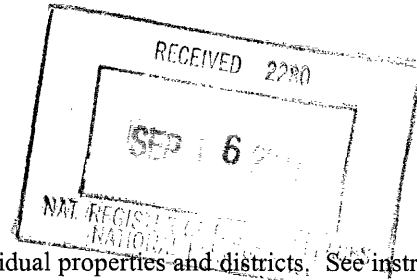


**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

**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: Absaroka Mountain Lodge
other names/site number: Gunbarrel Lodge; Wilderness Enterprises, Inc. dba Absaroka Mountain Lodge

2. Location

street & number: 1231 North Fork Highway
not for publication N/A
city or town: Cody x vicinity
state: Wyoming code: WY county: Park code: 29 zip code: 82414

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

X nationally ___ statewide ___ locally. (___ See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Leri L. Liestman _____ September 8, 2003
Signature of certifying official/Title Date

Preservation Officer, Rocky Mountain Region, USDA Forest Service
State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property X meets ___ does not meet the National Register criteria.
(___ See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Richard A. Hunt _____ Aug 4, 2003
Signature of certifying official/Title Date

State Historic Preservation Office
State or Federal agency and bureau

**Absaroka Mountain Lodge
 Park County, WY
 Dude Ranches Along the Yellowstone Highway (U.S. 14-16-20) in the Shoshone National Forest**

4. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby certify that this property is: Signature of the Keeper Date of Action

entered in the National Register *Linda McCullough* 10/30/03
 See continuation sheet.

determined eligible for the
 National Register

See continuation sheet.
 determined not eligible for the
 National Register

removed from the National Register

other (explain):

5. Classification

Ownership of Property

(Check as many boxes as apply)

- private
- public-local
- public-State
- public-Federal(**privately leased**)

Category of Property

(Check only one box)

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

Name of related multiple property listing

(Enter N/A if property is not part of multiple property listing.)

Dude Ranches Along the Yellowstone Highway (U.S. Hwy. 14-16-20) in the Shoshone National Forest

Number of Resources within Property

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

Contributing	Noncontributing	
<u>15</u>	<u>4</u>	buildings
<u> </u>	<u> </u>	sites
<u> </u>	<u>2</u>	structures
<u> </u>	<u> </u>	objects
<u>15</u>	<u>6</u>	Total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register: N/A

Absaroka Mountain Lodge
Park County, WY
Dude Ranches Along the Yellowstone Highway (U.S. 14-16-20) in the Shoshone National Forest

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions (Enter categories from instructions)

DOMESTIC: **Camp**
RECREATION: **Outdoor Recreation**

Current Functions (Enter categories from instructions)

DOMESTIC: **Camp**
RECREATION: **Outdoor Recreation**

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions)

Early 20th Century
Other: grand lodge and dude ranch rustic

Materials

(Enter categories from instructions)

Foundation: STONE; CONCRETE
Roof: ASPHALT SHINGLE & SHEETING
Walls: WOOD; LOGS
Other: STONE; METAL

Narrative Description

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

Absaroka Mountain Lodge
Park County, WY
Dude Ranches Along the Yellowstone Highway (U.S. 14-16-20) in the Shoshone National Forest

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.)

- 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
RECREATION
SOCIAL HISTORY
TRANSPORTATION

Period of Significance: 1917 TO 1950

Significant Dates: 1917

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

Cultural Affiliation: N/A

Architect/Builder: Earl F. Crouch

Narrative Statement of Significance

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

Absaroka Mountain Lodge
Park County, WY
Dude Ranches Along the Yellowstone Highway (U.S. 14-16-20) in the Shoshone National Forest

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 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: Shoshone National Forest (Wapiti Ranger District)
Park County Historical Archives

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property: 6.33 acres

UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet)

Zone	Easting	Northing
12	596250	4923150

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.)

Absaroka Mountain Lodge
Park County, WY
Dude Ranches Along the Yellowstone Highway (U.S. 14-16-20) in the Shoshone National Forest

11. Form Prepared By

name/title: Jeannie Cook, Curator, and Joanita Monteith

organization: Park County Historical Archives date: July 15, 2002

street & number: 1002 Sheridan Ave. telephone: (307) 527-8530

city or town: Cody state: WY zip code: 82414

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 the SHPO or FPO.)

name: Absaroka Mountain Lodge(owns buildings and structures; land is owned by the Shoshone National Forest.)

street & number: 1231 North Fork Highway telephone: (307) 587-3963

city or town: Cody state: WY zip code: 82414

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**Absaroka Mountain Lodge
Park County, WY
Dude Ranches Along the Yellowstone Highway (U.S. 14-16-20) in the Shoshone National Forest**

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Description:

Summary Description

Absaroka Mountain Lodge is an historic dude ranch occupying 6.33 acres leased from the Shoshone National Forest along U.S. Highway 14-16-20 in Park County, Wyoming. The setting is heavily forested and mountainous, located about 13 miles east of the east entrance into Yellowstone National Park. It is located on Gunbarrel Creek near its confluence with the North Fork of the Shoshone River. The buildings are laid out in typical rustic dude ranch style. The grand lodge building is near the southern end of the property, with one guest cabin to the south and the other 17 buildings and two structures (a foot bridge and a cellar) to the north. Most of the buildings are east of the old stream channel of Gunbarrel Creek. However, the barn and corrals are located at the northwest corner of the property on the west bank of Gunbarrel Creek. Construction materials are primarily wood (log) with stone and concrete foundations. The buildings and structures evolved over a period of years, from 1917 through the 1980's. The contributing buildings have historic integrity of design, materials, workmanship, feeling and association with early Western dude ranching.

Detailed Description

The beautiful Shoshone National Forest, dedicated in 1891 as the first national forest in the United States, provides the backdrop for the Absaroka Mountain Lodge. Aspen and cottonwood trees line the stream courses, while lodge pole pine, Douglas fir and Engleman spruce predominate in the woods. Eocene volcanic rock peaks of the Absaroka Mountains form dramatic outcroppings along U.S. Highway 14-16-20, which crosses the Shoshone National Forest from its east to west boundaries. Interestingly, this section of federal roadway between Cody and Yellowstone was part of the original Yellowstone Highway (the route from Denver to Cody to the east entrance of Yellowstone) and was also called the Cody Road in the early days of automobile travel. In this region, the highway follows the course of the North Fork of the Shoshone River, as it flows east from Yellowstone to Cody, at the western edge of the Big Horn Basin.

In typical dude ranch style, the buildings and structures of Absaroka Mountain Lodge are laid out in a pattern dictated by the lay of the land and the location of creeks and rivers. Absaroka Mountain Lodge is in its original historic location in a setting that looks much like it did when it was built. The contributing buildings have historic integrity of design, materials, workmanship, feeling and association. Their simple designs and construction materials are rustic and evocative of the natural beauty of their setting. The grand lodge is non-contributing, (#21 & #2,) since it has three substantial additions built in the 1960's, 1970's and 1980's. In addition, the north side has a two-story addition built in 1947, which is used as the manager's quarters. The remainder of the building includes a central portion comprising about 40% of the building, which was built about 1917, with a small kitchen. The parts of the building erected in 1917 and 1926 would probably be eligible if they stood alone, but the large, newer additions to the building compromise its overall integrity as a historic structure. However, with the exception of the north, two-story addition, it is appropriate as a type of dude ranch rustic grand lodge for the locale, in terms of its general look, feel, massing and scale. Fifteen of the guest cabins and support buildings are contributing, all dude ranch rustic, with appropriate type, style, method of construction, size and significant features. Most of the buildings on the site are currently in use and are in good condition, with a minimum of remodeling (with the exception of the remodeling at the grand lodge.). There are three non-contributing guest cabins and support buildings, along with two structures, (a foot bridge and a cellar,) because they were built after 1950. However, they are not visually intrusive for dude ranch rustic in terms of type, style, method of construction, size or significant features, and have mitigating features that do not distract from the overall integrity of the historic site.

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**Absaroka Mountain Lodge
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Contributing Buildings and Structures

Building #1 (date 1917) is an irregularly shaped, one-story guest cabin; of wood and log construction, with a low stone and concrete foundation. Walls are round, peeled logs, with saddle corner-notching. Chinking is cement. The building is asymmetrical with three bays. The single-leaf front door is homemade of pine boards. The roof is comprised of intersecting low-pitched and medium-pitched gables. The roof has green asphalt shingles with exposed purlins and ridge poles. There is one side-slope, metal chimney. There is a covered porch on the north corner. The building is in excellent condition with minor alterations including an entryway. Overall dimensions are 9' 3" e-w, 25' 8" n-s.

Building #2a & #17 (date 1920's) is a rectangular, one-story, duplex guest cabin, constructed of logs with a low poured concrete foundation. The walls are round, peeled logs, with saddle corner-notching. Corners overlap about one foot. Chinking is cement. There is one slightly asymmetrical bay. There are two single-leaf front doors. They are wood panel types with nine lites each in a pattern of three over three. The roof is a medium-pitched gable with green asphalt shingles. There are exposed roof board ends, exposed purlins and exposed ridge poles. There are two chimneys, one metal and the other of unknown material. The building is in good condition. Alterations include the combining of two independent buildings at an early date. There is a wood deck-porch on the north end, and a cement slab on the south end of the building. Overall dimensions are 17' e-w and 33' 3" n-s.

Building #3 & #4 (date 1917) is a "T" shaped, one-story, duplex guest cabin. The principle construction is log, with a low foundation of stone and concrete. The siding is round, peeled logs with saddle-notched corners and caulk chinking. It has three asymmetrical bays. There are two single-leaf wood front doors. Each has one large panel with six lites in a pattern of three over three. The roof is a medium-pitched gable, with green asphalt shingles with exposed purlins, exposed rafter ends and exposed ridge poles. There are three side-slope metal chimneys. Jut-out bathrooms have been added on the southeast side. There is a tiny shed roof over the south entrance. The building is in good condition with minor alterations, including the caulk chinking. Overall dimensions are 22' sw to ne, 25' 4" nw to se.

Building #5, & #6 (date 1917) is an irregularly shaped, duplex guest cabin, one-story, of log construction. It has a low foundation of stone and concrete. Logs are un-hewn, with saddle-notched corners. There is cement chinking. The southeast and north bathroom jut-out additions are made of hand-peeled logs, cut thin and flat on one side (a kind of log slab siding.) The log siding is butted and overlapped at the corners on the additions. The asymmetrical building has three bays. The two single, wood, one panel front doors have six lites in a three over three pattern. The roof is a medium-pitched gable with asphalt shingles, exposed rafter ends, exposed purlins, and exposed ridge poles. There are tiny shed roofs over the entryways on the north and south. The building is in good condition with minor alterations, including the bathrooms. Overall dimensions are 29' 6" sw to ne, 21' 6" nw to se.

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Building #7 (date 1917) is a "T" shaped, one-story log guest cabin. It has a low foundation of stone and concrete. Logs are peeled, round, with saddle-notched corners and cement chinking. There are two asymmetrical bays. The single-leaf front door is a wood panel style with one lite. The roof is a medium-pitched gable, with green asphalt shingles. The roof has exposed roof board ends, exposed purlins and exposed ridge poles. There is one side-slope metal chimney. There is a covered porch on the west side. The building is in good condition with minor alterations, including a jut-out bathroom addition on the south side. Overall dimensions are 31' 2" e-w, 24' 5" n-s.

Building #8 (date 1920's) is a rectangular, one-story guest cabin of log construction, with a low foundation made of stone and concrete. Logs are peeled, round, with extended saddle corner-notching and cement chinking. There is one asymmetrical bay. The single-leaf wood front door has panels with six lites in a pattern of three over three. The roof is a medium-pitched gable with green asphalt shingles. There is a tiny shed roof on an addition made for a water heater, on the southwest corner. The roof has exposed roof boards, exposed purlins and exposed ridge poles. There are two chimneys, one on the side slope and one on the rear slope. They are metal and there is one pvc pipe vent. There is a tiny medium-pitched gable roof over the east entry, with a cement deck. The building is in excellent condition with minor alterations, including the water heater addition. Overall dimensions are 22' e-w, 14'6" n-s.

Building #9 & #10 (date ca.1940) is a duplex guest cabin that is a one-story, rectangular building of log construction, with a low foundation of concrete and stone. The logs are "D" shaped, commercially milled log siding, with overlapped corners with no notching. There is caulking between the logs. There are two asymmetrical bays. The roof is a medium-pitched gable and includes a shed roof on the east bathroom addition, which has unpeeled log slab siding. It has green asphalt shingles with exposed rafter ends and exposed purlins. It has four side-slope metal chimneys. The single-leaf wood front door has one lite. There are covered porches on the north and south. The building is in good condition with minor alterations. Overall dimensions are 37' sw-ne, 25'8" nw-se.

Building #11 & #12 (date 1917) is shaped as a central block with one wing, and is a one-story, duplex guest cabin. It is constructed of logs, with a low foundation of stone and concrete blocks. The walls are round, peeled logs, with some boxed square plank corners, others are boxed square on one side, with saddle-notched corners on others. Chinking is cement. The asymmetrical building has four bays. The roof is a medium-pitched gable with green asphalt shingles. The roof has exposed log ends, exposed purlins and exposed ridge poles. There are four metal side-slope chimneys. There are two wood, single-leaf front doors with one lite each. The building is in fair condition with no major alterations. There are small cement decks on the west and south. Overall dimensions are 34' 10" e-w, 20' n-s.

Building #12a (date 1917) is a square, one-story storage shed. It is log sided (with bark on) over frame planks that are full one by ten inches. Corners are made of two log slabs set at a right angle. There is no chinking. There are wood-shingled gable ends. There is no foundation. The building is set on four wood blocks. The symmetrical building has one bay. The roof is a medium-pitched gable, with wood shingles in poor condition over boards. There are exposed rafter ends and one side-slope metal chimney. The front door is homemade using one-inch by thirteen-inch vertical boards, with no lites and a porcelain, black doorknob. The building is in deteriorated condition and is missing about 20 percent of its log slab siding. There is a sign by the door that says "danger" in red. Overall dimensions are 12' 5" e-w, 12' 5" n-s.

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Building #16 (date ca. 1930's) is a square, one-story, wood-frame guest cabin with an early style of log siding, commercially milled, without tongue-in-groove. The corners are boxed square on the front, and are mitred on the back. There is no chinking. The foundation is concrete, stone and concrete block. There are three symmetrical bays. The single-leaf front door is wood. The medium-pitched gable roof has green asphalt shingles with exposed rafter ends and one side-slope metal chimney. There is a wood deck on the east side. The building is in good condition with moderate alterations, including the back 4' 10" of the building. Overall dimensions are 19' nw-se, 10' 5" sw-ne.

Building #18 (date ca. 1920's) is a rectangular, one-story, log guest cabin, with a low foundation of concrete and rock. The walls are unpeeled, round logs with saddle-notched-corners and cement chinking. There are two asymmetrical bays. The roof is a steep-pitched gable with green asphalt shingles, and exposed roof board ends, exposed purlins and exposed ridge poles. There are no chimneys or vents. The single-leaf front door is homemade of logs and pine boards. The west side has a good-sized set of poured concrete steps with log banister. The building is in good condition with minor alterations. Overall dimensions 10' n-s, 12' 6" e-w.

Building #18a (date ca. 1945) is a rectangular, one-story bunkhouse. It is clad with commercially milled tongue-in-groove log siding. The back half of the foundation is stone and concrete, and the front half is poured concrete. There is a partial crawl space on the back. The front gable end is made of peeled log-slab siding in a vertical pattern. The back gable end had the same commercially milled siding as the exterior walls. Corners are cut at 45-degree angles. There is no chinking. The symmetrical building has one bay. The single-leaf front door is wood with one panel and two lites in a one over one pattern. The roof is a medium-pitched gable, with asphalt shingles, exposed rafter ends, and four side-slope metal chimneys. The front of the building has a covered porch. The building is in good condition with moderate alterations, the front half dates later in time than the back half. Overall dimensions are 38' 4" n-s, 14' 7" e-w.

Building #19 (date ca. 1920's) is a rectangular, one-story, wood frame, duplex guest cabin. It has log-slab siding with the bark removed. It has a low foundation of poured concrete. The gable ends are clad with vertical log-slab siding. Corners are mitred. On the back of the building, the corners are simply overlapped and flat-cut. There is no chinking. The slightly asymmetrical building has five bays. The two single-leaf front doors are wood, with one panel each, and two lites each. The roof is a medium to steeply-pitched gable, with a shed roof over the porch along the east side. There is one metal chimney on the front slope of the roof. The building is in good condition with no alterations noted. Overall dimensions are 16' 3" nw-se, 36' 6" sw-ne.

Building #20 (date ca. 1917) is an old garage with the east part built into a hill. It is rectangular, one-story, of log construction. The low foundation is of concrete and stone. The logs are round, peeled, with saddle-notched corners. Slab-log siding with the bark on, is placed vertically on the gable ends. There is a small, log retaining wall to the north. There is one symmetrical bay. There are two sets of double garage doors made of vertical boards and hung with large metal hinges on the front center of the building. The roof is a medium-pitched gable, with green asphalt shingles and exposed rafter ends. The building is in fair condition with no alterations noted. Overall dimensions are 20' n-s, 13' e-w.

Building #20a (date ca. 1940) is a rectangular, one-story, wood-frame well house. It appears to have no foundation and is set directly on the soil, although there may be buried rocks at the corners. Siding is horizontal boards. The building has one symmetrical bay. The single-leaf front door is made of vertical wood boards. The roof is a steeply-pitched gable, with wood

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shingles and exposed rafter ends. The building is in good condition and shows no alterations. Overall dimensions are 3' 7" n-s, 4' 6" e-w.

Non-Contributing Buildings and Structures

Building #21 & #2 (date 1917, 1926, 1947, 1966, 1975, 1986, 1992) is the grand lodge. Since about half of the building was built in the 1970's, 1980's and 1990's, it is generally not old enough to be contributing. It is partly frame construction and partly log. Its overall look and design is dude ranch rustic, and its massing, scale and detailing are appropriate for the site. Overall dimensions are 112' 6" n-s, 52' e-w.

Building #22 (date 1993, 1994) is a guest cabin.

Building #24 (date 1970's) is the barn.

Building #25 (date recent) new garage and girls' bunkhouse.

Structure (date recent) is a cellar.

Structure (date recent) is a modern, homemade foot bridge.

Statement of Significance

The Absaroka Mountain Lodge is historically significant, as it is an operational, nearly intact representation of Western dude ranching as it arose and evolved in Wyoming, in the first half of the twentieth century. Its rich history epitomizes the entrepreneurial resourcefulness of the early twentieth century settlers of the Cody, Wyoming, region as they recognized their unique chance to provide recreational opportunities in previously inaccessible areas. Yellowstone became this country's first national park in 1872; but it was decades later, within the social context of an emerging middle class, the rise of the automobile, and the 'good roads' movement, that the "Cody Road" into Yellowstone precipitated the emergence of dude ranches: places to provide shelter and recreational opportunities to an increasingly mobile and affluent public eager to explore this nation's natural wonders.

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Historical Background and Significance

The grand lodge at Absaroka Mountain Lodge was built over six decades, beginning in 1917. Concerning the other buildings that remain at the site today, 39% were built in 1917, 22% in the 1920's, 6% in the 1930's, 16% in the 1940's, 6% in the 1970's, and 11% in the 1990's.

Absaroka Lodge probably originated in August 1917, when Earl F. Crouch obtained a permit for the site from the Shoshone National Forest. The original site name was Gunbarrel Lodge from 1917 to 1925. In 1925, it was bought by Tracy Hill (Crouch's step-son) and Earl and Mildred Martin. In 1927 Wood and Martin bought the dude ranch. The Martins and Earl Hayner bought the place in 1928. Later, Earl Hayner took over full ownership and named the place the LV Bar Ranch in 1930. It was later named Absaroka Mountain Lodge. Earl Hayner retained ownership until 1946. "Absaroka" is a Crow Indian word for "home place." In 1946, it was sold to Victor Heyliger and Forest A. Jordan, who obtained a permit in 1947 from Shoshone National Forest. They operated the place as Absaroka Lodge Camp for Boys. It was probably during that time that Hans Snortland, a Norwegian furniture maker and carpenter, worked at the site using lumber produced at Red Star Sawmill, located at Shoshone Lodge, a few miles away.

In 1951, Peg and Fred Garlow (Buffalo Bill Cody's grandson) bought the dude ranch, obtaining their permit in 1952. In the 1970's, 1980's and 1990's, there was a series of owners including Dan Estes, David and Virginia Brannon, Michael J. and Marian Becker, Absaroka Mountain Lodge (Jensen-Ohlson,) Absaroka Mountain Enterprises (Schmaltz) and David and Catherine Sweet. Robert R. Kudelski was President of Absaroka Lodge from 1997 to 2000. New owners are Scott and Patti Bates, who own the buildings and structures at the site. Wilderness Enterprises, Inc. dba Absaroka Mountain Lodge is currently open from May to October and specializes in horseback riding, fishing, hiking, pack trips, badminton, river rafting, cookouts, campfire singing, camp outs, playground activities and mountaineering. Throughout its long history, Absaroka Mountain Lodge's activities have been typical of dude ranches for the state. Additionally, the contributing buildings have retained their dude ranch rustic appearance and the setting remains remote and ruggedly beautiful.

The evolution of Absaroka Mountain Lodge and the other historic dude ranches on the old "Cody Road" portion of the Yellowstone Highway coincides with growing American affluence and the availability of automobiles. Prior to this, Yellowstone was only accessible to the very rich who hired camping companies to escort them on lengthy park excursions. The "Cody Road" stretching between Cody, Wyoming and the East Gate of Yellowstone accommodated increasing numbers of travelers eager to see the wonders of our nation's first national park. The "good roads" movement of the early 1900's was a loose confederation of civic organizations and private individuals dedicated to the development of a well-maintained network of roads between population centers and the growing number of national parks in the West. Its motivation was to draw "auto-tourists" to previously inaccessible areas. As such, the movement represents an early twentieth century version of community and economic development.

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The Cody Road has been heavily traveled since it first opened in 1904 and, as of 2002, accommodates approximately 250,000 tourists during the summer season. These dude ranches were also aided in the first half of the century by the Chicago, Burlington & Quincy Railroad, which brought “dudes” to “the Buffalo Bill Country” at Cody, a jumping-off spot for dude ranches within a 50-mile radius of the depot. Both the tourism industry and one of its components, Western dude ranching, began in Wyoming shortly after the turn of the century. Dude ranching’s period of significance in Wyoming lasted from 1904 through 1950. By 1937 there were about 100 dude ranches in Wyoming; the same number exists today. While the total number of beds at dude ranches in Wyoming is small, the Dude Ranching Associations of both Wyoming and Colorado emphasize that dude ranching is very “big on image and the rest of tourism rides on its coat-tails.”

There were three general periods when dude ranching was not especially profitable: from 1917 to 1919 during World War I, from October 1929 until the mid-1930’s because of the Great Depression, and from about 1940 to 1945 because of World War II. Despite these setbacks, dude ranching has been important to the state’s economy. One of the reasons is that many of the guests are from a higher socio-economic class than the average tourist. For example, even though economic times were not exactly robust in 1937, one Wyoming newspaper reported that, “According to a recent issue of the Wall Street Journal, 97 dude ranches in Wyoming did a business in 1937 of approximately \$2,000,000. Guests of these ranches [are] of the wealthy class for the most part, [and] are said to spend an average of close to \$500 each during the last season. Most years it takes several ‘beef critters’ to clear that much for a rancher.” The article goes on to say that dude ranching appeared to have so much potential in the growth of Wyoming’s economy, that the University of Wyoming, in 1935, started a course in recreational ranching, including “institutional management, cuisine, animal production, zoology, geology, western lore, veterinary science and agronomy.” In 1937 rates at Wyoming dude ranches ranged from \$20 to \$77 per week, averaging around \$40.

Throughout its long history, Absaroka Mountain Lodge’s activities have been typical of dude ranches for the state. Additionally, the contributing buildings have retained their dude ranch rustic appearance, and the setting remains remote and ruggedly beautiful. It remains as one of the significant historic dude ranches along the Yellowstone Highway (U.S. Highway 14-16-20) within the Shoshone National Forest. During its period of significance between 1917 and 1950, it reflected the growing mobility and affluence of the American public, in its quest for new recreational opportunities and experiences.

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Personal communication from Gloria Schmitt (former owner of Goff Creek Lodge) to Joanita Monteith, telephone 2 P.M., October 13, 1999.

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Personal communication from Ellis Smith (former owner of UXU Ranch) to Jeannie Cook and Joanita Monteith, interview at Park County Court House, Cody, WY, October 1, 1999.

Personal communication from Phil Lamb (co-owner of Elephant Head Lodge) to Jeannie Cook and Joanita Monteith about Elephant Head Lodge, October 1999. Personal communication from Ellis Smith (former owner of UXU Ranch) to Jeannie Cook and Joanita Monteith, interview at Park County Court House, Cody, WY, October 1, 1999.

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Verbal Boundary Description

The boundary of the nominated property is delineated on the attached map by the point whose vertice is marked by the following UTM reference points: A 12 596250 4923150.

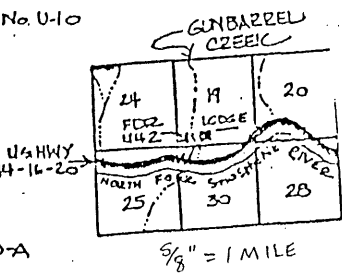
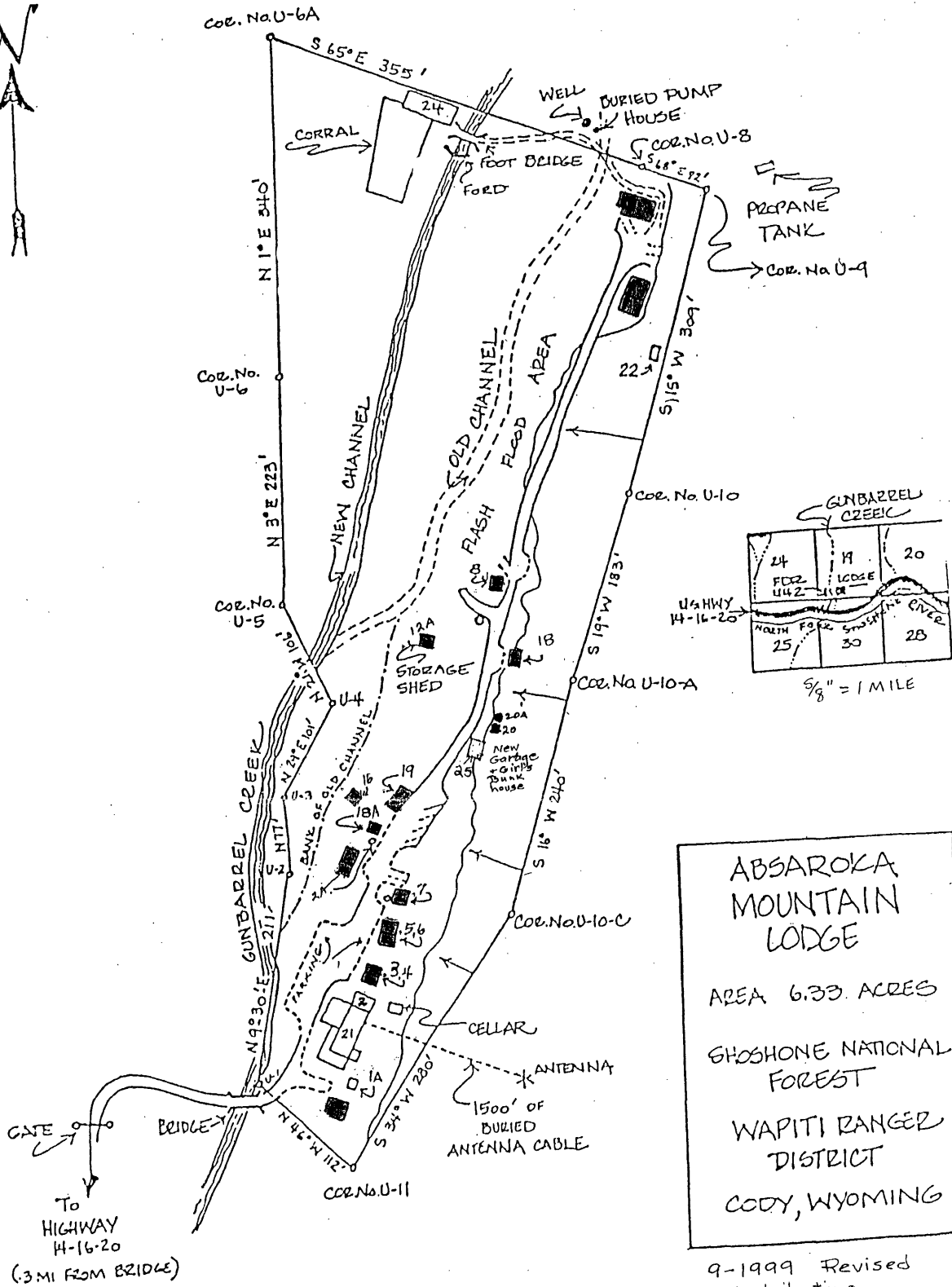
Public Land Survey System (Township and Range)

Township 52 North Range 107 West

E1/2 SE1/4 SW1/4 SW1/4 Section 19

Boundary Justification

The nominated property includes the entire parcel historically leased by the Shoshone National Forest to the Wilderness Enterprises, Inc. dba Absaroka Mountain Lodge and its successors.



ABSAROKA MOUNTAIN LODGE
 AREA 6.33 ACRES
 SHOSHONE NATIONAL FOREST
 WAPITI RANGER DISTRICT
 CODY, WYOMING

9-1999 Revised
 ■ Contributing
 Not to scale

Absaroka Mtn. Lodge
 1231 North Fork Highway
 Cody, WY 82414
 Park County
 Wyoming

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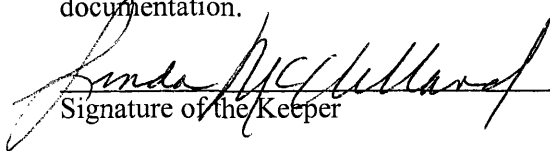
SUPPLEMENTARY LISTING RECORD

NRIS Reference Number: 03001105
Property Name: Absaroka Mountain Lodge

County: Park State: Wyoming

Multiple Name: Dude Ranches along the Yellowstone Highway in the Shoshone National Forest
MPS

This property is listed in the National Register of Historic Places in accordance with the attached nomination documentation subject to the following exceptions, exclusions, or amendments, notwithstanding the National Park Service certification included in the nomination documentation.


Signature of the Keeper

October 30, 2003
Date of Action

Amended Items in Nomination:

Section 3: State/Federal Agency Certification

The recommended level of significance is hereby changed to "statewide" to reflect the level supported by the narrative statement of significance.

The U.S. Forest Service Historic Preservation Office was notified of this amendment.

DISTRIBUTION:

- National Register property file**
- Nominating Authority (without nomination attachment)**