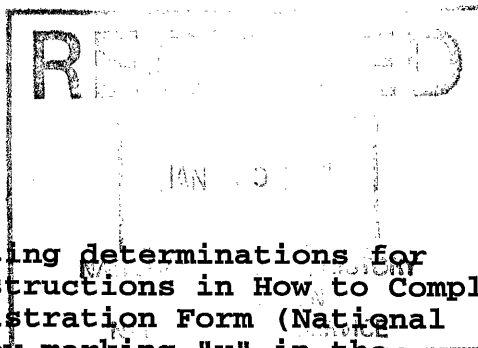


United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service



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 Rapids Roadhouse

other names/site number Black Rapids Roadhouse, Rapids Hunting Lodge

AHRS Site No. XMH-00223

=====

2. Location

=====

street & number Mile 227.4 Richardson Highway

not for publication N/A

city or town Delta vicinity X

state Alaska code AK county Southeast Fairbanks code 240

zip code 99737

USDI/NPS NRHP Registration Form

Rapids Roadhouse
Southeast Fairbanks, Alaska

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1986, as amended, I hereby certify that this X 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 X meets does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant nationally statewide X locally. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Judith Butler
Signature of certifying official

12-26-00
Date

Alaska
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 commenting or other official

Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

I, ✓ hereby certify that this 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
- removed from the National Register

Edson H. Beall 2/2/01

other (explain): _____

Jay
Signature of Keeper

Date of Action

USDI/NPS NRHP Registration Form

Rapids Roadhouse

Southeast Fairbanks, Alaska

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)

- building(s)
- district
- site
- structure
- object

Number of Resources within Property

| Contributing | Noncontributing |
|---------------|--------------------------|
| <u> 1 </u> | <u> </u> buildings |
| <u> </u> | <u> </u> sites |
| <u> </u> | <u> </u> structures |
| <u> </u> | <u> </u> objects |
| <u> 1 </u> | <u> 0 </u> Total |

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 0

Name of related multiple property listing (Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing.) N/A

USDI/NPS NRHP Registration Form

Rapids Roadhouse
Southeast Fairbanks, Alaska

=====
6. Function or Use
=====

Historic Functions (Enter categories from instructions)

Cat: Commerce Sub: Restaurant
Domestic Hotel

Current Functions (Enter categories from instructions)

Cat: Vacant/not in use Sub: _____

=====
7. Description
=====

Architectural Classification (Enter categories from instructions)

No style

Materials (Enter categories from instructions)

foundation _____
roof metal
walls log, wood
other _____

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

Rapids Roadhouse is located just to the east of the Richardson Highway at mile 227.4 (from Valdez). It is approximately 133 miles south of Fairbanks and 38 miles south of Delta. To the west of the roadhouse is the highway, the Delta River, and Black Rapids Glacier.

The roadhouse is at the southwest end of a five acre parcel of land. It faces and is clearly visible from the Richardson Highway. The site has sparsely scattered timber. To the east is a sixty foot bluff on top of which are heavily wooded stands of mature white spruce. Also on the bluff is a wind generator tower (not included in the nomination). To the east and north of the roadhouse are several wood frame buildings and a Quonset hut/garage placed on the site in the 1950s (not included in the nomination).

The original roadhouse is a two-story log building on a square plan. Single story additions were built on the north, south, and east sides of the original building over the years. Today the roadhouse is shaped like an L with the long leg running north-south for about 120 feet parallel with the highway.

The original building has two stories and measures 19 by 25 feet. It is constructed with unpeeled spruce logs. The roof appears to have been covered with sod originally. It is now covered with metal. The roof rests on spruce pole rafters supported by three purlins and ridgepoles on each of the sides of the gable roof. There is a low door opening centered in the

USDI/NPS NRHP Registration Form

Rapids Roadhouse
Southeast Fairbanks, Alaska

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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.) N/A

- A owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- B removed from its original location.
- C a birthplace or a 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)

Commerce

Period of Significance 1904-1923

Significant Dates 1904

Significant Person (Complete if Criterion B is marked above)
N/A

Cultural Affiliation N/A

Architect/Builder _____

USDI/NPS NRHP Registration Form

Rapids Roadhouse
Southeast Fairbanks, Alaska

=====
9. Major Bibliographical References
=====

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

Phillips, Walter T., Sr. Roadhouses of the Richardson Highway II. Alaska Historical Commission Studies in History No. 172. Manuscript in files of Alaska Office of History and Archaeology, Anchorage, 1984.

Richardson Highway Transportation Company. *Alaska: A Travelogue of the Richardson and Steese Highways Constructed and Maintained by the Alaska Road Commission.* Valdez, Alaska: privately printed, c. 1929.

Smith, Michael, *Alaska's Historic Roadhouses.* History and Archaeology Series No. 6. Anchorage: Alaska Office of History and Archaeology, 1974.

Previous documentation on file (NPS) N/A

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) 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: _____

USDI/NPS NRHP Registration Form

Rapids Roadhouse
Southeast Fairbanks, Alaska

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10. Geographical Data
=====

Acreage of Property less than one acre

UTM References (Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet)

| | Zone | Easting | Northing | Zone | Easting | Northing |
|---|------------------------------------|----------------|-----------------|-------------|----------------|-----------------|
| 1 | <u>06</u> | <u>556863</u> | <u>7044939</u> | 3 | <u> </u> | <u> </u> |
| 2 | <u> </u> | <u> </u> | <u> </u> | 4 | <u> </u> | <u> </u> |
| | <u> See continuation sheet.</u> | | | | | |

Verbal Boundary Description (Describe the boundaries of the property.)

The roadhouse is in the southwestern section of U.S. Survey 2971, platted May 13, 1952.

Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected.)

The boundary includes the building known as Rapids or Black Rapids Roadhouse or Hunting Lodge shown on U.S. Survey 2971. It includes the attached additions. Sheds, storehouse, and quonset hut buildings to the east and behind the roadhouse, are not included because they were built after the period of significance or no longer have historical integrity. A wind generator tower on top of a bluff to the east is not included because it is not associated with the roadhouse.

=====
11. Form Prepared By
=====

name/title Ann Hopper, Owner

organization _____

date October 1, 2000

street & number 1307 Windfall Way

telephone (907) 455-6158

city or town Fairbanks **state** AK **zip code** 99709

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Rapids Roadhouse
Southeast Fairbanks, Alaska

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facade and a small window opening in the gable of the facade. The shed-roofed arctic entry visible in a 1920 photograph no longer exists. Remains of a stovepipe indicate a chimney once was in the center of the lodge. A narrow staircase leads up to the second story at the southwest corner. The second story is divided into two rooms (site plan #7).

Most of the additions are of unpeeled white spruce logs chinked with moss. Some logs were squared with an axe. Most have saddle corner construction. The additions have, or had, low to medium gable sod roofs, some covered with corrugated metal roofing. Window and door trims are of hand sawn lumber, hand planed on the exposed sides. Window sashes are hand made and double glazed.

On the north side of the original building is an 82-foot long series of connected, single story buildings (site plan #1-6). The first, about fifteen feet long, was probably a kitchen. Its fenestration includes a six pane window measuring 24" by 24" in the front, a six pane window measuring 33" by 26" in the rear, and a small doorway measuring 26" by 51" in the southeast corner (site plan #1).

The other sections have single rooms off a central corridor. The second section is approximately sixteen feet long. Fenestration includes a four pane window measuring 27" by 20" and a six pane window measuring 27" by 34" (with glass panes intact) in front, and a six pane window measuring 26" by 30" in the far south corner. The roof has collapsed (site plan #2). The third section is fourteen feet in length. There is a single-pane window measuring 32" by 26" in the front and two windows, one 28" by 22" and the other a six pane window measuring 26" by 30", in the rear. The roof of this section has also collapsed (site plan #3). The fourth section is about nineteen feet long with two single pane windows, each 30" by 35", in front and two windows, each 32" by 25", in the rear (site plan #4). The fifth section is approximately twenty feet long and has a stovepipe protruding from its roof. Fenestration is two 30" by 35" windows in the front and two windows, one 34" by 29" and one 36" by 34", in the rear (site plan #5). The final addition, built in the 1950s, is a one-story frame building with flat and gable roofs and a concrete block basement. It is attached to the older roadhouse building by a narrow greenhouse corridor. A variety of window and door openings, most boarded with plywood, are on each elevation. A concrete block chimney is in the north elevation. The owners plan to demolish this section (site plan #6).

Off the south elevation of the original building is a collapsed 10' by 12' log addition. A frame door opening is centered in its facade (site plan #8).

Attached to the east elevation of the original lodge are three additional rooms. The first is log. Its roof has collapsed (site plan #9). The second and third additions are constructed of lumber and appear to have been a garage, workshop, or storage areas. They are covered with planks. Gable ends show axe marks. The third section has a wide double-door centered on the north side and windows centered in the gable on the east and south elevations (site plan #10-11).

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Rapids Roadhouse
Southeast Fairbanks, Alaska

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Current condition

The original roadhouse building still stands. The roof has been braced. Its second floor sags and the staircase is unsound. Much of the wood floor is gone. Some walls are covered with layers of painted canvas and some of the canvas is still intact. The southwest corner has subsided two to three feet and the west wall has buckled. The dirt floor has sunk two to three feet in the center. Logs on the north and east walls appear sound; most on the south wall are deteriorated.

The northern additions are in various states of disrepair. The kitchen's metal roof is barely in place. The roofs of the middle sections have collapsed. The first of the additions to the east has collapsed, and the second and third sections are sagging. The roof of the small addition on the south side has collapsed.

The present owners plan to stabilize the parts of the roadhouse standing in 1920. They plan to remove the 1950s addition. Although deteriorated, the building still conveys the sense of a typical roadside business in Alaska in the early 1900s.

USDI/NPS NRHP Registration Form

Rapids Roadhouse
Southeast Fairbanks, Alaska

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

Rapids Roadhouse, variously known as Black Rapids Roadhouse or Rapids Hunting Lodge, opened at least by 1904 to serve travelers on the new Valdez-Fairbanks Trail. Roadhouses could be found along all Alaska trails in the first quarter of the twentieth century. Along the 386-mile Valdez-Fairbanks Trail, which at the time was Alaska's principal travel corridor, roadhouses were typically spaced a day's travel between each other. Of the more than thirty roadhouses that operated along the route between 1902 and 1923, Rapids Roadhouse is one of only a few that survive. The Alaska Road Commission improved the Valdez-Fairbanks trail over the years and renamed it the Richardson Road. In 1923, when the Alaska Railroad offered an alternative year-round route connecting interior Alaska with an ice-free port on the southcentral coast, traffic on the road declined. Rapids Roadhouse continued to operate until 1993, although its peak years had been during the first decades of the twentieth century. Because of this, the period of significance is ended in 1923.

Background

Felix Pedro discovered gold in the Tanana Valley in the heart of Alaska's interior in 1902. Prospectors and entrepreneurs blazed a trail to the Tanana Valley that left the Valdez-Eagle Trail (also known as the Trans-Alaska Military Road) at Gulkana and headed northwest. When the federal government created the Alaska Road Commission in 1904 to build and maintain trails and roads in the territory, its first project was to improve the Valdez-Fairbanks route.

Entrepreneurs opened roadhouses, which were sometimes just tents, to provide food and lodging for travelers along the Valdez-Fairbanks trail. Between 1902 and 1923 more than thirty roadhouses operated along the 386-mile trail. Typically, they were spaced a day's travel between each other. Rapids Roadhouse, sometimes called Rapids Hunting Lodge, was among the first to open. One source says Peter Findler opened the roadhouse in 1902, but it seems more likely that Joe Hansen and his two sons built the roadhouse in 1904. There is some disagreement whether or not Rapids Hunting Lodge and Rapids Roadhouse are the same place, but the preponderance of evidence suggests they are. By 1922, the roadhouse had facilities for twenty-three people. One could get a meal for \$2.00 and a bed for \$1.00.

The Alaska Road Commission widened the Valdez-Fairbanks Trail for wagons and sleds and then for automobiles. It was renamed for Wilds P. Richardson, the first president of the Alaska Road Commission. In 1923 the Alaska Railroad between Seward and Fairbanks started operating. It was an alternative year-round overland route connecting interior Alaska with an ice-free port on Alaska's southcentral coast. After the railroad started operations, traffic on the Richardson Road declined, although there was still a need for roadhouses.

USDI/NPS NRHP Registration Form

Rapids Roadhouse
Southeast Fairbanks, Alaska

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The Orr Stage Company was one of the first businesses to carry passengers and freight over the Valdez-Fairbanks trail. Rapids Roadhouses was described as a crucial stop for the company's stages. At the roadhouse, southbound travelers changed from four and six-horse stages to double-ender sleds drawn by single horses to go over Isabel Pass to Paxson. At some time the roadhouse was said to be a Northern Commercial Company (NCC) store. Later, hunters frequently stayed at the roadhouse. It was described in an early travel guide to the highway as "The hunter's paradise . . . The mountains on all sides, with their diversified coloring, abound in mountain sheep and brown bear, while the valleys and hills are the feeding grounds for bands of caribou. . . . It is not at all unusual in the fall of the year to meet huge herds of caribou on these flats, and often drivers of cars have raced down the road with the animals, getting so close to them that their flying hoofs have thrown gravel against the windshield."

Over the years the roadhouse had a number of owners and operators including Hugh and Lloyd Beckel (1912), Henry Colombon (1916), Russell Robinson (1918), Frank Glaser (1922), Charles Nevilius (1925), Grace Lowe and Evelyn Mahan (1930s), the Revells (1930s), J.B. Coble (1946), Edith Acres (1947), Bert and Mary Hansen (1958-1974), Jerry and Wanda McMillian (1974-at least to the mid-1980s), and Earl Tourgeau.

The roadhouse closed in 1993. Several roadhouses along the trail, Rika's Roadhouse that is part of the Big Delta Historic District, and Sullivan's Roadhouse, are listed in the National Register of Historic Places. But most of the historic roadhouses are gone. Sourdough Roadhouse, a National Historic Landmark, burned about twelve years ago. The current owners of Black Rapids Roadhouse are interested in, at a minimum, stabilizing the sections of the roadhouse that stood in the 1920s. It still conveys a sense of accommodations available as one traveled Alaska's main road in the early 1900s.

USDI/NPS NRHP Registration Form

Rapids Roadhouse
Southeast Fairbanks, Alaska

Additional Documentation

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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 the SHPO or FPO.)

name Ann and Michael Hopper

street & number 1307 Windfall Way

telephone (907) 455-6158

city or town Fairbanks **state** AK **zip code** 99709

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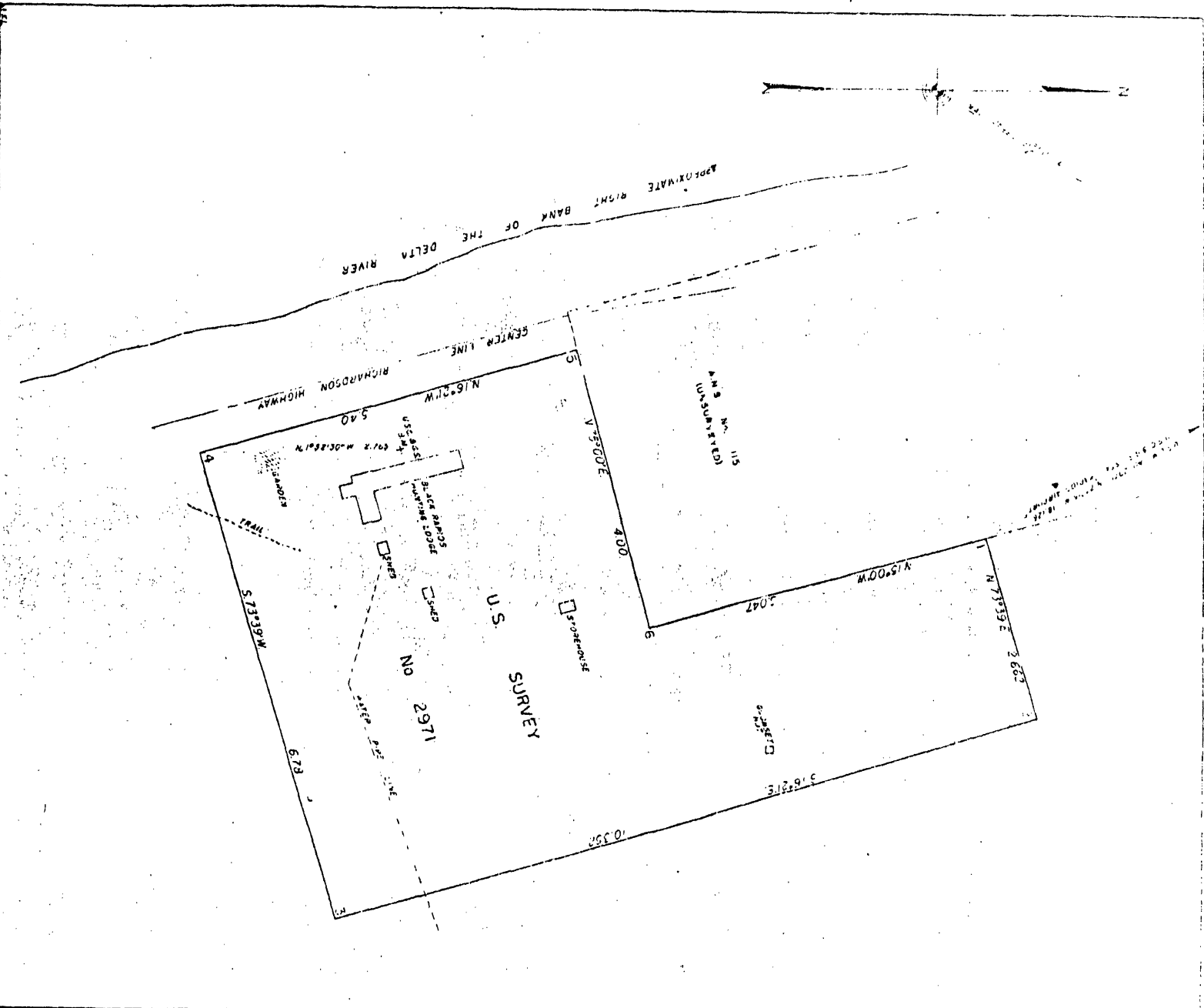
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Rapids Roadhouse
Southeast Fairbanks, Alaska

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Photograph identification

1. Rapids Roadhouse
Southeast Fairbanks, Alaska
Ann Hopper
August 18, 2000
1307 Windfall Way, Fairbanks, AK 99709
Looking east at the front of the main lodge and five of the additions that extend to the north of the main lodge
2. Rapids Roadhouse
Southeast Fairbanks, Alaska
Ann Hopper
August 18, 2000
1307 Windfall Way, Fairbanks, AK 99709
Looking northeast. The main lodge is in the center of the photograph, part of the kitchen addition is visible on the left, and the storage addition is on the right
3. Rapids Roadhouse
Southeast Fairbanks, Alaska
Ann Hopper
August 18, 2000
1307 Windfall Way, Fairbanks, AK 99709
Looking west at the back elevation of the main lodge
4. Rapids Roadhouse
Southeast Fairbanks, Alaska
Lu Liston Collection, LLC 289-3
no date (c. 1940s)
Anchorage Museum of History and Art, 121 West 7th Ave., Anchorage, AK 99501
Looking northeast at facade of roadhouse
5. Rapids Roadhouse
Southeast Fairbanks, Alaska
Lu Liston Collection, LLC 289-1
no date (c. 1940s)
Anchorage Museum of History and Art, 121 West 7th Ave., Anchorage, AK 99501
Looking southwest at back of roadhouse, highway, Delta River, and Black Rapids Glacier



U.S. SURVEY
No 2971 ALASKA

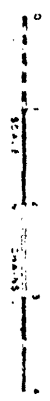
511-1114

1/4 sec. eastern 1/4 sec. of Richardson Highway,
at Iglood, Alaska, N. 77° 10' W from Iglood

Area: 4.05 Acres

Latitude 83° 21' 51.10" North Longitude 155° 51' 11.00" W

Grant No. 1



Surveyed by

Thomas P. Jones, Assistant Engineer
September 21, 1916 and September 21, 1920

Field Notes, District 22
dated September 21, 1916 and
September 21, 1920.

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT
Washington, D. C., May 13, 1952

This plat is strictly conformable to the approved field notes, and the survey, having been correctly executed in accordance with the requirements of law and the regulations of this Bureau, is hereby accepted.

For the Director

Wm. H. Anderson

Chief, Branch of Surveys

Photo Key: Site Plan

Black Rapids Roadhouse

Not To Scale

