UNIVERSAL STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM

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

1. NAME
   HISTORIC
   Siletz Agency Site
   AND/OR COMMON
   (Government Hill)

2. LOCATION
   STREET & NUMBER
   Siletz
   CITY, TOWN
   Siletz
   STATE
   Oregon
   VICINITY OF
   Vicinity of Siletz

3. CLASSIFICATION
   CATEGORY
   DISTRICT
   BUILDING(S)
   STRUCTURE
   SITE
   OBJECT
   OWNERSHIP
   PUBLIC
   PRIVATE
   BOTH
   PUBLIC ACQUISITION
   IN PROCESS
   BEING CONSIDERED
   STATUS
   OCCUPIED
   UNOCCUPIED
   WORK IN PROGRESS
   ACCESSIBLE
   YES: RESTRICTED
   YES: UNRESTRICTED
   NO
   PRESENT USE
   AGRICULTURE
   COMMERIAL
   EDUCATIONAL
   ENTERTAINMENT
   GOVERNMENT
   INDUSTRIAL
   MILITARY
   OTHER

4. OWNER OF PROPERTY
   NAME
   City of Siletz
   STREET & NUMBER
   CITY, TOWN
   Siletz
   STATE
   Oregon
   VICINITY OF
   Vicinity of Siletz

5. LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION
   COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.
   Lincoln County Courthouse
   STREET & NUMBER
   CITY, TOWN
   Newport
   STATE
   Oregon
   VICINITY OF
   Vicinity of Newport

6. REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS
   TITLE
   Statewide Inventory of Historic Sites and Buildings
   DATE
   1970
   DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS
   Parks and Recreation Section
   CITY, TOWN
   Salem
   STATE
   Oregon
   VICINITY OF
   Vicinity of Salem
The site of the headquarters of the Siletz Agency, is about 30 miles west of Fort Hoskins, in Lincoln County. Now known as "Government Hill," the site is located on a prominence in the community of Siletz which can be approached directly from the Fort Hoskins site over a somewhat tortuous yet scenic route, half of which is not paved. This road follows essentially the course of the pack trail established to supply the Agency.

A blockhouse was erected in 1856 to protect employees of the Siletz Agency. Army Lieutenant Philip Sheridan commanded the work detail for the blockhouse and the construction of a supply road between Fort Hoskins and Siletz. The next year the Agency was permanently relocated at Government Hill. In 1857, the blockhouse was dismantled, floated six miles down the Siletz, and reassembled within 200 to 300 yards of the Agency. Royal A. Bensell Journal describes the blockhouse as being 40 feet square with four windows 22 inches square.

In 1885 a two story boarding house, a ten room schoolhouse, a barn and Commissary store, a two story office building for the agent commissary and medical officer, and several employee residences were reported standing on the Government Hill. The building remembered by local Indians as the hospital and by others as the old Tribal Meeting House is the last of the complex of impressive structures largely built by Indian labor. This rectangular one story Hospital constructed about 1895 is rapidly deteriorating. Both the main section of the Siletz Hospital and a small wing located at the back have hipped roofs with wooden shingles. Regular spaced double hung weighted windows can be found on each elevation. Most of the sash still retain two lights over two. The double front doors are five paneled, the middle panel being horizontal. Window and door casings are plain with circular detailed corner blocks and molded window and door stops. Although Siletz hospital is in a deteriorated state, it is structurally sound and generally intact.
Government Hill is the most important extant property for Indian affairs on the Oregon Coast. It was the site of the Siletz Blockhouse erected in 1856 and the headquarters of the Siletz Indian Agency officially established in 1857.

A few Acoma Indians lived on the Government Hill site before the whiteman came. Beginning in 1855, United States soldiers brought defeated southwest Oregon tribes, including the Rogues (Tututnies), Shastas, Coos, Umpquas, Coquilles, and Siuslaws to this small isolated country.

Twenty-six hundred refugees were forced to march on to the Siletz Reservation, an area 20 miles wide and 90 miles long. By 1887 war, famine, and disease left only six hundred. The stragglers left scattered through the hills of Southern Oregon were hunted down, occasionally captured, but often murdered. In 1856 Lt. Sheridan and army soldiers came to the reservation to quiet the Indians. He found them starving and quieted them with food. During the reservation years, 1856-1925, many of the remaining Indians worked hard to adapt to the whiteman's way of life, but the shortage of timber and the constant threat of losing reservation land turned many Indians to a life of poverty and drink. In 1940 Congress authorized the court of claims to continue negotiating settlement with descendants for lands taken from them by force and without compensation. Estimated cost is about $16,000,000. In 1925 the Siletz Indian Agency was closed, but for some years Siletz Confederated Tribes continued to hold annual meetings in the council hall which rested on the top of Government Hill until 1973 when it was burned by local firemen. At present Government Hill is owned and controlled by the City of Siletz and cared for by local Indian inhabitants.

The pleasant landscape, the small cemetery and the little buildings that remain on Government Hill are subtle but significant reminders of the rough and ugly dealings between the native Indians and the pioneering whiteman.
9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES


10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY 36.55

UTM REFERENCES

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VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

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

STATE CODE COUNTY CODE

STATE CODE COUNTY CODE

11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE
Paul B. Hartwig, Park Historian and Gregg Olson, Assistant

ORGANIZATION
Oregon State Highway Division

DATE
August 8, 1975

STREET & NUMBER
State Highway Building

TELEPHONE
(503) 378-6118

CITY OR TOWN
Salem

STATE
Oregon

97310

12 STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER CERTIFICATION

THE EVALUATED SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS PROPERTY WITHIN THE STATE IS:

NATIONAL ___ STATE ___ LOCAL ___

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

FEDERAL REPRESENTATIVE SIGNATURE

[Signature]

TITLE Oregon State Historic Preservation Officer

DATE Sept. 19, 1975

FOR NPS USE ONLY

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

[Signature]

DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF ARCHAEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION

DATE 11/15/66

ATTEST

[Signature]

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

DATE 12/30/65
GOVERNMENT HILL

7. Description (continued)

One residence remains. It is grown over with blackberries and is in a state of decay. It would appear to have been constructed in the 1920s and is a one story gabled structure with a small porch at the front. The base of the hill is the site for a log structure probably built by the C.C.C. in the 1930s. This structure served the Indians as an Arts and Crafts building. Made of six inch logs, this rectangular building is one and a half stories and has a center chimney made of small stone. The cemetery of about two acres contains many locally manufactured sandstone and carved wooden markers. These interesting markers distinguish the many graves of the Coos, Umpqua, Siuslaw, Shasta, Coquille, Rogue River, and Tuuine people. The site is owned by the city of Siletz as a park. Although many Indians live nearby, no one lives on Government Hill at the present time.

9. Major Bibliographical References (continued)


Beckham, Stephen Dow, Requiem for a People, page 189.

Item 22 Oregon Historical Map (Lincoln County Historical Society Publication #8).
The Siletz Agency Site is located in Twp. 10 S., Rge. 10W., W. M., Lincoln County, Oregon, containing a total of 36.55 acres, more or less, and particularly described as: S 1/2 of Lot 32, Section 4, containing 10 acres, more or less. N 1/2 of Lot 1, Section 9, containing 10 acres, more or less. N 1/2 of Lot 2 Section 9, excepting therefrom a tract of land containing 3.03 acres more or less, described as: Beginning at the 1/16 corner on the section line common to Section 4 and 9, this being also the Northwest corner of said Lot 2, thence N 89° 17' E 100 feet, thence S 0° 01' E 660.31 feet, thence S 89° 31' W 100 feet, thence N 0° 01' W 659.84 feet to the point of beginning, the parcel hereby conveyed containing 6.97 acres, more or less. That portion of the S 1/2 of Lots 1 and 2, Section 9 described as follows: Beginning at the section corner common to Sections 3, 4, 9, and 10, T. 10 S., R. 10 W., W. M., thence S 0° 34' E 664.74 feet to the true point of beginning: Thence S 89° 31' W 1335.60 feet, thence S 59° 44' E 1299.25 feet, thence N 89° 45' E 54.2 feet, thence N 0° 34' W 598.98 feet, thence N 89° 45' E 165 feet, thence N 0° 34' W 65.76 feet to the true point of beginning containing 9.58 acres, more or less, together with all the improvements thereon and the appurtenances thereunto belonging.