

**United States Department of the Interior
Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form**

For HCRS use only

received JAN 23 1980

date entered AUG 27 1981

See instructions in *How to Complete National Register Forms*
Type all entries—complete applicable sections

1. Name

historic 1872 California-Nevada State Boundary Marker

and/or common

2. Location

street & number On California-Nevada border ___ not for publication

city, town Verdi -x- vicinity of congressional district at-large

state Nevada code 32 county Washoe code 031

Also in Sierra Co., CA

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use	
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> public	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> museum
<input type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input type="checkbox"/> commercial	<input type="checkbox"/> park
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input type="checkbox"/> educational	<input type="checkbox"/> private residence
<input type="checkbox"/> site	Public Acquisition	Accessible	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment	<input type="checkbox"/> religious
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> object	<input type="checkbox"/> in process	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> government	<input type="checkbox"/> scientific
	<input type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> other:

4. Owner of Property

name State Director U.S. Bureau of Land Management

street & number Room 3008 Federal Building, 300 Booth Street

city, town Reno ___ vicinity of state Nevada

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Washoe County Courthouse

street & number

city, town Reno ___ vicinity of state Nevada

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title Nevada Historic Engineering Site
Inventory

has this property been determined eligible? yes no

date 8-27-79 ___ federal state ___ county ___ local

depository for survey records History of Engineering Program, Texas Tech University

city, town Lubbock ___ vicinity of state Texas

7. Description

Condition

excellent
 good
 fair

deteriorated
 ruins
 unexposed

Check one

unaltered
 altered

Check one

original site
 moved date _____

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

The 1872 California-Nevada Boundary Marker is a hollow, cast iron pylon 8 feet tall. Six feet of the marker appears above ground. The marker is encased in a cage made of chain-link storm fence. The word CALIFORNIA, cast in raised letters, is on the west face of the marker and NEVADA is on the east face. The south face contains 1872, LONGITUDE 120° WEST OF GREENWICH, A. W. VON SCHMIDT, U.S.; while the north face presents 170 MILES 47 CHAINS TO OREGON. The only damage to the marker is a broken out place about a foot tall and 8 inches wide near the very bottom of the west face. Other than this one fracture, the marker is remarkably well preserved.

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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800–1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input checked="" 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 1872

Builder/Architect Alexey W. Von Schmidt

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

The 1872 California-Nevada Boundary Marker is an important element in the history of both California and Nevada. It is a vestige of one of the Far West's largest surveying efforts, an effort which still affects the populace of both states today.

When California wrote a constitution in 1849, it defined its northern border as the 42nd parallel; its southern border as the border between the U.S. and Mexico, established in the Treaty of Guadalupe-Hidalgo of 1848; and its eastern border as commencing at the intersection of the 120th degree of longitude and the 42nd degree of latitude then running south along this line until it strikes the 39th degree of north latitude then south-easterly in a straight line to the point where the 35th degree of north latitude crosses the Colorado River, then south down the center of the Rio Colorado to Mexico. Thus, California's eastern (and Nevada's western) boundary was created on paper. The real problem developed in laying this boundary out on the ground. Between 1855 and 1900, six different surveys of California's eastern boundary were made. None of them agreed as to the location of the boundary or the 120th degree of longitude. Various surveys were conducted in 1855, 1863, 1872, 1889 and 1893. The 1872 Von Schmidt survey is the only one that was clearly marked along its entire length with stone, rock, wood and iron markers. The 1872 survey also was accepted longer than any other survey before its inaccuracy became widely known. It was not until 1893 that the Von Schmidt line was found to be 1,600 to 1,800 feet too far west. However, even after 1893, the Von Schmidt line remained the accepted boundary, and is still used more today than the more accurate 1893 version. Oddly enough, both the 1872 and 1893 lines have been recognized and are used by both California and Nevada.

The Von Schmidt marker near Verdi has two-fold importance: 1. It became Von Schmidt's initial location point of the 120th meridian. Before any survey could occur the 120th degree of longitude had to be located as accurately as possible. Von Schmidt located and marked the 120th meridian with this iron marker in 1872. 2. It is a physical remnant of one of the most important surveys conducted in the Far West. Therefore, the fact that this simple cast iron marker was one of the major reference points in this historically important survey and the fact that it has remained intact for over a century makes it an historical site of regional significance.

9. Major Bibliographical References

Uzes, Francois D. Chaining the Land: A History of Surveying in California. Sacramento, California: Landmark Enterprises, 1977.

Sinclair, C.H. Oblique Boundary Line Between California and Nevada. Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1901.

10. Geographical Data

UTM NOT VERIFIED

Acreege of nominated property .001

ACREAGE NOT VERIFIED

Quadrangle name Verdi, Nevada

angle scale 1:24000

UMT References

A

1	1	2	4	2	0	6	10	4	13	7	9	0	8	10
Zone				Easting				Northing						

B

Zone				Easting				Northing						

C

Zone				Easting				Northing						

D

Zone				Easting				Northing						

E

Zone				Easting				Northing						

F

Zone				Easting				Northing						

G

Zone				Easting				Northing						

H

Zone				Easting				Northing						

Verbal boundary description and justification

See phone report of 8/27/81 : Three jt. on all sides of the marker.

List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

state California code 06 county Sierra code 011

state _____ code _____ county _____ code _____

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Donald Abbe, Research Assistant

organization History of Engineering Program

date 9-5-79

street & number Texas Tech University, P.O. Box 4089

telephone (806) 742-3591

city or town Lubbock

state Texas

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 Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service.

State Historic Preservation Officer signature

Djimi Redem

title S.H.P.O.

date December 30 1979

For HCRS use only

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

Sell Grosvenor
Keeper of the National Register

date

3/27/80

Attest:

Chief of Registration

date

3-11-80