

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

FOR FEDERAL PROPERTIES

FOR NPS USE ONLY

RECEIVED FEB 29 1980

DATE ENTERED

APR 29 1980

**SEE INSTRUCTIONS IN HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS  
TYPE ALL ENTRIES -- COMPLETE APPLICABLE SECTIONS****1 NAME**

HISTORIC

Steele Creek Roadhouse

AHR'S SITE NO. EAG-019

AND/OR COMMON

Steele Creek Post Office, Steel Creek Trading Post

**2 LOCATION**

STREET &amp; NUMBER

Fortymile River, Fortymile Resource Area

NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CITY, TOWN

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

Eagle

VICINITY OF

STATE

CODE

COUNTY

CODE

Alaska

02

Upper Yukon

**2 CLASSIFICATION**

## CATEGORY

## OWNERSHIP

## STATUS

## PRESENT USE

 DISTRICT PUBLIC OCCUPIED MUSEUM BUILDING(S) PRIVATE

Mining claim

 UNOCCUPIED PARK STRUCTURE BOTH WORK IN PROGRESS EDUCATIONAL SITE PUBLIC ACQUISITION ACCESSIBLE RELIGIOUS OBJECT IN PROCESS YES: RESTRICTED SCIENTIFIC BEING CONSIDERED YES: UNRESTRICTED TRANSPORTATION NO MILITARY OTHER**4 AGENCY**

REGIONAL HEADQUARTERS: (If applicable)

Bureau of Land Management, Fairbanks District Office

STREET &amp; NUMBER

P. O. Box 1150

STATE

CITY, TOWN

Fairbanks,

Alaska 99707

**5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION**

COURTHOUSE,

REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

Bureau of Land Management, Fairbanks District Office

STREET &amp; NUMBER

1028 Aurora Drive

STATE

CITY, TOWN

Fairbanks,

Alaska 99707

**6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS**

TITLE

Antiquities Site Inventory #EAG-019

DATE

11-21-74

 FEDERAL  STATE  COUNTY  LOCALDEPOSITORY FOR  
SURVEY RECORDS

Bureau of Land Management, Fortymile Resource Area

CITY, TOWN

STATE

Tok,

Alaska 99780

## 7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION	CHECK ONE	CHECK ONE
EXCELLENT	X DETERIORATED	X UNALTERED
GOOD	RUINS	ALTERED
FAIR	UNEXPOSED	MOVED      DATE

### DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The two story log structure is located at the mouth of Steele Creek on the south bank of the Fortymile River. It sits on a clay bank one hundred and twenty five feet from the river and is subject to occasional flooding during extremely high water. The area immediately surrounding the roadhouse is an open bench with vegetation consisting mainly of grass and forbs with few shrubs. Three other log cabins are situated on the same flat near the roadhouse but they are further from the river. The hills rise steeply from a level of 1200 feet at the river to 3000 feet at the ridge five miles to the southwest where the Taylor Highway lies. Access to Steele Creek is restricted. It can be reached by river and a trail leads from mile 105 of the Taylor Highway to the roadhouse. Due to the trail's poor condition, one must walk.

The roadhouse measures fifty feet, east to west, and is twenty five feet wide. Built by a man named Anderson, it was originally a one story structure completed in 1898. A second story was added at an unknown time--approximately 1910. The roadhouse is constructed in the notch and saddle fashion using spruce logs of nine to twelve inches in diameter. A structural inner wall divides the building into two twenty five foot square sections. On the ground floor, the eastern section is one large room with a stairway leading to the second story. The floor of this section has collapsed due to a recent flood and is in need of repair. A door opens from the east wall to a six foot wide porch running the width of the house. The western half is divided, east to west, by a wall with a 3'x6' horizontal opening apparently serving as a buffet between the kitchen and the dining area. The second story contains the sleeping quarters with three rooms on the east half and one large dormitory-type room on the west. The ceiling is open with log collar beams at a height of six feet supporting the rafters. Two lean-to type, one story log additions are attached to the structure. These were constructed at an unknown time. One is located on the south side, measuring 20'x12', while the other is a continuation of the first story on the west side. It measures 15'x25'. The roof is tin. The log chinking appears to be cement.

## 8 SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD	AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW				
<input type="checkbox"/> PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNITY PLANNING	<input type="checkbox"/> LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> RELIGION	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> CONSERVATION	<input type="checkbox"/> LAW	<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENCE	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> ECONOMICS	<input type="checkbox"/> LITERATURE	<input type="checkbox"/> SCULPTURE	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATION	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input type="checkbox"/> SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> ART	<input type="checkbox"/> ENGINEERING	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSIC	<input type="checkbox"/> THEATER	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE	<input type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNICATIONS	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRY	<input type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY)	
		<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION			

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SPECIFIC DATES

BUILDER/ARCHITECT

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STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

A small but very important community in the Fortymile District, Steele Creek served as a major meeting place for miners and trappers. The roadhouse served as a post office from 1907 to 1951 providing outside communication for local residents. It was a major stop on the chief overland trail from Eagle to Chicken. John Powers utilized the facilities at Steele Creek on his mail route through the Fortymile area and maintained a barn at the Steele Creek site for his pack horses. The roadhouse was an overnight stop for many freighters and visitors traveling through the region. In addition to the attractions of mail and supplies, the Steele Creek roadhouse was the site of holiday festivities up and down the Fortymile River until WW II. The Steele Creek roadhouse was an integral part in the transportation route of the Fortymile region serving the commerce and insuring the well being of its inhabitants until the completion of the Taylor Highway in 1951. Without this important link, travel through the Fortymile would have proved to be much more difficult if not perilous at times. The roadhouse is unique in that it is the only two story log structure in the Fortymile district and is also the largest log building. It is one of the oldest buildings in the Fortymile Resource Area that remains standing.

### Background

The roadhouse was built by Mr. Anderson in 1898. He ran it until 1908 when it was sold to John A. "Pappy" Kemp. Mr. Kemp and his wife operated the roadhouse for many years with Kemp serving as postmaster from 1908 to 1932. Harry Ross purchased the establishment in 1932 and operated it until 1938, also serving as postmaster. The roadhouse traded hands several times between 1938 and 1948 at which time Robert and Ruth Wilson took over, running the roadhouse until the mid-50's. They remained at Steele Creek until 1964 when the area was sold to Neil Thurneau who currently resides there, mining in the vicinity.

George Lenont served as postmaster from April 11, 1907 until John A. Kemp took over April 27, 1908. H.H. Ross took the job on February 8, 1932 and was replaced on May 23, 1938 by Orville W. Couden. It again changed hands to Ann S. Ayre on April 18, 1939, to Eugene Doherty on February 29, 1940, and to Laurence Lyman on September 1, 1949. Ruth E. Wilson was the roadhouse's last postmaster beginning July 1, 1949 until August 31, 1951 when the mail stop was transferred to Boundary, Alaska.

## 9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

- Bell, Wendell and Sullivan, Michael, Cultural Resource Inventory of the Fortymile River, 1976. Boulder, Colorado WICHE.
- Haynes, Terry, They Didn't Come in Four Wheel Drives, 1976. Boulder, Colorado WICHE.
- Prindle, L.M., The Fortymile Quadrangle, U.S.G.S. Bulletin #375, 1909.
- Smith, Michael, Alaska's Historic Roadhouses, 1974. Boulder, Colorado WICHE.
- Bureau of Land Management-Cultural Resource Files, Fortymile Resource Area, Tok, Alaska.

## 10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY 1

UTM REFERENCES

A [0,2] [4,86] [2,3,0] [7,1] [2,7] [1,0,0]  
ZONE EASTING NORTHING  
C [ ] [ ] [ ] [ ] [ ] [ ]

B [ ] [ ] [ ] [ ] [ ] [ ]  
ZONE EASTING NORTHING  
D [ ] [ ] [ ] [ ] [ ] [ ]

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION The property nominated is a 250' by 250' parcel which is faced on the north side by the main fork of the Fortymile River and on the east side by the Steele Creek stream. The north and east sides of the boundaries follow the natural meander of the river and creek with the south and west sides being perpendicular to each other.

**ACREAGE NOT VERIFIED**

**UTM NOT VERIFIED**

## LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE

CODE

COUNTY

CODE

N/A

STATE

CODE

COUNTY

CODE

## 11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE

James Christopher Bonewitz, Cultural Resource Technician

ORGANIZATION

Bureau of Land Management, Fortymile Resource Area

DATE

September 30, 1977

STREET & NUMBER

Box 307

TELEPHONE

907-883-4181

CITY OR TOWN

Tok.

STATE

Alaska 99780

## 12 CERTIFICATION OF NOMINATION

STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER RECOMMENDATION

YES

NO

NAME

*William Knobell*  
STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER SIGNATURE

In compliance with Executive Order 11593, I hereby nominate this property to the National Register, certifying that the State Historic Preservation Officer has been allowed 90 days in which to present the nomination to the State Review Board and to evaluate its significance. The evaluated level of significance is  National  State  Local.

FEDERAL REPRESENTATIVE SIGNATURE

*Janice E. Danke*  
TITLE BLM CULTURAL RESOURCE PROGRAM LEADER (BUREAU LIAISON) DATE 2/22/80

FOR NPS USE ONLY

I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS PROPERTY IS INCLUDED IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

*W. Ray Sice*

DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF ARCHAEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION

ATTEST: *Kristin J. O'Connell*

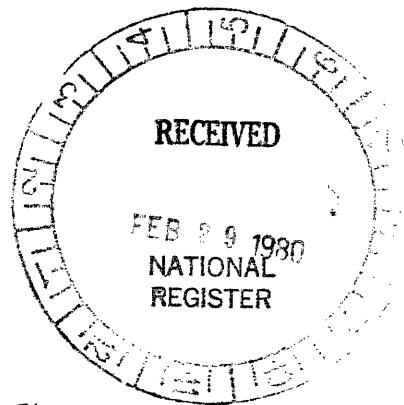
KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

DATE

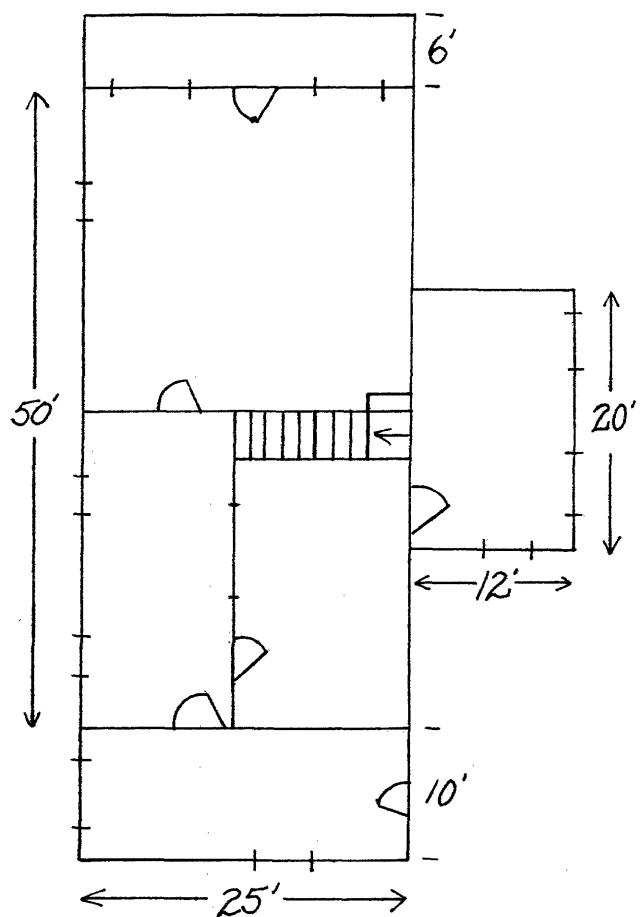
4/29/80

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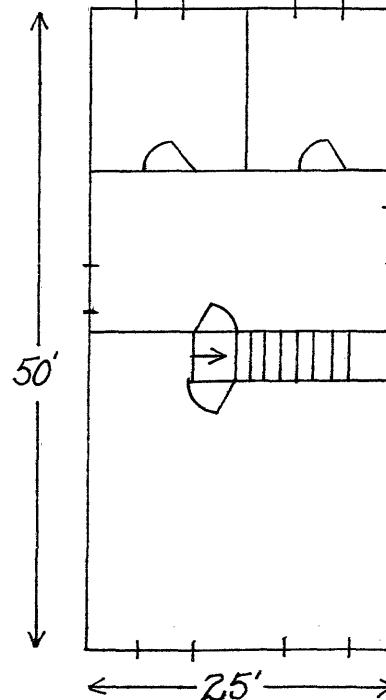
4/22/80



1st Floor



2nd Floor



STEELE CREEK ROADHOUSE

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