

THE HORSE RANCH, COOK'S CABIN
Wallowa-Whitman National Forest
Joseph vicinity *Eagle Cap Wilderness Area*
Wallowa County
Oregon

HABS No. OR-165-N

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PHOTOGRAPHS

WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY
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HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY
THE HORSE RANCH (Red's Horse Ranch), Cook's Cabin

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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 cook's cabin is located east of the ponds in the center of the complex. The structure is located directly north and west of the dining hall/kitchen. A lawn area is located west of the cabin and the wood shed/wash house is located directly to the south. The wood shed/wash house is separated from the cook's cabin by a narrow concrete path. The wood shed/wash house, cook's cabin, and kitchen/dining hall are all closely associated in space and are separated by only a few feet.

Significance: The cook's cabin is significant as it relates to the ranch complex. The cook's cabin was an integral part of the ranch operations, serving as living quarters for the cook as well as a cold storage area (basement). The cabin is in close proximity to the kitchen and wood shed and was built during Red Higgins' ownership ca. 1946.

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 cook's cabin is a primary building within the Horse Ranch complex.

Description: This rectangular one room building, measuring approximately 14' E.W. x 20' N.S., is covered with a low-pitched gable roof sheathed with painted, corrugated metal roofing. A metal stove pipe projects from the northeast corner of the roof. The roof is supported by closely spaced continuous purlins constructed of small peeled logs (slightly smaller than the adjacent wood shed/wash house). The purlins project slightly over the north and south walls of the cook's cabin creating an overhang. A slight overhang also is present on the west and east elevations. The gable ends are covered with hand-split shakes.

The cook's cabin is constructed of horizontal peeled ponderosa pine logs with square corner notching. Chinking consists of a soft, light colored mortar; some of the mortar chinking is missing. Two double, multi-pane windows are located on the west elevation. The entrance door to the cabin is on the east elevation. The door is constructed of wood planks with iron hardware. A concrete stoop is outside the east door.

The interior of the cabin has a knotty pine ceiling and log walls. The concrete floor is covered with linoleum. A small closet is built into the southeast corner and a wood stove is in the northeast corner. The interior of the cabin is wired for electricity.

The poured concrete basement rises above grade level approximately one foot on the south elevation and drops away to a full story, exposed basement on the west elevation. A heavy, metal lined refrigerator door on the west elevation leads to the basement. The interior of the basement or cold storage room has concrete walls, floors, and ceilings and a central floor drain. Four hanging meat hooks are located in the ceiling surrounded by free standing wood shelves. The interior of the basement is wired for electricity.

The cook's cabin is very similar in construction methods and size to the adjacent wood shed/wash house. The cook's cabin is in good-excellent condition.

Historical Context:

The building, built ca. 1946, originally functioned as a cook's cabin and currently (1996) is used as a bunkhouse. The basement served as a cold storage area for storing meat and other perishable foods. The door to the cold storage area is lined with metal for insulation purposes, and meat hooks and shelving are still intact in the basement. A Chinese cook at the ranch who lived in the building is reported to have committed suicide by drowning himself in the pond on the ranch.

Sources:

Cason, Richard, 8/12/96, Elgin, Oregon, former wrangler and pilot for Red's Horse Ranch, interviewed by Kimberly Lakin. 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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COOK'S CABIN

