

DATA SHEET

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

FOR NPS USE ONLY
RECEIVED MAR 16 1977
DATE ENTERED MAY 24 1978

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

FOR FEDERAL PROPERTIES

SEE INSTRUCTIONS IN *HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS*
TYPE ALL ENTRIES -- COMPLETE APPLICABLE SECTIONS

1 NAME

HISTORIC

Bessey Nursery

AND/OR COMMON

once called the Halsey Nursery

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER

State Spur 202 (off Nebraska State Highway No. 2) / on the Nebraska National Forest
Third

CITY, TOWN

Halsey

VICINITY OF Halsey

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

Thomas

171

STATE

NE

CODE

31

COUNTY

CODE

3 CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	PRESENT USE
<input type="checkbox"/> DISTRICT	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PUBLIC	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> OCCUPIED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE
<input type="checkbox"/> BUILDING(S)	<input type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE	<input type="checkbox"/> UNOCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSEUM
<input type="checkbox"/> STRUCTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> BOTH	<input type="checkbox"/> WORK IN PROGRESS	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCIAL
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> SITE	PUBLIC ACQUISITION	ACCESSIBLE	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATIONAL
<input type="checkbox"/> OBJECT	<input type="checkbox"/> IN PROCESS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES: RESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> ENTERTAINMENT
	<input type="checkbox"/> BEING CONSIDERED	<input type="checkbox"/> YES: UNRESTRICTED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> GOVERNMENT
		<input type="checkbox"/> NO	<input type="checkbox"/> RELIGIOUS
			<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENTIFIC
			<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRIAL
			<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
			<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY
			<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER:

4 AGENCY

REGIONAL HEADQUARTERS: (If applicable)

U.S.D.A., Forest Service

STREET & NUMBER

11177 West Eighth Avenue, Box 25127

CITY, TOWN

Lakewood

VICINITY OF Denver

STATE

Colorado

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE,
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

Office of County Clerk, Thomas County

STREET & NUMBER

CITY, TOWN

Theford

STATE

Nebraska

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE

Evaluation of the Bessey Nursery in Nebraska for Eligibility as a National Historic Place

DATE

July 22, 1976

FEDERAL STATE COUNTY LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR
SURVEY RECORDS

U.S.D.A., Forest Service, 11177 West Eighth Avenue

CITY, TOWN

Lakewood

STATE

Colorado

7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION

EXCELLENT
 GOOD
 FAIR

DETERIORATED
 RUINS
 UNEXPOSED

CHECK ONE

UNALTERED
 ALTERED

CHECK ONE

ORIGINAL SITE
 MOVED DATE 7/1/76

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The Bessey Nursery as originally designed and built, consisted of a tract approximately 15 acres in size south of the Middle Loup River in the SE $\frac{1}{4}$ of Section 3, Township 22 North, Range 26 West of the 6th P.M. It consisted of a two-story headquarters building, mess hall, barn, and shop building. The present headquarters building was built in 1930 on the site of the original headquarters building. The barn constructed in 1903 was torn down in 1958. The shop building constructed in 1910 was expanded in 1930 and still remains in place.

Originally the irrigation system for the nursery beds was direct from the Middle Loup River by pump with the seedling beds running north and south. In 1957, wells and an overhead irrigation system were put in with the seedling beds running east and west.

The nursery is still an operating nursery, producing approximately three million conifer seedlings a year. The present facilities consist of approximately 38.6 acres of seedling beds running east and west.

The nursery area recommended for inclusion as a Historic Place consists only of the area occupied by the original nursery and includes the present day headquarters building, the shop which is the oldest building on the nursery, and a hillside arboretum planted by early day nurserymen. All other buildings and facilities will be removed or replaced as their usefulness deteriorates with age since they are not significant to the enjoyment of the Historic Place.

In spite of all the additions and reconstruction of the original nursery, the original character of the nursery has been retained. The buildings and facilities still present a pleasing appearance and show the dream of the early foresters and nurserymen.

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CONTINUATION SHEET 1 ITEM NUMBER 7 PAGE 2

The continued operation of the site as a nursery will not affect the historical integrity or detract from its historical significance. Normal maintenance activities will be carried out in a manner which is sensitive to the historical theme. Items requiring paint or roof coverings will be replaced in kind.

The interior of the Administrative Building AD-10 and Shop PU-14 and TL-15 will continue to be adapted to modern functional use. Any outside preservation treatment to these buildings will be done in such a manner that conforms to the buildings original appearance. Intrusions such as alteration of roads, sidewalks and necessary utilities will be made in such a manner that will not affect the historic integrity of the building or its environment.

Certain buildings will be removed or replaced as their usefulness deteriorates with age since their removal or replacement will not have a negative effect or detract from the sites historical significance. These facilities include: Nursery Overhead Watering System, Paint Cellar PC-32, Chemical House, Seed House, Garage FH-11, Bunkhouse B-6, House B-9, House B-7 and Oil and Gas House. Removal or replacement will not alter the historical appearance of the nursery. *

Trees on the site will be removed and replaced as they deteriorate with age or disease. Any replacement done will be in such a manner that it conforms to the site's appearance at the time of nomination to the Register.

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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> RELIGION	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> CONSERVATION	<input type="checkbox"/> LAW	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> SCIENCE	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input checked="" 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> EDUCATION	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input type="checkbox"/> SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> ART	<input type="checkbox"/> ENGINEERING	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSIC	<input type="checkbox"/> THEATER	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE	<input type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY	<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNICATIONS	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRY	<input type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY)	
		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> INVENTION			

SPECIFIC DATES 1903 - 1929

BUILDER/ARCHITECT

U.S.D.A. Forest Service

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

In 1903, the nursery was established to produce seedling trees for planting on the Dismal River Forest Preserve which later became the Nebraska National Forest. It was the first Federal forest tree nursery and was developed by the then U.S. Bureau of Forestry which later became the Forest Service of the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

The name of the nursery was originally the Halsey Nursery, but was changed in 1915 to the Bessey Nursery in honor of Dr. Charles E. Bessey, late Professor of Botony at the University of Nebraska. The establishment of the Forest and Nursery was mainly a result of his long sustained interest in tree planting and conservation in the Sandhills of Nebraska.

The establishment of the nursery was a new project for the Forest Service. There were no precedents or practices to follow. It was necessary to go into the area, break up the prairie sod, and figure out ways of raising coniferous trees in a nursery which could be planted and survive without cultivation in the sandhills. The nursery pioneered the way from the beginning and in so doing gradually developed the present day nursery methods and techniques that are used by many nurseries world wide. Nurserymen from distance places have shown keen interest and many have adopted to their own needs the practices and some of the equipment which has been developed at the nursery.

Some of the techniques and equipment developed are as follows: spraying dilute sulfuric acid on seed beds to stop "damping off", stratification of Eastern Red Cedar to promote germination the following spring after planting, transplanting seedlings for a year to develop a better root system, transplanting boards, four year rotation of seed beds and use of native species for best survival.

The work of the Forest Service has been demonstrational. The successful tree plantings on the Forest are a result of the quality trees produced by the nursery. The trees planted on the then almost barren sandhills are to a considerable extent responsible for the stimulation of shelterbelt and windbreak planting in the past 50 years in the Great Plains Region.

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

- Hunt, John Clark, November and December 1965. The Forest That Man-Made. American Forests. 1942. Annual Silvicultural Report for the Nebraska National Forest
- July 1927. The Bulletin. Rocky Mountain District, Nebraska Forest Silver Anniversary Issue
- September 1952. Golden Anniversary Observance of the Nebraska National Forest.

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY 42.18 more or less

UTM REFERENCES

A	14	391007	4639550	B	14	391016	4639003
	ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING		ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING
C	14	391016	4639010	D	14	391007	4639010
	ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING		ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

SE $\frac{1}{4}$ SE $\frac{1}{4}$ and that portion of the SW $\frac{1}{4}$ NE $\frac{1}{4}$ lying south of the Middle Loup River all in Section 3 of Township 22 North, Range 26 West of the 6th P.M. in Thomas County, Nebraska.

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

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
Nebraska	31	Thomas	171
STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE

11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE

Robert W. Tice, Recreation, Lands & Fire Staff Officer 10/13/76

ORGANIZATION

Forest Service

STREET & NUMBER

270 Pine Street

CITY OR TOWN

Chadron

TELEPHONE

308-432-3367

STATE

Nebraska

12 CERTIFICATION OF NOMINATION

STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER RECOMMENDATION

YES

NO

NONE

Martin B. Kinett
STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER SIGNATURE

In compliance with Executive Order 11593, I hereby nominate this property to the National Register, certifying that the State Historic Preservation Officer has been allowed 90 days in which to present the nomination to the State Review Board and to evaluate its significance. The evaluated level of significance is National State Local.

FEDERAL REPRESENTATIVE SIGNATURE

Robert W. Tice
TITLE Director of Recreation Management

DATE 3/11/77

FOR NPS USE ONLY

I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS PROPERTY IS INCLUDED IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

ATTEST: *William Lebowich*
DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF ARCHAEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

DATE 5/24/78
KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER
DATE May 22, 1978

Continuation Sheet

Information to amend the original form:

The following buildings within the nominated property while not as old as the shop (1910) or as symbolic of the nursery as the Administrative Building were built during the nursery's formative years, were an integral part of its functioning, and hence contribute to the nominated ~~property~~ property's general significance. Many of the structures have been changed and adapted to accomodate newer~~s~~ techniques and ~~and~~ activities.

Paint Cellar PC-32 Concrete Dugout 1931 Deteriorated
Chemical House C-13 Frame

Bussell Nursery - Thomas Co
Nebraska