

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number _____ Page _____

SUPPLEMENTARY LISTING RECORD

NRIS Reference Number: 99001471

Date Listed: 12/14/99

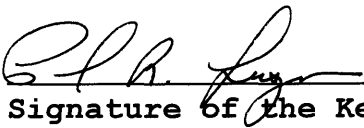
Martinez Canyon Rockhouse
Property Name

Riverside
County

CA
State

N/A
Multiple Name

This property is listed in the National Register of Historic Places in accordance with the attached nomination documentation subject to the following exceptions, exclusions, or amendments, notwithstanding the National Park Service certification included in the nomination documentation.


Signature of the Keeper

12/14/99
Date of Action

=====
Amended Items in Nomination:

Resource Count:

The correct resource count is: *one (1) contributing building.*

[The outlying resources are considered components of the general landscape.]

Significance:

The applicable period of significance is: *1930.*

Photographs:

BLM has confirmed that the 1991 photographs adequately convey the current condition and status of the nominated property.

This information was confirmed with Russ Kaldenberg, BLM.

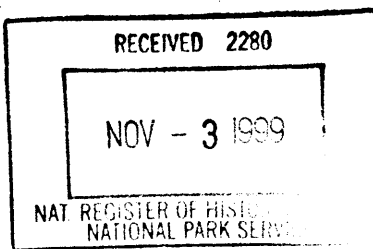
DISTRIBUTION:

National Register property file

Nominating Authority (without nomination attachment)

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Registration Form



RECEIVED

NOV 09 1998

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OLD

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 an 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 Martinez Canyon Rockhouse

other names/site number Miller, Jack, Cabin (CA-Riv-4176-H)

2. Location

street & number BLM, Palm Springs-South Coast Resource Area not for publication

city or town North Palm Springs, vicinity

state California code CA county Riverside code 065 zip code 92258

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, 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.)

Signature of certifying official/Title John G. Denevan Preservation Officer Date 10/25/99
State or Federal agency and bureau Bureau of Land Management

*Quality Control
D.S.
11/1/98*

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

Signature of commenting official/Title David Alveyta Date Jan. 13, 1999
Acting, State Historic Preservation Officer
State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that the 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): _____

Signature of the Keeper [Signature] Date of Action 12/14/99

Martinez Canyon Rockhouse

Name of Property

Riverside, CA

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	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

None

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

Domestic/Single dwelling

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

Domestic/Camp

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions)

Late 19th and early 20th Century

American Movements/Vernacular

Materials

(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation Concrete & Rock

walls Stone/Granite & Concrete

roof Metal/Tin

other

Narrative Description

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

See Attached

Riverside County, CA

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National Park Service****National Register of Historic Places
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Martinez Canyon Rockhouse

Narrative Description

The Martinez Canyon Rockhouse (CA-Riv-4176-H), also known as Jack Millers Cabin, is a two room vernacular style dwelling built approximately in 1930. The Martinez Canyon stream passes by the cabin about seventy (70) feet to the south and also passes east of the cabin since at this juncture the stream turns from south to an easterly direction. At this point the stream supports huge cottonwood trees. Except in the very driest of years, this stream sufficiently supplies the cabin with fresh water the year round.

The cabin is situated on a low bench that is relatively level and which supports the remnants of a small garden behind and east of the cabin. No vegetal materials remain in the garden which might allow us to identify what crops had been planted. Throughout the garden and portions of the surrounding cabin yard are prehistoric remains of chipped stone debitage and Tizon Brown pottery. One granitic bedrock outcrop supports a metate. A shovel test probe in the garden revealed about 10cm of mostly intact subsurface deposition. Based upon surface artifacts, the site dates to the late prehistoric period. The archaeological component is not considered a contributing element.

This two room homestead/miners camp is constructed of cement with a facade of local river rock. The cabin walls are constructed of thirteen (13) 4" X 8" cement lifts (forms). The cement forms which run the length of the walls have a high content of local small river rock. The outside ornamental river rocks average four to six inches in diameter and were placed with mortar while the interior cement forms were sill drying. The outside rocks therefore also serve to stabilize the walls.

At a point three (3) concrete forms, approximately 16", below the ceiling, the walls are braced with true 2" X 4" beams. At the top of the highest form there are eleven (11) 2" X 4" beams which have been laid parallel to the support beams. These run north-south across the narrow span. The ceiling is constructed of 1" X 6" tongue and groove planks laid across the 2" X 4" beams and covered with tar paper. The seams and edges were sealed with hot tar. Over the tar paper has been laid galvanized tin siding. This form of roof construction forms a flat roof with the cement walls extending above the roof approximately six (6) inches. For the purposes of roof drainage, four inch diameter tin pipe have been extended from the roof through the cement and rock wall.

Riverside County, CA

**United States Department of the Interior
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Martinez Canyon Rockhouse

After the walls were poured, the floor was poured in segments. These cement floor segments vary in size, with portions of the slab floor supported to the east by either lumber, rock, or concrete footings. It was impossible to determine what exactly was used as supports since no view of the underside of the floor is possible. These supports, of whatever material, were necessary due to the asymmetrical surface of the ground.

The cabin sports six (6) wooden framed windows and two fire places. A river rock fire place is located on the north wall in the main room and a much smaller fire place is in the kitchen. The front door and side doors, as well as the window frames, have been transported from town since they are of a mercantile grade.

On the south (front) of the house is a wide dirt, open level surface which measures 5' by 35' and is outlined with rocks. Leading down from this area are seven small boulders positioned as steps. Constructed at the bottom, some 20 feet below are two posts connected by an old wire which was used to tether mules or burros.

Fifty feet southwest of the house is an historic period rock and earthen oven or "hornito". Forty feet west of the house stands a cement and rock forge which may also have been used as a smelter, judging by the associated ladle and smelting equipment nearby. These associated activity areas date from the same period as the cabin.

The property is in overall excellent condition and has had minimal attention since its construction, about 1930. The setting has changed little and the environment and structures reflect the individual miner and his residence and occupation during the early 20th century.

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.
[X] 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 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.

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions)

Architecture

Period of Significance

Late 19th and early 20th Centuries

Significant Dates

1930

Significant Person

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

None

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

N/A

Narrative Statement of Significance

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

9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography None

(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 #

Primary location of additional data:

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

Name of repository:

10. Geographical Data

Acreege of Property Two (2)

UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1	1 1	5 6 2 6 8 0	3 7 0 7 3 6 0
	Zone	Easting	Northing
2			

3			
	Zone	Easting	Northing
4			

See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

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

See Attached

Boundary Justification

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

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Mike Mitchel, Archaeologist

organization BLM, Palm Springs Resource Area date July 1, 1997

street & number 690 W. Garnet Ave., telephone (760) 251-4800

city or town North Palm Springs, state CA zip code 92258

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 SHPO or FPO.)

name Palm Springs-South Coast Resource Area, BLM

street & number Same as Item # 11 above telephone _____

city or town _____ state _____ zip code _____

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 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 Projects (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

Riverside County, CA

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service****National Register of Historic Places
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Martinez Canyon Rockhouse

Narrative Statement of Significance

Today few intact examples of rock cabins remain in the Colorado Desert. Most have fallen due to earthquakes, lack of structural stability, vandalism or a combination of factors. Jack Miller's Martinez Canyon Rockhouse is the exception. Built circa 1930, six miles up a rugged canyon, the cabin meets the National Register Criterion C, in the area of architecture, as one of the best examples of rock cabins built by early 20th century miners and homesteaders in the Colorado Desert.

In the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries there were few available building materials throughout most of California's Colorado Desert. In many cases, transportation across the desert was still by mule or burro. Most homesteaders and miners were not wealthy and had to rely on their ingenuity and materials at hand. Since no trees of any size grow in the Colorado Desert below 6000 feet and few exposures of clay are available, the only readily available building material was rock. As a result, most dwellings which were segregated from population centers were constructed of native rock. All were flat roofed, usually of some type of metal sheeting, most with only one room; two at the most. Many were built without mortar or cement. Others, depending on the distance from commercial centers and the ambition and motivation of the individual, incorporated varying amounts of cement. But always, the primary component was rock.

The Martinez Canyon Rockhouse was the center for Jack Miller's prospecting and mining efforts. It was also his homestead. Unfortunately, when Jack Miller filed for his homestead, his legal description was to the south, below his cabin. As a consequence the cabin still remains on public land. Nevertheless, it remains the finest example of late nineteenth and early twentieth century desert mining/homestead rockhouse construction in the Colorado Desert.

Riverside County, CA

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Section number 8 Page 4Martinez Canyon Rockhouse

As small scale prospecting and mining greatly decreased during the late twenties and the Great Depression, fewer rockhouses were built. By the time the price of gold recovered and there was a renewed interest in mining, World War II had come to a close and four wheel drive and tracked vehicles had taken the place of burros and mules. Continuous living in the mountains to "scratch the rock" was now not necessary because there were now new and improved paved roads and highways. Off these roads the new vehicles could cross the desert in a fraction of the time the earlier prospectors had taken to cross the same ground. Rather than the labor intensive work of building a rock shelter, the miner could sleep in a tent and easily return to town within any given day. The improved road system and vehicles also allowed homesteaders to bring in construction materials, which enabled them to build their cabins of wood.

Riverside County, CA

**United States Department of the Interior
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**National Register of Historic Places
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Martinez Canyon Rockhouse

Verbal Boundary Description

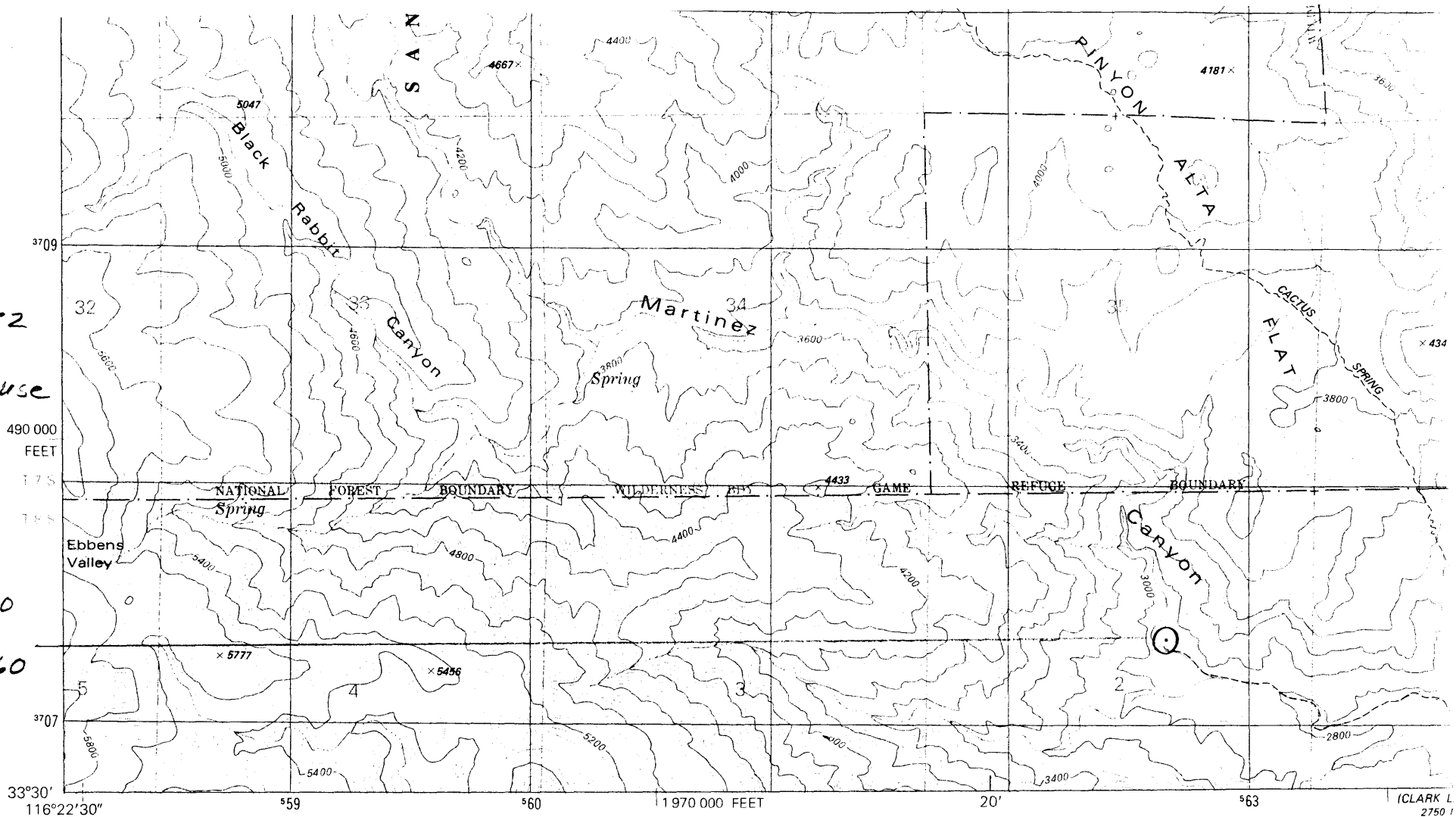
Six (6) miles up from canyons mouth, the Martinez Canyon Rockhouse is situated on the right bank of Martinez Creek. Approximately 75 feet west of the rockhouse the creek turns north causing the southern and western borders of the creek to be the boundaries for this property. Behind and to the right (northeast) of the house is the remnants of a garden. The far edges of the garden mark the northern and eastern boundaries of this property.

Boundary Justification

The boundaries of this property include the structure and all associated activity areas (i. e. garden, hornito, forge, and tether line).

Martinez
Canyon
Rockhouse

Zone II
Easting
562680
Northing
3707360



(COLLINS VALLEY)
2750 IV NW

Mapped, edited, and published by the Geological Survey

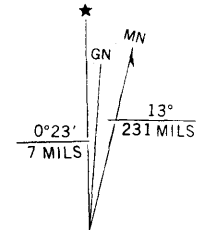
Control by USGS and NOS/NOAA

Topography by photogrammetric methods from aerial
photographs taken 1975. Field checked 1976
Map edited 1981

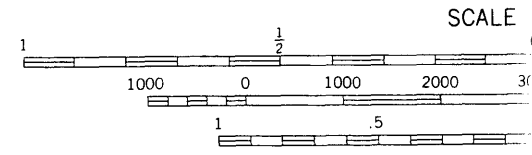
Projection and 10,000-foot grid ticks: California coordinate
system, zone 6 (Lambert conformal conic)
1000-meter Universal Transverse Mercator grid, zone 11
1927 North American Datum
To place on the predicted North American Datum 1983
move the projection lines 1 meter south and
79 meters east as shown by dashed corner ticks

Fine red dashed lines indicate selected fence and field lines where
generally visible on aerial photographs. This information is unchecked

There may be private inholdings within the boundaries of
the National or State reservations shown on this map



UTM GRID AND 1988 MAGNETIC NORTH
DECLINATION AT CENTER OF SHEET



CONTOUR INTERVAL
SUPPLEMENTARY CONTOUR
NATIONAL GEODETIC VE

Revisions shown in purple and woodland compiled from
aerial photographs taken 1984 and other source data.
Partial field check by U.S. Forest Service. Map edited 1985

THIS MAP COMPLIES WITH NATIONAL
FOR SALE BY U. S. GEOLOGICAL SURVEY, DENVER
A FOLDER DESCRIBING TOPOGRAPHIC MAPS