

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM**

(Type all entries - complete applicable sections)

STATE: <u>Wyoming</u>	
COUNTY: <u>Fremont</u>	
FOR NPS USE ONLY	
ENTRY NUMBER <u>W. 249. 249 0004</u>	DATE <u>7/26/70</u>

1. NAME

COMMON:
South Pass City

AND/OR HISTORIC:

2. LOCATION

STREET AND NUMBER:
Section 20, R. 100 W., T. 29 N., 6th P.M.

CITY OR TOWN:
South Pass City

STATE <u>Wyoming</u>	CODE <u>49</u>	COUNTY: <u>Fremont</u>	CODE <u>013</u>
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3. CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY (Check One)	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	ACCESSIBLE TO THE PUBLIC
District <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Building <input type="checkbox"/> Site <input type="checkbox"/> Structure <input type="checkbox"/> Object <input type="checkbox"/>	Public <input type="checkbox"/> Private <input type="checkbox"/> Both <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Public Acquisition: In Process <input type="checkbox"/> Being Considered <input type="checkbox"/>	Occupied <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Unoccupied <input type="checkbox"/> Preservation work in progress <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
PRESENT USE (Check One or More as Appropriate)			Yes: Restricted <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Unrestricted <input type="checkbox"/> No: <input type="checkbox"/>
Agricultural <input type="checkbox"/> Commercial <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Educational <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Entertainment <input type="checkbox"/>	Government <input type="checkbox"/> Industrial <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Military <input type="checkbox"/> Museum <input type="checkbox"/>	Park <input type="checkbox"/> Private Residence <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Religious <input type="checkbox"/> Scientific <input type="checkbox"/>	Transportation <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <u>Historic Preserve</u> Comments <input type="checkbox"/>

4. OWNER OF PROPERTY

OWNERS NAME:
There are three owners: see Continuation Sheet
State of Wyoming, administered by the Wyoming Recreation Commission

STREET AND NUMBER:
604 East 25th Street

CITY OR TOWN:
Cheyenne

STATE:
Wyoming

CODE:
49

5. LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC:
Wyoming Recreation Commission

STREET AND NUMBER:
604 East 25th Street

CITY OR TOWN:
Cheyenne

STATE:
Wyoming

CODE:
49

APPROXIMATE ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY: 640

6. REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE OF SURVEY:
Wyoming Recreation Commission, Survey of Historical Sites, Markers & Mon.

DATE OF SURVEY: Summer-Fall 1967 Federal State County Local

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS:
Wyoming Recreation Commission

STREET AND NUMBER:
604 East 25th Street

CITY OR TOWN:
Cheyenne

STATE:
Wyoming

CODE:
49

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

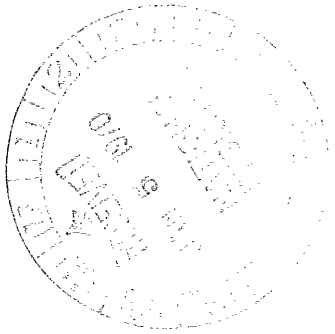
STATE:
COUNTY:
ENTRY NUMBER
DATE
FOR NPS USE ONLY

7. DESCRIPTION

CONDITION	(Check One)							
	Excellent <input type="checkbox"/>	Good <input type="checkbox"/>	Fair <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Deteriorated <input type="checkbox"/>	Ruins <input type="checkbox"/>	Unexposed <input type="checkbox"/>		
INTEGRITY	(Check One)			(Check One)				
	Altered <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>			Unaltered <input type="checkbox"/>				
			Moved <input type="checkbox"/>			Original Site <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (If known) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

Only a few major original buildings remain at the South Pass City site on land administered by the State of Wyoming. Presently, these include a store, a museum, a combination bar and hotel, the old Wells Fargo office, a dugout structure called "the Cave", and a log house occupied by the site attendant. Numerous other structures, from various time periods, surround this nucleus. Important is a school, a jail, the Esther Morris hat shop, a saloon, a dance hall and several cabins and residences. The majority of the structures that remain standing are constructed of logs. Most of the roofs and false fronts are of cut lumber with the exception of the museum (Sherlock's store) which has a dirt and pole roof and "the Cave" which has a metal roof. All buildings at South Pass City are suffering from age and deterioration and are badly in need of restoration. Important structures that once stood at South Pass City and are no longer in existence include the Masonic Lodge and the home and office of Esther Hobart Morris. Markers have been erected at the sites of both buildings. An additional marker at South Pass City commemorates the acquisition of the site by Wyoming's 75th Anniversary Commission.



SEE INSTRUCTIONS

8. SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD (Check One or More as Appropriate)

Pre-Columbian 16th Century 18th Century 20th Century
 15th Century 17th Century 19th Century

SPECIFIC DATE(S) (If Applicable and Known) 1867

AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE (Check One or More as Appropriate)

Aboriginal <input type="checkbox"/>	Education <input type="checkbox"/>	Political <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Urban Planning <input type="checkbox"/>
Prehistoric <input type="checkbox"/>	Engineering <input type="checkbox"/>	Religion/Philosophy <input type="checkbox"/>	Other (Specify) <input type="checkbox"/>
Historic <input type="checkbox"/>	Industry <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Science <input type="checkbox"/>	
Agriculture <input type="checkbox"/>	Invention <input type="checkbox"/>	Sculpture <input type="checkbox"/>	
Art <input type="checkbox"/>	Landscape <input type="checkbox"/>	Social/Humanitarian <input type="checkbox"/>	
Commerce <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Architecture <input type="checkbox"/>	Theater <input type="checkbox"/>	
Communications <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Literature <input type="checkbox"/>	Transportation <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Conservation <input type="checkbox"/>	Military <input type="checkbox"/>		
	Music <input type="checkbox"/>		

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE (Include Personages, Dates, Events, Etc.)

South Pass City was the most important town established during the short-lived period of discovery and development in Wyoming's Sweetwater gold mining district. Laid out in 1867 the City reached its pinnacle about 1870 after which it steadily declined in stature and importance. The town derives its name from the famous landmark of South Pass, located just ten miles to the southwest. Thousands of people traveled through the South Pass region during the era of overland migration; however, this phase of American history is only indirectly related to that of South Pass City. More important to South Pass City is its association with the "woman suffrage" movement in the United States and its relationship to the early development of the State of Wyoming.

Reportedly, gold was first discovered in the Sweetwater region around 1842 by a trapper of the American Fur Company. Again in 1855 and 1860 the presence of gold in the vicinity occasioned limited activity but nothing developed as a result of these early attempts to extract the precious metals. The limited nature of the discoveries and the attraction of the more lucrative mining fields of California, Colorado, Idaho and Montana prevented all but the most adventurous from frequenting the Sweetwater diggings. Only as activity in other areas subsided did the Sweetwater mines receive any degree of attention.

On November 11, 1865 the first mining district was organized in the Sweetwater area along the gulch where South Pass City would shortly come into being. Within this district the Carissa lode was discovered in 1867 and the richness of the claim precipitated the first genuine "gold rush" to the area. Miners began to flock in during the winter of 1867-68 and South Pass City sprang up along the banks of Willow Creek. The following summer a main street a half-mile in length had been constructed with five hotels, three meat markets, two bakeries, four law firms, thirteen saloons and sundry other businesses. The town's population swelled to an estimated 2,000 (a figure that may have been exaggerated by promoters). The first Masonic Lodge in Wyoming was established at South Pass City in 1869. Publication of a five-column newspaper called the "South Pass News" began the same year and Iliff and Company opened a bank which engaged in the purchase and shipment of gold dust. A gun shop did a good business supplying the residents with side arms for protection while freight and stage line operations provided a necessary link with the outer world. Many residents came in from the Virginia City, Montana region and when the Union Pacific

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Homsher, Lola M. (ed.), South Pass 1868, (Lincoln, Nebraska, University of Nebraska Press, 1960.)
 Coutant, C. G. History of Wyoming, (Laramie, Wyoming, Chaplin, Spafford and Mathison, 1899.)
 Homsher, Lola M. and Pence, Mary Lou, Ghost Towns of Wyoming, (New York, Hastings House, 1956.)
 _____, Old South Pass City Historical Preserve, Preliminary Development Plan, January 8, 1968.

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING A RECTANGLE LOCATING THE PROPERTY				OR	LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING THE CENTER POINT OF A PROPERTY OF LESS THAN ONE ACRE										
CORNER	LATITUDE				LONGITUDE			LATITUDE			LONGITUDE				
	Degrees	Minutes	Seconds	Degrees	Minutes	Seconds	Degrees	Minutes	Seconds	Degrees	Minutes	Seconds	Degrees	Minutes	Seconds
NW	42°	28'	42"	108°	48'	56"									
NE	42°	28'	42"	108°	47'	47"									
SE	42°	27'	51"	108°	47'	47"									
SW	42°	27'	51"	108°	48'	56"									

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE:	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE

11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME AND TITLE:
 Bill Barnhart, Assistant Historian

ORGANIZATION: Wyoming Recreation Commission DATE: Dec. 19, 1969

STREET AND NUMBER:
 604 East 25th Street

CITY OR TOWN: Cheyenne STATE: Wyoming CODE: 49

12 STATE LIAISON OFFICER CERTIFICATION

As the designated State Liaison Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service. The recommended level of significance of this nomination is:

National State Local

Name: Paul H. Orestedt

Title: State Liaison Officer

Date: December 19, 1969

NATIONAL REGISTER VERIFICATION

I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register.

Arnot Allen Connally
 Chief, Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation

FEB 26 1970

Date: _____

ATTEST:

William J. Mumlagh
 Keeper of The National Register

FEB 11 1970

Date: _____

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

No 10/19/69/477-200
 5100/601/4700440
 SW 1/609 60/470037

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM**

STATE Wyoming	
COUNTY Fremont	
FOR NPS USE ONLY	
ENTRY NUMBER	DATE
70249- 000	2/26/70

South Pass City

(Continuation Sheet)

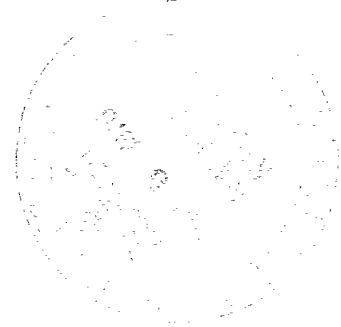
0004

(Number all entries)

4. Owner of Property - page - 2

1 State Office Bureau of Land Management
Department of Interior
P. O. Box 1828
Cheyenne, Wyoming (49)

2 Mr. G. B. Colemere, President
Pioneer Carissa Gold Mine, Inc.
1380 Ramona Avenue
Salt Lake City, Utah (43)



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Wyoming	
COUNTY	
Fremont	
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ENTRY NUMBER	DATE
70.2.46. 070	2/26/70

(Continuation Sheet)

South Pass City
(Number all entries)

8. Statement of Significance - page - 2

Railroad completed its tracks in 1868 to Point-of-Rocks, stages and wagons began carrying passengers and supplies up from the south. Another route to the region was developed from Bryan Station on the Union Pacific and in later years Rawlins became the major rail supply point. In connection with the stage operations Wells Fargo and Company maintained an office at South Pass City for a period of time.

Several mining districts were established in the Sweetwater region during its heyday and other towns that came into being included Atlantic City, Miner's Delight and Lewiston. The large numbers of miners spread out through the claims provided a tempting target for hostile Indians and between 1867 and 1869 twenty-six whites are said to have met their death at the hands of the Red Men. The citizens' demands for protection resulted in the establishment of Camp Stambaugh near Atlantic City in 1870. For eight years soldiers from Stambaugh protected residents of the South Pass area until the Camp was abandoned in 1878.

Through the years no other Wyoming Law has received more attention than the woman's suffrage act passed by the 1869 Territorial Legislature. According to tradition, Mrs. Esther M. Morris encouraged South Pass City legislator William H. Bright to introduce a bill that would give women the right to vote and hold office. Regardless of what led up to the bill's introduction and passage, the fact remains that it made Wyoming the first territory in the United States to grant the franchise to women. (Wyoming subsequently became the first state in the Union to have woman suffrage when admitted in 1890.) A year following passage of the woman's suffrage act Wyoming Territory attained the additional distinction of having the first woman ever appointed as a Justice of the Peace. At South Pass City Mrs. Morris succeeded incumbent Justice James Stillman. Starting February 14, 1870 Esther Morris presided over thirty-four cases at South Pass City before turning over the office to a new Justice on November 14, 1870. Although her tenure as Justice of the Peace was short, Esther Morris was a credit to her office and made noteworthy contribution to the "equal rights for women" cause.

South Pass City's prosperity of 1868-69 led it to be considered for the territorial capitol of Wyoming but it quickly lost out to Cheyenne. In 1869 the City was designated the county seat of Sweetwater County, one of five original counties formed in the new territory. This status lasted until 1874 when, through legislative action, the county seat was changed from South Pass City to Green River. Residents of South Pass City balked at the change and refused to turn over the county records. A court order was required to effect the move but not all the records found their way to Green River. The records were still outstanding by 1884. With this final drama South Pass City's political prominence had disappeared. Also, the mineral deposits had by this time been substantially depleted and the

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70-2149-10000	2/26/70

South Pass City

(Continuation Sheet)

(Number all entries)

8. Statement of Significance - page - 3

entire area was suffering from over-speculation. A state of decline and decay settled over the region.

As the mining activity declined South Pass City's population, along with that of the surrounding communities, dwindled rapidly. A few people stayed on as residents and in succeeding years various groups attempted to revive the mining industry but South Pass City never came close to regaining its old vigor. In all, an estimated seven million dollars worth of precious metal was produced from the mines in the region.

A century has passed since South Pass City was at its zenith but it has never been without a few residents. In 1950, Fred Stratton, who then owned the townsite, began making plans to restore the city to its original character. Five years later the major structures of the town's Main Street became the property of Mr. and Mrs. John Woodring who maintained the town for over a decade until it was purchased by the Wyoming 75th Anniversary Commission in 1967. The Commission donated the site to the State of Wyoming and the 39th State Legislature in turn created the Old South Pass Historical Preserve Commission to administer the site. Presently, through the action of the 1969 State Legislature, South Pass City is administered by the Wyoming Recreation Commission.

South Pass City, a product of an exciting era in American history, now stands on the threshold of serving yet another generation of Americans as the nucleus of a unique historical and recreational development.

