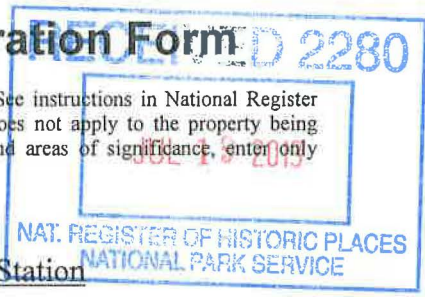


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United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form



This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in National Register Bulletin, *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form*. 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.

1. Name of Property

Historic name: Lower Trout Lake Bathhouse Complex and Contact Station

Other names/site number: N/A

Name of related multiple property listing:
N/A

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

2. Location

Street & number: Bald Mountain Recreation Area Entrance Drive, Bald Mountain Recreation Area

City or town: Orion Township State: Michigan County: Oakland

Not For Publication: Vicinity:

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 at the following level(s) of significance:

 national X statewide local

Applicable National Register Criteria:

X A B X C D

<u>Brian D. Murray</u>	<u>7/10/13</u>
Signature of certifying official/Title:	Date
<u>Michigan State Historic Preservation Officer</u>	
State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government	

In my opinion, the property <u> </u> meets <u> </u> does not meet the National Register criteria.	
Signature of commenting official:	Date
Title :	State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

Lower Trout Lake Bathhouse Complex and
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Michigan

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4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that this property is:

- entered in the National Register
- determined eligible for the National Register
- determined not eligible for the National Register
- removed from the National Register
- other (explain:)

Patrick Andrus

Signature of the Keeper

9/3/2013

Date of Action

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

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Number of Resources within Property

(Do not include previously listed resources in the count)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
<u>5</u>	<u>0</u>	buildings
<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	sites
<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	structures
<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	objects
<u>5</u>	<u>0</u>	Total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register N/A

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions

(Enter categories from instructions.)

Recreation/Outdoor Recreation

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions.)

Recreation/Outdoor Recreation

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7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions.)

Modern Movement

Materials: (enter categories from instructions.)

Principal exterior materials of the property: concrete, copper, wood

Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current physical appearance and condition of the property. Describe contributing and noncontributing resources if applicable. Begin with a **summary paragraph** that briefly describes the general characteristics of the property, such as its location, type, style, method of construction, setting, size, and significant features. Indicate whether the property has historic integrity.)

Summary Paragraph

The Lower Trout Lake Bathhouse Complex and Contact Station includes five Mid-Century Modern resources, located on two separate land parcels, in the same section of the Bald Mountain Recreation Area in Orion Township. The Lower Trout Lake Bathhouse Complex and Contact Station was designed in the mid-1960's by internationally renowned Michigan architect Gunnar Birkerts. The larger of the two parcels of land contains a bathhouse complex of four closely spaced circular buildings – Men's and Women's Bathhouses, a Concession Stand, and a Pump House – all grouped within a large circular pad of concrete pavement set back from the beach at Lower Trout Lake. The nomination also includes a small round contact station or "control booth" located about one mile away to the southwest on the entrance road into this southern section of the Bald Mountain Recreation Area. The buildings are closely related by their circular forms, concrete construction, and, before vandals stripped them, copper roofs.

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Narrative Description

The Bald Mountain Recreation Area (Recreation Area) runs non-continuously from a northern point at Lake Orion to a southern point at Lower Trout Lake. The Recreation Area consists of 4,637 acres with a number of camping, fishing, and picnicking locations. It is located in northern Oakland County just south of the city of Lake Orion and northwest of Pontiac, about thirty miles north-northwest of downtown Detroit. The nominated properties are located on one of the southernmost parcels of park land within the Recreation Area. They are situated southwest of Lower Trout Lake and are one of the more recent additions to the greater Bald Mountain Recreation Area, purchased by the state park system in the 1950's. Originally the property was located in a fairly rural area, with rolling topography caused by glacial deposits. The land had been used historically as farms with natural wetlands interspersed around the fields. Today, the area has become much more suburbanized.

The Lower Trout Lake Bathhouse Complex and Contact Station's five buildings are located in the Trout Creek section of the Bald Mountain Recreation Area. One of the structures is located independently of the other four, to the southwest along the park's drive, near the park entrance along M-24 (South Lapeer Road). The remaining four structures are located in an axial configuration set back from the southern shores of Lower Trout Lake. The five structures were commissioned by the Michigan Department of Conservation, during the Mission 66 era, in 1964 and were completed in 1969. The facility was designed by world renowned architect Gunnar Birkerts and his firm Gunnar Birkerts & Associates of Birmingham, Michigan. The intent behind the design of the structures was to blend them organically into the topography of the landscape to give the structures a sense of permanence, as if they were natural formations within the landscape.

Each of the five buildings was formed from patterned, cast-in-place, reinforced concrete and was originally covered with a lumber framed copper roof and stands on a 4" thick, slab on grade, concrete pad. The sizes of the buildings range from approximately 1,200 square feet to 225 square feet and they have had few alterations. The concrete forms were made from exposed grain lumber which stamped their wood grain patterns into the concrete as it was cast. The end result created unique textured imprints along the entire expanse of interior and exterior wall surfaces.

Contact Station

The Contact Station is located at a separate location, approximately one mile away from the other four buildings and is situated at the entrance of the Trout Creek Section of the Bald Mountain Recreation Area, just east of M-24, on Bald Mountain Recreation Area Entrance Drive. The contact station has been used as the ticketing structure for visitors to gain access to the park since its initial construction and has not been used for any additional purpose. Its organic, circular shaped design occupies an approximate 58.5 square feet and is 18' 10" in height. The walls have been formed from cast-in-place molded concrete six inches thick.

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The floor is a 4" thick slab on grade poured concrete floor that continues beyond the exterior walls to form an apron around the structure. The apron is etched with a lineal arrayed pattern with the same center point as the Contact Station structure. The truncated cone roof was built using 2x8 red cedar rafters exposed on the interior and faced in copper on the exterior. It has a multi-sided flat-roof overhang around the circumference of the structure which reaches to 4' 10" at its widest point on the north, drive-up side elevation. The flat-roof overhang is much narrower on the south side. The roof overhang's underside is finished with 2x6 oak boards stained light oak. The entire roof is covered by a standing seam copper roof with the seams aligned with the centers of the rafters and has a 1' 4" cap. The Contact Station is the only building, of the five nominated, to retain its roof's entire original copper finish. The Contact Station was designed with five double hung plexi-glass windows 8' 0" in height and 1' 6" in width with fixed upper sashes along the north facing exterior walls. The upper transoms are 4' 6" from top to bottom and all five are missing their fixed plex-glass window panes. Instead, the entire expanse of the 8' 0" tall windows has been covered with brown painted plywood. The plywood coverings are hinged in the middle with piano hinges that work like Bahama shutters. They have fixed transoms on top and functioning shutters at the bottom to let in light and allow the lower sashes to continue to open and close. All five lower sashes still possess their original moveable plexi-glass panes. The door into the Contact Station is original with its original escutcheon and a newer replacement pull. The door was originally stained but has been painted over time to match the plywood wood coverings. The interior of the Contact Station still retains its original built-in desk, complete with angled drawer and original pull. Very little damage has been done to this structure. There are three points of cracking within the concrete pad, two inside the Contact Station and one within the south side of the exterior apron surrounding the building, due to settling. All of the original interior and exterior lights are still functioning and in place.

Bathroom Complex

The Bathroom Complex is comprised of four nearly circular buildings – a Pump House, Men's and Women's Bathhouses, and a Concession Stand. The Bathroom Complex fronts north on a sandy beach approximately 1,000 feet wide, with grassy lawn behind the beach sloping up to the level of concrete pad on which the Bathroom Complex stands. The four buildings are set back about 125 feet from the south shore of Lower Trout Lake, in an axial configuration, on a 4" thick circular concrete pad, that was replaced once in 1990 due to the concrete popping up because the original clay base was never properly prepared. The original concrete pad had a lineally arrayed pattern scored into it. The Bathroom Complex's southern border is lined with a lightly forested edge along a slight incline. Denser woods are located further to the north, across Lower Trout Lake, as well as to the east and west, behind the Recreation Complex. A curving concrete path leads southwest to a paved parking area, originally designed to hold approximately 410 cars.² To the north of the Bathroom Complex, a grass lawn slopes down to the southern shore of the sixty-five-acre Lower Trout Lake. Picnic tables are dispersed randomly across the lawn and playground equipment is located to the northwest of the Bathroom Complex.

Pump House

The Pump House is located within the group of four structures along the south side of Lower Trout Lake. It is the southernmost structure of the four along the lake, an approximately 88.2 square foot circular structure that is 14' 10" tall. The truncated cone roof was formed from 2x10 red cedar rafters, set at a thirty degree slope, with a

² Michigan Department of Natural Resources, Bald Mountain Working File, Bald Mountain Recreation Area, Trout Creek Section

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9'-0" overhanging eave around the circumference of the structure. The roof overhang is left open across the soffit with no finishing treatment, exposing the rafters. The entire roof was covered by a standing seam copper roof with the seams aligned with the centers of the rafters. However, vandals have since stolen the original roofing and the roof is now covered in asphalt shingles with a cedar shingle fascia. The structure was originally designed to be encased in fourteen locker towers 6' 0" high with five 12" x 12" lockers. The lockers have since been removed from the exterior of the structure by vandals. Perforation holes where the lockers were once fixed to the exterior walls have not been filled in and are still visible. The interior of the structure was designed to hold plumbing equipment and function as a pump room, but upgrades to the facilities' plumbing have negated the necessity for the pump room and the plumbing from the structure has been removed. The structure has been used over the past few seasons as a boat rental facility and storage. The original door is still in place with original pull and escutcheon. The door was once flanked by two pay phone niches 2' 8" wide by about 2' 0" deep at their greatest depth. Both the phones and electrical have been removed and only the easternmost telephone shelf still remains. There are a few spots on the pump house's exterior that have been painted with grey paint to cover up graffiti, but the structure is in extremely sound shape with very little damage and no signs of cracking concrete or other signs of wear.

Men's Bathhouse

The Men's Bathhouse is also within the group of four structures along the south side of Lower Trout Lake, standing about 28' 0" northwest from the Pump House. It is the westernmost structure of the four along the lake and is a grouping of three circular structures clustered together. The three structures house the showers, a changing room, and restrooms that together create a building of approximately 1,962 square feet with 7' 10-5/8" high walls. The floors of all three spaces have lineal patterns etched into the concrete pad, the changing room a more complex lineal array than the other rooms and hallway into the structure. A long and curving corridor provides privacy for the otherwise open bathroom facility. The hall opens into an almost foyer-like space that gives entrance to the changing room to the left, shower room to the right, and restroom spaces in a more enclosed space straight ahead.

The dressing room is directly across from the shower room. The exterior wall is lined with 4" thick concrete privacy partitions. The concrete partitions are offset away from the exterior wall and form pie shaped cubbies, 7' 6" wide by 7' 6" deep, around the north half of the room. The partition walls are cast-in-place poured concrete and pierce through the exterior walls about 2". Some of the interior walls have been victim to graffiti and have since been painted over with grey paint. Within each individual partitioned changing room is a small circular stool made of cast-in-place poured concrete 1' 6" in diameter and 18" tall. Seven larger cast-in-place poured concrete stools, with bases 8" tall/1' 6" in diameter and seats an additional 8" tall/3' 0" in diameter, have also been arrayed around the center of the greater changing room area. There are a few minor stress cracks located along the floor and throughout some of the partition walls, but otherwise the structure remains in excellent condition.

At the end of the corridor is the restroom area. The circular restroom section is divided in half about a central core storage room, separating it into two individual rooms with separate entrances. One entrance coming from the hall connects jointly to the changing and shower rooms on the north side of the structure. The only access to the storage room inside the central core of the building is in this half of the restroom. The second entrance is at the south side of the bathhouse and leads into a half of the restroom that is accessed independently from the rest of the bathhouse and does not connect into the shower or changing areas. The north side of the restroom holds

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three stalls, two urinals, and three sinks, while the south side holds four stalls, two urinals, and three sinks. The imprinted wood grain along the interior and exterior of the Bathhouse’s concrete walls is mimicked in the restroom stall doors in both sides of the restroom. The doors have been made from 2 inch wide pieces of oak fixed together and stained a light oak color. When all the stall doors are closed, it’s easy to see the repetitive wood grain pattern imprinted into the concrete that carries along the walls and across the doors of each stall.

Two of the three circular structures that make up the Men’s Bathhouse have no roof, while the third, the restroom structure, is the only one enclosed. The truncated cone roof was originally formed from 4x8 rafters that did not completely extend all the way to the building’s exterior walls. Instead, the roof ended 16” away and 6” above the exterior walls of the restroom structure, allowing 360 degrees of natural light within the space. In order to better protect the interior furnishings and fixtures from seasonal elements, and to discourage vandalism, the roof was fully enclosed in the 1980’s, after the majority of the copper had been stolen, by extending the rafters all the way to the exterior wall. In order to allow for the roof to be fully extended, concrete blocks were used to complete the restroom structure’s circular form at the building’s entry points and metal doors were installed for added security. Four skylights were also added to compensate for the loss of natural light, but were later covered over with brown painted plywood. All of the changes to the bathhouse roof were done by the Department of Natural Resources and Bald Mountain State Park staff; no architect was hired. Today the roof is set at an average pitch with no overhang and exposed rafters on the inside. The entire roof was covered by a standing seam copper roof with the seams aligned with the centers of the rafters. However, vandals have since stolen the original roofing and the roof is now covered in asphalt shingles.

Women’s Bathhouse

The Women’s Bathhouse is a mirror image of the Men’s Bathhouse within the group of four structures along the south side of Lower Trout Lake. Located about 28’ 0” northeast from the pump house, it is the easternmost structure of the four along the lake and has the same plan, features, and conditions as the Men’s Bathhouse with a few exceptions.

Additional vandalism within the women’s dressing room has had an impact beyond the graffiti found in the men’s dressing room. Of the seven large stools originally arrayed around the center of the greater women’s changing room area, only five of the stools are still in place. It appears that the two missing stools were either destroyed by vandals or deteriorated due to an error in the concrete casting process. There are a few minor stress cracks located along the floor and throughout some of the partition walls, but otherwise the room is in excellent condition. Both sides of the restroom building within the Women’s Bathhouse have no urinals, but the same number of water closets and sinks.

Concession Stand

The Concession Stand is the northernmost structure of the four in the Bathhouse Building complex. It is also a circular structure and contains four entrances, one to the east, one to the west, and two facing south. The interior of the Concession Stand is divided into seven rooms. The northern half of the building is divided into a kitchen space for the concessions to be prepared and sold. The kitchen area features built-in shelves with a wide countertop along the exterior wall. A series of six pass-through window openings are located above the countertop and are sealed shut with brown metal rolling shutters. Parallel to the built-in shelves along the exterior wall is a band of custom cabinets with spaces for fryers, a grill and soda fountain. The floors of the kitchen area

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are covered in red slip-resistant tile. A little over a third of the southern half of the structure is divided into a utility room and storage room, housing a large water heater. The southwest and east wedges flanking the utility space are divided into a concession manager's office on the southwest side and a completely separate first-aid room on the southeast side with its own private entrance along the eastern wall. A central core within is enclosed and divided in half, one side providing a restroom, the other side providing a mechanical closet for the furnace. There are only three interior doors within the Concession Stand, one leading into the manager's office, one leading into the bathroom and one leading into the mechanical closet. All of the interior lighting and wall sconces are original. The roof rafters are completely exposed on the interior with sixteen hopper windows that act as skylights arrayed along the entire roof where the exaggerated eave begins to pitch upward. The Concession Stand roof was also covered in flat seam copper with standing seams at the center of each roof joist; this copper has also been stolen by vandals. Instead of being covered in asphalt shingles like the other three buildings, the Concession Stand has yet to have a replacement roof installed. It still retains its original copper fascia.

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(CONTINUATION SHEET)

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

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

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

Criteria Considerations

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

- 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 old or achieving significance within the past 50 years

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Areas of Significance
(Enter categories from instructions.)

Architecture

Period of Significance
1964-1969

Significant Dates
1964, 1969

Significant Person
(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation
N/A

Architect/Builder
Gunnar Birkerts
Gunnar Birkerts & Associates

Statement of Significance Summary Paragraph (Provide a summary paragraph that includes level of significance, applicable criteria, justification for the period of significance, and any applicable criteria considerations.)

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The Lower Trout Lake Bathhouse Complex and Contact Station are significant under national register criteria A and C as Modernist structures unique within the Michigan state park system and inspired by the Modern architecture of the National Park Service's nationwide Mission 66 program. The buildings were designed by world renowned architect Gunnar Birkerts who is known for his high-style Modern structures. The Lower Trout Lake Bathhouse Complex and Contact Station's structures are examples of two complementary forms of Mid-Century Modern design: one, a style of park building known as Park Service Modern, made popular by the National Park Service and the Mission 66 program architects, the other, the distinctive architectural style produced by Gunnar Birkerts at the time, during the beginning of the busiest point in his career. The buildings are less than fifty years old, yet because of their unique design, association with a nation-wide program, and design by a master architect; they are eligible for nomination to the National Register of Historic Places at the State level.

Narrative Statement of Significance (Provide at least one paragraph for each area of significance.)

Michigan's first state park was established in 1895 when the former Mackinac Island National Park, containing military fort, grounds, buildings, and parkland, on Mackinac Island was taken over by the state and turned into Mackinac Island State Park. In 1909 Wawatam Park in Mackinaw City was added to the Mackinac Island State Park Commission's oversight and was renamed Michilimackinac State Park. Eight years later, Public Act 366 allowed another 200 acres near Interlochen to be added to the state's park land in order to preserve a stand of virgin pine. In 1919, Public Act 218 created a Michigan State Park Commission, responsible for acquiring additional park land and maintaining any parks acquired by the Commission. The Commission was appropriated \$150,000 and added 1,360 acres across twenty-two sites, in addition to the 200 acres of park land already acquired at Interlochen. It had been decided that Michilimackinac State Park would not be managed under the state's Parks Division.¹

The Michigan Department of Conservation (now known as the Michigan Department of Natural Resources or DNR), was first established in 1921 through Public Act No. 17, and all of the Michigan State Park Commission's responsibilities were transferred over to the Department of Conservation. An additional 2,333 acres and twenty-four sites were added to the previously acquired state park land. The Michigan Department of Conservation continued to progressively expand their interests, and by 1932 the state had acquired fifty-three parks across seventy-one sites with a total of 36,506 acres of land. With the establishment of federal New Deal programs like the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) in 1933, Michigan State development continued to surge.

¹ Michigan Department of Natural Resources, Bald Mountain Working File, History from Department of Natural Resources Bald Mountain Recreation Area file.

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With CCC funding the Michigan Department of Conservation completed 1,400 acres of improvements to state parks and reforestation of an additional 134,000 acres³ of land. The period of improvements lasted from 1931 until 1941, when the United States entered WWII. In 1943, at the request of then Governor Henry F. Kelly and well after the end of the federal CCC program, the Conservation Commission recommended obtaining an additional 100,000 acres of land in southeast Michigan. Three million dollars were appropriated for their purchase by the state Legislature and an additional \$600,000 in supplemental funds from the Game Protection Fund.⁴

As part of the southeast Michigan state park expansion, a master plan was developed in 1953 for acquisition of the Trout Creek section of the Bald Mountain Recreation Area by the Michigan Department of Conservation. At the time, the existing Bald Mountain Recreation Area, located seven miles north of Pontiac and east of M-24, contained 2,406 acres of land. The recreation area was divided up into two separate sections, one north of Stoney Creek Road and the other south and west of Paint Creek, east of M-24.⁵ The new plan focused on development around the Trout Creek valley. One element of the plan was to enlarge an existing pond on state land (now Upper Trout Lake) through removing peat deposits and constructing a dam, with the intent to increase useable shore frontage in the area. The other element was to purchase land east of the pond that included Tamarack Swamp. The Michigan Department of Conservation wanted to flood the swamp by constructing another dam, which would provide additional water recreation facilities⁶ and an approximately sixty-five-acre lake (what would be known as Lower Trout Lake). The new lake would be flanked by additional picnic areas with a headquarters building nearby.

The final master plan for the Trout Creek section of the Bald Mountain Recreation Area was approved by the Conservation Commission on March 14, 1955.⁷ The Michigan Department of Conservation projected that the entire expansion would be able to handle about 5,800 people at a time, 1,600 of whom would be utilizing the area that would later contain the Lower Trout Lake Bathhouse Complex and Contact Station. Originally, an estimated cost of \$875,000 was planned for the facility's construction, with the realization that final construction plans might alter that sum.

Mission 66

At the same time, while the Michigan Department of Conservation was making plans to improve Michigan state parks, the National Park Service launched its own park improvement program. The Mission 66 project was a federally funded program aimed at completing all of its goals by the National Park Service's fiftieth anniversary in 1966. It focused on improving aging national park facilities that had fallen into distress due to greatly increased visitation and deferred maintenance. After World War II there was a surge in visitors to national parks, the major contributor to much of the damage.⁸ The Mission 66 projects themselves began in 1956 and went

³ Michigan Department of Natural Resources, Bald Mountain Working File, Fiscal Year Program Descriptions 2002-2003, 6.

⁴ Michigan Department of Natural Resources, Bald Mountain Working File, History from Department of Natural Resources Bald Mountain Recreation Area file.

⁵ Michigan Department of Natural Resources, Bald Mountain Working File, Report to Accompany Preliminary Master Plan, Bald Mountain Recreation Area, July 1953, 1.

⁶ Ibid.

⁷ Michigan Department of Natural Resources, Bald Mountain Working File, Bald Mountain Recreation Area, Trout Creek Section.

⁸ Ethan Carr, *Mission 66, Modernism and the National Park Dilemma*, (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 2007).

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through 1966, spending more than \$1 billion on improving infrastructure, facilities and other elements within the parks.⁹

A main objective of the Mission 66 program was to update and streamline park facilities. Infrastructure, structures, and architectural features were all designed and constructed with the most advanced technology available at the time. One of the most important elements of the Mission 66 program was the invention of a new building type, the "visitor's center."¹⁰ The building type was developed by the Mission 66 program's architects to serve the large number of visitors coming to the national parks. Their primary functions were designed to provide administration offices, interpretation programs and exhibits, as well as visitor facilities. However, visitors' centers were not the only buildings constructed by the program, just the most publicized. Support structures like contact stations, bathhouses, and concessions stands were also added to facilitate the various amenities throughout the national parks.

Park Service Modern

The methodology of utilizing new technology in park development was carried over into the appearance of the park structures. The "Park Service Modern" architectural style became standardized throughout each of the national parks participating in the Mission 66 program.¹¹ Along with Cecil Doty, the primary architect for the Mission 66 program, leading Mid-Century Modern architects were commissioned to design many of the new facilities at national parks. Richard Neutra, Eero Saarinen, and Robert Alexander are just a few of the many. The new Modern facilities became a symbol of the improvements taking place within national parks and the fresh perspective of park service staff in resource interpretation and management. Each structure maintained its own unique appearance, with no specific aesthetic "style" carried throughout each of the parks. Instead, "Park Service Modern buildings exploited the functional advantages offered by postwar architectural theory and construction techniques."¹² The program encouraged architects "to take advantage of free plans (in which different functional spaces overlapped or were only partially divided), flat roofs (as well as other roof types), and other established elements of modern design in order to create spaces in which larger numbers of visitors could circulate easily and locate essential services efficiently."¹³ Concrete construction, prefabricated elements, and unusual sized, shaped, and placed windows were all elements frequently found in Park Service Modern architecture.¹⁴

In the end, the modern looks of the Mission 66 facilities were designed to act like flashy lures, attracting the public's attention and increasing attendance rates in parks across the country. Park Service Modern created a successful structural cohesiveness throughout the national parks that trickled over to the state parks as well.¹⁵ "The result was a distinctive new style of park architecture that amounted to a Park Service adaptation of contemporary American modern architecture."¹⁶

60-61

⁹ Ibid., 119

¹⁰ Sara Allaback, *Mission 66 Visitor Centers, The History of a Building Type*, (National Park Service, 2000) http://cr.nps.gov/history/online_books/allaback/vc.htm (accessed July 27, 2012), Appendix III.

¹¹ Ibid.

¹² Ibid.

¹³ Ibid.

¹⁴ Ibid.

¹⁵ Ibid.

¹⁶ Ibid.

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Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Gunnar Birkerts

At the time of the Lower Trout Lake Bathhouse Complex and Contact Station commission, Gunnar Birkerts was an established architect with his own office in Birmingham, Michigan. His story, however, began in Germany, where he attended Stuttgart's Technische Hochschule and earned degrees in architecture and engineering. Birkerts came to Detroit after graduation in 1949, looking for a position with Eliel and Eero Saarinen at their architectural firm in Birmingham, Michigan. After initially being turned down, and working with the architectural firm of Perkins & Will in Chicago, he spent many years working for Eero Saarinen, and later Minoru Yamasaki, being mentored and gaining experience before opening his own firm in the early 1960's. Gunnar Birkerts & Associates had an impressive portfolio of work, created without an established philosophy or dogmatic principles guiding Birkerts's designs. His concepts for the Detroit Institute of Art addition in 1962, his design for the 1300 Lafayette Apartments in Detroit (an addition to Ludwig Mies van der Rohe's Lafayette Park housing project) in 1961, and his Schwartz Summer Residence in Northville, Michigan in 1960 received numerous awards and were widely published. He was also named in *Art in America* as New Talent USA in 1962. When the Michigan Department of Conservation approached him, the momentum of Birkerts's career and his architectural firm was growing, while his reputation as an exceptional architect was solidly established.

Lower Trout Lake Bathhouse Complex and Contact Station Development

Gunnar Birkerts was approached to create the designs for the Lower Trout Lake Bathhouse Complex and Contact Station nine years after the land had been acquired by the Michigan Department of Conservation; the master plan had been approved in 1955. Birkerts believes that the State Architect, Adrian N. Langius¹⁷, recommended him for the commission.¹⁸ The Michigan Department of Conservation and the State Architect wanted Birkerts to develop a design for bathing facilities and support structures for the beach along the southwest side of Lower Trout Lake. The buildings needed to be strong and made from materials that would support permanent structures throughout Michigan's four seasons. By this time, Mission 66's Park Service Modern had become standardized throughout the national parks and had already come into use in state parks like the Roman Nose State Park visitors center in Oklahoma and Louis Kahn's Trenton Bathhouse in New Jersey.

Birkerts's plans included a Contact Station, Men's and Women's Bathhouses, a Concessions Stand, and a Pump House, all designed as a series of organically shaped pavilions. They are the first instance in which Birkerts expands his portfolio of work into the realm of the organic. Previously, he had been limited in his intellectual maturity to understand how to develop organic architecture.¹⁹ Up until his design for the Lower Trout Lake Bathhouse Complex and Contact Station his work was extremely linear, taking cues from the International Style and Brutalism, because, to him, they were easier to understand and execute.²⁰

In keeping with Mission 66 Park Service Modern design guidelines, each of the five structures was designed to require little maintenance, with interestingly shaped roofs, textured concrete walls, and using inexpensive yet

¹⁷ Adrian N. Langius was State Architect 1939-1971.

¹⁸ Gunnar Birkerts, (Architect), interview by Jessica Puff, "Gunnar Birkerts Interview March – June 2010," March 28 – June 9, 2010.

¹⁹ Ibid.

²⁰ Ibid.

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

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Lower Trout Lake Bathhouse Complex and Contact Station
Name of Property Oakland County, Michigan
County and State N/A
Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Section number 8 Page 4

durable materials to hold up against the seasonal weather changes and exposure to the elements. Concrete was the chosen material for casting the walls because of its strength and structural sustainability. The concrete was cast in wood forms, keeping the exterior clean without excessive ornamentation. The only decoration along the walls is the wood grain imprinted into the concrete when it set. Interesting shapes were created by the circular forms and the truncated roofs framed in timber and clad in copper. Many of these elements were repeated in a number of his future designs, but in more refined and less cost-conscious ways, and became indicative of Gunnar Birkerts' uniquely individual architectural style. The Freeman Residence (1965/66) in East Grand Rapids, Michigan and the Bardha Residence (1984-89) in Birmingham, Michigan are two such examples.

The Lower Trout Lake Recreation Complex and Contact Station is also perhaps the first appearance of Birkerts' architecture responding to the landscape. Birkerts has commented that the intention behind his design was to create a non-directional design, with buildings rounded in shape that would blend with the landscape and follow along the same axis as the tree line.²¹ His addition to the University of Michigan Law Library in 1978 took this idea to an entirely new level by physically submerging the structure underground, becoming one of the first underground structures of its kind, in Birkerts' recollection, to be designed and constructed in the world.²² And, his design of the Ferguson Residence (1980-1893) in Kalamazoo, Michigan demonstrates the variety of ways in which an architect can unify a design into the natural environment by constructing a house that mimics the hills on either side of it.

Construction on the Lower Trout Lake Bathhouse Complex and Contact Station began in 1964 and was finished in 1969. The buildings there have served continuously as park recreation facilities since their completion and follow in the tradition of the Park Service Modern style from the Mission 66 program while representing a style of architecture unique to Gunnar Birkerts. They are the first example of Birkerts' transition into organic architecture.

²¹ Ibid.
²² Ibid.

Lower Trout Lake Bathhouse Complex and
Contact Station
Name of Property

Oakland County,
Michigan
County and State

9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography (Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form.)

Books

- Allaback, Sara. *Mission 66 Visitors Centers: The History of a Building Type*. National Park Service, 2000. http://www.cr.nps.gov/history/online_books/allaback/vc.htm (accessed July 27, 2012).
- Birkerts, Gunnar. *Buildings, Projects, and Thoughts 1960-1985*. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan, College of Architecture and Urban Planning, 1985. Print.
- Birkerts, Sven, and Martin Schwartz. *Gunnar Birkerts: Metaphoric Modernist*. Stuttgart/London: Edition Axel Menges, 2009. Print.
- Carr, Ethan. *Mission 66, Modernism and the National Park Dilemma*. Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 2007.
- Kaiser, Kay. *The Architecture of Gunnar Birkerts*. Washington, D.C.: The American Institute of Architecture Press, 1989. Print.

Archives and Files

- Gunnar Birkerts. Gunnar Birkerts Papers, Bentley Historical Library, University of Michigan.
- Gunnar Birkerts. Gunnar Birkerts & Associates Papers, Bentley Historical Library, University of Michigan.
- Michigan. Department of Natural Resources. *Bald Mountain Working File*.

Interviews

- Birkerts, Gunnar. "Gunnar Birkerts Interview March - June 2010." by Jessica Puff. March 28 – June 9, 2010.

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested
- previously listed in the National Register
- previously determined eligible by the National Register
- designated a National Historic Landmark
- recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # _____
- recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # _____
- recorded by Historic American Landscape Survey # _____

Lower Trout Lake Bathhouse Complex and
Contact Station
Name of Property

Oakland County,
Michigan
County and State

Primary location of additional data:

- State Historic Preservation Office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other

Name of repository: _____

Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned): _____

10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of Property _____ About 12 _____

Use either the UTM system or latitude/longitude coordinates

Latitude/Longitude Coordinates

Datum if other than WGS84: _____

(enter coordinates to 6 decimal places)

- | | |
|--------------|------------|
| 1. Latitude: | Longitude: |
| 2. Latitude: | Longitude: |
| 3. Latitude: | Longitude: |
| 4. Latitude: | Longitude: |

Or

UTM References

Datum (indicated on USGS map):

NAD 1927 or NAD 1983

- | | | |
|-------------|-----------------|-------------------|
| 1. Zone: 17 | Easting: 317380 | Northing: 4733490 |
| 2. Zone: 17 | Easting: 317900 | Northing: 4734020 |
| 3. Zone: 17 | Easting: 318180 | Northing: 4734020 |
| 4. Zone: 17 | Easting: 318180 | Northing: 4733860 |

Lower Trout Lake Bathhouse Complex and
Contact Station

Oakland County,
Michigan
County and State

Name of Property

5. Zone: 17

Easting: 317890

Northing: 4733850

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

The nominated property includes two parcels located within the Bald Mountain Recreation Area in Orion Township, Oakland County.

Contact Station Parcel: Using the Contact Station UTM at the building's midpoint as the point of beginning for the boundary description, north 40 feet to Boundary's Point of Beginning; thence east along north edge of Bald Mountain Recreation Area Entrance Drive 75 feet; thence south 93 feet; thence west 230 feet; thence north 81 feet; thence east 155 feet to Boundary Point of Beginning.

Bathhouse Complex Parcel: A rectangular parcel 1000 feet in length east and west and 425 feet in width north and south on the west side (and slightly longer on the east because of the shoreline projecting a little further south), with corners marked by the four UTM references, excepting a small area north or offshore of the Lower Trout Lake beach off the west boundary.

Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected.)

Contact Station Parcel boundaries are drawn to include the entire contact station site, including the widened area of the entrance drive near the building.

Bathhouse Complex Parcel boundaries are drawn to include the open (unforested) area associated with the complex, lawn surrounding it, and beach, but excluding the parking area to the south.

11. Form Prepared By

name/title: Jessica Puff, Graduate Student, Historic Preservation Program

organization: Eastern Michigan University

street & number: 235 Strong Hall

city or town: Ypsilanti

state: Michigan

zip code: 48197

e-mail: puffj@michigan.gov

telephone: 616-460-2281

date: 12/21/2012

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

Lower Trout Lake Bathhouse Complex and
Contact Station
Name of Property

Oakland County,
Michigan
County and State

- **Maps:** A **USGS map** or equivalent (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.
- **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources. Key all photographs to this map.
- **Additional items:** (Check with the SHPO, TPO, or FPO for any additional items.)

Photographs

Submit clear and descriptive photographs. The size of each image must be 1600x1200 pixels (minimum), 3000x2000 preferred, at 300 ppi (pixels per inch) or larger. Key all photographs to the sketch map. Each photograph must be numbered and that number must correspond to the photograph number on the photo log. For simplicity, the name of the photographer, photo date, etc. may be listed once on the photograph log and doesn't need to be labeled on every photograph.

Photo Log

Name of Property: Lower Trout Lake Bathhouse Complex and Contact Station

City or Vicinity: Orion Township

County: Oakland

State: Michigan

Photographer: Jessica Puff

Date Photographed: March 5, 2012; April 5, 2012; and October 12, 2012

Description of Photograph(s) and number, include description of view indicating direction of camera:

- 1 of 30. Composition of Lower Trout Lake buildings looking southwest
Print_1_Lower Trout Lake Bathhouse Complex and Contact Station_Comprehensive
looking_SW.tif
- 2 of 30. Northwest Contact Station elevation looking southeast
Print_2_Lower Trout Lake Bathhouse Complex and Contact Station_Contact Station
Exterior_SE.tif
- 3 of 30. Interior Contact Station detail of desk looking west

Lower Trout Lake Bathhouse Complex and
Contact Station

Oakland County,
Michigan

Name of Property

County and State

Print_3_Lower Trout Lake Bathhouse Complex and Contact Station_Contact Station
Interior_West.tif

4 of 30 North Pump House elevation looking south

Print_4_Lower Trout Lake Bathhouse Complex and Contact Station_Pump House_
Looking S.tif

5 of 30 Exposed Pump House roof joist detail looking west

Print_5_Lower Trout Lake Bathhouse Complex and Contact Station_Pump House Roof
Joist Detail_Looking West.tif

6 of 30 Men's Bathhouse looking west

Print_6_Lower Trout Lake Bathhouse Complex and Contact Station_Mens
Bathhouse_Looking West.tif

7 of 30 Men's Bathhouse Hall looking northeast

Print_7_Lower Trout Lake Bathhouse Complex and Contact Station_Mens Bathhouse
Hall_Looking NE.tif

8 of 30 Men's Bathhouse changing room looking southwest

Print_8_Lower Trout Lake Bathhouse Complex and Contact Station_Mens Bathhouse
Changing Room_Looking SW.tif

9 of 30 Men's Bathhouse Restroom looking southwest

Print_9_Lower Trout Lake Bathhouse Complex and Contact Station_Mens Bathhouse
Bathroom_Looking SW.tif

10 of 30 Men's Bathhouse Restroom, stall door, looking south

Print_10_Lower Trout Lake Bathhouse Complex and Contact Station_Mens
Bathhouse_Restroom Stall Door_Looking South.tif

11 of 30 Men's Bathhouse restroom ceiling detail looking southwest

Print_11_Lower Trout Lake Bathhouse Complex and Contact Station_Mens
Bathhouse_Roof Detail.tif

12 of 30 West Women's Bathhouse Restroom looking southeast

Print_12_Lower Trout Lake Bathhouse Complex and Contact Station_Womens
Bathhouse_Looking SE.tif

13 of 30 Women's Bathhouse hall looking northwest

Print_13_Lower Trout Lake Bathhouse Complex and Contact Station_Womens
Bathhouse_Hall_Looking NW.tif

14 of 30 Women's Bathhouse changing room looking southeast

Lower Trout Lake Bathhouse Complex and
Contact Station

Oakland County,
Michigan

Name of Property

County and State

Print_14_Lower Trout Lake Bathhouse Complex and Contact Station_Womens
Bathhouse_Changing Room_Looking SE.tif

15 of 30 Women's Bathhouse changing room detail showing missing stools looking
northwest

Print_15_Lower Trout Lake Bathhouse Complex and Contact Station_Womens
Bathhouse_Changing Room_Missing Stools_Looking NW.tif

16 of 30 Women's Bathhouse shower room looking southwest

Print_16_Lower Trout Lake Bathhouse Complex and Contact Station_Womens
Bathhouse Shower Room_Looking SW.tif

17 of 30 Women's Bathhouse restroom looking southwest

Print_17_Lower Trout Lake Bathhouse Complex and Contact Station_Womens
Bathhouse_Restroom Interior_Looking SW.tif

18 of 30 Concession Stand looking south

Print_18_Lower Trout Lake Bathhouse Complex and Contact Station_Concession
Stand_Looking South.tif

19 of 30 Concession Stand eave detail looking northeast

Print_19_Lower Trout Lake Bathhouse Complex and Contact Station_Concession
Stand_Roof Overhang Detail_Looking NE.tif

20 of 30 Concession Stand storage room looking east

Print_20_Lower Trout Lake Bathhouse Complex and Contact Station_Concession
Stand_Storage Room_Looking East.tif

21 of 30 Concession Stand interior looking east

Print_21_Lower Trout Lake Bathhouse Complex and Contact Station_Concession Stand
Interior_Looking East.tif

22 of 30 Concession Stand interior looking northeast

Print_22_Lower Trout Lake Bathhouse Complex and Contact Station_Concession Stand
Interior_Looking NE.tif

23 of 30 Concession Stand hopper windows facing northwest

Print_23_Lower Trout Lake Bathhouse Complex and Contact Station_Concession
Stand_NW Hooper Windows_Looking NW.tif

24 of 30 Concession Stand typical wall sconce looking northwest

Print_24_Lower Trout Lake Bathhouse Complex and Contact Station_Concession
Stand_Wall Sconce.tif

Lower Trout Lake Bathhouse Complex and
Contact Station

Oakland County,
Michigan
County and State

Name of Property

25 of 30 Concession Stand kitchen looking northeast

Print_25_Lower Trout Lake Bathhouse Complex and Contact Station_Concession
Stand_Kitchen_Looking NE.tif

26 of 30 Concession Stand kitchen exposed rafter detail looking southeast

Print_26_Lower Trout Lake Bathhouse Complex and Contact Station_Concession
Stand_Kitchen_Exposed Roof_Looking SE.tif

27 of 30 Lower Trout Lake Bathhouse Complex and Contact Station typical wood print detail

Print_27_Lower Trout Lake Bathhouse Complex and Contact Station_Concrete Wood
Print Detail.tif

28 of 30 Composition of Lower Trout Lake Bathhouse Complex buildings looking northeast

Print_28_Lower Trout Lake Bathhouse Complex and Contact Station_Comprehensive
Looking NE.tif

29 of 30 Lower Trout Lake Bathhouse Complex Playground looking northwest

Print_29_Lower Trout Lake Bathhouse Complex and Contact Station_Playground
Looking NW.tif

30 of 30 Comprehensive composition of Lower Trout Lake Bathhouse Complex buildings,
beach, and playground looking southeast

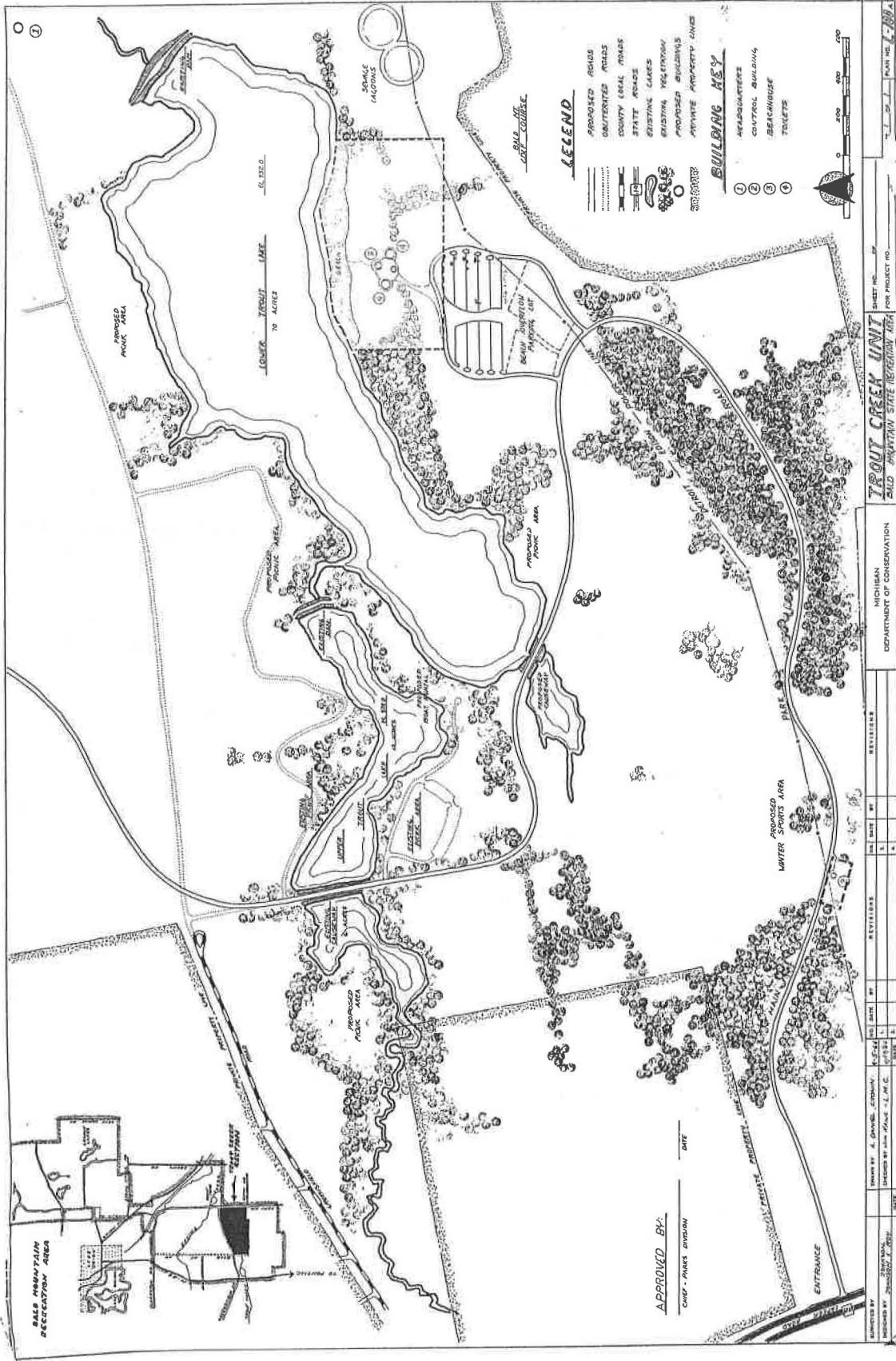
Print_30_Lower Trout Lake Bathhouse Complex and Contact Station_Composition
Looking SE.tif

Lower Trout Lake Bathhouse Complex and
Contact Station
Name of Property

Oakland County,
Michigan
County and State

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 100 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 Office of Planning and Performance Management, U.S. Dept. of the Interior, 1849 C. Street, NW, Washington, DC.



APPROVED BY: _____ DATE: _____
 CHIEF, PARKS DIVISION

REVISIONS	DATE	BY	REVISIONS	DATE	BY

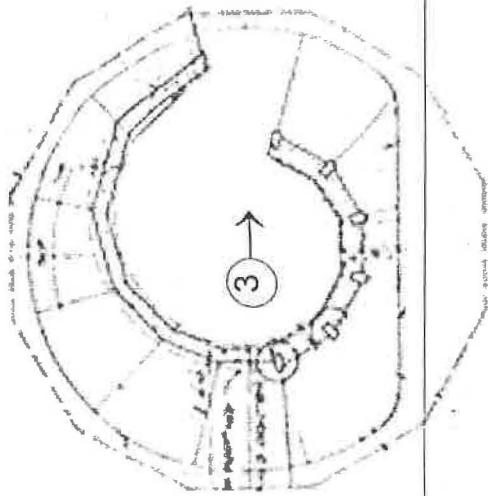
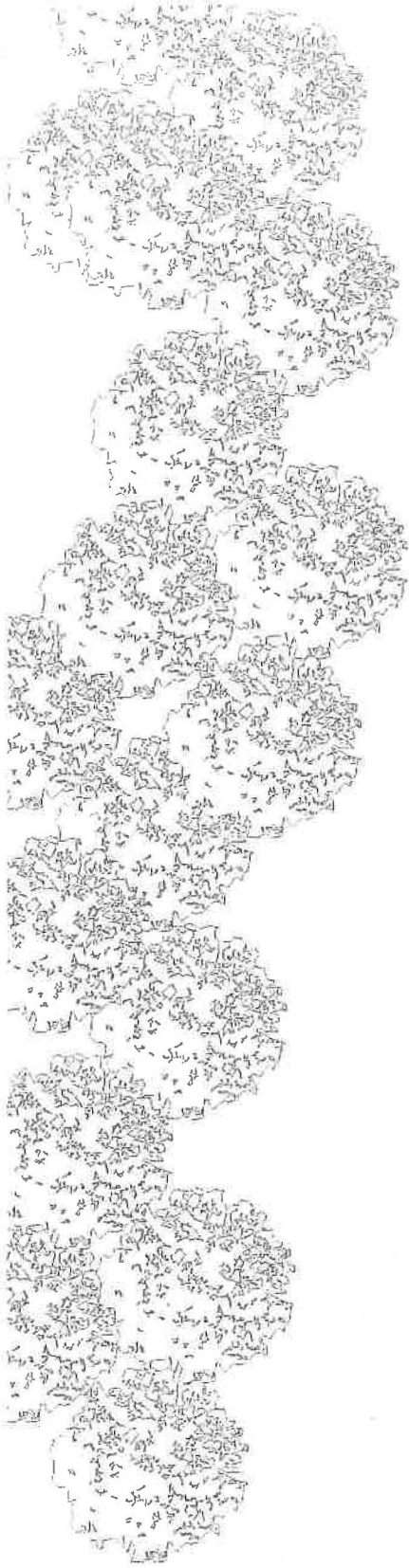
DESIGNED BY: J. M. C. DATE: _____
 DRAWN BY: A. DAVIES DATE: 10/15/54
 CHECKED BY: J. M. C. DATE: _____

MICHIGAN DEPARTMENT OF CONSERVATION
 TROUT CREEK UNIT
 BALD MOUNTAIN STATE RECREATION AREA

SHEET NO. 1 OF 1
 PLAN NO. 1-884

Site Plan Lower Trout Lake Bathhouse Complex and Contact Station Lake Orion, Oakland County, MI

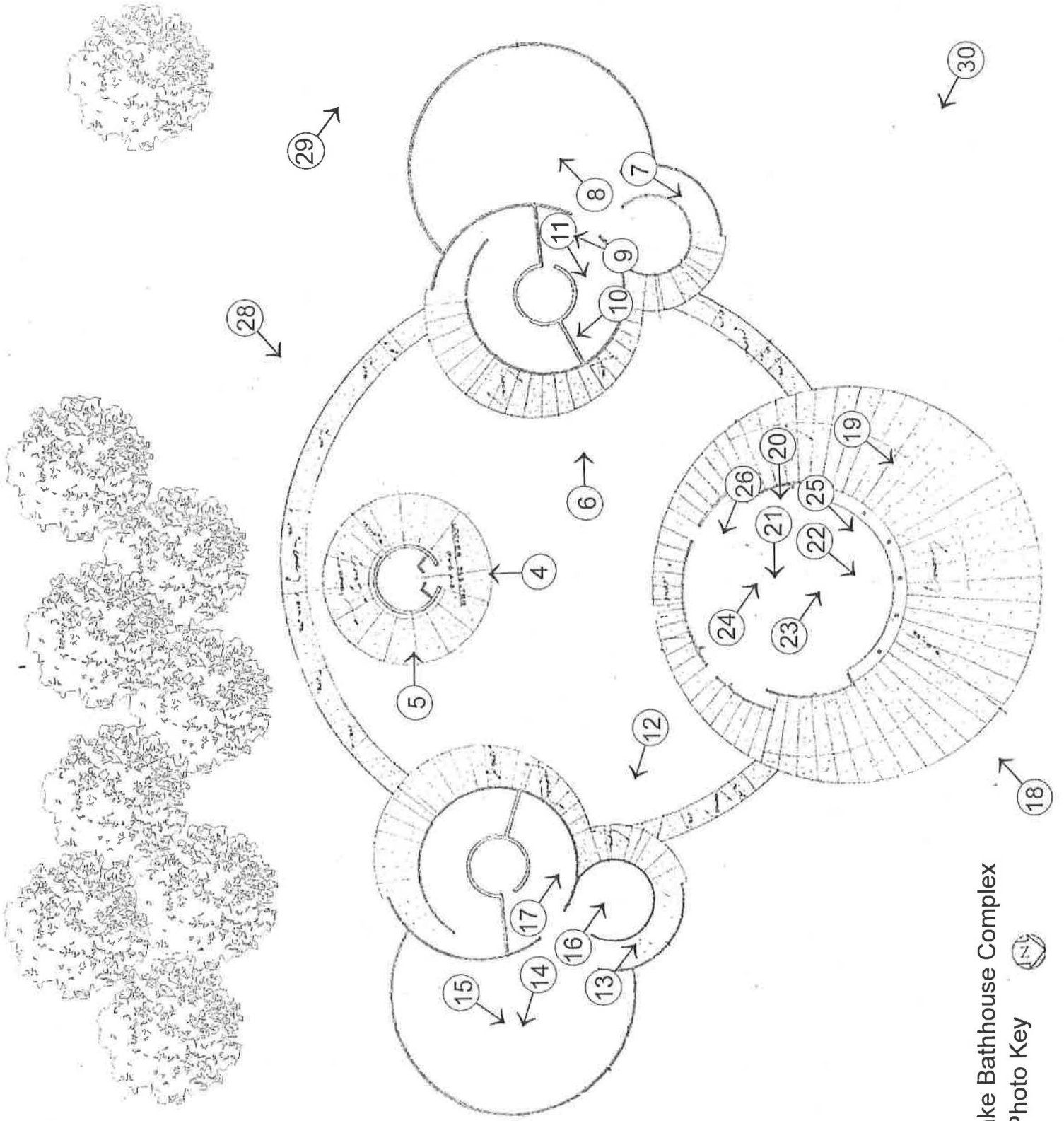
Key
 [---] Nomination Boundary



Lower Trout Lake Contact Station

Site Map and Photo Key





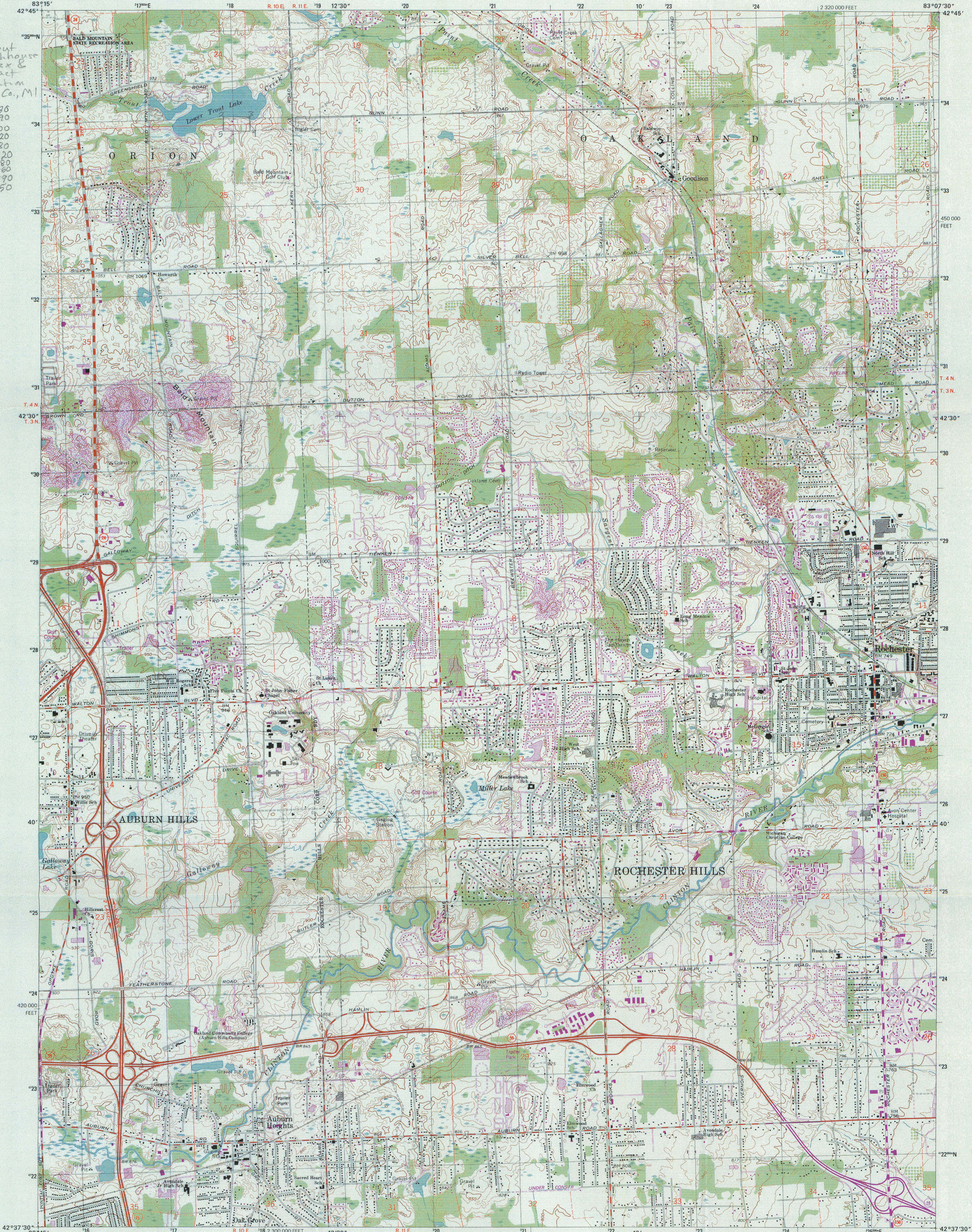
Lower Trout Lake Bathhouse Complex

Site Map and Photo Key



Lower Trout
Lake Bathhouse
Complex &
Contact
Station
Oakland Co., MI

- 1 17 317388
- 2 17 317900
- 3 17 318180
- 4 17 318180
- 5 17 317890



Produced by the United States Geological Survey

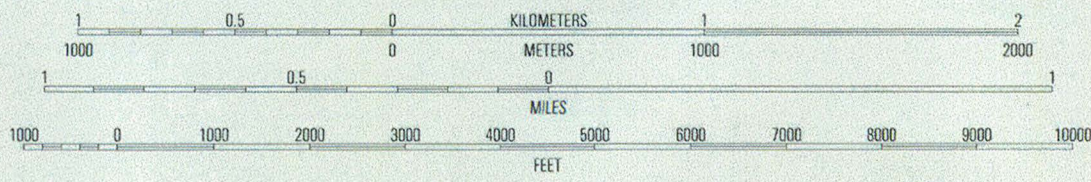
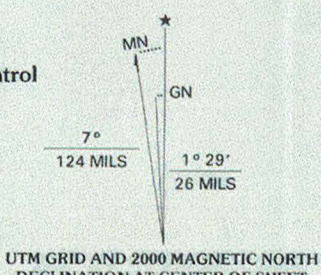
Topography compiled 1967. Planimetry derived from imagery taken 1981 and other sources. Photoinspected using imagery dated 1997; no major culture or drainage changes observed. PLSS and survey control current as of 1968. Boundaries, other than corporate, revised 2000

North American Datum of 1927 (NAD 27). Projection and 10 000-foot ticks: Michigan coordinate system, south zone (Lambert conformal conic)
1000-meter Universal Transverse Mercator grid, zone 17

North American Datum of 1983 (NAD 83) is shown by dashed corner ticks. The values of the shift between NAD 27 and NAD 83 for 7.5-minute intersections are obtainable from National Geodetic Survey NADCON software

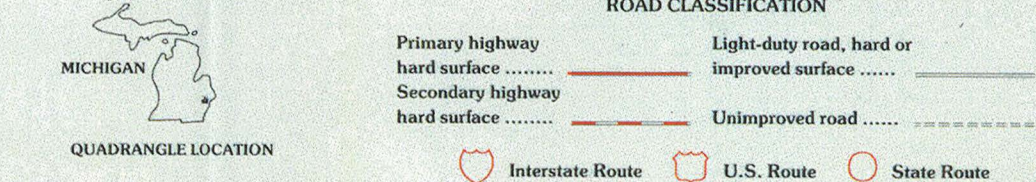
There may be private inholdings within the boundaries of the National or State reservations shown on this map

Information shown in purple may not meet USGS content standards and may conflict with previously mapped contours



CONTOUR INTERVAL 10 FEET
NATIONAL GEODETIC VERTICAL DATUM OF 1929
TO CONVERT FROM FEET TO METERS, MULTIPLY BY 0.3048

THIS MAP COMPLIES WITH NATIONAL MAP ACCURACY STANDARDS
FOR SALE BY U.S. GEOLOGICAL SURVEY, P.O. BOX 25286, DENVER, COLORADO 80225
AND GEOLOGICAL SURVEY DIVISION
MICHIGAN DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES, LANSING, MICHIGAN 48909
A FOLDER DESCRIBING TOPOGRAPHIC MAPS AND SYMBOLS IS AVAILABLE ON REQUEST



1	2	3
4	5	6
7	8	

- 1 Oxford
- 2 Lake Orion
- 3 Romeo
- 4 Pontiac North
- 5 Utica
- 6 Pontiac South
- 7 Birmingham
- 8 Warren

ROCHESTER, MI
1997

NIMA 4369 II NW-SERIES V682

RECEIVED
AUG 31 2000
USGS AND
HISTORICAL MAP ARCHIVES













BOAT RENTALS
248-421-3



MEN













WOMEN





































UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

REQUESTED ACTION: NOMINATION

PROPERTY Lower Trout Lake Bathhouse Complex and Contact Station
NAME:

MULTIPLE
NAME:

STATE & COUNTY: MICHIGAN, Oakland

DATE RECEIVED: 7/19/13 DATE OF PENDING LIST: 8/19/13
DATE OF 16TH DAY: 9/03/13 DATE OF 45TH DAY: 9/04/13
DATE OF WEEKLY LIST:

REFERENCE NUMBER: 13000670

REASONS FOR REVIEW:

APPEAL: N DATA PROBLEM: N LANDSCAPE: N LESS THAN 50 YEARS: Y
OTHER: N PDIL: N PERIOD: N PROGRAM UNAPPROVED: N
REQUEST: N SAMPLE: N SLR DRAFT: N NATIONAL: N

COMMENT WAIVER: N

ACCEPT RETURN REJECT 9/3/2013 DATE

ABSTRACT/SUMMARY COMMENTS:

RECOM./CRITERIA Accept A/c
REVIEWER Patrick Andrews DISCIPLINE Historian
TELEPHONE _____ DATE 9/3/2013

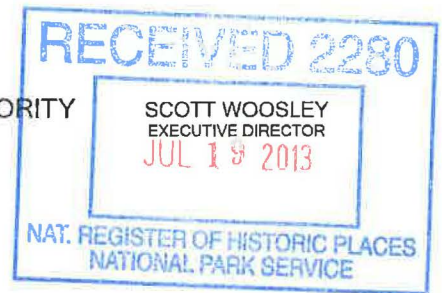
DOCUMENTATION see attached comments Y/N see attached SLR Y/N

If a nomination is returned to the nominating authority, the nomination is no longer under consideration by the NPS.



RICK SNYDER
GOVERNOR

STATE OF MICHIGAN
MICHIGAN STATE HOUSING DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY
STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICE



July 8, 2013

Ms. Carol Shull, Interim Keeper
National Register of Historic Places
National Park Service
1201 Eye Street, NW, 8th Floor
Washington, DC 20005

Dear Ms. Shull:

Enclosed is a national register nomination form for the Lower Trout Lake Bathhouse Complex and Contact Station in Oakland County, Michigan. This property is being submitted for listing in the national register. No written comments concerning this nomination were submitted to us prior to the submission of the nomination to you.

Questions concerning this nomination should be addressed to Robert O. Christensen, national register coordinator, by phone at 517/335-2719 or email at christensenr@michigan.gov.

Sincerely yours,

Brian D. Conway
State Historic Preservation Officer