

PH0503274

DATA SHEET

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

FOR NPS USE ONLY  
RECEIVED AUG 29 1977  
DATE ENTERED JAN 31 1978

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

Schech's Mill

AND/OR COMMON

Schech's Mill

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER

nw of Caledonia

NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CITY, TOWN

In Beaver Creek Valley State Park  
Caledonia, Minn. VICINITY OF Sheldon

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

First

STATE

Minnesota

CODE

22

COUNTY

Houston

CODE

055

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
- MUSEUM
- COMMERCIAL
- PARK
- EDUCATIONAL
- PRIVATE RESIDENCE
- ENTERTAINMENT
- RELIGIOUS
- GOVERNMENT
- SCIENTIFIC
- INDUSTRIAL
- TRANSPORTATION
- MILITARY
- OTHER:

4 OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME

Ivan Krugmire

STREET & NUMBER

R.R. #2

CITY, TOWN

Caledonia VICINITY OF

STATE

Minnesota

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE,  
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

Registry of Deeds -- Houston County Courthouse

STREET & NUMBER

CITY, TOWN

Caledonia

STATE

Minnesota

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE

Minnesota Mill Study

DATE

1976-1977

FEDERAL  STATE COUNTY LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR  
SURVEY RECORDS

Minnesota Historical Society -- Building 25, Fort Snelling

CITY, TOWN

St. Paul

STATE

Minnesota

# 7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION		CHECK ONE	CHECK ONE
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> EXCELLENT	<input type="checkbox"/> DETERIORATED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> UNALTERED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ORIGINAL SITE
<input type="checkbox"/> GOOD	<input type="checkbox"/> RUINS	<input type="checkbox"/> ALTERED	<input type="checkbox"/> MOVED      DATE _____
<input type="checkbox"/> FAIR	<input type="checkbox"/> UNEXPOSED		

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## DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

Schech's Mill, a grist mill, was built in 1875-76 and is located one mile southeast of Sheldon and six miles northwest of Caledonia in the SW $\frac{1}{4}$ , NE $\frac{1}{4}$ , Section 5, T102N, R6W, Houston County. Water is supplied to the mill by a quarter mile combined head and tail race running along the west side of Beaver Creek beginning at the mill pond behind a 1922 concrete dam (replacing an earlier wood dam).

The mill is a two story structure built of broken course stone, rectangular in plan, 34 x 54 feet, on an east-west axis. The basement is exposed to the northwest. The building has a gabled roof of corrugated metal with a wood ventilating cupola centered on the ridge and a brick chimney on the north slope of the east end. The windows are arranged in three bays by four bays with six-over-six-light double hung sashes in segmental arches.

On the west end of the south side is a single low arch for the head race. The water exits on the west end of the north side through double arches after a ten foot drop. The main door is centered in the east end above a concrete loading platform and beneath an 1876 datestone. From the west end of the mill is a ramp and a feed chute to the swine barn located to the west of the mill. Attached to the east end of the south wall is a small corrugated shed of more recent construction which does not detract from the integrity of the main structure.

The mill's interior is of timber frame construction. The interior walls are plastered on the first floor only with the upper floor walls remaining unfinished. A stairway in the northeast corner leads from basement to attic. Vertical grain and flour elevators occupy the center of the mill from basement to attic. In the west end of the basement is an open top concrete wheel pit constructed in 1924 containing three water turbines. The two original (1875-76) turbines are a 23-inch Leffel which powers the crusher, sheller and elevators, and a 35-inch Leffel which powers all milling machinery. A 23-inch Samson Upright Turbine was installed in 1924 to power a 22-inch Diamond Buhr Feed Mill. Power drive to all equipment is by shaft and belt.

The milling machinery is arranged for New Process or high grinding milling. Significant equipment includes four pairs of operating millstones enclosed in their original wood vats, two with hopper feed and two with the later "silent feed." There are three middlings purifiers, two from Martin's Middlings Purifier Co. and one early "Boss Purifier." There are also numerous reels, bolters, separators, and grain cleaners. Roller mills installed in the late nineteenth century were removed about 1947 to make room for a one ton Brower Mixer, the only significant intrusion on the mill interior. All of the mill equipment is operable using the water power although the present owner only runs the mill occasionally to grind flour and feed.

Other buildings at the site include a swine barn complex, a hay barn, and farmhouse. The swine barn complex, built in 1896, is located directly to the west of the mill building on the same axis and consists of two attached blocks, beginning with a one story square structure of broken course stone with a gable roof which is attached to the mill by the ramp and feed chute. Attached to the west wall of this building is a one story elongated structure of similar stone construction with a monitor roof. The timber frame hay barn is located to the southeast of the mill building and possibly contains structural elements of an earlier mill building. The wood frame farmhouse is located to the south of the mill building.

# 8 SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD	AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW				
<input type="checkbox"/> PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNITY PLANNING	<input type="checkbox"/> LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> RELIGION	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> CONSERVATION	<input type="checkbox"/> LAW	<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENCE	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> ECONOMICS	<input type="checkbox"/> LITERATURE	<input type="checkbox"/> SCULPTURE	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATION	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input type="checkbox"/> SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> ART	<input type="checkbox"/> ENGINEERING	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSIC	<input type="checkbox"/> THEATER	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE	<input type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY	<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNICATIONS	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRY	<input type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY)	
		<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION			

SPECIFIC DATES 1875-76 - present

BUILDER/ARCHITECT John Blinn

## STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Schech's Mill is significant for three reasons: (1) it is the only flour or grist mill in Minnesota known to contain a complete, unaltered, and operable equipment system for New Process or high grinding milling; (2) it is the only mill in Minnesota known to contain millstones in original installations, and (3) it is one of only three mills in Minnesota still operable solely by water power.

Built in 1875-76 in the midst of the southeast Minnesota milling region, Schech's Mill was established in the middle of the New Process era which opened with the 1871 invention of the middlings purifier, ending the long reign of Oliver Evans style low grinding, and closed with the introduction of the roller mill about 1880 which marked the beginning of the modern automatic, all-roller, gradual reduction process. The important equipment combination for New Process milling is the middlings purifier operated in system with millstones (as opposed to roller mills). This is the system which has survived in Schech's Mill. In fact, so swiftly did roller mills replace millstones after 1880 that Schech's Mill is the only mill in Minnesota in which original and unaltered millstone installations have survived.

The present mill building was built by John Blinn as a custom mill to replace a mid-1850s wood frame grist and saw mill at the same site, elements of which may have been incorporated into the hay barn located southeast of the present mill. Although Blinn reportedly died before the new mill's completion, it continued to be known as Blinn's Mill until later in the nineteenth century when it was known as the Caledonia Grist Mill. The mill received its present name through the ownership of Michael J. Schech, a Bavarian miller who purchased the mill about 1887 and maintained a merchant milling operation. Steel roller mills apparently were installed during Michael's tenure as miller. His son, Edward, was the miller from 1913 until his death in 1941 when merchant flour milling was discontinued. Edward's wife continued custom grinding operations until 1946. With the installation of the Brower Mixer in 1947, the mill's function was reduced to occasional feed grinding and the mill operation became secondary to the farm operation at the site. It exists today at about the same status although the present owner grinds whole wheat flour occasionally and opens the mill to visitors.

# 9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Robert M. Frame III. Millers to the World: Minnesota's Nineteenth Century Water Power Flour Mills. St. Paul: Minnesota Historical Society, 1977.  
History of Houston County. Minneapolis, 1882, p. 362.  
 "Schech's Water Powered Mill." Pamphlet written and distributed by Ivan Krugmire.

# 10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY approx. 10<sup>3</sup> acres

UTM REFERENCES

*see table phone report  
Lebowich 1/31/78*

A 

1	5	6	1	4	4	4	0	4	8	3	5	6	8	0
ZONE		EASTING				NORTHING								

B 

ZONE		EASTING				NORTHING							

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

## 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

Robert M. Frame III, Research Historian, Minnesota Mill Study

ORGANIZATION

Minnesota Historical Society

DATE

7 June 1977

STREET & NUMBER

Building 25, Fort Snelling

TELEPHONE

612-726-1171

CITY OR TOWN

St. Paul

STATE

Minnesota

# 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.

STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER SIGNATURE

*Russell W. Fridley*

TITLE  
Russell W. Fridley  
State Historic Preservation Officer

DATE  
8-22-77

### FOR NPS USE ONLY

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

DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF ARCHAEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION

*[Signature]*

DATE 1/31/78  
KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

ATTEST:

*[Signature]*

DATE 1-31-78

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

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CONTINUATION SHEET Schech's Mill      ITEM NUMBER 7      PAGE 1

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Included within the boundaries of the property as nominated are the flour mill building, the 1896 swine barn complex, the hay barn and silo (possibly dating from the 1850s and reportedly containing structural elements of the first mill building at this location), the 1922 concrete dam, and the mill head race from dam to mill.

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

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RECEIVED

JAN 28 1978

DATE ENTERED

JAN 31 1978

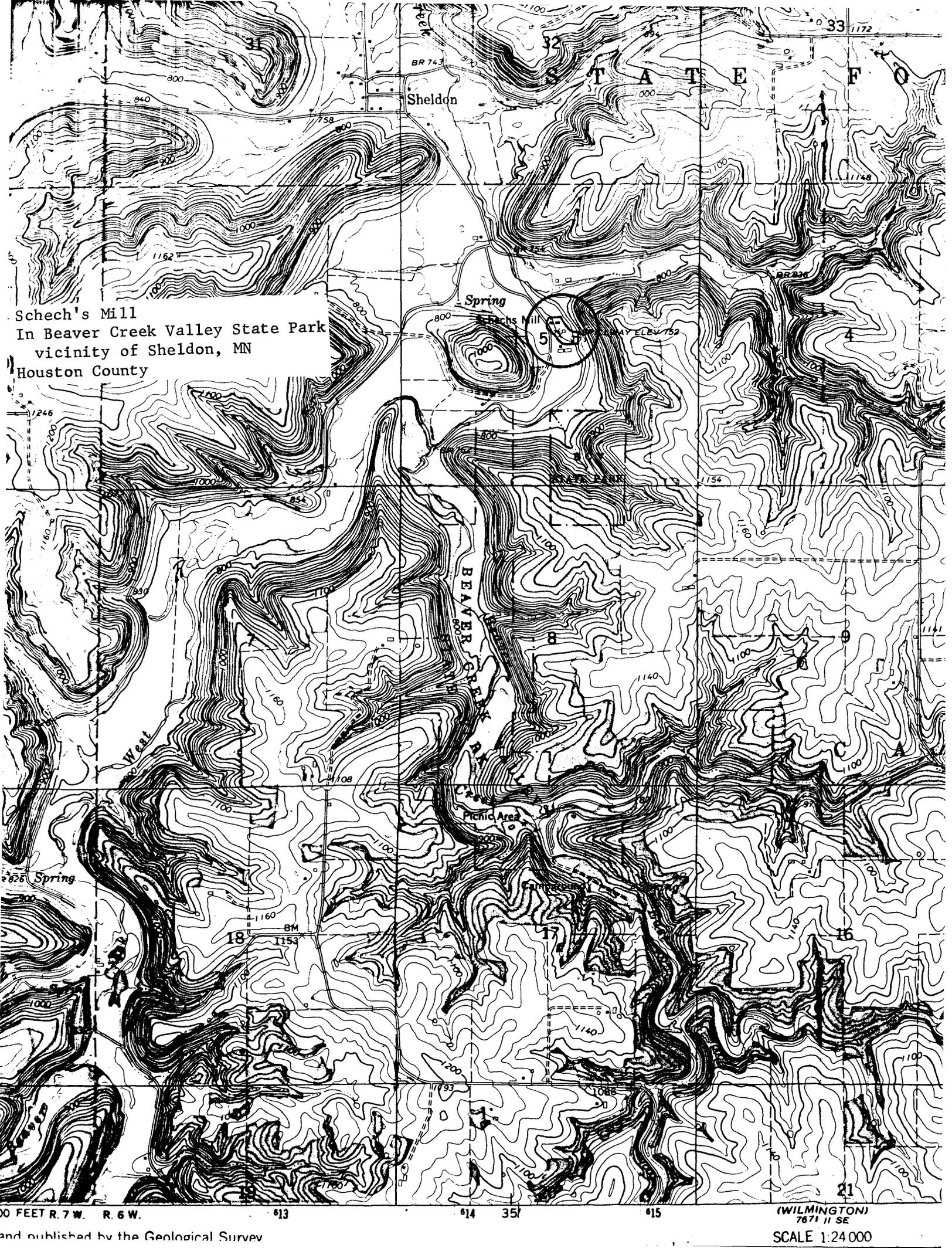
CONTINUATION SHEET Schech's Mill      ITEM NUMBER 10      PAGE 2

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Change acreage to approx. 3 acres.

Verbal Boundary Description

The nominated property encompasses the area immediately surrounding the flour mill and swine barn complex, and running southeast on both sides of the head race so as to include the hay barn, and terminating with the east bank of Beaver Creek so as to include the dam and millpond.



Schech's Mill  
In Beaver Creek Valley State Park  
vicinity of Sheldon, MN  
Houston County

00 FEET R. 7 W. R. 6 W.

and published by the Geological Survey

(WILMINGTON)  
7671 11 SE

SCALE 1:24 000

JAN 31 1978

Form No. 10-301  
(Rev. 10-74)

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

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**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
PROPERTY MAP FORM**

SEE INSTRUCTIONS IN *HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS*  
TYPE ALL ENTRIES -- ENCLOSE WITH MAP

**NAME**

HISTORIC

Schech's Mill

AND/OR COMMON

Schech's Mill

**LOCATION**

CITY, TOWN

VICINITY OF Sheldon COUNTY Houston STATE Minnesota  
In Beaver Creek Valley State Park

**MAP REFERENCE**

SOURCE

USGS - Sheldon Quadrangle, Minnesota-Houston Co., 7.5 Minute Series

SCALE

1:24000

DATE 1965

**REQUIREMENTS**

TO BE INCLUDED ON ALL MAPS

- 1. PROPERTY BOUNDARIES
- 2. NORTH ARROW
- 3. UTM REFERENCES

INT: 2986-75

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number \_\_\_\_\_ Page \_\_\_\_\_

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ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

for Keeper Helene Lynn  
1/19/89

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number \_\_\_\_\_ Page \_\_\_\_\_

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**Note: These changes apply to  
Schech's Mill in Houston County,  
Minnesota.**

**REFERENCE NUMBER:** 78001548

**STATE:** MINNESOTA

**COUNTY:** Houston

**RESOURCE NAME (HISTORIC):** Shech Mill

**CITY:**

**VICINITY OF:** Caledonia

**ADDRESS:** off Co. Rd. 10 in Beaver Creek Valley  
State Park

**CERTIFICATION DATE:**

**REMOVED DATE:**

**COMMENTS:**

*Nina M. Archabal*

\_\_\_\_\_  
Nina M. Archabal  
State Historic Preservation Officer

JUN 17 1988

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date