

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

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National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

DEC 23 1992

NATIONAL
REGISTER

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 Pillsbury Point State Park Overlook District
other names/site number none

2. Location

street & number State Highway 71 not for publication
city or town Arnolds Park vicinity
state Iowa code IA county Dickinson code 059 zip code 51331

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 _____ Date 12/20/92
State Historical Society of Iowa
State of 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 certifying official/Title _____ Date _____
State or Federal agency and bureau _____

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that the property is:

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> entered in the National Register. <input type="checkbox"/> See continuation sheet.	Signature of the Keeper <u>Beth Poland</u>	Date of Action <u>1/12/93</u>
<input type="checkbox"/> determined eligible for the National Register <input type="checkbox"/> See continuation sheet.	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> determined not eligible for the National Register.	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> removed from the National Register.	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> other, (explain): _____	_____	_____

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	
		buildings
1		sites
7	1	structures
6	1	objects
14	2	Total

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

CCC Properties in Iowa State Parks: 1933-42

Number of contributing resources previously listed
in the National Register

0

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions
(Enter categories from instructions)

Landscape/Park

Current Functions
(Enter categories from instructions)

Landscape/Park

7. Description

Architectural Classification
(Enter categories from instructions)

OTHER: Rustic Architecture

Materials
(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation n/a

walls n/a

roof n/a

other Limestone; concrete

Narrative Description

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

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

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

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

Criteria Considerations

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

Property is:

- A owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- B removed from its original location.
- C a birthplace or 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)

Landscape Architecture

Politics/Government

Social History

Conservation

Recreation

Period of Significance

1933-1942

Significant Dates

1934

Significant Person

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

n/a

Cultural Affiliation

n/a

Architect/Builder

Central Design Office, Ames; National Park Service

Narrative Statement of Significance

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

9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography

(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:

Department of Natural Resources, State Historical Society of Iowa

Name of Property

County and State

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property approximately 1.5 acres

UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

UTM grid for Zone, Easting, Northing with values 11.5, 32.6, 5.4, 0, 4.8, 0.3, 6.8, 0

UTM grid for Zone, Easting, Northing

See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

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

Boundary Justification

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

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Rebecca Conard

organization PHR Associates date July 20, 1992

street & number 275 Crescent Park Dr. telephone 712/657-3347

city or town Lake View state Iowa zip code 51450

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 Iowa Department of Natural Resources

street & number Wallace Office Building telephone

city or town Des Moines state Iowa zip code 50319

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.

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National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 1

Pillsbury Point State Park Overlook, Dickinson County, Iowa

Description

Pillsbury Point State Park Overlook is an irregularly shaped parcel of approximately 1.5 acres, representing the northernmost portion of Pillsbury Point State Park. This state park is one of the smallest and one of the most urban, comprising only six acres located within the city limits of Arnolds Park. The overlook may be considered a landscaped park, although not in the formal sense since the vegetation consists of lawn and natural overgrowth on the banks of West Lake Okoboji. Cultural features include five stone benches and two sets of stone steps, all of which are built into slopes and symmetrically laid out to produce a designed landscape of rustic character. Benches and steps are linked by a dirt footpath. In addition, there are six concrete property boundary markers, two of which bear a bronze medallion inscribed "Iowa State Conservation Commission Property Line, Unlawful To Disturb." All of these resources are further described below. They are in reasonably good physical condition, although well weathered with no evidence of regular maintenance. None of the structures or objects has been altered. There are two noncontributing structures: a post-1940 park bench which is bolted to a concrete pad and a set of wooden steps which have been built adjacent to one of the stone benches.

The overlook is situated on a small promontory that extends into West Lake Okoboji. Several species of vines, shrubs, and wildflowers cover steep banks which slope to a rocky shoreline. Private homes are located south of the overlook. The park continues as a narrow strip along the west and east perimeters of the promontory, providing some measure of shore protection in front of residential development. Boathouses, docks, patios, and other recreational structures have been allowed within the park along these strips; consequently, these areas have been excluded from district boundaries. On the south, the park extends inland to form an irregularly shaped, tree-shaded picnic area with benches and picnic tables. Several more concrete property boundary markers are located here. As a whole, Pillsbury Point State Park forms an irregular, open triangle, but only the north overlook constitutes a cohesive unit that meets National Register eligibility criteria.

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Pillsbury Point State Park Overlook, Dickinson County, Iowa

Contributing Resources

- 1) stone bench measuring 10'3" long x 8' wide

Four stone benches are identical in design and similar in dimension. The backs and seats are constructed of mortared rubblestone with an unmortared stone "floor" in front of the seat. All four benches are buttressed with triangular sidewalls that appear to function both as barriers to hillside erosion and stabilizers to keep the bench backs from slumping. The benches are built into the slope so that from the grassy area above they are barely visible.

- 2) stone bench measuring 11'2" long x 7'10" wide.

Identical in design to other benches.

- 3) stone bench measuring 9'10" long x 4'8" wide

Identical in design to other benches. A set of wooden steps have been built into the slope on the southeast side of this bench, exposing the hillside to erosion. The design and materials integrity of the bench itself have not been impaired, but the wooden steps are an intrusion into the setting and eventually will cause the physical condition of the bench to deteriorate.

- 4) stone bench measuring 10'2" long x 6'10" wide

Identical in design to other benches.

- 5) U-shaped stone bench measuring 10'x13'x10' long

At the base of the promontory is a vaguely U-shaped bench that sits nearly at the water's edge. It, too, is constructed of mortared rubblestone and is built into a steep slope. The middle section measures 13' long with two 10' wings on either side. It has no "floor." The bench is accessed by a narrow dirt footpath down the slope. This path appears to be an approach cut and worn by park uses, not part of the original

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Pillsbury Point State Park Overlook, Dickinson County, Iowa

landscaping plan, since it winds precipitously down the slope and ends about mid-point along the bench. Thus, one steps from the path over the bench back and directly onto the bench seat. As depicted on the 1934 landscape development plan, the original footpath gently descended the slope and wound along the shoreline. However, wave action has slowly eroded the shore, and this pathway appears to have disappeared. Now dense vegetation covers the slope during the summer months. Evidence of continued erosion was observed at both ends of the bench.

6) trail steps (west)

Nine steps of mortared rubblestone are set into the slope on the west side of the park. The treads measure 5' long and 12" wide with 5" risers. There are no railings or sidewalls. These steps and a similar set of steps on the north side of the promontory provide access from the grassy lawn area to the dirt footpath that links the stone benches.

7) trail steps (north)

Another set of mortared stone steps, this set with 8 treads, is set into the north slope. The treads measure 5' long and 12" wide, with 5" risers.

8-13) property boundary markers

Six markers delineate the southern boundary of the overlook area. All of them are simple concrete markers measuring 6"x6" and extending approximately 12" above the ground surface. Two of them carry bronze medallions with the inscription "Property of Iowa State Conservation Commission, Do Not Disturb." Identical boundary markers delineate the property line of the entire park, a total of about 18 in all, but only these six are included in the historic district boundaries.

14) park site

As a designed landscape, the site itself is a distinctive resource.

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Pillsbury Point State Park Overlook, Dickinson County, Iowa

Noncontributing Resources

15) park bench

A moveable park bench has been bolted to a concrete pad. It is of standard design, with the seat and back of painted wood slats in a metal frame, and therefore difficult to date. Although the bench is quite different in design and materials from the rustic stone benches built into the slope, it is similar to benches found elsewhere in the park. It is of traditional park bench design, more closely associated with Victorian Era landscaped parks but nonetheless compatible with the urban character of Pillsbury Point State Park.

16) wooden steps

A flight of wooden steps, constructed of 4"x4" rough-cut lumber, has been built into the hillside adjacent to one of the stone benches (3). It appears to be of recent construction. Although it is not necessarily incompatible with the rustic character of park structures, the steps pose a threat to the long-term stability of the bench at its side, and the structure interrupts the symmetry of the designed landscape laid out in the 1930s.

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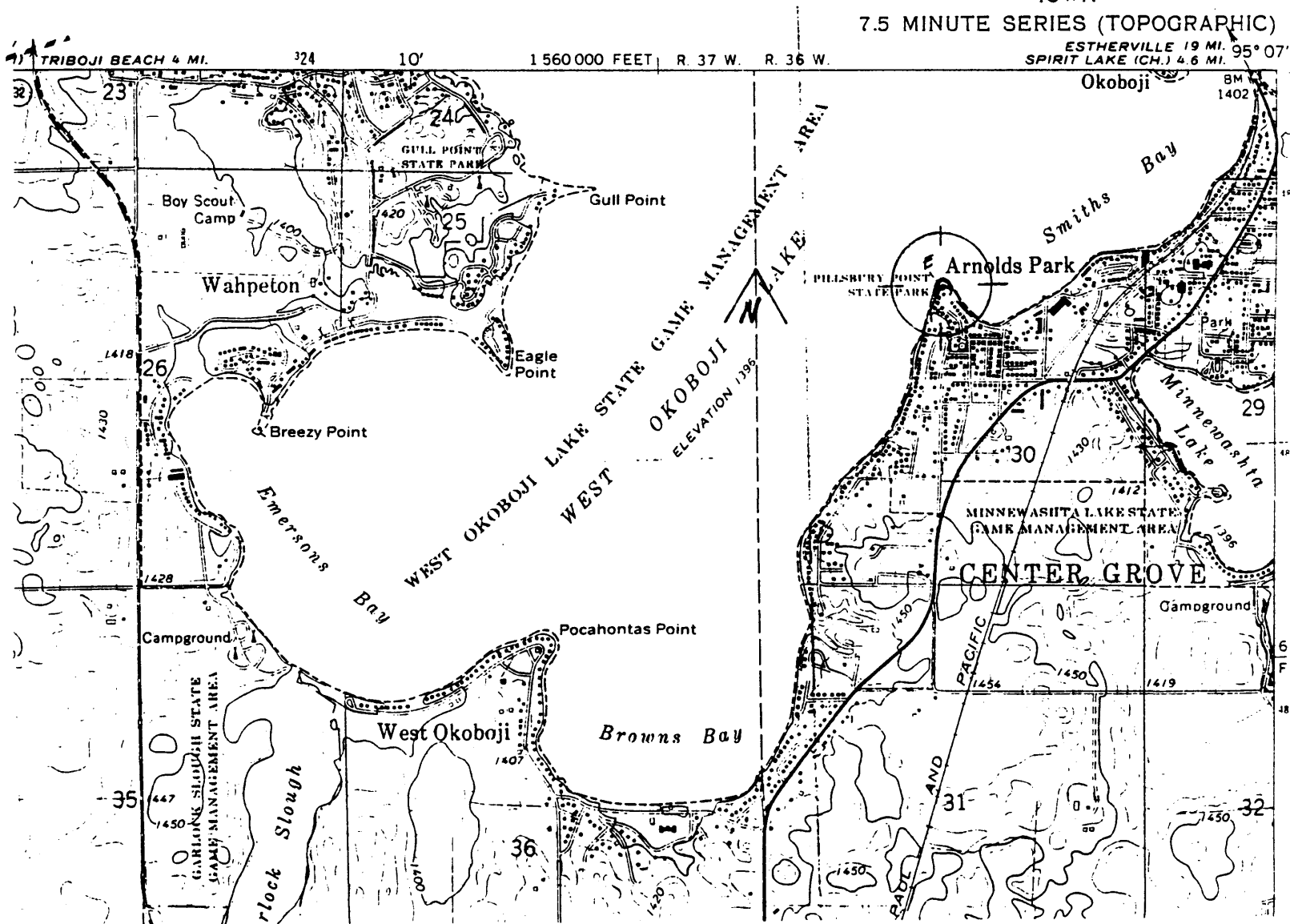
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Pillsbury Point State Park Overlook, Dickinson County, Iowa

Resource Location Map: U.S.G.S. Milford Quadrangle, 7.5 minute

MILFORD QUADRANGLE
IOWA
7.5 MINUTE SERIES (TOPOGRAPHIC)



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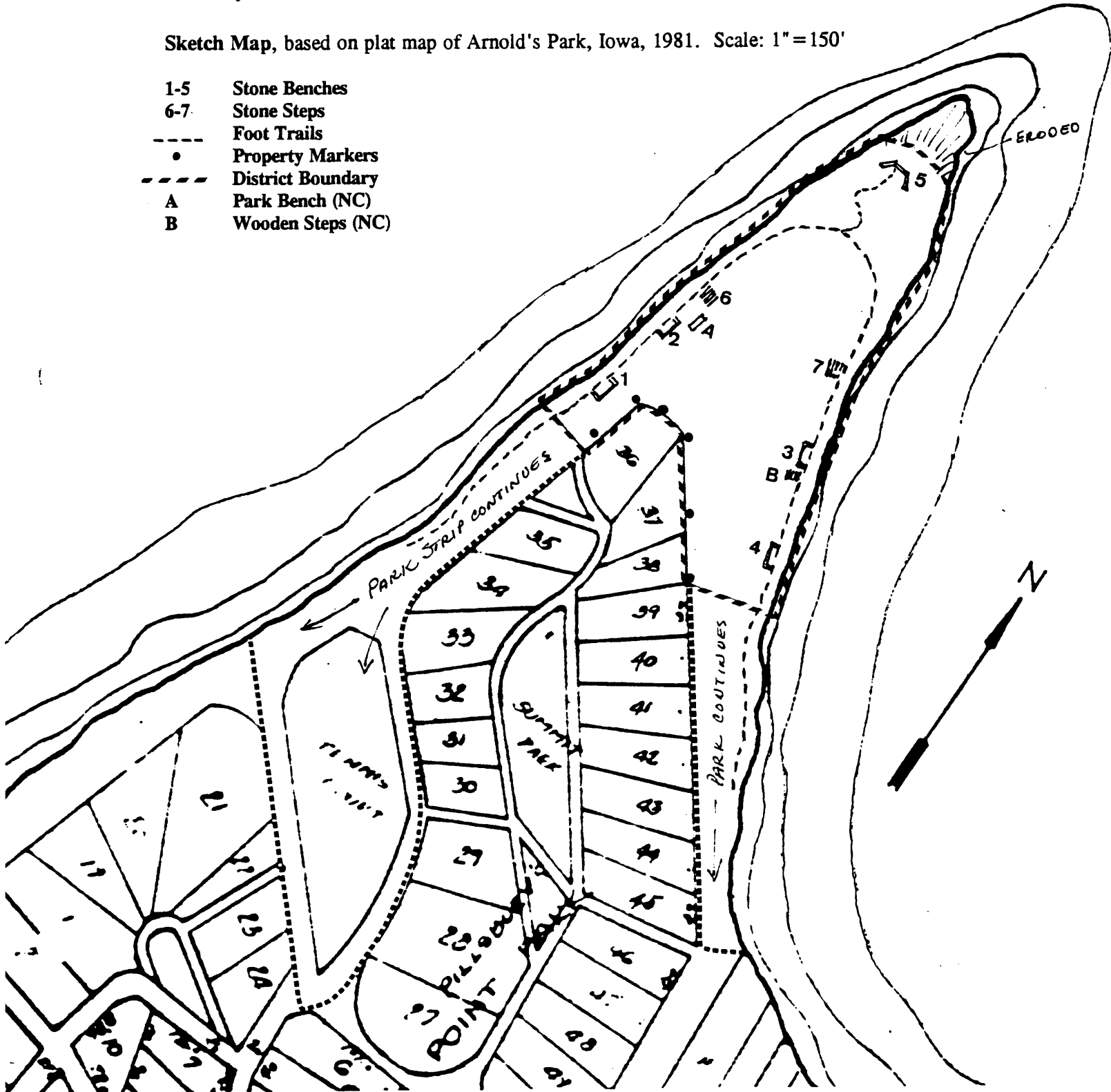
National Register of Historic Places
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Pillsbury Point State Park Overlook, Dickinson County, Iowa

Sketch Map, based on plat map of Arnold's Park, Iowa, 1981. Scale: 1" = 150'

- 1-5 Stone Benches
- 6-7 Stone Steps
- - - Foot Trails
- Property Markers
- - - District Boundary
- A Park Bench (NC)
- B Wooden Steps (NC)



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Pillsbury Point State Park Overlook, Dickinson County, Iowa

Statement of Significance

Pillsbury Point State Park Overlook District is significant under Criterion A for its association with the work of the Civilian Conservation Corps in constructing a rustic landscaped park. It is also significant under Criterion C as a park that embodies the distinctive philosophy associated with the rustic architectural style, namely a harmonic blending of natural and physical elements.

CCC Company 778 established a camp in the northern Iowa lakes area at Spencer on June 1, 1933. A 1933 work project map for northern Iowa identifies the Iowa Lakes Region and associates it with the Company 778. Beginning as a Forest Service camp, the company worked on both park and private soil conservation projects within a fifty-mile radius of base camp. During the second period, the company worked at Mini Wakan, Pillsbury Point, Rush Lake, Medium Lake, Silver Lake, at or near Trapper's Bay, and Lost Island Lake, working principally on soil erosion or landscaping projects. On October 12, 1933, the company moved to Milford Camp SP9 and was transferred to the National Park Service. Enrollees continued to work on multiple projects at widely scattered locations, including Pillsbury Point as well as Cheever's Lake, Dewey Lake, Fort Defiance, Four Mile Lake, Gull Point, Lost Island, Mini Wakan, Okamanpedan, Orleans Hatchery, Peterson Preserve (Wanata State Park), Pikes Point, Silver Lake, and Rush Lake. Company 778 remained at Milford through the fifth period, ending its stay on September 30, 1935.¹

Pillsbury Point was the site of the 1857 Spirit Lake Massacre in which forty settlers lost their lives and four women were taken hostage. Adjacent to the park are located several gravesites, historical monuments memorializing the massacre site, and the restored log cabin of the Rowland Gardner family. The land upon which the park is located was owned by Rev. Samuel Pillsbury in the 1860s; hence the park name. Later it belonged to H.H. Lantz, who developed a recreation area here in the 1890s. Lantz died in 1925, and in 1928 his heirs, Florence B. Lantz

1 Iowa Department of Agriculture, *Iowa Yearbook of Agriculture* (Des Moines, 1935), 30, 206; National Park Service, District Office Reports (Box 3), 27 November 1933, 2 December 1933, 2 January 1934, 17 March 1934, and 30 September 1935; C.N. Alleger and C.A. Alleger, *Civilian Conservation Corps: Iowa District History* (Rapid City, S.D.: c. 1935), 41-42.

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CFN-259-1116

Pillsbury Point State Park Overlook, Dickinson County, Iowa

(widow) and Miriam L. and John I. Cross, donated 6.0+ acres to the state.² Between October 2, 1933 and March 1934, CCC Company 778 constructed the walkways along the lake, the stone steps, and the benches. A development plan dated February 1934 illustrates the five benches and two sets of steps. By 1936, this small park, along with Mini Wakan, Pike's Point, and Trapper's Bay, had been placed under the jurisdiction of the custodian at Gull Point State Park, the largest of the Iowa Lakes Region state parks.³

As a small park in an urban setting, Pillsbury Point State Park is somewhat unusual. In part, it protects a fragile ecological environment from what otherwise would be intense shoreline development because the point offers a commanding view of lake. The 1933 *Report on the Iowa Twenty-Five Year Conservation Plan*, prepared under the direction of the State Board of Conservation and State Fish and Game Commission, called for Iowa's state park properties to be classified into state parks, which would be developed for recreational use, and state preserves, which were intended to protect areas of special historical or scientific interest.⁴ Pillsbury Park was reclassified as a preserve. Under the National Park Service system adopted in 1940, it was reclassified again as a historic-archaeologic park.⁵ Today it is referred to as an "access." Park users are mainly Arnold's Park residents who come here to stroll and picnic. Even when the park was new, usage was moderate. Between 1934-35 and 1941-42 the number of estimated park users rose from 500 to 10,000.⁶

- 2 Robert Charles Wolf, *Iowa's State Parks* (Ames: Iowa State University Press, 1991), 177-78; Plat of Property, recorded December 14, 1928, Book 2:176, Dickinson County. In 1979, the Iowa Department of Natural Resource deeded the southerly portion of the park, approximately 3 acres, to Sunset Beach Improvement Association, Inc. in exchange for other park property.
- 3 Iowa State Park Records, 1917-1973, State Archives, Des Moines; Alleger and Alleger, 43; National Park Service, Project Supervisor Reports (Box 76), February 1934, March 1934, and December 1934; NPS District Office Reports (Box 2), 17 March 1934; Preliminary Sketch Plan for Development, Pillsbury Point State Park, February 1934, National Park Service; *Spencer Reporter*, 25 June 1936.
- 4 Jacob L. Crane, Jr. and George Wheeler Olcott, *Report on the Iowa Twenty-Five Year Conservation Plan* (Des Moines, 1933), 8-9.
- 5 As reported in the State Conservation Commission Minutes of February 13-14, 1941.
- 6 Minutes, State Conservation Commission: 1936, p. 118-19; 1940, p. 127-28.

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DATE: 6/13/92

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Pillsbury Point State Park Overlook, Dickinson County, Iowa

Under Criterion A, Pillsbury Point State Park is significant as a fine example of the landscape-based approach to park development which reached its peak during the 1930s. The mission of the Civilian Conservation Corps meshed nicely with the goals of Iowa's twenty-five year conservation plan, and CCC camps contributed to the development of practically every state park in Iowa. Projects frequently included restoration or conservation of natural resources through soil erosion control and the planting of trees, shrubs, and grasses. New construction was incorporated into "landscape development plans," and park amenities were not to intrude upon natural resources either visually or physically. Pillsbury Point represents the landscaping aspect of park development almost exclusively, since it does not contain park buildings, and the development plan indicates that "scattered planting" in existence along the shore in 1934 was to be enhanced with gooseberries, grasses, and riprapping to hold the slope.

The benches and steps are essentially landscaping devices. Under Criterion C, these features represent a classic interpretation of the rustic landscape architectural style that flowered in the 1930s. "The appearance of belonging in its setting is the rightful claim of the trail seat," wrote architect Albert H. Good. "If it is to be effectively naturalized, it must appear casual and unforced, free of the appearance of being too cunningly and elaborately devised. There must be no implication of Nature turned upside down, or inside out, into a very parody of itself, in order that the world and his wife may have quaint, if uncomfortable, seats on the aisle.⁷" Tucked into the slopes along the shore, the stone benches of Pillsbury Point State Park are among the most unobtrusive structures in any park setting. They are barely visible from the shaded lawn above them, and they subtly emerge into view as one walks along the footpath that links them.

7 Albert H. Good, *Park and Recreation Structure, Park II: Recreational and Cultural Facilities* (Washington, D.C.: National Park Service, 1938), 87.

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Pillsbury Point State Park Overlook, Dickinson County, Iowa

Bibliography

Alleger, C.N. and C.A. *Civilian Conservation Corps: Iowa District History*. Rapid City, S.D.: Johnston and Bordewyk, Inc, c. 1935.

Crane, Jacob L. and George Wheeler Olcott. *Report on the Iowa Twenty-Five Year Conservation Plan*. Des Moines: Iowa State Board of Conservation and Iowa Fish and Game Commission, 1933.

Good, Albert H. *Park and Recreation Structures*, 3 vols. Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service, 1938.

Iowa Department of Agriculture. *Iowa Yearbook of Agriculture*. Des Moines: State Printing Office, 1936.

Iowa Department of Natural Resources, Des Moines. Maps, construction drawings, and landscape development plans for state parks. Plans dated 1933-1942 were executed by U.S. Department of Interior, National Park Service and the Central Design Office at Iowa State College, Ames.

Iowa State Park Records, 1917-1973. Manuscript Department, State Archives, Iowa State Historical Society, Des Moines.

Iowa State University, College of Design, Ames, Iowa. Maps, construction drawings, and landscape development building plans for work projects in state parks. Plans dated 1933-1942 were executed by the U.S. Department of Interior, National Park Service and the Central Design Office of Iowa State College at Ames.

Spencer Reporter, 25 June 1936.

U.S. Department of Interior, National Park Service. RG 79, Entry 39 (1933-37), National Archives, Washington, D.C.. Reports of district offices and inspectors concerning State Park Emergency Conservation Work for the Branch of Land Planning, Design, and State Cooperation. Arranged by district (Iowa) and then chronologically.

U.S. Department of Interior, National Park Service. RG 79, Entry 37, Boxes 71-88 (1933-37), National Archives, Washington, D.C. State park files; records relating to the CCC work projects supervised by the Branch of Land Planning, Design, and State Cooperation. Records derived from regional office of the NPS and the states. Arranged by state and camp.

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Section number 10 Page 11

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Pillsbury Point State Park Overlook, Dickinson County, Iowa

Boundary Description

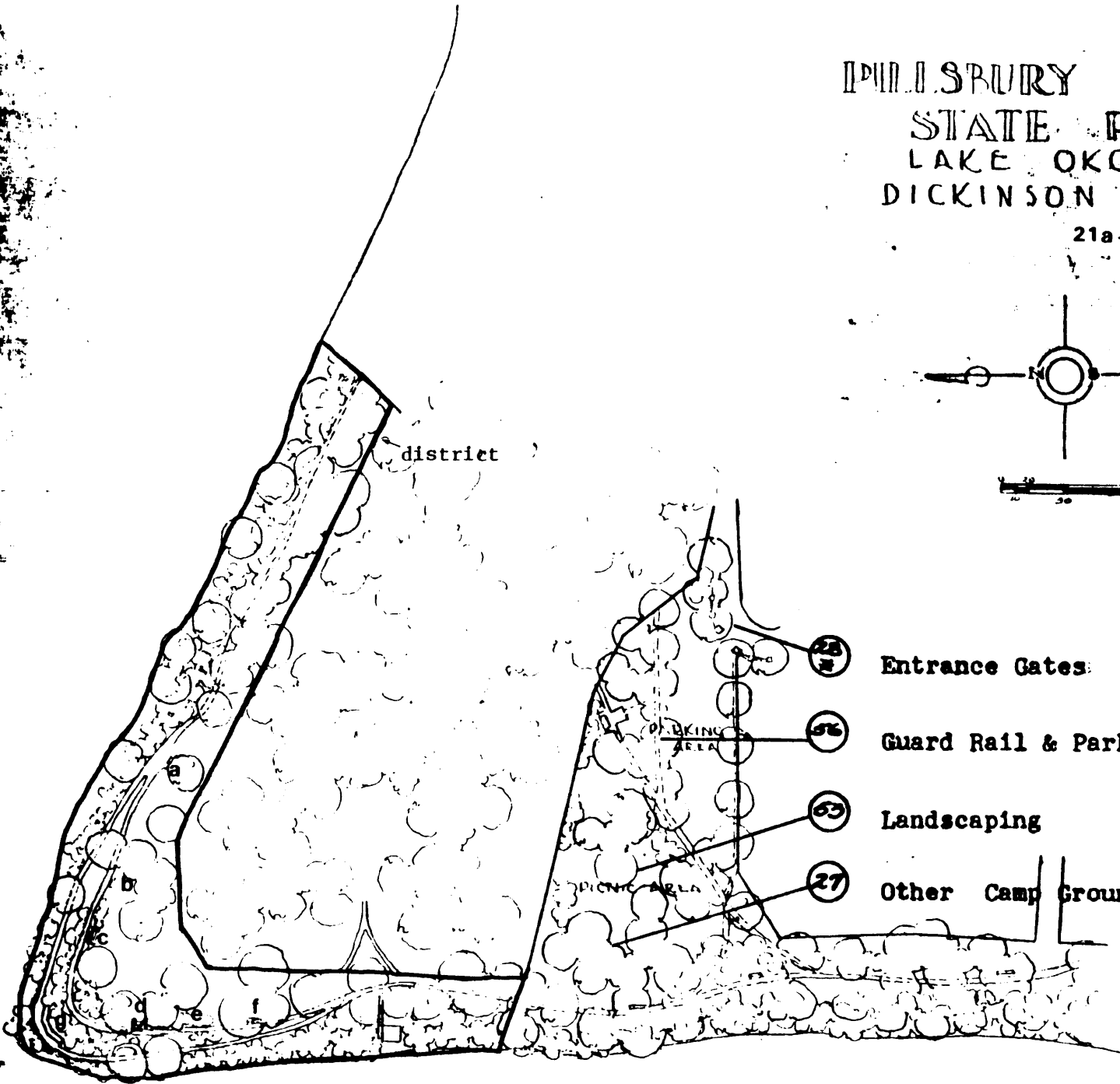
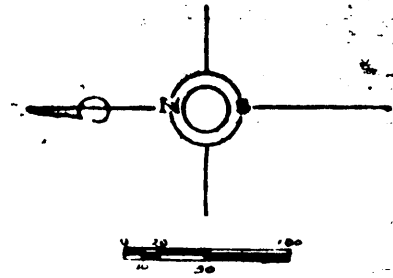
The historic district constitutes the northerly portion of Lot D of Pillsbury Point Park in the City of Arnolds Park. On the west, north, and east, the boundary follows the park boundary, which is the shoreline of West Lake Okoboji. On the south, the boundary follows a curving line of six property markers that delineate park boundaries from private lots 36, 37, and 38 of Pillsbury Point Park. The boundaries are indicated on the sketch map.

Boundary Justification

The north overlook area of Pillsbury Point State Park is the only portion which contains a cohesive concentration of historic structures and objects that meet National Register eligibility criteria. The boundaries include all of the associated natural and cultural resources in this area. The remainder of the park has been excluded from the boundaries because it contains several privately constructed and maintained recreational structures which visually and functionally tend to isolate the overlook as a special area.

MILLSBURY POINT
 STATE PARK
 LAKE OKOBOJI
 DICKINSON COUNTY

21a-g



WEST OKOBOJI

007

PROPERTY OF
STATE OF IOWA

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

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Continuation Sheet

Section number photo Page 1

CFN-259-1116

Photographic Identification

Name: Northern Iowa Lake State Park District
Location: Dickenson and Clay counties, Iowa
Negative: Bureau of Historic Preservation, State Historical Society
of Iowa
Photographers: Kevin Pape and Joyce McKay
Date: March 13, 1989 and May 27, 1989

Description:

1. View of the west side of the lodge (GUL5) at Gull Point State Park, Milford facing northeast.
2. View of the east side of the lodge (GUL5) at Gull Point State Park, Milford facing southwest.
3. View of the east side of the boathouse (GUL6) at Gull Point State Park, Milford facing west.
4. View of the front facade of the custodian's residence (GUL2) at Gull Point State Park, Milford facing southwest.
5. View of the west and north facades of the service building (GUL1) at Gull Point State Park, Milford facing northwest.
6. View of the northwest entrance portal (GUL4) at Gull Point State Park, Milford facing east.
7. View of the picnic shelter (GUL18) and steps (GUL19) at Pikes Point State Park, Spirit Lake facing southeast.
8. View of the picnic shelter (GUL22) at Trapper's Bay State Park, Lake Park facing northwest.
9. View of the picnic shelter (GUL24) at Wanata State Park, Peterson facing southeast.
- * 10. View of one bench along the overlook (GUL21) at Pillsbury Point State Park, Arnolds Park facing southwest.

* Only this photograph has been submitted with this nomination.