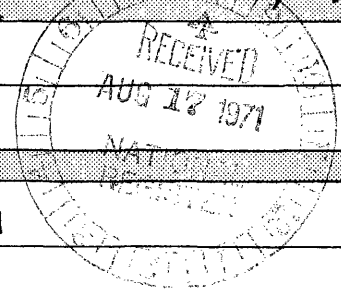


NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

(Type all entries - complete applicable sections)

STATE: Nevada	
COUNTY: White Pine	
FOR NPS USE ONLY	
ENTRY NUMBER 71,932,000	DATE 9/58/71



1. NAME

COMMON:  
Ward Charcoal Ovens

AND/OR HISTORIC:  
Ward

2. LOCATION

STREET AND NUMBER:  
Off U.S. Hwy. 6-50-93; 14 miles <sup>^</sup> via Cave Valley Road

CITY OR TOWN:  
Ely vicinity

STATE Nevada	CODE 32	COUNTY: White Pine	CODE 033
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3. CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY (Check One)	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	ACCESSIBLE TO THE PUBLIC
<input type="checkbox"/> District <input type="checkbox"/> Building <input type="checkbox"/> Site <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Structure <input type="checkbox"/> Object	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Public <input type="checkbox"/> Private <input type="checkbox"/> Both	Public Acquisition: <input type="checkbox"/> In Process <input type="checkbox"/> Being Considered	<input type="checkbox"/> Occupied <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Unoccupied <input type="checkbox"/> Preservation work in progress
PRESENT USE (Check One or More as Appropriate)			
<input type="checkbox"/> Agricultural <input type="checkbox"/> Commercial <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Educational <input type="checkbox"/> Entertainment	<input type="checkbox"/> Government <input type="checkbox"/> Industrial <input type="checkbox"/> Military <input type="checkbox"/> Museum	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Park <input type="checkbox"/> Private Residence <input type="checkbox"/> Religious <input type="checkbox"/> Scientific	<input type="checkbox"/> Transportation <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify) _____ <input type="checkbox"/> Comments _____

4. OWNER OF PROPERTY

OWNER'S NAME:  
Nevada Fish and Game Commission, Leased to State Park System

STREET AND NUMBER:  
1100 Valley Road

CITY OR TOWN:  
Reno

STATE:  
Nevada

CODE:  
32

5. LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC:  
Courthouse, White Pine County

STREET AND NUMBER:

CITY OR TOWN:  
Ely

STATE:  
Nevada

CODE:  
32

6. REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE OF SURVEY:  
Nevada Historical Sites

DATE OF SURVEY: 1968     Federal     State     County     Local

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS:  
University of Nevada, Desert Research Institute, Center for Western Studies

STREET AND NUMBER:  
Stead Facility

CITY OR TOWN:  
Reno

STATE:  
Nevada

CODE:  
32

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

STATE:

COUNTY:

ENTRY NUMBER

DATE

FOR NPS USE ONLY

71,932,000  
9/58/71

7. DESCRIPTION

CONDITION	(Check One)					
	<input type="checkbox"/> Excellent	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Good	<input type="checkbox"/> Fair	<input type="checkbox"/> Deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> Ruins	<input type="checkbox"/> Unexposed
	(Check One)			(Check One)		
	<input type="checkbox"/> Altered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Unaltered	<input type="checkbox"/> Moved	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Original Site		

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (if known) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

Ward was a mining town located 15 miles south of present day Ely in the Egan Mountain Range. The town, now a short distance off Highway U.S. 6,50,93, was platted in 1876, and supported a population of 1500. It was composed of stores, saloons, a city hall, breweries, fraternal orders, a hook and ladder company, a school, two newspapers, a post office, two smelters, and a 20 stamp mill with three furnaces. Little remains of the town of Ward. Located in a canyon, most of the town has been destroyed by run-off and flash floods. A cemetery, smelter, and mill foundations are left at the town site.

On the edge of the juniper-pinion forest two miles south of town stand 6 excellently constructed stone ovens built in 1876 and used to reduce those trees to charcoal for use in smelters.

The ovens at Ward are larger than average, 30' high, with a floor diameter of 27' and walls 2' thick at the base.

They are built of random stone square faced to the exterior, with dressed stone forming the frames of the charge and discharge doors. The arched stone roofs derive their sole support from the highly skilled manner in which their stones are fitted together.

A charge door for receiving wood is located high on the back of the oven and a discharge door for removing charcoal at ground level on the front. Both openings were fitted originally with heavy iron doors which closed against an iron frame set into the doorway, thereby effecting a nearly airtight seal. All air necessary to control the burning process was supplied through a series of small vents built into the kiln wall.

Five of the 6 ovens are in good shape. One has been damaged near the top and all have been vandalized to some extent and need some repair work.

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

**3. SIGNIFICANCE**

PERIOD (Check One or More as Appropriate)

- |  |                                       |  |                                       |
|--|---------------------------------------|--|---------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Pre-Columbian | <input type="checkbox"/> 16th Century | <input type="checkbox"/> 18th Century            | <input type="checkbox"/> 20th Century |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 15th Century  | <input type="checkbox"/> 17th Century | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 19th Century |                                       |

SPECIFIC DATE(S) (If Applicable and Known) **1876**

AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE (Check One or More as Appropriate)

- |  |   |  |  |
|--|---|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Aboriginal              | <input type="checkbox"/> Education              | <input type="checkbox"/> Political           | <input type="checkbox"/> Urban Planning  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Prehistoric             | <input type="checkbox"/> Engineering            | <input type="checkbox"/> Religion/Philosophy | <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Historic                | <input type="checkbox"/> Industry               | <input type="checkbox"/> Science             | <u>Mining</u>                            |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Agriculture             | <input type="checkbox"/> Invention              | <input type="checkbox"/> Sculpture           | _____                                    |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Architecture | <input type="checkbox"/> Landscape Architecture | <input type="checkbox"/> Social/Humanitarian | _____                                    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Art                     | <input type="checkbox"/> Literature             | <input type="checkbox"/> Theater             | _____                                    |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Commerce     | <input type="checkbox"/> Military               | <input type="checkbox"/> Transportation      | _____                                    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Communications          | <input type="checkbox"/> Music                  |  | _____                                    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Conservation            |   |  | _____                                    |

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Ward Mining District was organized in 1872 and the town platted in 1876, Residents of Ward, the county's biggest camp, enjoyed an outstanding view of the Schell Creek Range to the east, scenic rock formations to the south, year-round flow of water, and two years of prosperous gold and silver production from 1877-79. Ward's 680 registered voters controlled county elections at that time.

Freight and passenger traffic for Ward left the Eureka-Palisade Railroad depot at Eureka. A bi-weekly mail route between Eureka and Pioche included a stop at Ward, and there was regular stage communication with the more central and south central Nevada towns of Austin, Belmont, Tybo, Hamilton and Pioche.

After 1880, production declined and the town was quickly deserted. Much of the population crossed Steptoe Valley to Taylor, 15 miles distant, or traveled to the reviving town of Cherry Creek, also nearby. A major fire in the summer of 1883 destroyed 1/3 of the town. The post office was discontinued in 1887. Over \$1 million was taken from a single chamber in the Ward Mine. Subsequent intermittent activity has occurred in the area. Short-lived revivals of mining took place in 1906, and the late 1930's and in the late 1960's.

Ward's 6 existing charcoal ovens are excellent examples of one of the West's forgotten industries.

Requiring neither skill nor exceptional intelligence of its laborers, the charcoal industry swept over the West leaving bloodshed and war, racial strife and corruption, hostile Indian tribes, and tens of thousands of acres stripped of timber. But the production of charcoal was an indispensable part of the mining process.

The purchase of charcoal represented the smelters largest single item of expense. From 30 to 60 bushels were needed to reduce one ton of ore. Prices varied on charcoal from 18¢ to, at one time, 65¢ per bushel, but the average price was 25¢ per bushel. At their peak of operation, the 13 furnaces at Eureka, Nevada, with a daily capacity of 595 tons of ore each, were purchasing \$600,000 worth of charcoal monthly. (16,000 bu. daily)

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

History of Nevada, 1881, Thompson and West. Reproduction by Myron Angel, Berkeley, 1958

Nevada Ghost Towns and Mining Camps, Paher, Stanley, Howell-North books, Berkeley, California, 1970

Nevada Historical Sites, Mordy and McCaughey, University of Nevada, 1968

Charcoal, The West's Forgotten Industry, Murbarger, Nell, Desert Magazine, June 1956.

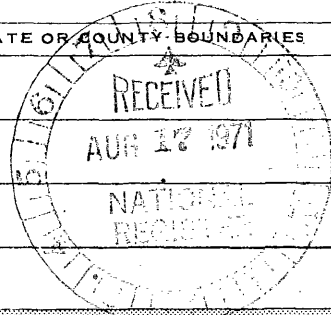
10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING A RECTANGLE LOCATING THE PROPERTY			O R	LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING THE CENTER POINT OF A PROPERTY OF LESS THAN TEN ACRES		
CORNER	LATITUDE	LONGITUDE		LATITUDE	LONGITUDE	
	Degrees Minutes Seconds	Degrees Minutes Seconds		Degrees Minutes Seconds	Degrees Minutes Seconds	
NW	° ' "	° ' "		39 ° 02 ' 16 "	114 ° 50 ' 49 "	
NE	° ' "	° ' "				
SE	° ' "	° ' "				
SW	° ' "	° ' "				

APPROXIMATE ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY: **1.0**

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

STATE:	CODE	COUNTY	CODE



11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME AND TITLE:  
**W.E. Wieprecht, Recreation Park Planner**

ORGANIZATION: **Nevada State Park System** DATE: **June 2, 1971**

STREET AND NUMBER:  
**201 S. Fall Street, Nye Building, Room 221**

CITY OR TOWN: **Carson City** STATE: **Nevada** CODE: **82**

12 STATE LIAISON OFFICER CERTIFICATION

As the designated State Liaison Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service. The recommended level of significance of this nomination is:

National  State  Local

Name: *Eric Cronkrite*

Title: *Administrator N.S.P.S.*

Date: *7-13-71*

NATIONAL REGISTER VERIFICATION

I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register.

*Ernest A. Connolly*  
Chief, Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation

**SEP 28 1971**

Date \_\_\_\_\_

ATTEST:

*William Shustogel*  
Keeper of The National Register

**SEP 24 1971**

Date \_\_\_\_\_

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

(Continuation Sheet)

STATE	
Nevada	
COUNTY	
White Pine	
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ENTRY NUMBER	DATE
71,932,000	9/28/71

(Number all entries) (Significance continued)

8. Only one mining center in hundreds, the smelters at Eureka were consuming 1,200,000 bushels of charcoal annually--the total tree crop from over 5,000 acres of juniper-pinon woodland. By 1877-78, the hills around Eureka were denuded of trees for a 50 mile radius.

The growing shortage of fuel material was largely responsible for transition (about 1870) from the pit method of charcoal production to the beehive oven method.

Stoutly constructed of stone or brick, and costing from \$500 to \$1000 each the kiln could be used indefinitely, and produced a much higher quality charcoal. One cord of greenwood yielded, by pit burning only 25 bushels of charcoal. Oven processed wood yielded from 38 to 48 bushels of good solid charcoal per cord. A kiln held 25 cords of wood and yielded from 950 to 1400 bushels per firing. Time for burning usually took 5 days.

Deep mining operations made necessary when surface ores played out were expensive, and the cost of charcoal increased steadily as the tree supply grew shorter and the distance for hauling wood grew greater. Eventually the transition to total use of coke was accomplished.

The empty ovens have often served as temporary storm shelters for man and for his livestock. But the primary value of the old charcoal ovens is their historical function serving as reminders of a now-vanished industry, without which the great silver and lead bonanzas of the early West could not have been harvested.

The Ward Charcoal ovens are considered Nevada's most outstanding and best preserved beehive ovens, and they are still in excellent condition. The immediate need is to restore damaged sections and prevent further vandalism. to these ovens.

The Ward Charcoal Ovens site was designated as a State Historic Monument on August 5, 1957. State Historical Marker #54 marks the Ward Mining District.

