

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

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RECEIVED OCT 8 1975

DATE ENTERED DEC 4 1975

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

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

**1 NAME**

HISTORIC **Cape Spencer Lighthouse**  
\*\*

AND/OR COMMON

**2 LOCATION**

STREET & NUMBER

CITY, TOWN

STATE

Alaska

X VICINITY OF Cape Spencer

CODE

230 (Skagway-YaktatSoutheast Alaska)

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

COUNTY

CODE

230

**3 CLASSIFICATION**

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

**4 OWNER OF PROPERTY**

NAME United States Coast Guard/17th District

STREET & NUMBER

Federal Building

CITY, TOWN

Juneau

99801

VICINITY OF

STATE

Alaska

**5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION**

COURTHOUSE,  
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

United States Coast Guard/17th District

STREET & NUMBER

Federal Building

CITY, TOWN

Juneau

99801

STATE

Alaska

**6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS**

TITLE

Alaska Heritage Resource Survey

DATE

1970

HAER

FEDERAL  STATE  COUNTY  LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR  
SURVEY RECORDS

Alaska Division of Parks, 323 East 4th Avenue

CITY, TOWN

Anchorage

STATE

Alaska

Senators: Mike Gravel/Ted Stevens

Congressman: Don Young

# 7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION		CHECK ONE	CHECK ONE
<input type="checkbox"/> EXCELLENT	<input type="checkbox"/> DETERIORATED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> UNALTERED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ORIGINAL SITE
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> GOOD	<input type="checkbox"/> RUINS	<input type="checkbox"/> ALTERED	<input type="checkbox"/> MOVED    DATE _____
<input type="checkbox"/> FAIR	<input type="checkbox"/> UNEXPOSED		

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DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The Cape Spencer Light Station is located on the outermost large islet south of Cape Spencer, Southeast Alaska. On concrete foundations, the light and fog-signal building is a one-story, rectangular, reinforced concrete structure (51' x 62') with a square, concrete tower (14' x 14') and lantern rising 25 feet above the center of the flat roof. The lantern is circular with diamond-shaped glass panes. The light and fog-signal building also provided quarters for keepers. The lighthouse structure has never been rebuilt, and remains on its original site.

Other structures at the station included a steel derrick and gasoline hoist; one small air hoist; a wooden boathouse with a medium hipped roof; blacksmith shop; a landing platform; fuel cylinders; and a tramway leading from the lighthouse to the landing platform. Most of these structures still remain on the rock.

Originally, the lighthouse displayed a flashing white light (110,000 c.p.) about 105 feet above water. The intensity of the light was later increased to 200,000 candlepower; and still later, to 500,000 candlepower. The station also included a radiobeacon with a range of 200 miles or more.

# 8 SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD		AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW			
<input type="checkbox"/> PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNITY PLANNING	<input type="checkbox"/> LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> RELIGION	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> CONSERVATION	<input type="checkbox"/> LAW	<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENCE	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> ECONOMICS	<input type="checkbox"/> LITERATURE	<input type="checkbox"/> SCULPTURE	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATION	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input type="checkbox"/> SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> ART	<input type="checkbox"/> ENGINEERING	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSIC	<input type="checkbox"/> THEATER	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE	<input type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> COMMUNICATIONS	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRY	<input type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY)	
		<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION			

SPECIFIC DATES      1925-1974      BUILDER/ARCHITECT

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Marking the entrance to Cross Sound, the Cape Spencer Light Station was an important navigational aid on the Southeast-Southcentral Alaska shipping lanes. The light station was also the first in Alaska with radiobeacon facilities. A significant structure in the history of Alaska commerce, transportation, and communications, the Cape Spencer lighthouse should be entered on the National Register of Historic Places.

As early as 1903 commercial interests and officers of the Lighthouse Service recommended a light and fog-signal station at Cape Spencer with the justification that the bulk of Alaska commerce was moving westward through Cross Sound. As vessels were often forced to wait until storms and fogs subsided before entering the sound, it was imperative that a light and fog-signal station be established at Cape Spencer. However, it was not until 1923 that Congress finally approved the establishment of the Cape Spencer Light Station and appropriated funds for construction.

In May 1924 construction of the station began. Due to weather conditions and the problems of landing supplies and materials on the rock, construction was slowed considerably. The station was lighted for the first time on December 11, 1925. About six months later a radiobeacon -- the first in Alaska -- was placed in operation at the station, ready at any time to guide vessels into Cross Sound.

The Cape Spencer Light Station still functions as an important navigational aid in Alaska. Due to rising maintenance costs, however, the keepers were removed and the station automated in 1974.

# 9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Alaska Division of Parks, Aids to Navigation in Alaska History. Anchorage: Alaska Division of Parks, 1974. (pamphlet)

# 10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY -1

UTM REFERENCES

A	08	403880	6451700	B			
	ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING		ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING
C				D			

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

Rock islet, approx. 1 acre, southern approach to Cross Sound

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

C. M. Brown, Historian

ORGANIZATION

Alaska Division of Parks

DATE

March 11, 1975

STREET & NUMBER

323 E. 4th Avenue

TELEPHONE

274-4676

CITY OR TOWN

Anchorage

STATE

Alaska

# 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  
FEDERAL REPRESENTATIVE SIGNATURE

*Russell W. Cahill*

TITLE

SHPO

DATE

9/20/75

FOR NPS USE ONLY

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

DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF ARCHEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION

DATE

12/4/95

ATTEST:

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

DATE

11.28.75