

# DATA SHEET

Form 10-300  
(Rev. 6-72)

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

## NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

(Type all entries - complete applicable sections)

STATE: Wyoming
COUNTY: Johnson
FOR NPS USE ONLY
ENTRY DATE <b>JUL 29 1977</b>

### 1. NAME

COMMON:  
Cantonment Reno

AND/OR HISTORIC:  
Cantonment Reno, Cantonment or Camp McKinney, Fort McKinney, Depot McKinney

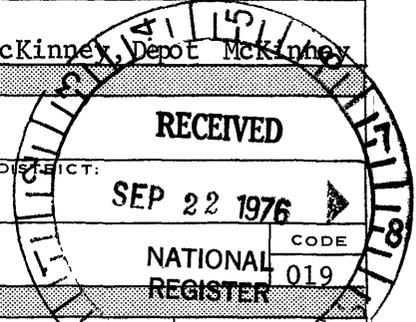
### 2. LOCATION

STREET AND NUMBER:  
Sections 17,18 T44N R78W

CITY OR TOWN:  
5 mi. W of Sarney at Powder River

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT:  
First

STATE: Wyoming CODE: 56 COUNTY: Johnson CODE: 019



### 3. CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY (Check One)	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	ACCESSIBLE TO THE PUBLIC
<input type="checkbox"/> District <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Site <input type="checkbox"/> Building <input type="checkbox"/> Structure <input type="checkbox"/> Object	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Public <input type="checkbox"/> Private <input type="checkbox"/> Both	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Occupied <input type="checkbox"/> Unoccupied <input type="checkbox"/> Preservation work in progress	Yes: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Restricted <input type="checkbox"/> Unrestricted <input type="checkbox"/> No
PRESENT USE (Check One or More as Appropriate)			
<input checked="" 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"/> Other (Specify) _____ _____ _____

### 4. OWNER OF PROPERTY

OWNER'S NAME:  
United States Government; administered by Bureau of Land Management

STREET AND NUMBER:  
Federal Building, 2120 Capitol Ave.

CITY OR TOWN: Cheyenne STATE: Wyoming CODE: 56

### 5. LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.:  
Johnson County Courthouse

STREET AND NUMBER:  
76 North Main

CITY OR TOWN: Buffalo STATE: Wyoming CODE: 56

### 6. REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE OF SURVEY:  
Wyoming Recreation Commission, Survey of Historic Sites, Markers & Mon.

DATE OF SURVEY: 1967; revised 1973  Federal  State  County  Local

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS:  
Wyoming Recreation Commission

STREET AND NUMBER:  
604 E. 25th Street

CITY OR TOWN: Cheyenne STATE: Wyoming CODE: 56

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

STATE: \_\_\_\_\_  
COUNTY: \_\_\_\_\_  
ENTRY NUMBER: \_\_\_\_\_  
DATE: \_\_\_\_\_

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7. DESCRIPTION

CONDITION	(Check One)					
	<input type="checkbox"/> Excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> Good	<input type="checkbox"/> Fair	<input type="checkbox"/> Deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> Ruins	<input checked="" 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

The site of Cantonment Reno is in the northeast quadrant of Wyoming, in Johnson County, and on the west bank of the Powder River about 25 miles east of the town of Kaycee. Today no structures remain of the cantonment that was important for a short period of two years during the last quarter of the nineteenth century. From 1876 to 1878 Cantonment Reno served the United States Army as a supply post in a campaign to force the Sioux, Cheyenne, and Arapahoe from their last great hunting grounds. Close to the eastern foothills of the Big Horn Mountains and on the western fringe of the Powder River Basin, it was purposely located within those hunting grounds, along a major north-south line of transportation and communication called the Bozeman Trail.

Cantonment Reno was established within a deep, eastward loop of the Powder River, opposite a tributary called the Dry Fork. The post had no stockade to enclose it, but rather was spread across a wide, slightly elevated, alluvial terrace. Available nearby was wood for fuel and building construction, water and forage for stock, food in the form of game, and water-although often sour- for man to drink. Situated above the river's immediate flood plain, the terrace afforded a generally dry, level site for the large supply depot. That sage-covered terrace contained the cantonment's main complex of structures and is historically the most significant portion of the mile-wide military reservation that is proposed for nomination to the National Register. The reservation was selected because it is a convenient, inclusive boundary wherein future archeological research may reveal material relative to the history and prehistory of the site.

Although no physical structures remain of the once expansive supply depot, numerous, shallow depressions in the ground are evidence of their former existence. Inspecting the site afoot one may lose count of the number of depressions located within a few hundred square yards of sagebrush, but it is known that over 40 major log structures were built at Cantonment Reno during just the first period of construction. Storehouses, a hospital, huts for officers and enlisted men, outbuildings, stables and corrals were built of logs hewn from cottonwood trees that grow in a belt along the bottomland of the Powder River.

Removal of structures and artifacts is a part of the history of Cantonment Reno. Scattered widely throughout the site are fragments of metal, wood and glass, mere reminders of what once could be found at the depot. An instance of wholesale removal of artifacts from this historic site occurred as late as 1962; however that was about a decade prior to the time when historic sites were seriously considered as an important part of the planning conducted by some government agencies. Historic sites such as Cantonment Reno have received lately more attention, especially where they have become included within environmental impact studies that precede industrial or other development projects. Nevertheless, since no plan of the post has survived, haphazard excavations by anonymous persons has caused disruption of the site, making a full archeological reconnaissance of it more difficult in the future.

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

**SIGNIFICANCE**

PERIOD (Check One or More as Appropriate)

- |  |                                       |  |                                       |
|--|---------------------------------------|--|---------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Pre-Columbian | <input type="checkbox"/> 16th Century | <input type="checkbox"/> 18th Century            | <input type="checkbox"/> 20th Century |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 15th Century  | <input type="checkbox"/> 17th Century | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 19th Century |                                       |

SPECIFIC DATE(S) (If Applicable and Known) **1876-1878**

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               | <input type="checkbox"/> Engineering            | <input type="checkbox"/> Religion/Philosophy       | <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify) |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Historic       | <input type="checkbox"/> Industry               | <input type="checkbox"/> Science                   | _____                                    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Agriculture               | <input type="checkbox"/> Invention              | <input type="checkbox"/> Sculpture                 | _____                                    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Architecture              | <input type="checkbox"/> Landscape Architecture | <input type="checkbox"/> Social/Humanitarian       | _____                                    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Art                       | <input type="checkbox"/> Literature             | <input type="checkbox"/> Theater                   | _____                                    |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Commerce       | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Military    | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Transportation | _____                                    |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Communications | <input type="checkbox"/> Music                  |  | _____                                    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Conservation              |   |  | _____                                    |

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

In the 1870's the United States Army took the offensive against certain tribes of High Plains Indians. White civilization was expanding into Indian land and pressure was being put upon the army to protect the white man from such tribes as the Sioux, Cheyenne and Arapaho. The tempo of white encroachment upon Indian country was stepped up by the rumor that gold was found in the Black Hills. Rumor became fact when the presence of gold was verified by two government expeditions to the Black Hills—one in 1874 led by Lieutenant Colonel George Custer and another led by Professor Walter P. Jenney in 1875. The necessity to make safe for the white man such areas as the Black Hills led to the organization of a fighting force under Brigadier General George Crook. In the spring of 1876 Crook directed a three-pronged invasion of the Powder River country. The expedition was not successful and Crook's own force was fought to a standstill on the Rosebud. The most well-known battle of the campaign, however, is Custer's defeat at the Little Big Horn.

In the autumn of 1876 army strategy changed and it became the particular mission of General Crook to continue warfare by seeking out hostile Indian bands, obstructing their freedom of movement and harrassing them in their own homeland. By attacking the source of their provender the army could make it impossible for Indians to live off the land, thus forcing them into reservations. Such an offensive required large and mobile forces. Keeping this in mind Crook assembled almost an entire regiment under Colonel Ranald S. Mackenzie, adding to it a company of Pawnee scouts, and Shoshone and Crow scouts and irregulars. Since wagon transport and pack train did not wholly answer to the supply needs of this mobile fighting force, the construction of a temporary supply camp, or cantonment, was planned. It was established in the Powder River Basin, and utilized the permanent North Platte River posts of Fort Laramie and Fort Fetterman as points of resupply.

Cantonment Reno took its name from a Bozeman Trail fort which once lay about three miles downstream, to the north. Fort Reno, abandoned by the military and burned by Indians following the Fort Laramie Treaty of 1868, was a stockaded post named for Major Jesse L. Reno who was killed in the Civil War at the Battle of South Mountain on September 14, 1862. On October 14, 1876, a decade following the construction of Fort Reno,

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

See Addendum: Bibliography  
 See Addendum: Geographical Data UTM References

10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

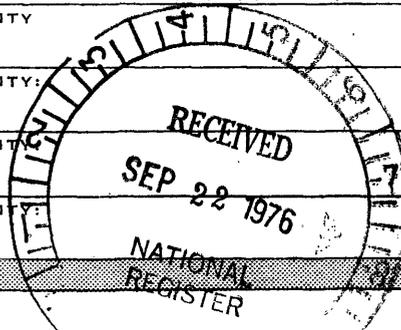
LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING A RECTANGLE LOCATING THE PROPERTY			O R	LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING THE CENTER POINT OF A PROPERTY OF LESS THAN TEN ACRES		
CORNER	LATITUDE	LONGITUDE		LATITUDE	LONGITUDE	
	Degrees Minutes Seconds	Degrees Minutes Seconds		Degrees Minutes Seconds	Degrees Minutes Seconds	
NW	0 ' "	0 ' "		0 ' "	0 ' "	
NE	0 ' "	0 ' "		0 ' "	0 ' "	
SE	0 ' "	0 ' "		0 ' "	0 ' "	
SW	0 ' "	0 ' "		0 ' "	0 ' "	

SEE ADDENDUM

APPROXIMATE ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY: 640 acres

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

STATE:	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE



11. FORM PREPARED BY

NAME AND TITLE:  
 Mark Junge, Historian

ORGANIZATION: Wyoming Recreation Commission

DATE: February 13, 1975

STREET AND NUMBER:  
 604 E. 25th Street

CITY OR TOWN: Cheyenne

STATE: Wyoming

CODE: 56

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 Paul H. Stetson

Title Wyoming SHPO

Date July 9, 1976

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

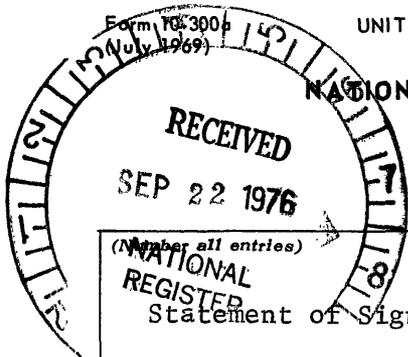
W. H. Stetson  
 Director, Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation  
 KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

Date 7/29/77

ATTEST:  
Charles Adams  
 Keeper of the National Register

Date 7.6.77

SEE INSTRUCTIONS



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

(Continuation Sheet)

STATE	
Wyoming	
COUNTY	
Johnson	
FOR NPS USE ONLY	
ENTRY NUMBER	DATE
	JUL 29 1977

(Number all entries)  
NATIONAL REGISTER STATEMENT of Significance - 2

Cantonment Reno was established by Captain Edwin Pollock of the Ninth Infantry. Pollock was following orders to select a site on the Powder River in the vicinity of the former Fort Reno. From their tent camp Pollock's men began construction of the post near the Dry Fork, using cottonwood logs taken from a belt of trees along the river's bottomland. In his book Military Posts in the Powder River Country of Wyoming, 1865-1894, Robert Murray describes specific camp buildings and also the chronology of their construction, which is as follows: a storehouse, two storage cellars, 19 barrack-huts for enlisted men along with four mess room-kitchens, a hospital, 9 officers' huts, four company orderly huts, two double-huts containing offices for commanding officer, quartermaster, and commissary of subsistence, a shed and corral, teamster's hut, guardhouse, blacksmith shop, and bakery. A commissary quarters and various sinks complete the list of structures built at Cantonment Reno in late 1876. The new post was not luxurious but more comfortable than the tents and dugouts the men inhabited previously. In November, 1876 Captain John Bourke of the Third Cavalry described the rudimentary cantonment as he saw it enroute to the Red Fork or Dull Knife fight west of present-day Kaycee, Wyoming.

Cantonment Reno was not, at that time, suggestive of luxury or comfort. Officers and men were living in holes excavated in the faces of clay banks or in makeshift quarters of a similar type. It had been established for the protection of supplies to be issued to expeditions like our own and answered its purpose well enough. The officers and soldiers of the garrison were taking things philosophically and there was no growling or complaint of any kind; still orders to report for duty at West Point, Fort Monroe or Washington would probably have been received with gladness and promptly obeyed by most of them. More unaffected hospitality could not have been found anywhere in the world.

Perhaps Christmas was made more enjoyable for the men by the arrival from Fort Fetterman of window, doors and hardware to fit their log and earth structures. Secure in their quarters they spent a quiet winter, although activity at Cantonment Reno did not stop. Captain Pollock was told that a bridge across the Powder was necessary because high water in the spring would make the river impassable. A post trader was thus authorized to construct a bridge, one which was washed out during the first period of high water. By April 6 the post's civilian master mechanic had completed a sturdier military bridge that remained in use for at least the existence of the post, possibly longer.

Cantonment Reno played a role in the army's winter campaign of 1876-1877,

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Wyoming	
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SEP 22 1976

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

(Continuation Sheet)

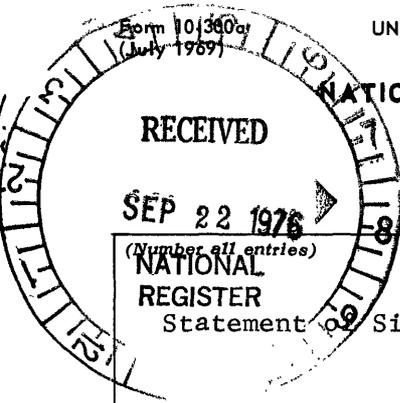
NATIONAL REGISTER  
Number of entries

Statement of Significance- 3

the high point of which was the defeat of a Cheyenne band under chiefs Dull Knife and Little Wolf on the headwaters of the Powder River in the Big Horn Mountains. In the spring of 1877 the Fifth Cavalry Regiment took the field in northern and central Wyoming to again engage the Indians. Part of the regiment operated in the vicinity of Cantonment Reno, drawing supplies from the post. One particular force under Captain J.M. Hammond set up a tent camp on the Clear Fork of the Powder River near present-day Buffalo, Wyoming and called it Camp McKinney in honor of Lieutenant John McKinney, killed in the Dull Knife Battle. The name Hammond gave to his camp has caused historical confusion involving Cantonment Reno and a later post, Fort McKinney, because the name Cantonment Reno was changed to "Cantonment or Camp McKinney." Captain Pollock requested that change to end the confusion in mail deliveries that existed because of the similarity between the name of his post and that of the older Fort Reno. On August 30, 1877 the War Department officially designated his post on the Powder River "Fort McKinney."

In the fall of 1877 a new period of construction was begun at the cantonment with the arrival of three companies of the Fifth Cavalry from the campaign field. New buildings completed by early December, 1877 were: three barracks, three mess rooms, three large cavalry stables, one quartermaster's stable, an additional office, a new guard house, a corn building, and a carpenter's shop. Erection of a pine flagstaff on February 1, 1878 completed the construction of Cantonment Reno or Fort McKinney. At peak strength the post contained 358 men, a large garrison by Wyoming military post standards. Because of the aggressive warfare against High Plains Indians the post was left open; no stockade ever surrounded the cantonment like that at Fort Phil Kearny and Fort Reno a decade previous.

The ultimate dissatisfaction of Pollock and his troops with their earth-roofed huts caused the captain to request from his superiors a sawmill, along with permission to look for a good source of timber. This led to eventual abandonment of the post and establishment of what is today known as Fort McKinney, located on the Clear Fork. By July 15, 1878 most of Pollock's men had left the Powder River for the site of the new post. Meanwhile Cantonment Reno or Fort McKinney was given another designation, "Depot McKinney" as the new post was named Fort McKinney. Except for a small detail which remained to take care of the depot and repair the telegraph line from there, the army had vacated the Powder River post by the end of 1878. Doors, window sashes, and hardware were stripped from the cantonment to supply the new post on Clear Fork, leaving the hulls of post buildings. On December 10, 1878 Major Verling K. Hart, commander at the new Fort McKinney, recommended that a section of land at the old post be retained as a campground, which was accomplished. That entire section of land, described on the accompanying map, is the area proposed for National Register status.



NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

(Continuation Sheet)

STATE	
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	JUL 29 1977

(Number all entries)  
NATIONAL REGISTER  
Statement of

Significance - 4

The cantonment's post trader, E.U. Snider, moved with the army to the new site. On May 13, 1879 authorization was provided to allow his old store and one of the cantonment cavalry stables on Powder River to be used as a store and eating house. It may have been Moreton Frewen, the English gentleman who was an early settler in the Powder River Basin and owner of the 76 Ranch on the Middle Fork, who began that roadhouse enterprise. Late in 1879 the caretaker detail was withdrawn, and the army's last tie with their Powder River post was the telegraph operation. In 1880 permission was granted the Rock Creek Stage Company to remove another log cavalry stables from the cantonment to a point east of the Powder River along the Dry Fork.

Although some squatters inhabited post buildings after 1880 a larger population gathered on the east side of the river at a settlement which became known as Powder River Crossing. According to Mrs. J.E. Chappell a good sized civilian community of about 100 people lived there or on the grounds of the post following the departure of the military. That community declined in importance as railroads reached the northern and southern ends of the Powder River Basin. Today the area in which the military reservation is located is used as part of a ranching operation.

The role of Cantonment Reno in the history of the West is limited mainly to the period 1876-1878, although life at the post did not cease to exist in the latter year. Civilian occupation at this significant crossing on the Bozeman Trail continued until the 1890's, and the general area today still contains a scattered population. The role of the cantonment in army campaigns against High Plains Indians, however transitory, gives it at least a regional significance which, translated to proper National Register form, becomes one of state significance. It is associated with a long and bitter struggle for the resources of a region, fought between members of different cultures. As a key site in the development of that struggle it deserves National Register status.

The location of the post, away from population centers, is one reason for lack of interpretive development. Yet there is growing interest in history as a form of recreation and the remoteness of a site may be somewhat of an attraction to some who care to veer from beaten paths of travel. Cantonment Reno, approaching in 1976 the centennial celebration of its establishment, could well fit into an interpretive plan treating the history of the Bozeman Trail and the Powder River Basin. An archeological survey of the site might contribute to a further understanding of the construction of western cantonments, as well as preclude further haphazard excavation, something that has occurred at the site over the years.



ADDENDUM: BIBLIOGRAPHY

BOOKS:

- Bruce, Robert. The Fighting Norths and Pawnee Scouts. New York City: Robert Bruce, 1932.
- Hebard, Grace Raymond, and Brininstool, E.A. The Bozeman Trail. Glendale, California: The Arthur H. Clark Co., 1960.
- Murray, Robert. Military Posts in the Powder River Country of Wyoming, 1865-1894. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1968.

JOURNALS, PERIODICALS:

- Bourke, John G., "Mackenzie's Last Fight With the Cheyennes," Unites States Army Recruiting News, (late 1929?), second, third, fourth, fifth installments available only.
- Bourke, John G. and McClellan, James S., "A Day With the 'Fighting Cheyennes,'" Motor Travel magazine, (April-December, 1930).
- Wyoming State Archives and Historical Department and Wyoming State Historical Society, "Bozeman Trail Trek," Annals of Wyoming, XXXVI, 1(April, 1964), 43-77.

MISCELLANEOUS:

- Barnhart, Bill, "Fort Reno." National Register of Historic Places Inventory-Nomination Form, Wyoming Recreation Commission, Cheyenne, Wyoming, 1970. 5 pp.
- Chappell, Mrs. J.E., "A History of Old Fort McKinney." WPA Files 68B, Wyoming State Archives and Historical Department, Cheyenne, Wyoming, 1936. 16 pp.
- Chappell, Mrs. J.E., "Military Occupation and Forts in Johnson Co." WPA files 68C, Wyoming State Archives and Historical Department, Cheyenne, Wyoming, 1936. 44 pp.
- "File 6120, Inventories-Recreation, T44N. Fort McKinney #1." Buffalo Resource Division, Bureau of Land Management, Buffalo, Wyoming. (xeroxed copies of 57 pages of correspondence and documents dating from April 18, 1962 to April 28, 1967 are available at the Wyoming Recreation Commission, Cheyenne, Wyoming.)

JUL 29 1977

ADDENDUM: GEOGRAPHICAL DATA UTM REFERENCES

10 Geographical Data Cantonment Reno Nomination

Acreage of Nominated Property 640 acres

UTM REFERENCES

A	<u>1</u>   <u>3</u> ZONE	<u>3</u>   <u>9</u>   <u>9</u>   <u>9</u>   <u>5</u>   <u>0</u> EASTING	<u>4</u>   <u>8</u>   <u>4</u>   <u>9</u>   <u>3</u>   <u>7</u>   <u>0</u> NORTHING
B	<u>1</u>   <u>3</u> ZONE	<u>3</u>   <u>9</u>   <u>9</u>   <u>9</u>   <u>2</u>   <u>0</u> EASTING	<u>4</u>   <u>8</u>   <u>4</u>   <u>7</u>   <u>7</u>   <u>6</u>   <u>0</u> NORTHING
C	<u>1</u>   <u>3</u> ZONE	<u>3</u>   <u>9</u>   <u>8</u>   <u>3</u>   <u>2</u>   <u>0</u> EASTING	<u>4</u>   <u>8</u>   <u>4</u>   <u>7</u>   <u>7</u>   <u>2</u>   <u>0</u> NORTHING
D	<u>1</u>   <u>3</u> ZONE	<u>3</u>   <u>9</u>   <u>8</u>   <u>3</u>   <u>4</u>   <u>0</u> EASTING	<u>4</u>   <u>8</u>   <u>4</u>   <u>9</u>   <u>3</u>   <u>4</u>   <u>0</u> NORTHING



The Cantonment Reno site is one square mile in size. Its boundary lines coincide with the historic boundary lines of the McKinney Military Reservation, shown on the enclosed map.