

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.

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1. Name of Property

historic name Agricultural Experiment Station Barn

other names/site number AHRS Site No. KOD-00459

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2. Location

street & number 614 Egan Way not for publication N/A

city or town Kodiak vicinity N/A

state Alaska code AK county Kodiak Island code 150 zip code 99615

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1986, 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   nationally   statewide  X  locally. (   See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

*Judith E. Bettner*   June 4, 2004   
Signature of certifying official Date

Alaska   
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

*Edson H. Beall*   7/2/04

other (explain): \_\_\_\_\_

*[Signature]*   \_\_\_\_\_   
Signature of Keeper Date of Action

USDI/NPS NRHP Registration Form

Agricultural Experiment Station Barn  
Kodiak Island, Alaska

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5. Classification

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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

Contributing	Noncontributing
<u>  1  </u>	<u>      </u> buildings
<u>      </u>	<u>      </u> sites
<u>      </u>	<u>      </u> structures
<u>      </u>	<u>      </u> objects
<u>  1  </u>	<u>  0  </u> Total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register   0  

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

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**6. Function or Use**  
=====

**Historic Functions (Enter categories from instructions)**

Cat: Agriculture/subsistence Sub: animal facility

**Current Functions (Enter categories from instructions)**

Cat: Government Sub: government office

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**7. Description**  
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**Architectural Classification (Enter categories from instructions)**

no style

**Materials (Enter categories from instructions)**

Foundation concrete

roof asphalt shingles

walls wood

other \_\_\_\_\_

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

The Agricultural Experiment Station Barn in Kodiak sits at the top of a hill overlooking the center of the city. When the Experiment Station operated, 1907-1931, its buildings were at the edge of town and around them were fenced pastures and meadows.

The barn is a Wisconsin dairy barn style frame building. It measures 32 by 40 feet and is about 25 feet high. The barn sits on a concrete foundation. It is post and beam construction, and is clad in horizontal wood siding, painted white. It has a gambrel shingle roof with an 18 inch overhang to which the haysung was attached. Construction of the barn started in 1922 and was completed the next year.

On the west elevation, or front, there is a centrally placed double door, a window to the south, and windows flanking the space for the haysung on the second floor. On the north elevation, there is a window opening toward the west end. On the east end there is a single door not quite in the center. The south side has, from the west, a door and three window openings.

Inside, the south half of the first floor of the building had the entry area, office, laboratory, and bathroom. In the center were milking stantions and at the east end a water trough. The walls on the main floor were paneled. Stairs at the west end led to the loft that extends the full length of the second floor. The loft has exposed 2" by 6" rafters at 2' centers. The loft was used for storing hay and other feed for cattle.

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8. Statement of Significance  
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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.) N/A

- 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.

Areas of Significance (Enter categories from instructions)

Agriculture

Period of Significance 1922-1931

Significant Dates 1922

Significant Person (Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation N/A

Architect/Builder unknown

**USDI/NPS NRHP Registration Form**

Agricultural Experiment Station Barn  
Kodiak Island, Alaska

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**9. Major Bibliographical References**

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

Georgeson, C.C. ``Brief History of Cattle Breeding in Alaska,' ' *Alaska Agricultural Experiment Stations*. USDA Bulletin No. 8. Washington, D.C.: January 1929.

----- . *Alaska Agricultural Experiment Stations*. USDA Bulletin No. 5. Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, January 1924.

Stevens, Gary. ``The Agricultural Station Here was a Noble, Costly Experiment,' ' *Kodiak Daily Mirror*, January 6-8, 1989.

----- . The Alaska Agricultural Experiment Station at Kodiak: A Brief History. Copy in files of Alaska Office of History and Archaeology, Anchorage. September 1988.

----- . Chronology of the Kodiak Station of the Alaska Agricultural Experimental Station. Copy in files of Alaska Office of History and Archaeology, Anchorage. April 8, 1988.

**Previous documentation on file (NPS) N/A**

- \_\_\_ 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

Acreage of Property less than one

UTM References (Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet)

Zone	Easting	Northing	Zone	Easting	Northing
1	<u>05</u>	<u>535899</u>	<u>6405672</u>	3	_____
2	_____	_____	4	_____	_____

\_\_\_\_ See continuation sheet.

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

The barn sits on Lot 6B-1, U.S. Survey 2538H, 614 Egan Way, in the City of Kodiak.

Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected.)

The nominated property includes the barn and the lot on which it sits, historically associated with the Agricultural Experiment Station at Kodiak.

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Wanda Fields

organization n/a

date October 15, 2002

street & number P.O. Box 25 telephone (907) 486-3949

city or town Kodiak state AK zip code 99615-0025

**USDI/NPS NRHP Registration Form**

Agricultural Experiment Station Barn  
Kodiak Island, Alaska

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Since the station closed in 1931, the building has been used in a variety of ways, among them as a basketball court and for storage. Over the past several years, windows and doors have been replaced and the barn has been painted. The Kodiak Police Department, Drug Enforcement Unit, uses the first floor. City records are stored on the second floor. A road to the east end of the building has been built.

**USDI/NPS NRHP Registration Form**

Agricultural Experiment Station Barn  
Kodiak Island, Alaska

Page 7

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**Narrative Statement of Significance (Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)**

The Agricultural Experiment Station Barn at Kodiak is the last remaining building of the Kodiak station. The U.S. Department of Agriculture opened the Kodiak Station in 1907 and operated it until 1931. The Russians in the 1700s, and later the Americans, thought Kodiak Island in southcentral Alaska would be a good location for cattle breeding and agriculture. The agricultural experiment station had fields, barns and houses adjacent to the town of Kodiak, and also at Kalsin Bay about fifteen miles out of town. Experiments conducted at the station determined it was possible to successfully raise animals in the coastal areas of Alaska by carefully selecting the stock, housing them sufficiently, and feeding them during the winter months. The station provided good information to local ranchers about raising cattle and sheep and the nutritional value of native grasses. During the 1920s a number of people started ranches on Kodiak Island and benefited from the advice of the staff and the results of the experiments conducted at the station. The barn was constructed in 1922, replacing an earlier one. The period of significance is 1922-1931, encompassing when the barn stood and was used as part of the agricultural experiment station.

Background

The Russians and later, the Americans, thought Kodiak Island was a natural location for cattle breeding and agriculture. Gregorii Shelikhov established the first Russian settlement on the island in 1784. His employees planted various grains and vegetables, and later Shelikhov sent pairs of steers, calves, pigs and goats to Kodiak. Cabbages, potatoes, wheat, and barley were grown on the island. Cattle were pastured at Chiniak and Kalsin bays and on nearby Spruce, Woody, Marmot and Long islands. After the U.S. purchased Alaska in 1867, Kodiak residents and the Alaska Commercial Company continued to raise crops. Many families had gardens and kept a milk cow or two.

In 1897, the U.S. Congress authorized the Secretary of Agriculture to investigate and report on the agricultural potential of Alaska. Walter Evans, Benton Killin and Sheldon Jackson spent three weeks at Kodiak as part of their three month study tour around Alaska. The party reported that many people on Kodiak and adjacent islands maintained gardens and had farm animals, including beef and dairy cattle. The report recommended two agricultural stations be established in Alaska, one at Sitka and one at Kodiak. Factors influencing the recommendation of a station at Kodiak included that it was a coaling station, the mail steamer made regular visits, the Alaska Commercial and North American Commercial companies had important stations there, and land was available.

President William McKinley reserved sites in Alaska for agricultural experiment stations on March 28, 1898. One of the reserves was of 160 acres on Kodiak Island adjoining the town of Kodiak. The first agricultural experiment station opened at Sitka in 1898, with C.C. Georgeson in charge. Four other stations were established in Alaska before one at Kodiak.

**USDI/NPS NRHP Registration Form**

Agricultural Experiment Station Barn  
Kodiak Island, Alaska

Page 8

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Georgeson, however, visited Kodiak soon after arriving at Sitka to survey the land reserve. He concluded Kodiak was better suited for cattle raising than farming yet recommended field experiments. Georgeson rented three garden patches at Kodiak and hired a man to do some experimental work in 1899.

Beginning in 1901, Georgeson sent seeds to Reverend Curtis P. Coe, superintendent of the Baptist Orphanage on Woody Island near Kodiak. Coe conducted experiments on grains and vegetables. In 1906, Georgeson sent four Galloway cows to Woody Island. Georgeson also received reports from M.L. Washburn on the Alaska Commercial Company's stockbreeding attempts in the area.

In 1907, the Kodiak agricultural experiment station opened. The soil, terrain and climate at Kodiak were thought to be fairly representative of the southwest Alaska grasslands. The agents were tasked to conduct experiments growing agricultural crops and to study breeds of cattle and sheep, local silage, and appropriate plants for pasturage. In particular, studies were to determine the adaptability of Galloway cattle to Alaska and, if Galloways were not suitable, to determine which breed of cattle could thrive in Alaska to provide meat and milk for local markets. The Galloway breed originated in Scotland two hundred years earlier and were used to foraging. They had a heavy coat of hair.

On June 8, 1907, M.D. Snodgrass was appointed Assistant at Kodiak to C.C. Georgeson. Nineteen head of Galloway cattle were purchased in Illinois and Nebraska and reached Kodiak on April 27. The original agriculture reserve at Kodiak was determined to be too small and another 300 acres were temporarily added. A log house was rented as a stable for calves and feed storage, and a nearby house was rented for Snodgrass. The pasture was fenced with barbed wire. A shed was built, a well dug, and swamp land ditched.

The next year, a barn was built with a cement foundation and metal roof for the dairy cows and hay storage. A twelve square mile tract at Kalsin Bay, where the Russians had their pastures, about fifteen miles from Kodiak was reserved for the station. A barn, cattle shed, silo, and herdsman's cottage were built there. Snodgrass's plan was to keep the main body of the cattle herd at Kalsin Bay and the best milk cows at Kodiak. He also hoped to have a small flock of sheep at the station.

The initial studies concluded the Galloway cattle could be left outdoors, with only an open shelter, as long as there was enough native hay and silage. Beach rye was found to be quite nutritious. Generally, the cattle preferred the spruce woods for shelter to the open sheds. In 1911, Lawrence Kelly was hired as an assistant to Snodgrass, and in April 1912, President William Howard Taft signed an executive order enlarging the Kodiak agricultural reservation, adding 3,000 acres at Kalsin Bay and 200 acres on Near Island.

The experiments were hastily stopped in June 1912 when 18 inches of ash from the Mount Novarupta volcanic eruption near Katmai covered Kodiak Island.

**USDI/NPS NRHP Registration Form**

Agricultural Experiment Station Barn  
Kodiak Island, Alaska

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Dozens of sheep and calves suffocated and the pasturage was destroyed. The government sent 76 animals from Kodiak to Toppenish, Washington, for two years until there was grass again at Kodiak, and 28 animals were sent to Seward for slaughter. The horses and 74 sheep remained at Kodiak. Fences and wagons were buried, sheds were filled three feet deep with ash, and a cottage was almost buried in an ash slide. Snodgrass and Kelly went with the herd to Washington. An assistant named Heideman was left in charge of the Kodiak station.

In 1914, Kodiak bears killed 41 sheep. Georgeson wrote in his 1914 annual report:

The practical destruction of the live-stock industry would appear to be a high price to pay for the pleasure that may be enjoyed by a few sportsmen from the States who make occasional visits to Alaska in search of trophies. . . . It is certain that live-stock breeding will be impossible on Kodiak and Afognak Islands if the bear is allowed to hold unrestricted sway.

Snodgrass left the Kodiak station in 1915. The increased costs of supplies and labor attributed to World War I, decreased funding, and greater priority being assigned to other stations led to a decision to reduce the Kodiak herd size. Also, the General Land Office reduced the original reservation from 160 to 133 acres. The station at Kalsin Bay was closed and activities consolidated at Kodiak. Nonetheless, experiments continued. In 1922 the barn standing today was constructed to replace an earlier one.

In 1923 most of the cattle were transferred from Kodiak to the new Matanuska station. The recently-completed Alaska Railroad planned a campaign to actively recruit homesteaders to the Matanuska Valley. The Department of Agriculture determined that the Kodiak station would operate on a reduced scale and emphasis was to be on providing advice and assistance to local settlers who intended to raise cattle and sheep. In 1929 there were no longer permanent full-time station employees at Kodiak. On July 30, 1931, the Agriculture Department officially closed the Kodiak station.

During its twenty-four years of operation, the Kodiak agricultural experiment station provided good information to local ranchers about raising cattle and sheep and the nutritional value of native grasses. Station workers determined it was possible to successfully raise animals in the coastal areas of Alaska by carefully selecting the stock, housing them sufficiently, and feeding them as necessary in winter. Without the information disseminated by the station or their experiments, it is possible there would not have been the interest in livestock and ranching on Kodiak and adjacent island that developed during the 1920s. Today, Kodiak has cattle and buffalo at Pasagshak Bay.

**USDI/NPS NRHP Registration Form**

Agricultural Experiment Station Barn  
Kodiak Island, Alaska

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**Additional Documentation**  
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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 City of Kodiak

street & number 710 Mill Bay Road      telephone (907) 486-8640

city or town Kodiak                      state AK                      zip code 99615-1397

**USDI/NPS NRHP Registration Form**

Agricultural Experiment Station Barn  
Kodiak Island, Alaska

Page 13

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NPS Form 10-900-a  
(8-86)

OMB No. 1024-0018

**United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service**

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET**

**Section Photograph identification**

- =====  
1. Agricultural Experiment Station Barn  
Kodiak Island, Alaska  
Wayne Biessel  
October 2002  
Alaska Office of History and Archaeology, 550 West 7<sup>th</sup> Ave., Suite 1310,  
Anchorage, Alaska 99501-3565  
Looking southeast at north and west (front) elevations of the barn
2. Agricultural Experiment Station Barn  
Kodiak Island, Alaska  
Wayne Biessel  
October 2002  
Alaska Office of History and Archaeology, 550 West 7<sup>th</sup> Ave., Suite 1310,  
Anchorage, Alaska 99501-3565  
Looking southwest at the east elevation
3. Agricultural Experiment Station Barn  
Kodiak Island, Alaska  
Wayne Biessel  
October 2002  
Alaska Office of History and Archaeology, 550 West 7<sup>th</sup> Ave., Suite 1310,  
Anchorage, Alaska 99501-3565  
Looking north at the south elevation