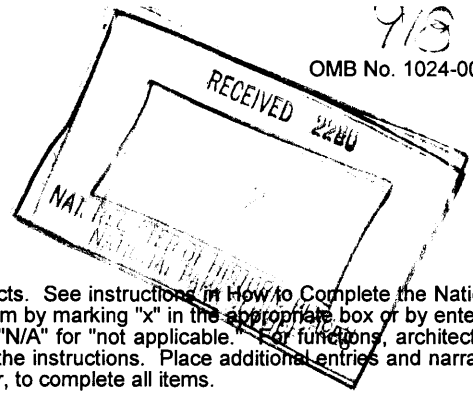


United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

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 TRAPPER NELSON ZOO HISTORIC DISTRICT

other names/site number Trapper Nelson Hunting Camp; Trapper Nelson Interpretive Site; FMSF# MT01449

2. Location

street & number 16450 S.E. Federal Highway N/A  not for publication

city or town Hobe Sound  vicinity

state FLORIDA code FL county Martin code 085 zip code 33455

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

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

Barbara C. Mattick / DSHPO 8/17/06  
Signature of certifying official/Title Date

State Historic Preservation Officer, Division of Historical Resources  
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 the 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  See continuation sheet.
- removed from the National Register.
- other, (explain) \_\_\_\_\_

for Daniel J. Vicia 10/3/06  
Signature of the Keeper Date of Action

5. Classification

Ownership of Property

(Check as many boxes as apply)

- private
- public-local
- public-State
- public-Federal

Category of Property

(Check only one box)

- buildings
- district
- site
- structure
- object

Number of Resources within Property

(Do not include any previously listed resources in the count)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
6	0	buildings
0	0	sites
12	0	structures
6	0	objects
24	0	total

Name of related multiple property listings

(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. Function or Use

Historic Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

- CAMP/Hunting Campsite
- COMMERCE/Private Zoo
- DOMESTIC/Single Dwelling
- SECONDARY STRUCTURE/Various Dependencies
- RECREATION AND CULTURE/Outdoor Recreation

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

- ENTERTAINMENT/RECREATION/Museum

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions)

- NO STYLE/Log Construction
- NO STYLE/Masonry Vernacular

Materials

(Enter categories from instructions)

- foundation Concrete
- walls Log
- Sheet Metal
- roof Corrugated Metal
- other

Narrative Description

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

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.)

- 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.
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 owned 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 of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions)

ARCHITECTURE
ENTERTAINMENT/RECREATION

Period of Significance

1933-1960

Significant Dates

1933
1960

Significant Person

Nelson, Vince "Trapper"

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

N/A

Blder: Nelson, Vince "Trapper"

Narrative Statement of Significance

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

9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography

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

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 36) 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 Buildings Survey
recorded by Historic American Engineering Record

Primary location of additional data:

- State Historic Preservation Office
Other State Agency
Federal agency
Local government
University
Other
Name of Repository

#

**10. Geographical Data**Acreage of Property 2.5 apprx.**UTM References**

(Place additional references on a continuation sheet.)

1	1	7	5	8	3	0	0	0	2	9	8	3	9	8	0
	Zone		Easting					Northing							
2															

3															
	Zone		Easting					Northing							
4															

 See continuation sheet**Verbal Boundary Description**

(Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

**Boundary Justification**

(Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)

**11. Form Prepared By**name/title Barry Richardson, Park Ranger/Carl Shiver, Historic Preservationistorganization Bureau of Historic Preservation date July 2006street & number R.A. Gray Building, 500 S. Bronough Street telephone (850) 245-6333city or town Tallahassee state Florida zip code 32399-0250**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.**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 SHPO or FPO.)

name Ms. Eva Armstrong, Director, Division of State Lands, Dept. of Environmental Protectionsstreet & number 3900 Commonwealth Blvd. MS 100 telephone (850) 245-2555city or town Tallahassee state Florida zip code 32399-3000**Paperwork Reduction Act Statement:** This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and amend listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 470 et seq.).**Estimated Burden Statement:** Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Projects (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

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**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
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Section number 7 Page 1 TRAPPER NELSON ZOO HISTORIC DISTRICT  
MARTIN COUNTY, FLORIDA  
DESCRIPTION

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**SUMMARY PARAGRAPH**

The Trapper Nelson Zoo Historic District encompasses an approximately 2.5 acre section of the 875.5 acre Trapper Nelson Interpretive Site, which is a part of Jonathan Dickinson State Park located at 16450 SE Federal Highway, Hobe Sound, Martin County, Florida. The park consists of 11,470.94 acres that contain many unique natural features and significant cultural resources. The historic district is found in the southern part of the state park and contains the principal buildings and other resources that made up the “zoo and museum” owned and operated by Vince “Trapper” Nelson from c.1933 until he closed it to the public in 1960. Nelson died in 1968, and the property containing Nelson’s home site and the surrounding 875 acres of land were acquired in 1969 and added to Jonathan Dickinson State Park. The major resources in the district consist of two log cabins, a large chickee shelter, and a boat house and dock. All are constructed out of rough hewn logs. There are also a concrete block building containing public restrooms, a wood and corrugated metal water tower, well, and a number of other shelters constructed of wood, and some animal pens. Miscellaneous features related to Trapper Nelson include a large woodpile and brick barbeque grills.

**SETTING**

The Trapper Nelson Interpretive Site is part of Jonathan Dickinson State Park, which is located on U.S. Highway 1, seven miles north of Jupiter and twelve miles south of Stuart. To reach the entrance to the park, the traveler takes I-95 to the Jupiter exit (Indiantown Road), then heads east on Indiantown Road until it reaches U.S. 1, then one drives north. The park entrance is located on the west side of U.S. Highway 1. The site is located nine miles down river along the north bank of the Loxahatchee River, and approximately five miles from the headwaters of the river. The site is positioned on a high bank along a bend in the river. The ground rises steadily away from the river bank, only leveling out at the limits of the buildings and structures. Situated through this area are a number of exotic trees and plants that Trapper Nelson planted. These include mango, Java plum, pineapple, bamboo, Surinam cherry, citrus, and wild almond. Acreage beyond the buildings and structures consists mostly of slash pine flatwoods with a palmetto understory.

**PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION**

**The First Shelter** (Contributing Building, Photos 1-3)

The earliest known physical remains of human habitation at this site were described in 1923 as “a single hut—an old deserted fishing camp.”<sup>1</sup> Today the concrete and tile floor of the First Shelter survives from the 1923 deserted hut. An alternate explanation of its date and origins comes from the park’s oral history describing the “First Shelter” as having been built by a previous trapper, whose name remains unknown, just prior to Trapper

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<sup>1</sup> Trapper Nelson Site, Jonathan Dickinson State Park, Historic Structures Report, Architectural History, p. 8.

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Nelson's arrival at the site. When Trapper Nelson arrived on the property in 1933, all that remained of the structure was the tiled concrete foundation. He constructed a roof over the foundation of tiles, and this would serve as his living quarters until he could build his first cabin. The foundation is made up of two large concrete slabs that vary in thickness. The large slab measures 11 feet 5 inches by 11 feet 8 inches and is surfaced with 6 inch square tiles that cover an area approximately 5 feet 6 inches by 8 feet. Some tiles are cracked and missing tiles have been replaced with cement. The second concrete slab measures 11 feet 9 inches by 8 feet. The shelter is an open sided braced pole building made of pine logs, roughly hewn. Log diameters range from 4 inches to 7 inches. The gable-ended roof is covered with corrugated galvanized metal. There is no sheathing between the metal and beams. Slightly off center above the two slabs is a loft that measures 5 feet 4 inches by 11 feet 4 inches. There is 4 feet of clearance between the lowest part of the roof and the loft. The loft has been framed using hewed pine logs. The top of the loft is surfaced with galvanized metal with the v-crimp facing down.

**The First Cabin** (Contributing Building, Photos 6-10)

The First Cabin is a Vernacular style log residence built between 1937 and 1945. The building has a rectangular ground plan and features a double pen interior making up 584 square feet of living space. The exterior walls are constructed of hand-hewn pine logs 5 inches and 6 inches in diameter that have been laid horizontally and the spaces between them chinked with concrete mortar. The cabin was not constructed using the traditional lapped log method. Instead, Nelson erected vertical posts and filled the bays with horizontal logs. Exposed hewn log trusses and rafters form the pitched roof that is covered with corrugated sheet metal. The roof extends beyond the two gabled ends of the cabin walls, forming porches with no flooring. The corner support columns of the porches are also made of hewed pine logs approximately 9 to 10 inches in diameter. Around 1949, Nelson removed the lower pine logs from the walls and inserted concrete blocks because the foundation logs were beginning to deteriorate as result of water infiltration from rainwater. Around 1951, he installed indoor plumbing for a bathroom and kitchen sink in the cabin so it could be used by house guests.

**The Chickee Shelter** (Contributing Building, Photos 7-10)

The Chickee<sup>2</sup> Shelter was built between 1933 and 1945. It is an open sided braced pole shelter with two loft areas under a galvanized sheet metal gable roof. The ground floor is packed sand, raked smooth (1034 square feet.). All structural wood is hewn pine logs ranging from 4 inches to 8 inches in diameter. Both lofts are formed with a 2-bay by 2-bay pattern of eight poles around the perimeter. Corner poles are diagonally buttressed. The loft floor and roof rafters frame to the same rim beam. An additional pole near the midline of the roof supports the ridgepole. The roof is framed as a continuous structure over both lofts. Each loft measures approximately 22 feet square, but usable space in the loft areas is limited by the diminished headroom under the

<sup>2</sup> "Chickee" is the word Seminoles use for "house." It is an open-sided construction with a cypress log frame and palmetto thatched roof. It is often two stories in height with sleeping quarter in the loft area.

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sloping roof. The gable ends of the loft are closed with a pattern of spaced vertical boards. Galvanized corrugated sheet metal roofing is attached directly to rafters, without sheathing. Four benches, which are made from various with of milled pine boards, line the south side, which are made from various sizes of milled pine. There are also four block grills in and near the Chickee Shelter. A corrugated metal enclosure was added by the Florida State Park Service service. It is located under the eaves on the north side and serves as a small storage closet. Some of the original benches constructed by Nelson were replaced by the Park Service, and additional tables modeled on those made by Nelson were added to provide additional seating for visitors to the site.

**The Boathouse** (Contributing Building, Photos 11-12)

The boathouse was built between 1933 and 1945. It is a corner-braced, hewn pine pole structure with beams and purlins supporting a low sloped shed roof. The structure also divides into the upstream section of two narrow boat slips, each about 10 feet wide, and the downstream section of two wider boat slips, each about 15 feet wide. The landward edge of the building is supported on a combination of living cypress knees trimmed level, and poles and posts sunk into the wet soil. Poles extend to the roof; short posts extend only to the walkway level. A timber band beam connects all at walkway level. Five rows of poles extend west into the flowing river, defining four boat slips. These poles extend to the roof. The poles are corner braced and diagonally braced to one another. An "E" shaped walkway system outlines the boat slips and divides the two middle boat slips from one another.

**The Original Waterfront Dock** (Contributing Structure, Photo 13)

A fragment of Trapper's original waterfront dock, probably constructed around 1933, still remains, extending diagonally from the northwest corner of the boathouse. Heavy, irregular planking is a key character-defining element of the structure. The north (landside) wall is partially open. The westernmost bay of the north wall is open, without siding. The three remaining bays are clad with corrugated galvanized sheet metal on horizontal spaced plank furring strips. The east (upstream) wall is clad with corrugated galvanized metal siding similarly constructed. The south (riverside) and west (downstream side) are open. Galvanized corrugated sheet metal is attached directly to purlins spanning between column line beams. There is no roof sheathing. Trapper Nelson closed his business in 1960 and by 1963 most of the dock was removed. The Florida Park Service added a chain-link fence panel across the upstream boat slip.

**The Main Cabin** (Contributing Building, Photos 14-18)

This 761 square foot building was built and modified by Trapper Nelson between 1937 and 1945. This log cabin is post and beam log pen construction with logs filling the spaces between posts, and the gable roof framed with rough-hewn trusses and rafters joining at a log ridge beam. Trusses and rafters rest on and are spiked to log roof plate timbers. The pine logs were obtained from the surrounding pine flatwoods and hand hewn on site by Trapper Nelson. The walls are constructed of hand hewn pine vertical post logs placed at

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varying intervals (ranging from about 3 feet to about 7 feet apart), secured at the top to a continuous horizontal hewn roof plate serving as a tie and bearing beam. Pine logs are hewn to approximately 5 inches thick with flattened sides for close fit. Horizontal logs are not notched; rather, they are stacked between vertical corner and intermediate posts, with some horizontal log ends spiked to adjacent posts. Joints between logs are thickly chinked inside and out with Portland cement mortar daubing applied directly to shaped logs. In its current configuration the cabin is a double-pen form. Based on physical evidence of the structure's organization, this cabin was constructed and modified in several phases, beginning with a single pen which was subdivided in later stages. The fireplace, bathroom, and kitchen sink plumbing were added during 1952. As in the case with the First Cabin, Nelson replaced the lower logs of the building with concrete blocks to prevent water intrusion. Alterations were made by park staff. The east and south entrance doors have been substantially modified by the park in an effort to secure the interior and to make the doors weather tight. It is not known if these doors were part of this cabin prior to state ownership.

**The Restroom Building** (Contributing Building, Photo 19)

The Restroom Building was constructed by 1959. The building consists of three rooms. The men's and women's rooms equal 52.77 square feet. and a storage room equals 37.74 square feet. The existing foundation consists of an 8-inch wide concrete block wall, on a concrete footing of unknown dimension at least two courses below grade, placed directly on soil. The bottom of the stem wall is approximately 8 inches below grade. Concrete slab roofs of varying thickness were poured on plywood forms placed on the top of the concrete block walls. The windows are all screened, unglazed openings. Water for the restrooms is supplied from a metal tank on the roof of the building. The doors to the restrooms are replacements installed by park staff. The utility room retains its original door, which is made of planks. The bathroom fixtures are believed to be original. The showers in both restrooms consist of depressions in the floor. Since the restroom is in current use, the shower piping has been removed due to bad floor drains.

**The Souvenir Chickee** (Contributing Structure, Photos 20-21)

The Souvenir Chickee was built between 1933 and 1945. It does not actually resemble the traditional Seminole type of structure but consists of three major elements: the internal support frame, plywood walls, and an exterior frame to which palm fronds have been attached. The support frame is made of hewn pine logs 5-6 inches in diameter. The bottom, front, sides, and back cross beams are fastened to the corner posts at 14 inches above the ground. The top beams are fastened to the corner posts with nail spikes and plumbing strap. Five pine beams support the roof that consists of corrugated galvanized metal. Attached to the outside of the support frame is 5/8-inch plywood which gives the interior a boxed look. The bottom of the box is closed in with hewn planks that are 4 feet long and vary in thickness and width. The front of the box has a hinged swing down panel of 5/8-inch plywood. This panel when closed covers an opening that is 3 feet 6 inches by 7 feet. From a distance the box appears to have both ends and the back made of palm fronds. However, the fronds are attached to the exterior frame that is attached to the plywood walls. On the back wall inside the "chickee" is a



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shelf 8 feet in length. The sloped roof covering the structure is 6 feet high at the front and 5 feet high at the rear.

**The Alligator and Turtle Pens (Two Contributing Structures, Photo 22)**

The Alligator and Turtle Pens were constructed between 1933 and 1945. The left pen measures 9 feet 6 inches by 10 feet 6 inches and the right pen is 8 feet by 9 feet 6 inches. Each pen has a pit-like concrete foundation that slopes in the center 20 to 24 inches below the ground surface. The left pen's top, rear and front walls are framed with rough pine logs and covered with galvanized chain-linked fencing. This also applies to the right pen's top and front. The left wall of the left pen consists of eleven 8-inch by 24-inch poles (utility type) with galvanized fencing on the exterior. The utility poles do not extend toward the front of the pen, however, fencing fills the void and is attached to the front corner post. The inner wall that the two pens share is also constructed in the same manner. Fastened to the right side of the utility poles facing the right pen is 26 gage sheet metal. The right side pen has a rear and right wall made of concrete blocks. Both pens have entry hatches that are hinged. The left pen has a top hatch that measures 5 feet by 30 inches. The right pen has a top hatch measuring 14 inches by 32 inches and a front entry measuring 26 inches by 30 inches. Galvanized pipe drains extend through the back side of each pit and terminate at two concrete block troughs that are 4 feet long. There is a hand-dug drainage ditch at the end of the troughs that empty into the nearby underbrush.

**Stumpy's Pen (Contributing Structure, Photos 23-24)**

The pen housing Stumpy the pet alligator was built between 1933 and 1945. It measures 5 feet 7 inches by 8 feet 6 inches. The trough-like foundation is made of cement and slopes down in the center 16 inches below the ground surface. Several thick rough cut squared pine logs lie flush with the ground to the left and right of the concrete trough. The walls are framed with rough pine logs covered with chain-linked fencing. The top is not fully closed and has no fencing material. Some rough pine log ribs cross over the top on the front and rear of the top. The mid section of the top has an opening of 42 inches by 55 inches. The drain is partially recessed and terminates out of the back of the trough. This pen shares the same drainage ditch as the alligator and turtle pens.

**The Sheltered Grill (Contributing Structure, Photo 25)**

The Sheltered Grill is an open-sided braced pole structure and was built during 1933 and 1948. It measures 11 feet 8 inches by 15 feet and has a sloped roof that is 10 feet at the highest point and 8 feet at the lowest. The floor is packed sand. Four hewn pine logs 5-6 inches in diameter make up the corner posts. Cross beams are tied to the corner posts with plumbing strap and corner posts to support the roof beams. Galvanized corrugated metal is attached directly to the beams without any sheathing. One side of the structure has been re-enforced with two diagonal logs forming an X. There are two cooking pits under the shelter. One is 30 inches tall and the other 12-13 inches. The materials of the pits are a mixture of 2-inch by 4-inch by 9-inch bricks and 2-inch by 4-inch by 8-inch bricks. The smaller bricks have the name "STEVENS" stamped into them. Cement mortar binds

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the bricks together uniformly on the larger grill; however, the smaller grill appears to be made of scrap bricks with globs of cement protruding away from the base.

**The Plant Rack** (Contributing Structure, Photo 26)

The Plant Rack was built between 1933 and 1945. This rough pine structure consists of 3 sections that vary in size. All support posts are 4-5 inches in diameter and all cross ties and ribs are 2-4 inches in diameter. Section one measures 5 feet 6 inches wide, 6 feet 4 inches high and 42 inches deep. The shelf is 12 inches from the ground and consists of a mixture of hewed pine planks 2 inches by 4 inches and 3 inches by 8 inches. The top beam on the left and right side of this section extends 36 inches beyond the front support post, forming an overhang. The ribs along the sides and back run parallel to the ground from the top down to the shelf. Section two measures 8 feet 6 inches wide, 6 feet 4 inches high, and 36 inches deep. The shelf is 24 inches from the ground and also consists of a mixture of hewed planks. The ribs along the sides and back run parallel to the ground from the top down to the shelf. Section 3 measures 7 feet wide, 6 feet 8 inches high, and 36 inches deep. This rack has ribs parallel to the ground on all four sides top to bottom. There is no shelf; however, there is a row of rough pine logs lying within the frame of the rack directly on the ground. The existing plant rack is a reconstruction of the original, executed by the Park Service during 1980-1981.

**The Wildcat Cages** (Contributing Structure, Photo 27)

The Wildcat Cages were built between 1933 and 1945. Together both cages measure 10'6" deep and 21' wide. The roof is 7 feet 6 inches tall on the front and slopes to 5' on the back. The foundation is of concrete and slopes down toward the riverbank. The divider and both sides consist of a combination of rough pine logs; hewed pine logs 5-7" in diameter, and hewed planks. Large planks cover the upper part of the front of the left cage, with chain link fencing covering the rest. The rear of the left cage and the front and rear of the right cage are also of chain link fencing. Both cages have a sloped corrugated galvanized roof that is supported by hewn pine beams. There is no sheathing. Each cage has an access panel located on the lower front side of the outer side wall. These panels are of hewed planks and slide from back to front on skids.

**The Raccoon Cages** (Contributing Structure, Photo 28)

The Raccoon Cages were built between 1933 and 1945. Together both cages measure 10 feet 6 inches deep and 23 feet wide. The roof is 7 feet 9 inches high on the front and slopes to 4 feet 6 inches on the back. These two cages are built in the same manner as the Wild Cat Cages. A small ditch runs along the back edge of both structures, allowing drainage into the adjacent wetlands.

**The Grease Rack** (Contributing Structure, Photo 29)

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The original Grease Rack was built between 1945 and 1948. The present rack is a reconstruction of the original, built by the Park Service in 1999. There are two sets of planks 3 inches thick by 8 inches wide by 16 feet long set 5 feet (on center) apart. The sets are tied together with 3 cross ties that are 8 feet long. The first cross tie is at ground level and consists of a 2 by 4 inch timber. The middle cross tie is a 3 inches by 8 inches and the end that extends over the ditch is made from an 8-inch utility pole. Two 8-inch utility poles 36 inches high allows for the two sets of driving planks to overhang the ditch. All the lumber including utility poles appears to be pressure treated.

**The Water Tower (Contributing Structure, Photo 30)**

The Water Tower was built between 1945 and 1948. The tower stands 13 feet tall and measures 6 feet 5 inches by 7 feet 8 inches at the base and narrows to 4 feet by 5 feet at the top. It is covered with an assortment of odd sizes of corrugated galvanized metal that has been painted. The top of the tower is capped with sheet metal. A galvanized tank measuring 4 feet by 5 feet 34 inches high rests on a platform of 4 inches by 6 inches by 5 feet pressure treated lumber on top of the tower. The tank is tied down with four heavy gage strand cables. The concrete foundation is uneven and varies in thickness. Some erosion and breaking away of the backside of the foundation reveals red bricks embedded within the concrete. The internal corner post is of hand-hewn pine logs. They average 7 inches in diameter at the base and narrow to approximately 5 inches at the top. Other than these four supports there is no other handcrafted timber within the structure. Crosstie and diagonal bracing consists of milled lumber 2 by 4 inches and 2 by 6 inches that have been painted brown. A large shelf extends midway out from one side of the interior tower wall. The clearance is 6 feet 6 inches. Oral history from Trapper's family says that a gas-powered pump used to sit on the shelf. The shelf is now empty. The tank on top is no longer in use; however, the park service now uses the interior floor space to house their water pressure/storage tank and chlorinating system from a nearby well.

**The Gopher Tortoise Pen (Contributing Structure, Photo 31)**

The Gopher Tortoise Pen was built between 1933 and 1945. It measures 8 feet by 9 feet and stands 24 inches high. The foundation is of 2-inch by 6-inch by 16-inch concrete blocks that sit snug to each other without mortar. The frame consists of four corner posts tied together with horizontal beams top and bottom. All timber appears to have come from the upper parts of the slash pine tree with branch stubble. Chain link fencing covers all four sides. Up against one side of the tortoise pen is an area of 2-inch by 6-inch by 16-inch concrete blocks measuring 7 feet 8 inches by 8 feet. This area is u-shaped with the closed portion facing the gopher pen. The function of the space is not known at this time.

**The Sheltered Snake Pit (Contributing structure, 1945-1948, Photo 32)**

The Sheltered Snake Pit is an open-sided braced pole structure, 12 feet 6 inches square, made up of hand-hewn pine logs measuring 4 inches to 6 inches in diameter. The foundation is of packed sand. The sloped shed roof

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is covered with corrugated galvanized metal. The clearance from ground to roof at the highest point is 7 feet and drops down to 6 feet at the lowest point. The snake pit is constructed of concrete blocks. It measures 5 feet 4 inches by 6 feet 8 inches and stands 4 feet high. Half of the pit extends beyond the roof to allow sunning for reptiles. The floor of the pit consists of concrete and has a raised divider of concrete. This division forms a chamber that holds water. There is a small drain hole at the bottom edge of the back wall. There is also a galvanized water pipe extending through the inside wall of the chamber. The same pipe has a gate valve located on the exterior of the pit. The pit is covered with 1/4-inch hardware cloth framed with pressure treated furring strips. There is a hinged access panel made of the same material. There is no record of Trapper having installed a top. In 1977-1978, the shelter over the pit was demolished, and a reconstruction following the original appearance was erected. Between 1980 and 1982 a drain was installed in the pit and the wire top was replaced.

**Trapper's Wood Pile** (Contributing Object, 1933-1968, Photo 35) can be seen in a clearing of palmettos northwest of the guest cabin. It is 80 feet long with an uneven width of 8-10 feet. The height is also uneven measuring approximately from 5-8 feet. This pile is frequently mentioned during the daily interpretive tours as being an original feature of the site. Family members have said that Trapper would cut as much as a cord of wood a day.

The **Travel Cages** (Four Contributing Objects, 1945-1948, Photo 33) These four cages vary in size measuring an average of 5 feet wide, 38 inches deep and 24 inches high. They are constructed of galvanized metal roofing material, chain link fencing, and an assortment of milled lumber. These cages would play a part in ordering animals by mail. People could write Trapper and request a live animal be sent into town.

The **Cook Pot** (Contributing Object, 1933-1937, Photo 34) The pot is cast iron and measures 20 inches across and 13 inches deep in the center. The pot is suspended with chains attached to a tripod made of 3/4-inch galvanized pipe. Total height, 4 feet. The pot currently sits near the gopher tortoise pen.

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**SUMMARY PARAGRAPH**

The Trapper Nelson Historic District is significant at the local level under Criteria B in the area of Entertainment/Recreation, and C in the area of Architecture for its association with Vince "Trapper" Nelson (1908-1968), who established his "wilderness camp" on the Loxahatchee River in Martin County in 1933. The property is also being nominated under Criteria Consideration G for properties that have achieved significance within the past fifty years. The buildings and other resources on the campsite reflect the period of his life when he operated a private zoo (c. 1933-1960) for the entertainment of tourists who came by riverboat to satisfy their curiosity about the "Wild Man of the Loxahatchee," who made his living by exploiting the animal resources of the surrounding forest, collecting alligator, raccoon, and other animal hides for sale to furriers and the makers of leather accessories. Nelson constructed pens for the display of live wild animals and shelters where tourists could hold picnics and experience activities such as alligator wrestling which Nelson used to entertain his visitors. He would also show them the process of preparing hides for sale and would even sell some of them to the tourists visiting his camp. Although he never abandoned the collection of animal hides for commercial sale and maintained his subsistence lifestyle in the wilderness, he devoted much of his time to the development of his tourist attraction. In the area of Architecture, Nelson personally constructed all of the buildings and structures at the camp, using native materials and techniques typical of the self-taught builder. The two log cabins he constructed are of a distinctive type, normally found in the American Northwest and parts of the Midwest. Trapper Nelson's camp and zoo reached its fullest development more than fifty years ago and continues to maintain its integrity of both setting and architecture.

**HISTORIC CONTEXT**

The settlement of the Hobe Sound vicinity reaches back to the earliest period of human occupation within the Florida peninsula. The abundance of fish in the offshore waters and the game found in the woodlands attracted the area's earliest residents, Native Americans.<sup>3</sup> Hobe Sound began to attract European visitors in the latter part of the 17th century. According to Shipwrecks in Florida Waters by Robert F. Marx, it was then that the British barkentine<sup>4</sup> vessel Reformation, sailing from Port Royal, Jamaica, to Philadelphia, in a convoy of 12 to 13 merchant ships, sank quite close to shore on September 23, 1696, a bit north of Jupiter Inlet. The vessel carried 25 passengers and crew and her cargo consisted of sugar, rum, beef, molasses, and some Spanish money. Jonathan Dickinson and other survivors of the shipwreck, encountered Tekesta (from whom Tequesta gets its name) and Jove Indians, whose name the Spanish pronounced "Ho-bay" and who gave Hobe Sound its name. The natives were helpful to the small Quaker party. Today, the "Hobe" is pronounced to rhyme with "Robe," losing its Spanish origins.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> William R. Adams, Historic Architectural Survey of Martin County, Florida. Historic Property Associates, Inc. June 1997, p. 2.

<sup>4</sup> A 3-masted vessel square rigged on fore mast only with the main and mizzen being fore and aft rigged.

<sup>5</sup> "Our Community," Hobe Sound Chamber of Commerce, <http://www.hobesound.org/community/history.asp>

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Hobe Sound was part of the Gomez Grant, included in the 12,000 acres given by the king of Spain to Don Eusebio Gomez in 1815. In 1821, Gomez sold 8,000 acres to Joseph Delespine for one dollar an acre. The remaining land was divided among the Gomez heirs and sold to others, but significant settlement of the area did not occur until late in the 19th century.<sup>6</sup> The Indian River Association, Ltd., a British land development company, acquired much of the former Gomez Grant in the late 1880s. A subsidiary of the company, the Indian River Pine Apple and Coconut Grove Association, platted a large subdivision west of the Indian River. In 1891, a U.S. post office was opened in Hobe Sound. The number of homesteads in the area grew steadily after 1894 when Henry Flagler's Florida East Coast Railway (FEC) reached the community. In 1895, the FEC constructed a modest wood frame depot in Hobe Sound to deliver passengers and goods to the area.

The arrival of the railroad opened up a whole new way of life to area residents. Citrus and pineapples could be shipped by rail; and tourists arrived in the area by train seeking sunshine and a new place to visit. At the time the area was part of Dade County, but in 1909 it became part of Palm Beach County which was carved out of northern Dade County. Present-day Martin County,<sup>7</sup> located on the east coast of Florida about 100 miles north of Miami, was created in 1922 from a southern portion of St. Lucie County and a northern portion of Palm Beach County. The town of Stuart was incorporated in 1914. In anticipation of being part of a new county, the community received a new charter to become the city of Stuart, the charter being approved by the Florida House of Representatives on May 11, 1925 and Stuart became the county seat of Martin County.

The area that now comprises Jonathan Dickinson State Park and the headwaters of the Loxahatchee River, a large territory in southeastern Martin County and northeastern Palm Beach County, were still very much a wilderness when Vince Natulkiewicz arrived in Jupiter, Florida. It was 1931 and he was twenty-three years old. Before long he changed his name to Vincent Nelson, signing his name as "Vince Nelson." The town was named after the planet Jupiter and other nearby settlements took on the names of Mars and Venus. Even though Mars and Venus were not officially named, a railroad that traveled from the south bringing travelers from the Lake Worth area called itself the Celestial Railroad. After the land boom in 1924 and 1925, during which most of Jupiter's streets were laid out, there was a land bust in 1926. This was followed by the crash of 1929.

**STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE—RECREATION AND ENTERTAINMENT**

Early Tourist Attractions in Florida

Even before the construction of the Tamiami Trail and U.S. Highway 1 began to provide tourists with access to Florida's beaches and other "tropical delights" beginning in the 1920s, winter tourists had come to the state in

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<sup>6</sup> Ibid, p. 38.

<sup>7</sup> Named after John W. Martin, governor of Florida, 1925-1929.

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the 19th century to visit the numerous natural springs. The springs were accessible by riverboats via the short rivers of which the springs were the fountainheads. Hotels sprang up next to the springs, and the guests diverted themselves by taking boat rides to view the wild scenery and exotic animals, particularly alligators, found along the banks of the springs and streams. The Chautauqua movement established campgrounds in the state, where speakers of national reputations would address the crowds with speeches having important religious or social themes and visitors could enjoy picnics and band concerts. Even then, the display of wild animals—alive or preserved by the taxidermist’s art—was among the favorite attractions for the tourists.

The face of tourism was changed forever with the arrival of the railroad to Florida. In the 1880s, railroad builders on both sides of the peninsula quickly pushed their lines southward, opening Florida to immigrant settlers and tourists. Still, only the relatively wealthy could afford vacation journeys. The first major wild animal attraction—still in existence today—was the St. Augustine Alligator Farm, established in 1893, just six years after the railroad had come to the Ancient City. Not until the 1920s, when automobile ownership and paved roads became widespread did the economic face of Florida tourism begin to change. Middle class Americans began to arrive in cars and, “roadside attractions,” many of them featuring zoos with native animals, began to proliferate. Private zoos sprang up along all the major traffic arteries in Florida, often in rural locations. Even during the Great Depression and World War II people scraped together money to visit Florida. An estimated 2.6 million tourists came in 1939.<sup>8</sup>

The attraction of small private zoos faded with the establishment of more elaborate commercial zoos, animal parks, and aquariums in well-established tourist destinations in Florida. The allure of Florida remained strong in the 1950s and destinations such as Busch Gardens in Tampa offered an array of attractions based on exotic encounters with the African continent. It features a blend of thrilling rides, one of the country’s premier zoos featuring more than 2,700 animals, live shows, restaurants, shops and games. Sea World Adventure Park Orlando, Florida opened in 1973 and is advertised as the world’s premiere marine adventure park with 200 acres of world-class shows, thrilling rides and unforgettable animal encounters that include killer whales, dolphins, sea lions, stingrays and more.<sup>9</sup> High profile tourist attractions combining zoos, elaborate rides, live performances, and shopping venues have proliferated throughout the state, driving most of the small family operations out of business.

Trapper Nelson Zoo

Among the private commercial zoos in Florida, the one operated by Vince “Trapper” Nelson was extremely unusual. First, it was not located near any easily accessible highway; it could be reached only by boat via the

<sup>8</sup> William R. Adams and Carl Shiver, The St. Augustine Alligator Farm: A Centennial History (St. Augustine: Southern Heritage Press, 1993), pp. 1, 8.

<sup>9</sup> “Sea World Orlando,” [http://www.themeparkinsider.com/reviews/seaworld\\_orlando/](http://www.themeparkinsider.com/reviews/seaworld_orlando/)

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Loxahatchee River. Second, even though Nelson tolerated visitors and tourists, he was basically a man who liked solitude and did little to advertise his attraction. The animals in his "zoo" were native species captured in the surrounding forest and were displayed in rudely constructed cages. He made little effort to make his campsite attractive, constructing only rough-hewn shelters where visitors could have picnics or shelter themselves from the sun and rain. Little was offered for sale in the way of gifts, novelties, or native products. Nelson and his way of life, the rugged individualist living a primitive life in the wilderness, was the main attraction. For the nearly thirty years that he lived on the Loxahatchee River, he made few concessions to modern conveniences. He lived without electricity, a telephone, or most of the other appurtenances of daily life common to most Americans; however, he did add indoor plumbing to both cabins in the 1950s and constructed restrooms for tourists visiting the site.

Vince Natulkiewicz<sup>10</sup> was born in 1908 into a Polish immigrant household in Trenton, New Jersey. As a youngster, he trapped "vermin" for state bounty money. Leaving school after eighth grade, he worked on a road construction crew, rode the rails as a vagabond, and made his way as a trapper through the American West, ranging as far as Alaska. In September 1931, he made his way to Jupiter, Florida, with his brother Charlie and childhood neighbor John Dykas. The three men set up a hunting camp near Jupiter Inlet, where the Loxahatchee River empties into the Atlantic Ocean, engaging in fur trapping to earn money and subsisting on the bounty of the surrounding countryside. In December of 1931, while Vince was away checking traps, his brother Charles and John Dykas got into an altercation. Charles shot and killed Dykas and was sent to prison for life at the Florida State Prison at Raiford. Left alone, "Trapper" continued to exploit the wilderness in the vicinity of Jupiter Inlet, trapping raccoons, otters, opossum,<sup>11</sup> and other game. When the game began to get scarce, Nelson made his way farther up the Loxahatchee River, establishing temporary camps, living off the land, and skinning the animals he trapped. In 1933, he set out to build an oasis on the hostile though beautiful banks of its wending path. At first he rowed a heavy rowboat back and forth to Jupiter for his supplies and mail, but later he bought a small skiff fitted with an outboard motor. He used the money he earned from fur trapping to buy land. In the days of the Great Depression, many people were unable to pay the taxes on their property, and Nelson became a familiar figure at tax sales.<sup>12</sup>

Nelson made his encampment on the northwest fork of the Loxahatchee his headquarters, roaming the surrounding wilderness searching for game and living off the land by trapping and selling furs. He skinned hundreds of animals: raccoons, wildcats, and alligators, before he was ready to ship the skins to market each year. He was an accomplished tanner of alligator skins and fur pelts. He was a loner for the most part, who found security in this area and a way of life that was suited to his skills and temperament.<sup>13</sup> As time passed,

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<sup>10</sup> Another source gives his original name as Victor Nostokovich,

<sup>11</sup> The opossum was usually trapped for food. Its hide has no commercial value.

<sup>12</sup> DuBois, Bessie W., *The History of the Loxahatchee River* (Stuart, FL: Southeastern Printing Co., 1981), p. 23.

<sup>13</sup> "Loxahatchee River Adventures at Jonathan Dickinson State Park," <http://www.floridaparktours.com/trappernelsons.html>.



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curiosity about Vince "Trapper" Nelson grew among the public. His solitary manner of life in the wilderness reminded the public of Tarzan, as played in the movies during the 1930s by Johnny Weissmuller.

Nelson was a huge man, six foot four, and well-muscled. Before long, he had become a draw for tourists. Jungle cruise boats began to stop at his now permanent camp on the Loxahatchee River. To make the most of this business opportunity, he began to charge the boats to land passengers at his dock. Nelson persuaded boat captains to bring Palm Beach socialites upriver to visit his "zoo" of captive bobcats, raccoons, possums, and snakes, and to watch him wrestle alligators. Millionaires and socialites from Palm Beach also began to come up the Loxahatchee in their yachts to see and be photographed with Nelson.<sup>14</sup> He cultivated this public persona of "Wildman of the Loxahatchee."<sup>15</sup> In time, he built a compound of sorts to host guests in search of adventure and a taste of the then exotic Florida wilderness. He built a guest log cabin for visitors who wished to stay more than just a few hours at the site.<sup>16</sup> He had no electricity, so the guests had to enjoy the primitive conditions far from civilization.<sup>17</sup>

One of Trapper Nelson's constant preoccupations during his entire life on the river was the business of acquiring more land. Nelson gained control of much of his property one parcel at a time by searching tax rolls and purchasing land put up for sale by the county tax assessor for the payment of back taxes. Gradually he amassed nearly 1,100 acres along the Loxahatchee, with the core holdings of about 850 acres surrounding his home camp. Upon the entry of the United States into World War II, Nelson sold some of his property to the U.S. government for the construction of Camp Murphy.<sup>18</sup> Operated by the Southern Signal Corps School and sited on 11,200 acres, Camp Murphy served as the Army's top-secret radar training facility. Named for Colonel William Herbert Murphy, an U.S. Army pioneer in electronic equipment, the camp operated from April 1942 until November 1944 to provide research and development resources to the military. As many as 1,000 buildings were constructed for use by a complement of 854 officers and 5,000 men stationed there during this thirty-one month period. Acquired by the State of Florida when abandoned by the military, Camp Murphy became Jonathan Dickinson State Park.<sup>19</sup>

Hoping to gain an exemption from the war time draft, Nelson married Lucille Gee, but he was inducted anyway and sent to an army camp in Texas. After being stationed in Texas for a while, he was sent to Camp Murphy, near his Loxahatchee home, and finished his enlistment as a military policeman at Camp Murphy. After the war, Nelson resumed his former life as a trapper and zookeeper and the jungle boats began to call at his dock

<sup>14</sup> DuBois., pp. 24-25.

<sup>15</sup> "Loxahatchee River Adventures at Jonathan Dickinson State Park," <http://www.floridaparktours.com/trappernelsons.html>.

<sup>16</sup> DuBois, p 25.

<sup>17</sup> Trapper Nelson Site, Jonathan Dickinson State Park, Historic Structures Report, Site History, 4-8.

<sup>18</sup> DuBois, p. 25.

<sup>19</sup> "Camp Murphy Jonathan Dickinson State Park," [http://www.flheritage.com/museum/mfh/exhibits/wwii/sites.cfm?PR\\_ID=103](http://www.flheritage.com/museum/mfh/exhibits/wwii/sites.cfm?PR_ID=103).

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again. He and Lucille lived in the newer log cabin until about 1950 when they separated. They were later divorced<sup>20</sup>

In 1960, after more than two decades of opening his home site to visitors and finding himself vulnerable to lawsuits aimed at taking his land, Nelson closed the zoo operation, put up fences and gates, and became increasingly reclusive. The zoo operation had brought visitors up the river over a period of 23 years. The trapping operation lasted many years longer. For 37 years, until his death in 1968, trapping was Nelson's principal occupation., and in later years shifted into the more lucrative sale of live animals to zoos and private collectors<sup>21</sup> On July 24, 1968, Nelson made an appointment to meet an old friend, John DuBois, but did not appear. After several days of not seeing his friend, DuBois became alarmed and went to the camp along with an acquaintance to see if something had happened to Nelson. They found him lying on the ground with a shotgun nearby. The body was badly decomposed, and the coroner who later examined the body estimated that Nelson had been dead about a week.<sup>22</sup>

The property that formerly had been Camp Murphy had been acquired by the state of Florida in 1947 and opened as Jonathan Dickinson State Park in 1950. All but two of the camp buildings were demolished. The property containing Nelson's home site and the surrounding 875 acres of land were acquired in 1969 and added to Jonathan Dickinson State Park.<sup>23</sup> The Florida Park Service has maintained and continues to conserve and restore the resources that comprise the zoo, which is the focal point of the Trapper Nelson Interpretive Site in Jonathan Dickinson State Park. Visitors are transported to the Trapper Nelson compound aboard the Loxahatchee Queen II, a forty-passenger, Coast Guard-certified vessel. Passengers are met at the dock by a Park Ranger who guides them through the cabins and grounds once belonging to the "Wildman of the Loxahatchee."<sup>24</sup> The Trapper Nelson Interpretive Site is an unusual example of a mid-20th century tourist attraction that continues to fascinate visitors to Martin County to the present day.

**STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE—ARCHITECTURE**

The buildings and shelters located at the Trapper Nelson site were all constructed of native materials by Vince "Trapper" Nelson and are excellent examples of vernacular architecture and building techniques. Logs and structural materials were all hand-hewn and finished without being shaped into the standard lengths and widths typical of commercially finished lumber and building materials. The method Nelson used to construct his log cabins was not the more familiar lapped log technique. Instead he secured log ends to the vertical posts using spikes or pegs. Vertically positioned logs were secured at their top and bottom ends, usually into roof and sill

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<sup>20</sup> DuBois, p. 25.

<sup>21</sup> Neece Regis, A piece of quiet, legendary coast in Jupiter, [http://www.boston.com/travel/getaways/florida/articles/2004/11/21/a\\_piece\\_of\\_quiet\\_legendary\\_coast\\_in\\_jupiter/](http://www.boston.com/travel/getaways/florida/articles/2004/11/21/a_piece_of_quiet_legendary_coast_in_jupiter/)

<sup>22</sup> DuBois, p. 27.

<sup>23</sup> Trapper Nelson Site.

<sup>24</sup> "Jonathan Dickinson State Park," <http://www.answers.com/topic/jonathan-dickinson-state-park>.

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plate timbers. This construction method finds its antecedents among Russian fur traders and colonists in Alaska and Scandinavian and Finnish immigrants who settled in the Upper Midwest.<sup>25</sup> It is not known if Nelson was familiar with these traditions or arrived at the construction method independently. All of the buildings and shelters constructed by Nelson exhibit the same straight-forward practicality. The Trapper Nelson Interpretive Site provides an unusual example of mid-20th century Florida tourism that continues to fascinate visitors to Martin County to this day.

**STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE—CRITERIA CONSIDERATION G**

Trapper Nelson's zoo continued to maintain its significance as a popular tourist attraction until 1960 when he closed it to the public. Private zoos, museums, and other "roadside attractions" began to decline in the 1960s as interstate highway construction and competitions from more major attractions left them isolated and lacking in patronage. Most of these private attractions have completely disappeared from Florida, so that not even the buildings and structures remain, whereas the major features of Trapper Nelson's enterprise—except for the animals—continue to be a tourist destination maintained by the Florida Park Service, which provides guides to conduct tours of the site and explain its history and significance.

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<sup>25</sup> Bomberger, Bruce D. "The Preservation and Repair of Historic Log Buildings," Preservation Brief 26. Washington, D.C.: Technical Preservation Services, National Park Service, U.S. Department of the Interior, 1991.

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GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

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**Verbal Boundary Description**

The boundaries of the Trapper Nelson Interpretive Site Historic District are those shown on the map accompanying the district nomination proposal. It is an approximately 2.5 acre section of the 875.5 acre SW portion of the larger acreage known as Jonathan Dickinson State Park. The park is in SE Martin County adjacent to the NE boundary of Palm Beach County. Martin County's Appraiser's Office does not list a parcel or Geo number. The following information was obtained from the appraiser's office as being the legal description.

East 250 of Government Lot 3 and all of Government Lot 4 in  
Section 16, Township 40 South, Range 42 East

All, less West one-quarter (W1/4) and Notheast Quarter of the Northeast Quarter (NE 1/4 of NE 1/4) in  
Section 20, Township 40 South, Range 42 East

West one-half (W 1/2) and North 832 feet of Government Lot 1, less south 200 feet East of road in  
Section 21, Township 40 South, Range 42 East

Book 228, Page 259  
Book 1392, Page 512

**Boundary Justification**

The boundaries of the nominated property are within the property known as Jonathan Dickinson State Park and retain its historic setting, character, and integrity.

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LIST OF PHOTOGRAPHS

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**PHOTOGRAPHS**

1. First Shelter, Trapper Nelson Interpretive Site Historic District
2. 16450 SE Federal Highway, Hobe Sound (Martin County), Florida
3. Barry Richardson
4. February 2005
5. Jonathan Dickinson State Park
6. Northeast Elevation, Looking Southwest
7. Photo 1 of 35

**Items 2 through 5 are the same for the remaining photographs.**

1. First Shelter
6. Floor Tiles and Concrete Foundation, View Looking Northeast
7. Photo 2 of 35

1. First Shelter
6. Loft Area, View Looking West
7. Photo 3 of 35 (Not shown on plan)

1. First Cabin
6. Southwest and Southeast Elevations, Looking North
7. Photo 4 of 35

1. First Cabin
6. Main (Southwest) Entrance, Looking Northeast
7. Photo 5 of 35

1. First Cabin
6. Interior, Bathroom and Kitchen Sink, Looking Northeast
7. Photo 6 of 35 (Not shown on plan)

1. Chickee Shelter
6. Northwest End of Shelter, Looking Southeast
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  6. Southeast End of Shelter, Looking Northwest
  7. Photo 8 of 35
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1. Chickee Shelter
  6. Side Benches Facing South
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1. Chickee Shelter
  6. Cooking Pits, Looking South
  7. Photo 10 of 35 (Not shown on plan)
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1. Boathouse
  6. Northwest Elevation, Looking Southeast
  7. Photo 11 of 35
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1. Boathouse
  6. View of Boathouse and Boat Slips, Looking North
  7. Photo 12 of 35
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1. Original Waterfront Dock
  6. View from Dock, Looking Northwest
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1. Main Cabin
  6. Main (Southwest) Entrance, Looking Northeast
  7. Photo 14 of 35
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1. Main Cabin
  6. Northeast and Northwest Elevations, Looking Southeast
  7. Photo 15 of 35
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1. Main Cabin
  6. Interior, Kitchen Sink, Looking Northeast
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6. Interior, Bathroom, Looking Northeast
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1. Main Cabin
6. Interior, Fireplace, Looking Northwest
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1. Public Restrooms
6. Northeast Elevation, Looking Southwest
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1. Souvenir Chickee
6. Southwest Side, Looking Northeast
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1. Souvenir Chickee
6. Southwest Side, Looking Northwest
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1. Alligator & Turtle Pens
6. Northeast Corner, Looking Southwest
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1. Alligator & Turtle Pens
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1. Stumpy's Pen
6. Southeast Corner, Looking North
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6. Southeast Side, Looking West
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6. Southeast Side, Looking Northwest
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1. Wildcat Cages
6. Northeast Side, Looking Southwest
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1. Grease Rack
6. Ramp End, Looking Southwest
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1. Water Tower
6. West Corner, Looking East
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6. Looking West
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The **Grease Rack** (Contributing structure, photos 59-61)

The Grease Rack was built between 1945 and 1948. There are two sets of planks 3"x 8"x16' that lay 5' (on center) apart. The sets are tied together with 3 cross ties that are 8'. The first cross tie is at ground level and consists of a 2"x4". The middle cross tie is a 3"x8" and the end that over hands the ditch is made from an 8" utility pole. Two 8" utility poles 36" tall allows for the two sets of driving planks to overhang the ditch. All the lumber including utility poles appears to be pressure treated. The rack was rebuilt in 1999.



**The Grease Rack**

The reconstructed grease rack meets the requirements of being considered a contributing reconstructed structure in the Trapper Nelson Zoo Historic District because.

- a. The reproduction has been “accurately executed” based upon sound data concerning the historic construction and appearance of the resource. The reconstruction using new materials of the exact same form and proportions to replace the original materials was made necessary because the original materials were too deteriorated to be reused in part or whole.
- b. The resource occupies a “suitable environment,” since it is located in the exact same place as the original structure and is situated among its original grouping of buildings, structures, and objects and is an important element in the original visual and historical character of the district as it was developed by Vince “Trapper” Nelson and is used by the staff of Jonathan Dickinson State Park to explain to visitors the lifestyle and habits of “Trapper” Nelson. The structure is not misrepresented as an authentic historic property.