

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

For NPS use only

National Register of Historic Places  
Inventory—Nomination Form

received

date entered

See instructions in *How to Complete National Register Forms*  
Type all entries—complete applicable sections

1. Name

historic Kennecott Mines

and/or common Kennecott

2. Location

street & number North bank, National Creek, East of Kennicott Glacier, Wrangell Mountains  
not for publication

city, town Kennecott X vicinity of

state Alaska code 02 county Cordova-McCarthy Division code 080

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> district	<input type="checkbox"/> public	<input type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture
<input type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input type="checkbox"/> commercial
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input type="checkbox"/> educational
<input type="checkbox"/> site	<b>Public Acquisition</b>	<b>Accessible</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment
<input type="checkbox"/> object	<input type="checkbox"/> in process	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government
	<input type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial
		<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military
			<input type="checkbox"/> museum
			<input type="checkbox"/> park
			<input type="checkbox"/> private residence
			<input type="checkbox"/> religious
			<input type="checkbox"/> scientific
			<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> other: none

4. Owner of Property

name The Great Kennecott Land Company, Et al. (see continuation sheet)

street & number 555 West Northern Lights Blvd., Suite 211

city, town Anchorage vicinity of state Alaska 99503

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. District Recorder

street & number P.O. Box 86

city, town Glennallen state Alaska 99538

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title Alaska Heritage Resource Survey (AHRs) has this property been determined eligible?  yes  no

date February 2, 1972 federal  state  county  local

depository for survey records Office of History and Archeology, State of Alaska

city, town Anchorage state Alaska

# 7. Description

**Condition**  
 excellent to  deteriorated  
 good  ruins  
 fair  unexposed

**Check one**  
 unaltered  
 altered

**Check one**  
 original site  
 moved date \_\_\_\_\_

## Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

The Kennecott National Historic Landmark nomination encompasses the total of the nationally significant Kennecott Mines National Register District as recorded on the National Register of Historic Places in 1978. The district comprises the isolated and uninhabited mining camp located adjacent to the Kennicott\* Glacier and on the west slope of Bonanza Ridge in the Wrangell Mountains, Alaska. The nomination site is in the center of Wrangell-St. Elias National Park, 230 airmiles east of Anchorage, Alaska, and is without direct air or surface vehicle connection. A dirt road, following an abandoned railroad grade which once connected Kennecott with civilization and commerce (the Copper River & Northwestern Railroad), stops four miles south at the former satellite community of McCarthy.

Although abandoned for nearly fifty years, Kennecott remains an unanticipated, spectacular industrial and residential sprawl in a glacial wilderness setting. The geographic setting dominates the site. To the north stand Mount Blackburn at 16,390 feet and Mount Regal at 13,845 feet. The adjacent Kennicott Glacier drains into the nearby Chitina River Valley, a ten-to-twenty mile wide lowland of spruce and birch, cut by the river and its tributaries. The district stands at the edge of this lowland at 2200 feet; the broad valley to the south, the glacier to the west, and the mountains to the north and east.

The nomination site encompasses the total of the Kennecott National Register District as recorded on the National Register of Historic Places in 1978. The site consists of the mill town and its 45 major structures and approximately 25 outbuildings, the tramway system up the mountain slope, the mines and camps at Bonanza, Glacier, Jumbo, and Erie, and the surface indications of the extensive Kennecott Mines Company operation.

### The Milltown

The central industrial zone of the Kennecott milltown includes the concentration mill and its associated structures. The fourteen story woodframe mill with its many gables and dormers, its location on the slope above the railroad grade, and its many chutes and bins, is the dominant structure at Kennecott. In it worked half of the employees of the camp. The concentrator contains all of its original machinery: two Buchanon jaw crushers, a Stevens-Adamson Apron Feeder, a Symons Crusher,

## 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-1938	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		

**Specific dates** 1901 - 1938

**Builder/Architect** Kennecott Mines Company, Et al.

### Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

During the two decade period divided by World War I, when the United States produced more than half the world's copper, the mines at Kennecott, Alaska were among the nation's largest, and contained the last of the great high grade copper ore deposits discovered in the American West. Just as mining technology was gearing up to exploit the low-grade ores that remained in the West, the Kennecott mines exposed an ore body unequaled anywhere in the twentieth century. Superlatives were used by mining journals and mining engineers to describe the rich deposit found at the Kennecott mine. Competition for the ownership and the development of the mine affected territorial and national politics and led to the Ballinger-Pinchot affair.

Unlike most Western mining companies capable of working with only high grade ore deposits, the Kennecott Copper Corporation (backed by the Guggenheims) was able to reorient into an international conglomerate owning long-term, low grade ore mines. By designing the world's first ammonia-leaching plant at the Kennecott site, the corporation was able to extract higher concentrates of ore from the low-grade ores which were once discarded, ensuring further profits. Increased profits allowed investment and expansion elsewhere.

The camp is little changed since the 1938 closing and today provides a window into the technology and work environment of the early twentieth century. Technological artifacts remain in situ due to the site's remoteness. The mining camp, with its striking red buildings with white trim, dominated by the woodframe fourteen-story concentrator, is overwhelmed by the Kennicott Glacier and the Wrangell Mountains, which stand 14,000 feet above the camp. The camp is within the Wrangell-St. Elias National Park and Preserve/Kluane National Park (Canada), a World Heritage Site noted for its geology. The geologic formation at Bonanza Ridge created the unique high grade Kennecott ore body.

### HISTORY

On July 4, 1900, Clarence Warner and "Tarantula Jack" Smith staked the Bonanza mine outcrop. By mid-August they and nine of their partners had

# 9. Major Bibliographical References

See continuation sheet

# 10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of nominated property +/- 7,700 acres

Quadrangle name McCarthy

Quadrangle scale 1:250,000

UTM References

A	0 7	3 9 8 8 5 0	6 8 1 6 9 7 8
	Zone	Easting	Northing

B	0 7	3 9 8 0 6 2	6 8 2 5 0 8 7
	Zone	Easting	Northing

C	0 7	4 0 2 9 7 7	6 8 2 3 0 7 8
---	-----	-------------	---------------

D	0 7	4 0 3 1 6 2	6 8 1 7 8 8 3
---	-----	-------------	---------------

E			
---	--	--	--

F			
---	--	--	--

G			
---	--	--	--

H			
---	--	--	--

Verbal boundary description and justification

See continuation sheet

List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

state	code	county	code
-------	------	--------	------

state	code	county	code
-------	------	--------	------

# 11. Form Prepared By

name/title See continuation sheet

organization date

street & number telephone

city or town state

# 12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

\_\_\_ national \_\_\_ state \_\_\_ local

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

title date

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I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register

date

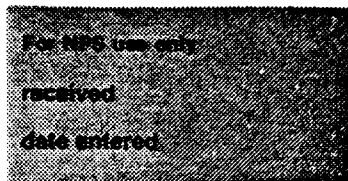
Keeper of the National Register

Attest: date

Chief of Registration

United States Department of the Interior  
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[A] Kennecott

Mr. James Harrower "Mr. Harrower"  
The Great Kennicott Land Co.  
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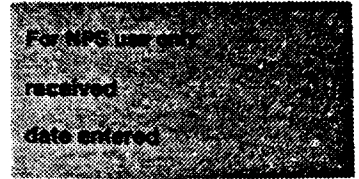
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[A] Kennecott

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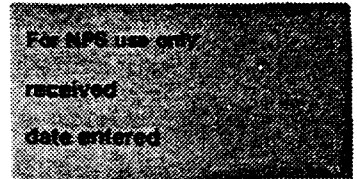
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[A] Kennecott

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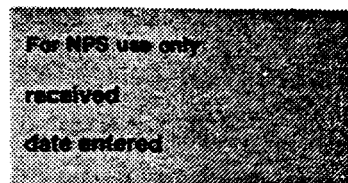
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[A] Kennecott

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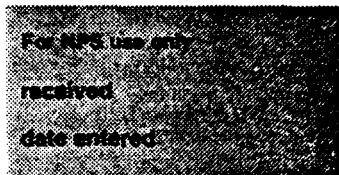
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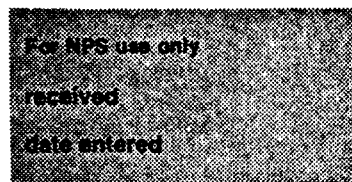
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Hancock Jigs, Colorado Impact Screens, Wilfley tables, a Door Thickener, ore bins, and sackers. The concentrator is a superlative reminder of turn-of-the-century mining technology and working conditions in Western mining camps. Built in 1910-1911, it received alterations and was doubled in size and capacity during World War I. It was little changed after 1924 and closed in 1938. Copper ore, transported from the mines above the mill, was concentrated into usable minerals through a long series of mechanical processes before undergoing chemical separation in the leaching plant.

The leaching plant stands immediately below the concentrator. A jumble of additions and extensions, it was proof of the Kennecott Company's growth and concern for efficiency. The plant, the world's first commercial ammonia leaching plant, went into operation in 1916. It allowed recovery of high percentage copper ore from ore which had formerly been considered waste rock. The leaching plant was enlarged in 1917 and again in 1918 to accommodate increased production.

The machine shop, built in 1916, is level with the grade on the west side of the main road. It is north of the leaching plant and south of the power plant. It is distinctive in design with six front bays of six-over-six light, double hung sash set in pairs. From the machine shop came the fabrication and repair of the everyday mechanical equipment necessary for the mining operation.

The power plant generated the lifeblood energy to power the industrial machinery. Electricity and steam heat were produced here and sent to almost every building in the mining camp. Characterized by four towering black smokestacks, the power plant was constructed in three distinct phases. The interior has a large open floor plan with a raised concrete platform forming a second floor in the west addition. Narrow sunken troughs, set into the floor, retain the piping which carries the steam from the plant. Still in place is an excellent and rare example of a large Pelton Water Turbine Generator, an Allis-Chalmers Steam Turbo-Generator, and related boilers, steam compressors, and power transmission equipment.

The general office completes the center industrial zone. Kennecott was formally established in 1906 with the construction of the log portion of the structure. As the mining operation expanded, four additions

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completed the present building. The office was the administrative nucleus for the mining operation. The building contains the company vault and still retains everyday working paper documents from the Kennecott operation.

Surrounding the industrial buildings and covering hundreds of acres of land are found the remainder of the milltown buildings. To the north of the concentrator are the railroad yard warehouses, oil storage tanks, and cottages for both railroad and mill staffs. Several of the smaller cottages have been privately restored to their former condition. To the south of the concentrator and adjacent to the abandoned railroad grade are the camp support buildings: the hospital, company stores, dairy, school, cemetery, and large three-story bunkhouses. To the north are found the homes of the Kennecott Company officials in a large residential area along a street called "Silk Stocking Loop." A tennis court, a bridge across National Creek, and a walkway lay beyond the loop.

The all woodframe Kennecott company town, every building painted red with white trim, remains a complete unit in an inspiring natural setting. There are no non-contributing structures. All were built from 1907 to 1925 and range in condition from excellent to ruinous. Several structures are restored under terms of deed restrictions placed at the time of their sale to private individuals.

### Tramways

In order to transport ore from the mines at 6600 feet to the mill at 2200 feet, four tram lines were built to the Bonanza (16,000 feet long), Jumbo (16,000 feet long), Erie and Glacier mines. They utilized the Blichert aerial system and they were constructed in 1909, 1915, 1916, and 1918, respectively. Towers and tension stations stand as well as the Angle Station on the line to the Bonanza mine and the Junction Station connecting the Glacier line to the Jumbo tram. A simple gravity tramway ran from the Erie mine 350 feet to a wagon road which extended from the milltown.

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Mine Camps

At each of the mines stood bunkhouses, mine shops, and tramway terminals. At Bonanza Camp the woodframe tramway terminus and one bunkhouse stand in deteriorated condition. Glacier Camp consists of ruins of the tramway terminus and tent platforms. Jumbo Camp, located on a talus slope, has slid down the slope of Castle Peak. One standing bunkhouse remains among the ruins on the shifting rock. Erie Camp, perched on a rugged ridge, has a three-story bunkhouse complete with recreation room and billiard table with classic lion feet.

\* Kennicott Glacier was named after Alaska explorer Robert Kennicott. The name Kennecott is derived from a misspelling of the local name.

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Building Inventory

dairy barn  
storage building  
tent cottage  
21 cottages  
apartment house  
recreation hall  
Kennecott school  
company store  
carpentry shop  
sauna  
National Creek bunkhouse  
east bunkhouse  
hospital  
assay office  
depot  
general office  
concentration mill  
leaching plant  
machine shop  
power plant  
steel and sack storage shed  
electric shop  
Kennecott cemetary  
tramway system with related structures  
4 mines with related structures  
miscellaneous ruins

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staked much of the ground which would become known as the Kennecott mines. A young mining engineer, Stephen Birch, was in the area and acquired options on the claims. Backed by Henry O. Havemeyer, a New York capitalist, Birch formed the Alaska Copper and Coal Company which was promptly sued by others claiming ownership of the deposit. From 1901-1904 the Chitina Exploration Company, which claimed to have grubstaked the prospectors, and the Copper River Mining Company, which claimed legal title, dragged the suit through territorial and federal court and were denied judgement in their favor. The Supreme Court of the United States refused to hear the case.

In 1905 the Alaska Copper and Coal Company was reorganized as the Kennecott Mines Company. The Guggenheim family, controllers of the American Smelting & Refining Company smelter monopoly, and J.P. Morgan, another wealthy industrial investor, entered the enterprise and organized the "Alaska Syndicate" to fund the mine's development. Between 1905 and 1911, the syndicate spent \$25 million to build mine and mill works, a 196-mile railroad, and organize a steamship line connecting the copper port of Cordova with ASARCO's Tacoma smelter. All this occurred prior to the first shipment of copper.

On April 8, 1911, the first trainload of copper, worth \$250,000, was shipped from Kennecott in 32 railroad cars. By 1916 production had reached 108,372,783 pounds of copper worth \$28,042,396. Kennecott was classed among the nation's largest mines, with those at Butte, Montana, Bisbee, Arizona, and Bingham Canyon, Utah. During 1915-1922 it ranked 3rd to 7th in production. With the building and operation of the mines and their supply line - the Copper River and Northwestern Railway - this was the largest, most costly, and complex mining enterprise ever in Alaska. But Kennecott's significance lies more in the quality of ore. Despite the general assumption that Alaska's gold was preeminent, no single Alaskan placer gold district or gold lode entity was as productive of mineral wealth as the Kennecott.

On April 12, 1915, the Kennecott Copper Corporation was formed by the Guggenheim and Morgan interests. Stephen Birch became the first president and saw to the transfer of the Alaska Syndicate holdings--the Kennecott Mines Company, the Copper River and Northwestern Railway, the Alaska Steamship Company, and the Beatson Copper Company, all in Alaska--into the new corporation. The phenomenal profits from the Alaska

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mine provided the capital to fund Kennecott's purchase of the Bingham Canyon mine in Utah and the Utah Copper Company, as well as the Braden Copper Company and other low-grade mines in Nevada, Arizona, and New Mexico. By the 1930s, while the deposit in Alaska was nearing exhaustion, the corporation had expanded to become the nation's largest copper company and an international force in the metals market. The Kennecott business organization had met the shifting realities of the mining world.

The Kennecott deposit, though rich, proved limited in extent. The operation closed in 1938 (producing an estimated \$200 to 300 million worth of copper in 28 years); the company vacated the camp and donated its railroad to the territory.

The structures at Kennecott, cumulatively, are a true vestige of an early twentieth century copper mining camp. The mill represents mining technology of the era. The copper industry was transformed during the first quarter of the twentieth-century by the ability to work large deposits of low grade ore by concentrating 2% or lower grade ore up to 50% to 80% copper concentrate, which then went to the smelter. Among other innovations were "leaching," where chemicals acted to dissolve out the mineral, then precipitate it into a concentrate, and "flotation," where oil or grease was used to separate, through a bubbling action, the mineral from its host rock. The ammonia leaching process was first successfully used on a commercial scale at Kennecott. E. Tappan Stannard perfected the process in 1915 and enabled the company to work its "low grade" (8%) ores. A flotation plant, planned earlier but delayed because of litigation between the patent holder and a number of western mining companies, was built in 1922-1923 (the year of an out of court settlement). Thus by 1924 the milling plant equalled, if not in size at least in function, all western copper mills. That year was the last year of major mining discoveries at Kennecott.



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BIBLIOGRAPHY

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National Park Service

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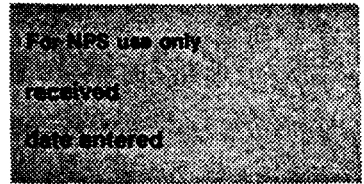
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Property Description

Beginning at the center point of the north end of the Copper River & Northwestern Railway roadbed bridge spanning National Creek; thence S 30 00'W, 1,100 meters to point "A"; thence N 06 30'W, 8,100 meters to point "B"; thence S 68 00"E, 5,300 meters to point "C"; thence S 01 30'E, 5,200 meters to point "D"; thence S 79 00'W, 4,200 meters to point "A".

Acreage: +/- 7,700 acres.

Quadrangle Name: McCarthy (Alaska Topographic Series)

Quadrangle Scale: 1:250,000

UTM References:

X	Zone	Easting	Northing
A	07	398850	6816978
B	07	398062	6825087
C	07	402977	6823078
D	07	403162	6817883

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National Park Service**

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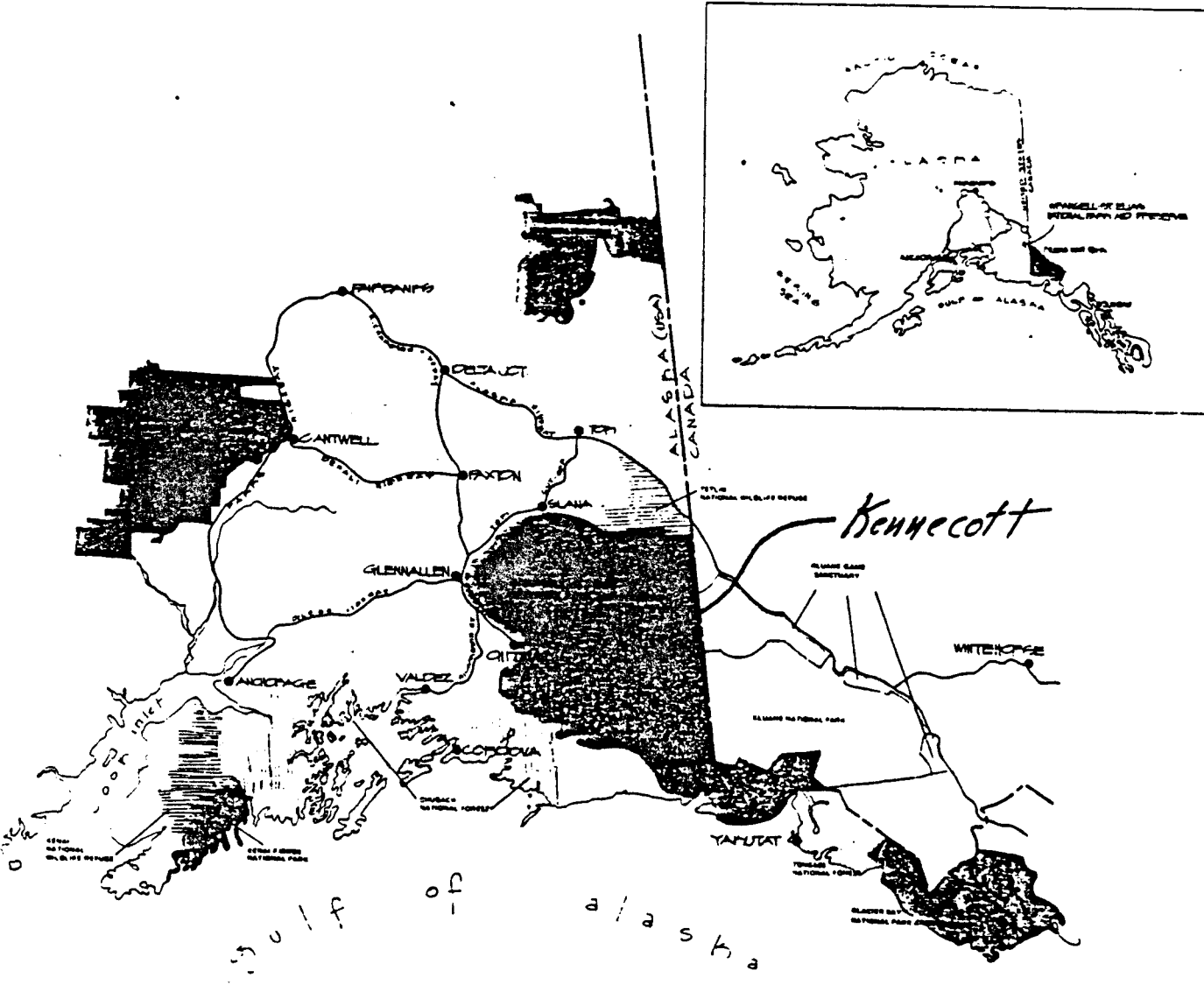
Item number 11

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Nomination form prepared by:

Robert Pierce  
Administrator  
National Park Trust  
National Parks and Conservation Association  
1701 Eighteenth Street, N.W.  
Washington, D.C. 20009

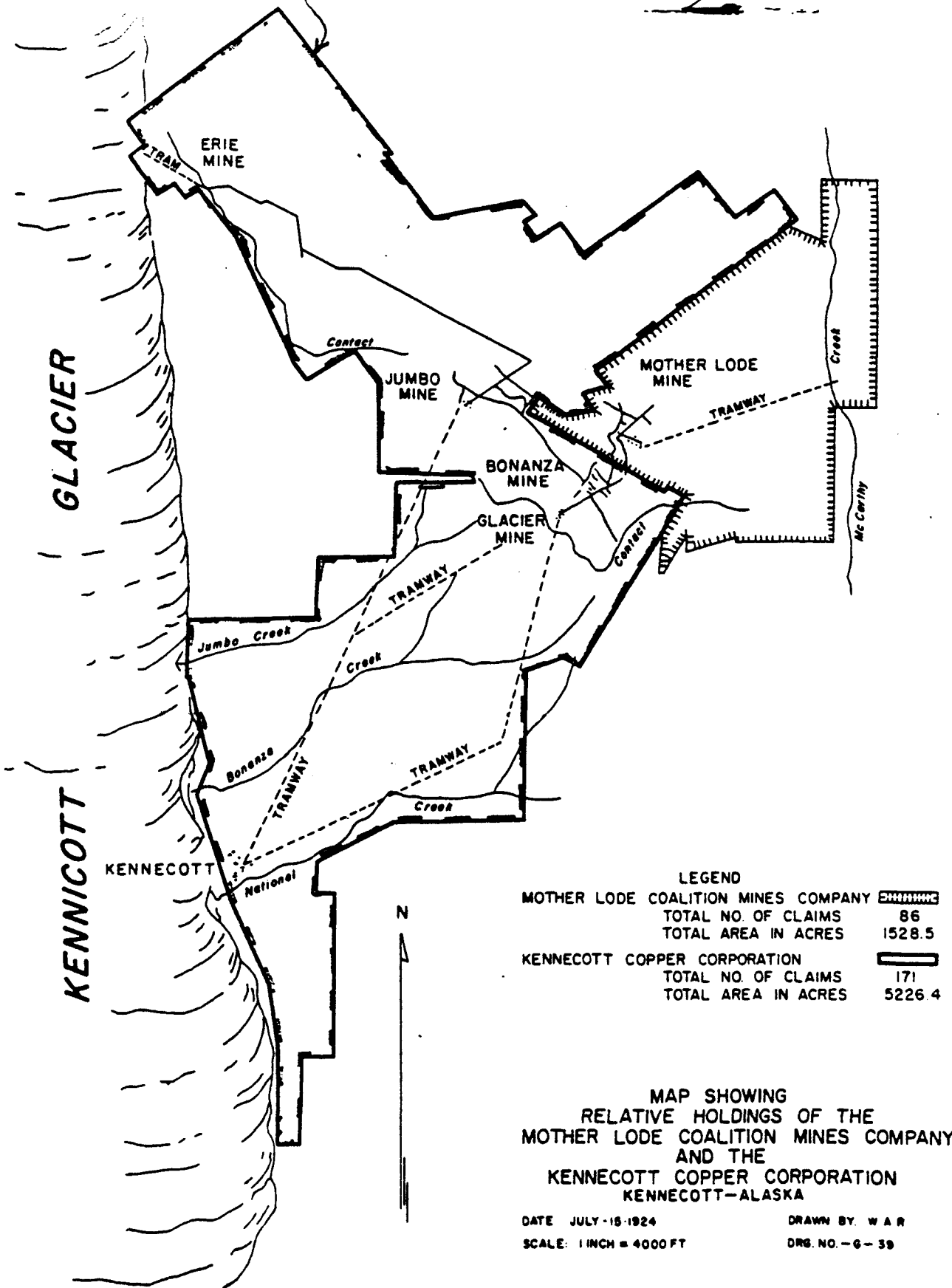
Robert Spude  
Regional Historian  
Alaska Regional Office  
National Park Service  
2525 Gambell Street  
Anchorage, Alaska 99504





# REGION

WYANGELL-ST ELIAS NATIONAL PARK AND PRESERVE  
 UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR WILDLIFE SERVICE  
 1981 42813C  
 58C1 JAN 81

*Kennecott boundary*



LEGEND

MOTHER LODE COALITION MINES COMPANY	
TOTAL NO. OF CLAIMS	86
TOTAL AREA IN ACRES	1528.5
KENNECOTT COPPER CORPORATION	
TOTAL NO. OF CLAIMS	171
TOTAL AREA IN ACRES	5226.4

MAP SHOWING  
 RELATIVE HOLDINGS OF THE  
 MOTHER LODE COALITION MINES COMPANY  
 AND THE  
 KENNECOTT COPPER CORPORATION  
 KENNECOTT-ALASKA

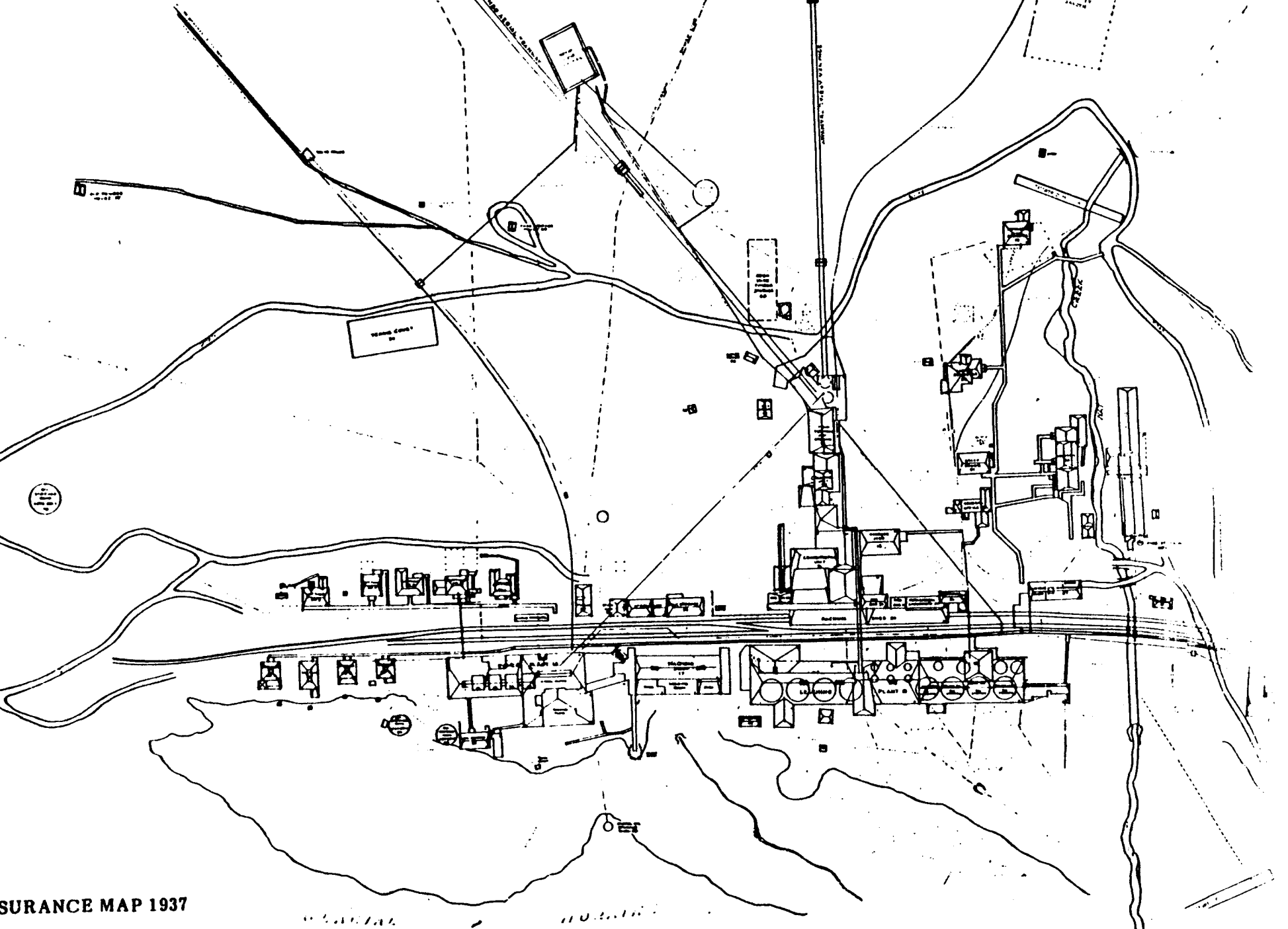
DATE JULY-15-1924

DRAWN BY. W A R

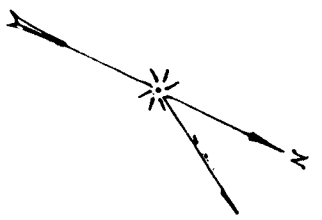
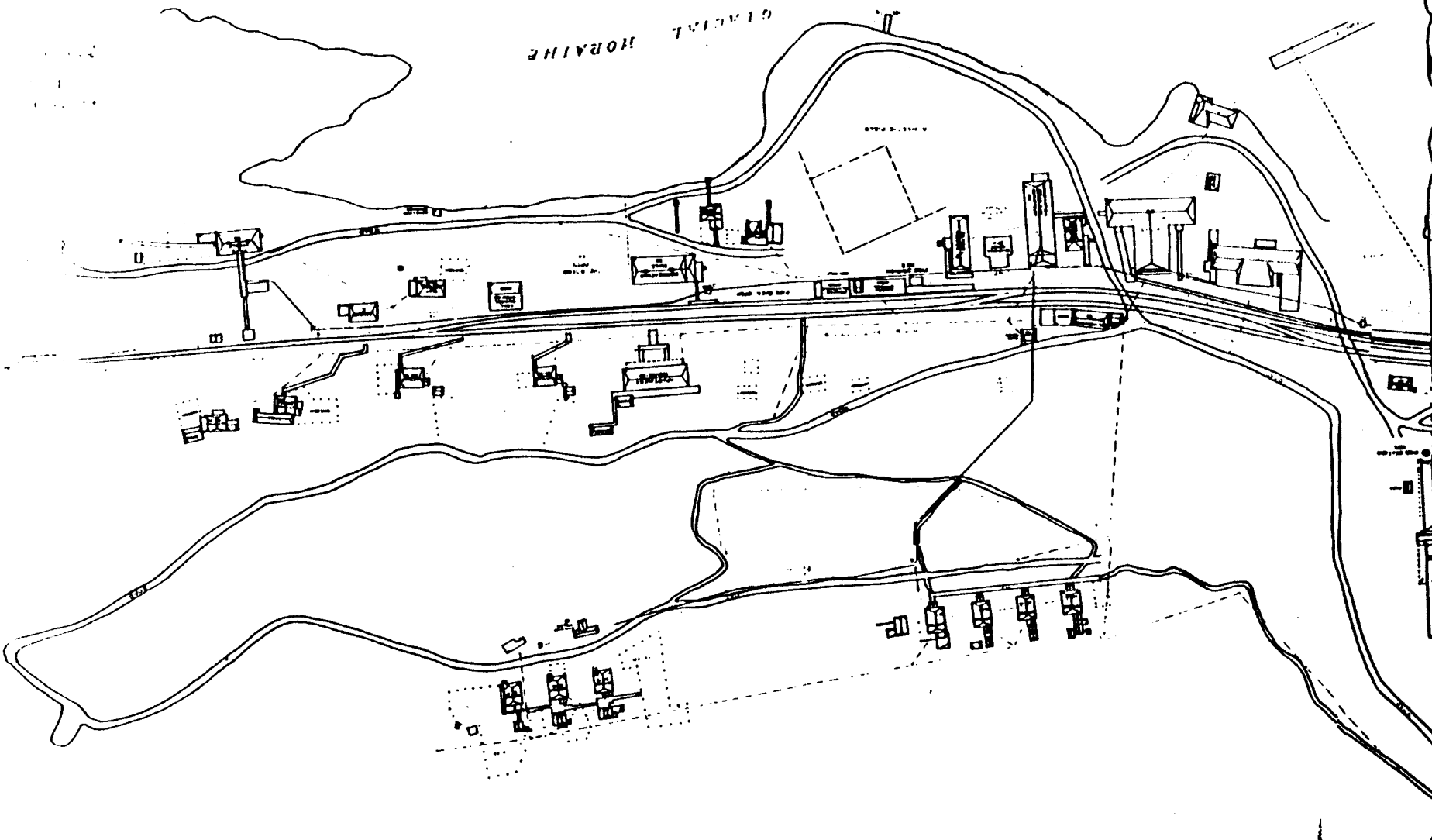
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DRG. NO. - 6 - 39

SURANCE MAP 1937



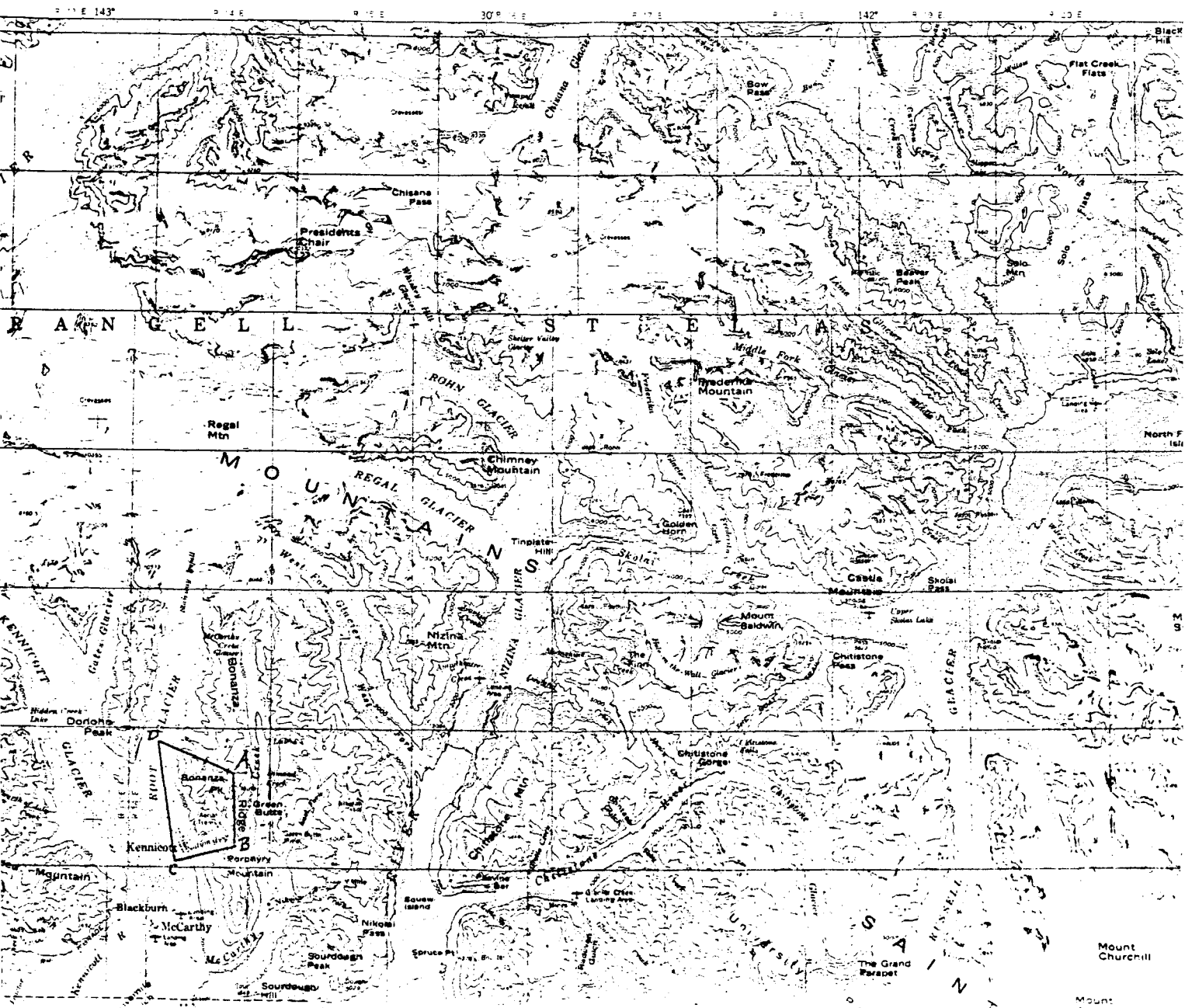
GENERAL HORAIHE



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# MCCARTHY





Contemporary political cartoon of  
Guggenmorgan monster grabbing Alaska  
while Uncle Sam eats gum drops. ca. 1910

From Sullivan, Kennecott, 1981