

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

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RECEIVED JUL 16 1981
DATE ENTERED OCT 29 1981

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM

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

1 NAME

HISTORIC GERLACH WATER TOWER

AND/OR COMMON same

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER Main Street

CITY, TOWN Gerlach VICINITY OF CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT Nevada-at-large

STATE Nevada CODE 82 COUNTY Washoe CODE 031

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

4 OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME Gerlach Improvement Association

STREET & NUMBER

CITY, TOWN Gerlach VICINITY OF STATE Nevada

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC. Gerlach Lease Holders Association - Map #455252

STREET & NUMBER Washoe County Courthouse

CITY, TOWN Reno STATE Nevada

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE none

DATE
FEDERAL STATE COUNTY LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS

CITY, TOWN STATE

7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION

EXCELLENT

DETERIORATED

GOOD

RUINS

FAIR

UNEXPOSED

CHECK ONE

UNALTERED

ALTERED

CHECK ONE

ORIGINAL SITE

MOVED

DATE 1909

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The Gerlach water tower is a redwood tank 24 feet in diameter with a holding capacity of 44,000+ gallons. The tank is 13 feet in depth and the base sits on heavy timber supports 15 feet above the ground. In greater detail the tank may be described as being constructed of vertical narrow redwood boards secured by round steel bands set every 6 inches over the entire depth of the tank. The tank is topped with a conical cap atop of which is a wooden finial piece. The roofing material is rolled asphaltum.

The tank is supported by 12 fifteen foot 12"x12" timbers in the shape of a cruciform sitting on 16"x16" timber sills. The upright supports are cross braced by 4"x9" timbers. The central 8" steel feed and discharge pipe is housed in frost-proof, walkin box covered with clapboard. The finish of the tank and its supports is barn red. The roof is colored green. The condition of the finish is fair. The discharge apparatus for steam locomotive servicing was located adjacent to the tracks some 150 feet away and not directly opposite the tank.

The Gerlach water tower was built in 1909 by the Utah Construction Company under contract to the Western Pacific Railroad Company. It was one facility among many others of like design built for the railroad. The Gerlach tower initially served not only the locomotives, but also the town. Gerlach was a company town at this Division Point located in the Granite Creek Desert. A small round house, shops and attendant facilities served the needs of the railroad until 1953.

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/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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY	<input checked="" 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 type="checkbox"/> INVENTION		

SPECIFIC DATES 1909 BUILDER/ARCHITECT Utah Construction Company/unknown

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Gerlach water tower is the only steam engine servicing tank still in use (although not now servicing steam locomotives) in the State of Nevada and the last remnant of a mainline rail division point (roundhouse, shops and attendant facilities) of the early Western Pacific Railroad.

Construction of the tower tank was simultaneous with the construction of the railroad during 1906 to 1909. The Western Pacific was the last of the transcontinental rail lines to be constructed. Location of water sources was vital to the operation of steam equipment and service or division centers had to be located at closer intervals than is now necessary with diesel equipment.

The railroad bought the town of Gerlach in 1909, purchasing a small settlement first inhabited in 1906 in anticipation of the coming of the railroad. It was seen as a cattle shipping point for the Gerlach Land and Cattle Company. This company was formed by Louis Gerlach of the nearby Gerlach and Waltz Ranch before the turn of the century. The Gerlach post office was established on October 27, 1909.

Gerlach ceased to be a Division Headquarters in 1931 and between 1945 and 1953 all Division facilities were removed except the water tower. Transcontinental freight trains still pass through and Gerlach serves as a switching point for the six mile Portland Cement Company's industrial railroad that was constructed in 1922 and runs to their plant at Empire, south of Gerlach.

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Myrick, David F., Railroads of Nevada and California, Vol. 1, Howell-North Books, Berkeley, California, 1962.

Carlson, Helen S., Nevada Place Names, a geographical dictionary, Univ. of Nev. Press, Reno, Nevada 1974

Correspondence with R.D. Nordstrom, Engineer of bridges and structures, Western Pacific Railroad Company, San Francisco, California

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY -1
UTM REFERENCES

**UTM NOT VERIFIED
ACREAGE NOT VERIFIED**

A	1 1	3 0 1 0 0 0	4 5 0 2 5 0 0	B			
	ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING		ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING
C				D			

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

Refer to Map #455252
Within boundaries of the Gerlach Fire Department Lot - Blk. F, Lot 19.

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

STATE	n/a	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
STATE		CODE	COUNTY	CODE

11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME/TITLE W. E. Wieprecht, Historian, Div. Hist. Pres. & Arch. in cooperation with G. E. Senior Citizens, Inc. DATE 10/14/80

ORGANIZATION _____ DATE 6/12/81

STREET & NUMBER 325 W. Sunset Blvd. TELEPHONE 702-885-5138
702-557-2206

CITY OR TOWN Gerlach STATE Nevada

12 STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER CERTIFICATION

THE EVALUATED SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS PROPERTY WITHIN THE STATE IS:

NATIONAL STATE LOCAL XX

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 National Park Service.

STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER SIGNATURE

Dorimi Redden

TITLE SNPO

DATE 12 June 1981

FOR NPS USE ONLY

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

Beth Grosvenor
DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF ARCHEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION
ATTEST *Patrick Andrews* SUPERVISOR OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER
KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

DATE 10/29/81

DATE 10/20/81

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Conversations with a Mr. Bridges, Public Relations Officer, Western Pacific Railroad Company, San Francisco, CA and Mrs. Helen Thresher, Gerlach resident since 1929 and adjacent inhabitant to the water tower since that time.

Dubie, Carol Ann - The Architecture and Engineering of Elevated Water Storage Structures: 1870-1940. Unpublished Master's Thesis, George Washington University, 1980.