NPS Form 10-900
(Oct. 1990)

OMB No. 1024-0018

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NAT. REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
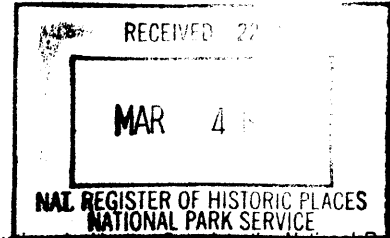NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

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 ___Great Northern Depot___

other names/site number ___Skykomish Depot___

2. Location

street & number ___SE Corner of Railroad Avenue and 4th Street___   ___N/A___ not for publication

city or town ___Skykomish___   ___N/A___ vicinity

state ___Washington___ code ___45___ county ___King___ code ___033___ zip code ___98288___

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1986, as amended, I hereby certify that this _X_ 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 _X_ meets ___ does not meet the National Register criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant ___ nationally _X_ statewide ___ locally. (___ See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

_____ 2.1897
Signature of certifying official/Title   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 certifying official/Title   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.

___ removed from the
　　 National Register.

___ other (explain:) _____

Signature of the Keeper _Bobby Savage_

Date of Action _4-14-97_

5. Classification

Ownership of Property
(Check as many boxes as apply)

X private
___ public-local
___ public-State
___ public-Federal

Category of Property
(Check only one box

X building(s)
___ district
___ site
___ structure
___ object

Number of Resources within Property
(Do not incl. previously listed resources in the count.)

Contributing	Non-Contributing	
1	0	buildings
0	0	sites
0	0	structures
0	0	objects
1	0	Total

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

N/A

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

0

6. Functions or Use

Historic Functions
(Enter categories from instructions)

TRANSPORTATION-rail related

Current Functions
(Enter categories from instructions)

TRANSPORTATION-rail related

7. Description

Architectural Classification
(Enter categories from instructions)

OTHER-commercial vernacular

Materials
(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation   CONCRETE

walls   WOOD-weatherboard

roof   COMPOSITION

other   WOOD-interior tongue-and-groove

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

Setting

The Great Northern Depot in Skykomish was originally constructed in 1894. For 28years, it stood on the south side of the railroad tracks, at the foot of Fifth Street, facing north toward John Maloney's general store and the Skykomish Hotel. In this earlier period, the depot was only about half of its present-day size, and its exterior cladding material and window arrangement differed from the present design. In 1922, the building was moved to the north side of the tracks, re-oriented to face the south, and considerably expanded with the addition of a large freight room on the east end.

_X_ See Continuation Sheet

The present-day depot is a simple, single-story frame structure. It is situated just as it was sited in 1922, along the north side of today's Burlington Northern right-of-way. The combination passenger-freight depot now faces the railroad tracks and the formerly bustling rail yard of Skykomish. To the north is Railroad Avenue, the major commercial street in town. Early 20th Century frame commercial buildings comprising the Railroad Avenue Historic District form a backdrop for the depot. Immediately to the west, within the right-of-way, is a small green open space used by the town for some time as a picnic park.

Exterior

The depot itself is rectangular in plan, with no variation except the protrusion of a small three-sided bay window on the track side. An apron of blacktop and gravel wraps around the east and south sides of the building where a low wood plank platform once stood. The north elevation directly abuts the pavement of Railroad Avenue. The roof configuration is a broad, medium-pitched gable with generous overhangs.

The exterior walls of the depot are clad with a narrow-gauge, lapped weatherboard siding, typical of bungalow construction in the 1920s. The continuous use of this material around the entire building indicates that it was likely re-sided at the time of the depot's relocation and expansion in 1922. Around the base of the building on three sides, the original contrasting shiplap siding remains in place. On the north side, however, the shiplap has been covered over with non-descript plywood. The roof of the depot is sheathed with composition shingles installed during the summer of 1995. A central brick chimney, appearing in the 1940 King County Assessor photograph of the depot, is no longer extant.

The depot's fenestration consists largely of generously-porportioned, six-over-six light, wooden sash arranged around the west end of the building where the passenger-waiting room and office are housed. At the east gabled end, supplying some light into the freight room, is a high rectangular window with fixed, multiple panes. A simple, three-sided bay window with three, four-over-four light sash protrudes from the central office facing the tracks. The station operator sat at this window where a clear view up and down the tracks could be had. Two doors at either side of the bay window provide passenger and employee access to the interior of the depot. Three freight doors, two on track side and one along Railroad Avenue, open into the freight room. Those on the track side appear to be of original design with transom windows above.

Historic photographs and early Sanborn Insurance Company maps offer some clues as to the depot's physical alterations over time. Prior to its relocation across the tracks in 1922, the original depot was a condensed version of its present form. A c.1915 view depicts the building with a wood-shingled roof, and three windows on the west gabled end fronting a modest wood platform.

In a 1940 King County Assessor photo, the relocated depot features its freight room expansion. A ladder on the the roof leads to a central brick chimney from the office, and marks the beginning of the addition to the east end. A comparison of this photo with current views reveals that the original freight room door along Railroad Avenue has now been closed up and the opening moved to a point further east along that elevation. The raised wooden platform visible in the earlier photo, and in 1926 and 1930 Sanborn maps, has now been removed. The Sanborn maps also describe the interior use of the depot in those years, identifying a waiting room, office (with bay window), and freight house. Today, those spaces have been reconfigured with the insertion of newer partitions.

Interior

The interior of the depot has been only partially inspected, but appears to have undergone a fair amount of change. The passenger waiting room at the west end of the building has been chopped up into various office and storage areas. The original entrance hall and central ticket office remain in place, however, with fir flooring, tongue-and-groove partitions, and ticket window detailing intact. These areas of the building have a dropped ceiling of accoustical tiles. The condition and physical integrity of the freight room at the east end of the depot is unknown.

Overall the Skykomish Depot remains in fair condition, and its exterior historical integrity is strong. Its interior bears further investigation and documentation. It is probable that, should the railroad discontinue its now-limited use of the building, the interior might be readily restored to its 1922 configuration and finishes.

_X_See Continuation Sheet

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.)

X 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.

X 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.)

Property is:

___ **A** owed by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.

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

___ **C** a birthplace or grave.

___ **D** a cemetery.

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

___ **F** a commemorative property.

___ **G** less than 50 years old or achieving significance within the past 50 years.

Areas of Significance
(Enter categories from instructions)

TRANSPORTATION-rail

ARCHITECTURE

_____

_____

_____

_____

Period of Significance

1894-1947

_____

_____

Significant Dates

1894

1922

_____

Significant Person
(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

_____

Cultural Affiliation

_____

_____

_____

Architect/Builder

Great Northern Railroad

_____

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

The Great Northern Railway Depot in the town of Skykomish, Washington, has served as the functional and symbolic hub of railroad activity in the town from the time of its construction in 1894. The depot is the sole-surviving primary, original structure in the Skykomish rail yard, and is one of only a very few wood-frame Great Northern depots still standing in Washington State. Constructed from standard Great Northern plans for rural train stations of the early 1890s, the depot as such is an increasingly rare and important example of its type. The 1922 relocation of the building across the tracks, and the concurrent addition of a freight room to its east end. only serve to enhance the depot's integral association with the operation and development of the Skykomish yard over time.

_X_See Continuation Sheet

The town of Skykomish is situated in the upper Skykomish River Valley on the steep western slopes of the Cascade Mountains. It was founded in 1893 as a division point along the newly-laid lines of the Great Northern Railroad. By the turn of the century, the village boasted a population of 150, a shingle mill, saw and planing mill, hotel, school, and general store. Mining and logging flourished in the surrounding forested environs, and the area became known at an early date for its fine fishing and hunting.

In the early years of the 20th Century, the rail yard at Skykomish was the western Cascades Division point where steam locomotive helper engines were attached to the trains for the uphill climb to the summit. At the Skykomish terminal, engines of both passenger and freight trains were repaired, maintained, and re-supplied with coal, water, and oil.

In the 1920s, Skykomish reached its peak population and bustled with activity. Construction of the Great Northern's famous eight-mile tunnel over Stevens Pass drew hundreds of workers into town. The sawmill and the rail yard were both greatly expanded. In conjunction with the new tunnel, the railroad electrified its line from Skykomish to Wenatchee. Thereafter, Skykomish served as the helper station from which electric engines were substituted for steam locomotives for the division run eastward over the summit and down into Wenatchee.

The support and operation of the Great Northern Railroad over Stevens Pass was in fact the chief industry and economic mainstay of Skykomish from 1893 through the middle of the 20th century. It was Patrick McEvoy, a Skykomish resident, who stood at the throttle of the first passenger train over the summit. Over the six decades that followed, hundreds of Skykomish men devoted their entire working lives to the operation of the Cascade Division. The surviving Skykomish train station thus symbolizes not only the town's importance to the Great Northern line, but also the railroad's fundamental role in the social and economic fabric of the community.

The physical evolution of the depot at Skykomish is reflected in descriptions, maps, and photographs of the period. The first depot was a sidetracked boxcar. In 1894, a modest frame depot with a gabled, wood-shingled roof was erected south of the tracks. That depot housed a passenger waiting room and office, and probably a small freight room. The rail yard also then boasted coal chutes, a small roundhouse, an oil shed, a water tower, and some related storage structures. In a c.1915 photograph, recently made into a post card, four main tracks run past the little depot, and a siding separates it from the water tower and oil shed. Pedestrian access across the tracks from the depot to Railroad Avenue is nothing more than a planked and graveled path. A 1913 Great Northern timetable from this era lists eight passenger trains a day stopping in Skykomish.

The depot was apparently without electric lights as late as 1921. In December of that year, Skykomish High School student Florence Manning wrote in the school paper, *The Sky Flash,* noted:

> The depot at present is very poorly lighted. As there are two or three passenger trains going through this town at night this makes a very poor impression on the travelers on these trains. Good lights would be one of this city's best advertisements.

In 1922, the Great Northern returned division point status from Gold Bar (where it had been temporarily removed during World War I) to Skykomish, and undertook considerable improvements to the yard there. Although the railroad had not yet officially approved construction of the eight-mile tunnel and electrification of the line, it is likely that the expansion of the Skykomish yard was linked to that long-range plan. Students at the high school very aptly described the various yard improvements in essays published in early 1920s yearbooks:

> The Great Northern Railroad Company is cutting away the unsightly underbrush and also some beautiful trees, by the roundhouse, and tracks and machine shops will take their place....

> Now a company of Grant Smith men are enlarging the yards. Several more tracks will be laid. The railroad company is planning to build a new round house much larger than the present one. The depot will be moved to the opposite side of the track.

                                        _X_ See Continuation Sheet

The depot was in fact moved to its present-day location and expanded with the addition of a freight room. Presumeably, electric lights were installed at that time. New tracks were laid, and the old roundhouse replaced with a sixteen-stall facility. A giant new turntable was constructed, as well as new water tanks, an oil tank, and a pump house. Sanborn Insurance maps dated 1926, and King County Assessor property record photographs from 1940, show the expanded depot and two tool houses north of tracks. South of the tracks were a water tower, fuel oil unloading shed, oil pump house, coal sheds, and various smaller unidentified structures.

Beginning in 1925, the railroad made preparations at the Skykomish yard for electrification of the line from Skykomish to Wenatchee. In late 1926 or 1927, a large substation of concrete post and pier was erected south of the tracks near the original site of the depot. In the same time period, trolley and caternary wiring were raised along tracks through the yard. A 1930 Sanborn Insurance map shows the depot unchanged, and the addition of the substation and its transformer yard.

The Great Northern yard at Skykomish experienced its busiest years in the 1920s, 1930s, and 1940s. During the tunnel-construction era of the late 1920s, there were two local passenger trains daily, one local freight, two mail trains, the Empire Builder daily passenger trains east and west, occasional silk trains for high officials, work trains on alternate days, and bulldozer and rotary snowplow crews in the winter. Until 1927, steam locomotives were kept fired up on the tracks at all times, ready to attach as helpers. After that, the huge electrics were housed and serviced at the Skykomish yard, to be added for the run to Wenatchee. There were jobs for the section crew, the "B&B" or bridge and builder crew, the three-man substation crew, machinists and mechanics on the roundhouse crew, and the depot agent and three operators. Some, but not many, of the employees were provided with housing by the railroad. These included the section crew foreman's house (a two-story house still standing on Dean Avenue) and rudimentary track and section crew housing in the form of cabins and boxcars. Japanese immigrants worked as section crew in those days, followed by Filipinos in later decades.

Activity in the Skykomish yard began to slow in the 1940s. The roundhouse burned down in the early years of World War II and was never rebuilt. Steam locomotives disappeared from the yard in 1953, and the electrics followed in 1956. That year, the electric power lines were taken down and the substation equipment removed. The switch to diesel engines signaled the end of railroading as a major local industry in Skykomish. It was at this time that passenger service to Skykomish was discontinued completely, and the depot ceased to serve travelers on the Great Northern. Still, there was work for local men as operators out of the depot for as long as helper engines continued to be added at Skykomish.

The end of an era came in 1970 when the Great Northern Railroad became a part of Burlington Northern. BN was actually formed from the merger of four railroads: the Great Northern, the Northern Pacific, the CB&Q (Chicago, Burlington and Quincy), and the SP&S (Seattle, Portland and Spokane), all of which had been owned by James Hill. At Skykomish, the substation was torn down and nearly all physical reminders of the once-bustling yard systematically removed. Although many freight trains still pass through town each day, the 1894 depot and the section foreman's house are the only tangible reminders of what was, for more than sixty years, the life-blood of the community. The depot remains in limited railroad use, primarily for storage.

As an example of its type, the Skykomish Depot appears to be one of the last surviving representatives in the State of Washington. Most other wood-frame, standard-plan Great Northern depots dating from the completion of the line in 1893 have been either demolished, relocated away from the right-of-way, and/or severely remodelled and converted to new uses. In King and Snohomish Counties, between Stevens Pass and Seattle, no other early wood-frame Great Northern depots still stand along the line. Other major stations within the Cascade Division, at Leavenworth and Wenatchee, are now gone. Although the terminal King Street Station in Pioneer Square is clearly Washington's premier symbol of the Great Northern Railroad, dozens of modest wood-framed stations once dotted the line from Seattle to Spokane. Few if any remain, and none with the functional significance of the depot at Skykomish, western portal to the crossing of the Cascades.

9. Major Bibliographical References

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

Anderson, Eve. *Rails Across the Cascades*. Wenatchee, WA: World Publishing Co., 1952.

Gibson, Harold. "Memories of Skykomish." *The Skykomish Sentinel*. Skykomish, WA: July/August 1995.

Hansen, David. "Stevens Pass Historic District." National Register of Historic Places Nomination Form. March 4, 1976.

Hollenbeck, Jan L. *A Cultural Resource Overview: Prehistory, Ethnography, and History*. Mountlake Terrace, WA: Mt. Baker - Snoqualmie National Forest, 1987.

Holstein, Craig, ed. *An Historical Overview of Wenatchee National Forest*. Eastern Washington University Reports in Archeology and History 100-80. Cheney, WA: Archeological and Historical Services, 1994.

King County Assessor's Records. WA State Archives, Puget Sound Branch.

Manning, Adele. "History of the Railroad Through Skykomish." *Herald of the Hills*. Skykomish, WA: Skykomish High School, c.1922.

Manning, Florence. "Electric Lights." *The Sky Flash*. Skykomish High School, December, 1921.

McEvoy, Alice. "The Future of Skykomish." *Herald of the Hills*. Skykomish, WA: Skykomish High School, c.1922.

Neiland, Frances. "Sky is the Limit." *The Skykomish Sentinel*. Skykomish, WA: July/August 1995.

Norton, Robert. "What Is It?" *Historically Speaking*. Skykomish, WA: January 1990.

Roe, JoAnn. *Stevens Pass: the Story of Railroading and Recreation in the North Cascades*. Seattle, WA: The Mountaineers, 1995.

Warren, James. "Skykomish Came With the Railroad." *The Seattle Times*. January 29, 1992.

Maps

General Land Office (GLO) - 1895
Kroll - 1930
Metsker - 1940
Sanborn Insurance Co. - 1908, 1926, 1930

Personal Interviews

Cleveland, Ted. Retired Great Northern Railroad engineer. November 10, 1995, and January 4, 1996.

Garner, Janet. Skykomish resident, Maloney Store owner. Various conversations, July - November, 1995.

Gibson, Harold. Long-time Skykomish resident, local historian. October 24, November 10, and various telephone conversations, October - November, 1995.

Lynde, Larry. Skykomish property owner and railroad buff. January 3, 1996.

Wood, Charles. Great Northern Railroad historian and author. January 5, 1996.

                                                    __X__See Continuation Sheet

Previous documentation on file: King County Historic Resource Inventory #0___ (Skykomish)

Primary location of additional data: local government (King County and Skykomish)

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
___ designated a National Historic Landmark
    #_____
___ recorded by Historic American Engineering
    Record#_____

Primary location of additional data:

___ State Historic Preservation Office
___ Other State agency
___ Federal agency
X   Local government
___ University
X   Other
    Name of repository:
    King County Cultural Resources Div

_____

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10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property   Less than one

UTM References
(Place additional UTM References on a continuation sheet.)

1 | 10 | | 6 | 23 | 060 | | 5 | 28 | 5080 | 3 |__| |__|__|__|__| |__|__|__|
  Zone   Easting   Northing   Zone   Easting   Northing

2 |__| |__|__|__|__| |__|__|__|__| 4 |__| |__|__|__|__| |__|__|__|
  Zone   Easting   Northing   Zone   Easting   Northing

Verbal Boundary Description
(Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)
SE 1/4 of SW 1/4 of Section 26, Township 26N, Range 11E, Willamette Meridian. Depot building footprint,
plus roof overhang only.

Boundary Justification
(Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)
The nominated property includes the depot building alone and not the Burlington Northern-Santa Fe Railroad land
surrounding it.

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11. Form Prepared By

name/title _____ Florence K. Lentz _____

organization _____ Cultural Resource Consulting _____ date _ January 25, 1996 ____

street & number ___ PO Box 898 _____ telephone __ 509/925-3944 ____

city or town _____ Ellensburg _____ state WA _____ zip code 98926 _____

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.

                _X_See Continuation Sheet

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

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

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

name   Burlington Northern-Santa Fe Railroad

street & number   2000 FIC/99 3rd Avenue   telephone   206/625-6111

city or town   Seattle   state   WA   zip code   98104