

THE HORSE RANCH, KITCHEN-DINING HALL  
Wallowa-Whitman National Forest  
Joseph vicinity < Eagle Cap wilderness area  
Wallowa County  
Oregon

HABS No. OR-165-L

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ORE  
32 - JOS.V,  
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PHOTOGRAPHS

WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY  
Columbia Cascades Support Office  
National Park Service  
909 First Avenue  
Seattle, Washington 98104-1060

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HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY  
THE HORSE RANCH (Red's Horse Ranch), Kitchen/Dining Hall

HABS NO. OR-165-L

**Location:** The Horse Ranch is located within the Eagle Cap Wilderness Area, Wallowa-Whitman National Forest. The ranch lies in a valley along the Wild and Scenic Minam River In Wallowa County. It is approximately nine air miles northeast of Cove, Oregon and thirteen air miles southwest of Enterprise, Oregon. SE 1/4 of the NE 1/4 and the NE 1/4 of the SE 1/4 of Section 36, Township 2S, Range 41E, Willamette Meridian.

The kitchen/dining hall is part of the group of buildings (HAB NO. OR-165-F through J) centrally located on the site. Bunkhouse #2 is southwest of the kitchen/dining hall and west of a the rocky bluff. The building faces south.

**Significance:** The kitchen/dining hall is significant as it relates to the evolution of the site. First used as a logger's cabin or bunkhouse, the original one room cabin portion (western half) was later used as a residence for the Richards family (1920s). The Richards had a sheep raising operation on the ranch. During the Hudspeth's ownership (1930s), the building was used as the main lodge and mess hall for guests of the ranch. The building was expanded (dining room and kitchen added) during Red Higgins' ownership to accommodate the growing use as a dude ranch.

According to the Determination of Eligibility for the National Register (letter dated, May 1, 1996) between the State Historic Preservation Office and the U.S. Forest Service, the kitchen/dining hall is a contributing building within the Horse Ranch complex.

**Description:** *Exterior:* The L-shaped building, measuring approximately 46' E.W. x 52' N.S., has intersecting gable roofs sheathed with corrugated metal roofing. The front porch is recessed underneath the western portion of the gable. The original cabin, the western portion of the building, is constructed of peeled horizontal logs with saddle notched corners. The chinking is similar in mixture to bunkhouses #1 and #2. The kitchen (to the north) and dining hall additions (eastern section) are constructed of horizontal logs with log end cut at 45 degree angles and butted together. Exterior corner logs were added to cover the cut ends. The kitchen/dining hall shows two different notching techniques.

*South elevation:* The gable roof covers a recessed front porch on the western half of the front elevation. This portion of the building represents the original building length. Two low granite walls flank the front walk that lead to the front porch. Posts supporting the porch roof rest on the wall and are at the west and east end of the porch. The front door is comprised of horizontal wood planks secured with an iron latch. Two one over one double-hung wood sash windows flank the front door. The porch floor is flagstone set in mortar. A design made from rocks in the porch floor near the entrance reads, "Red's Horse Ranch"; a north arrow in a circle is above the name. The dining hall addition, east of the original cabin portion, has three aluminum sliding windows. Window boxes are below two of the three windows.

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*West elevation:* The walls are horizontal peeled logs which extend to the roofline. A tapered, central massive granite chimney is on the west elevation. This chimney has rounded corners and was constructed in a more random rubble pattern. The chimney was added in the 1930s. A hops vine grows on the southern portion of the west elevation. Hand-cut shingles cover the addition north of the chimney. This area was originally a sleeping area, later a kitchen addition, and is currently (1996) the bathrooms. There are two small double-hung wood sash windows on the shingle covered addition.

*North elevation:* The wall of the kitchen addition or the eastern half of this elevation is board and batten. The older wall on the western half of this elevation is covered with hand-split shakes. The 1965 kitchen addition is covered with a gable roof. A porch area is formed at the apex of the L-shape and is covered with a corrugated metal shed roof which extends from the kitchen addition to the wood shed/wash room. The porch floor is poured concrete. Two skylights are in the roof of the kitchen addition.

*East elevation:* The walls are horizontal peeled logs with board and battens covering the gable end. A massive central chimney with squared corners is on the east elevation. This chimney is constructed in an uncoursed random rubble pattern. This chimney is part of the 1964 dining hall addition and was built by Pete Decker. Three aluminum sliding windows are on this elevation, one at the north end and two at the south end. North of the chimney is a large side porch with a gable roof supported by squared posts and bracing. The door on this elevation is knotty pine panel door. The porch faces onto the bluff which rises next to the building. A large lodgepole pine is directly north of the porch roof, a few feet from the building wall.

*Interior:* Knotty pine paneling in the sitting room area of the kitchen/dining hall cover the walls and ceiling. The floors are wood that have been covered with indoor/outdoor carpeting. The front door is faced with knotty pine panels. A granite fireplace on the west wall has a pine mantel-shelf supported by two large projecting chunks of granite. There is a knotty pine cupboard on the north wall. Hanging from the ceiling is a copper and wood wagon wheel light fixture. A large wood and leather couch sits under each of the two front windows. Other items in the room are: a log and pine slab end table, wooden bench, antique scale, wood churn, and a glass display case. All knotty pine was added by Red Higgins during his ownership.

Directly north of the sitting area is a narrow hall with doors that lead to two bathrooms along the west wall. These bathrooms have modern flooring, wallpaper, sinks, and toilets.

The dining room is east of the sitting area and is accessed through a wide opening. The long room has three long log ceiling beams which extend east/west. A large granite fireplace is on the east wall with a thick wood mantel-shelf and a decorative metal grate. Two large copper and wood wagon wheel light fixtures hang from the ceiling, and two propane light fixtures hang from the walls. Three sets of elk antlers hang on the east wall. Furniture in the

dining hall consists of: four long dining tables, one low knotty pine cupboard, and one knotty pine wall cupboard. The door leading to the side porch on the east wall is covered with pine paneling.

The kitchen is north of the dining room and is accessed through a wide opening. The east wall is lined with knotty pine fronted cabinets, and the refrigerator. Two aluminum-framed windows on the east elevation front the rocky bluff. On the north wall are the stoves: one is a large wood burning stove and the other is a large propane stove. Along the west wall is a stainless steel double sink, counter and door leading to the porch area, barbecue, and wood shed/wash room. A large aluminum frame window looks out on the porch area and the wood shed/wash room. On the south wall are painted built-in cupboards and the door to the pantry. In the center of the kitchen are two long tables. There are six copper hanging light fixtures and two propane wall fixtures. The floor of the kitchen and pantry is concrete. The pantry is a painted wood paneled room with shelves for storage.

**Historical Context:**

The original cabin consisted of one room and was probably built by the Minam Lumber Company along with bunkhouses #1 and #2. When Richards acquired the property in 1921, the entire family slept in what is now the sitting area. At that time, there was no fireplace, only a pot belly stove in the center of the room heated the cabin.

A shed roof extension was added to the north elevation and was used as a sleeping area and kitchen during the Hudspeth's ownership. The Hudspeths also built the fireplace on the west wall. In 1964, under Red's ownership, a dining hall was added to the east wall of the original cabin. In 1965, Red added a kitchen to the north elevation and converted the old sleeping area/kitchen to two bathrooms and a pantry. Directly north of the kitchen is the barbecue conveniently located for use by the cook. The building now labeled as wood shed/washroom was originally a wood shed. This allowed the cook to get wood easily to stoke the stove. The cook's cabin, located next to the wood shed/wash house also was conveniently located near the kitchen.

**Sources:**

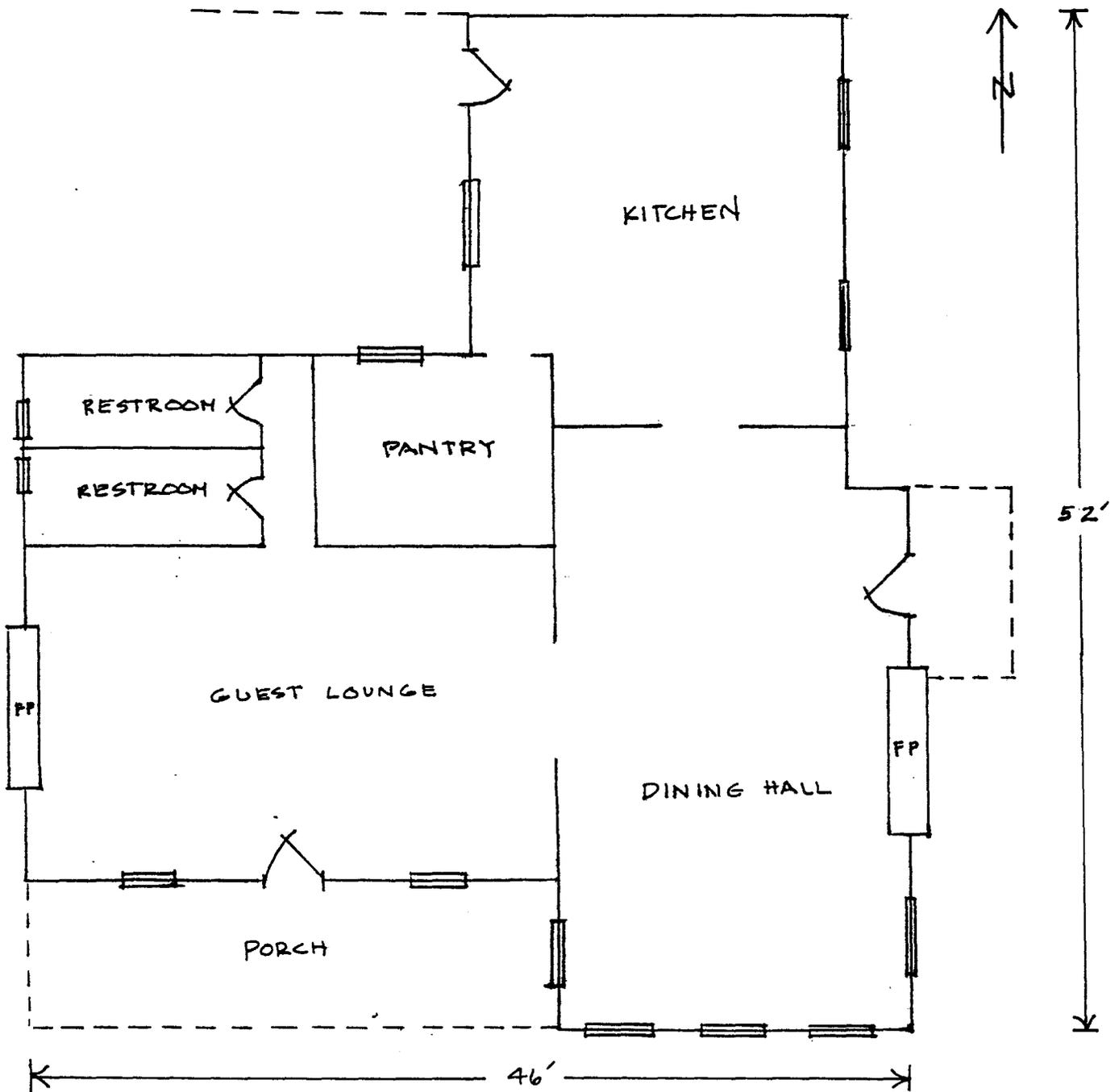
Cason, Richard, 8/12/96, Elgin, Oregon, former wrangler and pilot for Red's Horse Ranch, interviewed by Kimberly Lakin. Case, Donna, former resident, phone interview by Kimberly Lakin, December 1996. Richards, Cecil, former resident of ranch, site interview by Kimberly Lakin and Sally Donovan, August 1996. Womack, Bruce, 8/96 and 10/96, Enterprise, Oregon, Eagle Cap Wilderness Area, Wallowa-Whitman National Forest, National Register Determination of Eligibility. Site analysis by Kimberly Lakin and Sally Donovan, August 1996.

**Project Information:**

In 1994, the Horse Ranch (Red's Horse Ranch) was acquired for inclusion in the National Wilderness System by the USDA Forest Service. As a result of the property acquisition, the USDA Forest Service is preparing an Environmental Analysis Report and Future Use Determination for the site. This process will enable the Wallowa-Whitman National Forest to establish management direction and priorities for the property. As part of the environmental analysis, a Determination of Eligibility report was completed in the spring of 1996.

Project Supervisors: Contracting Officer R.A. Cunningham, Wallowa-Whitman National Forest and Bruce Womack, Contracting Officer's Representative, Eagle Cap Wilderness Area, Wallowa-Whitman National Forest.

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Date: December 1996



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APP. OX. SCALE

KITCHEN/DINING HALL