

**OFFICE OF HISTORIC PRESERVATION
DEPARTMENT OF PARKS AND RECREATION**

P.O. BOX 942896
SACRAMENTO, CA 94296-0001
(916) 653-6624 Fax: (916) 653-6624
calshpo@ohp.parks.ca.gov
www.ohp.parks.ca.gov



August 23, 2004

Dr. Stephanie Toothman
National Park Service
Pacific West Region
909 First Street
Seattle, Washington 98104-4159

Dear Dr. Toothman:

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the National Register Multiple Property nomination for Yosemite National Park. I concur that the properties identified and evaluated in the nomination do constitute a coherent group of geographically dispersed resources that are eligible for listing in the National Register. The nomination does an excellent job of defining separate, but related contexts that make clear the significance of the individual resources, as well as the reasons that they collectively constitute a multiple property. The inclusion of a number of the park's less elaborate, high altitude resources is particularly noteworthy. The context statements synthesize a large amount of historic documentation in a clear and concise manner and the descriptive material that is provided for the individual resources or resource groupings is excellent.

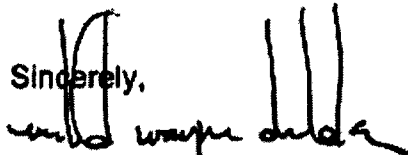
We concur in all of your findings regarding the resources enumerated in the multiple property nomination. We agree that the following properties are eligible for the National Register as a part of a multiple property.

Lake Vernon Cabin Building #2450
May Lake High Sierra Camp Historic District
Hetch Hetchy Comfort Station Building #2104
Henness Ridge Fire Lookout Building #5300
The Golden Crown Mine
Glen Aulin Sierra Camp Historic District
Chinquapin Historic District
Buck Creek Cabin Building #4800
Snow Flat Cabin Building #3501
Snow Creek Cabin Building #3450
Sachse Springs Cabin Building #2452
Ostrander Ski Hut Building #5110
Old Big Oak Flat Road
New Big Oak Flat Road
Merced Lake Ranger Station Building #3400
Merced Lake High Sierra Camp Historic District

Wawona Tunnel
Vogelsang High Sierra Camp Historic District
Tuolumne Meadows High Sierra Camp Historic District

I have signed the application as commenting authority. If you have any questions, please call
Gene Itogawa of my staff (916) 653-8936.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Milford Wayne Donaldson". The signature is written in a cursive style with some vertical strokes.

Milford Wayne Donaldson
State Historic Preservation Officer

Cc: Kimball Koch

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
REGISTRATION FORM

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

1. Name of
Property

historic name Chinquapin Historic District

other names/site number

2.
Location

street & number N/A not for publication

city or town Yosemite National Park (YOSE) vicinity

state California code CA county Mariposa code 043 zip code 95389

3. State /Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1986, as amended, I hereby certify that this nomination request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant nationally statewide locally. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of certifying official

Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of commenting or other official

Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby certify that this property is:
entered in the National Register
See continuation sheet.
determined eligible for the
National Register
See continuation sheet.
determined not eligible for the
National Register

Signature of Keeper

Date of Action

Chinquapin Historic District

Name of Property

removed from the National Register

other (explain):

Mariposa, CA

County and State

5. Classification

Ownership of Property (Check as many as apply)	Category of Property (Check only one)	Number of Resources within Property (Do not include previously listed resources in the count)	
☐ private	☐ building(s)	Contributing	Noncontributing
☐ public-local	☒ district	3	2
☐ public-State	☐ site		
☒ public-Federal	☐ structure		
	☐ object		
			buildings
			sites
			structures
			objects
		3	2
			Total

Name of related multiple property listing

(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing.)

Historic Resources of Yosemite National Park, California

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

0

6.Function or Use

Historic Functions (Enter categories from instructions)	Current Functions (Enter categories from instructions)
OTHER/NPS administrative complex	OTHER/NPS ranger station

7. Description

Architectural Classification (Enter categories from instructions)	Materials (Enter categories from instructions)
Other: NPS Rustic Vernacular Wood Frame	foundation concrete with stone veneer walls wood: horizontal boards roof wood: shingles other wooden porch

Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing)

☒ **A** Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.

☐ **B** Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.

☒ **C** Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.

☐ **D** Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations

(Mark "X" in all the boxes that apply.)

☐ **A** owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.

☐ **B** removed from its original location.

☐ **C** a birthplace or a grave.

☐ **D** a cemetery.

☐ **E** a reconstructed building, object, or structure.

☐ **F** a commemorative property.

☐ **G** less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions)

Architecture

Conservation

Landscape Architecture

Period of Significance

1933-1938

Significant Dates

N/A

Significant Person

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

National Park Service

Narrative Statement of Significance

(Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography

(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

Previous documentation on file (NPS)

☐ preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested.

☐ previously listed in the National Register

☐ previously determined eligible by the National Register

Primary location of additional data

☐ State Historic Preservation Office

☐ Other State agency

☐ Federal agency

☐ Local government

☐ University

Chinquapin Historic District

Name of Property

Mariposa, CA

County and State

☐ designated a National Historic Landmark
☐ recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey

☐ recorded by Historic American Engineering
Record #

☒ Other

Name of repository:
Yosemite National Park, California

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property 10 acres

UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet)

1	<u>11</u>	<u>261050</u>	<u>4170060</u>	3	<u>11</u>	<u>261072</u>	<u>4170060</u>
	Zone	Easting	Northing		Zone	Easting	Northing
2	<u>11</u>	<u>261067</u>	<u>4170035</u>	4	<u>11</u>	<u>261050</u>	<u>4170040</u>

 See continuation sheet.

Verbal Boundary Description

(Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

The Chinquapin Historic District begins at point A, about 90 feet north of Building #5000. It continues 200 feet east to point B, north of building #5003 and across Highway 41, running on the north side of the former site of building 5050. It turns south-southeast past building 5051 for approximately 180 feet to point C, and then veers around building 5004 back to the west, across Highway 41 approximately 170 feet to point D. The line between points D and A, running on the west side of building 5001 is 140 feet.

Boundary Justification

(Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)

The Chinquapin Historic District boundary immediately encompasses the significant resources of the remaining buildings and the immediate surrounding land that comprises their historical setting. It also includes the plaza and intersection areas which were an integral part of the design scheme for the intersection as proposed by the NPS Branch of Plans and Design. The road configuration here, however, is not considered part of the National Register nomination, which applies only to the buildings' architectural significance.

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Andy Kirk, Richard Coop, Charles Palmer

organization UNLV Public History date 3/8/04

street & number 4505 Maryland Parkway Box 455020 telephone (702)895-3544

city or town Las Vegas state NV zip code 89135-5020

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

Continuation Sheets

Maps

A **USGS map** (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.

A **sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

Photographs

Representative **black and white photographs** of the property.

Additional items

(Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

Chinquapin Historic District

Mariposa, CA

Name of Property

County and State

Property Owner

(Complete this item at the request of the SHPO or FPO.)

name

street & number telephone

city or town state zip code

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 470 et seq.).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including the time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Project (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET

Chinquapin Historic District
name of property
Mariposa, California
county and State
Historic Resources of Yosemite
National Park, California
name of multiple property listing

Section 7

Page 1

=====

Summary
The Chinquapin ranger station, garage, and comfort station are located at the junction of state highway 41 and the Glacier Point/Badger Pass roads. They are of wood frame construction with white clapboard siding and green trim and sit on stone mortar foundations. Wood shingles cover the steeply pitched gable roofs. These buildings, patterned after the simple wood frame structures typical of early California settlement, possess large porches shaded by overhanging roofs and are sheathed with wide clapboards. Designed to blend with Yosemite National Park's cultural setting, they comprise an architectural offshoot of the National Park Service's rustic design ethic. Recognized as a significant example of National Park Service rustic architecture and landscape design, the district has been documented by HABS/HAER. The complex originally included a lunchroom/service station building (#5050) on the northeast corner of the intersection, but this has been removed as a part of a leaking underground fuel tank remediation project.

General Description - Contributing Resources

Ranger Station. Building #5000
The ranger station stands on its original location on the west side of the road at the Chinquapin junction of the Wawona and Glacier Point roads. It is a rectangular wood frame structure with white clapboard siding and sits on a stone mortar foundation. Wood shingles in poor condition cover the steeply pitched roof. Green shutters and window trim are in need of repainting. The full-length front porch is surrounded by a white picket fence. The rear entry has a stone/mortar stepped approach. Two stone/mortar chimneys top the roof. A one-car detached garage/storage building stands in back (west) of the house. The property retains integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, and association

The plan for the ranger station was prepared by the National Park Service Branch of Plans and Design in 1933 as PWA project FP-//71. The building was completed by January 1, 1934. The Park Service designed a one-story standard wood frame structure with an overall size of 38'-6" x 46'-6", containing two apartments. The first consisted of a bedroom, kitchen, and lavatory and shower; the second of a living room, bedroom, kitchen and lavatory and shower. A small hall was built for common use. A front porch 8 feet wide extends the full length of the building. The structure also has a back porch and concrete cellar for storing food. Two brick chimneys with stone veneer sit on the ridge line. The concrete foundation has a stone veneer. The exterior walls are redwood siding and the roof cover is cedar shingles. Interior walls and ceilings were lined with 3/8" wallboard. The roof was stained with green creosote and the exterior walls covered with white paint.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET

Chinquapin Historic District
name of property
Mariposa, California
county and State
Historic Resources of Yosemite
National Park, California
name of multiple property listing

Section 7

Page 2

=====

Building #5000 has undergone no alterations or modifications in its interior spaces. No removals have been made on the exterior, but vertical pickets have been added to the horizontal railing around the porch. Only regular maintenance has been performed, including exterior repainting, roof repair, or kitchen remodeling involving painting and installation of new cabinetry. The park staff has attempted to maintain the interior with its original decor and paint scheme. Replacement and maintenance work has been performed in kind.

The Chinquapin ranger station, with its gable roof, its front roof overhang supported on two-by-fours creating a recessed front porch, its encircling porch railing, and its white paint with green trim exemplifies a unique building style in Yosemite National Park that was intended to continue early California hostelry and ranch traditions and, specifically, the style of earlier hotel structures in the Yosemite area.

Garage and Storage, Building #5001
This two-stall building, measuring 19'-6" by 40'-6", was constructed in 1935 by the National Park Service. Located behind Building #5000, it is also a wood frame building (horizontal boards), with a dirt floor and shingle roof. It was intended for use as a garage and woodshed.

Comfort Station, Building #5004
The National Park Service Branch of Plans and Design also prepared the drawings for this building, which was completed by the Park Service in 1933. Its overall size is 16 by 28. The building originally had lattice-enclosed entrance porches (latticework no longer present), measuring 4' by 7' on each end. It is standard wood frame construction on a concrete foundation, containing a women's section with seven fixtures, a men section with ten fixtures, and a middle utility chamber. The concrete foundation is 10" thick with a footing 16" wide lined with a stone veneer 9" thick for the front and two end walls. Because of the hillside location of the building, the foundation for the rear wall was built 5' high, forming a retaining wall 10" thick, constructed of reinforced concrete. It extends along the line of the rear wall, then at a 90-degree angle and parallel to the end walls for 16'. Exterior walls are redwood siding and the anterior finish is tongue and groove. The building has concrete floors in both the men's and women's sections; the utility compartment has a gravel floor. The roof is of royal cedar shingles, 24" long. Exterior walls are painted white with a dash of light gray coloring, the roof is stained with green creosote, and the interior is light gray. The structure is wired for electrical fixtures and lights and was connected to a local gasoline engine-driven plant installed for the service station. Construction on the building began in September 1933 and ended in December.

General Description - Noncontributing Resources

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET

Chinquapin Historic District
name of property
Mariposa, California
county and State
Historic Resources of Yosemite
National Park, California
name of multiple property listing

Light Plant, Building #5051
This building, installed by the Yosemite Park and Curry Company in 1933, served as a generator building for the service station and comfort station. It is currently used for storage. In poor condition, it is not considered historically or architecturally significant.

Barn
A small barn and post-and-wire corral were built approximately 50 yards downslope from the garage and storage building around 1934. The barn is roughly 15 by 20' and has partly collapsed on the east side.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET

Chinquapin Historic District
name of property
Mariposa, California
county and State
Historic Resources of Yosemite
National Park, California
name of multiple property listing

Section 8

Page 4

=====

Significance

- Property Type: Resources Associated with State and Federal Administration of Yosemite (1864-1966)
 Subtype: National Park Service Administration
- Property Type: Resources Associated with Tourism, Recreation and the Preservation Ethic in Yosemite (1864-1973)
 Subtype: Tourism
- Property Type: Resources Associated with Architecture and Design (1856-1964)
 Subtype: New Deal Rustic
- Property Type: National Park Service Landscape Architecture in Yosemite (1916-1940)
Period of Significance: 1933-1938.

The former Chinquapin administrative complex is considered regionally significant as exemplifying an architectural theme specifically developed by the National Park Service Branch of Plans and Design in response to earlier building traditions in Yosemite National Park. It is a unique style unused in other parks and is exemplified by only a few buildings in Yosemite. The four buildings at Chinquapin included in this nomination comprise a small historic district exemplifying one aspect of the Park Service’s interpretation of the rustic design ethic, specifically, one stressing harmony with the cultural environment rather than the natural setting. The Gas and Oil House, Building #5003, the Light Plant, Building #5051, and a small barn are considered noncontributing resources within the historic district.

Context
By October 1932 a plaza area at Chinquapin was under construction in connection with improvement of the Glacier Point road. A fire raged in the road contractor's camp at Chinquapin in October, destroying thirteen frame structures. Located at the junction of the Glacier Point and Wawona roads, Chinquapin seemed a good place to disseminate information to the public and to house rangers patrolling the southern portion of the park boundary, especially during deer hunting season. Completion of the Wawona road in 1933 was expected to increase travel as would improvement of the road to Glacier Point. Park officials decided, therefore, to install a complete administrative unit at the Chinquapin junction, and the National Park Service Branch of Plans and Design prepared a construction scheme consisting of a ranger station, comfort station, and a Standard Oil Company service station with a small refreshment stand. The plan included landscaping around the plaza area connecting the Glacier Point and Wawona roads.

In March 1933 tracings of a proposed lunchroom and service station at Chinquapin were submitted by the Yosemite Park and Curry Company to Yosemite Superintendent C.G. Thomson for his approval. The lunchroom was envisioned as being useful in the winter for skiers as a ski house. It would also serve as a stopover facility for visitors using the ski fields at Badger Pass or passing over the Wawona road to Wawona or the Mariposa Grove of Big Trees. The ranger and comfort stations were scheduled to be built at Chinquapin that summer. The Yosemite Park and Curry Company would construct the service station, which was to be developed in accordance with the plan prepared by the

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET

Chinquapin Historic District
name of property
Mariposa, California
county and State
Historic Resources of Yosemite
National Park, California
name of multiple property listing

Section 8

Page 5

=====

NFS Branch of Plans and Design. San Francisco architect Eldridge T. Spencer designed the building for the Curry Company to harmonize with the NFS design plan.

In July 1933 the Public Works Administration allotments contained funds to develop facilities at Chinquapin. These PWA projects were executed under the supervision and direction of the Engineering Department of Yosemite National Park, consisting of E.M. Hilton, Park Engineer, and H.S. Shiiko, Assistant Engineer, aided by Assistant Landscape Architect John B. Wosky. Wosky had earlier realized the impossibility of developing a single architectural theme appropriate to Yosemite because of the wide variety of environments, the distances between developed areas, and the stylistic disparity of existing structures. Unfettered by stylistic restraints, therefore, Park Service designers developed a cultural theme unknown in other mountainous Western parks for the ranger, comfort, and service stations at the Chinquapin site.

The simple, white-painted frame buildings with gable roofs, wide porches, and lap siding were typical of the architectural style of many buildings in nineteenth-century California, particularly hotel structures. This white clapboard cottage form had its origins in the East, but became a generic form with regional variations as Angles moved west. The earlier Sentinel and Wawona hotels, both major complexes in the park, displayed the same architectural characteristics, although on a somewhat grander scale. Because Chinquapin lay on the road between those two hotels (the Sentinel was not razed until 1938), it was considered an appropriate place to further emphasize that cultural theme and tie together the Yosemite Valley and Wawona areas.

The service station/lunchroom was featured in the three-volume study by Albert H. Good entitled *Park and Recreation Structures*, published in 1938. That study served as a training tool for park architects and landscape architects throughout the nation. The study provided examples of many of the best Emergency Conservation Work projects completed in county, state, and national parks through 1937. The study described the Chinquapin concession building (vol. II, p. 86) as follows:

In parks of vast size and along extended parkways, concessions to dispense gasoline are necessary. This one dispenses fuel for both man and motor and provides quarters for an attendant in a housing that admirably recaptures the simple character of early California architecture.

The significance of this complex was noted by Allan Temko, *San Francisco Chronicle* architecture critic, who stated in 1987 that the two service stations at Yosemite (one in Yosemite Valley, the other at Chinquapin) prepared in the office of Eldridge T. Spencer reveal the "forward movement" of a period when designers had more freedom to be imaginative when confronted by perplexing architectural problems. The buildings at Chinquapin, he said, are

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET

Chinquapin Historic District
name of property
Mariposa, California
county and State
Historic Resources of Yosemite
National Park, California
name of multiple property listing

Section 8

Page 6

=====

important because they were executed at a time when architects could still practice their "high calling" and were not yet "reduced to servitude to fast-buck promoters and pre-packaged structures":

Unlike most practitioners today, they had a good fund of general culture, and were broadly educated in literature and history as well as the arts. They created buildings carefully. Scale and proportion, massing and texture, symbolic form and nobility all were ingredients of their work.¹

The ranger station is the most significant building of this group. It retains in relatively pristine condition the significant design elements characterizing this unique interpretation of the National Park Service rustic design concept. The service station, though lacking the physical integrity to stand alone as a National Register property, retains a portion of its functional integrity as employee housing. It has, however, lost its functional integrity as a gas station. Although its architectural integrity is not pristine, it retains several of its character-defining elements and completes the picture of the design scheme and physical layout of the site. The comfort station and garage are much plainer examples of this rustic style, lacking the wide front porch and other decorative elements. In shape, basic design, and materials, however, they are an integral part of the basic design scheme. The lack of the porches denotes that they are only utilitarian buildings, but they do complement the major buildings of the group.

1 Allan Temko, "Show of Architectural 'Treasures'." *San Francisco Chronicle*, 23 January 1987.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET

Chinquapin Historic District
name of property
Mariposa, California
county and State
Historic Resources of Yosemite
National Park, California
name of multiple property listing

Section 9 Page 7
=====

Bibliography

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Final Report, Comfort Station—Chinquapin, Account No. 415—PWA Project FP #68; Ranger Station—
Chinquapin, Account No. 418-PWA Project FP #71, February 1934.

Finley, Michael V., Superintendent, Yosemite National Park to Regional Director, Western Region “Review of
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Greene, Linda W. *Historic Resource Study. Yosemite: The Park and Its Resources*, 3 vols. Denver: NFS, 1987.

Tweed, William C., Laura E. Soulliere, Henry G. Law, *National Park Service Rustic Architecture; 1916-1942*. San
Francisco: NFS, 1977.