

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register Of Historic Places
Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form* (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

1. Name of Property

historic name Susanville Railroad Depot

other names/site number _____

2. Location

street & number 461 Richmond Road NA not for publication

city or town Susanville NA vicinity

state California code CA county Lassen code 035 zip code 96130

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. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

K. Mellon 2/21/01
Signature of certifying official/Title Date

California Office of Historic Preservation
State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

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:

- 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): _____

Edson H. Beall
Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

4.5.01

Susanville Railroad Depot

Name of Property

Lassen County, California

County and State

5. Classification

Ownership of Property

(Check as many boxes as apply)

- private
- public-local
- public-State
- public-Federal

Category of Property

(Check only one box)

- building(s)
- district
- site
- structure
- object

Number of Resources within Property

(Do not include previously listed resources in the count.)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
1		buildings
		sites
		structures
		objects
1	0	Total

Name of related multiple property listing

(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing.)

N/A _____

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

0 _____

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

Transportation: rail-related _____

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

Recreation and Culture: museum _____

Social: meeting hall _____

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions)

No Style _____

Materials

(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation **concrete** _____

roof **asbestos** _____

walls **stucco** _____

other _____

Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

Susanville Railroad Depot

Name of Property

Lassen County, California

County and State

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing)

- A Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- B Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- C Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- D Property has yielded, or is likely to yield information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations

(Mark "X" in all the boxes that apply.)

Property is:

- A owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- B removed from its original location.
- C a birthplace or a grave.
- D a cemetery.
- E a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- F a commemorative property.
- G less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

Narrative Statement of Significance

(Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

9. Major Bibliographical References

(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

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 # _____

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions)

Transportation

Period of Significance

1927-1950

Significant Dates

NA

Significant Person

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

NA

Cultural Affiliation

NA

Architect/Builder

NA

Primary Location of Additional Data

- State Historic Preservation Office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other

Name of repository:

Susanville Railroad Depot

Name of Property

Lassen County, California

County and State

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property 1.4 acres

UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet)

	Zone	Easting	Northing		Zone	Easting	Northing
1	10	698660	4475860	3	---	---	---
2	---	---	---	4	---	---	---

See continuation sheet.

Verbal Boundary Description

(Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

Boundary Justification

(Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)

11. Form Prepared By

name/title **Karen Fouch, Member**

organization **Lassen Land & Trails Trust** date **2/23/2000**

street & number **1009 Orchard St.** telephone **530-257-8291**

city or town **Susanville** state **CA** zip code **96130**

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

Continuation Sheets

Maps

A **USGS map** (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.

A **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

Photographs

Representative **black and white photographs** of the property.

Additional items

(Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

Property Owner

(Complete this item at the request of the SHPO or FPO.)

name **Lassen Land & Trails Trust**

street & number **P.O. Box 1461** telephone **530-257-3252**

city or town **Susanville** state **CA** zip code **96130**

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 470 *et seq.*).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including the time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Project (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

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National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 1

Susanville Railroad Depot
Lassen County, CA

Description

The Susanville Railroad Depot, built in 1927, is a typical railroad station. It is a 72.5-foot long by 28-foot wide building with a stucco exterior sitting on a concrete foundation. The depot is located at 461 Richmond Road with North Railroad and South Railroad Avenues running on each side of the 1.32-acre parcel. There is no access to the depot parcel from the east as the adjoining parcel is an abandoned railroad bed owned by Union Pacific that remains vacant. The depot is the only structure on the parcel that also features a paved parking lot, landscaped grounds, and railroad tracks. The appearance of the property has changed very little over the years and has retained a high degree of its original integrity.

The 1927 depot was an addition to the original railroad station that was built in 1913. The addition was designed to provide a ticket office, waiting room, express office, lavatories, and public telephone booth. The 1913 structure was at that time remodeled to serve as a baggage room and freight shed. In 1989 a fire destroyed the older structure leaving the 1927 passenger depot standing alone.

The design of the 1927 depot captured the basic symmetry of old depots of that time, adopting an extended roofline with simplicity of detail in its design. Stucco originally painted in a buff color was used on the exterior walls. The original hipped roof had asbestos shingles with a roof edge treatment of metal-lined "Dutch" rain gutters and a boxed cornice with a plain frieze used as a signboard with another row of cornice molding below it. There is a bay window centered on the track side of the building in the ticket office, paired wooden entrance doors, double-hung multi-light sash windows, sliding baggage and express room doors on both the front and back sides of the depot. The exterior appearance of the depot has changed little since its construction. The exception being new composition shingles on the roof, and the absence of the rain gutters.

The interior of the depot was divided into three main areas; a waiting room, ticket office and express office (from west to east). At the west end of the waiting room were the men and women's lavatories, which included a women's retiring room in the women's restroom. The public phone booth was situated between the entrances to the lavatories. A wood-paneled counter divided the waiting room from the ticket office. Another

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Continuation Sheet**

Section number 7 Page 2

**Susanville Railroad Depot
Lassen County, CA**

Description (continued)

partition and counter divided the ticket office from the express room, creating a public hallway. The interior floors were linoleum in a large tile pattern over concrete. The rooms have 16 foot coved ceilings and the walls were clad with tongue-and-groove wainscoting with picture railing and decorative moldings throughout. The cabinetry was clear pine with brass hardware. Many of these interior features are still intact.

The most notable modifications were made sometime between 1950 and 1960. They included the removal of the wood-paneled counter that divide the waiting room from the ticket office. In the express office the ceiling was lowered in one-half of the room which was partitioned off. Because of the partition the public hallway between the ticket office and the express office has disappeared.

When Southern Pacific closed the Susanville Depot in 1956 it was primarily used for storage until 1979. After that time the structure stood vacant and the victim of vandalism. The depot was saved from being burned in a firefighting exercise in 1987 and was eventually acquired and renovated by Lassen Land and Trails Trust in the 1990's.

Renovation that began in 1993 restored the damage to the depots original features. Some of the fixtures, such as sinks and lights had to be replaced. The linoleum floor is now painted concrete. New features to the buildings interior are the furnace and security system. Because of the renovation the building is in good condition and is historically quite intact.

Improvements to the parcel where the depot sits include a paved parking lot, curbs and sidewalks along with lawn and landscaping containing vegetation native to Lassen County on the north and east sides of the building. A redwood deck has been added to the west end of the depot. Railroad tracks are still in place on the south side of the depot.

The depot setting in south Susanville has changed very little over the years. Most of the surrounding houses were built in the 1930's. The original railroad bed that served as the western line out of Susanville is now maintained as a trail. A Union Pacific caboose is positioned just across the street from the depot on Richmond Road.

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Continuation Sheet**

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**Susanville Railroad Depot
Lassen County, CA**

Description (continued)

The Susanville Railroad Depot has integrity of location, design, materials and workmanship. For this reason it demonstrates its place as an important historic structure and therefore is eligible for the National Register under Criteria A.

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**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation sheet**

Section number 8 Page 4

**Susanville Railroad Depot
Lassen County, CA**

Statement of significance

The Susanville Railroad Depot is eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places under Criteria A, in the area of transportation. It is significant in that it is one of few reminders in the City of Susanville and Lassen County of the major role the railroad played in the economic and social development of the area. The period of significance extends from 1927 to 1956; the earlier year is the date of construction while the latter year is when the depot ended its freight operations. The Susanville Railroad Depot retains a high degree of integrity in its location, setting, design, materials, workmanship, and feeling to warrant listing in the National Register.

Lassen County was formed in 1864 and local government established in the community of Susanville. The area was slow to develop because of its isolated location at the northern end of the Sierra Nevada. In the early 1880's the community saw hopes of the railroad coming to town. But several times the town was bypassed and other routes chosen. It wasn't until T.B. Walker, a well-known lumberman from Minnesota, began to acquire timberlands in Lassen County and operate the Red River Lumber Company that negotiations with Southern Pacific Railway finalized the plan for a line that would run through Susanville. On April 26, 1913 the Fernley and Lassen Branch of the Southern Pacific Railway opened Susanville's first railroad depot, it operated out of a boxcar. On September 14, 1913 the combination passenger depot and freight shed opened its doors. Spurred by increased demands on railroad activity the existing Susanville Railroad Depot was opened on September 14, 1927.

The railroad with its depot in Susanville made it feasible to develop businesses in the Susanville area. The Lassen Lumber and Box Company built a substantial mill very near the depot in 1918. In 1921 Fruit Growers Supply Company also built a mill close by. Both businesses produced lumber and wooden boxes to be shipped from the depot. The county became the third largest producer of forest products in the state. Because of new jobs, new families moved to Susanville. The community began to develop better roads, water, sewer and electrical services. The ability to ship local products by rail was a significant force in the development of the area. The existing Susanville Depot was built in response to this development and continues to serve as a reminder of the railroad's contributions.

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Continuation sheet**

Section number 8 Page 5

**Susanville Railroad Depot
Lassen County, CA**

Statement of significance (continued)

The Fernley and Lassen Railroad carried freight through Susanville from 1913 to 1956. Passenger service was provided from 1913 to 1933, thus the 1927 depot had a brief period of full usage. The decline in rail activity was due to the Depression, a reliance on the automobile, a decrease in lumber production. A further decline began with new means of hauling lumber increased, such as the use of diesel trucks.

The Susanville Railroad Depot's use as a train station effectively ended in 1956 when a flood damaged a trestle at the west end of Susanville, making it impossible for trains to enter or leave the city from the west. Traffic over the line at that time did not justify making repairs. The depot was used as a Southern Pacific office and for storage until October 12, 1979 when Southern Pacific closed their agency in Susanville.

The depot remained vacant and deteriorating for a number of years. In 1987 an agreement was made between Southern Pacific and the Susanville Fire Department to burn the depot as a firefighting practice session. A local committee of citizens fought to save the structure and eventually Southern Pacific offered the Susanville Depot Committee a twelve-month lease with an option to buy the depot.

The Susanville Depot was acquired by the Trust for Public Lands and ownership was then transferred to the newly formed citizens group, Lassen Land and Trails Trust in November 1988.

Restoration did not begin until 1993 after several grants were secured to financially assist the project. The project was completed in 1994.

The Susanville Railroad Depot is once again a center for community activity. It serves as a visitor center and museum. It is the eastern terminus and trailhead for the Bizz Johnson National Recreation Trail, which occupies the old railroad right-of-way for the Southern Pacific, Fernley and Lassen Branch. Community events and educational activities take place at the depot; activities include the "Rails to Trails Festival", "Whistlestop

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**Susanville Railroad Depot
Lassen County, CA**

Statement of significance (continued)

Lectures”, school tours, living history reenactments, a seasonal farmer’s market and more. The Lassen Land and Trails Trust uses the depot as its headquarters.

The Susanville Railroad Depot sits at its original location. The bay window still has an advantageous view of the railroad tracks that run just outside the building. The 1927 depot did not exist during the early development of the railroad in the Susanville area but was built in response to the railroad’s success and development in the community. The Susanville Railroad Depot symbolizes the importance that rail transportation played in our economic and social development. In every respect the depot retains sufficient integrity to demonstrate its place as an important community historic structure.

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Continuation sheet

Section number 9 Page 6

Susanville Railroad Depot
Lassen County, CA

Bibliography

Bryant, Jim. Fernley an Lassen Timeline. MS on file, Eagle Lake Resource Area Office of BLM, Susanville, California, 1989.

Bryant, Jim and Jim Cooper. n.d.: Operations of the Fruit Growers supply company. Exerpted from *The Lassen Ledger*, Lassen County Historical Society Publication, 1982.

Bryant, Jim and Jim Cooper. "A Depot for Susanville". *Lassen Ledger*, vol 1(2): 15-18, 1981.

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Continuation sheet

Section number 10 Page 7

Susanville Railroad Depot
Lassen County, CA

Verbal Boundary Description

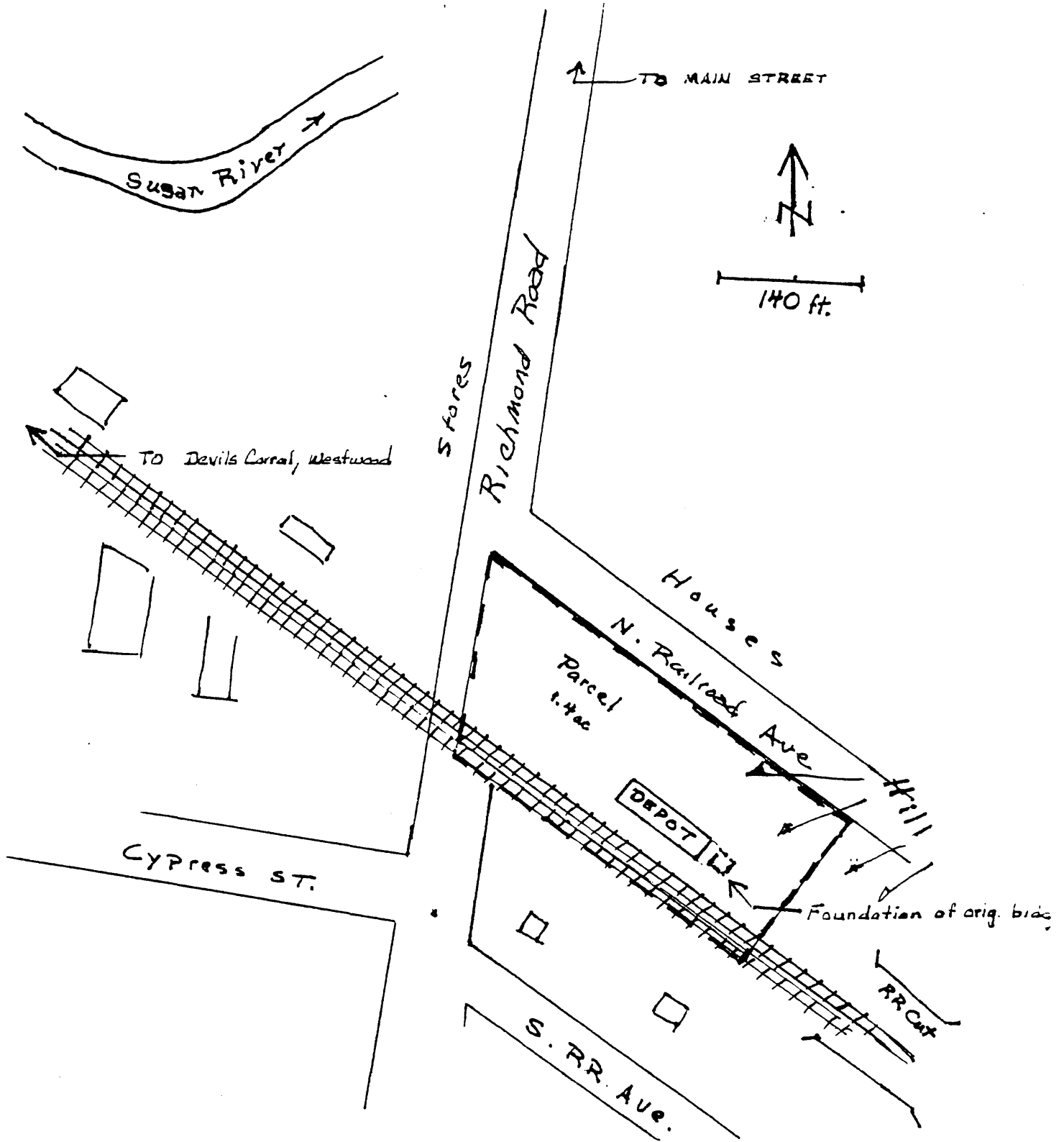
1.32 acres identified as Assessor's Parcel Number 107-270-05-11 and described as follows:

Parcel "B" as shown on the parcel map for Southern Pacific Transportation company filed in the office of the Lassen County Recorder December 22, 1988, in Book 27 of Maps at Pages 40 and 41.

Map attached.

Boundary Justification

The nominated property includes the entire parcel historically associated with the railroad depot.



(Derived from Parcel Map. LAH 91)

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Continuation sheet**

Photographs

**Susanville Railroad Depot
Lassen County, CA**

- #1 Photographer – Ron Garrelts
 Date – 1998
 Negative location- 618 Main St., Susanville CA 96130
 View – Southwest corner depot property
- #2 Photographer – Unknown
 Date – September 14, 1927
 Negative location- Unknown
 View – Southwest corner depot property
- #3 Photographer – Karen Fouch
 Date – April 1998
 Negative location- 1009 Orchard St., Susanville CA 96130
 View – Southwest corner depot; full view of west side of depot

Photos #4 - #8

Photographer – Karen Fouch
Date – December 17, 2000
Negative location- 1009 Orchard St., Susanville CA 96130
View – #4 South side depot
 #5 East side depot
 #6 North side depot
 #7 Northeast corner of depot property from North Railroad Avenue
 #8 West side depot from Richmond Road

Photos #9 & #10 Only one copy submitted

Photographer – Karen Fouch
Date – April 1998
Negative location- 1009 Orchard St., Susanville CA 96130
View – #9 Northwest corner depot
 #10 Southwest corner depot from Richmond Road