

**United States Department of the Interior
Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service
National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form**

For HCRS use only
received APR 6 1981
date entered MAY 7 1981

See instructions in *How to Complete National Register Forms*
Type all entries—complete applicable sections

1. Name

historic Horseshoe Bend Placer Claim

and/or common Same

2. Location

street & number N of Sultan _____ not for publication

city, town Sultan, wa. vicinity of congressional district 2nd - Al Swift

state Washington code 53 county Snohomish code 061

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> public	<input type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture
<input type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input type="checkbox"/> private	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input type="checkbox"/> commercial
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input type="checkbox"/> educational
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> site	Public Acquisition	Accessible	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment
<input type="checkbox"/> object	<input type="checkbox"/> in process	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government
	<input type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial
		<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military
			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> other: none

4. Owner of Property

name City of Everett

street & number City Hall

city, town Everett _____ vicinity of state Washington 98201

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Auditor's Office, Snohomish County Administration Building

street & number 3000 Rockefeller

city, town Everett _____ state Washington 98201

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title Wash. State Cultrual Resource Inventory (Snohomish County) has this property been determined eligible? yes no

date 1979 _____ federal _____ state county _____ local

depository for survey records Snohomish County Planning Dept. Co. Admin. Bldg.

city, town Everett _____ state Washington 98201

7. Description

Condition		Check one	Check one
<input type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> unaltered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> original site
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> good	<input type="checkbox"/> ruins	<input type="checkbox"/> altered	<input type="checkbox"/> moved date _____
<input type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> unexposed		

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

The Horseshoe Bend Placer Claim is located on the Sultan River in Section 8 of T28N, R8E about five miles north of the Town of Sultan. At the site, the river enters a very narrow canyon, two hundred feet in depth. The canyon creates a loop in the river three-fourths of a mile in length and one quarter of a mile across at its base. Enclosed within the loop is a tongue of land which averages about eighty feet above the river and is bisected along its length by a ridge. The ground drops away to the river on both sides of the high area in approximately equal fashion.

The area subject to this nomination has been logged, probably several times. Consequently, vegetation comprises the typical second growth pattern found on the western slope of the Cascade Mountains at low elevations: a mixture of deciduous and coniferous trees, with the latter predominant, and considerable understory. Major deciduous types are alder and vine maple while Douglas fir dominates the fir-cedar-hemlock coniferous community.

The major features associated with the Horseshoe Bend Placer Claim are contained within the loop. These comprise a river diversion system, evidences of a pucelon road, bits and pieces of machinery, remnants of a flume system, a deposit area for sluice box debris and evidences of ditching operations.

The major structural element on the site is a diversion system of about 800 feet in length which is oriented generally north to south. At the north end an open channel comprises the first four hundred feet of the system. Averaging twelve feet in depth and perhaps eighteen in width at the top, the channel opens onto the river with its floor at water level. The mouth of the channel is currently obstructed by large boulders and a few logs; however, it is apparent that during periods of high water some of the Sultan's flow is still diverted from the main course and through the channel.

About fifty feet in from its mouth a rustic catwalk crosses the channel. Running from a point high on the east bank and sloping down to a lower point on the west bank, the catwalk was constructed by flattening one side of a trimmed tree trunk and nailing to it short sections of planking, their long axes perpendicular to the long axis of the beam. The structure is about twenty feet long and one foot wide. The upper surfaces of the catwalk are obscured by a thick growth of moss.

About four hundred feet south of its mouth, the channel meets the north portal of the diversion tunnel. A concentration of driftwood and other river borne debris has accumulated at this juncture and the obstruction is of such density that it completely obscures the tunnel portal. However, access to the entire length of the tunnel can be gained through the unobstructed south portal and thus it was possible to examine the north portal. Its dimensions were established to be approximately seven feet high by seven feet wide.

Blasted out of a very solid, granite-like igneous rock, the tunnel's dimensions are most irregular but average about the same as the portals. The surface of the walls, floor and ceiling are rough and uneven as no finish work was performed on them subsequent to blasting operations.

Approximately two hundred feet south of the north portal is a length of tunnel with no ceiling. This stretch is about thirty-five feet in length and twenty feet in depth. It is unclear whether this feature resulted from collapse or was created intentionally (for debris clearance or perhaps to enable the builders to excavate on four faces rather than two.)

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At this time, the opening is partially obstructed by fallen trees and debris from the surrounding surface area.

From the opening south to its debouchment, the tunnel exhibits no remarkable characteristics. The south portal opens into a channel of about fifty feet in length which in turn terminates at the river. It was at this point that the diverted waters were returned to the main channel of the Sultan.

Strewn about the river bank in the vicinity of the south tunnel portal is some mining debris. Prominent is a large fragment of steel plate regularly and uniformly perforated by round holes approximately two inches in diameter. This may have been a sluice box screening plate designed to keep rocks out of the sluice box yet pass mineral bearing sands and dirt. A few feet of conveyor chain with several buckets attached is also present. This may have been used to dredge the river channel for mineral bearing sands and/or convey stockpiled mineral bearing material to the head of the sluice box. Pieces of sheet metal pipe comprise additional debris. About twelve inches in diameter and of varying lengths, they represent the remains of a flume system designed probably to bring water to the sluice box. They may also have supplied water to monitors for hydraulicking operations.

Intermittently discernible along the ridge for a distance of about two hundred feet is a ditch of about two feet in width and a bit more in depth. This appears to have been a portion of the system which delivered water from a nearby creek to the claim. The water was used for washing and sluicing operations.

The remnants of a puncheon road are visible east of the diversion channel's north opening. The road was constructed originally to service the mining operations and so must have been relatively substantial. However, only fragments remain and these are heavily obscured by undergrowth and moss. The deteriorated condition of the fragments renders it impossible to make any specific comments regarding the original conformation and dimensions of the road.

Also in the vicinity of the north channel opening is a boulder field of about a quarter acre in size. This represents the dumpsite for rocks and boulders removed from the sluice box. No trace of the derrick used in this operation is evident.

Miscellaneous items associated with the mining site relate to logging and recreational activities. The area appears to have been logged several times, the evidence comprising random lengths of wire rope strewn about, traces of skid roads and the presence of a multitude of cut stumps. Many of the latter display the springboard notches and great height which were characteristic of logging practices prevalent prior to the advent of power saws. Recreational usage appears to be associated primarily with fishing and a little placer mining with major physical evidence limited to debris and fire rings.

8. Significance

Period	Areas of Significance—Check and justify below			
<input type="checkbox"/> prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> community planning	<input type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> religion
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-historic	<input type="checkbox"/> conservation	<input type="checkbox"/> law	<input type="checkbox"/> science
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> economics	<input type="checkbox"/> literature	<input type="checkbox"/> sculpture
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> social/
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> humanitarian
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> other (specify) mining

Specific dates 1889 Builder/Architect Unknown

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

The significance of the Horseshoe Bend Placer Claim lies in two areas. First, it is the only readily identifiable placer mining site yet discovered in Snohomish County which encompasses major physical evidence of mining activities. Consequently, it comprises a tangible monument to an industry important in the economic and historical development of the county. Second, within the larger context of mining history in the American West, the river diversion system (combining a channel and a tunnel) which was central to mining operations at the site represents a highly original application of engineering in order to capitalize on existing terrain. The combination of these two factors renders the Horseshoe Bend Placer Claim a unique cultural resource of major significance to Snohomish County.

Mineral exploitation comprised an element of Snohomish County's economic development from its earliest days. Much hard-rock prospecting and claim development transpired during the last quarter of the Nineteenth Century, coming to a virtual standstill about 1905. These same years also witnessed a considerable amount of placer mining along the County's upland streams. This effort, too, ceased to have any measurable economic impact on the County by the turn of the century. However, during the era of the Great Depression, with relief payments going primarily to men with families, many bachelors returned to mining and eaked out meager existences working marginal placer deposits which had been passed over in earlier eras.

Against this background of mining in Snohomish County, the Horseshoe Bend Placer Claim is at once representative and unique. Located approximately five miles north of the Town of Sultan at a major bend in the Sultan River, the placer site was visited by a succession of individual as well as joint venture gold miners (numbered among these may have been a group of Chinese miners known to have operated on the Sultan). These efforts appear to have met with little success, presumably due to the difficulties associated with working the site. The river was forced from its old course at the site of Horseshoe Bend by an ancient geologic disturbance; in realigning itself around the resulting obstruction, the river assumed considerable depth and swiftness of current.

As with many other mining claims in the county, the capital investment necessary to successfully exploit the mineral wealth of the Horseshoe Bend site exceeded the financial scope of the average individual. As a consequence, the Sultan River Mining Company was created in 1884.

For a period of several years, company activity appears to have been limited to turnover in the ownership as a procession of individuals bought into and sold out of the partnership. However, development work commenced in earnest in 1889. Eight years later, in his Mining in Western Washington (published by the Seattle Post-Intelligencer) editor L.K. Hodges offered the following commentary on the Horseshoe Bend operation:

9. Major Bibliographical References

See continuation sheet

UTM NOT VERIFIED

10. Geographical Data

ACREAGE NOT VERIFIED

Acreeage of nominated property 23.3

Quadrangle name Monroe

Quadrangle scale 1:62,500

UMT References

A	1 0	5 8 9	5 2 5	5 3 0 8	9 7 5
	Zone	Easting		Northing	
C	1 0	5 8 8	9 2 5	5 3 8	0 8 5 5 0
E					
G					

B	1 0	5 8 9	5 2 5	5 3 0 8	5 5 0
	Zone	Easting		Northing	
D	1 0	5 8 8	9 2 5	5 3 0 8	9 7 5
F					
H					

Verbal boundary description and justification

That parcel of land in Sec 8, T28N, R8E, W.M. Which is bounded on the north, west and south by the Sultan River and on the east by a line parallel to and 650' east of the west boundary of government lot 2.

List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

state	code	county	code
state	code	county	code

11. Form Prepared By

name/title: Brent Lambert, Preservation Planner

organization Snohomish County Planning Dept. date December 27, 1979

street & number 3000 Fockefeller telephone (206) 259-9324 Ext. 2211

city or town Everett, state Washington 98201

12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

national state local

As the designated State Historic Preservation 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 Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service.

State Historic Preservation Officer signature Jacob E. [Signature]

title State Historic Preservation Officer date March 25, 1981

For HCERS use only	
I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register	date <u>5-7-81</u>
<u>[Signature]</u> Keeper of the National Register	date
Attest:	date
Chief of Registration	

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"In the quite reasonable belief that the deep hole in the box canyon had formed a depository for great quantities of gold washed from the gravel, the first owners of this property, the Sultan River Mining Company, in 1889 and 1890 cut a tunnel seven feet wide and 800 feet long across the bend and turned the river into it for the purpose of emptying and working the present channel, the work costing \$40,000. Soon after the river had been turned into it, the tunnel was choked with boulders and driftwood by a great flood and the work was abandoned until it was taken up again in the spring of 1896...."

Continuing his commentary, Hodges states that the company "has made one and one-half miles of ditch and flume from Marsh Creek with a fall of 100 feet and a possible fall of 700 feet, laid 600 feet of eight inch pipe and installed a hydraulic giant, fitted for nozzles ranging from one and one-half to four inches in diameter, which washes the dirt into a thirty-foot sluice box over five pole and one Hungarian riffles. The boulders are removed by a derrick and the debris is discharged into the tunnel, into which two-thirds of the river has been turned by the clearing of its course. At the point where work is in progress, the dirt is being washed down to bedrock, which is from eight to eighteen feet below the surface. The whole depth pays from 25 to 40 cents a yard, but the best dirt is two feet of blue clay near the surface and some streaks of cement gravel. The gold is found in rough pieces ranging from 25 cents to \$1 each, sometimes with pieces of quartz attached, and at times bits of native silver and copper ranging in size from a pinhead to a kernel of wheat are found. The old company took out \$1,200 during a temporary suspension of work on the tunnel. The present company intends to turn the whole stream into the tunnel by damming the present channel and to pump out the canyon and work the dirt in its bed; a gasoline engine and centrifugal pump having been already provided for this purpose."

This cogent description of operations at the site accentuates the placer claim's value as an example of the mining industry for, when on the site with the foregoing description in hand, it is a simple exercise to visualize the operations due to the site's intact nature.

The significance of the Horseshoe Bend Placer Claim in an engineering context lies in its primary feature, the diversion system. One of the common veins in the history of mining operations in the West was the need for immediate solutions to engineering problems associated with mineral extraction. In the vast majority of cases, particularly in small scale operations, these situations were met and mastered by individuals with little or no formal engineering instruction. Experience, logic and common sense prevailed in the absence of professional engineering knowledge and as a consequence unique and fascinating solutions abounded. The placer claim's diversion system is certainly representative of this facet of American mining history. It represents an innovative response to the exigencies associated with mining technology and the geomorphology of a specific site. Moreover, research has failed to identify another mining operation, either in the region or the West generally, which addressed a similar conjunction of circumstances in a similar manner.

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The Horseshoe Bend Placer Claim is of major significance to Snohomish County as a tangible link with its own mining history. Additionally, the site in a sense represents a memorial to the innovative resourcefulness which was so instrumental not only in the pursuit of mining but in the industrial and economic development of the American Nation.

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1. History of Skagit and Snohomish Counties, Washington. Interstate Publishing Company, 1906.
2. Hodges, L.K., ed. Mining in Western Washington. Seattle: The Shorey Book Store, 1970 (reprint).
3. Jenft, Sohpia, Chairman. The History of Sultan. Sultan community development project, historical committee report. Sultan, Washington: Community Development Project, 1959.
4. Snohomish County (Washington) Planning Department. Collection of miscellaneous documents and records of varying dates.
5. Snohomish (Washington) Sun. August 16th, 1890.
6. Whitfield, William. History of Snohomish County Washington. Chicago: Pioneer Historical Publishing Company, 1926.