

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

FOR NPS USE ONLY
OCT 8 1975
RECEIVED
DATE ENTERED

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

Cape St. Elias Lighthouse

HISTORIC
**

AND/OR COMMON

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER

CITY, TOWN

Katalla

NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT (Dist. 1)

STATE

Alaska

080

CODE

VICINITY OF Kayak Island

VALDE Cordova

COUNTY

080E 080

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 | 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 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. U.S. 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-1975

FEDERAL STATE COUNTY LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS Alaska Division of Parks, 323 E. 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 | | |

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

For many years the Cape St. Elias Light Station was the pride of the Lighthouse Service. The light and fog-signal apparatus was the latest model, on exhibit at the Panama-Pacific International Exposition at San Francisco before installation at the new station. The light and fog-signal building was a two-story, rectangular, reinforced concrete structure (25' x 36') with a medium hipped roof; the square, concrete tower (12' x 12') and circular lantern with diamond-shaped glass panes extended from the corner of the lighthouse structure. The light (390 c.p.) was displayed forty feet above high water, visible for about eleven miles. Other structures at the light station included a two-story, reinforced concrete dwelling (30' x 35') with a medium hipped roof for three keepers; one-story boat and hoist houses; and a one-story storage building.

The lighthouse structure was never rebuilt or altered. Of course, the station facilities were improved through the years. In 1927, for example, a radio beacon was established at the station, the second in Alaska which such facilities. In later years, the station was converted to electrical power.

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 type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION | | |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900- | <input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNICATIONS | <input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRY | <input type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT | <input type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY) | | |
| | | <input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION | | | | |

SPECIFIC DATES 1915-1974

BUILDER/ARCHITECT

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The second major aid to marine navigation established in Southern Alaska before World War II, the Cape St. Elias has long performed a significant function in the development of Alaska commerce and transportation. For this reason, the lighthouse should be entered on the National Register of Historic Places.

Since the early 1800's Pinnacle Rock, off the southwestern point of Kayak Island, has been an important landmark for navigators traveling between Southeast Alaska, Prince William Sound and Cook Inlet. Due to fog, winter darkness, and frequent storms, Cape St. Elias was also considered one of the most dangerous points along the entire coast of southern Alaska. When, in the early 1910's, the United States Bureau of Lighthouses announced plans to establish a light and fog-signal station at the cape, many Alaska seafarers agreed that this was "by all odds the most important aid to navigation yet recommended for Alaska." (Cordova Daily Alaskan January 23, 1911: 1)

After several years of recommendations by the Lighthouse Service and memorials by steamship companies, railway officials, fishermen, and the like, Congress finally approved construction of the Cape St. Elias Light Station in 1911. However, it was not until October 1913 that Congress appropriated the necessary funds. During the season of 1914, survey work for the station was completed, and a temporary acetylene blinker light placed on the cape. Construction began in early 1915; and by late fall, the lighthouse structure was nearly completed. The station was lighted for the first time on September 16, 1916.

Placed in operation in the same year that the Alaska Engineering Commission began construction of the Alaska Railroad, which eventually established Southcentral Alaska as the economic hub of all Alaska, the Cape St. Elias lighthouse proved to be an indispensable navigational aid along the shipping lanes from the contiguous American states and Southeastern Alaska to Cordova, Valdez, Seward, and Anchorage. Equipped with radio facilities in 1916, the station keepers could transmit messages to Katalla, Cordova, Valdez, Seward, and later Anchorage, informing residents of the expected arrival of a passenger or cargo vessel. In 1927 a radio beacon was installed at the station, ready at any time to inform a lost seafarer of his location. In later years, the station was provided with electrical power, thereby upgrading the intensity of the light.

Due to rising maintenance costs and technological advances, such as battery-powered lights, the Cape St. Elias Light Station was unmanned and downgraded to a minor light 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

~~63 34 0 5 0~~ 66 32 175

| | | | | | | | |
|---|------|---------|----------|---|------|---------|----------|
| A | 016 | 6341010 | | B | | | |
| | ZONE | EASTING | NORTHING | | ZONE | EASTING | NORTHING |
| C | | | | D | | | |
| | ZONE | EASTING | NORTHING | | ZONE | EASTING | NORTHING |

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

Extreme southern tip of Kayak Island, including Pinnacle Rock.
1 acre.

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 10, 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 X 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 *State Historic Preservation Officer*

DATE *9/26/1975*

FOR NPS USE ONLY

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

NOV 1975

DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF ARCHEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION

ATTEST: *C. M. Brown* DATE *12/18/95*

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER DATE *DEC 18 1975*