

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

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**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 New Russia Site (AHRs SITE NO. YAK 029)

AND/OR COMMON

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER

Ocean Cape Road

...NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CITY, TOWN

Yakutat

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

STATE

Alaska

VICINITY OF
CODE

02

Alaska

COUNTY

Skagway-Yakutat Div. 230

CODE

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 Alaska Division of Lands (907) 279-5577

STREET & NUMBER

323 E. 4th Avenue

CITY, TOWN

Anchorage

...VICINITY OF

STATE
Alaska

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE,
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC

Alaska Division of Lands

STREET & NUMBER

323 E. 4th Avenue

CITY, TOWN

Anchorage

STATE
Alaska

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE Alaska Heritage Resource Survey (AHRs)

DATE

1971

...FEDERAL STATE ...COUNTY ...LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR
SURVEY RECORDS

Alaska Division of Parks, 323 E. 4th Avenue

CITY, TOWN

Anchorage

STATE
Alaska

7 DESCRIPTION

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

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

This wet swampy area on the banks of Ankau Creek is in dense forest. Although once consisting of seven buildings within a stockade and five without, the site today has no surface remains. It is known to have been burned in the late summer of 1805 and reportedly was never reoccupied due to its local cultural significance.

Remains of what appear to be a log wall have been found at one location on the site and charcoal beneath the surface over a larger area gives evidence of some previous occupation or its end by fire.

This knowledge has been gained by cursory surveys by State and U.S. Forest Service archaeologists, but more extensive testing has not been undertaken. Local tradition does report that for many years, particularly during World War II, "pot hunting" resulted in many artifacts, e.g. cannon balls, iron scraps, and so forth, being taken from the site but the extent of recovery and location of material taken is not known.

The site's effective preservation depends on further scientific excavation.

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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> ART	<input type="checkbox"/> ENGINEERING	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSIC	<input type="checkbox"/> THEATER	
<input 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 1796-1805 (established ~~Preserved~~ ~~Destroyed~~ ~~Abandoned~~ ~~Destroyed~~)

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Significance

The site of New Russia, outside the Gulf of Alaska community of Yakutat on the Phipps Peninsula between Ankau Creek and Ocean Cape Road, represents a pivotal incident in Russian-Tlingit relations that effectively postponed European intrusion into the region for nearly a century.

Established in 1796 as a link between the fur trading center of Kodiak to the north and the rapidly southward moving sea otter who were being pursued to extinction in that direction by the Russians, New Russia created much misunderstanding between the North Pacific coast natives of Yakutat and the Russians; in the end, the natives, believing the terms under which the Russians had been allowed to occupy the post violated, attacked and burned the Russian stockade and buildings in 1805. This chronology foreshadowed many similar patterns that were to occur during the Russian presence in southeast Alaska from the late 18th century until 1867.

Today the area of the former Russian post on the banks of Ankau Creek is quiet. In the dense forest only subsurface charcoal, what may be the remains of a log building buried in the soil, and the oral tradition of the Yakutat remain as evidence. Accessible by automobile from Yakutat, the site is of great cultural significance to the people of Yakutat, and local inquiries should be made before visiting the site which is managed by the State of Alaska.

Historical Background

New Russia was established in 1796, apparently in an effort to create a more stable base for settlement in Alaska that were existing fur trading poses.

In June of 1794, Alexander Baranov of the Shelikov-Golikov Company arranged purchase of land in Yakutat Bay from natives residing there, and in August of that year one-hundred and ninety-two Russians, including forty-two craftsmen and ten farmers arrived at Kodiak enroute to Yakutat.

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Initial efforts to establish the Yakutat colony in 1795 miscarried, but in June, 1796, the colonists reached the proposed site and construction of a fortified post began. Two large log buildings, one for the hunters and one for the colonists, were placed inside a stockade. A blockhouse guarded the pallisades. When completed in October, 1796, New Russia was garrisoned by fifty men.

During the first winter the settlers suffered severely from lack of food and twenty men and several women died of scurvy. Baranov was able to provide relief in the spring. The colony grew.

At the time of the attack which destroyed it, New Russia reportedly had twelve buildings--seven within the stockade and five without. A shipyard was established and two small vessels constructed in 1803-04.

Sporadic conflicts occurred throughout the years 1796-1805, including attacks on hunting parties and the destruction of Redoubt St. Archangel Michael at Sitka in 1802. Although the New Russia settlers were terrified at the time and threatened to flee to Kodiak, they were reinforced and the post served as a vital staging area for Baranov's 1804 recapture of the Sitka area.

In September of 1805, the Kolosh (as the Russians called the Tlingit) attacked New Russia, killed all but a few women and children, and burned the post to the ground. Immediately after the massacre a Russian hunter reported that there was "not one log left standing on another". The importance of the site was pointed out later in 1805 by Imperial Chamberlain NICOLAI Rezanov who wrote "if Yakutat is not in our hands ...our hunting crews cannot get here [Sitka]."

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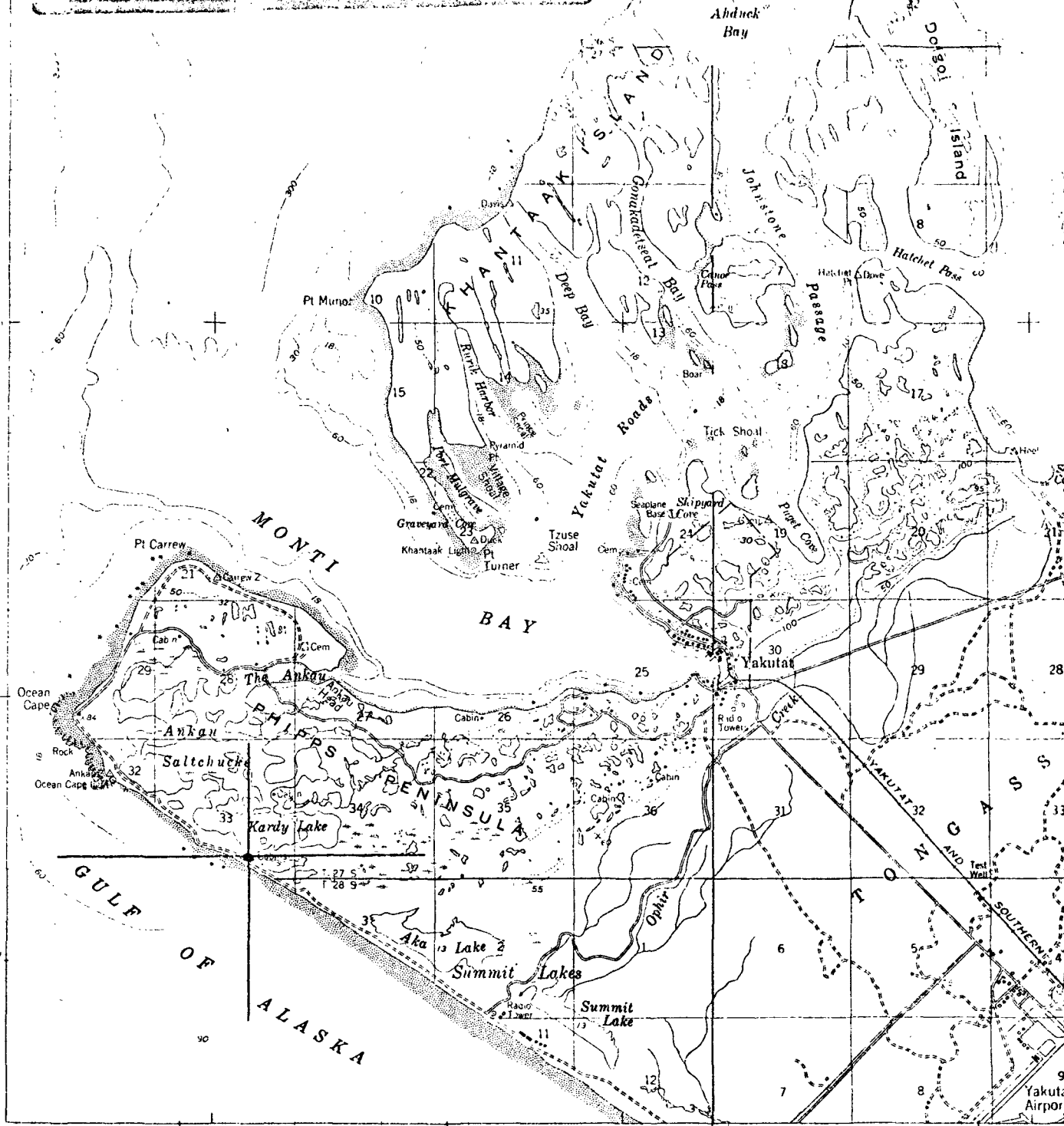
8

3

Although the Tlingits who attacked New Russia were slaughtered in their subsequent attempt to assault the Russian post on Hinchinbrook Island to the north in Prince William Sound, the Indians kept the Russians away from Yakutat Bay. As late as 1822 the Russian American Company was not able to conduct a census there. Aside from intermittent geographers' visits, other foreign intrusions did not occur in the area until the late nineteenth century.

The first American traders did not arrive until the late 1870's. One American cartographer about that time remarked of the Russian occupation "even the site has not been seen by white men for half a century." A similar impression was expressed twenty years later by a geologist in 1891: "the cellars marking the sites of the former houses are occupied by spruce trees, some of which are two feet in diameter. Were it not for the depressions left by the old cellars one could scarcely believe that this locality was inhabited less than 100 years ago."

The New Russia site was entered in the National Register of Historic Places on February 23, 1972.



Mapped, edited, and published by the Geological Survey
Control by USGS and USC&GS

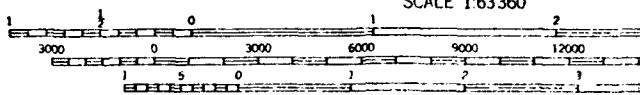
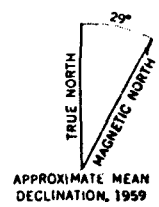
Topography by photogrammetric methods from aerial photographs
taken 1948, field annotated 1959. Map not field checked

Selected hydrographic data compiled from USC&GS Charts 8455
(1952) and 8402 (1960) and from aerial photographs
This information is not intended for navigational purposes

Universal Transverse Mercator projection, 1927 North American datum
10,000 foot grid based on Alaska coordinate system, zone 1
1000 meter Universal Transverse Mercator grid ticks,
zone 7, shown in blue

Land lines represent unsurveyed and unmarked locations
predetermined by the Bureau of Land Management
Tulu CR B, Copper River Meridian

Swamps, as portrayed, indicate only the wetter areas,
usually of low relief, as interpreted from aerial photographs



CONTOUR INTERVAL 100 FEET
DOTTED LINES REPRESENT 10 FOOT CONTOURS
DATUM IS MEAN SEA LEVEL
DEPTH CURVES AND SOUNDINGS IN FEET DATUM IS MEAN LOWER LOW
SHORELINE SHOWN WITH DASHES THE APPROXIMATE LINE OF MEAN HIGH
TIDE THE MEAN RANGE OF TIDE IS APPROXIMATELY 8 FEET

FOR SALE BY U. S. GEOLOGICAL SURVEY
FAIRBANKS, ALASKA 99701, DENVER, COLORADO 80225, OR WASHINGTON, D. C. 20508
A FOLDER DESCRIBING TOPOGRAPHIC MAPS AND SYMBOLS IS AVAILABLE