

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Registration Form

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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 Linoma Beach

Other names/site number NeHBS #SY00-113

2. Location

Street & number 17106 South 255th Street Not for publication

City or town Gretna Vicinity

State Nebraska Code NE County Sarpy Code 153 Zip code 68028

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1986, as amended, I hereby certify that this 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 meets does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant nationally statewide locally. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of certifying official

Date

Wendell Sommer
Director, Nebraska State Historical Society
State or Federal agency and bureau

1/21/03

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

Signature of certifying official/Title

Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby, certify that this property is:

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): _____

Elsa A. Beall 3.11.03

[Signature]
Signature of Keeper

Date of Action

Linoma Beach

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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

(Do not include previously listed resources in the count.)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
6	4	Buildings
1		Sites
		Structures
2		Objects
9	4	Total

Name of related multiple property listing

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

N/A

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

N/A

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions

(Enter categories from instructions.)

RECREATION AND CULTURE: outdoor recreation

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions.)

RECREATION AND CULTURE: outdoor recreation

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions.)

NO STYLE

Materials

(Enter categories from instructions.)

Foundation STONE

Walls WOOD: Plywood

Roof METAL

Other _____

Narrative Description

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

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.
x 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.)

Property is:

- 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.

Narrative Statement of Significance

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

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions.)

ENTERTAINMENT/RECREATION

ARCHITECTURE (lighthouse only)

Period of Significance

1924-1953

Significant Dates

1924, 1939

Significant Person

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above.)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

Stanley W. Thornton

9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography

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

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 #

Primary location for additional data:

- X State Historic Preservation Office
Other State agency
Federal agency
Local Government
University
Other
Name of repository:

Linoma Beach

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10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of property Approximately fifty-nine acres.

UTM References (place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet).

	Zone	Easting	Northing		Zone	Easting	Northing
1.	14	725390	4549300	2.	14	725495	4548890
3.	14	725585	4548690	4.	14	725200	4548670
5.	14	724935	4548910				

[] See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

(Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

Boundary Justification

(Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Greg Miller, Preservation Historian

organization Nebraska State Historical Society

date August 2002

street & number 1500 R Street

telephone (402) 471-4787

city or town Lincoln

state NE

zip code 68501

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

Continuation Sheets

Maps

A **USGS map** (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.

A **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

Photographs

Representative **black and white photographs** of the property.

Additional items

(Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items.)

Property Owner

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

name/title Randy and Jody Beach

street & number 300 West 23rd St.

telephone (402) 721-1190

city or town Fremont

state NE

zip code 68025

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determined 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, (15 USC 470 et seq.).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including the time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Project (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

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Linoma Beach is located in Sarpy County on the north side of the Platte River in eastern Nebraska. Using an existing sand pit as its focal point, the recreation area opened in 1924. Over the years the approximately fifty-nine acres that constitute Linoma Beach and the associated built environment has experienced a number of architectural and landscape changes. However, the majority of these changes have taken place within the period of significance and Linoma Beach retains very good historic integrity.

Linoma Beach is located about four miles northeast of Ashland and thirty miles from both Lincoln and Omaha. The recreation area is bounded by the Platte River on the southwest; Nebraska Highway 6 on the northwest; 255th Street (which remains a gravel road) on the northeast and east; and agricultural land on the southeast.

From a distance Linoma Beach is indistinguishable from the surrounding tree lined banks of the Platte River. Upon entering the property, however, one discovers a unique landscape. The apparent natural environment takes on a totally different character. Roads, buildings, a beach, and camping sites are evidence this is a secluded, man-made recreation area.

The entrance to Linoma is on its northeast side just off 255th Street. The entry road leads to a graveled parking lot divided by a row of deciduous trees. On the perimeter of the parking lot, located clockwise from northwest to southwest, is a c.1950s one-story, side gabled, wood-frame house (contributing building), c.1960s metal storage shed (noncontributing), and a c.1910s one-and-one-half story house that has been converted into a restaurant (contributing building). The original house appears to have been constructed of formed concrete block. One-story, wood-frame additions have been built on all four sides over the years. The south façade also has an open pavilion addition. Just to the south of the pavilion is a modern storage shed (noncontributing). Finally, there is a concrete block bathhouse (contributing building) originally constructed in 1923-1924. This structure has also been altered by the adoption of a wood-frame second story and an attached concession stand area. These additions took place within the period of significance. Located to the southwest of the parking lot is the main sand beach. This area is separated from the rest of the facility by a chain link fence. The only public access to the beach is through the bathhouse.

Continuing southeast from the parking lot, the private Linoma Beach road (bounded on the exterior by a chain link fence that surrounds most of the recreation area) passes through an electric security gate with an adjoining attendant's booth. This entrance leads to the campground. Through the gate and immediately east are ten rental spaces for overnight camping. West of the road is a modern storage shed (noncontributing) and a c.1940s cabin (contributing building). This utilitarian cabin has a shed roof porch. Maintaining a southeasterly course the road passes by seasonal rental spaces with the lake front lots on the west side. Before turning almost due west, a "Y" intersection divides the road. One spur branches off in a northwesterly direction on a peninsula in the lake. This dead end portion of the road is flanked on either side by lakefront rental spaces.

Rental spaces are located on either side of the main road. Turning northwest the road continues around the lake, again flanked by seasonal rental spaces and a c.1960s cement block shower and restroom facility (noncontributing). This stretch of road runs parallel to the Platte River. As the road nears Highway 6, the northwesterly boundary of Linoma Beach, it divides into several separate lanes that converge on a loop guiding traffic back toward the previously traveled route.

The lighthouse (contributing building) and surrounding walls (contributing object) are immediately adjacent to Nebraska Highway 6 right-of-way. Set on an irregular concrete platform, sandstone walls, constructed in 1933, run along the lakefront and highway side. Historically, the walls were not only decorative, but served a functional purpose. The

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walls provided a divided space that allowed for parking and two exits to the lake area. Eventually, these walls completed a designed layout that included the lighthouse.

Completed in 1939, the base of the lighthouse is an octagonal shaped building that originally housed a filling station. The concrete block building sits on a poured concrete base and is faced with the same type of sandstone used in the construction of the surrounding walls. There are two entry doors—one facing northwest, the other northeast. While the most easterly facing façade is solid stone the other five sides feature metal palladian windows.

The lighthouse is constructed of wood frame with metal cable supports. The plywood-covered exterior is painted white with LINOMA spelled out in black letters. Observation decks are located on the second and tenth-stories. Each has a surrounding metal railing and a pressed metal floor. The top (tenth) story observation deck encompasses a metal cage that once housed the lighthouse beacon. The lighthouse is topped with a wood-frame dome encased with a metal covering.

The interior centers around a central wooden spiral staircase that extends from the basement to the top observation deck. On the ground floor (filling station) the staircase is flanked on either side by a restroom. The succeeding floors have rooms off the staircase. The room on the second floor has a toilet, stove piping, windows, and a sprinkler system. While the remaining eight rooms do not have toilets they do have piping of water and sewage, and stoves, a sprinkler system, and windows.

A fence separates the lighthouse and surrounding walls from Highway 6. Mixed in with newer materials is a portion of the heavy-gage chain link fence with reinforced concrete posts constructed in 1939 (contributing object).

The nearly oblong lake (contributing site along with the beach and islands) at Linoma Beach constitutes about forty acres of the entire fifty-nine acre recreation area. The sand beach and stone wall surrounding the lighthouse, which are the prominent features at Linoma, comprise a small portion of the shoreline. The vast majority of the shore consists of a water-eroded bank. The lake's bank gently slopes to the water's edge.

There are seven islands located in the lake. All are densely covered with trees and scrub growth. A log cabin (contributing building) is located on the largest island, which is located approximately in the center of the lake. It is unclear whether this c.1930 cabin was built on the island or moved there at a later date (*Gretna Guide and News*, July 1, 1981).

Given the nature of the on-going work at Linoma Beach exact dates for construction and additions are not readily available. However, by examining historical documents and contemporary newspaper articles it is possible to define parameters for periods of construction. As a result it can be stated, with a high degree of certainty, that most of the alterations to, and construction of, contributing resources were done during the historic period of significance and are sensitive to the overall historic character of Linoma Beach.

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Contributing and Noncontributing Resources

Linoma Beach includes nine contributing and four noncontributing resources.

Contributing Buildings:

Lighthouse

Restaurant

Concession/bathhouse

c.1930s cabin

c.1940s cabin

c.1950s staff rental house

Contributing Site:

Man-made lake and associated beach and islands

Contributing Objects:

Sandstone wall around lighthouse

1939 chain link fence and accompanying concrete posts

Noncontributing Buildings:

Three modern metal storage sheds

One modern concrete block restroom

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Linoma Beach, located on the north bank of the Platte River in Sarpy County, is significant at the local level under Criterion A for its association with the Historic Context: Entertainment/Recreation. From its inception in 1924 Linoma Beach has been a popular recreational destination. Located between Lincoln and Omaha on the original Detroit-Lincoln-Denver Highway (present-day Nebraska Highway 6) the recreation area drew visitors from throughout the Midwest region. The period of significance begins in 1924 when Linoma Beach first opened and ends in 1953, fifty-years from this nomination. Linoma Beach is eligible until 1953 because its significance is derived primarily as a tourist destination and resort, a function and use that survives to this day. This nomination includes one district containing one contributing site, six contributing buildings, and two contributing objects. The site consists of the lake and its associated beach and islands. The buildings include the staff rental house, the concession/bathhouse, the restaurant, the c.1940s cabin, the c.1930s cabin, and the lighthouse. The stone wall surrounding the lighthouse, and 1939 chain link fence and associated concrete posts are considered contributing structures.

The lighthouse is individually eligible at the local level under Criterion C. Constructed in 1939 it is significant as a unique example of roadside architecture that was popular in the first one-half of the twentieth century. Aside from being a tourist attraction the lighthouse also functioned as a filling station. Although the fuel pumps are non-extant the lighthouse retains a high degree of integrity and is an excellent example of an increasingly rare type of roadside architecture.

In 1907, the Lyman Richey Sand Company purchased land immediately adjacent to the north bank of the Platte River approximately four miles northeast of Ashland. After acquiring the land the firm began to quarry sand and gravel from this area. This process continued until about 1915. The quarrying resulted in the creation of small lakes fed by underground springs.

By 1924 the Lyman Richey Sand Company had sold portions of their land holdings to Lawrence Simpson and H. E. Schellberg. Together Simpson, who was president of the Chicago Lumber Company; and Schellberg, an executive officer with the Lyman Richey Sand Company, formed the Inland Development Syndicate. It was this organization that created Linoma Beach as a business venture. Situated halfway between Lincoln and Omaha, new recreation area derived its name from the first syllables of these two cities, "L-I-N-O-M-A".

Using an existing gravel pit left over from the previous quarrying, Simpson and Schellberg invested an additional \$10,000 to create a sand beach and construct associated recreational buildings. An article printed in *The Ashland Gazette* (July 3, 1924) went into detail about the creation of Linoma Beach. It states the sand pits were fifty- to sixty-feet deep and unsafe for swimming or boating. As a result, a 50-horsepower pump was installed to move about 30,000 cubic yards of sand in order to make a safe swimming environment. Additionally, a beach of clean white sand was constructed by pumping sand from the pit onto the shore. The beach, when finished, was over 100 feet wide and extended for 600 feet in a crescent shape around the lake. Aside from the beach, acres of picnic grounds were created.

The Detroit-Lincoln-Denver (D-L-D) Highway provided the main automobile access route to the recreation area. In addition to the D-L-D Highway Mr. Simpson began negotiations with the railroad to offer an alternative means of transportation to Linoma. A letter dated June 4, 1924 from the Chicago, Burlington & Quincy (C,B&Q) to Mr. Simpson addressed some of the necessary details. The C,B&Q agreed to stop at Linoma if a suitable platform was constructed and proper lighting provided at no expense to the railroad. Finally, the letter mentioned

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three trains would initially be available on both Saturdays and Sundays. A round trip ticket from Omaha to Linoma cost \$1.11, from Lincoln \$1.10, and from Ashland \$.22.

As for the buildings, *The Ashland Gazette* (July 3, 1924) noted "a model, sanitary bath house was constructed. Plate glass mirrors, electric lights, and many conveniences furnished the bathhouse". Additionally, the Inland Land Company converted an existing farmhouse (c.1910s) into a restaurant. This operation was then leased to a third party. The first manager was Al Jones a well-known cook from the Omaha area. The restaurant also provided room for dancing on a veranda that extended around the entire building. Finally, the upstairs of the restaurant served as living quarters (Letter L. Simpson to V.R. Proctor, September 3, 1924).

With most of the details complete, Linoma Beach celebrated its grand opening on July 4, 1924. An article published in a local newspaper the day before noted there would be "bathing, boating, fishing, and dancing." Chicken dinners for twenty-five cents, lunches could be purchased at the restaurant. The article also stated the area, aside from the beach, consisted of wooded land, meadow, and an island dotted lake. The newspaper account concluded by stating the recreation park could be accessed by the C, B & Q Railroad and the D-L-D Highway (*The Ashland Gazette*, July 3, 1924).

Although no attendance figures are available for the opening day, Linoma Beach seemed a popular destination. On July 11, 1924, *The Gretna Breeze* reported that not only was Linoma busy during the day, but that the "new pleasure resort near the Ashland bridge is drawing a large crowd nightly." The nightlife referred to in the article was aimed more at the dancing than the dinner crowd. To encourage this activity Mr. Simpson wrote Verne McDonald (Letter August 14, 1924) of Central City asking if he would like to construct and operate a dance hall at Linoma.

The year-end financial statement for 1924 indicates that Linoma Beach was indeed a popular recreation area. Beach admission, at twenty-five cents per person, shows total receipts of \$1,236; picnic grounds at ten cents per person netted \$144.40; swimming suit and towel rentals \$136.20; and boat rental totals of \$71.10 (no individual rate figures are available on the final two items), (Source: Inland Development Syndicate, Statement, December 31, 1924). Dancing in the restaurant, a favorite activity was free in 1924. In a letter to the *Nebraska State Journal* (July 10, 1924) Simpson, in an effort to gain additional advertising publicity, notes that Al Jones' new restaurant has "endeared itself to a good many hearts if return visits are any indication." He adds that the "colored orchestra, playing dance music every evening is indeed an added attraction and at least on some of the chilly evenings is proving itself to be the most popular part of Linoma Beach."

Following the success enjoyed by Linoma Beach in its inaugural year, 1925 saw additional changes. From a management standpoint the most important event was the dissolution of the Inland Development Syndicate and the creation of the Linoma Realty Company. This occurred in June 1925 when Lawrence Simpson bought out H. E. Schellberg, thus becoming the sole proprietor of Linoma Beach.

There were some physical changes as well. It appears that Mr. Simpson built a cabin for himself at the lake. Letters from Simpson to Atwood & Company (July 16 and 21, 1925) detail the construction costs. Also, since dancing was such a big attraction at Linoma, a dance pavilion was constructed. Newspaper advertisements indicate local bands played there on Wednesdays, Saturdays, and Sundays. Listening to the music was free, but dancing cost five cents.

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However popular this attraction was to the general public, it did create some problems. First and foremost was opposition to Sunday night dances by local religious organizations. An article in *The Ashland Gazette* (July 23, 1925) noted that Sunday night church attendance was down and intimated the Sunday night dances at Linoma Beach may be part of the problem. According to the newspaper account, correspondence between the manager of Linoma and the local clergy did not result in a mutually satisfactory solution. Consequently, three ministers from Ashland "visited the state house at Lincoln...and were informed that a Sunday night dance was recently brought under the observance of the law..." resulting in heavy fines. "At the attorney general's (sic) office they [the ministers] were informed that the law against Sunday night dancing was very strict." The article concludes with recognizing Linoma Beach as a fine recreation area and local attraction, but indicated the Sunday night dances must stop.

The solution to this issue came in the form of a letter (dated July 28, 1925) from the Linoma Realty Company to the Chicago Lumber Company. The letter states, "We have been advised that it is unlawful to conduct Sunday public (emphasis added) dances at Linoma Beach." The conclusion was that private dance clubs could rent the pavilion at the recreation area. This relieved the Linoma Realty Company of any legal liability while still generating revenue for Linoma Beach.

The following year Linoma Beach appeared ready to make some major changes. Letters between Mead Lumber Company of Ashland and Mr. Simpson (January 25 and 26, 1926) suggests there was a possibility of constructing a bunkhouse and some cottages at Linoma Beach. Since no further correspondence exists concerning this subject it apparently came to naught.

With the opening of the season in 1926, Linoma Beach again began advertising their dances as one of the main attractions. Knowing that visitors came for other reasons as well *The Papillion Times* (May 20, 1926) printed articles noting the good fishing at the lake. Additionally, Linoma was offering a "Camper's Card" which, for \$2.00, allowed a family a season-long pass to the entire park, with the exception of the "Bathing Beach." Similar articles and advertisements appeared in other local papers. In addition to mentioning the activities taking place at Linoma, most also took note of the availability of train service and especially the all graveled (D-L-D) road one could take to the recreation area. The 1926 season ended with a final dance on September 11.

In 1927 Linoma Beach continued to make small but significant changes and improvements in accordance with the needs brought on by the prosperity of the past three years. One of the changes that happened repeatedly was the transfer of the restaurant management. Al Jones, the original manager, ran into financial difficulties and voluntarily resigned (Letter A. Jones to L. Simpson, January 24, 1927).

In addition to a change in restaurant management, Linoma Beach, while still owned by Mr. Simpson, it was managed by Mr. G. L. "Life" Sandy. According to *The Ashland Gazette* (April 21, 1927) under Mr. Sandy's guidance Linoma would be an even more attractive and comfortable attraction. During the previous winter, underbrush was cleared away, ground leveled, grass planted, and seventy-five new picnic tables added. Mr. Sandy also ordered three hundred maple trees be planted to provide additional shade for visitors. The article concludes by stating that while the beach will not open until May 30 the opening dance would occur on April 30. Thereafter dances would be held every Saturday night during May, June, July, and August, and the pavilion could be rented on any other night for private dance parties.

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Despite the clean-up weed suppression was an on-going problem. In response Sandy came up with a unique solution. He brought one hundred sheep to Linoma to help rectify the problem. According to *The Ashland Gazette* (May 19, 1927) not only would the sheep help with the weed problem they also presented "a sort of picturesqueness" to Linoma.

While the sheep were an anomaly associated with Linoma Beach, there is a constant theme associated with the recreation area. Beginning with the opening day Linoma was always identified with the D-L-D (later Highway 38 and then Highway 6) Highway. Virtually every advertisement contained some reference to the highway. In 1927 newspaper ads also emphasized the location of Linoma Beach on the D-L-D. The importance of the route and its association with Linoma is described in a letter (May 24, 1927) from Mr. Simpson to the Omaha World Herald that provided possible advertising concepts. One suggestion by Mr. Simpson stated:

"There are so few beautiful spots within driving distance of Omaha that ever popular Linoma Beach would probably continue to be the objective of a great many week-end (sic) drives even if it weren't as attractive as it is...Linoma Beach is located on the D.L.D. highway (sic) at the Platte River,--just half way between Omaha and Lincoln. This excellent highway is one of the main Federal arteries and its being paved or graveled all the way insures the motorist of a pleasant Sunday's trip regardless of how the weather turns out."

In this one statement Mr. Simpson is promoting Linoma Beach while lauding the importance of the D-L-D Highway.

During the 1927 season, Linoma Beach continued to grow in popularity. As a result, internal and external forces began to generate new ideas for changes at the recreation area. The most noticeable modification suggested was the addition of permanent cabins. While Mr. Simpson had retained a cabin at Linoma since 1925, all other non-employee overnight stays were restricted to rented camping spaces. But some people were interested in a more permanent recreational retreat. In a letter dated August 24, 1927 Mr. George Lenhard, a bank official from Ashland, asked Mr. Simpson if it would be possible to lease some land at Linoma Beach on which to build a cabin for private use. Although Simpson did not accept the proposal (Letter, L. Simpson to G. Lenhard) he elaborated on the reasons behind his decision. Mr. Simpson states that he did not want cabins built on leased land because "in case of an opportunity to sell the whole place (Linoma Beach), entangling leases would make the conclusion of a deal very much more difficult." Still, the concept of having cabins at Linoma was not lost on Simpson. He goes on to say "in view of what might happen in the future, I think we should build our own stuff and rent it by the season at the longest, and my intention is to start early next season to construct some cabins..." as usual Simpson was thinking of Linoma Beach's future, either in terms of selling it or for improving the property. An indication of his intent to follow through with the building of cottages at the lake was the receipt of a number of brochures, in late 1927, concerning advantages and construction methods of cabin camps (Nebraska State Historical Society. Chicago Lumber Company Collection).

The 1928 season, which began with the first dance on May 12, opened with few noticeable changes. The most obvious change was the complete fencing-in of the recreation area. An article in *The Gretna Breeze* noted this fencing allowed Linoma's manager to charge a ten-cent per person admission fee on Sundays. The beach was open to the public on the remaining days with the usual use fees (boating, picnicking, dancing, bathhouse, etc.) still in place.

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While most people perceived business as usual at Linoma Beach, activities were transpiring behind the scenes. As Mr. Simpson suggested to Mr. Lenhard (Letter, August 26, 1927) he did indeed contemplate building cabins at Linoma, if not for the 1928 season, certainly at some point shortly thereafter. Records from the Chicago Lumber Company indicate Mr. Simpson continued to receive information about cabin construction and furnishing in January 1928. Included in this collection is material concerning bed mattresses, floor plans, and pictures of summer cottages. Additionally, there are a number of sketches showing floor plans, elevations, construction details, and a map showing potential cabin locations at the lake. Although there is no related correspondence this material (and the time frame in which it was received) is strong evidence Mr. Simpson was considering adding cabins to the recreation area.

As initial preparations began for constructing cabins, Mr. Simpson was exploring other options as well. Even as he contemplated improving Linoma, Simpson continued to consider selling the property. Referring to a previous conversation, a letter from Mr. F. E. Dinsmore (Letter, Dinsmore to Simpson, September 1, 1928) to Simpson asked if Linoma Beach was still for sale, and if so, at what price. While Simpson entertained the sale of Linoma Beach the Linoma Realty Company, under the direction of Mr. Simpson, owned Linoma Beach until 1955 when it was sold to the Chicago Lumber Company.

Without making any major improvements over the next few years, Linoma Beach continued as a popular recreation spot. Newspaper articles periodically reported large crowds at the beach, especially on holidays. An account in *The Ashland Gazette* (August 1, 1929) stated on one day the previous week 500 people used the bathhouse and an additional 460 utilized the picnic tables. This number was dwarfed by the 1,700 people who attended Linoma Beach on July 4, 1930 (*The Ashland Gazette*, July 10, 1930). Along with the traditional outdoor activities associated with Linoma, dances continued to be an ongoing attraction. By 1930, however, dancing at the beach's pavilion was limited almost exclusively to once a week.

The dwindling number of dances was an indicator of future changes at Linoma. On April 16, 1931 *The Ashland Gazette* reported the dance pavilion was demolished at Linoma Beach. According to the article, the realignment of the highway necessitated the dance hall's removal. The road construction that caused the dance pavilion's demise also resulted in an expanded beach area. According to the newspaper account, the newly configured beach would extend further south and east (where the dance hall was). The article concluded with a statement from Mr. Sandy that while the dance hall probably would not be rebuilt, within one year new and modern cottages would be constructed and available for rent. The dance pavilion's demolition ended an era at Linoma Beach that featured music and dancing as part of the main attraction. As from its inception swimming, picnicking, fishing, and boating once again became the recreational focus at Linoma Beach.

From 1931 through 1933, Linoma continued to prosper as a favorite recreation area. The destination remained the same but the preferred means of transportation, which was originally split between the railroad and the automobile, now tilted heavily in favor of the latter. The shift to the automobile occurred for several reasons. Generally, the popularity and availability of cars increased. By the late 1920s the automobile had progressed from a novelty or luxury item to a mainstay in American society. Affordable prices and improved reliability made the car an increasingly indispensable part of everyday life. The automobile also gave travelers a sense of independence. Rather than being tied to a train schedule, which dictated arrival and departure times, cars allowed travelers to come and go as they pleased. A family that took a car to Linoma Beach could determine their length of stay, rather than being restricted by the train schedule.

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As car usage and popularity increased, so did the nationwide demand for better roads. The good roads movement and the benefits better roads would bring to Linoma Beach was not lost on Mr. Simpson. From its inception, Mr. Simpson made a point of noting that Linoma Beach was on the D-L-D Highway, and that the D-L-D was an all-weather road. Any upgrades to the highway, especially concerning surfacing improvements, were always mentioned in regard to accessibility to Linoma Beach. This constant advertisement of the D-L-D encouraged visitors to arrive by automobile.

To accommodate the shift in increased vehicular traffic, Mr. Simpson altered the appearance of Linoma Beach. The changes, which occurred over a number of years, was first reported in *The Ashland Gazette* on October 19, 1933. In an article entitled "Many Changes Being Made at Linoma Beach" the newspaper noted ten men working on improvements "which will make this outdoor recreation spot one of the most beautiful and up-to-date in Nebraska." Plans included a "new front, a natural stone wall, a new building, and extensive paving." The account continues by stating "The wall, which is being built of natural sandstone will be 700 feet long, 10 feet high, and will extend out into the lake 20 feet." When completed the wall would be in the shape of a half octagon. Parking spaces will be marked off outside the two new gates, as well as along the paving on the waterfront."

The article goes on to describe the building planned for the site. "In the center of this paved space will be erected an octagon-shaped building 20 feet square, which will be topped with an 80 foot regulation lighthouse. The first story will be glassed in." There is, however, no explanation as to the function of the lighthouse or the building designed as its base. Irregardless, neither the building nor the lighthouse were constructed in 1933 when the aforementioned wall was completed.

The newspaper account concludes with a brief history of Linoma. "It is indeed interesting to watch the progress of the Beach from year to year. From treacherous sandpits, a wonderful bath beach was leveled off. The bathhouse and restaurant gave city facilities (sic), and the tables, charcoal stoves and other additions made the natural wilderness more convenient for picnickers. Brightly colored beach chairs and umbrellas gave the beach a smart appearance. The management is now having 100 tables built to increase the seating capacity to 5,000" (*The Ashland Gazette*, October 19, 1933). This unsolicited praise indicates the newspaper's perception of Linoma Beach's importance to the area.

Throughout the 1930s Linoma continued as a popular recreation destination. The frequently mentioned construction of guest cabins, however, never occurred. In fact, few if any noticeable alterations took place at the beach following the building of the sandstone wall in late 1933. In 1939, however, the lighthouse first mentioned publicly in 1933 was completed. The addition of the lighthouse was a significant change to the area landscape and along the route of the D-L-D, distinguished Linoma Beach. The lighthouse continues to be the resort's most recognizable feature.

On May 24, 1939 *The Ashland Gazette* reported on the new look proposed for the beach. The article mentions moving the main entrance to "complete the plans which were started some time ago (1933), utilizing the stone wall of natural rock." Additional wall construction will:

"form a modern, safe, and adequate entrance to the beach. The frontage will be 300 hundred feet wide and 126 feet deep, with the back stone wall measuring 113 feet in length. The entire area will be paved, and will lead off into two ramps through which motorists can drive into the beach grounds. One ramp will lead to the bathhouse, and the other into the picnic grounds. A

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distinctive aspect of the new entrance will be a landscaped 'island' which will front the entrance, and will be located between the paving and the entrance proper. This 'island' is designed to eliminated all hazards."

The latter reference reflects the importance of the highway as the main transportation route (rather than the train) to the beach and the dangers posed by the large volume of traffic at Linoma.

While these access changes were not necessarily minor the paper saved the biggest news for last. According to the article "The entrance will boast a new filling station, also (sic) which will be the finest between Omaha and Lincoln. It will be octagonal in shape, of glass and masonry. It will be completely air-conditioned, and will be open for year-round service." Sitting atop the filling station would be an 80-foot lighthouse. Conceptualized by owner Lawrence Simpson the design duplicated a similar lighthouse he visited while vacationing in the Caribbean. "The building will boast a tower which will rise 100 feet above the parking area. This tower will have a circular stairway and present plans are that it will be open to the public as an observation tower...The tower will be of steel lattice and stucco, octagonal in shape, and will be illuminated with floodlights."

Working from Mr. Simpson's proposed design, the lighthouse plans were drawn by Stanley Thornton (oral interview with son Stanley W. Thornton, July 10, 2002). Following his plans Mr. Thornton then proceeded to construct the tower that would top the already completed filling station. During the course of the next three months the lighthouse took shape. When completed, the lighthouse closely reflected the description provided by *The Ashland Gazette* (May 24, 1939). The base of the lighthouse is an octagonal-shaped building that originally housed a filling station. The tower is constructed of wood-frame with metal cable supports and a plywood-covered exterior. Observation decks are located on the second and tenth-stories. The top (tenth) story observation deck encompasses a metal cage that once housed the lighthouse beacon. The lighthouse is topped with a wood-frame dome encased with a metal covering.

The interior centers around a central wooden spiral staircase that extends from the basement to the top observation deck. The ground floor housed the service station. The succeeding floors have rooms off the staircase that could have been used for overnight stays. The room on the second floor has a toilet, stove piping, windows, and a sprinkler system. While the remaining rooms do not have toilets they do have piping for water and sewage, and stoves, a sprinkler system, and windows. Despite a lack of supporting documentation these fixtures strongly suggest the rooms were designed for overnight stays.

Since it opened in 1924 Linoma Beach has been a popular recreation destination. Centered around a man-made lake, Linoma provided a place where people could swim, boat, fish, and enjoy restaurant dining. Sitting adjacent to the Chicago, Burlington, & Quincy Railroad and the Detroit-Lincoln-Denver (D-L-D) Highway visitors could choose their mode of transportation. Initially, both the train and automobile were used extensively to reach the recreational site. However, as the car became the preferred means of transportation, Linoma Beach adapted to accommodate and attract more motorists.

The lighthouse is the most notable automobile-associated attraction at Linoma Beach. Constructed in 1939 the lighthouse served two functions. First, it was a filling station providing gasoline to automobiles on the D-L-D Highway. Just as importantly, however, it was a roadside landmark that motorists readily identified. The Linoma Beach lighthouse is significant at the local level under Criterion C for its association with Roadside

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Architecture. The lighthouse is an excellent example of an increasingly rare architectural resource and a unique structure in its own right in Nebraska.

Linoma Beach is eligible at the local level under Criterion A for its association with the significant Historic Context of Entertainment/Recreation. From its inception, Linoma Beach has been a popular gathering place. Before municipal swimming pools became commonplace, privately owned aquatic recreation areas provided a place to swim. Linoma Beach, however, went even further. Easily accessible by train or automobile Linoma not only offered swimming, but also fishing, boating, restaurant dining, dancing, and overnight camping. All these features made Linoma Beach a popular destination for outdoor activities.

The longevity of Linoma Beach is amazing. Today, people in our highly mobile society have many options when choosing recreation, from waterparks, fishing lodges, marinas, and campgrounds. Despite these many choices, Linoma Beach continues as a viable recreation destination. Very little has changed at Linoma Beach from its original function and design. The train no longer stops, but Linoma Beach is still accessible from the old D-L-D (Nebraska Highway 6). While seasonal rental spaces are primarily occupied by recreational vehicles, overnight camping is also available. The man-made lake and associated beach continues to accommodate swimming, fishing, and boating. The original restaurant and bathhouse continue to provide services to Linoma Beach guests. Linoma Beach is a unique resource, offering virtually the same services and environment as the day it opened.

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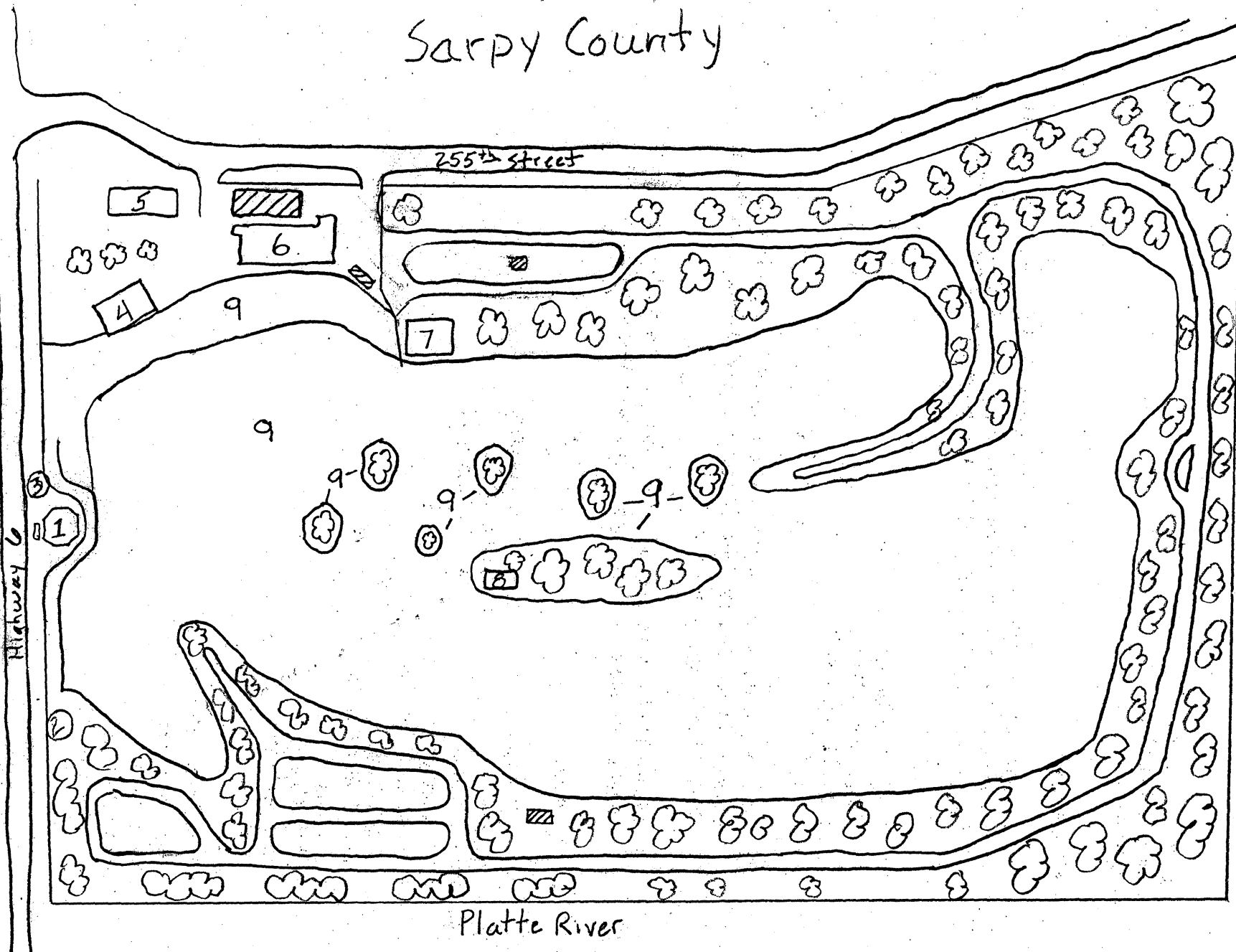
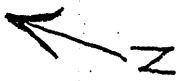
Verbal Boundary Description

Commencing on the Section line Twenty-two and Ninety-three Hundredths chains West of the South East corner of section Twenty-nine, Township Thirteen, North of Range Ten, and using the South Line of said Section as a base line, running thence North Thirty-four degrees, Forty-four minutes West Fourteen and five one hundredths chains, thence North Eight degrees, Two minutes West Twenty-two and Nineteen Hundredths chains to a point Thirty-two feet South of the South line of the B. & M. right of way; thence in a South Westerly direction parallel to and Thirty-two feet distant from the said right of way Twenty-seven and Forty One Hundredths chains to the East bank of the Platte River, thence in a South Easterly direction along said river bank Twenty-one and Ten Hundredths chains more or less to the South line of said Section Twenty-nine, thence East along said line Twenty-one and Nineteen Hundredths chains to the place of beginning.

Boundary Justification

The boundaries include the land associated with Linoma Beach's historic development.

Linoma Beach Sarpy County



- Contributing
 1. Lighthouse
 2. 1939 chain link fence
 3. Stone wall
 4. Concession/bathhouse
 5. Rental House
 6. Restaurant
 7. c. 1940s Cabin
 8. c. 1930s Cabin
 9. Lake and associated beach and islands

- Non-Contributing

✿ Trees, shrubs, misc. vegetation

Not to scale