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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 instruction 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 classifications, 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 Wheeler Ridge Japanese Bombing Site

other names/site number Mt. Emily Bombing Site

2. Location

street & number Rogue River-Siskiyou National Forest  not for publication

city or town Brookings  vicinity

state Oregon code OR county Curry code 015 zip code 97415

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 X nationally      statewide      locally.

*Elizabeth A. Gail Throp, Regional Historian*  
*for Richard Hanes, Regional Preservation Officer*  
Signature of certifying official/Title

Date May 25, 2006

State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that the property is:  
Action

- 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 7/6/2006

Wheeler Ridge Bombing Site  
Name of Property

Curry, Oregon  
County and State

**5. Classification**

Ownership of Property  
(check as many 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	
<u>1</u>		buildings
		sites
		structures
		objects
<u>1</u>		Total

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

N/A

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

0

**6. Function or Use**

Historic Functions  
(enter categories from instructions)

Defense: Battle Site  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Current Functions  
(Enter categories from instructions)

Recreation & Culture: Monument  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**7. Description**

Architectural Classification  
(Enter categories from instructions)

N/A  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Materials  
(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation: \_\_\_\_\_  
walls: \_\_\_\_\_  
roof: \_\_\_\_\_  
Other: Wood  
\_\_\_\_\_

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

See continuation sheets.

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DESCRIPTION

Location and Setting

The Wheeler Ridge Japanese Bombing Site, located by road nineteen miles east of Brookings, Curry County, Oregon, is situated on National Forest System (Rogue River-Siskiyou National Forest) lands administered by the Chetco Ranger District. Bombed by the Japanese on September 9, 1942, Wheeler Ridge is reached from U.S. Highway 101 by the South Bank Chetco River Road six miles to the intersection of Forest Road 1205 (Mt. Emily Road), and approximately thirteen miles along Road 1205 to the trailhead leading to the site. Forest Trail #1118 is approximately one mile in length and crosses part of the Wheeler Creek Research Natural Area, a 334-acre tract set aside in 1972 to preserve redwood forest near the northern limits of its range. The trail approaches the top of Wheeler Ridge and winds along the south-facing slope to the bomb site.

At 1660 feet elevation, the site is situated on the upper third of the south-facing slope of Wheeler Ridge on a spur between two drainages. Located in the northwest quarter of the northwest quarter of Section 22, Township 40 South, Range 12 West, W.M., the bombing site lies above Wheeler Creek a tributary of the East Fork Winchuck River. Mt. Emily, at 2926 feet elevation, the highest peak in the vicinity, lies to the northwest across the Wheeler Creek canyon from the site.

Wheeler Ridge is composed of igneous and metamorphic rocks of various ages. The south facing slope is distinguished by Mount Emily Dacite (Oligocene). Sandy loam and gravelly loam soils support vegetation consisting of redwoods and Douglas-fir and other species.<sup>1</sup> The area's climate is wet and mild in winter and dry during the summer months, although it occasionally experiences coastal fogs. The immediate area of the bombing site contains mature trees as well as evergreen saplings, broad-leafed trees and brush. The overstory is characterized by Douglas-fir (*Pseudotsuga menziesii*) and coast redwood (*Sequoia sempervirens*); the understory by tanoak (*Lithocarpus densiflorus*); Oregon myrtle, (*Umbellularia californica*); rhododendron (*Rhododendron macrophyllum*); and evergreen huckleberry; (*Vaccinium ovatum*). Ground cover is composed of evergreen huckleberry and Oregon grape (*Berberis nervosa*).<sup>2</sup>

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Forest Trail #1118, constructed by the Siskiyou National Forest in 1973, approaches the Wheeler Ridge Japanese Bombing Site at its western edge and opens into a central clearing measuring approximately 20 by 30 feet in size.<sup>3</sup> Encircling the clearing are several "veteran" trees including redwood—the largest approximately 60" in diameter, Douglas-fir as large as 36" in diameter, and tan oak—the largest approximately 24 inches in diameter.<sup>4</sup> No physical evidence of the drop site crater remains readily evident at the site—the depression has filled in with soil and brush, and no scars remain visible on old trees. Investigation has not determined if an extant redwood stump in the clearing was sheared in the bombing. A small coast redwood, planted by Japanese pilot Nobuo Fujita in 1995 and now an Oregon Heritage Tree, stands near the southerly edge of the clearing.

Two man-made features are currently present at the site. The largest is an interpretive sign constructed of two 6" by 6" pressure-treated posts that support a glass-enclosed wood-framed panel of dimensional lumber displaying historical information about the bombing incident. The sign's peak, capped by a narrow cedar-shake roof, is twelve feet high at the top and 10' 6" wide at its broadest point. The interpretive panel measures 4' 10" wide by 3' 5 ½ high. A smaller wood panel framed in dimensional lumber and displaying routed letters measures 2' 2" wide by 1' 4" high. The second fixture at the site is a simple wooden bench of rough-cut lumber—its top measuring approximately six feet in length, supported by two wood uprights.

Integrity

The Wheeler Ridge Japanese Bombing Site, framed in old-growth redwoods and Douglas-fir that were mature trees at the time of the bombing in 1942, retains integrity of location, setting, feeling and association. Located in a remote area of southwest Oregon, the site lay little disturbed during the first thirty years of its existence. Rediscovery of the bombing location in 1972, subsequent interpretive marking, and growing publicity have encouraged more frequent visits to the site in the past thirty years. Continued visitations have, in fact, increased soil compaction and consequent vegetation loss at the site. Lack of vegetation management as well as the artificial suppression of natural "light-burning" fires over the years has led to the proliferation of brush and sapling trees that were once not so dominant at the site, and which now put the site at increased risk of a severe, stand-replacement fire.

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USDA Forest Service Rogue River-Siskiyou National Forest overall objectives are to preserve and enhance the physical setting and increase the public's recognition of this unique site of the World War II conflict. The long-range Forest Service goals at Wheeler Ridge include improved public access to the site and expanded bilingual interpretive signage.<sup>5</sup>

The location, setting, vegetation and interpretive features at the Wheeler Ridge Japanese Bombing Site in Curry County, Oregon reflect the site's historic associations with World War II military events and with the symbolic values the location has acquired as a commemorative site. Although potentially vulnerable to overuse and fire, the site's integrity of setting, location, association, and feeling remains substantially intact.

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<sup>1</sup> Gary Martinek, Cultural Resource Technician, Rogue River-Siskiyou National Forest, Gold Beach Ranger District, August 10, 2004; John D. Beaulieu and Paul W. Hughes, *Land Use Geology of Western Curry County*, Oregon, Portland, Oregon: State of Oregon, Department of Geology and Mineral Industries, Portland, Oregon, 1976.

<sup>2</sup> Gary Martinek, August 10, 2004. Jerry F. Franklin and C.T. Dyrness, *Natural Vegetation of Oregon and Washington*, Corvallis, Oregon: Oregon State University Press, 1988, p. 67.

<sup>3</sup> Joe D. Waller, Siskiyou National Forest, Chetco Ranger District, to Stephen Dow Beckham, Linfield College, June 18, 1974, on file Rogue River-Siskiyou National Forest, Gold Beach Ranger District; Marlon G. Nichols, Siskiyou National Forest, Chetco Ranger District to Ed Waldrop, January 23, 1973 on file Rogue River-Siskiyou National Forest, Gold Beach Ranger District.

<sup>4</sup> Gary Martinek, August 10, 2004.

<sup>5</sup> U.S.D.A. Forest Service, Rogue River-Siskiyou National Forest, Application for Federal Assistance, U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service American Battlefield Protection Program 2002 Funding Application, January 3, 2002, on file, Rogue River-Siskiyou National Forest, Medford, Oregon.

Wheeler Ridge Bombing Site  
Name of Property

Curry, Oregon  
County and State

**8. Statement of Significance**

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

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

Areas of Significance  
(Enter categories from instructions)

Military  
Social History  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Period of Significance

1942  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Significant Dates

1942  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

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

Significant Person

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Architect/Builder

N/A  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Narrative Statement of Significance

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

**9. Major Bibliographical References**

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

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36CFR67) 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: \_\_\_\_\_

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**STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE**

**Narrative Significance**

The Oregon State Historic Preservation Office has determined that the Wheeler Ridge Japanese Bombing Site is eligible to the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion A for its associations with military events in World War II as the location of an incendiary bomb explosion on September 9, 1942. The site also holds symbolic value in its expression of a later generation's assessment of the past. With its period of significance focused on the year 1942, the Wheeler Ridge Japanese Bomb Site is significant in the areas of Military and Social History and is clearly eligible at both the statewide and national levels of significance.<sup>1</sup>

The Wheeler Ridge Japanese Bombing Site was thoroughly investigated by Forest Service archaeologists in June 2004 for remnant artifactual evidence of the bombing. The 100%-survey coverage of the site area by several metal-detecting devices yielded no items that could be possibly identified as bomb fragments. In addition, no pre-Euro-American cultural evidence of any kind was found during the intensive visual search of the site vicinity. All but two of the items found during the site investigation are plastic, glass, and metal objects (largely .22-caliber bullet shells) that clearly date to the past twenty-five years. The only two exceptions are: (a) a pre-1960, large-format-camera flash bulb and (b) a heavily rusted "tuna"-type tinned can; pending further analysis of the objects, both of these items could conceivably date to the U.S. Army's and FBI's post-bombing investigations. A full report on the archaeological investigation expands on these findings.<sup>2</sup> National Register Criterion D does not apply to the Wheeler Ridge Japanese Bombing Site.

The September 9, 1942 bombing of Wheeler Ridge—and a second, never-located bombing near Grassy Knob (in Curry County, Oregon) on September 29, 1942 by a Japanese submarine-launched, light bomber airplane—resulted in the first attack on the continental United States by enemy aircraft. (Two incidents of artillery fire by surfaced submarines occurred along the Pacific Coast, and, later in World War II, incendiary bombs were delivered to the U.S. by high-altitude balloons launched from near the Japanese home islands.) Anxieties over possible attack on the Pacific Coast remained



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high throughout the year after Pearl Harbor; the Wheeler Ridge bombing gave justification to such fears. No lives were lost at Wheeler Ridge, but this daring raid—intended to spark forest fires that would drain manpower from the American war effort—was, until September 11, 2001, the only such aircraft attack of its kind in American history.<sup>3</sup>

Following World War II, Nobuo Fujita, the Japanese pilot who flew the plane over Wheeler Ridge became a self-appointed “peace ambassador” to the United States, making several goodwill visits to southwest Oregon and planting a redwood seedling “peace tree” at the bombing site. Over the years, the Wheeler Ridge Japanese Bombing Site has become a traditional destination for those wishing to offer condolences and remember the events of a major global war, as well as to visit the site of an event that is unique in American history. It has acquired status as symbol of peace with historical significance to Japanese veterans and others and inspired communication between Japanese and American citizens who experienced World War II. Wheeler Ridge has acquired growing significance as a commemorative site fostering friendships between former enemies.

Substantially intact in and retaining a high degree of integrity to its original location, setting, and appearance, the Wheeler Ridge Japanese Bombing Site conveys both its original setting and important associations with the military and social history linked to World War II.

### **Historic Context**

#### World War II Military Context

##### *The First Year of the War with Japan*

The Japanese bombing of the coastal forest at Wheeler Ridge on Sept. 9, 1942 does not loom particularly large in the history of World War II, although it was the only publicized aerial bombing of the U.S. mainland. The standard reference book for the war, *The Oxford Companion to World War II*, has no entries under “Wheeler Ridge,” “Oregon,” or “Brookings.” None the less, the bombing at Wheeler Ridge, along with the submarine shelling of Fort Stevens, the incendiary balloon bomb explosion near Bly,

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Oregon, the shelling of an oil refinery near Santa Barbara, California, and other incidents marked the extreme eastward reach of the Japanese armed forces.

On December 7, 1941 Japanese bombers attacked Pearl Harbor, Territory of Hawaii, killing more than 2,400 Americans, and destroying or damaging battleships, cruisers, and hundreds of airplanes. The following day, President Franklin Roosevelt asked Congress for a declaration of war against Japan. Three days later the United States declared war on Germany and Italy, following a declaration of war by those countries.

After the attack on Pearl Harbor the Japanese were very successful at extending their territory across much of the Pacific and the Japanese flag soon flew over Guam, the far-western Aleutians of Alaska, the Philippine Islands, much of Southeast Asia, and other locations. A chronology gives an overview of Japan's military progress:

December, 1941	Japanese Attack Pearl Harbor and other U.S. military installations
December, 1941	Japanese Occupy Guam and Wake
February, 1942	Japanese Seize Singapore
March, 1942	Japanese Defeat Dutch and Seize Java
March, 1942	Japanese Forces Raid Shipping on the Indian Ocean
April, 1942	Japanese Defeat U.S. Forces in the Philippines
May, 1942	Japanese Successful in the Battle of the Coral Sea
June, 1942	Japanese Navy Defeated in the Battle of Midway
June, 1942	Japanese Forces Attack Dutch Harbor and Occupy Aleutian Islands
July, 1942	Japanese Forces Land in New Guinea
August, 1942	Allied and Japanese Forces Stalemated on Guadalcanal <sup>4</sup>

For U.S. citizens on the West Coast, the threat of Japanese invasion was real. In addition to newspaper accounts of the progress of war on islands throughout the Pacific in 1942, the war was coming closer to Oregon. On the night of June 20, a Japanese submarine surfaced off the Oregon coast and shelled Fort Stevens, an artillery base near the mouth of the Columbia River. The commanding officer ordered his men to withhold fire in order not to divulge Fort Stevens's position. Residents along the coast watched with fascination as the submarine's guns fired through the night sky.

Wartime measures on the West Coast included the incarceration of U.S. citizens of Japanese descent in Oregon, Washington, and California. The Coast was "blacked

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out” at night, so that enemy ships could not see land. People were required to cover windows with blackout curtains and to drive with their headlights off. The U.S. government organized private citizens as Civil Defense coast watchers. Boats from fishing and charter fleets patrolled the coast. In June 1942, a supervising official of the U.S. Forest Service-run Aircraft Warning Service (AWS) sent the following alert to Foresters on the Columbia, Siuslaw, and Siskiyou National Forests where civilians staffed observation posts at lookouts and other locations, on watch for enemy aircraft:

Ample warning has been given us from the highest Army authorities on down that we can expect enemy aircraft traffic over America this year. We are told that the next three months will be an especially critical period for aircraft invasion.

Let's consider the coming ninety-day period as an extraordinary alert period. All of your aircraft observers, switchboard and relay operators, telephone linemen, packers, and others connected to the A. W. S., should resolve to perform his or her duty cheerfully and efficiently. This is no time to sleep at the switch...<sup>5</sup>

Site History

*Japanese Imperial Navy:*

On September 8, the Japanese Imperial Navy submarine *I-25*, staffed by a crew of about 100 under Lieutenant Commander Meiji Tagami lay submerged off the southern Oregon coast. Aboard the ship, pilot Nobuo Fujita waited for clear weather that would allow an early-morning flight inland. Fujita, who was drafted into the Navy in 1932 at age 21, had extensive experience as a pilot. He spent late 1941 and the first nine months of 1942 on the *I-25*, supporting operations at Pearl Harbor, patrolling the Pacific Coast from Seattle to San Francisco, and flying missions over Australia and New Zealand. Fujita was still aboard the submarine on June 21, 1942 when its crew attacked the merchant ship “Fort Camosun” off the Washington coast and fired shells at Fort Stevens west of Astoria, Oregon before returning to Japan.<sup>6</sup>

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In Japan, Pilot Fujita, who had promoted using small observation planes as bombers to attack places such as the Panama Canal, U.S. West coast naval bases and other sites, was assigned to drop two bombs on the Oregon forest. As the Imperial Navy's map officer explained:

The northwest United States is full of trees. Once a fire gets started in the deep woods it is very hard to put out. Sometimes whole towns are burned. If we could start some big fires it would cause panic if the people knew Japan could bomb their country, their factories, and their homes.<sup>7</sup>

In addition, the September air attack was meant as direct retaliation for the Americans' recent aerial bombing of the Japanese homeland, the 1942 "Doolittle Raid" on Tokyo.

On August 15, 1942, the huge (nearly 100 yards in length) *I-25* left Yokosuka, Japan and three weeks later lay off the Oregon Coast opposite Cape Blanco waiting for clear weather.<sup>8</sup> On the morning of September 9 the *I-25* crew readied Fujita's plane. The Yokosuka E14Y1 aircraft, nicknamed the "Glen" by U.S. forces, was designed to carry one pilot and one observer. The craft had wings that detached from the fuselage as well as other parts that could be disassembled. Aircraft historian William H. Langenberg described the thirty-three foot long plane:

[It] was powered by a 9 cylinder, 340-hp Haitachi Tempu radical engine that provided a maximum speed of about 150 mph, and a normal cruising speed of 85 mph. Constructed of a metal and wood airframe, with fabric-covered wing and tail surfaces, the aircraft weighted just 3,500 pounds, including the twin floats. With a wingspan of 36 feet, the Glen could remain airborne nearly five hours, giving it approximately a 200-mile operating radius.<sup>9</sup>

As described by author Bert Webber, the "engine was started for its warm-up while still inside the submarine's hanger. Following removal from the cylindrical hangar, the wings, fins, and floats were attached and the tail-plane unfolded. The airplane was catapulted by compressed air from a pair of launching rails on the submarine's fore

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deck.” Upon return, the pilot landed the plane in the ocean near the submarine, where the crew plucked it out of the water with a derrick, prepared it for another flight or stored the craft.<sup>10</sup>

Before dawn, Fujita and his observer, Shoji Okuda catapulted off submarine and the crew maneuvered it toward a rendezvous point. Guided by the beacon at Cape Blanco lighthouse, the two headed toward the Oregon coastline where they turned southeast, flying approximately fifty miles overland. “The sun was rising at this time...like a gigantic Chinese lantern”, Fujita recalled:

We flew at about 100 knots over the coastal mountains. The plane was a little above 2,500 meters...altitude after climbing through the coastal fog. Over heavily wooded area ...I yelled to Okuda through the voice tube, “The bombs are to be dropped here.” With my left hand I reached for the bomb-release knob and called to Okuda, “Ready—fire!” and I pulled the knob.

Nothing would disappoint me more than the bombs not exploding after being carried all the way from Japan. With this thought in mind, Okuda and I watched carefully. Moments later we saw the scattering of flickering fires through the trees....<sup>11</sup>

With his objective accomplished, Fujita added, “It gave me great satisfaction to get some revenge for the bombing of my homeland by Doolittle’s raiders. I felt that it partially evened the score.” Skimming the trees, Fujita and Okuda flew out over the water and successfully located their submarine surfaced several miles off the coast. The sub’s crew lifted them onto the deck, dismantled and stored the aircraft. Just as the I-25 submarine submerged, “one of the duty officers just leaving the deck sighted an enemy airplane coming out of the sun. It looked like a dive bomber.”<sup>12</sup> The submarine dove and was underwater when the first bomb hit, inflicting minor damage. Additional bombs missed the vessel.

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*U.S. Forest Service:*

*September 9, 1942*

An Aircraft Warning Service (AWS) lookout, Howard Gardner, stationed on Mt. Emily just north of Wheeler Ridge, heard Nabuo Fujita's aircraft overhead. Established by the War Department in 1942 following Pearl Harbor, the AWS functioned in the Pacific Northwest with considerable U.S. Forest Service support. Two-person teams staffed the lookouts in coastal and adjacent mountainous sections on a 24-hour basis, reporting any aircraft sighted or heard. Ranger Edward Marshall of the Chetco Ranger District logged the events of September 9-10, 1942:

6:24 A.M. A.W.S. Station, Gold 56 (Mt. Emily L.O.) reported the following flash message to the Gold Beach Relay station: 1 plane, type unknown flying low, seen east, 2 miles circling. Howard Gardner was the observer on duty at the time and Reta Ganong was relay operator on duty that forwarded the message to the Roseburg Filter center... When the plane first was sighted, its identity could not be determined due to the poor light of early morning and fog and rain clouds over the area.

12:20 P.M. Howard Gardner on Mt. Emily L.O. reported smoke to me in T 40 S R 12 W, Section 22. I called Snow Camp L.O. for cross shot. We assumed that the smoke was a sleeper lightning fire as we had had a lightning storm Southeast of this area the day before.

12:25 P.M. I dispatched Gardner to fire, with one man outfit, a distance of approximately 4 ½ miles cross-country, no trails.

12:57 P.M. Keith Johnson, Bear Wallow lookout, departed for fire with S radio and one man outfit. Distance, 8 ½ miles by trail. [two additional men were sent from Harbor].

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4:20 P.M. Johnson reported via "S" radio from ridge above fire that fire was started by bomb. I requested that he get more definite information on this and report back. Also not to disturb any evidence and to leave all evidence there until further notified. Fire under control.

5:40 P.M. Johnson radioed from fire that they had found pieces of steel bomb fragments and gave me more information on size of bomb crater, etc.

5:50 P.M. I called Roseburg Filter Center [Army Air Corps' regional intelligence-gathering center] and reported what we had found.

7:00 (approximate) Roseburg Filter Center called back for more information.

8:10 P.M. F.B.I. called from Portland for more information on fire and complete details of bomb.

8:15 I called Colvill [Assistant Forest Supervisor of the Siskiyou National Forest] at Long Ridge Lookout and notified him of incident.

*September 10, 1942*

10:30 A.M. Departed from Brookings.

11:40 began hike to fire.

1:40 P.M. Arrived at fire. Found Johnson completing mop up of snag. I took pictures of bomb fragments & crater. Colvill dug nose of bomb out of ground.

3:40 P.M. I radioed in to Gold Beach that we had found further evidence

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3:50 P.M. Colvill & I departed from fire. We decided that all evidence should be turned over to local Army post at Gold Beach for identification.<sup>13</sup>

*U.S. Military:*

*September 9, 1942*

1. 0600 PWT – ...enlisted man from the 174<sup>th</sup> Infantry who had just come off OP duty in the vicinity of BROOKINGS, OREGON reported seeing an unidentified plane come inland from the sea and hearing a plane head out to sea at about 0630 PWT. Due to poor visibility the description of the plane was not obtained except that the plane was reported to have square wing tips.

2. 0624 PWT- A Forest Service observer stationed on Mount Emily reported observing an unidentified float type seaplane flying from the west toward Bear Wallow, which is 6 1/2 miles east of

MOUNT EMILY...the plane circled BEAR WALLOW and came back toward the west passing south of MOUNT EMILY. The plane came in at elevation of 2721 feet and left at about 3000 feet altitude, was described as a single motor biplane with single float and small floats on wing tips. It appeared quite small, moved very slowly, had no lights, no distinguishable color, and no insignia.

3. 1053 PWT – The pilot of an A-29 on regular patrol duty reported sighting an unidentified submarine approximately 30 miles off CAPE BLANCO. When first sighted, the submarine was 7 miles away and was fully surfaced.... The sub started to submerge as the plane approached and at 1055 PWT plane dropped 2 bombs while sub was operating at periscope depth, followed by a third bomb 1 1/2 minutes later...



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4. 1220 PWT – A small fire was observed 3 miles southeast of Mount Emily and subsequent investigation by forest patrols who put out the fire disclosed a small bomb crater and fragments later positively identified by bomb experts as parts of a Japanese incendiary bomb of estimated 60 Kilogram size. Identification was principally established by measurements of fins, type of filler and Japanese ideographs on the nose, which was salvaged intact.

5. Upon checking with the 12<sup>th</sup> Naval District, the 13<sup>th</sup> Naval District, the Fourth Air Force, the Fourth Fighter Command, the C.A.A. and the Fourth Ground Air Support command, it was definitely determined that no Army, Navy, marine, civilian or Forest Service planes were in the BROOKINGS area ...at the time in question.

CONCLUSION: It is definitely concluded that a single float type plane released from a Japanese submarine, probably of the I-5 type, at some time shortly prior to 624 PWT 9 September, dropped a 132 pound bomb of incendiary character in the heavily wooded

area southeast of MOUNT EMILY...for the purpose of starting forest fires. It is further concluded that enemy knowledge of our coast dispositions, probably also of RADAR positions is detailed and thorough.<sup>14</sup>

*Japanese Imperial Navy*

After narrowly escaping destruction by the American bombing on September 9, the I-25 submarine lay deep in the ocean, running “submerged during the day and [surfacing] at night to recharge our batteries and search for targets.”<sup>15</sup> Although a second flight was not originally planned, Fujita and Okuda readied for an additional flight over Oregon, intending to drop two more incendiary bombs. Fujita recalled,

We surfaced on September 29 about 50 miles west of Cape Blanco and assembled and armed the plane. Okuda and I took off in the

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dark, flew inland for about half an hour, and dropped our bombs....  
We thought we saw the explosions of red fire in the forest.<sup>16</sup>

After some difficulty locating the I-25 submarine on the return trip out to sea, Fujita and Okuda landed, were brought aboard and reported a successful mission.

*U.S. Forest Service*

L.H. Douglas, USFS Control/Suppression Portland Oregon September 29, 1942 sent a confidential wire to the Chief of the Forest Service in Washington D.C.

Another enemy incendiary bomb fire started Siskiyou Sec. 27 T 32 South, R. 14 W about 5:30 this morning. Possibly others. No real difficulty expected to control except for inaccessibility. Army and FBI informed.

On the Siskiyou National Forest, H.C. Obye, Forest Supervisor, logged events:

At 5:22 a.m. Sept. 29, Mr. L.S. Giebner, A.W.S. observer on Grassy Knob Lookout station reported to the relay operator at Gold Beach an airplane coming inland from the ocean.

Grassy Knob Lookout is located 7 miles due east of the Pacific Ocean in the vicinity of Port Orford, Oregon, in Section 32, Township 32 South, Range 14 West...

At 5:33 the lookout observer reported the plane going back toward the ocean. Between 5:22 and 5:23 observer Giebner stated that he stepped outside the lookout house and saw a large flash of light in a northeasterly direction, and in an estimated 6 to 10 seconds heard the report of an explosion. He estimated the flash originated 8 miles from the lookout station.

On Grassy Knob at the time this incident occurred were two AWS observers, three carpenters, and four members of a suppression crew, all employees of the Forest Service. All of these men heard the plane; all but one saw the flash; and all heard the explosion. ..

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At daylight or about 7:15 Mr. Giebner sighted a smoke in the direction from which the flash was seen...Reporting of the smoke was withheld until all nine of the men on the lookout agreed that what they saw was smoke and that it was in the Dry Creek Canyon. The smoke was reported to Gold Beach Ranger Station at 7:35....

The smoke seen was described as small, bluish blanket and was observed from the time it was first sighted at 7:15 a.m. until about 10:a.m. when it appeared to settle down behind the obstructing ridge... It was not seen by anyone after that time....

We made what we consider a reasonable search of the area for any existing fire or fragments of a bomb but nothing has been found....<sup>17</sup>

Reporting on the September 9 and 29 bombings and noting that the U.S military had not made news of the second attack public before November 20, 1942, the author of a US Forest Service fire control report wrote:

The enemy's object in dropping these single bombs can only be surmised. The first bomb was of the explosive incendiary type and probably the second was the same type...Certainly conditions generally were favorable at the time, as well as earlier and later, to set the forests on fire....<sup>18</sup>

A number of newspapers nationwide carried a report of the September 9, incident, including the *Seattle Post-Intelligencer* and the *New York Times*. Southwest Oregon newspaper coverage of the September 9 bombing was broad and not without controversy. The entire front page of the *Grants Pass Courier* – its reporters had “scooped” the story—of September 15, 1942, was devoted to photos and articles related to the bombing. Columns devoted to the story included a brief U.S. Army communiqué on the incident, in which military representatives tersely announced that “an incendiary bomb had dropped from a naval seaplane which possibly operated from a Japanese submarine—a submarine which later was bombed by an army patrol plane.”<sup>19</sup>

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Additional articles described the initial attack and the U.S. Army Air Patrol's bombing of the Japanese submarine. Photographs depicted both bomb fragments and investigating U.S. Forest Service personnel. In an article headlined "JAP DROPS BOMB 40 MILES FROM GP", the *Courier* reported that "the first aerial attack on the continental United States fizzled harmlessly into a fog-shrouded Oregon forest only 40 air-line miles from Grants Pass Wednesday morning".

Another article, datelined San Francisco, announced that the three-foot wide, one foot deep crater, "apparently caused by an incendiary bomb, gave evidence today of what may have been the first aerial assault upon United States home soil, an apparent attempt to set fire to an isolated forest on the southern Oregon coast..."<sup>20</sup> In Japan, the press treated Fujita's raid on the Pacific Coast as heroic. A front page article in the *Asahi* newspaper's edition of September 17, 1942 read: "Incendiary Bomb Dropped on Oregon State. First Air Raid on Mainland America. Big Shock to Americans".<sup>21</sup>

The *Courier's* coverage of the September 9 bombing drew immediate criticism from U.S. defense officials:

The state defense council ordered all counties today to organize and train bomb reconnaissance agents immediately so that they may take charge at the scenes of future enemy bombing attacks on Oregon.

James D. Olson, assistant state defense coordinator, said these agents must prevent persons from taking or photographing fragments of enemy bombs, such as occurred Sept. 9 when a Japanese bomb fell in a Curry county forest.<sup>22</sup>

The *Courier* editor defended the newspaper's actions:

An investigation of the circumstances will disclose... that the *Courier* was authoritatively informed of the bombing early Friday morning and that a *Courier* photographer accredited by the western defense command took pictures of the bomb fragments, which were distributed by five national photo syndicates.

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Neither this story nor the exclusive pictures were released by the Courier or by news and photographic agencies which it supplied until they had been approved for release by the western defense command...<sup>23</sup>

More controversy erupted as the Army criticized the Forest Service for its handling of the bombing investigation. In January 1943, Forest Service official Leslie Colvill sent a memorandum to Edward Marshall, Chetco District Ranger, describing the Army's public depiction of the Forest Service's actions as incompetent, citing reports by a sergeant stationed at Brookings, Oregon. "The sergeant said we used a party tel. here to transmit the information," Colvill wrote,

... That he heard you and I discussing how we were going to divide the loot (bomb fragments), that he accompanied you to Gold Beach for the purpose of making sure you delivered the fragments to the officer there. That when he arrived at the scene of the bombing the area was all trampled and the crater filled with tin cans, lunch

refuse etc. All in all it sounded plenty bad... Also the Report stated that the first report of the plane was made by an OP operator at Brookings and relayed from there to the Filter Board at Roseburg at 6 AM...

"The Army," Colvill told Marshall, "is determined to shift the blame for inadequate action on their part to someone else and I plan to make it my job to see that it is not us."<sup>24</sup> Indignant, Ranger Marshall defended the Forest Service's actions, rebutting the Army's claim to having seen Fujita's incoming plane with information that residents of Brookings had heard the plane but that no one there could see it due to heavy fog. He told Colvill:

So far as I know the Army did not reach the bomb crater until sometime Sept. 11. As you recall, Sgt. Fritz and 3 other Army men met us on the way out from the area and helped carry out the fragments. They did not go back that day as it was late when we got out.

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As for the Army guarding the bomb fragments, that was about the last thing they did. When I turned it over to Lt. Kane, he spread it out on the floor at the camp.... In fact, I know that several of the Army boys did take pieces of the bomb.<sup>25</sup>

After the investigative teams finished their examinations of the site, Wheeler Ridge fell silent. The rough trail flagged into the site disappeared and the forest surrounding the bombing site closed in with new growth.

Although Fujita's flight had tremendous propaganda value to the Japanese, by most accounts, the Japanese Imperial Navy's mission had failed to accomplish its goal – "one bomb detonated, and due to unseasonable rains and alert Forest Service lookouts, resulting small fire easily extinguished. – 20 days later Fujita dropped two additional bombs... these were duds and were never found."<sup>26</sup> While the bombing of Wheeler Ridge had little physical effect on the forest, the enemy's ability to penetrate the coast line worried civilians and the military. Airplanes were flown from McChord Field at Tacoma, Washington to Moon Island off the Washington coast and pilots patrolled for targets. FBI agents scoured southwest Oregon mountains for lakes on which they believed the Japanese might land small float planes in preparation for an attack. According to historian Langenberg, the Japanese did not repeat air raids from submarines because "aircraft-carrying submarines gradually disappeared into the increasing category of obsolete weapons."<sup>27</sup>

World War II continued for two and one-half more years after the attack on the American mainland. While Fujita's bombings of Wheeler Ridge and Grassy Knob remained the only attacks on the continental United States by plane, Japanese balloon bomb attacks occurred in the Pacific Northwest. Examples of notable incidents were the February 15, 1945 explosion north of Prosser, Washington and the fatal explosion of another balloon bomb on May 5, 1945 near Bly, Oregon. In the latter incident, six local residents—two adults and four children—died at the scene, the site of the only fatalities caused by enemy attack in the continental United States during World War II.<sup>28</sup>

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*Memory*

**1962**

Nabuo Fujita's bombing of Wheeler Ridge on September 9, 1941 and his subsequent run over the forest two weeks later has, until September 11, 2001, maintained a record in military history as the only attacks on the continental United States by manned aircraft. With the close of World War II, these flights, along with other events of the war, became part of military history. For thirty years after Fujita's strikes, the Wheeler Ridge Bombing Site drew little or no public attention. Contributing to its low profile were at least two factors: its remote location and the fact that no deaths had occurred as a result of the attack—a result that, had it happened, would probably have increased attention to the site.

In 1962 circumstances focused new interest on the site, and from then on the site gradually acquired additional symbolic value as a place of peace. As historian Derek Hoff has written in "Igniting Memory: Commemoration of the 1942 Japanese Bombing of Southern Oregon 1962-1998," "the...bombing, and more precisely commemoration of it, became a unique vehicle through which former enemies became friends."<sup>29</sup>

In order to boost tourism during the town's 1962 Azalea Festival, Douglas Peterson, president of the Brookings Oregon Junior Chamber of Commerce (Jaycees), devised a plan to sponsor a visit to the celebration by the pilot who had bombed Wheeler Ridge. Historian Hoff notes that Japanese officials were wary of the town's motives. "Before they would provide Fujita's address, six representatives from the Japanese Consulate in Portland visited Brookings, apparently convinced that the town wanted to try Fujita as a war criminal."<sup>30</sup> The visit, however, convinced them otherwise, and the pilot's address was released.

Fujita, who after the war had opened a metal products business and raised a family in Tokyo—the mission's observer Shoji Okuda had lost his life in the Philippines during the war—accepted the invitation to Brookings, later recalling that he thought Brookings residents might beat him. Still he said, "It would have been impolite to refuse the invitation." With the pilot's acceptance, the Brookings Jaycees began a private fund-raising effort to bring Fujita and his family to Oregon. Anticipating vociferous local

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opposition to the idea, they also contacted a number of agencies and officials, including the U.S. Information Agency, the U.S. State Department, and the American ambassador to Japan. The State Department representative held that "There can be no overestimating the extent to which direct, people-to-people projects of this kind have been a positive force for greater international understanding."<sup>31</sup>

A number of Brookings residents objected vehemently to the Jaycee's project, arguing that the plan would celebrate a former enemy. Many of those opposing the plan were veterans. As Hoff points out, "41 percent of the Curry County male population over age 14 had served in the nation's armed forces during wartime" and twenty years had not lessened their memories or their "strong anti-Japanese sentiments...." Anonymous hecklers leveled death threats against Jaycees president Peterson, while others who knew him boycotted his business.<sup>32</sup> Protestors tried to block the visit with letters to the editor of the local newspaper, and on one occasion ran a full-page petition against Fujita's trip to Brookings. At the same time, influential individuals wrote in support of the project, including President Kennedy and Oregon Governor Hatfield.<sup>33</sup>

As the crisis developed over the visit, the Jaycees responded to protestors by citing not only the benefits to tourism, but the "promotion of international understanding." The organization emphasized their creed that "the brotherhood of man transcends the sovereignty of nations." In late May 1962, Nabuo Fujita and his family arrived in Brookings, where he served as honorary grand marshal of the Azalea Festival and flew over the forest he had bombed two decades before. Near the end of his visit he presented the city of Brookings with his family's 400-year-old samurai sword, a talisman he had carried in the cockpit of his plane throughout the war. "It is in the finest of samurai traditions to pledge peace and friendship by submitting the sword to a former enemy," Fujita commented on his gesture.<sup>34</sup> By the time his week's visit came to a close, Fujita's "transformation into an ally was inchoate, but [he] was no longer an enemy."

## 1972

Over the next decade, both the Wheeler Ridge Japanese Bombing Site and Fujita's 1962 visit faded in memory but were not forgotten. The pilot maintained personal relationships with some Brookings residents, and entertained Oregon travelers in Japan. The community displayed Fujita's sword publicly, first at a local bank and later at the



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city hall. In 1970, the president of the Brookings Chamber of Commerce contacted the U.S. Forest Service about locating and marking the Wheeler Ridge site on the Siskiyou National Forest, but no action was taken on this initial proposal.

On August 15, 1972 the Chetco Ranger District of the Siskiyou National Forest issued a press release stating, "On August 10, 1972 a successful search was conducted for the site of the Japanese bomb that was dropped on Wheeler Ridge, approximately four air miles southeast of Mt. Emily, nearly thirty years ago."<sup>35</sup> In a search party organized by photojournalist Bert Webber of Medford, Oregon, and operating under the supervision of the Forest Service, several individuals used photographs taken soon after the attack and old blaze marks to find the site, including: "Russell Kahre, Chetco District Ranger; Gus Nichols, Resource Assistant; Jack Valentine, Forestry Technician; Les L. Colvill retired Forester of Portland, Oregon; Mr. Colvill's 14 year old grandson, Les R. Colvill; Ed Waldrop, retired U.S. Army Officer of Bandon, Oregon; and Bert Webber..." Colvill, the announcement read, had been assistant Forest Supervisor and Waldrop the commanding officer of G Company, 174<sup>th</sup> Infantry, U.S. Army, the day the bomb fell. The group located the bomb site on a bench in "broken, steep and brushy" country.

The rediscovery of the Wheeler Ridge Japanese Bombing site generated interest in a historical marker, and Webber encouraged the Siskiyou National Forest to develop a trail and to erect an appropriate monument. Although the Forest Service completed a trail to the site in 1973, momentum to construct the marker gradually waned due to the expense involved and the relocation and retirements of interested Forest Service personnel.<sup>36</sup>

In 1975, the Forest Service marked the trail to the bombing site and erected a simple wooden sign, thereby introducing the first interpretive marking of the location. The sign announced:

JAPANESE BOMBSITE  
ONLY JAPANESE BOMB DROPPED ON THE  
CONTINENTAL U.S. DURING WORLD WAR II  
September 9, 1942<sup>37</sup>

Fujita's son visited the Wheeler Ridge site in June 1975 and enjoyed a tour around Oregon hosted by Webber, who had recently published a book about Japanese

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attacks on the West Coast during World War II. In the ensuing decade, the site again received little publicity or visitation. Its place in memory was revived however in 1982, when the Siskiyou National Forest replaced the original sign with a new one, with corrected text reading:

JAPANESE BOMBSITE  
DROP SITE OF ONE OF FOUR BOMBS DROPPED  
ON THE CONTINENTAL UNITED STATES BY  
SUBMARINE-LAUNCHED AIRCRAFT DURING W.W. II  
SEPTEMBER 9, 1942.<sup>38</sup>

**1985**

In October, 1984 Fujita invited three Brookings high school students on a visit to Japan as his guests. Arriving in July 1985, the three were warmly greeted, attending a science fair and touring Fujita's factory. Like their host's visit to Brookings in 1962, the students' visit to Japan garnered extensive publicity and attention from national figures. President Reagan wrote the Brookings Chamber of Commerce president who accompanied the young women to Japan, indicating that "he was moved by the story, fascinated by Fujita's place in aviation history, and convinced that the event might nominally help trade relations with Japan."<sup>39</sup> News journalist Dan Rather covered the story on his "CBS Evening News" report. As Derek Hoff has noted,

The student visit to Japan was the key turning point in the transformation from enemies to friends...His remarkable gesture of honoring his promise, despite a business failure, was not lost on the town.<sup>40</sup>

As it turned out, although Fujita at the time credited the students' visit with helping end the war for him, his friendship with Brookings had just begun.

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1990/1992

In 1990, Fujita instigated his second visit to Brookings, where he again served as grand marshal for the Azalea Festival. Although a few veterans protested the second visit in writing, citing bitter war experiences, there was little of the animosity evident in 1962. Pilot Fujita donated \$1,000 from his employees "for the children of Brookings", and visited again with his young guests of five years prior.

In 1992 Nabuo Fujita came back to Brookings for the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of his World War II mission, and went to Wheeler Ridge to plant a redwood seedling in the place where his bomb had started a fire. According to Derek Hoff, "In a short statement read in front of Brookings officials, Forest Service personnel, and family members, Fujita said that he had been tormented for years because he had tried to damage the forest. 'So this is the finest day of my life,' he concluded. The tree-planting ceremony encouraged new attention to the bombing site. The Forest Service cleaned up the site for Fujita's visit and the following year added an interpretive display board concerning the story.

1995

In 1994 the community of Brookings again invited Fujita to visit, especially to attend the dedication ceremony of a new state historical marker about the 1942 bombing, located near U.S. Highway 101. Ill health forced Fujita to decline the invitation. The ex-pilot's message for the event read in part, "The [bomb]site reflects another folly in war, but what's elating is that [the bombing] has become a symbol of peace between the U.S. and Japan."<sup>41</sup>

In 1995, Fujita returned to Brookings for his last visit. In his honor, the sword he had donated was mounted in a specially made wood case in the new community library. At a ceremony at the bomb site on May 29, 1995, a forest ranger read Fujita's speech – the elderly man was unable to hike in, but was flown over the site. The former pilot's speech said in part:

...this site has become to me the fondest symbol of friendship and peace, the friendship between the people of Brookings and myself,

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and the transpacific peace between the US and Japan. ..It is precisely 50 long years after the war ended across the Pacific Ocean. I offer my deepest prayers now for the repose of all those who had died in the war, but I pray too for this commemorative tree of friendship and peace to live through the hundreds of years to come and grow into the tallest reflection of our mutual pledge for friendship and peace....<sup>42</sup>

Later that year, the Forest Service, with the Brookings Chamber of Commerce and other groups, devised a self-guided tour beginning at the highway marker and ending at the trailhead to the bombsite. The accompanying brochure terms the location "one of the most unique historical sites in the United States."<sup>43</sup>

### 1997

Nabuo Fujita died September 27, 1997 at the age of 85 years. National periodicals *People* and *Time* magazines noted his passing. The *New York Times* stated:

Mr. Fujita, whose incendiary bombs set off forest fires in Oregon's coastal range, played the key role in a quixotic plan by Japanese military commanders to put pressure on America's home turf in World War II.<sup>44</sup>

In the fall of 1998, a year after Fujita's death, his daughter, Yoriko Asakura flew from Portland to Brookings where she scattered some of her father's ashes at the Wheeler Ridge site. One month earlier, on September 9, 1998 several of Fujita's contemporaries from the Japanese Naval Academy visited southwest Oregon where they "retraced the history of Fujita, at the library, the bomb site trail and Camp Blanco Lighthouse." Following a Forest Service-sponsored tour to the site, the group donated about \$1,000 to its maintenance.<sup>45</sup>

### 2001

In the spring of 2001 the State of Oregon gave Nabuo Fujita's young redwood special designation. "The bomb-site sequoia tree hidden in the mountains near

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Brookings,” declared the Portland Oregonian, “is the smallest to be named an Oregon Heritage Tree, but it carries a tremendous symbol: peace.” The report continued:

The tree sits on the spot where an enemy pilot dropped the first aerial bomb on the continental United States on Sept. 9, 1942. The bomb was an effort to set the forest on fire, divert wartime resources and panic Americans during World War II. The Japanese pilot who dropped the bomb, and three other bombs on the South Coast, planted the sequoia tree in 1992 as a symbol of peace between the two nations.

Today the State of Oregon will recognize the site by dedicating the 8 foot tall sequoia as an Oregon Heritage Tree in memory of the historic bombing and resulting peace and friendship....<sup>46</sup>

Over a period of forty years, from 1962 until the opening of the new century, the persistent efforts of Nabuo Fujita and an increasingly receptive community led to the transformation of the remote Wheeler Ridge Japanese Bombing Site from a place that represented fear and resentment to a location that symbolized the values of peace and accord. The site’s significance as an enduring commemorative place increased through the decades with visits from the American and Japanese public. Gradually, memories of the war faded, and cultural expressions of peace took their place. As Derek Hoff notes, “Fujita’s four visits to Brookings and other commemorative activities produced a new text of the 1942 bombing, a mixture of new memories and older memories of the original attack...Fujita and Brookings had successfully infused the bombing with a message of international friendship”. The grace that infused Fujita’s apologies and the community’s gradual acceptance of him as ally rather than enemy is tangibly expressed on Wheeler Ridge.

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<sup>1</sup> James Hamrick to Jack E. Williams, Rogue River-Siskiyou National Forests, January 4, 2002.

<sup>2</sup> Jeff LaLande, Report on an Archaeological Survey of the Wheeler Ridge 1942 Japanese Aerial-Bombing Site, Rogue River-Siskiyou National Forest.

<sup>3</sup> Rogue River-Siskiyou National Forest, Application for Federal Assistance, USDI National Park Service American Battlefield Protection Program 2002.

<sup>4</sup> Spector, Ronald H. *The Eagle Against the Sun: The American War With Japan*. New York: Macmillan, 1985.

<sup>5</sup> James Frankland, U.S. Forest Service Supervision, Aircraft Warning Service, June 1, 1942, on file, Rogue River-Siskiyou National Forest, Gold Beach Ranger Station, Gary Martinek, Cultural Resource Technician.

<sup>6</sup> Webber, Bert and Margie Webber. *Fujita Flying Samurai: His Aerial Bombing of the Continental United States in World War II – Documentary*, Medford, Oregon: Webb Research Group Publishers, 2000, pp. 21; 23.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 27.

<sup>8</sup> William H. Langenberg, "Japan Bombed the West Coast in Return for Doolittle's Payback Raid on Tokyo" *Aviation* July 1993, p. 66.

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid*, p. 16.

<sup>10</sup> Webber, p. 21.

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid*, p. 32. Fujita dropped two bombs on September 9. The second bomb was never found (Webber, *Retaliation*, p. 75).

<sup>12</sup> Webber, pp. 32; 35.

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<sup>13</sup> USFS Siskiyou National Forest, Chetco Ranger District, Ranger Ed Marshall to Forest Supervisor, September 12, 1942, on file Rogue River-Siskiyou National Forest Supervisor's Office, Medford, Oregon.

<sup>14</sup> Record Group 499 Western Defense G2 Files Box 31 290-38-17-5 WTC G2 Summaries No's 95, 96, 97 and 103; Box 32 Files 290-38-17-5 Quarterly Intelligence Summaries Nov. 15, 1942. vol. 3-570; G-2 Summary No. 97 Military (Secret) Headquarters Western Defense Command and Fourth Army Presidio of San Francisco, California 11 September 1942-14 September 1942, National Archives and Records Administration, Washington D.C.

<sup>15</sup> Webber, pp. 37-39.

<sup>16</sup> Webber, p. 39.

<sup>17</sup> H.C. Obye, Forest Supervisor, Siskiyou National Forest, October 5, 1942, on file, Rogue River-Siskiyou National Forest Supervisor's Office, Medford, Oregon.

<sup>18</sup> USDA Forest Service November 20, 1942, "Region 6 Narrative Report & Appendix 1942" and "Fire Control Report-Region 6 - 1942, on file Rogue River-Siskiyou National Forest Supervisor's Office, Medford, Oregon.

<sup>19</sup> Bert Webber, *Retaliation: Japanese Attacks and Allied Countermeasures on the Pacific Coast in World War II*, Corvallis, Oregon: Oregon State University Press, 1976, p. 76; *Grants Pass Daily Courier* September 15, 1942, p. 1. Clipping on file, Rogue River-Siskiyou National Forest Supervisor's Office, Medford, Oregon.

<sup>20</sup> *Grants Pass Daily Courier*, September 15, 1942, p. 1 ff. Clipping on file, Rogue River-Siskiyou National Forest Supervisor's Office, Medford, Oregon.

<sup>21</sup> *New York Times*, October 3, 1997. Clipping on file Rogue River-Siskiyou National Forest Supervisor's Office, Medford, Oregon.

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<sup>22</sup> *Grants Pass Daily Courier*, September 18, 1942. Clipping on file Rogue River-Siskiyou National Forest Supervisor's Office, Medford, Oregon.

<sup>23</sup> *Grants Pass Daily Courier*, September 18, 1942. Clipping on file, Rogue River-Siskiyou National Forest Supervisor's Office, Medford, Oregon.

<sup>24</sup> Memorandum, Forester Leslie L. Colvill to Edward Marshal, Chetco District Ranger. January 19, 1943, on file, Rogue River-Siskiyou National Forest Supervisor's Office, Medford, Oregon.

<sup>25</sup> Memorandum, Marshall to Colvill, January 23, 1943. Apparently relations smoothed out sufficiently between the two organizations. At the request of Forester Colvill, the bomb fragments were returned to the Siskiyou National Forest for display in their historical collection. (Leslie L. Covill, Forester, to Major Frank M. McGrath, Portland Branch, G2 Western Defense Command and Fourth Army, December 26, 1942; May 5, 1944, fragments returned to Forest by War Department, Ninth Service Command, Portland Branch Office, Portland, Oregon, on file Rogue River-Siskiyou National Forest Supervisor's Office, Medford, Oregon.

<sup>26</sup> Derek Hoff, "Igniting Memory: Commemoration of the 1942 Japanese Bombing of Southern Oregon, 1962-1998," *The Public Historian*, Vol. 21, No. 2 (Spring 1999) p. 66.

<sup>27</sup> Langenberg, p. 68.

<sup>28</sup> Rodgers, Mary Ellen, "Mitchell Monument", Nomination to the National Register of Historic Places, July 31, 2001, on file, Oregon State Historic Preservation Office, Salem, Oregon.

<sup>29</sup> Hoff, p. 66.

<sup>30</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 67



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<sup>31</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 69

<sup>32</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 68.

<sup>33</sup> *Ibid.* p. 70

<sup>34</sup> *Ibid.* p. 70; Fujita's statement was published in *Time* magazine, May 25, 1962. In his study of the commemorative aspects of the Wheeler Ridge Japanese Bombing Site, Derek Hoff quotes Fujita's daughter, who claimed that her father "had decided to carry the sword so that if necessary he could appease their fury by committing ritual suicide, disemboweling himself with the sword in the traditional Japanese method known as seppuku"; *New York Times*, 3 October 1997, p. C-20.

<sup>35</sup> Siskiyou National Forest, Chetco Ranger District, Brookings, Press Release, For Immediate Release: Historical Search August 15, 1972.; Webber, *Fujita Flying Samurai: His Aerial Bombing of the Continental United States in World War II – Documentary* Medford, Oregon: Webb Research Group Publishers, 2000, p. 116.

<sup>36</sup> Hoff, pp. 73-74.

<sup>37</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 75

<sup>38</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 76

<sup>39</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>40</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 77.

<sup>41</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>42</sup> Fujita's speech on file, Siskiyou National Forest, Gold Beach Ranger Station, Gary Martinek, Cultural Resources Technician.

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**Section Number: 8 Page: 27** Wheeler Ridge Japanese Bombing Site, Curry County, Oregon

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<sup>43</sup> Hoff, p. 80

<sup>44</sup> *New York Times*, October 3, 1997, p. C 20

<sup>45</sup> Unidentified news clipping, October 11, 1998, Curry Coastal Pilot, 9/16/98 B 5. On file, Rogue River-Siskiyou National Forest Supervisor's Office, Medford, Oregon.

<sup>46</sup> *Portland Oregonian*, April 7, 2001.

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Wheeler Ridge Bombing Site  
Name of Property

Curry, Oregon  
County and State

## 10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property less than one acre

### UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet)

1 10 408080 4658850  
Zone Easting Northing

2 \_\_\_\_\_

3 \_\_\_\_\_  
Zone Easting Northing

4 \_\_\_\_\_

### 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 Kay Atwood

organization \_\_\_\_\_ date September 10, 2004

street & number 365 Holly St. telephone 541-482-8714

city or town Ashland state OR zip code 97520

## 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

name USDA Forest Service, Rogue River-Siskiyou National Forest

street & number PO Box 520 telephone 541-858-2200

city or town Medford state OR zip code 97501

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 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, PO Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Project (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

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**Section Number: 10 Page: 1 Wheeler Ridge Japanese Bombing Site, Curry County, Oregon**

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A photocopied section of the USGS map of the Fourth of July Creek, Oregon quadrangle is included within this nomination document.

**Boundary Description**

The Wheeler Ridge Japanese Bombing Site is situated on National Forest land in the northwest quarter of the northwest quarter of Section 22, Township 40 South, Range 12 West, W.M., in Curry County, Oregon. The site is further identified on USGS map Fourth of July Creek, Oregon Quadrangle, 7.5 minute series.

For purposes of this nomination, the property may be further described as a circular parcel measuring approximately 200 feet (horizontal distance) in diameter, whose outer boundary is determined by horizontally measuring approximately 100 feet in radius from the site datum (a metal reinforcing bar driven into the ground next to the access trail) to encompass the bombing drop site, major veteran trees, trail entrance to the site and interpretive signage. The acreage of the 100'-radius circle that includes the major natural and manmade features of the site consists of 0.72 acres, more or less, on the south slope of Wheeler Ridge.

**Boundary Justification**

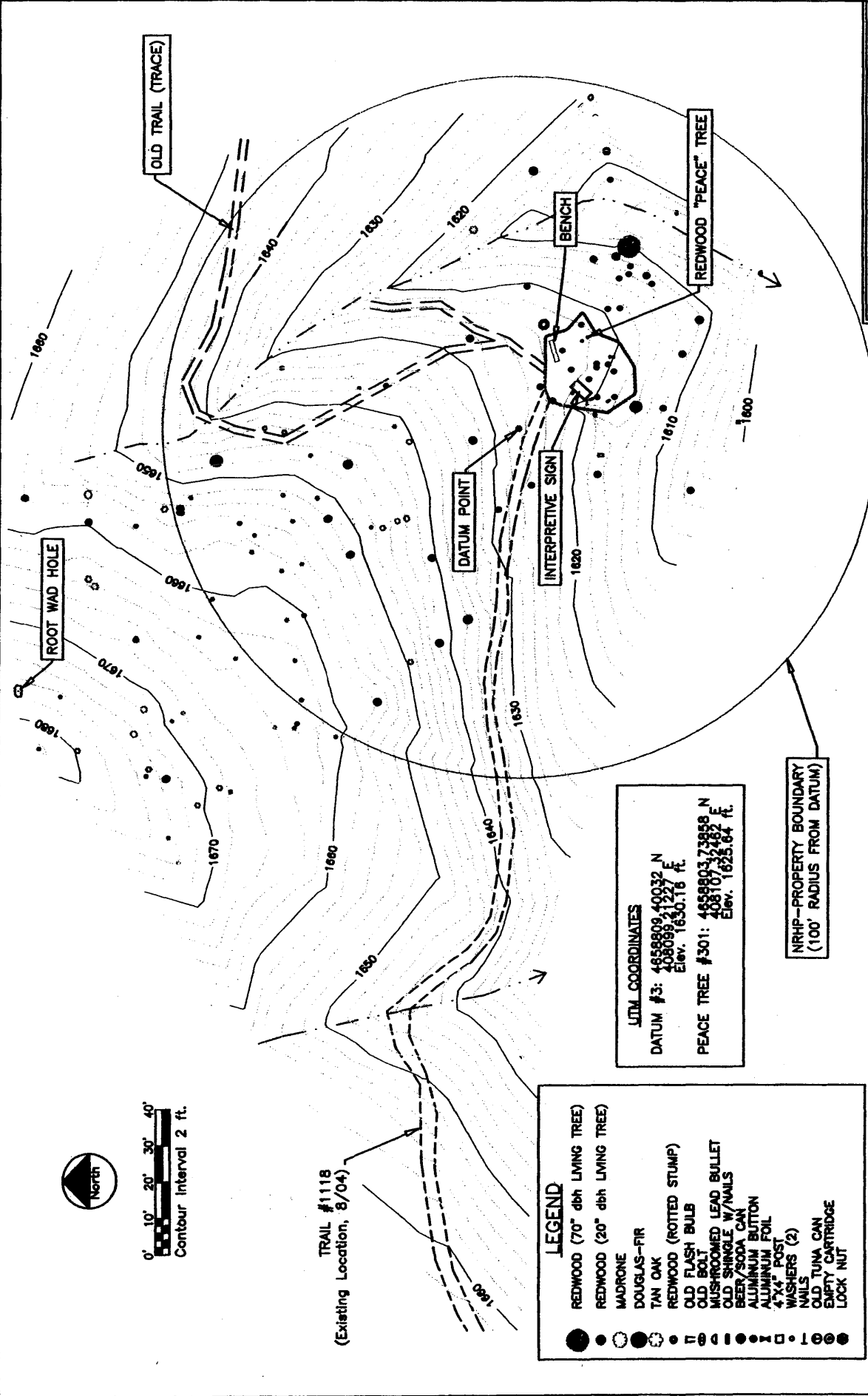
The boundary includes the area of Wheeler Ridge immediately encompassing the Japanese Bombing Site, including the bombing drop site, major veteran trees, all of the items (none of them bomb fragments) recovered from the 2004 archaeological survey, the trail entrance to the site, and interpretive signage within the 200-foot diameter circle centered at the site datum. This area has historically been part of the Wheeler Ridge Japanese Bombing Site, and the boundary defines a discrete, visually identifiable area associated with military events of World War II and with subsequent commemorative activities that have constituted a major human activity.





0' 10' 20' 30' 40'  
Contour Interval 2 ft.

TRAIL #1118  
(Existing Location, 8/04)



**LEGEND**

●	REDWOOD (70" dbh LIVING TREE)
○	REDWOOD (20" dbh LIVING TREE)
◐	MADRONE
◑	DOUGLAS-FIR
○	TAN OAK
◐	REDWOOD (ROTTED STUMP)
○	OLD FLASH BULB
○	OLD BOLT
○	MUSHROOMED LEAD BULLET
○	OLD SHINGLE W/NAILS
○	BEER/SODA CAN
○	ALUMINUM BUTTON
○	ALUMINUM FOIL
○	4"x4" POST
○	WASHERS (2)
○	NAILS
○	OLD TUNA CAN
○	EMPTY CARTRIDGE
○	LOCK NUT

**UTM COORDINATES**  
 DATUM #3: 4858809.40032 N  
 408099.2227 E  
 Elev. 1630.16 ft.  
 PEACE TREE #301: 4858803.73858 N  
 408107.2482 E  
 Elev. 1625.64 ft.

NRHP-PROPERTY BOUNDARY  
(100' RADIUS FROM DATUM)

SURVEYED UTILIZING A LEICA TCR 703 ELECTRONIC TOTAL STATION ON JUNE 7-8, 2004.

**SURVEY CREW:**  
 STEPHAN BAROTT  
 JEFF LALANDE  
 GARY MARTINEK  
 JEN HERBAGE  
 PETER UHEREK  
 MARIE KRAJCOCHVILOVA  
 VIC HARRIS

**DRAFTSMEN:**  
 ROBERT BAKER  
 ANDREW HILLMAN

REGISTERED  
 PROFESSIONAL  
 LAND SURVEYOR  
*Stephan Barott*  
 OREGON  
 STEPHAN L. BAROTT  
 2332

WHEELER RIDGE  
 JAPANESE BOMBING SITE  
 T.40S., R.12W., Sec. 12, W.M.  
 CHETCO RANGER DISTRICT  
 ROGUE RIVER-SISKIYOU NATIONAL FOREST  
 PROJECT NO. 2004-16

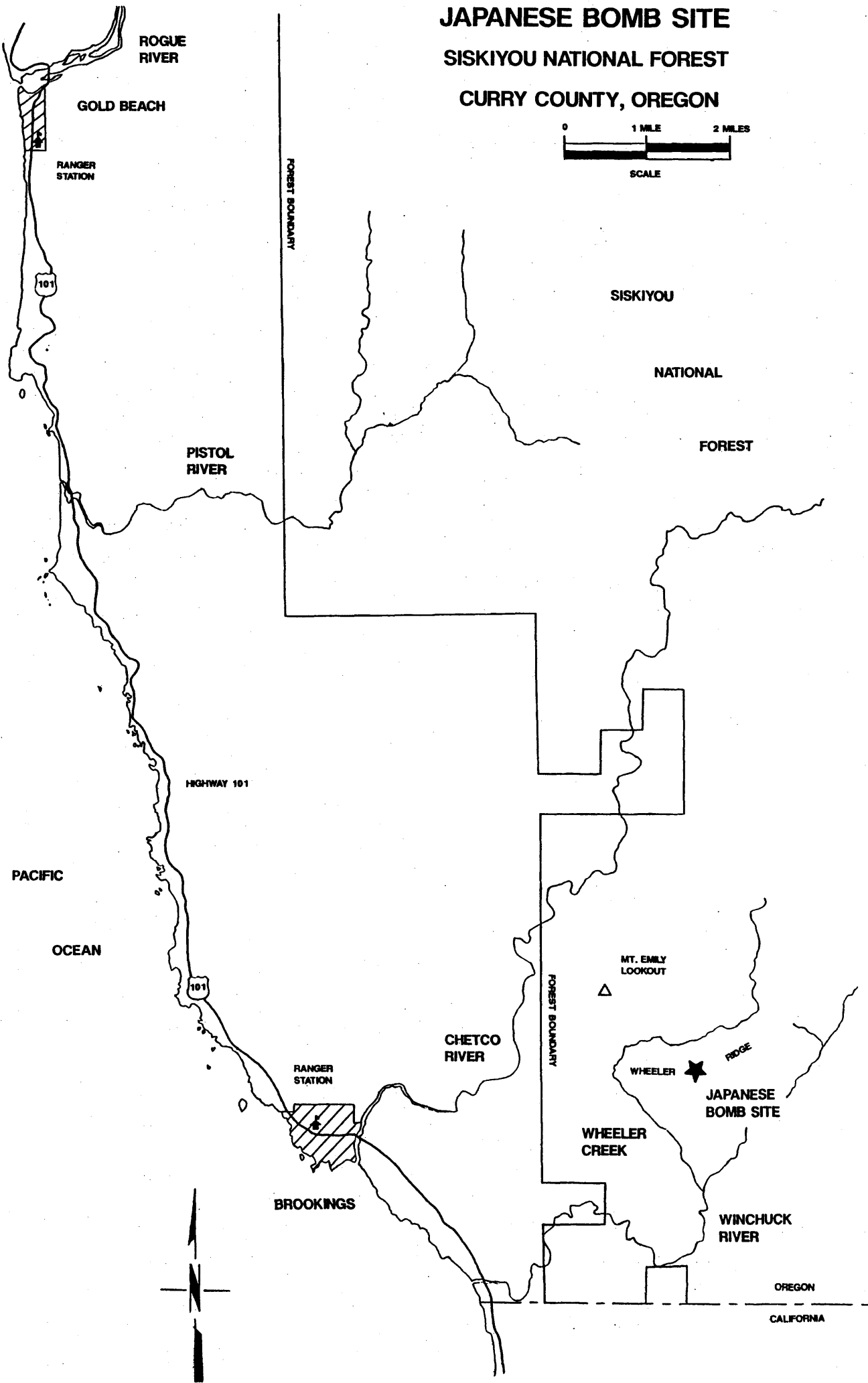
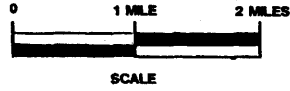
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 REVISION BY: \_\_\_\_\_ DATE: \_\_\_\_\_

RENEWAL 12/31/05

# JAPANESE BOMB SITE

SISKIYOU NATIONAL FOREST

CURRY COUNTY, OREGON



WHEELER RIDGE/JAPANESE BOMBSITE PROJECT

VICINITY MAP

JAPANESE BOMBSITE

NORTH

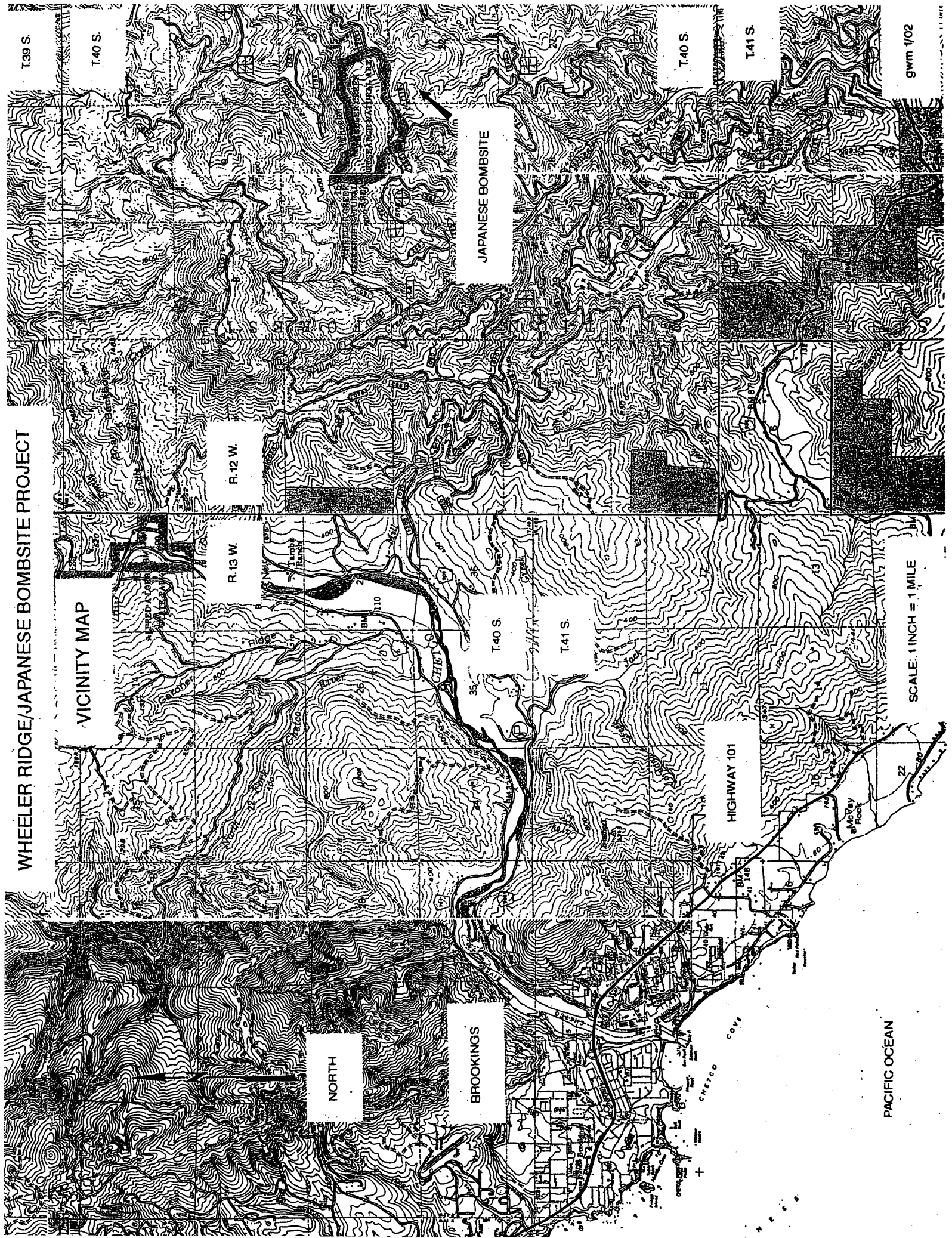
BROOKINGS

HIGHWAY 101

PACIFIC OCEAN

SCALE: 1 INCH = 1 MILE

gwm 1/02

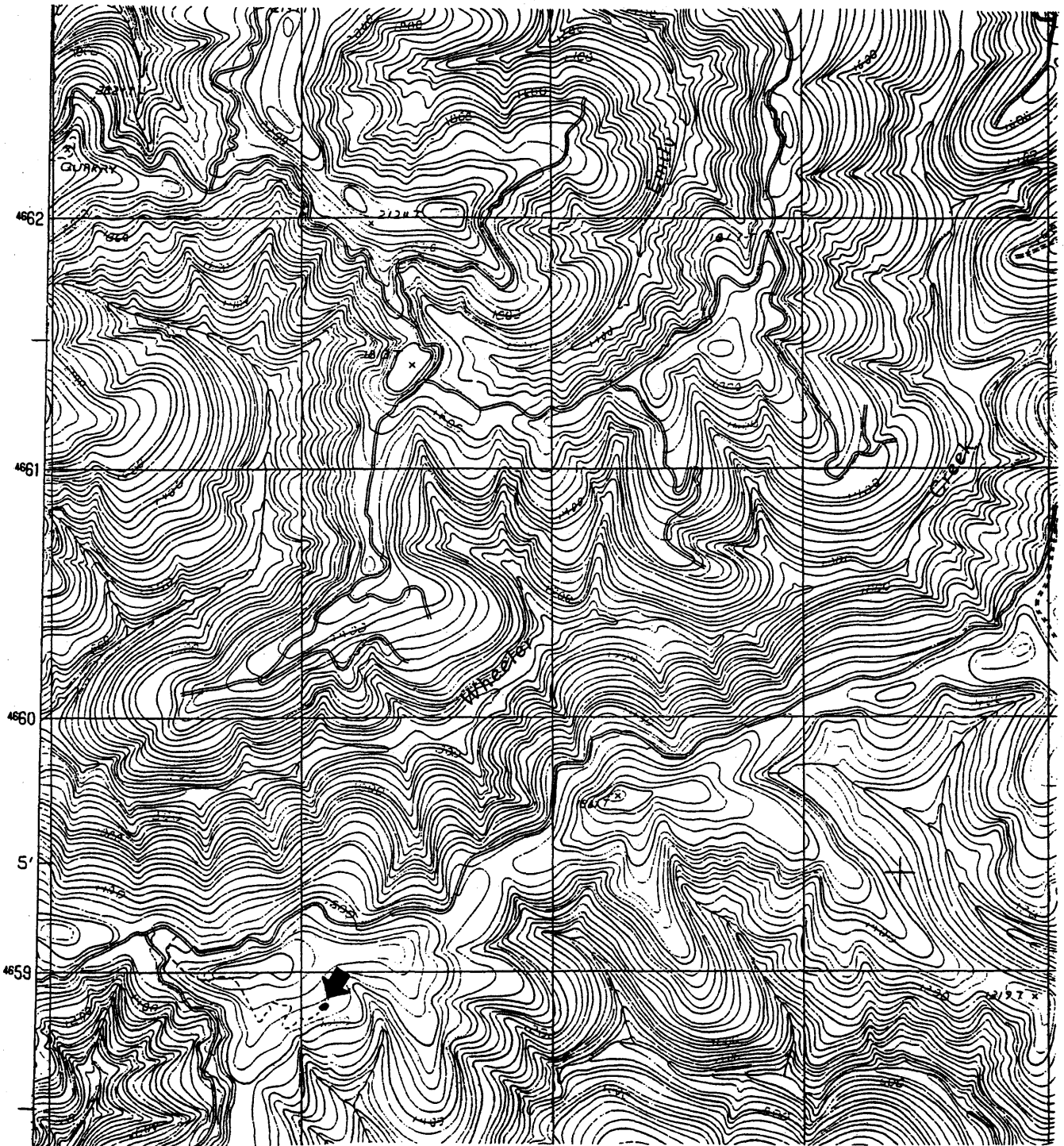


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Section Number: Maps Page: 1

USGS Quad: Fourth of July Creek, Oregon  
Provisional, 1989



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**Section Number:** Photographs **Page:** 1 **Wheeler Ridge Japanese Bombing Site Curry County  
Oregon**

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Photograph No. 1

- 1) Wheeler Ridge Japanese Bombing Site
- 2) NW ¼ Section 22, Township 40 South, Range 12 West, W.M., Curry County, Oregon
- 3) Photographer: Katherine Atwood
- 4) Date of Photograph: August 2004
- 5) Negative Holder: Rogue River-Siskiyou National Forest  
P.O. Box 520  
Medford, Oregon 97501
- 6) View of site with interpretive sign, looking s.w. to 210 degrees
- 7) Photograph number 1 of 9

Photograph No. 2

- 1) Wheeler Ridge Japanese Bombing Site
- 2) NW ¼ Section 22, Township 40 South, Range 12 West, W.M., Curry County, Oregon
- 3) Photographer: Katherine Atwood
- 4) Date of Photograph: August 2004
- 5) Negative Holder: Rogue River-Siskiyou National Forest  
P.O. Box 520  
Medford, Oregon 97501
- 6) View of site with bench, looking n.e. to 32 degrees
- 7) Photograph number 2 of 9

Photograph No. 3

- 1) Wheeler Ridge Japanese Bombing Site
- 2) NW ¼ Section 22, Township 40 South, Range 12 West, W.M., Curry County, Oregon
- 3) Photographer: Katherine Atwood
- 4) Date of Photograph: August 2004
- 5) Negative Holder: Rogue River-Siskiyou National Forest  
P.O. Box 520  
Medford, Oregon 97501
- 6) View of site with sign and bench, looking s.e. to 115 degrees
- 7) Photograph number 3 of 9

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Photograph No. 4

- 1) Wheeler Ridge Japanese Bombing Site
- 2) NW ¼ Section 22, Township 40 South, Range 12 West, W.M., Curry County, Oregon
- 3) Photographer: Katherine Atwood
- 4) Date of Photograph: August 2004
- 5) Negative Holder: Rogue River-Siskiyou National Forest  
P.O. Box 520  
Medford, Oregon 97501
- 6) View of interpretive sign
- 7) Photograph number 4 of 9

Photograph No. 5

- 1) Wheeler Ridge Japanese Bombing Site
- 2) NW ¼ Section 22, Township 40 South, Range 12 West, W.M., Curry County, Oregon
- 3) Photographer: Katherine Atwood
- 4) Date of Photograph: August 2004
- 5) Negative Holder: Rogue River-Siskiyou National Forest  
P.O. Box 520  
Medford, Oregon 97501
- 6) View of interpretive sign, detail
- 7) Photograph number 5 of 9

Photograph No. 6

- 1) Wheeler Ridge Japanese Bombing Site
- 2) NW ¼ Section 22, Township 40 South, Range 12 West, W.M., Curry County, Oregon
- 3) Photographer: Katherine Atwood
- 4) Date of Photograph: August 2004
- 5) Negative Holder: Rogue River-Siskiyou National Forest  
P.O. Box 520  
Medford, Oregon 97501
- 6) View of tree canopy
- 7) Photograph number 6 of 9

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Oregon**

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Photograph No. 7

- 1) Wheeler Ridge Japanese Bombing Site
- 2) NW ¼ Section 22, Township 40 South, Range 12 West, W.M., Curry County, Oregon
- 3) Photographer: Katherine Atwood
- 4) Date of Photograph: August 2004
- 5) Negative Holder: Rogue River-Siskiyou National Forest  
P.O. Box 520  
Medford, Oregon 97501
- 6) View of bench
- 7) Photograph number 7 of 9

Photograph No. 8

- 1) Wheeler Ridge Japanese Bombing Site
- 2) NW ¼ Section 22, Township 40 South, Range 12 West, W.M., Curry County, Oregon
- 3) Photographer: Katherine Atwood
- 4) Date of Photograph: August 2004
- 5) Negative Holder: Rogue River-Siskiyou National Forest  
P.O. Box 520  
Medford, Oregon 97501
- 6) View of commemorative redwood (Oregon Heritage Tree)
- 7) Photograph number 8 of 9

Photograph No. 9

- 1) Wheeler Ridge Japanese Bombing Site
- 2) NW ¼ Section 22, Township 40 South, Range 12 West, W.M., Curry County, Oregon
- 3) Photographer: Katherine Atwood
- 4) Date of Photograph: August 2004
- 5) Negative Holder: Rogue River-Siskiyou National Forest  
P.O. Box 520  
Medford, Oregon 97501
- 6) View of trail to site, looking n.w. 296 degrees
- 7) Photograph number 9 of 9