

**United States Department of the Interior
Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service**

**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 Old Borges Ranch
and/or common Same

2. Location

street & number 1035 Castlerock Road ___ not for publication
city, town Walnut Creek *vic.* vicinity of congressional district #7
state California code 06 county Contra Costa code 013

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use	
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> public	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> museum
<input type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input type="checkbox"/> commercial	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> park
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> educational	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private residence
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> site	Public Acquisition	Accessible	<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 type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> other:

4. Owner of Property

name County of Contra Costa
street & number Public Works Director, 6th Floor Administration Building
city, town Martinez vicinity of state California

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. County Recorder
street & number 822 Main Street
city, town Martinez state California 94553

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title None known has this property been determined eligible? yes no
date ___ federal ___ state ___ county ___ local
depository for survey records ___
city, town ___ state ___

7. Description

Condition		Check one	Check one
<input type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> unaltered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> original site
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> good	<input type="checkbox"/> ruins	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> altered	<input type="checkbox"/> moved
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> unexposed		date _____

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

The Old Borges Ranch center comprises seven main buildings/structures, and sites historically and architecturally significant. Dating from the late 1890's and early 1900's, excluding the second generation house, all buildings have undergone only minor alterations.

Located within the Contra Costa County, Service Area R-8, the Borges Ranch is the main activity center for the greater 1,400 acre Walnut Creek Open Space Shell Ridge Recreation Area. The ranch center is located at 1035 Castle Rock Road, Walnut Creek, California and is accessible by a one (1) mile gravel/dirt road branching off to the right of the main Castle Rock Road. Access is also available through the south border through Diablo Foothills Regional Park via the Briones to Mt. Diablo Regional Trail.

Buildings and sites contributing to the character of the site:

1. Site of small cabin once in apricot grove: 1890's c. - cabin no longer standing. Located in lower pasture below ranch road and cattle guard leading to ranch.
2. Old Borges Farmhouse: 1901, 1 story, tongue-in-groove redwood farmhouse; initially three bedrooms (two bedrooms converted into one - 1929); Livingroom, kitchen, pantry and lean to storage area (1940's converted to bathroom and sink and cupboard area of kitchen - electricity added to kitchen; redwood 6" tongue-in-groove redwood siding. Deteriorated - but not beyond point of rehabilitation).
3. Horse Barn: 1903, barn divided in three (3) sections - 2 large horse stalls, large hay storage area, 5 small stalls for animals; 1" X 12" redwood board siding; pitched roof - tin (was shake until mid 1940's); large center barn door, single doors on either side - leading to horse stalls and small animal stalls; side with small stalls has concrete slab floor. Good to excellent condition.
4. Milk and Cow Barn: 1913, Barn - inside, large storage area for hay and smaller area with wood flooring for farm animals and grain storage. 1" X 12" redwood barn wood siding; pitched roof - was originally shake, changed to tin 1977; fieldstone foundation - barn was cut in half during 1920/early 30's, old foundation (fieldstone) shown in back of barn. Good condition.
5. Wagonshed: 1920's, tongue-in-groove redwood siding; roof - tin (was shake until mid 1940's); inside - tackroom, large utility area, and concrete well for forge; alterations - concrete slab floor, 1978, three large sliding wooden doors (handmade), 85-years old, put on front, 1979, electricity added 1940's. Good condition.
6. Second Generation house: 1937 - built as one room cabin; tongue-in-groove redwood siding; painted alterations: late 1930's to mid 1940's - addition of kitchen, enclosed porch with windows that drop into slots when wooden pins released; livingroom, 2 small bedrooms and master bedroom; livingroom, diningroom, and master bedroom all knotty pine paneling - individual boards, 1" X 12". Unique foundation - concrete blocks containing various keepsakes - shells, kerosene lantern, bottles, sayings - "Going My Way" (title of 1940's movie), birthdates, blacksmith's tools, old bits, spurs, horseshoes, impressions, pressed glass chicken with real eggs, etc. Additional alteration - mid 1950's extension of master bedroom, sliding glass doors leading out to old porch.

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 checked="" 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/
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> humanitarian
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)

Specific dates Various dates, 1890s - present **Builder/Architect** Unknown

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

The Old Borges Ranch, originally part of the old Spanish land Grant Arroyo de las Nueces y Bolbones purchased by Juana Pacheco in 1843, also known as the San Miguel Rancho, has remained in the Borges family for four generations and is still an active working cattle ranch today; the sole surviving ranch in now a heavily urbanized area, which was once a thriving agricultural community. Scarcely changed since the turn of the century, the Old Borges Ranch is a prime example of a rural cattle ranch from the period of late 1890's and early 1900's. In the foothills of Mt. Diablo overlooking and surrounded by the cities of Walnut Creek and Concord, the ranch has well-preserved its historic integrity and flavor of the old west -- still retaining the original farmhouse, horse and cow barns, wagonshed, milkhouse, second generation house and woodshed, farm equipment and corrals. It is the intent of the County of Contra Costa and the City of Walnut Creek to preserve the Old Borges Ranch for future generations as a part of their western heritage; and as an example of the culture and life style of those individuals who settled the Walnut Creek and Concord area around the turn of the century.

Additional Background

In 1877, at the age of 17 Frank (Francisco) Borges, a Portuguese immigrant, came to America by ship. Having heard of California's rich farm and grazing lands from his older brother who was living in California, Frank headed west. For several years, he worked on a ranch near Vacaville, where he met his future wife, Mary Vieira and started a family that was to grow to six children. In 1899 the family migrated to the foothills of Mt. Diablo in the general area of what was then the thriving agricultural and since disappeared town of Pacheco. There they purchased and settled on a portion of the old San Miguel Rancho, becoming one of the original 100 pioneer families to help establish and develop the small towns of Walnut Creek and Concord. Today these small towns are the central cities in an urbanized area with a population of over 200,000.

When they arrived at the ranch site, the only building was a small cabin nestled in a grove of apricot trees. It soon proved too small for the large and still growing Borges family, so in 1901, Frank built his family a three-bedroom, tongue-in-groove redwood farmhouse overlooking the valley.

Within a few years, the house looked small indeed, next to two large barns, a wagonshed, and several other out-buildings, including a two-holer outhouse.

By 1905, when Frank and Mary's last child, Lula, was born, the small town of Walnut Creek boasted two mercantiles, a blacksmith shop, hotel and meat market.¹

As a visitor to the ranch, the sights, smells and sounds take you back through time to when the farmer got up with the sun, milked the cows daily, shod his own horse, rounded up cattle, chopped wood for the stove, and relied on the weather and almanac to tell him when to sow his crops and when to wean his livestock; while, the women folk cooked a morning breakfast, washed clothes in a metal wash tub with a scrub board, baked bread from homegrown wheat and ordered their few luxuries from the Sears & Roebuck Catalog. Now after

9. Major Bibliographical References

White, Marlene E., The Old Borges Ranch, Contra Costa County, The Contra Costa Times, 1980
A History of Contra Costa County, published by the Tri-Valley News, Danville, CA,
 F. L. Sparks, 1976
 Oral accounts from Mrs. Lula Borges-Joaquin-Schuchart, Mr. & Mrs. Daniel Borges, and other
 Borges family members and friends.

10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of nominated property 393.76 **UTM NOT VERIFIED**
 Quadrangle name Walnut Creek and Clayton **ACREAGE NOT VERIFIED** Quadrangle scale 755
 UMT References

A	03	5614	31617	015	112	31117	B	03	5613	31514	015	016	91214
	Zone	Easting		Northing				Zone	Easting		Northing		
C	03	5613	11115	015	019	91719	D	03	5617	61714	015	018	21016
E	03	5612	71017	015	019	61612	F	03	5616	91913	015	110	91216
G	03	5612	41910	015	019	01913	H						

Verbal boundary description and justification

The boundary of the Old Borges Ranch is shown as the red lines on the accompanying maps entitled "Record of Survey Portion of Rancho San Miguel, Contra Costa County, California" consisting of 4 sheets labels in green "Old Borges Ranch."

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 Robert M. Pond, Open Space Specialist
 organization Contra Costa County Service Area R-8 date 12/18/80
 street & number 1666 N. Main Street telephone (415) 943-5867
 city or town Walnut Creek state California 94596

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 Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service.

State Historic Preservation Officer signature *K. M. Reed*

title _____ date 5/20/81

For HCRS use only

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

Delores B. ... date 7/7/81
 for _____
 Keeper of the National Register

Attest:

Chief of Registration

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

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

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7. Garage, horse stall and woodshed (all attached): late 1930's to early 1940's; one side, single car garage - tongue-in-groove redwood, painted; roof - pitched, tin (was once shake); horsestall - dirt floor, dutch door, wooden flooring in back for storage area; (2) doors on northfacing side of building leading into garage and stall; alteration 1978 - overhang attached to southfacing side for storage of wood. Good condition.
8. Milkhouse: 1913 redwood barnwood 1' X 12' shake roof. Now used as chicken shed and tackroom. Good condition.

Other buildings/structures: outhouse, early 1900's; corrals. Good condition. New two-holer outhouse for public use; old barnwood used on outside to be in keeping with other buildings; pitched roof with shakes.

Note: The only building requiring improvements is the original farmhouse. All other buildings are in fair to good condition and used today.

The one mile gravel-dirt road leading up to the Old Borges Ranch off the main road, was blazed and constructed by Frank (Francisco) Borges and his sons in 1899, and has been continually maintained and used by the Borges Family over the past four generations for their cattle and dairy operation and as the main entrance to the ranch. The road circles the ranch complex and continues on up into the grazing lands where wagon roads were cut as shortcuts to the nearby towns of Walnut Creek and Danville, and for ranching purposes. As one travels up the ranch road glimpses of rustic wooden fence posts strung with 5-strand barbed wire catch your eye, combined here and there with sections of modern-day red and white tipped metal fence stakes. An aging fence of hog wire circles the farmhouse, garden and orchard. In front of the second generation house, a section of time-worn, lichen-encrusted picket fence, is all that remains of a fence that once circled the first generation house during its prime at the turn of the century. Gates and corrals have been kept up and where needed, replaced with similar gates of the same construction.

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In spring, the ranch is surrounded by a pictorial view of rolling foothills carpeted with thick lush-green grassland savanna and dotted with oak-woodlands of valley oaks, blue oaks, scrub oaks and California Buckeye. Nearby, creeks, springs and stock ponds swollen with winter's rains play host to cottonwood, willow and native bunch grass. Along the ridge top, 200-300 year old oaks stand as elegant monuments against a backdrop of azure sky and provide food and shade for black-tail deer. Along the roadside, California quail, morning doves, and red squirrels scurry. The chatter of acorn woodpeckers, nut hatches or scrub jays can be heard, while red-tail hawks and turkey vultures circle lazily overhead. The Ranch also plays host from time to time to the California the red fox and racoon. The grassland is patchworked with splashes of Blue Dicks (Brodiaea), California poppies, Chinese Houses, bright yellow mustard, orangish-yellow fiddlenecks and Tom-cat clover. By the first of May, most of the wildflowers start to die back and the grass begins to show signs once again, of turning a golden brown with the coming of summer.

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CONTINUATION SHEET

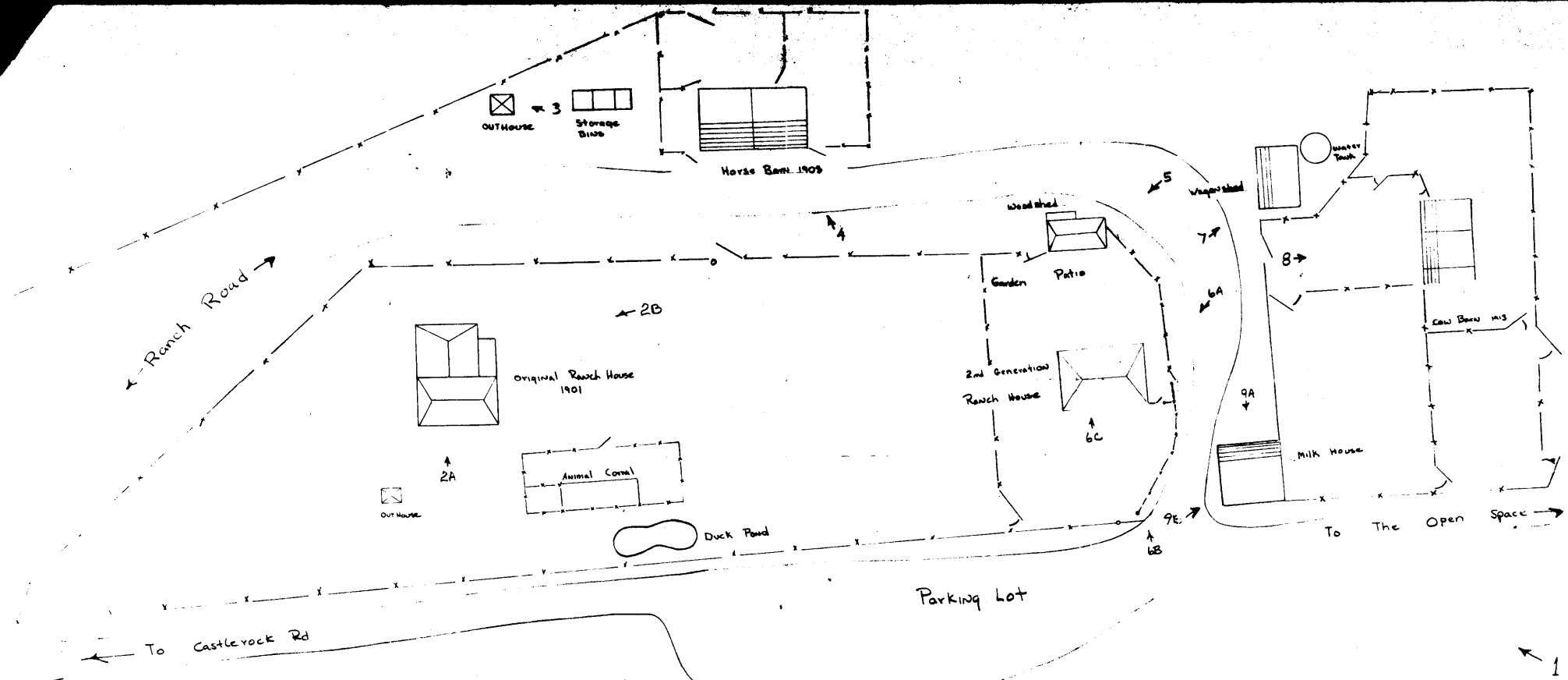
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four generations the skill of handling cattle has become a finite art and a tradition being passed on from father to son, as a part of our western heritage of raising cattle.

In 1976, the remaining Borges family members sold the ranch and surrounding acreage to Contra Costa County for the Walnut Creek Open Space Program. However, Dan Borges, grandson of Frank and Mary and his son Dan, Jr. continue to raise cattle, and lease the grazing rights ^{and} one of the large barns and the corral at the ranch.²

The ranch buildings and acreage have functioned as parts of the same economic and cultural unit since the late nineteenth century. Although title has passed to Contra Costa County, continuity of use is maintained through the County interpretive program and through lease of the ranchland to Borges family members.

1. White, Marlene E., "The Old Borges Ranch", The Contra Costa Times, Contra Costa County, c. 1980, pp. 1,3.
2. Ibid. pg. 10.

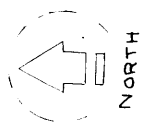
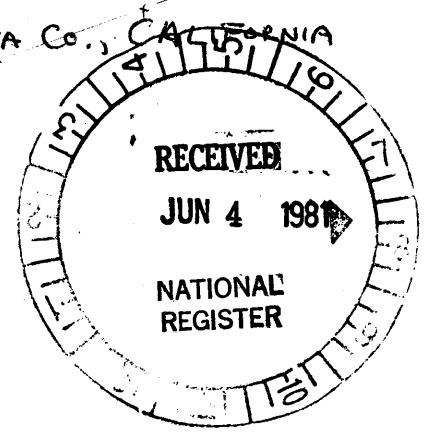


"OLD" THE BORGES RANCH

WALNUT CREEK, CONTRA COSTA CO., CALIFORNIA

(X) Original Cabin Site

Future Borges Pond



JUL - 7 1981