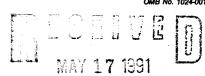
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United States Department of the Interior National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form



NATIONAL REGISTER

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations of eligibility for individual properties or districts. See instructions in *Guidelines* for Completing National Register Forms (National Register Bulletin 16). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the requested information. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, styles, materials, and areas of significance, enter only the categories and subcategories listed in the instructions. For additional space use continuation sheets (Form 10-900a). Type all entries.

1. Name of Property						
historic name	Yamhill I	River Lock ar	nd Dam			
other names/site number	Yamhill I	ocks Park				
		:				
2. Location						
street & number	Southern	terminus Loc	ks Road (Co	unty Rd. 86)	N/A not for publication	
city, town	Dayton				vicinity	
state Oregon	code OR	county	Yamhill_	code	071 zip code 9	7114
3. Classification						
Ownership of Property	Cate	egory of Property		Number of Re	sources within Property	
private		ouilding(s)		Contributing	Noncontributing	
X public-local		district			3 buildings	
x public-State	\mathbf{x} :	site		_1	sites	
public-Federal		structure		_1	structures	
•		object			objects	
					Total	
Name of related multiple pr	operty listing:			Number of cor	ntributing resources previou	ısly
N/A					ational Register <u>N/A</u>	
4. State/Federal Agenc	. Cortification				*1/11	
4. State/Federal Agenc	y Certification					
In my opinion, the prope Signature of certifying offici State or Federal agency and	Oregon St	ate Historic	mile		e continuation sheet. May 7, 1991 Date	
In my opinion, the prope	rty meets	does not meet the	National Regist	er criteria. 🗌 Se	e continuation sheet.	
Signature of commenting or	other official				Date	
State or Federal agency and	d bureau					
5. National Park Service					The state of the s	
l, hereby, certify that this pr						
entered in the National I See continuation sheet determined eligible for the Register. determined not eligible fermined	ne National ation sheet.	<u>lutouicet</u>	T (lee		<u>6hılaı</u>	· ·
National Register.						
removed from the Nation other, (explain:)	_		· · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · ·	<u> </u>		
			Signature of the	Keeper	Date of Action	

6. Function or Use	
Historic Functions (enter categories from instruction	ons) Current Functions (enter categories from instructions)
Transportation: water related,	Outdoor Recreation: park
navigation lock	
7. Description	
Architectural Classification (enter categories from instructions)	Materials (enter categories from instructions)
	foundation <u>concrete</u>
<u>N/A</u>	walls <u>concrete</u>
	roofN/A
	other

Describe present and historic physical appearance.

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The Lock and Dam, Yamhill River, Oregon, were constructed by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, under appropriation for improving the Willamette and Yamhill Rivers, for the purpose of affording low-water navigation to McMinnville, Oregon. Construction operations were started in May 1898.

HISTORIC PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The principal features of the lock and dam which were located in and adjacent to the Yamhill River are:

Location: 1 1/2 miles below Lafayette, Oregon, 8 miles above the mouth. Usuable lock dimensions: one lock 175 feet by 38 feet.

Lift of lock: 16 feet.

Depth on sills at low water: 4 feet on upper sill; 2 feet on lower sill.

Character of foundation: timber piling in clay.

Kind of dam: fixed.

Type of construction: timber crib.

Date of completion: September 22, 1900.

The accompanying "Panorama View, Showing the Condition of the Work at the Close of the Season, Nov. 10, 1901" provides the full array of development in the vicinity of the lock and dam in its historic period of significance. Additional details of the development of the property can be seen in the supporting historic photographs.

The panorama displays the lock and dam, the removable foot bridge across the crest of the dam, the wooden line fence around the west bank, the grading of the steep bluffs on each side of the river, the timber apron adjacent to the dam, and the mixed stand of conifers and broadleafed trees surrounding the area.

On the west side of the river, the bank was paved with stone to an elevation of five feet above the top of the lock wall, and above this, was seeded with grass. Downstream from the lock wall, a timber revetment was placed at the toe of the slope. A wooden walkway and stairway ran from the upstream end of the lock to the small lock keeper's office and the storehouse on the rise at the northwest corner of the property.

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On the east side, the bank was graded to a slope of 1 on 3 downstream from the dam, and to 1 on 1 1/2 upstream. The slope closest to the water was covered with stone paving and the upper portion seeded with grass. A timber apron 30 feet in width extended from the top of the dam to the top of the slope. A wooden stairway in the middle of the apron provided access to the foot bridge across the dam.

The concrete lock walls were constructed in 1898 and 1899. Accessories included wooden lock gates, hand operated machinery for opening and closing the gates, maneuvering gear, and hand operated valves for filling and emptying the lock. Excavation of the lock cofferdam was accomplished in about 60 hours with a Chinese pump, of "chain and bucket" order, operated by a large undershot water wheel in the river. (See accompanying photocopy, "Showing Cofferdam Before Pumping and Slide at Lower End, July 18, 1898."

The dam, which extended from the water wall of the lock to the east bank, was of fixed type, consisting of a rock filled timber structure, about 125 feet in length. The crest of the dam was 16 feet above lower pool low water. The cross sectional base width was 30 feet, and the width of the crest was 8 feet. The portable bridge across the dam provided foot access to the lock operation.

The level ground adjacent to the east bank is a distinct section unto itself. The enclosed photograph of the steamer "Leona" (ca.1908) shows the 5,000 gallon water tank and tower erected in 1902. Also shown in the photo to the right of the water tank, is a wooden boardwalk that joined the lock keeper's dwelling and the lock grounds. The willows planted by the lock keeper Nels Nelson in the winter, 1900 can be seen on the east bank upstream from the dam.

A narrow concrete sidewalk followed along the top of the east bank from the base of the water tower north about 250 feet, and a spur walk branched to the west toward the timber apron above the dam.

Nelson did a lot of work on the lock grounds in the winter, 1903. Work included trimming shade trees, cutting down ash trees, burning dead ash trees, scraping moss off shade trees and sowing grass. He apparently wanted the area to have a pleasant appearance. However, the first reference to a "park" isn't found in Nelson's journal until Feb. 1919.

The next parcel to the east was acquired on Oct. 27, 1906. This acquisition provided additional level area for the lock grounds and connected the grounds and the one acre parcel occupied by the lock keeper's dwelling. The eastern portion of this unit is covered with conifers and rises abruptly to the lock keeper's house.

The one and one-half story lock keeper's house was constructed in 1898

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as a part of the lock and dam contract. Some of its features are quite similar to the tender's house at Cascade Locks.

The lock keeper's dwelling would be an element of the proposed nomination because it was a part of the history, and because it appears to meet the eligibility criteria as it stands today. However, the house stands on a separately held parcel, privately owned, and is not included in the nominated area. The present owners do not give their consent to including it.

OPERATION OF LOCK

The upper pool, formed by the dam, provided the water to fill the lock. If a boat was "passing up", it would enter the empty lock and the lower gates would be closed. The lock tender and his assistant would then let the water in by turning the two hand operated wheels on the upstream end of the lock. The water came in through two culverts in the lock walls creating considerable whirlpools until the lock was filled. Next, the upper gates would be opened by the hand operated machinery and the boat would proceed. This usually took from 10 to 15 minutes. If the vessel was "passing up", the upper gates would be left open, leaving the lock full. If the vessel was "passing down", the lower gates would be left open, leaving the lock empty.

The guard of the lock, or the height of the walls above the crest of the dam, was calculated at 4.7 feet. Thus the waterway was available at stages of less than 5 feet through the lock, or more than 12 feet measured above the lock, over the dam. At intermediate stages, the lock was submerged, while an impassable fall existed at the dam. Nelson reported on March 17, 1900 that "the steamer Elmore tried to go to LaFayette today but failed. She tore some timbers off the dam in trying."

THE YAMHILL RIVER FRESHETS

From Nov. 1900 to 1901, ten freshets occurred in the Yamhill, carrying the water over the lock walls. The effects of this flooding showed that the banks adjacent to the lock and dam were much less stable, and the conditions during these periods much more severe than was anticipated.

During the later part of Dec., the third freshet carried the river 10 feet over the lock walls, and in its subsidence did much injury to the fresh earth embankment behind the land wall of the lock, scouring a channel some 25 feet wide and 9 feet deep along the entire length of the wall.

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Repair of the damage from these freshets included extension of the conrete wing wall at the head of the lock, regrading and riprapping of the entire west bank, extension of the sheet pile abutment on the east side of the dam, increasing stone filling at the root of the dam, extension of riprap on the east side above the dam, and regrading and replacing riprap below the dam.

PRESENT PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The property proposed for nomination still includes many of the elements of the original project. The principal remaining feature is the lock structure itself, consisting of two concrete walls each approximately 270 feet in length, an estimated 20 feet high above low water and about 10 feet thick.

At the upper end of the lock, the water is level and glassy smooth. About midway on the east side of the water wall, the river begins to cascade down over a jumble of rocks losing perhaps six or more feet in elevation. This is where the dam was located in the original construction.

The timber crib dam was breached by the County and the Oregon State Fish and Wildlife Commission in September 1963 because it was a barrier to fish migration.

During low water season, dozens of wood pilings extend two to five feet above the water on both sides of the river from the north end of the lock to the cascades midway along the lock wall. Parts of the timber revetment remain on the west side of the river just south of the lock. 12

On the east side of the river is a concrete and rock paving, located just below the cascades. It has settled and separated considerably due to erosion of the bank. The hydraulic ram that supplied water for the 5,000 gallon tank was located in this area.

Parts of the wooden gates from both ends of the lock are still on the lock basin floor just above the lower sill.

In the intervening years, the lock grounds east of the lock and dam were managed to a considerable extent for recreation purposes by the Corps of Engineers. When the property was transferred from the U.S.A. to Yamhill County, effective January 16, 1959, it became known as "Lafayette Locks Park." Management responsibility went to the newly organized Yamhill County Park and Recreation Board.

The park area behind the east bank includes an elevated berm where the 5,000 gallon water tank and tower were located. The rock pedestals that were the foundation for the tower have been salvaged and are now being used to help define the south parking area and to separate use areas.

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An informational sign is located adjacent to the north parking area. It provides a brief history of development of the Yamhill River valley and the lock and dam.

North of the elevated berm is a flat area used primarily for picnicking. There is room for several portable tables in this area. Adjacent are two small restrooms. The picnic area is surrounded by mature conifers and broadleafed trees.

The original narrow concrete sidewalk along the top of the east bank offers several views of the water wall of the lock and access to the river is available from the south parking area. A very good view of the lock walls and the cascades is also offered adjacent to the south parking area. This has been made possible by the cutting of a "window" in the brush by the park maintenance crew.

The only development east of the park road is a small water system pumphouse next to the north parking area. Much of this area is open space covered with grass.

There is no road access to the west bank. This area differs from its heyday in that the native vegetation, including mature bigleaf maple, Oregon ash, northern black cottonwood, has reestablished itself and the lock keeper's office and the storehouse are gone. There are many earth hummocks caused by floodwaters over the past 89 years.

An old wire fence marks most of the property line. It is not known when this fence was built, but it likely replaced the original wooden line fence in the early years of the project.

A public hearing on an application by Roy and Ruth Taylor, and Yamhill County, to designate the Yamhill/Lafayette locks site as a County Landmark was held on Nov. 1, 1989. A copy of the staff report including historical research, a description by Melinda Lee-Van Bossuyt and a map of the property in County ownership is included with the supporting material. (Yamhill County Planning Department, Cultural Resources Inventory, Resource No. I-300, Yamhill Locks/Lafayette Locks).

The site where the lock was constructed, the concrete walls, the rubble from the dam, the stone riprap, and the timber revetments all mark the place where the steamers and log rafts passed up and down the river. The rest of the site has had only minimum development (picnic area) or no development (west bank), and there is still an aura of being able to stand on the property and have a clear trace of historic enterprise.

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NON-CONTRIBUTING BUILDINGS

The three noncontributing buildings identified in Section Number 3 are the two small restrooms and the small water system pumphouse. These are located in the park area adjacent to the east bank of the Yamhill River. The three buildings are shown on the Yamhill Lock Site Sketch Map Number 3.

The thumb-nail sketch of the three buildings follows:

Restrooms 1 and 2.

The two small restrooms are both six feet by eight feet and are set on a concrete vault. Vertical board siding is simulated by the use of "T-111" plywood. The siding is painted a dark green. The roof is a relatively flat shed style made of clear corrugated fiberglass.

Water System Pumphouse

The small water system pumphouse is six feet by six feet and is set on a concrete pad. Both the walls and the roof are constructed of corrugated galvanized steel and are painted a dark green. The roof is a low-pitched gable style. The door, which faces away from the use areas, is unpainted solid steel.

8. Statement of Significance	
Certifying official has considered the significance of this property in relation to other properties:	
Applicable National Register Criteria XA B C D	
Criteria Considerations (Exceptions)	
Areas of Significance (enter categories from instructions) Transportation Politics/Government Period of Significance 1898–1902	Significant Dates - 1898-1900
Cultural Affiliation N/A	
Significant Person N/A Architect/Builder U.S. Army Corps of Engi	neers
State significance of property and justify criteria considerations and gross and periods of significance	

and the second of the second o	and grown and the first of the second of	
	to the contract of the second	
	X See continuation sheet	
Previous documentation on file (NPS):	A dee commutation sheet	
preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67)	Primary location of additional data:	
has been requested	State historic preservation office	
previously listed in the National Register	Other State agency	
previously determined eligible by the National Register	X Federal agency	
designated a National Historic Landmark	Local government	
recorded by Historic American Buildings	University	
Survey #	U Other	
recorded by Historic American Engineering	Specify repository:	
Record #	Portland District, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers	
10. Geographical Data	corps or mignieers	
	on, Oregon 1:24000	
Acreage of property	2021000	
UTM References A	B Zone Easting Northing D See continuation sheet	
	See continuation sneet	
Verbal Boundary Description The nominated area is loca	ated in Secs. 7 and 18, T.4S., R.3W. Willame	tte
	consists of Tax Lot 2000, a land surface of	
5.93 acres held and maintained by Yamhill County	y as Yamhill Locks Park (also known as	
Lafayette Locks Park), together with a 500-foot		
total surface area of 8.5 acres. Not included i		
small, privately-held parcel adjacent to the nor		
part of the U.S. Government Lock reservation and		C
Lockkeeper's residence. The nominated area is m Boundary Justification The boundary of the nominated a	ore particularly described as follows: orea corresponds to the bounds of the histo	ric
U.S. Government Lock reservation with the except	ion of the one-acre parcel on the east edge	e
containing the Lockkeeper's residence that is se		
nominated area encompasses, therefore, the histori		
reservation, remnants of the rock revetments or		am-
bed, the concrete Lock walls and rubble of the c	demolished dam. The site and its most inta	ict
structural feature, the Lock, are counted as	X See continuation sheet separately contribu	ting
features. Three small-scale buildings on the ea	ist pank relating to park development after	
11. Form Prepared By 1959 are counted as non-his		i
name/title Ruth Stoller, historian and George Wil		
organization Yamnill County Citizens Coalition street & number 1348 Melrose AVenue	telephone (503) 472-4547	
city or townMcMinnville	state <u>Oregon</u> zip code 97128	

9. Major Bibliographical References

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The site of Yamhill River Lock and Dam on the Yamhill River approximately two miles upstream, or westerly of Dayton, Oregon is a holding maintained as Lafayette, or Yamhill Locks Park, a unit of the Yamhill County Park System. When the historic U. S. Government Lock reservation was surplused to the county in 1959, a one-acre portion of the reservation went into private ownership. The bounds of the nominated area correspond precisely to that parcel on the east and west riverbanks under county ownership, and, in addition, a 500-foot section of streambed and streambank below the line of ordinary high water that is under ownership of the Oregon Division of State Lands. The total nominated area is 8.5 acres.

Developed features of the nominated area that are counted as contributing to the significance of the historic site are the structural remains of lock and dam that include the 270 foot-long concrete land and river walls of the lock, the lock basin, and rubble of the demolished dam. Stone riverbank revetments remain, but the lockhouse and storehouse are no longer standing. The lock master's dwelling place (1898) stands on the adjoining privatelyheld parcel and is not a part of the nomination.

As early as the 1860s, support gathered for construction of locks at the first rapids of the Yamhill River, an important tributary to the Willamette, as an aid to navigation of the Yamhill's South Fork. The Yamhill Locks and Transportation Company was formed, and, under authority of the River and Harbor Act of 1872, the United States Army Corps of Engineers commenced its protracted study of the river. In 1896 Congress approved the lock project on the Yamhill.

The historic period of significance is marked from 1898, the year construction was started. The lock was completed and opened to traffic in 1900. The relatively brief period of significance is drawn to 1902 when the commercial significance of the lock faded with the lock's closure to regular steamboat traffic. The lock was officially abandoned years later, in 1954, and the dam was blasted from the waterway.

The historic project of the Army Corps of Engineers meets National Register Criterion A under the themes of transportation and government as one of three navigational locks on Oregon rivers antedating 1900 that were constructed under United States

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government auspices as a result of local agitation for improvements to navigable waterways. Steam navigation was important to Oregon farmers and manufacturers as an affordable alternative to railroads for transporting freight and passengers.

The Yamhill feeds the Willamette River, which in turn is tributary to the Columbia, the route to the Pacific Ocean. The significance of the Yamhill River Lock and Dam in the area of transportation was that it gave steam vessels direct access from the river's mouth all the way to the head of shipping on the South Fork at McMinnville. Steamboats normally had a modest three-foot draft. The advantage of steam shipping was that it was the cheapest method of transport for grain, and even though grain was harvested in the low-water season, steamboats could negotiate the river the year around. The Yamhill River with its navigational lock also was the key to economy-boosting log exports in the county before the road system was well developed.

As an engineering project, the Yamhill River Lock and Dam was not especially remarkable. It does, however, epitomize the common pattern of local agitation for the federal government's support of economic development through public works. It represents the last phase of hand construction for such works, in that non-mechanized equipment was used. On completion, the Yamhill River Lock was a It is hoped that in the future it will be one-man operation. possible to nominate for National Register listing the only architectural remnant of the project, namely the lockkeeper's house, which stands on its original site on that parcel now separated to private ownership. Only two other navigational locks were constructed on Oregon waterways by the United States Army Corps of Engineers in the 19th Century. Willamette Falls Locks had been opened in 1873, and Cascade Locks on the Columbia was opened in 1896, although construction of its ship canal continued to 1904. Of the three projects, only Willamette Falls Locks is intact and In their historic periods, each contributed operational. significantly to the vigor of commerce in the region.

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The Yamhill Lock and Dam is significant under Criterion A as one of three navigation locks built on rivers in the Pacific States before 1900. All three locks were in Oregon and all were considered important to river transportation. The oldest of the three was built to go around the falls of the Willamette at Oregon City and was finished in 1873. This lock opened up navigation from Portland directly to the upper Willamette Valley and is still in use today. The second lock was built on the Columbia River at the Cascades. It opened up river traffic as far as The Dalles and eliminated an expensive and time consuming portage around the Cascades. It was opened in 1896. This lock was submerged by the backwater of Bonneville Dam in 1938. The last of the three was begun in 1898 on the Yamhill River about a mile below Lafayette and was finished in September of 1900. It raised the water level of the river so that the boats could get over the Yamhill Falls and rapids at Lafayette and opened up direct river traffie from McMinnville and Lafayette on the Yamhill to Portland on the Willamette. This lock was abandoned in 1954 and the principal remaing feature is the concrete walls of the old lock. These remains are one of the last tangible remnants in the upper Willamette Valley of a time when river navigation played an important role in the valley in transporting freight and passengers. Ās such, they make a significant contribution to the transportation history of Oregon.

The Yamhill Lock was built under the direction of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers with money appropriated by the United States Congress. That a county as small in population as Yamhill could carry enough political influence through its Congressmen to be able to have a lock built by the Federal Government is a tribute to man's persistence and to our political process. For almost forty years efforts were made to obtain a lock on the Yamhill, first by private means and finally through the Federal Government.

From the beginning of American settlement in the Willamette Valley the Yamhill River was an important waterway, especially for those who lived in the Yamhill basin. By 1850 the Yamhill Valley was mostly

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taken up by land claims and two towns had been laid out on its banks. Lafayette at the Yamhill Falls (only 3 or 4 feet high but a real obstruction to river traffic except at high water) in the fall of 1846 and Dayton in the spring of 1850. The site of Dayton had been chosen by its founder because it was near the head of year round navigation on the Yamhill. 1850 was also the year that commercial boats began plying the Yamhill, connecting Canemah, just above the Willamette Falls at Oregon City, with Dayton and Lafayette, when the river was high enough. In 1851 the first steamboats were put on the river. They were larger and heavier than the canoes and flatboats that had been used previously; so now when the water in the Yamhill was low, the sandbar at its mouth became a problem.

The 1850s were busy years for river traffic on the Yamhill. Most of the time two boats came and went each day from Dayton and, when conditions permitted, continued on to Lafayette. Only when the water in the river was too low to permit steamboats from crossing the bar at its mouth was river traffic stopped. With so much business it was no wonder that boat owners were anxious to have the Yamhill open for river traffic the year around.

The first agitation for a lock came from steamboat owner Christopher Switzer. In January 1859 he filed incorporation papers for his Yamhill Water Lock and Transportation Co. His plan was to build a lock at the mouth of the Yamhill so as to by-pass the sandbar during low water. Switzer died a year after the filing and his proposed project died with him. 15

During the 1860s Dayton continued to be an active river port. It had two warehouses that shipped a large quantity of grain. Between 1865 and 1868 a flour mill and a sawmill were built in Dayton. Both felt fortunate to be able to send off their products by water. Lafayette and McMinnville did not have this advantage. Railroads were still a thing of the f uture and roads during the wet season were bottomless. Direct access to river transportation would have meant a great deal to both towns.

A little more than a decade after Switzer's lock incorportation a group of McMinnville business men, on December 27, 1869, filed articles of incorporation for a Yamhill Lock and Transportation Company, providing for two locks—one at the mouth of the river to by—pass the sandbar and another to raise the water level at the rapids and falls at Lafayette. These locks were never built. Again an incorporation for a lock on the Yamhill was filed on February 17, 1872. This time it was done by a group of Lafayette business men and was called The Yamhill Lock and Transportation and Manufacturing Company. This effort was also a failure, possibly because a railroad was completed as far as the Yamhill River, at a point between Lafayette and McMinnville, in November of 1872. For a while this may have helped the trans-

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portation problem for Yamhill County, but railroad freight charges were too high to suit most Yamhill citizens so agitation for river transportation soon began again.

In the meantime the Army Corps of Engineers had entered the picture. The first office of the Engineers on the West Coast was opened in San Francisco in 1866. In 1871 they opened an office in Portland.

What appears to have been one of the first political efforts to interest the Federal Government in improving the Yamhill River was reported in the Yamhill County Reporter, a McMinnville newspaper, for February 13, 1873. It was a copy of a letter that a local business man had received from Oregon's U.S. Senator, Henry W. Corbett:

Washington, D.C. Jan. 27, 1873

Mr. Gustaff Wilson:

The petition from you containing several hundred names asking for the passage of the bill introduced by me for improvement of the Yamhill River was duly received and presented to the Senate. I shall do all I possibly can to have it embraced in the river and harbor appropriations. The only difficulty I apprehend in the matter will arise from want of survey and estimate. I shall make an effort, however, not withstanding this want of information and hope to get the appropriation.

Yours truly, H.W. Corbett

Corbett was able to get an appropriation that took in the Yamhill River. The initial survey of the river was begun on September 29, 1874. The Yamhill County Reporter for October 1, 1874 carried the story

Yamhill County Reporter for October 1, 1874 carried the story.

Gen Michler commenced actual operations on the survey of the Yamhill River last Tuesday. There can scarely be a doubt that his report will be favorable when we consider the few obstacles to be removed and the importance of the section of the country to be benefited thereby. We learn that an effort will be made to obtain aid from the State and as almost every other county has at sometime received liberal appropriation and Yamhill has never asked nor received a dollar for any such purpose, we think it ought certainly be granted us now. It is said that cutting out three rapids and building two locks on the falls at Lafayette will open the river for navigation all the year round, a distance of 25 miles right into the head of the best grain growing country in the world. 16

The survey was completed on October 10, 1874 but even before its completion two more lock incorporations were filed. On October 1 it was "The Yamhill River Improvement Co." which included plans for a lock, by a group of McMinnville business men. On October 8 it was "The Yamhill Lock and Transportation Co." by several Lafayette merchants and professional men. Apparently nothing came of these incorportations, either.

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When Michler released the report of his survey it was found to be favorable to the improvement of the Yamhill, including the construction of a lock so that produce could be shipped the year round. This would:

give not only increased impetus to the producers, but would to the plow thousands of acres of valuable land not now under cultivation. Any improvement to navigation would not only benefit the producer, it would be of incalculable benefit to the consumer; the expenditure, if the work proved to be practicable and be executed at a reasonable cost, would certainly be justified.

Micher's report was referred to the House Committee on Commerce in February of 1875 and stayed there for the next fifteen years.

One more lock incorportation was in the offing. On October 14, 1876 the Yamhill Lock and Manufacturing Co. filed incorportation papers. This group made up of both Lafayette and McMinnville patrons was the final attempt to build a lock and improve navigation on the Yamhill with private capital. Government restrictions on public waterways and the railroads probably discouraged further efforts.

In 1878 farmers along the South Yamhill River began building a narrow gauge railroad from Sheridan to Dayton, where the train would meet the riverboats. The road went into receivership almost before it was finished and for the next ten years led a most precarious existence. Again both low water and flooding were a problem at Dayton. The railroad soon by-passed that town, crossed the Yamhill River at Lafayette and met the Willamette River near Dundee. In time it was extended to Portland. The narrow gauge was never reliable and always expensive. The Southern Pacific finally bought the road in 1890 and changed it to broad gauge in 1893.

The same year that the narrow gauge road was begun, the broad gauge road that had ended at the Yamhill River, began work on extending its line south to Corvallis, by way of McMinnville.

As the railroad's monoply grew so did the dissatisfaction of the local citizens with its freight rates. They began to think again about river improvement. Through the local newpapers, the diary of A.R. Burbank(one of Lafayette's leading merchants for many years and previously a member of the State Legislature), and the Annual Reports of the Chief of Engineers, we can follow the course of events, beginning in 1890, that led up to the building of the Yamhill Lock and Dam.

The September 28, 1900 issue of the Yamhill County Reporter gave "Some Facts About the Struggle to Secure the Same by Congressional Appropriation". "The Same" was referring to the lock and dam. The article read in part:

Ten years ago this September marks the date when the first earnest agitation for the construction of locks at Lafayette took form by

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petitioning through Hon. Binger Hermann member of Congress, for a Congressional appropriation supplemented by figures showing the commercial disadvantages under which the producers and shippers labored in consequence of an obstructed river. Our neighbors of Benton County could, by hauling their wheat to Corvallis, ship it to Portland a distance of 100 miles, by rail for 3¢ a bushel, while the rate from this city, a distance of 50 miles was 6¢. The secret was in the fact that boats could run to Corvallis, but not to Mc Minnville.....

Mr. Hermann took the matter before Congress in dead earnest, and presented a bill January 11th, 1892, asking an appropriation for a preliminary survey....While the principal part of the Congressional work fell to Hermann, he was seconded by Senators Mitchell and Dolph and when Mr. Tongue succeeded him, he took up the work just as faithfully in connection with Senator McBride.

Before Hermann presented his January 1892 bill to Congress he paid a visit to Lafayette, which A.R. Burbank recorded in his diary on September 13, 1891: 18

The Hon. Binger Hermann (our member in Congress) came here on Friday, llth, which is the first time he has been to Lafayette. He was at our house. We want him to try and get Congress to make an appropriation for a Lock at the mouth and one at the falls here of the Yamhill River. Which he promised to work for. He went down to the river and falls here to see and I and the others went with him.

Then about three years later, on October 21, 1894 Burbank wrote:

On Friday, the 19th instant, U.S. Senator, J.H. Mitchell and a number of gentlemen from McMinnville with others from here, called on me in the afternoon (mostly those from McMinnville). On which we had a pleasant chat for a short time. They was (in carriages) on their way down to see the lower rapids of the Yamhill River along farm of Mr. O.H. Denny, East of my place. They had been down to the falls of said River at the Town here. We of this Yamhill County, Or. are wanting to have our Representatives in Congress to try to get an appropriation for to put Locks in the River here as to improve the navigation. Hence this visit to the River, Falls and Rapids here by said Senator (Mr. J.N. Dolph, Senator, visited said River in September).

The part that the Army Corps of Engineers was playing in all this is told in the Annual Report of the Chief of Engineers for 1895 (p.3602):

In 1890 the river and harbor act of that year provided for a preliminary examination of "the Yamhill from its mouth to McMinnville

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with a view to improving the same by removing snags and other obstructions". This examination was also made and was followed by a survey and a report by Maj. T.H. Handbury, Corps of Engineers, then in charge, under date of July 18, 1891. In this report it was estimated that \$3,000 could be profitably expended in removing trees, snags. sunken logs, stumps, etc., from the river. In the Act of July 13,1892, Congress provided the \$3,000 recommended and also directed that a preliminary examination be made of "the Yamhill River from its mouth to McMinnville for slack water navigation by lock and dam at Lafayette". This examination was also assigned to Major Handbury, who reported adversely upon this method of improvement, stating that the present and prospective commerce of the river did not warrant so large an expenditure by the Government.

In spite of adverse reports by the Corps of Engineers, the political process was continuing in regard to an appropriation for a lock and dam on the Yamhill. Maj. Handbury was replaced by Maj. James C. Post in 1893 and on March 6, 1895 Major Post submitted a report of his own survey made in response to the river and harbor act August 17, 1894. He wrote:

Considering....the phraseology of the Act concerning the survey, it appears to be the intention of Congress that an estimate of the cost of slack water navigation to McMinnville should now be submitted.

His estimate of the cost of the lock and dam and other necessary work for making the river navigable to McMinnville for a draft of $3\frac{1}{2}$ feet during the entire year was:

Lock	\$55,272
Dam	4,119
Land and residence for lock keeper	2,000
Channel near Martin's Landing	875
Engineer and Contingencies	6,434
	\$69.000

On June 3, 1896 Congress approved an appropriation for river improvement on the Willamette and Yamhill rivers that included the construction of a lock and dam in the Yamhill River at an estimated cost of \$69,000. \$40,000 of that was appropriated in June 1896 and on June 4, 1897 the rest of it was assigned. Bids were let for the project on February 10, 1898. A contract was awarded to Normile, Fastabend & McGregor of Astoria, Oreg., Mar. 11, 1898 and approved by the Chief of Engineers March 24, 1898, and provided that the whole work should be completed on or before Dec. 31, 1898. Work on the contract began in May 1898, culminating a 40 year old dream of the citizens of Yamhill Co. for a lock on the Yamhill River.

The Telephone Register of McMinnville for May 5, 1898 carried a reprint of an editorial in the Oregonian. The editorial was probably written by the Oregonian's editor, Harvey Scott, who had deep ties to Yamhill County, having lived and worked there as a young man. The editorial summed up so well the struggle for the locks and its future: 20

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THE YAMHILL IMPROVEMENT

Preliminary work has begun on the locks and dam on the Yamhill River at Lafayette, thus foreshadowing the early fulfillment of a long and anxious dream of the people of Yamhill County. While the hopes centured in this improvement may not be entirely fulfilled -- such hopes, it may be said, seldom are --- the completion of the work will be a source of gratification. The demand for it has come down from pioneer times, antedating the railroad era. It's foundation like that of the construction of the canal and locks at the Cascades, if we may compare great things with small, was in the lack of transportation facilities that pressed heavily upon farmers who for years were compelled to haul their wheat from the interior valley counties to Portland, then as now, the point of export. The demand was so firmly rooted in necessity that it has remained unshaken all these years regardless of the fact that the railway freight train long ago succeeded the long line of wheat laden wagons that through the dust of the late summer and the mud of early fall made their slow way over the uneven roads that lead from the agriculture counties to the shipping point.

It is easy for one whose memory runs back to that time to grow reminiscent over conditions in which springs the demand for an improvement of the Yamhill River, that will admit of its navigation to McMinnville. But though in a reminiscent mood it is easy to draw a picture of a long line of farm wagons....making their slow way from the grain field to the market, the picture would, however, represent nothing real to the farmers of a later generation whose shipping point has been a railway station....but a few miles from them. Yet, the hope of "river improvement" is a heritage to which the people of the rural districts have clung tenaciously as to a cherished birthright.

It is thus that the need for the construction of the dam and locks in the Yamhill is not so pressing as it was when it was first voiced by a demand. The farmers of the section drained by that river see in the actual beginnings of the work, promise of the realization of a long deferred hope, and he is a churl indeed who does not share their gratification in the event.--Oregonian.

Work on the lock and dam continued during the summer and fall. The keeper's dwelling was completed, but because of high water work was suspended on the lock and dam in November of 1898. The contractors were given an extension on their contract to November 30, 1899. Because of the condition of the river, work was not resumed until the middle of July. The small lock house for the keeper's office on the west side of the river was completed during September. Operations were suspended in October (1899) owing to high water, and a further extension owing to the

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breaking of the cofferdam the third time was granted to October 1, 1900. Work was again resumed in May 1900. All work under contract was completed September 22, 1900. and the works were formally turned over to the United States.

The lock was officially opened to navigation September 24, 1900. The total cost had been \$72,164.82. The opening of the locks was a great day for Yamhill County and it was appropriately celebrated with a two day celebration on September 28-29, 1900.

From September 24, 1900 to the end of the fiscal year, June 30, 1901 the locks were in operation for 202 days and closed 78 because of high water. During the same time 1,738 tons of freight and 2,170 passengers passed through the locks. But during that winter high water did a great deal of damage to the banks on both sides of the river at the lock and dam. On May 24, 1901 an allotment of \$23,200.00 was made for repairs. Most of the authorized repairs were made in the summer of 1901 and the lock and dam successfully withstood the winter freshets of the following season.

The Corps report for the year ending June 30, 1902 showed that the locks had operated almost continuously except for 79 days when it was closed because of high water. 2,455 tons of freight and 1,199 passengers had passed through the locks during that fiscal year.

The fiscal year ending June 30, 1903 was a significant one in the history of the Yamhill Lock and Dam. The lock was closed for 79 days because of high water and 19 days during August and September (1902) for repairs on the dam. Included in the Annual Report of the Chief of Engineers for that year was a notation that "the comparatively small number of lockages during the months when the lock was in operation was due to the withdrawal of the Oregon City Transportation Company's boat which formerly made regular trips to McMinnville. It was claimed by this company that the uncertainty of reaching McMinnville during the winter months because of a frequently closed lock made it impossible to build up a paying trade in competition with railroad rates, and therefore their boat could be used to a more profitable advantage on the Willamette River". Judging by lockages, the Oregon City boat had been taken off of the Yamhill River during the time that the lock had been closed for repair of the dam in August of 1902. 1,747 tons of freight and 284 passengers had gone through the locks during this fiscal year -- this included 710 tons of logs. The year 1902 marked the end of regular steamboat traffic on the Yamhill above the locks and commercial steamboats had been the principal reason the lock had been built in the first place.

For the fiscal year ending June 30, 1904 there were only 34 recorded lockages with 640 tons of freight and 26 passengers through the lock. All freight carried was logs with the exception of 1 ton of crawfish and 48 tons of gravel. There had been no steamer lockages during the year, "both lines of boats which formerly ran to McMinnville having abandoned the run above Dayton because it was claimed that uncertainty of lock operations during the high water season makes it impossible to compete with railroad rates".

In 1905 Corps of Engineer's report was practically the same as the year before. Freight tonnage increased but it was made up largely of cord wood

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on barges for paper fiber and of log rafts. No regular steamer operated above the locks.

The 1910 Annual Report of the Chief of Engineers gave the total traffic through the locks as 376 short tons of freight and 263 passengers. "The freight consisted largely of log rafts and pulp wood, and the passengers were principally parties in small boats and launches, there being no regular line of boats operating on the Yamhill River at the time".

"Due to lack of use by commercial traffic for which the facilities were provided, operation of Yamhill lock was discontinued February 7, 1954" -- this was the final report of the Army Corps of Engineers for the Yamhill lock and dam.

The Yamhill Lock is listed in The American Canal Guide, A Practical Guide to the Historic Canals of the United States and Canada, adding even more to its significance as a transportation landmark. It is listed in the Guide by its alternate name, Lafayette Lock. ²¹

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ENDING DATE OF THE PERIOD OF SIGNIFICANCE

The period of significance of the Yamhill Lock and Dam ended with the year 1902 because that was the year that regular steamboat traffic through the lock ended. After that, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Annual Report of the Chief of Engineers always emphasized that no regular steamers operated above the lock. Because of this lack of commercial traffic, the Corps did not feel justified in making the lock capable of year round use. (1)

With the loss of regular steamboat traffic in 1902, the lock had lost its significance as a commercial navigational aid on the Yamhill River, for which it had originally been built.

(1) Suann Reddick, "From Dream to Demolition," (Oregon Historical Quarterly, Vol. 91, No.2), pp. 166-7.

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MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

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- 2. ARCE, 1939, p.1906.
- 3. ARCE, 1902, pp.2390-2391.
- 4. ARCE, 1900, p.4349. ARCE, 1899, p.3236.
- 5. Yamhill County Historical Society (hereafter YCHS), Lafayette Locks file, letter from Oscar C. Kuentz to Chief of Engineers (Nov. 13, 1931).
- 6. Nels Nelson, Yamhill Lock Journal (hereafter NNYL), (Oct. 1899) courtesy of Jim and Millie Dunwoody, Lafayette, OR.
- 7. University of Oregon, Special Collections, (hereafter UOSC), Yamhill Lock Journal (1900-1932).
- 8. ARCE, 1889, p.3026.
- 9. Personal interview with "Skip" Baldwin, McMinnville, OR, (Feb. 1990), conducted by George Williams.
- 10. ARCE, 1904, p.3570; NNYL (March 16, 1900).
- 11. ARCE, 1901, pp.3555-3556.
- 12. YCPD, Cultural Resources Inventory, Resource I-300, Yamhill Locks/Lafayette Locks.
- 13. ARCE, 1953, p.1842; Quitclaim Deed from the U.S. of America, transferring Lafayette Locks and Dam to Yamhill County, Jan. 16, 1959. County Records, Vol. 3, pages 406-409.
- 14. Ruth Stoller, Old Yamhill, the Early History of Its Towns and Cities, (Yamhill County Historical Society, 1976), p.13; p.34.
- 15. Suann Reddick, "From Dream to Demolition, the Yamhill Lock and Dam" (Oregon Historical Quarterly, Vol. 91, No.1), p.47.
- 16. Yamhill County Reporter, McMinnville, OR, Feb. 13, 1873; Oct. 1, 1874.
- 17. Reddick, "From Dream to Demolition, the Yamhill Lock and Dam" (OHQ, Vol. 91, No. 1), p.57 and passim, pertaining to private lock incorporations on the Yamhill.

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- 18. A.R. Burbank Diary, Manuscript Collection, University of Oregon.
- 19. ARCE, 1895, 1898, 1899, 1900, 1901, 1902, 1903, 1904, 1905, 1910, 1956. These are mentioned by years in the narrative.
- 20. Telephone Register, McMinnville, OR, May 5, 1898.
- 21. The American Canal Guide, A Practical Guide to the Historic Canals of the United States and Canada. Published by the American Canal Society, Box 638, Glen Echo, Md. 20768. (Part I The West Coast, September 1974).
- 22. YCHS, Lafayette Locks file, Plat of Real Estate Owned by the U.S., Lock and Dam, Yamhill River.
- 23. Quitclaim Deed from the U.S. of America, transferring Lafayette Locks to Yamhill County, Jan. 16, 1959, County Records, Vol. 3, Pages 406-409.
- 24. 1989 Oregon Revised Statutes, 274.025, Jurisdiction over submersible and submerged lands generally.

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Boundary Description

Total acreage of the nominated property is 8.5 acres, including 5.93 acres of land on both sides of the Yamhill River owned by the county, and 2.57 acres of bed and banks of the river below the line of ordinary high water owned by the State of Oregon. The proposed boundary is shown on the accompanying Assessor's Map.

The land on both sides of the river was acquired by the United States by Warranty Deeds from private owners between April 1, 1989 and October 27, 1906. The boundaries of the tracts adjacent to the river included the banks down to the ordinary low water line in the appropriate deeds. However, this was an invalid description since the State of Oregon owned the bed and banks below the line of ordinary high water since statehood was achieved in 1859.

Yamhill County acquired the surplus property on January 16, 1959 by the acceptance of a Quitclaim Deed from the United States transferring the Yamhill River Lock and Dam to the county for recreational purposes. The boundaries of the land adjacent to the river again included the banks down tot he low water line. This also was an invalid description for the same reason as stated above.

Oregon claims the bed and banks of the river under the provision of the Act of Congress Admitting the State Oregon into the Union, approved February 14, 1859. 24

The nominated parcel of land and water lying in Sections 7 and 18, Township 4 South, Range 3 West, Willamette Meridian, in Yamhill County is more particularly described as follows:

Beginning at a stone monument 100 feet south and 100 feet west of the northeast corner of the Francis Fletcher Donation Land Claim No. 45 (variation used 21° 30' east), said point being the northwest corner of tract No. 5, as shown on the accompanying Plat of Yamhill Lock and Dam showing property owned by the United States of America, M. H. Kraft, country draftsman, April 1, 1955: thence south 500 feet to the point: thence east 100 feet, more or less, to the low water line on the west side of the Yamhill River; thence east 125 feet, more or less, to the low water line on the east side of the Yamhill River; thence

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southerly along said low water line 100 feet, more or less, to a point S. 62° W. 225 feet, more or less, from a stone monument at the southeast corner of tract No. 4, as shown on the accompanying Plat of Yamhill Lock and Dam; thence 225 feet, more or less, to the stone monument at the southeast corner of tract No. 4; thence north 41.3 feet on the west end of County Road No. 86 to a stone monument; thence N. 67° 29' E. 320 feet, more or less, along the north margin of County Road No. 86 to a point; thence east 94 feet long the north margin of County Road No. 86 to a point at the southwest corner of tract No. 2, as shown on the accompanying Plat of Yamhill Lock and Dam; thence north 174.2 feet along the west boundary of tract No. 2 to a point at the northwest corner of tract No. 2; thence northwesterly 632.5 feet, more or less, to the low water line on the east side of the Yamhill River, said point being northerly 110 feet along said low water line from the northwest corner of tract No. 1, as shown on the accompanying Plat of Yamhill Lock and Dam; thence southerly along said water line 110 feet to the northwest corner of tract No. 1; thence west 110 feet, more or less, to a point on the low water line on the west side of the Yamhill River; thence west 110 feet to the point of beginning, said parcel containing 8.5 acres, more or less.

Boundary Justification

The area proposed for nomination corresponds precisely to the area acquired by the United States between April 1, 1898 and October 27, 1906, plus a section of the Yamhill River bed and banks below the line of ordinary high water under state ownership; less the one acre parcel occupied by the lockkeeper's dwelling because that parcel is now under private ownership; less 0.73 acres of County Road No. 86. The proposed nomination is made up of four major elements:

- * The toehold on the west bank where the remaining land wall of the lock is located.
- * The east bank where the east end of the dam was anchored.
- * The section of the river where the remaining river wall of the Lock and the remnants of the dam are located.

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* The park area above the bank on the east side of the river.

The west bank was an area of much activity during construction and operation of the Lock. The concrete land wall was anchored into the bank by a wing wall. The total length of the bank (500 feet) was paved with stone to an elevation of five feet above the top of the Lock wall, and the area above this was seeded with grass. A small lockhouse and a storehouse were located on the rise at the northwest corner of the property. These two buildings are no longer extant.

The principal remaining structural feature of the nominated area is the Lock, which is distinguished by 270-foot-long walls of concrete. Remnants of the wooden lockgates are to be found at the bottom of the lock basin. The historic 125-foot wide, rock-filled, timber crib dam that extended from the water wall of the Lock to the east bank of the river is essentially a ruin, distinguishable as a cascade over a deposit of rubble.

The hand operated machinery on top of the Lock walls was removed and stored on the rise during periods of high water. Access to this area was by the portable bridge across the dam or by the lockkeeper's boat located above the dam.

The east bank also was graded and covered with stone paving on the lower slope and grass above. Much of this stone paving remains today. A timber apron 30 feet in width with steps in the middle extended from the top of the dam to the top of the slope. Lockkeeper Nelson's willows planted in 1900 are still helping to protect the slope.

The section of the river included in the nomination area is the same length (500 feet) as the developed banks described above. The water lock wall, the remnants of the dam and their associated features are all located in this parcel.

Many of the wooden pilings that remain were used in the initial effort to close the dam. These can be seen extending two to five feet above low water upstream from the main dam to the upstream and of the Lock. The remains of bank revetments are on both sides of the river below the Lock structure.

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The park area above the bank on the east side of the river was originally apart of the "lock grounds." Historic developments in this area included a 5,000-gallon water tank and tower located at the end of an elevated berm and a narrow concrete sidewalk along the top of the river bank which is still in place. Historic site improvements included tree clearing, tree trimming, and the sowing of grass. The south end of this unit also provided wagon road and foot access to the property.

The nominated area conforms to National Register standards. The selected boundaries encompass the area known to be the site where the historic event took place and its immediate setting. Except for the Lockkeeper's dwelling, the boundary includes the historic location of all features of the property, but does not include "buffer zones," or acreage that does not directly contribute to the significance of the site.

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The following information is the same for photo numbers 1 through 3.

Yamhill River Lock and Dam South end of Locks Road, Dayton, Yamhill County, Oregon Photographers not identified Yamhill County Historical Society PO Box 484 Lafayette OR 97127

Historic Photos 1-3

- 1 of 10 September 1900
 View upstream from east bank with lock house and storehouse in background and construction debris in foreground.
- 2 of 10 September 1900
 View from downstream end of land wall, showing steamer
 Bonita, hand operated machinery and timber boom for opening and closing west half of gate.
- 3 of 10 Circa 1908
 View downstream from west bank, showing steamer Leona
 "passing up," upstream water pool, timber apron and
 willows planted by Lockkeeper Nelson on east bank, and
 5,000-gallon water tank and tower.

The following information is the same for photo numbers 4 through 10.

Yamhill River Lock and Dam South end of Locks Road, Dayton, Yamhill County, Oregon Photographer - George W. Williams 1348 Melrose Avenue McMinnville OR 97128

Current photos 4 - 10

4 of 10 July 5, 1990
View upstream from east bank during low water, showing lock walls, dam rubble and timber piling.

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- 5 of 10 July 5, 1990
 View upstream from west bank during low water, showing river lock wall, dam rubble, timber piling and rock paving.
- 6 of 10 July 5, 1990
 View west from east bank during low water, showing dam rubble, water lock wall, and timber piling above dam rubble.
- 7 of 10 July 5, 1990
 View downstream from east bank, showing remains of stone paving and timber revetment below dam rubble.
- 8 of 10 July 5, 1990 View north from park area above east bank, showing simple recreation facilities.
- 9 of 10 August, 1990
 View northwest from south parking area showing concrete pedestal that was one of the footings for the 5,000-gallon water tank and tower of 1902. The water tank and tower were located on the berm behind the car.
- 10 of 10 August, 1990
 View north to lockkeeper's house of 1898 which sits on knoll above Locks Road. The house is under separate, private ownership and is not included in the nominated area.

Other Illustration

Photocopy of panoramic view, "Showing the Condition of the Work at the Close of the Season, November 10, 1901." U. S. Army Corps of Engineers, <u>Annual Report of the Chief of Engineers</u>, Part 3, page 2391. Looking upstream from east bank.

Photocopy of view "Showing Cofferdam Before Pumping and Slide at Lower End, July 18,1898." U. S. Army Corps of Engineers, <u>Annual Report of the Chief of Engineers</u>, Part 4, page 3236. Looking upstream from east bank.

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Sketch Map, Yamhill Lock Site, November 4, 1990. George W. Williams.

Plat of Yamhill Locks and Dam Showing Property Owned by the U.S.A., M. H. Kraft, County Draftsman, April 1, 1955.

Real Estate Owned by United States, Lock and Dam, Yamhill River, Oregon submitted by E. B. Thompson, Corps of Engineers, U. S. Army.

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SUPPLEMENTARY LISTING RECORD
NRIS Reference Number: 91000799 Date Listed: 6/21/91
Yamhill River Lock and Dam Yamhill <u>OR</u> Property Name County State
N/A Multiple Name
This property is listed in the National Register of Historic Places in accordance with the attached nomination documentation by the following expensions overlaps or amondment
subject to the following exceptions, exclusions, or amendment notwithstanding the National Park Service certification incluin the nomination documentation.
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