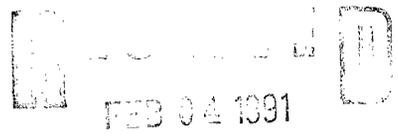


NPS Form 10-900  
(Rev. 8-86)

OMB No. 1024-0018

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service



NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
REGISTRATION FORM

NATIONAL  
REGISTER

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1. Name of Property

=====

historic name: Big Delta Historic District

other name/site number: Rika's Landing Road House  
Big Delta State Historical Park  
AHRS Site No. XBD-132

=====

2. Location

=====

street & number: Mile 274.5 Richardson Highway not for publication: n/a

city/town: Delta Junction vicinity: x

state: Alaska county: Southeast Fairbanks code: 240 zip code: 99737

=====

3. Classification

=====

Ownership of Property: Public - state

Category of Property: District

Number of Resources within Property:

Contributing	Noncontributing	
<u>8</u>	<u>4</u>	buildings
<u>5</u>	<u>2</u>	sites
<u>5</u>	<u>3</u>	structures
<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	objects
<u>18</u>	<u>9</u>	<b>Total</b>

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register: 1

Name of related multiple property listing: n/a

4. 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.        See continuation sheet.

Judith E. Butler  
Signature of certifying official

Jan 28, 1991  
Date

Alaska  
State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property        meets        does not meet the National Register criteria.        See continuation sheet.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of commenting or other official Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
State or Federal agency and bureau

5. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby certify that this property is:

- x   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
- other (explain): \_\_\_\_\_

Antoinette Lee

3/20/91

for Signature of Keeper

Date of Action



8. Statement of Significance

Certifying official has considered the significance of this property in relation to other properties: Local

Applicable National Register Criteria: A

Criteria Considerations (Exceptions) : E

Areas of Significance: Transportation  
Communications  
Commerce

Period(s) of Significance: 1904-1941

Significant Dates: 1904 1907 1909  
1929

Significant Person(s): n/a

Cultural Affiliation: n/a

Architect/Builder: n/a

State significance of property, and justify criteria, criteria considerations, and areas and periods of significance noted above.  
x See continuation sheet.

Big Delta Historic District is associated with the development of transportation, communications, and commerce in interior Alaska, beginning in 1904 and continuing until World War II. On the south bank of the Tanana River and near the mouth of the Delta River--the upriver limit for sternwheel steamboats operating on the Tanana--a supply post opened in 1904. It developed into a roadhouse offering food and shelter for travellers, and in 1909 was replaced with the roadhouse standing in the district today. The site became a significant junction along the major overland transportation route in interior Alaska, the Valdez-Fairbanks Trail (later named the Richardson Highway). Until a bridge was constructed in 1943, travellers on the trail crossed the Tanana River at Big Delta on a ferry. The Alaska Road Commission (ARC) built a cabin for the ferry operator at the site in 1929. Telegraph service at Big Delta became available with the establishment of the McCarty station in 1907. From 1925 to 1947 the Big Delta Post Office operated in the roadhouse. During the period of significance, several names were associated with the area: Big Delta, McCarty's, and Rika's. Today a historical park, the trading post site, the McCarty Station storehouse, Rika's Roadhouse (listed in the National Register in 1976), the Alaska Road Commission's ferryman's cabin, and related outbuildings (including one reconstructed outbuilding and the

9. Major Bibliographical References

See continuation sheet.

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 -- Specify Repository: \_\_\_\_\_

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property: 10.26 acres

UTM References: Zone Easting Northing Zone Easting Northing

A	<u>06</u>	<u>556950</u>	<u>7114775</u>	B	<u>06</u>	<u>556950</u>	<u>7114525</u>
C	<u>06</u>	<u>556450</u>	<u>7114500</u>	D	<u>06</u>	<u>556425</u>	<u>7114760</u>

See continuation sheet.

Verbal Boundary Description:  See continuation sheet.

Boundary Justification:  See continuation sheet.

11. Form Prepared By

Name/Title: Janet F. Clemens, Researcher

Office of History and Archaeology

Organization: Alaska Division of Parks

Date: September 1, 1990

Street & Number: P.O. Box 107001

Telephone: (907) 762-2622

City or Town: Anchorage

State: Alaska

ZIP: 99510-7001

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The nine non-contributing features are consistent in design and appearance with the historic district and landscape. The features include the Alaska Road Commission garage, restaurant, wooden bridge remains, Rika's house site, animal pens, and two flag poles. Also within the district are two public restrooms of recent construction.

Rika's Roadhouse, the dominant building on the site, is located in the upper northwest portion of the district, along the Valdez-Fairbanks Trail, and approximately 120 feet from the Tanana River. Features associated with the roadhouse and Rika's homestead include a windmill, garden, outhouse, barn, outbuilding, springhouse, and animal pens. These resources are south of the roadhouse. Across the road and slightly northwest of the roadhouse is the site of Rika's house, a non-contributing feature, built during the 1940s.

The Alaska Road Commission's activities at Big Delta are represented by several features. The graveled Valdez-Fairbanks Trail, renamed the Richardson Road in 1919, runs through the district in a north and south direction. The ferryman's cabin is located in the northwest corner of the district on the west side of the trail and just south of the riverbank. A few feet to the east of the trail are the vehicle scales. On the south side of the bend in the trail is Rika's Roadhouse. Historically, the Valdez-Fairbanks Trail was the boundary between the roadhouse and the McCarty Telegraph Station. At different times the Alaska Road Commission made use of the McCarty station buildings, as well as constructing its own buildings on the property. The trail passes barnyard animal pens, the springhouse, the 1914 ARC storage cabin, and the reconstructed ARC garage.

A prospector's trail parallels the Tanana River heading east from the roadhouse through the district. Also east of the roadhouse are remains of the wooden bridge constructed in 1942 to span the river. The steamboat landing was located fifty yards upriver from the bridge remains. South of the trail is the McCarty Telegraph Station.

The original station consisted of several log buildings built in a line with an east-west orientation. Currently, the storehouse is the only building standing. The cabin directly east of the storehouse burned down, leaving only log sills. The cabin further east was moved from the site in

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1967. It has recently been disassembled and returned to the park where it will be reassembled at its original location in 1991. Directly east of the cabins are two flag poles placed in 1987 by a local Boy Scout group. Continuing east, the prospector's trail leads around the McCarty Trading Post site and rises slightly in elevation to the cold cache site which is at the eastern boundary of the district. Just outside the district, at the top of a small hill are two graves (AHRS Site No. XBD-154): Emil Hammer's, a local trading post operator who died in 1929; the other unknown. Directly south and just outside the southeastern district boundary is Rika's grave (AHRS Site No. XBD-153).

Contributing properties (see site map)

1. Rika's Roadhouse (AHRS Site No. XBD-059): Built ca. 1909. The house is a two-and-a-half story log building, "L" shape in plan, measuring 75 feet across the front (north) by 40 feet deep. The 31'9" x 43'2" north-south section was built with round spruce logs in 1909. In 1926 the east wing measuring 20' x 40' was added by Louis Grimsmore who used squared spruce logs. The walls are made of horizontal log construction, the southernmost corners are joined with saddle notches; all other corners utilize V-plate notches. The chinking consists of hemp rope and cloth. The front entrance is a single door centered on the gable facade of the original building. Orientation of the ridge to the main facade is parallel. Plain boards are used to frame the casement windows. The logs are flattened to support the window framing. The gable roofs each have a medium pitch of approximately 48 degrees. The dormers with multi-pane windows and gable roofs add light and ventilation to the attic.

Stabilization and reconstruction work on the roadhouse during 1984 included: a new wood plank roof with mineral surfaced roofing paper, attic insulation, sheetrock on the walls, and the addition of a crawl-space under the main floor for the heating, ventilation, and electrical systems. Approximately forty percent of the logs on the north-south section were replaced with round logs and twenty-five percent of the logs on the east section were replaced with squared logs.

The interior is divided to include a large dining room and kitchen, a spacious parlor, eleven private rooms and a large open area on each floor.

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Presently, there are room displays, a gift shop, offices, and storage areas inside the roadhouse. Several rooms have been refurbished with furnishings appropriate to the building's period of significance.

2. Valdez-Fairbanks Trail/Richardson Road (AHRS Site No. XBD-133): A gravel five-to-six foot wide trail runs approximately 650 feet through the district. Entering the property from the south and traveling north, the trail passes by the ARC garage (22), the animal pens (21), and the roadhouse (1). The trail then passes between the vehicle scales (11) and the ferryman's cabin (10) before reaching the bank of the Tanana River. At this point, the trail is deteriorating because of bank erosion.

3. Prospectors Trail (AHRS Site No. XBD-134): This three-to-six foot wide gravel trail was used by prospectors traveling to gold strikes along the Tanana River and in the Chisana area, as well as by hunters and trappers. The trail parallels the Tanana River passing by the bridge built in 1942, the McCarty Telegraph Station, and the McCarty Trading Post site. It continues east beyond the park boundary.

4. Garden (AHRS Site No. XBD-135): Located just south of the roadhouse, this 34' x 60' plot was the original site of Rika's garden. Since 1987 this area has again been a producing garden with a 3'8" high fence constructed of wood boards, log poles, and chicken wire.

5. Outhouse (AHRS Site No. XBD-136): The double-seater outhouse measures 8' x 4'. The building is frame with board and batten siding. It has a shed roof covered with corrugated metal. The foundation and roof of the building are deteriorating. A metal "Ladies" sign is attached to the eastern exterior wall. The southeast door is missing. Faded wallpaper covers the interior walls.

6. Barn (AHRS Site No. XBD-137): Built during the 1920s by Louis Grimsmore. This one-story, rectangular, log barn measures 38'3" x 27'3". The saddle-notched spruce logs are chinked with moss and willow saplings. There are a total of five single pane sliding windows in wood frames. A central plank door is located on the front (north) facade, and a hay mow double door is located on the south side. The main facade has a parallel orientation with the gambrel roof ridge. The three air vents along the

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ridge line remain intact. Restoration work by the State of Alaska in 1984 included: a new plank roof in the same gambrel design as the original, covered with mineral surfaced roofing paper; a concrete foundation with log sills; a rough plank floor; minimal log course replacement; a new loft floor; and an electrical system. The original seven animal stalls were put back in place after the new floor was installed. The enlarged main door, measuring 3'6" x 6'7", encompasses the original wood plank door.

7. Springhouse (AHRS Site No. XBD-138): The small building measures approximately 6' x 10'6". It has shiplap and beaded board siding with cornerboards. The shed roof is tongue-and-groove. Originally standing in the spring, it has been moved onto a gravel area a few feet away. Several boards retain evidence of white paint. The door is missing.

8. Outbuilding (AHRS Site No. XBD-139): The original log building with shallow-pitch sod roof and wide eaves was constructed by Louis Grimsore during the 1920s-1930s. In 1984, the badly deteriorated building was replaced by a similar one with a concrete foundation. The new building is visually similar in size, measuring 25' x 25'; volume; historic appearance; and use of materials. The new outbuilding was made with logs similar in size to the originals. An electrical system was installed in 1984. The Delta Historical Society is currently using the building as a museum.

9. Windmill (AHRS Site No. XBD-140): The original windmill built by Carl Tweiten in 1932 was determined to be structurally unsound and dangerous due to rotted members and a poor foundation. It was taken down in 1984, each part measured, and a replica was constructed and placed on the original site. Each leg is on a block of concrete.

10. Ferryman's Cabin (AHRS Site No. XBD-141): Built ca. 1929 by Louis Grimsore for the Alaska Road Commission, it is a one story log cabin measuring 14'9" x 18'. The peeled round logs are 8"-9" diameter, with saddle-notched corners. Hemp rope was used for chinking. The three casement windows have simple wide metal frames. The original roof was composed of log purlins overlain by wood planks, sod insulation, and corrugated tin roofing. The front eave extends six feet over the entrance, a tongue-and-groove door. The original wooden floor system lay directly on grade. Stabilization and reconstruction work during the 1980s included: a

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new plank roof covered with mineral surfaced roofing paper, a new concrete foundation, replacement of the first three courses of logs, and addition of a new wood plank floor. Electricity and a fuel oil furnace were added.

11. Alaska Road Commission Vehicle Scales (AHRS Site No. XBD-142): In place by 1935, the scales cover a 22' x 9' area. The original concrete pit is currently filled with spring coils covered by wooden planks to simulate early scales. The deteriorating planks were replaced with new ones in 1984.

12. Alaska Road Commission Storage Cabin (AHRS Site No. XBD-143): Built in 1914 by the ARC, the log cabin measures 18'4" x 28'. The walls are saddle-notched unpeeled spruce logs. Clapboard siding covers the front gable, with overlapping horizontal plank siding on the back gable. The gable ends are framed with rough sawn lumber. The back (south) wall shows fire damage from the floor to the peak. The wall has been covered with plywood. There is one small window pane on the east wall and one on the west. The roof of the building consists of log rafters covered by corrugated metal. The foundation consists of a dirt floor with logs resting on grade. A central plank door is located on the front (north) facade.

13. McCarty Station Storehouse (AHRS Site No. XBD-144): One of the cabins built by the U.S. Signal Corps in 1906/07. The building measures 49'6" x 18'10". Although appearing to be two log cabins joined together, the entire building appears to have been built at one time using short logs. The walls are square hewn spruce logs with moss chinking. The ten, squared, saddle-notched ends are painted alternately white and red, a traditional practice for Signal Corps buildings in Alaska. The roof is composed of a peeled pole deck over log purlins. The roof on the north end has deteriorated and is now covered with plywood and tar paper. The roof on the south end is corrugated metal and appears original. There is one air vent/smoke hole in the south-west portion of the roof. An unpeeled log fascia protects the ends of the roof structure. Remains of a telegraph insulator are located just below the roof peak on the north end.

The floor rests on grade. The south portion of the storehouse floor is severely buckled due to frost heaves. The floor in the south section consists of joists and round poles, while the north cabin floor is mostly dirt. The four windows, two on the east and two on the west, measure

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approximately 3' x 3', and are covered with plywood. The single plank door measures 6' x 3' on the southwest side. The building orientation is parallel.

The interior is evenly divided by a plank partition with a central, square opening. No evidence of a door exists. The storehouse is currently used for storage of the station cabin moved from its original site in 1967. This disassembled log cabin, approximately 16' by 22', is round logs with alternating red and white paint on the saddle-notched ends, and a standing-seam metal roof. The pieces were numbered, disassembled, and moved into the storehouse in 1990. They are scheduled to be reassembled on a concrete foundation on the original site (#15 on the site plan) in 1991.

14. McCarty Station Cabin Site (AHRS Site No. XBD-145): The site of one of the cabins built by the U.S. Signal Corps in 1906/07. Deteriorated sill logs, measuring 29'6" x 19'6", pinpoint the middle cabin location. At an unknown date the cabin burned. The log foundation remains give evidence of a 19' x 15'6" addition on the east wall. This is believed to have been a shed roofed addition constructed during the 1920s for housing.

15. McCarty Telegraph Station Site (AHRS Site No. XBD-146): The site of one of the cabins built by the U.S. Signal Corps in 1906/07. The cabin, removed from the site in 1967, has been returned and lies disassembled in the McCarty Storehouse. Following archaeological testing in summer 1990, a concrete foundation was poured on the original site. The cabin will be reassembled on the original site in 1991.

16. McCarty Station Stable Site (AHRS Site No. XBD-147): A stable, measuring 108' x 20', stood south of the other Signal Corps buildings. It was built ca. 1910. The site is now covered with grass, but has been determined through archaeological testing to have potential to yield information important to understanding the past.

17. McCarty Trading Post Site (AHRS Site No. XBD-148): This is the site of a one-story log cabin built by Ben Bennett in 1904. In 1983 archaeologists concluded from test excavations that this large depression (34' x 20') has high potential to provide information about the area's early historic and protohistoric periods.

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18. Cold Cache (AHRS Site No. XBD-149): Constructed ca. 1910, this large T-shaped collapsed cache with several separate rooms was used for food storage. Its log cribbing remains, but the horizontal poles and sod that covered it are gone. It is built into a hill.

Noncontributing properties (see site map)

19. Rika's New House Site (AHRS Site No. XBD-150): Built ca. 1940s, the house burned down in 1965. Only concrete stairs remain from the original building. The footprint of the house is delineated with gravel.

20. Bridge Site (AHRS Site No. XBD-151): The bridge was built by the U.S. Army in 1942, and washed away the following spring. This site on the river bank has only a few wooden planks.

21. Animal Pens and Storage Sheds: The animal pens and sheds were constructed during the 1980s. The area consists of two small wood and wire fenced yards and three small sheds with board and batten siding that store equipment for fire fighting and yard maintenance. The structures are consistent in color and with materials used during the historic period. Animal pens were present in the district at approximately this location during the period of significance. Ducks and geese are housed in the pens.

22. Alaska Road Commission Garage (AHRS Site No. XBD-152): The present building measuring 35' x 85' was constructed in the late 1980s on the same site as the original ARC garage. The exterior duplicates the original historic building in design and color. The interior was designed to accommodate local community activities.

23. Restaurant: Constructed in the late 1980s, the restaurant stands a few feet south of the McCarty Station stable site. This simple wood frame structure measures 38' x 80' with an attached kitchen that measures 12' x 16'. It maintains the same rectangular shape as the stable and is stained an orange-toned color. Location, materials, and design combine to make this recent building unobtrusive.

24/25. Flagpoles: In 1988 a local Boy Scout troop erected two flag poles at the McCarty Telegraph Station site. The brown painted poles blend in

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with district colors. Flagpoles were present at the site during the period of significance.

26/27. Public Outdoor Restrooms: Built in the late 1980s, the two buildings, each housing four stalls, are on cement foundations. They are brown with green roofs. One building is located at the west end of the district, between the parking lot and the roadhouse, and few feet north of the historic outhouse. The other building is located by the east parking lot.

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windmill) represent Big Delta's significance in the history of  
transportation, communications, and commerce in interior Alaska.

Discoveries of gold near Fairbanks in 1903, and later on tributary creeks of the upper Tanana River, led to development at Big Delta. Prospectors blazed a trail from the Trans-Alaska Military Road to the new gold diggings. The new trail crossed the Tanana River near the mouth of the Delta River. Later, it was incorporated into the Valdez-Fairbanks Trail established by the Alaska Road Commission in 1905.

In 1904, Ben Bennett constructed a log trading post near the trail on the south side of the Tanana River. Bennett sold the post to Dan McCarty, Jr. the following year. Although McCarty left the area in 1906, the site was known as McCarty's into the 1920s. Supplies were delivered by steamboats to the front yard. As more people traveled to Fairbanks over the Valdez-Fairbanks Trail, the cabin became a stop for changing horses and for travelers to stay overnight.

In 1905, the Alaska Road Commission, newly-created by the Secretary of War, established the Valdez-Fairbanks Trail. Travelers on the trail had to cross the Tanana River where there was no bridge. During 1909, the Alaska Road Commission upgraded the trail to wagon road status, and installed a cable ferry for travellers to cross the river. The road was later improved for cars and trucks and named in 1919 for Wilds P. Richardson, the first chairman of the Alaska Road Commission. The road was the major overland route into the interior of the territory until the Alaska Railroad was completed in 1923.

In 1907, the U.S. Signal Corps, a separate branch of the Army, opened McCarty Telegraph Station at Big Delta. Between 1900 and 1904, the Signal Corps constructed the thousand-mile Washington-Alaska Military Cable and Telegraph System (WAMCATS) to connect the six army posts in Alaska with each other and with Washington, D.C. Following completion, stations were established regularly along the line to facilitate maintenance. During the winter of 1905/06, a fire destroyed the station at the mouth of the Goodpaster River. The replacement station was located at McCarty because it was "in the public interests as it was where the mail route, the miners' trail, and the work of the Alaskan Road Commission meet" (Annual Report of the Chief Signal Officer, 1907).

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The Signal Corps contracted in 1907 for a station, cache, and storehouse at McCarty. The site selected was just west of the trading post. By 1911, the station included at least two more caches, a stable, and improvements that included portable bathtubs, screen doors and windows, and a fresh water pump. As a result of a land ownership dispute, the government formally withdrew the land that encompassed the station as a military reserve in 1912.

In 1906, John Hajdukovich, originally from Serbia, Yugoslavia, moved from Fairbanks to the Big Delta area. Three years later he bought the McCarty Trading Post and opened the roadhouse known today as Rika's. Hajdukovich constructed the north-south section of Rika's Roadhouse in 1909 adjacent to the Valdez-Fairbanks Trail. He used the old trading post and a large cache cut into a knoll to its east for storage. The roadhouse became a trade and supply center for the upper Tanana River valley, as well as a roadside stop. The Valdez-Fairbanks Trail passed by the roadhouse, the ferry operated from the front yard, steamboats docked in front, and the adjacent telegraph station provided a communication link with the outside world.

Hajdukovich operated a casual roadhouse where travelers had to take care of themselves--even cooking their own meals. Around 1917, Hajdukovich hired Rika Wallen (born Lovisa Erika Jakobson in Wallen, Nerike, Sweden) to help manage the roadhouse. In 1923, Hajdukovich sold the roadhouse to Rika. Following local custom, the roadhouse became known as Rika's.

Rika's Roadhouse developed over the years into the headquarters for a number of area trappers, prospectors, and hunters, and a territorial homestead. Rika had gardens, raised sheep, goats, and chickens, and grew grain for feed. She processed and wove wool from her sheep. She kept honey bees, made cheese, and for a time tried fox farming. A Travelogue of the Richardson Highway printed in 1928 characterizes Big Delta:

. . . one of the most important centers of trade along the road, being the supply point for the inhabitants of the entire region of the headwaters of the Tanana River. A War Department radio station here maintains communication with the outside world. Here also is located a commodious roadhouse boasting of such luxuries as fresh milk, and domestic fowls, including chickens, geese, ducks, and turkeys, as well as all kinds of wild meats, berries, fish, etc.

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The Tanana River never freezes over at this point, however cold it may be in the winter. This is due to the warm springs emptying into it above McCarty. The river is navigable in summer for small steamboats, between Fairbanks and Grundler, providing there is a wise and careful pilot at the wheel. We cross the river on a ferry at this point. The ferryman, like Charon, works 24 hours a day.

Rika built a barn, workshop, springhouse, and outhouse on her property. An east addition to the roadhouse was added in 1926. She continued, like Hajdukovich, to use the old trading post and cold cache for storage. The Big Delta post office operated in the roadhouse from 1925 until 1947. Rika served as postmistress.

In 1923 the McCarty Telegraph Station was renamed Grundler. This name change was in honor of Sergeant Frank Grundler who died of illness at Fort Egbert in Eagle. The Signal Corps turned the Valdez-Fairbanks telegraph line over to the Alaska Road Commission in 1925, and closed a number of stations. In 1926, the War Department established a 50-watt radio station at Grundler. In 1928 the station name reverted back to McCarty. The department later abandoned the station, and in 1935 the McCarty Military Reservation was turned over to the Alaska Road Commission.

The Alaska Road Commission had a maintenance camp at McCarty from 1905 to 1943. In 1914, the Alaska Road Commission built a storage cabin between Rika's Roadhouse and the McCarty stable. The Alaska Road Commission built a cabin for the ferryman next to the Richardson Road on the south river bank in 1929. Later, a vehicle garage was built to the south of the storage cabin.

In 1932, the administration of rights and duties concerning Alaska's roads transferred from the Secretary of War and the Alaska Road Commission to the Secretary of the Interior. In 1935, the U.S. Department of the Interior instituted fees for truckers on the Richardson Highway in an effort to force more traffic on the government's money-losing Alaska Railroad. The tolls were collected at Big Delta. The truckers rebelled by refusing to pay, and protested the tolls in court. They also used the Alaska Road Commission ferry without the ferryman's permission or paying the toll, and installed a homemade scow. Although the validity of the tolls was upheld

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in district court, the World War II build-up provided enough freight for the Alaska Railroad to make a profit. Tolls on the Richardson Highway were removed in July of 1942.

World War II brought many changes to the Big Delta area. In 1942, the U.S. Army reclaimed the McCarty Military Reserve, and used the site for a military camp. The Army constructed a road, popularly called the Alcan (Alaska-Canada) Highway, during the war to link Alaska by road to the 48 states. This new road intersected with the Richardson Highway near Big Delta. Army crews constructed a temporary wooden bridge in 1942 across the Tanana River to replace the ferry. The following spring, break-up took out the bridge. In July 1943, the Alaska Road Commission finished constructing a high truss steel bridge across the Tanana and realigned the Richardson Highway bypassing Rika's Roadhouse. Rika closed the roadhouse in 1947, but continued to live at the site in a building constructed prior to 1953. When the building burned in 1965, Rika lived with friends and then moved into the ferryman's cabin where she lived until her death in 1969.

The State of Alaska acquired the land and buildings at Rika's Roadhouse in 1976 for a historical site. During the 1980s, the State restored the roadhouse and related outbuildings. The U.S. Bureau of Land Management transferred the military reserve land and buildings to the State for the park in May 1990.

Together, the roadhouse and outbuildings, the Alaska Road Commission ferryman's cabin, the Telegraph Station buildings, and the related sites and structures at Big Delta exemplify a rural Alaska community located at a major transportation junction during the first half of the twentieth century.

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(8-86)

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National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section number   9  

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(8-86)

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National Park Service

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET**

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**Verbal Boundary Description:**

The boundary of Big Delta Historic District includes three tracts of land. In 1977, a total of 6.87 acres of land was donated to the State of Alaska and described as two tracts located within Lots 7 and 8, Section 8, Township 9 South, Range 10 East, Fairbanks Meridian. In 1990, 3.39 acres of land located between the other two tracts of land were transferred to the State of Alaska by the Bureau of Land Management.

**Boundary Justification:**

The boundary includes the roadhouse and related outbuildings, the McCarty Telegraph Station buildings and sites, Alaska Road Commission buildings, and the trading post site with related cold cache that have historically been part of Big Delta. The northern border is defined by the Tanana River, the south and east borders by a gravel road, and the west by the edge of historic buildings (roadhouse and ferryman's cabin).

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NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section number Photograph Identification

- =====
1. Big Delta Historic District (AHRS Site No. XBD-132)  
Delta Junction, Alaska  
Steve Klingler  
1987  
Office of History and Archaeology, P.O. Box 107001, Anchorage, Alaska  
99510  
Looking at north facade of Rika's Roadhouse (site map number 1).
  2. Big Delta Historic District (AHRS Site No. XBD-132)  
Delta Junction, Alaska  
Janet Clemens  
1990  
Office of History and Archaeology, P.O. Box 107001, Anchorage, Alaska  
99510  
Looking at south elevation of Rika's Roadhouse (site map number 1).
  3. Big Delta Historic District (AHRS Site No. XBD-132)  
Delta Junction, Alaska  
Janet Clemens  
1990  
Office of History and Archaeology, P.O. Box 107001, Anchorage, Alaska  
99510  
Looking at north and east facades of the barn (site map number 6).
  4. Big Delta Historic District (AHRS Site No. XBD-132)  
Delta Junction, Alaska  
Janet Clemens  
1990  
Office of History and Archaeology, P.O. Box 107001, Anchorage, Alaska  
99510  
Looking at north facade of the ferryman's cabin (site map number 10).
  5. Big Delta Historic District (AHRS Site No. XBD-132)  
Delta Junction, Alaska  
Janet Clemens  
1990  
Office of History and Archaeology, P.O. Box 107001, Anchorage, Alaska  
99510  
Looking at the east elevation of the McCarty telegraph station  
storehouse (site map number 13).

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NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section number Photograph Identification

- =====
- 6. Big Delta Historic District (AHRS Site No. XBD-132)  
Delta Junction, Alaska  
Janet Clemens  
1990  
Office of History and Archaeology, P.O. Box 107001, Anchorage, Alaska  
99510  
Looking south from the roadhouse includes the garden, outbuilding,  
and barn (site map numbers 4, 8, and 6).
  
  - 7. Big Delta Historic District (AHRS Site No. XBD-132)  
Delta Junction, Alaska  
Janet Clemens  
1990  
Office of History and Archaeology, P.O. Box 107001, Anchorage, Alaska  
99510  
Looking east at outhouse, garden, outbuilding, and windmill (site map  
numbers 5, 4, 8, and 9).
  
  - 8. Big Delta Historic District (AHRS Site No. XBD-132)  
Delta Junction, Alaska  
Janet Clemens  
1990  
Office of History and Archaeology, P.O. Box 107001, Anchorage, Alaska  
99510  
Looking southeast from the ferryman's cabin at the Valdez-Fairbanks  
Trail, the vehicle scales, and Rika's Roadhouse (site map numbers  
10, 2, 11, and 1).
  
  - 9. Big Delta Historic District (AHRS Site No. XBD-132)  
Delta Junction, Alaska  
Janet Clemens  
1990  
Office of History and Archaeology, P.O. Box 107001, Anchorage, Alaska  
99510  
Looking east, south of the roadhouse, at the animal pens and storage  
sheds (site map number 21).

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NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section number   Photograph Identification

- =====
10. Big Delta Historic District (AHRS Site No. XBD-132)  
Delta Junction, Alaska  
Janet Clemens  
1990  
Office of History and Archaeology, P.O. Box 107001, Anchorage, Alaska  
99510  
Looking southeast at the springhouse, storage cabin, and restaurant  
(site map numbers 7, 12, and 23).
  
  11. Big Delta Historic District (AHRS Site No. XBD-132)  
Delta Junction, Alaska  
Janet Clemens  
1990  
Office of History and Archaeology, P.O. Box 107001, Anchorage, Alaska  
99510  
North facades of the storage cabin and restaurant (site map numbers 12  
and 23). McCarty telegraph station stable site defined by the two  
grassy areas with picnic benches (site map number 16).
  
  12. Big Delta Historic District (AHRS Site No. XBD-132)  
Delta Junction, Alaska  
Janet Clemens  
1990  
Office of History and Archaeology, P.O. Box 107001, Anchorage, Alaska  
99510  
Looking northwest from the McCarty telegraph station stable site  
towards the outbuilding and the roadhouse (site map numbers 16, 8,  
and 1).
  
  13. Big Delta Historic District (AHRS Site No. XBD-132)  
Delta Junction, Alaska  
Janet Clemens  
1990  
Office of History and Archaeology, P.O. Box 107001, Anchorage, Alaska  
99510  
Looking west at the McCarty telegraph station cabin site and storehouse  
(site map numbers 14, and 13). To the south is the McCarty telegraph  
station stable site, restaurant, and storage cabin (site map numbers  
16, 23, and 12).

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NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section number   Photograph Identification

- =====
14. Big Delta Historic District (AHRS Site No. XBD-132)  
Delta Junction, Alaska  
Janet Clemens  
1990  
Office of History and Archaeology, P.O. Box 107001, Anchorage, Alaska  
99510  
Looking west from the Prospector's Trail, which forks to the right and  
towards Rika's Roadhouse (site map number 3). The McCarty telegraph  
station cabin sites, and storehouse are directly west of the flag  
poles (site map numbers 14, 15, 13, and 24/25).

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

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SUPPLEMENTARY LISTING RECORD

NRIS Reference Number: 91000252 Date Listed: 3/20/91

Big Delta Historic District      Southeast Fairbanks AK  
Property Name                      County                      State

N/A  
Multiple Name

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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.

*Antoniella Fiese*  
for \_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of the Keeper

3/20/91  
Date of Action

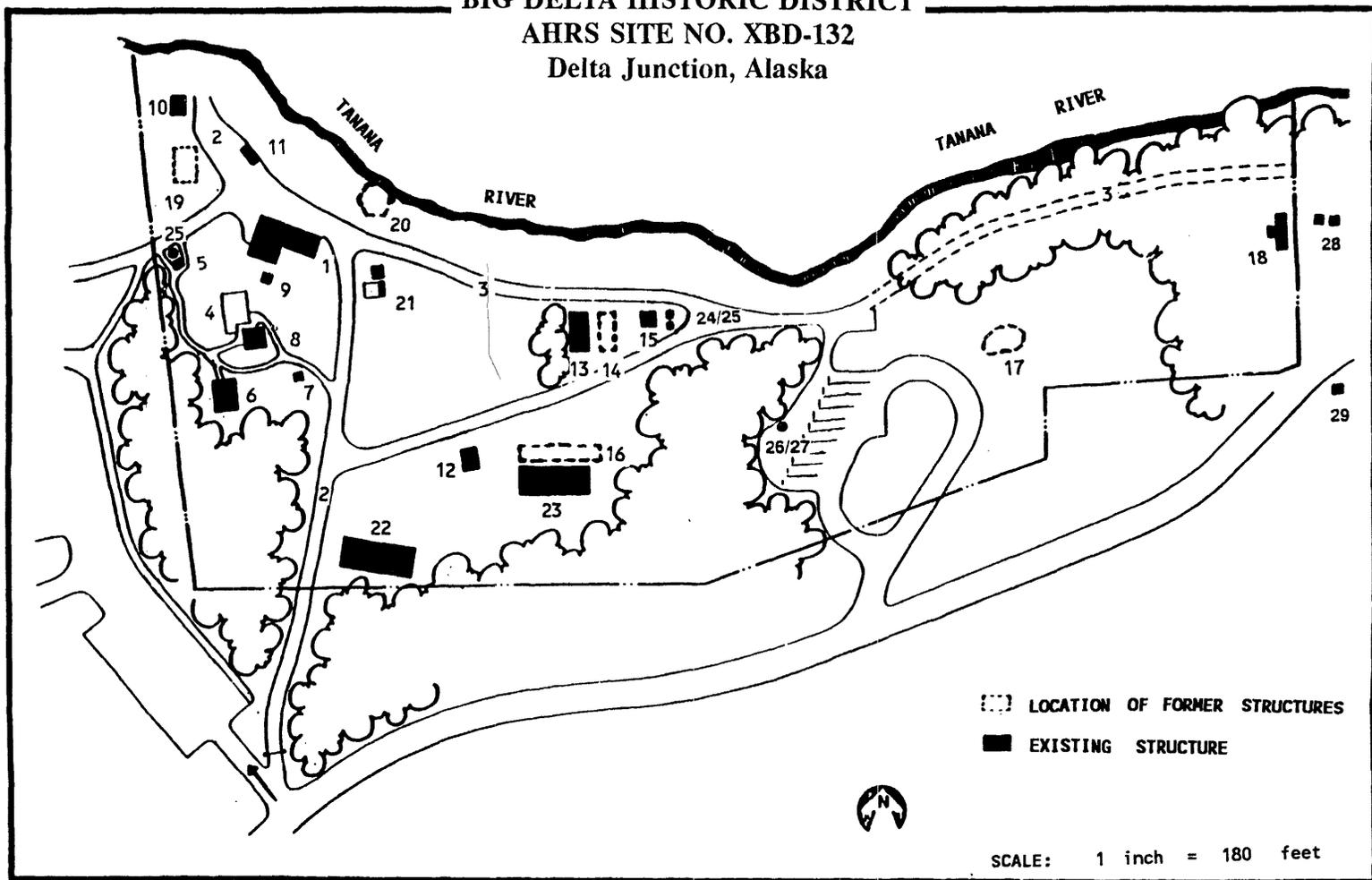
=====  
Amended Items in Nomination:

**Classification:** Under Number of Resources within Property, the number of contributing structures is decreased to 4 and the number of noncontributing structures is increased to 4. The Windmill (AHRS Site No. XBD-140) is redefined as a noncontributing structure because it is wholly a replica.

This information was confirmed with Jo Antonson of the Alaska State Historic Preservation Office.

DISTRIBUTION:  
National Register property file  
Nominating Authority (without nomination attachment)

**BIG DELTA HISTORIC DISTRICT**  
**AHRS SITE NO. XBD-132**  
 Delta Junction, Alaska



**BIG DELTA HISTORIC DISTRICT**  
**AHRS SITE NO. XBD-132**

- |                                     |  |
|-------------------------------------|--|
| * 1. Roadhouse                      | *16. McCarty Station Stable Site             |
| * 2. Valdez-Fairbanks Trail         | *17. Trading Post Site                       |
| * 3. Prospector's Trail             | *18. Cold Cache                              |
| * 4. Garden                         |  |
| * 5. Outhouse                       | 19. Rika's House Site                        |
| * 6. Barn                           | 20. Wooden Bridge Site                       |
| * 7. Springhouse                    | 21. Animal Pens                              |
| * 8. Outbuilding                    | 22. ARC Garage                               |
| * 9. Windmill                       | 23. Restaurant                               |
| *10. Ferryman's Cabin               | 24/25. Flag Poles (two)                      |
| *11. Vehicle Scales                 | 26/27. Public Restrooms (two)                |
| *12. ARC Storage Cabin              | 28. Rika's Grave (outside district boundary) |
| *13. McCarty Station Storehouse     | 29. Other Graves                             |
| *14. McCarty Station Cabin Site     |  |
| *15. McCarty Telegraph Station Site | * Contributing Resource                      |