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National Park Service  
Cultural Landscape Inventory  
2006



United States Coast Guard Point Reyes Lifeboat Station  
Historic District

Point Reyes National Seashore

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**National Park Service  
Cultural Landscape Inventory  
2006**

**Point Reyes Lifeboat Station Historic District  
Point Reyes National Seashore**

Point Reyes National Seashore concurs with the general findings of this Cultural Landscape Inventory, including the Management Category and Condition Assessment as listed below:

MANAGEMENT CATEGORY: **A: Must be preserved and maintained**

CONDITION ASSESSMENT: **Good**



Superintendent, Point Reyes National Seashore

6/30/06

Date

Please return to:

Erica Owens

CLI Coordinator

National Park Service

Pacific West Regional Office

909 First Avenue

Seattle, WA 98104-1060



# UNITED STATES COAST GUARD POINT REYES LIFEBOAT STATION HISTORIC DISTRICT POINT REYES NATIONAL SEASHORE

## California SHPO Eligibility Determination

### Section 110 Actions Requested:

- 1) SHPO concurrence on the revised boundary for the United States Coast Guard Point Reyes Lifeboat Station Historic District. The boundary has been expanded from both the 1985 National Register nomination and subsequent 1990 National Historic Landmark designation to include associated landscape features. (See pages 6 and 16 of the CLI).
- 2) SHPO concurrence with expansion of the period of significance from 1927-1939 to 1927-1957. (See page 16 of the CLI).
- 3) SHPO concurrence that the Setting as identified in the CLI, contributes to the significance of the site. (See the following landscape characteristics: natural systems and features, spatial organization, topography, circulation, vegetation, and views and vistas).
- 4) SHPO concurrence with the list of contributing and non-contributing structures to the United States Coast Guard Point Reyes Lifeboat Station Historic District. (See tables below.)

1) ☒ I concur, ☐ I do not concur with the **boundary** established for United States Coast Guard Point Reyes Lifeboat Station Historic District as described in the Cultural Landscape Inventory (CLI).

2) ☒ I concur, ☐ I do not concur with the proposed **period of significance** expansion for the United States Coast Guard Point Reyes Lifeboat Station Historic District as described in the Cultural Landscape Inventory (CLI).

3) ☒ I concur, ☐ I do not concur that the **setting** as described in the CLI contributes to United States Coast Guard Point Reyes Lifeboat Station Historic District.

4) The following structures are already listed on the National Register of Historic Places as **contributing features** of the United States Coast Guard Point Reyes Lifeboat Station Historic District:

| LCS Number | Structure Name                                                     | NRIS Number |
|------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------|
| 9235       | Point Reyes Lifeboat Station One-Car Garage                        | 85002756    |
| 9236       | Point Reyes Lifeboat Station Pumphouse                             | 85002756    |
| 9237       | Point Reyes Lifeboat Station Fire Pumphouse                        | 85002756    |
| 9238       | Point Reyes Lifeboat Station Boathouse                             | 85002756    |
| 9239       | Point Reyes Lifeboat Station Three-Stall Garage                    | 85002756    |
| 9240       | Point Reyes Lifeboat Station OIC Quarters                          | 85002756    |
| 16044      | Point Reyes Lifeboat Station Water Storage Tank #1 (foundation)    | 85002756    |
| 16045      | Point Reyes Lifeboat Station Water Storage Tank #2                 | 85002756    |
| 16046      | Point Reyes Lifeboat Station Stone-Faced Wall                      | 85002756    |
| 16047      | Point Reyes Lifeboat Station Water Storage Tank #3                 | 85002756    |
| 16048      | Point Reyes Lifeboat Station Water Storage Tank #4 (reconstructed) | 85002756    |

Eligibility Determination

United States Coast Guard Point Reyes Lifeboat Station Historic District

1 of 3

| LCS Number | Structure Name                             | NRIS Number |
|------------|--------------------------------------------|-------------|
| 16049      | Point Reyes Lifeboat Station Low Rock Wall | 85002756    |
| 56311      | Point Reyes Lifeboat Station Road          | 85002756    |

Based on the information provided in the CLI, the following unevaluated structures have been identified as **contributing** to United States Coast Guard Point Reyes Lifeboat Station Historic District:

| LCS number | Structure Name                                                   | Date Built | Concur | Do not Concur |
|------------|------------------------------------------------------------------|------------|--------|---------------|
| 22267      | Point Reyes Lifeboat Station Marine Railway                      | 1927       | X      |               |
| 55741      | Point Reyes Lifeboat Station Motor Lifeboat                      | 1953       | X      |               |
| 56312      | Point Reyes Lifeboat Station Fuel Tanks                          | 1955       | X      |               |
| 56313      | Point Reyes Lifeboat Station Concrete Walks and Steps            | 1940       | X      |               |
| 447845     | Point Reyes Lifeboat Station Fuel Tanks to Lookout Tower Road    | 1942       | X      |               |
| 451426     | Point Reyes Lifeboat Station Officer-in-Charge Quarters Driveway | ca. 1935   | X      |               |

Based on the information provided in the CLI, the following structures were constructed after the period of significance or are otherwise **not contributing** to the United States Coast Guard Point Reyes Lifeboat Station Historic District:

| LCS number | Structure Name                            | Date Built                          | Concur | Do not Concur |
|------------|-------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|--------|---------------|
| 56314      | Point Reyes Lifeboat Station Drake Plaque | 1950                                | X      |               |
| 56315      | Point Reyes Lifeboat Station NHL Plaque   | 1990                                | X      |               |
| n/a        | Chimney Rock Trail                        | modern, post-period of significance | X      |               |
| n/a        | Propane Tanks                             | modern, post-period of significance | X      |               |
| n/a        | Recycle Bin                               | modern, post-period of significance | X      |               |
| n/a        | Split Rail Fence                          | modern, post-period of significance | X      |               |
| n/a        | Gates                                     | modern, post-period of significance | X      |               |

Reasons/comments why any 'Do Not Concur' blocks were checked:

N/A

 DSHPO 9-26-2006  
California State Historic Preservation Officer Date

Please return forms to the attention of:

*Kimball Koch*  
*Cultural Landscape Program Lead-Oakland*  
*National Park Service*  
*Pacific West Regional Office-Oakland*  
*1111 Jackson St. Suite 700*  
*Oakland, CA, 94607*  
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## Executive Summary

### General Introduction to the CLI

The Cultural Landscapes Inventory (CLI) is a comprehensive inventory of all historically significant landscapes within the National Park System. This evaluated inventory identifies and documents each landscape's location, physical development, significance, National Register of Historic Places eligibility, condition, as well as other valuable information for park management. Inventoried landscapes are listed on, or eligible for, the National Register of Historic Places, or otherwise treated as cultural resources. To automate the inventory, a web-based, national CLI database was created in 2005. The "Web CLI" provides an analytical tool for querying information associated with the CLI.

The CLI, like the List of Classified Structures (LCS), assists the National Park Service (NPS) in its efforts to fulfill the identification and management requirements associated with Section 110(a) of the National Historic Preservation Act, NPS Management Policies (2001), and Director's Order No. 28: Cultural Resource Management (1998). Since launching the CLI nationwide, the NPS, in response to the Government Performance and Results Act (GPRA), is required to report on an annual performance plan that is tied to 6-year strategic plan. The NPS strategic plan has two goals related to cultural landscapes: condition (1a7) and progress on the CLI (1b2b). Because the CLI is the baseline of cultural landscapes in the National Park System, it serves as the vehicle for tracking these goals.

For these reasons, the Park Cultural Landscapes Program considers the completion of the CLI to be a servicewide priority. The information in the CLI is useful at all levels of the park service. At the national and regional levels it is used to inform planning efforts and budget decisions. At the park level, the CLI assists managers to plan, program, and prioritize funds. It is a record of cultural landscape treatment and management decisions and the physical narrative may be used to enhance interpretation programs.

Implementation of the CLI is coordinated on the Region/Support Office level. Each Region/Support Office creates a priority list for CLI work based on park planning needs, proposed development projects, lack of landscape documentation (which adversely affects the preservation or management of the resource), baseline information needs and Region/Support office priorities. This list is updated annually to respond to changing needs and priorities. Completed CLI records are uploaded at the end of the fiscal year to the National Center for Cultural Resources, Park Cultural Landscapes Program in Washington, DC. Only data officially entered into the National Center's CLI database is considered "certified data" for GPRA reporting.

A number of steps are involved in completing a CLI. The process begins when the CLI team meets with park management and staff to clarify the purpose of the CLI and is followed by historical research, documentation, and fieldwork. Information is derived from two efforts: secondary sources that are usually available in the park's or regions' files, libraries, and archives and on-site landscape investigation(s). This information is entered into CLI database as text or graphics. A park report is generated from the database and becomes the vehicle for consultation with the park and the SHPO/TPO.

The ultimate goal of the Park Cultural Landscapes Program is a complete inventory of landscapes, component landscapes, and where appropriate, associated landscape features in the National Park System. The end result, when combined with the LCS, will be an inventory of all physical aspects of any given property.

## **Relationship between the CLI and a CLR**

While there are some similarities, the CLI is not the same as a Cultural Landscape Report (CLR). Using secondary sources, the CLI provides information to establish historic significance by determining whether there are sufficient extant features to convey the property's historic appearance and function. The CLI includes the preliminary identification and analysis to define contributing features, but does not provide the more definitive detail contained within a CLR, which involves more in-depth research, using primary rather than secondary source material.

The CLR is a treatment document and presents recommendations on how to preserve, rehabilitate, or restore the significant landscape and its contributing features based on historical documentation, analysis of existing conditions, and the Secretary of the Interior's standards and guidelines as they apply to the treatment of historic landscapes. The CLI, on the other hand, records impacts to the landscape and condition (good, fair, poor) in consultation with park management. Stabilization costs associated with mitigating impacts may be recorded in the CLI and therefore the CLI may advise on simple and appropriate stabilization measures associated with these costs if that information is not provided elsewhere.

When the park decides to manage and treat an identified cultural landscape, a CLR may be necessary to work through the treatment options and set priorities. A historical landscape architect can assist the park in deciding the appropriate scope of work and an approach for accomplishing the CLR. When minor actions are necessary, a CLI park report may provide sufficient documentation to support the Section 106 compliance process.

## Park Information

**Park Name:** Point Reyes National Seashore  
**Administrative Unit:** Point Reyes National Seashore  
**Park Organization Code:** 8530  
**Park Alpha Code:** PORE

## Property Level And CLI Number

**Property Level:** Landscape  
**Name:** Point Reyes Lifeboat Station Historic District  
**CLI Identification Number:** 725182  
**Parent Landscape CLI ID Number:**

## Inventory Summary

### Completion Status:

|                      |                                        |
|----------------------|----------------------------------------|
| Data Collected:      | 1/10/2006                              |
| Data Collection:     | Timothy Babalis and Gretchen Stromberg |
| Date Entered:        | 3/31/2006                              |
| Data Entry Recorder: | Gretchen Stromberg                     |
| Site Visit:          | Yes                                    |
| Date of Concurrence  | TBD                                    |

## Landscape Description

The Point Reyes Lifeboat Station is a 13-acre historic district located at Point Reyes National Seashore in California that listed on the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) in 1985 and was designated a National Historic Landmark (NHL) in 1990. It is located close to the tip of Point Reyes on a steep north-facing slope, above the protected waters of Drake's Bay. The 1990 NHL documentation for the Lifeboat Station identifies the period of significance from 1927 to 1939. Research conducted to complete the CLI revealed that the period of significance extends from 1927 to 1957. This time frame includes the entire era of development at its existing site.

The Point Reyes Lifeboat Station contains structures associated with maritime transportation and early social and humanitarian efforts. The original Point Reyes Lifeboat Station was built along the unprotected shores of the Pacific Ocean northwest of the existing station in 1889 to aid ships stranded or wrecked at sea. The Station was moved in 1927 to the more protected waters of Drake's Bay. It has stood in its present location since 1927 with some alterations being made to the historic district throughout the period of significance. The major contributing features of the district include the marine railway, boathouse, Officer-in-Charge quarters, three-car garage, one-car garage, and pumphouse. Additional landscape features include a Monterey cypress windbreak, lawns, footpaths, driveways, roads, water tanks, retaining walls, and fences. Some features such as planting beds, wheelchair accessible ramps, propane tanks, and some of the ornamental vegetation were added after the period of significance ended and therefore do not contribute to the significance of the historic district.

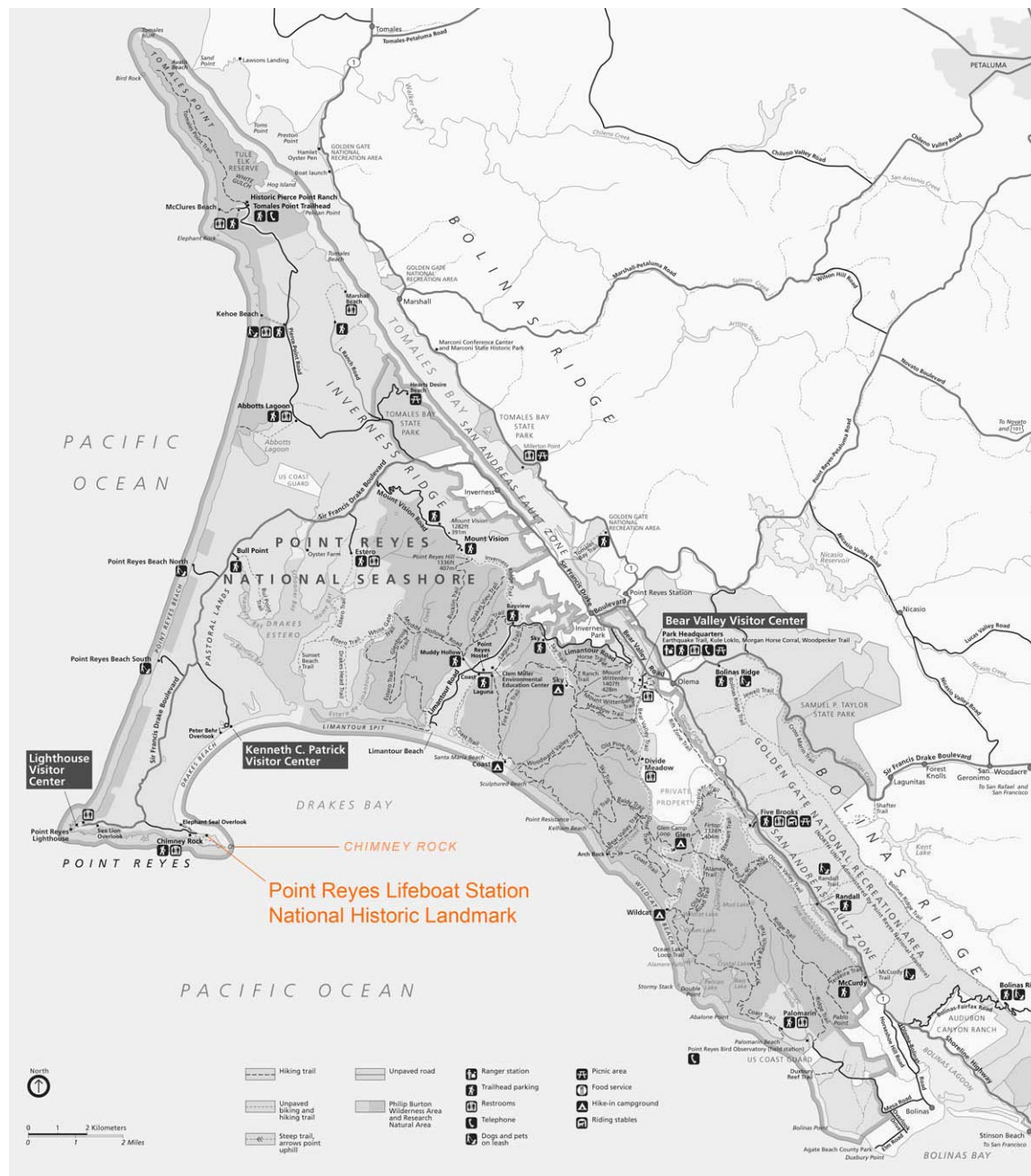
Currently, the boathouse and marine railway are maintained and used by the National Park Service. The boathouse was recently restored and the marine railway is currently being restored. The Officer-in-Charge quarters and associated grounds are being maintained by its current residents, two NPS employees. Overall, the district is in good condition and exhibits all seven aspects of integrity as defined by the National Register of Historic Places. Because it is a National Historic Landmark, the district falls into Management Category A: Must Be Preserved and Maintained.

Those landscape characteristics that contribute to the significance of the district include natural systems and features, spatial organization, topography, views and vistas, vegetation, circulation, buildings and structures, small scale features, and archeological sites. The natural systems and features on site provided an ideal location for a lifeboat station. The protected shores and narrow beach along Drake's Bay, the clear views of the Pacific and Drake's Bay from the lookout tower, and the calm waters allowed for easier rescues than at the first Point Reyes life-saving station site. The remaining contributing buildings and structures display how the site was spatially organized and used during the period of significance. The footpaths, roads, and driveways that date to the 1920s and 1930s development, are relatively unchanged and function as they did when they were first built. And, although less manicured than during the period of significance, vegetation patterns such as rectilinear lawns, hedges, and Monterey cypress windbreaks are still present and contribute to the character and setting of the historic district.

## Cultural Landscape Inventory Hierarchy Description

The Point Reyes Lifeboat Station Historic District is a landscape with no component landscapes.

## Location Map



Location Map No. 1. Point Reyes Lifeboat Station NHL location map

## Boundary Description

The Point Reyes Lifeboat Station historic district boundary that is proposed in this document encompasses 75-acres and is larger than the 13-acre National Historic Landmark boundary that was established in 1990. This historic district boundary is a larger rectangle (approximately 1,400-feet by 2,300-feet square) that encompasses the lookout tower ruin and the lookout tower road (neither of which were included in the NHL boundary). It begins approximately 1,200-feet northeast of the lookout tower. It travels southwest to a point approximately 200-feet south of the lookout tower. From here, it travels northwest for approximately 2,300 feet. From this point it travels northeast for 1,400 feet. From this corner it travels southeast for 2,300 feet, and rejoins the beginning point.

## Regional Context

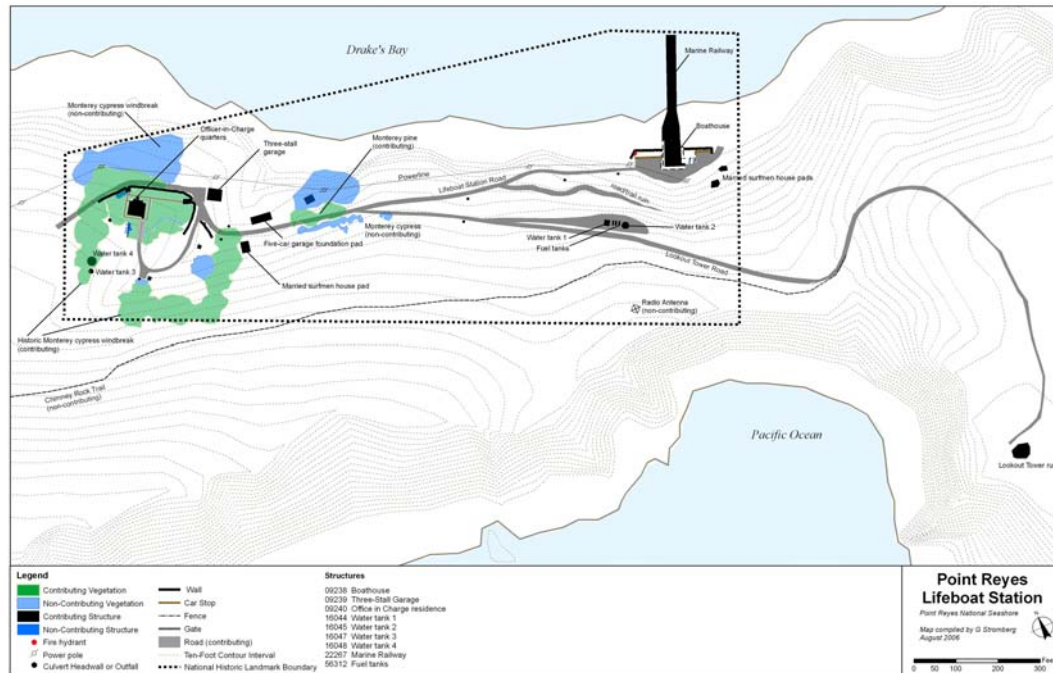
### Physiographic Context

Located in Point Reyes National Seashore, the Point Reyes Lifeboat Station is a 75-acre site adjacent to, and extending into, Drake's Bay. Located on the north side of a steep slope, this site abuts the Bay, providing a relatively sheltered access to the water for the lifesaving crews. The area is sparsely vegetated with a coastal bluff mix.

### Political Context

The Point Reyes Lifeboat Station was operated under the Pacific Area U.S. Coast Guard until it was deactivated in 1968. Some of the land was owned by the U.S. Coast Guard and small areas of land were leased by crewmembers from the Mendoza family who owned the surrounding ranch land. In 1969, the U.S. Coast Guard land was transferred to the National Park Service, and in the 1970s the Mendoza land was purchased by the National Park Service. The Point Reyes Lifeboat Station is located in Marin County in California Congressional District 6.

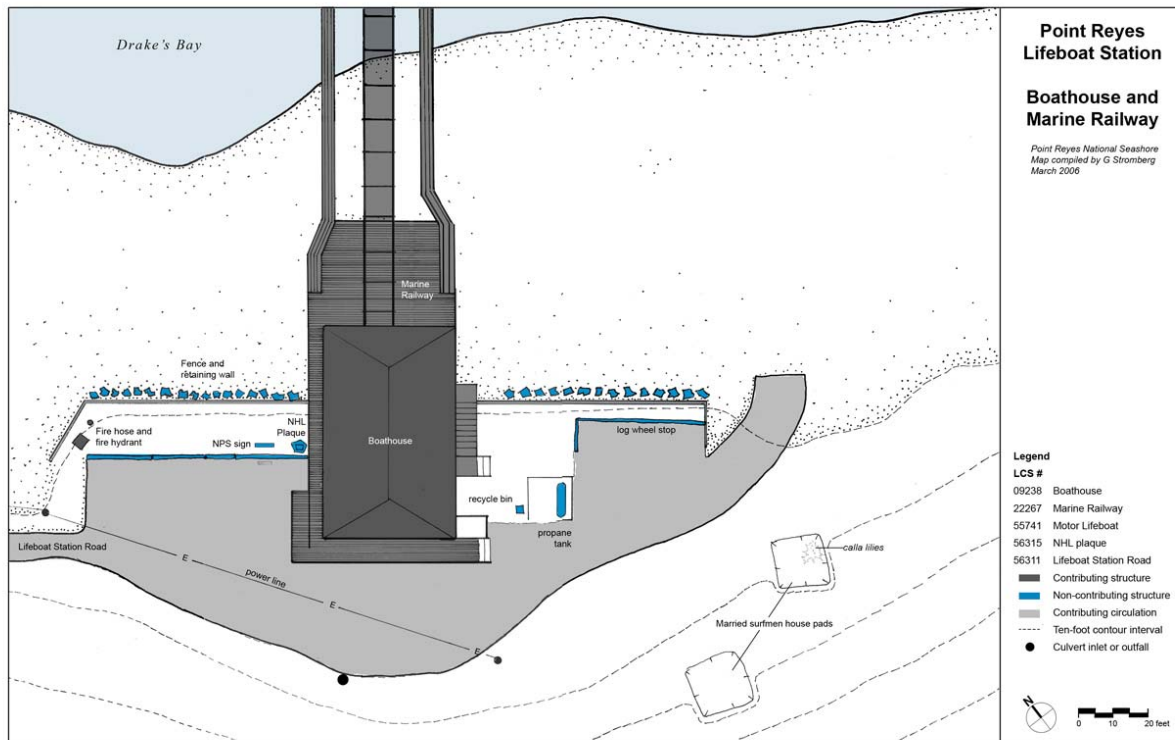
## Site Plan



Site Plan No. 1: Map showing existing development and the National Historic Landmark boundary. See Appendix for a larger version of the map (PWRO 2005).



Site Plan No. 2: Map showing existing conditions within the Officer-in-Charge quarters area. See Appendix for a larger version of the map (PWRO 2005).



Site Plan No. 3: Map showing existing conditions within the Boathouse and Marine Railway area. See Appendix for a larger version of the map (PWRO 2005).

## CHRONOLOGY

| Year | Event       | Description                                                                                                                                                             |
|------|-------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1878 | Established | (June 18) The United States Life-Saving Service was established by an act of Congress.                                                                                  |
| 1886 | Established | The life-saving station was proposed for Point Reyes.                                                                                                                   |
| 1888 | Purchased   | (January 20) Three-and-a-half acres were purchased from landowner Charles Webb Howard on Ten Mile Beach at Point Reyes for life-saving station.                         |
| 1889 | Built       | (August 15) The Point Reyes Life-Saving Station was completed. Caretaker Henry Boesen moved in for a period of seven months.                                            |
| 1890 | Developed   | (April 5) The first keeper moved to the station and began preparing the facility for active service.                                                                    |
| 1890 | Developed   | (July 8) A full complement of surfmen enlisted. The station began active service.                                                                                       |
| 1894 | Built       | (Fall) The auxiliary boathouse was built on Drake's Bay below B Ranch.                                                                                                  |
| 1912 | Platted     | (March) Sites were surveyed at Drake's Bay for the new lifeboat station.                                                                                                |
| 1913 | Purchased   | (January 2) The property for the proposed lifeboat station was purchased from heirs of Charles Webb Howard.                                                             |
| 1915 | Established | (March) The U.S. Coast Guard was established through the consolidation of the Life-Saving Service and the Revenue Cutter Service.                                       |
| 1920 | Built       | The F.E. Booth fishing dock was built near the site of the proposed lifeboat station on Drake's Bay. This was the first of three docks that would be built in the area. |
| 1923 | Platted     | (Spring) The Coast Guard engineer-surveyed the property on Drake's Bay and began drawing plans for new lifeboat station.                                                |
| 1923 | Built       | The Paladini fish dock was built adjacent to the future Coast Guard lifeboat station.                                                                                   |
| 1925 | Designed    | (December, 1924 through April, 1925) Plans were drawn for the boathouse, launchway and Officer-in-Charge quarters.                                                      |

| Year | Event       | Description                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |
|------|-------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1925 | Designed    | (June through July) Bids were solicited. All proposals were rejected and work was postponed.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |
| 1926 | Designed    | (June through July) A new round of bids was solicited. A \$42,162.00 contract was awarded to Fred J. Maurer and Son of Eureka, California. Construction began.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
| 1927 | Built       | (June) The boathouse and Officer-in-Charge quarters were completed. Work was accepted by Coast Guard engineers, and a surfman caretaker occupied the station until a full crew could be assigned.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
| 1927 | Built       | The Officer-in-Charge quarters area consisted of the main residence, three-car garage (initially unpainted), and one wooden water tank in the southwest corner. This tank rested on a platform directly on the ground. There were also two small buildings, probably both pumphouses, one in the southwest corner next to the water tank and one in the southeast corner. Both had been removed by 1940. A wooden fence consisting of posts with a single wooden cap rail (and possibly wire beneath) was constructed around the perimeter of the residential area. The cap rail was painted white, but the posts were left unpainted. There was no landscaping. A wreck pole was later installed on the hillside just west of the pumphouse (one-car garage), probably around 1930. |
| 1927 | Built       | The boathouse area consisted of the original boathouse (without the 1946 shed extensions), marine railway and adjacent piers, and the small, hipped-roof powerhouse building just south of the boathouse entrance at the foot of the hill. The area between the two buildings was landscaped as a small, rectangular courtyard, and foundation plantings were introduced along the south wall of the boathouse (which at that time had no porch). A wooden water tank stood next to the powerhouse on the east side of the courtyard. The boathouse area was accessed by a steep wooden staircase from the top of the bluff. (A narrow trail led to the adjacent Paladini Docks, roughly following the route of the current road).                                                   |
| 1927 | Purchased   | (August 7) The first motor lifeboat, No. 3042, was installed at the new boathouse.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |
| 1927 | Established | (September 18) Officer-in-Charge Howard A. Underhill and the Coast Guard crew occupied new station. The Coast Guard ensign was raised at 4:30 p.m., and the U.S. Coast Guard Station No. 313 officially began active service.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |

| Year   | Event         | Description                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |
|--------|---------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1927   | Land Transfer | (September) The original life-saving station (U.S. Coast Guard Station No. 320) on Ten Mile Beach was conveyed to the U.S. Navy.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
| 1927   | Built         | (Fall) Three outbuildings—a well/pumphouse, three-car garage, and the powerhouse (non-extant)—were constructed by station crew.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |
| c.1928 | Planted       | Underhill planted a Monterey cypress windbreak around the perimeter of Officer-in-Charge quarters area. Only the northeast corner was left unplanted. This was the first significant landscaping to be introduced to the Officer-in-Charge quarters area.                                                                                                                                                            |
| c.1930 | Built         | A wreck pole was installed just west of the original pumphouse (one-car garage).                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
| 1930   | Demolished    | The original life-saving station buildings were demolished.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |
| 1933   | Demolished    | The auxiliary boathouse on Drake's Bay was demolished.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |
| 1934   | Purchased     | (July 24) The second motor lifeboat, No. 2161, was installed at the Point Reyes station.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |
| 1935   | Built         | (Summer) A new well was drilled and a new pumphouse built near the three-car garage. This is the existing pumphouse at the foot of the driveway.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
| 1935   | Built         | The original pumphouse was remodeled into a one-car garage.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |
| 1937   | Built         | (July) A steel lookout tower was built on the bluff southeast of the boathouse. It replaced the original wooden lookout that was built in 1927. Note: the wooden lookout closely resembled the 1890 lookout at the original life-saving station on Ten Mile Beach. This structure still exists, though it was modified by the Navy around 1920 and moved several feet back from the eroding cliffs during the 1940s. |
| 1938   | Built         | An improved communication system was installed. A radio room was situated in a small shack directly beneath the lookout tower. A small radio antenna stood beside the structures.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |

| Year        | Event   | Description                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
|-------------|---------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| c.1935-1938 | Built   | Several small cottages were built by married enlisted men to accommodate their families. These were constructed outside the station boundaries on private ranchland with the agreement of the owner (J.V. Mendoza). Three cottages stood on the hillside just behind the old powerhouse and a fourth stood just outside the lower gate of the Officer-in-Charge quarters area, on the south side of the road. Mendoza built a five-car garage opposite this latter cottage on the north side of the road about the same time.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |
| 1939        | Built   | Commercial electricity was installed. Overhead power lines were constructed. They passed along the west and north sides of the residential area and followed the top edge of the bluff, coming down to the boathouse just east of the powerhouse. The powerhouse was no longer needed and was converted to a laundry room.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |
| 1939        | Built   | The road to the boathouse was built by a Works Progress Administration (WPA) crew. The courtyard between the powerhouse (laundry room) and boathouse was now used for parking.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
| 1940        | Planted | (Summer) Extensive landscaping was done around Officer-in-Charge quarters by WPA crew. The crew built rock retaining wall around yard and poured concrete steps and sidewalk to the front porch. Vehicular access was provided to the rear of the residence with a new driveway and a small parking area, bordered by a wood plank fence. Native vegetation was cleared and a lawn of kikuyu grass ( <i>Pennisetum clandestinum</i> ) was planted. A shrubbery border was made along the southeast side of the lawn using Australian tea-tree ( <i>Leptospermum laevigatum</i> ). Privet ( <i>Ligustrum sp.</i> ) was planted at the top of the stairways. [Note: Between 1927 and the WPA landscaping, native vegetation within the residential area had succeeded from grassland to relatively dense scrub (lupine and coyote bush), probably as a result of cattle being excluded by the perimeter fencing]. |
| 1942        | Built   | A Quonset hut was built just east of the boathouse entrance. It was used as a recreation room during the WWII. The boathouse bathroom was enlarged to accommodate increased wartime staffing.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |
| c.1942      | Built   | A two-story wooden tower was built to hold a second water tank in the southwest corner of the Officer-in-Charge quarters area.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |

| Year   | Event      | Description                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
|--------|------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| c.1943 | Built      | A small boat hoist was built at the northeast corner of the launchway to raise the station's pulling skiff.                                                                                                                           |
| 1944   | Built      | The Balestrieri fish dock was built adjacent to the F.E. Booth dock just below the Coast Guard Officer-in-Charge quarters area. This is the only fish dock remaining in the area.                                                     |
| 1946   | Restored   | The launchway was entirely restored. A third track was added to the refurbished marine railway and catwalks were built along the piers to either side of the railway.                                                                 |
| 1946   | Restored   | The boat room was enlarged in order to accommodate two motor lifeboats simultaneously. This enlargement was accomplished by adding a shed addition along the entire length of the west side of the boathouse.                         |
| 1946   | Restored   | New boat room doors were installed.                                                                                                                                                                                                   |
| c.1946 | Built      | A fire booster pumphouse was constructed just southwest of the Officer-in-Charge quarters quarters.                                                                                                                                   |
| c.1946 | Built      | A private residence, unrelated to the Coast Guard, was constructed on an excavated pad just east of the five-car garage. It was possibly occupied by one of the fishermen who worked at the F.E. Booth and Balestrieri fishing docks. |
| c.1950 | Removed    | The wreck pole was removed.                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
| c.1950 | Removed    | The water tower in the Officer-in-Charge quarters area was removed and replaced with existing tank, which sits on a ground pad.                                                                                                       |
| 1951   | Restored   | The boathouse kitchen was remodeled.                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
| 1954   | Demolished | The Quonset hut was demolished.                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
| 1955   | Built      | A 100,000 gallon redwood water tank and three steel fuel oil canisters were built on platforms situated on the bluff directly above the boathouse.                                                                                    |
| 1956   | Destroyed  | (January) Mudslides destroyed the power house and three cabins situated on the hillside above the boathouse. The boathouse and access road were damaged. Mendoza's five-car garage was damaged but later rebuilt.                     |

| Year      | Event          | Description                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |
|-----------|----------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1957      | Demolished     | (April) The station lookout was discontinued on recommendation of the district commander in response to a dramatically diminished number of maritime incidents requiring assistance. The lookout tower was demolished.                                                                        |
| 1959      | Built          | A 20,000 gallon water tank was built on bluff above boathouse adjacent to fuel oil canisters.                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
| c.1960    | Built          | The Officer-in-Charge quarters area perimeter fence was realigned along the north side of the three-car garage, apparently to accommodate vehicles along that side.                                                                                                                           |
| 1962      | Built          | A radio antenna was built on the bluff southwest of boathouse. The structure was 85-feet tall and sat on a 6-foot concrete pad. It was supported by 100-foot ground radials placed every 3-degrees. The perimeter of the site was enclosed with a rustic split-rail fence to keep cattle out. |
| 1963      | Established    | (July 6) Bodega Bay small craft station began service twenty miles north of Point Reyes.                                                                                                                                                                                                      |
| 1963-1965 | Altered        | Minor remodeling occurred in the boathouse kitchen. A fire detection system installed. An electric winch was installed in the boat room to replace original gasoline-powered model.                                                                                                           |
| c.1965    | Altered        | The launchway was strengthened with horizontal bolts.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |
| 1966      | Decommissioned | The Point Reyes Lifeboat Station was partially deactivated. A skeleton crew remained to maintain the facility.                                                                                                                                                                                |
| 1968      | Abandoned      | (December 16) The Point Reyes Lifeboat Station is fully deactivated. Most of its crew and equipment were transferred to other facilities.                                                                                                                                                     |
| c.1968    | Removed        | An 85-foot radio antenna was removed. Little remains to mark the site.                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |
| 1969      | Established    | (November) The lifeboat station was officially conveyed to the National Park Service at Point Reyes National Seashore.                                                                                                                                                                        |
| 1970      | Destroyed      | The Paladini fish docks burned down. The Pilings are still visible at low tide.                                                                                                                                                                                                               |
| 1975-     | Stabilized     | Emergency stabilization work was conducted on the launchway and boathouse.                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |

| Year    | Event       | Description                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |
|---------|-------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1976    | Restored    | Work on the boathouse included repair of boat room doors, repainting, and replacing roof shingles.                                                                                                                                                                            |
| 1976    | Demolished  | The remaining married crewman's cottage (just outside the lower gate to the Officer-in-Charge quarters area) was demolished by the Park Service. Mendoza's five-car garage was probably demolished at the same time as well as the old fisherman's residence just east of it. |
| 1982    | Moved       | Motor lifeboat CG-36542 was transferred to Point Reyes National Seashore from Bodega Bay station.                                                                                                                                                                             |
| 1985    | Established | The Point Reyes Lifeboat Station was listed on the National Register of Historic Places.                                                                                                                                                                                      |
| 1988-90 | Restored    | Restoration was performed on the boathouse under the guidance of an NPS historic preservation team. Emergency stabilization of the launchway was performed by this team.                                                                                                      |
| 1990    | Built       | A white picket fence was built by the NPS, above the retaining wall at the boathouse.                                                                                                                                                                                         |
| 1990    | Established | The Point Reyes Lifeboat Station was designated a National Historic Landmark.                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
| 1991    | Planned     | The NPS completed a Historic Structure Report for the Point Reyes Lifeboat Station.                                                                                                                                                                                           |
| 1991    | Preserved   | Motor lifeboat CG-36542 underwent preservation maintenance.                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |
| 1999    | Restored    | Water Tank No. 4 collapsed and was replaced in kind.                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |
| 2005    | Restored    | Restoration of the marine railway began.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |

## Statement of Significance

### *General Statement*

The significance of the Point Reyes Lifeboat Station—recognized as the only surviving lifeboat station on the Pacific coast to possess an intact marine railway—has already been well-established. It was listed in the National Register of Historic Places in 1985. In 1989 the property was nominated as a National Historic Landmark (NHL) and in January of 1990 it received landmark designation. The history of the station was carefully and thoroughly documented in 1991 with the preparation of a Historic Structure Report, entitled *The History and Architecture of the Point Reyes Lifeboat Station*, by historian Dewey Livingston and historical architect Steven Burke. The purpose of this Cultural Landscape Inventory (CLI) is to complement the already extensive literature on the Point Reyes Lifeboat Station by filling in one of the few remaining gaps, namely, to document the cultural landscape which comprises that facility in addition to its individual buildings and structures. The cultural landscape is simply the geographic area associated with the historic site or event or exhibiting values identified with it. However, the argument put forward in the NHL nomination is extracted or paraphrased in the following paragraphs in order to establish an appropriate context for subsequent discussion of the cultural landscape.

The Point Reyes Lifeboat Station was determined to have national significance under criteria A and C of the National Register, corresponding to categories 1 and 4 of the National Historic Landmark criteria. The areas of significance, or "contextual themes," under which it was proposed that the property be interpreted are NHL Theme XII: *Business*; Sub-theme L: *Shipping and Transportation*. And NHL Theme XIV: *Transportation*; Sub-theme B: *Ships, Boats, Lighthouses, and Other Structures*. In the language of the post-1993 revision of the National Park Service's thematic framework, the following are the closest and most appropriate corresponding areas: Theme II: *Creating Social Institutions and Movements*; Sub-theme B: *Social and Humanitarian Movements: Emergency Aid and Health Care*. And Theme V: *Developing the American Economy*; Sub-theme T: *Shipping and Transportation by Water: Ships, Boats, Lighthouses, and Other Structures*.

### *Period of Significance (1927-1957)*

The NHL nomination established the period of significance as 1927 to 1939. The beginning date corresponds to the opening of the station. The end-date was established following a rigid adherence to the 50-year rule (1939 being exactly fifty years prior to 1989, the year the nomination was written). This end date has little justification on a purely historic basis, since no significant change in the physical structure of the station or break in its continuity of service occurred that year. Important physical modifications continued to be made after that date, and the station continued to operate at full capacity until 1957, remaining in service at diminished capacity until 1968. In light of these facts, this CLI proposes extending the period of significance to 1957 in order to include the entire operational history of the Point Reyes Lifeboat Station. 1957 represents a natural conclusion of the station's history since regular patrol activities were discontinued that year, and the crew complement was reduced in response to the declining utility of the Point Reyes facility. The amended period of significance, as proposed, would now extend from 1927 to 1957.

### *Criterion A*

The Point Reyes Lifeboat Station was built to rescue seamen whose misfortune it was to wreck on the treacherous shores of the Point Reyes peninsula, which abruptly intersects the ocean shipping lanes off the Pacific coast. Vessels making landfall from transpacific passages usually aimed for Point Reyes and turned south from here to San Francisco. Strong currents, thick fogs, and shifting winds always threatened to drive ashore vessels seeking shelter in the point's lee. Between 1595 and 1939, more than 30 vessels engaged in coastal and transpacific trade were lost at Point Reyes, and more than 20 other large vessels

were stranded or suffered some sort of accident in its waters. Because of the large number of shipwrecks on the peninsula, a life-saving station was built in 1889 on Ten Mile Beach, just windward of the point. The station remained in service at this location until 1927, when it was moved to Drake's Bay on the lee side of the Point Reyes peninsula.

The United States Life-Saving Service, later merged with the Revenue Cutter Service to create the U.S. Coast Guard, was established in 1878 to render aid to the hundreds of shipwrecked vessels and mariners lost annually on the nation's coasts and lakeshores. A variety of station types were developed for various launching conditions. Most employed manually-launched surfboats hauled across beach sands to the ocean. Other stations on rocky coastlines employed simple railways to launch their boats. The introduction of motor lifeboats around 1908 revolutionized life-saving operations, and a number of early stations built on sand beaches were decommissioned in favor of more centrally-located rail-launching stations on more protected shores in order to accommodate the new vessels. The new motor lifeboats were immediately preferred, because they had a quicker response time and could operate in a wider range of conditions more efficiently. Point Reyes responded somewhat belatedly to this innovation but eventually relocated its operations to Drake's Bay and constructed a boathouse and launchway there designed specifically for the new motor lifeboats. During its forty-one years in service on Drake's Bay, the Point Reyes Lifeboat Station assisted in several major shipwrecks and countless minor incidents. The station became an indispensable aid to the local fishing fleets. But the vigilance of its crew improved safety for all sea-borne commerce on the treacherous northern approach to San Francisco Bay. In addition to the lives it saved, the Point Reyes Lifeboat Station made an important contribution to the regional economy by protecting millions of dollars worth of maritime trade.

#### *Criterion C*

The Point Reyes Lifeboat Station is also significant under Criterion C as a characteristic example of the type of architecture and landscaping commonly used by the Coast Guard for its lifeboat facilities on the West Coast. The buildings constructed for these facilities were usually simple and utilitarian interpretations of contemporary residential styles. The Point Reyes facility displays a neo-colonial classicism, reflecting a style popular at the time it was built. The Officer-in-Charge quarters is similar in this respect. Its broad shed dormer seems even vaguely reminiscent of Dutch neo-colonial influence. The landscaping throughout the facility is spare but clean, reflecting the orderliness and discipline of a working Coast Guard station. The most extensive landscaping was introduced within the boundaries of the residential area at the top of the bluff. These boundaries are defined by a perimeter of cypress trees, which were planted immediately after the station was completed and are now quite large. The landscaping around the residential area was brought to its fullest maturity with extensive work done in 1939-1940 by a WPA crew. This crew enhanced circulation through the area by introducing footpaths and a driveway which sweeps in a graceful arc from the main drive to the rear of the house. This arc is visually—and structurally—reinforced by a curving stone retaining wall which separates the main drive from the more intimate space around the front porch by dividing the two areas into distinct levels, with the latter significantly elevated above the former. The WPA crew also planted lawn around most of the residence. The overall effect of the WPA landscaping sets the residential area dramatically apart from its surrounding environment and from the more utilitarian purposes of the boathouse below, creating an image of quiet and well-groomed domesticity in the midst of a contrastingly harsh natural landscape of windswept bluffs and pounding sea.

The Point Reyes Lifeboat Station also represents a rare surviving example of the unique technologies developed by the Coast Guard for its early small craft stations. This includes the marine railway and a fully-restored example of the 36-foot motor lifeboat which the station was designed to accommodate. Lifeboat stations were originally developed under the U.S. Life-Saving Service to accommodate the

massive lifeboat, which was much more stable than the light surfboat and could operate reliably in deep water to perform rescues farther from shore. But the lifeboat was too heavy to launch by hand into the surf, so the Life-Saving Service designed special boathouses equipped with launchways that delivered the boat directly into deep water. These boathouses had to be constructed within bays or sheltered coves, where the water was relatively calm. They were often built within harbors, like the Fort Point station inside San Francisco Bay. The Point Reyes Lifeboat Station was established in 1927 to replace the antiquated life-saving station on Ten Mile Beach, which had originally been designed only for surfboats. By this time, lifeboats were being equipped with gasoline engines and had become even larger and heavier than their original predecessors. The new lifeboat station was designed specifically to accommodate these 36-foot motor lifeboats. It employed a heavy marine railway powered by a gasoline winch to launch or take up the boats. The lifeboat house itself was designed to accommodate enough enlisted men to operate two of these boats, or sixteen men. The Point Reyes Lifeboat Station remained in active service until the middle of the 1960s, when the introduction of the 44-foot motor lifeboat made the station obsolete. It was replaced in 1966 by the Bodega Bay Small Craft Station, which had opened in 1963 and was designed to accommodate the newer model lifeboats.

### *Integrity*

For 80 years the life-saving and lifeboat stations of Point Reyes provided a humanitarian service to Pacific coast shipping, one of the nation's vital maritime trade routes. The first half of this period was served by the original life-saving station at Ten Mile Beach, built in 1889. Shortly after its decommissioning in 1927, all of the structures comprising this station were either demolished or relocated, and now nothing remains of it except the cypress trees planted by the life-saving crew. No attempt has been made to attribute any status to it.

The second half of this life-saving period was served by the newer lifeboat station on Drake's Bay. This facility has been preserved relatively intact since its decommissioning in 1968 and is currently managed for preservation by the National Park Service, which now owns it. A typical example of an early twentieth century lifeboat station with marine railroad and cradle-launched 36-foot motor lifeboat, the Point Reyes Lifeboat Station is the only unaltered station of this nationally-employed type remaining on the Pacific Coast. It retains its principal structures, the majority of its secondary structures, and most importantly its launchway, marine railroad, launching cradles, and one of the station's original 36-foot motor lifeboats, now restored to operational condition. All of the structures comprising the station and the landscape in which they are situated remain much as they were during the period of significance, retaining essential aspects of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling and associations.

## Physical History

### Introduction

Maritime life-saving operations formally began at Point Reyes in 1890 when the U.S. Life-Saving Service opened a life-saving station on Ten Mile Beach about three miles north of the point where the lighthouse already stood. The U.S. Life-Saving Service, created in 1878, was a predecessor of the modern Coast Guard, which was created in 1915 when the original Life-Saving Service and the Revenue Cutter Service were merged. The Point Reyes Life-Saving Station remained in active service for 37 years from its founding, despite the challenges posed by its exposed location on a windward coast. But the need for a more protected location was recognized from its very first year, when two surfmen were lost in the heavy breakers during routine operations. After much delay, the Coast Guard finally built a new lifeboat station in 1927 in the lee of Chimney Rock on Drakes Bay, and the original life-saving station on Ten Mile Beach was deactivated and subsequently demolished. The new Point Reyes Lifeboat Station was designed specifically to accommodate the heavy 36-foot motorized lifeboats which had become the Coast Guard's standard small rescue craft by that time. It remained in service for the next 41 years and was finally deactivated in 1968 only after the 36-foot motor lifeboat became obsolete. The Coast Guard subsequently conveyed the property to the National Park Service, which has restored the facility and one of its original motor lifeboats to their historic condition. The site was listed on the National Register in 1988 and subsequently as a National Historic Landmark in 1990. It is recognized as the only surviving lifeboat station on the Pacific coast to possess an intact marine railway. The station is currently used for interpretive purposes.

### Historical Background of U.S. Lifesaving Stations

#### *Origins of the Life-Saving Service*

Life-saving stations were a response to maritime conditions unique to nineteenth century America. An increase in shipping during the first half of that century brought rising numbers of shipwrecks, especially in Massachusetts and along the coasts of New Jersey and Long Island, where two of the nation's most important maritime centers, Boston and New York, were located. The relative lack of navigational aids—like accurate charts, signal buoys and lighthouses—compelled early mariners to sail close to the shore so that they could use physical landmarks to orient themselves. Along much of the Atlantic seaboard, the land slopes at a very gradual angle into the water, so that sandy shoals are often present a long ways from the shore itself. Ships sailing along the coast frequently grounded on these shoals and were wrecked. Ironically, the inclination to sail close to the shore was often greater during bad weather, because navigators could not use the stars to establish their position and had to rely almost exclusively on terrestrial landmarks. Prior to the advent of steam power at the end of the nineteenth century, ships were also more vulnerable to the vicissitudes of wind and current and could more easily be swept off course and into land. If a wooden ship grounded on an exposed shoal or beach during a storm, it could be battered to pieces in a matter of hours, and the crew would have little chance of reaching safety without help.

#### *Volunteer Life Savers (1807-1877)*

The response to this problem was incremental, growing only slowly in proportion to the gradual increase in the number and severity of wrecks. A few individual tragedies brought attention to the need for some system of assistance. Not surprisingly, the earliest measures were taken on the Massachusetts coast near Boston, since Boston was one of the nation's earliest major ports. The Massachusetts Humane Society, established in 1785, began building simple huts on the more remote stretches of coastline in the 1790s. These unmanned shelters were supplied with caches of food, warm clothes, and firewood for use by survivors of shipwrecks. But so few people ever managed to get to shore once their ship had wrecked in these northern waters that the need for a more active form of assistance eventually became obvious. The

first true life-saving station was established in 1807 by the Massachusetts Humane Society near the town of Cohasset on the Atlantic coast south of Boston. The Cohasset facility was supplied with a surfboat and equipment for rescuing mariners in distress. The station was not manned by a resident staff but by volunteers from the nearby town. By 1845 the Society had established 18 more of these volunteer stations along the Massachusetts coast. As welcome as these stations were, they fell far short of providing the level of assistance most critics felt was needed. Many people, including several legislators, believed that only the federal government had the necessary resources to provide adequate measures and should therefore intervene. By the 1830s Washington grudgingly began to respond to this pressure.

The federal government had actually been involved in maritime assistance since as early as 1789, when the U.S. Lighthouse Service was created. In addition to providing a vital aid to navigation, lighthouse keepers frequently helped mariners who were shipwrecked in the vicinity of their stations. The federal government eventually made supplies and equipment available to lighthouse keepers to support this work, but it was never acknowledged to be one of the official responsibilities of the lighthouse service. In 1837 the government became more actively involved in life-saving when Congress authorized federal revenue cutters to patrol the coastlines during the winter storm season. [1] The Revenue Marine Bureau had been established in 1790 within the Treasury Department. [2] In 1848, in response to the appeals of New Jersey congressman William A. Newell, Congress appropriated a sum of money—about \$10,000—to provide surf boats and associated apparatus for equipping coastal life-saving stations. These stations were built and supplied by the Revenue Marine Bureau but subsequently turned over to a local community to be manned and maintained by untrained volunteers. [3] The system was, in fact, no different from that which the Massachusetts Humane Society had established. Nobody was officially responsible for ensuring the upkeep of the stations or for training their volunteer staff, and the quality and effectiveness of each life-saving station varied dramatically. Most were less than satisfactory.

The inadequacy of these measures became apparent in 1854, when a severe storm swept the East Coast. In response to the loss of life and property which resulted, Congress appropriated money for more stations and equipment. More importantly, it allocated funds to employ full-time keepers at each station and two superintendents to oversee the entire system (which was still limited to the coastlines of New Jersey and Long Island). This was a decided improvement over the *status quo ante*, but the crews who manned the boats were still volunteers, and the station keepers had to raise these men from nearby communities whenever a disaster occurred. Usually it was too late by the time a crew was assembled.

#### *The U.S. Life-Saving Service (1878-1915)*

For awhile it seemed like the prospects for a better life-saving system were improving with federal involvement, but the Civil War distracted the government, and the life-saving program fell into neglect from the late fifties through the end of the sixties. But in 1870 a devastating winter storm season drew attention to the problem once more. In 1871 Congress officially established a life-saving branch within the Revenue Cutter Service and voted that “...the Secretary of the Treasury may establish [life-saving stations] on the coasts of Long Island and New Jersey for affording aid to shipwrecked vessels thereon, and furnish such apparatus and supplies as may in his judgment be best adapted to the preservation of life and property from such shipwrecked vessels.” [4] This legislation merely formalized activities which had been going on in an *ad hoc* manner for nearly 30 years, and little might have changed except for the efforts of the newly-appointed chief of the Revenue Cutter Service, Sumner I. Kimball. Kimball made the life-saving activities of the Revenue Cutter Service his principal task and personal obsession. He immediately organized a survey of existing facilities and prepared a highly-critical report on the less-than-satisfactory findings. At Kimball’s instigation, steps were taken to replace the volunteer crews of the coastal life-saving stations with professional, full-time staffs. He established rigorous standards of professional conduct for these men to follow, introduced a manual of training and drill, and set up a

centralized administration to provide oversight and accountability for the new organization. By 1878 Kimball had persuaded Congress to reorganize the entire life-saving branch of the Revenue Cutter Service into a separate entity within the Treasury Department. It was known from then on as the U.S. Life-Saving Service. Kimball became its first—and only—general superintendent, holding that position for the duration of the Service's 38 years of existence. A Board on Life-Saving Appliances was also established in 1882 to assist with the development and procurement of appropriate technology for the new Service.

The U.S. Life-Saving Service expanded rapidly during its relatively short existence. By its final year in 1915, a total of 280 stations had been established on coastlines throughout the continental United States. These stations were divided into three categories: life-saving stations, lifeboat stations, and houses of refuge. The first of these categories, the life-saving station, was the original model established on the northeastern coast. These facilities were usually located on remote stretches of beach and staffed by a resident keeper and between six and eight surfmen. The crews manned small, lightweight boats that were launched directly into the ocean surf. Life-saving stations were originally manned only during the storm season for about four months every year. The duration of this "active season" might vary from place to place. Over time, it was gradually increased, and some life-saving stations eventually began keeping their staff on hand all year long. On the West Coast, where heavy fogs made summer nearly as dangerous as winter, the Life-Saving Service began maintaining a full staff year-round in 1883. Keepers had always resided full-time at the life-saving stations, and most facilities provided a house specifically for the keeper and his family.

The second category, the lifeboat station, was an adaptation to conditions more common on the West Coast and the Great Lakes. In these places the shoreline tended to be more rugged with fewer beaches than the eastern seaboard, making the lightweight surfboat unnecessary or inappropriate. Instead, the much heavier lifeboat was used. These vessels were more stable in heavy seas and could operate further from shore, but they had to be launched by mechanical means directly into deep, sheltered water. Many lifeboat stations were actually built directly over the water on pilings. They were equipped with davits or a marine railway for launching the boat. Unlike the generally remote life-saving stations, lifeboat stations tended to be placed near major ports, often within the harbor itself or in a protected cove adjacent to the harbor entrance. Most lifeboat stations also possessed at least one surfboat.

The final category, the house of refuge, was only built in Florida and on the Gulf Coast, where milder conditions made the need for active rescues less common. In concept, the house of refuge was much like the original shelters established by the Massachusetts Humane Society, but the house of refuge was occupied year round by a keeper and his family and was generally a more substantial structure. It was intended to provide food, shelter and warm clothing for survivors of shipwrecks.

#### *Life-saving Technique and Equipment*

The mission of the Life-Saving Service was not only to rescue mariners but to help prevent shipwrecks in the first place. Stations maintained a 24-hour watch over their designated service area. One man always stood watch at the station itself, positioned in a tower or in a cupola on top of the boathouse. During stormy or foggy weather, a patrolman would also walk along the coastline for a distance of 1.5 to 5 miles in either direction. These men carried a type of flare, called a Coston signal, which they would use to warn ships in danger of approaching too near the coast. In effect, the patrolman was like a moving lighthouse. The Coston signal was also used to alert the station lookout in case of emergency. A signalman of the U.S. Army Storm Signal Service was assigned to the life-saving stations to provide weather information to passing ships. Signals were transmitted by means of flags.

In the event of a shipwreck, surfmen had basically two means of providing assistance. They could either bring the victims ashore using equipment collectively known as the beach apparatus. Or they could try to reach the victims by boat and ferry them back to shore. The first of these methods was employed only when the wreck was close to land. It was done by firing a weighted shotline over to the wreck from a small cannon called a Lyle gun (named after its inventor, Lt. David A. Lyle of the U.S. Army). The shotline was carefully aimed so that it would fall across the mast or superstructure of the stricken vessel, where the vessel's crew could retrieve it. This shotline was used to haul out a much heavier rope, or hawser, which was tied securely to the mast of the ship. The life-saving crew then secured the other end to a beach anchor, which was buried in the sand. The hawser was elevated as high as possible on a wooden support—called a crotch—to get it off the sea, and a device for carrying people was sent out on a pulley. The most common carrying device was the breeches buoy, a simple harness that held one individual at a time, but occasionally a lifecar was used. The lifecar resembled a small boat with a domed, sheet-metal roof. It was entered through a water-tight hatch in the top and could hold as many as 11 people.

As the name implies, the beach apparatus could only be used when a ship was grounded relatively near the shore on a beach or sandy shoal where a rescue by breeches buoy or lifecar could be executed. The apparatus could not be used if the ship were wrecked more than 600 feet out—the maximum range of the Lyle gun—or if it was wrecked off a shoreline that was too rugged or steep for the lifesavers to access with their heavy apparatus. In these instances, the life-saving crews had to rely on boats to execute a rescue. The Life-Saving Service used two categories of small boats. The first, the surfboat, was a relatively lightweight craft that could be hauled down the beach by its crew and launched directly into the surf. The design of this vessel had evolved from a variety of similar types used commercially on the northeastern seaboard, including the beach skiffs of fishermen on the New Jersey coast and the whale boats developed at Nantucket and Martha's Vineyard. The typical surfboat used by the Life-Saving Service was open and shallow-drafted, ranged from 23 to 27 feet in length and weighed just under half a ton. Surfboats were often equipped with airtight compartments, making them insubmersible, but were usually not designed to be self-righting or self-bailing. The surfboat was kept in a boat house which stood directly on the beach above the highwater line. Garage-like doors swung out toward the ocean, and the crew would haul the boat down to the surf on a wheeled carriage. In a few places horses were used to pull the carriage, and these stations might include a barn and corral in addition to the usual buildings.

The other type of boat commonly used by the Life-Saving Service was the lifeboat. This craft was much heavier than the surfboat—as much as eight times heavier—but was considerably more seaworthy and could operate much further from the shore. The lifeboats used by the Life-Saving Service were taken from an English design, first invented in 1785 by a London carriage-maker and developed to its mature form by about 1852. [5] The English lifeboat was a relatively large, double-ended, deep-drafted craft. It was pulled by oars but could also be sailed. Most importantly, it was insubmersible and possessed the capacity to self-right and to self-bail. Self-righting was achieved through the addition of a heavily-weighted false keel and air-tight compartments. The compartments kept the vessel buoyant at all times, while the false keel concentrated the bulk of the vessel's weight beneath the hull, so that it would always return to an upright position. Self-bailing was achieved through a system of one-way valves placed within scuppers in the lower half of the hull. Another characteristic of these boats was their extraordinary strength, which was needed in order to survive the strain of heavy seas. In 1873 the United State Life-Saving Service—still part of the Revenue Cutter Service at this date—acquired its first lifeboat from an English manufacturer. By 1876 a slightly modified version of the English boat was being built for U.S. service in New York. This basic design remained standard for the duration of the Life-Saving Service with only a few modifications. In 1891 the overall length was increased to 34 feet, and in 1907 a motorized version was introduced using a gasoline-powered engine. The motorized lifeboat was

increased to 36 feet to accommodate the new equipment. Slightly later versions added a small compartment amidships for the helm.

Unlike the surfboat, a lifeboat could not be hauled to the water by hand. Those in use by the 1890s weighed about 4 tons. They had to be launched by mechanical means. In some instances, lifeboat houses were built directly over the water on piers, and the boats were lowered through a trap door. Much more common, however, was the marine railway, which was in widespread use by the end of the 1880s. [6] This system appears to have evolved naturally from the method of launching surfboats down a beach. The first modification was the addition of an inclined wooden launchway from the boathouse to the water. This facilitated the passage of the much heavier lifeboat carriage as it traversed the sand. Eventually steel rails were added to help accommodate the increased weight even better. Boats were moved up and down these launchways on a wheeled carriage with an attached cable driven by a hand-powered cargo winch. Sometime around 1904 the hand-powered winch began to be replaced with a gasoline-driven version.

The inherent difficulty of conducting a maritime rescue as well as the complexity of the equipment involved meant that the life-saving crews had to practice regularly in order to be able to perform their duties quickly and automatically under the most trying circumstances. The two most important drills, which were conducted regularly at every life-saving station, were the beach apparatus drill and the boat drill. Every Monday and Thursday the life-saving crews turned out their beach apparatus and practiced going through the entire procedure, from firing a shotline with the Lyle gun to bringing a crewmember back in on a breeches buoy. The drill was usually conducted along the beach in front of the station, where a "wreck pole" was permanently emplaced. The wreck pole was a simulated mast which was used as the target for the practice rescue. Crews were timed and had to be able to finish the entire drill in five minutes or less. On Tuesdays the life-saving crews practiced handling their boats. This included launching the surfboats and lifeboats and pulling at the oars for at least half an hour. Crews also practiced capsizing and righting their boats. These drills were held in all weather and could be as dangerous as an actual emergency. In 1890, for example, the Point Reyes Life-Saving Station lost two surfmen during a Tuesday drill when their boat was capsized in heavy seas. On Wednesdays the life-saving crews practiced signals. They had to be proficient in both wig-wag and flag-hoists. Wig-wag was a type of code done with two hand-held flags and resembled morse-code. Flag-hoists used differently-marked pennants raised on a flagstaff or a spar. Each flag represented a different number or letter of the alphabet, and specific combinations of pennants had universally-accepted meanings. On Fridays the crew practiced first-aid; on Saturdays they cleaned and conducted routine maintenance around the station; and Sundays they had off. This routine was repeated every week without fail during the active season, unless the routine was interrupted by an actual rescue.

### *Architecture*

The earliest life-saving stations—for example, those built by the Massachusetts Humane Society—were utilitarian, wood-frame structures with no architectural styling or adornment. With the creation of the U.S. Life-Saving Service in 1871, the buildings became more substantial and elaborate. This was partially in response to the need to accommodate a larger, more permanent staff, but professional pride also played a role in determining the character of these structures. [7] Nearly all of the facilities built after the 1870s borrowed their architectural motifs from contemporary domestic models. Many of the early stations were built according to the Stick or Eastlake style, which was popular during the first two decades of the Life-Saving Service. Colonial Revival, including the Dutch Colonial or Gambrel, became popular slightly later. The basic residential model was modified according to the specific needs of a life-saving or lifeboat station. Boat houses, for example, all needed a large bay on the ground floor to store and service the station's small craft. These bays had to be accessed through barn-like doors, which pierced most of the ground-floor wall on one or more sides. Usually there was a ramp of some sort

attached on which the boats were conveyed to the water. With the later lifeboat houses, this launchway ramp became one of the most visually arresting features of the whole structure. Most boathouses had a living room or lounge adjacent to the boatroom on the ground floor and sleeping quarters on the upper floor. Another peculiarity of boathouses was the need for an observation deck or a watchtower. Many had either an open widow's walk or a cupola built into the roof peak. At many stations a separate lookout tower might also be constructed and stand some distance from the main buildings. By 1890 telephones allowed the tower lookout to stay in touch with the rest of the station. The Keeper's quarters were closer to the typical residential house in design, but they too often had some distinctive features which betrayed their unique use. Many, for example, had cupolas like the boathouses.

#### *The U.S. Coast Guard (1915 to present)*

In 1911 President William Taft's economic adviser, Frederick Cleveland, convened a commission designed to investigate and recommend ways to increase cost efficiency in government. One of the key conclusions of the Cleveland Commission was that agencies with a single, well-defined responsibility or function were far more efficient than those with multiple, diverse responsibilities. The Commission therefore recommended consolidating related responsibilities and functions within single agencies as much as possible. Among the opportunities it saw for such consolidation were the so-called "protection" responsibilities distributed among the Life-Saving Service, the Lighthouse Service, and the Revenue Cutter Service within the Treasury Department. The first two services were exclusively responsible for life-saving. The latter had a variety of duties, of which life-saving and protection were only a part. The Commission proposed that the exclusively life-saving and protection responsibilities of the Revenue Cutter Service be combined with the Life-Saving Service and the Lighthouse Service in a single, uni-functional agency, while the remainder of the Revenue Cutter Service's responsibilities be assumed by other, existing agencies, for example, by the Navy.

These recommendations aroused jealousies in the Treasury Department, which did not want to lose its Revenue Cutter fleet. They also incurred resistance from the Navy, which did not want to assume responsibility for the Revenue Service's civilian personnel. A compromise was reached in which the Revenue Cutter Service and the Life-Saving Service were combined into a new military service which would operate under the authority of the Treasury Department except during times of war, when it would revert to the authority of the War Department and work in collaboration with the Navy. The new agency was created by an act of Congress on January 20, 1915 and was called the U.S. Coast Guard. Captain Ellsworth Price Bertholf of the old Revenue Cutter Service became its first Commandant. The Lighthouse Service was later added in 1939.

The creation of the Coast Guard had one very immediate effect on the life-saving stations. Their crews now formally became military personnel. As far as the men of these stations were concerned, the most important consequence of this change was their eligibility for military benefits, including retirement. This was something the old Life-Saving Service had fought for in vain since its creation. Other consequences included the introduction of a formal military hierarchy with clearly-specified ranks and responsibilities. Surfmen were given enlisted ranking, with the number one (senior) surfman becoming a petty officer. Keepers became warrant officers. District superintendents and above became commissioned officers. A few minor changes in nomenclature also occurred. Most notably, the keeper became known as the Officer-in-Charge (and the Keeper's quarters became the Officer-in-Charge quarters, or simply the Officer-in-Charge quarters).

The larger implications of these changes did not become apparent for another few years. Personnel remained essentially the same, and their responsibility remained primarily coastal life-saving. But in 1917 the United States entered World War I, and the Coast Guard, consistent with the terms of its

enabling legislation, was transferred to the Navy. As the service's revenue cutters crossed the Atlantic to assume escort duties in the Mediterranean and around the British Isles, the life-saving stations assumed the new responsibility of coastal-watchers, patrolling for potential enemy infiltrators and saboteurs. Lifeboat crews patrolled the harbors and waterways while life-saving crews maintained beach patrols along the coastline. World War I began a process of militarization that would continue even after the Coast Guard returned to civilian status in 1919. The role of coastal-watcher had to be maintained by the life-saving stations throughout the following decade when the Volstead Act introduced Prohibition and made it necessary to patrol for rum-runners and clandestine drop points up and down the coast. By the time Prohibition was repealed in 1933, the imminent approach of new hostilities ensured that patrol work would remain a permanent part of the Coast Guard's responsibilities.

By this time, the original purpose of the old Life-Saving Service was becoming increasingly anachronistic in other ways. Commercial disasters close to shore were now less frequent as a result of improved navigational aids. More importantly, the substitution of steam for sails at the end of the nineteenth century had made ships less susceptible to the vagaries of ocean currents and the wind. Shipwrecks still occurred, but they were less likely to happen in the near-shore zone that the original Life-Saving Service had been designed to protect. By the middle of the twentieth century, the majority of incidents to which Coast Guard life-savers responded involved small pleasure craft rather than commercial ships. This, combined with coastal defense, comprised most of the life-saving stations' responsibilities by the end of the 1930s. Since these activities tended to be concentrated in or around major ports, rather than off remote stretches of beach, the Coast Guard began to consolidate its resources over the next few decades in those stations that already existed within or near the mouths of harbors. The introduction of faster motor lifeboats and especially aircraft, which allowed life-savers to respond effectively over greater and greater distances, was an additional impetus toward such consolidation.

World War II only reinforced tendencies which had been taking place since 1917. In 1942 the Coast Guard was again transferred to the authority of the Navy and resumed many of the same duties it had undertaken during the First World War. The Coast Guard's cutters performed convoy escort while its life-saving stations performed coastal defense and harbor patrol. This need to balance multiple duties associated with the Coast Guard's combined military, law enforcement, and civilian life-saving responsibilities has remained characteristic of the service up to the present day. Only those stations which were able to combine and integrate all these aspects of the modern Coast Guard's diverse mission have survived into the twenty-first century. The majority have been consolidated in new, multi-functional facilities.

### **The Point Reyes Life-Saving Station**

[Note: Much of the following material is copied or paraphrased from Livingston and Burke, 1991, and from the National Historic Landmark Nomination of 1989].

The need for a life-saving station at Point Reyes was recognized early in the history of California, because of the numerous shipwrecks which occurred along its shores and shoals. Point Reyes juts several miles out into the Pacific Ocean about 40 miles north of San Francisco. Its rocky cliffs intercept the prevailing southerly currents and are frequently hidden from view in some of the densest fog on the western coast. Following the discovery of gold in 1848, San Francisco quickly grew into a major port city, and maritime traffic increased exponentially along the seaways approaching the mouth of San Francisco Bay. Most ocean-going traffic approached San Francisco from the south, which may explain why the first life-saving station in the vicinity of the city—the Golden Gate Park Life-Saving Station—was established on the Great Beach just south of Land's End on the southerly approach to the bay. This was built in 1878, the

same year the Life-Saving Service was formally established, and demonstrates that the service was well-aware of San Francisco's need for such a facility. With the growth of the northwestern lumber industries after 1860, and the related growth of northern port cities like Seattle and Portland, traffic along the seaways north of San Francisco grew increasingly crowded, and Point Reyes loomed with a corresponding menace. Eight major shipwrecks occurred off the peninsula during the following two decades. Only the resident ranchers and occasionally the staff of the Point Reyes Lighthouse were available to assist the victims, and they proved inadequate for the challenge despite their good intentions and heroic efforts. By 1886 the Life-Saving Service was looking for a place to establish a new facility somewhere on the Point Reyes Peninsula. It approached landowner and rancher Charles Webb Howard that year to negotiate purchasing a site from within his extensive property. In January of 1888, the U.S. Life-Saving Service finally bought a 3.5 acre plot from Howard on Ten Mile Beach about three miles north of the point itself. This site lay on the most exposed section of the entire peninsula, a fact which would always complicate operations, endanger the crews, and ultimately doom the station itself. Nonetheless, the Point Reyes Life-Saving Station was built the following year on August 20, 1889. The buildings were designed by architect A.B. Bibb and identical in almost every way to the Fort Point Station on San Francisco Bay, which was commissioned the same year but not completed until February 14 of 1890.



*History Figure No. 1. Original Point Reyes Life-Saving Station on Ten Mile Beach, ca. 1914 [NPS, Point Reyes National Seashore, Park Archives].*

The original Point Reyes Life-Saving Station began service on July 8, 1890 when it finally received its full complement of staff. It remained in operation for 37 years, despite the challenges of its difficult location. During that time, its crew provided assistance in 14 major shipwrecks and countless minor incidents. One of the most memorable and successful rescues in which the Point Reyes life-saving crew participated was following the wreck of the steamer *Samoa* on January 28, 1913. The *Samoa* was enroute from Eureka to San Francisco with a load of lumber, when the vessel ran aground on Ten Mile Beach in a

heavy fog almost directly below the life-saving station. The resulting rescue is described by Keeper Christopher Hunt in his logbook:

"At 8 a.m. a steamer coming down the coast, blowing the usual fog signal, was heard by the life saving crew; the whistle sounded very close in shore. At 8:15 a.m. she blew a distress signal. The keeper ordered the crew to man the beach cart. He then ran down to the beach to try and locate the steamer. In the meantime he gave orders to the crew to follow him with the beach cart. When about 600 yards south of the station, the keeper knew he was abreast of the steamer by the sound of her whistle, but could not see her, the fog was so dense. He then hurried back to the beach cart, which was coming down along the beach. We arrived abreast of the wreck with the beach cart at 8:30 a.m. A little clearing of the fog gave us a chance to see the steamer, which proved to be the *Samoa*, with her bow in for the beach, in the breakers with the sea going over her. We got our apparatus gear into action—soon had the gear set up, and the breeches buoy hauled off to her, and the work of rescue began. We took twenty-one men on shore with the breeches buoy, all that were on board. We worked under great difficulties; that no one was lost or seriously injured by the mess of drifting lumber and heavy timbers that was thrown up by the rough sea is due to a great extent to the valuable assistance rendered us by the farmers and there hired help in hauling the breeches buoy to and from the wreck. It enabled me to have two and three surfmen in readiness to run out into the surf and protect the shipwrecked man in the breeches buoy from being hit by flying lumber, without retarding the working of the beach apparatus. By 10:25 a.m. we had all hands on shore. We then sent off the hawser cutter and cut the hawser, hauled our lines ashore and collected all our gear into the beach cart, arrived back at the station at 12:30 p.m. Brought all the shipwrecked men to the station, gave them dry clothing and some warm coffee, kept them at the station overnight, made them as comfortable as possible, sent them off on board Revenue Cutter McCulloch at 10 a.m. Jan. 29th, which was in Drakes Bay over night, waiting to give the shipwrecked men a passage to San Francisco."

#### *Difficulties of the Location*

The Life-Saving Station's exposure to the northern winds and currents on Ten Mile Beach made launching the surfboats both difficult and dangerous. Three surfmen were killed while trying to launch their boats from this station, two during the first year of the station's operation, and another in 1893. All of these men are buried in a small cemetery plot donated by the Claussen family of G ranch, about 6 miles north of the life-saving station. Frequently, it was impossible to get any boat into the water at all, and the surfmen had to rely solely on their beach apparatus when responding to emergencies. The situation was mitigated in 1894 when Charles Webb Howard gave permission for the Life-Saving Service to construct an auxiliary boathouse on Drakes Bay. This small structure was located at the bottom of the swale just below B Ranch. It held two boats and a beach apparatus but had no accommodations and was only manned when needed. The surfmen could get to this boathouse relatively quickly from their main facility on the other side of the narrow peninsula. Drakes Bay was sheltered from the brunt of the northerly winds, and boats could be launched in comparative safety here when it was impossible to do so on Ten Mile Beach.

While these measures improved the operational effectiveness and safety of the Point Reyes Life-Saving Station, they also called into question the continued existence of the facility at its original location. By 1910 the Life-Saving Service was actively considering a new location for it Point Reyes station. By 1912 engineers under the direction of Assistant Superintendent of Construction Andre Fourchy had surveyed an appropriate site for a new facility on Drakes Bay just inside the lee of Chimney Rock. This was about a half mile further west along the shoreline from the auxiliary boathouse. The property was purchased from the heirs of Charles Webb Howard the following year. Then nothing further was done for over ten years. The merging of the Life-Saving Service and the Revenue Cutter Service in 1915 into the U.S. Coast Guard may have contributed to the mysterious delay. World War I almost certainly did. But ultimately

the reasons why no action was taken for such a long time remain inexplicable. In the mean while conditions and morale continued to deteriorate at the Point Reyes Life-Saving Station (which became U.S. Coast Guard Station No. 320 in 1915). The District Superintendent visited the station shortly after the War had ended and noted, "This is a very discouraging place for both boatswain [keeper] and crew and it is to be hoped that the station will be moved in the near future which will remedy the matter."

#### *The Navy Radio Direction Finder Station*

In 1920 the Point Reyes Life-Saving Station acquired a new neighbor when the Navy purchased a small parcel adjacent to the station on its north side and built a Radio Direction Finder Station—also known as a Compass Station. This was one of three facilities established in the San Francisco Bay Area at that time to facilitate maritime navigation. The Radio Direction Finder Station provided a radio signal from a known location which ships at sea could, use in conjunction with the other stations, to triangulate their exact position. The other two stations were apparently identical to the Point Reyes facility. One was located at Point Montara, the other on the Farallon Islands. The Navy's Radio Direction Finder Station at Point Reyes was extremely modest at first but would eventually be expanded to include a two-story dormitory by 1923. (The dormitory and the compass station are still extant; the latter is being used as a private residence under lease from the National Park Service). These additions complemented the already village-like environment that had grown up around the Coast Guard life-saving station. A collection of small cottages and outbuildings had been constructed by many of the surfmen just outside the formal boundaries of the facility on its northeast side in order to accommodate their wives and families. Only the keeper (or officer-in-charge, as he was known after 1915) was allowed to have family members resident on the station itself. In response to this restriction, married surfmen had arranged with the rancher who owned the surrounding property to build private residences for themselves. This practice was not uncommon and was unofficially condoned. The structures would revert to the rancher when they were no longer needed by the surfmen who had originally occupied them.

#### *Building the New Station on Drakes Bay*

Between December, 1924 and April, 1925 the Coast Guard finally completed plans for its long-anticipated station at Drakes Bay. The design was prepared by Coast Guard architect Victor Mendelheff, who also prepared plans for similar boathouses at the Bolinas Bay and Golden Gate Park Stations. The new facility was to be a lifeboat station (rather than a life-saving station), designed to accommodate the heavy 36-foot motor lifeboats, which had become the mainstay of life-saving operations in the Coast Guard by this date. The facility would include a three-track marine railway for launching the motor lifeboats. It also included a gasoline-powered winch for operating the boat carriage. The dormitory-style crew's quarters were roomy by comparison with the older facility and had hot water heating and electric lights, luxuries at the time for Coast Guardsmen in this remote location. A separate Officer-in-Charge quarters was to be situated at the top of the bluff some distance from the boathouse. Work was started in July of 1926 by Fred J. Mauer, contractor, under the supervision of Assistant Superintendent of Construction Andre Fourchy. It was mostly completed by March of 1927 and managed by a caretaker until a crew could be assigned. Finally, on September 18, at 4:30 p.m., the Coast Guard ensign was raised and the new station entered active service as U.S. Coast Guard Station No. 313. The original life-saving station (U.S. Coast Guard Station No. 320) was subsequently sold, as was the auxiliary boathouse at B Ranch. The structures associated with these older facilities were either relocated or demolished and nothing now remains at either site except the lookout at Ten Mile Beach and two of the three cypress trees planted along the south side of the original keeper's quarters (the third cypress was washed off the bluff during a storm in 1998, and the other two will probably follow within the next few years).

The new facility comprised essentially two building clusters. The heart of the station was the lifeboat house itself with its associated structures. These stood on the water's edge at the foot of a high bluff. A

second cluster of buildings included the Officer-in-Charge quarters and related outbuildings. These stood about 1000 feet west of the lifeboat house at the top of the hillside above the bay. The two groups of buildings were originally connected only by a precipitous wooden stairway that descended the steep walls of the bluff. (This was later replaced by the current road). Two private fishing wharfs also existed at the time the Coast Guard station was originally built. One of these, the F.E. Booth wharf, stood on the shoreline directly below the Officer-in-Charge quarters. The other, the Paladini wharf, stood next the Coast Guard boathouse.

The Coast Guard facility was approached from the west across the open, windswept pastureland of the point. From this direction the Officer-in-Charge quarters would have been visible a considerable distance away and would have appeared to hang in bleak isolation at the very edge of the land. This was the first view a visitor got of the Point Reyes Lifeboat Station, and the image would have left a lasting impression of the loneliness of the place, perched incongruously before the vast backdrop of grey ocean beyond. One can only imagine the apprehension of the young enlistee as he approached his new duty station for the first time.



*History Figure No. 2. The Officer-in-Charge quarters on Drakes Bay seen from the west, ca. 1928 [NPS, Point Reyes National Seashore, Park Archives].*

The Officer-in-Charge quarters stood at the edge of a broad expanse of grazed pastureland, part of the A-Ranch, which was owned at that time by Azorean dairyman Joseph V. Mendoza. No other prominent features—whether natural or otherwise—stood near it, except for the F.E. Booth fishing wharf, which was not visible from the landward side. The vegetation surrounding the quarters was low and consisted mainly of grass or native iris. Native scrub survived only in scattered patches around rocks or on steeper slopes where the cattle could not trample it. Originally, the Officer-in-Charge cluster included only the main quarters, the three-car garage, a small pumphouse and a water tank. The property was surrounded by a simple fence to keep out cattle but otherwise had no artificial landscaping to set it off or protect it from the surrounding countryside.

A dirt road originally ran along the top of the bluff for about 1000 feet, where it met the wooden staircase which descended to the main building cluster. The lifeboat house was the most prominent feature here, but the area also included a single-story powerhouse and a wooden water tank. The space between the powerhouse and the boathouse was graded to form a simple, small courtyard, possibly planted with grass. The crew entered the boathouse through a door which opened onto this courtyard opposite the powerhouse. The boathouse was an imposing, two-story, wood-framed structure with a shallow, gable-on-hip roof. It stood on piers over the bay, so that only its rear—or southern—end rested on land. The most distinctive feature of this building was the marine railway, which extended more than 200 feet into the bay from the north end of the building. Boats were transported into the water on a wheeled carriage which traveled down the inclined track. Barely 75 feet away, the long rambling warehouses of the Paladini fishing wharf stretched into the bay. These buildings contributed significantly to the feeling of the lifeboat station even though they were not actually part of the facility. The fishermen and Coast Guard men regularly interacted, so this juxtaposition was more than just visual. It also resulted in an informal community which helped mitigate the isolation of this remote duty station.



*History Figure No. 3. The lifeboat house on Drakes Bay with Paladini wharf in background, ca. 1928 [NPS, Point Reyes National Seashore, Park Archives].*

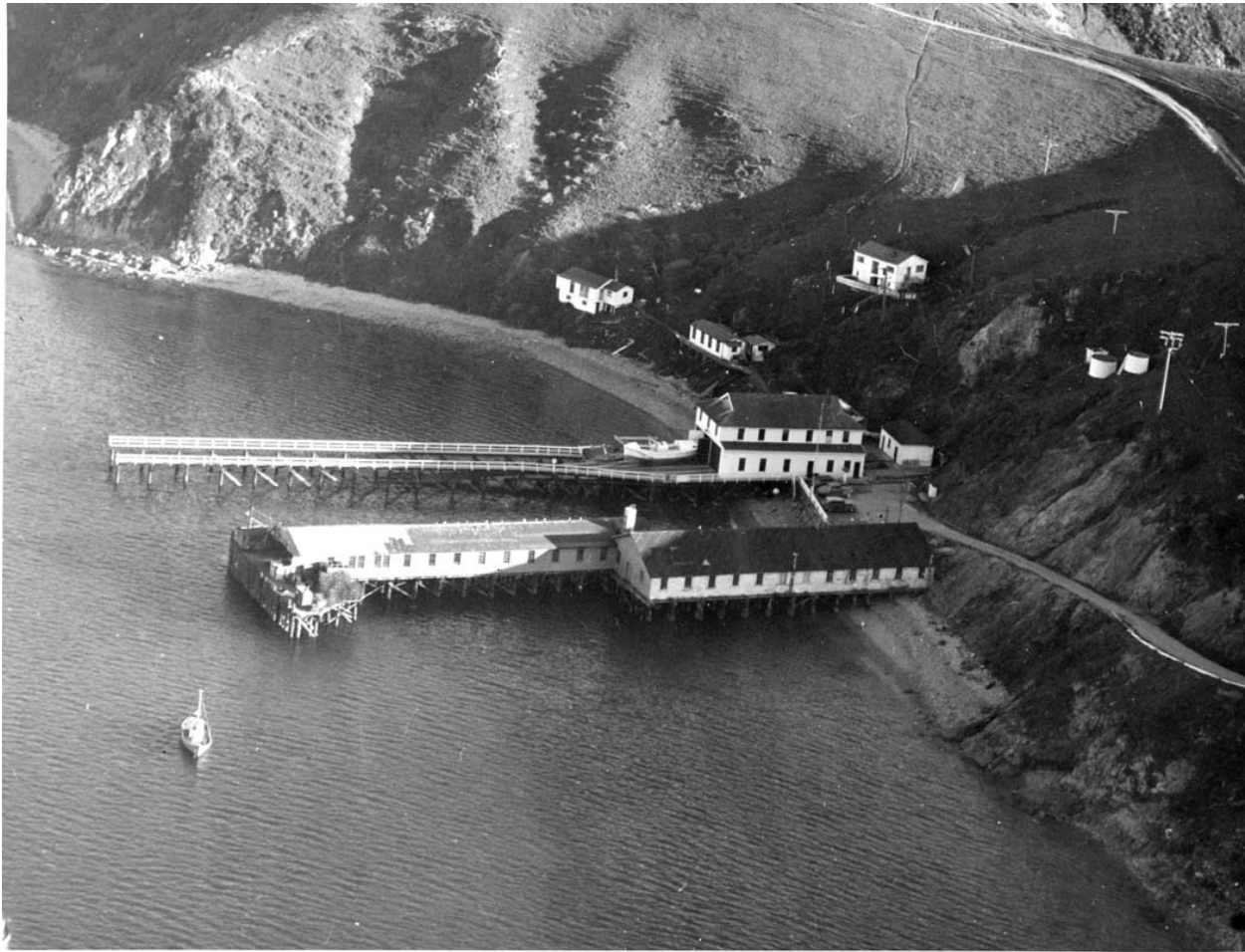
The physical setting of the Point Reyes Lifeboat Station gave the facility its most distinctive and defining characteristics. One of the most arresting of these was the expansive view across Drakes Bay and out to the ocean beyond. The Coast Guard men who worked here could never forget the ocean, which filled their senses no matter where they stood in this confined landscape. Not only was the sea always before their eyes, its sound was in their ears even as they slept—the waves of the bay lapping and crashing against the piers underneath their bunks—and the smell and feel of salt air was in their faces during the day. This sense of the overwhelming presence of the sea was only reinforced, if not exaggerated, by the physical topography and vegetation of the land itself. The narrow point on which the station was situated is nearly surrounded by the sea and seems barely substantial enough to withstand its erosive effects. Some of the land slides into the water every year. And the sparse vegetation that grows here did nothing to protect the men from the bitter winds the sea was constantly sending their way or to relieve their eyes of the relentless horizontality of nearly everything in sight. This experience of being immersed in the maritime is still available to anyone who visits the place, since little has happened over the years to alter the essential characteristics of this landscape.

#### *Operation of the Point Reyes Lifeboat Station*

During its forty-one years in operation, life at the Point Reyes Lifeboat Station was occupied primarily with equipment maintenance and drill, as the crew constantly prepared for emergencies that only came intermittently. Except for adjustments that had to be made for the occasional technological advance—mostly involving communication or additional power in the boats—little changed in this day-to-day routine. These routines had been established under the original U.S. Life-Saving Service. With the merging of the old Life-Saving Service into the U.S. Coast Guard, a more military culture began gradually to overtake the earlier habits and practices, but this did not have much noticeable effect until after the last generation of U.S. Life-Saving Service surfmen began retiring in significant numbers. World War I required the surfmen to serve briefly in a military capacity providing coastal defense, but the first really significant effect of the new militarization did not come until the end of the 1930s, when the Coast Guard introduced a system of tours of duty on the military model. Under this system, a man would enlist in the Coast Guard, receive training at a central facility, like the Coast Guard Training Center at Curtis Bay, Maryland, and then be assigned more-or-less randomly to a station anywhere in the nation. He could expect to be transferred again in another year or two and might find himself on the other side of country once more. The effect of this practice—and possibly its intent as well—was to create a stronger allegiance to the institution and a correspondingly weaker connection to a particular place and its resident community. This contrasted markedly from the old Life-Saving Service, where most of the surfmen came from the community in the immediate vicinity of the life-saving station where they served and often knew one another prior to joining. This was true at Point Reyes as it was throughout the country, and the change resulted in greater alienation between Coast Guard personnel and local civilians, though it probably also resulted in more professional standards of conduct.

One condition that did not change under the new Coast Guard was the lack of accommodations for family men. Only the officer-in-charge was officially provided with such provisions. At Point Reyes, the officer-in-charge traditionally occupied the large residence at the top of the hill. Married enlisted men either lived away from their spouses and family or had to find alternative lodging near the station grounds. Some married men transferred to another facility that offered family housing. Soon after the Point Reyes Lifeboat Station was completed, some of the crew members built four cottages on the private ranch property adjacent to the station. The rancher, Joseph Mendoza, allowed the Coast Guard men to build these houses if the ownership reverted to him when the men transferred. Mendoza would then rent the cottages to other enlisted men or to fishermen who worked at the nearby fish wharfs. Three of these cottages and a three-car garage built by Mendoza all perched on the steep slope behind the lifeboat house just east of the powerhouse. All of these buildings were destroyed in a mudslide that occurred in January

of 1956. A fourth residence was built sometime later just outside the south gate of the Officer-in-Charge area.



*History Figure No. 4. Aerial view of lifeboat station on Drakes Bay showing crew's residences on hillside, ca. 1951 [NPS, Point Reyes National Seashore, Park Archives].*

#### *Assistance and Shipwrecks*

During its first decade of operation, the Point Reyes crew responded to numerous distress calls along the Marin and Sonoma coastline. Most of these calls simply required hauling stranded fishing boats and yachts out of the surf, or towing stalled gas-powered vessels into the many fish company piers on Drakes Bay. The latter activity made the Coast Guardsmen very popular with the local fishermen. Through their constant efforts, the new station's crew saved over \$3,000,000 worth of property and assisted 45 vessels in just ten years. Included in these figures are three major shipwrecks. The first of these occurred on the evening of June 27, 1929, when the 946-ton steam schooner *Hartwood*, carrying a mixed cargo of freight and 26 passengers, ran aground on the rocks just off the point. As heavy seas began to break the wooden hull apart, the captain ordered all hands to abandon ship. Two boats were launched. Thirteen people, including the captain's wife, five-year-old son, and the seven-year-old son of the first mate, managed to get in the boats and escape. But heavy seas prevented launching of a third, smaller boat, leaving the 13 remaining men stranded on the wrecked ship.

The Point Reyes lifeboat crews had meanwhile responded to the *Hartwood's* telegraphed SOS and quickly located the steam schooner's lifeboats. Their occupants were all retrieved and taken safely back to the

station. While this was occurring, another group of surfmen rigged a breeches buoy from a position on the cliffs above the wreck. As the cable alternately sagged and snapped taut with each roll of the ship, three men were hauled to safety. But the breeches buoy had to be abandoned after the third person was brought to shore, since by then the storm had worsened and the cable was cracking like a whip. The surfmen resorted once more to their motor lifeboat, and ran the craft close enough to the side of the stricken *Hartwood* to pass a line over. All but two of those remaining on the wreck climbed hand over hand down the line to the waiting lifeboat. But two were not strong enough to accomplish this and were finally removed when the breeches buoy could be restored from the adjacent cliffs. By night's end, all of the crew and passengers had been rescued from the *Hartwood* with no casualties. The ship, however, was a complete loss and broke up the following day.

Nearly a year later, on May 8, 1930, the Atlantic Richfield Company's gasoline tanker *Richfield* ran aground off Chimney Rock, not far from the lifeboat station. The impact tore her hull open, and gasoline began spreading over the sea. The crew abandoned ship immediately, fearful of an explosion. They were all rescued without mishap by the motor lifeboat launched from the Point Reyes Station. Later attempts to pull the tanker free all failed, and the Coast Guard had to post a mariners' warning prohibiting open fires at sea around Point Reyes until the gasoline slick from the stricken vessel had dissipated. The *Richfield* was a complete loss and eventually broke up.

On November 7, 1931 a third major shipwreck occurred when the freighter *Munleon*, carrying 800 tons of general cargo, ran aground off Point Reyes almost at the same place where the *Hartwood* was lost two years earlier. With her hull stove in, the *Munleon* settled low into the water but remained intact long enough for the Point Reyes Station's motor lifeboat to ferry all of her 28 man crew safely to shore in three successive trips. The *Munleon* was abandoned and later broke up.

### *The War Years*

The physical landscape of the Coast Guard station underwent significant changes during the years just prior to the United States entering World War II. In 1939 the Works Progress Authority (WPA) constructed a graded road linking the Officer-in-Charge area with the lifeboat house. The old wooden staircase was removed, and circulation was greatly improved between the two building clusters. Two more residences and a five-car garage were built along this road just below the Officer-in-Charge area shortly afterward. One of these residences was the crew member's quarters already mentioned. The other was built by the local rancher, as was the garage. The introduction of these additional structures in such a compact area began to give the place a village-like atmosphere. During the subsequent war period this feeling would be greatly amplified by the increased staffing of military personnel.

In 1940 the WPA also built a stone retaining wall around the grounds of the Officer-in-Charge quarters and introduced much of the current landscaping, including a lawn of kikuyu grass (*Pennisetum clandestinum*) and shrubs consisting of Australian tea-tree (*Leptospermum laevigatum*) and privet (*Ligustrum sp.*) as well as various ornamental flowers. This was the first landscaping which had ever been introduced systematically around the quarters. It was facilitated by the fact that the Monterey cypress (*Cupressus macrocarpus*), which had been planted about five years earlier along the borders of the Officer-in-Charge area, was finally beginning to mature sufficiently to create an effective barrier against the wind. By 1940 many of these cypresses already stood over eight feet tall. This windbreak also helped soften the harsh lines of the buildings and made them fit more naturally into the surrounding environment. A two-story wooden water tower was also built about this time on the top of the slope behind the Officer-in-Charge quarters beside the existing water tank. This was probably constructed by WPA labor as well.



*History Figure No. 5. View of the Officer-in-Charge quarters shortly after completion of WPA work, ca. 1942. Private residences and 5-car garage in foreground. [NPS, Point Reyes National Seashore, Park Archives].*

When the war finally broke out at the end of 1941, routine at the Point Reyes Lifeboat Station changed dramatically. The station was transferred to the emergency command of the Navy Department, (as the life-saving station at Ten Mile Beach had during World War I), and was designated a part of the Naval Local Defense Forces. Responding to incidents of sabotage on the East Coast early in the war, watches were tightened and began to include beach patrols like those which had been regularly conducted by the Life-Saving Service during the nineteenth century. Coast Guard Headquarters directed all of its Naval Districts to institute beach patrols on July 25, 1942, with all men properly trained and armed. Coastal defense measures required a dramatic increase in military personnel of all branches throughout West Marin, and many new facilities had to be constructed to accommodate the increased staff. The Point Reyes Lifeboat Station held as many as 50 men at one time or another during the war, most of who were assigned to Point Reyes on temporary training duty. Point Reyes hosted training in dive bombing, landing barge practice, and air-sea rescue. Lifeboat station crews were regularly called upon to rescue the young trainees who dumped their planes in the ocean or to retrieve the bodies of the less fortunate pilots. The station kept a core life-saving crew always on standby while the majority of the men, who slept at the adjacent Paladini fishing wharf or in the crowded boathouse bunk rooms, were involved in the practice sessions.

As soon as the war ended, staffing at the lifeboat house returned to normal as did the daily routine. Many improvements which had been postponed on account of the war were also finally undertaken. The most

significant of these was the enlargement of the boatroom and addition of a third rail on the launchway. These changes had been proposed in 1938 and were intended to allow the station to function efficiently with two 36-foot motor lifeboats. The boathouse had originally been designed to accommodate only one of the boats and had only a single bay in the boatroom large enough to fit this vessel. The other two bays were intended to house the much smaller surfboats. In 1934 the station had acquired a second 36-foot motor lifeboat, but this vessel had had to remain in the water at all times, moored to the pilings. In 1946 work finally commenced on the enlargement of the boatroom with a shed addition along the south side. New boat doors were installed, and a third rail was laid on the launchway to bring the second motor lifeboat into the new bay.

### *Postwar Denouement*

These changes brought the lifeboat station to its fullest stage of physical development. The enlargement of the facilities suggested that the Coast Guard was expecting continued, vigorous activity at the Point Reyes Lifeboat Station, but not long after they were completed, just the opposite happened. During the last two decades of the station's operation, the Point Reyes crew saw increasingly less action as a result of improved navigational technology at sea and the ever diminishing size of the fishing fleets. During the late 1950s the station was evaluated by the 12th Coast Guard District. The findings concluded that there was a lack of ample activity to justify continued full operation of the facility. The coast lookout observed only three potential distress cases during fiscal year 1956, and only one of those cases required aid. Acting on the recommendation of the district commander, the coast lookout was discontinued, and the tower at the top of the bluff was torn down in April of 1957. Staffing was also reduced. Nevertheless, the station remained open and continued to provide valuable assistance to mariners in the area.

In 1956 a natural event significantly altered the physical landscape around the Coast Guard facility. That January unusually heavy rains caused the hillside above the lifeboat house to slide, destroying the old powerhouse and the three crew's residences and damaging the boathouse itself. While the boathouse was repaired, the other buildings were never replaced. The introduction of electricity in 1939 had long made the powerhouse unnecessary, while declining service needs now made the residences superfluous as well. After the bustling activity of the previous decade, the place must have now begun to feel like a ghost town. The declining fisheries and the abandonment or neglect of many of their facilities only contributed to this feeling.

A sadly memorable tragedy occurred during this period. In 1960 two surfmen took motor lifeboat CG-36542 up to Bodega Bay in response to a routine call for towing. The crew radioed the station at the start of their return journey. Nothing unusual was noted, but the men never arrived. The following day the motor lifeboat was found aground on Ten Mile Beach with its engine running and no damage. The crewmen were missing. Their bodies were not found for months. Presumably, they had been washed overboard, and the boat had continued motoring on without them.

The real threat to the Point Reyes Lifeboat Station was the growing obsolescence of the 36-foot motor lifeboat for which the station had been designed. The last of this model lifeboat was built in 1956, after which it was superseded by the 44-foot motor lifeboat. The 44-foot boat had been in development for years and represented a radically new design. It was steel-hulled, powered by twin diesel engines and outfitted with the most up-to-date navigational and communications technology. It would become the mainstay of Coast Guard life-saving operations up through the 1990s. The first of the new boats entered active service at Yaquina Bay Station (Oregon) in October of 1963. That same year the Coast Guard opened a new lifeboat station—now termed a small boat station—at Bodega Bay some 20 miles north of Point Reyes. Bodega Bay was not only a sheltered harbor but had an active port and provided a variety of services in town for Coast Guardsmen and their families. The station was equipped with one of the new

44-foot boats as well as one of Point Reyes' 36-foot boats (No. 36542). With the opening of the Bodega Bay station, the Point Reyes station no longer seemed necessary. Its remote location made it expensive to maintain and undesirable to serve in. Its antiquated design would not accommodate the increased size and weight of the new 44-foot boats, which were meant to stay in the water at all times. The one great advantage of the Point Reyes facility—its nearness to the fog-shrouded and rocky shoals that claimed so many ships—was no longer as crucial an asset as it once had been, since the greater speed and operational radius of the 44-foot boats allowed them to reach Point Reyes from Bodega Bay in relatively little time. By April of 1964, the commander of the 12th Coast Guard District had approved a recommendation for its deactivation. Local residents, especially the Drakes Bay fishermen who had grown dependent on the services of the lifeboat station, opposed this move and managed to delay any action until 1966. That year the station was partially deactivated. Only a skeleton crew was left to maintain the facility. Finally on December 16, 1968 the Point Reyes Lifeboat Station was officially deactivated, and the property was transferred—through an intermediary party—to Point Reyes National Seashore, which had been established on the peninsula in 1962.

#### *Park Service Ownership and Management*

During the 1970s and 1980s the staff at Point Reyes National Seashore used the boathouse as a launching and storage site for the park's patrol boat. The residence was assigned to park staff, who used the garages for personal and park use. The paint locker, radio tower, and flagstaff were removed, as well as the old bell tower adjacent to the boathouse. The boathouse deteriorated with disuse and through exposure resulting from missing windows, forcing the park to make several major repairs in 1976. Foremost of these were replacement of the red cement-asbestos roof shingles with wood shingles painted red and repair of the launchway railings. Much of the historic setting was altered with the gradual disappearance of the adjacent fishing facilities. The Paladini fish dock burned down in 1970 (the pilings are still visible at low tide). The Park Service demolished the deteriorated F.E. Booth fishing pier in 1977 as well as the last remaining private cottage built by one of the married surfmen. Only the Balestrieri fishing pier remains below the Officer-in-Charge quarters.

Determining the Point Reyes Lifeboat Station to be of historic significance, the Western Regional Office of the National Park Service prepared nomination forms to the National Register of Historic Places, first in 1973 and again in 1979 and 1985. In 1985 the property was listed on the Register. The park initiated a long-planned adaptive restoration of the boathouse, which was performed between 1988 and 1990. The boathouse was put into use in mid-1990 as a classroom and dormitory for nonprofit educational purposes and as an operating museum. It has continued to serve this purpose up to the present date. After an effort by National Park Service staff in Washington, D.C., the Point Reyes Lifeboat Station was named a National Historic Landmark by the Department of the Interior in January of 1990. The nomination form noted that the Point Reyes Lifeboat Station was called "the best example of the Pacific coast variation of a nationally-employed and significant type of lifeboat station."

Point Reyes National Seashore currently possesses one of the original 36-foot motor lifeboats used at the Point Reyes Lifeboat Station, boat number CG-36542. This boat was built at the Coast Guard shipyard in Curtis Bay, Maryland in 1953 and served for ten years at Point Reyes until it was transferred to the new Bodega Bay small craft station in 1963. In 1978 the Coast Guard "surveyed," or deactivated, CG-36542, and the boat was subsequently donated to the National Park Service at the latter's request. It was delivered to Point Reyes National Seashore in 1982. In 1991 CG-36542 was carefully restored to its original operable condition, but by this time the marine railway had deteriorated to such an extent that the lifeboat could not be launched off of it. CG-36542 was kept in the boathouse and used only as a stationary exhibit for the next two decades. In 2005 the Park Service initiated a full restoration of the marine railway and associated wharf structures with the intent of making the system fully operable. This

will allow the Park Service to launch its motor lifeboat, and it hopes to use CG-36542 for historical interpretation. The restoration of the marine railway is still in process at the time of this writing.

The Officer-in-Charge quarters is currently used as employee housing. The landscaping is well-maintained by the residents, but no formal guidance is given by park management to preserve historic character or content.

### Physical History Endnotes

- 1 In fact, Congress authorized "any suitable number of public vessels, adapted to the purpose," to patrol during the winter storm season. But since only the Revenue Marine's cutters were "adapted to the purpose" only they conducted these patrols. See Robert Johnson, *Guardians of the Sea: The United States Coast Guard, 1915 to the Present*. (Annapolis, MD: Naval Institute Press, 1987), 4.
- 2 In 1863 the Revenue Marine became the Revenue Cutter Service.
- 3 To call the volunteers "untrained" might be unduly harsh, since most of these men were fishermen by trade and usually very competent with a small boat in local waters. The two greatest problems with the volunteer system were ensuring regular maintenance of the facilities and gathering a volunteer crew quickly enough during an emergency.
- 4 Quoted in William Wallace Johnson, "The United States Life-Saving Service," *The New England Magazine* 8.2 (Apr., 1890): 135.
- 5 Martha J. Lamb. "The American Life-Saving Service." *Harper's New Monthly Magazine* 64.381 (February, 1882): 361; and Dennis Noble. *That Others Might Live: The U.S. Life-Saving Service, 1878-1915*. (Annapolis, MD: Naval Institute Press, 1994), 81-90.
- 6 Gebhard, David Gebhard and David Bricker. *The Former U.S. Coast Guard Lifeboat Rescue Station and Lookout Tower, Point Arguello, California (1936-1941)*. (Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service, Interagency Archeological Services, 1980), 8.
- 7 A comprehensive study of this subject was made by Eugene York in 1983. See his "The Architecture of the United States Life-Saving Stations." Master of Arts thesis, Boston University 1983.

## Analysis and Evaluation

### Summary

The Point Reyes Lifeboat Station Historic District retains physical integrity related to its period of significance, 1927-1957. The landscape characteristics contributing to the district include: natural systems and features, spatial organization, topography, views and vistas, vegetation, circulation, buildings and structures, small scale features, and archeological sites. The natural systems and features on site provided an ideal location for lifeboat station. The protected shores and narrow beach along Drake's Bay, the clear views of the Pacific and Drake's Bay from the lookout tower, and the calm waters allowed for easier rescues than at the first Point Reyes life-saving station site. The remaining contributing buildings and structures display how the site was spatially organized and used during the period of significance. The footpaths, roads, and driveways that date to the 1920s and 1930s development, are relatively unchanged and function as they did when they were first built. And, although less manicured than during the period of significance, vegetation patterns such as rectilinear lawns, hedges, and Monterey cypress windbreaks are still present and contribute to the character and setting of the historic district.

### Integrity

The historic district retains all seven aspects of integrity.

**Location** – The Point Reyes Lifeboat Station was moved to its present site in 1927. The purpose of the move was to take advantage of the calmer waters of Drake's Bay when launching boats. The Station's period of significance begins with its move to this site and it retains integrity with respect to its location.

**Setting** – The physical environment of the cultural landscape has seen few changes since 1927. The natural systems and features such as landform, hydrology, and native vegetation are virtually unchanged since the period of significance. The views that existed during the historic period are also relatively unchanged. Ornamental vegetation has grown, and some of it is not as manicured as it once was, but overall the patterns of vegetation established during the period of significance are still intact.

**Design** – The Point Reyes Lifeboat station includes a collection of buildings, circulation, and landscaping that was thoughtfully integrated into the steep slope. Most of the structures are unchanged since the period of significance. The boathouse, the lifesaving boat, and the marine railway have undergone, or are currently undergoing, substantial restoration in keeping with the original design. Wheelchair accessible ramps have been added to the boathouse, and a few small scale features such as propane tanks, signs, and recycle bins have been added since the period of significance. Because these features are relatively minor in scale, they do not detract from the overall design.

**Materials** – The physical materials that comprise this historic district have also remained largely intact. The lawns and hedges still define spaces and edges around the Officer-in-Charge quarters. The structures still have the original materials, and when restored, compatible materials were used. The road and footpath surfaces are the same as they were during the period of significance, and the cypress windbreaks and utilities such as power lines and the water system are still present.

**Workmanship** – Original workmanship dating to the original development from 1927 is still expressed in most of the existing structures. Features built by the Works Progress Administration in 1940, including the rock retaining walls, the landscaped area around the house, and the road to the boathouse, also still convey the high level of workmanship typical of New Deal projects.

**Feeling** – The Point Reyes Coast Guard Station expresses a connection to the early U.S. Coast Guard stations on the West Coast. The architecture, building layout, and site design maintain a cohesiveness that preserves this place in time. One can sense that this facility has not changed all that much since the period of significance. Although the function of the place has changed, visitors to the site are able to visualize the link between the site and the sea and thereby understand how this facility worked.

**Association** – The facility is significant because of its historic association with the Life-Saving Service and U.S. Coast Guard. It is significant because of its role in providing aid to vessels in distress and Combined, the facility’s remaining structures, location, layout, design, views, and vegetation patterns convey its association with all aspects of life-saving activities during the period of significance. The structures convey how the Coast Guard lived and worked on site. The location, layout, and views convey how the lifeboat station accessed the shipwrecks and emergencies within Drake’s Bay and the Pacific Ocean, and the design and ornamental vegetation patterns convey an aesthetic that is also present at other lifeboat stations in the region.

## **Natural Systems and Features**

Natural Systems and Features are defined as the natural aspects that have influenced the development and physical form of the landscape. For the Point Reyes Lifeboat Station, natural systems such as landform and hydrological patterns influenced how the site was developed.

### **Geomorphology**

The overriding natural feature of Point Reyes National Seashore is the presence of the San Andreas Fault that bisects the peninsula from the rest of the California mainland. The peninsula is located on the Pacific plate which is estimated to creep northwestward about two inches a year. It is intermittently edged by beaches, sea cliffs, and intertidal zones, and is surrounded by the Pacific Ocean. This long and relatively narrow landform serves as a natural breakwater, significantly calming the rough Pacific waters as they enter Drake’s Bay. Because of the bay’s relative calm, the Point Reyes Lifeboat Station was moved to this site in 1927—away from the unprotected shores of the Pacific. It is located near the southern tip of the peninsula on a steep north-facing slope. The uppermost part of the historic district is at the crest of the narrow peninsula and is afforded a 360-degree view of the Pacific Ocean, Drakes Bay, and the Point Reyes lighthouse. A narrow, sandy beach is located at the bottom (northern-edge) of the site—leading into the protected waters of Drake’s Bay. A combination of landform features such as the proximity to the dangerous shipping lanes of the Pacific, the gentle and easily-accessible waters of Drake’s Bay, and the expansive views were determining factors in the U.S. Coast Guard’s decision to site the station at its present location.

### **Hydrology**

The steep slope on which the station was built provided both opportunities and constraints due to associated hydrological patterns. One ephemeral drainage passes through the site. When the station was first developed, a well and pumphouse were built directly over the drainage in the hope of tapping into a permanent water supply. When the first well failed to yield a reliable source, a deeper well was drilled further down stream in the mid 1930s. This well and associated pumphouse supplied water throughout the rest of the station’s operation, however it was an inadequate supply for all of the Coast Guardsmen, their families, and the fishermen that lived in this area, and water conservation—particularly in the drier summer months—was a continual necessity.

Surface runoff also contributed to periodic landslides along the steep slope. In the mid 1950s, a large slide broke free from behind, and to the west of the boathouse. This slide destroyed the married surfmen cottages that were carved into the slope and it significantly damaged the Lifeboat Station Road. It is unknown whether the slope gave way due to purely natural causes or whether the change in surface hydrology due to the addition of roads and house pads contributed to the problem. The road was restored soon after the slide, but the instability of the slope precluded the married surfmen cottages from being rebuilt.

### **Native Vegetation**

Other than the area surrounding the Officer-in-Charge quarters, the historic district is still covered with a natural coastal bluff mix of vegetation. This vegetation community is comprised of indigenous plants such as coast buckwheat (*Eriogonum latifolium*), lizard-tail (*Eriophyllum staechadifolium*), California polypody (*Polypodium californicum*), Pacific reedgrass (*Calamagrostis nutkaensis*), lupine (*Lupinus chamissonis* and *L. arboreus*), beach strawberry (*Fragaria californica*), seaside daisy (*Erigeron glaucus*), live-forever (*Dudleya farinosa*), California blackberry (*Rubus ursinus*), soap plant (*Chlorogalum pomeridianum*), and bracken fern (*Pteridium aquilinum*). Invasive exotics such as cape ivy (*Delairea odorata*), kukuyu grass (*Pennisetum clandestinum*), wild radish (*Radix sativa*), periwinkle (*Vinca major*), and iceplant (*Carpobrotus edulis*) are also interspersed throughout the district. The community is characterized by low lying herbaceous plants and prostrate shrubs. Because there is no associated overstory, the slope is open and exposed, providing expansive views of Drake's Bay. Although some of the Monterey cypress and Monterey pine copses that were introduced to the site have slightly expanded, the native vegetation patterns are intact and the open character of the district remains.

### **Summary**

The geomorphology, hydrology, and native vegetation of the site influenced how the lifeboat station was sited and developed. Because these natural systems and features are intact, they help convey the historic setting. Therefore natural systems and features landscape characteristic contributes to the significance of the historic district.

## **Spatial Organization**

Spatial organization is defined as the three-dimensional organization of physical forms and visual associations in the landscape. The spatial organization of Point Reyes Lifeboat Station is defined by two distinct clusters. These are the boathouse and marine railway area (the primary work area), and the quarters (the primary residential area). Natural features such as the steep slope, beach, views, and water dictated where development of these clusters could occur.

The boathouse and marine railway were the primary features defining spatial organization for this historic district. When the 1889 Point Reyes lifesaving station was deemed inadequate due to the dangerous waves along the Pacific, U.S. Coast Guard planners searched for an acceptable site along the more protected shores of Drake's Bay. This exact site was chosen due to its narrow beach, its protected slope, and its proximity to the dangerous waters of the Pacific. This site provided a gentler slope on which to build the large two-story house and associated features such as garage, pumphouse, water towers, and landscape elements such as the lawn and cypress windbreak. While the boathouse and marine railway area is characterized by distinctly utilitarian features and lack of ornamentation, the Officer-in-Charge quarters has ornamental vegetation, retaining walls, and fencing that create a more formal and less industrial character.

Some lifesaving stations in the region (such as the Fort Point U.S. Coast Guard Station in San Francisco and the original Point Reyes Lifesaving Station) sited the Officer-in-Charge quarters next to, or in very close proximity to the boathouse. The steepness of the terrain for this station required the Officer-in-Charge quarters to be sited nearly a quarter-mile away, creating a distinct cluster of residential features away from the boathouse. When entering the historic district, the Officer-in-Charge quarters is first encountered after passing through a dense Monterey cypress windbreak. This windbreak provides a distinct visual boundary between the ranch land to the west, and the lifeboat station to the east. The stone-faced retaining wall that lines the road, the manicured lawn, and the ornamental hedges further express the formal character of the Officer-in-Charge quarters. Continuing along the asphalt-surfaced road, through a gate that marks the east boundary of the Officer-in-Charge quarters.

The Officer-in-Charge quarters cluster is connected to the boathouse cluster by the Boathouse Road that descends down to the beach over a steep open slope. The road terminates at the boathouse parking area, which is tucked inbetween the boathouse and the steep slope to the south. The boathouse and marine railway were built at the edge of the beach, extending into the water. Because the boathouse only offered living quarters for single surfmen, those with families sought permission to build cottages from the rancher (J. Mendoza) who owned the adjacent land. These cottages were sited as close to the boathouse as was physically possible—carved into the steep hillside. The water tanks and fuel tanks above the boathouse still express their spatial relationship to the boathouse even though they no longer function. The lookout tower and the radio antenna which were located south of the boathouse are no longer extant. The siting of the lookout tower was influenced by the 360-degree views.

The Officer-in-Charge quarters and the Boathouse remain the two most distinct developed areas in the district and the Boathouse Road still serves as the primary connection between these two areas. Because the bulk of the district features are still located and functioning in the same way they did during the period of significance, and because the natural landforms that constrained the development are unchanged, spatial organization contributes the significance of the historic district.

## Topography

For purposes of the CLI, topography is defined as the human-manipulated configuration of the landscape. Because the Point Reyes Lifeboat Station was built on a steep slope, features such as retaining walls, culverts, and drainage ditches were necessary for development. The boathouse and marine railway were built at the base of the steep slope, on the water's edge, but all of the other developed features including roads, residences, utilities, and landscaped areas, were built along the slope.

The Lifeboat Station Road (the main circulation through the site) gently traveled down hill from the Officer-in-Charge quarters to the boathouse. A fairly typical cut-and-fill alignment, the road was built with a 1-foot tall berm on the downhill side and a 1-foot wide vee-ditch on the uphill side. Culverts were spaced along the road to further help with drainage. The lookout tower road that provides access to water tanks No. 3 and No. 4 was similarly built of cut-and-fill, but with no associated ditch and berm. The Officer-in-Charge quarters was built towards the top of the slope, on a gentler site. However, 6-foot tall retaining walls were still required around the landscaped area. These walls were built over ten years after the station was moved to this location and serve to create a distinct boundary between the road and the large residence. An additional retaining wall was built at the base of the Officer-in-Charge quarters driveway to create a level area in front of the pumphouse, and a wooden bulkhead was built at the junction of the beach and the Lifeboat Station Road to create a level parking area near the boathouse.

Only the minimum amount of excavation appears to have occurred for the construction of the married surfmen cottages. Although the structures have all been destroyed or removed, some of the foundation pads remain.

### Summary

The topographic features established during the period of significance still remain intact on site and continue to function as they were originally intended. Because of this, topography is a landscape characteristic that contributes to the significance of the historic district.

## Circulation

Overall, the existing circulation patterns reflect the patterns and composition from the period of significance. Several roads, walkways, and driveways contribute to the significance of the Point Reyes Lifeboat Station historic district.

### Contributing Circulation

#### **PORE Lifeboat Station Road**

**LCS ID: 056311**

**Structure No: HE0127**

Built in 1927 when the lifeboat station was first established, this road was modified by the WPA to its current configuration circa 1939. It begins at the junction with the Balestrieri Fish Dock access road and continues east to the boathouse. From the junction, it gently descends down the steep slope for approximately 1700 feet. It passes the Officer-in-Charge quarters and terminates at a parking area at the boathouse.

Today, the road is paved in asphalt and the parking area is partially surfaced in asphalt and partially surfaced in aggregate. Wheel stops, comprised of 7-inch diameter, horizontally-placed logs, define the edge of the parking area. The entire length of the road is constructed of cut and fill. It averages 10-feet in width and ranges in slope from 8- to 16-percent. A 12-inch wide, unsurfaced drainage ditch is located on the uphill side of the road and a slight earthen berm is located on the downhill side of the road. A total of four 12-inch corrugated iron culverts are located along the length of the road. Dry-laid fieldstone headwalls and outfalls are still present. White fog lines are painted on both edges of the road.

#### **PORE Lifeboat Station Officer-in-Charge Quarters Driveway**

**LCS ID: 451426**

**Structure No: TBD**

An 8- to 10-foot wide dirt and gravel-surfaced driveway starts at the Lifeboat Station Road then loops around to the back of the Officer-in-Charge quarters. Based on the analysis of historic photographs, it appears to have been built prior to 1940 and was probably built circa 1935, when the original pumphouse was converted into a one-car garage. A small parking area, large enough for two vehicles, is located adjacent to the one-car garage. A road culvert begins at this point, crosses the road then connects with the ditch and culvert system located on the Lifeboat Station Road. The driveway continues past this parking area and terminates at the back entrance of the Officer-in-Charge quarters. Concrete curbing is located on all three sides of the terminus, measuring 5-inches wide by 3-inches tall.

#### **PORE Lifeboat Station Concrete Walks and Steps**

**LCS ID: 056313**

**Structure No: HE0129**

These 4-foot wide, linear concrete walks are located at the Officer-in-Charge quarters. They begin at each of the concrete stairways, lead to the front and back entrances to the Officer-in-Charge quarters, and completely surround the residence. Some cracking and erosion is apparent. Two concrete stairways connect the Boathouse Road with the front of the Officer-in-Charge quarters. These stairways taper from approximately 10-feet wide at the bottom to 4-feet wide at the top. They are bordered with the stone-faced wall (LCS ID: 16046) and were built at the same time, in 1940.

## **PORE Lifeboat Station Fuel Tanks to Lookout Tower Road**

**LCS ID: 447845**

**Structure No: N/A**

This 10-foot-wide dirt surfaced road was built prior to 1942 and was altered in 1955 after a landslide damaged the slope below. The road is comprised of two distinct segments, neither of which is still used as a road. The first segment originates at the Lifeboat Station Road east of the Officer-in-Charge quarters. Analysis of historic photographs indicates that it veered off to the northeast, contoured along the steep slope and terminated into what appears to have been a parking area in the present day location of the water and fuel tanks. Photographs from 1955, taken after the landslide destroyed their previous site, show that the water tanks were moved to this parking location. At this point, the second segment of the road was built connecting the first segment with the lookout tower—approximately 1500-feet to the southwest.

The original segment of road including and adjacent to the water tanks still remains. The physical form of this section of the road (including the alignment and cut and fill) is still distinguishable. The dirt surface is covered in grass and other low coastal bluff vegetation. The second segment of the road starts above the fuel tanks, joins the Chimney Rock Trail and leads to the non-extant lookout tower. The portion that is actively used as the Chimney Rock Trail suffers from deep, braided erosion channels caused by water run-off and hikers. Once the road departs the Chimney Rock Trail and heads towards the lookout tower, the alignment is virtually indiscernible—although a faint trail, approximately 1- to 2-feet wide, still exists.

One culvert is located on this road—west of the fuel tanks—and is comprised of a 24-inch, corrugated metal pipe. The headwall is mostly buried in vegetation and soil, although a few dry-laid fieldstone are partially visible.

### **Non-Contributing Circulation**

The Chimney Rock Trail begins at a modern parking area uphill from the Lifeboat Station Road-Balestrieri access road junction. It crosses through the historic district and travels to the Chimney Rock overlook. This trail is surfaced in decomposed granite and is eroding in areas. It was built after the period of significance ended but is compatible with the setting of the historic district.

A wheelchair ramp at the boathouse parking area connects to the west side of the boathouse. It was built after the period of significance ended, however its white-painted, 4-by-4-inch wood posts and railings, and 2-by-6-inch decking are compatible with the historic deck that surrounds much of the boathouse.



*Circulation No. 1. View of Boathouse Road, water tank road is located above water tank, and road ruin is located between the water tank road and Boathouse Road.*



*Circulation No. 2: Concrete stairway leading from Boathouse Road to front of Officer-in-Charge quarters. (PWR Staff 2005).*

## Buildings and Structures

Fifteen buildings and structures remaining at the lifeboat station contribute to the historic district. Collectively they portray the architectural aesthetic and utilitarian requirements of the U.S. Lifesaving Service from the 1920s through the 1940s. The descriptions below were synthesized from the NPS' *List of Classified Structures* and the *Point Reyes Lifeboat Station Historic Structures Report* (Livingston 1991).

### Contributing Buildings and Structures

#### **PORE Lifeboat Station Boathouse**

**LCS ID: 009238**

**Structure No: HE0125**

The boathouse was built in 1927 and was designed to house type "T" 36-foot motor lifeboats on the first floor and provide quarters for the station's crew on the second floor. The 60- by 40-foot boathouse rests on a concrete and wood piling foundation. It is a two-and-a-half story rectangular structure, of wood frame construction. Exterior walls are sheathed with horizontal wood siding with vertical wood trim at the corners and a horizontal frieze below the soffit. Most siding and trim appears to be original fabric. Except for the removal and replacement of some smaller windows on the south elevation (noticeable by seams in the siding), some indentations in the siding and trim caused from disk sanding and blistering paint.

Electrical service to the building comes into and is attached to the south elevation of the building. An electrical panel box, meter, fire alarm and kitchen exhaust fan are also located on this wall. Other than lighting fixtures, all other exterior wall surfaces are free of mechanical and electrical equipment.

The boathouse, simple in form, is punctuated heavily by windows and doors on all four elevations. The north elevation (facing Drake's Bay) consists primarily of three very large double doors, designed to be accessible for storage of the motor lifeboats. These doors are constructed like barn doors, with an upper and lower criss-cross structural frame on the inside. They are sheathed on the outside with beaded vertical and tongue and groove boards. The doors are in good condition and function properly. The large type T 36-foot motor lifeboat was stored in the center bay while the 26-foot rail-launched surfboats were stored in the end bays. Also on the north elevation are three double-hung windows on the second story of the building (above the boat doors) and three small windows in the attic gable of the roof.

The east elevation has two rows of six windows each, one row on the first floor and one row on the second floor. All openings on the east side are uniform in size except those windows which are located on the shed entry room and at the landing of the first floor stair. The east elevation of the entry room has a small, 2-over-2 wood window.

The south elevation of the boathouse has three large-double-hung windows grouped together in the middle of the wall on the second floor. The first floor has two smaller double-hung windows at the kitchen and two double-hung windows in the mess hall next to the entry room. The south side of the entry room also features a paneled wood door with a 2-over-2 window.

The west elevation is similar in design to the east with the exception of the 1946 addition which expanded the first floor. A shed roof covers the addition. The window placement in the addition remains similar to the original configuration, with five double-hung windows on the first floor and six windows on the second. Two doors are located on this elevation, one which leads directly into the boat room and the other

into the kitchen. The head heights for the windows on all four elevations are aligned while the sill heights vary.

The boathouse has a hip roof on the original portion of the building, and shed roofs on the 1946 west addition and east entry room. The hip roof, on the north and south ends of the structure, rises to a point where it dies into a windowed gable. Roofing material on the original building portion is wood shingles. The existing shingles were painted red when installed in 1976. Weathering during the intervening years has resulted in a worn and faded appearance. This roof portion shows years of wear with cupped and missing shingles. The shed addition on the west side was reroofed with red asphalt roll-roofing during the 1988-89 restoration.

The boathouse has a single red brick chimney originally used by the boiler. The chimney is located above the boiler room near the east end of the roof. Considerable deterioration of the mortar joints is evident.

During the 1988-89 restoration, the exterior walkway on the west side of the building was rebuilt and a new wider walkway added to the south side of the structure. By providing this walkway, a formal entrance to the kitchen and mess hall was established. The walks are wood frame construction, all posts and rails are painted white to match the building's siding.

An exterior stairway was constructed on the east side of the structure as part of the building's latest restoration. To satisfy current codes, one of the original bedrooms on the second floor was redesigned into an exit corridor that leads to a new exit door. The door for the stairway access made use of the opening on one of the original double-hung windows. The stairway resembles the walkways and launchway construction with treated timber treads and white painted posts and rails.

### **PORE Lifeboat Station Marine Railway**

**LCS ID: 022267**

**Structure No: HE0133**

The marine railway extends 240 feet from the north side of the building. It is constructed of treated timber piles, with heavy timber framing above and below the water line. All structural wood members are connected by bolts. The structure resists lateral forces by the use of cross bracing. The current launchway varies in width with the far-end being approximately 20.5 feet wide, and the portion against the building being approximately 44 feet wide. A walkway on each side of the rail system, reached by a ramp on the west walk and steps on the east, extends to the end of the launchway. Three pairs of 85-pound tracks exit the boat room, curve to a common line in the center of the launchway and, using crossovers, continue side by side into the water. The boardwalk was modified during the 1989-90 restoration to allow wheelchair access and to continue the boardwalk around the southern edge of the boathouse. The entire structure is currently being restored.

### **PORE Lifeboat Station Motor Lifeboat**

**LCS ID: 055741**

**Structure No: HE0132**

One of the 36-foot motor lifeboats employed at this station is now owned by the National Park Service and is housed in the boathouse. Built at the Coast Guard yard at Curtis Bay, Maryland, in 1953, the boat, a type "TRS," is numbered 36542. There were three types of 36-foot motor lifeboats, hundreds of which were built between 1908 and 1956; less than a dozen of these vessels survive in the United States today. The 36-foot motor lifeboat is a rescue craft designed to remain afloat and self-right in adverse sea

conditions. It was the first standard motor-propelled lifeboat type adopted by the Coast Guard for lifesaving. The double-ended hull is fully-enclosed by three turtleback trunks and two well decks. The hull is divided into several watertight compartments, with a GM 4-71 marine diesel engine turning a single screw. The oak-framed and oak cypress-planked vessel has a solid oak keel reinforced with a cast-brass shoe, with clamps and stringers providing longitudinal support along with two substantial rub rails on the outer hull. The hull is 36.8-feet long, with a 10.6-foot beam and a 3.4-foot draft. The boat was recently restored.

### **PORE Lifeboat Station Officer-in-Charge Quarters**

**LCS ID: 009240**

**Structure No: HE0115**

The Officer-in-Charge Quarters is located west of the boathouse and high on the hill overlooking Drake's Bay. The residence sits among several other structures is bordered by a stone-faced retaining wall on the north and east sides. The two-story, wood frame residence was constructed in 1926-1927. It has a closed-in-porch on the north side and an entry room on the south side. A heavy wood lattice constructed of 3-inch wood boards screens the under-side of the north porch and the south entry room. Both the porch and entry room are accessed by wood steps with steel pipe hand railings. The residence has a poured-in-place concrete foundation and wood framed walls clad with horizontal vee-joint siding, 5-inch exposure, and vertical trim at the corners. Currently the window trim, lattice and the 2-inch by 10-inch fascia is painted grey. The siding is painted white. The structure has several 6-over-6 double hung wood windows with 1-over-1 exterior storm windows attached to the side of the window frame with piano hinges. Originally the storm windows were hinged to the top of the window frame by two small hook-like brackets and held open with casement adjusters. The residence has several basement windows as well as an access door on the west side. Several other double hung windows of various sizes are found on the east and west elevations of the residence. Fixed windows were installed on the north porch.

The roof of the residence is covered with sawn cedar shingles both on the main roof, the dormers and on the porches. The soffit material on the main roof is tongue and groove while plywood is used on the dormers. A red brick chimney protrudes from the dormer on the south side of the roof while a newer metal chimney pipe projects from the northwest corner near the ridge of the main roof. In several instances, the original wood gutter system is deteriorated or missing. Currently, the only gutters on the house are attached to the main roof. All downspouts consist of three-inch metal pipe.

In several other areas, primarily the north porch, original wood trim is deteriorated or missing. In a few areas, original exterior woodwork needs to be repaired and in some cases replaced..

### **PORE Lifeboat Station Three-Stall Garage**

**LCS ID: 009239**

**Structure No: HE0126**

Below the Officer-in-Charge quarters and across the road from the northeast corner of the stone retaining wall is 27-foot by 30-foot, three-bay garage built in 1927. The garage was constructed in a shingle style to match some of the other smaller buildings in the area. It bears no resemblance to either the residence or the boathouse. Like several of the other structures located at the Point Reyes Lifeboat Station, the garage is wood frame construction and painted white with grey trim. Exterior walls are sheathed with sawn shingles and the hipped roof is covered with sawn cedar wood shingles. Attached to the fascia of the building are built-in wood gutters with three-inch metal downspouts similar to those found on the residence.

On the west side of the garage are two large overhead garage doors and one smaller passage door hinged at the side. The east elevation of the building has three 1-over-1 double-hung windows spaced evenly across the facade and the north and south elevations have one window each located in the center of the wall. At one time a toilet was installed in the crawlspace of the garage which was accessible by a door on the east side. The toilet is still present, though no longer functional.

**PORE Lifeboat Station One-Car Garage**

**LCS ID: 009235**

**Structure No: HE0118**

About halfway up the driveway that loops around to the back entrance of the Officer-in-Charge quarters is a one-car garage that was originally built to be used as a well and pumphouse in 1927. When the new pumphouse and well were built in 1935, this structure was converted to a garage. Also built in the shingle style, this 12-foot by 20-foot rectangular wood frame structure has a hipped roof covered with sawn cedar wood shingles. This garage has only one bay accessed by an overhead garage door on the west side. The north elevation is punctuated by a raised wood panel door and a 1-over-1 double-hung wood window. The east elevation has one window and the south elevation has two windows.

**PORE Lifeboat Station Pumphouse**

**LCS ID: 009236**

**Structure No: HE0119**

Just above the three-car garage is a small pumphouse that was constructed in 1935. This building was also constructed in the shingle style with a hipped roof. Like the one-car garage, the pumphouse has a raised wood paneled door and a window on the north side. Different from the other ancillary buildings in the area, this structure has 2-over-2 double-hung windows instead of 1-over-1. The pumphouse has two windows on the south side and one window on the east and the west sides. A small vent protrudes from the south side of the roof. During much of the period of significance, the well and pumphouse provided water for the entire lifeboat station, the fishing docks, and all of their associated inhabitants. Currently, the pumphouse is still used to provide water for the Officer-in-Charge quarters and the boathouse.

**PORE Lifeboat Station Fire Pumphouse**

**LCS ID: 009237**

**Structure No: HE0123**

Located immediately to the southwest of the Officer-in-Charge quarters is an 8.5-foot by 8.5-foot structure referred to as the fire pumphouse. It was built in the 1940s to provide an emergency water-supply for suppression of structural fires. Similar to the Officer-in-Charge quarters, it has 5-inch exposed, vee-rustic horizontal siding with vertical trim at the corners. The building is painted white and has a hipped roof covered with sawn cedar wood shingles like some of the other ancillary buildings nearby. The south and east sides of the pumphouse have 1-over-1 wood windows while the north side has a wood raised paneled door with three windows.

**PORE Lifeboat Station Water Storage Tank No. 1**

**LCS ID: 016044**

**Structure No: HE0116**

Water Storage Tank No. 1 and No. 2 were originally located just upslope from the boathouse. In 1955, both tanks were moved further upslope to their current location. Water Storage Tank No. 1 was originally a 10,000 gallon redwood water tank with metal straps on concrete/wood foundation mat. The tank collapsed within the past 20 years and only the foundation mat is still extant. The mat is comprised of four linear concrete foundations with eleven wood 4-inch by 8-inch timber grid-work atop. The overall size is 15-feet by 15-feet.

**PORE Lifeboat Station Water Storage Tank No. 2**

**LCS ID: 016045**

**Structure No: HE0117**

Water Storage Tank No. 2 is a 20,000 gallon cylindrical tank of 10-inch vertical redwood planks held by metal straps. The tank was painted red, although most of the paint has chipped off. The wood roof is missing. It is 16 feet in diameter and 16 feet tall. It is on an identical foundation mat as Water Storage Tank No. 1. Neither Water Storage Tank No. 1 nor No. 2 has been used since the lifeboat station was deactivated in 1968.

**PORE Lifeboat Station Water Storage Tank No. 3**

**LCS ID: 016047**

**Structure No: HE0121**

Located on the hill above the Officer-in-Charge quarters, this 10,000 gallon redwood tank is still in use. It is constructed of vertical planks and measures 10 feet high by 12 feet in diameter. It has a 30-inch high concrete base, a flat wood roof, and the structure is painted white. The foundation mat is constructed of four concrete trapezoid shaped piers. A water meter box is located at the base of the piers and a wooden ladder is at the southeast side, partially covered in plywood prohibiting access. The tank needs repainting and the loose straps need tightening.

**PORE Lifeboat Station Water Storage Tank No. 4**

**LCS ID: 016048**

**Structure No: HE0122**

Like Water Storage Tank No. 3, this 20,000 gallon redwood water tank is located on the hill above the Officer-in-Charge quarters and is still in use. It is constructed of vertical planks with round metal straps, and measures 14-feet high by 16-feet in diameter. It has a peaked wood roof, ladder, and volume gauge. It rests on a foundation of four concrete trapezoid shaped piers. Galvanized metal straps have "Cellagio Wood Tanks," Healdsburg, California" inscribed on them. The flat roof is locked with a hinge paneled covering.

The tank collapsed in 1999 and was replaced in kind the same year.

**PORE Lifeboat Station Stone-Faced Wall**

**LCS ID: 016046**

**Structure No: HE0120**

This random ashlar faced retaining wall is located on the north and east edges of the lawn surrounding the Officer-in-Charge quarters. The wall was built in 1940 by the WPA and consists of three segments separated by two sets of reinforced concrete stairs. The stairways are wider at the bottom (approximately 6 feet wide) and taper at the top to 4 feet. They have 10-inch deep treads and 4-inch tall rises. Both

stairways lead to concrete walkways (LCS ID: 056313) that circumnavigate the residence. The retaining walls are 18 to 20 inches wide at the top and range from ground level to 96 inches tall. The wall is approximately 385 feet long and forms a semi-circle around the front lawn of the Officer-in-Charge quarters. A bronze plaque (LCS ID: 056314) commemorating Drake's possible visit to Point Reyes is embedded into the stone wall at the base of the larger stairway. Some cracking of the rock surface is apparent.

**PORE Lifeboat Station Low Rock Wall**  
**LCS ID: 016049**  
**Structure No: HE0124**

A 50-foot long random rubble retaining wall with mortared joints is located adjacent to the boathouse road and pumphouse. This wall creates a flat parking or staging area in front of the pumphouse, above the boathouse road. The wall ranges in height from 0 to 3 feet. According to historic photographs, it was built prior to 1939; it was possibly built in 1935 when the adjacent pumphouse was built. In recent years, the wall had suffered from neglect and had become concealed by overgrown grass. The current NPS tenants at the Officer-in-Charge quarters house recently removed the grass, re-exposing the wall.

**PORE Lifeboat Station Fuel Tanks**  
**LCS ID: 056312**  
**Structure No: HE0128**

Three yellow cylindrical metal tanks are positioned horizontally on two concrete foundations in between Water Storage Tank No. 1 and No. 2. These tanks were installed in 1955, and have not been used since the U.S. Coast Guard deactivated the station in 1968. Each tank is 3-feet to 4-feet in diameter and 8-feet to 10-feet long. They have riveted seams. Although they were once painted yellow, they are severely rusted, causing structural deterioration. They are no longer useable as fuel tanks.

**Summary**

Today, the fifteen buildings and structures that were built during the period of significance continue to reflect its primary function as a U.S. Coast Guard lifeboat station. As a result, these individual buildings and structures contribute to the significance of the historic district.



*Buildings and Structures No. 1. Front of three-stall garage. Officer-in-Charge quarters' lawn and stairway in foreground. Drake's Bay in background (PWR Staff 2006).*



*Buildings and Structures No. 2. West elevation of boathouse (PWR Staff 2006).*



*Buildings and Structures No. 3. Marine railway undergoing restoration (PWR Staff 2006).*

## Small Scale Features

Small scale features are the elements that provide detail and diversity among functional elements and ornamentation in the landscape. Of the contributing small scale features found at Point Reyes Lifeboat Station, two main feature types contribute to the historic district: fences and utilities.

### Contributing Small Scale Features

#### Utilities

Commercial electricity was installed in 1939. The existing power-line and poles are in the same location as the original. Some or all of this system may be original.

Two small scale features associated with water supply are still in use at the site. A red-painted water pipe is exposed adjacent to the retaining wall at the Officer-in-Charge quarters. It goes through the retaining wall, below the lawn towards the house. A red-painted fire hydrant is located west of the boathouse. It is 50 inches tall by 4 inches in diameter. “James Jones Co.” is inscribed on the surface. Adjacent to the fire hydrant is a small structure containing a fire hose. It measures 33 inches wide by 33 inches deep by 41 inches tall and has white horizontal siding with a red asphalt shingle roof. As stated in the “Buildings and Structures” section, two water tanks and the 1935 pumphouse still function to supply water to the Officer-in-Charge quarters and the boathouse.

#### Officer-in-Charge Residence boundary fence

A fence was built around the grounds of the Office-in-Charge quarters in 1927, when the residence was first built. The fence was a simple post and rail construction—painted white, and formed a square around the grounds. The cypress windbreak was planted just outside of the fence-line, further distinguishing the boundary. Up to 1966, photographs show the fence as intact. Currently, very little of the historic fence remains and virtually all of the white paint has chipped or eroded off. Portions of the fence have been removed, portions are rotting or damaged by Monterey cypress slash, and some portions now have barbed wire instead of wooden rails connecting the posts.

#### White Lattice Fence

A 35-foot long, latticed fence is located behind the Officer-in-Charge quarters and may be contributing to the historic district. An identical fence first appears in historical photographs dating to 1940—the same year that the retaining walls and other landscaping was done at the Officer-in-Charge quarters. Photographs from 1940 show the fence as unpainted, but by 1942 the fence is painted white. Today, the fence is painted white and the size, type of material, and alignment is identical to the historic fence. The posts and rails appear to be old and may be original, but it is likely the lattice is a replacement. This fence may have been used to screen views of the clothesline for those who entered the house from the back.

#### Wooden Bulkhead

The existing bulkhead at the base of the boathouse parking area, appears in photographs from the early 1950s. It is constructed of 2-inch by 12-inch horizontal cribbing supported by 12-inch by 12-inch posts and is 4-feet tall. A white picket fence, built in 1990, sits on top of the bulkhead.

#### Summary

Fences and remnants of the electrical and water utility systems still exist and function on the site as they did during the period of significance. Because of this, the associated small scale features contribute to the significance of the historic district.

### Non-Contributing Small Scale Features

### **PORE Lifeboat Station Drake Plaque**

**LCS ID: 056314**

**Structure No: HE0130**

Installed in 1950 by the San Francisco chapter of the Clammers, this bronze plaque was designed by William Gordon Huff. It measures 15 inches by 18 inches with sculpted images of Francis Drake and a local Indian holding a fish, Drake's ship is in the background. It is embedded in concrete on the stone-faced wall (LCS ID: 16046) adjacent to the Officer-in-Charge quarters. Although it dates to the period of significance, it is not functionally related to life and operations at the station and therefore does not contribute to the district. As a memorial structure, the NPS manages it as if it were a historic structure.

### **PORE Lifeboat Station NHL Plaque**

**LCS ID: 056315**

**Structure No: HE0131**

This plaque, installed in 1990, identifies the lifeboat station as a National Historic Landmark. It is a 16-inch square bronze plaque with raised lettering, cemented on a granite boulder on the west side of the boathouse. Because it is a NHL plaque, the NPS manages it as a historic structure, but it does not contribute to this historic district.

### **Propane Tanks**

The propane tanks at the Officer-in-Charge quarters and boathouse are modern. The boathouse tank is surrounded by a modern fence constructed of pressure-treated wood which is also non-contributing to the historic district. In the 1960s the boathouse propane tank was located on the opposite side (west side) of the boathouse where the NHL plaque is currently located.

### **Recycle Bin**

The recycle bin adjacent to the propane tank and a National Park Service sign adjacent to the NHL plaque (both at the boathouse) are also modern and non-contributing.

### **Split Rail Fence**

A split-rail fence and signs keeping people away from bluffs edge is located along the lookout tower road (Canyon Rim Trail); it too is modern and non-contributing to the historic district.

### **Gates**

Two modern metal gates, one above the Officer-in-Charge quarters and one below the Officer-in-Charge quarters are present along the Boathouse Road. Both gates were installed after the period of significance ended and do not contribute to the significance of the historic district.

### **Benchmark**

A survey benchmark is located south of the three-car garage—embedded in the concrete curb along the driveway. It reads, "NATIONAL OCEAN SURVEY/ FOR INFORMATION WRITE TO C.G. DIRECTOR WASHINGTON D.C./1983." It was added after period of significance and therefore does not contribute to the historic district.

## Vegetation

The vegetation landscape characteristic includes deciduous and evergreen shrubs and trees, ground covers, and herbaceous plants that were intentionally introduced to the district during the period of significance.

### Contributing Vegetation

#### Officer-in-Charge Quarters Area:

The bulk of introduced vegetation occurs in the vicinity of the Officer-in-Charge quarters. Three vegetation types are known to have been added during the period of significance for their functional and/or aesthetic benefits. The first vegetation type to be introduced was the Monterey cypress (*Cupressus macrocarpa*) windbreak that forms a nearly-complete square around the Officer-in-Charge quarters area. The windbreak was planted in 1927 at the time of initial development. In combination with a fence line, it creates a distinct edge that differentiates the Officer-in-Charge quarters from the rest of the lifeboat station. Some portions of the windbreak, particularly adjacent to the Lifeboat Station Road, are pruned and maintained. Other areas that have not been pruned in recent years have accumulations of deadwood. The northern edge of the windbreak and portions of the western edge have begun expanding as young Monterey cypress volunteer. Despite these changes, the original windbreak is intact and continues to provide wind protection for the Officer-in-Charge quarters. These trees were planted in four lines to create a square around the Officer-in-Charge quarters. They were planted roughly 30-feet apart to create a border around that Officer-in-Charge quarters that was approximately 300-feet by 300-feet square.

The other two vegetation types, the lawn and the hedges, were planted in 1940 and are also still intact. The lawn surrounds the residence and is broken up by narrow concrete sidewalks that circumnavigate the residence and connect it to the road and driveway. The lawn is primarily comprised of kikuyu grass, a drought-resistant, aggressive turf that is considered by the park to be an invasive species. It appears that the kikuyu is spreading into the drainage below the three-car garage well outside the original lawn area.

Two species of hedges were planted in the Officer-in-Charge quarters area at the same time as the lawn. The Australian tea tree (*Leptospermum laevigatum*) was planted southwest of the residence and served to create an edge between the manicured lawn at the front of the house and the unmaintained hillside at the back. Historic photographs show the ell-shaped hedge, approximately 70-feet by 50-feet long, as approximately 3-feet tall and well-clipped. It has not recently been pruned and now reaches 4-5 feet in height. The ell-shape is still distinct and the hedge appears to be healthy.

On either side of the main stairway leading to the Officer-in-Charge quarters front yard, stand two clusters of privet (*Ligustrum* sp.) that were also planted in 1940. Historic photographs show that they were clipped into rectangular hedges, approximately 3 feet tall. Currently they are unpruned and reach a height of up to 6 feet. The privet on the west of the stairway is approximately 20-feet long, and the privet on the east of the stairway is approximately six-feet in diameter (a single specimen). Like the Australian tea tree, the individual plants are healthy.

#### Rest of District

A row of Monterey pine (*Pinus radiata*) lines the north edge of the Lifeboat Station Road just east of the Officer-in-Charge quarters area. They first appear in photographs from 1956. Currently, this line of trees stands at least 25 feet tall and creates a distinct row along the road. Dozens of small Monterey pine have sprouted around the original row after the period of significance ended, and do not contribute to the significance of the historic district. These have formed a dense, impenetrable area around the foundation pad of the no-longer extant five-car-garage.

### **Non-Contributing Vegetation**

#### **Officer-in-Charge quarters Area:**

Adjacent to the one-car garage, and within the ephemeral drainage, a cluster of red-hot poker (*Kniphofia* sp.) and rose (*Rosa* sp.) is well-established. A few lily-of-the-Nile (*Agapanthus* sp.) are located along the footpaths. Begonias (*Begonia* sp.), calla lilies (*Zantadeschia* sp.), and lily-of-the-Nile are also interspersed throughout the Officer-in-Charge quarters area. No photographic or written evidence was found to suggest that any of these were planted during the period of significance. For now, they are considered non-contributing, but compatible with the historic district.

A planting bed was installed after the period of significance between the screening-fence and the driveway at the back of the residence. Currently lavender (*Lavandula angustifolia*) and other unidentified perennials are planted within the bed. The bed and the plants within it are noncontributing and incompatible with the historic district.

#### **Rest of District:**

A few calla lilies are growing around the married surf-men foundation pads. Although considered a “species of concern” by park vegetation managers, calla lily is not formally listed as invasive. And like those that are growing near the Officer-in-Charge quarters, it is unknown exactly when they were planted. For now, they are considered non-contributing, but compatible to the historic district.

### **Summary**

Today, the ornamental vegetation at Point Reyes Lifeboat Station reflects the patterns and character it possessed during the period of significance. As a result, vegetation is considered a contributing landscape characteristic.



*Vegetation No. 1. Image shows the lawn, Monterey cypress windbreak, and Australian tea tree planted around the Officer-in-Charge quarters (PWR Staff 2006).*

## **Views and Vistas**

Views and vistas are defined as the expansive and/or panoramic prospect of a broad range of vision which might be naturally occurring or deliberately contrived. The opportunity for expansive views was created by the natural topography of the lifeboat station and the relationship of the steep cliffs to Drake's Bay and the Pacific Ocean. The siting of the lookout tower, the boathouse, and possibly the Officer-in-Charge quarters was influenced by the views.

### **Contributing Views**

#### **Views of Pacific Ocean and Drake's Bay from lookout tower**

Historically, the lookout tower site had unobstructed, 360-degree views of the Pacific Ocean, Point Reyes Lighthouse, and Drake's Bay. These views allowed the Coast Guard to search for shipwrecks in the dangerous waters adjacent to Point Reyes. And although the lookout tower is no longer standing, the views are virtually unchanged.

#### **Views of Drake's Bay from the Boathouse**

Historically the boathouse had unobstructed views of all of Drake's Bay and its sparsely developed shores. Today, these views are virtually unchanged—very little development has occurred along the shores, and the Bay itself remains prominent in the view.

#### **Views of Drake's Bay from the Officer-in-Charge quarters**

Historically, the Officer-in-Charge quarters had a framed view of Drake's Bay towards Chimney Rock to the east. The Monterey cypress windbreak that encircled the residential area, had a gap at the corner that afforded the view to Drake's Bay. Further research is needed to determine whether maintaining a view was the design intent or whether wind patterns influenced this gap. Today, the Monterey cypress have grown and spread and Monterey pine have grown and spread near the non-extant five-car garage and have begun to encroach on the historic view from the Officer-in-Charge quarters.

### **Summary**

The prominent visual relationship between the Pacific Ocean, Drake's Bay, and the Lifeboat Station remain intact. Although tree growth has slightly impacted the view from the Officer-in-Charge quarters, the views from the site are considered an important landscape characteristic that contributes to the setting of the Point Reyes Lifeboat Station historic district.

## Archeological Sites

Archeological features that are associated with the period of significance include foundation pads and remnants of roads and structures. These features include surface and subsurface material and when considered collectively, they help reveal how the district was spatially organized during the period of significance.

### **Surfmen house pads above boathouse**

Two graded foundation areas damaged by landslides are located just above the boathouse. Historic photographs show small cottages carved into this steep slope. These cottages were built within 50 to 80 feet of the boathouse, by married surfmen who were not provided family housing by the U.S. Coast Guard. They were built within the first few years of Point Reyes Lifeboat Station operation and they were located outside of U.S. Coast Guard property, on land owned by rancher J.V. Mendoza and his wife Zena Mendoza. Very little associated debris or building material remains, although a few calla lilies are growing on and around the foundation pads.

### **Five-car garage foundation pad and two married surfmen house pads**

These three foundation pads are located east of the Officer-in-Charge residential area, adjacent to a seasonal drainage. Similar to the married surfmen cottages near the boathouse, these structures were built on Mendoza's land and throughout their existence were leased to married surfmen and fishermen who worked at the Paladini, Balestrieri, and Booth fishing docks. They were built between the mid-1930s and the mid-1940s and were likely demolished in the 1970s by the National Park Service. Today, three foundation pads remain. Each is covered with iceplant and the northernmost foundation pad is obscured by a copse of young Monterey pine. No associated artifacts were observed. Like the other surfmen house pads, these were carved out of the hillside and historically had unobstructed views of Drake's Bay.

### **Abandoned Road**

An abandoned dirt road still exists between the Lifeboat Station Road and the Lookout Tower Road. It contours along the steep slope and ends at a substantial landslide dating from the mid-1950s, just southwest of the boathouse. This road may have accessed the water tanks before they were moved further up slope to their current location following the landslide. The road varies in width from 6 to 10 feet.

### **Lookout Tower Site**

In 1937, a steel lookout tower was built on the bluff approximately 1000 feet southeast of the boathouse. The lookout tower was demolished in 1957. Only four concrete blocks and a slightly raised foundation pad remain of original structure. This site was chosen by the United States Coast Guard because of the 360-degree views overlooking the Pacific Ocean and Drake's Bay that allowed unobstructed observation and a more efficient response to shipwrecks. The site on which the lookout tower stands, still possesses the same unobstructed views, natural systems and features, and circulation that it possessed during the period of significance.

## **Non-Contributing Archeological Features**

### **Radio Antenna**

In 1962, a radio antenna was built on the bluff southwest of the boathouse. The structure used to be 85 feet tall and sat on a 6-foot concrete pad enclosed by a split-rail fence. Circa 1968, the antenna was dismantled. Today, only a concrete block with steel bolts remains and it looks like the area has been regraded. Because it post-dates the period of significance, it does not contribute to the significance of the historic district.

### **Debris Scatter**

A substantial debris scatter is located in a steep, seasonal drainage below (downstream from) the living areas and away from the boathouse and marine railway. Consisting of dozens of intact bottles, tin cans, and rusted metal, this scatter appears to date to the 1960s. More modern refuse such as food containers and building material is also present.

### **Summary**

For the purposes of the CLI, no archeological research design was formulated and no evaluation or testing was conducted on these archeological features and site. Consequently, it is unknown whether any of these features and site possess data potential. However, the locations of the married surfmen house pads—closely carved out of the steep hillside in close proximity to the boathouse—illustrate how the site was used and settled throughout its years as a functioning lifeboat station. Furthermore, the location of the lookout tower site—on the top of the bluff overlooking Drake’s Bay and the Pacific Ocean—also offers insight into how the district was spatially organized. Because of this, these archeological features help convey the historic district’s integrity of design and setting.

## Management Information

### Descriptive and Geographic Information

**Historic Name:** United States Coast Guard Point Reyes Lifeboat Station  
**Current Name:** Point Reyes Lifeboat Station  
**Management Unit:**  
**Tract Numbers:**  
**State and County:** Marin, California  
**Size (acres):** 75

### Boundary UTM

| Source | Type | Datum  | Zone | Easting | Northing |
|--------|------|--------|------|---------|----------|
|        | Area | NAD 83 | 10   | 502646  | 4205221  |
|        | Area | NAD 83 | 10   | 502401  | 4204695  |
|        | Area | NAD 83 | 10   | 501719  | 4205013  |
|        | Area | NAD 83 | 10   | 501963  | 4205538  |

## National Register Information

### National Register Documentation:

Entered—Documented

### Explanatory Narrative:

The Point Reyes Lifeboat Station was listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1985 and was designated a National Historic Landmark in 1989. It is significant at the National level under Criteria A and C from the period of 1927-1939. This period arbitrarily ended at the 50-year mark. For the purposes of the CLI, the period of significance is extended to 1957—when the stations development was complete.

### NRIS Number:

### Primary Certification:

**Primary Certification Date:** 11-07-1987

### Other Certifications and Date:

**Name in National Register:** Point Reyes Lifeboat Rescue Station, 1927

### Other Names:

### National Register Eligibility:

Eligible—SHPO Consensus Determination

**Date of Eligibility Determination:** 1985

**National Register Classification:** District

**Significance Level:** National

**Contributing/Individual:** Individual

|                               |                                                 |
|-------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Significance Criteria:</b> | A,C                                             |
| <b>Period of Significance</b> |                                                 |
| <u>Time Period:</u>           | 1927-1957                                       |
| Historic Context Theme:       | Creating Social Institutions and Movements      |
| Historic Context Subtheme:    | Social and Humanitarian Movements               |
| Historic Context Facet:       | Emergency Aid and Health Care                   |
| <u>Time Period:</u>           | 1927-1957                                       |
| Historic Context Theme:       | Developing the American Economy                 |
| Historic Context Subtheme:    | Shipping and Transportation by Water            |
| Historic Context Facet:       | Ships, Boats, Lighthouses, and Other Structures |
| <b>Area of Significance</b>   |                                                 |
| Category:                     | Maritime History                                |
| Priority:                     | 1                                               |
| Category:                     | Architecture                                    |
| Priority:                     | 2                                               |
| Category:                     | Politics/Government                             |
| Priority:                     | 3                                               |
| Category:                     | Social History                                  |
| Priority:                     | 4                                               |

## National Historic Landmark Information

|                                           |                                                                                                                      |
|-------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>National Historic Landmark Status:</b> | Yes                                                                                                                  |
| <b>Date Determined Landmark:</b>          | 1990                                                                                                                 |
| <b>Landmark Theme:</b>                    | 1. NHL XII L: Business: Shipping and Transportation<br>2. NHL XIV B: Ships, Boats, Lighthouses, and Other Structures |

## World Heritage Site Information

|                                    |    |
|------------------------------------|----|
| <b>World Heritage Site Status:</b> | No |
|------------------------------------|----|

## Cultural Landscape Type and Use

|                                 |                             |
|---------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| <b>Cultural Landscape Type:</b> | Historic Designed Landscape |
|---------------------------------|-----------------------------|

|                                           |                     |
|-------------------------------------------|---------------------|
| <b>Current and Historic Use/Function:</b> |                     |
| Use/Function Category:                    | Transportation      |
| Use/Function:                             | Water-Related       |
| Detailed Use/Function:                    | Water-Related Other |
| Type of Use/Function:                     | Historic            |
| Use/Function Category:                    | Transportation      |

Use/Function: Water-Related  
Detailed Use/Function: Boat Launching Area  
Type of Use/Function: Historic

Use/Function Category: Domestic (Residential)  
Use/Function: Single Family Dwelling  
Detailed Use/Function: Single Family House  
Type of Use/Function: Historic

Use/Function Category: Government  
Use/Function: Government Office  
Detailed Use/Function: Administrative Office  
Type of Use/Function: Both Current and Historic

Use/Function Category: Landscape  
Use/Function: Leisure-Passive (Park)  
Detailed Use/Function: Leisure-Passive (Park)  
Type of Use/Function: Current

## Ethnographic Information

**Ethnographic Survey Conducted:** No

## Adjacent Lands Information

**Do Adjacent Lands Contribute:** No

## General Management Information

**Management Category:** Must be Preserved and Maintained

**Management Category Date:** March 31, 2006

**Explanatory Narrative:**

As a designated National Historic Landmark, the Point Reyes Lifeboat Station is considered nationally significant and therefore falls under Management Category A: "Must be Preserved and Maintained."

## Condition Assessment and Impacts

The criteria for determining the condition of landscapes is consistent with the Resource Management Plan Guideline definitions (1994) and is decided with the concurrence of park management. Cultural landscape conditions are defined as follows:

*Good:* indicates the landscape shows no clear evidence of major negative disturbance and deterioration by natural and/or human forces. The landscape's cultural and natural values are as well preserved as can be expected under the given environmental conditions. No immediate corrective action is required to maintain its current condition.

*Fair*: indicates the landscape shows clear evidence of minor disturbances and deterioration by natural and/or human forces, and some degree of corrective action is needed within 3-5 years to prevent further harm to its cultural and/or natural values. If left to continue without the appropriate corrective action, the cumulative effect of the deterioration of many of the character-defining elements will cause the landscape to degrade to a poor condition.

*Poor*: indicates the landscape shows clear evidence of major disturbance and rapid deterioration by natural and/or human forces. Immediate corrective action is required to protect and preserve the remaining historical and natural values.

*Undetermined*: not enough information available to make an evaluation.

|                                     |                  |
|-------------------------------------|------------------|
| <b>Condition Assessment:</b>        | Good             |
| <b>Assessment Date:</b>             | January 11, 2006 |
| <b>Date Recorded:</b>               | March 31, 2006   |
| <b>Park Management Concurrence:</b> | June 30, 2006    |
| <b>Level of Impact Severity:</b>    | Low              |

**Stabilization Measures:**

Overall the district is in good condition. Currently the marine railway is undergoing restoration and in the recent past the boathouse and lifeboat have been restored. The Monterey cypress windbreak should be pruned and volunteer cypress and Monterey pine that have arrived on site after the period of significance should be removed.

**Impact:**

|                        |                                                                                                                                       |
|------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Type of Impact:        | Vegetation/Invasive Plants                                                                                                            |
| Explanation of Impact: | The Monterey cypress is overgrown. Accumulated deadwood is causing some of the historic trees to fall, and is causing limbs to break. |

|                        |                                                                                                       |
|------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Type of Impact:        | Vegetation/Invasive Plants                                                                            |
| Explanation of Impact: | Some Monterey cypress and Monterey pine have sprouted in areas where they did not historically exist. |

|                        |                                                                                                                                                   |
|------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Type of Impact:        | Vegetation/Invasive Plants                                                                                                                        |
| Explanation of Impact: | Kikuyu grass is growing outside of the historic lawn area. Cape ivy (considered exotic and invasive) is growing on site and is expanding in area. |

## Agreements, Legal Interest, and Access

|                               |                    |
|-------------------------------|--------------------|
| <b>Management Agreement:</b>  |                    |
| <b>Explanatory Narrative:</b> |                    |
| <b>NPS Legal Interest:</b>    | Fee Simple         |
| <b>Public Access:</b>         | Other restrictions |
| <b>Explanatory Narrative:</b> |                    |

## Treatment

|                                      |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |
|--------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Approved Treatment:</b>           | Preservation                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
| <b>Approved Treatment Document:</b>  | Historic Structures Report                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
| <b>Document Date:</b>                | 1991                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |
| <b>Explanatory Narrative:</b>        | <p>The Point Reyes National Seashore General Management Plan (1980) calls for the preservation and interpretation of station resources and adaptive restoration of the boathouse, garages, and residence. The Seashore's Interpretive Prospectus (1989), Statement for Management (1990) and the Cultural Resources Plan (1987) also specifically state that the site should be restored and interpreted for the public, while preserving the historic integrity of this National Historic Landmark. The Historic Structures Report was approved in 1991 and provides guidelines for preservation treatment.</p> <p>The recommended treatments for the lifeboat station include: stabilization and restoration of the launchway; restoration of various launchway features; re-roofing the boathouse; restoration of missing interior and exterior features on the boathouse, including trim, gutters, and lights; paint testing; repair of residence foundation; and adaptive restoration of the residence and two garages. The HSR also recommends that further investigation (Cultural Landscape Report) be performed.</p> |
| <b>Approved Treatment Completed:</b> | No                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |

## Approved Treatment Cost

LCS Structure Approved Treatment Cost:  
Landscape Approved Treatment Cost:  
Cost Date:  
Level of Estimate:  
Cost Estimate:  
Explanatory Description:

## Stabilization Costs

LCS Structure Stabilization Cost: None

|                                       |                                                                                                                         |
|---------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Landscape Stabilization Costs:</b> | \$6,500                                                                                                                 |
| <b>Cost Date:</b>                     | March 20, 2006                                                                                                          |
| <b>Level of Estimate:</b>             | Class C Estimate                                                                                                        |
| <b>Cost Estimator:</b>                | Support Office and PORE Vegetation<br>Management                                                                        |
| <b>Explanatory Description:</b>       | This estimate is for pruning Monterey cypress<br>and removal of non-contributing Monterey<br>cypress and Monterey pine. |

## Appendix

### Bibliography

#### Secondary Literature

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- Shanks, Ralph. "The United States Life-Saving Service in California," National Maritime Museum *Sea Letter* 27 (Spring, 1977), pp. 2-10; 31 (Summer 1980), pp. 2-12.
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- U.S. Department of the Interior. National Park Service. National Historic Landmark Nomination. "The Maritime Heritage of the United States NHL Study: Point Reyes Lifeboat Station." 1989.

**Archival Repositories**

U.S. Department of the Interior. National Park Service. Pacific West Regional Office, Oakland, CA.  
Park Files: Point Reyes NS.

U.S. Department of the Interior. National Park Service. Point Reyes National Seashore Archives, Point  
Reyes Station, CA.

## Supplemental Information

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**Title:** Boundary Map

**Description:**

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**Title:** Existing Conditions Map—Officer-in-Charge quarters area map

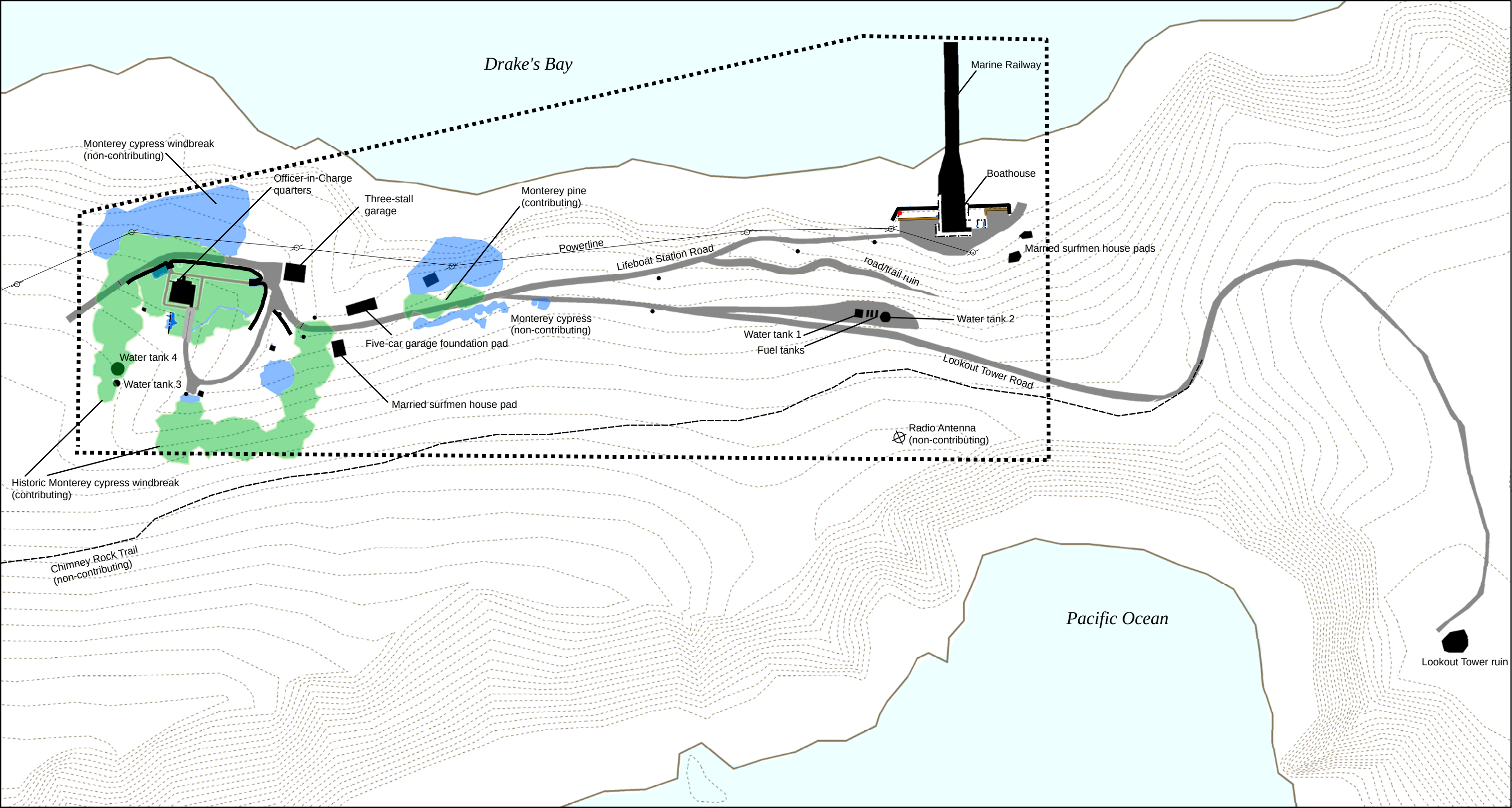
**Description:**

---

**Title:** Existing Conditions—Boathouse area map

**Description:**

---



Legend

Contributing Vegetation

Non-Contributing Vegetation

Contributing Structure

Non-Contributing Structure

Fire hydrant

Power pole

Culvert Headwall or Outfall

Wall

Car Stop

Fence

Gate

Road (contributing)

Ten-Foot Contour Interval

National Historic Landmark Boundary

Structures

09238 Boathouse

09239 Three-Stall Garage

09240 Office in Charge residence

16044 Water tank 1

16045 Water tank 2

16047 Water tank 3

16048 Water tank 4

22267 Marine Railway

56312 Fuel tanks

Point Reyes  
Lifeboat Station

Point Reyes National Seashore

Map compiled by G Stromberg  
August 2006

0

50

100

200

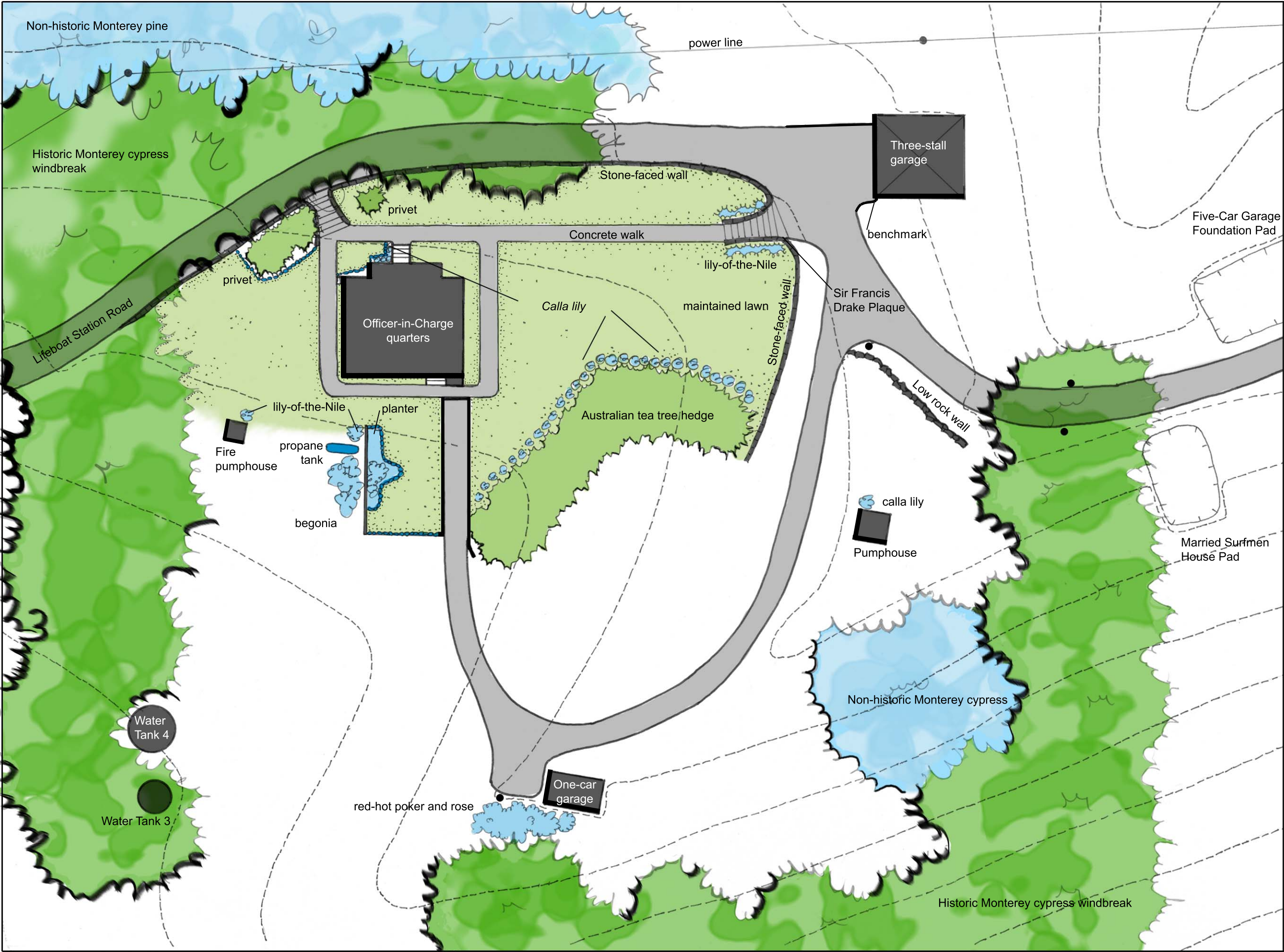
300

Feet

N

↑





# Point Reyes Lifeboat Station

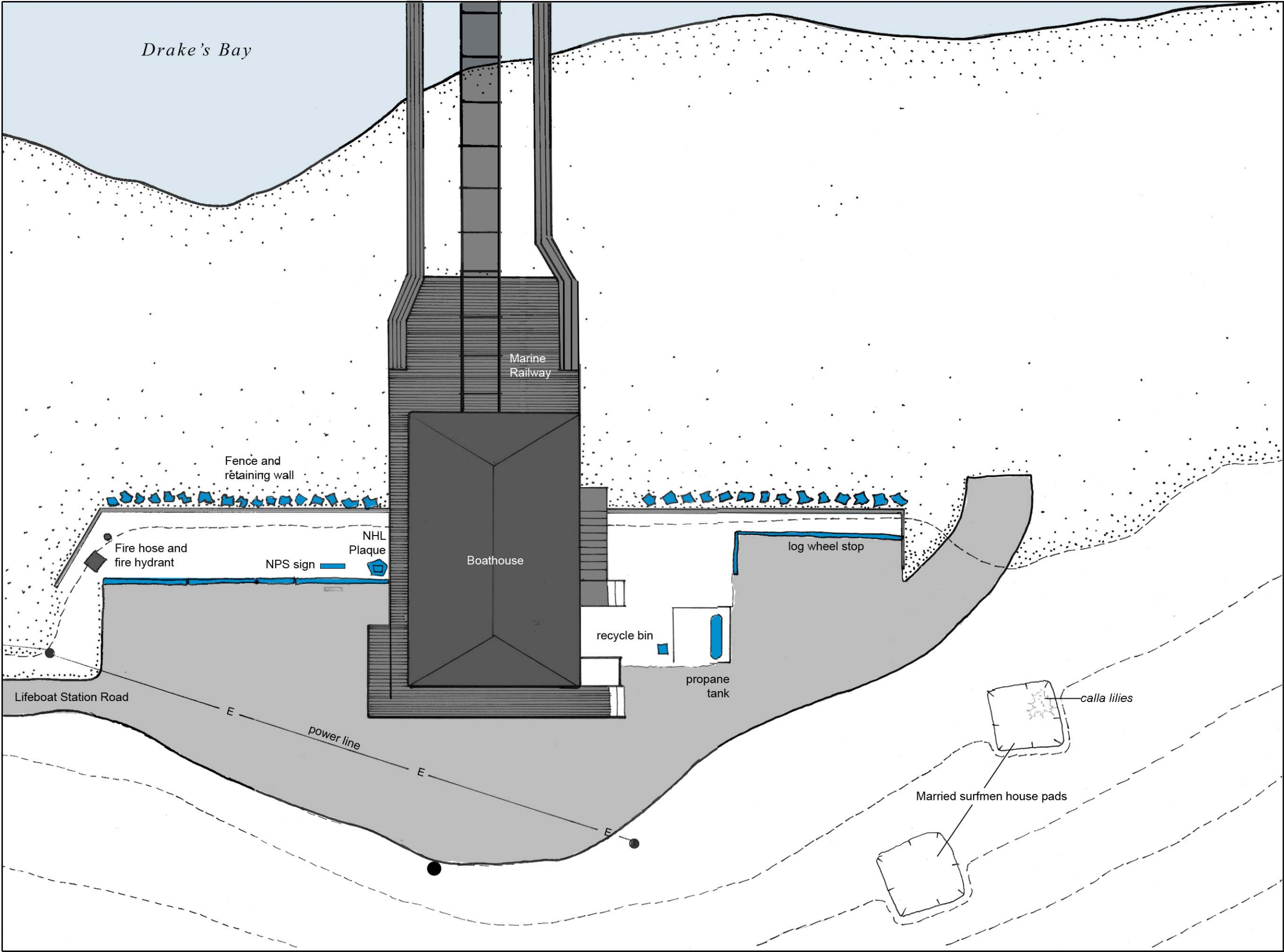
## Officer in Charge Residence

Point Reyes National Seashore  
Map compiled by G Stromberg  
March 2006

- Legend**
- LCS #**
- 09235 One-car garage
  - 09236 Pumphouse
  - 09237 Fire pumphouse
  - 09239 Three-stall garage
  - 09240 Officer-in-Charge quarters
  - 16046 Stone-faced wall
  - 16047 Water tank 3
  - 16048 Water tank 4
  - 16049 Low rock wall
  - 56311 Lifeboat Station Road
  - 56313 Concrete walks
  - 56314 Sir Francis Drake Plaque
  - Contributing vegetation
  - Non-contributing vegetation
  - Contributing structure
  - Non-contributing structure
  - Contributing circulation
  - Ten-foot contour interval
  - Culvert inlet or outfall







# Point Reyes Lifeboat Station

## Boathouse and Marine Railway

Point Reyes National Seashore  
Map compiled by G Stromberg  
March 2006

- Legend**
- LCS #**
- 09238 Boathouse
  - 22267 Marine Railway
  - 55741 Motor Lifeboat
  - 56315 NHL plaque
  - 56311 Lifeboat Station Road
- Contributing structure
- Non-contributing structure
- Contributing circulation
- - - Ten-foot contour interval
- Culvert inlet or outfall

