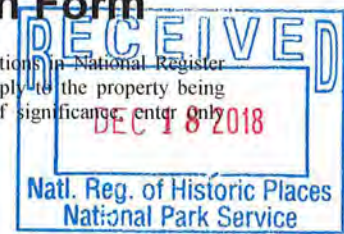


United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

BC3401

# 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 National Register Bulletin, *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form*. 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.



### 1. Name of Property

Historic name: Kelso Historic District (Boundary Increase)  
Other names/site number: Kelso Depot, Restaurant and Employees Hotel Historic District  
Name of related multiple property listing: N/A  
(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing)

### 2. Location

Street & number: Kelso-Cima Road (0.29 miles northeast of the Kelso Depot)  
City or town: Kelso State: California County: San Bernardino  
Not For Publication:  Vicinity:

### 3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended,

I hereby certify that this X 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 X meets \_\_\_ does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant at the following level(s) of significance:

\_\_\_ national   X   statewide \_\_\_ local  
Applicable National Register Criteria:  
  X   A \_\_\_ B   X   C \_\_\_ D

[Signature] 10/30/18  
\_\_\_\_\_  
**Jenan Saunders/Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer** **Date**  
California State Office of Historic Preservation  
\_\_\_\_\_  
**State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government**

[Signature] 12/18/2018  
\_\_\_\_\_  
**Dr. Turkiya Lowe/Acting Federal Preservation Officer** **Date**  
National Park Service  
\_\_\_\_\_  
**State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government**

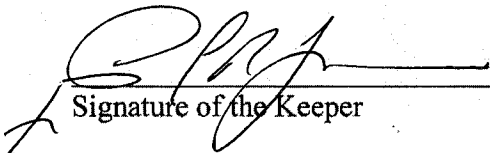
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**4. National Park Service Certification**

I hereby certify that this property is:

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

  
Signature of the Keeper

1/31/2019  
Date of Action

**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

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**Number of Resources within Property**

(Do not include previously listed resources in the count)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
<u>6</u>	<u>          </u>	buildings
<u>          </u>	<u>          </u>	sites
<u>1</u>	<u>1</u>	structures
<u>          </u>	<u>          </u>	objects
<u>7</u>	<u>1</u>	Total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 3

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**6. Function or Use**

**Historic Functions**

(Enter categories from instructions.)

TRANSPORTATION

DOMESTIC: institutional housing

COMMERCE/TRADE: restaurant

COMMERCE/TRADE: department store

GOVERNMENT: post office

EDUCATION: schools

EDUCATION: education-related

TRANSPORTATION: rail-related

**Current Functions**

(Enter categories from instructions.)

GOVERNMENT: government office

RECREATION AND CULTURE: museum

VACANT/NOT IN USE

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## 7. Description

### Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions.)

LATE 19<sup>TH</sup> & 20<sup>TH</sup> CENTURY REVIVALS:

Mission/Spanish Colonial Revival

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**Materials:** (enter categories from instructions.)

Principal exterior materials of the property: brick, wood, concrete, stucco, asphalt

### Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current physical appearance and condition of the property. Describe contributing and noncontributing resources if applicable. Begin with a **summary paragraph** that briefly describes the general characteristics of the property, such as its location, type, style, method of construction, setting, size, and significant features. Indicate whether the property has historic integrity.)

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### Summary Paragraph

The 2001 Kelso Depot, Restaurant and Employees Hotel Historic District included three contributing resources: two buildings—the Kelso Depot, Restaurant and Employees Hotel and the Coal and Supply Shed—and one landscape site. The contributing designed landscape includes a ramp area, plantings, planters, arcade, walkways, Kelso-Cima and Kelbaker Roads, lighted signposts, utility poles, concrete shafts, and shower building foundation. The listed district is 1.95 acres in the railroad community of Kelso within Mojave National Preserve. This district amendment increases the boundary to seven acres, and encompasses an additional eight resources: six contributing buildings—a schoolhouse, teacherage, outhouse, storage shed, garage, and combination store/post office; one contributing structure—a chicken coop; and one noncontributing structure—a parking lot. The district retains historic integrity. All of the buildings except the privately owned store/post office were stabilized by the National Park Service in 2004, by virtue of repairing and roofing with original matching materials, boarding over and venting windows, clearing grounds of unmaintained growth, and removing trash and storage materials. In 2010, the schoolhouse was restored and repurposed as a Law Enforcement Rangers office.

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## Narrative Description

### Boundary Increase

The original boundary of the historic district followed the landscaped grounds around the Kelso Depot, Restaurant and Employees Hotel building and the Coal and Supply Shed. The privately owned store/post office is just north of the Depot, across Kelso-Cima Road. The schoolhouse and associated resources are just north and east of the original district boundary.

### Setting

The property is within the Mojave National Preserve (MNP) at the former railroad town of Kelso, an area categorized by generally flat, open land with moderate density of scrub, creosote, and tamarisk trees dotting the edges of the former Los Angeles and Salt Lake Railroad grade, rail line, and depot (later Union Pacific). The buildings and structures in the expanded district are part of the mid twentieth century expansion of the town of Kelso, a time when the local population swelled to accommodate increased railroad traffic from neighboring extractive industries and war-time activities during World War II and the Korean War. The population expansion resulted in construction of multiple buildings, the Kelso-Cima Road, and the northern and eastern expansion of Kelso, with the schoolhouse marking the northeastern edge of Kelso's construction buildout.

Identification number in parentheses refers to ID# on the Sketch Map (**Figure 3**).

### Kelso Schoolhouse (R3)

### CONTRIBUTING BUILDING

Completed in 1925, the Kelso Schoolhouse is a single-story, 1,332 sq. ft., frame building with boxy massing, resting on a post-and-beam foundation, capped by a low-pitched roof surrounded by a tall, flat parapet (**Photograph 1**). The walls are sheathed in smooth-finish concrete stucco, and single-hung sliding sash windows are present on all elevations. Windows are constructed of wood, and rest within wood frames, on integrated sills flush with exterior walls. The parapet is punctuated with wood-framed attic vents on the (roughly) north and south elevations, and galvanized steel drainage pipes are present on the corners of the remaining elevations.

The primary façade of the building faces directly onto Kelso-Cima Road and the railroad tracks beyond. The main entry is right-of-center and is protected by a wood-framed porch with a pyramidal roof covered in asphalt shingles. The porch is raised above grade by a shallow, poured concrete slab consisting of three steps. The porch frame includes milled lumber posts with square caps, supporting a beadboard frame below open rafters.

The building originally featured an open floor plan consisting of a single room. At an unknown date between 1925 and 1945, a supply closet and restroom were added to the rear elevation of the building. The classroom features walls covered in a gray sandy plaster with a wire-brush finish, tall ceilings, floor-to-ceiling windows (interior floor is raised), brick enclosed flue for wood-burning stove, original porcelain drinking fountain, molding along the ceiling, and carpet on the floors. The supply closet and restroom feature the same plaster wall finishes. The supply closet

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has built-in wood cabinets and the restroom contains two bathroom stalls. Based on the materials, finishes, and hardware, it appears the rooms were likely built in the 1920s or 1930s.

The building's overall condition is good. Some signs of deterioration are present, as are signs of alterations and repairs. Paint around windows, on vents, and on porch steps is peeling; wood frames are warping; and some spalling of stucco near the foundation is visible. In 2010, conversion of the schoolhouse to a ranger station resulted in the application of new stucco and exterior paint; installation of new wood window frames and new roof sheathing; replacement of exterior wood doors with solid core steel doors; and installation of an HVAC system, satellite dish, swamp cooler, carpeting, interior molding, and ceiling fans. Many of the 2010 alterations are in need of repair (e.g., windows and painted elements) or replacement. Colored stucco should be replaced with white paint per original appearance, and interior moldings and carpet should be removed.

### **Teacherage (R8)**

### **CONTRIBUTING BUILDING**

Constructed shortly after the schoolhouse, the teacherage is a single-story, rectangular, 465 sq. ft. frame residence with a side-gable roof, resting on a post-and beam foundation (presumed, not visible). The building features shiplap walls, wood-framed windows (window type not visible) on all four elevations covered by protective plywood sheets, and a roof sheathed in tarpaper (**Photograph 2**). The fascia board along the roofline is partially covered by the rolled edges of roofing tarpaper.

The primary façade includes a shallow pyramidal porch overhang supported by exposed brackets, and it is sheathed with tarpaper. The street-facing entry is on-center, and it is accessible via a shallow concrete stoop. The remains of a flowerbed are visible on either side of the porch and edged in small local cobbles. A wood-burning stovepipe extrudes through the roof, slightly right-of-center.

A bathroom addition with a shed roof abuts the length of the rear elevation, and shares the same construction materials and form as the original residence. It is unknown when this addition was constructed, presumed to be shortly after the original residence was completed. The remains of an associated septic pit lie immediately adjacent to the northwest corner of the building.

The interior of the teacherage was not accessible during field documentation, nor were window and doors visible. The building has been mothballed and stabilized to protect it from further deterioration. The only noticeable deterioration is peeling paint and some settling of the concrete stoop at the entry.

### **Outhouse (R4)**

### **CONTRIBUTING BUILDING**

Measuring approximately 460 sq. ft., the outhouse is a single-story rectangular building with shiplap over frame construction, a shallow-pitched side-gable roof sheathed in tarpaper, and a concrete slab foundation. The building contains no windows. Two doors—marking individual restrooms labeled “boys” and “girls”—open towards the schoolhouse building (**Photograph 3**). The doors are two-paneled wood frame, and portions of the panels are missing.

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The interior contains evidence of plumbing and associated fixtures, as well as beadboard shelving. The building was not previously included in the 2004 stabilization efforts undertaken by the park, and the interior has been exposed to wind-blown detritus, sand, moisture, and temperature extremes. Portions of the doors are missing, and paint is peeling off the exterior. Date of construction is unknown. The outhouse does not appear on aerial images prior to 1945, and is one of the few school-associated buildings with a slab foundation.

### **Storage Shed (R5)**

### **CONTRIBUTING BUILDING**

The storage shed is a small, 161 sq. ft. frame building with shiplap siding, a side-gable roof sheathed with tarpaper, and exposed rafter ends supported by a post-and-beam foundation covered by a wood floor (**Photograph 4**). The building includes a single window on the west elevation, covered with plywood. The shed has only one entry that faces towards the schoolhouse, but the door is missing. The interior features open shelves and the remains of miscellaneous building materials. Although the building was stabilized in 2004, noticeable deterioration is evident including missing tarpaper sheathing, missing shiplap near the foundation, and the lack of a protective covering across the entry. The date of construction is unknown. Based on construction materials, the shed dates to the period of significance.

### **Garage (R7)**

### **CONTRIBUTING BUILDING**

The garage, constructed within the period of significance in conjunction with the teacherage, is a rectangular, single-story frame and shiplap building measuring 335 sq. ft. with a gable roof sheathed in tarpaper with little-to-no overhang and an earthen floor (**Photograph 5**). The primary elevation is oriented under the gable end, and includes barn-style doors that would have accommodated an opening for an automobile. One door is covered in plywood sheeting. The open interior is laden with original building materials and fixtures from both the stabilization and rehabilitation projects undertaken at the property between 2004 and 2010. The building was also part of the 2004 stabilization work. It exhibits some signs of deterioration near the base of the walls and along the doors where plywood was affixed to the openings. The outdoor light fixture has a shade hanging by exposed wires and needs repair.

### **Store/Post Office**

### **CONTRIBUTING BUILDING**

The old Kelso Post Office and store, roughly square in plan, was constructed of cast-in-place concrete, formed using horizontal boards (**Photograph 6**). The building has a shallow gable roof concealed behind a false front on the primary elevation, which faces the road to the south. The primary elevation is symmetrical, with a central door flanked by large, fixed nine-light wood sash (**Photograph 7**). The entrance threshold is two steps above grade. The door opening appears to have been closed down at both jambs and at the head to accommodate a new door smaller than the original. Wood nailers have been embedded in the concrete, horizontally across the west half of the elevation, just above the window head, and vertically at three points across the width of the false front. Remnants of painted signage remain on the concrete of the false front, including lettering for the post office.

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The south end of the west elevation has a single nine-light window identical to the two windows on the front. This elevation is otherwise unadorned. Unlike the other elevations, which are bare concrete, this elevation has been painted white (**Photograph 8**). The rear elevation, like the front, is symmetrical with a central door flanked by windows. The replacement door fits the opening correctly and the flanking windows are small, fixed four-light wood sash. The east window is missing. The concrete on the rear terminates at the top of the wall and there is wood infill in the gable end. This infill, which has a central opening to access the attic space, is plywood, most likely a later alteration (**Photograph 9**).

The east elevation is completely plain with the exception of small, possibly screened opening high up in the wall about three quarters of the way back, and an electric meter and service entrance towards the rear (**Photograph 10**). Each elevation also has one small rectangular opening at grade to vent the basement (**Photograph 11**). The shallow gable roof is covered with asphalt shingles. The interior of the building was not accessible and could not be assessed.

**Chicken Coop (R12) CONTRIBUTING STRUCTURE**

Constructed sometime after 1945, the chicken coop is a small 80 sq. ft. wood frame structure sheathed with galvanized sheet metal. The coop is capped by a side-gable roof also covered in sheet metal, and it has a dirt and concrete slab floor. The roof features a ridge cap across the gable seam, and has exposed rafters. A small opening for a former vent is visible within the roof. The interior of the building includes the remains of nesting boxes and other miscellaneous fencing and equipment (**Photograph 12**). The chicken coop was not included in the 2004 stabilization efforts undertaken by the park, and the interior has been exposed to wind-blown detritus, sand, moisture, and temperature extremes. The exterior has not been noticeably altered. The placement of this structure on the landscape and its construction and architectural details indicate it is likely contemporaneous with the other buildings on site and built within the period of significance.

**Parking Lot NONCONTRIBUTING STRUCTURE**

The asphaltic visitor parking lot between the depot and schoolhouse was constructed in the 2000s, after the period of significance.

**Ancillary Landscape Features**

Eight ancillary features associated with the property are largely utilitarian (**Photographs 13-19**). Features are listed in the table and their locations are indicated on the Sketch Map (**Figure 3**).

<i>ID #</i>	<i>Description</i>	<i>Measurement</i>
R1	Steel flagpole embedded in concrete footer inscribed with student initials, names, and the date <i>10-20-56</i>	14 x 13 inches (base)
R2	Concrete slab inscribed with letters; illegible	49 x 14 inches
R6	Concrete sidewalk fragment between Outhouse and Shed	12 ft x 33 inches
R9	Earthen septic pit	4.5 x 3.2 ft (2-to-3 ft deep)
R10	Steel clothesline "T" arm	2 ft tall
R11	Galvanized steel water spigot	1.5 ft tall



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R13	Galvanized steel chain-link fencing with acorn finials	212.5 x 200 ft
R14	Galvanized steel woven wire fence	117 ft x 40 ft

The condition of the three previously listed resources remains as described in the original nomination, and the resources retain integrity. As summarized in the 2001 nomination,

### **Kelso Depot, Restaurant and Employees Hotel**

**LISTED BUILDING  
(Photograph 20)**

The Kelso Depot, although somewhat modified during its later years of operation, retains a high degree of integrity. Principal exterior and interior character-defining details and spaces are extant. On the exterior, these features include: overall building mass; tri-color Mission tile roof; espadana parapets; Union Pacific herald in south espadana; arcade with molded bases and capitals on pillars and buttressed ends; original double-hung and casement window sash; entry; downspouts, collector boxes and decorative straps; brick walks; and electroliers. In the interior, these features include: lobby, lunch room, lodging rooms, billiard room, and reading room; heavily-textured plaster wall and ceiling finishes; panel-and-batten wainscot; cigar case and check-in counter; lunch counter and stools; stair cases, newel posts, and balustrades; and lockers.

### **Coal and Supply Shed**

**LISTED BUILDING**

The Coal and Supply Shed retains a high degree of integrity. Its principal exterior wood frame character-defining details are extant.

### **Landscape**

**LISTED SITE**

The cultural landscape characteristics of the historic designed landscape which [*sic*] retain integrity include natural systems and features, spatial organization, topography, circulation, buildings and structures, and views and vistas. Those that do not retain integrity include land use and archeological sites and most elements of vegetation and small-scale features. The loss of three characteristics (land use, spatial organization, and vegetation) has diminished the integrity of this historic designed landscape. However, when evaluating the landscape characteristics and their associated features as they relate to the Kelso Depot Historic District as a whole, the historic landscape at the depot retains integrity and thus contributes to the historic significance of the site.

Kelso-Cima and Kelbaker Roads were included in the original nomination as part of the depot's designed landscape. The Kelso-Cima Road serves to connect both ends of the district.

### **Integrity**

Location: District resources remain in their original locations, and the district retains integrity of location.

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Design: As detailed in the individual resource descriptions, resources retain integrity of design.

Setting: Much of the 1920s-era built environment remains extant and freight trains continue to utilize the area for employee housing and staging of materials. The greatest change to the setting is the removal of the WWII-era temporary housing, which has resulted in the creation of open space between the Kelso Depot, Post Office, and Schoolhouse. Since the schoolhouse, teacherage, and garage were constructed prior to the WWII-era temporary housing, historically, the area between the schoolhouse property and the depot would have been open with few buildings present.

Materials: As detailed in the individual resource descriptions, resources retain integrity of materials.

Workmanship: While all of the resources are largely utilitarian in design, the front porch of the schoolhouse does exhibit some late Victorian details, particularly in the design of the pyramidal roof, wood frame, capped pillars, and beadboard paneling. The wood panel door with upper screen and original hardware (stored in garage) also displays architectural details.

Feeling: The property retains the feeling of a rural railroad town, whereby the community continues to exist in a rural, isolated setting, and the railroad endures as a prominent feature of the landscape.

Association: Resources and features share an immediate relationship to each other, and with the larger community of Kelso. All are associated with the historical development of Kelso between 1924 and 1964, and represent only a handful of extant resources in Kelso from this period.

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## 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.)

- A. Owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes
- B. Removed from its original location
- C. A birthplace or grave
- D. A cemetery
- E. A reconstructed building, object, or structure
- F. A commemorative property
- G. Less than 50 years old or achieving significance within the past 50 years

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**Areas of Significance**

(Enter categories from instructions.)

COMMUNITY PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT

EDUCATION

TRANSPORTATION

ENGINEERING

INDUSTRY

ARCHITECTURE

**Period of Significance**

1924-1964

**Significant Dates**

1924

1942-1947

1950-1954

1964

**Significant Person**

(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)

N/A

**Cultural Affiliation**

N/A

**Architect/Builder**

Office of the Chief Engineer, LASLRR

Office of the Chief Engineer, UP

San Bernardino School District

Packard, Lester J.

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**Statement of Significance Summary Paragraph** (Provide a summary paragraph that includes level of significance, applicable criteria, justification for the period of significance, and any applicable criteria considerations.)

The Kelso Depot, Restaurant and Employees Hotel district was listed at the state level of significance in 2001 under Criteria A and C in the areas of Community Planning and Development, Transportation, Engineering, Industry, and Architecture, with a 1923 to 1964 period of significance. The Kelso Historic District (Boundary Increase) is additionally eligible in the area of Education, as the expanded district includes the schoolhouse and associated resources. The historic district is associated with the development of Kelso as a company town, the town's relationship to the continued functioning and expansion of the California route of the San Pedro Los Angeles & Salt Lake Railroad and Union Pacific's transcontinental railroad, and Kelso's location as a critical supply stop during WWII and the Korean War. The period of significance is corrected to 1924 to 1964, representing the depot's construction completion (rather than survey and start) through the end of passenger rail service and closure of the depot function in 1964.

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**Narrative Statement of Significance** (Provide at least **one** paragraph for each area of significance.)

Euro-American exploration into eastern California began in the years leading up to the Mexican-American War as American explorers such as John C. Frémont, traveled through what became Utah, Nevada, and California (Chaffin 2014). The war, which began in 1846, concluded with the signing of the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo in February 1848. Through this treaty, the territory of California (as well as parts of what became Arizona, New Mexico, Nevada, Utah, Wyoming, and Colorado) was officially ceded by Mexico to the United States. Nearly coincident with the signing of the treaty, gold was discovered in the Sierra Nevada Mountains of eastern California, promoting the settlement of the region (Brands 2003).

Coupled with lucrative mining deposits in the region, the race to build the transcontinental railroad also had a lasting impact on the development of Southeastern California. By the early 1860s, Union Pacific Railroad (Union Pacific) had completed the eastern half of the nation's first transcontinental railroad, terminating at Promontory Summit, Utah. During its race westward towards Portland, Oregon, Union Pacific absorbed or acquired much of its competition, incorporating Utah Central, Utah & Northern, Kansas Pacific, Denver Pacific, Denver and Gulf, Oregon Short Line, and Oregon Railway and Navigation Company under the umbrella of Union Pacific. After years of costly construction and financial mismanagement, Union Pacific filed for bankruptcy. Five years later, in 1897, the owner of the Illinois Central and Chicago & Alton railroads, Edward H. Harriman, secured control of the Union Pacific and under his leadership, the railroad added branch lines and infrastructure improvements, becoming one of America's premier railroads (Unrau 2000).

By the late nineteenth century, competition to reach the markets of Southern California grew between the Union Pacific and its largest competitor, the Southern Pacific Railroad (Southern

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Pacific). The Union Pacific sought to extend the Oregon Short Line from Utah towards Southern California, while wealthy industrialist and Montana senator William A. Clark purchased the Los Angeles Terminal Railway with the intention of extending the line from Los Angeles to Utah. These two extensions promised to be a lucrative connection between the mining districts of southeastern California with California's port cities. The process was not without conflict, as right-of-way and port access issues arose between the Union Pacific, Southern Pacific, William Clark of the Los Angeles Terminal Railway, and James Hill of the Great Northern Railway, who controlled much of the steamship lines in California. Eventually Harriman bowed to Collis B. Huntington, co-owner of the Southern Pacific, who warned that any attempt by the Union Pacific to reach Los Angeles would be met with unfavorable action. With Huntington's death in 1901 and Harriman's purchase of Huntington's stock shares in his railroad, Harriman gained control of the Southern Pacific—removing his biggest competition to the California's port cities, save for William A. Clark (Chappell et. al. 1998).

That same year, Clark and colleagues established the San Pedro, Los Angeles, and Salt Lake Railroad (SPLA & SL), thus continuing their rivalry with Union Pacific for control of a route between Utah and California. By 1902, the Union Pacific acquired a half share in SPLA & SL and the construction of the SPLA & SL began in earnest on 31 August 1903. By 1904, construction crews reached what became the town of Kelso (Unrau 2000). A construction crew camp was established—Siding No. 16—and several warehouses were built in the vicinity. A post office was formally established on 20 May 1905, and the new settlement was named Kelso after a warehouse worker, John H. Kelso, whose name was drawn out of a hat as part of a competition (Chappell 2005; Chappell et. al. 1998).

Kelso was founded as a helper station along the SPLA & SL (also called the Salt Lake Route), functioning largely as a location to provide water for steam locomotives and additional locomotive power necessary to haul trains up the grade to Cima, the closest town to Kelso. Because Cima is 2,000 ft. higher in elevation than Kelso, additional locomotive power was required to pull the trains up the long haul. Once the train arrived in Cima, the helper engine or engines would uncouple and return to Kelso to help the next train up the hill (Chappell 2005; DesertUSA 2016).

The earliest development of Kelso included a small wood frame depot, an engine house (later replaced with a large roundhouse), a restaurant, a post office, and a sand house. Other developments include two pump houses, a cottage, a hoist house, two 30-ft.-high water tanks, and accommodations for a crew of mechanics and other workers, as well as for train crews staying overnight between runs (Chappell 2005; Chappell et. al. 1998).

The SPLA & SL was a standard gauge railroad that originally operated with steam locomotives. In the 1930s, they began phasing out the steam engines for the more efficient diesel-electric locomotives still in use. In 1916, SPLA & SL dropped the *San Pedro* from its name and operated as the Los Angeles and Salt Lake Railroad. It became a subsidiary of the Union Pacific Railroad in 1921, operating as a separate entity until 1988 when it was absorbed into Union Pacific (Chappell 2005). During the early days

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of rail service between Salt Lake City and Los Angeles, the average passenger had access to few amenities, including food. Station restaurants were historically known for watery coffee, stale sandwiches, rancid meat, rubberized cheese, and greasy plates and utensils, all of which were being handled by employees bereft of basic hygiene. Wealthier passengers traveling the same route booked passage with the premiere passenger train known as the Los Angeles Limited, which provided top-of-the line Pullman sleeping cars and dining cars with better food, allowing wealthier passengers to forgo eating at stations such as Kelso (Chappell 2005; Chappell et. al. 1998).

In response to consumer demand for better amenities, Union Pacific sought to improve their railroad depots by emulating their competitor, the Atchison, Topeka, and Santa Fe Railroad (AT & SF). The AT & SF included stops at Harvey Houses—lunch counters, souvenir shops, hotels, and depots—based on the entrepreneurial vision of Fred Harvey. Designed by respected architects, Harvey Houses were renowned for their hotels, restaurants, and depots that offered high quality food and service. Harvey Houses employed top chefs, offered high quality meat, poultry, and produce; fine linens and china, and young waitresses, known as Harvey Girls, uniformed in black dresses and white aprons (Chappell 2005).

In 1924, the Union Pacific's Office of the Chief Engineer constructed the two-story Mission Revival-style depot at Kelso, later the Mojave National Preserve Visitor Center. A year after the depot was completed, San Bernardino County constructed a schoolhouse east and north of the depot along Kelso-Cima Road within the community of Kelso (Unrau 2000). In addition to being a school, it also functioned as a community center where dances, parties, and other community functions occurred. Within the year, a teacherage and garage were constructed immediately adjacent to the schoolhouse. Prior to this, the depot was hosting community events, a function that disturbed trainmen who were trying to sleep upstairs. Events continued to be held in the depot's basement, but the number of social functions held there was greatly diminished with the construction of the new schoolhouse (Chappell et. al. 1998). Following WWII, additional buildings were constructed within the school grounds, and classes continued to be held in the building until the 1970s (personal communication with David Nichols, November 15, 2016).

In 1942, Kaiser Steel Company began mining iron ore deposits at Vulcan Mine in order to supply iron during WWII. Kaiser established a camp near the mine that housed 65 men. An additional 35 men and their families lived in temporary housing at Kelso. It was during this time that Kelso reached its peak population of 2,000 individuals. The Los Angeles and Salt Lake Railroad shipped raw ore to the mills at Fontana, California. From December 1942 to July 1947, two million tons of ore were shipped from Kelso. In 1948, high-grade iron ore was found in the Eagle Mountains and Vulcan Mine was shut down. Subsequently, Vulcan Mine was worked sporadically supplying iron for use in manufacturing of cement. The population of Kelso began to dwindle soon after the mine closed (DesertUSA 2016, Shumway et. al. 1980).

With the outbreak of the Korean conflict in the early 1950s, Kelso once again experienced a surge of activity. The war effort resulted in a renewal of high traffic levels on the Union Pacific line, particularly with freight cars supplying minerals resources from the neighboring mines. In

Kelso Historic District (Boundary Increase)  
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1953 and 1957, attempts were made to market the low-grade iron stockpiled at Vulcan Mine. By the 1960s, competition from other railroads with higher horsepower locomotives meant that helper locomotives were no longer necessary, propelling the further decline of Kelso. By 14 August 1964, the closing of the station agency and cessation of passenger train service to Kelso resulted in the end of the depot's principal function. Only the lunchroom remained open until 1985 (Unrau 2000).

The Union Pacific operated passenger trains through Kelso until 1971 when the federally chartered National Railroad Passenger Corporation (Amtrak) took over passenger train service. The Amtrak Desert Wind passenger train ran from Salt Lake City to Los Angeles until 10 May 1997 when it was discontinued. Since then, only freight trains run by Kelso (Chappell 2005).

In the 1970s, Kelso became a gathering point for special interest groups, including the Audubon Society and the Sierra Club, as well as other outdoor enthusiasts (DesertUSA 2016). The depot continued to function as lodging for railroad employees, and the lunchroom remained open until the depot was eventually closed on 1 July 1985. Once the depot was vacated, Union Pacific made plans to demolish the building, assuming that it would become a legal liability. This decision resulted in the founding of the Kelso Depot Fund, Inc. by citizens who wanted to preserve the depot. The efforts of local citizens resulted in the preservation of the depot, the acquisition of the property in 1992 by the Bureau of Land Management, and the transfer of the property to the National Park Service (NPS) as part of the California Desert Protection Act of 1994. The transfer of the property to the NPS resulted in the listing of the depot on the National Register of Historic Places in 2001, its rehabilitation in 2002, and its use as the Mojave National Preserve Visitor Center beginning in 2005.

Along the entire Union Pacific line, only two Mission/Spanish Colonial Revival style railroad depots remain, with the Kelso Depot the only one remaining on this line in the state of California. Although not unique in the state, Kelso Depot does represent a period of architecture in California widely realized and identified as an early twentieth century movement in design popular throughout the state.



Kelso Historic District (Boundary Increase)  
Name of Property

San Bernardino, CA  
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## 9. Major Bibliographical References

**Bibliography** (Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form.)

Brands, H. W.

2003 *The Age of Gold: the California Gold Rush and the New American Dream*. Anchor Books, New York.

Chaffin, T.

2014 *Pathfinder: John Charles Frémont and the Course of American Empire*. University of Oklahoma Press, Norman.

Chappell, G., R. L. Carper, H. Brown, S. Hart, B. Wanderer, A. M. Roberts, C. Svoboda, and S. Daron.

1998 *An Oasis for Railroaders in the Mojave: The History and Architecture of the Los Angeles and Salt Lake Railroad Depot, Restaurant, and Employees Hotel at Kelso, California, on the Union Pacific System*. Mojave National Preserve, California.

Chappell, G.

2005 Railroads around Mojave National Preserve. In *Old Ores: Mining History in the Eastern Mojave Desert*, edited by R. E. Reynolds, pp. 41-48. Desert Symposium, California State University, Desert Studies Consortium and LSA Associates.

DesertUSA

2016 Mojave National Preserve: Kelso Depot. Electronic document [http://www.desertusa.com/mnp/mnp\\_kelso2.html](http://www.desertusa.com/mnp/mnp_kelso2.html), accessed September 15, 2016.

Personal Communication with David Nichols

2016 With Jennifer Levstik, November 15, 2016 at the Mojave National Preserve, California.

Shumway, G.I., L. Vredenburgh, and R. Hartill

1980 *Desert Fever: An Overview of Mining in the California Desert Conservation Area*. Desert Planning Staff, Bureau of Land Management, U.S. Department of Interior, Riverside, California.

Unrau, H.

2000 *Kelso Depot, Restaurant, and Employees Hotel, San Bernardino County California*. National Register of Historic Places Registration Form. National Park Service, Washington.

Kelso Historic District (Boundary Increase)  
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County and State

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**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 # \_\_\_\_\_  
 recorded by Historic American Landscape Survey # \_\_\_\_\_

**Primary location of additional data:**

- State Historic Preservation Office  
 Other State agency  
 Federal agency  
 Local government  
 University  
 Other  
Name of repository: Mojave National Preserve, National Park Service

**Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned):** \_\_\_\_\_

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**10. Geographical Data**

**Acreage of Property** 7 acres

**Latitude/Longitude Coordinates**

Datum if other than WGS84: \_\_\_\_\_  
(enter coordinates to 6 decimal places)

1. Latitude: 35.014293 Longitude: -115.649019

**Verbal Boundary Description** (Describe the boundaries of the property.)

The district amendment expands the boundary of the Kelso Depot, Restaurant and Employees Hotel Historic District to encompass an additional six contributing resources and one noncontributing resource. The district is semi-rectangular, follows along the Kelso-Cima Road and is bounded by private property, the Kelso Depot, Restaurant and Employees Hotel, and Supply and Coal Shed located at the southern and western edges of the district respectively, while the northern and eastern extent of the district is bounded by the fence surrounding the schoolhouse.

Kelso Historic District (Boundary Increase)  
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**Boundary Justification** (Explain why the boundaries were selected.)

The property is in Section 25 of Township 11 North, Range 12 East (Kelso USGS 7.5' topographic quadrangle; San Bernardino Baseline and Meridian) (**Figures 1 and 2**). The district is expanded from the original listing to include the former Kelso schoolhouse and associated resources, as well as the privately owned store/post office building. The boundary increase includes the portions of Kelso associated with the early to mid-twentieth century expansion of the town, a time when the local population swelled to accommodate increased railroad traffic from neighboring extractive industries and wartime activities during World War II and the Korean War. The population expansion resulted in construction of multiple buildings, Kelso-Cima Road, and the northern and eastern expansion of Kelso, with the schoolhouse marking the northeastern edge of Kelso's construction buildout.

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**11. Form Prepared By**

name/title: Jennifer Levstik, Architectural Historian  
organization: Logan Simpson  
street & number: 177 N. Church Avenue, Suite 607  
city or town: Tucson state: AZ zip code: 86701  
e-mail: [jlevstik@logansimpson.com](mailto:jlevstik@logansimpson.com)  
telephone: (520) 884-5500  
date: July 2017

name/title: David R. Nichols, Park Archeologist  
organization: National Park Service, Mojave National Preserve  
street & number: 2701 Barstow Road  
city or town: Barstow state: CA zip code: 92332  
e-mail: [David\\_R\\_Nichols@nps.gov](mailto:David_R_Nichols@nps.gov)  
telephone: (760) 252-6145  
date: Revised April, July 2018

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**Additional Documentation**

Submit the following items with the completed form:

- **Maps:** A **USGS map** or equivalent (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.
- **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources. Key all photographs to this map.
- **Additional items:** (Check with the SHPO, TPO, or FPO for any additional items.)

Kelso Historic District (Boundary Increase)  
Name of Property

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### **Photographs**

Submit clear and descriptive photographs. The size of each image must be 1600x1200 pixels (minimum), 3000x2000 preferred, at 300 ppi (pixels per inch) or larger. Key all photographs to the sketch map. Each photograph must be numbered and that number must correspond to the photograph number on the photo log. For simplicity, the name of the photographer, photo date, etc. may be listed once on the photograph log and doesn't need to be labeled on every photograph.

### **Photo Log**

Name of Property: Kelso Historic District (Boundary Increase)  
City or Vicinity: Kelso  
County: San Bernardino  
State: California  
Photographer: G. Fahrni and J. Levstik; D. Nichols  
Date Photographed: November 2016; June 2018

Description of Photograph(s) and number, include description of view indicating direction of camera:

- 1 of 20 Schoolhouse, facing southwest (teacherage in the background to the left)
- 2 of 20 Teacherage, facing southwest
- 3 of 20 Outhouse, facing southwest (edge of storage shed visible immediately behind it)
- 4 of 20 Storage shed, facing southeast (garage visible in background)
- 5 of 20 Garage, facing northeast
- 6 of 20 Store/Post Office, facing north
- 7 of 20 Store/Post Office, window detail, facing north
- 8 of 20 Store/Post Office, facing northeast
- 9 of 20 Store/Post Office, facing south
- 10 of 20 Store/Post Office, facing southwest
- 11 of 20 Store/Post Office, basement vent, facing southeast
- 12 of 20 Chicken coop, facing southeast
- 13 of 20 Concrete flagpole footer with inscribed initials and date

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- 14 of 20 Concrete slab with illegible lettering, facing north
- 15 of 20 Septic pit, facing northeast
- 16 of 20 Steel clothesline, facing southwest
- 17 of 20 Water spigot, facing southwest
- 18 of 20 Chain-link fence, facing southwest
- 19 of 20 Woven wire fence, facing northwest
- 20 of 20 Kelso Depot, Restaurant and Employees Hotel, facing north

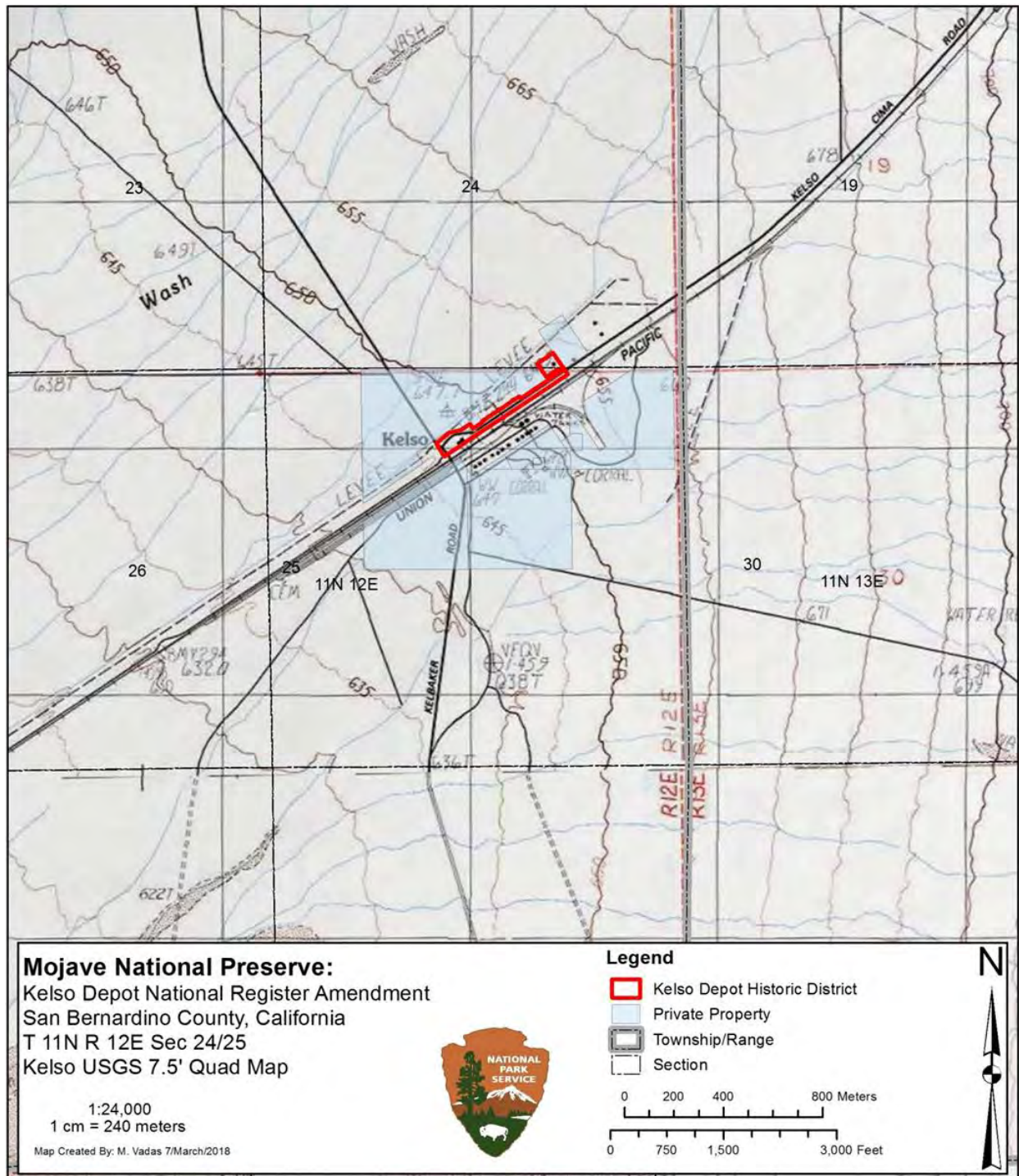
**Paperwork Reduction Act Statement:** This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C.460 et seq.).

**Estimated Burden Statement:** Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 100 hours per response including 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 Office of Planning and Performance Management, U.S. Dept. of the Interior, 1849 C. Street, NW, Washington, DC.

Kelso Historic District (Boundary Increase)  
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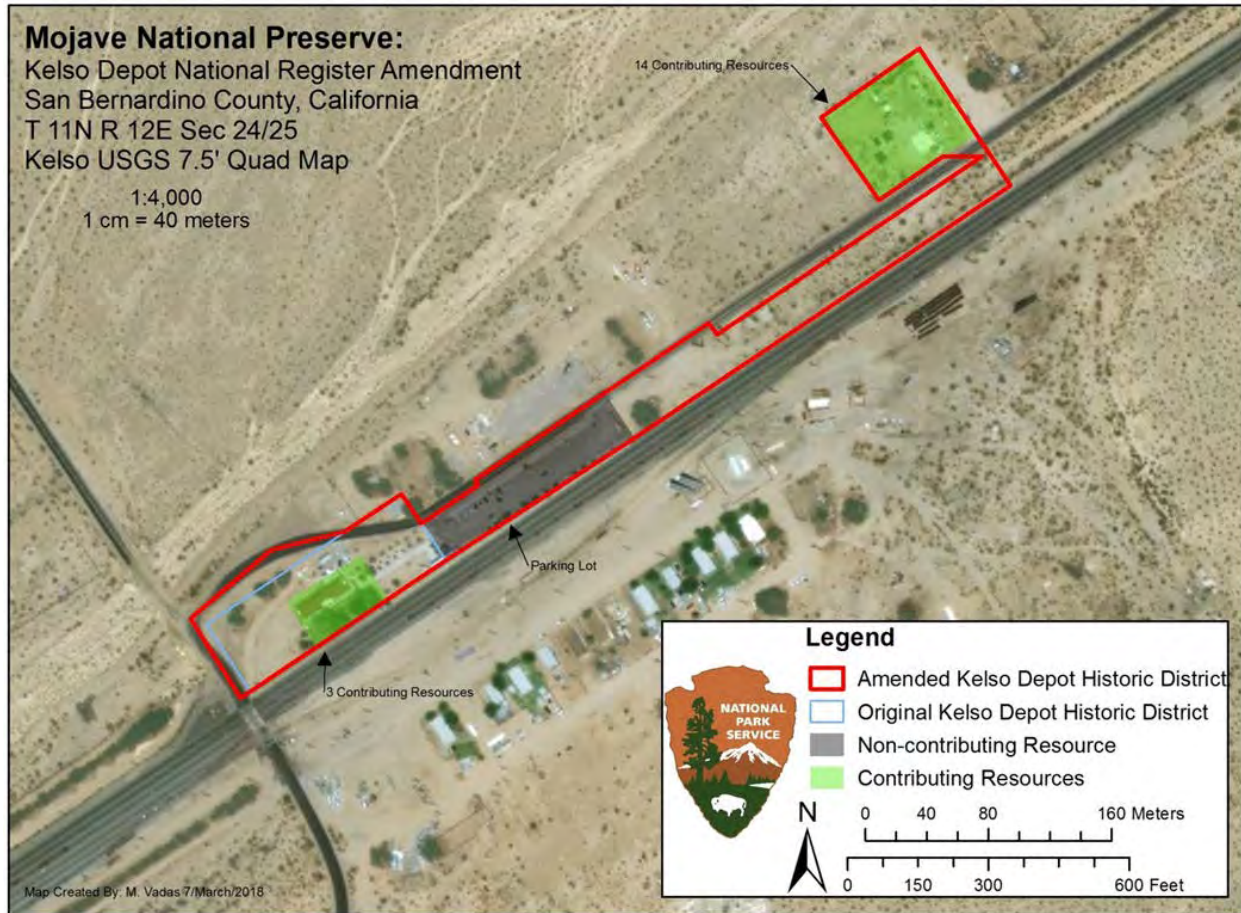
**Figure 1. USGS Map**



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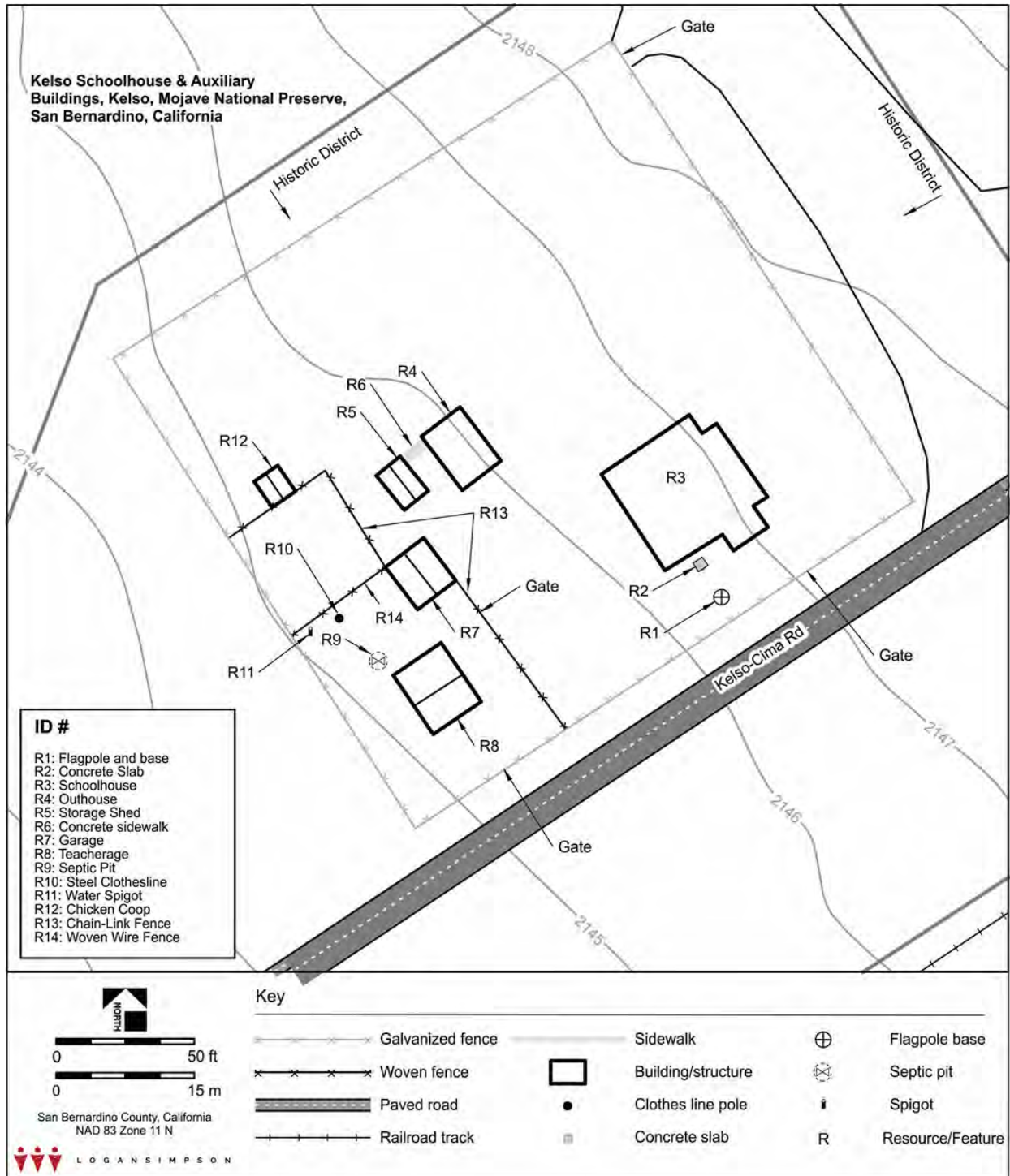
**Figure 2. Site Map**



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**Figure 3. Sketch Map**







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Figure 5. Photo Key 2 of 2



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**Photo 1**



**Photo 2**



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**Photo 3**



**Photo 4**



Kelso Historic District (Boundary Increase)  
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**Photo 5**



**Photo 6**



Kelso Historic District (Boundary Increase)  
Name of Property

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County and State

**Photo 7**



**Photo 8**



Kelso Historic District (Boundary Increase)  
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**Photo 9**



**Photo 10**



Kelso Historic District (Boundary Increase)  
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**Photo 11**



**Photo 12**





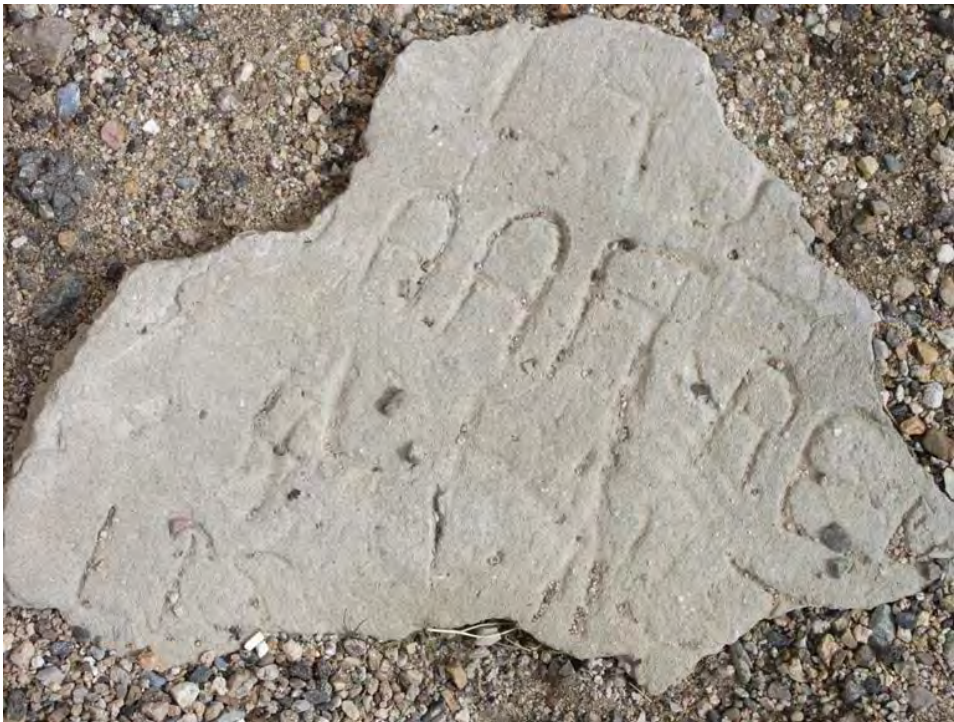
Kelso Historic District (Boundary Increase)  
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**Photo 13**



**Photo 14**



Kelso Historic District (Boundary Increase)  
Name of Property

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**Photo 15**



**Photo 16**



Kelso Historic District (Boundary Increase)  
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**Photo 17**



**Photo 18**



Kelso Historic District (Boundary Increase)  
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**Photo 19**



**Photo 20**









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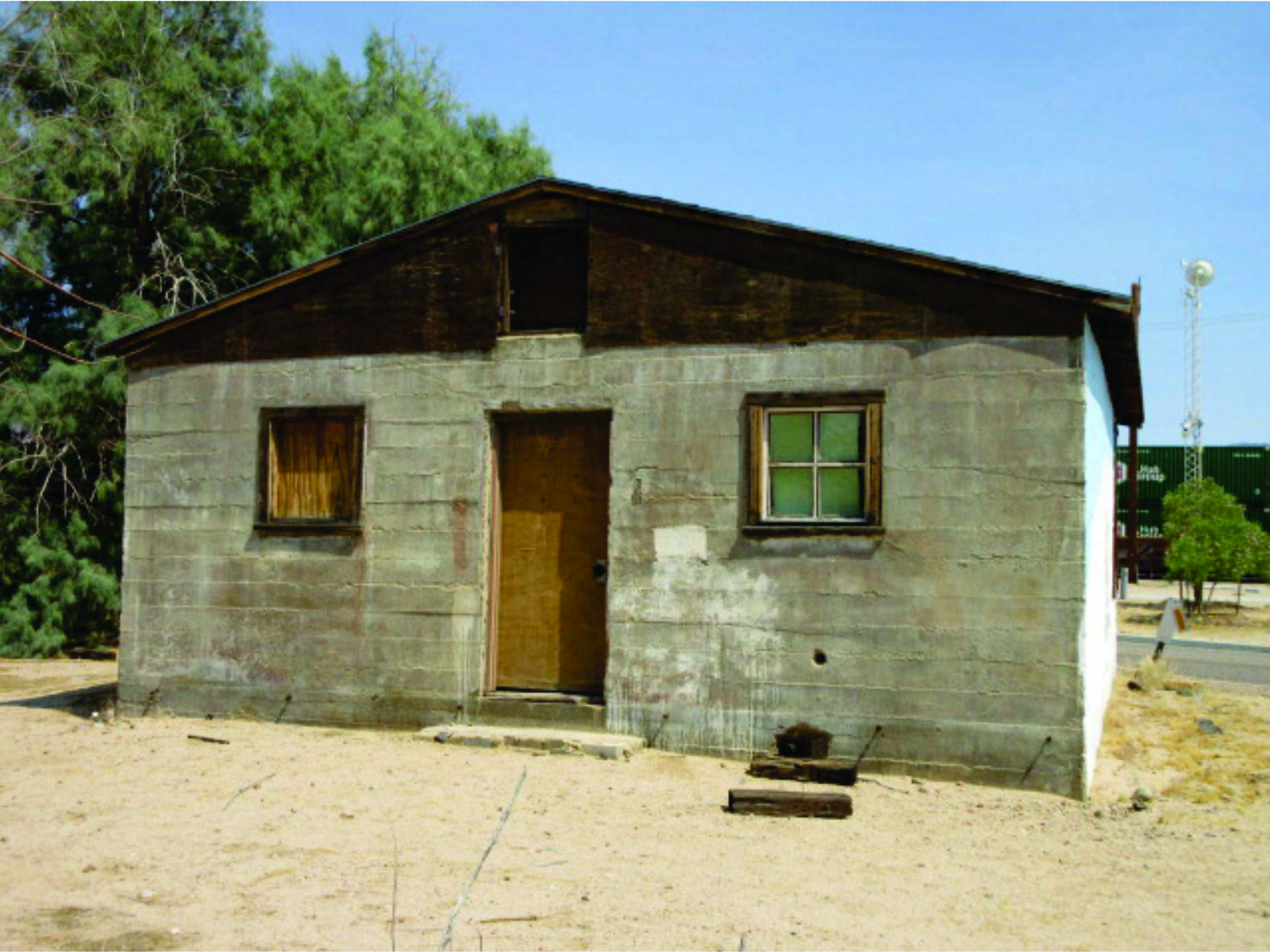
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UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

Requested Action: Boundary Update

Property Name: Kelso Depot, Restaurant and Employees Hotel (Boundary Increase)

Multiple Name: \_\_\_\_\_

State & County: CALIFORNIA, San Bernardino

Date Received: 12/17/2018      Date of Pending List: \_\_\_\_\_      Date of 16th Day: \_\_\_\_\_      Date of 45th Day: 1/31/2019      Date of Weekly List: \_\_\_\_\_

Reference number: BC100003401

Nominator: Federal Agency

Reason For Review:

Accept       Return       Reject      1/31/2019 Date

Abstract/Summary Comments: The Boundary Increase and Additional Documentation incorporates additional early twentieth-century historic resources associated with the development and expansion of Kelso, an important rail stop on the Union Pacific line. Subsequent mining in the area surrounding Kelso during the 1940s and 50s further expanded the isolated community's role in local transportation and industry. The Boundary Increase includes buildings that served commercial, post office, and educational roles beyond the previously listed depot and hotel buildings and largely complete the extant historic building inventory of the community.

Recommendation/ Criteria: Accept Boundary Increase and Additional Documentation

Reviewer Paul Lusignan      Discipline Historian

Telephone (202)354-2229      Date 1/31/2019

DOCUMENTATION:    see attached comments : No    see attached SLR : No

If a nomination is returned to the nomination authority, the nomination is no longer under consideration by the National Park Service.

**Kelso Historic District (Boundary Increase)  
Kelso, San Bernardino County  
Staff Report**

The 2001 Kelso Depot, Restaurant and Employees Hotel Historic District included three contributing resources: two buildings—the Kelso Depot, Restaurant and Employees Hotel and the Coal and Supply Shed—and one landscape site. The contributing designed landscape includes a ramp area, plantings, planters, arcade, walkways, Kelso-Cima and Kelbaker Roads, lighted signposts, utility poles, concrete shafts, and shower building foundation. The listed district is 1.95 acres in the railroad community of Kelso within Mojave National Preserve. This district amendment increases the boundary to seven acres, and encompasses an additional eight resources: six contributing buildings—a schoolhouse, teacherage, outhouse, storage shed, garage, and combination store/post office; one contributing structure—a chicken coop; and one noncontributing structure—a parking lot. The district retains historic integrity. All of the buildings except the privately owned store/post office were stabilized by the National Park Service in 2004, by virtue of repairing and roofing with original matching materials, boarding over and venting windows, clearing grounds of unmaintained growth, and removing trash and storage materials. In 2010, the schoolhouse was restored and repurposed as a Law Enforcement Rangers office.

The Kelso Depot, Restaurant and Employees Hotel district was listed on the National Register of Historic Places at the state level of significance in 2001 under Criteria A and C in the areas of Community Planning and Development, Transportation, Engineering, Industry, and Architecture, with a 1923 to 1964 period of significance. The Kelso Historic District (Boundary Increase) is additionally eligible in the area of Education, as the expanded district includes the schoolhouse and associated resources. The historic district is associated with the development of Kelso as a company town, the town's relationship to the continued functioning and expansion of the California route of the San Pedro Los Angeles & Salt Lake Railroad and Union Pacific's transcontinental railroad, and Kelso's location as a critical supply stop during World War II and the Korean War. The period of significance is corrected to 1924 to 1964, representing the depot's construction completion (rather than survey and start) through the end of passenger rail service and closure of the depot function in 1964.

The property is nominated by the National Park Service (NPS), as the district is primarily within the boundaries of (and managed by) the NPS Mojave National Preserve. As the nominated boundary includes private property, the nomination is presented to the State Historical Resources Commission as a concurrent nomination, containing both federal and non-federal property. No letters have been received to date. Staff supports the nomination as written and recommends the State Historical Resources Commission determine Kelso Historic District (Boundary Increase) is eligible under National Register Criteria A and C at the state level of significance with a 1924 to 1964 period of significance. Staff recommends the State Historic Preservation Officer approve the nomination for forwarding to the National Park Service for co-certification by the NPS Federal Preservation Officer and listing on the National Register.

Amy H. Crain  
State Historian II  
October 15, 2018



DEPARTMENT OF PARKS AND RECREATION  
OFFICE OF HISTORIC PRESERVATION

Lisa Ann L. Mangat, Director

Julianne Polanco, State Historic Preservation Officer  
1725 23rd Street, Suite 100, Sacramento, CA 95816-7100  
Telephone: (916) 445-7000 FAX: (916) 445-7053  
calshpo.ohp@parks.ca.gov www.ohp.parks.ca.gov

October 30, 2018

Dr. Turkiya L. Lowe, Chief Historian  
Acting Federal Preservation Officer  
NPS Park History Program Office  
1849 C Street NW, Mail Stop 7508  
Washington D.C. 20240

Subject: **Kelso Historic District (Boundary Increase)  
San Bernardino County, California  
National Register of Historic Places Nomination**

Dear Dr. Lowe:

**The enclosed disk contains the true and correct copy of the nomination for the KELSO HISTORIC DISTRICT (BOUNDARY INCREASE) to the National Register of Historic Places.** On October 26, 2018 in Los Angeles, California, the California State Historical Resources Commission unanimously found the property eligible at the state level of significance under Criteria A and C in the areas of Community Planning and Development, Education, Transportation, Engineering, Industry, and Architecture with a 1924 to 1964 period of significance. Prepared for the NPS Mojave National Preserve, this nomination amends the 2001-listed Kelso Depot, Restaurant and Employees Hotel Historic District to add the schoolhouse and associated resources, expand the district to seven acres, add Education as an area of significance, and correct the period of significance.

Private land is included within the boundary, resulting in a concurrent nomination. The cover page is adapted for both of our signatures as certifying officials. The nomination has been prepared for digital submittal to the Keeper of the National Register, in accordance with the guidance published in May 2013. Disk 1 of 2 contains the nomination and staff report in pdf format and Disk 2 of 2 contains the photographs as tif files. The enclosed signature pages and our transmittal letters are the only printed pages that need to accompany the two disks to the Keeper. If you have any questions regarding this nomination, please contact Amy Crain of my staff at (916) 445-7009.

Sincerely,



Jehan Saunders  
Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer

Enclosure



# United States Department of the Interior

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE  
1849 C Street, N.W.  
Washington, DC 20240



H32(2280)

## Memorandum

To: Keeper of the National Register of Historic Places

From: Acting, NPS Federal Preservation Officer *Jurkiga G. Rowe*

Subject: National Register Boundary Increase and Additional Documentation for Kelso Historic District, San Bernardino County, CA

I am forwarding the Boundary Increase and Additional Documentation for the Kelso Historic District in the Mojave National Preserve. Private land is included within the boundary, resulting in a concurrent nomination. The Park History Program has reviewed the nomination and found it eligible under Criteria A and C, with Areas of Significance of Community Planning and Development, Education, Transportation, Engineering, Industry, and Architecture.

The State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) and chief local elected official(s) supported the boundary increase and processed the nomination according to procedures for concurrent nominations (36 CFR 60.10). Any comments received are included with the documentation.

If you have any questions, please contact Kelly Spradley-Kurowski at 202-354-2266 or [kelly\\_spradley-kurowski@nps.gov](mailto:kelly_spradley-kurowski@nps.gov).