Form 10-300
(Rev. 6-72)

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES INVENTORY – NOMINATION FORM

(Type all entries - complete applicable sections)

STATE:	
Washington	
COUNTY:	
Okanogan	
FOR NPS USE ONLY	
ENTRY DATE	
SEP 6 1974	

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

1. NAME

COMMON:

* OKANOGAN PROJECT: Conconully Reservoir Dam

AND/OR HISTORIC:

2. LOCATION

STREET AND NUMBER:

~~Approximately 1.5 miles~~ S of Conconully

CITY OR TOWN:	CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT:
~~South of~~ Conconully vicinity	#5 - Honorable Thomas S. Foley

STATE	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE
Washington	53	Okanogan	047

3. CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY (Check One)	OWNERSHIP		STATUS	ACCESSIBLE TO THE PUBLIC
☐ District ☐ Building	☒ Public	Public Acquisition:	☒ Occupied	Yes:
☐ Site ☒ Structure	☐ Private	☐ In Process	☐ Unoccupied	☐ Restricted
☐ Object	☐ Both	☐ Being Considered	☐ Preservation work in progress	☒ Unrestricted
				☐ No

PRESENT USE *(Check One or More as Appropriate)*

☒ Agricultural	☐ Government	☐ Park	☐ Transportation	☐ Comments
☐ Commercial	☐ Industrial	☐ Private Residence	☒ Other *(Specify)*	
☐ Educational	☐ Military	☐ Religious	IRRIGATION	
☐ Entertainment	☐ Museum	☐ Scientific		

4. OWNER OF PROPERTY

OWNER'S NAME:

Bureau of Reclamation

STREET AND NUMBER:

U.S. Courthouse, 550 W. Fort Street

CITY OR TOWN:	STATE:	CODE
Boise 83702	Idaho	16

5. LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC:

Regional Director, Bureau of Reclamation

STREET AND NUMBER:

U.S. Courthouse, 550 W. Fort Street

CITY OR TOWN:	STATE	CODE
Boise 83702	Idaho	16

6. REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE OF SURVEY:

None

DATE OF SURVEY: ☐ Federal ☐ State ☐ County ☐ Local

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS:

STREET AND NUMBER:

CITY OR TOWN:	STATE:	CODE

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7. DESCRIPTION

CONDITION	(Check One)					
	☒ Excellent	☐ Good	☐ Fair	☐ Deteriorated	☐ Ruins	☐ Unexposed
	(Check One)		(Check One)			
	☐ Altered	☒ Unaltered	☐ Moved	☒ Original Site		

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL *(if known)* PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

Prior to the construction of the Conconully Reservoir Dam, the dam and reservoir site was a basin crossed by two branches of Salmon Creek. Approximately 292 acres of the area was farmland and 300 acres of trees and brush. After construction of the dam this area was inundated.

The dam is an earthern structure some 900 feet long about one and a half miles south of the town of Conconully. Although it is some 60 years old, little vegetation grows on it besides sparse grasses and scrub and the southern slope is scattered with bits of rock fill.

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

8. SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD *(Check One or More as Appropriate)*

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

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

AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE *(Check One or More as Appropriate)*

- ☐ Aboriginal
- ☐ Prehistoric
- ☐ Historic
- ☒ Agriculture
- ☐ Architecture
- ☐ Art
- ☐ Commerce
- ☐ Communications
- ☐ Conservation
- ☐ Education
- ☒ Engineering
- ☐ Industry
- ☐ Invention
- ☐ Landscape Architecture
- ☐ Literature
- ☐ Military
- ☐ Music
- ☐ Political
- ☐ Religion/Philosophy
- ☐ Science
- ☐ Sculpture
- ☐ Social/Humanitarian
- ☐ Theater
- ☐ Transportation
- ☐ Urban Planning
- ☐ Other *(Specify)* _____

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Conconully Reservoir Dam is significant as an early engineering feat in land reclamation and for the expansion of agricultural activities its construction made possible.

The first attempts at irrigation in this area were in the 1850's by Hiram F. (Okanogan) Smith, who had squatted on land bordering on the east end of Osoyoos Lake near the present town of Oroville. He had recognized early that the mild climate and rich soil in this locality were suitable for fruit growing, and he was determined to try it. His original orchard consisted of 24 acres of apples, 8 acres of peaches and pears, and 3 acres of grapes which were irrigated by ditch from Nine Mile Creek, the first irrigation in Okanogan County. After a boundary dispute with the Colville Indian Reservation was settled in 1886, the area within the Okanogan Project was thrown open for settlement. The cultivation and irrigation of these lands began immediately, taking water from Salmon Creek.

The first ditches were naturally small, irrigating only a few acres for the raising of corn, potatoes, grain, hay and gardens; but the value of irrigation was demonstrated, and during 1888, these ditches were enlarged and others constructed.

After President Roosevelt signed the Reclamation Act of June 17, 1902, area residents began to urge for a project to aid the development of the potentially productive farming lands. Early attempts were not successful but in 1907, construction began on the present dam.

Plans called for an earth filled dam with a core wall of sheet piling; nearby Peacock Mountain was a good source of material and it was decided to build the dam using the hydraulic fill method of construction. This was the first hydraulic fill dam built by the Bureau of Reclamation and there were no standard plans to follow; therefore, the construction plant was designed on the job and was made to produce the best results under the conditions encountered. Of particular importance was Lars Bergsvik, construction engineer in general supervision of the project, who had some applicable experience through hydraulic mining operations in Norway.

Materials used in the embankment consisted of disintegrated granite and earth found on the slopes of Peacock Mountain west of the dam. This

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

H. A. Yates - "A Pioneer Project"

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 TEN ACRES					
CORNER	LATITUDE			LONGITUDE				LATITUDE			LONGITUDE	
	Degrees	Minutes	Seconds	Degrees	Minutes	Seconds		Degrees	Minutes	Seconds	Degrees	Minutes	Seconds
NW	°	'	"	°	'	"		48°	32'	16"	119°	44'	52"
NE	°	'	"	°	'	"							
SE	°	'	"	°	'	"							
SW	°	'	"	°	'	"							

11/297150
5379500
CD

APPROXIMATE ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY: 8

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

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11. FORM PREPARED BY

NAME AND TITLE:
Robert M. French

ORGANIZATION: Okanogan County Historical Society

DATE: April 7, 1972

STREET AND NUMBER:

CITY OR TOWN: Okanogan

STATE: Washington

CODE: 53

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 Charles H. Odegaard
Charles H. Odegaard

Title Director - Washington State Parks & Recreation Commission

Date April 19, 1974

NATIONAL REGISTER VERIFICATION

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

Director, Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation

Date 9/6/74

ATTEST:

acting *Keeper of The National Register*

Date 9-6-74

☆ U.S. GOVERNMENT PRINTING OFFICE : 1973—729-147/1442 3-1

Form 10-300a
(July 1969)

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(Continuation Sheet)

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STATE	
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#8 - Significance
Conconully Reservoir Dam

was sluiced down and conveyed to the dam in steel lined flumes on high trestles. Water supply for sluicing was obtained from the west and south forks of Salmon Creek and carried down by three and one half miles of wooden flumes to a point on the mountainside above the borrow pit sites. There, connections were made to steel pipe lines running down to the pits, where large hydraulic nozzels were attached. The force of the stream from these nozzels directed against the mountainside washed the earth and rocks down into the main dirt flume. From the lower end of the main trestle, two sets of lateral trestles with flumes, each 1,000 feet in length and sloping toward the ends of the dam, distributed the material along the upper and lower slopes of the embankment.

By an ingenious arrangement of side gates and screens in the lateral flumes, the rocks and coarse material were dumped on the outer slopes of the dam, making levees on each side, while the silt and finer material flowed toward the center, forming a pond between the two levees. Thus, the silt was puddled in to form a watertight core against the sheet piling which consisted of a triple layer of two inch tamarack plank, 36 feet long, driven into the ground so that only three feet projected above the surface.

A spillway was cut into a rock spur which anchored the west end of the dam. An outlet tunnel eight feet square was driven through solid rock at the east end of the dam. Construction work was completed and the plant dismantled in 1910.

Since this was the first hydraulic fill dam built by the Reclamation Service, there were many unforeseen problems. One was the difficulty of making the flumes a workable part of the construction scheme. At the beginning of the project the flumes were lined with No. 10 mild steel plates, but the jagged rocks found in the borrow pits wore out this steel so fast that it had to be renewed five times the first season. Thereafter, a high carbon steel was used which gave a much better service. Another problem was to suspend sluicing operations for about five months each winter because of cold weather which greatly prolonged the period of construction. Lack of railroads -- which made it necessary to haul cement, steel, and other materials by freight wagons a distance of 40 miles from the terminus of the steamboat line at Brewster -- added materially to the construction costs besides causing frequent delays in receipt of needed supplies.

At one time the construction was considered to be of dubious value because of its high cost but since its completion, the value of crops produced in the area has been over 35 times the original cost of the project.