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National Park Service  
Cultural Landscapes Inventory  
2008



Tower Junction Ranger Station  
Yellowstone National Park

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## **Inventory Unit Summary & Site Plan**

### **Inventory Summary**

#### **The Cultural Landscapes Inventory Overview:**

##### **CLI General Information:**

###### **Purpose and Goals of the CLI**

The Cultural Landscapes Inventory (CLI), a comprehensive inventory of all cultural landscapes in the national park system, is one of the most ambitious initiatives of the National Park Service (NPS) Park Cultural Landscapes Program. The CLI is an evaluated inventory of all landscapes having historical significance that are listed on or eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places, or are otherwise managed as cultural resources through a public planning process and in which the NPS has or plans to acquire any legal interest. The CLI identifies and documents each landscape's location, size, physical development, condition, landscape characteristics, character-defining features, as well as other valuable information useful to park management. Cultural landscapes become approved CLIs when concurrence with the findings is obtained from the park superintendent and all required data fields are entered into a national database. In addition, for landscapes that are not currently listed on the National Register and/or do not have adequate documentation, concurrence is required from the State Historic Preservation Officer or the Keeper of the National Register.

The CLI, like the List of Classified Structures, assists the NPS in its efforts to fulfill the identification and management requirements associated with Section 110(a) of the National Historic Preservation Act, National Park Service Management Policies (2006), and Director's Order #28: Cultural Resource Management. Since launching the CLI nationwide, the NPS, in response to the Government Performance and Results Act (GPRA), is required to report information that respond to NPS strategic plan accomplishments. Two GPRA goals are associated with the CLI: bringing certified cultural landscapes into good condition (Goal 1a7) and increasing the number of CLI records that have complete, accurate, and reliable information (Goal 1b2B).

###### **Scope of the CLI**

The information contained within the CLI is gathered from existing secondary sources found in park libraries and archives and at NPS regional offices and centers, as well as through on-site reconnaissance of the existing landscape. The baseline information collected provides a comprehensive look at the historical development and significance of the landscape, placing it in context of the site's overall significance. Documentation and analysis of the existing landscape identifies character-defining characteristics and features, and allows for an evaluation of the landscape's overall integrity and an assessment of the landscape's overall condition. The CLI also provides an illustrative site plan that indicates major features within the inventory unit. Unlike cultural landscape reports, the CLI does not provide management recommendations or

treatment guidelines for the cultural landscape.

**Inventory Unit Description:**

The Tower Junction Ranger Station Historic District is located in the northern section of Yellowstone National Park. This part of the park derives its name from two sources: the junction of two important park roads and Tower Fall, a scenic attraction located nearby. The two roads are the Grand Loop road and the Northeast Entrance road. Both of these roads were originally constructed in the first decade of the twentieth century. NPS employees commonly know the inventory unit as “the government area” or “Tower Ranger Station.” This CLI uses “Tower Junction Ranger Station Historic District” because that is the name of the existing historic district, which was determined eligible to the National Register by the Wyoming SHPO in 1997 (Lentz 1997; Wolf 1997).

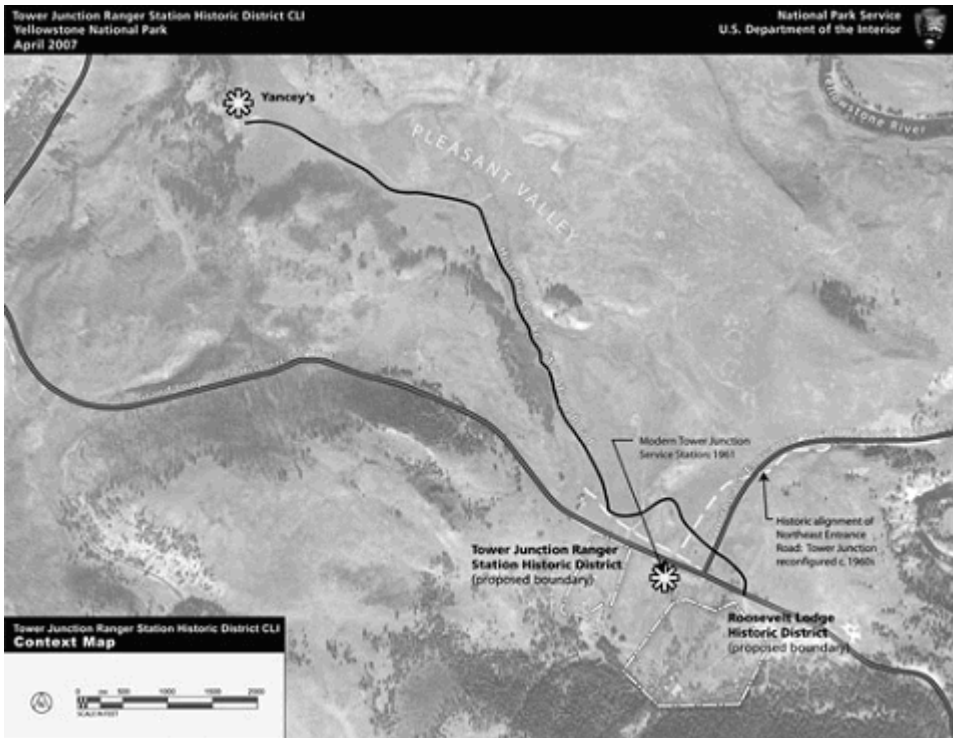
Development of the inventory unit began in 1907 when the Tower Fall(s) Solider Station was moved to the site. While some sources record that the earliest extant structure was built as late as 1914 or 1916, the recently published Administrative History reports that it was built in 1907 (Rydell and Culpin 2006, 64, 90). It began as the main Soldier Station building and became the Tower Fall(s) Ranger Station with the establishment of the NPS in 1916. The inventory unit evolved considerably, yet the utilitarian character and administrative function of the complex has been retained.

None of the buildings or landscape structures is currently listed on the National Register, though the district was determined eligible to the National Register at the local level under Criterion A. CLI researchers concur with this determination, but also believe that the district is eligible at the local level under Criterion C. This CLI recommends that the existing DOE be amended to include this additional criterion and to include landscape features that contribute to the significance of the district. Furthermore, the period of significance, subject to additional findings, should be set at 1907-1945. Overall, the historic district possesses historic integrity and its physical condition is good.



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Yellowstone National Park

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*Context Map*

**Property Level and CLI Numbers**

<b>Inventory Unit Name:</b>	Tower Junction Ranger Station
<b>Property Level:</b>	Component Landscape
<b>CLI Identification Number:</b>	975154
<b>Parent Landscape:</b>	890220

**Park Information**

<b>Park Name and Alpha Code:</b>	Yellowstone National Park -YELL
<b>Park Organization Code:</b>	1570
<b>Park Administrative Unit:</b>	Yellowstone National Park

**CLI Hierarchy Description**

N/A

## Concurrence Status

**Inventory Status:** Complete

**Completion Status Explanatory Narrative:**

Date Data Collected: 5/30/2005

Date Data Entered: April 2007

Data Recorder: Shapins Associates

This document represents the final submittal for Phase II of a Cultural Landscape Inventory (CLI) for the Tower Junction Ranger Station Historic District. In 2004-2005 Shapins Associates completed a CLI for the whole Tower Junction area, encompassing Roosevelt Lodge, Tower Ranger Station, the site of Yancey's, and the stage road that connects the Yancey's site with Roosevelt Lodge. Upon the findings of this CLI, a decision was made to treat Tower Ranger Station and Roosevelt Lodge as two separate districts, and to prepare separate CLIs for each. Because the Tower Junction CLI demonstrated that Yancey's did not possess historic integrity, a CLI was not needed for it.

This document contains all sections required for a complete CLI including: the site plan; component landscape description; chronology of major events; analysis and evaluation; and National Register information. Included within the National Register information are areas of significance, the period of significance, statement of significance, and historic context themes. The analysis and evaluation contains a discussion of landscape characteristics and an assessment of historic integrity. Also included are selected graphic materials: historic photographs obtained from the Yellowstone archives and from online resources, including Montana State Library and the Library of Congress; existing conditions photographs taken during the October 2004 site visit; historic maps and plans; and period plans executed by Shapins Associates. Additional fields required for CLI data entry are included at the back of the report. Entry of CLI data into the NPS CLI website will constitute completion of the project to 100%.

### Concurrence Status:

**Park Superintendent Concurrence:** Yes

**Park Superintendent Date of Concurrence:** 07/29/2008

**National Register Concurrence:** Eligible -- SHPO Consensus Determination

**Date of Concurrence Determination:** 09/03/2008

**National Register Concurrence Narrative:**


Nomination does not exist. In 1997 WY SHPO concurred that the proposed Tower Junction Ranger Station Historic District was eligible to the National Register, but with different

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Yellowstone National Park

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boundaries than those proposed in this CLI. Please see Statement of Significance.

**Concurrence Graphic Information:**



United States Department of the Interior  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE  
PO Box 168  
Yellowstone National Park  
Wyoming 82190

IN REPLY REFER TO:  
H3015(YELL)  
JUL 29 2008

Memorandum

To: Paul Chattey, Manager for Historic Preservation Programs, Intermountain Region


From: Superintendent, Yellowstone National Park

Subject: Tower Junction Ranger Station Historic District Cultural Landscape Inventory

The National Park Service's Cultural Landscape Inventory (CLI) program is a joint effort between the park and regional offices and requires superintendent concurrence with the content and the assessment of the cultural landscape in the CLI. This concurrence is also required in order for the CLI to be considered complete under PMDS Goal 1a7. The Wyoming State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) consensus determination on the CLI findings will also be required.

I hereby concur with the content and the assessment of the cultural landscape for the Tower Junction Ranger Station Historic District Cultural Landscape Inventory. Specifically, I concur with the following findings and recommendations:

1. The CLI identifies the Tower Junction Ranger Station Historic District as a "Historic Vernacular Landscape" (page 43).
2. The CLI rates the condition as "Good" (page 44).
3. The Management Category is listed as "Should be Preserved and Maintained" (page 42).
4. The period of significance for the Tower Junction Ranger Station Historic District is recommended to change from 1914-1945 to 1907-1945 for Criterion A and C (pages 2 through 4 of the CLI). This is seven years earlier than the existing period of significance for the 1997 Determination of Eligibility, and thereby includes when the Tower Soldier Station was first established in the current site. This will be proposed to the Wyoming SHPO in our request for consensus determination of eligibility.
5. The contributing patterns and features are listed on pages 5 and 6.

  
for Suzanne Lewis

Attachment

cc: Jill Cowley, Historical Landscape Architect and CLI Coordinator, Intermountain Region w/attachment

*2008 Superintendent concurrence memo*



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**ARTS. PARKS.  
HISTORY.**

Wyoming State Parks & Cultural Resources

State Historic Preservation Office  
Barnett Building, 3rd Floor  
2301 Central Avenue  
Cheyenne, WY 82002  
Phone: (307) 777-7697  
Fax: (307) 777-6421  
<http://wyoshpo.state.wy.us>

**RECEIVED**

**SEP 05 2008**

**SUPERINTENDENT'S OFFICE**

3 September 2008

Suzanne Lewis  
Superintendent  
Yellowstone National Park  
P.O. Box 168  
Yellowstone NP, WY 82190

Re: Determination of Eligibility for the Tower Junction Ranger Station Historic District (48YE232) Cultural Landscape Patterns and Features (SHPO File # 0808KLH008)

Dear Ms. Lewis:

Thank you for consulting with the Wyoming State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) regarding the above referenced historic district. We have reviewed the report and find the documentation meets the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Archaeology and Historic Preservation (48 FR 44716-42). We concur with your finding that the landscape, with the revised the boundary that incorporates the corral, open space and creek, is eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic. The landscape patterns and features, including the natural systems, topography and spatial organization, vegetation, circulation patterns, views and vistas, land use, buildings and structures, building cluster arrangements, and small-scale features are eligible as additional contributing features to the Tower Junction Ranger Station Historic District (48YE232).

This letter should be retained in your files as documentation of a SHPO concurrence with eligibility. Please refer to SHPO project # 0808KLH008 on any future correspondence regarding this project. If you have any questions, please contact me at 307-777-7828.

Sincerely,



Kara Hahn  
National Register Program Coordinator

 Dave Freudenthal, Governor

*WY SHPO concurrence, 9/3/2008*

**Revisions Impacting Change in Concurrence:** Other

**Revision Date:** 07/29/2008

**Revision Narrative:**

Updates and adding information, as the contracted (WORD) CLI was entered into the database

## Geographic Information & Location Map

### Inventory Unit Boundary Description:

The IU extends from the edge of the Grand Loop road south to HS-238 and includes all NR-eligible buildings and contributing landscape features. This is an expansion to the Tower Junction Ranger Station HD. See site plan and statement of significance.

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**State and County:**

**State:** WY

**County:** Park County

**Size (Acres):** 10.00

**Boundary UTMS:**

<b>Source:</b>	USGS Map 1:24,000
<b>Type of Point:</b>	Point
<b>Datum:</b>	NAD 83
<b>UTM Zone:</b>	12
<b>UTM Easting:</b>	545,720
<b>UTM Northing:</b>	4,973,940
<b>Source:</b>	USGS Map 1:24,000
<b>Type of Point:</b>	Point
<b>Datum:</b>	NAD 83
<b>UTM Zone:</b>	12
<b>UTM Easting:</b>	545,860
<b>UTM Northing:</b>	4,973,890
<b>Source:</b>	USGS Map 1:24,000
<b>Type of Point:</b>	Point
<b>Datum:</b>	NAD 83
<b>UTM Zone:</b>	12
<b>UTM Easting:</b>	545,800
<b>UTM Northing:</b>	4,973,690
<b>Source:</b>	USGS Map 1:24,000
<b>Type of Point:</b>	Point
<b>Datum:</b>	NAD 83
<b>UTM Zone:</b>	12
<b>UTM Easting:</b>	545,780
<b>UTM Northing:</b>	4,973,700
<b>Source:</b>	USGS Map 1:24,000

<b>Type of Point:</b>	Point
<b>Datum:</b>	NAD 83
<b>UTM Zone:</b>	12
<b>UTM Easting:</b>	545,730
<b>UTM Northing:</b>	4,973,660
<b>Source:</b>	USGS Map 1:24,000
<b>Type of Point:</b>	Point
<b>Datum:</b>	NAD 83
<b>UTM Zone:</b>	12
<b>UTM Easting:</b>	545,730
<b>UTM Northing:</b>	4,973,640
<b>Source:</b>	USGS Map 1:24,000
<b>Type of Point:</b>	Point
<b>Datum:</b>	NAD 83
<b>UTM Zone:</b>	12
<b>UTM Easting:</b>	545,670
<b>UTM Northing:</b>	4,973,640
<b>Source:</b>	USGS Map 1:24,000
<b>Type of Point:</b>	Point
<b>Datum:</b>	NAD 83
<b>UTM Zone:</b>	12
<b>UTM Easting:</b>	545,640
<b>UTM Northing:</b>	4,973,660
<b>Source:</b>	USGS Map 1:24,000
<b>Type of Point:</b>	Point
<b>Datum:</b>	NAD 83
<b>UTM Zone:</b>	12

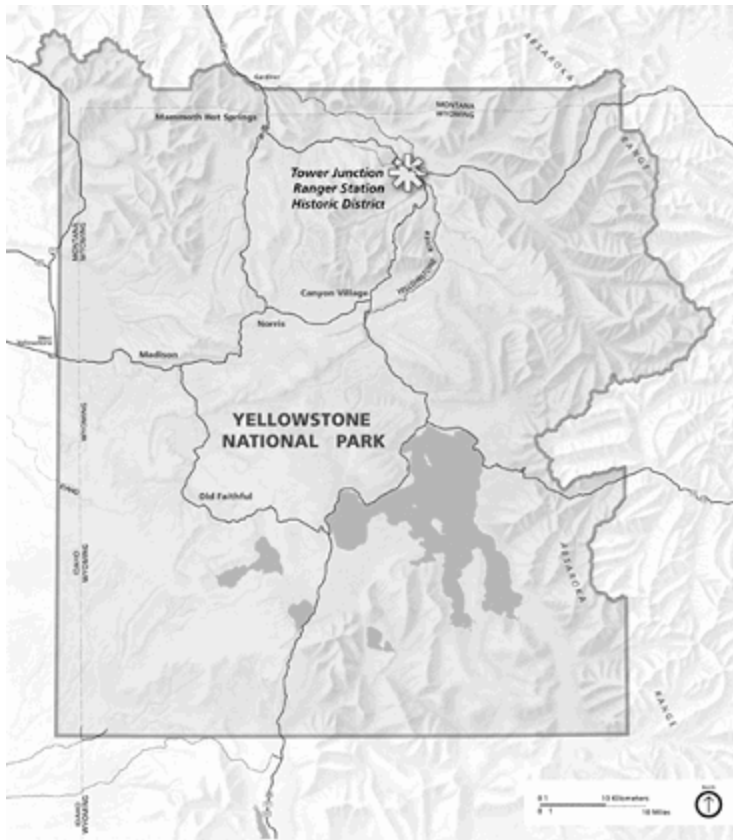
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**UTM Easting:** 545,620

**UTM Northing:** 4,973,670

**Location Map:**



*Tower Junction Ranger Station is located in the northern portion of Yellowstone National Park.*

**Management Unit:** Tower Subdistrict

## Management Information

### General Management Information

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

**Management Category Date:** 07/29/2008

**Management Category Explanatory Narrative:**

Supt. concurrence dated 7/29/2008

**NPS Legal Interest:**

**Type of Interest:** Fee Simple

**Public Access:**

**Type of Access:** Unrestricted

## National Register Information

### Existing National Register Status

#### National Register Landscape Documentation:

SHPO Inadequately Documented

### National Register Eligibility

<b>National Register Concurrence:</b>	Eligible -- SHPO Consensus Determination
<b>Contributing/Individual:</b>	Individual
<b>National Register Classification:</b>	District
<b>Significance Level:</b>	Local
<b>Significance Criteria:</b>	A - Associated with events significant to broad patterns of our history
<b>Significance Criteria:</b>	C - Embodies distinctive construction, work of master, or high artistic values

**Period of Significance:**

<b>Time Period:</b>	AD 1907 - 1945
<b>Historic Context Theme:</b>	Transforming the Environment
<b>Subtheme:</b>	Conservation of Natural Resources
<b>Facet:</b>	Origin And Development Of The National Park Service
<b>Time Period:</b>	AD 1907 - 1945
<b>Historic Context Theme:</b>	Developing the American Economy
<b>Subtheme:</b>	Transportation by Land and Air
<b>Facet:</b>	Land Travel West Of The Mississippi (I.e., Stagecoaches), After 1840
<b>Time Period:</b>	AD 1907 - 1945
<b>Historic Context Theme:</b>	Developing the American Economy
<b>Subtheme:</b>	Transportation by Land and Air
<b>Facet:</b>	Automobiles, Busses and other Vehicles
<b>Time Period:</b>	AD 1907 - 1945
<b>Historic Context Theme:</b>	Creating Social Institutions and Movements
<b>Subtheme:</b>	Recreation
<b>Facet:</b>	General Recreation
<b>Time Period:</b>	AD 1907 - 1945
<b>Historic Context Theme:</b>	Creating Social Institutions and Movements
<b>Subtheme:</b>	Recreation
<b>Facet:</b>	Tourism
<b>Time Period:</b>	AD 1907 - 1945
<b>Historic Context Theme:</b>	Expressing Cultural Values
<b>Subtheme:</b>	Architecture
<b>Facet:</b>	Rustic Architecture
<b>Time Period:</b>	AD 1907 - 1945
<b>Historic Context Theme:</b>	Expressing Cultural Values
<b>Subtheme:</b>	Landscape Architecture
<b>Facet:</b>	Parks Produce A New Profession



**Area of Significance:**

**Area of Significance Category:** Politics - Government

**Area of Significance Subcategory:** None

**Area of Significance Category:** Architecture

**Area of Significance Subcategory:** None

**Area of Significance Category:** Landscape Architecture

**Area of Significance Subcategory:** None

**Area of Significance Category:** Transportation

**Area of Significance Subcategory:** None

**Area of Significance Category:** Other

**Area of Significance Subcategory:** None

**Statement of Significance:**

Background

In 1997 the Wyoming SHPO completed a Determination of Eligibility (DOE) for the Tower Junction Ranger Station Historic District and determined that the district was eligible to the National Register. The existing district boundary is delineated on the site plan included in this CLI. Contributing resources include: the ranger residence (HS 241), garage (HS 239), fire cache (HS 240), barn (HS 245), mess house (HS 242), bunkhouse (HS 238), and corrals. All other structures on site were determined ineligible (Lentz 1997; Wolf 1997). Historic structure survey forms were completed for the buildings in the district, and these forms record that the district was determined eligible at the local level under National Register Criterion A. The area of significance for the district is “government” and the historic context is “Administrative and Concessions Development in Yellowstone National Park.” The period of significance for the district is not clear from existing documentation; however, it appears to be 1914 to 1945, according to the list of contributing resources. This CLI proposes a number of amendments to the DOE.

## Findings of the CLI

### National Register Criteria and Level of Significance

This CLI concurs with the existing registration that the Tower Junction Ranger Station Historic District is significant for its role in local history, and is therefore eligible to the National Register under Criterion A. Furthermore, this CLI finds that the district is significant at the local level under National Register Criterion C because it embodies the distinctive characteristics of the NPS Rustic Style. The CLI recommends that the DOE be amended to reflect this additional criterion.

### District Boundary Revision

This CLI recommends that the district boundary be redrawn to encompass key landscape features. As the proposed boundary is currently drawn, it includes all the buildings determined eligible by the WY SHPO and deliberately excludes non-contributing buildings, including the large residential building. The boundary should be expanded to include Lost Creek, the base of the hills immediately east of the existing boundary, the entire corral area, a screen of native trees, and the meadow surrounding the ranger residence. These attributes are important landscape features that figured in the siting and development of the district. For instance, the hills block views outside the district to the east, ensuring that the ranger station complex remains visually and spatially separate from nearby areas such as Roosevelt Lodge or the Tower Junction Service Station. The ranger residence (originally a soldier station, and later a ranger station) was sited to take advantage of scenic views to the north across the grassy meadows of Pleasant Valley. The addition of a porch to this structure in 1924 underscores the importance of these views. The northern boundary of the district should be the edge of the Grand Loop road, which is itself a separate historic district. (Please see site plan.)

### Period of Significance

The period of significance should be 1907-1945. The period of significance begins in 1907 when the Tower Fall(s) Soldier Station was established on site. This was the second incarnation of the Tower Fall(s) Soldier Station, the first having occupied a now abandoned site opposite the Calcite Springs Overlook. In 1945 an old Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) building was moved to the inventory unit to serve as a bunkhouse. All major Rustic Style changes were made to the district by 1945; thus the buildings that were present in 1945 are contributing. It also appears that significant landscape features were in place by 1945. For instance, photographs from 1949 demonstrate that the fences in the corral were in the same general location as today. In all likelihood, these fences had been constructed during the 1920s or 1930s.

### Criterion A

At the local level, the Tower Junction Ranger Station Historic District is eligible to the National Register under Criterion A for its association with the development of administrative facilities in Yellowstone National Park. The first phase of development began in 1907, when the Tower Fall(s) Soldier Station moved operations to the site. The first Tower Fall Soldier Station had been built near the current Calcite Springs overlook in connection with construction of the main road to Tower Fall. It comprised a combination of crude log cabins and simple frame structures. Eventually these arrangements proved unsatisfactory, necessitating the move to the Tower Junction area (Haines 1996, Vol. 2, 186-7). At this

## Tower Junction Ranger Station

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point it is unclear whether any buildings were moved to the new site. The only building that has survived from the soldier station period is the current ranger's residence. A frame structure, some sources record that it was built in 1914-1916 (HRA 1996-97), while others declare that it dates to 1907 (Rydell and Culpin 2006, 64, 90). In any event, originally it bore little resemblance to the Rustic structure of today (HRA 1996-97). When first constructed, three front doors and two brick chimneys were prominent features. The soldier station also featured log buildings and small frame structures. Believed to be the stable, one of the log buildings occupied the east side of Lost Creek. A crude footbridge connected it with the rest of the complex. Historic photographs show that the setting has changed little since this period. Natural meadows surrounded these buildings, punctuated by aspens and Douglas-firs (YELL 31759).

With the establishment of the NPS in 1916, Tower Fall Soldier Station became Tower Fall Ranger Station. The new ranger station assumed administrative responsibility for this sector of the park. To this day, the complex has maintained this administrative role.

The inventory unit also served as a road camp. This CLI, however, did not locate much information on this road camp. Park roads in the area had been completed by 1905. The road crew, therefore, was probably tasked with repairing and improving existing roads. After 1905, small maintenance crews were established throughout the park, approximately ten miles apart. Typically these crews included a cook, eight of ten laborers, drivers of sprinkling wagons, and a foreman. Over time, small permanent buildings were established to house these operations at suitable sites. These semi-permanent camps "were the forerunners of the road camps of a later day" (Haines 1996, Vol. 2, 252). When the road camp at Tower began operations is unclear, but operations were in full swing by 1921, when a wooden mess hall was built for the camp (Culpin 1995, 54). In 1926 additional recommendations for this road camp included replacing the old log stable—presumably from the soldier station period—with a new one (Culpin 1995, 57). Therefore, the mess hall is associated with the road camp, and the Tower Corral may also be.

#### Criterion C

This CLI proposes that the existing DOE be amended to include National Register Criterion C. At the local level, the district is eligible to the National Register under Criterion C because it embodies the distinctive characteristics of the NPS Rustic Style. The sensitive design, native materials, and careful workmanship of some buildings and landscape features at Tower Junction Ranger Station are representative of this style. The current ranger's residence is the most noteworthy example. In 1922 Superintendent Horace Albright requested that NPS Landscape Engineer, Daniel Hull, redesign this building in the Rustic Style. Hull was to use "the new Haynes building," a Rustic building in the Tower Fall area, as a model (HRA 1996-97). In 1924 these modifications were carried out and the building was transformed. Stone was applied around the base, giving the building the appearance that it sat on a heavy stone foundation. Small-diameter poles were attached to the exterior as Rustic ornamental framing. Exterior walls, which had been a light color during the soldier station era, were painted a rich brown to blend with the natural surroundings (YELL 31761).

The log fences in the corral are also Rustic Style features. During the spring of 1921 Hull and Albright discussed the appropriate architecture for “out of the way” places in Yellowstone. Hull requested that corrals be constructed of logs. He favored this type of construction for their picturesque “old time” appearance (Mathews and Rydell, E.18). During the historic period, the Tower Corral featured a combination of fence types: log post-and-rail fences were joined by buck-and-rail fences. The distinctive buck-and-rail fence type is named for its x-shaped log braces. Replacing conventional posts, which must be sunk into the ground, these braces rest on top of the ground surface, allowing the fence to be erected on ground that is frequently frozen. During the nineteenth century, pioneers in the Yellowstone/Jackson Hole area built buck-and-rail fences for use in ranching. Over time, barbed-wire fencing replaced the picturesque buck-and-rail examples at most of the area’s ranches (Grand Teton Natural History Association, 2). This type of fence was used at the Tower Corral for aesthetic effect and to celebrate local traditions. Unfortunately, these Rustic features no longer survive. Today, the corral is dominated by the more common post-and-rail type fence. The general location of these fences is similar to that of the historic period, however. Due to this arrangement and their simple log construction, the current fences and the corrals they define are counted as contributing features.

In addition to built features, important landscape patterns at Tower Ranger Station represent tenets of the Rustic style. These patterns include siting facilities in a natural setting, with emphasis on preserving natural features and views. Typically, landscape designers and builders working in the Rustic Style would achieve these objectives by preserving existing stands of vegetation as natural screens. At Tower Junction Ranger Station, planners located major buildings and facilities behind a natural screen of evergreen and aspens, thus limiting the visual impact of these operations on the natural setting. Considering the number of buildings in the area, the view of the Tower Junction Ranger Station Historic District from the Grand Loop road is relatively unobtrusive.

The Tower Junction Ranger Station Historic District is significant at the local level and eligible to the National Register under Criteria A and C. If the park chooses to pursue nomination, important landscape features and patterns should be included. These landscape resources are further discussed in the Analysis and Evaluation section.

## **National Historic Landmark Information**

**National Historic Landmark Status:** No

## **World Heritage Site Information**

**World Heritage Site Status:** No

## Chronology & Physical History

### Cultural Landscape Type and Use

**Cultural Landscape Type:** Vernacular

**Current and Historic Use/Function:**

**Primary Historic Function:** Ranger Station

**Primary Current Use:** Ranger Station

**Current and Historic Names:**

Name	Type of Name
Tower Ranger Station	Both Current And Historic
Tower Junction Ranger Station	Both Current And Historic
Tower Fall(s) Ranger Station	Both Current And Historic
Tower Fall(s) Soldier Station	Historic

### Chronology:

Year	Event	Annotation
AD 1801 - 1899	Established	The Bannock Indians established the Bannock Trail to access the lands east of the Rocky Mountains. Used in the nineteenth century, the trail ran across Blacktail Plateau and through Pleasant Valley. The trail was later used by fur trappers and explorers. A portion of this trail was incorporated into the later Cooke City Road through Pleasant Valley—the current “Stagecoach Road” maintained by the NPS (Blevins 1989, 13; YNP Housing Plan, 192).
AD 1872	Established	U.S. Congress established Yellowstone National Park

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Yellowstone National Park

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AD 1884	Built	<p>After permission was granted, construction began on a “commodious hotel” for travel to Cooke City through the park. Operated by John Yancey, the hotel was a 5-room structure, which accommodated 20 guests for \$2/day. It was called the Pleasant Valley Hotel. Clientele included miners, freighters, and tourists. Over time, the hotel was enlarged somewhat and a saloon was built at the site. This was the only place for overnight accommodations in this part of the park until the establishment of Camp Roosevelt in 1906 (Whithorn 1994, 47-48; Haines 1996, Vol. 2, 238).</p>
AD 1901	Built	<p>Construction of the last major portion of the belt line—or Grand Loop road—(between Grand Canyon and Tower Fall) led to the establishment of an outpost north of the Overhanging Cliff, about 500’ west of Calcite Springs Overlook. This was the first Tower Fall Ranger Station (Haines 1996, Vol. 2, 183-187).</p>
AD 1903 - 1905	Built	<p>The northeast entrance road and Grand Loop road were completed during the years 1903 to 1905. During President Roosevelt’s visit in 1903, the road to Tower Fall was under construction and passable to foot or horse travel (Chittenden 1949, 83; Haines 1996, Vol. 1, 272).</p>
AD 1906	Established	<p>On a site southeast of the inventory unit, Camp Roosevelt was established as the newest addition to the Wylie Permanent Camping Company’s touring circuit. William Wylie had previously sold the camping company to H.W. Child and A.W. Miles, whose management was responsible for adding this camp (Hert 2002, 16-17). This tent camp was the first substantial development in the immediate vicinity of Tower Junction. Years later, Howard Hays, the president of the Yellowstone Park Camps Company, claimed that the camp had been built on the site occupied by Theodore Roosevelt in 1903. The original camp consisted of semi-permanent structures resting on raised wooden platforms and topped with brightly striped canvas. Small sleeping tents surrounded larger registration and dining tents (James R. McDonald Architects 1993, 40).</p>

	Destroyed	A fire burned the Pleasant Valley hotel to ground in April 1906. The hotel had been operating during summer and during winter under charge of a keeper. W.A. Kelley was keeper during the fire (Whithorn 1994, 58). Dan Yancey had reportedly spent \$1500 on improvements to the property (Whithorn 1994, 56); The building was valued at \$2000 and its contents at \$800. Dan Yancey planned to rebuild hotel at site farther down the valley, where Lost Creek intersects road, to make the hotel more accessible. The lease was not renewed and the plans were blocked (Whithorn 1994, 58).
AD 1907	Moved	The original Tower Fall Soldier Station near Calcite Springs Overlook was abandoned in 1907. The detachment moved to the current site of the Tower Ranger Station, near the junction of the stage road and the Grand Loop road. Photographs of the first soldier station show that it was composed of crude log cabins and at least one frame structure (Haines 1996, Vol. 2, 183, 186-187). At present, it is not known whether any of these buildings were moved to the new site, though some archeological evidence suggests they may have been (Sanders et al. 2003). Constructed by the military, the Tower Fall Soldier Station was the first administrative development in the Tower Junction area (YNP Housing Plan, 192 and 215).
	Built	According to the recently published Administrative History, the main Tower Fall Soldier Station building (surviving on site as the ranger's residence) was constructed in 1907 (Rydell and Culpin 2006, 64, 90). Other sources such as the Draft Statement of Significance by HRA record that the building was not constructed until 1914-1916. (See duplicate listing below)
AD 1914 - 1916	Built	The Interior Department constructed the building that is the current ranger's residence, Bldg. No. 78, the Tower Fall Soldier Station, with a capacity of five men. Other buildings at soldier station site in 1916 included an officer's quarters and a stable. Historic photos believed to be from the 1910s show a log building on the east side of Lost Creek—thought to be the stable—and several small log and frame buildings (HRA 1996-97, YELL 31759).

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AD 1915	Planned	During the summer of 1915 the first automobiles and other gasoline-powered vehicles were allowed to enter the park. This marked the beginning of far-reaching changes in the way visitors experienced the park.
AD 1916	Established	National Park Service was established.
	Planned	With the establishment of the National Park Service, Tower Fall Soldier Station became Tower Fall Ranger Station. Personnel changed but the infrastructure did not (HRA 1996-97). Though today the facility is called "Tower Junction Ranger Station," it appears that the facility's name was always somewhat flexible. Most historic sources refer to the site as "Tower Falls (or Fall) Ranger Station." For instance, the draft Statement of Significance for the Proposed Tower Junction Developed Area quotes a letter from then Superintendent Horace Albright to NPS Landscape Engineer, Daniel Hull. In this letter, Albright requests that Hull "design a modification of our Tower Falls Ranger Station to conform to the new Haynes building" (HRA referencing: Albright to Hull, letter dated Aug. 9, 1922).
AD 1916 - 1921	Built	By 1921, a road camp had been established in the area of the Tower Ranger Station. In 1921 the district's wooden mess hall was erected for the road camp (Culpin 1995, 54).
AD 1924 - 1925	Altered	Tower Junction Ranger Station was modified according to plan. A memo from Hull to Albright in 1925 reported that plans were followed well and that a darker color paint would be needed for the exterior of the building; Hull wanted to use the paint color on the "old mess building" as a model. Vertically placed, small diameter poles were applied to the exterior of the building and stone applied to its base in order to make the structure appear more rustic (HRA 1996-97; Rydell and Culpin 2006, 91; YELL 31761).
AD 1925	Planned	In consultation with the district ranger, Daniel Hull selected the site for the new barn at Tower Fall Ranger Station (HRA 1996-97).



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AD 1929	Built	In 1926, recommendations for improvement at the Tower Junction road camp included razing an old log stable (probably the one built for the Soldier Station) to replace with a new smaller stable behind the mess house and the construction of a log or frame bunkhouse. The camp also included engineer's quarters at this time (HRA 1996-97) (Culpin 1995, 57). It is not clear whether any of these changes were implemented, though the old log stable was removed at some time.
	Built	The current barn at Tower Junction Administrative area (HS-0245) was constructed. The stable had been removed previously (HRA 1996-97). It is possible that the current corral may have been built about this time.
AD 1941 - 1945	Planted	Historic photographs show that the dense screen of evergreens immediately adjacent to the current ranger's residence were planted by 1946, probably a few years earlier, during World War II. These trees may have been originally planted to visually soften the building, connecting it with the landscape (YEL 31765).
AD 1945	Moved	An old CCC building was moved to Tower Fall Ranger station. It was remodeled and served the purpose of the old bunkhouse, which was too small and almost dilapidated. The bunkhouse proposed in 1926 for the road camp was probably never built; a 1939 master plan documents that what passed for bunkhouse at that time was an "old, abandoned mess house." The garage adjacent to current residence also appears to be a modified CCC structure. (HRA 1996-97).
AD 1946 - 1964	Altered	During this period (probably closer to 1964), raised log curbing replaced spaced stones at Tower (YELL 31765/1946, YELL 31766/1964)
AD 1961	Built	The modern service station at Tower Junction was built outside the proposed district (YELL 31818).
AD 1962	Altered	Master Plan drawings show the planned rerouting of the northeast entrance road and the drive from Roosevelt Lodge (NP-YEL 3713-A and 3714). These changes were put in place. One change not put in place was the proposal to build a Visitor Center by the Grand Loop road, near the recently constructed service station.

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AD 1983	Established	Located close by the inventory unit, Roosevelt Lodge Historic District was listed on the National Register
AD 1997	Planned	The NPS rejected HRA's suggestion to combine Tower Ranger Station area with the existing Roosevelt Lodge Historic District into a single historic district. NPS and WY SHPO found that inventory unit was eligible to the NR as a separate new district, the proposed Tower Junction Ranger Station Historic District.
AD 1997 - 1998	Built	About 1997, the large four-plex residential unit was built, dwarfing existing historic structures. At this time, the drive leading to the utilitarian area may have been widened and paved.
AD 2001	Paved	Reportedly, some portions of the Tower Ranger Station circulation system were paved.
AD 2006	Planned	NPS sought from WY SHPO a consensus determination of eligibility for Mission 66 era service station at Tower Junction (outside inventory unit but close by).



## Analysis & Evaluation of Integrity

### Analysis and Evaluation of Integrity Narrative Summary:

Summary/Integrity Evaluation

#### OVERALL INTEGRITY RATING

The Tower Junction Ranger Station possesses historic integrity.

A comparison of historic conditions with existing conditions reveals that the form of the Tower Junction Ranger Station Historic District evolved over time. The expansion of the “government area” to the south, and the addition of new structures, parking lots, and path networks substantially altered the overall feeling of the district. Nevertheless, the complex’s primary function as an administrative center remains evident. The layout was minimally designed according to basic Rustic principles of site planning. Some buildings and landscape features exhibit other characteristics of Rustic design. Beyond these examples, the component landscape was not consciously designed, but allowed to evolve according to park needs. Given the ongoing association with park operations, and the retention of site planning characteristics and Rustic features, Tower Junction Ranger Station possesses historic integrity.

The Tower Junction Ranger Station Historic District is associated with park administration and day-to-day operations through several historic periods. The current ranger’s residence, which was built as a soldier station before the establishment of the NPS, is associated with the army’s presence and with the transition of administration to the National Park Service. These were especially significant events in the history of Yellowstone. Therefore, the component landscape retains integrity of association. Most other features and buildings date to later phases of development by the NPS. Aside from the mess house, it is not clear whether any of these features are directly associated with the area’s history as a road camp. Generally, road camps were not designed as permanent establishments, so it is not surprising that relatively little survives from this phase.

The complex’s layout probably unfolded over time, not according to formal design. But some of its key characteristics were clearly planned. One of these characteristics is the distinct separation of the complex into private (day-to-day operations) and public (visitor service) zones. A vegetative screen that has persisted to this day reduces the visual impact of the utilitarian/residential area from view of motorists on the Grand Loop Road. The feature that bears the clearest evidence of design is the current ranger residence. Featuring a stone base and log poles affixed to its exterior, the Rustic design of this building celebrates its natural setting. Log rail fences in the corral are also Rustic elements. For these reasons, the property retains integrity of design. Because the immediate surroundings are little changed since the historic period, the landscape retains integrity of location and setting. The Tower Junction Ranger Station Historic District is located at the edge of Pleasant Valley; it still offers sweeping views of this valley from the ranger’s residence. Topographic features still separate Tower Junction Ranger Station from Roosevelt Lodge and other areas.

The historic feel of Tower Ranger Station has been compromised. The district is a center for

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administrative and operational functions, as it was historically. Given this primary function, the appearance of the area evolved as facilities were added or taken away. Collectively, these changes create a patchwork of historic and modern features; thus, the area does not “feel” particularly historic. A visitor stopping at Tower Junction would likely visit the ranger station, parking in front of this modern building in a modern asphalt lot. That visitor may notice other modern features nearby, such as a pump house behind the ranger station. Once the public face of the complex, the former ranger station has been converted into a private residence and has been obscured from view by plantings, thus blurring the planned division between private and public zones. Materials and workmanship play an important role in creating this mixed picture. Some historic structures and features exhibit use of stone and wood as design elements. Peeled log poles affixed to the exterior walls of the ranger’s residence and the wooden fences in the corral area contribute to a sense of history. By contrast, more recent buildings and features—of which there are many—do not share these materials or level of workmanship. For instance, a recent shelter for fire equipment is built of inexpensive modern construction materials, and rests on a very obvious graded terrace. The scale of the recently constructed four-plex overwhelms the historic buildings surrounding it, and the pedestrian boardwalks built to service it have no historic counterpart in the area. Meanwhile, the white recreational vehicles parked as employee residences interfere with the planned “hidden” nature of the area, as they are visible through the trees from the Grand Loop road.

#### Tower Ranger Station Historic District CLI

##### Contributing and Non-contributing Features and Patterns

##### Natural Systems and Features

###### Contributing Features/Patterns

- Lost Creek

###### Undetermined Features/Patterns

- Spring in meadow to the west of ranger residence

##### Spatial Organization/Topography

###### Contributing Features/Patterns

- Pattern of spatial organization determined largely by topography, with development at the base of slopes and obscured from sight by ridges
- Low ridge that visually and physically separates district from service station and Roosevelt Lodge
- Division of district into two zones: visitor services and operational/residential (the former ranger station is now off-limits to the public, but the visitor services have been retained nearby in the current ranger station building)
- General layout of corral
- Open natural area around and in front of ranger residence

##### Vegetation

###### Contributing Features/Patterns

- Location in natural setting with native vegetation: a mosaic of meadow, forest edge, and sagebrush

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- Screen of existing native vegetation, which obscures from view operations zone
- Specimen Douglas-firs near former ranger station and Grand Loop road (see site plan)
- Pattern of grounding buildings through naturalistic plantings (though poorly executed technique)

#### Non-contributing Features/Patterns

- Density of evergreen plantings adjacent to ranger's residence (though pattern of grounding building through plantings is contributing)

#### Circulation

##### Contributing Features/Patterns

- General alignment of access drive leading from Grand Loop road to utilitarian zone

##### Non-contributing Features/Patterns

- Asphalt surfacing of vehicular circulation system
- Modern expansions to vehicular circulation system including new parking areas and widening of entrance drive
- Pedestrian circulation features (e.g. modern boardwalk)
- Peeled-log curbing at ranger's residence

#### Views and Vistas

##### Contributing Features/Patterns

- Pattern of setting back facilities behind natural screens
- Views of natural landscape, especially Pleasant Valley from porch of current ranger residence

#### Land Use

##### Contributing Features/Patterns

- Continuing use for park administration (housing, maintenance, ranger operations, utilities etc.) and visitor contact (orientation, general information, backcountry permits, fishing licenses etc.)

#### Buildings and Structures

##### Contributing Features/Patterns

- NPS Rustic Style design of structures
- Buildings determined eligible to proposed district by WY SHPO and NPS:
  - o Ranger's residence (HS-0241)
  - o Bunkhouse (HS-0238)
  - o Garage (HS-0239)
  - o Fire Cache (HS-0240)
  - o Mess house (HS-0242)
  - o Barn (HS-0245)
- Pattern of using brown paint on building exteriors
- Building cluster arrangement - 2 clusters: visitor services and operations/residential (same as spatial organization zones)

##### Non-contributing Features/Patterns

- All other buildings including temporary structures, buildings moved to site recently, and buildings constructed after the period of significance

Small-Scale Features

Contributing Features/Patterns

- Rustic log rail fences in corral (overall character and alignment are contributing)

Non-contributing Features/Patterns

- Flagpole
- Modern utilitarian features (fire hydrants, weather stations and so forth)
- Log “dude ranch” gateways in corral area
- Modern fenced enclosures in the meadow west of the ranger residence

Undetermined Features/Patterns

- Gas pump island

Archeological Sites

Undetermined Features/Patterns

- Archeological Resources that await a Determination of Eligibility

Below are integrity ratings for the seven qualities of integrity defined by the National Register, followed by a description of the inventory unit by landscape characteristic.

LOCATION

Retains Integrity of Location

ASSOCIATION

Retains Integrity of Association

SETTING

Retains Integrity of Setting

FEELING

Does not retain integrity of Feeling

DESIGN

Retains Integrity of Design

MATERIALS

Does not retain Integrity of Materials

WORKMANSHIP

Does not retain Integrity of Workmanship

<b>Aspects of Integrity:</b>	Location
	Association
	Setting
	Feeling
	Design
	Materials
	Workmanship

### **Landscape Characteristic:**

#### **Archeological Sites**

Note: only general information is included

The concentration of archeological sites in the Tower District is quite high compared with many other portions of the park ("Yellowstone's Northern Range Complexity..."). Several archeological sites have been identified in the areas of Roosevelt Lodge and Tower Ranger Station. Some of these sites are prehistoric camps, which may be in need of a formal determination of eligibility to the National Register (YNP, Housing Plan, 216; Cannon & Phillips 1991). One of the sites dates from about 1100 A.D. and has features that are associated with cooking. Other prehistoric sites date to earlier times (Johnson 2004). Other sites are really historic dumps. At least one of these dumps may be connected with the military presence at Tower (YNP, Housing Plan, 217; Johnson 2004 conversation with the author).

#### **Character-defining Features:**

Feature: Arch. resources that await determination

Feature Identification Number: 116356

Type of Feature Contribution: Undetermined

#### **Buildings and Structures**

The original Tower Fall(s) Soldier Station, opposite the Calcite Springs overlook, was in operation from 1903-1907. This soldier station was one of several used by the military to manage Yellowstone before the establishment of the NPS. This early soldier station occupied three buildings—two log cabins and a granary/stable—that were first used by a road crew during 1902-1903. In 1907 the soldier station was abandoned and the second Tower Fall(s) Soldier Station was established at the inventory unit site. Operations moved to the new site. It is unclear if any buildings were also relocated, but archeological evidence suggests that some were. (Sanders et al. 2003, 2).

The soldier station building that has survived may have been built in 1907 (Rydell and Culpin 2006, 64, 90) or it may have been constructed as late as 1914-1916 (HRA 1996-97). With the



transition of authority to the NPS in 1916, this building became a ranger station. In 1922 Supt. Horace Albright requested that NPS Landscape Engineer, Daniel Hull, redesign this building to conform to the Rustic Style. In 1924 these modifications were carried out and the building was transformed. Significant features of the new design include the small diameter poles affixed to the exterior walls and the stone applied around the base, giving the building the appearance that it sat on a heavy stone foundation. The exterior, which had been a light color, was repainted a dark brown. Old shingles were replaced with new 24-inch shakes (Rydell and Culpin 2006, 91). Today this building serves as the residence for the sub-district ranger.

Other buildings at the site in 1916 included an officer's quarters and a stable. Photographs from the period reveal a log building on the east side of Lost Creek—thought to be the stable, perhaps from the first soldier station—and several small frame buildings (HRA 1996-97, YELL 31759). None of these buildings has survived. The inventory unit was also the site of a road camp. Typically, a Yellowstone road camp would contain a stable to shelter horses and a mess house. Road crews usually lived in tents, though sometimes bunkhouses were built (HRA 1996-97). The old mess house on the site was built in 1921, along with other mess halls for road camps at Excelsior Geyser and Gibbon Meadows (Culpin 1995, 54). Unfortunately, it is difficult to find information on the road camp located in this district.

Six major buildings have been determined contributing to the historic district. In addition to the ranger's residence, these include a bunkhouse, garage, fire cache, mess house, and barn (HRA 1996-97). In 1997, the WY SHPO determined that these buildings were eligible to the National Register as part of this proposed district, even though the mess house had previously been determined ineligible (Wolf 1997). Many of these buildings were built in the 1930s to facilitate concessionaire and park operations (YNP Housing Plan, 215).

There are also many small buildings that were moved to the site in recent decades. Two buildings constructed in recent years are a building to house employees and a shelter for vehicles. Neither of these buildings fits the historic context particularly well. Though an effort has been made to match the color of the four-plex apartment building with the surrounding buildings, it is a very large structure and its scale is not in keeping with the smaller historic buildings nearby. The vehicle shelter was moved to the site from Old Faithful. During the summer, a fire engine is parked inside; in the winter, the shelter houses the snowplow (NPS, Comments on the 75% draft Tower Junction CLI).

The buildings of the ranger station area are arranged in two distinct clusters. The ranger residence, historic garage, current ranger station, and modern pump house stand a short distance off the Grand Loop road. To the south are the four-plex, residential trailers, mess house, barn, and other buildings for park operations and administration (HRA 1996-97). To minimize visual impact, nearly all of the permanent structures are painted brown. From a distance they tend to recede. By contrast, the recreational vehicles parked at the site as residences, which tend to be white or other light colors, are easily spotted from the Grand Loop road.

Contributing Patterns and Features

- NPS Rustic Style design of structures
- Buildings determined eligible to proposed district by WY SHPO and NPS (see table)
- Pattern of using brown paint on building exteriors
- Building cluster arrangement: 2 clusters: visitor services and operations/residential (same as spatial organization zones)

Structure Name Struct. # LCS # Level

1. Tower Junction Ranger Station Bunkhouse HS-0238 50919 Local
2. Tower Junction Ranger Station Garage HS-0239 50920 Local
3. Tower Junction Fire Cache HS-0240 50921 Local
4. Tower Junction Ranger Station Residence HS-0241 50922 Local
5. Tower Junction Ranger Station Mess House HS-0242 50923 Local
6. Tower Junction Ranger Station Horse Barn HS-0245 50924 Local

Noncontributing Patterns and Features

- All other buildings including temporary structures, buildings moved to site recently, and buildings constructed after the period of significance

**Character-defining Features:**

Feature: NPS Rustic Style design of structures

Feature Identification Number: 116424

Type of Feature Contribution: Contributing

Feature: Tower Junction Ranger Station Residence

Feature Identification Number: 116426

Type of Feature Contribution: Contributing

IDLCS Number: 50922

LCS Structure Name: Tower Junction Ranger Station Residence

LCS Structure Number: HS-0241

Feature: Tower Junction Ranger Station Bunkhouse

Feature Identification Number: 116428

Type of Feature Contribution: Contributing

IDLCS Number: 50919

LCS Structure Name: Tower Junction Ranger Station Bunkhouse

LCS Structure Number: HS-0238

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Feature: Tower Junction Ranger Station Garage

Feature Identification Number: 116430

Type of Feature Contribution: Contributing

IDLCS Number: 50920

LCS Structure Name: Tower Junction Ranger Station Garage

LCS Structure Number: HS-0239

Feature: Tower Junction Ranger Station Fire Cache

Feature Identification Number: 116432

Type of Feature Contribution: Contributing

IDLCS Number: 50921

LCS Structure Name: Tower Junction Fire Cache

LCS Structure Number: HS-0240

Feature: Tower Junction Ranger Station Mess House

Feature Identification Number: 116434

Type of Feature Contribution: Contributing

IDLCS Number: 50923

LCS Structure Name: Tower Junction Ranger Station Mess House

LCS Structure Number: HS-0242

Feature: Tower Junction Ranger Station Horse Barn

Feature Identification Number: 116436

Type of Feature Contribution: Contributing

IDLCS Number: 50924

LCS Structure Name: Tower Junction Ranger Station Horse Barn

LCS Structure Number: HS-0245

Feature: Pattern – brown paint on exteriors

Feature Identification Number: 116438

Type of Feature Contribution: Contributing

Feature: Visitor services building cluster

Feature Identification Number: 116440

Type of Feature Contribution:      Contributing

Feature:      Operations/residential bldg cluster

Feature Identification Number:      116442

Type of Feature Contribution:      Contributing

Feature:      Temporary structures

Feature Identification Number:      116444

Type of Feature Contribution:      Non Contributing

Feature:      Buildings moved to site recently

Feature Identification Number:      116446

Type of Feature Contribution:      Non Contributing

Feature:      Residential RVs

Feature Identification Number:      116448

Type of Feature Contribution:      Non Contributing

Feature:      Large residential building

Feature Identification Number:      116450

Type of Feature Contribution:      Non Contributing

Feature:      Those built after the period of sign.

Feature Identification Number:      116452

Type of Feature Contribution:      Non Contributing

**Landscape Characteristic Graphics:**

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*#YELL 31760: An early view of the Tower Fall(s) Ranger Station: date unknown, probably after 1916.*



*#YELL 31761: Tower Fall Ranger Station after transformation to the Rustic Style. After 1924.*

### **Circulation**

The Tower Junction Ranger Station complex was built in its current location due to the proximity of an important junction of park roads. One is the Grand Loop road, which enters the area from the northwest, in the direction of Mammoth Hot Springs, and continues to the southeast, in the direction of Tower Fall. The other is the northeast entrance road, which heads north across Pleasant Valley before crossing the Yellowstone River and continuing up the Lamar Valley. The intersection of these roads gives the entire larger area its name—Tower Junction. The last portions of these roads were finished in 1905, two years before the soldier station operations were moved to the Tower Junction site (Haines 1996, Vol. 1, 272). Historically, the Tower Junction Ranger Station Historic District also served as a road camp, though researchers found little information on this topic. This road camp was probably established to maintain the park roads in the vicinity.

Neither vehicular circulation nor pedestrian circulation faithfully represents historic conditions within the Tower Junction Ranger Station landscape. This is hardly surprising, given that the entire area is primarily utilitarian in function, and that operational facilities have been added or removed over time. Vehicular circulation is simple: an asphalt drive that leads into the complex, flaring out in places to provide parking and turnarounds. The drive begins at a center island that contains a sign and flagpole. It leads south along the eastern side of the current ranger residence, widening by the historic garage to become a parking lot for the current ranger station. A line of peeled painted log curbing runs along the edge of the road for the entire length of the residence. At a sign that reads “Residential Area: Local Traffic Only,” the narrow drive leads farther south to the maintenance and residential area. It curves around the large employee apartment building and opens onto another parking area. After passing the barn and an old gas pump island, the drive becomes gravel. Beyond is a very utilitarian area. Two turnarounds have been created, large enough to handle heavy equipment.

Though many features of the vehicular circulation system are recent, and most of it is paved, the general alignment of the access drive appears to approximate that of the historic period. Historic photos of the early soldier station/ranger station show that the drive was always routed to the east of the building—the current ranger residence—but that it was located a bit further east, and gradually shifted somewhat. By 1946 the road appears to run close by this building as it does today (YELL 31765). At that time, stones spaced in a broken line protected the building from cars. By 1964 these stones were replaced by the raised log curbing present today (YELL 31766). Until 1992, the drive past the ranger station was only a graveled two-track road. Since that time, the drive has been paved all the way to the old gas pump island. Some portions of the circulation system, presumably informal parking areas in the utilitarian zone, were paved as recently as 2001 (Comments on the 75% draft Tower Junction CLI). Yet these paved parking areas probably occupy the general location that informal gravel areas did in the past. Parts of the drive have been reconfigured, to provide parking for recent facilities. .

The only notable features of the pedestrian circulation system are a few raised wooden

boardwalks that service the new four-plex apartment building, the old mess house, and the employee trailers. The pedestrian circulation is not historic.

**Character-defining Features:**

Feature: General alignment of access drive

Feature Identification Number: 116386

Type of Feature Contribution: Contributing

Feature: Asphalt surfacing of vehicular circ.

Feature Identification Number: 116388

Type of Feature Contribution: Non Contributing

Feature: Modern parking areas

Feature Identification Number: 116390

Type of Feature Contribution: Non Contributing

Feature: Modern widening of access drive

Feature Identification Number: 116392

Type of Feature Contribution: Non Contributing

Feature: Pedestrian features (e.g. boardwalk)

Feature Identification Number: 116394

Type of Feature Contribution: Non Contributing

Feature: Peeled-log curbing at ranger residence

Feature Identification Number: 116396

Type of Feature Contribution: Non Contributing

**Cluster Arrangement**

N/A

**Constructed Water Features**

N/A

**Cultural Traditions**

N/A

## Land Use

Transportation was an important land use in shaping the Tower Junction Ranger Station Historic District and neighboring areas. Construction of the last portion of the belt line (between Grand Canyon and Tower Fall) led to the development of the first Tower Soldier Station, which was located near the Calcite Springs Overlook. This earlier station occupied structures that had been built to house road crew during the construction of the “overhanging cliff” section of the road (Haines 1996, Vol. 1, 186; Sanders et al. 2003). Soldier stations were manned year-round, part of a system of Army outposts established throughout the park to protect its wildlife and visitors (Rydell and Culpin 2006, 36). At one time there were sixteen soldier outposts throughout the park, including soldier stations and the related snowshoe cabins (Rydell and Culpin 2006, 64).

In 1907 the soldier station was relocated to the current site of the Tower Junction Ranger Station Historic District. This site was also used as a road camp during the construction of the road network in the northern part of the park. After the transition of authority to the National Park Service in 1916, the soldier station became a ranger station. Ranger stations continued the protective function of the earlier soldier stations, but were also designed to offer improved visitor information (Rydell and Culpin 2006, 85). The Tower Junction Ranger Station Historic District continues to function in the capacity for which it was developed: park administration and visitor services. Today this area is a staging area for maintenance activities, interpretive programming, and resource and visitor protection for the Tower Subdistrict. It also continues to offer residential facilities to employees (YNP Housing Plan, 215).

Contributing land are included in the following table.

### Character-defining Features:

Feature: Use for park administration

Feature Identification Number: 116404

Type of Feature Contribution: Contributing

Feature: Visitor contact function

Feature Identification Number: 116406

Type of Feature Contribution: Contributing

## Natural Systems and Features

The Tower Junction Ranger Station Historic District is situated at the edge of Pleasant Valley, a broad, level, grassy valley within the Northern Range in the northern section of Yellowstone National Park. The eastern portion of Pleasant Valley drains to the Yellowstone River by a number of small intermittent streams (Aaberg and Crofutt 1999, 13). The western portion of the valley is drained largely by Elk Creek, which flows westward after being fed by tributary streams including Lost Creek, which passes through the inventory unit. Compared to other



sectors of the park, the Northern Range is unique in that its topography, vegetation and elevation combine to provide critical winter range for some of the largest wild herds of bison and elk in North America. Due to the presence of these animals and to the open character of nearby areas such as the Lamar River Valley, wolf watching is a popular activity in this part of the park.

The Tower Junction Ranger Station Historic District is located on the lower reaches of Lost Creek, about eighteen miles south of Mammoth Hot Springs. It occupies the west side of Lost Creek, while the nearby Roosevelt Lodge Historic District lies across the stream to the east. Lost Creek meanders down the slope of Prospect Peak through forests of Douglas-fir and lodgepole pine before its waters disappear from sight in the gravels of the valley floor (Culpin 1982; Whittlesey 1998 Place Names, "Lost Creek"). Historically, the creek may have also figured as a source of drinking water, which could have been one reason the area was chosen for a road camp and a soldier station. Some distance west of the ranger residence is a large, L-shaped fenced area. Reportedly, this enclosure was erected to protect a spring which serves as a water source. This CLI found no other information on this spring (Comments on the 75% draft Tower Junction CLI).

Additional natural features will be discussed in sections addressing "Vegetation" or "Views."

**Character-defining Features:**

Feature: Lost Creek

Feature Identification Number: 116358

Type of Feature Contribution: Contributing

Feature: Spring in meadow west of ranger resid.

Feature Identification Number: 116360

Type of Feature Contribution: Undetermined

**Other**

N/A

**Small Scale Features**

Small-scale features provide detail and diversity to the landscape and can be just as effective as buildings in establishing the character of a place.

The log rail fences defining the corral are the most significant surviving historic small-scale features in the district. A photograph from 1949 demonstrates that the approximate layout of these fences during the historic period is similar to that of today (YELL 31795). This photograph, however, also illustrates that during the historic period the corral exhibited a mix of log post-and-rail fence with log buck-and-rail fences. Often constructed of sturdy lodgepole pine, buck-and-rail fences are named for their x-shaped log braces. This fence type is deeply

rooted in the vernacular building traditions and historic land uses of the region. During the nineteenth century, pioneers in the Yellowstone/Jackson Hole area built buck-and-rail fences for use in ranching. By the early 1900s, modern barbed-wire fencing replaced the picturesque buck-and-rail examples at most of the area's ranches. (Grand Teton Natural History Association, 2). At the Tower Corral these fences served the practical purpose of creating enclosures for animals. But this old and picturesque fence type was also meant to relate the corral to historic local traditions. Unfortunately, these quintessentially Rustic features no longer survive in the corral area. Fences require periodic repair; over time they were replaced by the more common post-and-rail fence type. Fortunately, the photograph indicates that the general location and layout of the current fences is similar to that of the historic period. Due to this arrangement and their simple log construction, which fits the setting, the current fences are counted as contributing features, even though the loss of the buck-and-rail type is disappointing.

Today, one of the log "dude ranch gateways" of the type used at Roosevelt Corral stands adjacent to the historic barn, framing the entry to the corral. This gateway is absent in another photograph from 1949 (YELL 31797). Similar gateways were erected near the entry to Roosevelt Corral and Roosevelt Lodge about 1962, so it is likely that the gateway in the Tower Corral was also built at some late date (James R. McDonald Architects 1993, 39). Close to the barn is another small-scale feature of note, a historic gas pump island.

During the ranger station's early years, a decorative fence of antlers projected from the northern elevation of the main building. In the early twentieth century, such elkhorn fences were common ornamental features throughout the park. NPS landscape engineer Daniel Hull, the principal NPS planner for most of the 1920s, viewed these elkhorn fences as needless embellishment. He advised YNP Superintendent Horace Albright that "[s]imple, natural condition should be maintained rather than freak exhibits of craftsmanship" (Rydell and Culpin 2006, 90, 85). Following a visit to the park by landscape architects Frederick Law Olmsted, Jr. and Harlan P. Kelsey in 1921, Hull suggested measures for improving the park's appearance to Albright. The removal of elkhorn fences from around ranger stations was one of these recommendations. (Rydell and Culpin 2006, 90). The antler fence at the Tower Junction Ranger Station may have been removed soon afterwards, or perhaps when the ranger station building was remodeled in 1924-25.

Many small-scale features that exist on site today are not contributing resources. Dumpsters, weather stations, fire hydrants, and other utilitarian features are spread throughout the area. A large fenced enclosure protects a spring in the western portion of the meadow, and a smaller fenced area surrounds equipment located just west of the ranger residence. The peeled log curbing near the current ranger residence appears to have been placed in the 1950s or early 1960s. The flagpole in the center island at the entrance to the area is of metal construction and likely was placed within the last several decades, although one historic photo shows an earlier flagpole (YELL 31759).

Adjacent to the inventory unit is a culvert that contributes to the significance of a separate

historic district, the Grand Loop Road Historic District. This culvert carries the Grand Loop road above the bed of Lost Creek. Handsome stone portals decorate either end of this culvert. On each side, stones have been carefully arranged to form a shallow arch. The road through the area was completed by the first decade of the 20th century, but the culvert may date from a slightly later period, perhaps the 1920s or 1930s. It is a very typical example of Rustic architecture and of the character of work built in the National Parks during those two decades. This structure is associated with the road rather than with the Tower Junction Ranger Station Historic District.

**Character-defining Features:**

Feature: Rustic log rail fences in corral

Feature Identification Number: 116408

Type of Feature Contribution: Contributing

Feature: Flagpole

Feature Identification Number: 116410

Type of Feature Contribution: Non Contributing

Feature: Modern fire hydrants

Feature Identification Number: 116412

Type of Feature Contribution: Non Contributing

Feature: Weather Station

Feature Identification Number: 116414

Type of Feature Contribution: Non Contributing

Feature: Log “ranch” gateways in corral

Feature Identification Number: 116416

Type of Feature Contribution: Non Contributing

Feature: Other modern utilit. features

Feature Identification Number: 116418

Type of Feature Contribution: Non Contributing

Feature: Fenced exclosures – meadow area

Feature Identification Number: 116420

Type of Feature Contribution: Non Contributing

Feature: Gas pump island

Feature Identification Number: 116422

Type of Feature Contribution: Undetermined

**Landscape Characteristic Graphics:**



*#YELL 31759: HS-0241 and early log stable to east of Lost Creek. Note elkhorn fence and flagpole. Circa 1917?*



*#YELL 31795: Fire Cache (HS-0240); note corral fences at base of hill. Fences in back are buck-and-rail (not extant today): May 1949.*



*#YELL 31797: Barn (HS-0245) and Tower Corral fence; note that there is no "dude ranch gateway." Circa 1949.*



*A view of the barn and the rustic log fence with "dude ranch" overhead gateway in 2004 (Shapins 2004).*



*Lost Creek divides the Tower and Roosevelt areas and flows through this rustic culvert, which is part of the Grand Loop Road Historic District (Shapins 2004).*

### **Spatial Organization**

See "Topography"

### **Topography**

The topography of the Tower Junction Ranger Station Historic District strongly influenced its spatial organization. Steep slopes rise abruptly to the west and south of the current administrative and operations area, while to the north lies the level floor of Pleasant Valley. Lost Creek runs along the eastern edge of the complex at the base of a low ridge of hills. The creek and hills serve to physically separate the administrative complex from the concessions area of Roosevelt Lodge.

Currently the Tower Ranger Station complex is divided into two zones: a visitor services zone by the Grand Loop road and a more hidden, utilities and operations zone a few hundred yards south. This separation is reinforced by vegetation (discussed under "Vegetation"). Over time, this planned division of the district into two zones has been somewhat diminished, as the former ranger station was converted to a private residence and obscured by a dense planting of trees (also discussed under "Vegetation").

At one time, a crude fence of elk antlers defined an informal lawn in front of the early ranger station, which is now the current ranger's residence (YELL 31759). By 1925 the fence had been removed and the space was being maintained as an open natural area, as it is today. A sizable portion of the operations zone is occupied by the corral, which is delineated by a series of log rail fences. One fence runs in a line north of the current barn. Another runs along the foot of the hills to the west, passing behind the fire cache, bunkhouse, and other buildings. A photograph from 1949 records that the general arrangement of these fences developed by this date (YELL 31795). Since the historic period, the corrals have been one of the primary spaces of the operations zone in the historic district.

In recent decades, significant grading has occurred in the southern portions of the complex, in order to establish suitable areas for operations and for certain buildings.

### **Contributing Patterns and Features**

- Pattern of spatial organization largely determined by topography, with development at the base of slopes and obscured from sight by ridges
- Low ridge that visually and physically separates district from service station and Roosevelt Lodge
- Division of district into two zones: visitor services and operational/residential (The former ranger station is now off-limits to the public, but the visitor services have been retained nearby, in the current ranger station building.)
- General layout of corral
- Open natural area around and in front of the ranger residence

**Character-defining Features:**

Feature:     Spat. org. influenced by topography  
Feature Identification Number:     116364  
Type of Feature Contribution:     Contributing

Feature:     Low ridge at eastern edge of district  
Feature Identification Number:     116366  
Type of Feature Contribution:     Contributing

Feature:     Visitor services zone to north  
Feature Identification Number:     116368  
Type of Feature Contribution:     Contributing

Feature:     Operational/Residential zone to south  
Feature Identification Number:     116370  
Type of Feature Contribution:     Contributing

Feature:     General layout of corral  
Feature Identification Number:     116372  
Type of Feature Contribution:     Contributing

Feature:     Open natural area near ranger resid.  
Feature Identification Number:     116374  
Type of Feature Contribution:     Contributing

**Landscape Characteristic Graphics:**





*#YELL 31826: Tower Junction Service Station (outside inventory unit); modern design cradled by topography: date unknown, c. 1960s.*

### **Vegetation**

Native vegetation helps define the rustic character of the Tower Junction Ranger Station landscape. It is located in an area where forests of Douglas-fir and lodgepole pine give way to the grassy meadows of the valley floor. The steep slopes to the west of the complex are grassy, interspersed with Douglas-fir and aspen. South of the complex, the slopes are more heavily wooded. Tall grasses, sedges, and shrubs line the course of Lost Creek, while sagebrush covers the low hills to the east of the creek. The meadows of Pleasant Valley extend up to the current ranger residence and around the nearby buildings, dotted here and there with aspens and native evergreens.

Near the Grand Loop road, at the entry to the complex, stand a few mature specimen Douglas-firs that have survived from the clumps of young trees visible in historic photos. An informal screen of Douglas-firs, lodgepole pines, and aspens cuts from southeast to northwest across the landscape. Subtly, this natural screen hides the utilitarian area from the view of the road and reinforces the separation of visitor services from operations and residential zones. The operations zone was probably carved out from a lightly wooded area, and the mature trees left in front to act as a screen. The placement of buildings and utilities behind natural screens is a pattern visible elsewhere in Yellowstone National Park.

A conspicuous feature is a group of tall evergreen trees very close to the ranger residence. Six trees are planted along the north façade of the building: four along the wall and one at each

corner of the porch. Others are planted along the building's eastern side. All of the evergreens are the same age; they appear in a photograph from 1946 as young trees (YELL 31765). These trees exhibit the tenets of landscape naturalization. The planting was probably intended to "ground" the building to the landscape. However, it appears that this Rustic technique was poorly executed. The trees now completely obscure the historic building, and possibly endanger the structure because they are planted so close. Planted towards the end of the period of significance, this plant group is not representative of good Rustic design. It is also possible that the trees were planted to partially conceal the building from public view once it became a private residence. The overall picture of vegetation in the Tower Ranger Station area has not changed significantly since the historic period, except for this intrusive planting near the current residence.

**Character-defining Features:**

Feature: Natural setting with native veget.

Feature Identification Number: 116376

Type of Feature Contribution: Contributing

Feature: Screen of exis. native vegetation

Feature Identification Number: 116378

Type of Feature Contribution: Contributing

Feature: Specimen Douglas-firs near ranger resid.

Feature Identification Number: 116380

Type of Feature Contribution: Contributing

Feature: Pattern – use of plants to ground bldgs.

Feature Identification Number: 116382

Type of Feature Contribution: Contributing

Feature: Density of trees adjacent ranger res.

Feature Identification Number: 116384

Type of Feature Contribution: Non Contributing

**Landscape Characteristic Graphics:**

Tower Junction Ranger Station  
Yellowstone National Park

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*#YELL 31765: Side view from a distance, Ranger Station and garage; note young plantings along building: 9/18/1946.*



*#YELL 31766: By 1964 the dense evergreen plantings have grown up. 1964.*



*Trees now hiding the ranger residence (former ranger station) were planted in the 1940s. Trees may have been planted to ground building to landscape, but density is not contributing (Shapins 2004).*



*A natural screen of trees divides the utilitarian area from the visitor services/residential area. This screen is contributing (Shapins 2004).*

### **Views and Vistas**

Particularly after the NPS was given authority to manage Yellowstone, a pattern developed of siting buildings and facilities behind natural screens of vegetation or topographic features, thus keeping important views free from clutter. This pattern is evident at the Tower Junction Ranger Station, in that many of its utilitarian facilities appear “tucked away” from view of the Grand Loop road, through a combination of a considerable setback from the road and natural screening. (See “Vegetation”).

By contrast, the soldier station/ranger station (current ranger residence) was erected close by the Grand Loop road and in plain view of passing motorists. Oriented to the road, this building, which was the seat of administration in this part of the park during the historic period, presided over the valley and the junction. Now that the building is a private residence and a dense planting of trees practically conceals it from view (see “Vegetation”), this effect is diminished.

After the soldier station was converted to a ranger station, a large porch was placed on its front, providing a nice spot to view Pleasant Valley, which the porch overlooked. It is easy to imagine a few chairs set up on this porch for the enjoyment of visitors and staff. Because the building is a private residence, the public no longer uses the porch for viewing, though the views of the valley from this porch are intact.

It is important to note that the low hills to the east of Tower Ranger Station effectively hide

from view the service station area and the Roosevelt Corral. If, in the future, a taller building were to be located in one of these areas, it may be visible from the site. The planned “separate” nature of Tower Ranger Station would be compromised.

**Character-defining Features:**

Feature: Pattern – siting behind natural screens

Feature Identification Number: 116398

Type of Feature Contribution: Contributing

Feature: Views of natural landscape,

Feature Identification Number: 116400

Type of Feature Contribution: Contributing

Feature: View of Pleas. Valley from res. porch

Feature Identification Number: 116402

Type of Feature Contribution: Contributing

## Condition

### Condition Assessment and Impacts

**Condition Assessment:** Good

**Assessment Date:** 07/29/2008

**Condition Assessment Explanatory Narrative:**

Per Supt. concurrence memo, dated 7/29/2008

### Stabilization Costs

**Landscape Stabilization Cost:** 0.00

## **Treatment**

### **Treatment**

**Approved Treatment:** Undetermined

**Approved Treatment Document Explanatory Narrative:**

No approved treatment to date. The only planning document for the general area (incl. Roosevelt Lodge) is the outdated 1974 Master Plan/EIS, which does not specify an overall treatment for the cultural landscape.



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