic alignments, it is logical to assume that the extant fences are not original.

While the historic evolution of the fences for the ranger station compound cannot be documented definitively, they lend a rustic appearance and contribute to the rural western ambiance of the station site. However, they should be considered a non-contributing resource because of their historical ambiguity and general non-association with the central purpose of the station.

Image 10: View of corral and the west and south facades of the barn, looking northeast.

Feature Name	Feature Contribution	CRIS CL Feature ID	CRIS-HS Resource Name	CRIS-HS Resource ID	FMSS Record Number
Corrals	Contributing	201368	Baker Ranger Station Corrals	056841	
Fences	Non-contributing	201366	Baker Ranger Station Fences	1171638	

Image 11: Overview of entrance/fence west of office, looking south.

Constructed Water Features

Constructed water features are built features and elements that utilize water for aesthetic or utilitarian functions in the landscape.

IRRIGATION DITCH (Non-contributing)

Historic Condition:

Several irrigation ditches once crossed the two-1/2-acre ranger station compound. One ditch crossed the compound from west to east north of the office. Another ditch crossed the compound from west to east just south of the barn and then cut to the northeast corner of the compound behind (east) the hoist. A third ditch, which is still extant, crosses the compound from the north-northwest of the office and then passes in a north-northwest direction west of the nursery orchard and east of the garage/fire cache, leaving the compound southeast of the barn

The extant ditch is privately owned and operates under special use permits. The water rights associated with the ditches extend back to the period preceding the 1911 withdrawal.

Post-Historic and Existing Conditions:

The extant ditch, approximately 1-2 feet wide, follows its general historic alignment across the compound. However, its course has likely changed somewhat due to periodic maintenance and erosion-related causes.

The irrigation ditch, while retaining much of its historic integrity, should be considered as noncontributing resource because it is private-owned and has no association with the construction and operation of the Baker Ranger Station.

Feature Name	Feature Contribution	CRIS CL Feature ID	CRIS-HS Resource Name	CRIS-HS Resource ID	FMSS Record Number
Irrigation Ditch	Non-contributing	201367			

Image 12: Overview of ditch, just north of the office, looking south.

Condition Assessment

Condition

Good

Condition Date

09/29/2023

Narrative

The landscape is in good condition with no immediate stabilization measures needed to improve the condition.

Impacts

Type	Impact Type – Other	Internal Source	External Source	Narrative	Date Identified
Exposure to Elements				Weather has various degrees of impacts throughout the site.	09/28/2023

Stabilization Measures

Narrative

No stabilization measures have been identified.

Treatment

Stabilization Measures

Undetermined

Approved Treatments

Type (Required)

Undetermined

Completed

No

Document

Other Document

Narrative

The park's Foundation Document recognizes the value of the park's historic properties, including cultural landscapes, and the need for a "Historic Structures Plan":

> Maintenance and treatment of historic structures at the park has been deferred for many years. These structures are deteriorating, and some have already been lost. There is also very little known about some of the historic structures. A historic structures plan would provide guidance, outline treatment strategies, establish priorities for the preservation and use of historic structures, and ensure National Historic Preservation Act compliance.[70]

The Foundation Document identified the following opportunities related to the fundamental resource of "Representative Resources of the Great Basin's 13,000 Years of Human History" and that are relevant to the Baker Ranger Station cultural landscape:

[70] NPS, "Foundation Document, Great Basin National Park," 9, 18.

- Assuming adequate funding, there is an opportunity to preserve and stabilize historic structures.
- Identify resources that are high priorities for preservation measures (stabilization, etc.) and/or for interpretation.
- Implement stabilization for seven historic structures for which the park recently received funding.
- Nominate more properties for listing in the National Register of Historic Places (and to identify priorities for listing and/or research).
- Raise public awareness of the rich cultural heritage of the Great Basin. Enhance interpretation of cultural resources related to underrepresented themes. For instance, develop waysides, brochures, virtual tours, etc.
- Great Basin National Heritage Area has been collecting and organizing oral histories. This information could be integrated into park interpretation.[71]

[71] Ibid, 46.

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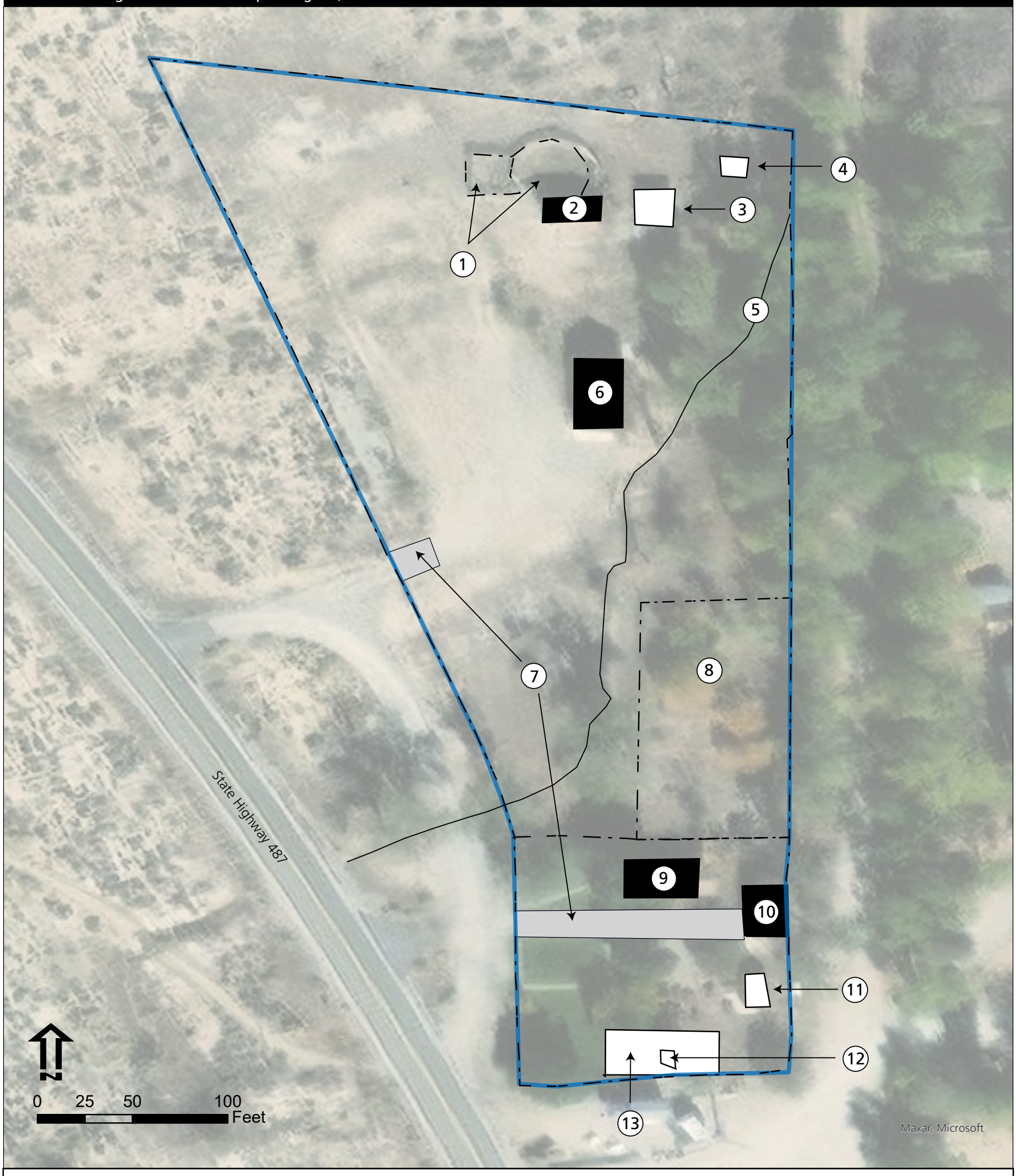
Supplemental Information

Baker Ranger Station
Site Plan

Baker Ranger Station Cultural Landscape Inventory
Pacific West Region Cultural Landscapes Program, March 2024

National Park Service
Pacific West Regional Office



Landscape Features

- Building or Structure - Contributing
- Building or Structure - Non Contributing
- Driveway
- Fence - Non Contributing (CRIS ID #201366)
- Cultural Landscape Boundary
- Irrigation Ditch

1. Corrals- Contributing (CRIS ID #201368)
2. Barn - Contributing (CRIS ID #201358)
3. Aluminum Shed - Non Contributing (CRIS ID #201361)
4. Hoist- Non Contributing (CRIS ID #201362)
5. Irrigation Ditch - Non Contributing (CRIS ID #201367)
6. Garage / Fire Cache - Contributing (CRIS ID #201360)
7. Gravel Driveways - Contributing (CRIS ID #201357)
8. Nursery Orchard - Non Contributing (CRIS ID #201356)
9. Office - Contributing (CRIS ID #201364)
10. Cottage - Contributing (CRIS ID #201359)
11. Well House / Pump House - Non Contributing (CRIS ID #201365)
12. Cement Foundation - Non Contributing (CRIS ID #201363)
13. Trailer Pad - Non Contributing (CRIS ID #201363)