

# DATA SHEET PH0150487

Form 10-300  
(July 1969)

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

## NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

(Type all entries - complete applicable sections)

STATE: <b>California</b>	
COUNTY: <b>Tuolumne</b>	
FOR NPS USE ONLY	
ENTRY NUMBER	DATE
<b>JUN 5</b>	<b>1975</b>

### 1. NAME

COMMON:

AND/OR HISTORIC:  
**Niagara Camp**

### 2. LOCATION *NE of Tuolumne in Stanislaus National Forest*

STREET AND NUMBER:  
The location of the site is approximately 100 feet south off of Forest \*

CITY OR TOWN:  
*N/A Tuolumne vicinity*

STATE <b>California</b>	CODE <b>06</b>	COUNTY: <b>Tuolumne</b>	CODE <b>109</b>
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### 3. CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY * (Check One)	OWNERSHIP	STATUS *	ACCESSIBLE TO THE PUBLIC
<input type="checkbox"/> District <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Building <input type="checkbox"/> Site <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Structure <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Object	<input type="checkbox"/> Public <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Private <input type="checkbox"/> Both	Public Acquisition: <input type="checkbox"/> In Process <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Being Considered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Occupied <input type="checkbox"/> Unoccupied <input type="checkbox"/> Preservation work in progress
PRESENT USE (Check One or More as Appropriate)			
<input type="checkbox"/> Agricultural <input type="checkbox"/> Commercial <input type="checkbox"/> Educational <input type="checkbox"/> Entertainment	<input type="checkbox"/> Government <input type="checkbox"/> Industrial <input type="checkbox"/> Military <input type="checkbox"/> Museum	<input type="checkbox"/> Park <input type="checkbox"/> Private Residence <input type="checkbox"/> Religious <input type="checkbox"/> Scientific	<input type="checkbox"/> Transportation <input type="checkbox"/> Comments <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify) * <i>HISTORIC</i>

### 4. OWNER OF PROPERTY

OWNER'S NAME:  
**Fibreboard Corporation**

STREET AND NUMBER:  
**55 Francisco**

CITY OR TOWN:  
**San Francisco**

STATE:  
**California**

### 5. LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.:  
**Tuolumne County Court House**

STREET AND NUMBER:  
**41 West Yaney Avenue**

CITY OR TOWN:  
**Sonora**

STATE:  
**California**

CODE:  
**06**

### 6. REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE OF SURVEY:  
**National Register of Historic Places Inventory Site Form, United States \***

DATE OF SURVEY: **1973 (form undated)**     Federal     State     County     Local

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS:  
**Federal Forest Service, Regional Office**

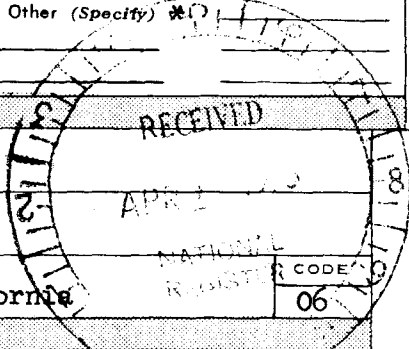
STREET AND NUMBER:  
**630 Sansome Street**

CITY OR TOWN:  
**San Francisco**

STATE:  
**California**

CODE:  
**06**

SEE INSTRUCTIONS



STATE: COUNTY: ENTRY NUMBER: DATE: FOR NPS USE ONLY

\* Refer to continuation sheet.

7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION	donkeys trestle railway (Check One) * Camp					
	<input type="checkbox"/> Excellent	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Good	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Fair	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> Ruins	<input type="checkbox"/> Unexposed
	(Check One)			(Check One)		
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Altered	<input type="checkbox"/> Unaltered	<input type="checkbox"/> Moved	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Original Site		

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (if known) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

At an elevation of 5,167 feet, Niagara Camp is surrounded by forest common to that of the Transition Zone: Yellow pine, sugar pine, Douglas-fir, white fir, and other miscellaneous vegetation. Presently, an area of approximately four acres includes the remains of a logging camp, the old railroad bed, a trestle and a steam donkey graveyard.

Typical to most logging camps, Niagara Camp consists of two camps: A family camp and the main camp (single men's camp.) Presently, the main camp is composed of one cabin that is still used temporarily as a shelter, two broken down cabins, and three piles of rotting lumber where cabins once stood. There is also a railroad car in good shape that has functioned as the bunk house for the steel gang and later used for food storage. The main camp forms a semicircle around a clearing where there are two boilers used to heat the water for the showers. Along the railbed, not too far from the main camp, there are a series of cabins which comprise the family camp. Three of the cabins are still functional as a shelter while two others have become dilapidated with time. There are many parts of wood-burning stoves that have been cast out onto the hillside in this area. To increase the visual inadequacies of the camp, there are five abandoned automobiles and large piles of refuse scattered indiscriminately around the area.

The railroad bed which passes the camp on two sides still has cedar ties but the rails have been salvaged. Approximately 200 yards from the camp, following the railroad bed to the southeast, there is a steep creek canyon that could not be crossed by means of a land fill. Fred Ellis is the designer and engineer of the trestle built here in 1923-24. It spans the creek 318 feet and has a height of 54 feet. The trestle, built of red fir, shows natural weathering. The original fifty-gallon water barrels and rails have been removed. Some of the lumber at the accessible end of the trestle is being cut and removed by vandals. It is not unrealistic to think the trestle may, over a period of time, be taken apart board by board.

Less than a quarter mile from the trestle following the railroad bed there is a donkey graveyard. These four old steam loading machines stand together proving their obsolescence to the relatively simple and economical cat logging. There are three large Willamette brand donkeys and a smaller donkey whose brand is unknown. The wooden skids are rotting and the metal has rusted but each of the donkeys is otherwise in good shape. Vandalism is apparent; many pieces small enough to be carried away are gone.

The refuse is unsightly and the remains of the logging camps, both family and main camp, are in a state of deterioration; nevertheless, they do show a skeletal picture of an old time logging camp. The railroad bed, though lacking rails, does have ties which induce the imagination to visualize the old railroad as it must have appeared. The trestle built by the West Side Railroad engineer still remains in all its grandeur. The obsolete steam loading machines are located close by the trestle and camp. Although the donkeys and trestle have held up well against time and the elements, vandals may soon be their ruin. Four acres encompass these classic examples of the early logging techniques that display the way the workers lived, the machinery they used, and their method of transportation.

S E E I N S T R U C T I O N S

**SIGNIFICANCE**

PERIOD (Check One or More as Appropriate)

- Pre-Columbian |  16th Century |  18th Century |  20th Century  
 15th Century |  17th Century |  19th Century

SPECIFIC DATE(S) (If Applicable and Known) **1898 - 1958**

AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE (Check One or More as Appropriate)

- |   |   |  |   |
|---|---|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Aboriginal                         | <input type="checkbox"/> Education              | <input type="checkbox"/> Political                           | <input type="checkbox"/> Urban Planning             |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Prehistoric (trestle)              | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Engineering | <input type="checkbox"/> Religion/Philosophy                 | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Historic (donkeys)                 | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Industry    | <input type="checkbox"/> Science                             | <u>Early logging techniques</u>                     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Agriculture                        | <input type="checkbox"/> Invention              | <input type="checkbox"/> Sculpture                           | <u>Lives of loggers</u>                             |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Architecture (trestles) | <input type="checkbox"/> Landscape Architecture | <input type="checkbox"/> Social/Humanitarian                 | <u>Economy based on logging</u>                     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Art                                | <input type="checkbox"/> Literature             | <input type="checkbox"/> Theater                             | _____   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Commerce                           | <input type="checkbox"/> Military               | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Transportation (railway) | _____   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Communications                     | <input type="checkbox"/> Music                  |  | _____   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Conservation                       |   |  | _____   |

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

In 1898, the towns of Carters and Summerville (soon to merge and be re-named Tuolumne City) became the center of bustling activity of the West Side Flume and Lumber Company conceived by Henry Crocker and Thomas Bullock. To bring the lumber out of their 60,000 acres was a substantial reason to build the railroad although the long range plans were to have a passenger line to Hetch Hetchy and Yosemite Valleys and possibly an intercontinental railroad over the Sierra Nevadas. Thus, the Hetch Hetchy and Yosemite Valleys Railway Company of California was incorporated as a common carrier line in August 1900, which gave the line power to condemn rights-of-way. In 1903, the narrow gauge railroad was bought for four million dollars by a group of lumbermen whose ambitions ended all possibilities of a passenger line. The new owners deleted the "Flume" so the name of the company became West Side Lumber Company. William Newell, under the management of Prince, Johnson and Thorcen laid track while the railroad flourished. Fred Ellis, Newell's replacement accomplished far more; he planned 250 miles of track that saw rails.

In 1923, the area around Niagara Creek was first used as a tent camp for 10 to 12 men who laid rail and built the trestle under the direction of Fred Ellis. In 1929, for the first time the Niagara area was logged of cedar, sugar pine and ponderosa pine from Camp 37. These were the days of steam equipment and bountiful rail which followed the loggers into the woods wherever trees were being felled. Steam donkeys with cable 1,200 to 2,000 feet long dragged the individual logs (leaving deep gullies on the ground surface) to a platform next to the railroad. When the cable from one donkey could not reach some desirable timber, another donkey was placed at the end of the first donkey's cable, so that another 1,200 to 2,000 feet could be covered. Yet another donkey loaded the logs onto the steam-pulled railcars. Later the spar tree was the axis for the cable used for loading.

When the depression hit, all logging operations closed down from 1930-1935. When West Side reopened, they started off with new equipment that was much easier and more economical than the steam equipment. Cats were used to bring logs to the landing; A-frame loaders loaded the logs onto the trucks which took the timber to the diesel-converted train where there was another A-frame to load the logs onto the railcar. By 1953, the white fir market picked up so that the Niagara Creek area was worth relogging. Fifteen to eighteen million board feet of lumber per year was brought out for five years. George Couture, camp boss until 1957, built the Niagara Camp. The number of men needed to log had decreased to 100 and was to \*

\* Refer to continuation sheet.

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

**9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES**

Couture, George. Retired Niagara Camp Boss. Interview, Tuolumne City, May 6, 1974  
 Gutohrlein, Adolf, Rails In The Mother Lode. Omaha: Kratville Publications, 1969, Pgs. 63-111.  
 Kreig, Allan, Last Of The 3' Loggers. San Marino: Golden West Books, 1962.  
 Tompkins, Martin. Retired Steam Donkey Operator. Interview, Tuolumne City, May 2, 1974.

**10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA**

LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING A RECTANGLE LOCATING THE PROPERTY			O R	LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING THE CENTER POINT OF A PROPERTY OF LESS THAN TEN ACRES		
CORNER	LATITUDE	LONGITUDE		LATITUDE	LONGITUDE	
	Degrees Minutes Seconds	Degrees Minutes Seconds		Degrees	Minutes	Seconds
NW	° ' "	° ' "		120°	00'	20"
NE	° ' "	° ' "		38°	00'	08"
SE	° ' "	° ' "				
SW	° ' "	° ' "				

UTM  
 10/76318  
 421045E  
 HL

APPROXIMATE ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY: **4 Acres**

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE:	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
N/A			
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

**11. FORM PREPARED BY**

NAME AND TITLE:  
**Earlene Daniels Forestry-Aid (Historian)**

ORGANIZATION: **Stanislaus National Forest** DATE: **June 3, 1974**

STREET AND NUMBER:  
**175 South Fairview Lane**

CITY OR TOWN: **Sonora** STATE: **California** CODE: **06**

**12. STATE LIAISON OFFICER CERTIFICATION NATIONAL REGISTER VERIFICATION**

As the designated State Liaison 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 National Park Service. The recommended level of significance of this nomination is:

National  State  Local

Name *[Signature]*  
 Title State Historic Preservation Officer  
 Date MAR 17 1975

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

*[Signature]*  
 Chief, Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation

Date 6/5/75

ATTEST:  
*[Signature]*  
 Keeper of The National Register  
 Date JUN 4 1975

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM**

(Continuation Sheet)

STATE <b>California</b>	
COUNTY <b>Tuolumne</b>	
FOR NPS USE ONLY	
ENTRY NUMBER	DATE
	<b>JUN 5 1975</b>

(Number all entries)

**2. Street and Number:**

Service Road No. 1N04 (Cottonwood Road) one-half mile west of the junction of Forest Service Roads No. 3N01 and No. 2N084 approximately 35 miles from Tuolumne City; Township 2N Range 17E Sections 21 and 28.

**3. Category:**

The trestle and railway would be classified as a structure, the steam-donkeys historical objects, and the camp, buildings.

**3. Status:**

Loggers still occasionally use the camp along with others wanting a temporary shelter.

**3. Present Use:**

The trestle, railway and the steam donkeys are not being used while the camp is used intermittently.

**6. Representation in Existing Surveys:**

Department of Agriculture Forest Service, Region 5, Numbers: 05-16-54-08 (trestle) and 05-16-54-09 (donkey graveyard).

**7. Condition:**

Each component of the nomination is treated separately for accuracy. Cumulatively the condition can be considered fair.

**8. Statement of Significance:**

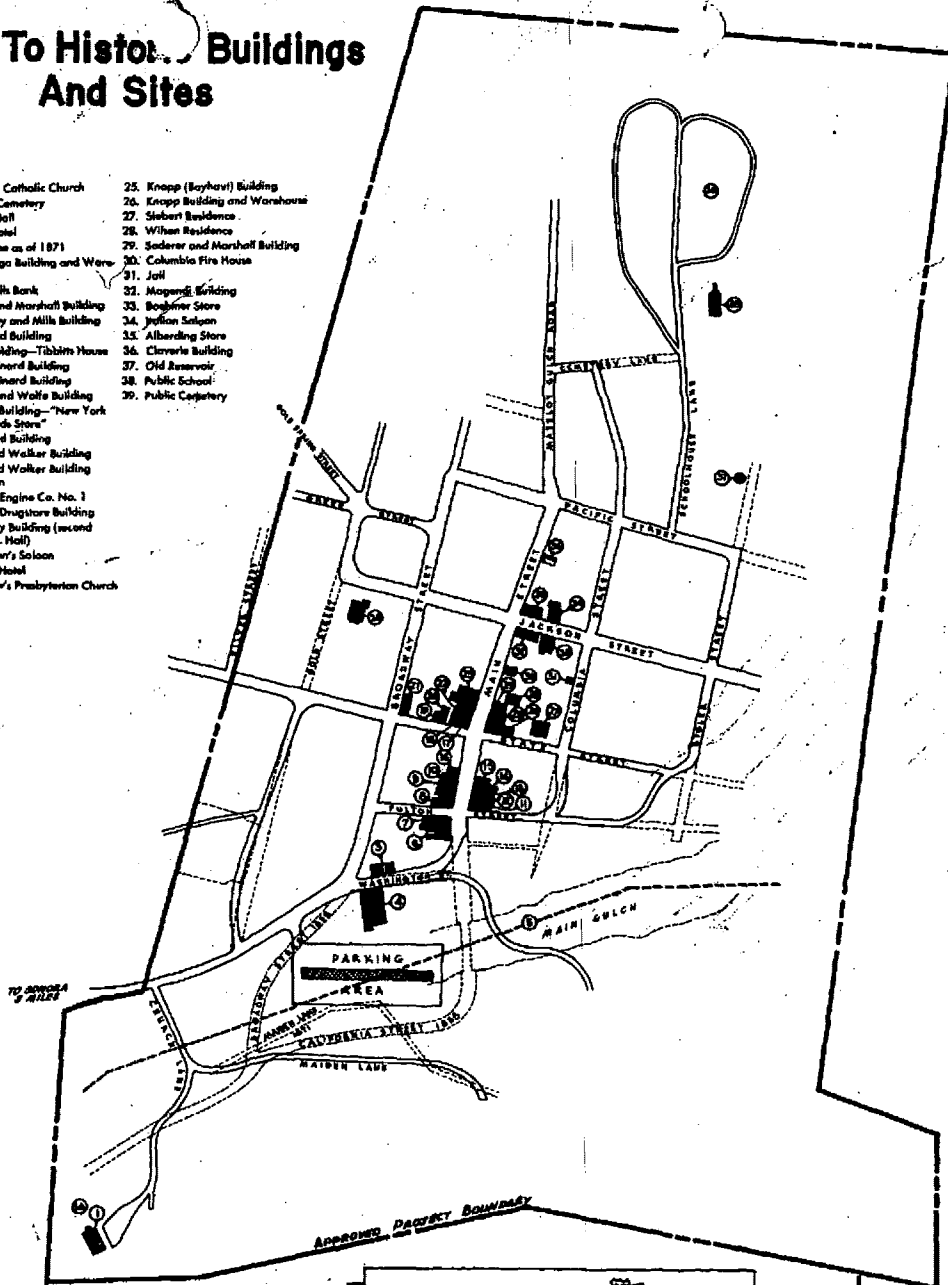
decrease even more as technology progressed.

Logging has been the major source of economic stability for Tuolumne County since the early 1900's; therefore, the local significance is great. Also to be taken into consideration should be the fact that the trestle was built during a time when tools were relatively primitive. The ties and rail were laid by men. The amount of man power the steam donkeys demanded and all other aspects of 1920 logging is not comparable to present day logging. While the logging of the 1950's had advanced considerably from those of the 1920's, it was also another era of logging--a transition stage from the 1920's to the 1970's.

The phases of history pertaining to the logging industry from 1923 to 1958 remain to be seen at Niagara Camp. There is an example of each phase of history: The railbed, trestle and steam donkeys were built and utilized in the 1920's, and the camp represents the 1950's. These 35 years depict a time when rapid technological advances affected peoples lives and the logging industry itself.

# Key To Historic Buildings And Sites

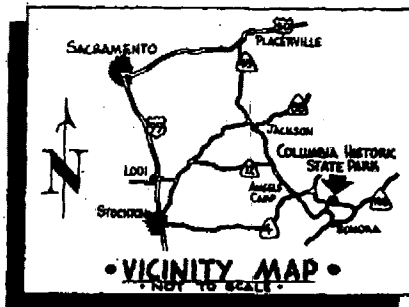
- |   |                                   |
|---|-----------------------------------|
| 1. St. Anne's Catholic Church                   | 25. Knapp (Bayview) Building      |
| 1A. Catholic Cemetery                           | 26. Knapp Building and Warehouse  |
| 2. Masonic Hall                                 | 27. Stebert Residence             |
| 3. Fallon's Hotel                               | 28. Wilson Residence              |
| 4. Main Flume as of 1871                        | 29. Soderer and Marshall Building |
| 5. Wells Fargo Building and Warehouse           | 30. Columbia Fire House           |
| 6. D. O. Mills Bank                             | 31. Jail                          |
| 7. Soderer and Marshall Building                | 32. Mogens Building               |
| 8. McClellan and Hills Building                 | 33. Bogner Store                  |
| 9. Hildebrand Building                          | 34. Jackson Store                 |
| 10. A. L. L. Building—Tobacco House             | 35. Alford Store                  |
| 11. South Broadway Building                     | 36. Chevalier Building            |
| 12. North Broadway Building                     | 37. Old Reservoir                 |
| 13. Franklin and Wolfe Building                 | 38. Public School                 |
| 14. Schwartz Building—"New York Drygoods Store" | 39. Public Cemetery               |
| 15. Hildebrand Building                         |                                   |
| 16. Leavitt and Walker Building                 |                                   |
| 17. Leavitt and Walker Building Addition        |                                   |
| 18. Tuolumne Engine Co. No. 1                   |                                   |
| 19. Columbia Drugstore Building                 |                                   |
| 20. McClellan Building (second I.O.O.F. Hall)   |                                   |
| 21. Heyman's Saloon                             |                                   |
| 22. Mogens's Hotel                              |                                   |
| 23. St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church            |                                   |



## COLUMBIA HISTORIC STATE PARK

SCALE 0 100 200 300 400 500 600 FEET

STATE OF CALIFORNIA  
DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES  
DIVISION OF BEACHES & PARKS



The State Park System holds in trust for generations yet unborn a small but very valuable portion of this State's rich heritage.

*Help keep it thus.*

For specific information write Supervisor, Columbia Historic State Park,  
P. O. Box 265, Columbia, California