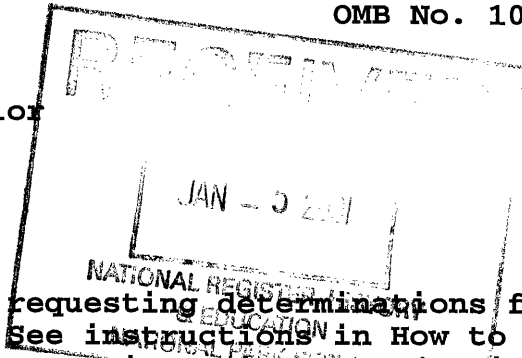


United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
REGISTRATION FORM



This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

=====
1. Name of Property
=====
historic name Gakona Historic District

other names/site number Gakona Roadhouse, Gakona Lodge and Trading Post
Doyle's Ranch, AHRs Site No. GUL-00240

=====
2. Location
=====
street & number Mile 2, Tok Cutoff/Glenn Highway

not for publication n/a
city or town Gakona vicinity n/a
state Alaska code AK county Valdez-Cordova code 261
zip code 99586

USDI/NPS NRHP Registration Form

Gakona Historic District

Valdez-Cordova, Alaska

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1986, as amended, I hereby certify that this [X] nomination [] request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property [X] meets [] does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant [] nationally [] statewide [X] locally. ([] See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

[Signature]
Signature of certifying official

Dec 29, 2000
Date

Alaska
State or Federal agency and bureau

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

Signature of commenting or other official

Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby certify that this property is:

- [X] 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] 2/2/01

[Signature]
Signature of Keeper Date of Action

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Gakona Historic District

Valdez-Cordova, Alaska

=====
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

Contributing	Noncontributing
<u> 11 </u>	<input type="checkbox"/> buildings
<u> </u>	<input type="checkbox"/> sites
<u> </u>	<input type="checkbox"/> structures
<u> </u>	<input type="checkbox"/> objects
<u> 11 </u>	<u> 0 </u> Total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 2

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

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

Historic Functions (Enter categories from instructions)

Cat: Commerce/trade Sub: restaurant
Domestic hotel

Current Functions (Enter categories from instructions)

Cat: Commerce/trade Sub: restaurant
Domestic hotel

=====
7. Description
=====

Architectural Classification (Enter categories from instructions)

No style

Materials (Enter categories from instructions)

foundation log, cement
roof metal
walls log, wood
other _____

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

The Gakona Historic District is at Mile 2 of the Tok Cutoff of the Glenn Highway. Originally named Doyle's Ranch, a roadhouse opened in 1904 at Mile 132 of the Trans-Alaska Military Road (in reality a trail) near a telegraph station and trading post that overlooked the Gakona River. After gold mining activity shifted from the upper Yukon River to the Tanana River valley, a new trail connecting Valdez and Fairbanks was blazed in 1905. The new trail followed the earlier trail from Valdez to Gakona and then veered north. Renamed Gakona Roadhouse, at the junction, became a popular spot for travelers.

When the Alaska Road Commission widened the Valdez-Fairbanks trail for wagons around 1910, Gakona became an important stage stop. The owners added a barn that could hold twelve horses and blacksmith shop. When the Alaska Road Commission started improving the neglected Eagle Trail (the northern half of the Trans-Alaska Military Road) to wagon road standards in the late 1920s to the Chistochina and Nabesna mining districts east of Gakona, the increased activity warranted construction of a larger log roadhouse. A final phase of the historic district's development reflects the activity associated with the construction of the Alaska and Glenn highways as part of the World War II military build-up.

Gakona Historic District sits on the north side of the Tok Cutoff. The original roadhouse along with an icehouse and storage shed are located along the bank of the Gakona River. They were listed in the National

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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)

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

Criteria Considerations (Mark "X" in all the boxes that apply.) n/a

- A owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
B removed from its original location.
C a birthplace or a grave.
D a cemetery.
E a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
F a commemorative property.
G less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

Areas of Significance (Enter categories from instructions)

Transportation
Commerce

Period of Significance 1904-1950

Significant Dates 1904

Significant Person (Complete if Criterion B is marked above) n/a

Cultural Affiliation n/a

Architect/Builder n/a

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Gakona Historic District

Valdez-Cordova, Alaska

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=====
9. Major Bibliographical References
=====

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

Bundy, Hallock C., editor. *The Valdez-Fairbanks Trail*. Seattle, Washington: The Alaska Publishing Company, 1910.

Clark, John H. "From Valdez to Fairbanks in 1906 by Bicycle, Blizzard and Strategy," in *Sourdough Sagas: The Journals, Memoirs, Tales and Recollections of the Earliest Alaska Gold Miners, 1883-1923*. New York: New York World Publishing, 1967.

Edman, Grace, Alice Hudson and Sam Johnson. *Fifty Years of Highways*. Nome, Alaska: Department of Public Works, Division of Highways, 1960.

Sundt, Henra. Personal communication. 1976.

Wickersham, James V. *Old Yukon: Tales, Trails, Trials*. Washington, D.C.: Washington Law Book, 1938.

Previous documentation on file (NPS)

preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested.

previously listed in the National Register Gakona Roadhouse

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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Gakona Historic District
Valdez-Cordova, Alaska

=====
10. Geographical Data
=====

Acreage of Property 7 acres

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

	Zone	Easting	Northing	Zone	Easting	Northing
1	<u>06</u>	<u>587985</u>	<u>6908855</u>	3	_____	_____
2	_____	_____	_____	4	_____	_____
	<u>See continuation sheet.</u>					

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

Southeast quarter of the northwest quarter of Section 18, Township 6N, Range 1E, Copper River Meridian.

Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected.)

The district includes all of the standing buildings that have historically been associated with Gakona Lodge as shown on the attached site plan.

=====
11. Form Prepared By
=====

name/title Barbara F. Strang, Owner

organization Gakona Lodge and Trading Post

date November 15, 1998

street & number P.O. Box 285

telephone 907-822-3482

city or town Gakona **state** AK **zip code** 99586

=====
Additional Documentation
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Submit the following items with the completed form:

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)

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Gakona Historic District

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Register of Historic Places on August 3, 1977. The other buildings are just to the south of these, lined along a looping gravel drive. Beginning at the east end of the property, stand Cabin One, Cabin Two, Carriage House, Trapper's Den Bar, Gakona Lodge, Garage, Gakona Horse Barn, and the Henra Sundt House (see site plan).

All but two of the buildings are log. They are all in good condition. The additions that have been made to some of the buildings are compatible with the size, scale and materials of the others. The buildings together convey the sense of a welcome stop for travelers through a sparsely settled area.

Contributing buildings

Cabins One and Two. These are single story, gable roof log cabins built in 1930-1931. They measure 20 by 40 feet. The buildings have single six light sash windows with 1" by 6" trim. The front doors are centrally placed in a gable end and protected by shed hoods. In 1984, a frame 12' by 14' addition was added to the right elevation towards the back of Cabin One.

Carriage House. Built in 1929, the original building is a one-story 30' by 35' log building with a gable roof covered with corrugated metal. The façade is the south gable wall. It has a sliding six light sash window centrally placed in the gable. The main entry is below the window. In 1981, a 12' by 14' log foyer with a shallow gable roof was added to provide an enclosed entry. Also in 1981, a shed roof 30' by 20' addition was added on the west elevation. The shed roof connects with the original gable roof at mid height.

Trapper's Den Bar. Constructed in 1942 as a garage for construction vehicles, this log building has a shed roof. The owners moved it in 1962 from a site by the garage on the property to its present location adjacent to the lodge and converted it for use as a bar, and later, a liquor store. In 1975 a three-sided log 15' by 26' addition was added on the south side, and a small storage room was added on the east side.

Gakona Lodge. Built in 1926-1928, the two-story log building with a steep, cross-gable roof has a full basement and an attic. It has an L floor plan. The leg of the L measures 24' by 38'. The foot of the L, which faces south and has the main entry, measures 20' by 40'. The south elevation's left third is one and a half stories tall and the right two-thirds is two stories high. Fenestration consists of double-leafed eight light windows hinged on their sides to open as French doors. The right third of the south elevation is a gable end and the left two-thirds a side wall. Centrally placed in the first and second floors of the gable end are windows similar to those on the south elevation. The side wall of the elevation has three fixed sash windows unevenly spaced on the second floor. These windows are divided in half, the bottom sections have two lights and the tops have six. A log shed roof porch constructed in 1988 encloses the first floor. A window is centrally placed in the east gable wall, and two are evenly spaced on the second floor level of the gable wall. A wood

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Gakona Historic District

Valdez-Cordova, Alaska

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ladder services the attic window and is placed between the two second floor windows. An enclosed shed roof porch, constructed in 1993 to replace a similar one, extends the entire width of the first floor on the east side. The west elevation is similar to the east, except that it is a side wall and has no porch. In 1964, a 26' by 30' log building that was built in 1924 and used a garage was moved and joined to the back of the east elevation.

Garage. Built in 1942, this five bay garage is a wood frame 36' by 60' building with a shed roof. The overhead garage doors are wood with three single pane windows in the middle of each.

Storage Shed. Built in 1904, this is a one-story 18' by 22' vertical slab wood building with a gable roof covered with corrugated metal sheeting. The south elevation has double X-braced lumber doors centrally placed and flanked by fixed single light sash windows.

Ice House. Built in 1904, this is a log 10' by 15' building with saddle notched corners and a shed roof. The door and window openings in the south wall are open.

Gakona Roadhouse. Constructed in 1904, the 20' by 30' log building has a 15' by 30' addition on its east side. The main entry, centrally placed in the south gable end, is flanked by two nine light fixed sash windows. A similar window is centrally placed in the second story. There is a small window on the west side of the second story. The addition has a doorway in the south elevation. The building was listed in the National Register of Historic Places August 3, 1977.

Horse Barn. Built in 1910, the gable roof log barn provided shelter for twelve horses. The ridgepole and purlins, but only half of the original pole decking of the roof remain. It is part of the August 3, 1977 National Register listing.

Henra Sundt House. Built in 1927-1928, this two story 30' by 30' log building has saddle notched corners. The second story is tucked under the gable roof. The roof has rough sawn lumber placed on log purlins and covered with corrugated metal roofing. Side walls have paired six over one double hung sash windows at each end. The front has a similar window centered in the gable wall. It has three double hung sash windows placed just left of center, and a plank door just right of center on the first floor.

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Gakona Historic District

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

At the junction of the Eagle and Fairbanks trails from the year-round port of Valdez, Gakona Roadhouse opened in 1904 to facilitate overland transportation through interior Alaska. When the Alaska Road Commission widened the Valdez-Fairbanks trail for wagons around 1910, the owners added a horse barn and blacksmith shop. Increased activity warranted construction of a larger log roadhouse in 1929. A final phase of the historic district's development reflects the increased activity associated with the construction of the Alaska and Glenn highways as part of the World War II military build-up. A lodge at the site has operated continuously. The original trails have been altered and improved, but remain two of Alaska's major highways, the Glenn and the Richardson. Gakona Historic District includes the principal buildings from each of these phases of the wayside stop's history. The period of significance is ended in 1950, fifty years ago, and encompasses all the buildings standing at the site.

Historic background

Responding to an outcry from Klondike gold rushers, in 1900 Congress appropriated \$49,975 to the U.S. Army for a road from a southcentral Alaska port to the Yukon River. Beginning the same year, the U.S. Army Signal Service started building the Washington-Alaska Military Cable and Telegraph System, part of which ran along the trail. Along the trail, called the Trans-Alaska Military Road, trading posts and roadhouses opened. The first roadhouses varied from tents to small one-story log buildings with roofs covered with sod. Usually one room served as a living, dining and sleeping area, and an attached lean-to was the kitchen. Meals were one or two dollars, a bed another two dollars.

In 1902, Jim Doyle homesteaded 160 acres of land at Mile 132 of the Trans-Alaska Military Road. He cleared about 80 acres and grew potatoes, vegetables, and feed for his horses. He constructed the original lodge, ice house and storage shed in 1904 (listed in the National Register of Historic Places on August 3, 1977). The main building had living quarters, a store, a kitchen/dining room, two small private rooms and a dormitory area upstairs. Near Doyle's Ranch and roadhouse stood a telegraph station.

Because the trail had few bridges, summer travelers had to cross the Gakona River by boat.

After gold mining activity shifted from the Klondike to the Tanana River valley, a new trail connecting Valdez and Fairbanks was blazed in 1905. The new road followed the earlier trail to Gakona and then veered north. Gakona Roadhouse, at the junction, became a popular spot for travelers. In 1910, the roadhouse became a station for the Orr Stage Company. Doyle added a barn for twelve horses, a hay shed, and a blacksmith shop. (The blacksmith shop and hay shed collapsed in 1975 and 1986 respectively, and the debris has been removed.)

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Gakona Historic District

Valdez-Cordova, Alaska

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Mike Johnson purchased the business around 1912. He and his family also farmed, raised a garden, did some fur trading, and provided lodging and supplies for travelers. About 1918, J.M. Elmer, purchased the property. J.M. was a mining engineer and managed the Slate Creek Placer Mining Company. During his tenure as manager, the mine went bankrupt and the company became owners of the Gakona roadhouse. In 1926, Arne Sundt arrived to manage the mining company. But he preferred to work for himself, and leased the property from the New York-based company, paid off the debt, and later purchased the Gakona property. His timing was excellent. The Alaska Road Commission started widening the overgrown Eagle trail to access the Chistochina and Nabesna gold mines. Sundt built a new, larger Gakona Lodge, which included a general store and post office. The lodge had nine rooms for guests and two bathrooms. He and his employee John Paulsen also built a residence and carriage and wagon repair shop, a log garage, and two cabins. Shortly after, Sundt added a retail liquor store to the general store.

The Army Corps of Engineers built a garage at Gakona in 1942 to house equipment used to construct the Glenn Highway during World War II. After the war, the building became a store, and in 1962 it was moved adjacent to the lodge and converted to a bar. Also in 1942, a freight company operating out of the lodge, built a five bay garage.

Judge James V. Wickersham, the first federal judge in interior Alaska, stayed at the lodge in February 1905. His notes tell of wading through overflow water to reach the roadhouse. Other guests have included artist Ted Lambert who lived in one of the cabins for about year in 1947, and Eustace Ziegler, an artist who helped Lambert get started painting. Another artist, Josephine Crumrine stayed at the lodge on her visits to the Copper River valley. Alaska's first state governor, Bill Egan, was a frequent guest while in office from 1959 to 1966. Hubert Wilkins, an arctic explorer, also stayed.

Arne Sundt died in 1946, but the family continued to operate the lodge. Gerald and Barbara Strang purchased the lodge from Henra Sundt, Arne Sundt's widow, in 1976. The lodge continues what it was started for in 1904, to meet the needs of travelers and area residents.

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Gakona Historic District

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Property Owner
=====

(Complete this item at the request of the SHPO or FPO.)

name Gerald and Barbara Strang

street & number P.O. Box 285

telephone 907-822-3482

city or town Gakona **state** AK **zip code** 99586-0285

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(8-86)

OMB No. 1024-0018

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section Photograph identification

1. Gakona Historic District
Valdez-Cordova, Alaska
Barbara Strang
1996
P.O. Box 285, Gakona, Alaska 99586-0285
Looking north at the front of Cabin No. One

2. Gakona Historic District
Valdez-Cordova, Alaska
Barbara Strang
1996
P.O. Box 285, Gakona, Alaska 99586-0285
Looking north at the front of Cabin No. Two

3. Gakona Historic District
Valdez-Cordova, Alaska
Barbara Strang
1996
P.O. Box 285, Gakona, Alaska 99586-0285
Looking north at the front of the Carriage House Restaurant

4. Gakona Historic District
Valdez-Cordova, Alaska
Barbara Strang
1996
P.O. Box 285, Gakona, Alaska 99586-0285
Looking north at the Trapper's Den Bar (originally a garage)

5. Gakona Historic District
Valdez-Cordova, Alaska
Barbara Strang
1996
P.O. Box 285, Gakona, Alaska 99586-0285
Looking north at the front of Gakona Lodge

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

OMB No. 1024-0018

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

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section Photograph identification

6. Gakona Historic District
Valdez-Cordova, Alaska
Barbara Strang
1996
P.O. Box 285, Gakona, Alaska 99586-0285
Looking west-northwest at Gakona Lodge, the Trapper's Den Bar is visible on the right and the garage on the left
7. Gakona Historic District
Valdez-Cordova, Alaska
Barbara Strang
1996
P.O. Box 285, Gakona, Alaska 99586-0285
Looking east at the five-bay garage
8. Gakona Historic District
Valdez-Cordova, Alaska
Barbara Strang
1996
P.O. Box 285, Gakona, Alaska 99586-0285
Looking north at the ice house on the left and storage shed on the right
9. Gakona Historic District
Valdez-Cordova, Alaska
Barbara Strang
1994 (although date on photo is shown as 1987)
P.O. Box 285, Gakona, Alaska 99586-0285
Looking north at Gakona Roadhouse (listed in the National Register)
10. Gakona Historic District
Valdez-Cordova, Alaska
Barbara Strang
1996
P.O. Box 285, Gakona, Alaska 99586-0285
Looking west at the east side of the horse barn (listed in the National Register)

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(8-86)

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National Park Service

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CONTINUATION SHEET

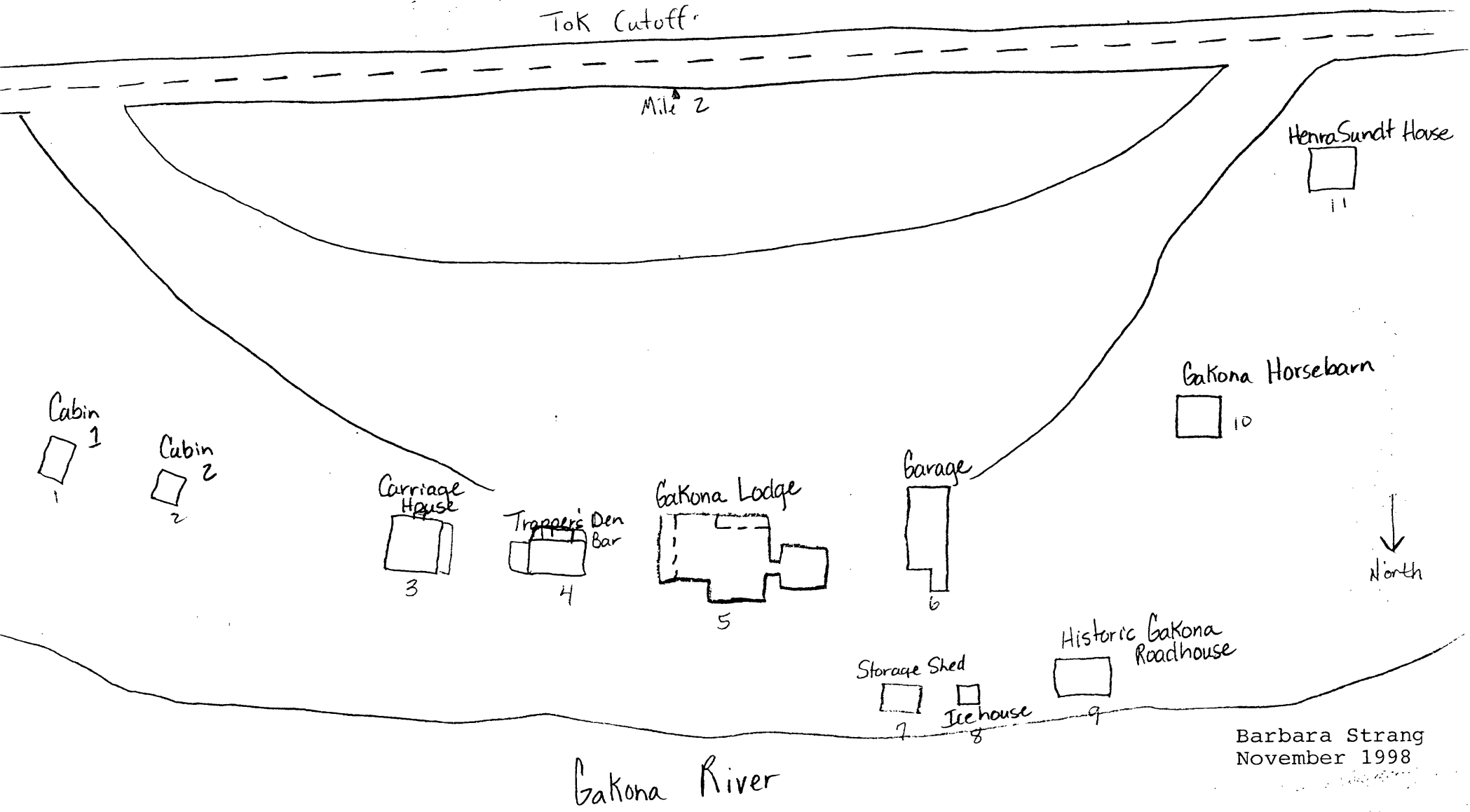
Section Photograph identification
=====

11. Gakona Historic District
Valdez-Cordova, Alaska
Barbara Strang
1996
P.O. Box 285, Gakona, Alaska 99586-0285
Looking southeast at Henra Sundt house

GAKONA HISTORIC DISTRICT
Valdez-Cordova, Alaska

← Toward Tok

Toward Glennallen →



Barbara Strang
November 1998