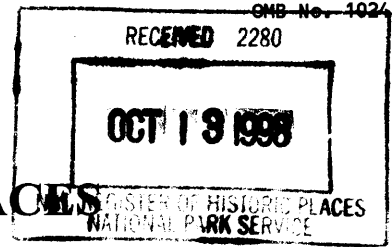


United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

1527



NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES REGISTRATION FORM

1. Name of Property

historic name: Wheeler, Burton and Lulu, Cabin

other name/site number: Ocqui

2. Location

street & number: Lake McDonald

not for publication: n/a
vicinity: X

city/town: Apgar

state: Montana code: MT county: Flathead code: 029 zip code: 59936

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1986, as amended, I hereby certify that this 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 meets does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant nationally statewide locally.

Signature of certifying official/Title

Date

10-6-98

Montana State Historic Preservation Office

State or Federal agency or bureau

(_ See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

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

Signature of commenting or other official

Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby certify that this property is:

Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

- entered in the National Register see continuation sheet
- determined eligible for the National Register see continuation sheet
- determined not eligible for the National Register see continuation sheet
- removed from the National Register see continuation sheet
- other (explain): _____

[Handwritten Signature]

11/27/98

5. Classification

Ownership of Property: Public-Federal (land) Private (building)	Number of Resources within Property	
	Contributing	Noncontributing
Category of Property: Building	<u> 1 </u>	<u> </u> building(s)
Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register: N/A	<u> </u>	<u> </u> sites
	<u> </u>	<u> 1 </u> structures
	<u> </u>	<u> </u> objects
Name of related multiple property listing: Glacier National Park Multiple Property Listing	<u> 1 </u>	<u> 1 </u> TOTAL

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions:

DOMESTIC: Camp

Current Functions:

DOMESTIC: Camp

7. Description

Architectural Classification:

OTHER: Rustic Style

Materials:

foundation: Concrete
walls: Logs
roof: Shake
other: Stone

Narrative Description

The Wheeler Cabin lies at the base of Mount Stanton at the head of Lake McDonald in Glacier National Park. The property is next to the Upper Lake McDonald Ranger Station and about three-quarters of a mile west of Going-to-the-Sun Highway.

The Wheeler Cabin site (including property not included in this nomination) is about 1.21 acres in size, trapezoidal in shape, and fronts for about 200 feet on the upper (north) end of Lake McDonald. The site is lightly timbered and grassy and slopes gently to the lake. The main cabin is approximately 60 feet from the top of a short flat-stoned beach. A stand of pine trees along the shore shields the cabin from the lake. There is a boathouse at the top of the beach toward the west side of the property. Three other cabins are located from 40 to 60 feet behind the main cabin. Rather dense woods surround the cabins on three sides. A road, built and maintained by the National Park Service, runs behind the site; it provides access to the Lake McDonald Ranger Station, about 500 yards away, to five other family cabin sites to the east, and to the Kelly Homestead which lies approximately 1¼ miles to the west.

The Wheelers purchased an existing cabin at Lake McDonald in 1916. A fire damaged that cabin in 1941, and the family constructed a new cabin on its site. Other buildings at the Wheeler site date from the late 1920s to the early 1960s. The Main Cabin is being nominated to the National Register and a boathouse is included as a non-contributing structure within the boundaries of the cabin. Three other cabins and a combination bath and laundry are excluded from the boundaries because of their late dates of construction or loss of integrity.

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Main Cabin (1941-42, contributing building)

The Wheelers began construction of the main cabin in the fall of 1941. Lulu Wheeler supervised completion during the early summer of 1942. Lulu Wheeler designed the cabin taking great care to insure that the design captured the Rustic Style spirit of its predecessor and of the architecture emblematic of the National Park Service.

The Wheeler Cabin measures 35.5 feet by 37.0 feet and has a T-plan. The one-and-one-half story building rests on a concrete foundation. The exterior log walls are hewn on the interior side and laid up with saddle notching and minimal extensions. The cross-gabled roof was covered with cedar shakes which have recently (1997) been covered with a metal standing seam roof.

The front (lake side) of the cabin is dominated by an open truss gable-front porch supported by pairs of log posts. Five broad steps lead to the porch and the flagstone terrace crossing the full length of the cabin. Parapet walls in front of the terrace and the footings for the posts are faced with native stone. The centered front door opening contains a pair of casement doors with five horizontally-divided lights. The front doors are flanked by triplets of full-height casement windows, again divided into five horizontal lights.

Each end of the front wing of the building has two full-height casement windows divided into ten lights. A massive slightly battered native stone fireplace is located between the windows on the east wall. A gable roofed dormer projects from the eastern slope of the roof. Windows in the dormer and the east gable end are horizontally-divided casements.

A 24-light fixed window and a multi-paned one-half light door provide light and access to the kitchen on west side of the rear wing. Two doors at the second floor level in the north gable are reached by an open, exterior stairway at the rear of the cabin. A small double-hung window is located beside each door.

The interior of the cabin includes a large living room across the front of the building, a kitchen, bathroom, and bedroom in the rear wing, and three bedrooms and a bathroom upstairs.

Boat House (c.1950, non-contributing structure)

The pole frame boat house measures 11.3 feet by 15.5 feet. The vertical poles are set on a concrete foundation and horizontal poles tie them together at the top and midpoint. Vertical board siding is placed on the interior side of the poles. The gable roof is covered with cedar shingles. A pair of side-hinged doors constructed of vertical boards provides access from the lake side. A block-and-tackle is used to move boats into the structure.

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria: B and C

Areas of Significance: Politics; Architecture

Criteria Considerations (Exceptions): n/a

Period(s) of Significance: 1941-1948

Significant Person(s): Burton Kendall Wheeler

Significant Dates: 1941-42

Cultural Affiliation: European-American

Architect/Builder: Lulu Wheeler

Narrative Statement of Significance

Statement of Significance

The Wheeler Cabin is eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion C. The Glacier National Park Multiple Property Document (MPD) provides the historic context for "Private Development in Glacier National Park, 1900-1945." "Summer Homes" are identified as a property type associated with this context. The MPD found summer homes eligible for listing under Criterion C if they retain those architectural features that display rustic architectural design developed outside the NPS's purview and they retain the scenic vistas and access routes that determined a resource's historic siting. The Wheeler Cabin meets these registration requirements.

The Wheeler Cabin also is eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion B. Burton Kendall Wheeler used the cabin as his summer home. Wheeler's national significance has already been recognized by the National Register with the designation of his house in Butte as a National Historic Landmark. During Wheeler's 24 years in the U.S. Senate, he sponsored many progressive pieces of legislation. The Independent Progressive party chose him to run as vice president with Robert M. LaFollette in 1924, and he was the leading Democratic candidate for president in 1940 until Franklin Roosevelt was re-nominated. Wheeler, an early supporter of Roosevelt, broke with the president and led the fight against expansion of the Supreme Court and the United State's entry into World War II.

Introduction

"seeing a man's home 'takes him out of the history books and makes him come to life with all his talents and abilities'."

Lulu Wheeler, 1958

Burton Kendall Wheeler, his wife Lulu, and their children first visited Glacier National Park in 1915. Camping near the park headquarters for two weeks began, what Elizabeth Wheeler Colman described as, "one of our family's most loved traditions, vacationing in Glacier Park." Returning to the park the next year, the Wheelers purchased a cabin on government-leased land from John Lewis, developer of Lewis Glacier Hotel (now known as Lake McDonald Lodge). Photographs of the original cabin at the site show a small, rectangular log cabin with a full-length front porch and an exterior stone fireplace. At the time, there was little tourist traffic in the Park and few accommodations. Besides Lewis' Hotel, a few homesteaders, including Frank Geduhn at the head of the Lake, rented out cabins.

During the teens and construction of the western portion of the Going-to-the-Sun Road, several homesteaders subdivided their property and sold small tracts for summer cabins. This stimulated a pattern that continues to this day: the development of extended-family claims. Like these other summer homes, the Wheeler Cabin, has been passed down from generation to generation. Burton K. Wheeler's surviving children continue to spend summers at Lake McDonald.

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Burton K. Wheeler

Burton K. Wheeler was born in Hudson, Massachusetts in 1883. His father was a Quaker who worked in a shoe manufacturing plant and maintained a small farm. Wheeler attended primary and secondary schools in Hudson. Later, he worked for several years in Boston and then entered the Michigan University Law School at Ann Arbor. After graduating, and upon the advice of a physician who thought he had tuberculosis, Wheeler headed West, settling in Butte, Montana.

During summer work while attending college, Wheeler met Lulu M. White, near Albany, Illinois. Miss White was then also attending college. Burton and Lulu married in Illinois in 1907. The Wheelers became the parents of six children: John, Elizabeth, Edward, Francis, Richard, and Marion. Elizabeth Wheeler Colman, described her mother as "the force behind the Senator throughout his twenty-four-year career in Washington. . . she was a major factor behind the scenes in the shaping of American politics."

Wheeler first turned his attention to politics in 1908 when he tried to help his law partner, Matt Channing, win the Democratic nomination for Silver Bow County prosecutor. Although Canning lost, Wheeler made a favorable impression, and in 1910, he was elected to the Montana House of Representatives on a ticket endorsed by The Anaconda Copper Mining Company (Anaconda), the dominant force in Montana's political life. Despite his freshman status, he became chairman of the judiciary committee. Refusing to bow to pressure from Anaconda, Wheeler tried to effect passage of a liberalized workmen's compensation law. Although he failed, he did get a loan shark bill passed which fixed the maximum interest rate, and a measure to ban the sale of prison-made goods as well. Wheeler most clearly showed his defiance of Anaconda in his leadership of the forces in the House that were trying to elect the corporation's enemy, Thomas J. Walsh, to the U.S. Senate. This fight, says historian Arthur M. Schlesinger, Jr., turned Wheeler into a "rough-and-ready ally fighter who had to learn to bite and kick and gouge in order to save his political life."

In 1913, thanks in large part to Wheeler, Walsh was finally elected to the U.S. Senate. Wheeler himself tried to win the Democratic nomination for Montana Attorney General, but bitterly opposed by Anaconda, he lost in the state convention by three votes. In 1913, on Walsh's recommendation, Wheeler was appointed U.S. District Attorney for Montana. His tenure in this office was largely uneventful until the U.S. entered World War I. Montana had one of the worst outbreaks of anti-German and anti-radical hysteria in the nation, largely fueled by The Anaconda Copper Mining Company through its control of the state's press. Anaconda hoped to use the war to break the power of the labor unions. Despite demands that he make wholesale arrests, Wheeler refused. "He was assiduous in handling what he considered genuine sedition cases," said New York Times reporter Alden Whitman, "but equally diligent in refusing to prosecute what he regarded as unworthy ones." By 1918, he had become so controversial that he resigned for fear he would ruin Senator Walsh's chances for reelection.

Wheeler's experiences as U.S. District Attorney made him determined to wrest control of the Montana Democratic Party from Anaconda. In 1920, he won the party's gubernatorial nomination with the assistance of the Non-partisan League. In the campaign which followed, Anaconda used all its power to defeat him, accusing him of being a Communist and claiming that his election would ruin Montana's economy. Despite heroic campaigning on Wheeler's part in the face of serious threats against his life, he was decisively defeated.

In 1922, depressed economic conditions enabled Wheeler to handily win election to the U.S. Senate on a platform of aid to agriculture, the right of labor to organize, and passage of the soldiers' bonus. Despite his freshman status, he wasted little time before making himself well known. Assigned to the Interstate Commerce and Indian Affairs committees, he challenged the reelection of Albert B. Cummins as chairman. With the aid of progressive Republicans, Democrat Ellison D. Smith was selected to replace him---one of the few times in the history of the U.S. Congress when an important chairmanship has been held by the minority party.

Burton K. Wheeler came to national attention two years later when he introduced a resolution to investigate Attorney General Harry Daugherty for his failure to prosecute law violators in the Teapot Dome scandal. Indeed, by 1924, only two years after arriving in Washington, he was so well known that the Independent Progressive Party selected him to run as vice president with presidential candidate Robert M. LaFollette. In their losing effort, the pair drew the largest third-party popular presidential vote in American history

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until 1968. Through the 1920s and 1930s, Wheeler was one of the leading progressives in the U.S. Senate. He authored such crucial pieces of legislation as the Wheeler-Rayburn Act which abolished public utility holding companies and the Wheeler-Howard Act which laid the grounds for self-rule on Indian reservations. As the chairman of powerful Senate committees and a close ally of President Franklin Roosevelt on most New Deal legislation, Wheeler was among a handful of individuals in the U.S. Congress who determined the direction of public policy. Then in 1937, he broke with Roosevelt over the president's plan to expand the Supreme Court. In what most historians now see as the "defining moment" of Roosevelt's second term, Wheeler led the fight against the "court packing" plan and, against tremendous initial odds, won.

In the late 1930s and early 1940s, Wheeler emerged as a leading spokesman against U.S. involvement in the European war. He traveled across the country speaking to antiwar groups. Wheeler led opposition in Congress to weakening the neutrality act and passionately opposed conscription calling it "another Agricultural Adjustment Act intended to plow under, not crops, but every fourth American son, . . ." With speculation over whether Roosevelt would run for a third term in 1940, Wheeler emerged as the leading Democratic Party contender. Articles supportive of Wheeler for President appeared in such publications as the *Saturday Evening Post*, *Colliers*, *The Nation*, *New Republic*, and *Time*. The Democratic convention, however, renominated Roosevelt. Wheeler spurned the offer of vice president, feeling that it was an attempt to silence his criticism of the administration's war policies. Wheeler fought the passage of the Lend-Lease bill and denounced Congress for abdicating its powers upon its passage. After Pearl Harbor, though questioning Roosevelt's prior knowledge of the attack, Wheeler became a strong supporter of the American war effort. Two of his sons saw active duty. After he left the U.S. Senate in 1946, he remained politically active, and as late as the Vietnam War, which he criticized in harsh terms, he was a respected national voice. The importance of Wheeler's political career can be put in these terms: no book about political life in the United States during the period he served in the U.S. Senate can fail to mention him.

Against this background, the scope of Wheeler's work at Lake McDonald can be appreciated. Three specific legislative bills were, to a considerable degree, worked on in Glacier National Park: The Wheeler-Lee Act, an amendment to the Federal trade act; the Wheeler-Rayburn Act, and the Wheeler-Howard Act.

In the early 1930s, telephone conversations with President Roosevelt, Secretary of the Interior Harold Ickes, members of the U.S. Senate, and others were conducted over a ring-down phone line which used a single strand of wire through the forests. Anyone having a phone on the line, including neighbors and park rangers, could pick up the receiver and listen. But many officials also came to Lake McDonald in person to meet with Wheeler. They included President Roosevelt, who came to dedicate Going-to-the-Sun Highway in 1935; Vice-president Henry Wallace, who had long discussions with Wheeler concerning the adjacent national forests and the interaction (particularly regarding the prevention of forest fires) between the National Park Service and the U.S. Forest Service; and, on a number of occasions, Secretary of the Interior Ickes and Postmaster General Frank Walker. This is not to mention various Montana Governors, other members of Montana's Congressional delegation, and leaders of Montana's Indian Nations, who held Wheeler in special affection for his championing of their causes.

Wheeler took a special interest in Glacier National Park. He frequently consulted with Superintendent Scoyen on a variety of issues: trails, wilderness areas, grizzly bears, buildings, snow problems on Going-to-the-Sun Highway, and whether to stock Glacier's lakes and streams with trout, tourism, the need to provide larger campgrounds, and problems with concessionaires. He and his longtime colleague, Senator Thomas Walsh, pushed through the appropriations bill for Going-to-the-Sun Highway.

Of course, Wheeler's time at Lake McDonald was not totally taken up with Congressional business. He participated in a variety of recreational pursuits. He loved to hike and fish, to play bridge, to spend time with his family in a way simply not possible in Washington, D.C., to entertain friends and constituents, and to "rest up." Lake McDonald had a tonic effect on him, and he invariably concluded his time at Lake McDonald charged up, with new energy and new ideas. He and Lulu celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary at Lake McDonald in 1958, and Lulu died there over Labor Day weekend in 1962. Burton K. Wheeler died on January 6, 1975 in Washington, D.C.

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Construction and Architectural Significance

In 1941, Glacier National Park officials found themselves faced with a "situation . . . very embarrassing both to the administration of this park, the [National Park] Service and the Department [of the Interior]." Rumors reached the superintendent that the Wheelers had hired carpenters to construct a new cabin. Although the Wheelers had purchased the cabin in 1916 and then leased the U.S. government-owned land it sat on, federal law prohibited Wheeler from signing a lease after his election to the U.S. Senate. Syndicated news columnist Drew Pearson pointed out to the nation that Wheeler had squatted on government land since 1924. Even while memorandums went back and forth between the National Park Service and the Department of the Interior on how to resolve the issue, the Wheelers finished construction of the new cabin. Wheeler acted under authorization granted by an Under Secretary of the Interior who, without the Secretary's approval, raised "no objection [to] remodeling log cabin Glacier National Park under present status." President Franklin Roosevelt entered the discussion in late-1942 writing that based on the approval given, he felt no further action should be taken, and the Wheelers should be permitted to occupy the cabin under a life estate. This still left unresolved Wheeler's inability to sign a lease for the land. Finally in 1946, the U.S. Congress passed a law that ultimately legalized the Wheeler's occupancy. It permitted the Secretary of the Interior to accept title to non-Federal lands in Glacier National Park in exchange for other properties or interests, including grants of life estates. Lulu Wheeler, in the name of her children, exchanged land at Apgar for a life estate in the cabins.

Lulu Wheeler designed the new cabin. She took great care to capture the spirit of its predecessor and follow the Rustic Style emblematic of National Park Service architecture in the pre-World War II period. Lulu also incorporated more contemporary architectural details like the large front windows meant to link the interior of the cabin with its natural surroundings. The builders considered the openings structurally unsound. Undoubtedly, she responded much the same as she did years later to the Washington, D.C. architect who suggested a change in her plans for the family's house there: "May I remind you this is my house." Work on the new cabin began in the fall of 1941, and Lulu spent the early summer of 1942 at Lake McDonald, alone, overseeing the cabin's completion. Logs for the cabin came from outside the Park. Masons constructed the fireplace from stones Lulu had collected. Cabinetmakers from Columbia Falls added the finishing touches to the kitchen. The cabin was ready for occupancy when the rest of the family arrived later that summer.

The Wheeler Cabin meets the Glacier National Park Multiple Property Listing's registration requirements for summer homes. It is an example of the vernacular, Rustic Style summer homes built in Glacier National Park up until 1945. Not designed under the purview of the National Park Service's Landscape Division, the house incorporates Lulu Wheeler's interpretation of the style. (It must be remembered that beginning about 1935, even within the National Park Service, the Rustic Style was falling from favor.) With its use of indigenous materials, the Wheeler Cabin falls within the mainstream of the Rustic Style. The log walls, cedar shakes, stone fireplace, and flagstone terrace emerge from the cabin's environment. At the same time, the large windows and the story-and-one-half thin posts supporting the open porch roof present a distinct vertical and airy appearance not found in earlier examples of the style. Lulu Wheeler, although striving to perpetuate the Rustic Style with the new cabin, was clearly influenced by more contemporary architectural philosophies.

The setting of the Wheeler Cabin and the other family cabins at the upper end of the Lake say much about the character and attitudes of those privileged to build within Glacier National Park. Privacy and isolation were as important to them as the quality of the view. The idea was that in coming here one really was getting away to a different sort of life, not merely trading it for an ersatz and self-deluding version. They built the cabins to blend with their natural environment, not only following the philosophy of the Rustic Style, but also to shield their wealthy and powerful owners from the public view. There is nothing fancy or affected about them; they represent a kind of "democratic" as well as "rustic" architecture. In this respect, they stand in sharp contrast to the second-home architecture that is now going up in Montana--huge and very complex houses built high up (often on ridge lines) and in full view.

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Other Properties

The National Register requires that properties associated with an important person be compared with other properties associated with that person. Two other houses owned and occupied by Burton and Lulu Wheeler are known to exist.

1232 East Second Street, Butte, Montana - The Secretary of the Interior designated this house a National Historic Landmark on December 8, 1976. The Secretary identified it as the "Montana home (1908-23) of Senate radical of the 1920s and 1930s. First prominent Democrat to support F.D.R. for the Presidency, he later broke with Roosevelt over the court-packing plan and Lend-Lease." Burton K. Wheeler lived in this house during his rise to political prominence in Montana. He did not occupy the house long after his election to the U.S. Senate in 1922. The NHL nomination identified the existence of Lake McDonald cabin but dismissed its significance as "a summer house that remains in the Wheeler family but eventually is to become National Park Service property."

4930 Loughboro Road, N.W., Washington, D.C. - This house, designed by Lulu Wheeler, was constructed in 1951. It was built after Wheeler left the U.S. Senate.

The Wheeler Cabin is the property most directly associated with Burton K. Wheeler's national political career. Even though Wheeler's senatorial career would come to an end within four years after completion of the cabin, construction occurred at the height of Wheeler's influence and power.

Wheeler, Burton and Lulu, Cabin
Name of Property

Flathead County, Montana
County and State

9. Major Bibliographic References

See continuation sheet

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

- 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: Less than one

UTM References:	Zone	Easting	Northing
	12	287590	5391270

Legal Location (Township, Range & Section(s)): Section 11, T33N, R18E, M.P.M.

Verbal Boundary Description

Beginning at the East ¼ corner of Section 11, T33N, R18E, M.P.M. proceed N73°10'W, 3574.5 feet; then due south 201.06 feet to the Point of Beginning. From the Point of Beginning proceed due south 130 feet; then N73°05'W, 200 feet; thence due north, 130 feet; thence S73°05'E, 200 feet, to the Point of Beginning.

Boundary Justification

The boundary encompasses the Wheeler Cabin and its lake front property while excluding the non-contributing buildings located behind it.

11. Form Prepared By

name/title: Gordon Brittan and Jason Nye
organization: Department of History, Montana State University date: June 1998
street & number: P.O. Box 172320 telephone: 406-994-4395
city or town: Bozeman state: MT zip code: 59717

Property Owner

name/title: Elizabeth Wheeler Colman, Marion Wheeler Scott, Edward K. Wheeler, Susan Wheeler-Knapp, Leslie Wheeler-Stein
street & number: 4th Floor - 808 17th Street NW telephone: 202-467-0500
city or town: Washington state: DC zip code: 20006

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Wheeler, Burton and Lulu, Cabin
Flathead County, Montana

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Bibliography

Information on Burton K. Wheeler's Montana career is taken directly from:

"Wheeler, Burton K., House." National Register of Historic Places Inventory Nomination Form, by George R. Adams and Ralph Christian.
February 1976.

For information on Wheeler's national career, the family's visits to Glacier National Park and construction of the cabin, see:

Colman, Elizabeth Wheeler. *Mrs. Wheeler Goes to Washington*. Helena: Falcon Press Publishing Company, Inc., 1989.

Copies of correspondence between Glacier National Park and the Department of the Interior regarding building the new cabin are in the files of the State Historic Preservation Office, Helena.

SITE PLAN

WHEELER CABIN
FLATHEAD COUNTY
MONTANA

